



**UNDERSTANDING GARDEN VISITORS:
THE AFFORDANCES OF A LEISURE ENVIRONMENT**

DOROTHY FOX

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Abstract

Visiting a garden in England is a traditional leisure activity that continues to grow in popularity but curiously this sector of the visitor attraction market has received little attention from academics. The thesis seeks to understand participation in garden visiting from a number of perspectives but principally that of the visitor. It moves beyond the established approach of individual agency with its assumption of free choice to incorporate social and material agency. This movement requires a shift in theoretical perspective from the prevailing theories in the leisure literature (motivational theories) to the emerging theory of affordance.

The study consisted of four phases of data collection. Two phases obtained quantitative data from surveys - first, of residents in Dorset and secondly, visitors in a garden. The aim was to identify garden visitors and to establish the importance of various factors in influencing a visit. The other two phases obtained qualitative data from a series of informal conversations with a small number of residents from the survey and a large number of visitors to several different types of horticultural attractions. These sought to establish the participants' explanations for visiting gardens.

Analysing the participants' explanatory repertoires reveals the importance of the natural and the social in garden visitation. Their perception of the 'natural' environment of the garden is a key element of the attraction for participants as gardens offer opportunities for both relaxation and hedonism. However, inseparable from the 'natural' is the 'social' environment. The proprietors and gardeners may afford some aspects whilst others are realised through the companionship of family or friends. Similarly, natural environmental features and social influences may prompt a visit or influence where it takes place.

The participants also reveal the power of social norms in regard to their activities in a garden and what prompted them to visit. Furthermore they disclose the importance of temporal and spatial considerations. The connections between, on the one hand, having a domestic garden, or an interest in gardening and on the other, participation in garden visiting were perhaps predictable, but the influence of the media and particularly the

television on recreational gardening and the indirect consequences this has for garden visiting was less foreseeable.

The thesis concludes with a summary and discussion of the major findings and interprets them in the light of affordance theory. Building on this discussion, suggestions are made for future research to explore the issues raised in the thesis. The study therefore offers not only a significant contribution to the literature in leisure and tourism studies but also the analysis of social-material agency.

List of contents

LIST OF CONTENTS.....	5
LIST OF TABLES.....	12
LIST OF FIGURES.....	14
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	16
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	17
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS.....	18
1.1. Introduction.....	18
1.2. A personal narrative of the research.....	20
1.2.1. <i>The identification of the aim and objectives</i>	20
1.2.2. <i>The choice of focus</i>	21
1.2.3. <i>The choice of theory</i>	22
1.2.4. <i>The choice of methodology</i>	24
1.3. The context of the research.....	26
1.3.1. <i>The historical background</i>	26
1.3.2. <i>The political context</i>	27
1.3.3. <i>The environmental context</i>	28
1.4. The structure of the thesis.....	28
1.4.1. <i>The contents of the chapters</i>	29
1.5. Gardens.....	31
1.5.1. <i>Definitions of gardens</i>	31
1.5.2. <i>The development of gardens into visitor attractions</i>	32
1.5.3. <i>Criteria for defining gardens which open as visitor attractions</i>	33
1.6. Chapter summary.....	37
CHAPTER 2 - THE CONCEPTS EXPLAINING PARTICIPATION BEHAVIOUR.....	38
2.1. Introduction.....	38
2.2. Motivational theories.....	39
2.2.1. <i>The behaviourist approach</i>	40

2.2.2.	<i>The humanistic approach</i>	40
2.2.3.	<i>The cognitive approach</i>	41
2.2.4.	<i>Emotion and motivation</i>	43
2.2.5.	<i>Combining theoretical approaches</i>	44
2.2.6.	<i>Leisure constraints theory</i>	45
2.2.7.	<i>The value of these approaches to this research</i>	45
2.3.	Social theory.....	47
2.4.	Supplementary forms of agency.....	49
2.4.1.	<i>Social agency – individual and collective</i>	50
2.4.2.	<i>Material agency</i>	51
2.5.	Biological influences on leisure behaviour.....	52
2.6.	Affordance theory.....	54
2.6.1.	<i>The rationale for employing affordance theory</i>	54
2.6.2.	<i>The development of the concept</i>	54
2.6.3.	<i>Development of affordance theory in leisure and tourism studies</i>	59
2.6.4.	<i>Applications of affordance theory in leisure and tourism research</i>	60
2.7.	Chapter summary.....	61
 CHAPTER 3 - THE RESEARCH METHODS		62
3.1.	Introduction.....	62
3.2.	The research aim and objectives.....	62
3.2.1.	<i>The research design</i>	63
3.2.2.	<i>Using a mixed method</i>	64
3.2.3.	<i>The initial plan of the research</i>	68
3.2.4.	<i>The plan of the research as subsequently carried out</i>	69
3.2.5.	<i>Ethical considerations</i>	70
3.3.	The methods used.....	71
3.3.1.	<i>Phase 1 – secondary data collection and analysis</i>	72
3.3.2.	<i>Consideration of quantitative methods</i>	73
3.3.3.	<i>Phase 2 – the resident survey</i>	73
3.3.4.	<i>Phase 3 – the visitor survey</i>	80
3.3.5.	<i>Consideration of qualitative methods</i>	81
3.3.6.	<i>Phase 4 – the resident interviews</i>	84
3.3.7.	<i>Phase 5 – the visitor interviews</i>	85

3.4.	The data analyses.....	88
3.4.1.	<i>Quantitative data analysis</i>	88
3.4.2.	<i>Qualitative data analysis</i>	89
3.4.3.	<i>The integration of the analyses of the quantitative and qualitative phases</i>	93
3.5.	An introduction to the findings.....	93
3.5.1.	<i>A summary of the primary data</i>	94
3.5.2.	<i>Explanatory repertoires</i>	95
3.5.3.	<i>A summary of responses to the 'grand tour' question</i>	96
3.5.4.	<i>Reporting the findings</i>	97
3.5.5.	<i>The socio-demographic characteristics of the participants</i>	100
3.5.6.	<i>The representativeness of the data</i>	101
3.6.	Chapter summary.....	102
CHAPTER 4 - GARDENS AND VISITORS.....		103
4.1.	Introduction.....	103
4.2.	Gardens open to the public.....	103
4.3.	The visitors to gardens.....	106
4.3.1.	<i>The socio-demographic characteristics of visitors to gardens</i>	107
4.3.2.	<i>Lifestyle characteristics of visitors</i>	117
4.4.	Reasons for visiting gardens identified from survey data.....	119
4.4.1.	<i>Data from the literature</i>	119
4.4.2.	<i>The resident survey</i>	121
4.4.3.	<i>The visitor survey</i>	123
4.4.4.	<i>Re-visiting a garden</i>	126
4.5.	The influences on garden visiting identified from survey data.....	127
4.5.1.	<i>Sources of inspiration</i>	127
4.5.2.	<i>Other influences on garden visiting</i>	129
4.6.	Chapter summary.....	131
CHAPTER 5 - AFFORDANCE WITHIN GARDENS.....		133
5.1.	Introduction.....	133
5.2.	Being in a garden environment.....	134
5.3.	Looking at a garden.....	139

5.4.	Moving around a garden.....	144
5.5.	Other behavioural opportunities afforded by gardens.....	148
5.5.1.	<i>Sitting</i>	149
5.5.2.	<i>Remembering</i>	149
5.5.3.	<i>Feeling nostalgic</i>	151
5.5.4.	<i>Learning</i>	152
5.5.5.	<i>Consuming</i>	153
5.6.	Being with people in a garden.....	154
5.6.1.	<i>With family or friends</i>	154
5.6.2.	<i>With children</i>	156
5.6.3.	<i>With the other visitors</i>	158
5.6.4.	<i>With the garden staff</i>	160
5.7.	Re-visiting a garden.....	161
5.8.	Chapter summary.....	163

CHAPTER 6 - THE PROXIMAL AFFORDANCES TO PARTICIPATION IN GARDEN VISITING.....	165	
6.1.	Introduction.....	165
6.2.	Social affordance.....	165
6.2.1.	<i>Affordances shaped by family and friends</i>	166
6.2.2.	<i>The media</i>	174
6.2.3.	<i>Governmental organisations</i>	177
6.2.4.	<i>Garden proprietors</i>	177
6.2.5.	<i>Trip organisers</i>	179
6.3.	Intra-personal affordance.....	180
6.4.	A material affordance: the weather.....	181
6.5.	Temporal and spatial affordance.....	185
6.5.1.	<i>Occasion</i>	185
6.5.2.	<i>Location</i>	189
6.5.3.	<i>Holidays</i>	191
6.6.	Chapter summary.....	192

CHAPTER 7 - THE DISTAL AFFORDANCES TO PARTICIPATION IN GARDEN VISITING.....	194
7.1. Introduction.....	194
7.2. Experience of garden-like spaces.....	195
7.3. Family influence.....	199
7.4. Media representations of gardens, gardening and garden visiting.....	200
7.4.1. <i>Literature</i>	201
7.4.2. <i>Television</i>	203
7.5. Peripheral interests.....	207
7.5.1. <i>Cultural experience</i>	207
7.5.2. <i>An awareness of 'heritage'</i>	209
7.5.3. <i>Environmentalism</i>	214
7.5.4. <i>An awareness of health and well-being</i>	215
7.6. Multiple affordances.....	216
7.6.1. <i>Gender</i>	217
7.6.2. <i>Ageing</i>	220
7.6.3. <i>Social representations</i>	225
7.6.4. <i>The participants' explanatory repertoires</i>	226
7.7. Chapter summary.....	227

CHAPTER 8 - AN AFFORDANCE APPROACH TO PARTICIPATION IN GARDEN VISITING.....	229
8.1. Introduction.....	229
8.2. Extending the depiction of affordance.....	229
8.2.1. <i>Impedance</i>	230
8.2.2. <i>Graded affordances</i>	231
8.2.3. <i>Shaping affordances</i>	234
8.2.4. <i>'Synchronising' affordances</i>	236
8.3. The perception of affordances.....	237
8.3.1. <i>Attunement to gardens</i>	237
8.3.2. <i>Personal goals</i>	239
8.3.3. <i>Affordance events</i>	241
8.4. The social-material practices of garden visitors.....	242
8.4.1. <i>'Specific' visits</i>	242

8.4.2.	<i>'Non-specific' visits</i>	244
8.4.3.	<i>Choosing between attractions</i>	247
8.4.4.	<i>A summary of 'specific' and 'non-specific' visits</i>	249
8.4.5.	<i>Group negotiations</i>	249
8.4.6.	<i>Considering options</i>	252
8.5.	Chapter summary.....	257
 CHAPTER 9 - EVALUATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH.....		258
9.1.	Introduction.....	258
9.2.	Evaluation of the theoretical, methodological and analytical approaches.....	258
9.2.1.	<i>Evaluation of the theoretical approach</i>	258
9.2.2.	<i>Evaluation of the methodological approach</i>	260
9.2.3.	<i>Evaluation of the analytical approaches</i>	262
9.3.	Summary of the findings.....	264
9.3.1.	<i>The definition and enumeration of gardens</i>	265
9.3.2.	<i>The establishment of a socio-demographic profile of visitors</i>	266
9.3.3.	<i>The affordances to garden visiting</i>	267
9.3.4.	<i>The social-material practices of garden visitors</i>	271
9.3.5.	<i>A diagrammatic illustration of the findings</i>	271
9.4.	Implications of the findings.....	273
9.4.1.	<i>Looking to the future</i>	276
9.5.	Further research.....	279
9.6.	A personal journey.....	281
9.7.	An understanding of garden visitors	282
 APPENDICES.....		284
Appendix A	The resident survey pilot questionnaire.....	284
Appendix B	An example of the covering letter for the resident survey.....	293
Appendix C	The 'reminder' letter for the resident survey.....	294
Appendix D	The resident survey questionnaire.....	295
Appendix E	The visitor survey questionnaire.....	304
Appendix F	The resident interview guide.....	307
Appendix G	The initial responses to the 'grand tour' question	309

Appendix H The attractions which respondents like to visit.....310
Appendix I The practice of selecting a garden to visit.....311
Appendix J A detailed evaluation of the methods used.....312

REFERENCES.....317

List of tables

CHAPTER 3

Table 3.1 The socio-demographic characteristics of the participants.....	100
Table 3.2 A comparison of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and of adults in Dorset and England.....	101

CHAPTER 4

Table 4.1 Visits to gardens by gender.....	108
Table 4.2 Visitors to gardens within genders.....	109
Table 4.3 Visits to gardens by age.....	111
Table 4.4 A comparison of visitors by cohort	113
Table 4.5 Visitors to gardens within ages.....	114
Table 4.6 Visits to gardens by occupational group	115
Table 4.7 Visitors to gardens within occupational groups	116
Table 4.8 Visitors to gardens by employment status	117
Table 4.9 Visits to gardens by enthusiasm for gardening	118
Table 4.10 Visits to gardens by membership of the National Trust	118
Table 4.11 Other reasons for visits – all gardens.....	120
Table 4.12 Knowledge sought during a visit by type of gardener	123
Table 4.13 Knowledge sought by type of gardener	126
Table 4.14 Sources of inspiration from the literature.....	128
Table 4.15 Sources of inspiration	128
Table 4.16 Factors influencing how respondents spend their leisure time	130
Table 4.17 Reasons and most important reason given for not visiting a garden seen on ‘Gardeners’ World’	131

CHAPTER 6

Table 6.1 References to Compton Acres in a selection of publications.....	174
Table 6.2 Marketing devices used by Compton Acres, the National Trust and the National Gardens Scheme.....	178

CHAPTER 7

Table 7.1 Gardening programmes watched, by demographic sub-group, December 2004.....	206
Table 7.2 Knowledge of relatives and friends who visit gardens, by gender	218
Table 7.3 Inspiration of family and friends, by gender	218
Table 7.4 Companionship during a visit, by gender	219
Table 7.5 Companionship during a visit to Compton Acres, by gender	220
Table 7.6 Respondents who have ever visited horticultural attraction types, by age	221
Table 7.7 Respondents who would like to visit a horticultural show but had not yet done so	221
Table 7.8 Combined percentages of those who have ever visited or would like to visit a horticultural show, by age.....	222
Table 7.9 Respondents who have ever visited a horticultural attraction.....	222
Table 7.10 The cultural attractions respondents like to visit, by combined age groups ...	223
Table 7.11 Attraction types respondents like to visit, by age	224

List of figures

CHAPTER 1

Figure 1.1 Indexed trend in the number of visits to attractions, 1989-2004.....	19
Figure 1.2 The location of the research.....	26

CHAPTER 3

Figure 3.1 The initial design of the research.....	68
Figure 3.2 The plan of the research as carried out.....	70
Figure 3.3 The node explorer in NVivo showing the tree hierarchy.....	92
Figure 3.4 The explanatory categories given in response to the ‘grand tour’ question.....	97

CHAPTER 4

Figure 4.1 Ownership of gardens in England.....	105
Figure 4.2 Gardens in England by additional draw.....	106
Figure 4.3 Visitors to gardens by gender.....	107
Figure 4.4 The age of visitors to gardens	110
Figure 4.5 Adults who have visited in the past 12 months by life-stage.....	112
Figure 4.6 The occupational group of visitors to gardens	114
Figure 4.7 Factors influencing a garden visit.....	122
Figure 4.8 Factors influencing a visit to Compton Acres.....	124
Figure 4.9 Knowledge sought during the visit	125
Figure 4.10 Reasons given for revisiting a garden	127

CHAPTER 5

Figure 5.1 The types of garden which visitors like to see.....	141
Figure 5.2 The types of planting which visitors like to see.....	142
Figure 5.3 The changes in a garden which visitors like to see.....	142
Figure 5.4 Other features in a garden which visitors like to see.....	142

CHAPTER 6

Figure 6.1 Examples of references to forms of social agency.....	166
Figure 6.2 Examples of references to marketing devices.....	179

Figure 6.3 A comparison of the anomaly in the number of hours of summer sunshine and the number of garden visits per annum.....182

CHAPTER 7

Figure 7.1 A comparison of respondents who have visited or not visited a garden and that have relatives or friends who visit.....200

Figure 7.2 Types of attraction liked by respondents.....224

Figure 7.3 The number of attractions liked by respondents, by age group225

CHAPTER 9

Figure 9.1 A cascade of nested, co-emergent and sequential affordances to visiting a garden.....272

List of abbreviations

ATLAS	The Association for Tourism and Leisure Education
CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
DEFRA	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
ETC	English Tourism Council
HDRA	Henry Doubleday Research Association
Mintel	Mintel International Group Limited
NGS	National Gardens Scheme
RBG, Kew	Royal Botanic Garden, Kew
RHS	The Royal Horticultural Society
UK	United Kingdom

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Chapter 1 - Introduction to the thesis

The weather was most exceedingly cold and rainy, yet we resolved not to pass the Leasowes without taking a look. I...looked over Mr Shenstone's woods and walks with more pleasure than I thought one could have obtained upon such a displeasing day. The cascades, however, are so lovely, so unartificial to appearance, and so frequent that one must be delighted, and confess that if one had to chuse among all the places one has seen the Leasowes should be the choice to inhabit oneself, while Keddlestone or Hagley should be reserved for the gardener to show on a Sunday to travelling fools and starers.

September 18th 1774

Mrs. Thrale's Tour with Dr Johnston.¹

1.1. Introduction

The Leasowes is a 57-hectare garden created by William Shenstone from 1743, in a style which represents the very beginning of the Picturesque English Landscape Movement (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, 2006). Public interest in The Leasowes increased during Shenstone's lifetime and for a period in the middle of the 18th century it was one of the most visited gardens in the country. Visitors would take the 'circuit walk' which allowed the design of the garden to be experienced and appreciated. Today, the garden is Grade 1 listed and owned by Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council. It is open daily to the public, and was awarded £1,306,500 from the Heritage Lottery fund in 1997 towards its restoration. It still pleases and delights visitors, including some who probably still see it in the rain.

This thesis asserts that the practice of visiting gardens is inextricably connected with the horticultural, environmental, social, cultural, political and economic affairs of a country or region. Accordingly, there is a triadic relationship between the visitor, the garden and the

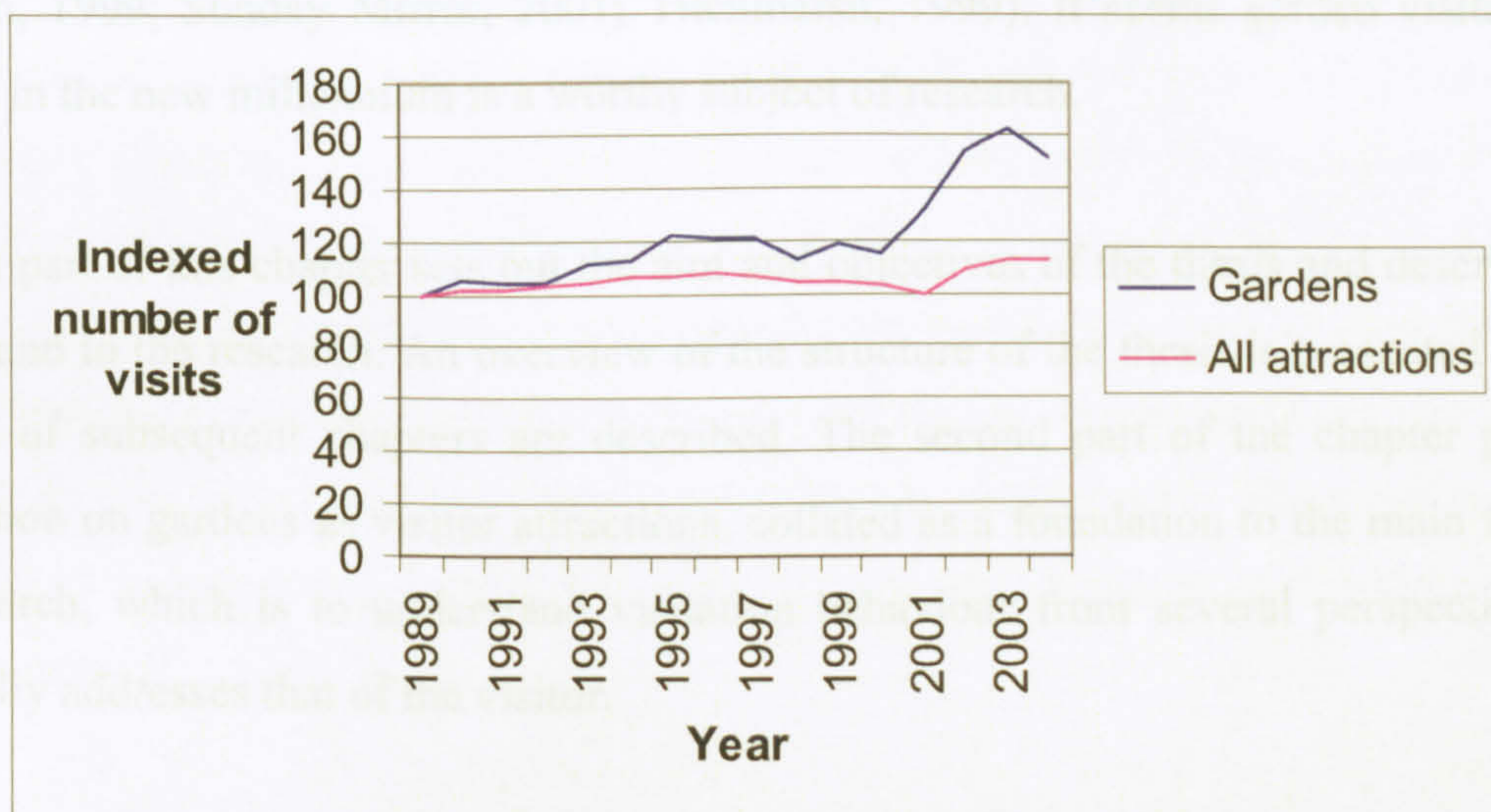
¹ Cited in Hadfield, 1936, p.284.

contextual circumstances of a visit. This research seeks to understand participation in garden visiting in England, in the twenty-first century.

In an editorial of 'Attractions Management', Terry (2005) suggests that '*Gardens are becoming big business and the public's appetite for them is growing fast*'. This is confirmed by the greater increase in the indexed¹ number of garden visits compared to all attraction types over the last two decades (Figure 1.1), leading to a greater than 50% increase in garden visits in 2004, compared to 1989 (VisitBritain 2005a).

Figure 1.1 Indexed trend in the number of visits to attractions, 1989-2004

Source: Derived from VisitBritain (2005a)



Yet, curiously there have been few investigations of garden visitation, although Connell (2004a, 2004b and 2005) has recently recognised the potential of gardens as leisure attractions. She questions '*whether academics perceive gardens as unfashionable, apolitical or commercially insignificant*' (Connell, 2004a, p. 230). In fact attractions such as the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBG, Kew) and the Eden Project each received over a million visitors in 2005 (VisitBritain, 2006) contributing to an estimated 24 million visitors to gardens in the UK (Bisgrove and Hadley, 2002). The Eden Project in Cornwall, generated £111m of additional spending in the South West economy in 2001 (Eden

¹ As the number of attractions responding to the survey varies from year to year, the percentage change between any two years is applied each time to the previous year's index to take account of the varying sample sizes each year (VisitBritain, 2005a).

Project, 2002) and garden tourism in the UK as a whole is worth an estimated £300 million *per annum* (Bisgrove and Hadley, 2002).

Furthermore, three gardens in England are World Heritage sites - Blenheim Palace, the RBG, Kew and Fountains Abbey with Studley Royal Water Garden (The United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organisation, 2006). Over the last 10 years the Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded more than £400m for projects in parks and gardens (Terry, 2005). Finally, Fearnley-Whittingstall (2002) suggests that *'a love affair with a garden seems to be an especially English form of love'* (Fearnley-Whittingstall, 2002, p.6) and recreational gardening is often described as *'the new sex'* (for example, BBC News, 2000; Leapman, 1999; Sunday Mirror, 2001; Titchmarsh, 1999). It seems garden visitation in England in the new millennium is a worthy subject of research.

The first part of this chapter sets out the aim and objectives of the thesis and describes the background to the research. An overview of the structure of the thesis is presented and the contents of subsequent chapters are described. The second part of the chapter presents information on gardens as visitor attractions, collated as a foundation to the main focus of the research, which is to understand visitation behaviour from several perspectives but principally addresses that of the visitor.

There is a continuing debate in the literature, whether attractions should be prefixed with the words 'tourist' or 'visitor'. Yale (1998) uses 'tourist attraction' and Swarbrooke (2002) prefers 'visitor attraction'. This research will adopt Swarbrooke's terminology, reflecting current industry practice and the recognition that most of the visitors to attractions are not tourists, but day visitors. In addition, throughout the thesis, a 'domestic garden' refers to a garden space when in private use. A garden, without any descriptor can be considered as a garden which is open to the public.

1.2. A personal narrative of the research

1.2.1. The identification of the aim and objectives

The principal aim of this research is to understand participation in garden visiting.

The following sections describe the choices I made in order to carry out the research and which led to the development of four research objectives:

1. to define and enumerate the gardens open to the public
2. to establish a socio-demographic profile of visitors
3. to identify the affordances to participation in garden visiting
4. to describe the social-material practices of garden visitors
5. to present a diagrammatic illustration of the theoretical underpinnings of the affordance approach to garden visiting.

1.2.2. The choice of focus

I selected the subject of this thesis after completion of a first degree in environmental studies and the consequent awareness of the extent of anthropogenic influences on the environment. I became interested in the opposite position; that of the influences of the environment on people; and from there, to the interdependence of nature and society. For many years, I have had great pleasure from gardening, particularly growing vegetables and fruit organically in my garden and allotment. I also enjoy visiting gardens with various members of my family and watching the ‘makeover’ programmes about gardening on television¹. These interests coalesced in a curiosity to understand more about the practice of garden visiting.

Upon beginning this research in 2001², I reviewed the literature in three ways: first, a review of the contextual literature on garden visiting; secondly, a theoretical review of potential theories for explaining participation; and thirdly a methodological review to examine different research methods which could be adopted. The contextual search of the literature revealed that there is considerable description of individual gardens but there seems to be insufficient knowledge of gardens as visitor attractions.

Although the literature demonstrated that gardens are a key part of the visitor attraction sector, understanding of garden visitation was mainly reliant on an initial survey of visitors to eight historic gardens in England by Gallagher (1983). Other literature regarding visitors was limited and fragmentary, and Gallagher’s perspective was that of the garden

¹ These personal experiences have influenced this research and the reader can now consider their impact when evaluating the subjective elements of the thesis.

² Research was undertaken on a part-time basis

proprietors. Therefore complementary research, which was based on the visitors' perspective, would make a contribution to knowledge. Further statistical data on garden visiting was available from sources such as Mintel International Group Limited¹ (henceforth abbreviated to Mintel) and the English Tourism Council (ETC). The literature was therefore limited to quantitative data obtained in response to standardised survey instruments.

1.2.3. The choice of theory

The literature also helped to establish a theoretical perspective to analyse the findings. Possibilities included consumer behaviour theory and the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980), but both are more predictive than explanatory and were therefore unsuitable. Literature on other types of visitor attractions showed that motivational theory is also used to explain participation (for example, Crompton and McKay, 1997; Flucker and Turner, 2000; Getz and Cheyne, 1997).

For the first stages of the research, therefore, motivation theory formed the conceptual basis. However, as I analysed the data from the first collection phase (a resident survey) I was unable to reconcile all the findings with any motivational theory, although over thirty were considered. Further assessment of the literature showed that some authors (for example, Gnoth, 1997; Weinberger and McClelland, 1990) were combining motivational approaches. These theoretical hybrids were adopted for the second data collection phase (a visitor survey) but as analysis progressed, it became clear that this approach again was unsatisfactory. Motivational theories are based on a premise of individual agency, but the findings were demonstrating that the notion of 'choice' in leisure was not supported.

Nonetheless, the next stages of data collection (resident and visitor interviews) began as the search for a better-fitting theoretical approach continued. An expanded search of the literature showed that in the wider field of leisure studies, British research has tended to rely on sociological theories (for example, Roberts, 1999; Rojek, 1995; Wynne, 1998). These are useful as they contend that there are serious limitations on individuals acting as free agents in their leisure, as the 'choices' people make are profoundly influenced by economic and political structures. However, the more I listened to the participants as the

¹ Mintel is a consumer, media and market research group

qualitative data was collected, the clearer it became to me that the research required a conceptual framework which was capable of recognising not only individual agency or structural factors, but also social and material agency (Pickering, 1995). Furthermore, the interviewees demonstrated that a satisfactory theory would need to be capable of recognising the interdependence of various factors.

It was at this time that I was directed¹ to affordance theory. Mannell and Kleiber (1997) had written briefly (two paragraphs) about ‘leisure affordances’ but only as a contrast to ‘constraints’ and so their approach was not initially considered as especially helpful. However, as I subsequently reviewed the wider literature on *affordances* its strengths, emerging from re-conceptualisations in other disciplines, became immediately apparent.

Affordance theory is an approach which has begun to warrant some attention in leisure studies, (for example, Yates and Littleton, 1999, on understanding computer game cultures), having its origins in the perceptual studies of Gibson (1979). He proposed that the affordances of the environment are ‘*what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill*’ (Gibson, 1979, p.127, his emphasis). Chemero (2003) conceptualises affordances as:

...relations between the abilities of animals and features of the environment. As relations, affordances are both real and perceivable but are not properties of either the environment or the animal (Chemero, 2003, p. 181).

In visitor terms, the environment includes the social as well as the physical and natural environment and so affordances can exist not only between an individual visitor and other people but also *inter alia* between visitors, artefacts and social-material practices. Affordances may be separable, but may also emerge together, sequentially or be nested one within another. Affordance theory can therefore embrace and explain psychological, sociological, ecological and cultural explanations of behaviour.

While the role of perception was central to Gibson’s notion of affordance, it is now acknowledged that affordances shape behaviour both explicitly and implicitly.

¹ I am very grateful to Dr Stephen Wallace of Plymouth University

Consequently, some may be recognised by an individual and accessible to narration (for example, ‘I saw the garden featured on television’) whereas other affordances may not. In either case, affordances create the possibility for certain forms of behaviour, whether an action, thought or feeling, or reduce the possibility of others. Perception of affordance is contingent upon attunement and attunement also makes certain affordances more powerful or likely. Attunement can vary between people, occasions and contexts and is dependent upon the individual’s past experiences, their present interests and their future goals.

On further consideration of this theoretical perspective I undertook a major re-evaluation of the conceptual framework of the research, which is reflected within the objectives of the research, the review of the literature and the findings.

1.2.4. The choice of methodology

Yates (2004) suggests that in the social sciences there are two main ways of selecting a method; first, by taking a position in relation to a specific philosophy; or secondly by taking a more practical approach. As my previous experience was in the natural sciences, I have adopted the position of a ‘bricoleur’, *‘learning how to borrow from many different disciplines’* (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p. 4¹) and therefore a pragmatic approach, based on the aim, objectives and empirical resources, was more appropriate.

An important initial consideration for the research design arose from the nature of the study - which is of a leisure experience which is ‘freely’ entered into. Therefore it seemed inappropriate to use an ‘intervention’ as carried out in an experimental design. An ethnographic approach could have been adopted, as Fielding (1993) suggests that it is a very effective way of gaining a first insight into a culture or social process. Ethnography

...is the production of highly detailed accounts of how people in a social setting lead their lives, based on systematic and long-term observation of, and conversations with, informants’ (Payne and Payne, 2004, p.71).

¹ Denzin and Lincoln ‘borrowed’ the notion of the bricoleur from Lévi-Strauss (1972).

As the motivational stage of a visit occurs mainly prior to reaching a garden, it seemed that this stage of a visit would be less accessible to observation and therefore an ethnographic approach was rejected.

Nonetheless I sought to generate rich understandings of garden visiting participation so I chose to use a mixed method approach, obtaining quantitative and qualitative data to provide comprehensive data for analysis. This offers the methodological equivalent of the biological practice of *'hybrid vigour'*, where the hybrid is an improvement on each of its parents. This was achieved through the implementation and analysis of two sets of survey data (one survey of residents and one of visitors to a garden) and two sets of interview data (again, one set with residents and one with visitors). These methods were dependent upon the assumptions that participants would not only be able to articulate but also would be willing to share their experiences of garden visiting with the researcher, whether at a distance when completing a survey or face-to-face during an interview. The data obtained was therefore in oral and written forms and could be considered elements of the participants' linguistic repertoires which are *'a set of descriptive and referential terms which portray beliefs, actions and events in a specific way'* (Wooffitt, 1993, p. 292).

The empirical data was collected in an area in and around the county of Dorset, in central southern England. I have lived in the county most of my life and therefore I am familiar with the gardens in the area. The visitor survey was carried out at Compton Acres, a garden in Poole, Dorset and the visitor interviews were undertaken at horticultural attractions in Dorset and West Sussex (Wakehurst Place). The resident survey and the resident interviews were carried out in the BH postcode area (see Figure 1.2), which covers East Dorset and a small segment of South-West Hampshire. The area is predominantly urban, based on the Poole, Bournemouth, and Christchurch conurbation. Outlying small towns, such as Wimborne, Ringwood and Swanage, together with villages, make up the remainder. There are two unitary authorities, Bournemouth and Poole and four district councils, Christchurch, East Dorset, Purbeck and New Forest. Only a small part of the New Forest District Council area falls within the BH postcode area. To the north of the area is the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to the east is the New Forest National Park. There are award-winning beaches to the south and finally in the west, is Poole Harbour, leading to the West Dorset Heritage Coast, a World Heritage Site.

Figure 1.2 The location of the research



1.3. The context of the research

Contextual sensitivity is essential to an understanding of any social phenomenon (Schutt, 1996). Particularly relevant to this research is the historical, political and environmental contexts of the study.

1.3.1. The historical background

This study reflects social conditions at the beginning of the twenty-first century, but as Walsh (1998) argues, culture is shaped by the conditions of actors within society, including those which may be a product of *historic* human agency. It is beyond this study's capacity to examine the social history of England, but there are numerous texts which have described the historical development of garden design (for example, Hunt, 1964; 2000); gardening (Elliott, 2004; Fearnley-Whittingstall, 2002; Griffiths, 2000; Hadfield, 1979; Hobhouse, 2002; Penn, 1993); gardeners (Hadfield *et al.*, 1980) or garden visiting (Connell, 2005; Löfgren, 1999; Taigel and Williamson, 1993).

Connell (2005), for example, demonstrates how the upper classes visited each others' properties, including the gardens, from the sixteenth century onwards, but that it was only in the Victorian period that the '*present-day large-scale participation in country house and garden visiting as a discrete activity can be traced*' (Connell, 2005, p. 2). During the

twentieth century the number of gardens open to the public expanded with the introduction of the National Gardens Scheme and the Gardeners' Sunday Scheme¹ (Hunt, 1964). By the 1960s over a million people visited gardens each year and the first national guidebook to gardens was published.

1.3.2. The political context

The activity of garden visiting enjoys government support, irrespective of political persuasion. Unlike other leisure activities, (the hunting of foxes with dogs and consuming alcohol, for example), garden visiting is neither proscribed or subject to licensing. The gardens too, benefit from numerous political activities including the direct ownership and management of gardens: for example, the RBG, Kew is a non-departmental public body with exempt charitable status under the National Heritage Act 1983 (Board of Trustees of the RBG, Kew, 2005). The garden receives a substantial proportion of its annual funding as grant-in-aid from its sponsoring department, the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, (DEFRA). English Heritage and many local authorities also have responsibility for numerous gardens. Jowell (2005), the Culture Secretary, when writing about the historic and built environment, states that *'it is the duty of Government...to protect and promote it for everyone'* (Jowell, 2005, p3.) because of the cultural, economic, educational and social policy benefits.

The National Lottery began in 1994, and by 2003 over £12 billion had been allocated by the distributors, much of it to visitor attractions (Selwood and Davies, 2005). Sources of finance from the Lottery included the Millennium Commission and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Millennium Commission had a range of schemes including the Millennium Projects which contributed up to 50% of the capital cost of a development (Millennium Commission, 2003). Recipients included the Eden Project (total costs - £87m), The National Botanic Garden of Wales (NBGW) (£43.6m) and the Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place (£29.9m). Whereas the Millennium Commission has now been wound down, the Heritage Lottery Fund continues and has committed more than £400m to park and garden projects over the last 10 years (Terry, 2005). This includes The Leasowes that was awarded £1.3 million for restoration work (DMBC, 2006) in 1997. Smaller awards

¹ These two organisations had similar charitable aims and merged in 1986 (NGS, 2006).

have also been given to other gardens: for example, Painshill Park in Surrey, received £100,000.

1.3.3. The environmental context

Thompson (2003) suggests that gardens occupy a greater proportion of the land area in Britain than in any other country. Natural environmental explanations for this phenomenon include first the temperate climate experienced as a result of Britain's position on the westerly edge of Eurasia and the warming effects of the Gulf Stream. It provides a good growing environment - Dorset, for example has a growing season of 9 or more months (Ordnance Survey, 1982). Secondly, the distribution of glacial drift has created frequent changes in the underlying solid rock and consequent variation in soil types, enabling a wider variety of plants to grow. Finally he suggests that repeated glaciations led to the depletion of the range of natural flora, which encouraged the enrichment of gardens by plants brought back by Britain's long history of colonial expansion and exploration (Thompson, 2003). This final example illustrates the ultimate links between the 'natural' and the 'social'.

A tree may have grown 'naturally' in a location or may have been transplanted there by a gardener. Conversely a self-seeded plant may have been overlooked by a gardener or may have been deliberately left in-situ as part of the design. A species may be indigenous to an area, have become naturalised or reintroduced. For example, the genus *Magnolia*, was once naturally abundant in Britain, but has had to be re-introduced by gardeners. The wind and animals as well as people have carried out hybridisation of plants and the actions of gardeners as well as climate influence the shape and size of the flora. For these reasons gardens must be considered as socio-natural artefacts demonstrating social-material agency.

1.4. The structure of the thesis

The overall structure of the thesis suggests a linear sequence, however, as explained above, the research process was more dynamic than this. The expansion of the conceptual framework to include affordance theory, the results of a survey of garden visiting published mid-way through the data collection (Connell, 2004a) and the findings from the interviews in the later phases of the method, demanded an iterative process.

1.4.1. The contents of the chapters

The second part of this chapter presents information on gardens as visitor attractions, collated from the literature to provide a foundation to the main focus of the thesis.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the established theories which attempt to explain garden visiting. It begins with the motivational theories which have developed from the three approaches in psychology which are widely cited in the leisure and tourism literature, namely the behaviourist, humanist and cognitive. It then develops a critique of these theories and highlights their dependence on individual agency. In response to this critique, social and biological theories of behaviour are reviewed and thereafter, the main analytic adopted in this research, affordance theory, is described in detail.

Chapter 3 relates the methods and procedures of the data collection, beginning with the analysis of the secondary data on gardens. It then discusses the primary data collection and the rationale for using a mixed method consisting of four phases - two surveys and two sets of interviews. An overview of how the data was prepared and then analysed, using SPSS and NVivo computer software programmes, is given. SPSS is a software tool to aid the statistical analysis of quantitative data and NVivo is a programme designed to assist in the organisation and analysis of qualitative data.

In Chapters 4 to 8 the findings of the research are presented; the participants' explanatory repertoires based on the survey and interview data are drawn on, supported by sources in the literature. The initial part of Chapter 4 begins with the findings relating to the first two objectives of the research, first, by presenting secondary data identifying the gardens open to the public in England in 2002 and secondly, by using the primary data from the two surveys and sources from the literature to establish a socio-demographic profile of visitors to gardens. The remainder of the chapter follows the 'traditional' means of explaining attraction visiting by assuming the individual agency of visitors and by using survey data. It identifies the physiological and psychological benefits which people seek to obtain through visiting a garden and the factors which may influence a visit.

Chapters 5 and 6 report the participants' responses to a 'grand tour' question (Spradley, 1979), put to the participants in the visitor interviews and as an open question in the visitor

survey. The question asked simply what had made the participant visit that day. Based on their responses, Chapter 5 uses the novel perspective of describing what a *garden* affords different visitors. It therefore rejects the voluntarism or assumption of free choice inherent in using motivation theory *and* the structuralism which has been suggested as an alternative in some sociological theory.

Affordance theory suggests that affordances may be nested one within another so an affordance may not be perceived before another has been realised. This implies that prior to a visit to a garden there is likely to be further affordance. The participants' responses suggest that five main types of affordance pave the way for a visit to a garden and these are discussed in Chapter 6. They include aspects of social-material agency, such as the media and the weather. It is then proposed in Chapter 7 that it is necessary to delve deeper into the 'nest', extending the scope of perceptual experience back through visitors' lifetimes to consider affordances which participants may or may not have been able to articulate. When not stated directly by the participants, the influence of these affordances is inferred from the literature, the data and the analysis.

For clarity, affordances are treated as separate entities in Chapters 5-7, however, Chapter 7 concludes with the recognition of the multiplicity of affordances. Chapter 8 continues with this approach by identifying 'impedances' (Wallace, 2005) to garden visiting and observes how they are interconnected with affordance. It is then shown that visitors are not simply reactive but are pro-active in partially determining the nature of their environment and can therefore create affordance. The chapter maintains the affordance approach to understanding garden visiting, by considering the attunement of visitors. The final part of the chapter examines the practices visitors use to make decisions about garden visiting.

Chapter 9 presents an evaluation and discussion of the findings from the five phases of primary and secondary data collection and interprets them in the light of affordance theory. First, an evaluation of the thesis, considering the theoretical, methodological and analytical approaches used in the study is made to assess the effectiveness with which the research has been carried out. Secondly, a summary and discussion of the findings is presented and thirdly, building on this discussion, the implications of the research for practitioners are considered. Finally, further work directly arising from the study is proposed, together with

suggestions for future research that could develop the use of affordance theory in leisure and tourism studies.

1.5. Gardens

This second part of the chapter aims to provide answers to the following questions as a foundation to the main study:

- What is a garden?
- How have gardens developed into visitor attractions?
- What types of garden are open to the public?

1.5.1. Definitions of gardens

The most comprehensive definition of a garden is that of Hunt (2000), who describes a garden as follows:

A garden will normally be out-of doors, a relatively small space of ground (relative, usually, to accompanying buildings or topographical surroundings). The specific area of the garden will be deliberately related through various means to the locality in which it is set: by the invocation of indigenous plant materials, by various mode of representation or other forms of reference (including association) to that larger territory, and by drawing out the character of its site (the genius loci). The garden will thus be distinguished in various ways from the adjacent territories in which it is set. Either it will have some precise boundary, or it will be set apart by the greater extent, scope, and variety of its design and internal organization; more usually, both will serve to designate its space and its actual or implied enclosure. A combination of inorganic and organic materials are strategically invoked for a variety of usually interrelated reasons – practical, social, spiritual, aesthetic – all of which will be explicit or implicit expressions or performances of their local culture. The garden will therefore take different forms and be subject to different uses in a variety of times and places. To the extent that gardens depend on natural materials, they are at best ever-changing (even with the human care and attention that they require above all other forms of landscape), but at worst they are destined for dilapidation and ruin from their very inception. Given this fundamental contribution of time to the being of a garden, it not only

exists in but also takes its special character from four dimensions. In its combination of natural and cultural materials, the garden occupies a unique place among the arts, and it has been held in high esteem by all the great civilisations of which it has been a privileged form of expression. (Hunt, 2000, p. 14-15).

Hill (1936) describes the type of domestic garden which would be familiar to many of the participants in this research:

The English garden...is pretty much the same throughout the country. Most gardens consist of rose beds, herbaceous border, lawn, and rockery... (Hill, 1936, p1).

Contemporary definitions, however, are less specific about the contents, for example:

the domestic garden ... is an area of enclosed ground cultivated or not, within the boundaries of the owned or rented dwelling, where plants are grown and other materials arranged spatially (Bhatti and Church, 2000, p. 183).

Possibly because, as Bhatti and Church (2001) subsequently note, domestic gardens now:

... are sites of cultural consumption...shaped by changing consumerism and the production priorities of the garden industry in the form of garden centres and Do-It-Yourself (DIY) retailers who sell garden products (Bhatti and Church, 2001, p. 367).

1.5.2. The development of gardens into visitor attractions

Gardens in England which are now open to the public as attractions, developed in four main ways¹:

1. As a complement to a domestic property. Whilst many gardens were developed for the pleasure of their owners or to provide flowers, fruit and vegetables for their

¹ During the seventeenth century, commercial pleasure gardens of between 1 and 5 acres were developed in London and other major cities – although none now remain (Taigel and Williamson 1993).

households, some were deliberately created at least in part, to impress visitors by displaying the owner's wealth or their overseas travels (Page *et al.*, 2001): for example, the Leasowes.

2. As scientific collections or arboretums: for example, the University of Oxford Botanic Garden (founded in 1621).
3. As a deliberate result of municipal action in providing recreational facilities for residents. Many were created during the late, nineteenth or early twentieth centuries: for example, the Bournemouth Pleasure Gardens, Dorset.
4. As an adjunct to a plant nursery or other commercial premises.

The expansion of the number of gardens open to the public during the twentieth century resulted from the introduction of the National Gardens Scheme (NGS). The NGS is a charitable trust, founded in 1927, which co-ordinates the opening to the public of over 3,000 gardens in order to raise money for charity. Details of all the gardens are given, in what Fearnley-Whittingstall describes as *'the garden visitor's 'vade mecum'* (Fearnley-Whittingstall, 2002, p. 346) - the 'yellow book'. This actually has two forms annually, a combined edition of all the gardens opening in England and Wales and booklets for each county. Other charitable organisations, such as the Royal National Lifeboat Institute and the British Red Cross, have similar, albeit much smaller schemes.

1.5.3. Criteria for defining gardens which open as visitor attractions

The gardens sector spans a diverse group of attractions, with no single attribute to define them. Definition is complicated further, as few gardens are solely what the ETC *et al.* (2002) defines as a garden: a garden constituting an attraction in its own right or what Evans (2001) calls a 'dedicated' garden. Many are one part of an attraction, which has another draw for example, the historic house, which the garden complements. The garden may be the principal part of the attraction or it may be subsidiary. Even dedicated gardens may have subsidiary services which attract visitors, such as tearooms, plants for sale, etc. VisitBritain includes arboretum as well as botanical gardens within its definition of a garden (VisitBritain, 2005a) whereas Connell (2005) excludes urban parks from hers. She defines gardens as *'cultivated grounds open to the pleasure-seeking public, but the definition does not include urban parks, which are different in form and use'* (Connell, 2005, p.186). Gardens as a sector can therefore be extremely diverse and can be defined or characterised in several ways.

Permanency

The comprehensive definition of Hunt (2000) given above highlights not only the blending of nature and culture but also gardens' ever-changing forms over time. Whilst creating a garden was traditionally viewed as a long-term project, today, gardens are also a major feature at events. Therefore the permanency of the garden can be defined in three ways:

- Permanent – these gardens are established and maintained longer than one year. The planting may change with the season but much of their appeal may lie in their maturity. These are the gardens described in this thesis.
- Semi-permanent – these gardens are established and maintained within one year. The planting may be changed slightly with the season. This sort of garden is created at a major festival such as the Westonbirt Festival of Gardens (Leendertz, 2002).
- Temporary - these are the show gardens at, for example, the Chelsea Flower Show, (The Royal Horticultural Society 2006a). They encapsulate a garden at a particular period of time - sometimes in contradiction to nature.

Type of Garden

It is beyond the capacity of this study to examine in detail individual gardens (but see for example, Bradley-Hole, 2000; Lennox-Boyd and Perry, 1987; Taylor, 1995; Young, 1987). Nor is there any consideration of their botanic (Rae, 1996) conservation, (Pickering, 1992) research and education, (Gilberthorpe, 1987) community (Andorka, 1999) aesthetic or cultural values (Goulty, 1993). However, some description of the main types of garden may be helpful:

(a) Botanic gardens can be defined as *'an ordered and catalogued collection of plants assembled primarily for scientific and educational purposes'* (Maunder, 1991 p.140). Pisa, in Italy, is usually credited with being the earliest botanic garden (founded in 1544) and in England the University of Oxford Botanic Garden was created in 1621. Its purpose was to provide plants for students of botany and biology.

