



Essex Coast RAMS Visitor Survey 2025

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Summary

This report has been commissioned by Chelmsford City Council on behalf of the local authorities within the Essex Coast RAMS Partnership. It presents the results of visitor surveys undertaken across the Essex Coast, during the winter and summer 2025. Surveyors conducted face-to-face interviews with a random sample of visitors and also kept a tally count of everyone passing the surveyor. Interviews and tally counts were conducted over two days (16 hours) at 25 locations throughout the winter, and 16 survey locations during the summer – a total of 26 different locations were surveyed.

The aim of the survey was to better understand recreational use of the Essex Coast, as part of an update to the evidence base to inform the ongoing Essex Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) review. It follows on from previous visitor surveys to support the Essex Coast RAMS implementation in 2011-2013.

A summary of the survey results is provided below.

Tally counts:

- A total of 9,899 groups were recorded entering, leaving or passing a survey point.
- These groups contained 18,509 people, of which 2,371 were minors (under 18).
- A small percentage (448 people, 2%) were cycling / mountain biking.
- There was an average of 1 dog for every 2 people.
- From these figures, the mean group size was 1.9 people (of which 0.4 were minors).
- The number of people visiting on a weekend was often more than double those visiting on a weekday.
- Water-based activities (via a separate vantage point count) were recorded at 16 survey locations. These activities included boating (sailing or rowing), kayaking, paddleboarding and wind or kite surfing.

Interview data:

- A total of 1,793 interviews were conducted.
- Of these, 1,225 were conducted in winter and 568 during the summer.
- The majority of interviewees (93%) were on a day trip or had travelled directly from home. A further 4% were staying away from home or on holiday and 3% were staying with friends and family in the area.
- The most common activities undertaken by interviewees were dog walking (45%) and walking (35%).
- Over half of all interviewees stated that they visit the survey location at least once a week (56%) and of these 18% are visiting daily.
- Visits were relatively short, with approximately half (54%) of all interviewees spending less than an hour visiting the survey location. People tended to visit longer in the summer (typical visit duration around 102 minutes) compared to the winter (75 minutes).

- Most interviewees didn't show a preference in the time of day that they visited; of those that did show a preference, 22% said they would prefer to visit before 9am.
- Almost two-thirds of interviewees (60%) stated that they tend to visit all year round and 75% of dog walkers said the same. A further 19% of interviewees said that they would visit more during the summer months (June-August).
- Most interviewees arrived either by car (58%) or on foot (38%). The main mode of transport varied between survey points, for example all interviewees arrived by car at Blue House Farm while at St Lawrence and Kirby Quay most interviewees (83% and 75% respectively) arrived on foot.
- Close to home was the most commonly cited reason (39% of interviewees) for visiting the survey location on the day of the interview. Other reasons given included the scenery and views (20%), being good for the dog (11%) and for the rural feel/wild landscape features (7%).
- Routes were mapped as part of the interview, and of the 1,759 routes recorded, the median length of route taken on site was 3.0 km.
- The longest route was recorded by an interviewee who was sailing (34.2 km), there were also notably long routes mapped for a cyclist (32.3 km) and a walker (30.1 km).
- Interviewees provided 340 unique alternative locations that they also visit for their activity. These locations included Belfairs (including Park, Woods and Nature Reserve) given by 8% of interviewees, Maldon (3%) and Frinton (3%).
- 46% of interviewees could name a species or habitat present that were special to the area they had visited.
- Almost half of all interviewees were unsure how the area they had visited was protected for wildlife (48%). Of those that said they were aware of any protection in place for wildlife, 18% suggested there was a nature reserve, 8% suggested that the area was a SSSI and 7% mentioned the RSPB.
- Improvements that interviewees would like to see at the interview sites included better paths and surfacing (7%), more bins / less litter (6%) and more dog waste bins (6%).
- Factors that would encourage interviewees to visit a new park or greenspace in their area included creating spaces that were more natural / wild (16%), provision of an area to let dogs off lead (13%) and presence of a café (13%). A small proportion of interviewees (17%) said that they wouldn't change their visiting habits or indicated that nothing would make them visit a new park or greenspace.
- A total of 1,688 interviewees provided their full UK home postcode. The majority (89%) came from within Essex and a further 11% were visiting from outside the county.
- The median straight-line distance from home postcode to survey location was 3.2 km and the 75th percentile distance was 12.9 km.

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Cover photo © St Lawrence by Emily Rush.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the results of a visitor survey along the Essex Coast during winter (February and March) and summer (June and July) 2025. The visitor survey has been commissioned by Chelmsford City Council, acting as the commissioning body for the Local Planning Authorities within the Essex Coast RAMS Partnership. These surveys provide evidence to support the update to the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS).

The Essex Coast

- 1.2 The Essex Coast comprises an extensive complex of estuaries and intertidal sand and silt flats, including several islands, shingle and shell beaches and extensive areas of saltmarsh. The coastline spans nearly 500 km¹, and is adjacent in part to settlements such as Harwich, Walton-on-the-Naze, Clacton-on-Sea in the north of the county and Southend and Shoeburyness to the south.
- 1.3 The nature conservation importance of the coast is reflected in a series of national and international designations. These include a series of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) classified for a diverse range of birds, a single Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and a number of Ramsar sites. The following European sites² form the network of protected sites along the Essex Coast and are shown in Map 1 below:
- Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA/Ramsar (only the southern shore of the Stour falls within Essex)
 - Hamford Water SPA/Ramsar
 - Colne Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 2) SPA/Ramsar
 - Dengie (Mid Essex Coast Phase 1) SPA/Ramsar
 - Blackwater Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 4) SPA/Ramsar
 - Crouch & Roach Estuaries (Mid Essex Coast Phase 3) SPA/Ramsar
 - Foulness (Mid Essex Coast Phase 5) SPA/Ramsar

¹ This is an approximate figure, derived using the shoreline within SPA boundaries (including islands with land above mean high water mark) and defined as the edge of selected habitats. The measurement reflects the shoreline rather than including any portions at sea or open water. The figure was derived from GIS layers used in the work of Ross *et al.* (2014).

² We use the term 'European site' to refer to both Habitats sites (those afforded statutory protection under the Habitats Regulations) and Ramsar sites (which are afforded similar protection through government policy).

- Benfleet & Southend Marshes SPA/Ramsar
- Thames Estuary & Marshes SPA/Ramsar (Essex part – Mucking Flats & Marshes SSSI only)
- Essex Estuaries SAC (comprising the Colne Estuary, Blackwater Estuary, Dengie, Crouch and Roach Estuaries and Foulness)

1.4 The designation, protection and restoration of European wildlife sites, such as those along the Essex Coast, is embedded in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended, which are commonly referred to as the ‘Habitat Regulations’. Importantly, amendments (the Conservation of Habitats and Species (amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019³) take account of the UK’s departure from the EU.

Recreation

- 1.5 The Essex Coast provides a strong draw for a range of recreational activities such as walking, sailing, paddle and wind sports, birdwatching, jet skiing, dog walking and fishing. Panter & Liley (2016) noted the presence of at least 210 car parks within 1 km of the relevant European sites providing around 18,000 parking spaces. They also recorded nearly 2,000 km of paths within the same area and mapped 143 jetties, 146 slipways and 40 marinas on the relevant shorelines. As such there are numerous opportunities across a wide area for recreational access.
- 1.6 Visits to the natural environment have shown a significant increase in England as a result of the increase in population and a trend to visit the countryside more (O’Neill, 2019). The issues are particularly acute in southern England, where population density is highest and the Covid-19 pandemic has changed access; there was a marked increase in recreation use during the pandemic (Burnett et al., 2021).
- 1.7 There is a strong body of evidence showing how increasing levels of access can have negative impacts on wildlife. Issues are varied and include disturbance, increased fire risk, contamination and damage (Harris, 2023; Liley et al., 2010; for general reviews see: Lowen et al., 2008; Marion et al., 2016).

³ The amending regulations generally seek to retain the requirements of the 2017 Regulations but with adjustments for the UK’s exit from the European Union. See Regulation 4, which also confirms that the interpretation of these Regulations as they had effect, or any guidance as it applied, before exit day, shall continue to do so.

- 1.8 However, it is now increasingly recognised that access to the countryside is crucial to the long-term success of nature conservation projects, enforcing pro-environmental behaviours and a greater respect for the natural world (Richardson et al., 2016). Access also brings wider benefits to society that include benefits to mental/physical health (Keniger et al., 2013; Lee and Maheswaran, 2011; Pretty et al., 2005) and economic benefits (ICF GHK, 2013; ICRT, 2011; Keniger et al., 2013; The Land Trust, 2018). There is therefore a challenge to address the considerable overlap between nature conservation and recreation, responding to the increasing demand for public access without compromising the integrity of protected wildlife sites.

Essex Coast RAMS

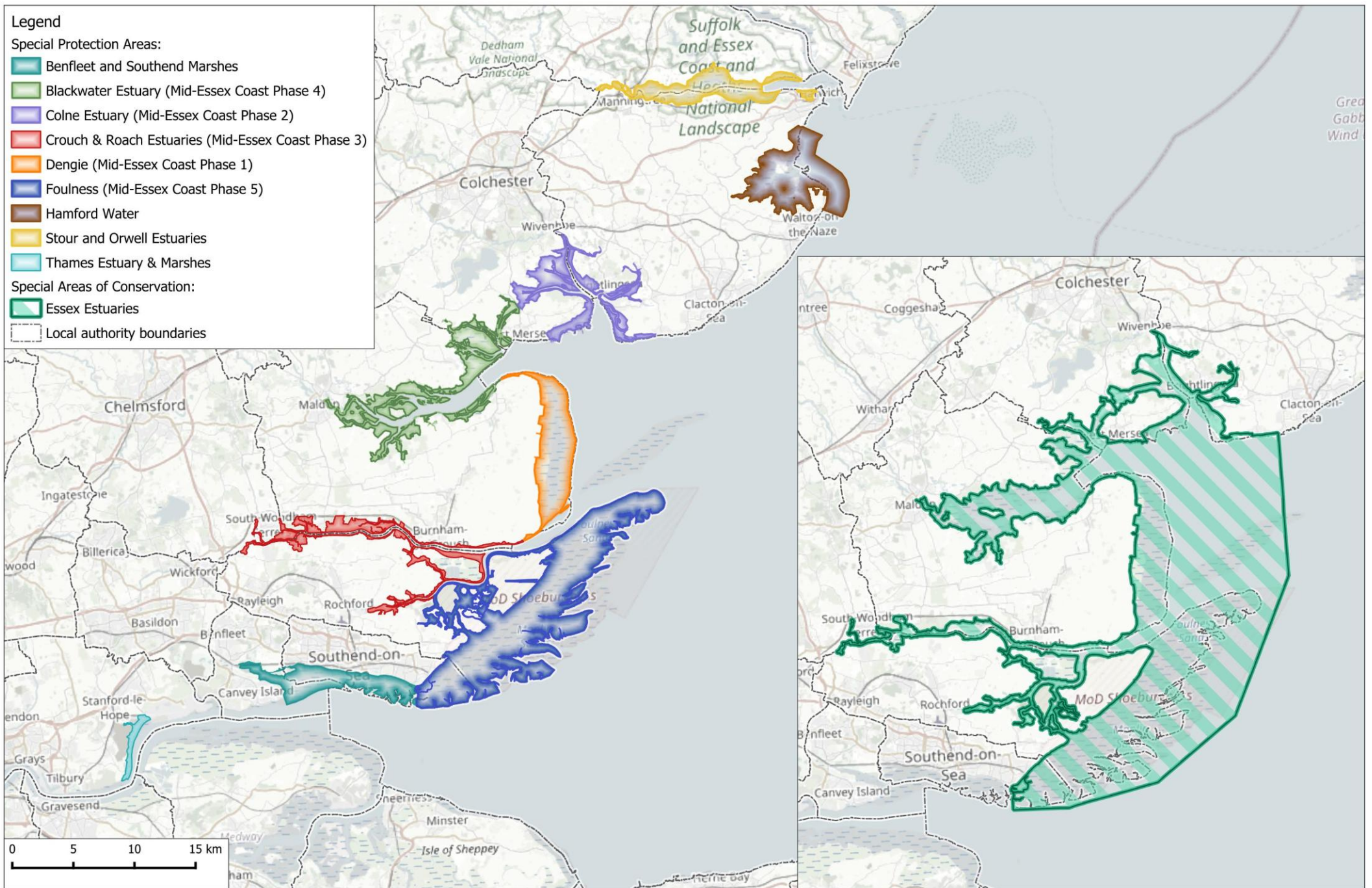
- 1.9 In recognition of the issues relating to the in-combination effects of increased recreation from local housing growth and impacts to the Essex Coast, relevant local planning authorities (12 local planning authority partners) have established a strategic approach to mitigation, the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) in 2019 (Essex County Council, 2018). An Essex Coast RAMS Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) followed in 2020. The RAMS is similar to a number of other strategic mitigation schemes around the country and sets out long-term strategic and proactive mitigation, ensuring relevant local planning authorities can deliver housing growth while meeting their statutory duties.

RAMS update and need for this survey

- 1.10 The RAMS will be updated in 2025/26 and this visitor survey was commissioned to help inform the evidence base underpinning the RAMS. Visitor data are relevant to:
- Identify current patterns of recreational use;
 - Pick-up any changes in use, such as different types of recreation since the previous surveys;
 - Provide information to inform design of mitigation, such as which types of access to target, how people behave;
 - Gather information on where people come from and the links between local housing and recreation use.
- 1.11 In addition, the results will provide baseline information to allow future surveys to be able to explore how mitigation delivery has influenced visitor use, how awareness of the importance of the coast for nature conservation

has changed and where any future gaps may occur. This will facilitate any further reviews and updates.

Map 1: European sites covered by the RAMS. Main map shows SPAs, and inset map (same scale) shows SACs



2. Methods

Overview

- 2.1 Visitor surveys involved face-to-face interviews with a random sample of people on the coast and direct counts of the overall number of people at the same locations. The data provides a snapshot of use from a sample of access points across the coast and cover both the summer and winter period. The survey approach matches the standard approach used by Footprint Ecology across the country and the evidence used to support mitigation strategies at multiple other European sites.

Survey locations

- 2.2 Visitor surveys took place at 26 survey locations across the Essex Coast (see Map 2 and Table 1). These were selected to include a representative range of access points including main car parks, pedestrian access points and also to ensure a good geographical spread. The locations were selected following a review of GIS information, discussion with the RAMS project manager, a review of previous visitor surveys and extensive site visits.
- 2.3 Previous surveys were undertaken by Colchester City Council on behalf of North Essex authorities between 2010 and 2013 and by Southend City Council in 2018 (see the RAMs -Essex County Council, 2018 - for further detail). Of the 21 locations used in the previous visitor survey work, 15 have been retained, and two further locations moved but within a similar area. Nine new survey locations have also been added.
- 2.4 Survey work took place in two pulses, to capture visitor use relevant to the SPA qualifying features (which for some sites include both breeding and non-breeding birds). A total of 25 survey locations were surveyed in the winter (when the non-breeding bird interest is present) and 16 locations (15 of which were also surveyed during the winter) were surveyed in the summer – see Map 2 for locations.

Interviews

- 2.5 Face-to-face interviews were conducted with a random sample of visitors, by the surveyor approaching the next person they saw after completing the

previous interview. Only one person was interviewed per group and no minors (under 18s) were approached or interviewed.

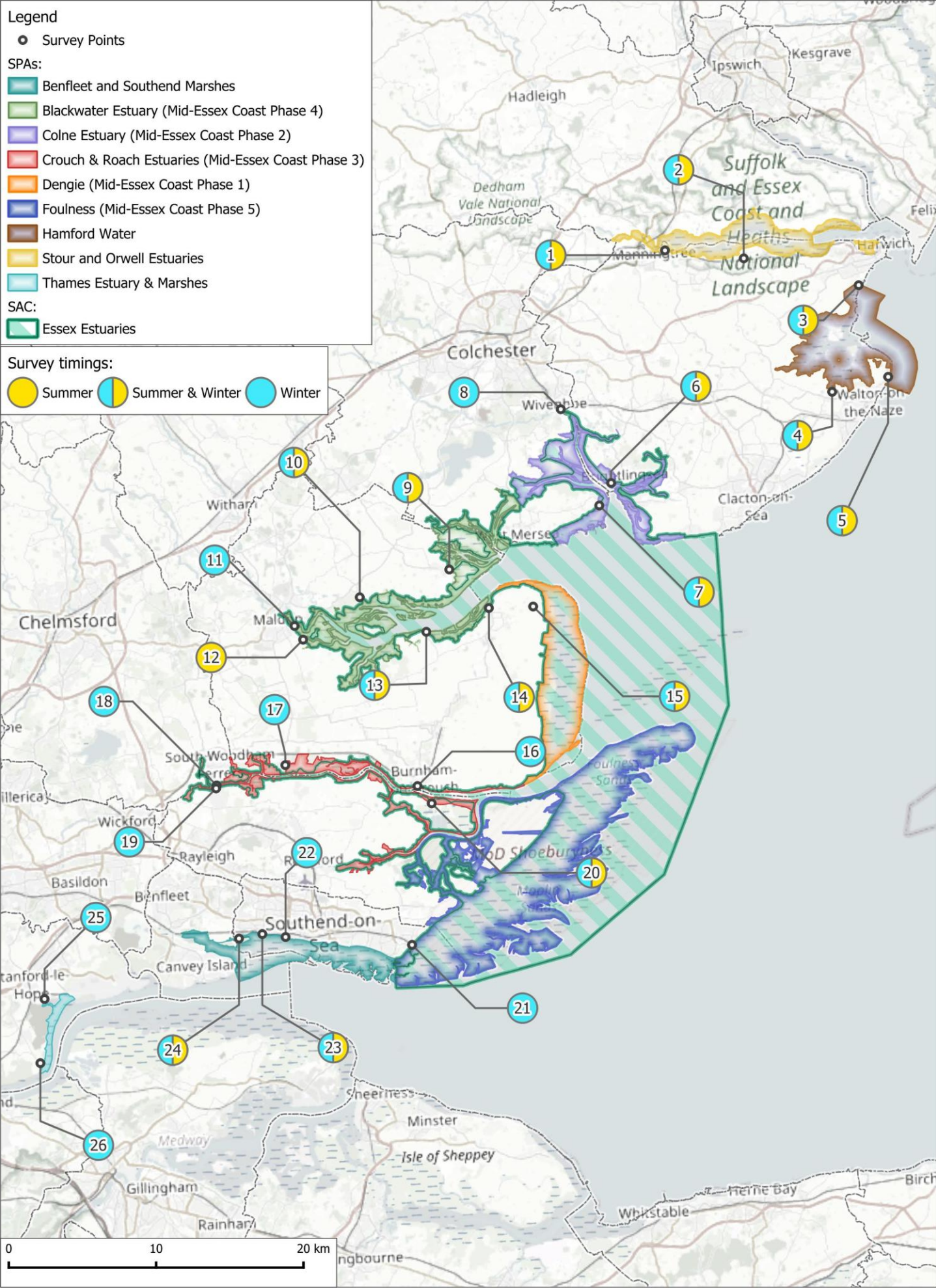
- 2.6 The surveyor kept a record of the number of visitors who were approached for interview but declined to take part or were unable to take part for whatever reason. They also recorded the number of people who were approached but had already been interviewed, so that they were not re-interviewed.
- 2.7 The questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was designed using Snap XMP survey software and was conducted using tablets running the Snap Offline Interviewer app. The app enables interviews to be conducted offline and then uploaded when the device is next connected to the internet.
- 2.8 It is important to note that some of the questions had pre-determined categories to facilitate data capture, however these were not shown to the interviewee or read out loud, in order to avoid any bias. Responses were categorised by the surveyor on the tablet as part of the interview process.
- 2.9 As part of the interview, visitors were asked to describe the route that they had taken on site (or were planning to take). This was captured by the surveyor on a paper map, using a unique reference number to match it to the corresponding questionnaire data, and these routes were subsequently digitised into GIS for analysis.
- 2.10 After each interview, the surveyor recorded additional information about the number of people in each interviewed group and the number of dogs that they had with them.

Visitor Counts

- 2.11 Alongside the interview data, surveyors maintained a tally of all people seen passing them, recording the number of groups (of any size), individuals (total headcount), minors, dogs and cyclists. These counts allow a comparison across survey points in terms of visitor volume/footfall and indicate the proportion of visitors that were interviewed at each location.
- 2.12 In addition to tally counts, surveyors were asked to keep a record of all activity on the water during each session. This includes people accessing the foreshore for bait digging for example, as well as any watercraft, paddlecraft or surfing activities observed. This was not possible in all locations, as not all

survey points overlook the water, and for Two Tree Island this took place at the end of the session as a single snapshot count from the lower slipway.

Map 2: Distribution of Survey Points and European sites



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Table 1: Details of the survey locations across the Essex Coast.

ID	Location name	Grid reference	Description	Relevant SPA	Original RAMS Survey	Winter 2025	Summer 2025
1	Mistley Walls	TM11377320	Located to the side of the pedestrian path next to the estuary and bridge.	Stour and Orwell Estuaries	✓	✓	✓
2	Wrabness Nature Reserve	TM16722314	At the entrance to the nature reserve, by gate and signage.	Stour and Orwell Estuaries	✓	✓	✓
3	Irlams Beach	TM24522296	On coastal path by steps leading down to Irlams Beach.	Hamford Water	✗	✓	✓
4	Kirby Quay	TM22723224	At path intersection towards the end of Quay Lane.	Hamford Water	✓	✓	✓
5	The Naze	TM26522234	Within the bounds of the car park, at the top of steps that lead down to beach/sea wall, by signage.	Hamford Water	✓	✓	✓
6	Brightlingsea Marsh	TM07721162	Located on slipway near Bateman's Café.	Colne Estuary	✓	✓	✓
7	Cudmore Grove Country Park	TM06916147	Located on coast path within country park, at the top of slipway leading down to the beach (path intersection).	Colne Estuary	✓	✓	✓
8	Wivenhoe Barrier	TM04302212	Located near signage and bench in front of Wivenhoe Sailing Club.	Colne Estuary	✓	✓	✗
9	Tollesbury Wick (EWT)	TL96736103	Survey point is located through the gate behind the Harbour View Bistro.	Blackwater Estuary	✓	✓	✓

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ID	Location name	Grid reference	Description	Relevant SPA	Original RAMS Survey	Winter 2025	Summer 2025
10	Goldhanger Creek	TL90658084	At path intersection on the coast path, behind the Goldhanger Parish Field.	Blackwater Estuary	✗	✓	✓
11	Promenade Park	TL86234065	Within the park, located next to the gazebo by the 'boating lake' on the sea wall.	Blackwater Estuary	✓	✓	✗
12	Northey Island Causeway	TL86818056	At base of causeway.	Blackwater Estuary	✗	✗	✓
13	St Lawrence	TL95473054	Survey point is located by steps leading to the beach, access from the road and coast path.	Blackwater Estuary	✗	✓	✓
14	Bradwell Marina	TL99421077	Stand at the top of the slipway and intercept anyone passing.	Blackwater Estuary	✓	✓	✓
15	St Peter's Chapel	TM02428078	Survey point at the end of car park by main gate and access point to nature reserve.	Dengie	✓	✓	✓
16	Riverside Park, Burnham on Crouch	TQ94579956	Survey point at path intersection along sea wall, within Riverside Park.	Crouch and Roach Estuaries	✓	✓	✗
17	Blue House Farm (EWT)	TQ85609970	Tallies and interviews within the bounds of the car park, roaming survey point.	Crouch and Roach Estuaries	✓	✓	✗
18	Marsh Farm Country Park	TQ80947957	On edge of car park, next to signage along sea wall / coast path.	Crouch and Roach Estuaries	✗	✓	✗

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ID	Location name	Grid reference	Description	Relevant SPA	Original RAMS Survey	Winter 2025	Summer 2025
19	Kendal Park	TQ80909955	Located at the path intersection along the estuary, near the entrance to Kendal Park.	Crouch and Roach Estuaries	✗	✓	✗
20	Wallasea Island (RSPB)	TQ95542944	At edge of car park by shelter, roaming where necessary.	Crouch and Roach Estuaries	✓	✓	✓
21	East Beach	TQ94209848	Stand on edge of grassy area near signage and access onto beach.	Foulness	✗	✓	✗
22	Chalkwell Beach	TQ85625854	Survey point along sea wall, near beach access and bowling green.	Benfleet and Southend Marshes	✗	✓	✗
23	Cinder Path	TQ84048856	Located at the beginning of sea wall, adjacent to access onto Bell Wharf Beach.	Benfleet and Southend Marshes	✓	✓	✓
24	Two Tree Island	TQ82465853	Located at entrance to nature reserve, opposite first car park on the island.	Benfleet and Southend Marshes	✓	✓	✓
25	Stanford Wharf (RSPB)	TQ69267812	Survey point along Wharf Road, at road intersection where vehicle access to estuary is restricted.	Thames Estuary and Marshes	✗	✓	✗
26	Coalhouse Fort	TQ68983768	Survey point on edge of car park, at entrance to fort complex and path intersection.	Thames Estuary and Marshes	✓	✓	✗

Survey timings

- 2.13 Surveys took place between 1st February and 28th March (winter pulse) and 1st June and 20th July (summer pulse) 2025. Two survey days were spent at each survey location during each survey pulse, comprising of one weekday and one weekend day. Each survey day comprised eight hours of survey effort, split into two-hour sessions to provide breaks for the surveyors and to cover daylight hours. This ensures comparable survey windows across all locations. The session timings were adjusted through the survey to fit with daylight, such that:
- Winter: 07:00-09:00, 09:30-11:30, 12:30-14:30 and 15:00-17:00 (February) or 07:00-09:00, 10:00-12:00, 13:00-15:00, 16:00-18:00 (March).
 - Summer: 07:00-09:00, 10:30-12:30, 14:00-16:00 and 17:00-19:00.
- 2.14 A total of (652.25) hours of survey effort were undertaken, with one session abandoned due to heavy rain and thunderstorms, and a further 1 hour 45 minutes lost across survey points due to access issues and inclement weather. During the winter surveys, days were generally dry and cold, with little rainfall (16% of sessions). Conditions varied during the summer surveys, with slightly more inclement weather (17% sessions with some rainfall) as well as some days with very high temperatures (up to 30 degrees) and dry, sunny weather. A summary of weather and total hours by survey point is provided in Appendix 2.
- 2.15 Bank holidays, large sporting events and other circumstances where visitor behaviour may be atypical were avoided.