RBG, Kew was established as a result of royal interest in 1759 (Griffiths, 2000). The garden rapidly achieved international acclaim due to the influence of Sir Joseph Banks who initiated plant collecting throughout the world. During the nineteenth century the garden sent economic plant specimens throughout the Empire, including seedlings of the rubber tree (*Hevea brasiliensis*) to Sri Lanka and Malaysia (RBG, Kew, 2006a). This

traditional role was later taken over by specialist agricultural centres, leaving Kew and other botanic gardens to experience a serious decline, particularly during the middle years of the twentieth century. Since then, however, the adoption of new roles of conservation and public education, have led to a revival in their fortunes. Planting is often arranged by taxonomic criteria or country of origin, rather than aesthetically.

(b) Arboreta: an arboretum is an *'area set aside for the growing and effective display of all the different kinds of worthy ornamental trees, shrubs, vines and other plants which can be grown in a given area, their maintenance, proper labelling and study'* (Wyman, 1971, p. 69). An arboretum differs from a botanical garden in that the emphasis is on growing woody plants.

(c) Historic Gardens: since Gallagher (1983) conducted her survey of historic gardens, the Preliminary and Interim List of Gardens and Parks of Outstanding Historic Interest upon which she based her selection of gardens has been replaced by the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England. In October 2002 there were 1531 historic parks and gardens recorded in the Register which is maintained by English Heritage (English Heritage 2002). Approximately 10% of properties are of international importance and classified as Grade I. Around 30% are considered of exceptional historic interest and are awarded Grade II* status. The remainder are identified as of sufficient interest to merit national designation Grade II.

The Register's value is derived from the obligation on local planning authorities that they *'should protect registered parks and gardens in preparing development plans and in determining planning applications'* (Hampshire County Council, 2000, p. 13). When compiling the Register, English Heritage is not limited to gardens which open to the public but it does consider only *'the more permanent elements in the landscape such as landform, built structures, walks and rides, water features, structural shrubberies, hedges and trees and not the ephemeral, shorter-lived plantings of herbaceous perennials, annuals, roses, and most shrubs'* (English Heritage 2002b).

Ownership

Private owners and not-for-profit organisations, such as charitable trusts and educational establishments now dominate the gardens sector (Connell, 2005). The principal owner of

gardens in the United Kingdom (UK) is the National Trust. It looks after 200 gardens and 67 landscape parks in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This is *'the greatest collection of gardens ever held by one body'* (Thomas, 1987, p 11). Visiting is open to both members of the charitable trust (who gain free admission) and to non-members. Details of all its properties are given in a handbook, which is sent annually to all members.

English Heritage *'exists to protect and promote England's spectacular historic environment and ensure that its past is researched and understood'* (English Heritage, 2006). It is part-funded by the Government and from revenue earned from members and visitors to over 400 historic properties. Members gain free access to the properties. It has 21 properties which have gardens as a part of the attraction, of which one is in Dorset - Portland Castle. The former kitchen gardens at the Castle were overgrown and closed to the public but in 2002 they were regenerated as part of English Heritage's Contemporary Heritage Gardens Programme (The Garden, 2001).

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) is *'the UK's leading gardening charity dedicated to demonstrating excellence in horticulture and promoting gardening'* (Royal Horticultural Society, 2006a, p8). Also dependent on its membership for funding, it owns four gardens, including Wisley in Surrey, all of which are open to the public as well as members. Through an arrangement, individual RHS members also have free admission to about 80 other gardens in England, at various times of the year. The RHS is responsible for several flower shows, including the Chelsea Flower Show and like the National Trust supports an extensive range of events at gardens throughout the year.

Gallagher (1983) suggested that ownership is *'a prime determinant in the organisation of garden opening'* (Gallagher, 1983, p. 1). It is important as it influences funding and grant aid criteria, for example, the Lottery and the European Regional Development Fund. The ETC (2000) suggest that external funding can lead to a tendency for new build and extensions rather than refurbishment and improvement projects. Similarly the subsidising of entry costs at some publicly owned attractions can undercut admission charges for gardens solely dependent on visitor income.

Limits on public access

Although few gardens were developed or maintained for commercial reasons, many are now dependent to a greater or lesser extent on visitor income. However, gardens attached to another commercial venture, for example, a plant nursery, are least likely to require payment of an entrance fee. Local authorities usually make no individual charge for entry to most public spaces and country parks (opened under the Countryside Act, 1968), but they do charge for some gardens. Owners opening their gardens for the NGS do so for the pleasure of sharing it with fellow enthusiasts, but they also aim to raise money for charity (NGS, 2002a) and hence make an admission charge.

The numbers of days a garden opens *per annum* ranges from some which open for charity for just a few days each year, to those operating commercially and open every day throughout the year. In 1998, gardens were open to the public for an average of 215 days (ETC *et al.*, 1999) yet the average number of days when maximum visitor capacity was achieved was just 6 days, lower than any other attraction sector.

1.6. Chapter summary

This chapter has been divided into two parts. The first has introduced the thesis structure by setting out the aims and objectives of the research and the significance of and rationale for carrying out the study. Then a brief history of the research and the structure of the document have been described in order to familiarise the reader with the contents of the thesis. The second part of the chapter provides an overview of gardens as visitor attractions in England. By defining gardens and describing their main characteristics, it provides a background to the research.

Chapter 2 - The concepts explaining participation behaviour

2.1. Introduction

This research aims to explain participation in garden visiting, as it has been a neglected aspect of leisure research. There are the works by Gallagher (1983) and Connell (2004a, 2004b, 2005) who each made contributions as part of wider studies of gardens and garden visitors. Their findings are noted in later chapters - however, neither situated their studies within a theoretical perspective. This literature review therefore examines the conceptualisations which could inform the empirical results of this study. Searle (2000) suggests that there are not many theories which explain leisure behaviour, but that there *'is a large body of literature that has borrowed theories from other, more established disciplines'* (Searle, 2000, p. 138). These disciplines are primarily psychology and sociology. Psychological theories have been used mainly to describe the motivation and constraints of leisure behaviour. This approach has especially dominated North American research, although it has also been influential in Great Britain, particularly in the visitor attraction sector. In the wider field of leisure studies, British research has tended to rely on traditional sociological theories. This project whilst accepting the value of aspects of each approach attempts to theorise alternatives from emerging social theories.

The chapter begins with a review of the motivational theories which have developed from the three approaches in psychology which are widely cited in the leisure and tourism literature, (namely the behaviourist, humanist and cognitivist). It then examines the critique of these theories and highlights their dependence on individual agency. The review then turns to the traditional social theories of Durkheim and Weber and their contribution to an understanding of social influences. This leads to an examination of the conflict between structure and human agency, for as Rojek argues, although society both *'orders and controls'* the individual, there is also *'disorder and fragmentation'* in leisure (Rojek, 1995, p. 36). Rojek suggests that the concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1979) can reveal how this differentiated behaviour is generated. Bourdieu's work is grounded in everyday practice, which is particularly appropriate to this research, as it too is concerned with the

commonplace and mundane factors which are nonetheless extremely influential in garden visiting.

Many of the factors influencing potential visitors to gardens derive from the agency of others, be it the social agency of family and friends or that of organisations, such as the National Trust. Also, and habitually overlooked in visitor attraction studies, there are the effects of material agents (Pickering, 1995) such as the weather, which in this study is shown to be important in several different ways. For completeness the review also includes an examination of possible hereditary influences on leisure behaviour. It is beyond current knowledge to investigate these in any detailed way, but their inter-relationship with social-material factors requires that the growing body of research, which considers a genetic disposition to leisure behaviour in a subjective form, be discussed.

The methods used in this research (detailed in the next chapter) are wholly dependent upon the self-reporting of the participants and it is their perceptions which consequently form the basis of the analysis. It was decided to employ the concept of affordance, that is not only inclusive of social and material practices (Wallace, 2004) but which allows both human and non-human agency. Affordance theory arises from the work of Gibson (1979) who focuses on perception and cognition within the everyday actions of individuals in their environments. This approach has not yet been widely employed in leisure research, so a section includes a review of the studies which have been identified that have adopted it.

2.2. Motivational theories

Pearce (2005) suggests that motivation has always been an important topic of leisure and tourism study, but that no widely agreed conceptual framework has emerged. His claim is supported by the various ways which the concept of 'motivation' has been referred to throughout the leisure and tourism literature. Examples from the visitor attraction sector include:

- 'motivation' (Neirotti *et al.*, 2001 – 1996 Summer Olympics)
- 'motivations' (Fluker and Turner, 2000 – whitewater rafting; Herbert, 2001 - literary places; Laws, 2001 – heritage sites);
- 'motives' (Crompton and McKay, 1997 – festival events; Getz, 1997 – events);
- 'motivators' (Swarbrooke, 2002 – all visitor attractions) and
- 'needs' (Fluker and Turner, 2000 – whitewater rafting; Getz, 1997 – events).

As there appears to have been no research which has used 'motivation' as an analytic in relation to participation in garden visiting, these studies and others from the wider context of leisure were examined for possible theories to support this research. This demonstrated that leisure and tourism researchers have drawn mainly on three different psychological traditions, the behaviourist, humanist and cognitive.

2.2.1. The behaviourist approach

The founders of the behaviourist school include Watson (1924), who argued that psychological study should be based on objective observation and the measurement of behaviour. Behaviour was therefore explained in terms of measurable stimuli and the response to them. Two principal forms of behaviour were identified, the first, respondent behaviour, is triggered automatically by particular environmental stimuli and includes reflexive actions (the classical stimulus-response). The second, operant behaviour, involves the muscles under voluntary control and therefore results in actions such as walking or talking (Gross, 1996). The likelihood of a particular behaviour occurring depends on the past consequences of such behaviour. If the consequences are pleasurable, this makes the behaviour more probable (a reinforcer) and conversely unpleasant consequences make it less likely. Two types of reinforcer have been identified, primary and secondary. Primary reinforcers satisfy the basic human needs of food, water etc, whereas secondary reinforcers acquire their reinforcing properties through learning. Examples include objects, such as money or tokens; social reinforcers for example, praise or facial expressions and activity reinforcers (Gross, 1996).

2.2.2. The humanistic approach

The humanistic theory of Maslow (1987) may not directly inform this research but is included in this review, because it is the most often quoted theory in tourism studies (Ryan, 1995) in spite of its formulation in the context of work rather than leisure. Despite the frequent citation, it has rarely been tested empirically, (an exception is Pearce [1982; 2005]). Maslow believed that people are subject to several, distinctly different kinds of motivational states or forces. The first were those that ensure survival by satisfying basic, physical needs. The second set of needs, he categorised as safety needs (for example, security, stability, freedom from fear, need for structure etc.) There were also those that satisfied psychological needs such as for love and belongingness. There were then those

which promoted an individual's esteem and cognitive needs. Finally, there were aesthetic and self-actualisation needs, or as Maslow described it '*becoming everything that one is capable of becoming*' (Maslow 1987, p22). He theorised that these needs are universal and that they are arranged in a hierarchy with the deficiency needs at its base. Only when these are satisfied, are individuals likely to focus on the growth needs, which are near the top of the apex. Maslow's theory is valuable in that it provides a more comprehensive view of motivation than theorists who had concentrated on basic physiological needs. However, the reliance on phenomenology for the formation of the theory means that it is restricted to the level of conscious awareness (Eysenck, 1998).

2.2.3. The cognitive approach

In contrast to behaviourism or the humanistic approach, cognitive theorists have been united by a similar interest in human information processes. Cognition refers to:

...all those ways in which knowledge of the world is attained, retained and used, including attention, memory, perception, language, thinking, problem solving, reasoning and concept formation ('higher order' mental activities) (Gross, 1996, p.7).

Human agency has been conceptualised as operating in three different ways, the first is that people are entirely independent agents of their own actions, (autonomous agency) and therefore have free will. The second, mechanical agency, suggests that external influences operate mechanistically on action, so humans are totally rational and operate like computers (McLeod, 1991). However, Bandura (1986, 1989) argues that people do not simply react to their immediate environment, in a mechanistic action, instead most of the behaviour of an individual is purposive and regulated by forethought, so an individual can anticipate the likely consequences of prospective actions. Bandura describes this third form of agency, which he calls '*emergent interactive agency*', as one in which '*action, cognitive, affective, and other personal factors, and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants*' (Bandura, 1989, p. 1175).

Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) therefore incorporates an interactional model of three factors - environmental events, personal factors and behaviour, which all interact

with each other. He suggests that theories which refer only to external events influencing and being influenced by human agency:

...neglect the portion of causation showing that the environmental events, themselves, are partly shaped by people's actions. Environments have causes as do behaviours... people partly determine the nature of their environment and are influenced by it (Bandura, 1989, p. 1182).

Therefore he argues any explanation of the determinants of people's actions must also include self-generated influences, i.e. cognitions, as a contributing factor. He describes several capabilities which, humans have to perform cognitive actions, namely:

- To symbolise – thoughts are symbolic constructions, for example, through language, numbers and musical notation. By manipulating symbols rather than their physical counterparts people can, amongst other things, consider the consequences of their actions, without actually carrying them out.
- Forethought – by representing foreseeable outcomes symbolically, people can change future consequences into current motivators.
- Vicarious capability – learning occurs not only directly, but vicariously as well, for example, through the media.
- Self-regulatory capability – much behaviour is motivated and regulated by personal standards or external influences.
- Self-reflective capability – by reflecting on personal knowledge and experiences, people can gain generic knowledge of themselves and the world around them.

Thoughts, therefore, not only influence action but also are capable of being influenced. Such influence he argues may come from the 'environment' of the individual, but he says *'for the most part, the environment is inoperative until it is actualized by appropriate action'* (Bandura, 1986, p. 28). For example, books, he says, do not affect people unless they select and read them. (His proviso of 'for the most part' is pertinent when social and material agency are also considered see Section 2.4 below).

In concentrating on cognitively-based motivators Bandura includes the role of reinforcers described above, but he suggests that the instigator of action can be anticipation of the

reinforcer, not just the sight of the actual incentive. In addition, social cognitive theory recognises biologically based motivators as well as those which are cognitively based. He highlights, however, how they may interact, by giving the example of the sight of appetising food which may prompt people to eat, even though they are not hungry.

2.2.4. Emotion and motivation

Frijda (2000) describes the relationship between motivation and emotion as a '*perennial problem*' (Frijda, 2000, p. 67), because motivation is viewed as a cause of emotion, or an aspect of it or also as one of its consequences. Izard and Ackerman suggest that '*the emotions system constitutes the primary motivational system for human behaviour*' (Izard and Ackerman, 2000, p. 253), although they acknowledge that few theorists adopt this extreme view. Bagozzi *et al.* (2002) describe an emotion as:

... a mental state of readiness that arises from cognitive appraisals of events or thoughts, has a phenomenological tone, is accompanied by physiological processes, is often expressed physically (for example in gestures, posture, facial features) and may result in specific actions to affirm or cope with the emotion, depending on its nature and meaning for the person having it (Bagozzi et al., 2002 p.37).

Moods are not as directly coupled with action tendencies and are therefore less likely to be a motivator (Bagozzi *et al.*, 2002). Conventionally a mood differs from an emotion in that it is longer lasting (from hours to days); is lower in intensity and non-intentional (that is has no specific object or referent).

It is often suggested that there are discrete emotions for example, joy, interest, fear and disgust. Izard and Ackerman (2000) state, that for healthy people in a safe and comfortable environment, 'interest' is experienced for more time than any other emotion. Interest, they argue, motivates exploration and learning and therefore guarantees a person's engagement with their environment. Similarly it is suggested that it is the dominant emotion caused by a work of art, but this can be hidden by other emotions mixed with it, such as enjoyment. The content of a representational artefact can be perceived only when it has been understood as an artefact, which therefore elicits interest in it (Tan, 2000). Others argue that much of the analysis of emotions carried out by psychologists has been culture-

dependent and that language has a central role in conceptualising emotions (Strongman, 1996).

2.2.5. Combining theoretical approaches

A response to the problem of the differences between behaviourist and cognitive approaches has been to suggest a rapprochement. Weinberger and McClelland (1990) for example, posit that there are in fact two kinds of motivation, operating either one at a time or together. They argue that the first kind, are the biologically-based needs which are innate, but which have individual differences due to genetics and/or early learning. The second kind, are the cognitively-based motives arising from conceptions of the self.

A similar approach is that of Gnoth (1997) who also suggests that motivation should no longer be conceived in a singular manner. He introduces what he describes as a new model of tourism motivation and expectation formation, which he says parallels the approaches of behaviourist and cognitive psychologists. Whilst much of his study is concerned with the wider concept of expectation formation, based on attitudes, it also recognises that both motives and motivations have a role in tourism motivation. He distinguishes between 'motives', which refer to '*the generic energizer for behaviour*' (Gnoth, 1997 p.291) and 'motivations', which indicate '*object-specific preferences*' (ibid. p.292). He suggests that '*the differentiation permits cultural, social, and situational influences to come to bear on the motivational process*' (ibid. p.300). 'Motives' are therefore conceptualised by Gnoth in a completely opposing way to that of Weinberger and McClelland.

Gnoth does not appear to have published any empirical data in support of his new model, but in a research note, McCabe (2000a) seems to support the motivational aspects described by Gnoth through a small pilot study of day visitors to the Peak National Park. Using a qualitative rather than the usual quantitative approach to visitor attraction motivation, he considered that there were two types of actions in the day-visitor decision process, both of which, he wrote '*appeared to have motivated dimensions*' (McCabe, 2000a p.1050). The first was the decision to act or go out, which he described as the behavioural 'need' characterised by Gnoth (1997) as motive. The other was the place, or activity-type decisions indicated by cognitive, situational motivations. He concluded that '*tourist motivation is not characterized as being either behaviourist or cognitivist, but is a combination of both dimensions*' (McCabe, 2000a, p. 1050).

2.2.6. Leisure constraints theory

Leisure constraints were originally conceptualised as a means to understand the barriers to activity participation (Samdahl and Jekubovich, 1997). Jackson defined constraints as *'factors that are assumed by researchers and perceived or experienced by individuals to limit the formation of leisure preferences and to inhibit or prohibit participation and enjoyment in leisure'* (Jackson, 1997, p.461). As this conceptualisation developed from a similar social psychological approach to motivation it also informed this research, but as the emphasis of this study is on participation rather than non-participation, no further details are given here.

2.2.7. The value of these approaches to this research

Opinions have been expressed in the leisure and tourism literature of the fundamental importance of motivation as a concept (Pearce, 2005) and authors have expressed their views as to the key elements of a sound theory of tourist motivation (Pearce, 1982, 1993, 2005). The assumption implicitly held therefore is that such an objective is achievable. However, as Pearce (1982) originally suggested, there are two alternative stances. First, that all behaviour is motivated, in which case the task of motivation theories is to account for the entire range of human behaviour. Iso-Ahola and St-Clair (2000) for example support this approach by suggesting that habitual behaviour is motivated. The alternative is that *'many behaviours are not strictly motivated but are the product of reflex actions, habits, and environmental and external forces'* (Pearce, 1982, p. 49) and can therefore be excluded from a theory of motivation. Whilst psychologists in a laboratory setting may be able to distinguish between different forms of motivated or unmotivated behaviour, this is impossible for this research. Furthermore as it uses the participants' perceptions as its primary data source it cannot distinguish between needs, motives, motivations, cognitions, emotions etc.

A second issue concerns the methods used to collect empirical data on leisure motivation. Gallagher noted that visitor surveys often:

...fail to elicit the detailed reasons which motivate trips because visitors are unable to articulate them. They respond with vague statements at the highest level of generality (Gallagher, 1983, p. 35).

Pearce has highlighted the bias of both tourist and researcher and suggests that *'Motivational accounts of tourist behaviour... have no ultimate recourse to the "correct" explanation of the phenomenon'* (Pearce, 1982 p.51). All of the examples of visitor attraction motivational research cited above used questionnaires, for example:

Respondents were presented with the 31 motivation items and requested to "please circle the number that best reflects how much you agree with each statement" on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (Crompton and McKay, 1997, p. 432).

Respondents were therefore only able to 'confirm' what a researcher already assumed about the concept of motivation. McCabe (2000b) expressed similar doubts in a second evaluation of his pilot study. He undertook firstly, open-ended, semi-structured interviews and secondly, post hoc conversations, with day visitors to the National Park. Having extensively reviewed the literature on the motivations for leisure and leisure travel he expresses his concerns about the validity of the methods used to measure and test the construct of motivation. He asks what can we reasonably expect to 'know' by asking individuals about their motivations and needs, are they part of our consciousness or simply the repetition of needs suggested by *'our immediate social peers, the wider contexts of our particular social realities in this place at this time, and the influence of the media?'* (McCabe, 2000b, p.215). He then questions whether motivation can even be a legitimate subject of inquiry in the context of leisure and leisure travel.

The principal argument, however, against adopting motivation as a conceptualisation is that the traditional psychological theories which have been used in leisure and tourism studies have a common assumption of the individual as agent. Rojek (1995) argues that there is an ambiguity about leisure experience, relating to human agency. Leisure behaviour, he states is often referred to in terms of freedom, choice or self-determination but he refutes this, suggesting that what we understand by the term, leisure, is socially conditioned which makes these associations of 'freedom', 'choice' and 'self-determination' (his punctuation, p1), insupportable. The next section therefore considers the role of society and its influence on participation in garden visiting.

2.3. Social theory

Weber (1962) argues that ultimately society is a collection of individuals whose interactions with one another constitute social life. Their actions establish structures (not necessarily intentionally), which then establish the conditions for subsequent actions. Structures therefore represent relationships between individuals and accordingly may not be autonomous entities but have a supra-individual character. Walsh suggests that it is *'a common commitment to shared values, interests and purposes (i.e. culture) on the part of actors which leads them to regulate and organize their interactions on a shared motivational basis'* (Walsh, 1998, p. 22).

Others argue that the important elements of a social structure, such as class, are not these 'surface' rules and social institutions, but the mechanisms and processes, which are hidden from view which underpin social life. The term 'structure' can therefore be problematic and has been applied in a variety of ways (see Stokowski, 1994 for a summary). In this research 'structures' refer to *'systems of generative rules and resources... structures only exist as the reproduced conduct of situated actors with definite intentions and interests'* (Giddens, 1979, p. 127). Structures are therefore not 'entities' in the way of a group or organisation and consequently it is only the effects they cause that can be observed. However, once structures have been created by human activity, they may continue to shape the conditions of actors within society, even though they may be a product of historic human agency.

Sociologists have differed in whether social life is mainly determined by social structures (individual agency is therefore understood as an outcome of structures), or on the other hand, whether individuals have the capacity to construct and reconstruct their worlds. A third way, is that of Giddens who recognises the complementarity of the two processes. For Giddens, the 'structuration' of social practices occurs through *'the day-to-day activity of social actors draws upon and reproduces structural features of wider social systems'* (Giddens, 1984, p.24).

Another contribution finding a middle way between agency and structure is that of Bourdieu (1977); he too, recognised that structures can constrain or enable, as they allow for personal agency as well (Baert, 1998). Several of Bourdieu's concepts are useful,

particularly 'habitus' and 'cultural capital'. The habitus generates thoughts, perceptions and actions consistent with it, but not, he argues, by a '*mechanical determinism*' (Bourdieu, 1977 p. 95). Within a habitus, objective distinctions (for example between social classes) are internalised by an individual as differing but lasting dispositions:

...durably inculcated by the possibilities and impossibilities, freedoms and necessities, opportunities and prohibitions inscribed in the objective conditions (which science apprehends through statistical regularities such as the probabilities objectively attached to a group or class) ... in a sense pre-adapted to their demands (Bourdieu, 1980, p 54).

These '*structuring dispositions*' (Bourdieu, 1980 p. 52) are constituted through practice, in the way everyday actions are accomplished (see also Greeno [1994] and Ingold [2000] below). So the habitus acquired in a family underlies the structuring of experiences at school and this transformed habitus then underlies all subsequent structuring and restructuring of experiences. The habitus is thus a product of history:

...in each of us, in varying proportions, there is part of yesterday's man; it is yesterday's man that inevitably predominates in us, since the present amounts to little compared with the long past in the course of which we were formed and from which we result (Bourdieu, 1977, p79).

This structuring process, which is neither wholly conscious, nor wholly unconscious, produces differing attitudes towards aspects of social life, for example, culture. So it therefore produces differing abilities to utilise cultural objects and practices, which results in a different logic of cultural practice. This he argues causes an individual to adjust their aspirations and to reject as unthinkable an activity which is improbable - '*to refuse what is anyway denied and to will the inevitable*' (Bourdieu, 1980, p 54). Based on this argument, the close correlation between for example, social class and garden visiting (Gallagher, 1983) is brought about by the cognitive structures of the habitus shaped by the unequal distribution of economic capital and the purchasing ability which this determines. The habitus can therefore demonstrate how an individual's actions are generated, shaped, sustained, and modified by society.

Ravenscroft *et al.*, (2005) similarly argue that people's leisure 'choices' have been '*circumscribed by their internalisation of existing social structures*' (Ravenscroft *et al.*, 2005 p.322). So '*class, gender, race, sexuality, disability, work and to a lesser extent religious affiliations*' (ibid.) generate social practices that constrain an individual's actions and as a result 'choice' when related to particular activities is a '*highly constrained and constructed term*' (ibid.). Therefore, they suggest, people do not have any significant element of freedom in their leisure participation (see also, for example, Clarke and Critcher, 1985; 1995).

For some critical theorists, leisure choices are illusory not only because of structuration, but because leisure has become commoditised '*and pervaded by consumer values that are propagated by, and ultimately serve the interests of the commercial providers*' (Roberts, 1999, p. 164). Leisure, it is argued, has become developed, packaged and advertised for consumption within lifestyles determined by the mass market and '*individuals are trapped within the ideology of consumerism and capitalism*' (Haywood *et al.*, 1995, p. 225). Tomlinson (1990), however, states that the debate about consumption has operated at the most general levels and has therefore overlooked factors such as cultural transformation; shifts in values; and changes in class, regional, generational and gender identities. Rojek (1995), too warns that leisure should not be perceived as an area of 'false consciousness', 'manipulation' and cynical control but rather as one in which there is a sense of 'liminality' as that '*carries with it the idea of thresholds of freedom and control rather than of absolutes*' (Rojek, 1995, p. 103). He therefore endorses Tomlinson's view when he suggests that whilst society both 'orders and controls' the individual, there is also 'disorder and fragmentation' in leisure.

2.4. Supplementary forms of agency

So far it has been shown that to understand participation in garden visiting, consideration must be given to human agency and the structures of the society in which that agency has developed and is situated. Veal summarises the 'agency/structure' debate in leisure studies as:

...the extent to which individuals are free agents, exercising free choice in their lives, including their leisure lives, and the extent to which such choice is

constrained and manipulated by the capitalist, economic and political structure, which is beyond the control of the individual (Veal, 1997, p. 20, his emphasis).

This project goes further and argues that there are other forms of agency than individual agency and that an appreciation of these makes a valuable contribution to an understanding of garden visiting. Bourdieu's work is particularly appropriate to this research as it is grounded in everyday practice and concerned with the commonplace. This thesis argues that what are taken to be mundane factors are however, extremely influential in garden visiting. The next section of the review therefore considers other forms of agency, relating to the social and natural world. Whilst social agency has been quite widely recognised in leisure studies, material agency (Pickering, 1995) does not appear to have been considered to any extent.

2.4.1. Social agency – individual and collective

Social agency, as used here, can be recognized at different levels of influence. The proximal level of social agents are those people closest to an individual, for example, a visitor's family, friends, work colleagues, fellow allotment association member etc. The second and more distal level comprises organisations for example, the National Trust, which may have influence over people who choose to visit their properties. Whilst employees of the organisation may have individual social agency - for example, the volunteer who describes what plants are presently at their best and where to see them, Wilson (2005) suggests that such organisations also have collective social agency, in that *'there is some intuitive sense in which they are "higher-level" entities than individual persons'* (Wilson, 2005, p. 21). An example of this form of agency would be the policies, determined nationally, by the National Trust. At the most distal level is the government and other national institutions which impact on the lives of everyone, irrespectively. They are distinct from the structures referred to above, in that the social agents (for example, employees) are themselves observable, rather than in the case of structures, in which only their effects can be observed.

2.4.2. Material agency

Whilst there has been a broad interest in socio-technical systems, that is the interaction between people and technology, there has been a more one-sided interest in the interactions between nature and society. Most environmental studies have concentrated upon

anthropogenic influences on the environment rather than the reverse. Pickering (1995) however emphasises the importance of the effects of the physical environment on people by using the term ‘material agency’, that is ‘agency that comes at us from outside the human realm and that cannot be reduced to anything within that realm’ (Pickering, 1995 p. 6). His example of the impact of the weather is fortunate, as it is particularly relevant to the context of visiting gardens in England, with its variable weather patterns. This is distinguished from a National Trust Guidebook, for example, which is treated as a form of social agency, because its influence is socially mediated and therefore derived from the ‘human realm’. The distinction is not critical because ‘affordance’ is conceptualised as inclusive of each form of agency.

Turning to the natural environment and interactions between species, the work of Reed (1988) is interesting because he shows that plants are not inanimate, so they too can have agency. An obvious example is that of the common stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*) which ‘stings’ you, if you brush against it. Plant agency is also demonstrated in research by Haviland-Jones *et al.* (2005) on the affects of flowers as powerful inducers of positive emotions. In separate studies, individual flowers or bunches of flowers, or non-floral stimuli were presented to people in different situations and their reaction, most notably the elicitation of a ‘Duchenne’ or true smile were observed. In the first study when a bouquet of flowers was presented to female participants, a 100% response rate was observed within the 5 second time period after presentation. This was significantly different from the response to being presented with a basket of fruit or multi-wicked candle gift. The presentation of a single flower in an elevator to men and women, showed a similar response, with no significant difference between genders.

Flowers form a key element in this project and their effects upon people will therefore be explored further. Three hypotheses have been put forward. First, that the response to flowers is a simple learned association with positive social events (Haviland-Jones *et al.*, 2005). Second, there are primal neural networks in parts of the brain, that constantly process emotional information, such as visual symmetry, colour, odour and pheromones, and that such sensory stimuli are sought and can affect moods (Panksepp, 2000). Third, the association of flowers with food derives from an evolutionary response, related to early hominid survival, when flowers could predict future food supplies (Orians and Heerwagen,

1992). This evolutionary response to flowers relates to the wider theory of biophilia, which is described below.

2.5. Biological influences on leisure behaviour

Social and biological influences on leisure behaviour are so interwoven, that it can be impossible to distinguish specifically between the two. To do so is not essential to this research as it aims only to be explanatory and not to initiate change. A few aspects may be attributable, for example, sex is determined biologically, but gender is socially mediated, but most are not. The current prevailing view is of the importance of social influences, but it could be argued that the most significant macro social effects arose historically from biological differences (for example, gender from sex) and that the micro social differences between individuals, which contribute to the contemporary fragmentation of leisure experience, may also be biologically based. This justifies their inclusion in this literature review.

Genetics can influence leisure behaviour in two main ways. The first aspect arises from the human genome which is common to us all - this is responsible not just for physiological development for example, but also for instinctive behaviour, the example which is especially relevant here is biophilia, hypothesised as an innate need for other living things. This is included particularly, as it arose from the analysis of the data of the residents' survey which indicated that a natural place was the most preferred type of attraction for respondents. This result was irrespective of gender, age or any other socio-demographic variable.

The term, biophilia, was popularised by Wilson (1984) and is the proposition that *'people have a need and propensity to affiliate with nature'* (Kahn, 1997, p 53). Evolutionary psychologists argue that humans have evolved in a natural environment and that we therefore have an innate need for such environments. Much of the support for this approach comes from the work on responses to landscapes. A meta-study reported in Kaplan (1992), assessed the results of 30 individual studies into environmental aesthetics. In each case, participants were asked to rate scenes, either using black and white photographs or colour slides, on a 5-point scale which represented how much they liked the setting in the picture. The studies differed with pictures selected to reflect a continuum ranging from natural to urban, and from a wide geographic basis. Participants too varied

greatly, with the question of the familiarity of the environments to the participants being specifically of issue in several of the studies. Kaplan concludes that natural rather than human-influenced environments were preferred, with trees and water enhancing that preference. He suggests that because selection pressures operate in a direction to support human survival and since an environment lacking trees and water are less likely to, the preferences are hardly surprising. Additional support for the concept of biophilia has been given by Relf (1998) on the physiological and psychological responses to plants; Haviland Jones *et al.* (2005) on responses to flowers and Allen (2003) on the influence of companion animals.

The second genetic effect relates to differences between individuals, which may arise in part due to variation in their genetic make-up. Two studies are reported here, each arises from a project involving monozygotic (MZ) and dizygotic (DZ) twins (that is identical and non-identical twins), that examine what Bouchard and McGue (2003) label '*global behavioural phenotypes*' (Bouchard and McGue, 2003, p.4), that is, traits like cognitive ability and personality. In the first study, Waller *et al.* (1995) used the Minnesota Twin Registry to explore genetic and social sources of variation in behaviour. Participants in the Registry, a sample of twins born in Minnesota, USA between 1936 and 1955, completed amongst other inventories, a 120-item questionnaire developed to measure leisure time interests. Waller *et al.* demonstrate that identical twins (MZ) of either sex have a greater commonality of leisure interests than non-identical twins (DZ), confirming a genetic component to leisure preferences.

The participants in the second study (Maia *et al.*, 2002) were Portuguese twins, aged 12 – 25 years. They completed a questionnaire which enabled the authors to estimate sports participation and leisure-time physical activity indices. From these they calculated estimates of variance of additive genetic factors, shared environment and unique environment. They show that in males, genetic factors account for 68% of the total variance in sports participation and 63% for leisure time physical activity. In females the comparable figures are 40% and 32%. They suggest that the genetic influence could arise from the motor and somatic features, that are known to be under genetic control and that are contributing factors in sports and leisure activities. Whilst this study does not provide any specific evidence in support of a genetic influence on preferences for attraction visiting, it does demonstrate that a genetic effect may exist. Equally, of course, it may

demonstrate that social determinates are important, what it does not do is show the degree of interaction between genes and the environment.

2.6. Affordance theory

2.6.1. The rationale for employing affordance theory

This chapter has shown that there are limitations in using a conventional motivational theory as a means of explaining garden visiting. As McCabe (2000b) asked, what can we reasonably expect to ‘know’ by asking individuals about their motivation, because their responses are likely to reflect social influences? Furthermore, the theories have a common assumption of the individual as agent. As an alternative, the literature showing the importance of social agency, at a structural and a collective level, together with some examples of material agency, has been discussed. Additionally the review has offered evidence to show that some differences in people’s actions may have a genetic basis. However, each of these factors are inter-dependent and this research therefore requires a conceptual tool which is capable of recognising all of these factors and their interdependence, whilst remaining non-deterministic as to their causes. It was therefore decided to employ the concept of affordance, which is not only inclusive of social and material practices (Wallace, 2004) but is agnostic as to causation. The remainder of the chapter accordingly reviews the literature detailing the development of the concept, first on an interdisciplinary basis and then within leisure studies and finally shows how it has been used in leisure studies.

2.6.2. The development of the concept

The concept of affordance has its origins in the work of Gibson (1979) and is important here because it *‘implies the complementarity of the animal and the environment’* (Gibson, 1979, p.127). He argued that in the world outside a laboratory, there is a rich amount of information available to be perceived – especially when the perceiver is moving. He suggested that an organism has the physiological means to perceive directly and numerous studies have shown support for this proposal. Among the best known is the ‘visual cliff’ (Gibson and Walk, 1960). This involves an experimental illusion of a cliff edge which has no actual ‘cliff edge’, as a Perspex sheet provides support. Animals which walk from birth do not venture over the ‘edge’ even though they have no experience in memory to construct an image of what would happen. Children have also been shown not to chance

stepping ‘over’, as soon as they learn to walk – this has been interpreted as evidence of an innate developmental ability to respond to external stimuli. The child or animal remains on the ‘cliff top’ because it affords support and hence survival. Gibson suggested that the affordances of the environment are ‘*what it offers the animal; what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill*’ (Gibson, 1979, p.127, his emphasis).

Gibson initially focused on the physical environment and for some researchers this is the only way in which they have employed the concept: for example, Van Acker and Valenti (1989) studied the environments of children with developmental disabilities. However, Gibson extended the concept, first, to the natural environment, showing that animals afford a complex set of interactions with each other and then secondly to the social and cultural environment of people:

It is a mistake to separate the natural from the artificial as if there were two environments; artefacts have to be manufactured from natural substances. It is also a mistake to separate the cultural environment from the natural environment, as if there were a world of mental products distinct from the world of material products (Gibson, 1979, p.130).

Gibson gives as an example a postbox – he argues that differentiating between the physical structure and the phenomenal postbox which invites posting a letter, is wrong. He suggests that ‘*the real postbox (the only one) affords letter-mailing to a letter-writing human in a community with a postal system*’ (Gibson, 1979, p. 139).

Subsequently, McArthur and Baron (1983) suggest that we can recognise affordances in people, so for example, emotional expressions may be viewed as specifying a social affordance such as ‘avoid me’ or ‘help me’ rather than simply expressing that ‘I am angry’ or ‘I am afraid’ (Zebrowitz, 1990). The contribution of Greeno (1994) is valuable because he shows how symbolic representations of information can also be affordances (for example, the brown pictographic symbol of a flower that identifies a garden on a road-sign).

A further extension of the concept by Costall (1995) points to some of the ways in which affordances may be created. He argues that artefacts surround us, (including even plants)

which are shaped by human intervention, so that we live in a world created by the activities of previous generations. The artefacts can encourage or prevent us from using them in certain ways, so the affordances of artefacts are *'a focus of enduring, and cumulative, social influence'* (Costall, 1995, p. 471). He notes that the use of artefacts may not correspond to their intended function - as Thomas (1991) points out objects are *'not what they were made to be but what they have become'* (Thomas, 1991, p.4). Therefore one affordance of a garden to its creator may have been that it was a private space, but although the garden *per se* may not have changed, in its current use as a visitor attraction, that affordance may no longer exist.

In discussing the walking boot as an affordance to being in a natural environment, Michael (2000) argues:

When we take such mundane technologies into account, what we begin to see are cascades of affordances; for example, socks afford the easier wearing of boots which afford the attachment of crampons which afford the climbing of snow-covered slopes which themselves become 'affordable', that is to say, climbable. Of course, these cascades are not determined; there is no necessity in one artefact articulating with another through such affordance cascades (Michael, 2000, p. 112, his emphasis).

Kyttä (2003) further clarifies characteristics of affordances. First, she notes that they may be sequential, co-emergent or nested. As an example of the latter, she cites a computer which has keys that afford pressing and in that way produces letters which in turn enables her to write articles. Secondly, she observes that affordances may be individual or shared between people. Finally she remarks that people may *'combine physical, symbolic, social, and cultural elements into an inseparable unit'* (Kyttä, 2003, p. 77).

Further developments of Gibson's original conceptualisation have been made in other ways - one is the ecological theory of social perception by McArthur and Baron (1983), which emphasises social affordances (referred to above). Whilst their assumption that perception has an adaptive function will not be pursued here, their paper is useful for two other reasons - first, because it recognises that the perception of affordances depends upon

the attunement of the perceiver and secondly because it suggests that information in the environment can be contained in 'events'.

Attunement may be innate or develop with familiarity through learning (Hoffman *et al.*, 2005). Both Greeno (1984) and Ingold (2000) suggest that individuals learn to perceive in the manner appropriate to a culture, by 'hands-on' training in every day tasks. Where this training is common to a group of people (see Bourdieu's theory of practice and the *habitus* above) there will be an element of shared attunement. Using the example of a postbox again, a child whom has grown up in England learns to post letters in a red cylindrical postbox. If in America, they are unlikely to perceive that a blue box on a post, offers the same affordance. An individual's perceptual experience, together with their personal goals or behavioural capabilities, therefore establishes what particular features of the environment demands their attention (Zebrowitz, 1990). Furthermore Ingold (2000) suggests that a person is not just a passive recipient of information, but is '*an active agent who purposively seeks out information that would specify the meaningful properties of his... environment*' (Ingold, 2000 p.165).

A subsequent development by Baron and Misovich (1993) suggests that the perception of affordances is linked not only to attunement, but also to 'effectivities'. These are the properties of an animal which enables them to make use of an affordance (Chemero, 2003). Harrison and Tweed (2006) propose that heritage attractions have various affordances for different people depending on their physical, cultural and intellectual effectivities. A similar approach is 'body scale', based on the experiments by Warren (1984). Gibson (1979) had proposed that the properties of the environment '*have to be measured relative to the animal*' (Gibson, 1979, p.127-128) and so Warren quantified affordances for stair climbing as the ratio between leg length and riser height. Subsequently, Cesari *et al.* (2003) continuing the research on stair climbing affordances, have shown that it is not body scale but a relationship between stepping ability and riser height and that this ability varies with age. Older adults have different stair climbing abilities than young adults and children, due to less flexibility, but it was also demonstrated that they perceive the tallest step they can climb differently to younger people, even in situations in which they could climb the stairs relatively easily.

Chemero (2003) argues that abilities are not necessarily dispositions, because even when coupled with the right enabling conditions, they do not inevitably become manifest. He gives as an example the person who has the ability to walk, but falls down, even though the conditions for walking may be ideal. Chemero's study is also useful because it clarifies Gibson's original definition of affordance and furthermore, suggests that affordances are relations between animals and features of situations. To make this clear he shows how there is a relation between two people, one of who is taller than the other. The 'taller-than' is not inherent in either of them, but depends upon both people for its existence and perception. Affordance is a relation between a feature of the environment and the ability (as discussed above) of a person. Typically he suggests a person perceives only the affordance relation, so one is not normally aware of one's stair climbing abilities, until for example, one perceives the need to climb a stair. However, with training (and when so inclined) a person can perceive things about their abilities and the features of the environment.

Returning to the second aspect of affordances discussed by McArthur and Baron (1983) – events can reveal affordances and are dynamic over space and time. They propose the following characteristics of events:

...they may be fast or slow (for example, smiling vs. aging), they may be rigid or elastic (for example,, rotating vs. stretching), they may be reversible or nonreversible (for example,, rolling vs. growing) (McArthur and Baron, 1983, p. 216).

Furthermore they suggest that a perceiver can create events, for example a person can perceive some properties of an object, such as its appearance, without touching it, but by lifting it and therefore creating an event, they may perceive more, such as its weight. Chemero (2003) defines an event as a change in the layout of an affordance. This may result from a change in the environment or a person's abilities. For example, Pijpers *et al.* (2006) show that the emotional state of experimental participants on a climbing wall, plays an important role in the perceiving and realising of affordances (climbing holds) and that their perception of affordances changes as their abilities change (in this case brought about by the projection of points of light around them).

2.6.3. Development of affordance theory in leisure and tourism studies

Turning now to affordances in a leisure context, Mannell and Kleiber (1997) refer to aspects of the physical environment *and* social conditions in their ground-breaking reference to affordance in a leisure text - although they only devote two paragraphs to affordances in a section on constraint negotiation. They conceive 'leisure affordances' as '*conditions that promote and support satisfying leisure styles*' (Mannell and Kleiber, 1997 p. 345). Their definition has two drawbacks – first it relies on distinguishing between a 'leisure affordance' and other types of affordance and secondly, it suggests that the 'leisure affordance' must afford a satisfactory experience. An airplane affords travel irrespective of whether it is business or leisure travel and similarly irrespective of whether the experience of flying is a positive one or not and so their conceptualisation seems limited. However, their suggestion that personality characteristics are an element of an affordance is useful and could be viewed as a part of a person's 'abilities' in Chemero's terms.

'Leisure affordances' have subsequently been discussed by Pierskalla and Lee (1998) who propose an 'ecological perception model of leisure affordance' and Kleiber *et al.* (2005) who have probably written the most comprehensive review of affordance theory in a leisure publication. This is included in a notable book about leisure constraints and uses affordance as a secondary conceptualisation in much of the review. For example, they reject the suggestion of Mannell and Kleiber (1997) that leisure affordance is the opposite of leisure constraint. But they also criticise Pierskalla and Lee's paper for restricting its coverage to the physical environment and omitting the social environment. However, it is useful when they argue that attunement enables the individual to detect features of the environment which are the most relevant and meaningful to them in relation to their abilities and interests. For example, '*sensitivity to social affordances changes as a result of a person's characteristics, actions and interactions*' (Kleiber *et al.*, 2005, p. 236).

Kleiber *et al.* continue with the approach of Mannell and Kleiber (1997) by suggesting that 'leisure affordances' are only pleasant. They emphasise that 'leisure affordance' is a '*special kind of affordance...only where an affordance is appealing and inviting can we conceive of it as a leisure affordance*' (ibid. p. 237). A casino can afford a leisure experience, but after a gambler loses heavily, it may cease to be 'appealing and inviting'. Furthermore they link affordance with motivation by suggesting that '*Affordance*

represents the environmental conditions that elicit motivation (for example,, interest, enthusiasm, approach) in conjunction with felt needs' (ibid. p. 239).

Nonetheless their review is valuable, not only for bringing the concept of affordance to a wider audience but because they also stress that the value of the concept to leisure studies, is in what affordances specify to people about the leisure opportunities available to them. They recommend that *'future research would do well to examine ... what they perceive in the environment that makes leisure experience a distinct possibility'* (ibid. p. 241).

2.6.4. Applications of affordance theory in leisure and tourism research

To date, there are few published leisure or tourism research projects, which have employed affordance as a concept. Examples include Van Acker and Valenti (1989) mentioned above and Loucks-Atkinson (2000) who suggested a list of affordances which have been perceived by a group of individuals with fibromyalgia syndrome¹. Goodwin and Watkinson (2000) used the concept of affordance as a 'conceptual template'. They wanted to understand the significance of how students with physical disabilities *'perceived their environments and attended to the affording qualities of people, substances, surfaces, places, objects and medium'* (Goodwin and Watkinson, 2000 p. 155), in distinguishing between a good day and a bad day.

Yates and Littleton (1999) present a very useful study with a theoretical discussion on understanding computer game cultures linking affordances, effectivities and attunement with ideas from cultural studies. They argue that the concept of affordance *'provides a useful tool in explaining the situated interaction among actors or between actors and objects'* (Yates and Littleton, 1999, p. 570). Furthermore they suggest that this enables the linking of *'the situated interaction of user and technology to the wider social and cultural context which provide the conceptual systems upon which the interaction is based'* (ibid. p. 571). Their work therefore supports the adoption of the affordance concept in this research, as it demonstrates that it is capable of recognising social and material factors on the one hand and the personal 'abilities' of the garden visitors on the other and the interdependence between them.

¹ Fibromyalgia syndrome is *'a widespread musculoskeletal pain and fatigue disorder for which the cause is still unknown'* (Fibromyalgia Association UK, 2007).

2.7. Chapter summary

This chapter has developed from the need to identify appropriate concepts to explain the phenomena of garden visiting as a search of the literature demonstrated that there were limitations with the existing frameworks which could be gainfully employed. The review therefore describes motivation as a concept which is widely used in the field of leisure and tourism studies and which informed the first two phases of data collection. However, the limitations and inadequacies of the conceptualisation of motivation has led to an alternative concept: that of affordance. The review therefore discusses the social, environmental and biological influences on leisure behaviour which are integral to this approach.

Chapter 3 – The research methods

3.1. Introduction

The opening chapter of the thesis described the background to the research. In this chapter the methods employed in order to achieve the aim and objectives are described. Unlike many theses, which aim for depth of inquiry, this study deliberately seeks a broad understanding of participation in garden visiting, drawing on the knowledge of several disciplines. It also recognises that the factors which may be significant to an academic at a macro-level may be different from and even contradictory to those of a visitor at a micro-level. Therefore a research strategy which would provide both researcher-led and participant-led data was required and to achieve this outcome, a mixed method approach was taken.

Initially three phases were envisaged; one descriptive using secondary data; the second, descriptive and explanatory by means of quantitative data and the third, descriptive and explanatory through qualitative data. For reasons which are described below, this was subsequently extended to five phases including two datasets of survey data and two of interview data. In this chapter, the rationale for, and a description of, each of the methods is given and therefore a longer chapter is necessary than is often the case. Thereafter, the quantitative and the qualitative analyses are described and a summary of the primary data is given.

3.2. The research aim and objectives

The principle aim of this research is to understand participation in garden visiting.

In order to achieve this aim, four objectives were established:

1. to define and enumerate the gardens open to the public
2. to establish a socio-demographic profile of visitors
3. to identify the affordances to participation in garden visiting
4. to describe the social-material practices of garden visitors
5. to present a diagrammatic illustration of the theoretical underpinnings of the

affordance approach to garden visiting.

3.2.1. The research design

The initial literature search, which informed the statement of the aim and objectives, showed that any understanding of participation in garden visiting would need to use more than one ‘logic of enquiry’ (Blaikie, 2000). He describes four logics of enquiry; first, a deductive approach based on new hypotheses being deduced from an existing theory. As there was no clear theoretical guidance from the literature on garden visiting, this approach was rejected. Secondly, an inductive approach which begins with the collection of data from which generalisations are derived using ‘inductive’ logic. He suggests that the strategy is useful for answering descriptive questions because it seeks *‘to determine the nature of the regularities, or networks of regularities, in social life’* (Blaikie, 2000, p. 25).

Thirdly he describes a retroductive research strategy, which seeks to reveal the underlying structure or mechanism which is responsible for producing some observed regularity, but in the absence of appropriate descriptive data, there was no evidence that such a structure is the only relevant factor. Finally, the abductive research strategy seeks to provide an understanding of the social world of an actor, which may then aid a more systematic explanation of their actions. Blaikie describes this as *‘...their way of conceptualizing and giving meaning to their social world, their tacit knowledge’* (Blaikie, 2000, p. 25). This research, however, also seeks ‘meaning’ from any additional insights observed from an array of cases and from the literature and therefore an inductive approach is more appropriate, (although at some stages it benefits from the other logics as well).

Next, because participation in garden visiting is a leisure experience which is ‘freely’ entered into, it was inappropriate to use an experimental design. Accordingly research participants could not be randomly allocated to groups; instead their responses are divided into groups based on the participants’ self-identified characteristics (for example, age and enthusiasm for gardening). Comparisons are then made using a cross-sectional design, which relies on statistical controls in the analysis to establish relationships.

However, cross-sectional designs are sometimes criticised for treating human actions as determined by external forces and neglecting the role of human agency. For example Marsh writes:

The aim of explanation is not just to show high correlations between variables; ... It must also show how the actions of the people involved were the actions of conscious human beings, reacting to an environment, trying to make sense of it and pursuing various goals and actions with more or less success. Only explanations which take cognisance of the meaningful aspect of social action will satisfy us as human observers (Marsh, 1982, p. 98).

She describes three approaches by which cross-sectional designs can provide ‘meaningful’ explanations. The least effective is by only correlating socio-demographic characteristics with the phenomenon being explained. Secondly, the subjects of the study can themselves supply the meaning. This approach is sometimes criticised on the grounds that the people may not know why they act as they do or may be unable or unwilling to articulate it (De Vaus, 2001). The third approach is for the researcher to supply the meaning as they may have access to additional insights observed from an array of cases. De Vaus argues that by employing a range of such strategies in a cross-sectional design a researcher can overcome the shortcomings of any single approach. For this reason a mixed-method which includes a participant-led phase as well as one which is researcher-led, has been employed in this research.

3.2.2. Using a mixed method

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003a) argue that using mixed methods, rather than a single approach, has three advantages:

- *Mixed methods research can answer research questions that the other methodologies cannot.*
- *Mixed methods research provides better (stronger) inferences.*
- *Mixed methods provide the opportunity for presenting a greater diversity of divergent views. (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003a, p. 14 -15).*

Other arguments in support of mixed methods include those of Bryman (2004) who suggests that quantitative research can tend to produce a static view of a phenomenon, whereas qualitative research can be more processual. A static view can be valuable in uncovering regularities, which may allow a processual analysis to take place. Similarly qualitative data can help in explaining the relationships between quantitative variables and

in identifying intervening variables. However the main argument in support of a mixed method is usually cited as ‘triangulation’. ‘Triangulation’ refers to *‘the practice of employing several research tools within the same research design’* (Sarantakos, 2005, p. 145). This approach enables the researcher to consider the subject of a study from more than one perspective allowing an enrichment of knowledge and/or to test validity.

Research findings from a mixed methods study may converge and provide a new comprehension of the phenomenon by forming complementary parts of a jigsaw (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003a). However, they can result, not in corroboration but in an absence of confirmation. Two approaches have been undertaken when results are inconsistent. The first is to acknowledge the supremacy of one form of the other, for example, Miller (2003) gives primacy to the quantitative aspects because he argues *‘the inference assumptions of quantitative analysis are more systematic and complete’* (Miller, 2003, p. 441). Alternatively and this is the approach adopted in this research, any divergence will be treated as a subject for further investigation in a future research project.

Other arguments against the employment of a mixed method are based on first, that the relationship between research methods and epistemological and ontological commitments are deterministic and secondly, that quantitative and qualitative research are separate paradigms (Bryman, 2001). With regard to his first point, Bryman shows how most qualitative research has an empirical emphasis. One example he gives is that of participant observation, whereby access to the interpretations of the research participants is through extended contact with them, which implies that meaning is accessible to the senses of the researcher. Related to this point is his second, that quantitative and qualitative research are conceived as paradigms and as Kuhn (1970) argues, paradigms are incommensurable. In response to this Bryman counters that it is *‘by no means clear that quantitative and qualitative research are in fact paradigms...there are areas of overlap and commonality between them’* (Bryman, 2001, p. 445). This research rejects philosophical determinism in relation to methods and adopts a ‘bricolage’¹ approach, based on the aim, objectives and empirical resources.

¹ The terms ‘bricolage’ and ‘bricoleur’ were adopted by Lévi-Strauss (1972) and his translator notes that they have no precise equivalents in English. *‘The ‘bricoleur’ is adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks; but, unlike the engineer, he does not subordinate each of them to the availability of raw materials and*

There are various forms of mixed methods (see Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003a for a review of topologies), but Creswell *et al.* (2003) suggest that there are four main criteria for selecting a strategy:

- The implementation sequence
- The priority between data types
- The stage at which the data types are integrated
- And whether a theoretical perspective guides the entire design.

These criteria were considered in devising the strategy for this research which was initially conceived as consisting of three phases, one of secondary data relating to the horticultural attractions (objective 1), one of quantitative primary data (objectives 2 and 3) and one of qualitative primary data (objectives 3 and 4). The implementation sequence was considered in that order as the quantitative data would contribute most to describing the phenomenon of garden visiting. It therefore needed to precede any data collection which sought to explain participation. It was felt that by then collecting qualitative data, which can be less determined by the researcher and more participant informed (depending upon the method used) better quality inferences as to the explanations could be made (de Vaus, 2001). The quantitative primary data needed to be collected after the secondary data, as it was clearly essential to be able to define the types of attraction, for any survey instrument. Therefore carrying out the phases simultaneously would be unsuccessful.

Consideration then had to be given as to the priority of the three phases. It was decided that each phase should complement the others and that no one strategy should be elevated above the others – each contribution would be equally valid. Whilst there was subsequently some slight mixing of data forms (for example open questions in the survey instruments which were analysed qualitatively as well as quantitatively), the integration of the data sets occurred after the initial analysis of each data set, during the interpretation stage. However,

tools conceived and procured for the purpose of the project. His universe of instruments is closed and the rules of his game are always to make do with 'whatever is at hand', that is to say with a set of tools and materials which is always finite and is also heterogeneous because what it contains bears no relation to the current project, or indeed to any particular project, but is the contingent result of all the occasions there have been to renew or enrich the stock' (Lévi-Strauss, 1972, p. 17).

because the phases were planned as sequential, it was intended that each could inform the detailed design of the subsequent phases. The theoretical perspective as discussed in Chapter 2, would support the study.

Creswell *et al.* (2003) employs the following notation to illustrate different mixed methods strategies:

A “+” indicates a simultaneous or concurrent form of data collection.

A “→” indicates a sequential form of data collection.

Capitalisation indicates an emphasis or priority on the quantitative or qualitative data and analysis in the study.

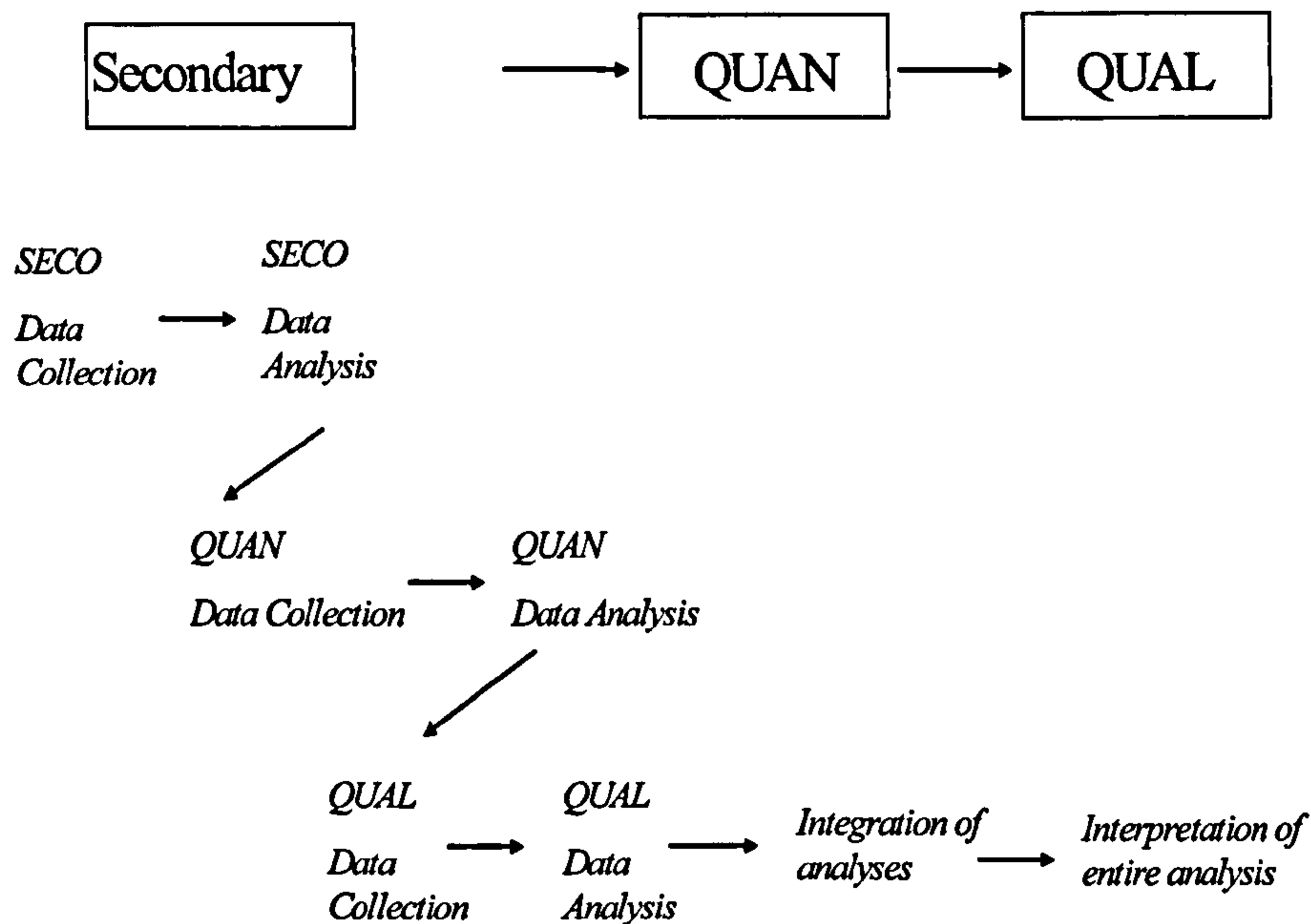
“Quan” and “Qual” stand for quantitative and qualitative, respectively, and they use the same number of letters to indicate equality between the forms of data.

Below each figure are specific data collection, analysis, and interpretation procedures to help the reader understand the more specific procedures used.

*Boxes highlight the quantitative and qualitative data collection (Creswell *et al.*, 2003, p. 214).*

Based on this notation the initial design of this research was as shown in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 The initial design of the research



3.2.3. The initial plan of the research

A search of the literature in preparation for the quantitative data collection phase showed that the data available appeared to be limited, in that it was based on visitor surveys (for example, Gallagher, 1983 on visitors to historic gardens). This type of data provides no information on the propensity to visit a garden or about people who may wish to visit but are constrained in some way from doing so. Therefore it was decided that, on balance, a survey of residents, rather than garden visitors, would provide better numeric, descriptive data. At the end of the survey instrument it was proposed that the residents would be asked if they would be willing to take part in further research and this could then provide qualitative data in a third phase. As Miles and Huberman (1994) argue, qualitative data is:

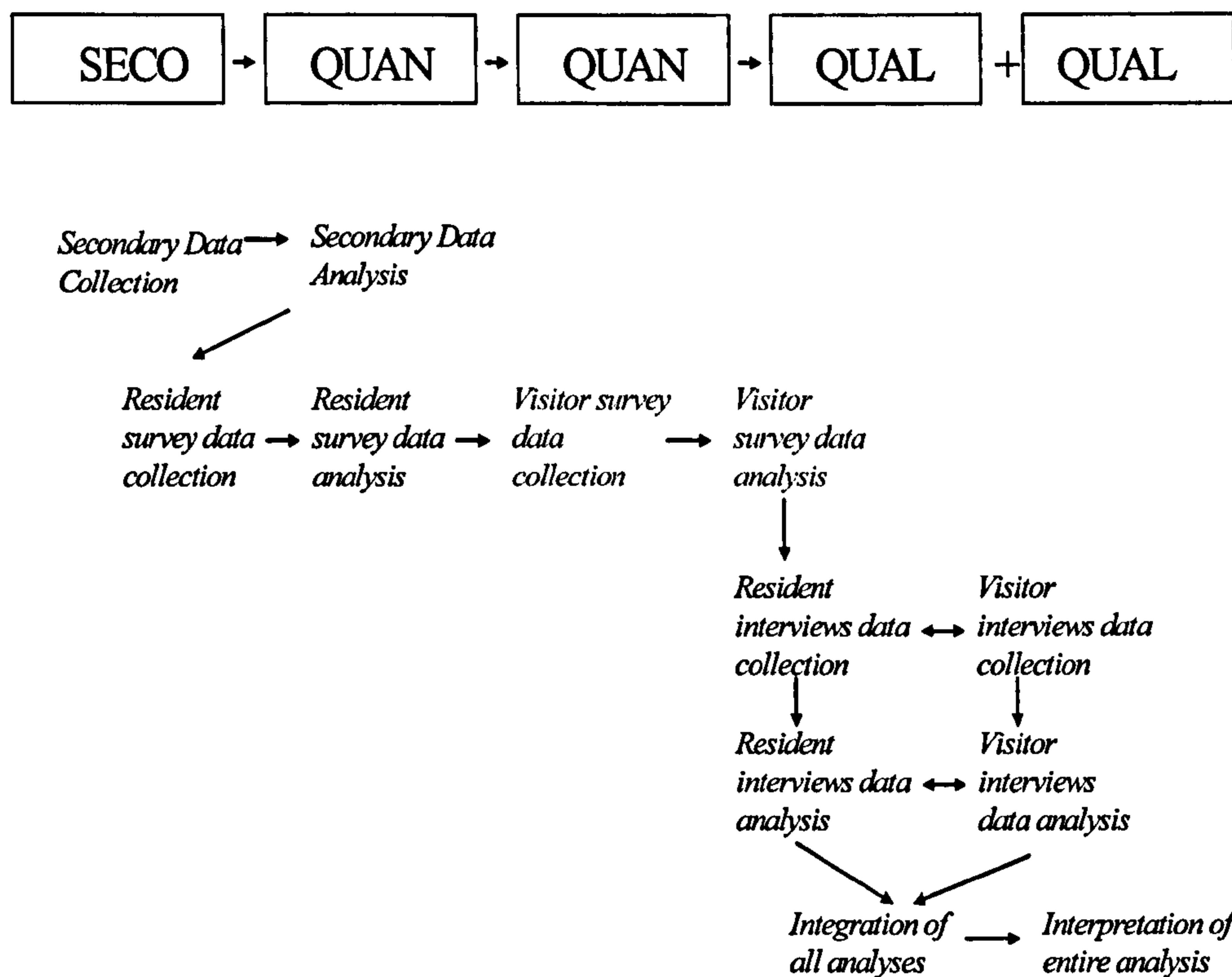
...a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts. With qualitative data one can preserve chronological flow, see precisely which events led to which consequences, and derive fruitful explanations (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 1).

3.2.4. The plan of the research as subsequently carried out.

Two amendments were subsequently made to the initial plan – adding a further quantitative and qualitative phase. During completion of the initial quantitative data analysis, a major work on visitors to gardens and their motivation was published (Connell, 2004a) and an opportunity to take part in a cultural tourism project developed by the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS) was presented. It was therefore decided to add a further quantitative phase, so that some of the findings of Connell and the first quantitative survey could be assessed. This additional phase took the form of a survey of visitors to a garden, which being a part of the ATLAS project, also allowed the opportunity to enrich the research by providing access to an extremely large data set (11,012 respondents) from visitors to cultural attractions worldwide.

The second amendment to the initial design was necessary, when it became apparent that only 9 residents from the initial resident survey were willing to take part in an interview and that the group were homogenous in terms of their gender (mainly female), age (predominantly mature) and that all shared an interest in gardening and/or garden visiting. This research was not intended to focus on any particular group of people and therefore it was believed that these interviews although valuable, would not provide the wide-ranging understanding of garden visiting, which this research project seeks. Therefore, the decision was taken to add a final data collection phase to the study, by carrying out a series of short interviews with visitors to a range of horticultural attractions. The two qualitative data phases were undertaken concurrently and all five phases continued to complement each other. The plan of the research as actually carried out is therefore shown in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2 The plan of the research as carried out



The research was originally conceived as a multiple method investigation (Brannen 1992), but the addition of the visitor survey and visitor interviews changed it to one of multiple data sets. Different data sets are derived through applying different methods and also by the use of the same methods at different times and with different sources.

3.2.5. Ethical considerations

Whilst designing the methods for this research, compliance with the guidance in the Bournemouth University's Research Ethics Policies and Procedures (Bournemouth University, 2003) and its predecessors was implicit so as to ensure that the research was carried out in accordance with ethical principles. In particular, the following arrangements were made:

- The ethical implications of the research and '*the physiological, psychological, social, political and economic consequences of it for the participants*' (Bournemouth University, 2003, p. 8) were considered. Every effort was made to assure the protection of participants against '*physical, mental, emotional or social injury*' (ibid.). In the

survey of residents, care homes and similar residential properties were excluded, so that any vulnerable members of society did not participate. It was found that other residents also excluded themselves from this phase of the research on these grounds. Children were only included in the visitor interviews and only then, when they were at the attraction as part of a family group. Oral consent to include a child in the interview was obtained from an accompanying adult and the child, before the interview began and then again during the interview, but before speaking to the child, to ensure that the consent the adult had given was fully understood. Children were only interviewed within the family group at all times and only then very briefly.

- The nature of the research, why it was being undertaken, how they had been selected to participate and their guarantee of anonymity was explained to participants either in an introductory letter or in the oral introduction by the researcher.
- The participants' voluntary participation in the research was taken as their consent to be involved in the research. Some indicated an unwillingness to participate as a whole by refusing to take part, by leaving a questionnaire blank or occasionally in the resident survey by writing a note to the researcher. Partial withdrawal of their consent was observed when some respondents to the questionnaires left questions blank. Some interviews ended as the interviewee indicated that they wanted the interview to finish, although none of the interviewees refused to answer any question and only one woman requested that one of her answers should not be audio-recorded.
- The confidentiality of participants was protected by coding data with numbers instead of names (if known) and using codes for identification of participants when transcribing audiotapes (again if names were known). Personal data, such as names and addresses, were not stored in a computer file and paper copies were kept securely in the researcher's residence. The research therefore complied with the Data Protection Act of 1998. All computer files were password protected.

3.3. The methods used

Having considered the aim and objectives the research sought to answer and the absolute requirement that the research should be carried out in accordance with ethical principles, the methods for each of the five phases were designed and carried out as follows.

3.3.1. Phase 1 – secondary data collection and analysis

Whereas the central role of this research is to explain garden visiting from the demand side, it would be meaningless, if this could not be linked to some extent, to the supply side. There was a considerable inconsistency in the literature regarding the number of gardens open to the public and an absence of detail of their ownership, type etc. Therefore based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 1 and for the purposes of enumeration only, ‘gardens’ were defined by the researcher as:

Places where a permanently planted space is promoted as part or all of the appeal of visiting. Hospital, cemetery and Local Authority owned ‘parks’ and ‘gardens’, for which no entrance charge is made, are excluded, as they are indistinguishable from public open spaces.

Gardens were further divided into two sets, those which open for 12 or more days per year and those which open for less than 12. This would distinguish between those opening more for commercial or charitable reasons and sharing the characteristics of a permanent attraction and those with purely fund-raising objectives, which would open as events.

Having established this definition, gardens in England which were open to the public in 2002, were identified from the following sources:

- Guide books
- Gardening magazines and newspaper articles
- Sightseeing in the UK 1998 (English Tourism Council *et al.*, 1999)
- Local authority tourism office publications
- ‘Yellow Pages’ directories
- Visitor attraction’s publicity leaflets
- Attraction posters
- and Internet pages.

Only literature in the public domain was used and so this exercise had a secondary consequence in that it identified the sources of information available to potential visitors.

3.3.2. Consideration of quantitative methods

In order to achieve objectives 2 and 3, to obtain first, numeric descriptive data and secondly, numeric data from which statistical inferences could be made to aid explaining garden visiting, quantitative data was necessary. The search of the literature had demonstrated that secondary data on visitors to gardens was limited and based on visitor surveys. It was therefore felt that a survey of residents would provide more appropriate initial data than a visitor survey, as it would include people irrespective of whether they currently visited gardens.

Sarantakos (2005) suggests that surveys are the most commonly used method of data collection in the social sciences. He describes two alternative methods of survey data collection, oral data obtained from an interview and written data from a questionnaire. Interviews can be conducted face-to-face, by telephone or electronically using the Internet. Self-completed questionnaires can be posted, delivered (in person or electronically) and have the advantages of being relatively inexpensive and relatively non time-consuming. Whilst they avoid the possibility of interviewer bias inherent in interviews, they do 'close' the data obtained. On the other hand they offer the respondent confidentiality, if required and can be completed at the respondents' convenience. Questionnaires are, however, dependent upon the respondents' ability to answer the questions appropriately, so questions need to be relatively simple and incomplete responses are more likely. On balance and considering financial and time constraints it seemed appropriate to use a self-completion questionnaire delivered to residents for this phase of the research.

3.3.3. Phase 2 – the resident survey

The pilot study

The objectives of the pilot were:

- To assess both the validity and the reliability of the survey instrument.
- To assess the effectiveness of the delivery and collection of questionnaires and to establish the amount of time required for the principal survey.
- To suggest a likely response rate in order to establish the number of questionnaires to be delivered in the principal survey.

The survey instrument

An eight-page questionnaire was designed using Microsoft Word (Appendix A). The approach of this study is inductive, however, a survey instrument requires some conceptualisation of the variables to be used (Schutt, 1996). For this survey the variables were derived from the literature on garden visiting, (for example, Gallagher, 1983) and the researcher's personal experience of horticulture and garden visiting. These variables were not regarded as the only variables to be employed in the research - it was recognised that additional variables might be introduced at later stages of data collection. In the visitor survey (Phase 3 described below) many of the variables were pre-determined by the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS, the organisers of a survey of cultural attractions). The respondents were asked questions about their socio-demographic and lifestyle characteristics and the importance of various motives for visiting a garden. Additional information about what influenced their garden visiting was also sought together with some questions about other horticultural attractions.

One possible variable which was excluded from the questionnaire was the respondents' ethnicity or race. Whereas 9% of the English population was non-white in 2001 (ONS, 2006a), the comparable figure for Dorset was 2%. Furthermore the non-white minority in the County was extremely fragmented between racial or ethnic groups. Accordingly it was believed that no meaningful analysis could be undertaken with any data regarding race or ethnicity and that therefore it would be unethical to request it from the residents.

The wording and layout of the questions, the instructions and the skip patterns were pre-tested informally on family and friends. The covering letter (see Appendix B) was designed to appeal to the respondents' altruistic nature (Gendall *et al.*, 1995) by explaining that the writer was a post-graduate researcher at the local University and asking for 'help' in completing the questionnaire, although no reward was offered (Dommeyer, 1989). The University logo was the only graphic (as recommended by Gendall *et al.*, 1995).

The sample

There are two types of sampling method, probability and non-probability or purposive (Sarantakos, 2005). Probability samples are essential if the characteristics of the sample are to be used to estimate the characteristics of the population. A probability sample is chosen at random, and every individual person or unit has an estimated non-zero chance of

selection. The selection process is therefore predetermined once the units are selected, and every unit must then be contacted.

The sampling unit is the individual unit of analysis - in this case, each respondent. The population of the survey were the adult residents of the 'BH' postcode area. Adults who were resident in care homes, hospitals, halls of residence and other institutions were excluded from the survey. The adult population of Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch, East Dorset and Purbeck Local Authorities, (that is excluding New Forest District Council) totals 397,623 (Office for National Statistics, 2006).

In deciding the size of a sample, Bryman (2001) suggests that there is usually a compromise to be made between considerations of time and costs and the need for precision. As sample size increases, sampling error decreases, but this research has several variables and therefore establishing a single acceptable sampling error is not possible. Instead an error of $\pm 5\%$ was adopted and based on the assumption that the variables are normally distributed within the population Yamane (1967) calculates that for a population of about 400,000 the size of the sample should be 400.

The sampling frame

The UK is divided into 124 postcode areas; these are further divided into approximately 20 postcode districts. Each district is then further sub-divided into a number of sectors. There are about 3000 addresses in a sector with approximately 15 in each unit (Consignia PLC, 2002). The BH postcode covers East Dorset and a small segment of South-West Hampshire. The 'Small User File' in the computer software, Post office address finder, Version4, provided the postcodes for the BH area. Arber (2001) describes the advantages of the Postcode Address File as an easily accessible, convenient and cheap sampling frame. It is more up-to-date than the Electoral Register as the Post Office updates it quarterly. Its disadvantage is that there is no record of the number of adults or households to be found at an address. This research overcame that problem by selecting all households at all the addresses in the cluster.

Residents within the household were then selected on the basis of 'next birthday'. It was also necessary to exclude non-residential addresses, such as commercial premises, as all addresses, which normally receive less than 25 items of post per day are included in the

'Small User File'. Whilst unlikely, it is possible that a private household, which receives more than 25 items of mail per day, was excluded from the survey.

Every residential address identified within those postcodes became part of a cluster in the sampling frame. Ideally a totally random selection of individuals was required, but there were economic constraints in their selection. Questionnaires can be posted with a return stamped addressed envelope or delivered and collected. Personal delivery offers the opportunity for face-to-face contact, which can increase the response rate (*ibid.*). This was the method employed for this research. Where a householder was at home, the researcher explained the nature of the survey and left a copy of the questionnaire. This was collected about 3 days later with a 'reminder' letter (see Appendix C) left at any household, where a questionnaire was not collected (Peterson *et al.*, 1989). A second follow up letter or pre-notification could not be incorporated due to time and financial constraints. Using a cluster sample reduced the distances travelled between respondents, whilst still maintaining a representative sample of the population.

The survey was piloted in two postcode areas, selected purposively for their convenience and for being typical of the local housing stock. Questionnaires were delivered to 35 households in areas BH10 (14) and BH7 (21) in July 2002. At 20 households questionnaires were collected (57%). All of the 7 households at which the purpose of the questionnaire was explained verbally, placed a questionnaire out for collection. Four of the collected questionnaires had no questions answered, leaving 46% at least partially completed. No questionnaires were subsequently received through the post after the 'reminder' letter.

Responses were divided between males (50%), females (37.5%) and unknown gender (12.5%). The spread across the age range responses was reasonable, but it was notable that none of the respondents had any children.

Conclusions reached from the pilot survey

The pilot study indicated that the itemised rating scale (of 'very important'; 'quite important'; 'quite unimportant' and 'very unimportant'); the definitions of attractions; the instructions and the skip patterns appeared to present no problems for respondents. Minor amendments, however, were required to the wording of a few of the questions. For

example, the question asking about a respondent's membership of organisations (Q51) had a 'none of the above' category added, so that during the data input, it could be clear whether the respondent was not a member of an organisation or had simply not answered that question. Additionally an analysis of the respondents' pattern of answering the questions showed that the lowest number of responses was made to the open questions. Only 4 and 2 respondents respectively, completed questions in which they were asked to describe the 'sense of place' and the 'special meaning' which a garden may have. These questions were therefore removed as the main emphasis of the survey was on quantitative data and these questions were more appropriate to being asked in a face-to-face situation in a later phase of data collection.

The delivery and collection was effective, particularly where a householder was present. The collection of 57% of questionnaires indicates that the instruction letter had been read and the instructions understood. Although many residents placed the completed questionnaire in a plastic bag, as requested in the delivery letter, not all did, which could cause problems in wet weather. Additionally many residents placed a weight (such as a pebble or flower-pot) on the questionnaire on their door-step, but two questionnaires were found to have blown away. Amending the instructions in the delivery letter was considered, but family and friends, consulted informally felt that this could be interpreted as patronising, however carefully the instructions were worded. As an alternative, the instructions were given informally as a suggestion to householders who were at home. Despite the absence of responses to the 'reminder' letter, it was considered worthwhile repeating the process for the main delivery, the only additional cost being that of printing the letters.

The pilot indicated that each post code block would take approximately 1 hour, to deliver and collect the questionnaires (including transportation). The response rate to the pilot of completed questionnaires of 46%, (that is 54% non-response) and a 'target' sample size of 400 suggested a minimum sample size of $400/0.46 = 870$ for the principal survey.

Undertaking the principal survey

Minor changes as described above were made to the questionnaire in response to the observations from the pilot study, (see Appendix D) but no alterations were made to the method of delivery and collection. A multi-stage random sample was compiled. The first

stage consisted of 100 postcodes selected randomly by the computer-generated programme from the 'Small User File'. The second stage also used a random number programme to reduce the number of postcodes to that determined by the pilot survey.

Delivery was subsequently carried out in November and early December of 2002 at the end of the visitor season. Delivery and collection took place between 9am and 4pm from Monday to Saturday. This had the disadvantage, however, that as delivery and collection were restricted to day light hours, the number of potential respondents who were met face-to-face was reduced both in number and in type. As Swires-Hennessy and Drake (1992) who analysed the date and time of interviews, concluded that the highest probability of a successful outcome occurs between five and ten o'clock in the evening. All questionnaires were collected 2, 3 or 4 days after delivery in accordance with the day stated in the covering letter. Where no questionnaire was collected, householders, if present, were told the information in the 'reminder' letter, as well as being given a copy of the letter. Duplicate questionnaires were left if requested.

At 2 of the 53 post code areas, there were no residential addresses and so only 51 areas were surveyed. Of 954 households identified, 22 were empty, demolished etc. leaving a total of 932 households to be approached. Access could not be gained or was difficult at 20 addresses and the questionnaire, together with an amended cover letter and a stamped addressed return envelope, was posted to the occupiers. Of the 912 remaining addresses, a householder was met in person at 324 households (35.5%). 36 householders declined to take part. 344 questionnaires were collected from respondents and a further 68 were subsequently received in the post. (58 in response to the 'reminder' letter and 10 in stamped-addressed envelopes, from the posted questionnaires.) 67 questionnaires were blank and 345 were completely or partially completed, a response rate of 37% ($345/932 \times 100$).

Collating and entering the data

A unique number, given sequentially as the questionnaires were returned, identified each questionnaire. All questionnaires were collated, including those which were only partially completed. Data was entered into a computer database using the software package SPSS, aided by the codes printed on the questionnaires for the closed questions. Multiple response answers were treated in one of two ways (Pallant, 2001). The first group of

variables were coded as separate variables, i.e. as dichotomies, where the answer was ticked or not ticked. The second group of variables arose from open responses where the respondent would identify a small number of items, for example, when asked to list their main leisure activities. Here the data was coded as one of 5 variables which can each take on numerous different values. Where additional variables could be written in by the respondent, under 'other', each was coded sequentially after the given variables.

One of the disadvantages of self-completion questionnaires is that despite careful drafting of the questions and instructions, errors in inscription are inevitably made by respondents. For example, in the grid questions (Q3, Q8 and Q15), two boxes were ticked in the same row, on occasion, with no ticks in the row below. Where the respondent's intentions were not clear as in this instance, both questions were coded as '-9'. In other instances it was clearly possible to see the respondent's intentions, for example, where a respondent ticked that they had not visited a garden, but then went on to complete the following questions, which clearly showed that they had made a visit. In these situations, the answers were coded as if the correct box had been ticked. Where a question was not answered a '-9', missing value was used. Similarly, '-8' was used where a question was skipped.

A final code was used to show whether the respondent had volunteered to take part in further research. The researcher alone carried out the data entry so that there were no differences of interpretation, between coders. Data was checked upon completion of the coding of each questionnaire. A further check was carried out prior to analysis, by using the frequency check function in the SPSS software. For example, where an item is coded either 1 or 2, and the software finds any other value, it is clearly a typographical error. The software then identifies the relevant questionnaire, which can then be checked so that the correct code can be entered. The analysis of the data is described in Section 3.5.1 below.

3.3.4. Phase 3 – the visitor survey

As the initial analysis of the resident survey was drawing to a close, data by Connell (2004a) on garden visitors and their motivations was published. Shortly after, the opportunity to participate in an ATLAS project arose. ATLAS – the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education is an academic network which has a membership drawn from over 70 countries. Its Cultural Tourism Project, which has been operating for over a decade, attempts to monitor the cultural tourism market. It does this through the

administration of a survey questionnaire to visitors, by volunteers at cultural attractions, worldwide. The aim of the 2004 research programme was to:

Analyse the motivation, socio-demographic profile, consumption patterns and image of tourists visiting cultural attractions and events (ATLAS, 2005, p. 4).

Participation in the ATLAS project offered several opportunities:

- To duplicate questions from the resident survey with garden visitors, to provide a comparison for triangulation
- To compare local residents responses with those of tourists
- To gain access to an extremely large data set on visitors to cultural attractions
- To incorporate factors referred to in the recent literature (i.e. Connell, 2004a) together with responses given by respondents as ‘other’ in the resident survey
- To expand data on cultural aspects of garden visiting
- To build a research relationship with a local garden

Compton Acres, in Dorset was selected as a location for the ATLAS survey, as respondents to the resident survey, when asked which garden they had last visited, referred to Compton Acres most often (see Section 3.3.7 below for a description). The questionnaire consisted of Section A, which referred to the respondent’s visit to the Dorset area and section B which was used to establish the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample. These questions were standardised questions designed by the ATLAS project organisers. Section C was then added for this particular research and referred specifically to the respondent’s visit to Compton Acres. There were an additional eleven closed questions and one open question (a copy of the complete questionnaire is in Appendix E). The closed questions asked the respondents about their needs, motives and motivations (discussed in Sections 2.2.4 and 2.2.5) for visiting a garden and other information about garden visiting that was not obtained specifically in relation to motivation theories. The open question asked what had made them visit that day; this was subsequently used as the ‘grand tour’ question for the visitor interviews in Phase 5.

The survey was administered for four days, from Friday the 18th of June 2004 to Monday the 21st of June, inclusive. (Sunday the 20th of June was ‘Father’s Day’.) This was with either the individual visitor or where there was a group of two or more people, the person

who would next have their birthday. A total of 201 questionnaires were fully or partially completed and there were only 13 refusals to participate, a response rate of 94%. The survey instrument was pre-coded and the data was again analysed using SPSS (see Section 3.5.1 below).

3.3.5. Consideration of qualitative methods

From the outset of the project this stage was planned with the intention of enriching the quantitative data and enabling better quality inferences to be drawn. The rationale for this phase was as follows:

1. All the identified research into garden visiting had been quantitative.
2. The surveys carried out in the earlier phases and in the literature, obtained researcher-led data and were therefore based on the assumption that all the respondents had a similar understanding or way of thinking about the concepts. For example, respondents may have interpreted an expression such as ‘be with others like me’ (Connell, 2004a) in different ways
3. It may have been that despite the questions in the resident survey asking for their personal preferences etc. that the respondents had answered on behalf of other household members
4. There may have been other influences, which had not been identified by the literature or the research to date, as the closed question responses, which had been used previously were researcher defined
5. The interaction, of groups of visitors, had not been identified
6. Qualitative research can be more processual and therefore more effective in establishing the practice and decision-making of visitors, before a visit

The two surveys had already obtained extensive information from the respondents in a numerical form and so what was required was an account in greater detail of their personal thoughts and feelings and their practices in relation to garden visiting. Therefore various methods were considered, for example, observation; diaries; focus groups and interviews.

Observation

Observation involves gathering data by the researcher actively seeing, noticing, hearing and recording (Payne and Payne, 2004) the actions occurring around them, which are selectively perceived dependent upon their previous attunement. Whilst it might have been

useful to have observed visitors to a garden in order to distinguish between stated and actual behaviour, the interpretation of the behaviour then becomes that of the researcher, whereas this study has sought to rely on the participants' contributions, with minimal interpretation by the researcher. There are also ethical considerations concerning observation (Sarantakos, 2005), whether it is participant or non-participant observation that would be difficult to overcome in a garden setting.

Furthermore, this research seeks to understand participation in garden visiting, which is conceptualised as the total experience of visiting, rather than just the experiential aspects of the time spent within a garden. As Swarbrooke (2002) describes, it is:

...an experience, which begins with the anticipation of visiting the attraction and the planning of the trip. There is then the visit itself, including the journey to and from the attraction, and the time spent at the attraction. Finally there are the memories once the visit is over (Swarbrooke, 2002, p. 44).

The research therefore seeks to identify all the factors, which may have influenced the visit to take place, for example, the ways in which the decision-making unit, such as a husband and wife, decide to visit a garden. Practices before and after the period spent in a garden occur at a time and in a private place beyond the scope of an observer. Finally, it would be impossible to tell by this method whether the behaviour observed had been anticipated by the participant, prior to the visit or whether it occurred spontaneously during the visit. For these reasons, it was not considered the most effective qualitative method in this instance. It could, however, form the basis of a recommendation for further study at the completion of the project.

Diaries

Many garden visitors do keep a record of their visits to gardens, with pre-printed notebooks being available. Connell (2004a) refers to visitors taking notes about plants seen during the garden visit. Therefore it would be feasible to request participants to complete a diary prior to a visit, setting out how their decision was made. This would therefore overcome the weakness of observation, in that the decision-making process would be described. However, Bell (2005) notes that diaries can be time-consuming and 'irritating' for the participants and:

...if respondents are not fully in sympathy with the task, or have been press-ganged into filling in diary forms, they will probably not complete them thoroughly, if at all (Bell, 2005, p. 173):

Other problems may arise in that diarists may not record the details contemporaneously and there may be memory recall problems; they may become less diligent over time and visitors who only make occasional visits to gardens may be excluded from the data, because they do not make a visit during the given time period. Furthermore, some parts of the decision-making process may be so routine to the participants that it may not occur to them to write it down.

Bhatti and Church (2000, 2001) obtained secondary data from a related method for their mixed method research into the contemporary domestic garden. They used data gathered in 1998 by the Mass Observation Archive at the University of Sussex, which asked respondents to write about key personal themes which related to their gardens. Replies, however, were extremely variable and ranged from a single page to over 30 pages. Finally, however well the volunteers are instructed, diaries provide no opportunity to probe for more detail, whereas in the final two methods, such opportunities are possible. For these reasons, diaries have also been discounted.

Focus groups

The final two options have much in common and therefore many of the same advantages. Compared to the first two methods, they are more structured and the researcher can exercise comparatively more control (Ryan, 1995). Focus groups have been used in leisure research, for example, Fennell (1997) used four focus groups as part of a mixed method to provide an understanding of sport and recreation participation amongst the economically disadvantaged in Saskatchewan, Canada. Belza *et al.* (2004) used ethnic-specific focus groups to examine barriers and facilitators to physical activity to ethnically diverse adults in the USA.

Focus groups have an advantage over in-depth interviews arising from the social dynamics of the group. Ryan (1995), categorises them as:

- Synergism – a cumulative group effect produces a wider range of ideas than is possible from just interviewing individuals
- Snowballing – a single comment can elicit a whole range of additional confirmatory or modifying statements
- Security – the social ease generated by the situation reduces the sense of insecurity or defensiveness which some might feel, allowing such people to make their views known
- Spontaneity – more spontaneous, but possibly more unconventional views might result
- Stimulation – the members of the group can stimulate each other.

Yates (2004) however suggests that not only may focus groups may not provide as in-depth and personal information as interviews, but also group interactions have to be well managed or some participants can dominate discussion. He concludes that '*group interactions produce different data than individual interviews*', (Yates, 2004, p. 172, his emphasis).

Interviews

The disadvantages of interviews include that they can be costly; time-consuming and bias can be introduced by the interviewer. Despite these disadvantages, interviews were used for this research because of their positive benefits. The quantitative resident survey had already obtained a great deal of information from the respondents and so what was required was the more in-depth probing which interviews can provide. It was the participants' personal thoughts and feelings which were sought and the synergistic effects of a focus group were therefore not required.

3.3.6. Phase 4 – the resident interviews

In order to gain a better understanding of the dynamics of decision-making within a pair or group of visitors, it was proposed to carry out the interviews where agreeable to the participants, within the decision-making group. In a study carried out at Disney theme parks, Bryman (1999) had interviewed family groups. Connell (2004a) found only 14% of respondents visited alone, Gallagher (1983) recorded 9% and the visitor survey carried out at Compton Acres as part of this research also found a figure of 9%. The responses to the open question in that survey as to what made the respondents visit, demonstrated the roles of companions as an integral part of the decision-making process. In carrying out the

interviews in this way it was hoped that some of the advantages of conducting a focus group, would apply.

Bryman (2001) describes two types of qualitative interviews, semi-structured and unstructured. Semi-structured interviews are those in which the interviewer has a series of questions in a general form of schedule, but feels free to vary the sequence and to ask further questions in response to replies that are considered significant. In an unstructured interview, the interviewer has only a list of topics or issues in an 'interview guide' that are covered at some point in the interview.

As quite a lot was already known about the volunteers from the questionnaire in the resident survey an unstructured interview format was adopted. This enabled the probing of an individual's responses given in the questionnaire in more depth and topics relevant to particular participants could be expanded with some interviewees more than others. The interview guide therefore consisted of a list of topics to be covered (see Appendix F).

As can happen in any research project, the best-laid plans may not come to fruition. Responses to the resident survey had indicated that 77 people were willing at that time (2002) to take part in further research. However, by the spring of 2005 only nine respondents were then willing to be interviewed. These unstructured interviews were carried out between March and June 2005 during which the researcher met five individuals on their own and four with relatives. All were audio-recorded with the interviewees' permission and then transcribed. The level of detail in the transcriptions included the 'um's, the mispronunciations and incomplete phrases, but was not at the level of detail which is usual in discourse analysis (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). The process was iterative (Bryman, 2001); an interview was transcribed and coded before the next one was carried out, so that the initial findings which emerged could be incorporated in subsequent interview questions. The analysis of the qualitative data from phases 4 and 5 was identical, and is described in Section 3.5.2 below.

3.3.7. Phase 5 – the visitor interviews

It was anticipated that there might be difficulties in obtaining a suitable sample of volunteers from the resident survey, due to the time lapse, so a pilot scheme of nineteen short interviews was also carried out at Compton Acres on Sunday the 20th of June 2005,

at the same time as the visitor survey. The sample was selected purposively (based on convenience) from the visitors who did not complete a questionnaire. The resident interviews had used an unstructured format with an ‘interview guide’; but the visitor interviews used the ‘grand tour’ approach (Spradley, 1979). In this method only the one broadest possible question is asked. In this case it was, ‘*What made you come to Compton Acres today?*’ This was the same as the open question in the written questionnaire, so complementing it. Further questions were then asked to expand on their initial response.

Subsequently, when the first replies from the resident survey volunteers demonstrated that an insufficient number and an un-heterogenic sample would be willing to part in interviews, further sets of interviews using the same technique, were carried out at five other sites between March and September 2005. The attractions were selected purposefully to be as representative as practically possible of the local horticultural attractions sector.

Compton Acres is a privately owned garden of 10 acres (4 hectares), established in 1920 and situated at Canford Cliffs in Dorset. New facilities have been introduced and there is an ongoing programme of clearance of dead wood, pruning and re-planting. The gardens are Grade 11* listed and consist of a series of gardens which offer views of Poole Harbour and the Purbeck Hills. These include an Italian garden; Japanese garden, heather garden and wooded valley (Compton Acres, 2006).

Wakehurst Place is described as Kew’s garden in the country and although owned by the National Trust is administered by the RBG, Kew. The 500 acres (200 hectares) in West Sussex include walled gardens, water gardens, a wetland conservation area, woodland, lakes and ponds. It holds four National Collections and the Millennium Seed Bank, which aims to house seeds from ten per cent of the world’s flora by 2009, to save species from extinction in the wild (National Trust, 2006b).

The National Gardens Scheme garden is a mature cottage garden, located near Swanage, Dorset, and has herbaceous borders, rockeries and a large organic kitchen garden. There are many Roman and medieval Purbeck stone artefacts used in the garden design, with an ancient stone cottage and a new moon-arch as a backdrop. Its private owners open the garden to the public in April and August and sell cream teas in aid of the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance (National Gardens Scheme, 2006).

Bournemouth Pleasure Gardens are publicly owned gardens, located in the Bourne Valley in the town centre. There are three sections, the Upper, Central and Lower gardens, which retain much of their original character and are listed Grade II*. The Gardens were awarded the Green Flag Award in 2004/5 and provide a range of facilities including tennis, putting, mini-golf, art exhibition, café, ice cream kiosk and tethered balloon. The Upper and Central gardens are quieter than the Lower gardens and maintain a more natural feel. Interpretation points are provided to highlight the diversity of flora and fauna and history of the Gardens (Bournemouth Borough Council, 2005).

Stewarts Gardenlands near Christchurch, Dorset has its 'Roots in Scotland, branches in Dorset'. This is how Stewarts, a family-owned business which began trading in 1742, is described on its webpage. It was the first Garden Centre in the United Kingdom, opening in the 1960s. Growing plants for sale in pots, rather than in the ground was a revolutionary change in gardening in which Stewarts played a major part. That innovation was instrumental in making the modern Garden Centre a possibility. The Garden Centre is on a level site with easy access for wheelchairs and has free parking with slight congestion only at the very busiest of times (Stewarts, 2005).

The Craft and Garden Show was a relatively small professionally run show held at Canford Park, Merley, Dorset on the boundaries of Wimborne, Poole and Bournemouth. This was one of several shows held in the area, organised locally by Craft Carnival of Wimborne.

The only variation from the pilot at Compton Acres was that the whole group of visitors were interviewed together, (if agreeable) whereas during the pilot, a respondent completing a questionnaire was excluded. Additionally interviews were carried out with members of a Dorset allotment association, either on the day before or during a coach trip to Wakehurst Place, as part of that set of interviews. In each location the sample was chosen purposively, but with an element of randomness to be as inclusive as possible. At Compton Acres, the Craft and Garden Show, Stewarts Gardenlands and Wakehurst Place the researcher remained at one location and approached the next group passing upon the completion of each interview. At the NGS garden; at the allotment association plots and on the coach trip, the researcher selected a particular area and then interviewed every individual or group in that area. In the Bournemouth Pleasure Gardens both techniques were used, the first in the

Lower Gardens (because too many people pass by at one time to randomly select a group) and the second in the Central Gardens (because far fewer people walk by).

Two people/groups declined to talk at the show, 6 at Stewarts, 1 on the allotment coach trip and 3 in the Pleasure Gardens. All the recordings were transcribed (as described above) and again the process was iterative (Bryman, 2001), with one set of interviews being transcribed and coded before the next set was carried out, so that the findings which emerged could be incorporated in subsequent interviews. The visitor interviews were analysed collectively with the data from the resident interviews.

3.4. The data analyses

All of the quantitative analysis was undertaken using established and standardised analytical approaches and so a brief description is argued to be sufficient. However, the qualitative data analysis is accorded a more expansive treatment in order to maintain transparency.