3. Results: Tally counts

Overview of data

- 3.1 Tally data are summarised in Table 2. In total, 9,899 groups were recorded entering, leaving or passing the surveyor. These groups contained a total of 18,509 people (of which 2,371 were minors) and 448 of these people were on bikes. A total of 4,804 dogs were recorded with groups. From these figures, the mean group size was 1.9 people (of which 0.4 were minors) and 0.5 dogs. There was an average of 1 dog per every 2 people. Overall, 13% of the total people counted were minors (under 18s) and cyclists made up 2% of the people counted.
- 3.2 Few cyclists were recorded, accounting for 2% of people overall. However, cyclists were notable at Wivenhoe Barrier, and at St Lawrence, where they accounted for 14% of people counted.
- 3.3 Cinder Path was the busiest location, with almost 4,500 people passing the surveyor during the survey period (32 hours total). Chalkwell Beach was the second busiest (124.3 people per hour, 1,988 total people passing the surveyor) followed by Promenade Park (68.5 people per hour). Surveyors recorded the most minors present at The Naze, where 33% of people present were under 18, followed by Irlams Beach (26% were minors) and Kendal Park (17% were minors).

Winter and summer comparison

- 3.4 There was some variation in tallies between seasons. Whilst overall it appears that survey points were busier in winter (7,045 groups compared to 2,854 in summer), this is likely accounted for by the greater survey effort and different survey points. When compared by the average people per hour, survey locations in winter were busier, with an average of 32.1 people per hour compared to 22.5 people per hour in the summer, with the exception of The Naze and Brightlingsea Marsh which were notably busier in the summer compared to the winter. Group size was marginally larger, during the summer (2.0 vs. 1.8 in the winter) and there were also a greater proportion of minors present in the summer (16% vs. 11% in the winter).

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Table 2: Summary of tally data by survey location. This includes all people and dogs passing the surveyor in any direction. 'Groups' includes lone individuals. 'People' is a total headcount, including minors (under 18s) and anyone using a bicycle. The highest three values in each column are highlighted in red. A total of 16 hours were spent at locations surveyed in only one season, 32 hours at locations surveyed in both summer and winter (see Table 1 for details).

Survey location	Groups	People	Dogs	Minors	Bicycles	People per group	Dogs per group	% minors	% on bicycles	People per hour: Winter	People per hour: Summer
1 - Mistley Walls	175	311	65	33	7	1.8	0.4	11%	2%	10.6	8.8
2 - Wrabness Nature Reserve	158	283	156	27	4	1.8	1.0	10%	1%	12.1	5.6
3 - Irlams Beach	130	286	106	73	1	2.2	0.8	26%	0%	9.1	8.8
4 - Kirby Quay	60	100	45	10	1	1.7	0.8	10%	1%	4.1	2.5
5 - The Naze	532	1,366	201	447	9	2.6	0.4	33%	1%	32.1	53.3
6 - Brightlingsea Marsh	737	1,197	233	151	39	1.6	0.3	13%	3%	35.2	39.6
7 - Cudmore Grove Country	394	892	339	128	8	2.3	0.9	14%	1%	23.1	34.1
8 - Wivenhoe Barrier	192	284	72	26	41	1.5	0.4	9%	14%	17.8	-
9 - Tollesbury Wick (EWT)	116	197	73	10	9	1.7	0.6	5%	5%	7	5.3
10 - Goldhanger Creek	251	472	188	39	22	1.9	0.7	8%	5%	16.2	13.3
11 - Promenade Park	551	1,096	288	143	22	2.0	0.5	13%	2%	68.5	-
12 - Northey Island Causeway	115	203	68	10	12	1.8	0.6	5%	6%	-	12.7
13 - St Lawrence	108	140	72	18	19	1.3	0.7	13%	14%	4.8	3.9
14 - Bradwell Marina	130	223	44	26	2	1.7	0.3	12%	1%	3.6	10.4
15 - St Peter's Chapel	124	242	72	18	26	2.0	0.6	7%	11%	6.4	8.7
16 - Riverside Park	248	401	115	33	13	1.6	0.5	8%	3%	25.1	-
17 - Blue House Farm (EWT)	23	29	14	1	0	1.3	0.6	3%	0%	1.8	-

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Survey location	Groups	People	Dogs	Minors	Bicycles	People per group	Dogs per group	% minors	% on bicycles	People per hour: Winter	People per hour: Summer
18 - Marsh Farm Country	399	923	209	76	24	2.3	0.5	8%	3%	57.7	-
19 - Kendal Park	377	712	198	118	8	1.9	0.5	17%	1%	44.5	-
20 - Wallasea Island (RSPB)	257	431	67	18	2	1.7	0.3	4%	0%	23.2	4.4
21 - East Beach	384	616	231	58	37	1.6	0.6	9%	6%	38.5	-
22 - Chalkwell Beach	1,188	1,988	387	174	27	1.7	0.3	9%	1%	124.3	-
23 - Cinder Path	2,305	4,497	669	578	58	2.0	0.3	13%	1%	152.3	128.8
24 - Two Tree Island	471	709	547	31	13	1.5	1.2	4%	2%	27.5	16.8
25 - Stanford Wharf	121	189	115	13	12	1.6	1.0	7%	6%	11.8	-
26 - Coalhouse Fort	353	722	230	112	32	2.0	0.7	16%	4%	45.1	-
Winter tallies	7,045	12,801	3,628	1,460	296	1.8	0.5	11%	2%	-	-
Summer tallies	2,854	5,708	1,176	911	152	2	0.4	16%	3%	-	-
Total tallies	9,899	18,509	4,804	2,371	448	1.9	0.5	13%	2%	32.1	22.5

Weekend and weekday comparison

- 3.5 Visitor numbers tended to be higher at weekends compared to weekdays. Overall, across all survey locations and both pulses of survey effort there were 65% of visitors counted on a weekend compared to 35% on a weekday. Visitor numbers were higher at weekends than weekdays at 23 of the 25 locations surveyed in the winter and 13 of the 15 locations surveyed in the summer (see Figure 1). Brightlingsea and East Beach were notable in having more visitors on weekdays than weekends during the winter and the same could be said of Cudmore Grove CP in the summer.

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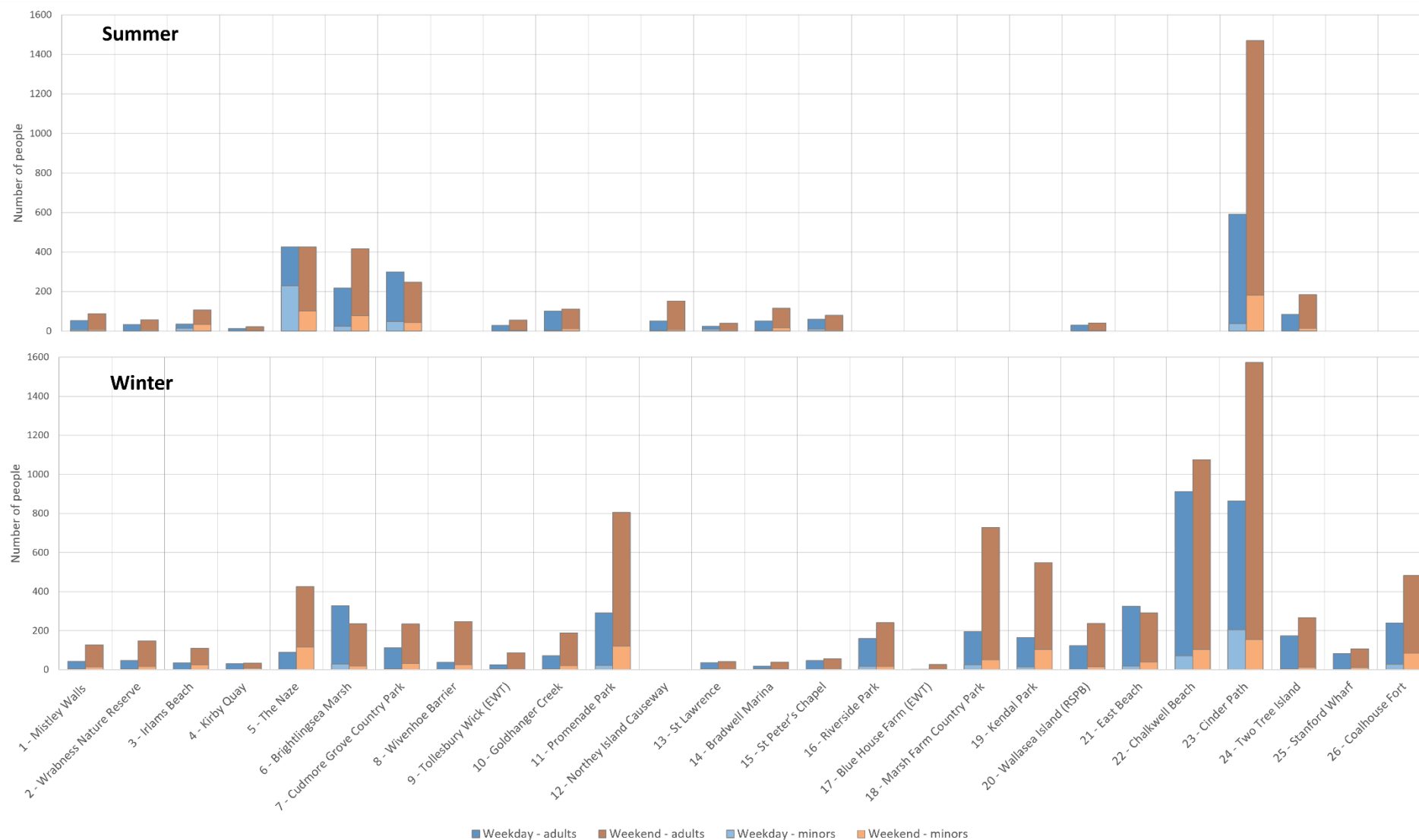


Figure 1: Number of people (adults and minors) counted at each survey location on weekdays and weekends. Note that Cinder Path total tallies were 3,043 people at the weekend and therefore was considerably busier than other sites (bar off scale).

Water Activity counts:

- 3.6 Where possible, surveyors kept a record of any activities taking place on the water. This was only feasible at 18 survey locations, as some did not directly overlook the water, e.g. Wallasea Island. At Two Tree Island the surveyor undertook a count from the slipway at the end of the survey session (i.e. moved location) whereas at the other survey points the counts were done from the interview location during the survey (and therefore are only approximate given the challenge of watching a wide area while interviewing).
- 3.7 These additional counts at the selected locations included any boats, watercraft, wind or kite surfing and activity along the foreshore. The data are summarised in Figure 2 below and in more detail in Appendix 3.
- 3.8 Water-based activities were noted most frequently at Two Tree Island, with activities present during 69% of sessions, and also at Chalkwell Beach (63% of sessions) and The Naze (44% of sessions).
- 3.9 Across all survey points, the data combined comprised:
- 39 observations of boats (either sailing – 16, rowing – 6 or otherwise undetermined);
 - 10 kayakers;
 - 9 paddleboarders;
 - 5 wind or kite surfing; and
 - 3 people accessing the mudflats for bait digging or metal detecting.

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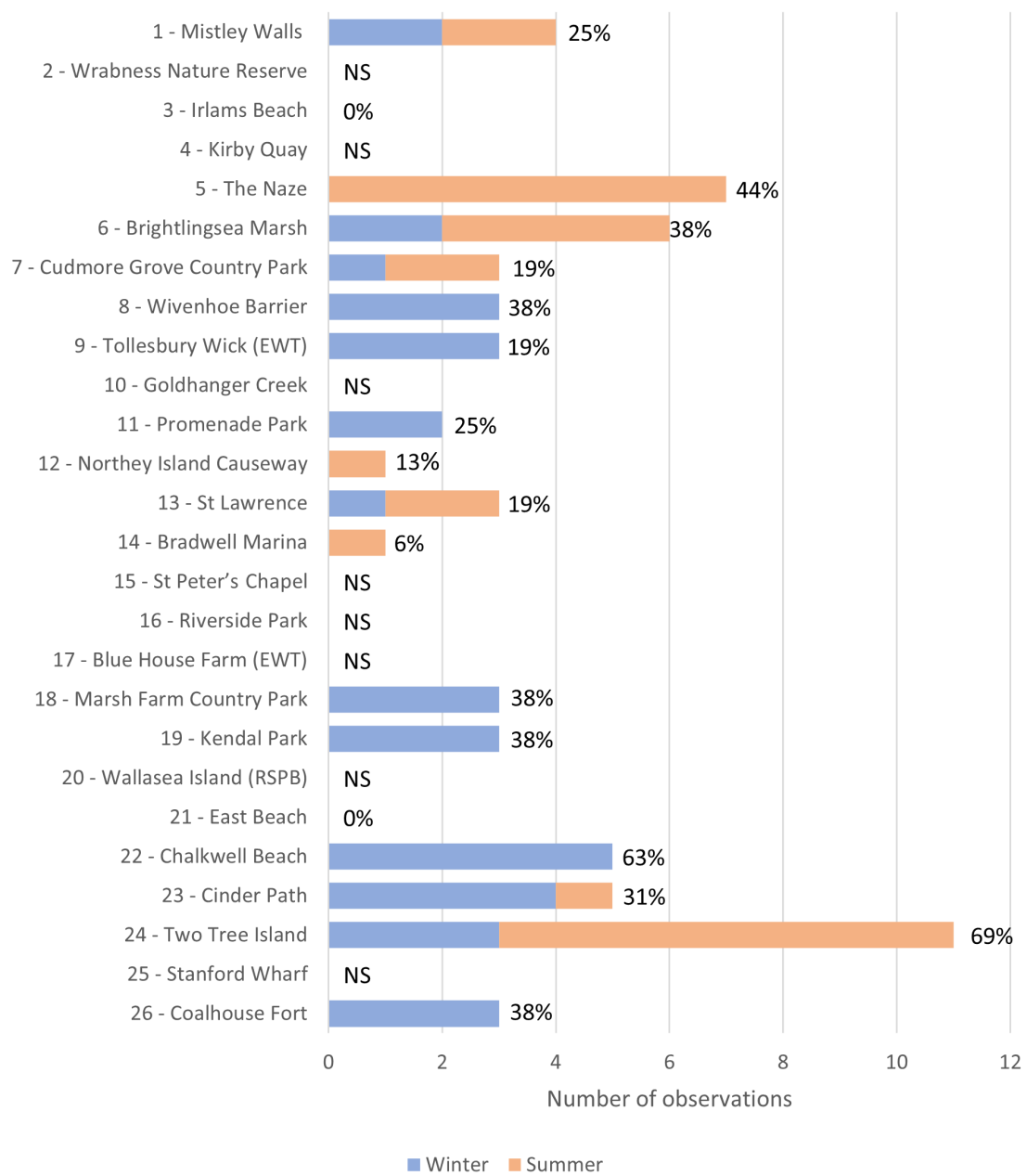


Figure 2: Summary of water activities recorded by survey location. Observations refer to individuals (including individual boats, kayaks etc). Percentages show the proportion of sessions during which water activities were observed (number of sessions differed per survey point). 'NS' is used where it was not possible to observe any water activities and therefore the survey point was 'Not Surveyed'.

4. Results: Interviews

Overview

- 4.1 A total of 1,793 interviews were conducted, with 1,225 in the winter and a further 568 in the summer. Of these 44% (796 interviews) took place on weekdays and 56% (997 interviews) on weekends (see Table 3). The median interview time was just over 6 minutes per interview.
- 4.2 Most interviewees were on their own (845 interviewees, 47%) or with one other person (722 interviewees, 40%). Most remaining groups were of between 3 and 14 people, with a notable exception of a school group of 130 people visiting at Cinder Path. The mean group size (including those on their own) was 1.8, and 165 groups had minors with them.
- 4.3 846 interviewees had 1 or more dogs with them, with a total of 1,092 dogs, roughly 0.6 dogs per interviewee (across all interviewees). At least 380 (35%) of the dogs were noted by the surveyor as off the lead at the time of interview.
- 4.4 A further 1,106 (36%) were approached for interview but declined for a variety of reasons. These included 386 runners/joggers/walkers (31%) who weren't prepared to stop, 332 individuals (26%) who said they had very little time and 159 (13%) who said they were not interested. A further 129 individuals (10%) cited other reasons for not participating in the survey and for 59 individuals (5%) the reasons for refusal were unclear. A number of people also cited the weather (e.g. being too hot, cold, rainy) for their reason of being unable to participate (41 individuals, 3%).
- 4.5 There were also 25 individuals who were approached for interviews, who stated that there was a language barrier which meant they felt unable to participate (1%) and a further 131 individuals who were approached for an interview but had already participated (4%).
- 4.6 Of those who did not participate, 450 (36%) were walking without a dog, 394 people (31%) were dog walking, 281 people (22%) were jogging, and a small number were either cycling (39 people) or appeared to be commuting (23 people).

Table 3: Summary of total interviews and refusals by survey location. Shading indicates survey season, **blue for locations surveyed in winter only, **orange** indicates locations surveyed in summer only and unshaded (green styling) indicates locations surveyed in both seasons.**

Survey Point	Weekday	Weekend	Total interviews	Already interviewed	Language issues	Refusals
1 - Mistley Walls	14	21	35	0	6	57
2 - Wrabness Nature Reserve	18	27	45	4	1	20
3 - Irlams Beach	12	21	33	3	3	30
4 - Kirby Quay	10	14	24	2	0	15
5 - The Naze	29	55	84	9	1	55
6 - Brightlingsea Marsh	46	44	90	8	3	78
7 - Cudmore Grove	55	53	108	1	0	39
8 - Wivenhoe Barrier	13	26	39	4	2	29
9 - Tollesbury Wick	22	31	53	2	0	26
10 - Goldhanger Creek	35	46	81	24	0	30
11 - Promenade Park	22	20	42	1	0	58
12 - Northey Island Causeway	15	24	39	3	0	14
13 - St Lawrence	17	29	46	11	3	26
14 - Bradwell Marina	21	30	51	1	0	28
15 - St Peter's Chapel	27	38	65	1	0	19
16 - Riverside Park	30	32	62	3	0	33
17 - Blue House Farm	1	13	14	1	0	2
18 - Marsh Farm Country Park	34	48	82	1	0	18
19 - Kendal Park	33	45	78	1	0	27
20 - Wallasea Island	40	53	93	5	0	12
21 - East Beach	40	47	87	2	1	62
22 - Chalkwell Beach	44	38	82	0	1	156
23 - Cinder Path	98	102	200	2	2	194
24 - Two Tree Island	58	85	143	31	0	26
25 - Stanford Wharf	25	21	46	10	0	26
26 - Coalhouse Fort	37	34	71	1	2	26
Total	796	997	1,793	131	25	1,106

Type of visit (Q1)

- 4.7 Most interviewees (1,665 interviewees, 93%) were on a day trip or had travelled directly from their home (Table 4). A further 70 interviewees (4%) were staying away from home (e.g. static caravan, mobile home) or on holiday in the area and a further 47 interviewees (3%) were staying with friends or family. A few interviewees (11, <1%) didn't fit into any of these categories. Interviewees on holiday accounted for a greater proportion of visitors in the summer compared to the winter. Locations where tourists accounted for a particularly high percentage of visitors in the summer were St Peter's Chapel (34% of visitors staying away from home), Irlams Beach (33%), St Lawrence (26%) and Cudmore Grove (25%).

Table 4: Numbers (%) of visitors by type of visit and season

Type of visit	Summer	Winter	Total
On a day trip/short visit and travelled directly from home	490 (86)	1,175 (96)	1,665 (93)
Staying away from home, e.g. static caravan, mobile home or on holiday	54 (10)	16 (1)	70 (4)
Short trip/short visit & staying away from home with friends or family	19 (3)	28 (2)	47 (3)
None of the above	5 (1)	6 (0)	11 (1)
Total	568 (100)	1,225 (100)	1,793 (100)

Main activity (Q2)

- 4.8 The main activities interviewees stated they were undertaking (see Figure 3) were dog walking (800 interviewees⁴, 45%) and walking (619 interviewees, 35%).
- 4.9 There was some variation between seasons, with 50% (616 interviewees) stating that they were dog walking in the winter compared to 32% (184 interviewees) in the summer (across all survey points). More interviewees stated that they were visiting for photography during the winter (22 interviewees, 2% in the winter and only one interviewee (<1%) in the summer). More interviewees stated they were undertaking water-based activities in the summer, including sailing/accessing boat (22 interviewees,

⁴ Note that 846 interviewees had dogs with them at the time of the interview – 46 of these stated that their main activity wasn't dog walking but some other activity instead.

4% in summer vs 6 interviewees, <1% in winter) and swimming (10 interviewees, 2% in summer vs. 3 interviewees, <1% in winter).

- 4.10 Some interviewees stated 'other' activities which did not fit into pre-determined categories. These included 'Visiting the chapel' (12 interviewees, <1%) which occurred almost exclusively at St Peter's Chapel, feeding the birds (13 interviewees, <1%), fossil hunting (11 interviewees, <1%) as well as exercising, admiring the scenery and accessing the beach.