3.4.1. Quantitative data analysis

The analysis of each set of quantitative data was carried out in two stages. The first was to describe participation in garden visiting and was carried out immediately after each set of quantitative data was collected. The second was to use the respondents' explanatory repertoires to help understand garden visiting which was undertaken during the integration of the analyses.

Exploring and describing cross-sectional data

The first stage used descriptive statistics to provide a numerical summary of the set of sample data and therefore described the respondents (the unit of analysis). It established the particular characteristics of sub-groups, such as men and women and how they said they behaved in given situations. Most of the data obtained was categorical data and therefore the Chi-square (χ^2) test was used to show if the distribution was 'random' or not. A significance level of 5% was taken to be statistically significant and when this occurred the *p*-value is reported in the tables. However, in many cases a statistically significant difference between variables could not be demonstrated as more than 20% of cells had a count of fewer than 5. Where feasible, (for example, age groups), categories were merged and re-coded (see Table 3.1) but this was not always appropriate.

3.4.2. Qualitative data analysis

The initial consideration regarding the data analysis was the type of analysis to be adopted. Sarantakos (2005) states that qualitative analysis:

...aims to transform and interpret qualitative data in a rigorous and scholarly manner...Beyond this there is simply no consensus as to how qualitative analysis should proceed, or what makes an acceptable analysis (Sarantakos, 2005, p. 344).

Seale (2004) suggests that there are five main forms of qualitative analysis; conversation, discourse, semiotic, grounded theory and qualitative thematic analysis. Conversation and discourse analysis (Rapley, 2004 and Potter and Wetherell, 1987, respectively) are more concerned with the way in which the data is expressed, rather than its content. A semiotic analysis is concerned with uncovering the processes of meaning production and how signs are designed to have an effect upon the perceivers of those signs (Bryman, 2001). Qualitative thematic analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Seale, 2004) and a form of grounded theory analysis (Glaser, 1998) inform the analysis in this research.

Secondly, there was the practical issue of whether or not to employ a computer and if so, which software to use. The principal arguments for using software packages are that they can add rigour by making analysis more systematic and transparent (Kelle, 1995). In contrast, concerns are concentrated on the possibility that a researcher can become alienated or distanced from the data by the technology (Weitzman, 2000). As the interviews were carried out, transcribed and coded etc. by the researcher, the possibility of alienation is reduced compared to analysis carried out by different people. Therefore, Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) was used, and having considered the merits and availability of the packages available, NVivo (2) was chosen.

This research seeks to identify and understand individual processes as well as other phenomenon or structures which afford garden visiting, so the analytical approach of Miles and Huberman (1994) seems applicable. They describe three components of analysis, which they argue are simultaneous - data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification. These stages were undertaken using the NVivo software as an analytic tool.

The initial tasks, carried out after the transcript of each interview had been imported into the NVivo programme, were designed to facilitate the analysis. First, a DataBite was created from the transcription document to the original sound recording. This allows instant replaying of the interview to reduce the possible distancing by the researcher from the data, as suggested can occur (Weitzman, 2000). Secondly, each transcript was assigned to a set, based on the location from where it was obtained and different colours based on the locations, were assigned to the document's icon, so that each location was obvious when looking at the Document Explorer (which resembles Windows Explorer in Microsoft Office software). Attributes (for example, the day of the interview) were then assigned to each document.

Several stages of coding were then carried out. The first was section coding, by which NVivo 'autocodes' sections of the text under a particular heading. The references of speakers were used as headings in this research to enable the identification of everything which each person said, as opposed to the document, which contains the researcher's and other companions' speech as well. Thereafter attributes could be assigned to these nodes, for example, the gender, age of the interviewee etc. For the visitor interviews, everything which an interviewee said about that particular visit was coded 'this visit' to distinguish it from other visits to horticultural attractions. Both these actions facilitated searching at a later date.

Punch (2005) suggests that there is a wide range of possibilities when assigning codes to data:

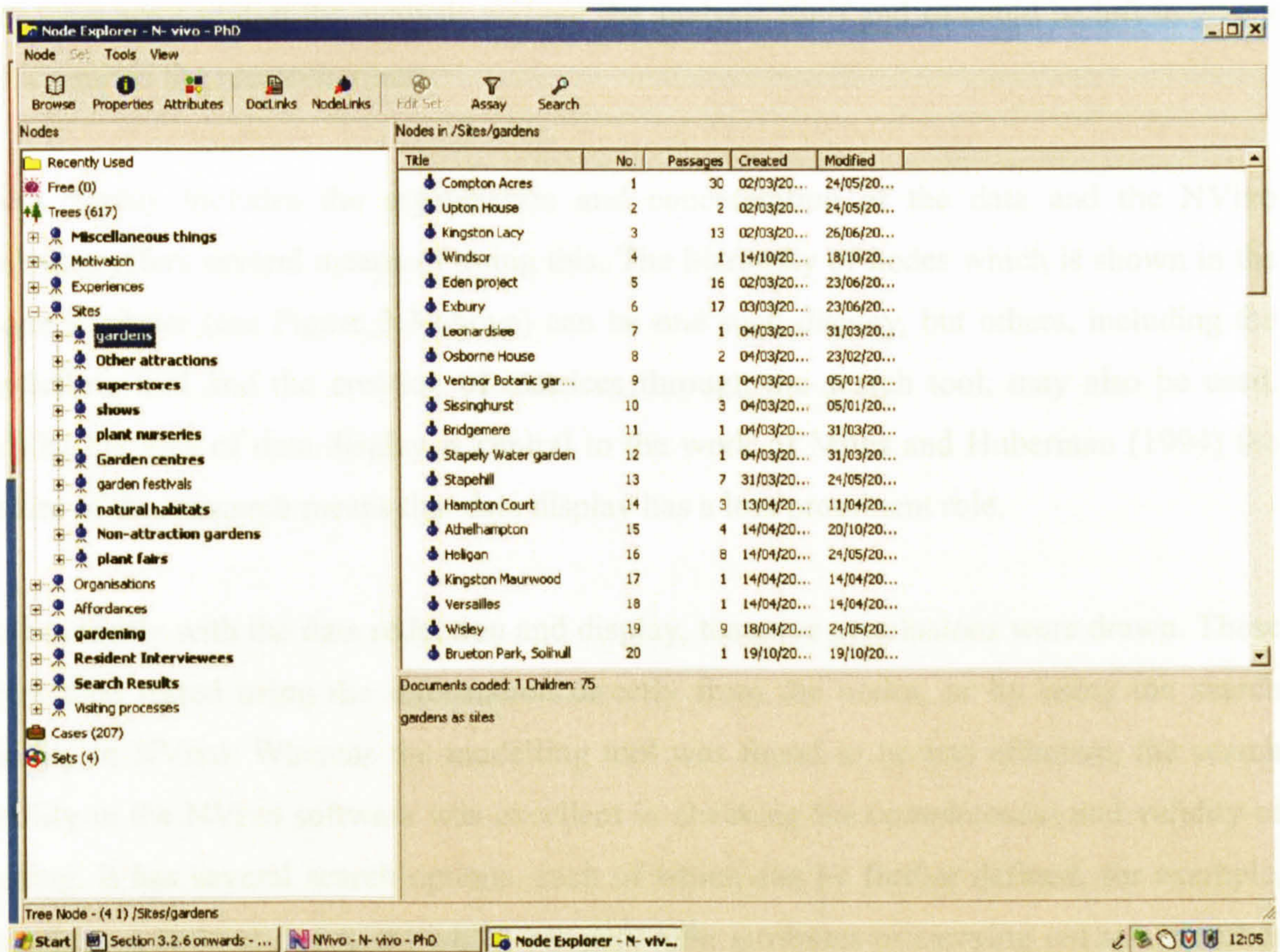
At one end of the continuum, we can have prespecified codes or more general coding frameworks. At the other end, we can start coding with no prespecified codes, and let the data suggest initial codes....Nor...does it need to be an either-or decision. Thus, even when guided by an initial coding scheme, we can be alert to other labels and categories suggested by the data (Punch, 2005, p. 200).

In this research pre-specified codes were derived from the findings of the quantitative phases. But as the qualitative phases were designed to elaborate and inform the data derived from the quantitative findings, the latter form of coding described by Punch, in

which additional categories are subsequently created, was employed. In NVivo, coded segments of text are copied to a node and any text can be coded as many times as the analyst requires.

The software programme organises nodes in three ways, as free nodes, tree nodes and case nodes. Free nodes simply appear in a list in the Node Explorer. Tree nodes are free nodes that have been organised into a hierarchy and case nodes are used for organising coding about cases (Gibbs, 2002). For this analysis, sections of the transcription were initially coded into free nodes, but upon completion of the coding of each transcript, all the free nodes were moved into the tree hierarchy. Initially the tree hierarchy was pre-specified from the literature but as the coding progressed new nodes were created. The ‘trees’ set up were labelled experiences; sites; organisations; affordances; gardening; the visiting process and miscellaneous. (A further tree node was initially set up, labelled motivation, in view of the concept’s earlier use). Thereafter ‘branches’ and ‘twigs’ were added. For example, the ‘tree’ labelled sites then had ‘branches’ of gardens, shows, festivals etc and then ‘twigs’ were added as they were identified, for example, the individual gardens of Exbury, the Eden Project etc. in the ‘branch’ labelled ‘gardens’ (see Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 The node explorer in NVivo showing the tree hierarchy



Memos were created and linked to a node (using a DocLink in NVivo). Glaser defines a memo as ‘...the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding’ (Glaser, 1978, p. 83). Memos were created as a tool of the analysis, of the researcher’s reflections on the related literature, difficulties in understanding the interviewee’s meaning, patterns which were emerging and also contradictions etc. Memos were also made regarding her thoughts on the node contents. This occurred either sporadically (as referred to by Glaser) or systematically. Upon completion of the coding of the first set of transcripts (those from Compton Acres) and after completion of each subsequent transcript, one or two nodes were reviewed in order through the tree hierarchy. Each segment of text coded at a node was assessed as to whether all the segments were consistent and whether the label given to the node accurately reflected its contents. If not, other notes were then added and the data was re-coded to the new node.

NVivo allows for the easy merging, movement, relabelling and recoding of nodes, so as the memos developed (all entries were dated) various changes were made to the nodes. In

some cases the tree hierarchy needed to be reorganised, but at other times it was left alone. The trees are a tool of the analysis and not the analysis itself and so could be left in a way which suited the researcher best.

Data display includes the organisation and concentration of the data and the NVivo software offers several means of doing this. The hierarchy of nodes which is shown in the Node Explorer (see Figure 3.3 above) can be one such display, but others, including the modelling tool and the creation of matrices through the search tool, may also be used. Whilst the idea of data display is central to the work of Miles and Huberman (1994) the nature of this research means that data display has a less prominent role.

Concurrently with the data reduction and display, tentative conclusions were drawn. These were then tested using the information directly from the nodes, or by using the search facility in NVivo. Whereas the modelling tool was found to be less effective, the search facility in the NVivo software was excellent in checking the completeness and validity of coding. It has several search options, each of which can be further defined; for example, searching a node or document which has particular attributes or carrying out text searches using Boolean or proximity combinations.

3.4.3. The integration of the analyses of the quantitative and qualitative phases

The actions, of creating an initial coding framework, the development of further codes, reflection on the contents of the nodes recorded in the memos and constantly referring either back to the literature already reviewed or on occasion by seeking out new sources, were therefore iterative. During the procedures, content themes, some aspects of the analytical process and some methodological issues became apparent. (These are discussed below). Further insights were gained by the integration of the analyses of the four data sets. This enabled comparisons to be made between the findings of the different phases and provoked additional analysis of parts of the data sets and further reflection on the findings.

3.5. An introduction to the findings

The remaining chapters of the thesis present the core of the research and in preparation, this section summarises the primary data and describes how and why the data is presented in the order that follows.

3.5.1. A summary of the primary data

At this stage it may be helpful to summarise the data obtained from the four phases of primary data collection.

The resident survey asked the respondents about:

1. their socio-demographic and lifestyle characteristics
2. their motives for visiting a garden
3. other information about garden visiting that was not obtained specifically in relation to motivation theories
4. other horticultural attractions

The visitor survey at Compton Acres asked the respondents about:

1. their socio-demographic and lifestyle characteristics
2. their needs, motives and motivations (discussed in Sections 2.2.4 and 2.2.5) for visiting a garden
3. other information about garden visiting that was not obtained specifically in relation to motivation theories
4. what had made them visit that day - the ‘grand tour’ question
5. other horticultural attractions
6. information on cultural tourism for the ATLAS survey.

The resident interviews used unstructured interviews to ask participants about:

1. the affordances to participation in garden visiting
2. the social-material practices of participation in garden visitation

The visitor interviews at horticultural attractions used the ‘grand tour’ approach to talk with participants about:

1. the affordances to participation in garden visiting
2. the social-material practices of participation in garden visitation
3. other horticultural attractions
4. information on visiting requested by the site owners

The information sought specifically at the request of ATLAS and the site organisers has been reported to them. The data obtained about horticultural attractions other than gardens has not been included in this thesis, but it is intended to present it in a separate journal article.

The primary data consists of many different types of response:

Respondents to the surveys:

- Drew ticks, crosses or forward slashes in boxes, or circles around numbers, to indicate agreement with a researcher provided response
- Crossed out an option given and wrote-in their own for example, on the ATLAS survey, a few respondents crossed through ‘partner’ and wrote in ‘spouse’
- Added their own option in addition to those given where requested, for example, under ‘other’
- Wrote in words, numbers or symbols in response to open questions
- Wrote unprompted additional information about a response at the side of the questionnaire
- Changed their minds and crossed through their initial response
- Did not answer a question

Participants in the interviews:

- Replied to questions from the researcher
- Spoke in response to questions or comments from their companions
- Made an unprompted comment, having answered a question but then redirected the conversation.

3.5.2. Explanatory repertoires

A challenge of the research was how to consider these very different forms of data. Furthermore, the study seeks to generate understanding from the data but there was also awareness that if, as argued within this thesis, behaviour such as garden visiting reflects social influences, so it must be acknowledged, will the responses in the data. Therefore it was decided to consider all the forms of responses as part of a participant’s explanatory repertoire. Linguistic repertoires are *‘a set of descriptive and referential terms which portray beliefs, actions and events in a specific way’* (Wooffitt, 1993, p. 292). Similarly

they are defined as '*clusters of terms, descriptions and figures of speech*' by Sarantakos (2005, p. 310).

Potter and Wetherell (1987) were concerned with the way language is used to give an account of behaviour and introduced the notion of 'interpretative repertoires'. They defined a repertoire as '*constituted through a limited range of terms used in particular stylistic and grammatical constructions*' (Potter and Wetherell, 1987, p. 149), and interpretative repertoires as '*recurrently used systems of terms used for characterizing and evaluating actions, events and other phenomena*' (ibid.). Repertoires are not conceptualised by them as intrinsically linked to social groups nor does an individual draw on the same repertoire in different situations.

Hermes (1995) uses 'interpretative repertoires' to understand how women's magazines become meaningful in everyday life. She suggests that:

Repertoires are the cultural resources that speakers fall back on and refer to. Which repertoires are used depends on the cultural capital of an individual reader (Hermes, 1995, p. 8).

Furthermore, the participants' explanations are accepted at face-value, they are *their* explanations. Therefore although they do not *explain* garden visiting, they do contribute to an understanding of the phenomena.

3.5.3. A summary of responses to the 'grand tour' question

One of the key ways of understanding participation in garden visiting in this research is based upon the participants' own explanations of why they visited a garden. The main source of data which provides this information are the responses to the 'grand tour' question – '*What made you come to the gardens today?*' The same question was asked as an open question in the visitor survey at Compton Acres and as the opening question to all participants in the visitor interviews. During the latter, subsequent questions were then asked in order to elaborate on the initial response. In presenting the data, the impression may be given that the participant had been unduly 'led' by the questioning. This notion may arise due to the inevitable, selective presentation of the extracts, which can result in their being read out of context.

The written answers, in the visitor questionnaire, were always brief and many included two explanations, for example, *'enjoyed previous visit + lunch'* and *'like gardens, easy to reach from Bournemouth'*. The oral responses were longer and again often included more than one explanation. All the written and oral explanations were assigned to one of eight categories (see examples taken from the visitor survey in Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4 The explanatory categories given in response to the 'grand tour' question (visitor survey)

• Individual agency	<i>To study the gardens</i>
• Re-visiting	<i>Been here before many years ago</i>
• Social agency	<i>My friend suggested it</i>
• Personal description	<i>We love gardening and visiting gardens</i>
• Weather	<i>Sunny day</i>
• Locality	<i>Local to where I'm staying</i>
• Occasion	<i>Mother's birthday trip</i>
• Indeterminate	<i>Obviously a mistake</i>

A matrix identifying the responses to the open question in the visitor survey is given in Appendix G. This shows that about two-fifths of responses in the visitor survey related to individual agency or to a previous visit to the gardens. This is only a small proportion of the responses when considered in the light of the findings by Connell (2004a), which emphasised the importance of individual agency in explaining garden visiting.

3.5.4. Reporting the findings

The data analysis is informed by two sets of literature – the first is the theoretical literature reviewed in the previous chapter which describes the prevailing approaches and the emerging social theories. The second set of literature identified studies from the leisure and tourism literature which could support the research in other ways. This literature was sought during one of three stages in the research. The first stage occurred before the resident survey and the literature reviewed, not only informed the aim and objectives of the research, but also contributed to the identification of the variables in the quantitative phases. The contribution from Gallagher (1983) was particularly influential. The second stage occurred after the completion of the resident survey, but before the visitor survey and

the main contribution was from Connell (2004a). The third stage was after the completion of the initial analysis of the qualitative data, during the integration stage of the analyses. Where appropriate, literature from all three phases is discussed in the chapters which report the findings.

Whilst the results could have been presented chronologically in the order in which the methods were carried out, it seems more desirable to describe them in relation to the research objectives (detailed above) to produce a more cogent argument. The literature and the results are therefore discussed together within five chapters, each of which contributes to an understanding of participation in garden visiting.

Objectives 1 and 2, relating respectively to the gardens open to the public and the visitors who go to them, are considered in Chapter 4. First by presenting secondary data identifying the gardens open to the public in England in 2002 and secondly by using the primary data from the two surveys and sources from the literature to establish a socio-demographic profile of visitors to gardens. The remainder of the chapter follows the ‘traditional’ means of explaining attraction visiting by assuming the individual agency of visitors. Using survey data it discusses the physiological and psychological benefits which people seek to obtain through visiting a garden. Although this data was collected whilst motivational theories were informing the research, the contributions of the respondents are still of value and should therefore be reported. One way of considering this data in light of the emerging theoretical perspective is that it identifies the importance to the respondents of the affordances that may be realisable in a garden.

The findings relating to Objective 3, to identify the affordances to participation in garden visiting, are sourced from all four phases of primary data collection. As this is a key element of the theoretical approach adopted in the study, a substantial amount of data was collected in respect of it and the findings are therefore divided over three chapters (5-7). A major part of this data was obtained in response to the ‘grand tour’ question, (*What made you come to the gardens today*), sourced from an open question in the visitor survey at Compton Acres and from the initial question put to all participants in the visitor interviews. This data was categorised into eight categories as discussed above. Two categories, relating to the affordances realisable in gardens on a first visit and those realisable on a subsequent visit to the garden, are discussed in Chapter 5. A sample response from the

visitor survey is *'relaxation, meditation, fresh air + ice-cream'*. In the 'traditional' way of interpreting this phrase it would be taken as a statement of what the visitor seeks from a visit, but in Chapter 5 it is interpreted using the novel perspective of showing what a garden may afford a visitor.

A principle of affordance theory is that perceptual activity shapes performatory action, but this perceptual activity may occur shortly before, or a considerable time before, the behaviour occurs. In the findings, therefore, the affordances are divided temporally into proximal or distal affordances. Chapter 6 discusses affordances perceived by participants shortly before their trip to a garden and so paved the way for a visit. The data is drawn from the remaining categories of the 'grand tour' question. These include aspects of social and material agency, such as the media and the weather.

The value of the unstructured interviews and the informal discussions with participants subsequent to the 'grand tour' question is demonstrated in the overall picture that emerged of additional influences on visitors that contributes to an understanding of garden visitation. Chapter 7 extends the scope of perceptual experience back through the participants' lifetimes and considers what are termed here 'distal' affordances which the participants may or may not be able to articulate. When not stated directly by the participants, the influence of these affordances is suggested by using inferences based on the literature, the data and the analysis. For ease of description, affordances are mainly treated as separate entities in Chapters 5-7, but in the first part of Chapter 8 the interconnectedness of affordances is discussed.

The fourth objective of this research seeks to describe the social-material practices of garden visitors. Therefore, in the second part of Chapter 8, aspects of participation in garden visiting are considered using an affordance approach. The strategies the research participants adopt and the decisions they make, as a consequence of the affordances they have perceived, are discussed.

Wherever the chapters report the qualitative data, quotes are provided to demonstrate the source of the finding, because they articulate either the viewpoint of that individual or others as well. For brevity and anonymity, the following notation is used to identify the

sources of quotations where the number refers to the questionnaire or transcript code and the letters to the phase of the methodology:

RS = resident survey

VS = visitor survey

RI = resident interview

VI = visitor interview

3.5.5. The socio-demographic characteristics of the participants

There were a total of 766 contributions of survey or interview data provided by the 757 participants involved in the four phases of primary data collection (9 participants took part in both the resident survey and the resident interviews). Their socio-demographic characteristics are summarised in Table 3.1 below.

Phase	2		3		4		5		all	
	Resident survey		Visitor survey		Resident interviews		Visitor interviews			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	
	345		201		13		207		766	
Gender	male	126	37	76	38	3	23	85	41	290
	female	210	61	115	57	10	77	122	59	457
	unknown	9	3	10	5	-	-	-	-	19
Age group	younger	92	27	12	6	1	8	-	-	105
	middle	137	40	44	22	4	31	-	-	185
	older	109	32	138	69	4	31	-	-	251
	children	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	3	7
	unknown	7	2	7	3	4	31	200	97	218
Occupational group	AB	92	27	60	30	2	15	-	-	
	C1C2	155	45	68	34	6	46	-	-	
	DE	52	15	44	22	1	8	-	-	
	unknown	46	13	29	14	4	31	-	-	

Table 3.1 The socio-demographic characteristics of the participants

3.5.6. The representativeness of the data

Before any statistical analyses, based on socio-demographic or lifestyle characteristics, are presented, it is appropriate to consider the representativeness of the sample, upon which the analyses are to be based. This section, therefore reviews the characteristics of the Dorset population and the participants in the research.

In 2001 the Census (ONS, 2006b) shows that Dorset had a population of almost 700 000. The population from which the resident survey sample was drawn tended to be older, more lower middle class (C1C2) and with a slightly greater imbalance between the sexes than England as a whole (see Table 3.2 below).

(%)		England	Dorset	Respondents
Gender	Male	49	48	37
	Female	51	52	63
Age	16-64	80	73	68
	≥65	20	27	32
Social grade	AB	22	21	31
	C1C2	45	49	52
	DE	33	30	17

Table 3.2 A comparison of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and of adults in Dorset and England (ONS, 2006b and resident survey)

This table also demonstrates that women, the retired and the higher social grades are over-represented within the respondents. Table 3.1 (above) shows a similar disparity in the visitor survey and the resident interviews and whilst age or occupational group were not ascertained during the visitor interviews, there is also an over-representation of woman in this phase too. These differences will need to be borne in mind when evaluating the data in the subsequent chapters.

Finally the findings from the resident survey could not show whether having access to a domestic garden, *per se*, is influential in garden visiting. Connell (2004a) found that a large percentage of visitors to gardens are owners of domestic gardens (95%) and concluded that ‘*garden visiting is strongly linked with garden ownership*’ (Connell, 2004a, p 236). Neither

her study nor this one adopts any legal distinctions of ‘ownership’ as opposed to rental. In the resident survey more than 88% of respondents had access to their own garden, so it was not possible to make many meaningful comparisons between owners and non-owners. Where comparisons could be made, there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups.

3.6. Chapter summary

This chapter has demonstrated how the aims and objectives of the research and the ethical considerations due to participants, together determined a research strategy based on a mixed method. The methods employed for each of the five phases of research have been described, together with the rationale which determined their use. Thereafter the two forms of analyses, quantitative and qualitative have been set out. Finally a brief discussion of the presentation of the findings has been given to provide guidance to the reader for the forthcoming chapters. These begin with a chapter that employs the ‘traditional’ method and theoretical approach to understanding garden visiting. Thereafter the major contribution to knowledge by this thesis is made when predominantly qualitative data is presented using affordance theory as the theoretical basis.

Chapter 4 - Gardens and visitors

4.1. Introduction

This chapter acts as a foundation for the remainder of the thesis and is divided into three main sections. The first provides a calculation of the number of gardens open to the public and specifies some of their characteristics. The second section identifies and describes the visitors to gardens. Within it, published data is presented, together with the findings from the two surveys carried out in this research. Seven characteristics are discussed and for each, three key data sets are provided from the resident survey - whether a respondent has ever visited a garden as an adult, whether they have visited in 2002 and if so, how many visits they made in that year. An examination is then made of the intersection between these characteristics in order to demonstrate the heterogeneity of garden visitors. The third section also provides published information together with some of the findings of this research and follows the 'traditional' means of explaining attraction visiting by assuming the individual agency of visitors. Using survey data it discusses the physiological and psychological benefits which people seek to obtain through visiting a garden and the factors that may influence the visit.

4.2. Gardens open to the public

At the beginning of the new millennium, there was no definitive statement of the number of gardens opening as attractions. Yale (1998) stated that in 1995 there were 75 526 gardens in Britain open to the public for '*at least part of the year*' (Yale, 1998, p. 87). This figure seemed exceptionally high, compared to the English Tourism Council *et al.* (1999) which showed only 110 gardens opening in England. Evans (2001), however, noted that there were '*well over 500 visitor attractions in the UK*', which '*promote their gardens for day visits*', whilst there are over 3 500 private homes which open '*their gardens to visitors on specific days of the year*' (Evans, 2001, p. A155).

In view of this diversity in the literature in the number of gardens open to the public, an exercise in identifying and enumerating the attractions was undertaken to meet the first objective of the research. Therefore based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 1 and for the purposes of enumeration only, 'gardens' were defined by the researcher as:

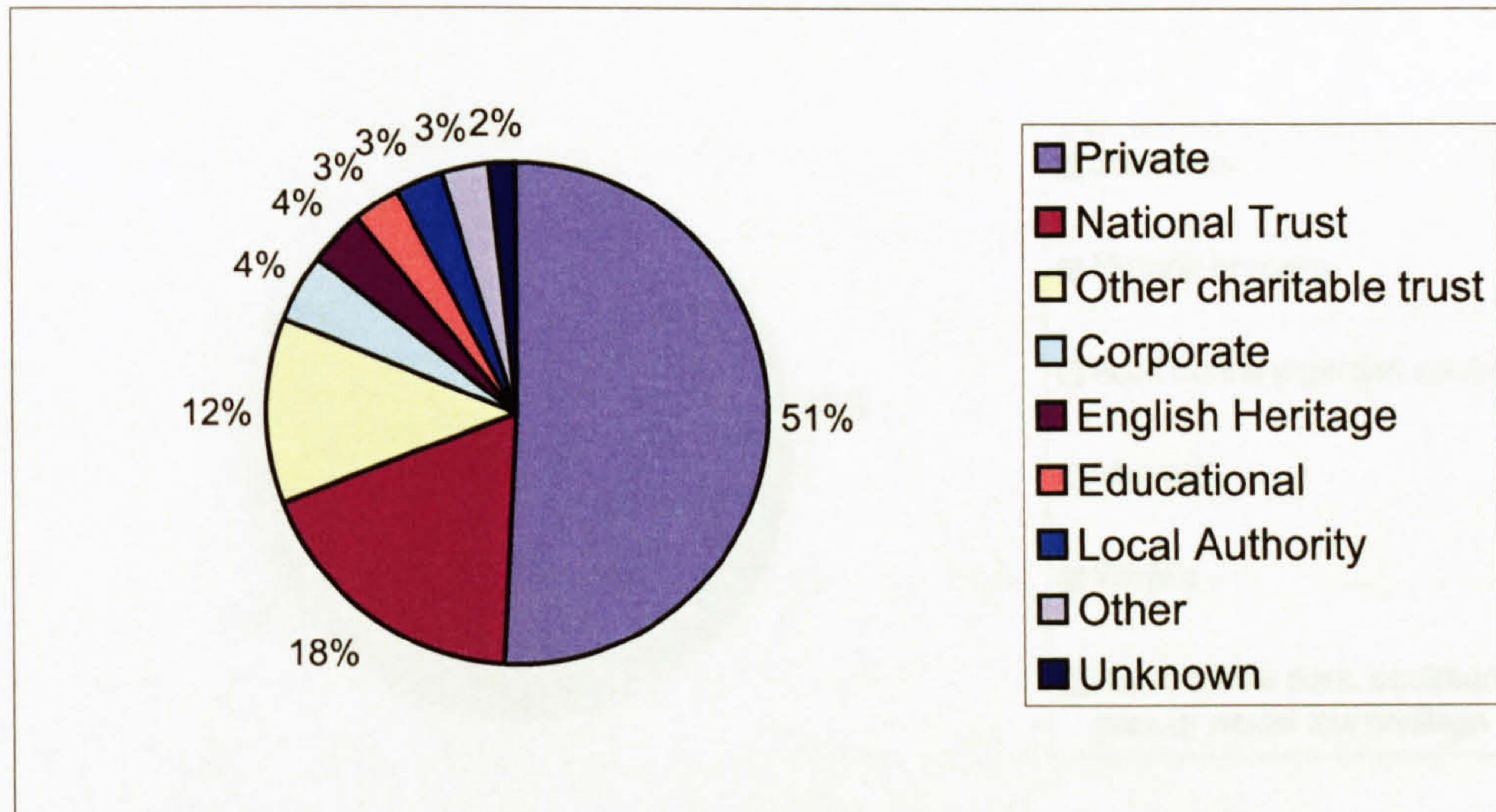
Places where a permanently planted space is promoted as part or all of the appeal of visiting. Hospital, cemetery and Local Authority owned 'parks' and 'gardens', for which no entrance charge is made, are excluded, as they are indistinguishable from public open spaces.

In Dorset, 191 gardens were identified, of which 41 were open for 12 or more days per year and 150 for less than 12 days per year. In total 880 places in England were identified that promoted a garden in some way and that opened to the public, for 12 or more days in 2002, and were not excluded as described above. Approximately 3000 further gardens were found which opened for less than 12 days per year, particularly those which open under the auspices of the National Garden Scheme or other charities such as the Red Cross.

Subsequently, VisitBritain (2005a) included 324 gardens in England in their survey of attractions while Connell (2005) created a database of 1223 gardens in Great Britain. She included attractions open to the public on a regular and/or commercial basis and estimated that a total of 5000 gardens are open to the public in Great Britain. Allowing for the pattern of supply across the home nations – Connell received 79.6% of her responses from English gardens, 15.3% from Scottish and 5.1% of Welsh - the figures established for this study seem commensurate.

Using the data from this study, Figure 4.1 shows a breakdown of gardens by ownership revealing that just over half of the gardens open regularly to the public in England are privately owned. The National Trust and other charitable trusts own almost another third of gardens, with just 4% being owned by corporate bodies.

Figure 4.1 Ownership of gardens in England

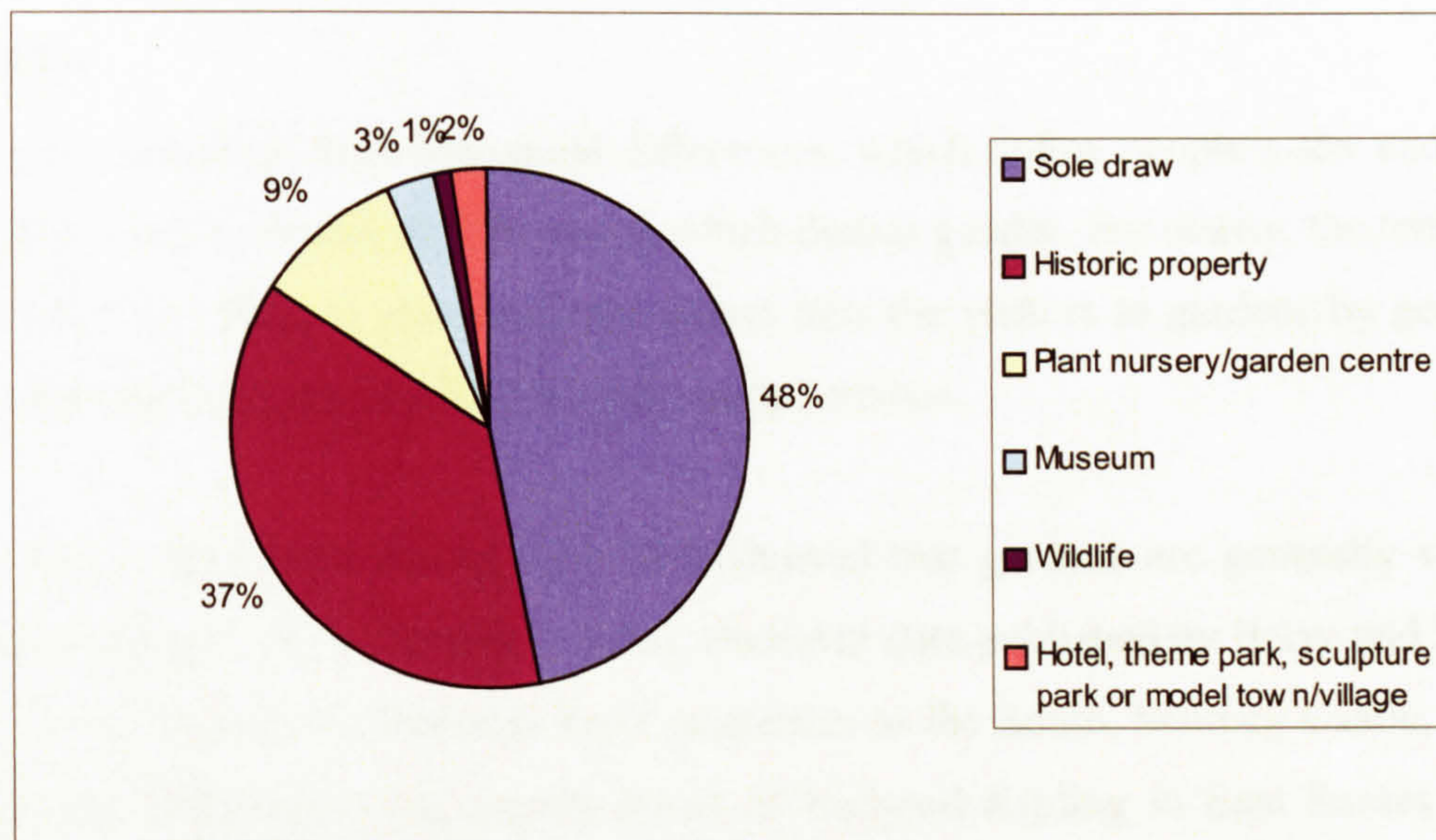


These figures can be compared to the information supplied by the garden owners in response to the survey carried out by Connell (2005). She found that the same proportion of gardens was privately owned (51.1%) but the National Trust and National Trust for Scotland owned a smaller proportion (13% compared to 18%). The difference between the figures in respect of the National Trust are probably attributable to her data being a sample (with a 48.4% response rate) and supply variation in attraction types between the home nations as she included the whole of Great Britain, rather than just England.

Nonetheless the figures show a greater proportion of gardens in private ownership than was indicated in the sample of all UK attractions by VisitBritain (2003) where only a quarter of attractions were privately owned. VisitBritain's survey shows first, that privately owned gardens received proportionally less visitors than gardens owned by organisations and secondly, that charitable trusts (other than the National Trust) receive proportionally more visitors. This would suggest that visiting is afforded differently in relation to gardens with different ownership patterns. The reasons for this appear not to have been considered in the literature and were beyond the scope of this study but may be a potential line of enquiry in any further research.

Turning to the various types of garden, at 48% of garden attractions in England the garden is the sole draw. In the second largest sector, (37%), are those gardens combined with an historic property (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Gardens in England by additional draw



Again these figures are comparable with those in Connell's survey: for example, historic gardens and those with historic connections totalled 41.2% in her survey, (37% in this study); botanical gardens – 1.5% (4%) and nursery gardens – 4.2% (9%).

Finally the number of gardens which are listed and were open to the public in England in 2002 was ascertained. A total of 196 gardens which open are listed under the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England (English Heritage 2002a). Of these, 68 are Grade 1, 53 are Grade II and 75 are Grade II*.

4.3. The visitors to gardens

Precise data regarding the number of visits to gardens in England is not available. Bisgrove and Hadley (2002) reported an estimated figure of 24 million visits to gardens in the UK whilst English Heritage (2002a) suggested that between 300 and 400 million visits are made to historic parks and gardens in the UK each year. This large discrepancy may be attributable to the number of historic gardens/parks owned by local authorities (for example, Bournemouth Pleasure Gardens) for which visitor numbers are unknown and which are excluded from Bisgrove and Hadley's calculation.

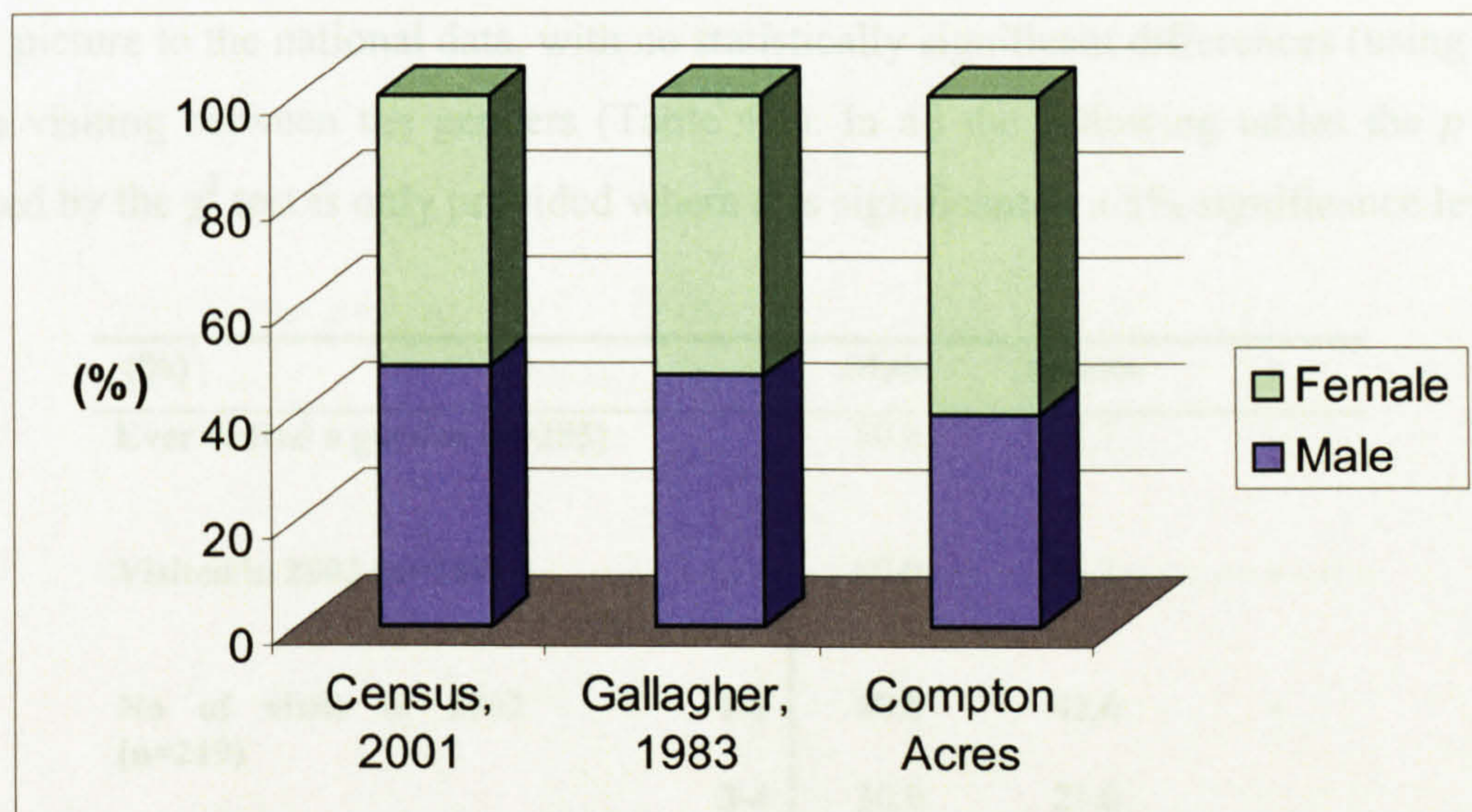
4.3.1. The socio-demographic characteristics of visitors to gardens

Sex/gender

This section considers both biological differences, which define people's sex and the less observable, socially mediated differences which dictate gender. For clarity, the term gender is used after this. Data is presented that shows first the visitors to gardens by gender and then with gender integrated with the other characteristics.

Visitor survey data from Gallagher (1983) showed that gardens are generally visited by both genders (men – 47%, women – 53%). However data published by Berry and Shepherd (2001) shows that at two National Trust properties in the South, Scotney Castle, a garden in Kent, and Bateman's, the country home of Rudyard Kipling in East Sussex, 60% of visitors were female. The data from the visitor survey at Compton Acres for this research shows similar proportions (see Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 Visitors to gardens by gender
(from Gallagher, 1983; Office for National Statistics, 2006 and visitor survey)



Two conclusions can be drawn from these findings, first that there seems to be little variation in the visiting of gardens between the genders on a national basis. However, a second conclusion is that there may be geographic variation in visiting between the genders, which is hidden within the national figure. Data from visitor surveys carried out at horticultural shows, for example the Chelsea Flower Show and Hampton Court Palace Flower Show, (both held in London) demonstrates that 71% and 72% respectively of

visitors are female. However, only 66% of visitors to the Tatton Park Show in Cheshire are female (Gray, 2007).

Therefore it appears that a slightly greater proportion of women are visiting gardens and horticultural shows in the South than are in the North of England. One of the factors which may explain this is the visitors' enthusiasm for gardening. A study by Mintel (2000a) shows that women are slightly more enthusiastic gardeners than men and that the more enthusiastic gardeners live in London, the South and Anglia/Midlands than in the West and North of Britain. Regional variation is an aspect of garden visiting which therefore warrants further attention.

Turning to the market research data, Mintel (2006), in a survey carried out throughout the UK, reveals that 16% of women had visited a garden in the 12 months prior to November 2005, a rate more or less comparable to men (15%). The resident survey in this research found a much higher level of visitation, with 80% of men and 76% of women having visited in 2002. Although the proportions of respondents are much higher, the data shows a similar picture to the national data, with no statistically significant differences (using the χ^2 test) in visiting between the genders (Table 4.1). In all the following tables the p value produced by the χ^2 test is only provided where it is significant to a 5% significance level.

(%)		Male	Female	p
Ever visited a garden (n=285)		80.8	84.7	-
Visited in 2002 (n=219)		80.0	76.1	-
No of visits in 2002 (n=219)	1-2	40.0	42.6	-
	3-4	30.0	21.0	
	5 or more	10.0	12.5	

Table 4.1 Visits to gardens by gender
(Resident survey)

To summarise therefore, this section shows only a moderate gender bias in visiting gardens. However, gender may be more relevant when integrated with other socio-demographic factors and so this is explored next.

Gender integrated with the other variables

In this section and subsequently throughout the rest of the chapter, each factor is crosstabulated with the remaining factors to assess diversity within the resident sample in respect of having visited a garden in 2002. Table 4.2 below shows that the visitors to gardens are not as homogeneous in terms of gender as the table above suggest and that there is considerable diversity.

Have visited in 2002 (%)		Male	Female	<i>p</i>
Age	16-44	13.8	27.8	0.049
	45-64	46.3	43.7	
	65 and above	30.1	40.0	
Occupational group	AB	46.2	23.2	0.004
	C1C2	42.3	61.6	
	DE	11.5	15.2	
Employment status	Retired	48.8	45.5	0.003
	Not employed	2.5	8.3	
	Full-time	42.5	25.8	
	Part-time	6.3	20.5	
Enthusiasm for gardening	Enthusiast	19.2	34.9	0.014
	Willing gardener	59.0	54.8	
	Unwilling gardener	21.8	10.3	

Table 4.2 Visitors to gardens within genders

(Resident survey, n=219)

In terms of who visited a garden in 2002, the table shows that women who are younger or older visited more than the younger or older men, but in the middle age group, men were visitors more than women ($p = 0.049$). In the middle and lower occupational groups women visited more than men. Conversely there were more men who visited than women in the higher occupational groups ($p = 0.004$). In terms of employment status, women who work part-time visited more than men who also work part-time ($p = 0.003$) and men who worked full-time visited gardens more than the women who did. Women who are enthusiastic gardeners visited more than the men who are enthusiasts. The willing or

unwilling gardeners on the other hand, were more often male ($p = 0.014$). Therefore although there is no overall gender bias in visiting gardens, gender is relevant when inter-correlated with the other socio-demographic factors of age, occupational group, employment status and enthusiasm for gardening.

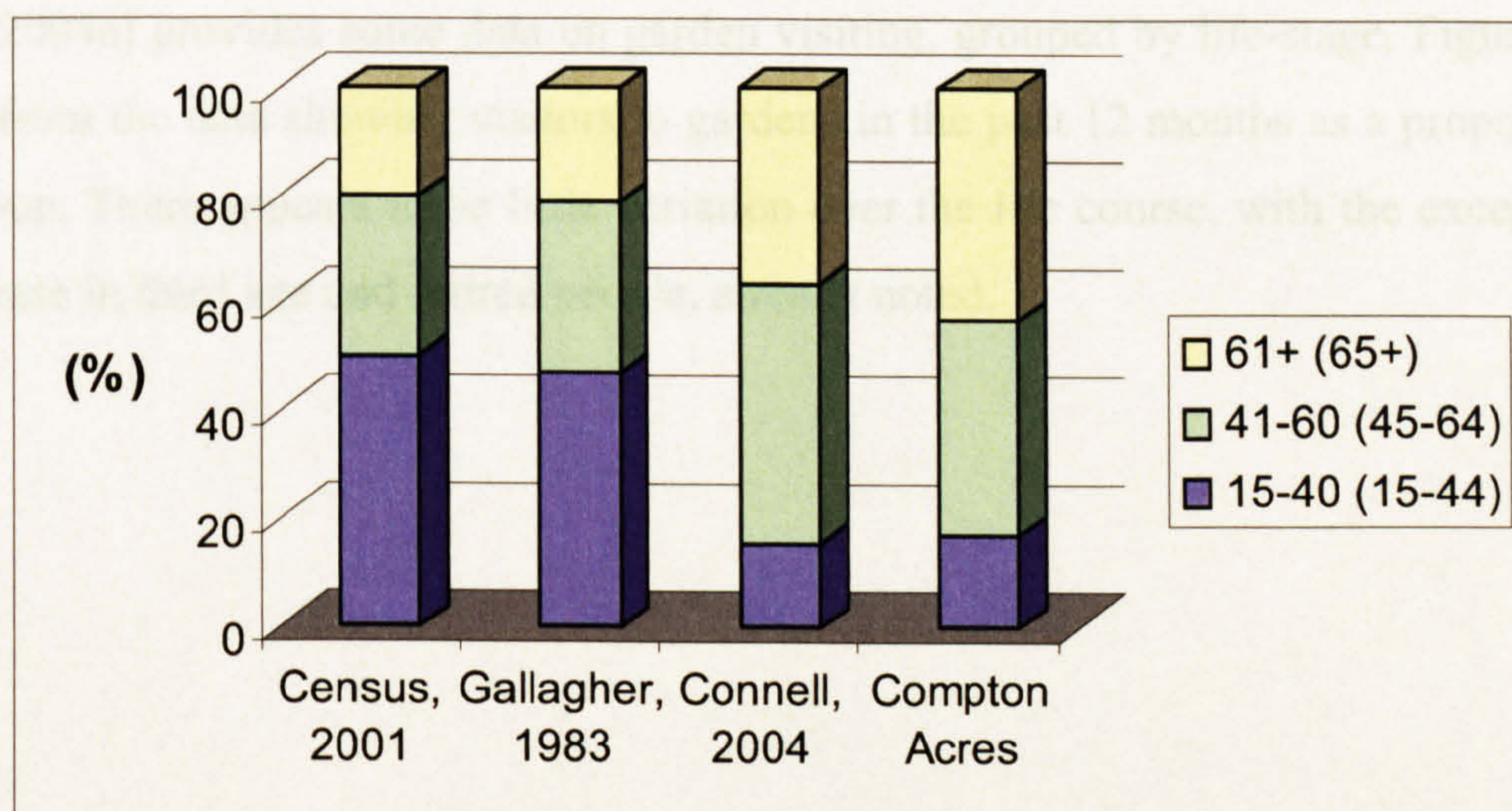
Age

Unlike gender, which is a relatively unambiguous and stable characteristic, age changes without our volition. This section examines age, without distinguishing between biological and chronological age. It therefore concentrates on age measured simply in terms of years. As before it presents the three key data sets, with the seven age groups in the survey instrument combined into three groups. It then considers the subgroups.

Data is available from the visitor surveys of Gallagher (1983) and Connell (2004a) on the ages of adult visitors to gardens, (see Figure 4.4). Findings from the visitor survey at Compton Acres and a profile by age from the 2001 Census (ONS, 2006a) are given for comparison. The data from Gallagher shows many more young people visiting than the other sources, but the data since the Millennium, from Connell (2004a) and Compton Acres suggests that middle-aged or older people now have a greater propensity to visit than young people.

Figure 4.4 The age of visitors to gardens

(Derived from Gallagher, 1983; Connell, 2004a; Office for National Statistics, 2006 and visitor survey)



The data from the resident survey again shows a similar picture of more middle-aged and older respondents having ever visited a garden than the younger age group ($p = 0.019$). A similar trend can be discerned in the number of visits in 2002 (Table 4.3).

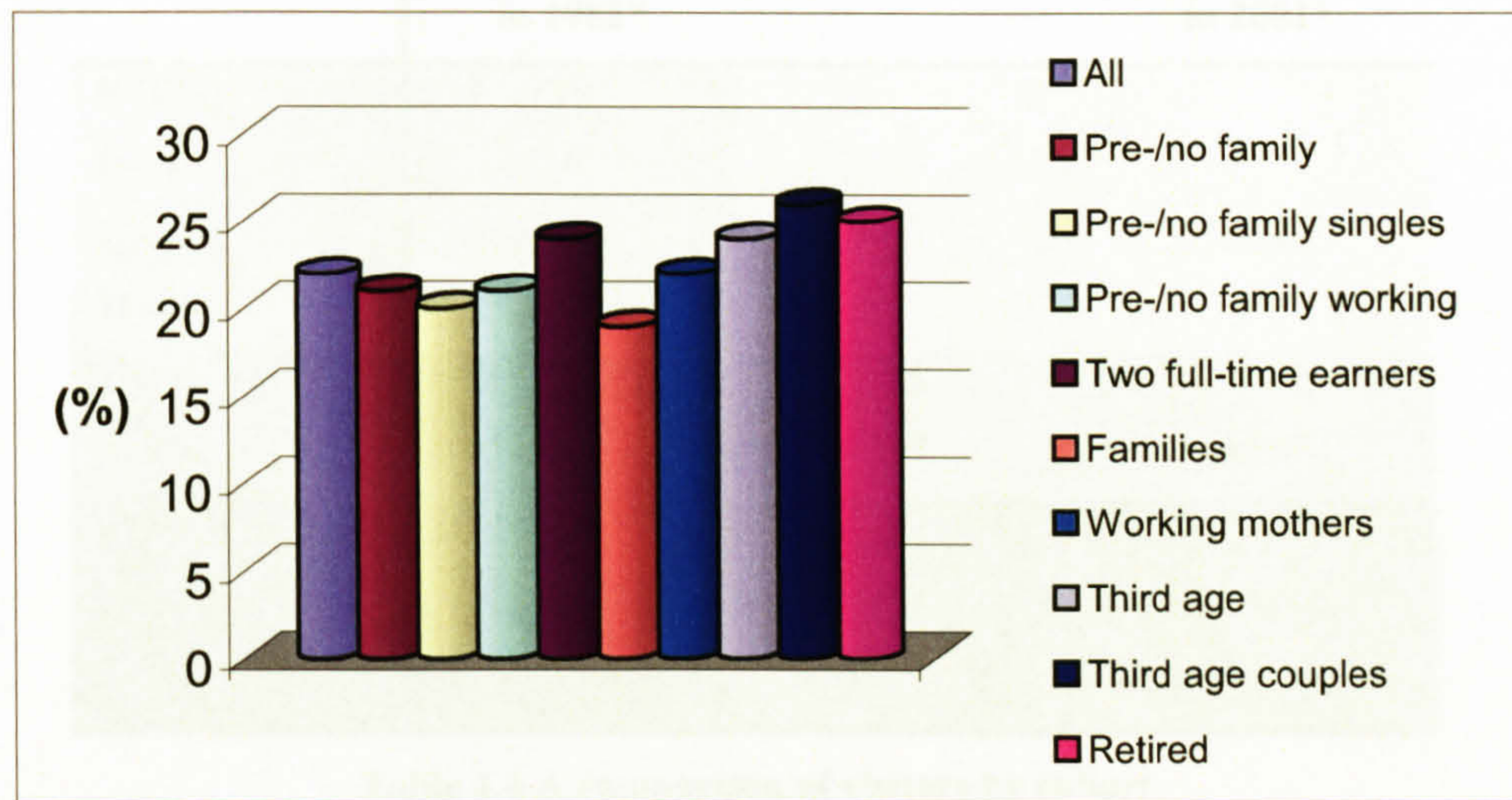
(%)		16-44	45-64	≥ 65	<i>p</i>
Ever visited a garden		73.6	86.0	83.0	0.019
Visited in 2002		71.6	79.5	79.3	-
No of visits in 2002	1-2	47.8	42.7	37.0	-
	3-4	16.4	21.4	32.6	
	5 or more	7.5	15.4	9.8	

Table 4.3 Visits to gardens by age
(Resident survey)

It is impossible to tell from this data, whether this difference is due to age, cohort or lifestage. It could be, for example, that there is a developmental change in people from early adulthood to middle age which modifies leisure preference, but no literature has been identified which examines this point. Therefore the literature on garden visiting has been studied with the aim of revealing more specifically whether age, lifestage or cohort produces differential rates of garden visiting.

Mintel (2004a) provides some data on garden visiting, grouped by life-stage. Figure 4.5 is derived from the data showing visitors to gardens in the past 12 months as a proportion of each group. There appears to be little variation over the life course, with the exception of the increase in third age and retired people, already noted.

Figure 4.5 Adults who have visited in the past 12 months by life-stage
 (Derived from Mintel International Group Limited, 2004a)



In order to assess whether the increase in mature people visiting gardens is a consequence of changes in behaviour between cohorts, the data from Gallagher (1983) can be adjusted by 20 years and compared to Connell (2004a) (Table 4.4). Although direct comparisons cannot be made on this basis, it does seem that there are more middle-aged and elderly visitors in Connell's study than would seem likely if only visitors of the same age as those in Gallagher's study in 1983 had continued to visit. For example 32% of Gallagher's sample was aged 21-40 in 1983. Based on the ageing of a cohort one would anticipate a similar percentage in the 40-60 age group in Connell's study, but her results show the figure to be 48%.

(%)	Survey by Gallagher in 1982*	Adjusted by 20 years	Survey by Connell in 2001*
0-16	19		
16-20	6		
21-30	15		15.4
31-40	17		
41-50	14	15	
51-60	12	17	48.4
61+	17	14	
		12	36.2
		17	

**Table 4.4 A comparison of visitors by cohort
(Gallagher, 1983; Connell, 2004)**

These two examples suggest that the variation between different aged garden visitors is not due purely to life-stage or cohort, but in combination with some change during the ageing process. Whether this is biologically based or socially mediated cannot be ascertained, but it is likely to be an interaction between them both.

Age integrated with the other variables

The resident survey has shown above that in relation to gender, it is younger and older women and middle-aged men, who visited more in 2002. Visitors who are young are more often in full time rather than part time work. There are no other statistically significant differences between the age groups (see Table 4.5). However, the following trends are also observable: first the youngest age group who have visited a garden in 2002 are more often in the middle occupational groups and unwilling gardeners in comparison to older visitors. Secondly, the middle-aged are more likely to be of a middle or lower occupational group and be enthusiastic gardeners. The elderly who visit are more often in the higher occupational groups and like gardening.

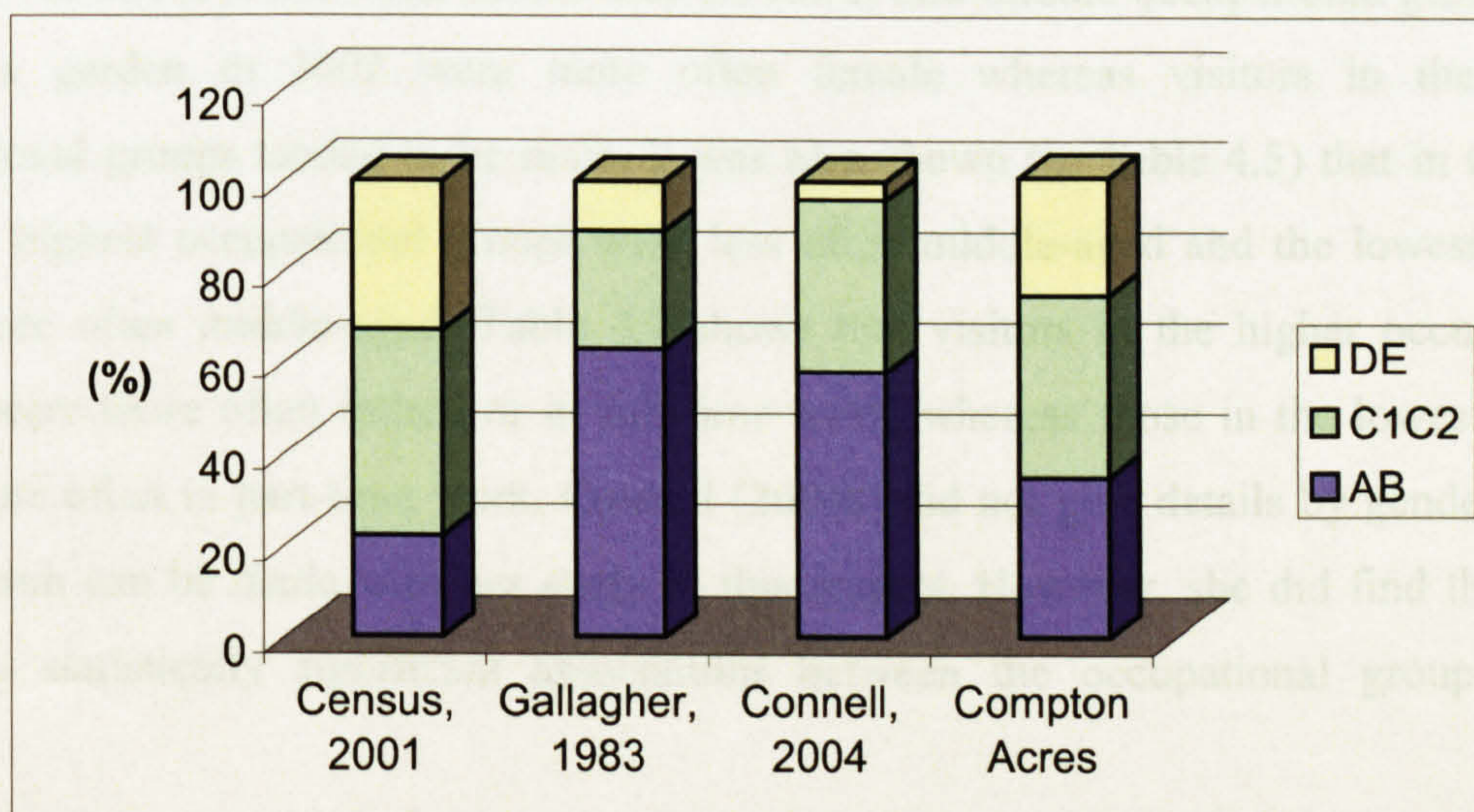
Have visited in 2002 (%)		16-44	45-64	≥ 65	<i>p</i>
Occupational group	AB	35.6	27.8	37.3	
	C1C2	57.8	50.6	53.7	-
	DE	6.7	21.5	9.0	
Employment status	Retired	0	27.0	73.0	
	Not employed	12.5	7.6	0	<0.001
	Full-time	66.7	39.1	0	
	Part-time	20.8	23.9	0	
Enthusiasm for gardening	Enthusiast	25.5	33.3	25.4	
	Willing gardener	51.1	51.1	67.2	-
	Unwilling gardener	23.4	15.6	7.5	

Table 4.5 Visitors to gardens within ages
(Resident survey, n=219)

Occupational group

Figure 4.6 shows the occupational group of visitors derived from the literature and the visitor survey at Compton Acres: for comparison, the 2001 Census details are also given. It gives a somewhat varied picture, but it does highlight a significant bias in favour of the higher occupational groups. However, it is also interesting that in the two decades, which have elapsed since the survey by Gallagher (1983), the proportion of middle occupational group visitors seem to have increased. This is discussed further in Chapter 7.

Figure 4.6 The occupational group of visitors to gardens
(ONS, 2006; Gallagher, 1983; Connell, 2004a and the visitor survey)



The data from the resident survey derives from an open question in which respondents were asked for their present or previous occupation (and not as in some research the occupation of the head of the household). Initially these were coded in accordance with the main groups of the Standard Occupational Classification Code [1990] (ONS, 2002), but this was found to be unwieldy during the analysis and so the data was recoded into three occupational groups, AB, C1C2 and DE, as this classification system appears most often in the literature. Using the χ^2 test, there are no statistically significant differences, between the percentages of respondents by occupational group, in the pattern of visiting (Table 4.6). However, the lower groups appear to visit less than the middle and higher occupational groups, as shown in the literature. None the less in the same way as it was shown within the section on gender, the data can mask differences between subgroups.

(%)		AB	C1C2	DE	<i>p</i>
Ever visited a garden		83.7	85.6	76.9	-
Visited in 2002		81.8	79.1	65.0	-
No of visits in 2002	1-2	42.9	44.2	32.5	-
	3-4	26.0	24.0	20.0	
	5 or more	13.0	10.9	12.5	

Table 4.6 Visits to gardens by occupational group
(Resident survey)

Occupational group integrated with the other variables

In Table 4.2 above it has been shown that the lower and middle occupational groups who visited a garden in 2002 were more often female whereas visitors in the higher occupational groups tended to be male. It was also shown (in Table 4.5) that in terms of age, the highest occupational groups were less often middle-aged and the lowest groups were more often middle-aged. Table 4.7 shows that visitors in the higher occupational groups were more often retired or in full-time work, whereas those in the lowest groups were more often in part-time work. Connell (2004a) did not give details by gender, so no comparison can be made with her study in this respect. However, she did find that there were no statistically significant associations between the occupational group of the

respondents and frequency of visits; age; type of visitor (in terms of horticultural interest); type of garden visited or time spent in the garden.

The findings of the resident survey show a similar absence of statistically significant associations in respect of the visitors' enthusiasm for gardening. Whilst not significant there are, nevertheless, trends of decreasing enthusiasm for gardening with increasing level of occupational group.

Have visited in 2002 (%)		AB	C1C2	DE	<i>p</i>
Employment status	Retired	50.8	43.6	34.6	0.002
	Not employed	4.8	5.9	7.7	
	Full-time	38.1	36.6	15.4	
	Part-time	6.3	13.9	42.3	
Enthusiasm for gardening	Enthusiast	16.7	34.0	36.0	-
	Willing gardener	61.7	55.7	56.0	
	Unwilling gardener	21.7	10.3	8.0	

**Table 4.7 Visitors to gardens within occupational groups
(Resident survey, n=219)**

Employment status

In everyday discourse, 'time' and 'money' are frequently suggested as influences on participation in leisure activities. Table 4.8 shows visitors to gardens by employment status. This suggests that full-time workers make fewer visits per year than the other categories. The more frequent visitors are those who have additional time to visit. This is explored further in a subsequent chapter, but has to be considered in the light of the finding above that women who work part-time visited more than men who work part-time ($p = 0.003$) and men who work full-time visited gardens more than the women who do.

(%)		Retired	Not employed	Full-time	Part-time	<i>p</i>
Ever visited a garden		88.2	76.0	83.0	76.2	-
Visited in 2002		80.6	68.4	65.3	77.5	-
No of visits in 2002	1-2	43.5	21.1	51.8	28.6	0.011
	3-4	27.4	31.6	22.9	14.3	
	5 or more	9.7	15.8	7.2	22.4	

**Table 4.8 Visitors to gardens by employment status
(Resident survey)**

4.3.2. Lifestyle characteristics of visitors

This next section differentiates garden visitors in terms of life-style characteristics. These factors are described separately from the socio-demographic characteristics given above, although participation in these activities is of course influenced by the structural factors already mentioned.

Enthusiasm for gardening

Connell (2004a) asked her respondents to choose one of three descriptions which best fitted their perception of themselves as garden visitors. 10.3% selected a 'special horticultural interest', 69.9%, a 'general gardening interest' and 19.7%, 'pleasant day out', which one can cautiously assume means that they had no particular interest in gardening. At Compton Acres, the figures from the visitor survey showed that 30% were enthusiastic gardeners, 59%, willing gardeners and 11%, unwilling gardeners; suggesting that Compton Acres receives more enthusiastic gardeners than gardens in general. Taken together these figures suggest that a willingness or enthusiasm for gardening may be a positive influence on garden visiting. This claim is further supported by the data in Table 4.8 below. There is a statistically significant association between enthusiasm for gardening and whether a visit has ever been made ($p = <0.001$) and the frequency of visits ($p = 0.002$). In both cases the likelihood of visiting increases with enthusiasm for gardening, a trend also identified for having visited in 2002.

(%)		Enthusiasts	Willing gardeners	Unwilling gardeners	<i>p</i>
Ever visited a garden		94.7	87.3	59.7	<0.001
Visited in 2002		85.7	74.8	73.2	-
No of visits in 2002	1-2	35.7	40.6	58.5	0.002
	3-4	25.7	24.5	12.2	
	5 or more	24.3	9.7	2.4	

**Table 4.9 Visits to gardens by enthusiasm for gardening
(Resident survey)**

Membership of the National Trust

Gallagher (1983) established that 41% of her respondents were members of the National Trust and at Compton Acres a similar figure of 40% membership amongst respondents was recorded. In the resident survey, 19% of the respondents were members of the National Trust and as Table 4.9 shows members are not only more likely to have visited a garden, but to visit more frequently. When asked if they had ever visited a garden, 95% of members had, in comparison to 80% of non-members ($p = 0.003$). The table also shows that over 60% of members made three or more visits to a garden in 2002, compared to 28% of non-members ($p = <0.001$).

(%)		Member	Non-member	<i>p</i>
Ever visited a garden		95.3	80.1	0.004
Visited in 2002		88.3	75.0	0.028
No of visits in 2002	1-2	26.7	47.2	<0.001
	3-4	28.3	21.7	
	5 or more	33.3	6.1	

**Table 4.10 Visits to gardens by membership of the National Trust
(Resident survey)**

Day visitors and tourists

In 2005, 56% of visitors to gardens were on a day out, 36% were domestic tourists and 8% were from overseas (VisitBritain, 2006). The findings from Gallagher (1983) and Connell (2004a) show that 61% and 55% were day visitors, respectively, but each noted, however, that there was considerable variation between individual gardens. Connell, for example, stated that in gardens in Cornwall and the Highlands of Scotland, almost three-quarters of the visitors were tourists. This puts the figure of two-thirds of visitors in the survey at Compton Acres being tourists, in perspective.

More usefully, perhaps, Connell also showed that there were statistically significant differences in the socio-demographic characteristics of the visitors in this respect. First, the proportions of day-trippers decreased with age, whereas the tourists increased. The same result was obtained in the visitor survey at Compton Acres with three-quarters of retired visitors being tourists ($p = 0.004$). Secondly, Connell showed that 91% of visitors in the DE occupational groups were on a day visit and only 10% were on holiday, whereas the other occupational groups were divided more equally. Thirdly she showed that of those visitors who had no interest in gardening, two-thirds were day-trippers. There were no statistically significant differences between the occupational group and type of gardener (or gender, which Connell did not show) in relation to tourism in the Compton Acres survey.

4.4. Reasons for visiting gardens identified from survey data.

The next part of the chapter follows the ‘traditional’ means of explaining attraction visiting by assuming the individual agency of visitors. Using survey data it discusses the physiological and psychological benefits which people seek to obtain through visiting a garden.

4.4.1. Data from the literature

Gallagher (1983) concentrated on the part a priori interest in the garden plays and concluded that about one third of visitors appeared to have a fairly positive interest in gardens, or some aspect of them. The same percentage stated that ‘garden visiting is a hobby of mine’. Just under half of all visitors were interested in plants (a quarter said this was a very important reason for their visit) and just over a third considered their own interest in gardening to be important or very important. However, a lack of importance was

attributed to wanting ideas for their own garden. Gallagher noted that some had commented that the context of the gardens they were visiting (historic) and their own were too different to consider this. Similarly, the history of the garden was of no interest to a majority of visitors.

Gallagher also asked an open question to elicit other reasons for visiting the gardens. The results shown in Table 4.11, demonstrate the generality of responses.

Reasons	(f)	(%)
Somewhere to go/out for the day	224	42
Special interest in place/something here (e.g. bird-watching)	96	18
Generally like gardens	63	12
Peacefulness/relaxation	44	8
Recommended	28	5
Support National Trust	24	5
Impulse	24	5
On excursion (in party)	20	4
Other	5	1

Table 4.11 Other reasons for visits – all gardens
(Gallagher, 1983, p 39)

Connell (2004a) similarly asked an open question in her survey of visitors and observed that the most popular reasons given for visiting a garden, were to have a day out (15.1%), to enjoy a garden (14.9%) and for interest (13.4%). From this she concluded that a large number of visits are made for general reasons rather than specific ones.

She also asked visitors to rate 7 reasons for visiting gardens using Likert scales to assess the strength of opinion. The most frequent responses related to the natural environment of gardens, rather than the social environment. Connell notes particularly that 53.2% of visitors scored visiting ‘a nice environment’ highly and 51.3% ‘the tranquillity’. Next in importance were the horticultural aspects and getting ideas for one’s own garden. She highlights that 48% of visitors said that they took notes on the garden and plants whilst they were in the garden, which she says supports this finding. Although not rated as highly, ‘somewhere to go’ was also considered an important reason, particularly by some groups of visitors. It is revealing that when asked which three factors, out of a list of 13, most influenced their enjoyment of a garden visit, over three quarters indicated the quality of the

garden, and just under half, the freedom to wander and the peaceful atmosphere. Only 28.2% referred to plenty of interest.

Connell also asked respondents what activities they undertook in a garden, other than viewing it. Three-quarters of visitors referred to sitting and about half took photographs and a similar number, notes about plants. From this she concluded that '*garden visiting appears to be a relatively passive pursuit*' (Connell, 2004a, p. 240)

4.4.2. The resident survey

The two surveys undertaken in this research were slightly different from each other, in that the resident survey was prospective and asked respondents how important various reasons were to them in relation to visiting a garden, whereas the visitor survey at Compton Acres, was retrospective and respondents were asked what had made them want to visit the garden. This section begins by describing the findings of the resident survey.

When asked how enjoyable they thought a visit to a garden would be, 89% of respondents in the resident survey thought it would be very enjoyable or quite enjoyable. Of those respondents who had visited a garden, just 1% thought a visit would be quite unenjoyable, none thought it would be very unenjoyable. Conversely of those respondents who had not visited a garden, 15% thought it would be enjoyable. Therefore, there is an extensive perception across the sample that visiting a garden is a pleasurable activity. Connell (2004a) also contends that visiting gardens is a pleasurable experience and uses the quotation '*the purest of human pleasures*'¹ in the title of her article.

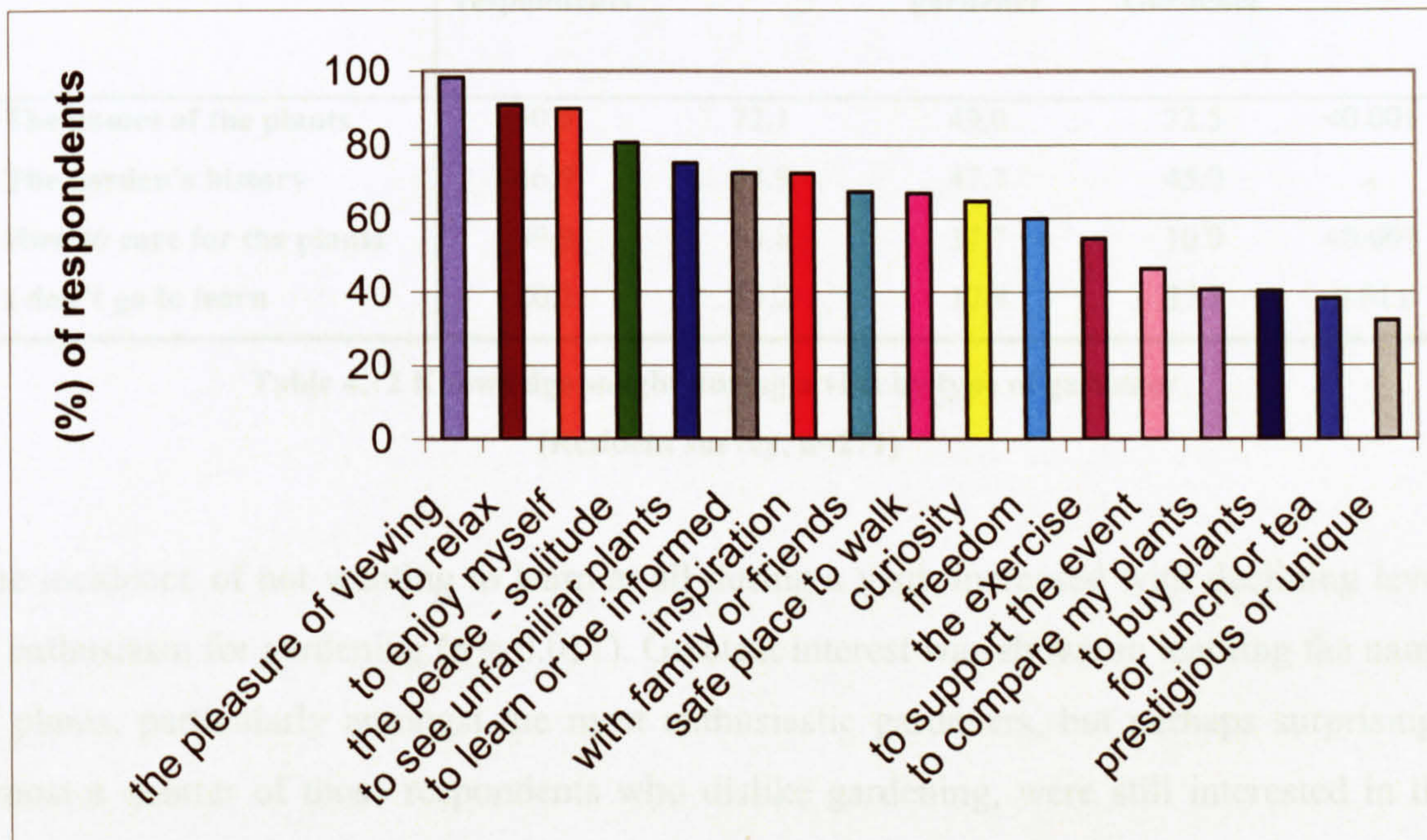
When asked what words they would use to describe a garden, 46 respondents (17% of those giving a description) referred to gardens as being interesting or very interesting; 43, relaxing; 40, beautiful; 23, peaceful or calm and 22 that gardens are informative. A few noted, however, that gardens are boring and one wrote, '*not my cup of tea*' (RS261).

Respondents were also asked about the specific importance of a series of factors which could contribute to the enjoyment of visiting a garden (Figure 4.7). The pleasure of viewing the garden was the most important reason for visiting, with almost 99% stating

¹ From the opening of the essay 'Of Gardens' by Sir Francis Bacon, 1625 (cited in Fearnley-Whittingstall, 2002, p. 53).

that this is a very important or quite important reason for visiting. For over three quarters of respondents, relaxation, enjoyment and the peace-solitude were important. To see unfamiliar plants, to learn or be informed and to obtain inspiration from the garden were important for over 70% of respondents.

Figure 4.7 Factors influencing a garden visit
(Resident survey)



These findings agree therefore with Connell's, with the opportunities afforded by the setting of a garden being the most important and the horticultural aspects of a visit being secondary.

Visiting an attraction with a desire to learn has been well documented in cultural attractions such as museums (for example, Prentice *et al.*, 1997) and the surveys therefore looked at this aspect in more detail. Here 'learning' refers to what Light (1995) labels '*informal education*' which is '*self-motivated, voluntary, exploratory, non-coercive learning and understanding which can take place during a visit...*' (Light, 1995, p. 117). Just over half the respondents showed that they wanted to learn about the names of plants, just under half, about a garden's history and 40% how to care for plants. Only 20% of respondents indicated that they do not go to learn in a garden.

Next it was ascertained whether there is any association between ‘leisure learning’ during a visit and the visitors’ enthusiasm for gardening. The respondents were asked whether they liked to learn when visiting and which of three subjects they liked to learn about (Table 4.12).

(%)	All respondents	Enthusiast	Willing gardener	Unwilling Gardener	<i>p</i>
The names of the plants	50.9	72.1	49.0	22.5	<0.001
The garden’s history	46.9	44.9	47.7	45.0	-
How to care for the plants	39.9	63.8	37.7	10.0	<0.001
I don’t go to learn	20.3	13.2	17.9	37.5	0.011

Table 4.12 Knowledge sought during a visit by type of gardener
(Resident survey, n=271)

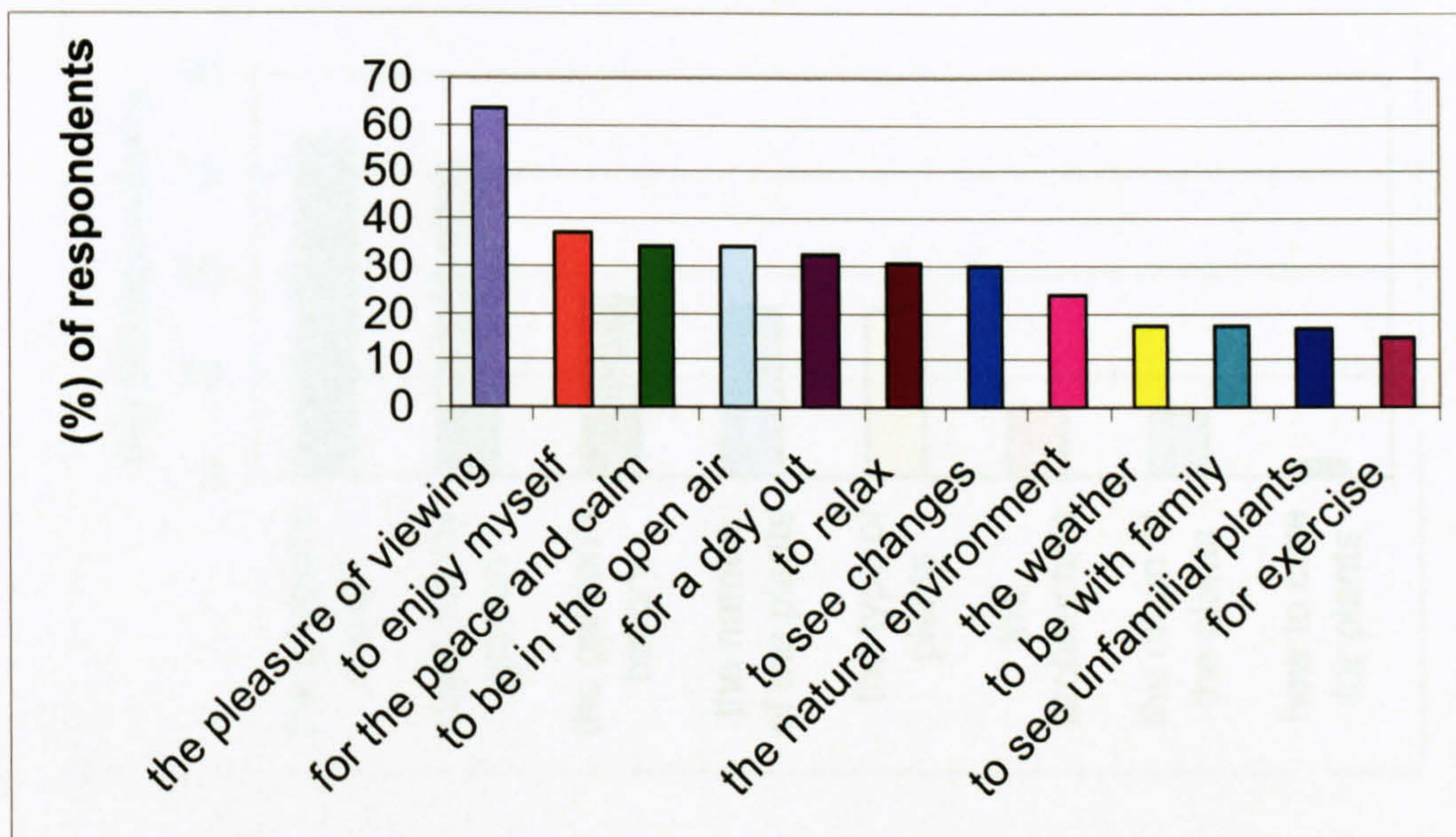
The incidence of not wanting to learn at all during a visit, increased with declining levels of enthusiasm for gardening ($p = 0.011$). Greatest interest was shown in learning the names of plants, particularly amongst the most enthusiastic gardeners, but perhaps surprisingly almost a quarter of those respondents who dislike gardening, were still interested in this aspect of visiting ($p = <0.001$). Similarly, although of less relevance was ‘how to care for plants’, again with the enthusiastic gardeners more likely to want to learn about this during a visit ($p = <0.001$). Learning about the garden’s history was of interest to just under half of the respondents, but intriguingly, seems to be of interest to visitors irrespective of their enthusiasm for gardening.

4.4.3. The visitor survey

In designing the questions for the visitor survey¹, the options given in the resident survey instrument were expanded to include additional items sourced from the data, then newly published by Connell (2004a). Respondents were asked about 29 factors in response to closed questions, which said ‘Before you decided to come here today, which, if any, of the following made you personally want to visit the garden?’ (Figure 4.8 shows the 12 factors indicated most often).

¹ In addition to the questions provided by ATLAS

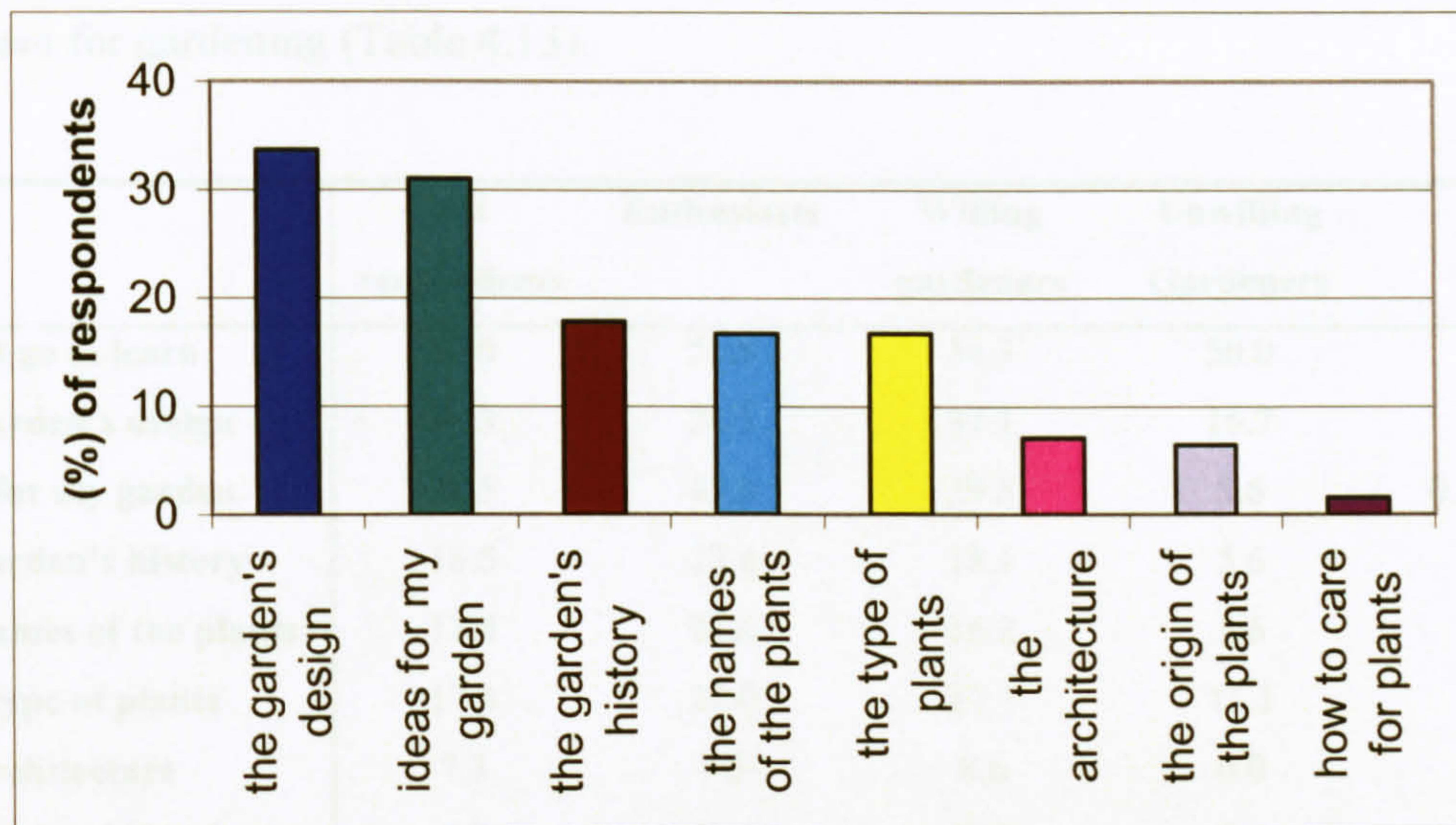
**Figure 4.8 Factors influencing a visit to Compton Acres
(Visitor survey)**



‘The pleasure of viewing the gardens’ was the response ticked most often (63.7% of respondents). This is the same result as in the resident survey (Figure 4.7). There was therefore anticipation that the gardens at Compton Acres would be a pleasurable place to visit. Three factors, not included in the resident survey, also seem to be important, namely, a need to be in the open air, for a day out and to see how the garden has changed. This again demonstrates that the generic motivators such as enjoyment and those relating to the setting or environment seem to be more important to the respondents of the surveys, than the specific horticultural reasons.

Two-thirds of the visitors indicated that the prospect of informal education is also an expectation of visiting a garden attraction. The questionnaire for the resident survey included only three options (referred to above) but several items were written in the section marked ‘other’ by the respondents and so these were included in an extended list of eight options which was part of the survey instrument for Compton Acres. As Figure 4.9 shows more of the visitors wanted to learn about the garden’s design and to get ideas for their own gardens, than the three subjects included in the resident survey. This suggests that they are more interested in the visual aspects of gardens than either the botanic or practical aspects.

Figure 4.9 Knowledge sought during the visit
(Visitor survey)



Gallagher (1983) found that only 16% of respondents in her survey wanted to learn about the history of the garden, which is perhaps surprising in that all her questionnaires were completed in historic gardens. The figure of 17.9% at Compton Acres is therefore comparable, but this is also a Grade 11* listed historic garden. However the figure of 31.0% interested in obtaining new ideas for their own gardens from Compton Acres is considerably higher than Gallagher's figure of 19%. She noted that some of her respondents commented that the context of the gardens they were visiting was too different from their own domestic gardens to even consider this. Perhaps Compton Acres, which is a relatively small garden (10 acres/4 hectares) and consists of a series of smaller gardens within it, is more comparable to domestic gardens. Learning about gardening skills does not seem to be widely associated with garden visiting.

The details shown in Table 4.12 (above) demonstrate that a greater number of residents, thinking hypothetically wanted to learn about the three options, than appears to be the case for the visitors. This repeats the finding of the general reason of learning. One must question, therefore, whether each set of respondents were reporting what they actually felt or whether their responses were a reflection of something more than individual agency.

The visitor survey at Compton Acres gives a retrospective view of learning during a visit (and as in the resident survey), the desire to learn increased with the respondent's stated enthusiasm for gardening (Table 4.13).

(%)	All respondents	Enthusiasts	Willing gardeners	Unwilling Gardeners	<i>p</i>
I don't go to learn	32.0	21.8	34.3	50.0	-
The garden's design	34.3	34.5	37.1	16.7	-
Ideas for my garden	31.5	43.6	29.5	5.6	0.008
The garden's history	18.5	23.6	18.1	5.6	-
The names of the plants	17.4	23.6	16.2	5.6	-
They type of plants	17.4	20.0	17.1	11.1	-
The architecture	7.3	7.3	8.6	0.0	-
The origin of the plants	6.2	10.9	4.8	0.0	-
How to care for the plants	1.7	3.6	1.0	0.0	-

Table 4.13 Knowledge sought by type of gardener

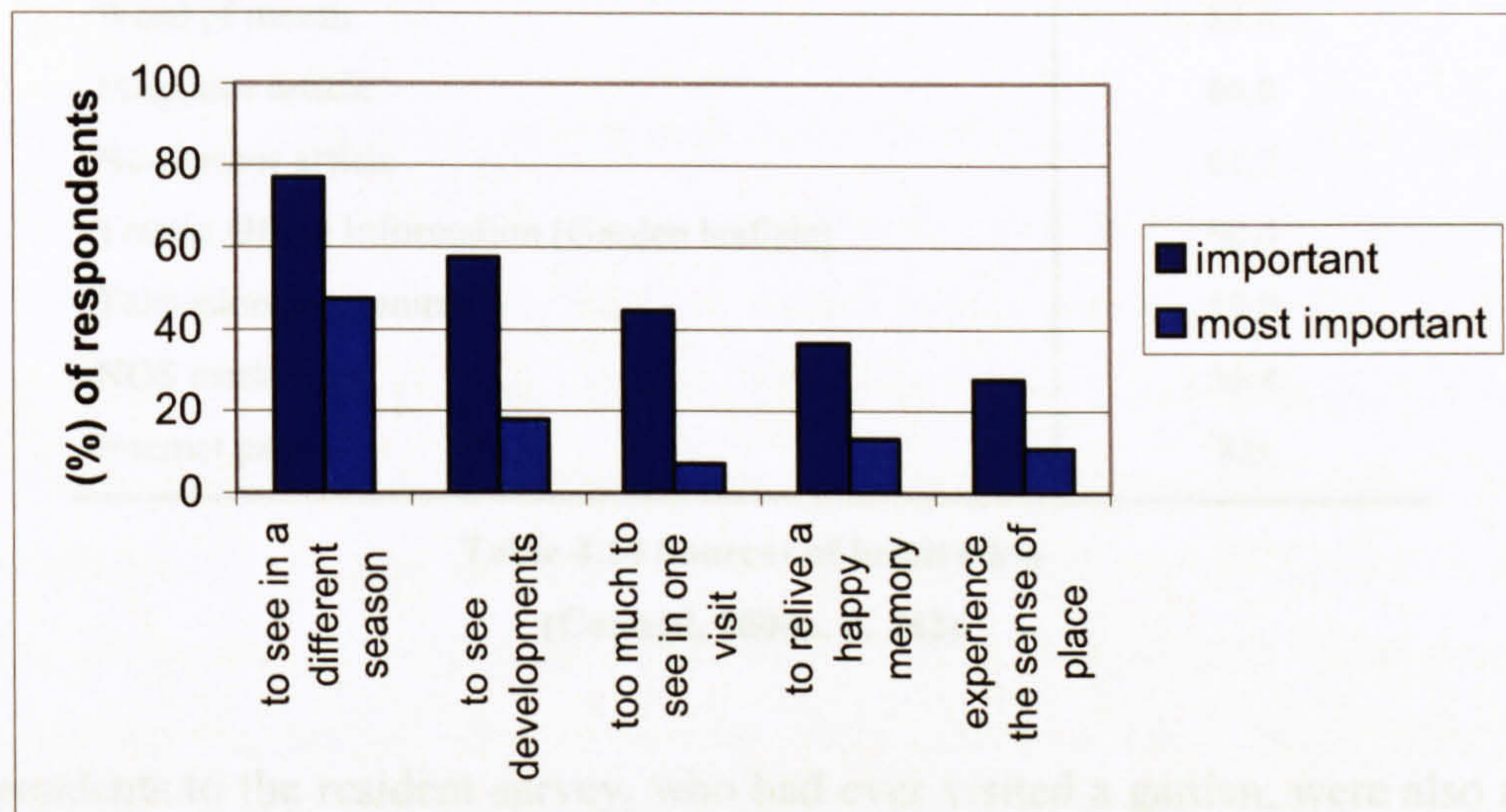
(Visitor survey, n=184)

The two reasons indicated most often by the respondents were to learn about the garden's design and to obtain ideas for their own gardens. In the case of the latter there were statistically significant differences between the groups. Predictably those who were most enthusiastic about gardening were most likely to want to obtain ideas ($p = 0.008$).

4.4.4. Re-visiting a garden

Repeat visiting of attractions in general has been frequently identified (Darnell and Johnson, 2001). Gallagher (1983) showed that just under half (49%) of the visitors in her survey had visited the garden before but a detailed analysis of figures for each of the gardens used in her survey, shows wide variation between gardens (ranging from 27 – 72%). The visitor survey of Compton Acres therefore confirms that the garden receives high levels of repeat visitation (just over two-thirds of visitors) in comparison to other gardens. In the resident survey 84% of respondents said that they like to revisit a garden. For all those respondents who did like to revisit, the reasons selected are shown in Figure 4.10.

**Figure 4.10 Reasons given for revisiting a garden
(Resident survey)**



Over three-quarters of residents like to see a garden in a different season and when asked the most important reason for revisiting, the same one was cited most often. Figure 4.10 shows that the more important reasons for revisiting, relate to the garden itself, rather than the personal experiences of the visitor. Gardens are different to most attraction types, because the imagescape (Wanhill, 2003) changes without the proprietor's intervention. This is discussed further in the next chapter.

4.5. The influences on garden visiting identified from survey data

4.5.1. Sources of inspiration

Connell (2004a) asked respondents whether a visit to a garden had ever been inspired by a range of different marketing sources (Table 4.14) and word of mouth was cited the most frequently.

Source	(%) of visitors inspired
Word of mouth	83.4
Magazine article	66.0
Newspaper article	61.2
Tourist Office Information (Garden leaflets)	60.4
Television programme	59.0
NGS marketing	56.4
Internet page	8.3

Table 4.14 Sources of inspiration
(Connell, 2004a, p. 242).

The respondents to the resident survey, who had ever visited a garden, were also asked to indicate what had inspired them (Table 4.15).

Source	(%) of residents (who have ever visited a garden)
Friend	57.8
Family	45.9
Magazine article	44.1
Newspaper article	40.4
National Trust Handbook	32.2
Tourist Office Information (Garden leaflets)	32.2
Garden guide book	21.5
RHS Handbook	11.9
Internet page	3.7

Table 4.15 Sources of inspiration
(Resident survey, n = 274).

Again the results demonstrate the importance of word of mouth as an affordance to garden visiting. The resident survey asked about ‘friends’ and ‘family’ as separate items and this shows that friends are a greater source of inspiration. It seems possible that friends are more inspirational than family because there is a greater tendency to visit with family than friends (see Chapter 5) and so family members are more likely to have visited the same garden and are therefore a slightly less likely source of new inspiration. Additionally and despite the two sets of data not containing all the same items, it is clear that in the first few

years of the twenty-first century, the traditional sources of arousal in the media were more influential than the Internet.