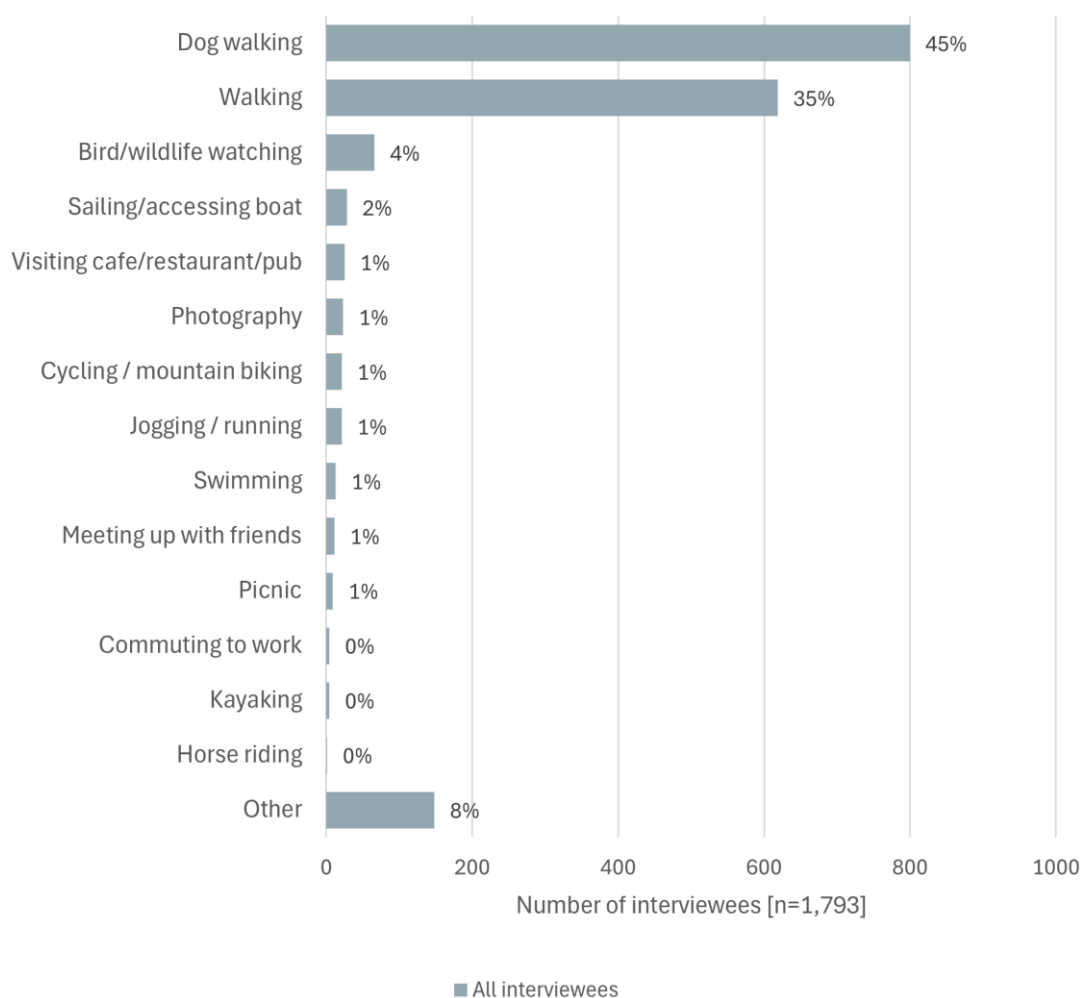
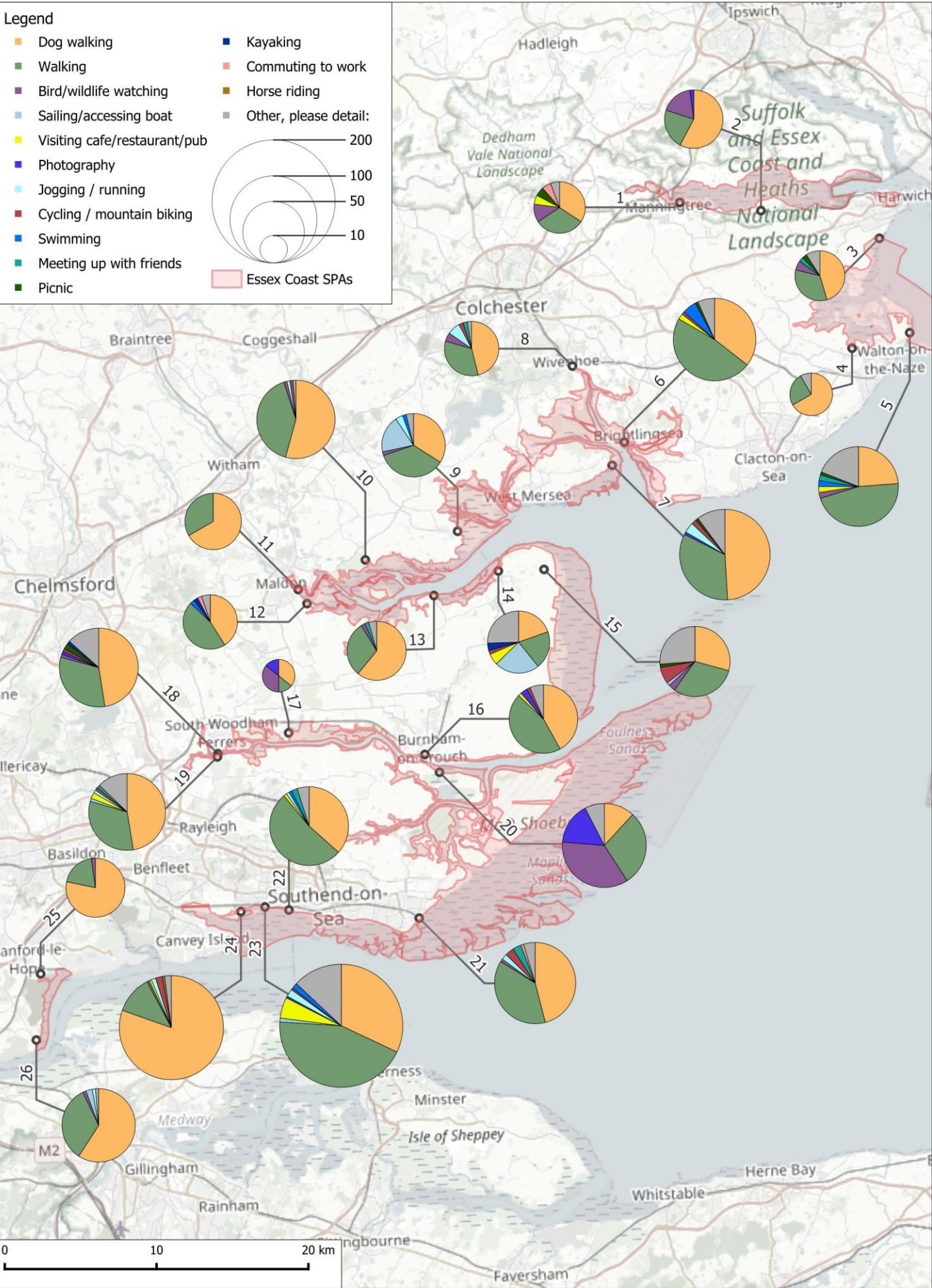


Figure 3: Main activity given by interviewees. Data from all seasons and all survey points combined.

- 4.11 There was variation between locations in the relative proportions of different activities (see Map 3 and Appendix 3). While dog walking and walking were typically the most frequently given activities, dog walkers accounted for a higher percentage at Two Tree Island (where dog walkers accounted for 80%

of interviewees) and Stanford Wharf (78%). Walkers accounted for a high proportion at Chalkwell Beach (52%) and Brightlingsea Marsh (48%). At Wallasea Island many interviewees were bird/wildlife watching or visiting for photography (35% and 16% respectively). Blue House Farm and Wrabness Nature Reserve were also popular locations for bird/wildlife watching (36% and 18% respectively). Cycling was more popular at St Peter's Chapel (8% of interviewees) than any other location, and Bradwell Marina was notable for the number of interviewees going sailing or accessing their boat (24% of interviewees).

Map 3: Main activity undertaken at each survey point by interviewees



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- 4.12 Interviewees were also asked to consider any secondary activities undertaken on their visit or by other members of the group (Q3). Of the 897 (50%) that said they were undertaking a second activity, 270 interviewees (30%) stated that they were also visiting a café/restaurant, 209 interviewees (23%) were also walking and 106 interviewees stated that they were also bird/wildlife watching (12%).

Temporal visit patterns

Frequency of visit (Q4)

- 4.13 Across all survey points and seasons, over half of all interviewees stated that they visited the location where interviewed at least once a week (1,004 interviewees, 56%). Of these, 329 interviewees (18%) were daily visitors. A number of interviewees were also on their first visit (218 interviewees, 12%).
- 4.14 Responses varied by season (Figure 4), with daily visitors accounting for a higher proportion of interviewees in the winter (258 interviewees, 21%) compared to the summer (71 interviewees, 13% visiting daily). By contrast, the proportion of those on their first visit was higher in the summer (111 interviewees, 20%) compared to the winter (107 interviewees, 9%).
- 4.15 The frequency with which interviewees visited also varied by survey location (see Figure 4). Locations such as Riverside Park (52 interviewees, 84%), St Lawrence (38 interviewees, 83%) and Wivenhoe Barrier (30 interviewees, 77%) attracted a higher proportion of at least weekly visitors in contrast to St Peter's Chapel (8 interviewees, 12%) and Wallasea Island (16 interviewees, 17%). Both these less frequently visited locations also attracted a higher proportion of first-time visitors (35 interviewees, 54% and 23 interviewees, 25% respectively) as did The Naze (23 interviewees, 27%).
- 4.16 Based on the categorical responses relating to visit frequency, interviewees had visited the interview location around 122 times on average over the past year, equivalent to roughly 2.3 visits per week⁵.

⁵ 'Daily' = 350 visits; 'Most days' = 200 visits; '1 to 3 times a week' = 110 visits; '2 to 3 times per month' = 27.5 visits; 'Once a month' = 10.5 visits; 'Less than once a month' = 3 visits; 'First visit' = 1 visit. Typical visit frequency is then the average based on the number of interviewees that gave each of the above categories.

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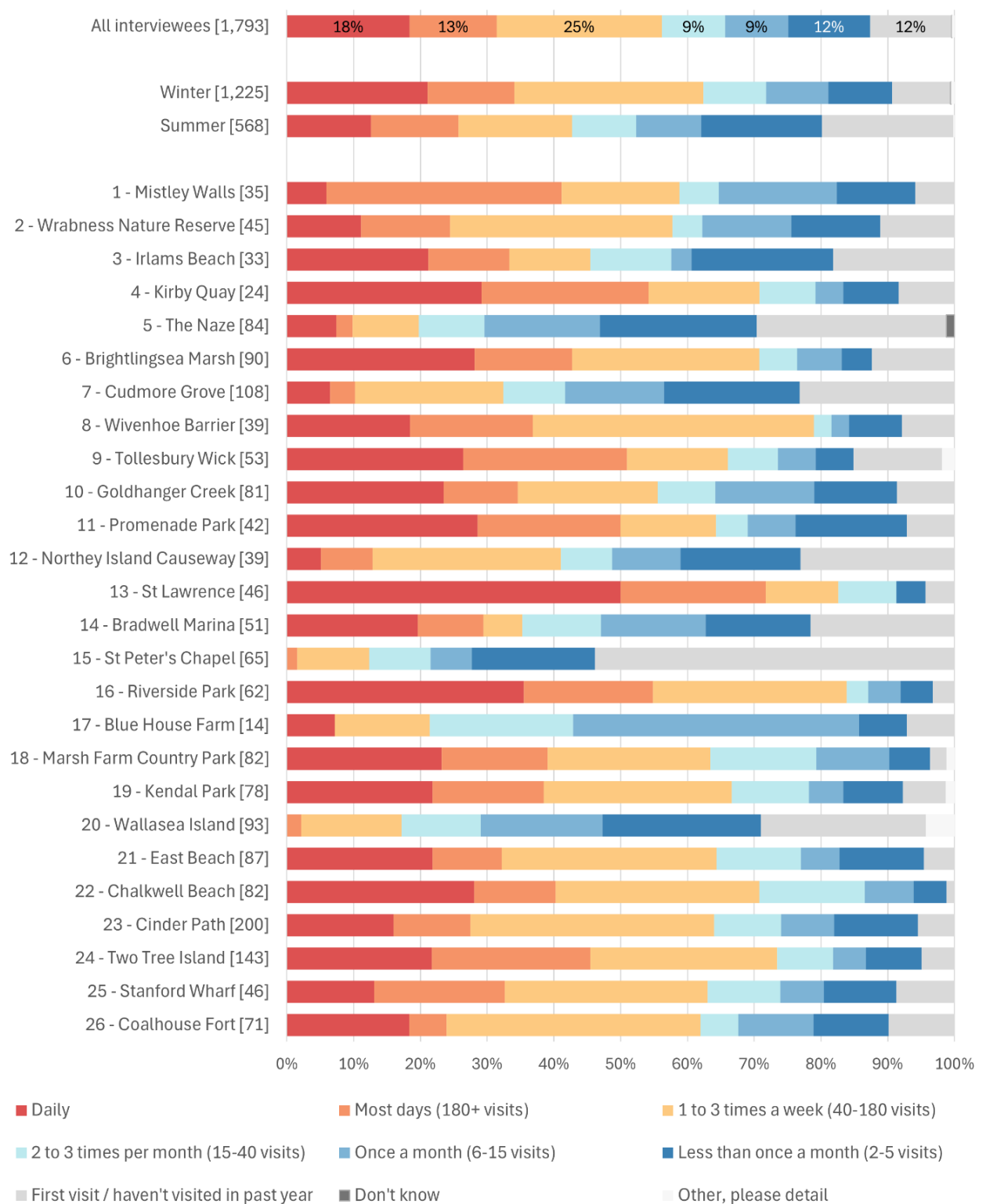


Figure 4: Visit frequency for all data combined and also by season and survey location.

4.17 There was some variation in visit frequency comparing those undertaking different main activities. Dog walkers tended to visit the sites where

interviewed frequently, with 238 interviewees who were dog walking (30% of dog walkers) visiting daily and 595 (74%) visiting at least weekly. Interviewees who were visiting for bird/wildlife watching were more likely to be visiting for the first time (19 interviewees, 29%).

Visit duration (Q5)

- 4.18 Visit duration is shown by season and survey location in Figure 5.
- 4.19 Approximately half of all interviewees had spent (or intended to spend) less than an hour visiting the location where they were interviewed, with most visitors spending between 30 minutes and one hour on site (719 interviewees, 41%). The visit duration varied between the seasons, with the tendency for longer visits in the summer. For example, 96 interviewees (6%) were visiting for 3 hours or more in the winter compared to 74 interviewees (17%) in the summer.
- 4.20 Survey locations where many interviewees were only visiting for a short period (up to an hour) included: Kendal Park (66 interviewees, 85% visiting for up to an hour), Two Tree Island (115 interviewees, 80%) and Mistley Walls (27 interviewees, 77%). In contrast, 26 interviewees (51%) at Bradwell Marina stated that they would spend over 4 hours on site. Interviewees at The Naze were also inclined to visit for longer, with 23 interviewees (27%) stating that they would visit for over 3 hours.
- 4.21 Based on the categorical responses relating to visit duration the typical visit duration to the Essex Coast across all seasons and survey points is around 83 minutes⁶. Those interviewed in the summer tended to visit for around 102 minutes compared to an average of 75 minutes for those interviewed in the winter.

⁶ Less than 30 minutes = 20 mins; 30 minutes to 1 hour = 45 mins; 1 to 2 hours = 90 mins; 2 to 3 hours = 150 mins; 3 to 4 hours = 210 mins and more than 4 hours = 300 mins. Typical visit duration is then the average based on the number of interviewees that gave each of the above categories.

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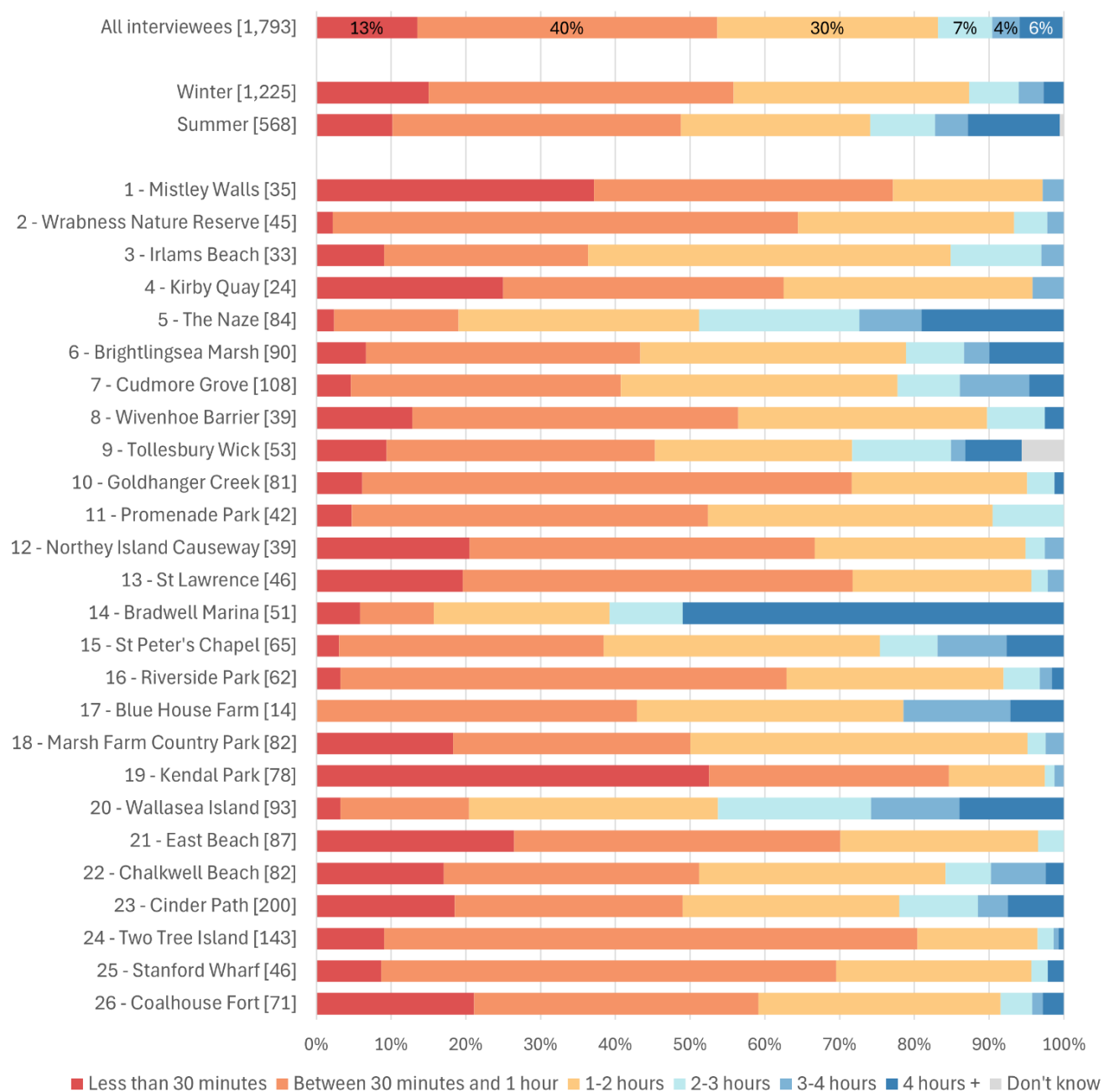


Figure 5: Comparison of duration of visit by interviewees, by survey location and season.

4.22 Visit duration varied between activities, with those interviewees who said they were commuting or horse riding all spending less than 30 minutes on site. Dog walkers (542 interviewees, 68%) and interviewees who were running/jogging (16 interviewees, 76%) both tended to visit for short periods, with 542 interviewees (68%) of dog walkers and 16 of those running/jogging (76%) spending less than an hour at the location at which they were

interviewed. In contrast, three interviewees who were kayaking (75% of those kayaking) said they would spend over 3 hours on site, as did 18 interviewees (64%) of those who were sailing or accessing their boat.

Time of day (Q6)

- 4.23 Most interviewees (671 interviewees, 37%) did not tend to visit at a particular time of day and said that the time at which they usually visit varies. Of those that did show a preference, approximately a fifth (403 interviewees, 22%) said they preferred to visit before 9am.
- 4.24 There was little seasonal variation in the time of day interviewees tended to visit. However, there were some patterns evident when comparing between activities, A high proportion of those dog walking (270 interviewees, 34%), indicated they were more likely to visit before 9am and people sailing or accessing their boat was much more evenly spread throughout the day than any other activity. This even spread is also reflected at Bradwell Marina where a greater proportion of interviewees were sailing compared to other sites.
- 4.25 Of the interviewees that showed a preference, there was some difference between survey locations (see Table 5). Early morning was the most commonly given response at Marsh Farm Country Park (where given by 31 interviewees, 38%) and Stanford Wharf (16 interviewees, 35%) while at Promenade Park later morning was the most common response (given by 12 interviewees, 29%). At Wallasea Island there was a preference for late afternoon visits (24 interviewees, 26%), perhaps reflecting those wildlife watching or taking photographs timing their visit to coincide with the bird interest (raptors and owls) while at Bradwell Marina there was a relatively even spread across the day, potentially linked to the high proportion of people sailing and accessing boats at this location.

Table 5: Number (%) of interviewees by survey point and the time of day interviewees tended to visit. Note that interviewees could provide multiple responses so percentages will not add up to 100. The highest value in each row is highlighted in **dark red and the second highest value highlighted in **a lighter red**.**

Survey location [number of interviews]	Early morning	Late morning	Early afternoon	Late afternoon	Evening	Varies / Don't know	First visit
1 - Mistley Walls [35]	9 (26%)	5 (14%)	5 (14%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	13 (37%)	2 (6%)
2 - Wrabness Nature Reserve [45]	12 (27%)	5 (11%)	1 (2%)	6 (13%)	2 (4%)	21 (47%)	5 (11%)
3 - Irlams Beach [33]	6 (18%)	7 (21%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (9%)	14 (42%)	6 (18%)
4 - Kirby Quay [24]	5 (21%)	7 (29%)	0 (0%)	4 (17%)	1 (4%)	10 (42%)	2 (8%)
5 - The Naze [84]	10 (12%)	5 (6%)	1 (1%)	4 (5%)	0 (0%)	39 (46%)	25 (30%)
6 - Brightlingsea Marsh [90]	21 (23%)	11 (12%)	2 (2%)	5 (6%)	4 (4%)	37 (41%)	11 (12%)
7 - Cudmore Grove [108]	24 (22%)	19 (18%)	13 (12%)	8 (7%)	8 (7%)	35 (32%)	25 (23%)
8 - Wivenhoe Barrier [39]	12 (31%)	3 (8%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	3 (8%)	17 (44%)	4 (10%)
9 - Tollesbury Wick [53]	16 (30%)	5 (9%)	2 (4%)	2 (4%)	7 (13%)	24 (45%)	7 (13%)
10 - Goldhanger Creek [81]	24 (30%)	17 (21%)	9 (11%)	9 (11%)	17 (21%)	25 (31%)	7 (9%)
11 - Promenade Park [42]	10 (24%)	12 (29%)	2 (5%)	3 (7%)	9 (21%)	12 (29%)	3 (7%)
12 - Northey Island Causeway [39]	6 (15%)	3 (8%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	4 (10%)	19 (49%)	9 (23%)
13 - St Lawrence [46]	7 (15%)	4 (9%)	2 (4%)	7 (15%)	5 (11%)	26 (57%)	2 (4%)
14 - Bradwell Marina [51]	10 (20%)	12 (24%)	11 (22%)	11 (22%)	9 (18%)	20 (39%)	11 (22%)
15 - St Peter's Chapel [65]	8 (12%)	6 (9%)	2 (3%)	4 (6%)	0 (0%)	16 (25%)	35 (54%)

Survey location [number of interviews]	Early morning	Late morning	Early afternoon	Late afternoon	Evening	Varies / Don't know	First visit
16 - Riverside Park [62]	8 (13%)	5 (8%)	5 (8%)	4 (6%)	3 (5%)	41 (66%)	2 (3%)
17 - Blue House Farm [14]	5 (36%)	2 (14%)	1 (7%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	7 (50%)	1 (7%)
18 - Marsh Farm Country Park [82]	31 (38%)	19 (23%)	8 (10%)	9 (11%)	14 (17%)	25 (30%)	2 (2%)
19 - Kendal Park [78]	10 (13%)	19 (24%)	8 (10%)	12 (15%)	3 (4%)	28 (36%)	5 (6%)
20 - Wallasea Island [93]	19 (20%)	15 (16%)	11 (12%)	24 (26%)	20 (22%)	22 (24%)	23 (25%)
21 - East Beach [87]	16 (18%)	16 (18%)	8 (9%)	11 (13%)	2 (2%)	33 (38%)	4 (5%)
22 - Chalkwell Beach [82]	20 (24%)	20 (24%)	4 (5%)	9 (11%)	5 (6%)	33 (40%)	1 (1%)
23 - Cinder Path [200]	44 (22%)	37 (19%)	16 (8%)	13 (7%)	21 (11%)	80 (40%)	11 (6%)
24 - Two Tree Island [143]	42 (29%)	35 (24%)	14 (10%)	10 (7%)	19 (13%)	43 (30%)	7 (5%)
25 - Stanford Wharf [46]	16 (35%)	7 (15%)	7 (15%)	5 (11%)	9 (20%)	8 (17%)	4 (9%)
26 - Coalhouse Fort [71]	12 (17%)	16 (23%)	10 (14%)	12 (17%)	4 (6%)	23 (32%)	7 (10%)
All interviewees [1,793]	403 (22%)	312 (17%)	143 (8%)	176 (10%)	173 (10%)	671 (37%)	221 (12%)

Time of year (Q7)

- 4.26 Most interviewees (1,078 interviewees, 60%) stated that they tended to visit the location where interviewed equally all year round. Of those that did show a preference, 332 interviewees (19%) said that they tended to visit more in the summer (June – August). A further 220 interviewees (12%) were on a first visit and therefore did not show a preference.

- 4.27 A relatively high proportion of interviewees who were dog walking stated they tended to visit equally all year round (600 interviewees, 75%) compared to all other activities. Interviewees who were bird/wildlife watching showed the greatest preference for visiting in the winter (14 interviewees, 21%) and interviewees going sailing or accessing their boat preferred to visit in the summer (15 interviewees, 56%).

Mode of Transport (Q8)

- 4.28 Overall, most interviewees arrived at the survey point either by car (1,058 interviewees, 58%) or on foot (676 interviewees, 38%). A small percentage arrived by bicycle (28 interviewees, 2%) and train (23 interviewees, 1%), while the remaining interviewees arrived by bus, motorbike, mobility scooter, sailing boat or ferry (all approximately 1% of interviewees).
- 4.29 Mode of transport differed slightly between survey points (see Figure 6 below). At Blue House Farm (14 interviewees, 100%) all arrived by car/van, while the majority of interviewees had arrived on foot at St Lawrence (38 interviewees, 83%), Kirby Quay (18 interviewees, 75%) and Wivenhoe Barrier (29 interviewees, 74%).

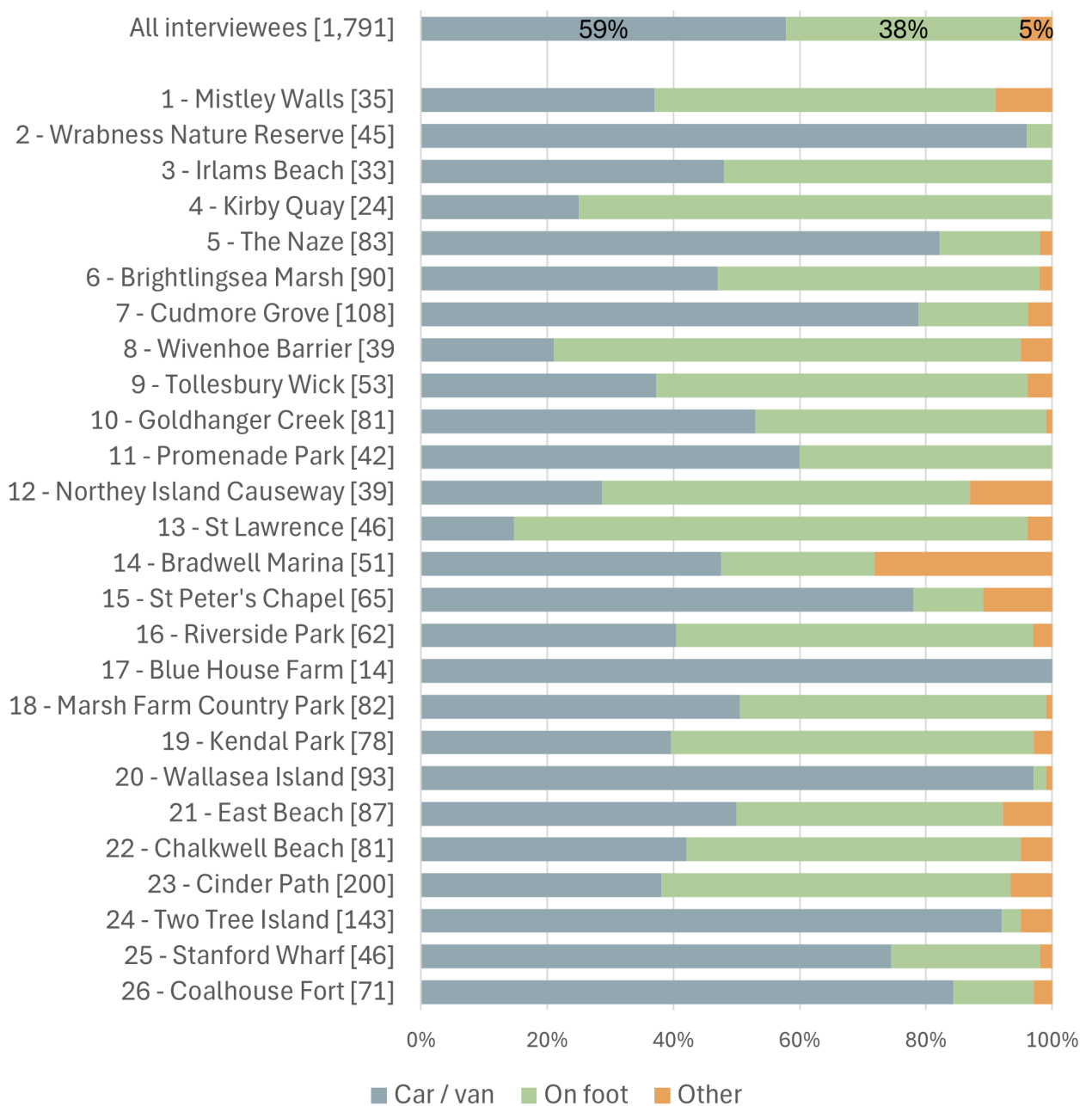


Figure 6: Mode of transport used by survey point. Numbers in square brackets reflect sample size.

Choice of location (Q9 & Q10)

- 4.30 Interviewees gave a variety of reasons for choosing to visit the location where they were interviewed, rather than another site (Figure 7). Some interviewees gave multiple reasons for their choice and where more than one reason was given, interviewees were also asked to select a single main reason (Q10). Being 'close to home' was by far the most common reason (both overall and as the main reason), given by over a third of interviewees (695, 39%). Other common responses included the scenery/variety of views (356, 20%) and the location being good for the dog or the dog enjoys it (190 interviewees, 11%).
- 4.31 A total of 470 interviewees (26%) gave 'other' reasons outside of the pre-determined categories, for example seeing family, being by the water, visiting the beach and being quiet or peaceful to visit.

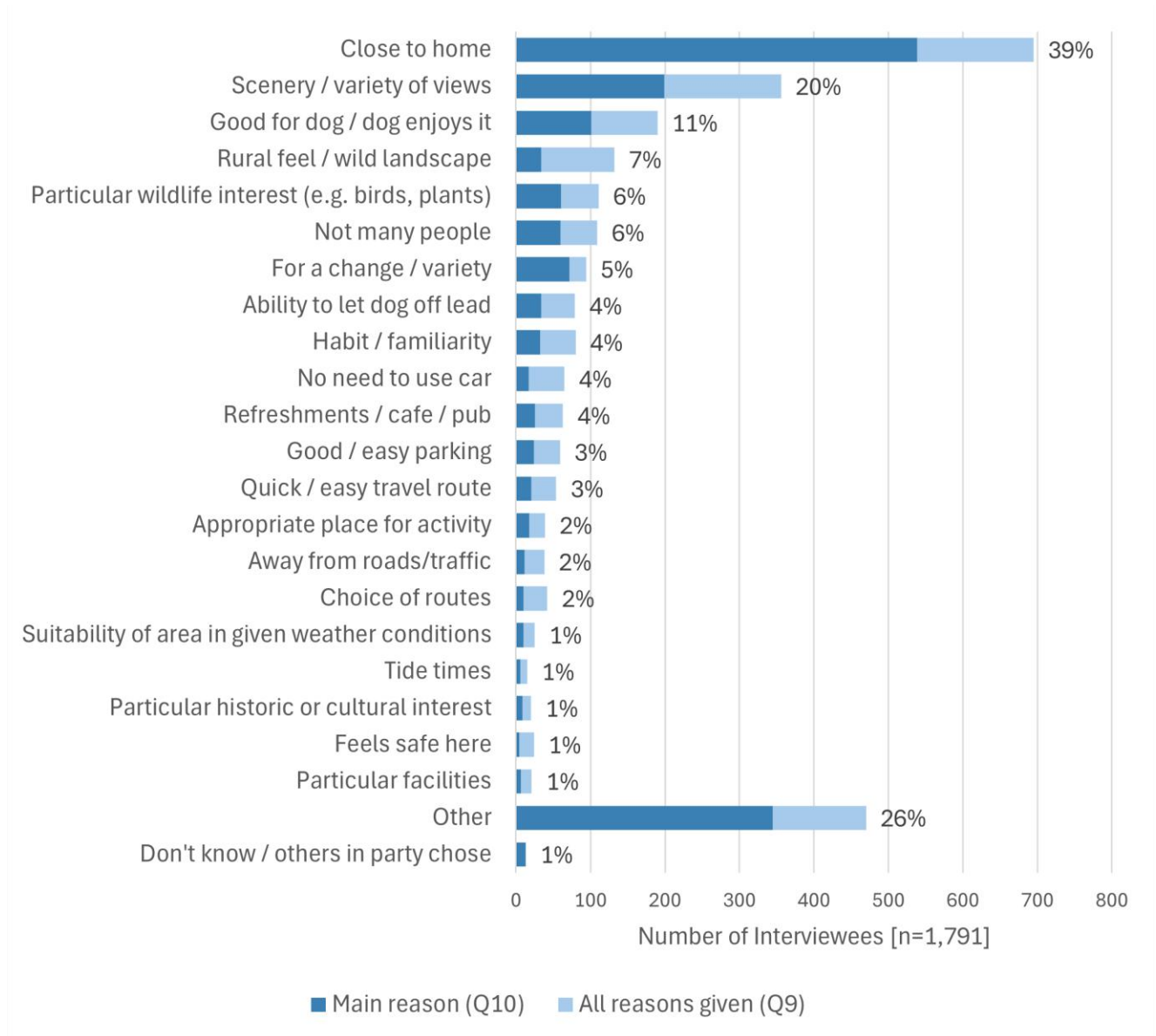


Figure 7: Reasons for visiting the specific location where interviewed that day rather than somewhere else. Interviewees were asked for one main reason and could give multiple other reasons. Responses categorised by surveyor and additional categories added following a review of free text responses. Value labels give the percentage of all interviewees who cited the reason (main or other).

4.32 In Figure 8 dog walkers are compared with all other activity types and it can be seen that for dog walkers proximity to home, being good for the dog and the ability to let the dog off the lead is of particular importance for site choice compared to all other interviewees.

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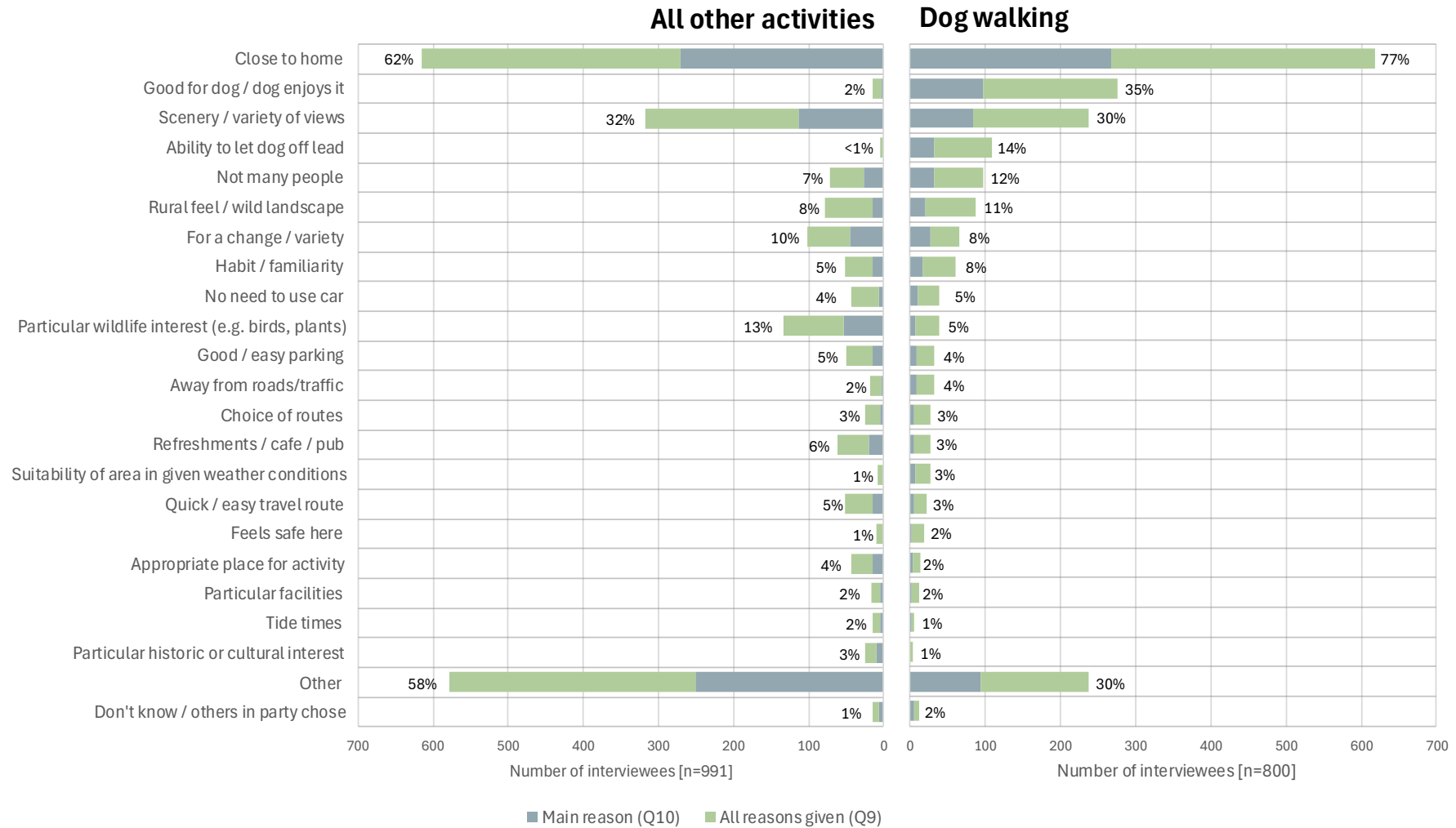
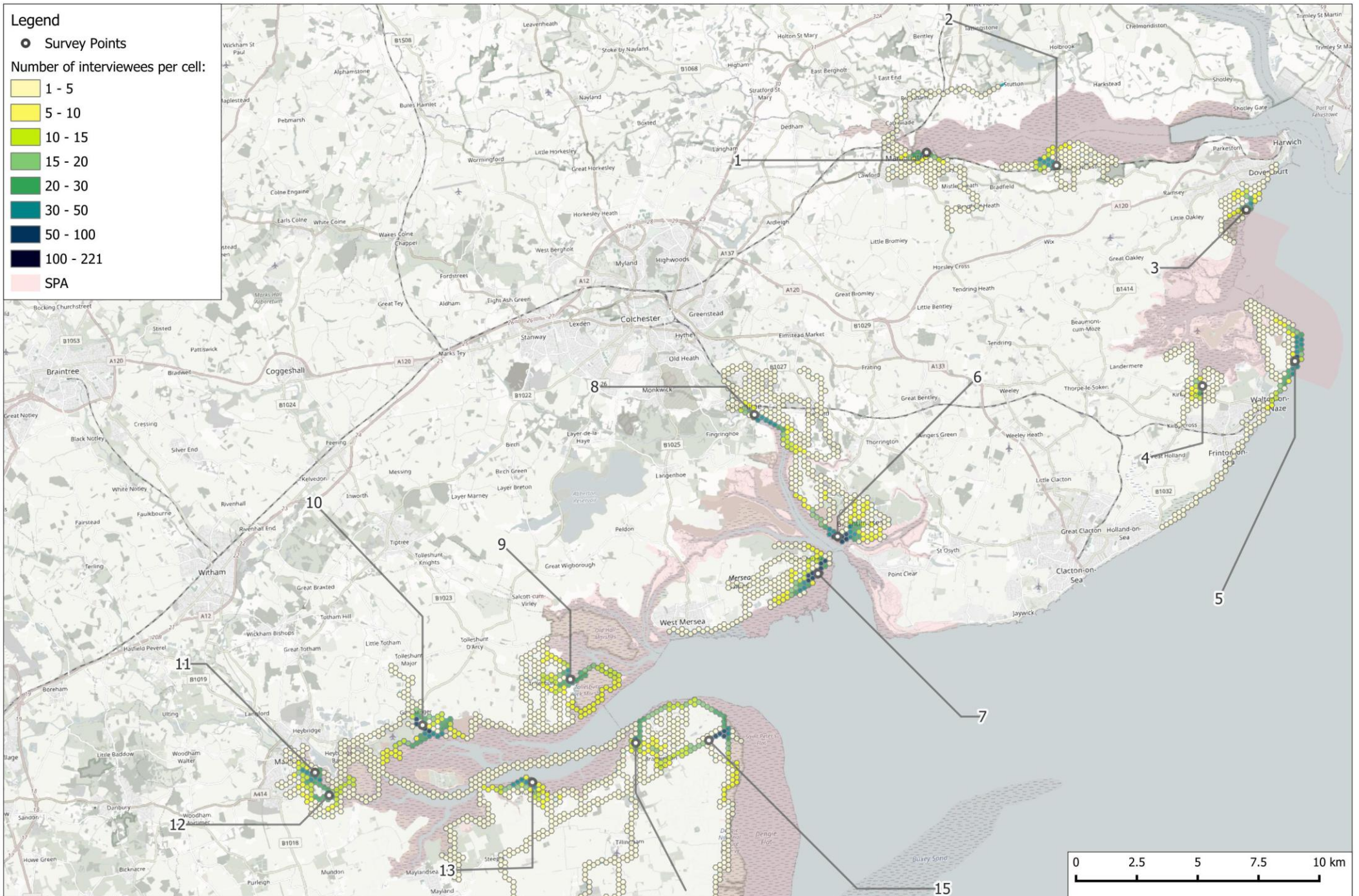


Figure 8: Reasons for visiting the specific location where interviewed that day rather than somewhere else comparing dog walkers and interviewees undertaking all other activities on site. Interviewees were asked for one main reason and could give multiple other reasons. Responses categorised by surveyor and additional categories added following a review of free text responses. Value labels give the percentage of all interviewees who cited the reason (main or other).

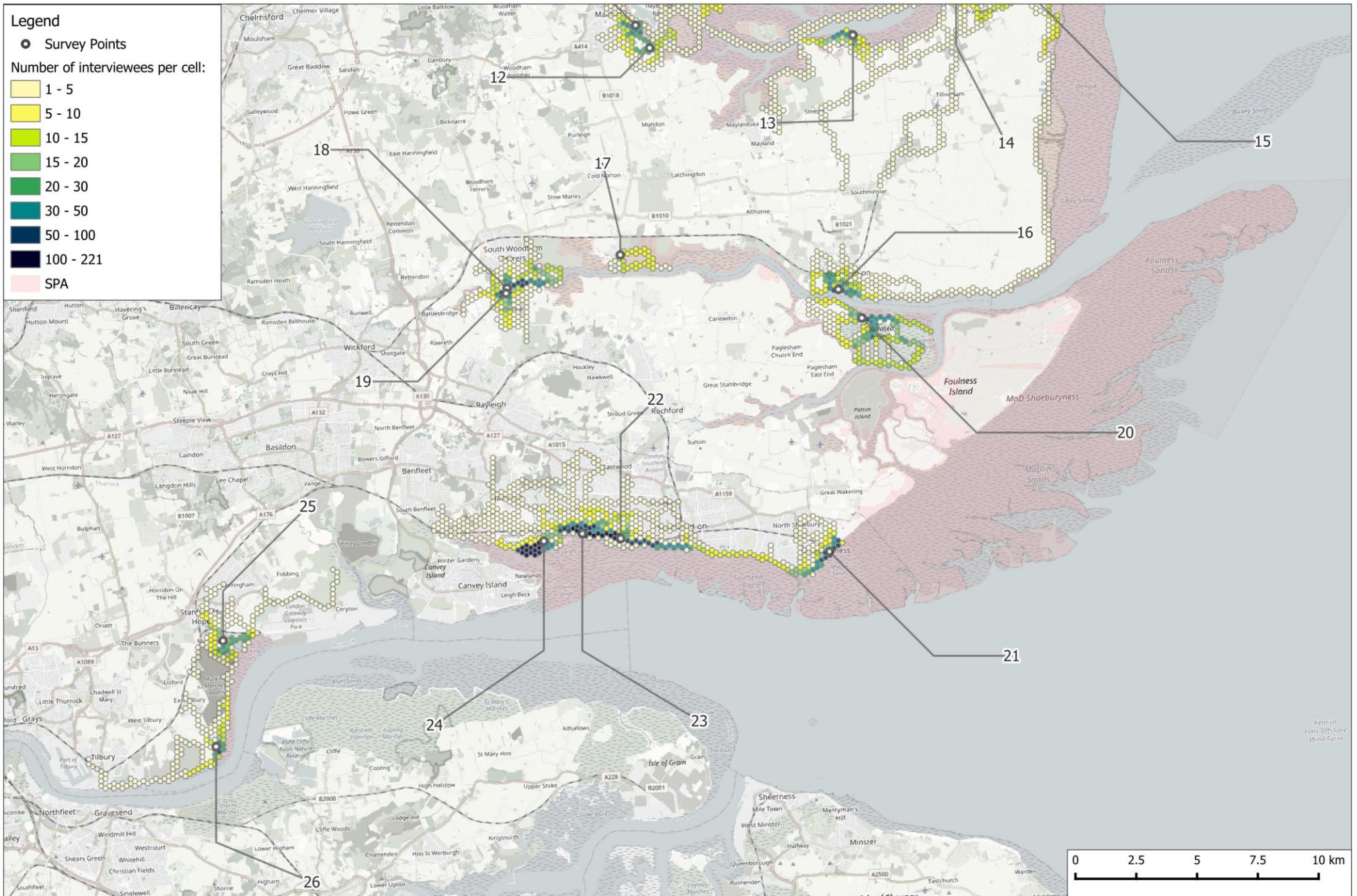
Routes taken on site (Q11 -13)

- 4.33 Routes were drawn on a paper map by surveyors during the interview and then later digitised, with the length calculated in GIS. A total of 1,759 routes were mapped (see Map 4 and 5). As can be seen from the data, many routes extend along considerable lengths of shore and include areas outside the European sites. Some routes extend well inland.
- 4.34 The median route length across all 1,759 interviewees was 2.96km, indicating that 50% of visitors tend to cover around 3km or more.
- 4.35 There was some variation between survey points (see Maps 4 and 5, and Figure 9). The median route length was highest at Northey Island Causeway (5.07km) and lowest at Bradwell Marina (1.24km).
- 4.36 Values for particular activities (Figure 10) indicate that cyclists/mountain bikers tend to cover the longest distances (13.86km median distance) and while the longest route was taken by someone sailing (34.2km), interviewees who were sailing/accessing their boat tend to cover shorter distances (0.98km median distance).
- 4.37 Most interviewees (1,115 interviewees, 71%) said that the route they had taken was typical of their usual visit, and of a similar length. A small proportion said that the route taken that day was much shorter than normal (226 interviewees, 14%) or longer than normal (196 interviewees, 13%).