Moving then from measures of general inspiration for visiting a garden to the specific and in particular to the garden at Compton Acres, where (as already shown), just under a third of respondents to the visitor survey had not visited before. Of those 61 first time visitors, 29 already knew about the garden – they therefore had acquired knowledge through some form(s) of social agency. Of the remaining respondents in the visitor survey 15 had heard about the garden from some one else, six had seen the Compton Acres leaflet, four had read about the garden in a magazine feature and one had seen the sign whilst passing (six did not identify the source). Media sources were therefore not a major affordance in directly inspiring a first visit to this garden. Further support for this finding is provided by Connell (2004a), who shows that of the 546 respondents in her survey, just 13 were directly influenced by a media source - (8, a television/magazine feature and 5 through a leaflet).

4.5.2. Other influences on garden visiting

When asked what factors influence how they spend their leisure time, the respondents to the resident survey identified the weather as the most important (Table 4.18). It seems likely, that as most leisure time is spent within the home, that the earlier questions in the survey instrument may have directed their thoughts to visits to attractions, rather than watching television or other indoor activities.

(%)	All
Weather	62.3
Your mood at the time	44.5
Children	34.0
Your garden	31.5
Other relatives	26.8
Pets	19.0
Disability or ill-health	17.4
Transport	12.7
Television schedules	9.7
Your religion	4.7

Table 4.16 Factors influencing how respondents spend their leisure time
(Resident survey, n=323)

When asked which factor was the *most* important, the weather again was cited most often. Further details about these influences emerged in the interviews and are discussed in Chapter 6.

In order to obtain further details of possible influences on garden visiting as opposed to their leisure in general, respondents were asked whether they had seen the television programme, 'Gardeners' World' as it frequently features gardens that are open to the public. 43% of respondents confirmed that they had seen a garden featured and subsequently visited it. However, what is important at this stage is the explanation given by respondents who had seen a garden which they would like to visit but had not visited. Respondents were asked to tick the appropriate boxes indicating their reasons for not visiting and 106 respondents did so. (As they could identify one or more reasons the columns on the left of Table 4.19 do not add up to 106 or 100%). Respondents were also asked the most important reason and 77 indicated this. The garden being too far away was cited most frequently as both a reason for not visiting and as the *most* important reason for not visiting (Table 4.19). The second most frequently given reason, was that the respondent had 'just not got round to it yet'. The factors which are most often suggested in the leisure constraints' literature, such as family and work commitments are all lower down in the table. Again the qualitative data, which is discussed in the subsequent chapters, gives more insights into these factors.

	Reasons for not visiting		Most important reason for not visiting	
	<i>f</i>	(%)	<i>f</i>	(%)
Too far way	79	74.5	36	46.2
Just not got round to it yet	50	47.2	23	29.5
Family commitments	20	18.9	5	6.4
Work commitments	20	18.9	2	2.6
No transport	17	16.0	5	6.4
Too expensive	15	14.2	2	2.6
Other leisure commitments	14	13.2	3	3.8
No-one to go with	6	5.7	1	1.3

Table 4.17 All reasons and most important reason given for not visiting a garden seen on 'Gardeners' World' (Resident survey, n=106)

4.6. Chapter summary

The first section of the chapter reported the use of secondary data to identify the number of gardens open to the public in 2002. The study by Connell (2004a) subsequently confirmed the figures. The number of attractions having an additional draw to the garden was highlighted, as was the domination of the private sector in owning gardens.

The remainder of the chapter has provided results from the usual method of obtaining data in respect of attraction visiting, that is, the survey. Comparisons were made between the contextual literature on garden visiting and the findings from the visitor survey carried out at Compton Acres and a survey of residents in Dorset. This demonstrated the heterogeneity of the garden visitor and that Gallagher's claim that '*visitors are essentially middle-class*' (Gallagher, 1983, p. 3), is maybe now too simplistic. It has shown that whilst structural factors are influential in participation in garden visiting, life-style 'choices', such as a person's enthusiasm for gardening and membership of the National Trust also reflect or are reflected in their propensity to visit gardens. As it has been shown that there are significant differences between sub-groups of visitors, for example, middle aged women and middle aged men, any further cross-sectional analysis of data undertaken using the main groups of gender, age etc. would be inappropriate as the sample would not be homogeneous and so

there are no examples reported in this research. A much larger sample size than that available here would be needed to analyse the variables within sub-groups.

The data presented in the final sections of the chapter is researcher-led, in that the respondents have indicated their perceptions in response to options presented by a researcher. The literature has shown that the prevailing insight into participation in garden visiting is dominated by individual agency and is described in terms of the pleasure sought during a visit. The findings of this research confirm the reported studies, in that visitors want opportunities for gentle, relaxed enjoyment, as opposed to an exhilarating experience; for example, experiencing the peacefulness found in gardens. Respondents also seek pleasure from the aesthetic value of the garden and the associations they can form with their own domestic gardens. Additionally, but less important to the respondents, the studies identified reasons for visiting which could be generic to any attraction, for example, social bonding and the opportunity to go out for a day. In the next chapter similar issues are considered but not only is participant-led data presented but also the approach is that of affordance theory and so the chapter shows what gardens can afford visitors.

Chapter 5 - Affordance within gardens

5.1. Introduction

This chapter moves from structured answers to questions about garden visiting obtained in the surveys to the more freely given responses provided by the participants in the interviews. In particular, it examines the behavioural opportunities afforded by gardens that the participants have perceived. It is argued that the anticipated affordances which may be realisable during a visit are an incentive for visiting a garden. Whilst the qualitative data corroborates many of the findings of the previous chapter it also reveals greater depth of detail than is possible from the surveys.

Thomas (1991) argues that what is important about an artefact is *'not what they were made to be but what they have become'* (Thomas, 1991, p4). Most gardens have *'become'* visitor attractions through the interaction of owners and visitors (MacCannell, 1976). This chapter reviews the affordances, which not only have been created through the actions of people, but also the affordances provided by nature together with those produced by an interaction between the two. These affordances were identified from the explanations provided in response to the *'grand tour'* question – *'What made you come to the gardens today?'* The same question was asked as an open question in the visitor survey at Compton Acres and as the opening question to all participants in the visitor interviews. From the responses, eight categories were established and in this chapter the first two are discussed. These are first, what a garden affords a visitor and secondly, what additional affordances are realisable from a repeat visit to a garden. The remaining categories are described in the *next* chapter.

The chapter begins by considering the affordances realisable from being in a garden and then from looking at it. Next it considers how movement within a garden space is not only afforded but affords opportunities for other behavioural actions (in the literature review it was noted that any environment contains a rich amount of information available to be perceived especially when the perceiver is moving). Other behavioural opportunities including sitting and remembering are discussed and the companionship of other people within the garden is considered at some length. Finally the chapter expands on the findings of the previous chapter about re-visiting a garden.

5.2. Being in a garden environment

The environment of a garden can be different to environments that are usually encountered, for example, the home; work and urban environments, and some of the participants explicitly identified a preference for garden environments:

VI05: *I certainly prefer to be in gardens or countryside than in town [woman at Compton Acres].*

Several of the interviews carried out in the Pleasure Gardens were with office workers during their lunch breaks. Here a man tells why he and his colleagues spend their lunchtime in the gardens, even though there are facilities for them to spend it in their workplace.

VI105: *We are working all day in a place we never see outside, no sky, just our computers, it's nice to come in the gardens...*

Gardens are predominantly open-air attractions (there maybe also be greenhouses as part of the garden or a house or other building which is part of the attraction). The interviewees spoke of the positive affect this had on them. A female employee in another group of office workers said when asked why they came into the Gardens:

VI104: *I think just to get some fresh air.*

Others perceived gardens as peaceful places. Here two women interviewed at Compton Acres describe the affects of gardens on them:

VI04: *Oh, it's very much a very peaceful pastime looking at gardens.*

VI09d: *... it's just a lovely tranquil feeling, especially if there's waterfalls and you know, water involved as well.*

A resident talked about her plants in the same way:

RI01: *I don't know, they give you a sort of um, sense of peace don't they. You look at a nice plant, the way it's shaped and that and it's sort of, especially if you're stressed out or worried about anything.*

However, people's perceptions of peacefulness vary, as this woman interviewed in the Pleasure Gardens demonstrates:

VI102: *... it's so tranquil, even with lots of people.*

Tranquillity often seemed to be the antithesis of the noise from transport. A young man also interviewed in the Pleasure Gardens described how he felt being there:

VI101a: *It feels disconnected but it's not too far away.*

DF: When you say disconnected, what from...

VI101a: *There's not too much traffic noise and background hustle and bustle.*

The importance of the peacefulness of gardens is illustrated by the finding that many of RBG, Kew's members only visit after 3pm each day. This is due to their awareness of an arrangement which exists at Heathrow Airport, that when the wind is from the west, aircraft which would otherwise fly directly over the Gardens switch at 3pm from landing on the airport's northern runway to its southern one. (BAA Heathrow, undated; Webster, 2005). Perhaps the most important aspect of a garden, however, is that it is a natural environment and this too contributes to the restorative effect which gardens can have on their visitors.

Some literature suggests that there is an innate relationship between nature and people. Biophilia, the proposition that *'people have a need and propensity to affiliate with nature'* (Kahn, 1997, p. 53), is supported by the findings of this research. Respondents, in the resident survey, were asked to indicate which types of attraction¹ they like to visit. A 'natural' place was the most popular choice (92%) with a garden or park (67%) second. Similarly when asked which attraction they *most* preferred to visit, over half (55%) again stated a 'natural' place. (Detailed results are given in Appendix H.)

¹ Based on Swarbrooke (2002)

A young man in the Pleasure Gardens explained why he liked to go there:

VI103: *It's very nice, like, especially in this period of the year and because of the um sun, the flowers, the cool ambience, very quiet and I love to be in nature.*

His explanation is all the more interesting, because this interview was carried out in the most popular part of the Gardens during a particularly busy time. Others implicitly talked about nature rather than explicitly:

RI02a: *...if I find a place that I particularly like, it will be the whole environment, the whole package in that particular place where you are, um, it won't be everything. I like big expanses of garden, greenery and things like that, but it won't be that, it would be something really unexpected. I really like plants that have big leaves, tropical plants with really big leaves that make a just a canopy, or sort of leaves over water or something like that creating shade, something like that, just, just makes a whole, sort of thing [female resident].*

Participants also perceived some form of restorative effect from being in a garden. Much of the literature on the influence of nature has concentrated upon its beneficial effects on health. A meta-study by the Health Council of the Netherlands and the Dutch Advisory Council for Research on Spatial Planning, Nature and the Environment (2004) concluded that the evidence from two large-scale epidemiological studies from Holland and Japan, confirmed the '*first direct indication of a positive link between nature and (generic) health indicators*' (HCN and DACRSPNE, 2004, p. 22). They then looked at indirect influences on health and agreed *inter alia* that a number of studies have produced strong evidence of the positive effect of nature on recovery from stress and attention fatigue.

Similarly exposure to nature has also had a proven positive effect on mood, concentration, self-discipline and physiological stress (English Nature, 2002; Kahn, 1999). Ottosson and Grahn (2005) tried to demonstrate the affects on health, from being in a *garden*, but their research with 15 elderly persons in residential care, showed limited results as there was no effect on the residents' blood pressure or heart rate but there was an improvement in their powers of concentration. Most other research in this area has concentrated on the effects of

gardening (in social and therapeutic horticulture) rather than visiting a garden *per se* (Centre for Child and Family Research, 2002; Elings, 2005; Söderback *et al.*, 2004).

Some of the respondents in the resident survey described gardens as, ‘*uplifting*’ ‘*restorative*’ and ‘*lifts the spirit*’. One interviewee was asked how she felt being in the gardens at Compton Acres where she was visiting:

VI11:... *it's a sanctuary really is the garden to me.*

DF: Is your own garden a sanctuary?

VI11: *Yes, yea, even though I live on a main road, it's only a very small garden now, but yes I love to be outside in the fresh-air, pottering around.*

DF: Do you think there is a sort of spiritual element to some gardens?

VI11: *Yes.*

DF: And do you think this one has that?

VI11: *Yes, yea definitely, I think you find it even in a little town garden, um, if you're happy there.*

Boniface suggests that gardens ‘*even seem to extend into the realm of aromatherapy through the charm of their varied scents*’ (Boniface, 2001, p. 19). Several women spoke of how the scent of plants is sensuous. One expressed her perceptions of first being in a garden and then secondly her domestic garden:

RI02a: *I like fragrant flowers, I just like the smell, because then that's another aspect of a plant that comes into me, if you like. You almost feel the oxygen and sort of, you know, just, it feels healthy, it feels as though I am actually gaining some kind of health from the plants outside, as well as just relaxing. It creates a nice environment, you become part of it. It's like if you've been gardening in the garden and you come in and you've been grubbing about in your overalls, or something like that and everything feels suddenly, very um, man-made if you like. You feel as though you've been breathing in so much oxygen, you come in and think oh, gosh, yes, this is a completely different environment isn't it. It's almost a shock to come in and it's so man-made and plastic.*

The concept of ‘sense of place’ has received wide support in the literature. Eyles (1985) suggests that it is:

...more than the (positive or negative) ‘feel’ for a place or places which is based on the individual’s experiences of those places. It is also seen as being derived from the totality of an individual’s life (Eyles, 1985, p. 2).

Sense of place is, therefore, not merely a phenomenon which exists in the minds of individuals but one that develops from and becomes part of everyday life and experience. For some interviewees it is not just the garden that is important, but the wider place in which it is situated. Here a woman and a man at the NGS garden began by talking about that garden but then recalled another garden they had visited and the effect it had on them:

VI91a: Another nice thing about a garden like this is the way it nestles in the, in the surrounding countryside, whereas there are some gardens you go to, they’re lovely gardens but they’re like, the little square in the middle of, whereas this, you know, you can sort of see...

VI91: There are, there are places around which we’ve visited over the years, which are sort of um, use the natural hillside, that they’re actually situated on and there’s one in particular that I’m thinking of on the Isle of Man that we visited ... It was a wonderful garden and it was, it actually used the natural contours of the hill to make best effect of the...

VI91a: There was a lot of waterfalls ...

She then extended her thoughts about gardens to the wider area in which they are situated:

VI91a: Another thing about going to gardens open while you’re on holiday, it’s like you’re seeing another aspect of the area that you’re exploring on holiday, that you don’t see by, maybe by going to beaches or walks or the tourist um, attractions. It’s another, a different aspect of the sort of life of that area or country.

5.3. Looking at a garden

Adam Pasco, a garden writer, suggests in the foreword of a guidebook to gardens that *'the value of any garden is in the eyes of the visitor'* (Pasco, 2000; p. 7). One man said:

VI81: *I like a lot of gardens...I like going to see 'em.*

This is supported by Gallagher (1983) who showed that 84% of visitors in her survey had looked at things in general and 41% of those had done only that. Half of all the visitors looked particularly at the plants, although there was considerable variation between gardens. At a privately-owned 'plantsmans' garden only 24% of respondents looked particularly at the plants whereas at a National Trust property (described by her as a series of outdoor rooms) 69% of respondents reported that they did.

What is it about a garden that makes people want to look at it? Two theories have been suggested: that we have an innate relationship with nature; or that we have learnt to appreciate it. Research on environmental preferences (for example, Kaplan, 1992) shows that natural rather than built environments are preferred; with trees and water enhancing that preference and that *'people have a generalized bias toward savanna-like environments'* (Orians and Heerwagen, 1992, p. 560). In particular they showed that trees with moderately dense canopies and trunks that bifurcate (fork or divide into two) near the ground, that is the prototypic savanna tree, are rated as the most attractive in a cross-cultural study. They suggest that Humphrey Repton (1752-1818), the English landscape designer who developed the idea of the 'picturesque', often included scattered clumps of trees in his designs:

Those pleasing combinations of trees which we admire in forest scenery will often be found to consist of forked trees, or at least of trees placed so near each other that the branches intermix, and by a natural effect of vegetation the stems of the trees themselves are forced from that perpendicular direction which is always observable in trees planted at regular distances from each other (Repton cited in Orians and Heerwagen, 1992, p. 559-560).

There is some support for the ‘savannah’ hypothesis, for example, one female resident said:

RIO9: *I quite like it as well when they [the National Trust] do, just call it parklands, which is pretty basic. Just quite happy there.*

Similarly Appleton (1996) suggests that people prefer landscapes whether natural or built that offer ‘prospect and refuge’, that is landscapes that provide not only a long-range view that would have enabled early humans to obtain food safely but also cover to avoid being seen.

However, Löfgren (1999) argues that what we like to look at in a landscape is culturally mediated. He contrasts the observations of Carl Linnaeus in a journey from Uppsala, Sweden, in 1732 to that of Carl Jonas Linnerhielm, who made the same trip half a century later. Whereas the former collected flowers and minerals, the latter ‘collected’ views and moods. Linnerhielm expresses the difference clearly in his journal – *‘I travel to see, not to study’* (Löfgren, 1999, p. 17). Löfgren describes him as the *‘first proper tourist in Sweden, a landed gentleman travelling for pleasure and nothing else’* (ibid., p. 16). On his journey Linnerhielm stopped at a garden in Forsmark, which was newly constructed in the English style. Löfgren describes how Linnerhielm walked around the garden, full of praise for the surprises it offered, a mix of wildness and idyll. *‘Behind every corner there are fresh surprises: a shady arbour, a bridge, a sculpture, or a little hall of mirrors, a Greek Temple’* (Löfgren, 1999, p. 22).

Today’s visitors, Löfgren suggests, are unlikely to share Linnerhielm’s enthusiasm. Although the park is relatively unchanged, it seems small, insignificant and tame. Current visitors he argues lack the cultural conditioning that made a visit so powerful to eighteenth century visitors. Small features of the landscape had literary, historical and aesthetic connotations which stimulated the mind, creating a large symbolic space out of what is a small park. As Löfgren concludes: *‘As modern visitors we lack these cultural lenses. We walk the same grounds but move in a different mindscape’* (Löfgren, 1999, p. 22).

In contemporary times, Urry (2002) distinguishes between the ‘romantic’ gaze and the ‘collective’ tourist gaze. Some places he says were designed as public places and they

would look strange if they were empty. Affordances are signalled by the broader social and cultural context in which they are situated. The Pleasure Gardens have always been a public park and therefore the other visitors are an integral part of it. In fact their absence gives cause for concern. Other places, however, are subject to the ‘romantic’ gaze. Walter (1982) gives the example of Stourhead to illustrate:¹

...the romantic notion that the self is found not in society but in solitudinous contemplation of nature. Stourhead's garden is the perfect romantic landscape...designed to be walked around in wonderment at Nature and the presence of other people immediately begins to impair this [Walter, 1982, p. 298].

This woman interviewed at the NGS garden, clearly feels the same:

VI92: *...I also like when you go round some of them and you get sort of, sort of, wild bits and things, which I love, Stourhead is nice for that, as you walk through there.*

There is also considerable evidence of the differentiation that Rojek (1995) refers to as the interviewees in this study identified a diversity of features which they like to see in gardens (examples are given in Figures 5.1 – 5.4).

Figure 5.1 The types of garden which visitors like to see

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| • A large garden | <i>I think it's just nice to see things on a different scale. We've got a typical garden at home really and you know, we've just managed to have one tree and it's lovely to see so many trees and things like that, really. The grander scale, I suppose.</i> |
| • A small garden | <i>I like the smaller ones</i> |
| • A natural garden | <i>I don't like les jardins à française, which are little, little, you know, box hedges and all neat and tidy. I like gardens that are more natural.</i> |
| • A formal garden | <i>The Italian garden is formal but there again that is beautiful.</i> |
| • A colourful garden | <i>I like the colours...</i> |

¹ Stourhead is described by the National Trust [2006b] as a ‘celebrated 18th century landscape garden’

Figure 5.2 The types of planting which visitors like to see

• Flowers	<i>Just looking at flowers...</i>
• Plants	<i>I think plants are just so lovely.</i>
• Fruit and vegetables	<i>I like the fruit and veg so I go back every time and see what they're up to, in those areas.</i>
• Bedding plants	<i>I don't know if there is any sort of formal gardens with bedding plants, but that I think is always part of a traditional Garden.</i>
• Trees	<i>You get nice trees,</i>
• Grass	<i>Nice grass</i>
• For own garden	<i>Like to see things that we might possibly grow ourselves</i>

Figure 5.3 The changes in a garden which visitors like to see

• Natural	<i>I'd see how things had grown.</i>
• Seasonal	<i>When we went things were just beginning to come out ... and so we said, well next time we're in the area we'll come back again and see what develops in a few weeks time.</i>
• Proprietors'	<i>Each year as well, they'll plant something else up that wasn't there the year before and so again you've got another twelve months of following that through to, you know, to fruition.</i>

Figure 5.4 Other features in a garden which visitors like to see

• The house	<i>I like to go to a garden, that's got the house, because the house has to be part of it, it all has to belong.</i>
• A view	<i>We were just going round there in the winter just to see the views</i>
• Cultivation techniques	<i>I think what I would look at is, is maybe different ways of cultivating</i>
• Greenhouse	<i>I hope I'm going to see greenhouses</i>
• Design	<i>I suppose it is, it is design and plants in different circumstances, different places to where you thought they may be.</i>

Employing Urry's (2002) use of the 'gaze', it seems evident that visitors to gardens 'gaze' from different perspectives. Some described gardens in aesthetic terms:

VI04: *Beautiful - nicely laid out, um, some very elegant trees, landscape; it's looking very nice* [woman at Compton Acres].

Other visitors who are interested in gardening, seem to look at the garden, in relation to their own - to get ideas; to compare plants; to look at techniques or to identify what might grow in their own garden.

VI95: *I'm a keen gardener. I like to look at other people's gardens, uh, for inspiration and to see what plants they're growing, and if I think it would grow in my garden...I'm impressed if I see something I don't know, and...*

VI95a: *Unusual plants.*

VI95: *Unusual plants, yes, um, and I, I like to see them, if I haven't seen them before. And I think oh, that's beautiful, or I don't like that, I've seen that picture in a book, now I've seen it in the flesh* [woman and man at the NGS garden].

DF: And do you ever compare the plants you have with the ones you see in the garden?

VI08: *Um some of them I suppose, yeah, how they're doing in the garden and how they're doing back at home you know, and you think why are yours not doing so good.*

DF: And what do you feel if yours are doing better?

VI08: *Oh, well, you get... [laughter] well, you know, you must feel better. Yeah, you must be doing something right so* [man at Compton Acres].

VI79: *... I went to Wisley, a couple or three years ago, with me brother and walked round their vegetable patch and I thought myself, if this is the best they can do, they want to give up, but saying that, it was September time, and everything was over... [male allotment holder].*

VI90: *We've got just, just recently we've got several Acers in our garden and um, one of them keeps getting colour burn and we keep thinking it's because it's in full*

sun, but these have proved that that's not the case, because these are in full sun and they have not the problem.

VI90a: *Because we live...*

VI90: *But we live near the sea and I'm now thinking that actually...*

VI90a: *The salt air.*

VI90: *Now I know that I can change the position of it...*

VI90a: *Keep it, still keep it in full sun...*

VI90: *But um, take it out of the wind that may work.*

VI90a: *We can try [husband and wife at Wakehurst Place].*

But not everyone feels this way when they look at a garden:

RI01: *I don't know really, it just seems, well I suppose in a way, you know that you would never have a garden like that so you sort of look at it, oh that's something nice to look at, but not something to get ideas from [older female resident].*

Also there are visitors who are not gardeners but none the less they enjoy looking at gardens. Here a reluctant gardener shares her enthusiasm for visiting gardens:

DF: *I think your daughter said you're a keen gardener?*

VI09d: *Not a keen gardener, but I love to look at gardens. I do it out of necessity, but I love gardens, yes, I love looking at them [woman at Compton Acres].*

5.4. Moving around a garden

If a visitor is to obtain pleasure from looking at a garden, it may be important that the garden affords movement around it, in order that it can be perceived. '*Gardens are for walking in and their spaces invite exploration*' (Hunt, 2003, p. 187). He suggests that gardens afford three different kinds of movement, the procession or ritual, the stroll and the ramble. The procession or ritual demands a specific route around the garden, with designated paths and activities, which are encoded in some form. The purpose of the procession has some '*higher objective than the mere performance of the rite and with a wider reference than the site of the ritual itself*' (*ibid.*, p. 188). Hunt gives as an example the garden at Stowe in Buckinghamshire, where eighteenth century visits were negotiated with the help of detailed guidebooks. William Gilpin wrote of his visit in 1747 how he was

'directed through a processional visit of the grounds, pausing to attend to the significance or visual delight of each item' (cited in Hunt, 2003 p. 203). In contemporary times, an audio tour (for example, as provided at Compton Acres) serves the same function, as a man interviewed there described:

VI15a: *It was very interesting. You're going along, it explains, you know, the reasons for things being here and it gives you a little more information that you wouldn't get otherwise.*

Strolling, Hunt suggests, implies a defined route with a purpose or sense of destination. It is most obviously exemplified by Chinese and Japanese stroll gardens, but an English example is the circuit created around the lake at Stourhead in Wiltshire. A garden designed for strolling includes incentives to move to particular parts of the garden, for example, by a clearly designated path or by an object such as a sculpture, a special tree or a seat which can be spotted, which stimulates movement towards it and then satisfaction upon arrival at it. An allotment holder described what he liked to do in gardens:

VI83: *Just stroll...Find a spot where you want to sit down, where you like to sit and relax and look at it. That's what I like.*

Finally, rambling entails movement without a specific prompt, so there is an implication of spontaneity or impulse in the layout of the garden. Hunt gives as an example, the greenswards designed by Capability Brown, which do not require any particular course to be undertaken across the open landscape. Visitors, Hunt argues, *'are propelled by their own will and willingness to wander aimlessly'* (Hunt, 2003, p. 195).

Many of the participants spoke of their preference for moving around a garden in this way, for example:

VI93: *...I think generally we prefer informal gardens, where you can wander around [man at the NGS garden].*

The simplest means that garden owners use to afford strolling rather than rambling is through the installation of paths.

VI15: *I mean the path's very nice, for me who can't walk very good and he can go up the steps, over the bridges and what have you, so it's for everybody [woman at Compton Acres].*

However, there are other ways that the management of gardens may create or stipulate conditions which attempt to influence or control visitors' behaviour. A young Belgian man at Wakehurst Place, revealed why he liked visiting gardens in England:

VI89a: *...because it's so quiet and uh, just uh, relax. Because I don't like to be in a row, waiting to watch some specific flower.*

DF: And is the fact that in this garden you can just wander freely, is that something you enjoy?

VI89a: *Yes, yes ... nobody asks you to uh, what you want t' do, just after the entrance it's pretty much up to you want you want to do.*

DF: Whereas if you went on a tour, I take it in a Belgian garden...

VI89: *Yes that's right you have schedules to follow.*

Nonetheless, although most gardens in England do not insist on formal guided tours, as is often the practice in Europe, visitors sometimes still perceived that their behaviour is being directed. Here a man interviewed at the NGS garden referred to a visit to Compton Acres:

VI95a: *I remember last time, uh, I was there, there was a gardener bellowing at people to don't step on the grass, you know, and this kind of thing. It's very regimented...It might be beautiful and the rest of it, but it's a commercial enterprise and don't touch, you know, don't do anything, kind of thing, whereas here, you just wander where you feel like it, have a sit if we want.*

A further means of influencing the movement of visitors is through the interpretation in a garden, for example, the use of way marking. (Other interpretation may provide information to visitors; plant labelling; or audio tours and panels stating the history of the garden etc.). Interpretation is therefore seen as a means of encouraging behavioural change. As Goodwin of the National Trust said at a seminar when considering the organisation's interpretation of gardens in the Southeast region – '*could we feed them behavioural messages?*'

There was conflicting views on the way marking at Compton Acres as these two interviewees showed:

VI78: *Yeah, yeah, been there and even there you have to trail round on a trail*
[female allotment holder].

VI03: *... we started at the entrance. Normally there was always arrows so that you went one way to each part of the gardens, so that you wouldn't miss any and so far I haven't seen that, I've only just seen like little signs when you've got somewhere*
[woman at Compton Acres].

Legislation has been enacted which ensures that gardens should be safe places to visit and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 ensures that gardens are accessible to those with disabilities. Several visitors remarked about the actions garden proprietors had taken to help them move around the garden:

VI86a: *We amble, we try to do as much as we can, but I can't walk too far, so when it's flat, it suits me and I can sit down and...*

DF: There's lots of seats here, aren't there?

VI86a: *There are, yes* [man at Wakehurst Place].

VI16: *Well, recently, because I've taken to a wheel chair, you know it's got to be reasonably easy access...*

DF: You've got a map there?

VI16: *Yeah, and we have been down there actually, but I think she sort of thought that I was self-propelled, but I was pushed down there.*

DF: So they've marked the areas?

VI16: *The areas not to go.*

DF: And the route where you can go with a wheelchair?

VI16: *Yeah.*

DF: And is that helpful?

VI16: *Um, yeah, it's quite...he still took me down there. I thought we were just going round there, but this way. Yeah, it would have been helpful, if I'd been pushing myself* [woman at Compton Acres].

Other participants spoke of how attractions often provide wheelchairs for visitors' use. Here a woman at Stewarts Gardenlands confirmed that this provision influenced where they visit:

DF: So does that influence where you go?

VI72: *Yes, it does in a way, yes. The thought that we can pick one up, we usually can here, but we have got, Mum has got her own, but it's much easier to, not to...*

Many of the participants spoke about their visits to Exbury Gardens, a Grade 11* listed garden (English Heritage 2002) with a landscape designed by Repton, which now contains a unique collection of Rhododendrons (Quest-Ritson and Blair, 1999). Often they referred to the steam train, which is part of the attraction and how it provides entertainment for children, but some of the older visitors also perceived it as a means of moving around the gardens, including the mother of the woman just cited:

VI72a: *We went on the train ... it's very good there, it goes all the way round. I mean you don't go in amongst, right amongst the plants, but you skirt round the outside and you see them.*

Some of the data collection in the Pleasure Gardens was carried out in the section known as the Central Gardens and people passing by were requested to engage in an interview. Several participants told her how they chose to walk through the gardens rather than along the parallel road.

DF: So why did you come through the gardens rather than along the road?

VI109: *Because we live up in Westbourne and I can come from my flat straight into the gardens. It's a nicer walk...obviously away from all the traffic, yes, yes, it's lovely [woman].*

Participants also confirmed that the pleasure of moving around a garden might derive from the act of walking *per se* as much as the sights being seen:

VI92: *We do go to Kingston Lacy a lot because it's not far and we can do their woodland walk, which gives us a chance to have a good walk, which we like* [woman at the NGS garden].

5.5. Other behavioural opportunities afforded by gardens.

5.5.1. Sitting

Participants noted that gardens afford places to sit:

VI08: *... you can just sit there sort of probably for hours just sitting there, you know, looking at it all you know* [man at Compton Acres].

Visitors wanted to sit in the gardens, first, simply because sitting is restorative and secondly to be better able to view the gardens. Consider the contrast between a young man spending his day off in the Pleasure Gardens and a retired factory worker on a coach trip, sitting a few feet away from him:

VI114: *Um, well I work six days a week, so I like just sitting down and relaxing all day, quite a nice thing to do... It's just a nice place to sit and chill out, and relax, watch people go by and that.*

VI99: *...it's a nice place to sit - I think thou must have the most beautiful gardens in Europe!*

The next section considers first the creation of memories in a garden and then at how returning to a garden, brings back memories.

5.5.2. Remembering

VI92a: *...if you can have nice days like this, they'll stick in the memory* [retired man at the NGS garden].

Several of the participants told how they try to 'capture' the feelings which the garden had made them feel in order to be able to recollect the experience in the future. The wife of the man quoted above described what she does:

VI92: *I do keep a little diary occasionally if we've been anywhere nice...I sort of write in my little book where we went and what it was like, you know.*

DF: And do you look back at that?

VI92: *Oh yes! When we're very old and can't go anywhere we'll need that - you see we can re-live it.*

Her husband, like many of the other visitors took photographs to help the memories 'stick'. Similarly the retired factory worker quoted above, while reminiscing about the Pleasure Gardens with the researcher, said:

VI99: *...I've got hundreds of pictures when the kids were small, we used to come down here, you know, and um, I've got hundreds of pictures, of this park at different times.*

A woman visiting Compton Acres when asked what she had been taking photographs of, said:

VI06: *I'm probably from an arty background so mine are very, very close-up of foliage and leaves and flowers. So they won't be your nice scenic view, they'll be very close-up macro shots. So probably for me to enlarge and have photographs at home.*

DF: Oh right, on the wall?

VI06: *Yes.*

Gallagher (1983) showed that 28% of respondents in her survey took photographs and 36% bought plants. Many of the participants seem to do this in order to help 'fix' the memory of the visit, for example, a woman at the NGS garden said:

VI95: *I do like to buy plants from open gardens and put it in my garden and that will remind me of that garden.*

5.5.3. Feeling nostalgic

‘Nostalgia’ was not included in either of the surveys but several interviewees introduced it when describing their feelings. One resident linked flower scent to feeling nostalgic:

RI02a: *Bluebells, I’ve always sort of lived near bluebells and those are very nostalgic to me and I’ll sort of go a long way to find bluebells and organise a walk around finding my bluebells.*

Several other women also identified that flowers may afford nostalgia:

RI05: *I just enjoy walking around, seeing all the different colours and smelling all the lovely smells and things.*

DF: Do you find that smells bring back memories?

RI05: *Yes, I suppose lilies of the valley particularly; always remind me of my Mum and picking flowers for my Gran. Um, narcissus, again reminds me of my childhood.*

A visitor to Wakehurst Place, who had grown up in a neighbouring village described her memories:

VI88: *The funny thing is, my Dad always used to keep on about, oh, Henry Price, that was the, Sir Henry Price, that was the guy that...*

DF: That owned the house here, oh right.

VI88: *And I can remember as a kid, coming up on the bus, and you never came in that way, you come now, this way, there’s a big long drive and I, every time I come past there, I’m taken back to when I was a child and we were brought up that straight, long drive, you know, a ‘Sir’ lives up here, type of thing, you know, the impression it made on me then.*

However, as Holak and Havlena (1998) point out, the memory may not reflect the reality of a lived past, but may be distorted, invoking a more positive picture than is perhaps justified. A visitor to Compton Acres recalled a visit they had made in the 1970’s, with her

son, then a young boy. Having now returned to the garden she realised that her memories had been influenced by the photographs they had taken on the first visit:

VI05: *...He lost his sandal on the stepping-stones and we had tears. And interesting enough when we went into the Italian Garden there's the two statues, the Herculean statues and my memory of them is that they were quite big because we've got a photograph of him sort of looking up at them - obviously he was so small [laughter].*

The retired man whose words opened this section, also demonstrated nostalgia for the past when he remarked to the researcher (who was recording the conversation on a digital recorder) about the sound of a whistle from a steam train passing through the valley:

VI92a: *I hope that picks it up [the whistle] because that's rather evocative of the area...*

And then his wife said:

VI92: *...my son-in-law said to me one day, Mum, you shouldn't, you know, you shouldn't look back, I said Collin, when you get to our age it's better to look back than to look forward.*

5.5.4. Learning

In Chapter 4, it was shown that visitors to gardens like to learn something new. Nine respondents to the resident survey described gardens in the open question as 'educational' or a 'learning resource' demonstrating the respondents' perception that gardens afford opportunities for learning. Others described them as 'informative' or 'inspiring'. Interviewees spoke positively about interpretation in gardens where it provides factual information:

VI95: *They usually tell you a little bit about the place, they often have pictures of the, before and after, how it started and what it's finished up like, it's always interesting [woman at the NGS garden].*

Some of the participants perceived gardens as places which provide opportunities to learn not just about the garden but also about gardening, as this man at the NGS garden showed:

VI93: ... *if you live locally and have got the same conditions, you can see what plants thrive in the local conditions*

5.5.5. Consuming

The participants identified two facilities which they like in gardens, one is the opportunity to buy plants and the second is to buy refreshments. Connell (2004a) established that 18.5% of visitors had visited a garden, solely to use a secondary or associated attraction, such as a retail shop, nursery or tea room/restaurant. The following quotes are from two men interviewed at the NGS garden:

VI96: ...*I thought I'd have a walk over to Corfe Castle and back and I see the notice on the door here, 'cream teas' - is the main thing I came for, so, uh, having a cream tea.*

VI95a: ...*a cream tea is nice.*

DF: Will you have one?

VI95a: *Oh, definitely! ...A cream tea will put us on nicely.*

But for this woman it was not essential:

RI02a: *'Cause if we've gone to a garden to do anything, we go to the garden, to see the garden, that would be the point of it, uh, cake is a frippery on top, that's nice, if there wasn't a tearoom or anything, we'd just take our own picnic.*

Visitors to gardens have the lowest rate of all attraction types for buying postcards or souvenirs (Oxford Centre for Tourism and Leisure Studies, 1994), but several participants said how they like to buy plants:

VI95a: *Yes, we have bought things from open gardens that we haven't seen elsewhere.*

VI95: *Yes, we have ... we usually like to buy... I usually go away with something*
[couple at the NGS garden].

5.6. Being with people in a garden

5.6.1. With family or friends

This section looks at the affordances which arise from visiting a garden with a companion(s). There is awareness amongst participants that they can afford something to their companions and that their companions can be an affordance to them. It is demonstrated that participants perceive that it is often better to visit gardens with some one else, but that it has to be the ‘right’ person.

In the two published surveys, Gallagher (1983) recorded only 9% of respondents visiting on their own and Connell (2004a) showed 15.1%. Similarly 9% of the respondents in the visitor survey at Compton Acres were visiting on their own, whilst 3% of residents indicated that they usually visit a garden alone. Nearly three quarters of the residents indicated that they most often visited with a family member and just under a quarter with a friend. The visitor survey at Compton Acres sought further clarification. This showed that 51% were with a partner, 21% with family, 15% with friends and 4% with a tour group. Similarly the two published surveys (Gallagher, 1983; Connell, 2004a) each indicate that 46% of respondents were with a partner. Gallagher notes that gardens are places where young adults brought, or were brought by older relatives. She suggests therefore that ‘family’ refers to another adult rather than a child.

The value to participants of companionship is demonstrated by the 22% of respondents in the resident survey who indicated that being with family or friends was *very* important to them as a reason for visiting a garden and a further 45% who agreed that it was quite important. Respondents to the resident survey demonstrated how a visit was co-created with their companions when asked in an open question, why they visited a garden with their family or friends. Many wrote responses which described their own reasons for visiting such as pleasure and relaxation, but 21 referred to aspects of doing something together and 13 responded specifically about companionship. Some comments referred to how going with someone else enhanced the benefits of visiting alone, for example:

R22: *More enjoyable than going on my own* [middle-aged woman].

And:

R272: *More interesting with company* [middle-aged man].

This sort of response was repeated in the interviews. At Compton Acres a woman said:

VI01: *This time I've come on my own and it's not quite the same. With a friend... it's someone to talk to and ...it's nice to be able to discuss things, which is, um, I think our favourite topic. Either criticise or enthuse over what ever we see.*

Gardens afford opportunities to talk – only 4% of respondents in the resident survey did not like to talk to anybody when in a garden. When asked who they like to talk to four-fifths of the residents liked to talk to their companion(s). Here a woman at the Craft and Garden Show explains further about visiting with or without her partner:

DF: Would you have come today, without him?

VI40: *Yeah, yeah, I would have done, so.*

DF: But is it nicer, when he's here?

VI40: *Oh, it is, 'cause you can sort of talk things, if you see something good, you know, oh that's nice, sort of thing.*

Visitors may not just talk about the attraction as this woman interviewed at Stewarts Gardenlands showed:

DF: So you'll go to Kingston Lacy?

VI70: *We'll go, but then again we'll meet family. We've got three daughters and we all went over there for the snowdrop day. We took a flask and sandwiches. See that, that's what I like.*

D: So what the family aspect?

VI70: *Exactly.*

DF: Having all the family?

VI70: *Having all the family there, I didn't even look at the snowdrops, because we were too busy nattering.*

But visitors do not always spend all their time in a garden together, as this elderly man at Wakehurst Place explained:

VI87: *My wife's disappeared off with one of my daughters, she'll wear herself out and come back to find me sitting here, quite happy, enjoying the sunshine.*

5.6.2. With children

Children are less frequent visitors to gardens than to other attractions. Figures from VisitBritain (2005b) show that 20% of the visitors to gardens in their sample were children, the lowest of all attraction types.¹ One woman in an open question in the resident survey, when asked what words she would use to describe a garden, wrote:

RS81: *fun for children.*

Another, however, had the opposite view:

RS145: *not good for children.*

Two residents, though, acknowledged that the management of gardens do try to enhance the facilities for children and spoke at some length about the amenities which their young family had encountered at a garden. The man began:

RI02: *Do you know what the boys liked the best, the red tractor that um, drove you down...from the car park.*

It was not just the facilities but also the design of the garden which offered affordances to the children, as his wife continued:

¹ The mean for all attraction types in England was 32%

RI02a: *They absolutely enjoyed all of them; we had mazes to go through, lakes to find, this and that...*

RI02: *Mazes, waterfalls, grottoes.*

RI02a: *It was wonderful they really, really, loved it. No I don't think having children going round a garden is a problem.*

She also gained pleasure from being with her family in other ways. She showed the researcher her photographs, taken during one of the visits to a garden whilst on holiday and described why a particular photograph specially appealed to her:

RI02a: *I mean it's not a good example, because it's not a good photograph, but I like a photograph of my children running along, finding their adventure, being together and they're sort of running along the path. I love that! And I love the picture as well, 'cause they're off to find new adventures.*

The next section moves from the familiarity of family to the affordances of other visitors to gardens.

5.6.3. With the other visitors

There were mixed reactions from the interviewees about other visitors to a garden who were not part of their own group. One female resident said about the Pleasure Gardens:

RI06: *I just get cross, sitting in the Gardens, you get all these yobs tramping on the flowers.*

But when it came to pay-to-visit gardens there was a different view:

VI90: *We seem to have a kindred spirit with garden people that watch and wander round places like this it's because we're sort of, I don't know, open spirited people I suppose and affable I would say... [woman at Wakehurst Place].*

Perhaps this is why a quarter of the residents indicated that they liked to talk to other visitors and why many participants were so willing to talk to the researcher.

This visitor at Wakehurst Place showed her consideration for the feelings of the other visitors when she told how she felt she had to control her grandchildren:

VI88: *...when they're tiny, it seems acceptable to other visitors, that little ones can run about and make a noise, but when they become eight, um you think and you've got to be telling them, oh, don't do this and don't do that.*

There were differences between public parks and gardens and those which open on a pay-to-visit basis, when the number of other visitors were considered. A response in the resident survey to the question asking what words respondents would use to describe a garden read:

RS239: *Pleasant if not too busy* [middle-aged man].

The residents with the young children, quoted above, described a recent visit to the Eden Project:

RI02a: *I found it claustrophobic, because people start stopping, then there'd be a bottleneck and you couldn't keep moving and I found that quite hard, right at the top there.*

RI02: *It was very busy...It was a Saturday in June, right at the end of June and it was a really hot, sunny day and full of coach-loads...of you know, people my Mum's age, kind of thing, and they were shuffling up and the higher they were getting, they were getting exhausted because of the climb, they got more exhausted because of the heat and that made them slow down and taking longer rests and we were just sort of getting slowed down...we had a 4 year old and a 2 year old, in heat in, in, all those people in the way, so...we walked them and then sort of they had to be carried down from the really hot bit, because it was just too much for them...squeezing my way through the old people.*

DF: Did that, did that sort of lessen the pleasure of it, do you think, the ...people there?

RI02: *Uh, um, yes 'cause I could have, I wouldn't have minded the heat so I could have stayed there a lot longer, and looked at that top bit.*

RI02a: *Yeah. And I would have felt more comfortable without so many people. I personally don't like crowds, so I don't like other people being there. ... I prefer to see gardens that are less filled with people, you know so that you can see the garden rather than the people there.*

But in the Pleasure Gardens, it was when there was an absence of people which was remarked upon as this woman described:

DF: Do you feel safe here?

VI109: *Yeah, yeah I do.*

DF: Are there any times when you think you wouldn't feel safe?

VI109: *Um, probably, later on in the evening, you know, round about five o'clock, especially as you've got up towards Coy Pond, it's a bit deserted up there [The Upper Gardens].*

DF: Because it's quiet?

VI109: *It's quiet, that's all the reason, so I come off, when I get to there...and go on the road, the rest of the way.*

DF: But because there's lots of people here now...

VI109: *Yeah, it's fine.*

One young Swiss man identified that it was whom the other people were that mattered to his sense of well-being:

DF: ... do you feel safe in places like this?

VI116a: *Yes, quite safe!*

DF: What about at night-time?

VI116: *At night-time, it is quite a bit different. At night, because the English teenagers, they are quite strange...They are drinking, ...I think during the week it's not a problem, but more Friday and Saturday and maybe starting at ten or something... Especially, there was fire-works, there's usually families and other people and as they left, it's quite strange...it was a very different atmosphere. Once two or three weeks ago we stayed there because we were waiting for someone and it's totally different because all the people left and families left and yeah, there is*

just young teenagers and it was just like, they had no behaviour, absolutely no respect, very strange.

One elderly woman described a recent visit to the Pleasure Gardens, similarly demonstrating the constant interaction between visitors and the social-material environment:

VII19: Now the other week we were down here and I thought oh I'll cut up that way to the shops and there was three youths walking along and I thought, no I won't, I'll play safe, I've got my hand bag on me. I popped my handbag in a bag like this you see, so nobody can see it, you just uh, you just use your common sense, you know.

Pay-to-visit gardens therefore seem to afford a safe space to be in; a conclusion supported by the finding from the resident survey that almost two-thirds of respondents indicated that they visited gardens because they are safe places to walk (see Section 4.4.2.). In contrast Hall and Page (2006) suggest that *public* gardens are often avoided, particularly by certain population groups, such as women, children and ethnic groups.

5.6.4. With the garden staff

When asked who they like to talk to when in a garden, a third of the residents liked to talk to the professional gardeners. Two women interviewed separately at the NGS garden concurred with this:

DF: So if you wanted to find out anything more, would you ask the gardeners, if you saw a gardener there or would you ask the owner here?

VI97: Yes, it's very approachable in this, it's a lovely lady, you know, if there's something I see and I don't know what it is, and I think cor'¹ I'd like that in my garden, then I'd go and ask her, where she got it from.

¹ 'Cor blimey' is a mild exclamation of surprise and is a corruption of the oath 'God blind me' (Duckworth, 2007).

VI95: *It's the same sort of thing here, the owner's here to chat to you and you can ask about the plants, I've seen this plant, what is it and he'll chat to you and it's very sort of friendly and welcoming. We've never been in an open garden or the National Garden Scheme, which hasn't been, have we?*

5.7. Re-visiting a garden

This chapter has not sought to comprehensively describe the experiences of visitors in gardens, rather it argues that first, gardens afford various experiences and secondly, that visitors' participation in garden visiting occurs because they are able to anticipate the realisation of these desirable affordances. Anticipation is most effective when a participant has already visited a particular garden and is therefore more able to predict the likely affordances to be realised there. However, revisiting may also afford additional experiences that are not realisable on a first visit. In the previous chapter survey data was presented which demonstrated the popularity of re-visiting a garden, whilst in this chapter further details of what a return visit affords is given.

In both the visitor survey and the visitor interviews they often referred to previous visits in this way. For example:

VS171: *Recollections of previous visits* [elderly woman].

VI02a: *Well last time I came here, I remember it very well and it was so nice, you know... we decided to come back* [woman at Compton Acres].

However, just because a visitor has been before, does not necessarily mean that their memory may be an accurate source of information regarding affordances in a garden. Here a woman at Compton Acres recalls her previous visit:

DF: And do you think the gardens have changed?

VI01: *You know, I can't remember. The only part I can remember is the Italian garden, I think I was with a friend and we talked too much and I don't think I took an awful lot in.* [laughter].