Map 4: Interviewee routes shown using a 100m grid categorised by the number of routes per cell



Map 5: Interviewee routes shown using a 100m grid categorised by the number of routes per cell



Essex Coast RAMS Visitor Survey 2025

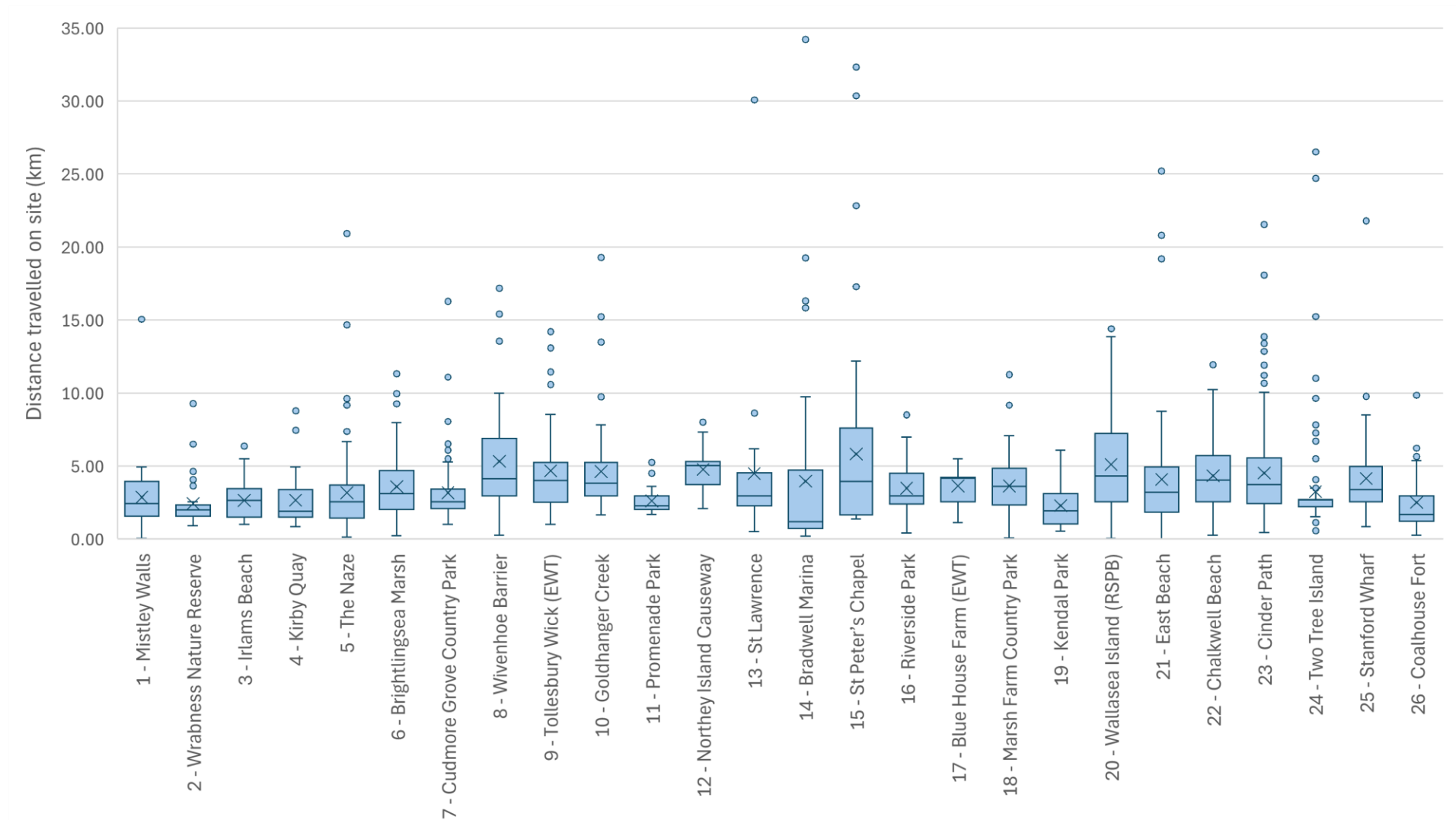


Figure 9: Box and whisker plot showing route length by survey point. Horizontal lines show the median, the 'x' shows the mean, boxes show the interquartile range, and the lines (or whiskers) are the maximum and minimum values. Dots represent any outliers.

Essex Coast RAMS Visitor Survey 2025

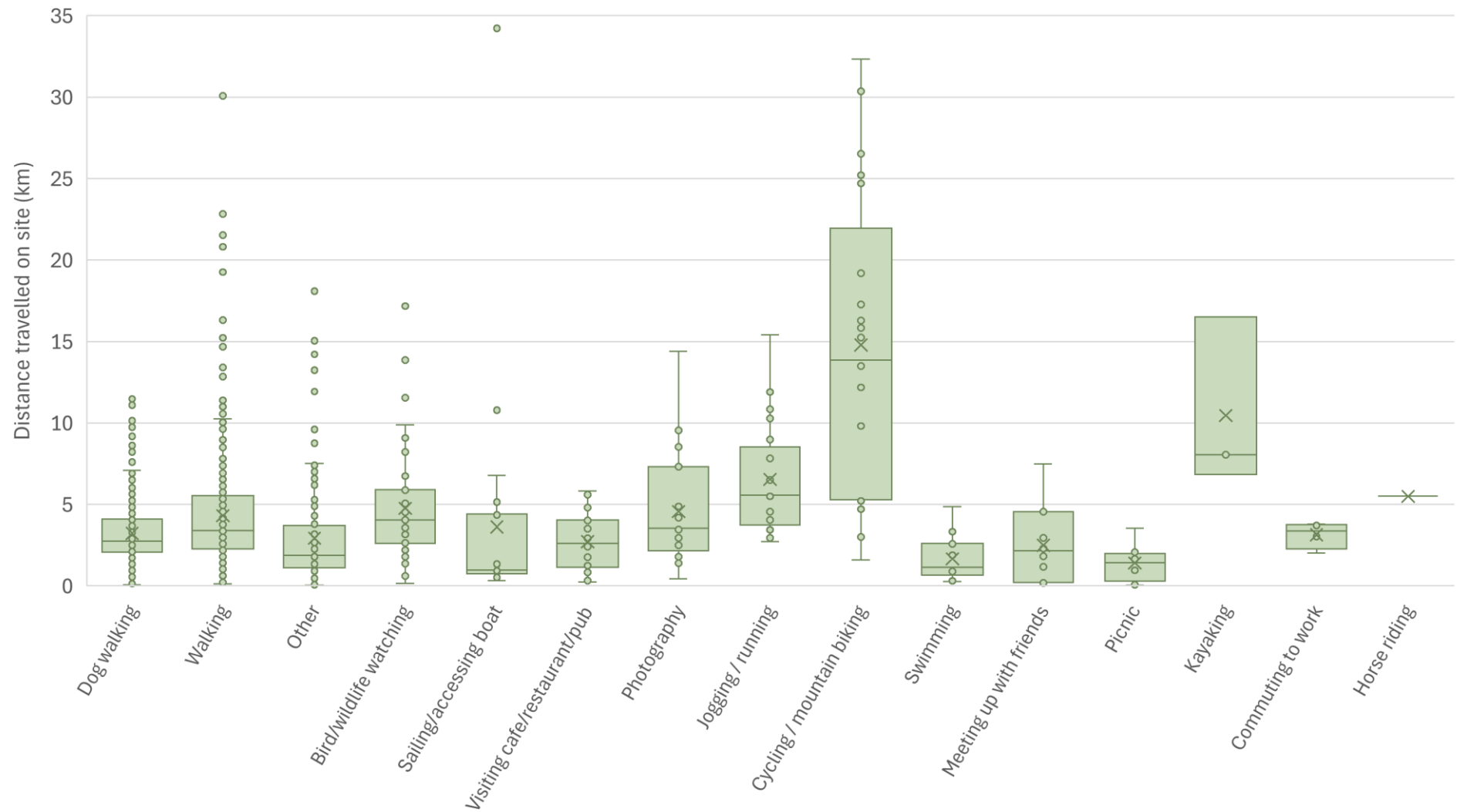


Figure 10: Box and whisker plot showing route length by main activity on site. Horizontal lines show the median, the 'x' shows the mean, boxes show the interquartile range, and the lines (or whiskers) are the maximum and minimum values. Dots represent any outliers.

- 4.38 When asked if anything had influenced their choice of route, approximately a third (588 interviewees, 34%) said that it was habit or their usual route. A further 15% (264 interviewees) said the weather affected their route (e.g. being too hot, cold, windy etc) followed by a small proportion (166 interviewees, 11%) who said that time was a limiting factor.

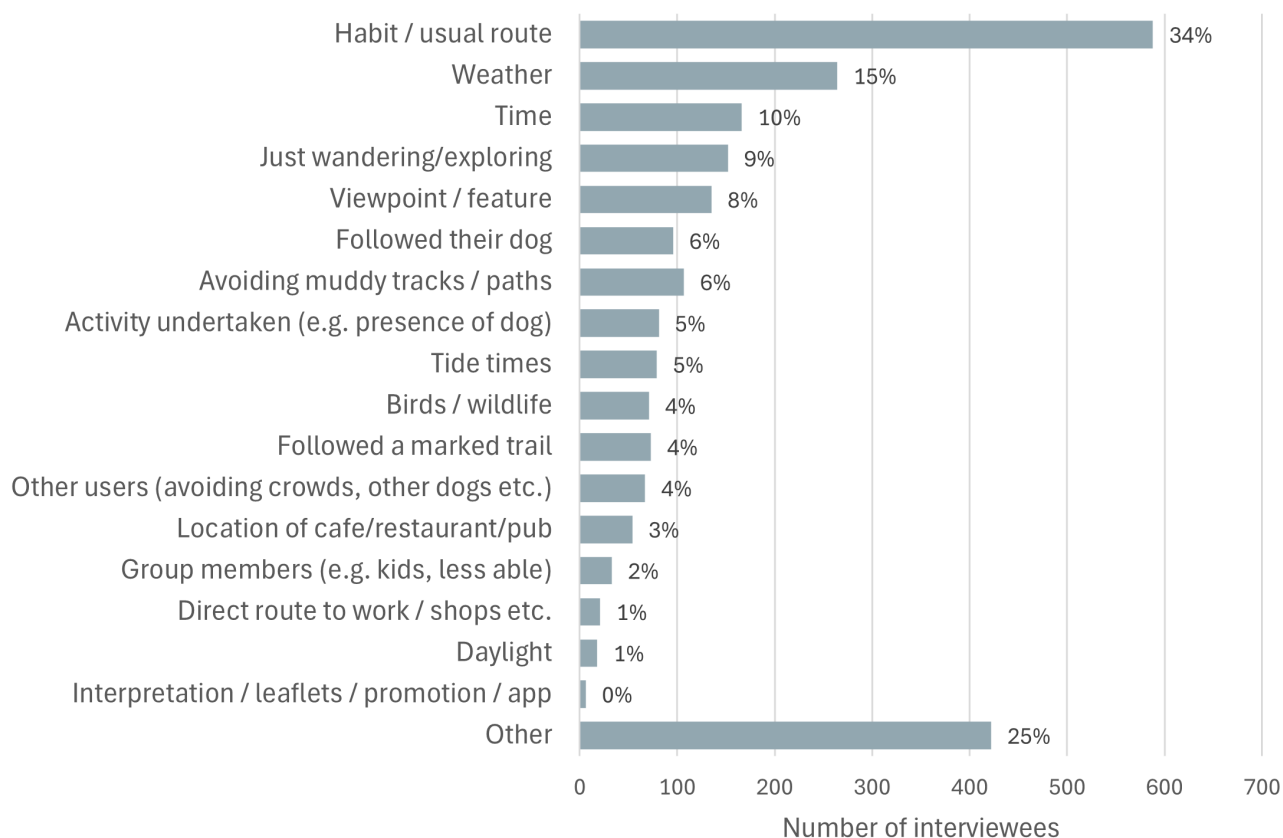


Figure 11: Summary of factors affecting choice of route by interviewees (Q13). Percentages show the total interviewees who gave that response.

- 4.39 There was limited variation between seasons regarding choice of route with the exception of more interviewees changing their route to avoid muddy paths/ tracks in the winter (102 interviewees, 9%) compared to the summer (5 interviewees, 1%).

Alternative sites (Q14-15)

- 4.40 When asked to name one location aside from the interview location that they would have visited that day if they had not visited the Essex Coast, 334 interviewees (19%) stated that they would not have gone anywhere else and

a further 108 interviewees (6%) were not sure or didn't know. In total, 1,351 interviewees (75%) named an alternative location.

- 4.41 The list of alternatives, as given by interviewees, was reviewed and standardised to give a specific site where possible. For example, some responses were clearly the same location but given different names – for example “Belfairs” and “Belfairs Park” or “Belfairs Nature Reserve” and therefore have been grouped as such. For some locations, such as “further along the coast”, “seafront” or “local” no specific site was assigned. The standardised locations (given by at least 15 interviewees) are summarised in Figure 12.
- 4.42 Belfairs (which included the Park, Woods and Nature Reserve) appeared the most popular named alternative site given by interviewees (177 interviewees, 6%) followed by Maldon (77 interviewees, 3%). A total of 340 unique alternative sites were given in responses.

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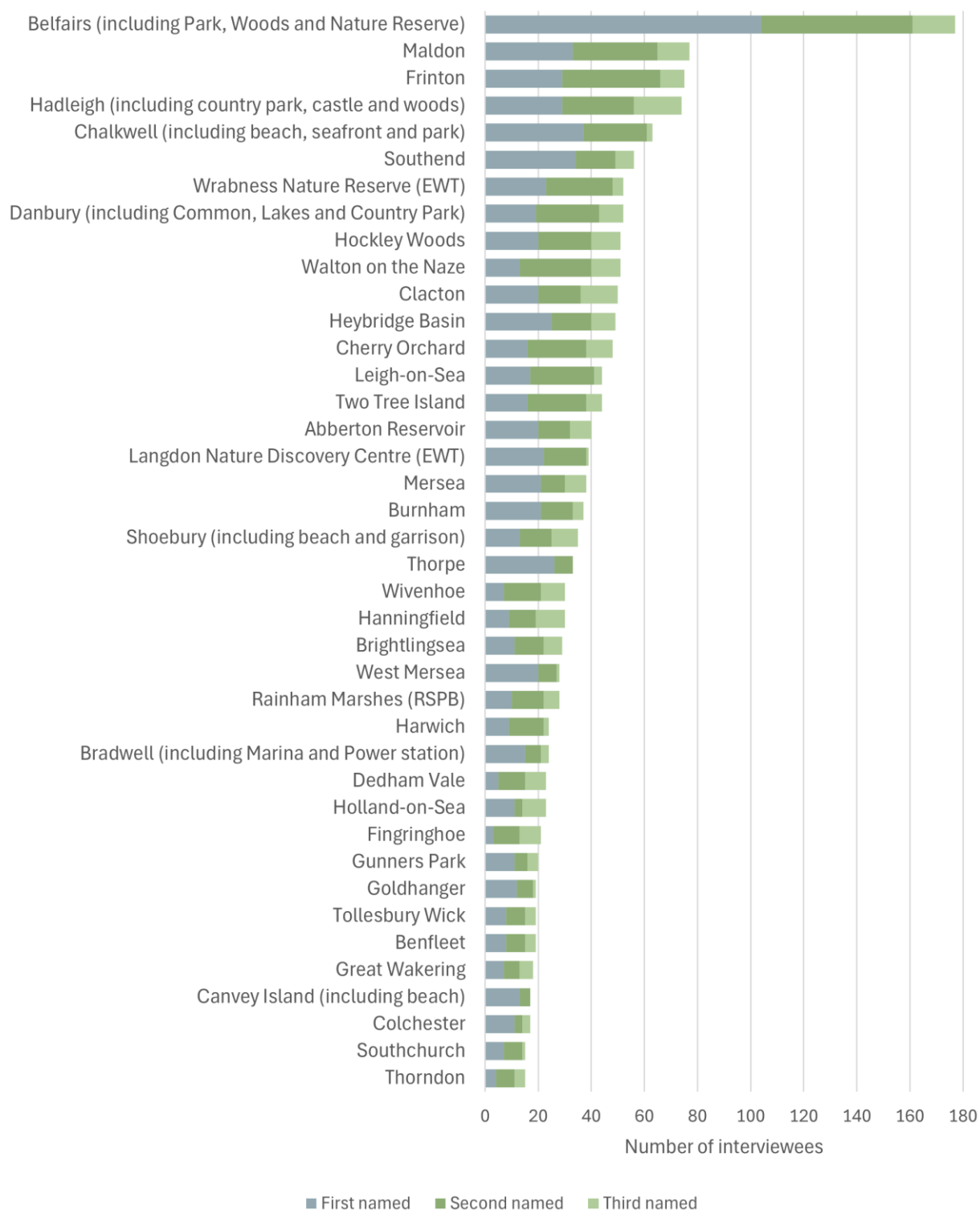


Figure 12: Summary of alternative site names given by interviewee. All locations given by at least 15 interviewees are shown.

Awareness of nature conservation (Q16-17)

- 4.43 Interviewees were asked whether they knew of species or habitats that were special to the area they visited, as a proxy to gauge visitor's awareness of the nature conservation importance of the site. They could give multiple responses for species or habitats. Responses were coded by the surveyor and just under half of all interviewees (819 interviewees, 46%) could name a species or a habitat (Figure 13). A further 714 (40%) made a general mention of wintering or breeding birds or habitats and 489 interviewees (27%) were not aware of any at all. Some responses (549 interviewees, 31%) were categorised as 'other' reflecting species such as 'squirrel' that aren't necessarily relevant to the coast.
- 4.44 A relatively high proportion of interviewees at The Naze (45 interviewees, 45% of responses) stated that were not aware of the any species or habitats that were special (Figure 13). In contrast, at Wrabness Nature Reserve, Kirby Quay and Wallasea Island a greater proportion of interviewees were likely to name specific habitats or species special to the area (all over 50%).

Essex Coast RAMS Visitor Survey 2025

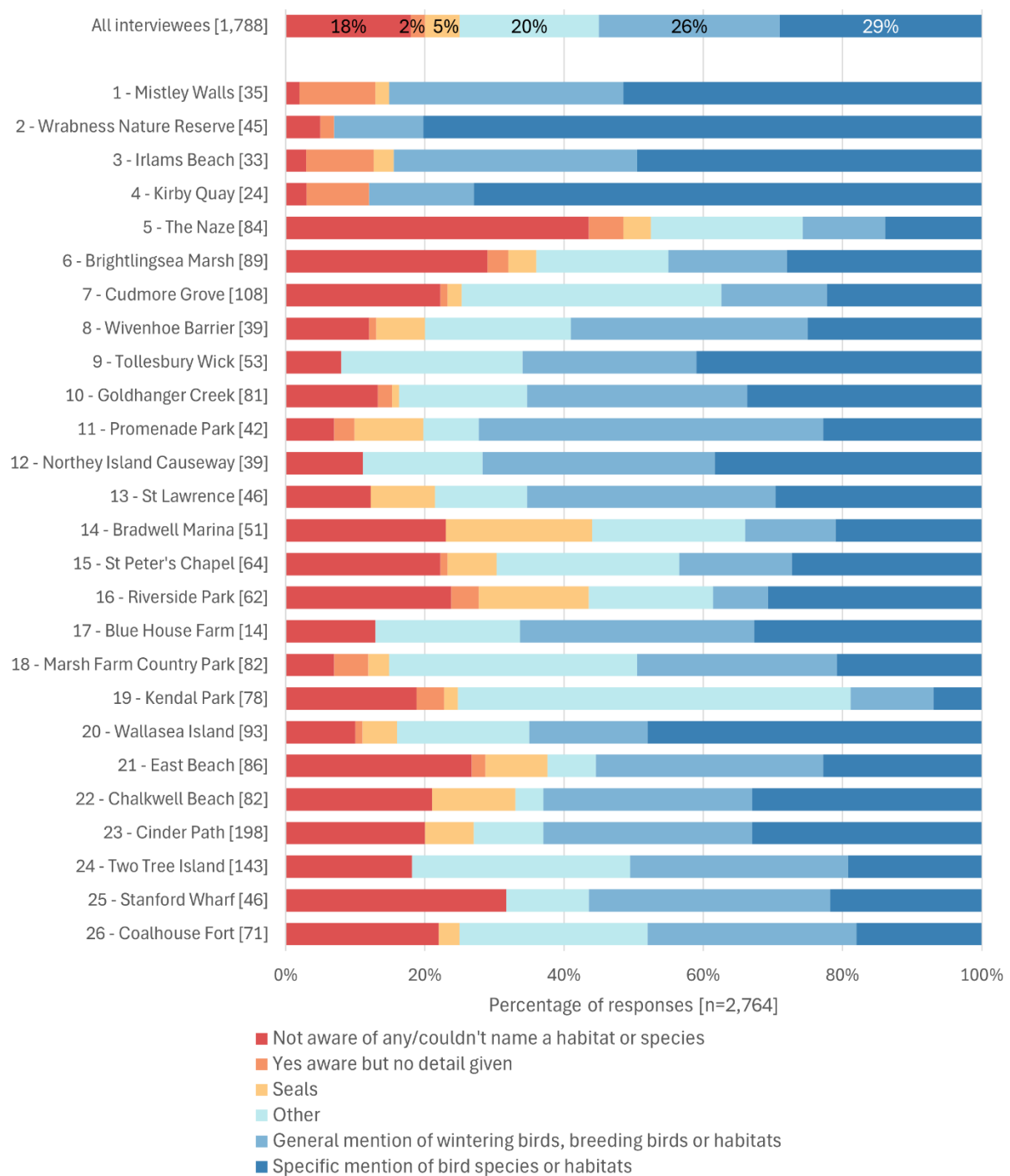


Figure 13: Percentage of interviewees and awareness of habitats or species special to the area (Q16), by survey point. Note that interviewees could give multiple responses and these have been grouped for the purposes of this graph, therefore percentages will not always add up to 100%.

4.45 Overall, almost half of all interviewees were unaware of ways in which the survey location was protected for wildlife (852 interviewees, 48%), see Figure

14. Of those that were aware of protection in place for wildlife, 18% suggested that there was a nature reserve (316 interviewees), 8% (141 interviewees) suggested the survey location was a SSSI and a total of 217 interviewees mentioned the RSPB (7%) or the Wildlife Trusts (6%) in general.

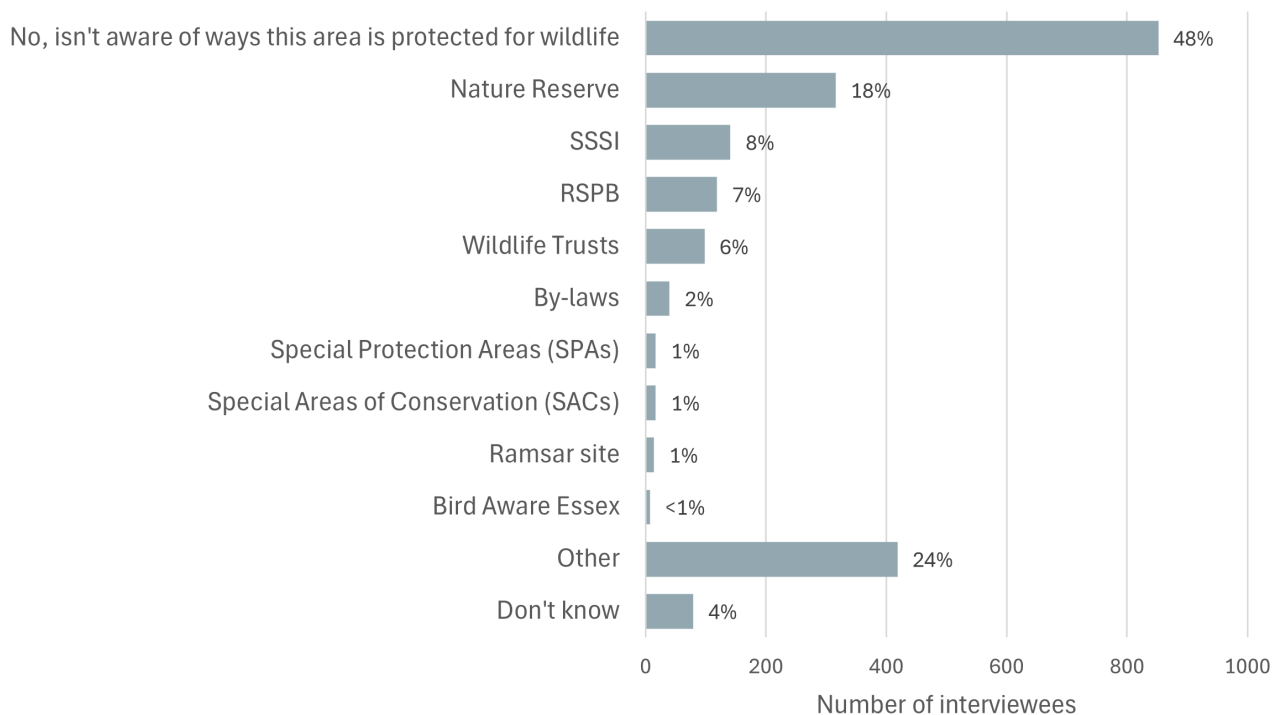


Figure 14: Interviewee responses to ways in which the survey location is protected for wildlife. Interviewees could provide multiple responses and answers were coded by the surveyor.

Site improvements (Q18)

4.46 Almost half of all interviewees (850 interviewees, 48%) stated that there were no changes or improvements they would like to see with respect to how the site (where the interview took place) is managed for access. Of the interviewees that did make a suggestion, 120 interviewees wanted better paths or surfacing on paths (7%), 111 interviewees would like to see less litter or more bins available (6%) and more dog bins available (101 interviewees, 6%), and 5% wanted to see more controls on dogs (such as dogs on lead/restrictions in when dogs can access the beach) or dog fouling (85 interviewees). A further 552 interviewees (31%) made suggestions which fell outside of pre-determined categories within the questionnaire. These included suggestions like 'cutting back vegetation along paths' and 'fixing

access road' and 'less anti-social behaviour'. Some interviewees were complementary and simply commented how 'lovely' or 'clean' the site was.

- 4.47 Interviewees could provide multiple responses, and as with previous questions, they were not prompted by the surveyor. Responses regarding how the area is managed for access is shown in Figure 15.