Also memory is not a perfect facility - frequently participants had difficulties in remembering details, particularly the names of the gardens that they had visited:

VI95: *There was a lovely garden at the Salcombe Estuary, um, that was National Trust wasn't it? I can't remember the name of it, yeah, I've got pictures of it.*

[Woman at the NGS garden].

Gardens are different to most attraction types, because the imagescape (Wanhill, 2003) is dynamic. Participants perceived that variation might be due more to the proprietor's intervention or to natural development and that these changes might be an additional affordance to visiting. A man interviewed at Compton Acres said:

VI08: *Well, we haven't visited them since about, must be, 8 or 10 years ago. We just wanted to see if there was any changes or anything.*

This woman from Cornwall describes why she'd want to return to Compton Acres, where she was interviewed:

VI04: *Um, I'd probably want to come a different time of the year to see how things are looking later in the summer or maybe the autumn time, um see what the different foliage is looking like then. Yeah, yeah, I like to go back and see a place two or three times very often because then you can see it at different times of the year.*

Smit (2003), one of the key figures in the restoration of The Lost Gardens of Heligan in Cornwall, suggests that visitors re-visited from the early stages in order to see the garden develop, so much so, that they '*took real ownership over what we were doing and returned time and again*' (Smit, 2003, p. xvii). Two of the residents (RI03 and RI03a) told the researcher about their regular visits to the Isabella Plantation in Richmond Park, London and how '*astounding*' it was to see the azaleas growing and watch the garden develop. Others spoke of their affective involvement with their local gardens. The next quote is from a woman who lives near Wakehurst Place and is a regular visitor with different members of her family. Here she shares her love of the garden with the researcher:

VI88: *...we live in Haywards Heath, which is only six miles down the road. Um, I just know when things are coming into season and I've got to get up here to have a look. So I think the seasons change and I miss 'em, so I have to come back again.*

DF: So what should I be looking for?

VI88: *Those irises, which the lady told you about just now, the Japanese irises.*

DF: Uh, the bearded ones are they?

VI88: *Uh, no, they're a bit like the bearded, but they're very different. No, because I have bearded ones at home which are over. I've been coming up here since the last week in May, because once I saw them in May and here we are the middle of June and they're still a few out and a few in bud.*

Sharing one's pleasure in a garden by showing it to someone else is another important affordance realisable by re-visiting. This young woman interviewed at Stewarts Gardenlands, shows how the Eden Project in Cornwall, affected her and how she wants to share this with her father, so he too can experience what she has felt:

VI73: *I have been to the Eden Project - that is absolutely mind-blowing. It is lovely, I mean I keep wanting to take m' Dad down there, 'cause he, it's his sort of place, it's his sort of plants...The tropical garden, you know, he'd love to go there, so I mean, we can't do it this year, because like, we're busy with holidays and everything, but next year I'd like to take him down there, and have a weekend down there, and really take him round, yeah, it is lovely down there.*

It is notable that the visit to the Eden Project described by this woman was different from most narratives. On the whole, participants spoke of gardens affording a quite ordinary, everyday life experience rather than one that was extra-ordinary or liminal in any way.

5.8. Chapter summary

This chapter has concentrated on the affordances realisable in a garden and it has shown that gardens have a certain social-material agency to which visitors respond. It is suggested that people anticipate the realisation of these affordances when considering a visit. This will be discussed further in Chapter 8. It has also been demonstrated that the relationship between the visitor and the social-material environment is a dynamic and interactive system.

The qualitative data presented has supported the findings of the previous chapter, but has also provided greater depth and detail. Together the details given in the two chapters are the conventional ways of understanding garden visiting participation. However, they form only some of the explanations given by the participants to the ‘grand tour’ question. The next chapter therefore describes the remaining explanations, which can also be considered as affordances to garden visiting. These affordances are temporally and spatially separate from those discussed here but can be considered as proximal to a visit in terms of the time between perception and realisation as they shortly precede a visit taking place.

Chapter 6 - The proximal affordances to participation in garden visiting

6.1. Introduction

This chapter considers the affordances to participation in garden visiting which are proximal to a visit, in terms of the time between perception and realisation. These affordances reveal the behavioural opportunities of a visit and are therefore perceived externally to a garden and not too long before the visit. The affordances include information provided about a garden and factors which not only influence whether a visit takes place, but also the particular attraction visited.

The chapter presents the remaining findings from the ‘grand tour’ question, ‘*What made you come to the gardens today?*’ which was asked as an open question in the visitor survey at Compton Acres and to all participants in the visitor interviews. In the previous chapter, two of the categories of responses were considered and the remaining five categories as shown in Chapter 3 are now discussed.¹ The sections begin with the influence of social-material agents before considering how participants’ perceptions of time and space can afford visits to gardens. Finally the chapter shows that participants have self-perceptions which may also be affordances to visiting.

6.2. Social affordance

Whilst it is a key premise of this thesis that the social and material are interconnected, in this chapter for ease of description, they are separated. This section describes the actions of social agents who afford participation in garden visiting. In the previous chapter it was shown how the companionship of family and friends within a garden is an affordance and this section begins by extending the role of family and friends to include that of prompting a visit. Furthermore the participants reveal that some individuals play a more important part in this than others and these people are described as ‘prime movers’. The section then moves to the actions of organisations and the affordances shaped by the media, governmental organisations, garden proprietors and trip organisers, which prompt a visit.

¹ The final category consisted of a very small number of responses where the explanation for visiting could not be determined from what was written; for example, ‘*obviously a mistake*’.

About a third of responses to the ‘grand tour’ question in the visitor survey at Compton Acres referred to some form of social agent and this was the most numerous category of response (some examples are shown in Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1 Examples of references to forms of social agency

1. *Reading books about Compton Acres* [elderly man].
2. *Gardeners World Magazine 2 "4" 1 offer* [young woman].
3. *Recommended by family* [middle aged woman].
4. *Organised visit* [middle aged man].
5. *My daughter and son in law bought (sic) me here* [elderly woman].
6. *My wife said we were coming here today. OK says I!* [middle aged man].

6.2.1. Affordances shaped by family and friends

Many of the respondents to the visitor survey, in response to the ‘grand tour’ question, wrote a type of relative, (for example, ‘*my sister*’) or even simply a name (‘*Frank*’). Further confirmation of the importance of family and friends in prompting a garden visit comes from the resident survey in which 46% of respondents indicated that they had been inspired by a family member and 58% by a friend to visit a garden. Transmission of information by word of mouth within families or friends is therefore a key affordance to visiting:

VI45: *Um, somebody told me yesterday about it...and I said well we like that sort of thing and uh, I told you about it...*

VI45a: *Yes.*

VI45: *... and here we are* [woman and man at the Craft and Garden Show].

DF: *When you go to a garden like that, that you really enjoy, do you then go and tell other people about it?*

VI82: *Yes, sort of a chat, I've been to see this one - I think I've done it with you as well M..., haven't I?*

VI81: *Yeah.* [Female allotment holder and her male friend].

They may simply be reliving their own experiences or they may be advocating visiting as this man at Compton Acres showed:

DF: And if you had the chance would you come back again?

VI12: *Oh I think I would, yes. I think I'd recommend it to some friends really, if I, you know, if they want a day out...*

Here a couple from the Midlands visiting Wakehurst Place recommended to the researcher that she should visit a National Trust property which they had visited:

VI86: *We go to one that's near us...*

VI86a: *Yeah, Calke Abbey, you'd like it.*

It seems from this that they predicted what they thought the researcher might like, but in a most general way. However when it is a specific visit, the ability to anticipate what another person might enjoy is an important affordance and one which is obviously easier when you know them. A young woman (VI43) with her mother (VI43a) and an aunt at the Craft and Garden Show illustrate this:

DF: And when you saw the advert, what did you think?

VI43: *It looked quite interesting.*

DF: Did you think they'd like it as well or is it just you?

VI43a: *Oh anything mentioning gardening she knows that we would like.*

The psychological support of companions often seems to be taken for granted, but a woman visiting Wakehurst Place on her own, recognised it:

VI88: *I'm a great one for thinking I'll do a thing, um and then I just think, oh shall I be bothered, but if somebody else'll come along...I don't always need people to go along with, but happy to do it on my own, but, but, you know... I just need that little bit of shove, now and again, to make me do things as opposed to the run of the mill.*

Others simply wanted to ‘share’ the experience of visiting the garden with family or friends:

VS44: *Showing relatives [elderly woman].*

Many of the people interviewed, described how staying with family or friends was the affordance:

VI04: *Um, visiting friends in Verwood, and uh, they had heard about the gardens and wanted to come and investigate [woman at Compton Acres].*

Similarly friends or family staying, provided that added impetus:

DF: Do you and your partner ever visit the sorts of gardens which are open to the public, like Exbury or Compton Acres?

VI67: *No, I’ve done that before, so um, and these are possible visits, but we would do that more perhaps when we have some friends around or people who don’t know the area very well [man at Stewarts Gardenlands].*

In the next extract a woman at Stewarts Gardenlands explained why she liked to take visiting guests out – it is interesting that the reason given relates to her and not to her guests’ interests.

DF: So if you have people staying with you, do you like to take them out in the area?

VI56b: *Oh yes, yes, not necessarily to garden centres but... [laughter].*

DF: Why do you like to do that?

VI56b: *I think because it’s a lovely area and it’s nice to show people that visit us what a nice part of the world we live in.*

For some participants, family and friends were not just sources of information but also afford the means of travelling to a garden as this man explained:

VI77: ... we go to Kew gardens and that, but we go by our own transport.

DF: What you drive or?

VI77: ...my daughter does.

DF: Oh right, she takes you?

VI77: She takes us.

In the following quotation, the interviewee told what she does, as she does not have her own vehicle:

DF: So if you see a garden that you'd like to visit, can you ask your daughter to take you, would you ask her?

VI72a: We went to Exbury, didn't we?

VI72: But I think she's making the point, that would you wait for me to offer or would you ask me to take you.

VI72a: I'd ask you to...

DF: You'd ask?

VI72a: Yeah [elderly woman and her daughter at Stewarts Gardenlands].

In order to identify a different way in which companions afford visiting, the residents were asked who most wants to visit a garden. In about two-thirds of cases the respondent believed that their companion wanted to visit gardens as much as they did, but in about a third of cases (n = 84), either the respondent most wanted to visit (21.6%) or the respondents believed that their companion (10.2%) most wanted to visit. The interview data provides examples of individuals who may be like the latter group. Here is an extract from an interview with a sixth-form student in the public Pleasure Gardens:

DF: Are you aware that there's gardens that people pay to visit?

VI101a: Yeah...

DF: Yes, do you ever visit that sort of garden?

VI101a: With my parents really.

DF: It wouldn't be your choice though?

VI101a: Not really.

DF: But if they go, you'll go with them?

VI101a: Yeah.

From examples like this it was observed that some individuals, specifically those who professed a strong desire to visit gardens, may have been influential in making a visit take place and so were labelled the ‘prime movers’. The others visited, but were less influential in promoting a visit, and these have therefore been labelled, the ‘secondary participants’. ‘Prime movers’ therefore afford visiting to the ‘secondary participants’.

The data from the resident survey restricted the establishment of the identity of all ‘secondary participants’, because there was only data from the respondents, there was no data from their companions. About a quarter of all ‘secondary participants’ did not visit a garden in 2002, but 42.6% made 1-2 visits, 21.0% made 3-4 visits and 12.5% made 5 or more visits. This suggests that ‘secondary participants’ may not always be reluctant to visit. The reasons for going were ascertained from the open question in the resident survey asking ‘Why do you visit a garden with your family or friends?’ The responses of some of those who stated that their companion likes to visit more than they do, included that of one young woman who wrote:

RS340: *for something to do.*

A middle-aged woman simply said:

RS113: *a day out.*

Others in this group seemed to be really reluctant to visit, one wrote,

RS26: *to occupy my mother* [middle-aged woman]

another,

RS268: *mother and father like them* [middle-aged man].

These reluctant visitors seem purely moved by feelings for other people and seem not to anticipate much personal satisfaction from the attraction. This couple at the Craft and Garden Show illuminate this aspect more:

DF: Did you want to come?

VI40: ...*He didn't want to come.*

VI40a: *Well it's a bit cool today.*

DF: If it weren't cold would you still not wish to come?

VI40a: ...*Uh, fifty-fifty.*

DF: Yeah, so why did you come?

VI40a: *Keep her happy.*

However, a second group who identified themselves as 'secondary participants' seemed to gain some pleasure from the visit, either vicariously, for example:

RS42: *a treat for an older member of my family* [middle-aged man]

and

RS192: *I like to take my mother* [young woman]

or by also enjoying the visit, just not as much perhaps as the 'prime mover'. Examples of this were:

RS51: *to enjoy the pleasure of it with loved ones* [young woman]

and

RS152: *we both enjoy* [older man].

The residents were also asked whether they ever visited a garden, so that their companion would then accompany them somewhere else. 15.2% of all respondents agreed they did. This next interview was with a young man (VI19) and his wife (VI19a) from the Isle of Wight, who were visiting Compton Acres. It shows how people will do something which they would not choose to do, as company for each other.

DF: Could you tell me what made you come to the gardens today?

VI19a: *It was my decision really, yes. Just, um, a few days off work and just decided to pop over here for the day really...*

DF: Are you happy to visit gardens with your...?

VI19: *It's just what I'm told, I just go where I'm told as it were... I don't mind gardens, but it's not my thing but, you know. But I don't mind having a look.*

DF: And sometimes do you ... go to places that he'd like to go to?

VI19a: *...Yes. I don't play golf, but I normally walk round the golf course and things like that, so yea.*

These individuals do not seem so reluctant to visit. However, the appeal of the visit may not be the garden itself as the sixth-form student who visits with his parents, quoted above, shows:

DF: Do you enjoy it when you go like that?

VI101a: *Sometimes. Lots of time I just want to go to the café, in the gardens...*

DF: So the gardens themselves aren't the appeal?

VI101a: *Not really.*

The next extract which follows is longer, but it demonstrates the benefits of informally interviewing a group of visitors rather than each one as an individual, as it shows that it is the lady who asks her husband whether he would still visit a garden if it were not for her interest, not the interviewer. The interview was carried out in the NGS garden; the man (VI95a) is particularly interested in the architecture of the owner's cottage:

DF: What made you come then, to the gardens?

VI95: *Well I love gardens so that's, it's my main hobby, my main interest.*

DF: You have a garden, you garden at home?

VI95: *Yes, I have, I'm a keen gardener. I like to look at other people's gardens, uh, for inspiration and to see what plants they're growing, and if I think it would grow in my garden...*

VI95a: *I like the, I'm interested in the architecture of the old buildings. So it's the setting of the garden and the architecture, so my interests are somewhat different ... We've been to some wonderful places, out of here [the National Gardens Scheme guide-book], architecturally beautiful places...*

VI95: *If I wasn't interested in gardening, would you come?*

VI95a: *No I don't suppose so.*

This led to the question of whether ‘secondary participants’ could have a positive response to marketing. In this conversation with a man at the Craft and Garden Show he confirmed that they could:

DF: What made you come to the show today?

VI25: *It was advertised in the paper...I've just bought a new house last year and I'm doing the garden up, ideally I'm here for shrubs and plants and things like that, so...*

DF: So you've just got a new garden or you've just got interested in gardening?

VI25: *Interested in gardening, bought a nice house with a big garden and I need to get it sorted ...*

DF: Have you come with your family today?

VI25: *Yeah, the wife there and my daughter.*

DF: And what did they think when you said you wanted to come today?

VI25: *Well, Sue, my wife, she, she enjoys it all as well because we do it together, so she's quite keen to come. It was Sue that picked it out in the Advertiser. She scans the papers.*

DF: So was she looking for somewhere to go or was she just reading the paper and saw it, do you think?

VI25: *No, she was reading the paper, we go out most weekends together, garden centres or different places, and she noticed the advertisement and we came...*

But this sub-section ends with the recognition that for some people not even family will make them go to a pay-to-visit garden:

DF: Can you think of any circumstances that would make you go? Would you go with your family?

VI106: *Probably not, no* [man in the Pleasure Gardens].

The remainder of this section considers the actions of organisations which promote gardens and which may therefore shape affordance through their prompting of a visit.

6.2.2. The media

This section looks at the actions of media organisations which promote visiting gardens as part of a wider field of operation and how they shape affordances to visiting. Representations about individual gardens to visit appear in the many forms of publication. Table 6.1 lists examples and shows from the extracts, the different ways in which the garden at Compton Acres has been described. Whether readers perceive this information and the photographs which often appear with the text will depend upon their attunement. Similarly their attunement may also determine their understanding and interest in the various aspects of the gardens and therefore whether they decide to visit. So for example a gardener reading the RHS's description in their handbook may be more inspired to visit than a non-gardener.

Type of publication	Example of publication	Reference to Compton Acres	Source
'coffee table'	Exploring Britain: great gardens	The colour photograph accompanying the text, features the Italian Garden, which it describes as an <i>'interpretation of Italian sophistication'</i>	The Reader's Digest Association Ltd. (1984, p.53)
Gazetteer	The New Shell Guide to England	In the section on Poole, it states that <i>'Poole would be worth visiting for them alone'</i>	Arlott (1981, p. 244)
Guidebook	Gardener's Handbook 2000	<i>'Very touristy, very Bournemouth, and very 1920s...There is opulence, vulgarity, overcrowding and blatant commercialism, but the standards are among the highest in any garden: no visitor could fail to be cheered up by the bravura of it all. We love it.'</i>	Quest-Ritson and Blair (1999, p.12)
Handbook	RHS Members Handbook, 2006	<i>'The microclimate within the wooded valley allows tender species to grow, and major pruning and refurbishment programmes...are resulting in a garden with interest all year round'.</i>	RHS (2006a, p.153)
Free guide	Dorset Gardens 2002	<i>'Compton Acres takes you on a relaxing journey around the gardens of the world, from Italy to Japan'</i>	The National Gardens Scheme (2002b, p.12)
Local newspaper	Daily Echo	<i>'All coming up roses at showpiece Acres'</i>	Tate (2004, p.33)

Table 6.1 References to Compton Acres in a selection of publications

The participants referred to newspapers as sources of information but usually failed to distinguish between articles and advertisements. Although the national newspapers carry articles about garden visiting it was only the local press which was mentioned by interviewees and particularly in relation to the Craft and Garden Show. However, newspapers are only an affordance to visiting if an event is reported prior to it taking place; as one resident said about the local daily paper:

RI02a: *...the Echo actually is very poor for that I have to say. They report on things that have happened, they do not do current events.*

Whereas 19% of respondents in the resident survey read a local paper, only 9% read a gardening magazine. Nonetheless they do seem to have some limited affect:

DF: What made you pick Compton Acres?

VI19a: *Um I've heard about it in a few of my garden magazines and just thought it sounded pretty interesting [day visitor from the Isle of Wight].*

However, their agency is limited because their coverage is nationwide:

VI178: *I think some of the gardens you see in magazines are sort of, elsewhere, rather a long way away, you know.*

The participants referred to guide books on several occasions; this extract confirms that they are an affordance:

DF: So how do you find out about gardens then? Is it just that you happen to see them or do people tell you?

VI93: *Well there's a book...*

VI93a: *Called the 'Garden Guide' or something like that [possibly the 'Good Gardens Guide'].*

VI93: *...which is very useful... we look them up.*

Books are often published in association with television series about gardens. Two Channel 4 television series were dedicated to the restoration of the Lost Gardens of

Heligan, in Cornwall. The series won a best documentary award and the accompanying book won 'Illustrated Book of the Year, 1997' (Page *et al*, 2001). Similarly, a television series was dedicated to the development of The Eden Project in Cornwall. Here a woman interviewed at Stewarts Gardenlands spoke about the affects of the programme on her:

DF: ...the Eden Project, have you been?

VI69: *I'd love to go, and I haven't been yet, yeah, I'd love to go actually.*

DF: Why is that?

VI69: *Um, I just think it looked fantastic, what they've done there, we watched the programmes on television...*

Similar media collaboration can be seen with the television programme 'Gardeners' World', which has a tie-up with a monthly magazine and an annual horticultural show of the same name.

In the resident survey about a third of respondents watched 'Gardeners' World' on television, as often as they could. Slightly more watched, if they happened to see it on. Six per cent watched it because another member of the household watched it and a quarter of the respondents never watched it.

Three quarters of residents had seen a garden featured on a programme like 'Gardeners' World'. Of those 74% would like to visit a garden they had seen and 43% had subsequently visited it. This suggests that either directly or indirectly television programmes do afford garden visiting. An allotment holder told the researcher the day before the visit, how she knew about Wakehurst Place:

VI74: *... it was on the television the other evening because they've got a special system of irrigation apparently there. They've got a natural lake and they feed the water down in pipes to the lower part of the garden.*

DF: Did you think that looked quite interesting?

VI74: *Very! Yes.*

There are several Internet webpages which promote gardens to visit, for example www.gardenvisit.com and www.greatbritishgardens.co.uk. Yet none of the interviewees

mentioned or replied in the affirmative when asked directly if they had used the Internet to find out about gardens. This supports the findings of the quantitative data, that to date the Internet is not an important affordance to garden visiting.

6.2.3. Governmental organisations

Direct support from central Government in promoting gardens to the public as places to visit has come mainly, first, from the actions of the tourism boards, for example, VisitBritain (formed from the English Tourism Council *et al.*) and secondly, from the directional signs introduced by the then Department of Transport in 1986. Through its webpage (www.visitbritain.com) VisitBritain promotes venues to visit including gardens. The directional signs are white on brown pictographic signs, which are erected by local traffic authorities, but paid for by the attraction. Whilst their primary objective is to guide visitors by the best route, they are also distinctive enough to attract passers-by – gardens are identified by a flower symbol (Yale, 1998). There was no evidence from the participants in this research to indicate that they had been directly influenced by one of these signs to visit a garden. However, a woman, interviewed in Stewarts Gardenlands said, when asked how she knew about Compton Acres:

VI60a: I must have heard about it from somewhere, but I don't know where. But we keep passing the signs saying to Compton Acres.

Support from local government is also often via a website (for example, in Poole, Dorset, the website, www.pooletourism.com, has links to gardens under a heading 'things to do') or through traditional tourist information booklets.

6.2.4. Garden proprietors

This section discusses the affordances which derive from the actions of organisations in promoting 'their' gardens. Table 6.2 shows the marketing devices used by three organisations, Compton Acres, the National Trust and the National Gardens Scheme, demonstrating how they afford garden visiting through *initiating* a visit.

	Compton Acres	National Trust	NGS
Guidebook	-	*	* ¹
Magazine	-	*	-
Newsletter	-	* ²	-
Signs at attraction	*	*	*
Signs near attraction	*	*	*
Posters	-	-	*
Special offers	*	*	-
Advertisements in newspapers	*	*	-
Advertisements in magazines	*	*	-
Advertisements in guidebooks	*	*	-
Leaflets	*	*	-
Internet	*	*	*
Membership/friend of garden	*	*	-
Promotion through other horticultural organisation	*	*	*

Table 6.2 Marketing devices used by Compton Acres, the National Trust and the NGS.

Example quotes from participants confirming that these marketing outputs are perceived, are shown in Figure 6.2.

¹ for each county and for England & Wales

² for each area, e.g. Wessex

Figure 6.2 Examples of references to marketing devices

- *I see the notice on the door here, 'cream teas' [man at NGS garden].*
- *...we saw the sign um, on the main road just out of Swanage a few days ago and decided that this would be one of our visits [woman at NGS garden].*
- *...our daughter has regular garden magazines, which sometimes have offers [man at NGS garden].*
- *...tourist information leaflets that you see, just where ever you go there's some and you think oh yeah there might be something I'll check there [female resident].*
- *Life member [elderly woman].*
- *The description in my guide [young man].*

6.2.5. Trip organisers

The findings which demonstrate the actions of trip organisers in affording a garden visit are from two sources. The first is the allotment society trip to Wakehurst Place, whose members were interviewed prior to the visit. The second source is from the interviewees, who happened to be on such a trip. The allotment society put up posters in their shop and on the gates to the allotment. The allotment holders were asked about their perception of the signs:

DF: Did you see the signs about the trip tomorrow?

VI78: *Yeah, I did, yes.*

DF: What did you think when you saw it?

VI78: *I, I don't normally bother with coach trips, I don't like them very much.*

Another confirmed that he had seen the signs and was going to go on the trip. He explained why:

VI74: *Well I just enjoy visiting gardens, especially with a group of people I know from the allotments. So I think it will be fun and interesting. The other trips we've done have been absolutely marvellous, so.*

Similar day trips were organised to the other gardens where interviews were carried out. For example, the retired factory worker [VI99] quoted before was visiting the Pleasure Gardens as part of a day trip to Bournemouth; several participants surveyed or interviewed at Compton Acres were there as part of a carers' day out and this woman's visit there was organised as an excursion as part of a holiday package:

DF: What made you come to Compton Acres today?

VI21: *Well we're on holiday at Bournemouth, so this was an organised, one of the organised trips, yes.*

Trip organisers therefore have a dual role, not only might they promote a garden visit, but they may also afford the means of travelling to a garden.

6.3. Intra-personal affordance

The next category of responses by the participants to the 'grand tour' question consists of 12 written responses to the survey and 2 oral responses in the interviews which referred to something the participants had perceived about themselves; particularly they attributed their visit to a general personal interest or enjoyment in visiting gardens, for example:

VS109: *I love to visit gardens* [elderly woman].

VS129: *Great interest in gardens generally* [elderly woman].

Other participants referred to their interest in gardening, confirming the findings given in Chapter 4:

VS61: *We love gardening* [elderly woman].

The interview data provides further support for these findings - many of the participants spoke explicitly of the influence of their interest in gardening, when explaining why they had visited, for example:

DF: What is it about gardens that really makes you want to go and visit them?

VI74: *Well because that's my main interest, is gardening. I just love gardening*
[female allotment holder].

And:

VI94: *We visit gardens because we do gardening ourselves* [woman at the NGS garden].

However, this view was not universal, as a woman interviewed at Stewarts Gardenlands revealed. She had described her visits to the garden centre every week for the lectures on gardening; she was then asked whether she visited gardens:

VI70: *No.*

DF: *Though you sound like keen gardeners...?*

VI70: *...I find them quite boring.*

DF: *Now that's interesting. You like gardens...*

VI70: *I love my own.*

DF: *...So what's boring about a garden?*

VI70: *I don't really know, but, I don't, I find it's just wandering, looking at plants that you can look at in your own garden or whatever.*

Other interviewees referred to their membership of the National Trust, the RHS or other horticultural organisations as explanations of their visit, again confirming the findings discussed previously:

VI41: *I go to the gardens because I am a member* [National Trust member at the Craft and Garden Show].

VS88 *Member of the RHS* [elderly woman].

6.4. A material affordance: the weather

In Section 4.4.3 it was shown that 18% of the respondents to the visitor survey at Compton Acres cited the weather as influencing their visit and in Section 4.5.2 the results of the resident survey suggested that the weather is the most important influence on how the respondents spend their leisure time. The weather affects everyone, so not surprisingly,

there were no statistically significant differences between different groups of visitors (e.g. by gender, age, occupational group) or by the number of times they visit gardens in a year. In this section it is demonstrated how influential the weather may be in garden visiting and then using the participants own words it is shown how the weather may be an affordance.

'When two Englishmen meet their first talk is of the weather' is a famous quotation of Dr Samuel Johnson (The Idler no 11, 1758 cited in the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, Knowles, 1999 p. 409). The extreme variation and often unpredictability of the English weather ensures that it remains a prime topic of interest to the people of England. The south coast of England is the sunniest part of Great Britain and there is also an appreciable summer minimum and winter maximum amount of rainfall, with totals in July just half those in January (The Meteorological Office, 2006a). Figure 6.3 shows the Met. Office's assessment of the 'anomaly' or difference from the 1961 to 1990 average number of hours of sunshine experienced in the summer in England each year (The Meteorological Office, 2006b). The number of garden visits is the indexed numbers of visits in England in the year (based on the survey carried out by VisitBritain [2005a]).

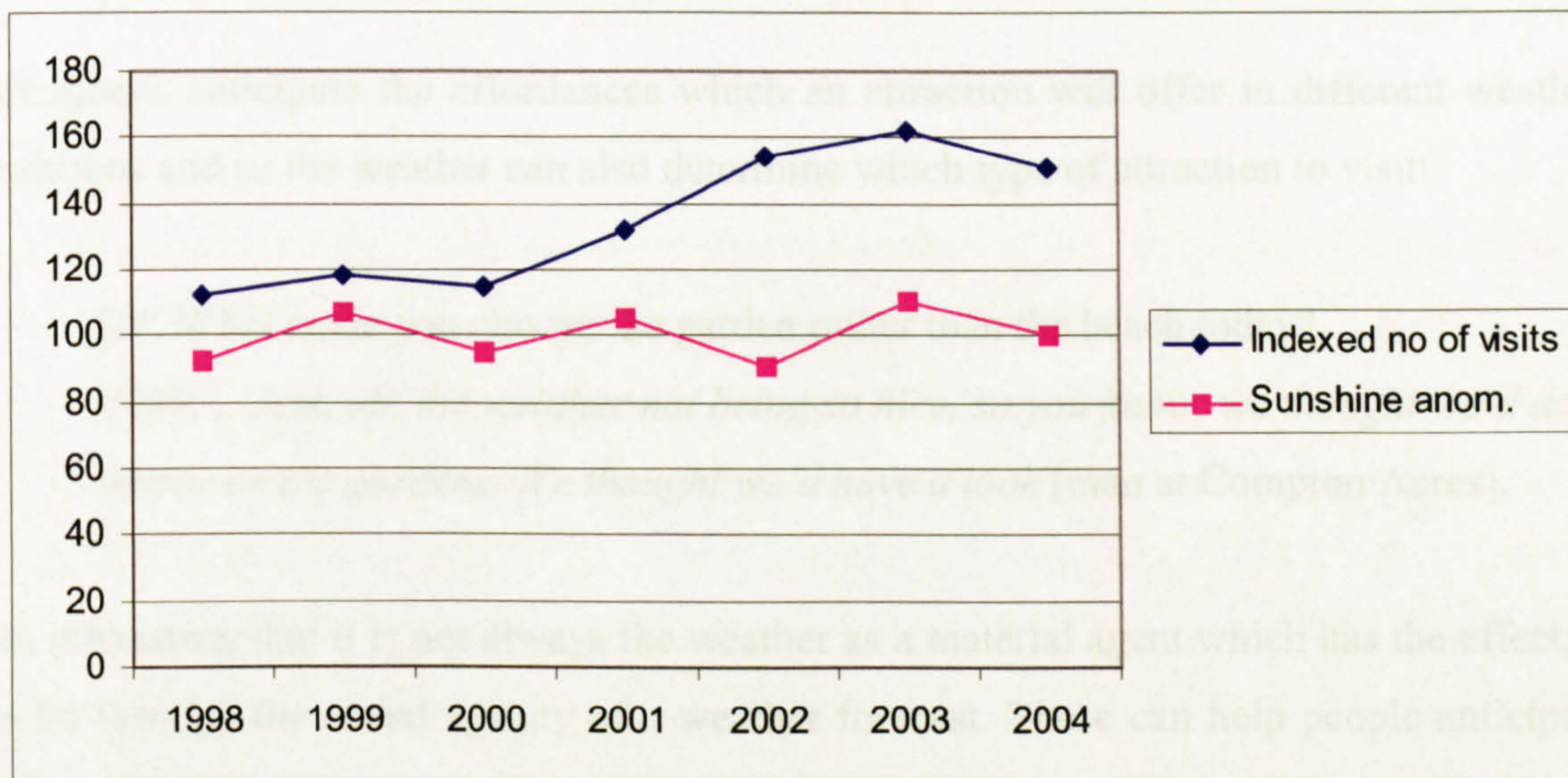


Figure 6.3 A comparison of the anomaly in the number of hours of summer sunshine and the number of garden visits per annum

Source: Derived from the Meteorological Office, 2006b and VisitBritain, 2005a

The figure demonstrates that (with the exception of 2002¹) as the number of hours of sunshine increases, the number of garden visits increase. For example, 2003 had a long hot summer and was the second driest year since 1766 and had the highest level of garden visiting ever recorded (Intel, 2004a and VisitBritain, 2005a). In contrast, England experienced its wettest summer since 1912 in 2004 and there was a 6% decrease in visitor numbers.

The qualitative data shows that the weather influences peoples' behaviour in several ways. First as gardens are outdoor attractions, the 'right' weather can be particularly important in affording satisfaction with a visit:

VI19: I think it's just nice to come at this time of the year when the weather is good really. You can just wander round without getting soaked [man at Compton Acres].

But the weather can also prompt a trip out, as this elderly resident said:

RI03: ...we're a bit off the cuff, we look at the weather and suddenly think we'll do something.

Participants anticipate the affordances which an attraction will offer in different weather conditions and so the weather can also determine which type of attraction to visit:

DF: What made you choose the garden rather than the beach today?

VI08: ...Just, uh, the weather not being so nice, so you know, we thought we'd do a detour on the gardens. We thought we'd have a look [man at Compton Acres].

It is interesting that it is not always the weather as a material agent which has the effect; it can be through the social agency of a weather forecast. These can help people anticipate whether a visit will be enjoyable and the best time to go:

¹ In 2002 the VisitBritain survey on which the figures are based, had a response rate of just 107 gardens, two-thirds of the level of responses in the previous year (VisitBritain 2005a) and so when the Eden Project received over 1.8 million visitors, in that year, it distorted the data. Therefore it is suggested that it is the manner of collecting the data that partially explains the anomaly in the relationship between weather and visitor numbers for 2002. Another factor that must also be considered is the provision of an extra Public Holiday for the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations (Intel, 2004a).

DF: ... what made you think of coming today?

VII15: *'Cause the weather [laughter]. I don't think the forecast's very good, so we've come [man in the Pleasure Gardens].*

In this conversation with a female customer at Stewarts Gardenlands, the researcher is the social agent:

VI64: *... we'll be going to Exbury on Wednesday or Thursday.*

DF: ...The forecast isn't very good for Wednesday.

VI64: *Isn't it? Oh, we won't be going Wednesday then!*

This shows that the weather does not only afford a visit, it can constrain too. Several interviewees told of how previous visits to a garden had been aborted, specifically by bad weather, demonstrating how past events influence the present:

DF: And did she [his daughter] give you a choice of where to come?

VII12: *Not really, no. She just, well we were coming here once before and we got to the gates and it poured with thunderstorm so we went off...so she said we'll definitely go today, as it's a nice day [a man on Father's Day at Compton Acres].*

This type of reaction to inclement weather is supported by the results of the resident survey. Over three-quarters of respondents said that if they were told it was going to rain all day, just as they were leaving home, they would not continue with a visit to a garden. Over half would cancel the visit, if the same circumstances occurred, as they arrived at the entrance to the garden.

The weather can also have a secondary influence on people through its affect on the planting in a garden. Here a female visitor to Compton Acres expresses her disappointment in the way the garden looks. Clearly her expectations of what a garden should look like, had not been met, although she attributes responsibility for the state of the planting on the gardeners rather than the weather, demonstrating her assessment of the garden as a cultural rather than a natural artefact:

VI03: *So far here I really am disappointed. You know, so, everything seems so dead, it seems so dried up. I mean where you've got bare patches, even there, dry patches and all there, just dry and dying because they haven't been watered* [woman at Compton Acres].

6.5. Temporal and spatial affordance

The next two categories identified from the responses to the 'grand tour' question are the explanations relating to the occasion or location of a visit.

6.5.1. Occasion

The participants' explanations of their visit often referred to a temporal element. Time was either seen as 'ordinary', in which case they spoke in terms of its availability or it was considered as 'special' in some way - an occasion. Having the time to visit was an affordance which many participants mentioned:

VI92: *...we've been going to visit this garden for ages and never got round to it. So today, we said right, we're going to drop everything and go! So we did and came here* [woman at the NGS garden].

Some participants spoke more specifically about how they had the time to visit gardens:

VI19: *Just, um, a few days off work and just decided to pop over here for the day really* [woman at Compton Acres].

VI06: *... our son is being looked after by grandparents so we thought we'd do something adult today, which is purely for us, so we haven't done that for a long while so we thought we'd go down then* [woman at Compton Acres].

VI86: *...we never kind of joined before [the National Trust]. When you're working you only had the weekends to go don't you, whereas now we can kind of go off in the week* [man at Wakehurst Place].

Whereas many public parks and gardens (including the Pleasure Gardens) are accessible continuously, many other gardens which open to visitors restrict their periods of opening to some extent. One resident, totally unsolicited, wrote on the front of her questionnaire:

RS212: ... *my experience of visiting NT properties/gardens is that they're always closed on the day one wants to go.*

Another resident in an interview expressed similar concerns about visiting National Trust properties:

RI09: ...*they used to close, I think it was Thursdays and Fridays, and quite often we're travelling on a Friday and that caught us unawares, we actually did draw up at properties to find them closed...*

Gardens which open as event attractions are even more restricting. The NGS garden was opened in April and then again in August 2005 when the interviews were carried out. Some of the visitors revealed why they were there that day:

VI92a: *But this one we saw advertised, well in the 'yellow' book, saw earlier in the year and then I said oh we've missed that one, so it'll have to be later in the year.*

DF: Oh, because it was open in April, wasn't it?

VI92: ...*We missed that, so we figured...*

VI92a: *We must do it now, we must do it this week.*

VI94a: *Basically they're just, they're open this week, so we take advantage of them [elderly man].*

The natural environment also has its own 'calendar':

VI86a: *We normally come Easter time, so of course it's nice now. I mean we usually come when the rhododendrons are out...We went down to Mottisfont Abbey, gorgeous roses. It's just the right time of the year [woman at Wakehurst Place].*

Therefore a different type of ‘special event’ arises when a visit to a permanently open garden is made at a particular time. A couple discussed the flowering of an Agave, which only flowers after an extremely hot summer the previous year.

VI94a: *We said, we must go to Glendurgan, where they were.*

DF: *Because they do only flower...?*

VI94a: *... every couple of hundred years they say.*

DF: *... You were going to Cornwall, so?*

VI94: *Not really, but I thought it would be a good idea to go to Cornwall and to see this...*

DF: *Did it make it feel special going that day because you knew it was a one-off chance?*

VI94: *Yes.*

The next quote is slightly different because here the ‘event’ is personal, rather than relating to the attraction.

VI91: *We were actually making a ‘phone call from a public box, when I saw the sign on the roadside. I didn’t really take it all in except that it was open each day and that it was in this direction and that was all I took in at that moment.*

VI91a: *I think the thing about the road signs, as opposed to getting a leaflet with it all in, is it, it sort of feels, I know it’s not, but it is planned, but it feels that you’re happening upon it... Whereas if you go and get a book and say we’re going to do this and this, I think what I mean is, it adds to the overall experience of when you’re walking around the garden, like happening upon a little grotto or something and to actually happen upon the whole garden, in the first place, by seeing the sign and saying oh let’s go down there, I think for me adds to the enjoyment and the pleasure of it as opposed to sort of maybe getting a book and...I think it is an extra thing because it’s like something you’ve, something special that you’ve um, got to enjoy just before going home. It’s the kind of thing we like, we like to do on the last day of the holidays isn’t it?*

VI91: *Yes...*

VI91a: *It’s very gentle and um, sort of reflective, sort of round the holiday off.*

However, some participants discussed attraction-visiting practices which amount to routine visiting. Here two female friends at the garden show told the researcher about their country walks to see the native flora. (This was the couple who asked that the data recorder be switched off whilst talking about a rare orchid which they like to go to see).

VI44a: *Well we're great friends obviously and very often Saturday, this is one of our days we go out, as well as one day in the week.*

VI44: *We always have a long walk during the week, and Saturday we don't usually have quite such a long walk. Sometimes we combine the walk with this sort of thing....*

VI44a: *Yeah, that's what we do. It's, it's our walking day.*

For another retired couple, Thursday is always the day they go out (RI08 and RI08a) and for two other female friends it is also Saturday (VI22 and VI22a).

For some participants, however, a socially mediated occasion can prompt a visit. When interviewed at Compton Acres on Father's Day, participants demonstrated this:

DF: Why have you come to Compton Acres today?

VI13: *Basically, it's Father's Day and uh, it's a present actually for me from the wife and the children [man].*

DF: What made you suggest Compton Acres today?

VI13a: *Today, Father's Day.*

DF: ... do you usually go out on Father's Day or special days out?

VI13a: *Yep, all the time [woman].*

Participants also mentioned that Mother's Day, birthdays and anniversaries could prompt visits. A resident explained why:

RI05: *Um, because it's a special day I suppose and we tend to do things on people's birthdays or anniversaries. Um, my husband's birthday's on a Sunday this year so we will probably go out somewhere, do something nice.*

However, some of the interviews at Stewarts Gardenlands were carried out on the spring bank holiday Monday and the impression given there by the participants was that bank holidays seem to afford time rather than the affective elements of the personal occasions:

DF: And what made you come today rather than...

VI69: *Bank holiday really. We're both off work* [woman at Stewarts Gardenlands].

6.5.2. Location

In Section 6.2.2 above, the distance to a garden was shown to be an important constraint to visiting gardens. The participants confirmed that being in the area of a garden affords visiting. A visitor at Compton Acres simply wrote:

VS83: *Location*

Others were more explicit:

VS122: *I live nearby* [middle aged man].

VS146: *Somewhere reasonably local to visit with my mother, who is based at Highcliffe* [middle aged woman].

A man interviewed at Wakehurst Place said:

VI87: *We're near, we, we live very near here ... it's just up the road, so when we have a few hours to spare we come up here.*

Some participants disclosed that travelling through an area offered another unexpected affordance:

VI90: *Um, we came from the Isle of Sheppey, which is the South side of Kent, and we were visiting my son at Biggin Hill overnight. And instead of actually turning round and going home, we decided to come down to Sheffield Park. But for some reason or other we ended up turning right, probably a little too early and ended up on the road to Wakehurst Place and as we're members of everything anyway, we*

thought oh, we'll do that instead. So here we are!... it is just a little bit far in normal circumstances for us to drive on a normal run out, but as we was already at Biggin Hill. Um, it didn't seem to be too bad to just have a quick nip down. It'll takes us two hours to get home but the actual getting here wasn't too bad.[woman].

Others visited because they had come to the area:

VS193: If we are in this area we will come to Compton Acres [elderly man].

The location of the garden can offer other affordances, such as local knowledge:

DF: How did you know about the gardens?

VI13: ...we live fairly local, we live in Ferndown, but we've always drove past it and never come in [man at Compton Acres].

A pleasing journey to get there, which can add to the pleasure of the trip, was noted by a man at the NGS garden:

VI95a: ...we live in Dorset obviously and everywhere's so gorgeous to drive and we've come over the Ranges¹ ...

Pursuing the opportunity to visit a second attraction - a woman (VI85) at Wakehurst Place described visiting a nursery, which has a garden as well, as getting a 'double helping'. Another couple there (VI86 and VI86a) were planning to visit a second garden nearby at Haywards Heath after they left Wakehurst Place. One interviewee told how she'd combined visits to two gardens which are quite close together:

VI41: I went to the Lost Gardens of Heligan, because we'd gone to the Eden Project and I did the two. The Lost Gardens of Heligan, I've been there twice and they're beautiful. I adore the Lost Gardens of Heligan [woman at the Craft and Garden Show].

¹ The public can drive through the army firing ranges at certain times.

One occasion which was mentioned frequently, namely holidays, afford both spatial and temporal affordances which may be unrealisable at any other time and so are considered next.

6.5.3. Holidays

In Chapter 4, the literature and the findings of the survey undertaken at Compton Acres demonstrated the importance of tourism to garden visiting. A couple interviewed at Wakehurst Place discussed their experience:

VI86a: *We're staying with my cousin, who lives near...*

VI86: *Up the road. And so we always do come here...Where we come from up in Derbyshire, we've got so many around us as well...And when they come up we go to them up there.*

DF: You take them there?

VI86: *Yeah, so we get a few in here while we're here in the week, then when they come up to us we do the same.*

A woman interviewed at the NGS garden said:

VI95: *...our daughter lives in Devon, so we do quite a bit of looking at gardens in Devon.*

As with a day-trip, travelling to or from a holiday location may afford a visit:

VI97a *...sometimes we say, right on the way home, there or on the way back, you know, we'll stop ...and go in and do a garden...[man at the NGS garden].*

There were a few occasions mentioned by the participants where the holiday destination had been selected specifically to afford garden visiting; here are some examples:

VI74: *I look at the brochure of the coach company, I usually go with, which is Excelsior and um, I thought, I just look for gardens to visit. Last year I did the gardens of Sussex, so we visited Sissinghurst and Great Dixter and Leonardslee [female allotment holder].*

VI88: *...we went on a three-day trip to be able to go and see Monet's garden.*

DF: You knew it was there and that was one of the reasons for going?

VI88: *Yeah.....beautiful, absolutely beautiful.*

DF: Was this a coach trip that was about gardens or...

VI88: *No, no...It was just a coach trip, in a company in Brighton that we use, we go on a three day trip to, we stayed in Rouen and then went to Monet's garden for the day.*

DF: So that's really why you went?

VI88: *Oh, yes, absolutely, no other reason [woman at Wakehurst Place].*

VI93: *I think we tend to pick an area that's got gardens in it, if we're going to stay away... and then visit the various gardens.*

DF: Oh right. Have you done that recently, this year?

VI93: *Cotswolds...it's very nice...Hidcote... And Kiftsgate, next door to it, which has lovely gardens actually [man at the NGS garden].*

6.6. Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed examples of proximal influences on garden visiting. Only by perceiving the affordances described in this chapter can the affordances of a garden be realised. As in the previous chapter it has shown how the visitor/environment relationship is interactive. Furthermore the quantitative and qualitative data has again confirmed the importance of social-material practices. Some instances have already been widely acknowledged in the literature, for example, the importance of word of mouth, the media and the marketing material of the attraction, in instigating visits. However, the data has also shown that the weather, occasion and location can also afford visits. Particularly it has shown the important role of 'prime movers' as an affordance to some people in visiting a garden. Finally the chapter revealed that a small number of participants explained their visits in terms of personal characteristics.

In the next chapter, the discussion of affordances moves backwards through time to the more distal influences which may also afford garden visiting. Rather than considering the affordances prior to a visit to a garden, which tend to be separable and therefore

identifiable, the chapter considers the accumulation of peoples' experiences over their lifetime to add to our understanding of garden visitors.

Chapter 7 – The distal affordances to participation in garden visiting

7.1. Introduction

In this chapter it is argued that there may be factors in understanding garden visitors which were not included in the participants' responses to the 'grand tour' question. Some factors may have been excluded because they would seem *too obvious* to state, others because they are not apparent to the individual. Giddens suggests that:

...in routinised social circumstances, actors are rarely able, nor do they feel the need, in response to the inquiries they make of one another in the course of social activity, to supply reasons for behaviour that conforms to convention. (Giddens, 1979, p. 219).

The social circumstances considered here *are* routine and the behaviour is conventional, as the chapter discusses not only visiting gardens but also reading and watching television, for example. Therefore the discussion relies more on the support of the literature than in the preceding chapters.

This chapter describes how the accumulation of the experiences of a lifetime influence garden visiting. Only by the perception of the proximal affordances (described in the previous chapter) as nested within the affordances described in this, can visiting a garden be a possibility. First, the principal sources of these distal affordances are those felt directly, so experiences of spaces which are similar to gardens are examined. Secondly, the history of family and friends in visiting gardens is considered. Thirdly, it is suggested that media representations, particularly in literature and television, influence the way people think about gardens and garden visiting, and so are discussed at some length.

Similarly these sources also affect people's interests which are peripheral to garden visiting and there is a discussion of the related interests of culture, heritage, environmentalism and personal well-being. It is then argued that if these sources influence garden visitation they may also influence the responses given by participants in this research. Consequently there is a brief consideration of the explanatory repertoires of the participants.

Thereafter the chapter confirms a key argument of the thesis, that a person is not a visitor to a garden because of any single affordance but rather is influenced by multiple inter-related affordances. It may be that people who have characteristics in common, derived *inter alia* from structural aspects of society are likely to share some commonality of affordances and so the chapter considers differences between the genders in respect of garden visiting and the types of attractions which participants like to visit differentiated by age.