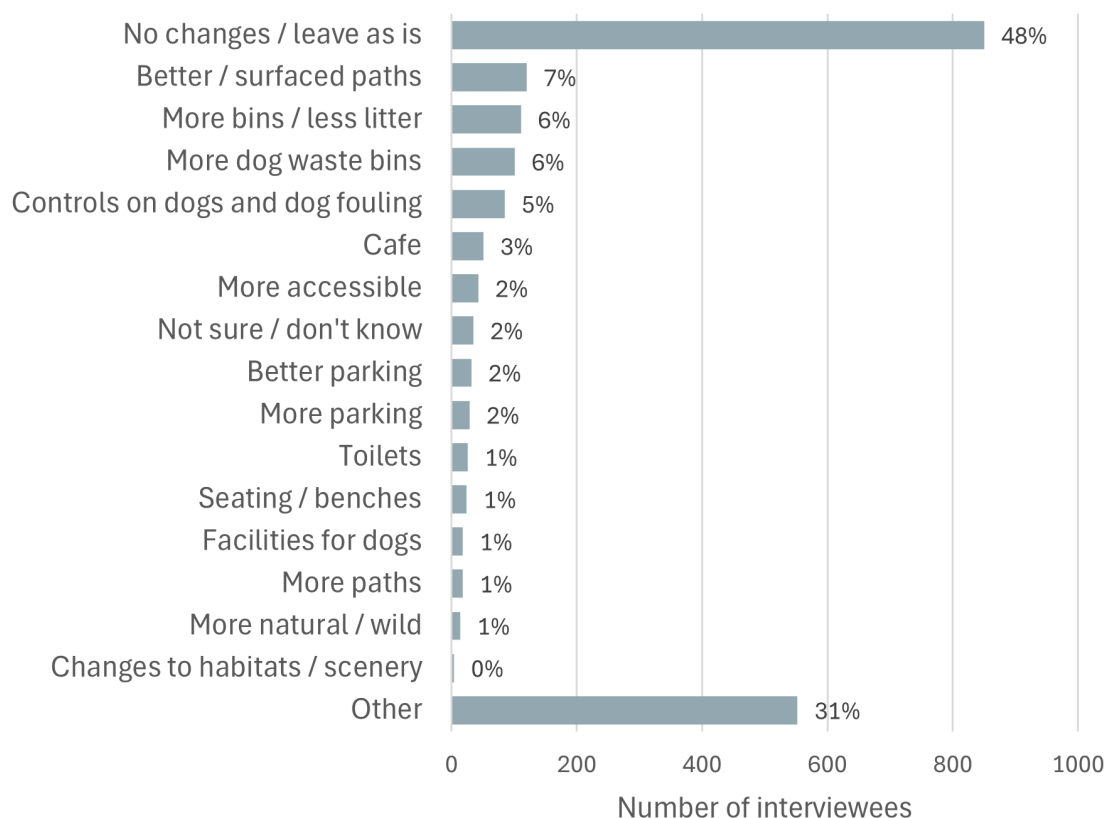


Figure 15: Summary of responses by interviewees regarding improvements in how the area is managed for access. Percentage of interviewees is shown [n=1,784].

New Greenspace (Q19)

- 4.48 When asked what factors would make the interviewee want to visit a new greenspace or park in their area, 295 interviewees (17%) stated that no changes were relevant, many commenting that a new park or greenspace wouldn't replace walking by the coast. Some said they would visit a new greenspace or park if it was more natural / wild (285 interviewees, 16%), while 226 interviewees (13%) would visit if there was a dog off lead area and (225 interviewees, 13%) if there was a café. A further 26% of interviewees

gave 'other' responses which did not fit the pre-determined categories. Interviewee responses are summarised in Figure 16.

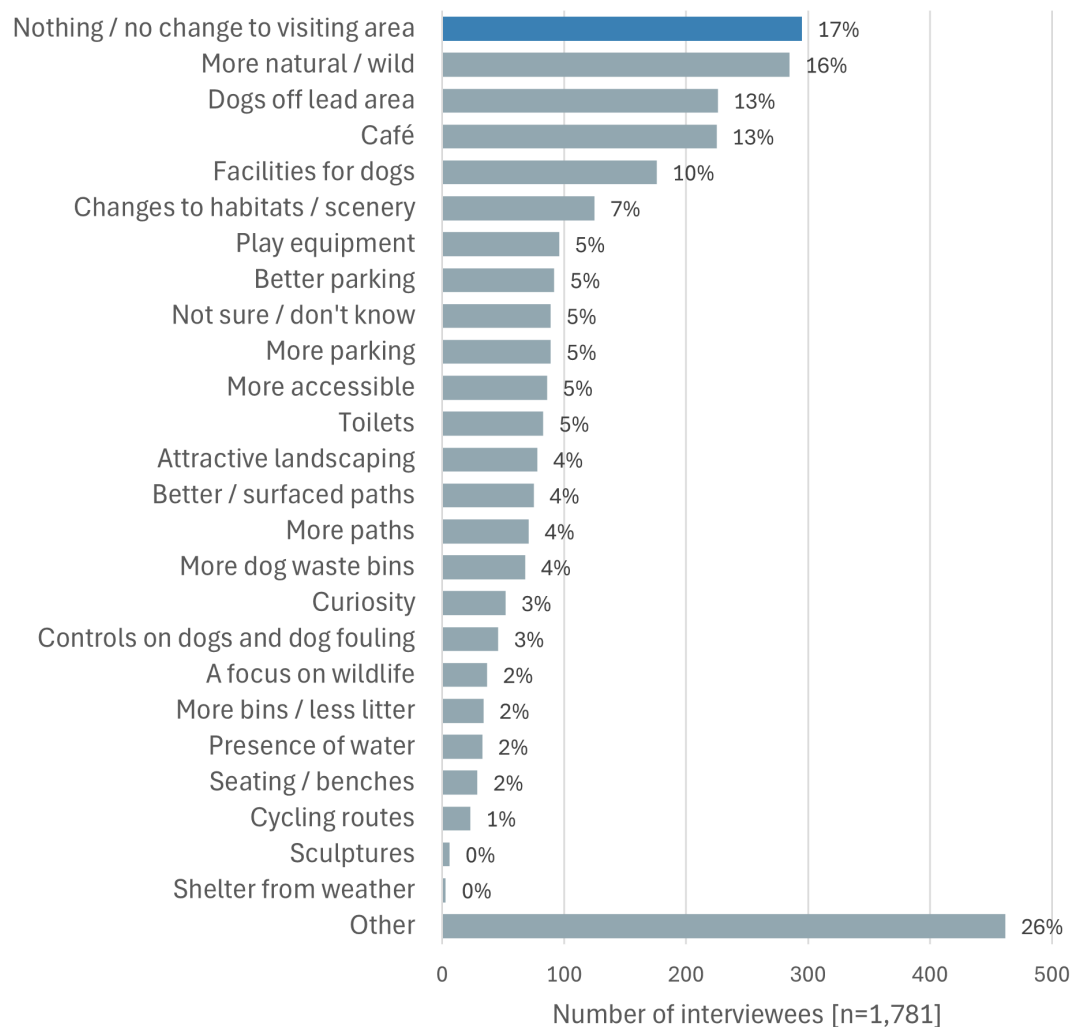


Figure 16: Factors that would affect the interviewees likelihood to visit a new park or greenspace. Interviewees could give more than one response and percentages reflect percentage of interviewees.

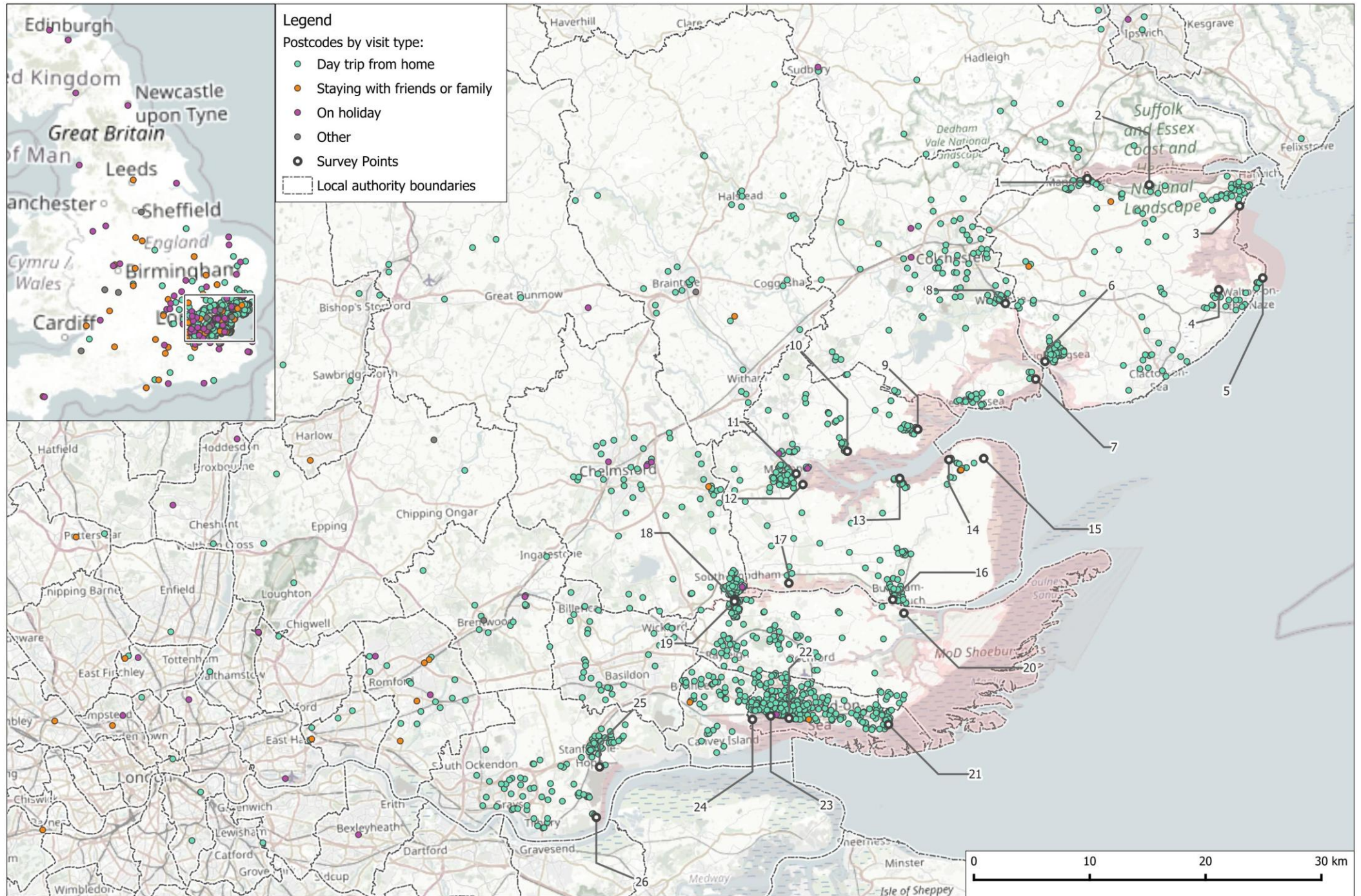
Home postcodes of interviewees (Q25)

- 4.49 1,688 interviewees provided a full, valid UK home postcode that could be matched with the national database and therefore the location determined in GIS. These postcodes are shown by visit type in Map 6, by season in Map 7 and 8 and by season in Map 9. For each map it is important to note that postcodes will overlap, particularly near urban areas.
- 4.50 The majority of interviewees were from within Essex (1,508 interviewees, 89%). Interviewees came from 103 different local authority areas, with the top 15 shown in Table 6. The top three were Southend-on-Sea, Maldon and Tendring, which accounted for just over half of all interviewees. Map 10 shows the proportion of each SPA visited by local authority, relative to the number of interviewees.

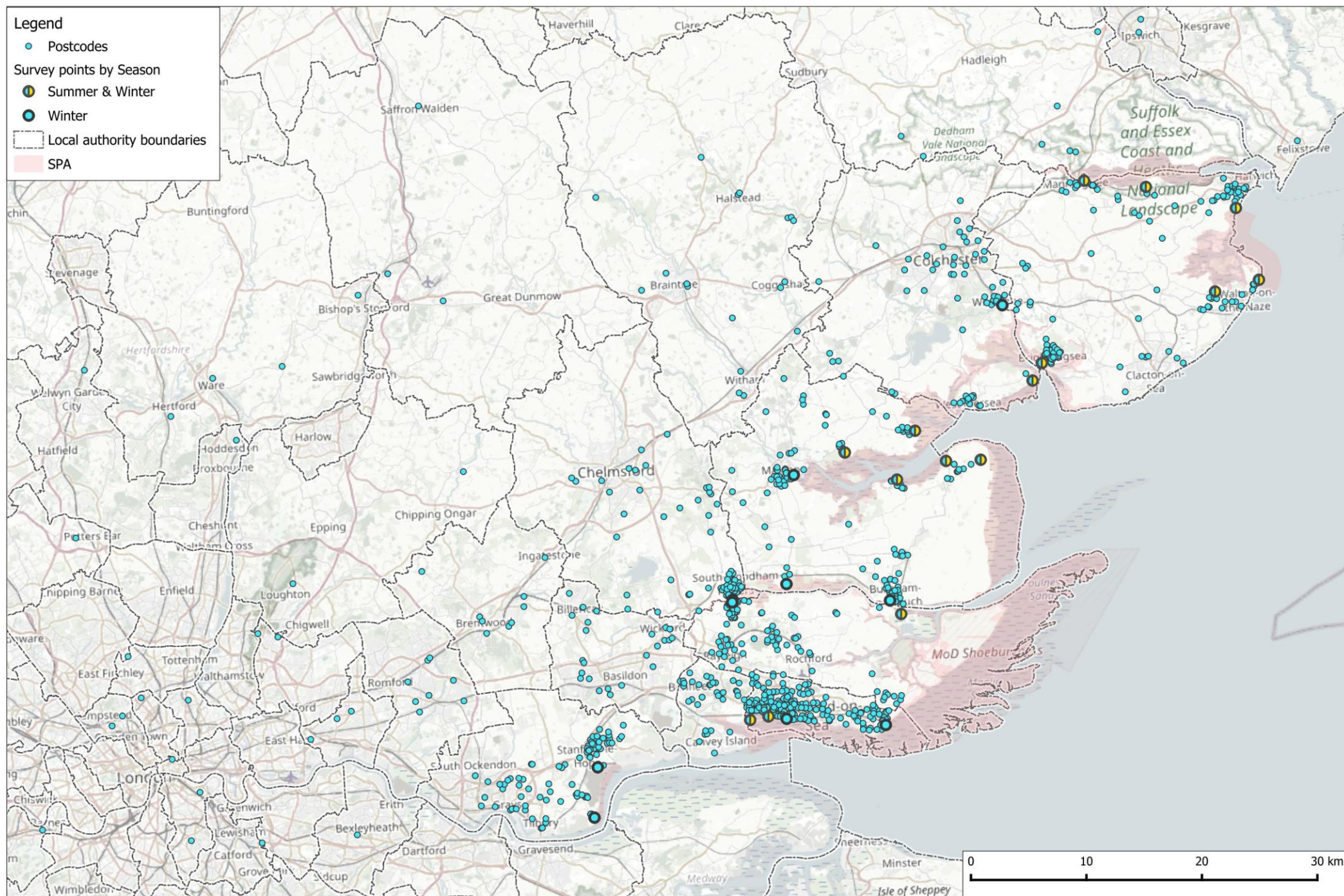
Table 6: Number (%) of interviewees by local authority area. Postcode data covered 103 different local authorities, however only those with at least 5 interviewees listed (these data also shown in Map 10).

Local authority	Number of interviewees (%)
Southend-on-Sea	410 (24.3%)
Maldon	278 (16.5%)
Tendring	203 (12.0%)
Rochford	130 (7.7%)
Colchester	117 (6.9%)
Chelmsford	113 (6.7%)
Thurrock	109 (6.5%)
Castle Point	50 (3%)
Basildon	34 (2%)
Braintree	34 (2%)
Havering	20 (1.2%)
Babergh	17 (1%)
Brentwood	15 (0.9%)
Uttlesford	9 (0.5%)
East Hertfordshire	8 (0.5%)
Buckinghamshire	5 (0.3%)
Epping Forest	5 (0.3%)
Barking and Dagenham	5 (0.3%)

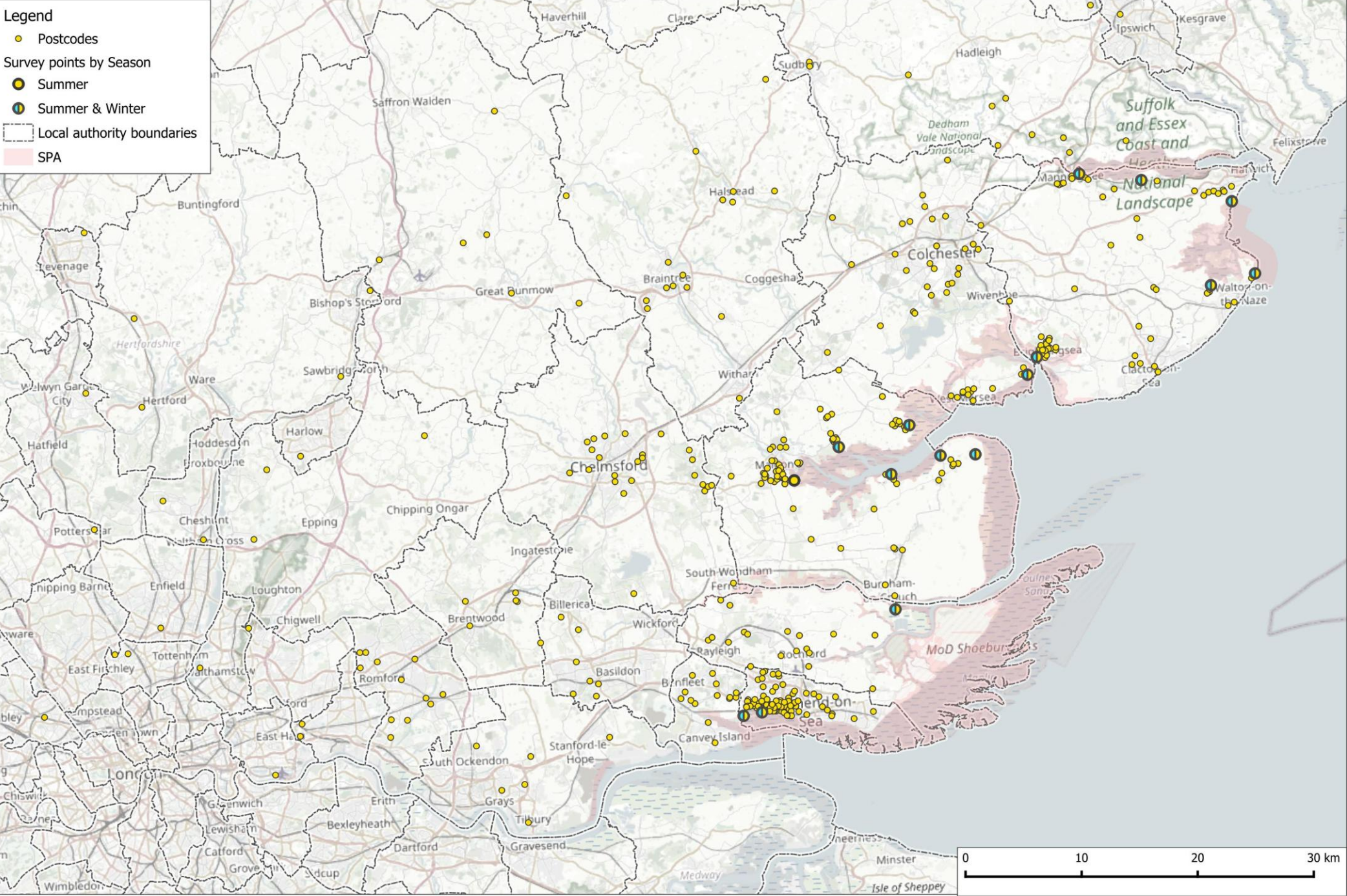
Map 6: Interviewee home postcodes categorised by visit type



Map 7: Interviewee home postcodes from the winter surveys

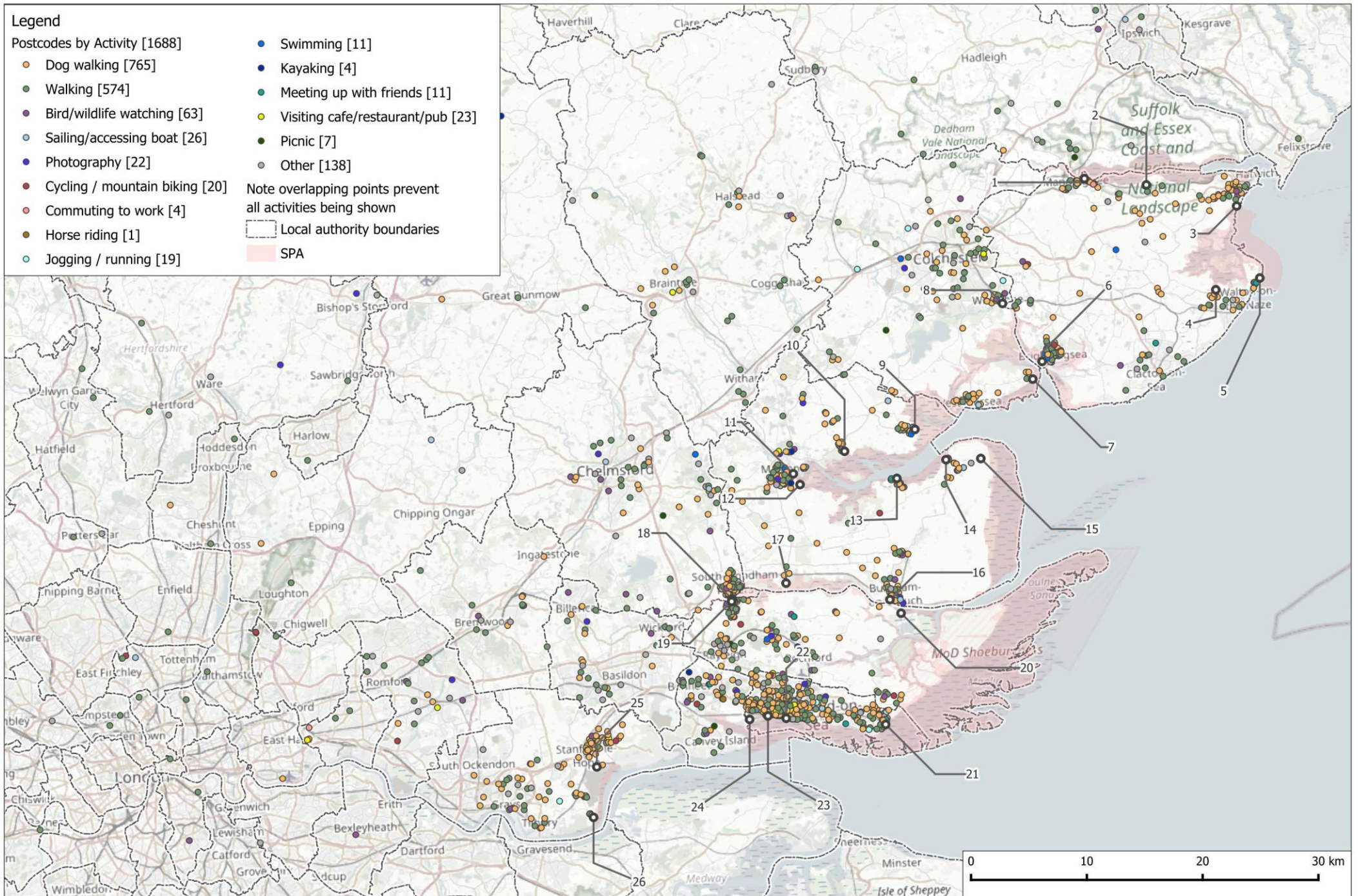


Map 8: Interviewee home postcodes from the summer surveys

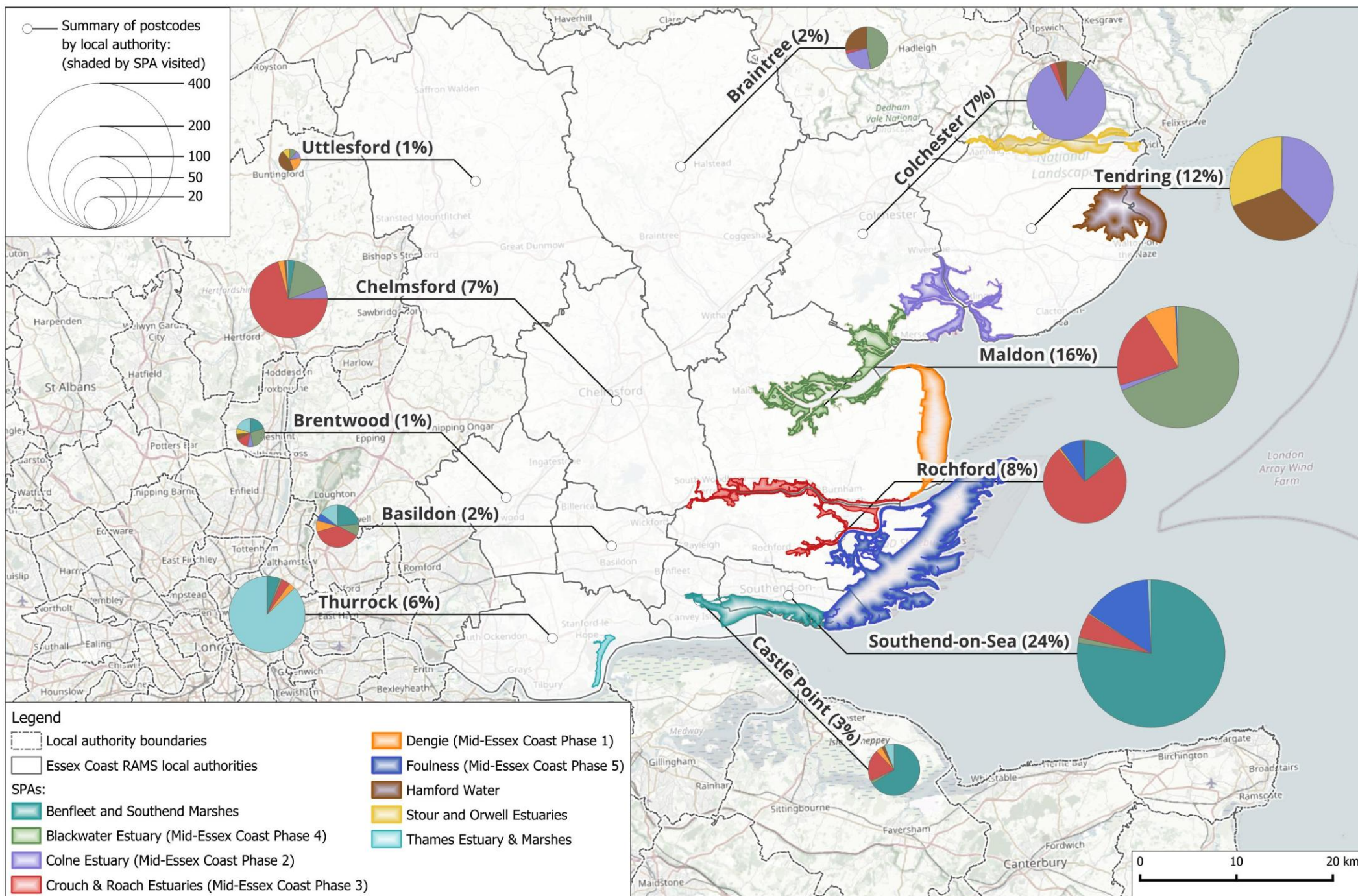


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Map 9: Interviewee home postcodes categorised by visitor activity



Map 10: Summary of interviewees by Local Authority and SPA



- 4.51 For each interviewee postcode the linear distance (from the home postcode to the survey point at which the interview took place) was calculated in GIS. Data are summarised for different types of visitors in Table 7 and by survey location in Appendix 3. The distances ranged from 30 m to 570 km, with around half of all interviewees giving home postcodes within just over 3 km of the survey location and around 75% originating within 13 km. Taking just those on a short visit directly from home, around half came from within 3 km and around 75% within 10 km.

Table 7: Summary statistics for the straight-line distance (km) from interviewee home postcodes to survey location, by different categories of interviewee.

Category		N	Mean ($\pm$ SE)	Range	Median	Q3
All interviewees		1,688	17.32 ($\pm$ 1.06)	0.03 - 571.3	3.2	12.9
<i>Winter</i>		1,165	12.45 ($\pm$ 1.01)	0.09 - 535.6	2.4	9.2
<i>Summer</i>		523	28.18 ($\pm$ 2.52)	0.03 - 571.3	6.7	28.4
Day trip/short visit from home		1,575	9.93 ($\pm$ 0.49)	0.03 - 245.3	2.8	9.9
Main activity (all interviewees)	Dog walking	765	7.86 ($\pm$ 0.86)	0.03 - 343.3	2.1	5.7
	Walking	574	21.48 ($\pm$ 2.13)	0.11 - 535.6	5.0	17.9
	Bird/wildlife watching	63	36.4 ($\pm$ 7.03)	0.19 - 279.6	16.2	36.5
	Sailing / accessing boat	26	34.82 ($\pm$ 9.82)	0.06 - 211.4	13.2	45.4
	Visiting café / restaurant	23	30.6 ($\pm$ 11.2)	0.7 - 184.3	3.7	27.7
	Other	237	29.55 ($\pm$ 3.79)	0.06 - 571.3	9.3	33.2

5. Discussion

Key findings

- 5.1 Visitor survey results show the Essex Coast is primarily visited by dog walkers and walkers (without a dog), these two activity types accounting for around 80% of interviewees. Visitors tend to visit frequently making on average around 122 visits per year, and visits are typically short (53% visiting for an hour or less than an hour). Almost all interviewees (93%) were visiting directly from their home, and the majority of interviewees (around 75%) lived within 15 km of the survey point. Most interviewees either arrived by car (58%) or on-foot (38%) with only a small number using public transport to access the coast. The coastal sites were typically chosen by interviewees because they were close to home (39%), because of the scenery and variety of views (20%) or because the location was perceived to be good for the dog (11%).
- 5.2 The awareness of nature conservation, in terms of the interviewee's awareness of habitats or species that were special to the area or in naming protections in place for nature conservation varied. Many interviewees (46%) could specifically name a habitat or species present (although note that these weren't necessarily those the Essex Coast is designated for) or provide a general mention of wintering birds, waders or habitats (40%). Fewer interviewees could name how the area was protected for nature conservation, with almost half stating that they didn't know or were unaware of any protections (48%).

Limitations

- 5.3 The data provides an overview and a snapshot in time and space. Access patterns will change and can vary markedly according to weather, local conditions and a suite of other factors that the survey design inevitably cannot comprehensively cover. The data are intended to provide a strategic overview rather than comprehensive data from all access points, across all tide conditions and times of year.
- 5.4 It should be noted that some types of access may be hard to capture in the interviews, for example runners, cyclists and horse riders can be difficult to intercept and may be reluctant to pause to be interviewed. Activities that take place on the water may be highly visible and have particular impacts in

terms of disturbance to birds etc. yet again may be under-represented in the data. For example, someone on a jet ski or a kayak may travel many kilometres and be out on the water for an extended time, but the only likelihood of capturing interview data for such activities is to intercept the user at the launch point or when they land. Where specific information is required from such users, then a targeted survey approach is likely to be necessary.

- 5.5 We have provided counts of water-based activities made by the surveyors, however these were only possible where the survey point provided a good vantage point across open water. The data therefore are a simple snapshot of water-based activities and numbers are likely to vary markedly according to tide, wind and other weather conditions. A large number of counts are likely to be necessary to get accurate count data where there is lots of variability in the levels and types of use. Again, targeted surveys may be necessary if such information is required.

Differences between seasons

- 5.6 There were some difference between seasons with those interviewed in the winter visiting more regularly (e.g. 21% visiting daily compared to 13% in the summer), tending to live closer to the survey point (median distance from postcode to survey point of 2.5km in the winter compared to 6.7km in the summer) and making shorter visits (typical duration 75 minutes in the winter and 102 minutes in the summer).
- 5.7 It is important to note that the above figures are drawn from all the summer data compared to all the winter data. Throughout the report we have presented all the data in this way rather than limit the comparison to the 15 survey points that were surveyed in both seasons. For this reason we have refrained from detailed statistical analysis comparing the summer and winter data as different survey points were covered in each season. For completeness key metrics are summarised in Table 8 below, with the data filtered to the 15 survey points covered in each season and therefore directly comparable. The totals indicate higher visitor numbers in the winter and people coming from further afield in the summer.

Table 8: Summary of key metrics by season, across the 15 comparable survey points.

Metric	Winter 2025	Summer 2025
Total people counted (from tally data)	5,841	5,505
Number of interviews	622	529

Metric	Winter 2025	Summer 2025
Number of interviews (home only)	585	452
Average group size (interview data, home only)	1.9	1.8
% of interviewees visiting on their own	289	208
% dog walking stated main activity (home only)	52%	35%
% walking stated main activity (home only)	28%	38%
% visiting daily (home only)	20%	15%
% visiting at least weekly (home only)	61%	49%
% on first visit (home only)	10%	12%
% arriving by car (home only)	63%	64%
Median route length (km)	3.2	2.9
% stating close to home main reason for site choice (home only)	26%	22%
Median distance survey point to home postcode (km) (home only)	1.8	2.0
75th percentile survey point to home postcode (km) (home only)	6.1	20.1

Differences between survey locations

- 5.8 The level of busyness and visitor profile varied by survey location and are summarised in Table 9. While locations around Southend-on-Sea were largely the busiest (4,500 people passed the surveyor at Cinder Path and a further 1,988 people at Chalkwell Beach) other busy locations were well known coastal destination sites such as The Naze Tower and Promenade Park. The Naze also provided a location for 'family' type visits, with 33% of minors (under 18s) recorded with groups. Irlams Beach to the north and Kendal Park were also popular with groups with minors. As above, weekends were often busier than weekdays, with the exception of Kirby Quay, Brightlingsea, Cudmore Grove Country Park and Stanford Wharf where visits were more evenly distributed between weekdays and weekends. East Beach was the only location where weekdays were busier than weekends.
- 5.9 Dog walking as an activity was particularly popular at Two Tree Island and Stanford Wharf, with walking (without a dog) popular also at many locations, although Brightlingsea and Chalkwell Beach in particular. Perhaps as expected, sites that are associated with nature conservation such as Wrabness Nature Reserve, Wallasea Island (RSPB) and Blue House Farm (EWT) were popular with interviewees who were bird/wildlife watching or doing photography. Although only a small proportion of interviewees arrived

on a bike (2% overall), cycling was a popular activity undertaken at St Peters Chapel. The same could be said of those who were sailing or accessing their boat, with Bradwell Marina and Tollesbury Wick locations where this activity was often encountered (both have marinas and/or boat storage).

- 5.10 Visit frequency varied by survey location, with regular weekly visitors attracted to Riverside Park, St Lawrence and Wivenhoe Barrier and spending less than an hour on site. In contrast, locations such as Wallasea Island and St Peter's Chapel had a small proportion of weekly visitors, but interviewees spent longer at these locations. Interviewees preferred an early morning visit to Stanford Wharf and Marsh Farm Country Park, while Wallasea Island was more often visited in the late afternoon. The longest routes were over 30km and were recorded at Bradwell Marina, St Peters Chapel and St Lawrence. On average across all sites however, half of all routes taken on site were less than 3km (median). At Northey Island half of all routes were often longer than this (5.07 km median value) and often shorter at Bradwell Marina (1.24 km median) and Coalhouse Fort (1.6km median value).
- 5.11 Awareness of nature conservation at survey locations varied, however the most northern survey locations (Mistley Walls, Wrabness Nature Reserve, Irlams Beach and Kirby Quay) all had less than 3% of interviewees who said that they couldn't name any habitats or species that were special to that area. In contrast, interviewees at The Naze (45%) were the most likely to say they didn't know of any habitats or species. Specific habitats or species were most mentioned at Wallasesa Island, Tollesbury Wick and Blue House Farm as well as the four most northern sites previously mentioned.
- 5.12 Overall, 75% of all visitors originated from within 12.9 km of the survey point. This increased significantly at The Naze where 75% originated from within 81.5 km, Irlams Beach (77.9 km), St Peter's Chapel (74.2 km) and Bradwell Marina (48.8 km). Each of these sites had a greater proportion of visitors who were not visiting directly from home. When considering those visiting from home only (see Table 13 in Appendix 3), the 75th percentile for each of those four sites decreases to 60.3 km (The Naze), 8.46 km (Irlams Beach), 41.8 km (St Peter's Chapel) and 41.8 km (Bradwell Marina) respectively. More locally used sites (with a shorter 75th percentile distance from home) across all interviewee data appear to be St Lawrence (0.95 km), Kirby Quay (2.7 km), Stanford Wharf (3.14 km), Kendal Park (3.94 km) and Two Tree Island (4.12 km).

Comparison across SPAs

- 5.13 A summary of the key metrics across the different SPAs is provided in Table 9 below. The number of survey points per SPA is small and as such meaningful comparison at an estuary level is challenging. The Benfleet and Southend Marshes survey points were by far the busiest (89.9 people visiting per hour, more than double any other SPA), likely due to the survey locations proximity to Southend. In contrast, the survey points on the Crouch and Roach Estuaries appear the quietest with approximately 26 people visiting per hour. Walking (without a dog) was popular near the Hamford Water SPA, the Colne Estuary and at Foulness, whilst dog walking appeared the most popular activity undertaken near the Thames Estuary and Marshes (again likely due to its popularity as an activity at Two Tree Island and Coalhouse Fort). People choosing to visit the Stour and Orwell Estuary SPA (survey points all on the south side of the Stour) were doing so because it was close to home (51%), more so than near any other SPA. The Dengie and Hamford Water SPAs appeared to have the largest draw for people visiting, with the data showing 75% of all interviewees originating from beyond 70km from the survey points (and 75% of those who had travelled directly from home living 41-42km away, see Table 9). Benfleet and Southend Marshes in contrast appeared to have the most local draw, with 75% of all visitors originating from within approximately 4.5km.

Comparison to previous surveys

- 5.14 Previous surveys were undertaken by Colchester City Council on behalf of the North Essex authorities (2010-2013) and by Southend City Council (2018) to form the baseline study underpinning the RAMS strategy. Results from these previous surveys are summarised in the Appendices of the original RAMS (Essex County Council, 2018). A total of 21 survey locations were used of which 15 were replicated in this study, however the survey methodology largely differs and the raw data from the previous surveys are not available. As such, caution should be taken when making direct comparisons. There is some evidence to suggest however, that the Essex Coast is busier in 2025 compared to the original surveys, for example in the number of people or groups passing the survey point per hour and in the increase in people who say they visit the Essex Coast all year round.

Essex Coast RAMS Visitor Survey 2025

Table 9: Summary of selected metrics from the 2025 survey data, compared by season and by SPA. A brief summary is provided of the 2010-2013 North Essex Surveys baseline RAMS data, however, these are only a rough estimate where the raw data wasn't available. Comparisons to the 2018 survey data also were not possible due to the lack of raw data.

Metric	2010 – 2013 North Essex Surveys	2025 Survey Data (All interviewees)	Winter	Summer	Benfleet & Southend Marshes	Blackwater Estuary	Colne Estuary	Crouch & Roach Estuaries	Dengie	Foulness	Hamford Water	Stour & Orwell Estuary	Thames Estuary & Marshes
Number of survey points (winter, summer)	21	26	25	16	3 (3,2)	6 (5,5)	3 (3,2)	5 (5,1)	1 (1,1)	1 (1,0)	3 (3,3)	2 (2,2)	2 (2,0)
Number of interviews	1,521	1,793	1,225	568	425	312	237	329	65	87	141	80	117
Number of people counted (people per hour of survey)	7 groups per hour	28.4	32.1	22.5	89.9	14.6	30	26.1	7.6	38.5	18.7	9.3	28.5
% of interviewees with main activity of dog walking	-	45	50	32	49	46	43	36	29	46	36	48	67
% of interviewees with main activity of walking	107 groups, 7% of total	35%	33%	38%	35	35	39	33	31	38	40	26	28
% visiting daily	-	18%	21%	13%	20	26	16	18	0	22	14	9	16
% visiting all year round	213 groups,	60%	66%	48%	66	65	51	55	31	66	51	74	70

Essex Coast RAMS Visitor Survey 2025

Metric	2010 – 2013 North Essex Surveys	2025 Survey Data (All interviewees)	Winter	Summer	Benfleet & Southend Marshes	Blackwater Estuary	Colne Estuary	Crouch & Roach Estuaries	Dengie	Foulness	Hamford Water	Stour & Orwell Estuary	Thames Estuary & Marshes
	14% of total												
% arriving by car/van	-	59%	58%	62%	58	43	59	62	78	51	65	70	82
% stating close to home as most important reason for site choice	-	39%	43%	29%	41	43	30	45	14	41	28	51	33
Median distance from home postcode to survey point – All interviewees (km)	-	3.2	2.5	6.7	2.26	2.49	5.78	3.76	38.4	2.09	17.68	5.54	3.37
Median distance from home postcode to survey point – Home only (km)	-	2.8	2.4	4.8	2.21	1.64	5.13	3.15	20.5	2	9.98	5.12	3.29
75th percentile distance from home postcode to survey point – All interviewees (km)	-	12.9	9.1	28.4	4.49	17.51	16.79	12.51	74.2	7.66	76.48	7.8	7.86
75th percentile distance from home postcode to survey point – Home only (km)	-	9.9	7.8	17.3	4.4	13.27	12.19	11.42	41.82	6.23	40.64	7.67	7.35
Original Zones of Influence (km):	-	-	-	-	4.3	22	9.7	4.5	20.8	13	8	13	8.1

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire



Good morning/afternoon. I am conducting a visitor survey on behalf of some local authorities in Essex, to find out how people use this area for recreation. Can you spare me a few minutes to take part in the survey please?

- Q0 ☐ Interviewee happy to take part in the survey (this will commence the survey)
☐ Person refuses to be interviewed (this option will allow you to log details about the refusal)

Q0a **Where a refusal... Log reason for refusal, if given or can be ascertained from behaviour**

- ☐ Already approached or participated in the survey
☐ Language issue
☐ Not prepared to stop (cyclist, jogger etc)
☐ Weather (e.g. rain, heat)
☐ In a hurry / no time
☐ Not interested
☐ Uncertain / not clear
☐ Other (give details):

Further details

Q0b **Where a refusal... Activity of person who refused to be interviewed. Based on your observation log the activity of the person who refused:**

- ☐ Dog walking
☐ Walking without a dog
☐ Jogging
☐ Cycling
☐ Commuting
☐ Other

Further details

INTERVIEW

Q1 Firstly I'd like to ask about the type of visit you are making today.

- ☐ Are you on a day trip/short visit and have travelled directly from your home today... *if no*
- ☐ Are you on a short trip/short visit & staying away from home with friends or family ... *if no*
- ☐ Are you staying away from home, e.g. static caravan, mobile home or on holiday
- ☐ If none of the above, How would you describe your visit today?

Further details

Q2 What is the main activity you are undertaking today? Tick closest answer. Do not prompt. Single response only. Record any additional activities on the next page (Q3).

- ☐ Dog walking
- ☐ Walking
- ☐ Jogging / running
- ☐ Cycling / mountain biking
- ☐ Bird/wildlife watching
- ☐ Photography
- ☐ Meeting up with friends
- ☐ Visiting cafe/restaurant/pub
- ☐ Picnic
- ☐ Horse riding
- ☐ Commuting to work
- ☐ Swimming
- ☐ Paddleboarding
- ☐ Kayaking
- ☐ Sailing/accessing boat
- ☐ Other, please detail:

Further details

Q3 Are there any other activities that you (or members of your group) are doing whilst you are here today? Tick all that apply. Do not prompt. Leave blank if not applicable.

- ☐ Dog walking
- ☐ Walking
- ☐ Jogging / running
- ☐ Cycling / mountain biking
- ☐ Bird/wildlife watching
- ☐ Photography
- ☐ Meeting up with friends
- ☐ Visiting cafe/restaurant/pub
- ☐ Picnic
- ☐ Horse riding
- ☐ Commuting to work
- ☐ Swimming
- ☐ Paddleboarding
- ☐ Kayaking
- ☐ Sailing/accessing boat
- ☐ Other, please detail:

Further details

Q4 Over the past year, roughly how often have you visited this location? Tick closest answer, single response only. Only prompt if interviewee struggles.

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Most days (180+ visits)
- ☐ 1 to 3 times a week (40-180 visits)
- ☐ 2 to 3 times per month (15-40 visits)
- ☐ Once a month (6-15 visits)
- ☐ Less than once a month (2-5 visits)
- ☐ First visit / haven't visited in past year
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Other, please detail

Further details:

Q5 How long have you spent / will you spend here today? *Single response only. Do not prompt.*

- ☐ Less than 30 minutes
- ☐ Between 30 minutes and 1 hour
- ☐ 1-2 hours
- ☐ 2-3 hours
- ☐ 3-4 hours
- ☐ 4 hours +
- ☐ Don't know

Further details:

Q6 Do you tend to visit this location at a certain time of day? *Tick closest answers. Multiple answers ok. Do not prompt.*

- ☐ Early morning (before 9am)
- ☐ Late morning (between 9am and 12pm)
- ☐ Early afternoon (between 12pm and 2pm)
- ☐ Late afternoon (between 2pm and 4pm)
- ☐ Evening (after 4pm)
- ☐ Varies / Don't know
- ☐ First visit

Q7 Do you tend to visit this location more at a particular time of year for *[insert given activity]*? *Multiple answers ok. Do not prompt.*

- ☐ Spring (Mar-May)
- ☐ Summer (Jun-Aug)
- ☐ Autumn (Sept-Nov)
- ☐ Winter (Dec-Feb)
- ☐ Equally all year
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ First visit

Q8 How did you get here today? *If necessary prompt with: What forms of transport did you use? Multiple response possible - e.g. train and bicycle.*

- ☐ Car / van
- ☐ On foot
- ☐ Bicycle
- ☐ Bus
- ☐ Train
- ☐ Ferry
- ☐ Motorbike
- ☐ Other, please detail

Further details:

Q9 Why did you choose to visit this specific location today, rather than somewhere else? Tick all responses given. Do not prompt, tick closest answers.

- ☐ Don't know / others in party chose
- ☐ Close to home
- ☐ No need to use car
- ☐ Quick / easy travel route
- ☐ Good / easy parking
- ☐ Particular facilities
- ☐ Refreshments / cafe / pub
- ☐ Choice of routes
- ☐ Away from roads/traffic
- ☐ Feels safe here
- ☐ Not many people
- ☐ Scenery / variety of views
- ☐ Rural feel / wild landscape
- ☐ Particular wildlife interest (e.g. birds, plants)
- ☐ Particular historic or cultural interest
- ☐ Habit / familiarity
- ☐ Good for dog / dog enjoys it
- ☐ Ability to let dog off lead
- ☐ Appropriate place for activity
- ☐ Tide times
- ☐ Suitability of area in given weather conditions
- ☐ For a change / variety
- ☐ Other, please detail

Further details:

Q10 Which of those reasons would you say had the most influence over your choice of location to visit today? Single choice, tick their main reason only. List is based on their answers to Q9.

- ☐ Don't know / others in party chose
- ☐ Close to home
- ☐ No need to use car
- ☐ Quick / easy travel route
- ☐ Good / easy parking
- ☐ Particular facilities
- ☐ Refreshments / cafe / pub
- ☐ Choice of routes
- ☐ Away from roads/traffic
- ☐ Feels safe here
- ☐ Not many people
- ☐ Scenery / variety of views
- ☐ Rural feel / wild landscape
- ☐ Particular wildlife interest (e.g. birds, plants)
- ☐ Particular historic or cultural interest
- ☐ Habit / familiarity
- ☐ Good for dog / dog enjoys it
- ☐ Ability to let dog off lead
- ☐ Appropriate place for activity
- ☐ Tide
- ☐ Suitability of area in given weather conditions
- ☐ For a change / variety
- ☐ Other reason (Further details:)

- Q11 **Now I'd like to ask you about your route today. Looking at the area shown on this map, can you show me where you started your visit today, the finish point and your route please.** *Probe to ensure route is accurately documented. Use **P** to indicate where the visitor parked (if applicable), **E** to indicate where they started and **X** to indicate where they finished. Mark the route with a solid line for the route already taken and a dotted line for the expected or remaining route, with arrows to indicate the direction.*

Enter the map reference below, or write 'no map' if no route map completed.

- Q12 **Question only asked of those not visiting for first time** **Is / was your route today the normal length when you visit here for [insert given activity]?** *Tick closest answer, do not prompt. Single response only.*

- ☐ Yes, normal
- ☐ Much longer than normal
- ☐ Much shorter than normal
- ☐ Not sure / no typical visit
- ☐ First visit

Q13 What, if anything, influenced your choice of route here today? *Tick closest answers, do not prompt. Multiple responses ok.*

- ☐ Weather
- ☐ Daylight
- ☐ Time
- ☐ Habit / usual route
- ☐ Tide times
- ☐ Other users (avoiding crowds, other dogs etc.)
- ☐ Group members (e.g. kids, less able)
- ☐ Avoiding muddy tracks / paths
- ☐ Followed a marked trail
- ☐ Location of cafe/restaurant/pub
- ☐ Activity undertaken (e.g. presence of dog)
- ☐ Birds / wildlife
- ☐ Followed their dog
- ☐ Interpretation / leaflets / promotion / app
- ☐ Viewpoint / feature
- ☐ Direct route to work / shops etc.
- ☐ Just wandering/exploring
- ☐ Other, please detail

Further details:

Q14 Which single location would you have visited today for [given activity] if you could not have visited here? Do not prompt. Ask for spelling if necessary.

- ☐ Nowhere / wouldn't have visited anywhere
- ☐ Not sure / don't know
- ☐ Alternative site:

Q15 Please could you tell me the name of two other locations that you also visit for [given activity]? Do not prompt. Ask for spellings if necessary.

2nd site name:

3rd site name:

Further details:

Q16 Can you name any species (plants or animals) or habitats (where they live) that are special to this area? Do not prompt. Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Not aware of any / couldn't name any species or habitats
- ☐ Yes aware but no detail given
- ☐ General mention of wintering waders / waterbirds / shorebirds / wildfowl (e.g. Geese, but not a specific species)
- ☐ General mention of breeding birds
- ☐ General mention of habitats without specifically naming any
- ☐ Specific bird species mentioned (e.g. Brent Goose, Curlew etc)
- ☐ Seals
- ☐ Specific habitat named (e.g. estuary, mudflats, saltmarsh)
- ☐ Other, give further details

Q17 Are you aware of any ways in which this area is protected for wildlife? Do not prompt.
Tick all that apply.

- ☐ No, isn't aware of ways this area is protected for wildlife
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ SSSI
- ☐ Nature Reserve
- ☐ Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- ☐ Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
- ☐ Ramsar site
- ☐ By-laws
- ☐ Mentions Wildlife Trusts
- ☐ Mentions RSPB
- ☐ Mentions Bird Aware Essex
- ☐ Other

Further details:

Q18 Are there any changes you would like to see here with regards to how this area is managed for access? *Do not give options or prompt. Tick closest option(s).*

- ☐ No changes / leave as is
- ☐ More parking
- ☐ Better parking
- ☐ More paths
- ☐ Better / surfaced paths
- ☐ More bins / less litter
- ☐ More dog waste bins
- ☐ Controls on dogs and dog fouling
- ☐ Facilities for dogs (e.g. training areas, washing facilities)
- ☐ More accessible
- ☐ Seating / benches
- ☐ Toilets
- ☐ Cafe
- ☐ Changes to habitats / scenery
- ☐ More natural / wild
- ☐ Not sure / don't know
- ☐ Other, please detail below

Further details:

Q19 What would make you want to visit a new park or greenspace if created in the area?

Do not give options or prompt. Tick closest option(s).

- ☐ Nothing / no change to visiting area
- ☐ More parking
- ☐ Better parking
- ☐ More paths
- ☐ Better / surfaced paths
- ☐ More bins / less litter
- ☐ More dog waste bins
- ☐ Controls on dogs and dog fouling
- ☐ Dogs of lead area
- ☐ Facilities for dogs (e.g. training areas, washing facilities)
- ☐ More accessible
- ☐ Seating / benches
- ☐ Toilets
- ☐ Cafe
- ☐ Play equipment
- ☐ Cycling routes
- ☐ Attractive landscaping
- ☐ Sculptures
- ☐ Shelter from weather
- ☐ Changes to habitats / scenery
- ☐ More natural / wild
- ☐ Not sure / don't know
- ☐ Other, please detail below

Further details:

Q20 Do you have any further comments or general feedback about your visit and access to this area?

- Q21 Finally, to identify how far people have travelled, what is your full home postcode?**
This is an important piece of information, please make every effort to record correctly. If necessary, reassure them that we don't want their full address, and it will only be used to work out where people are coming from.

- Q22 If visitor is unable or refuses to give postcode: What is the name of the town or area where you live?**

- Q23 If visitor is on holiday ask: Which town / area are you staying in?**

- Q24 If visitor is on holiday ask: What type of accommodation are you staying in? Do not prompt. Tick closest**

- ☐ Hotel
☐ B&B
☐ Self-catering
☐ Glamping
☐ Camping
☐ Other:

Further details (other accommodation type):

That is the end. Thank you very much indeed for your time.

Appendix 2: Summary of survey locations

Survey sessions were each 2hrs, with four sessions completed on a survey day. Target hours reflect the intended level of survey effort and actual hours the level of survey work actually completed. Tide state was not recorded during sessions, however we recognise that this may also influence visitor behaviour as well as the weather.

Table 10: Summary of the weather conditions during the survey period.

Survey location	Winter	Summer	Sessions with rainfall: Winter	Average temp (°C) : Winter	Sessions with rainfall: Summer	Average temp (°C) : Summer	Total sessions with rainfall	Target hours	Actual hours	Notes
1 - Mistley Walls	✓	✓	0	6.5	0	19.8	0	32	32	
2 - Wrabness Nature Reserve	✓	✓	0	4.3	0	20.3	1	32	32	
3 - Irlams Beach	✓	✓	0	5.4	1	19.1	1	32	32	
4 - Kirby Quay	✓	✓	0	8.4	2	19.5	2	32	29.75	Thunderstorms & one session curtailed early due to torrential rain. Other session abandoned completely due to Met Office Yellow weather warnings for storms. (Both in summer).
5 - The Naze	✓	✓	2	5.3	0	20.5	2	32	32	
6 - Brightlingsea Marsh	✓	✓	1	8.1	0	21.6	2	32	32	
7 - Cudmore Grove Country Park	✓	✓	0	7.3	2	21.3	3	32	31	Car park delayed opening, session started at 8am (winter).
8 - Wivenhoe Barrier	✓	✗	2	6.6	-	-	2	16	16	

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Survey location	Winter	Summer	Sessions with rainfall: Winter	Average temp (°C) : Winter	Sessions with rainfall: Summer	Average temp (°C) : Summer	Total sessions with rainfall	Target hours	Actual hours	Notes
9 - Tollesbury Wick (EWT)	✓	✓	0	4.6	4	19.4	4	32	32	
10 - Goldhanger Creek	✓	✓	0	4.5	0	19.8	0	32	32	
11 - Promenade Park	✓	✗	0	3.5	-		3	16	16	
12 - Northey Island Causeway	✗	✓	-		2	22.1	2	16	16	
13 - St Lawrence	✓	✓	1	4.8	4	17.3	5	32	32	
14 - Bradwell Marina	✓	✓	0	-	0	-	4	32	32	
15 - St Peter's Chapel	✓	✓	1	-	1	-	1	32	32	
16 - Riverside Park	✓	✗	2	-	-	-	2	16	16	
17 - Blue House Farm (EWT)	✓	✗	0	-	-	-	6	16	16	
18 - Marsh Farm Country Park	✓	✗	2	5.6	-	-	0	16	16	
19 - Kendal Park	✓	✗	0	10.3	-	-	3	16	16	
20 - Wallasea Island (RSPB)	✓	✓	0	5.5	3	18.7	3	32	31.5	Frost on sensors inhibited gate sensors working for the first half hour of a session (winter).
21 - East Beach	✓	✗	2	5.4	-	-	0	16	16	
22 - Chalkwell Beach	✓	✗	0	8.5	-	-	2	16	16	
23 - Cinder Path	✓	✓	0	5.0	1	18.5	1	32	32	

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Survey location	Winter	Summer	Sessions with rainfall: Winter	Average temp (°C) : Winter	Sessions with rainfall: Summer	Average temp (°C) : Summer	Total sessions with rainfall	Target hours	Actual hours	Notes
24 - Two Tree Island	✓	✓	1	11.3	0	24.6	0	32	32	
25 - Stanford Wharf	✓	✗	0	12.0	-	-	1	16	16	
26 - Coalhouse Fort	✓	✗	14	4.9	-	-	0	16	16	

Appendix 3: Supporting data tables

Water activities by survey location

Table 11: Activities observed by surveyors by survey location. A 'tick' indicates when the activity has been observed (numbers unspecified). Note that for boats, rowing/sailing/motorised craft have been ticked where specified, with boats 'ticked' to cover any instances where the type of boat observed was unspecified.

Survey location:	Boats	Rowing	Sailing	Motorised boats	Jet skis	Kayaks	Paddleboarding	Swimming	Wind or kite surfing	Metal detecting	Bait digging	Fishing	Flying model aircraft/drones
1 - Mistley Walls	✓	✓				✓							
2 - Wrabness Nature Reserve													
3 - Irlams Beach													
4 - Kirby Quay													
5 - The Naze	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓					
6 - Brightlingsea Marsh	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓				
7 - Cudmore Grove Country Park	✓		✓		✓								
8 - Wivenhoe Barrier	✓	✓	✓										
9 - Tollesbury Wick (EWT)	✓												
10 - Goldhanger Creek													
11 - Promenade Park	✓			✓		✓	✓						
12 - Northey Island Causeway	✓											✓	
13 - St Lawrence	✓		✓		✓							✓	

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Survey location:	Boats	Rowing	Sailing	Motorised boats	Jet skis	Kayaks	Paddleboarding	Swimming	Wind or kite surfing	Metal detecting	Bait digging	Fishing	Flying model aircraft/drones
14 - Bradwell Marina	✓												
15 - St Peter's Chapel													
16 - Riverside Park													
17 - Blue House Farm (EWT)													
18 - Marsh Farm Country Park	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓							
19 - Kendal Park							✓						
20 - Wallasea Island (RSPB)													
21 - East Beach													
22 - Chalkwell Beach	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓		
23 - Cinder Path	✓		✓				✓	✓		✓			
24 - Two Tree Island	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓						✓
25 - Stanford Wharf													
26 - Coalhouse Fort	✓		✓										✓

Main activity by survey location

Table 12: Main activity of interviewees by survey location and by season, with percentage (per location or season) given in parentheses.

Survey location:	Dog walking	Walking	Bird/wildlife watching	Sailing/accessing boat	Visiting cafe/restaurant/pub	Photography	Logging / running	Cycling / mountain biking	Swimming	Meeting up with friends	Picnic	Kayaking	Commuting to work	Horse riding	Other
1 - Mistley Walls	12 (34%)	11 (31%)	4 (11%)	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	2 (6%)
2 - Wrabness Nature Reserve	26 (58%)	10 (22%)	8 (18%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
3 - Irlams Beach	15 (45%)	11 (33%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (9%)
4 - Kirby Quay	16 (67%)	6 (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (8%)
5 - The Naze	20 (24%)	39 (46%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	2 (2%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	16 (19%)
6 - Brightlingsea Marsh	32 (36%)	43 (48%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	5 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (7%)
7 - Cudmore Grove	53 (49%)	36 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	4 (4%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (10%)
8 - Wivenhoe Barrier	18 (46%)	13 (33%)	2 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (8%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)
9 - Tollesbury Wick	18 (34%)	19 (36%)	1 (2%)	10 (19%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)

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Survey location:	Dog walking	Walking	Bird/wildlife watching	Sailing/accessing boat	Visiting cafe/restaurant/pub	Photography	Jogging / running	Cycling / mountain biking	Swimming	Meeting up with friends	Picnic	Kayaking	Commuting to work	Horse riding	Other
10 - Goldhanger Creek	44 (54%)	33 (41%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)
11 - Promenade Park	28 (67%)	14 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
12 - Northey Island Causeway	16 (41%)	18 (46%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)
13 - St Lawrence	28 (61%)	14 (30%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)
14 - Bradwell Marina	10 (20%)	10 (20%)	0 (0%)	12 (24%)	3 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	13 (25%)
15 - St Peter's Chapel	19 (29%)	20 (31%)	2 (3%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	17 (26%)
16 - Riverside Park	26 (42%)	28 (45%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (6%)
17 - Blue House Farm	5 (36%)	2 (14%)	5 (36%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (14%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
18 - Marsh Farm Country Park	39 (48%)	26 (32%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (13%)
19 - Kendal Park	37 (47%)	25 (32%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (13%)
20 - Wallasea Island	11 (12%)	27 (29%)	33 (35%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15 (16%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (8%)

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Survey location:	Dog walking	Walking	Bird/wildlife watching	Sailing/accessing boat	Visiting cafe/restaurant/pub	Photography	Jogging / running	Cycling / mountain biking	Swimming	Meeting up with friends	Picnic	Kayaking	Commuting to work	Horse riding	Other
21 - East Beach	40 (46%)	33 (38%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	3 (3%)	0 (0%)	3 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	4 (5%)
22 - Chalkwell Beach	30 (37%)	43 (52%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (5%)
23 - Cinder Path	64 (32%)	88 (44%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	11 (6%)	1 (1%)	4 (2%)	1 (1%)	3 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	26 (13%)
24 - Two Tree Island	115 (80%)	17 (12%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	3 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	3 (2%)
25 - Stanford Wharf	36 (78%)	9 (20%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
26 - Coalhouse Fort	42 (59%)	24 (34%)	1 (1%)	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)
Winter	616 (50%)	401 (33%)	55 (4%)	6 (0%)	12 (1%)	22 (2%)	11 (1%)	10 (1%)	3 (0%)	7 (1%)	2 (0%)	1 (0%)	2 (0%)	0 (0%)	77 (6%)
Summer	184 (32%)	218 (38%)	11 (2%)	22 (4%)	13 (3%)	1 (0%)	10 (2%)	11 (2%)	10 (2%)	4 (1%)	7 (1%)	3 (1%)	2 (0%)	1 (0%)	71 (13%)
Grand Total	800 (45%)	619 (35%)	66 (4%)	28 (2%)	25 (1%)	23 (1%)	21 (1%)	21 (1%)	13 (1%)	11 (1%)	9 (1%)	4 (0%)	4 (0%)	1 (0%)	148 (8%)

Distance from home postcode to survey location

Table 13: Summary of distance to home postcodes by survey location. Note that shading reflects the relevant SPA, with colours to match those seen in Map 1.

Category	N	Mean ($\pm$ SE)	Range	Median	Q3	N	Mean ($\pm$ SE)	Range	Median	Q3
	All interviewees					Visiting directly from home only				
Stour & Orwell Estuary	75	11.29 ($\pm$2.77)	0.17 - 153.62	5.54	7.8	72	7.14 ($\pm$1.28)	0.17 - 64.89	5.12	7.67
1 - Mistley Walls	31	13.83 ($\pm$ 6.16)	0.29 - 153.62	1.98	6.34	28	3.42 ($\pm$ 0.9)	0.29 - 16.43	1.31	4.36
2 - Wrabness Nature Reserve	44	9.5 ($\pm$ 1.94)	0.17 - 64.89	6.76	7.82	44	9.5 ($\pm$ 1.94)	0.17 - 64.89	6.76	7.82
Hamford Water	129	45.42 ($\pm$5.27)	0.03 - 366.07	17.68	76.48	105	24.94 ($\pm$3.2)	0.03 - 150.79	9.98	40.64
3 - Irlams Beach	28	45.4 ($\pm$ 15.3)	0.6 - 366.1	5.2	77.9	20	5.69 ($\pm$ 1.75)	0.58 - 29.92	1.75	8.46
4 - Kirby Quay	22	18.2 ($\pm$ 11.6)	0 - 212.8	0.6	2.7	20	1.64 ($\pm$ 0.62)	0.03 - 11.8	0.58	1.67
5 - The Naze	79	52.99 ($\pm$ 5.66)	0.5 - 233.33	41.06	81.47	65	38.04 ($\pm$ 4.42)	0.5 - 150.79	29.03	60.32
Colne Estuary	224	21.53 ($\pm$3.53)	0.26 - 456.96	5.78	16.79	197	9.3 ($\pm$0.93)	0.26 - 81.15	5.13	12.19
6 - Brightlingsea Marsh	82	7.14 ($\pm$ 1.48)	0.53 - 63.18	1.4	6.68	79	5.64 ($\pm$ 1.16)	0.53 - 59.99	1.38	5.37
7 - Cudmore Grove Country Park	104	39.32 ($\pm$ 7.1)	0.52 - 456.96	13.54	33.76	82	16.16 ($\pm$ 1.65)	0.52 - 81.15	11.78	19.79
8 - Wivenhoe Barrier	38	3.93 ($\pm$ 2.19)	0.26 - 84.1	0.7	2.78	36	1.7 ($\pm$ 0.35)	0.26 - 7.34	0.69	1.82
Blackwater Estuary	284	17.6 ($\pm$2.66)	0.06 - 535.56	2.49	17.51	260	10.68 ($\pm$1.29)	0.06 - 165.94	1.64	13.27
9 - Tollesbury Wick (EWT)	46	23.9 ($\pm$ 12.5)	0.2 - 535.6	1.2	14.3	41	7.11 ($\pm$ 2.58)	0.19 - 96.47	1.16	3.99
10 - Goldhanger Creek	77	12.59 ($\pm$ 3.68)	0.28 - 236.55	3.8	11.6	73	6.67 ($\pm$ 1.02)	0.28 - 45.45	3.64	9.9
11 - Promenade Park	40	8.79 ($\pm$ 1.64)	0.4 - 46.54	5.07	15.75	39	7.83 ($\pm$ 1.36)	0.4 - 29.53	5	15.08
12 - Northey Island Causeway	35	18.47 ($\pm$ 6.27)	0.8 - 165.94	2.03	20.06	35	18.47 ($\pm$ 6.27)	0.8 - 165.94	2.03	20.06
13 - St Lawrence	38	6.5 ($\pm$ 2.73)	0.15 - 84.85	0.49	0.95	35	2.9 ($\pm$ 1.13)	0.15 - 24.5	0.47	0.86

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Category	N	Mean (±SE)	Range	Median	Q3	N	Mean (±SE)	Range	Median	Q3
14 - Bradwell Marina	48	35.07 (±5.92)	0.06 - 211.38	27.36	48.79	37	25.55 (±4.76)	0.06 - 116.74	14.47	41.81
Dengie	61	66 (±12.5)	0.9 - 571.3	38.4	74.2	46	33.14 (±6.3)	0.92 - 245.32	20.5	41.82
15 - St Peter's Chapel	61	66 (±12.5)	0.9 - 571.3	38.4	74.2	46	33.14 (±6.3)	0.92 - 245.32	20.5	41.82
Crouch & Roach	310	14.41 (±2.16)	0.17 - 333.92	3.76	12.51	300	10 (±1.19)	0.17 - 176.48	3.15	11.42
16 - Riverside Park	54	14.52 (±5.85)	0.29 - 252.18	1.11	5.58	51	9.28 (±3.93)	0.29 - 176.48	1.11	4.02
17 - Blue House Farm (EWT)	14	8.95 (±2.36)	0.88 - 36.46	8.63	10.35	14	8.95 (±2.36)	0.88 - 36.46	8.63	10.35
18 - Marsh Farm Country Park	77	3.37 (±0.48)	0.45 - 15.44	1.25	4.19	77	3.37 (±0.48)	0.45 - 15.44	1.25	4.19
19 - Kendal Park	78	5.07 (±2.24)	0.17 - 172.92	0.91	3.94	77	4.76 (±2.25)	0.17 - 172.92	0.9	3.86
20 - Wallasea Island (RSPB)	87	33.35 (±6.01)	1.97 - 333.92	14.94	29.81	81	21.92 (±2.47)	1.97 - 154.85	13.18	27.89
Foulness	82	8.79 (±2.17)	0.2 - 106.47	2.09	7.66	78	5.83 (±1.43)	0.2 - 97.76	2	6.23
21 - East Beach	82	8.79 (±2.17)	0.2 - 106.47	2.09	7.66	78	5.83 (±1.43)	0.2 - 97.76	2	6.23
Benfleet & Southend Marshes	408	6.4 (±0.78)	0.11 - 184.28	2.26	4.49	404	5.53 (±0.56)	0.11 - 112.07	2.21	4.4
22 - Chalkwell Beach	80	5.37 (±1.16)	0.11 - 51.2	1.56	6.05	80	5.37 (±1.16)	0.11 - 51.2	1.56	6.05
23 - Cinder Path	189	7.54 (±1.37)	0.16 - 184.28	2.02	4.78	186	6.35 (±0.97)	0.16 - 112.07	1.96	4.72
24 - Two Tree Island	139	5.42 (±1.17)	0.85 - 133.81	2.78	4.12	138	4.49 (±0.71)	0.85 - 69.92	2.78	4.08
Thames Estuary & Marshes	115	7.78 (±1.58)	0.25 - 173.13	3.37	7.86	113	6.06 (±0.58)	0.25 - 26.58	3.29	7.35
25 - Stanford Wharf	46	7.41 (±3.76)	0.52 - 173.13	2.28	3.14	45	3.73 (±0.79)	0.52 - 26.58	2.26	3.04
26 - Coalhouse Fort	69	8.02 (±0.86)	0.25 - 36.62	6.08	9.79	68	7.6 (±0.76)	0.25 - 26.04	6.07	9.72

75th percentile distance from home postcode to survey location by season**Table 14: Summary of 75th percentile distance to survey location and estuaries overall, compared between seasons.**

Survey location	N	Winter Q3	Summer Q3	Combined Q3	N	Winter Q3	Summer Q3	Combined Q3
	All interviewees				Visiting directly from home only			
Stour & Orwell Estuary	75	7.82	6.86	7.8	72	7.76	6.75	7.67
1 - Mistley Walls	31	11.05	5.03	6.34	28	6.34	3.51	4.36
2 - Wrabness Nature Reserve	44	7.83	12.1	7.82	44	7.83	12.1	7.82
Hamford Water	129	41.08	83.73	76.48	105	19.92	62.53	40.64
3 - Irlams Beach	28	36.6	87.2	77.9	20	5.03	13.86	8.46
4 - Kirby Quay	22	2	42.4	2.7	20	1.98	2.85	1.67
5 - The Naze	79	55.49	89.25	81.47	65	41.06	77.26	60.32
Colne Estuary	224	9.07	33.41	16.79	197	7.37	20.66	12.19
6 - Brightlingsea Marsh	82	4.96	14.97	6.68	79	3.91	10.07	5.37
7 - Cudmore Grove Country Park	104	16.79	37.2	33.76	82	13.3	26.94	19.79
8 - Wivenhoe Barrier	38	2.78	-	2.78	36	1.82	-	1.82
Blackwater Estuary	284	11.43	22.16	17.51	260	8.22	17.56	13.27
9 - Tollesbury Wick (EWT)	46	3	17.47	14.3	41	1.4	12.35	3.99
10 - Goldhanger Creek	77	10.21	13.15	11.6	73	8.3	11.98	9.9
11 - Promenade Park	40	15.75	-	15.75	39	15.08	-	15.08
12 - Northey Island Causeway	35	-	20.06	20.06	35	-	20.06	20.06
13 - St Lawrence	38	2.07	0.83	0.95	35	0.86	0.83	0.86
14 - Bradwell Marina	48	42.49	49.32	48.79	37	30.95	47.56	41.81
Dengie	61	69.4	78.2	74.2	46	39.26	48.3	41.82
15 - St Peter's Chapel	61	69.4	78.2	74.2	46	39.26	48.3	41.82
Crouch & Roach	310	11.47	18.8	12.51	300	10.97	13.18	11.42
16 - Riverside Park	54	5.58	-	5.58	51	4.02	-	4.02
17 - Blue House Farm (EWT)	14	10.35	-	10.35	14	10.35	-	10.35
18 - Marsh Farm Country Park	77	4.19	-	4.19	77	4.19	-	4.19

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Survey location	N	Winter Q3	Summer Q3	Combined Q3	N	Winter Q3	Summer Q3	Combined Q3
19 - Kendal Park	78	3.94	-	3.94	77	3.86	-	3.86
20 - Wallasea Island (RSPB)	87	32.21	18.8	29.81	81	30.07	13.18	27.89
Foulness	82	7.66	-	7.66	78	6.23	-	6.23
21 - East Beach	82	7.66	-	7.66	78	6.23	-	6.23
Benfleet & Southend Marshes	408	3.86	5.73	4.49	404	3.86	5	4.4
22 - Chalkwell Beach	80	6.05	-	6.05	80	6.05	-	6.05
23 - Cinder Path	189	4.24	7.3	4.78	186	4.36	6.69	4.72
24 - Two Tree Island	139	3.6	4.66	4.12	138	3.6	4.59	4.08
Thames Estuary & Marshes	115	7.86	-	7.86	113	7.35	-	7.35
25 - Stanford Wharf	46	3.14	-	3.14	45	3.04	-	3.04
26 - Coalhouse Fort	69	9.79	-	9.79	68	9.72	-	9.72