7.2. Experience of garden-like spaces

Plants are fundamental to people's lives in terms of nourishment, but in addition have a special significance through their extensive ceremonial use, in the expression of joy, affection, welcome, gratitude, sympathy, celebration, grief, friendship, marital union or spiritual contemplation (Janick, 1994). In addition, we are surrounded by 'gardenscapes' and so it is almost impossible not to have had some degree of first-hand experience of a place similar to a garden, unlike other attractions; beaches or ski resorts, for example. This familiarity with analogous spaces enables a first-time visitor to anticipate what a visit to a garden might be like and whether it would afford the experiences they desire.

About 84% of UK households have access to a garden (The Advertising Association, 2002) and in terms of land area, domestic gardens make up around 3% of England and Wales (Bhatti and Church, 2000). Thompson, (2003) suggests that domestic gardens occupy a greater proportion of the land area in Britain than in any other country. So not only do the majority of people in England have their own garden, but if they do not, can possibly visit those of friends or family:

VI92: Our daughter's a very keen gardener... They've just moved into um, well they've just moved into an old woodman's cottage, but they're doing it up, but they've tackled the garden and every time we go over, um, we see that they've done something different.

Or they can look at front gardens as this woman confirmed:

VI70: Oh, ideas I get from other people's gardens, going for a walk, looking over their wall and seeing how other people done theirs [Stewarts Gardenlands].

Furthermore, public green spaces and parks account for around 20% of the developed land area in the UK (The Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management, 2006). In addition there are allotment sites, golf courses and even the most urban of areas have roadside planting:

DF: Do you look at the roundabouts ...and the plantings at the side of the roads?

VI113: *Yes, yes.*

VI113a: *Yes, there are some the other day on the way to Winton, that were very nice...*

VI113: *Very impressive, they're good, they're good [man and woman at Compton Acres].*

Or public parks which can often be seen even if not entered, as a young woman interviewed at the Pleasure Gardens confirmed:

DF: Do you ever look at the flowers and that, here?

VI106a: *I do actually, and I do like them all, I think they're lovely, I think they're really nice. Especially the ones in Boscombe, they're really nice.*

DF: Oh, Boscombe Gardens¹?

VI106a: *They're lovely, only because I like them, because I go past on the bus.*

DF: Oh, right, so you look down and...

VI106a: *Yeah... I like what they've done there. But it is nice and pretty.*

It is estimated that urban parks are used by 40% of the British population (Hall and Page, 2006) and familiarity and ease in a park or public garden can develop from an early age, as shown by this woman who was with her young children, when interviewed in the Pleasure Gardens:

DF: Do you go to gardens and parks at home then with the children?

VI118: *Parks, yeah, all the time.*

DF: What swing parks?

VI118: *Yes, yes.*

¹ Boscombe Gardens are a public park in a district of Bournemouth

The findings of this section suggest that the environment of gardens which people pay to visit would therefore have a familiar feeling to a novice visitor and that they would be able to anticipate what that ‘feeling’ would be like, prior to a first visit. Furthermore, awareness that there *are* gardens to visit in England seems widespread. The interviews carried out at the horticultural show, a garden centre and in Bournemouth Pleasure Gardens showed that with just one exception, all those interviewed were aware of the gardens sector, irrespective of whether they had ever actually visited a garden.¹ The only exception was a young Brazilian/Portuguese woman (VI104) who was working in Bournemouth. She was not aware that there are gardens in England which people pay to visit, although she said she was familiar with public gardens in Brazil.

Moreover, the perceptual experience of garden-like spaces enables people to anticipate what the environment of a pay-to visits garden would be like. This is established by the finding that almost half of the 58 respondents in the resident survey who had never visited a garden showed that nonetheless they had a perception of a garden by being able to write the words they felt would describe them. Examples included:

RS56: *As Eden In Cornwall* [elderly man].

RS63: *Pleasurable* [middle aged man].

RS78: *Boring* [middle aged man].

RS90: *Creative* [young woman].

Despite domestic gardens and those which open to the public being so similar or in many instances, being the same spaces (for example a domestic garden opening for the NGS), it is apparent from the participants’ comments that they have no difficulties in making a distinction. There are perhaps two key forms of affordance that may be overlooked but that are essential to a garden being an attraction. The first affordance arises from the actions of social agents who must create, maintain and operate the garden and the second derives from the decision to allow people in to visit. Most domestic gardens in England are not

¹ A typical response to being asked was to name a garden, for example, many said Compton Acres or Exbury.

open to the public and to enter is a civil offence. It is only through the agency of the owner that the affordance of legal entry is created.

MacCannell (1976) proposed that a phenomenon must have three components to be considered an attraction: a visitor, a site to be viewed and a marker or image, which makes the site significant. He adopted the term 'marker', in regard to information about a specific sight and this referred not only to information attached alongside a sight, for example, a notice board, but also any other information, for example in guidebooks or the narratives of people who have visited. The analysis of the secondary data (in Chapter 4) showed that though the majority of gardens which open to the public, are privately owned, people always seem able to distinguish between when a garden is being open to the public as an attraction and when it is a private space as a domestic garden. They must perceive a 'marker' of some form and this demonstrates behaviour learnt through practice that is rarely remarked upon, it is so taken for granted.

One resident did, however, comment about a friend's garden that she likes to visit when he opens it for the NGS:

RI07: I would love to go round more people's gardens. I tend to wait for an invite.

That sounds very old fashioned of me, doesn't it?

DF: ...So even a garden open to the public?

RI07: I'd still feel I was intruding, I suppose that's why we go to D... 's, because he's actually invited us.

Others recognise that gardens are cultural artefacts which may have been created as a public rather than a domestic space. Another resident referred to her dislike of the way bedding plants are used to create a giant clock in the Pleasure Gardens. When the researcher expressed her opinion that this is quite clever, the resident responded:

RI06: It's clever, but it's not a garden, it's there to attract a tourist.

Perhaps this is why an allotment holder also seeks to avoid the 'public' elements of a garden as she reveals when talking about another garden in Dorset which opens under the auspices of the NGS:

VI74: *I especially like gardens where you feel that you are going into somebody's garden, you know, like the smaller ones. I think I said, I like Dean's Court, it's because it's like...somebody's garden that they've let you into.*

7.3. Family influence

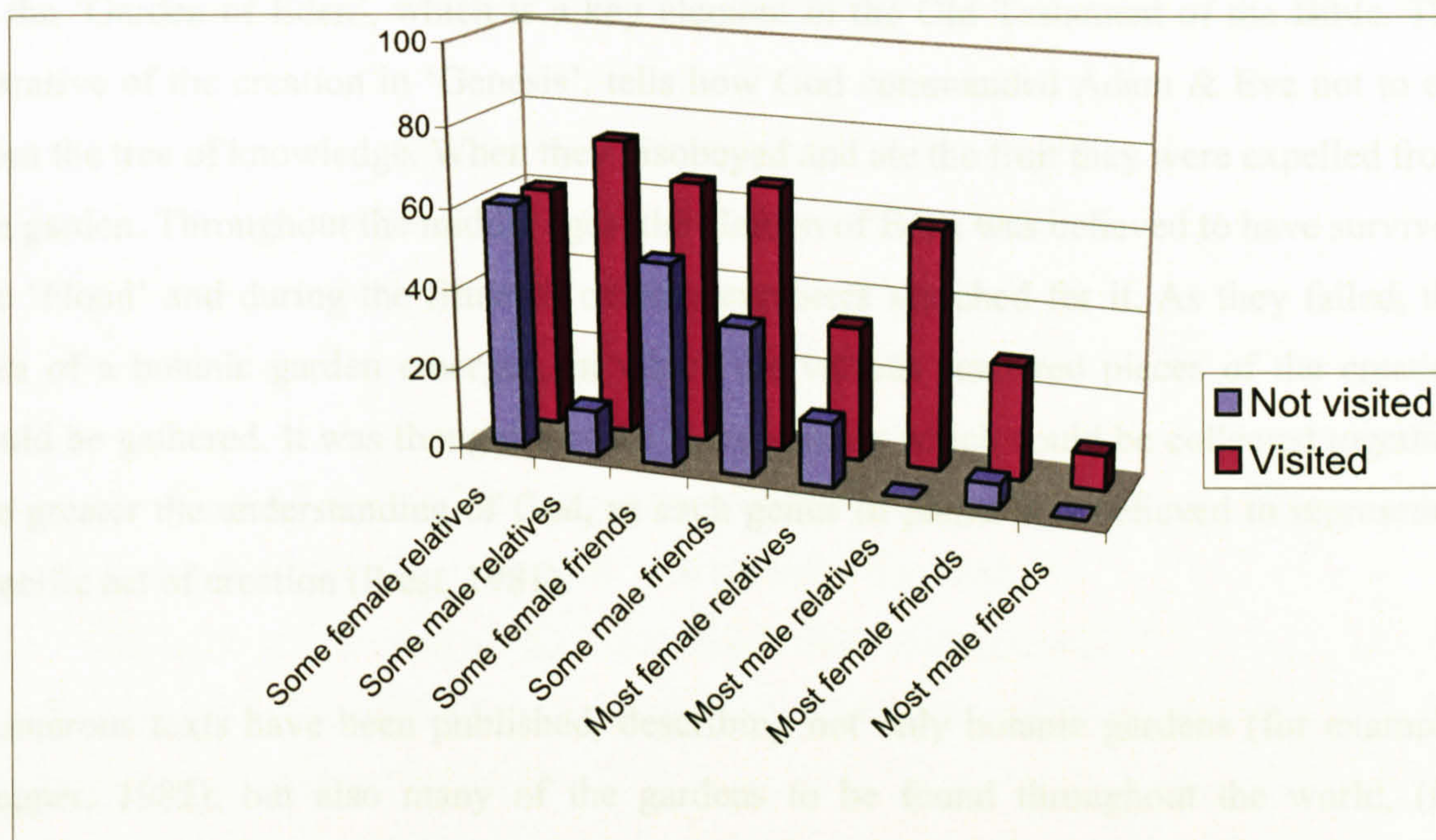
So far it is suggested that family and friends afford garden visiting by first, contributing to the pleasure of a visit (Chapters 4 and 5). Secondly by being a source of information, thirdly by initiating a visit and fourthly by enabling a visit, for example, by providing transport (all in Chapter 6). This section proposes that furthermore, family and friends are an affordance simply by example. The '*structuring dispositions*' (Bourdieu, 1980, p. 54) of a *habitus* '*...durably inculcated by the possibilities and impossibilities, freedoms and necessities, opportunities and prohibitions*' are internalised by an individual (*ibid.*). By visiting gardens themselves family and friends demonstrate to an individual that garden visiting is something they could do or perhaps something that they might enjoy.

It is impossible to distinguish the influential importance of each of the affordances of family and friends but their combined effect can be demonstrated. Figure 7.1 compares respondents in the resident survey who have visited a garden as an adult with those who have not and shows that respondents who have family and friends who visit gardens are considerably more likely to do so themselves. Employing the χ^2 test, the differences are statistically significant ($p = <0.001$ in each group¹). It is also notable that the differences between groups are greater for men than women. (Gender differences in the perception and realisation of affordances are discussed further in Section 7.6.1. below).

¹ In the groups consisting of female relatives, male relatives and male friends, 25% of cells had an expected count of less than 5.

Figure 7.1 A comparison of respondents who have visited or not visited a garden and that have relatives or friends who visit

(Resident survey)



7.4. Media representations of gardens, gardening and garden visiting

In the previous chapter it was shown how the media could prompt or provide information for a visit to a garden. Here it is demonstrated first, that the media is also influential in instilling an awareness of gardens and garden visiting. A young Belgian man and his friend told how they had watched the BBC in Belgium:

DF: Have you visited an English garden before?

VI89a: *No.*

DF: No, so did you have any idea what to expect?

VI89a: *From the TV.*

DF: What English television?

VI89: *On television, there's English gardens on the BBC.*

Secondly it is argued that representations in literature or television of who is gardening or visiting gardens influences viewers.

7.4.1. Literature

Gardens and plants have a long history of featuring in all genres of literature, dating back to the 'Garden of Eden', which is a key element in the Old Testament of the Bible. The narrative of the creation in 'Genesis', tells how God commanded Adam & Eve not to eat from the tree of knowledge. When they disobeyed and ate the fruit they were expelled from the garden. Throughout the middle ages, the Garden of Eden was believed to have survived the 'Flood' and during the fifteenth century explorers searched for it. As they failed, the idea of a botanic garden emerged, in which the various scattered pieces of the creation could be gathered. It was thought that the more species which could be collected together, the greater the understanding of God, as each genus of plants was believed to represent a specific act of creation (Prest, 1981).

Numerous texts have been published, describing not only botanic gardens (for example, Hepper, 1982), but also many of the gardens to be found throughout the world, (for example, Coats, 1963). These books, often with lavish illustrations, provide numerous descriptions of gardens which have developed over different periods of time, in various locations and climates. Some focus on the historical aspects of garden development (for example, Woods, 1996), whilst others concentrate on the designers (for example, Daniels, 1999).

Awareness of gardens can also be introduced at a young age through popular fiction. For example, in Frances Hodgson Burnett's children's favourite, 'The Secret Garden', the garden is a central location in how the story unfolds for Mary Lennox, the young heroine.

It was the sweetest, most mysterious-looking place anyone could imagine. ...There were other trees in the garden, and one of the things which made the place look strangest and loveliest was that climbing roses had run all over them and swung down long tendrils which made light swaying curtains, and here and there they had caught at each other or at a far-reaching branch and had crept from one tree to another and made lovely bridges of themselves (Burnett, 1950, p. 65).

Moving beyond simply showing that awareness of gardens can develop through literature, it is suggested first, that gardens have always been spaces structured by gender, class and

age and secondly that the observation of representations endorsing this structuration (Giddens, 1979) influences people's perceptions about gardens and garden visiting. In 1911 in 'The glory of the garden', Rudyard Kipling wrote:

*Our England is a garden that is full of stately views,
Of borders, beds and shrubberies and lawns and avenues,
With statues on the terraces and peacocks strutting by;
But the glory of the Garden lies in more than meets the eye...*

*Our England is a garden, and such gardens are not made
By singing:- 'Oh, how beautiful' and sitting in the shade,
While better men than we go out and start their working lives
At grubbing weeds from gravel paths with broken dinner-knives...*
(Kipling, 1940, p. 732-733)

Here a garden is represented as a place of pleasure for one class in society and a place of labour for another. Similarly, in the 1950's the Sunday Express published a booklet, entitled Adam the Gardener¹, which was subtitled 'A pictorial guide to each week's work...' (Cowell and Adams, undated). The information given concentrates on fruit and vegetable production and is accompanied by drawings which feature an image of the then stereo-typical amateur gardener, who is male, working class and mature in age. Women who gardened were more often, middle-class and middle-aged (Penn, 1993) and were overlooked by the Daily Express, when creating these booklets.

However, as Law (2002) in the Times newspaper describes – changes are taking place:

Fern Wharmby is typical of the new breed of allotment gardener. Casually elegant in her Birkenstock sandals and Ghost shorts, she has stopped off to pick something for dinner on her way home from work as a retail buyer for a chain of specialist shoe shops (Law, 2002, p.15).

¹ An apparent reference to the Garden of Eden

Chapter 4 showed the important relationship between an interest in gardening and garden visiting. It is argued here, first, that the changing attitudes to the domestic garden and gardening as a leisure activity are impacting on garden visiting, and secondly that those changes are happening because of, and are reflected in, the representations in the media. The discussion continues in the next section and concentrates on television, as it is the most important medium for leisure (Rowe, 2006). Like literature, television promotes certain meanings of the world and serves some social interests better than others (McQueen, 1998). The following section demonstrates how the changing content of programmes has been significant in influencing who now visits gardens.

7.4.2. Television

The programme 'Gardeners' World' was first broadcast in 1968 (Pasco, 1999a) and dominates the public's awareness of gardening productions (BBC Worldwide, 1998). A photograph of its first presenters, Percy Thrower and Arthur Billitt (in Pasco, 1999a), shows two elderly men with white shirts (sleeves rolled up to the elbows), ties, trousers and Wellington boots, holding a piece of turf. It is typical of the *'instructional close-up sequence of seed-sowing or pruning, accompanied by an authoritative voice-over'* (Taylor, 2002, p. 488), on which the programme relied. Brunsdon (2003) describes how in 20 minutes of continuous talking by Thrower, garden tools are placed near the appropriate plants so that he does not have to walk between different demonstrations, weighed down with equipment.

The current presenters of 'Gardeners' World' consist of two men and a woman, all of whom are usually dressed casually in denim jeans. Segments are much shorter, they do include instruction, but the plants shown are often mature, pot-grown specimens and visits to gardens open to the public, plant nurseries and horticultural shows are also featured. That such changes have occurred arises not only from changes in society in general but more particularly from within broadcasting.

Lifestyle programming began in the 1990s, and by 1999 there were four gardening programmes, on the five terrestrial programmes, in the prime 8-9 evening slot (Brunsdon, 2003). 'Ground Force' was one of the major successes and is typical of much lifestyle programming, by being based on the 'makeover', with its compressed narrative of 'before' and 'after'. In these the transformation is more important than the instruction with the

emphasis of the programme in what the producers call the ‘reveal’ and a concentration on the result and not the process. ‘Ground Force’ is:

...a combination of designing the new garden, clearing the old one, and then planting purchased mature specimens. This is clearly both more televisual (it takes a long time for a seedling to grow into a shrub), and more attuned to many contemporary lifestyles. It is a world way from Percy Thrower...(Brunsdon, 2003, p. 10).

Peter Bazalgette, whose production company created ‘Ground Force’, described how focus group research refined the format of the programme:

...the groups helped us see...that in fact when young homemakers think about the garden, they think about it as an extra room in the house. And that when they think about gardening, ‘it’s about instant solutions for time-poor lifestyles, not about an expert saying “this weekend you’d better be doing the pruning”. So we were able to develop the programme around these insights, into what you see on screen, which is a gardening show on BBC1 in primetime, with 12 million viewers (Regan and Brook, 2000, p.47).

Medhurst (1999), however, suggests that whilst the programmes may have changed the horticultural content, socially, lifestyle shows still:

...adhere to a sensibility that’s very inward, insular and small c-conservative, and in this context it’s worth noting the non-too-hidden class dimension of such programmes. Despite token gestures elsewhere, all are deeply rooted in white, English suburbia, where the houses and gardens are big enough to warrant makeovers (Medhurst, 1999, p. 27).

It is not just the participants who reflect changes in horticultural practices and society; the presenters too are different. Taylor (2002) suggests that much of the appeal of lifestyle programming is due to the ‘ordinariness’ of the presenters:

Current popular gardening celebrity-experts mark a new sense of openness, legitimation and tolerance towards a set of previously marginalized voices in mainstream programming. In terms of gender and age the popular media embrace a new set of voices of expertise. There are as many female experts as there are men. There is a balance of relatively young experts alongside the more venerable. Similarly, the middle-class received pronunciation of some of the overarching presenters seems almost exceptional among a range of regional accents (Taylor, 2002, p.486).

However, she then emphasises that ordinariness does not go as far as the working classes, *'being ordinary means being lower middle-class in the world of lifestyle programming'* (Taylor, 2002, p.486). Nor is expertise in gardening essential. She gives as an example, the presenter Anne McKeivitt on 'Homefront in the Garden' who openly admits her lack of expertise thus implying that an absence of knowledge provides no barriers to making over your garden. Such 'experts' Taylor states, *'strive to establish empathy with viewers by lowering their differences in knowledge, personality and outlook between themselves and audiences'* (Taylor, 2002, p. 487).

Leapman provides a vivid example of the democratisation of gardening:

Even at Columbia Road, the Sunday plant market in London's East End that has always championed the 'old gardening' busy Lizzies and rainbow-hued pansies by the boxful – you can now buy those slim galvanised 28 pots that only a couple of years ago the top garden designers were having made to order at bespoke foundries (Leapman, 1999, p28).

At other times, the programmes not only influence garden visiting indirectly by stimulating interest in gardening, they also actively promote garden visiting. 'Grass Roots' another series by Bazalgette, broadcast in the South, invited the public to visit a particular garden with the presenters each week, with free entry for all who chose to go. Furthermore, obtaining ideas for the design of a domestic garden by visiting a garden open to the public is a frequent suggestion in the lifestyle programmes. For example, in 'The Flying Gardener', presenter Chris Beardshaw tours the British Isles in a helicopter, studying native flora in its natural habitat and showing how an area of an 'ordinary' domestic

garden can be transformed. An integral part of the programme is the visits to gardens open to the public to obtain ‘inspiration’. In advice on how ‘to give your garden a true *Ground Force* makeover’, readers are advised, ‘if you do not know where to start, draw inspiration from visits to gardens...’ (Pasco, 1999b, p. 12-13).

The lifestyle television programmes have therefore been influential in not only promoting garden visiting, but bringing the idea of it to a wider audience. In doing so, the media is changing the *habitus* of many, by exposing individuals of all backgrounds to information which previously may have been limited to one social group or another. So instead of thinking of an activity as improbable (Bourdieu, 1980), a different group of people are now considering it as the norm. A Mintel report (2005) shows that a much higher percentage of younger people and the lower occupational groups, watch garden makeover programmes (for example, ‘*Ground Force*’ than watch programmes on gardening such as ‘*Gardeners’ World*’ (Table 7.1).

(%)	TV programmes on makeovers (for example ‘ <i>Ground Force</i> ’)	TV programmes on gardening (for example ‘ <i>Gardeners’ World</i> ’)
All	29	24
Men	26	20
Women	33	27
15-19	21	9
20-24	15	4
25-34	23	11
35-44	33	17
45-54	36	27
55-64	30	36
65+	34	43
AB	23	26
C1	27	22
C2	31	25
D	34	21
E	34	28

Table 7.1 Gardening programmes watched by demographic sub-group, December 2004
(Mintel, 2005, n=1963)

None the less, some of the impetus, for ‘doing up’ a garden has come not only from the representation on the television (that any one can do it), but also from people’s perceptions of property as an investment as well as a home. Going to a garden to gain ideas, will not occur to people if they do not have access to a garden and whilst the ‘right-to-buy’ policy has extended home ownership to the lower occupational groups, younger people are the least likely to have a house with a garden (Mintel, 2004b).

7.5. Peripheral interests

In this section it is proposed that people’s interests in areas which are peripheral to garden visiting may also have an impact on their participation and again family and friends and the media may influence this. Additionally the English education system which seems to make a limited contribution directly to garden visiting may be of more importance in the areas discussed here¹.

7.5.1. Cultural experience

The term ‘culture’ can refer ‘*to the best and most glorious achievements of a people or civilization*’ (Alasuutari, 1995, p. 25) but it is more usefully thought as: ‘*something like collective subjectivity – that is, a way of life or outlook adopted by a community or a social class*’ (*ibid.* author’s emphasis). Connell (2004a) suggests that ‘*the desire for more cultural goods and differentiated experiences associated with postmodernity may, to some extent, explain the reasons for garden visiting*’ (Connell, 2004a, p. 233). She asserts that gardens are part of Britain’s cultural heritage and identity and states that 68% of the respondents to her surveys also visit museums and galleries. Similarly the resident survey shows that 48% of respondents who like to visit gardens also like to visit museums and art galleries, compared to 22% of respondents who do not like to visit gardens (employing the χ^2 test, $p = <0.001$). This suggests that there is some aspect of garden visiting which has a commonality with visiting other cultural attractions.

One reason may be the acquisition of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1979), which is a strand of Bourdieu’s work taken up by researchers in the attraction sector (for example, Richards, 1996). Bourdieu argued that cultural capital enables the interpretation and appreciation of cultural products: ‘*A work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses*

¹ See for example, a study by Peacock (2006) on the relationship between schools and the National Trust

the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded' (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 2). Furthermore he suggests that '*Cultural practices which schools do not teach and never explicitly demand*'¹ (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 28) are none the less reflected in education qualifications:

The educational qualification designates certain conditions of existence, those which constitute the precondition for obtaining the qualification and also for the aesthetic disposition, the most rigorously demanded of all the terms of entry which the world of legitimate culture (always tacitly) imposes... it is because they are linked either to a bourgeois origin or to the quasi-bourgeois mode of existence presupposed by prolonged schooling, or (most often) to both of these that educational qualifications come to be seen as a guarantee of the capacity to adopt the aesthetic disposition (ibid.).

For these reasons, educational qualifications have been adopted as one important means of measuring cultural capital.

Over half the respondents in the ATLAS survey (of which the visitor survey at Compton Acres was a part) were graduates, a percentage which rose to 67%, when cultural tourists (i.e. those who defined their holiday as 'cultural') were assessed (Richards and Queirós, 2005). The data obtained specifically at Compton Acres, however, shows half the respondents left primary or secondary school with no further or higher education and just a fifth had a degree. This suggests that the acquisition of cultural capital may not be an affordance to visiting a garden in the same way as visiting other cultural attractions.

It is suggested that gardens are '*our most accessible art form*' (Goulty, 1993, p. 1) yet unlike other art forms, gardens are not often critically evaluated. One exception, an analysis by Wareham and Maitland (2004) of East Ruston Old Vicarage² provoked a '*vigorous and mixed*' (The Garden, 2004, p. 842) reaction after its publication in the RHS magazine, 'The Garden'. The letters to the Editor illustrate the varied perceptions of gardens as art and included the following comments (*ibid.*):

¹ There is usually an absence of garden history/design etc within the curricula of formal education in England

² An 8-hectare garden in Norfolk containing more than 20 individual but linked gardens.

I read the critique of East Ruston with a growing sense of depression at the nit-picking criticisms and designer-babble that pepper the article. Such articles seem to me to be totally without value since any garden is entirely the personal taste of the creator. The implication in the introduction that garden design is art seemed a vaulting overstatement. [HJ Janes, Essex].

...I think the world of gardening can live without critiques that are based on the pretext that garden design is an art form. To paraphrase Alexander Pope, gardening is greater than all arts, as it is closest to God's work. [Matthew Wilson, Curator, RHS Harlow Carr].

...It really is time for the gardening fraternity to embrace criticism, as all other aspects of the arts have done. [Neil Smurthwaite, Dorset].

Furthermore it is proposed here, that gardens are perceived differently to other cultural attractions because experiencing a garden is not restricted to people who visit gardens open to the public, in the same way as a visit to a museum or art gallery. It was demonstrated above that there is widespread familiarity with domestic gardens. This can be very different to people's experiences of other cultural attractions. For example, a study of museum visiting, cited by Davies and Prentice (1995), stated that non-visitors had not been socialised into visiting and '*saw museums as formal, formidable and inaccessible places that restricted both social interaction and active participation*' (Davies and Prentice, 1995, p. 492). Furthermore it reported the anxiety of non-visitors as due to their '*inability to understand the "museum code"*' (*ibid.*).

Therefore garden visitors may have greater experience of gardens from sources other than attractions and this may out-weigh the absence of opportunity to acquire cultural capital. This is a possible explanation of the popularity of gardens with people who have not obtained higher educational qualifications.

7.5.2. An awareness of 'heritage'

Prentice (2003) differentiates between 'heritage', implying '*an essentially past orientation*' and 'cultural' as not embodying such an implication (Prentice, 2003, p.164). Connell (2004a) argues that '*While traditionally, gardens have tended to be classified as heritage*

attractions, this is a misnomer' (Connell, 2004a, p. 233) and so *'the rise in heritage visits is not necessarily a reliable barometer-in the context of garden visitation'* (*ibid.*). Nuryanti (1996) includes gardens in her taxonomy of heritage attractions but perhaps more useful is a recognition that many gardens (but not all) are heritage sites. Heritage is considered here, first in respect of gardens *per se* and secondly the plants they contain.

Visiting heritage attractions is *'a powerful force in the construction and maintenance of a national identity'* (Palmer, 1999, p. 313). She argues that because landscapes are signifying systems, they are able to *'contain and convey multiple and often conflicting sets of shared meanings'* (*ibid.*) including that of national identity. Her example is Chartwell, in Kent, the home of Sir Winston Churchill. The National Trust who now owns it, include the following in their description of the property:

The rooms and gardens remain much as they were when he lived here, with pictures, books, maps and personal mementoes strongly evoking the career and wide-ranging interests of this great statesman (National Trust, 2006a, p. 118).

A woman talked to the researcher at Wakehurst Place about Kingston Lacy in Dorset:

VI86a: *...the old boy died and they had to give it over to the National Trust, because you know they couldn't pay the debt. I think it's marvellous that they keep them up, don't they, else our heritage would have gone, woul'n'it?*

Botanic gardens are also a part of that national heritage, but as Palmer (1999) stated, landscapes can have conflicting meanings to different people. McCracken (1997) in his discussion of the botanic gardens of the British Empire argues why RBG, Kew was at the centre of a network of gardens:

By 1901 gardening was more than just a pastime. It was an adjunct to imperialism, and the 100 or so colonial gardens in existence were as much a part of British imperialism as the fleets of the Royal Navy or the soldiers of the Queen (McCracken, 1997, p. viii-ix).

A typical example of the economic botany which RBG, Kew was involved in during the second half of the nineteenth century was the germination of seeds from Amazonian rubber trees. The seedlings were then sent to Sri Lanka and Malaysia to begin their rubber industries (RBG, Kew, 2006b). More recently, greater respect for the indigenous flora of a country was demonstrated by the opening to the public of the Australian National Botanic Gardens in 1967, the first botanic garden in Australia to grow only native plants (ANBG, 2006).

Poria *et al.* (2004) claim in the context of tourism in Israel that some heritage attractions not only provide a recreational or educational experience, but one which can be linked to the tourist's perception of the site as part of their own heritage. Herbert (2001) makes the same point about visitors attracted to literary places '*for some broader and deeper emotion than the specific writer or the story*' (Herbert, 2001, p. 316). Squire (1994) examined the experiences of visitors to Hill Top, Beatrix Potter's property in Cumbria. From the analysis of her data, examples of insights into childhood and family life, such as memories of childhood, reading to children, closeness, nostalgia and the intergenerational sharing of experiences emerged.

During one of the interviews a woman described her visits to the Pleasure Gardens, first in terms of her personal identity and then in nationalistic terms:

VI119: *I remember coming here as a kiddie you see, you didn't have holidays, you know, I'm just eighty next year and ... days out were the thing, in a charabanc and we used to, sometimes it'd be to Weymouth and sometimes it would be to here. And as a kiddie I used to think, we've got to walk all through those gardens to get to the beach, you know, but now we appreciate it, don't we.*

A female allotment holder identified with a heritage of allotments, in a symbolic way:

VI178: *... I'd love to visit allotments to be honest, I feel it's very often tied up with sort of uh, the mining towns, when you had to get out of the pits and go and breathe some fresh air in the allotments and grow their own food. I mean, historically I think that's fascinating. But very often that back, the allotments, and you know, and their love of beautiful plants, is based on the hellish time they have down the mines.*

This may be explained by the suggestion of Hewison (1987) that the market for heritage products (including heritage attractions) expanded in the 1970's and 80's because of the perception in Britain that the country was in a state of decline and that insecurities and doubts (which were more than simply economic) made heritage products appealing and reassuring.

During that time, (1978), the National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens [NCCPG] was founded. Describing itself as the '*World's leading cultivated plant conservation charity*' (NCCPG, 2002), its remit is to '*conserve, document, promote and make available Britain and Ireland's great biodiversity of garden plants for the benefit of horticulture, education and science*' (Fearnley-Whittingstall, 2002, p. 324). Their main means of achieving this is the NCCPG National Plant Collection® scheme where individuals or organisations undertake to document, develop and preserve a comprehensive collection of one group of plants in trust for the future. People who are interested in this plant heritage can usually visit the gardens, where the collection is held. For example, the collections of *Convallaria* and *Anemone nemorosa* can be seen at Kingston Lacy, Dorset. The NCCPG also raises funds and attracts visitors to gardens through their plant sales. A woman described another coach trip the allotment association had made to an NCCPG plant sale at Gilbert White's House in Selborne, Hampshire:

VI82: *We went there, was it last year or the year before and it was their, um, plant fair day and we had about thirty people on the coach then and it was a good day... That was a good one, a good day out because you get all the rare and unusual plants as well.*

Literary Places

Gardens can also acquire meaning from the people who worked in or occupied the garden. Where that person is a writer, the garden can be described as a literary place. Herbert (2001) suggests that there has been an increase in literary places and the attraction of a wider diversity of tourists. He argues that literary places have evolved from the simple association of the birthplace, etc of an author. They are now socially mediated, '*created, amplified, and promoted to attract visitors*' (Herbert, 2001 p. 313). Many of these visitors are not literary pilgrims in the traditional sense, but motivated from curiosity and interest rather than the single-minded devotion of the literary pilgrim.

Herbert suggests several ways in which attractions such as gardens are now literary places. First, the places may have connections with the lives of the writers. Hardy's Cottage, Thomas Hardy's birthplace and Max Gate, where he died, are National Trust properties open to visitors in Dorset. The gardens are essential elements of both attractions. At Hardy's Cottage, visitors are directed to the window seat, overlooking the garden, where he wrote his earliest works, including *Under the Greenwood Tree*.

DF: Have you been to Thomas Hardy's Cottage?

RI06: *At Lower Bockhampton? Yes I've been there, it's kind of pretty ... it's sweet, different from when you read his books, it's a complete contrast, because his books are very heavy going.*

Secondly, Herbert suggests that tourists may be inspired to visit literary places which form the settings for novels. The house and gardens at Renishaw Hall, in Derbyshire, have been the home of the Sitwell family for centuries. It was also the model for Wragby Hall in D.H. Lawrence's novel, 'Lady Chatterley's Lover' (Fox, 2004). Different individuals can draw inspiration from different facets of the garden, so whilst a gardener may notice the planting, a garden historian could be attracted by the life of George Sitwell, (who visited more than 200 gardens) and garden designers may be more interested in the combination of the romantic and the classical in the design and development of the gardens. Visitors, however, with a literary interest may overlook the horticultural aspects of the garden and concentrate instead on the fictional Wragby Hall where Fox recalled, '*Lady Chatterley found herself dreaming of wild horses and craving the rough kiss of lower-class flesh in the grounds (ibid. p. 13).*

A resident described how reading a novel set in Versailles, France, led her to arrange a visit to the garden:

RI01: *...I read a book, this woman met a fellow there and she was explaining all the different things, you know...I want to see these lovely fountains ...*

Finally Herbert suggests that some places may have been socially mediated as literary places by other, indirect association. Basildon Park near Reading, for example, was used as the location, of the film version of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, in 2005.

Subsequently the owner of the property, the National Trust, promoted this aspect of the house and garden (Aaltonen, 2005) even though there was no other connection with either Austen or her work.

7.5.3. Environmentalism

Evans (2001) suggests that the '*movement towards more environmentally-friendly or 'green' lifestyles*' (Evans, 2001, p. 158) ensures that visiting gardens will maintain its popularity. Connell (2004a) too, argues that a '*growing interest in the natural environment has spurred a greater propensity to visit naturally based attractions under which the broad heading 'gardens' may be classified*' (Connell, 2004a, p. 234). These interests seem to be of two kinds – one an innate preference for natural environments (already discussed in Chapter 5) and secondly support for conservation of natural resources.

An allotment holder spoke about her visit to a Dorset garden, connecting her concerns about the environment to her interest in heritage. She is a member of the Henry Doubleday Research Association (HDRA), described on their web-page as a charity '*for organic growing, for gardeners, for farmers and for an organic lifestyle*' (Garden Organic¹, 2006):

VI74: *And the garden that not many people know about is um, Dean Court, is it called Deans Court at Wimborne.*

DF: That only opens occasionally doesn't it?

VI74: *That's an organic garden and I find that fascinating because you can sort of be transported back to the last century I think ...I, I forget how I found, oh yes, in the Henry Doubleday um, magazine, they give lists of organic gardens, when they open, 'cause it opens quite rarely and that's how I went the first time, but that is a lovely garden, I think. The gardener there, you'd think he was, he'd stepped out of a painting [laughter] with a straw hat. I asked him questions about his comfrey plot and they were selling unusual potatoes.*

¹ Garden Organic is the new working name of HDRA

7.5.4. An awareness of health and well-being

Gardens have long been recognised as places of relaxation and restoration (for example, Hobhouse, 2002) and this is now recognised professionally:

Social and therapeutic horticulture is the process by which individuals may develop well-being using plants and horticulture. This is achieved by active or passive involvement (Thrive, 2006).

The media too, have acknowledged this therapeutic role. ‘Digging Deep’ a garden makeover programme, first broadcast on the 17th of October 2006, has presenters introduced not as gardeners but as horticultural therapists (Chater, 2006) and shows the creation of a garden called ‘The Healing Courtyard Garden’. Furthermore other wider campaigns promoting health through a ‘good’ diet and exercise have become common.

This next quotation shows how these wider social issues can influence visitor intentions. For this woman in the Pleasure Gardens, walking is not just for moving from place to place or for enjoyment:

VI109: *I like this garden, walking down through the gardens to the Pier.*

DF: You do that for pleasure though...

VI109: *To get exercise and for pleasure.*

A woman tells why she prefers to go to Wakehurst Place without her husband because she has the impression that she should be gaining some health benefit from the visit:

VI88: *...he's got wonky legs and I can go round today and do things in my own time. When you've got someone with bad legs, you, you, slow down completely aren't you and you think, this isn't doing me a lot of good, I should be belting along.*

These examples corroborate the findings of a Dutch report by the Health Council of the Netherlands and Dutch Advisory Council for Research on Spatial Planning, Nature and the Environment, (2004). Their report claims that the environment is an important determinant

of exercise, especially if it is seen as a ‘green’ environment. The report also asserts that people keep exercising for longer in natural surroundings.

A man interviewed at the NGS garden describes how a visit to a garden is not part of his normal routine and so a cream tea is permissible:

VI95a: *A cream tea will put us on nicely.*

DF: That’s a bonus, coming here for you, is it, the cream tea?

VI95a: *Um, not especially, we usually have a cup of tea and a cake, we don’t usually have a cream tea, we try to eat sensibly, I mean in our general lives, but um, an occasional cream tea is not going to hurt anybody. [laughter].*

Finally a man and woman interviewed in the Pleasure Gardens, show an appreciation of the value of such places to society:

VI113: *Of course we pay for these gardens anyway.*

DF: ... do you think...it’s right the money that’s spent, do you think it’s well spent?

VI113: *Yes I do, oh yes.*

VI113a: *It makes for a better quality of life.*

VI113: *Not only for us, it’s one of the appealing features of Bournemouth as a resort.*

7.6. Multiple affordances

So far, the thesis has recognised affordances only individually, (for ease of communication), but every visit to a garden is preceded and reinforced by numerous affordances which are interconnected in what Michael (2000) referred to as ‘cascades of affordances’. A visitor may be unable to articulate some affordances, as this chapter has shown, but at times the participants revealed multiple affordances to visiting, for example:

RI09: *...one place we are hoping to get to is Hillier’s Arboretum...I’ve never been there...*

DF: How did you know about the arboretum?

RI09: *Because for a start, we go up and down to Winchester quite a lot and I know about it, friends have been... and also they were on television again the other day [female resident].*

This example shows affordances emerging separately, but as the literature referred to in Chapter 2 suggests they may also emerge together or sequentially. Furthermore, affordances can be nested, so the affordances of a garden are realisable because of attunement to the proximal affordances described in the previous chapter. These proximal affordances are also nested within the distal affordances described above. Nor is there simply a linear nesting, instead affordances may be repeated or returned to over time as this interview suggests:

DF: Could you tell me why you've come to the gardens today, please?

VI14: *Basically just to have a look around. We've heard about it in the past, this is our first visit.*

DF: Could you tell me how you've heard about it?

VI14: *Through friends, relatives and um, we come to Bournemouth quite regularly and we decided to pay a visit today.*

DF: Was there any particular aspect of the garden that they told you about?

VI14: *None, none at all, it was just a general, everything basically.*

DF: And do you often visit gardens?

VI14: *I do, we have loads in Cornwall [man at Compton Acres].*

In the next chapter further properties of affordances are discussed, but first, it is suggested that people who have characteristics in common are also likely to share a commonality of affordances and that therefore their leisure activities are more likely to be similar. This is demonstrated by means of two characteristics, gender and age.

7.6.1. Gender

In this section, the research returns to the findings of the earlier chapters that showed the importance that family and friends can have on garden visiting. Respondents to the resident survey were asked to think about the people they know and then to indicate how many they thought would like to visit gardens. It begins by assessing whether there are statistically

significant differences between the genders as to who respondents know who visits gardens (employing the χ^2 test).

(%)	Male		Female		<i>p</i>
Of the people they know, how many visit gardens:	some	most	some	most	
Female relatives	58.1	33.3	61.7	28.5	-
Male relatives	73.7	12.3	70.7	7.4	-
Female friends	63.9	25.0	62.2	23.8	-
Male friends	73.1	8.3	53.3	6.6	0.001

Table 7.2 Knowledge of relatives and friends who visit gardens, by gender
(Resident survey, n=345)

Table 7.2 shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the genders in respect of knowing male or female relatives and female friends who visit gardens, but men are more likely to know male friends who visit gardens than are women. This suggests that men could be more aware of garden visiting from the men around them, than are the women.

(%)	Male	Female	<i>p</i>
Who has inspired them to visit:			
Family	46.5	45.6	-
Friends	41.6	67.5	<0.001

Table 7.3 Inspiration of family and friends, by gender
(Resident survey, n=274)

When it comes to inspiring a visit, there seems to be little difference between the genders in being inspired by a family member to visit a garden, but women are far more likely to be inspired by a friend than are men ($p = <0.001$) (Table 7.3).

In Chapter 6 it was shown that about a third of visitors to gardens afford visiting to their companions by accompanying them on a visit. Tian *et al.* (1996) found that there was a statistically significant difference (using the χ^2 test) between genders as to the visitors to museums who they labelled 'reluctant', with more men than women defining themselves in this way. Analysis of the data from the resident survey shows that of the male respondents, 12% said that their companion wanted to visit more, compared to 9% of women and for

female respondents, 26% said that they wanted to visit more, compared to 14% for men. These figures are not statistically significant ($p = 0.069$) but they do suggest that the ‘secondary participants’ are more likely to be male than female.

The data also shows that when it comes to visiting a garden so that your companion will then accompany you somewhere else, the sexes are similar, although the men seem slightly more calculating in this respect (19% of men and 13% of women). Also women are slightly more likely to do something else which another member of the group may enjoy whilst travelling to or from a visit to a garden (26% of women compared to 20% of men).

Next, companionship during a visit is reviewed (Table 7.4).

(%)	Male	Female	<i>p</i>
Who the respondent most frequently visits with:			
Member(s) of family	83.2	66.9	0.029
Friend(s)	13.9	29.4	
Who do they talk to in a garden:			
Nobody	3.0	4.0	-
My companion(s)	83.2	81.0	-
Other visitors	17.8	32.8	0.007

Table 7.4 Companionship during a visit, by gender
(Resident survey, n=274)

Again the differences between men and women as to the roles of family and friends in visiting gardens are highlighted. Men are more likely to visit with their family, than are women, whereas women are more likely to visit with friends than are men but, for both groups, family is more important than friends. It also appears that women are more gregarious when it comes to strangers, as they are almost twice as likely to talk to the other visitors, as are men.

Further clarification, of companion visitors, is available from the visitor survey carried out at Compton Acres. Table 7.5 shows that the majority of visitors were with their partner, but that the men were more likely to be with their partner than the women (66% compared to 41%). The women, however, visited more with their family than the men (26% and 14%).

(%)	Male	Female	<i>p</i>
Partner	65.8	40.9	0.008
Family	13.7	26.4	
Friends	13.7	15.5	
Alone	2.7	12.7	
Other including tour group	4.1	4.5	

**Table 7.5 Companionship during a visit to Compton Acres, by gender
(Visitor survey, n=201)**

So far this study has treated children as almost ‘invisible’ but it maybe valuable to consider their influence on other members of the household. The data shows that although there are no statistically significant differences between the sexes, there is a trend that women with children are more likely to have visited a garden than are men with children (39% of women having a child in their household visited a garden in 2002, compared to 15% of men in the same circumstances). Therefore in the context of garden visiting, children may in some way, be an affordance for visiting for some women. Whether this is because of the gender of child carers; differences in time committed to employment or whether this finding relates to women perceiving gardens as a safe place to be with children, (see Chapter 5) is unclear. Some of the feminist writers suggest that children can be a constraint to leisure (for example, Harrington *et al.*, 1992) and the resident survey shows that families can also impede garden visiting. When asked the reason why respondents had not visited a garden they had seen on ‘Gardeners’ World’, 24% of women cited family commitments, compared to 4% of men ($p = 0.024^1$).

7.6.2. Ageing

Although there is widespread evidence that participation in leisure activities in general, changes between age groups (Harahousou, 2006, McGuiggan, 2001) there is little detailed research within the attractions sector and there appears to be none in the horticultural attractions sector. The section begins by considering specifically horticultural attractions, moves on to data from the ATLAS project on cultural attractions before concluding with a wider range of attractions.

¹ 25% of cells had a count of fewer than 5

Commencing with horticultural attractions, the resident survey shows that, with the exception of national flower festivals, there is a statistically significant difference using the χ^2 test, between the age groups in having ever visited (Table 7.6). In every case, the likelihood increases with age. Whilst this could obviously be due to greater opportunity to visit, the longer one lives, it may also reflect a growing desire to visit these types of attraction, as one ages.

Attraction type (%)	All	16-44	45-64	≥ 65	<i>p</i>
Gardens	83.0	73.6	86.0	87.2	0.019
Natural Habitat	80.5	72.2	82.5	86.3	0.039
Amateur Shows	51.6	31.8	51.8	70.0	<0.001
Professional Shows	42.2	31.4	42.1	51.6	0.023
Local Flower Festivals	39.1	22.5	37.2	56.9	<0.001
Celebrity Shows	23.0	11.2	19.7	37.3	<0.001
National Flower Festivals	16.7	14.6	14.0	20.4	-

**Table 7.6 Respondents who have ever visited horticultural attraction types, by age
(Resident survey, n=345)**

Some support for the latter conclusion is demonstrated by the responses from the same questionnaire (and again using the χ^2 test), which asked those who had not visited each type of horticultural show, whether they would like to visit (Table 7.7).

Attraction type (%)	All	16-44	45-64	≥ 65	<i>p</i>
Amateur Shows	26.1	26.2	33.9	10.0	(0.051)
Professional Shows	39.5	40.7	42.1	34.0	-
Celebrity Shows	50.6	57.7	53.8	36.5	0.030

**Table 7.7 Respondents who would like to visit a horticultural show but had not yet done so
(Resident survey, n=345)**

For each type of show, overall about three quarters of the sample have visited or would like to visit (Table 7.8). However, as this table then demonstrates, there is still a differential between the ages, with the young having the smallest percentages for each type of show. This suggests that the statistically significant differences in Table 7.6 above are not solely due to a greater opportunity to visit, because the elderly have lived for longer, but to a greater desire to visit.

Attraction type (%)	All	16-44	45-64	≥ 65
Amateur Shows	77.7	72.5	85.7	80.0
Professional Shows	81.7	72.1	84.2	85.6
Celebrity Shows	73.6	68.9	73.5	73.8

Table 7.8 Combined percentages of those who have ever visited or would like to visit a horticultural show, by age

(Resident survey, n=345)

Turning now to the survey of visitors to Compton Acres, they were asked whether they had ever visited a slightly different range of horticultural attractions (Table 7.9). Although there are no statistically significant differences, the youngest age group once again, are less likely to have visited than the more mature respondents.

Attraction (%)	All	≤ 39	40-59	≥60	<i>p</i>
Garden centre	95.7	90.3	97.3	96.3	-
Plant nursery	70.6	67.7	72.0	70.4	-
Horticultural show	58.3	48.4	62.7	58.0	-
Flower festival	56.7	48.4	62.7	54.3	-
Plant fair	40.1	35.5	49.3	33.3	-
None of the above	2.7	9.7	1.3	1.2	-

Table 7.9 Respondents who have ever visited a horticultural attraction

(Visitor survey, n=201)

Moving from horticultural to cultural attractions, data from the ATLAS survey of which the Compton Acres survey was a part, provides further evidence that the appeal of different attraction types varies between age groups. This survey was carried out at 130 cultural sites in 23 countries worldwide and had over eleven thousand respondents. Table 7.10 shows the percentage of respondents who had visited or who were planning to visit different types of cultural attractions, whilst in the area of the survey.

Attraction type (%)	All	≤ 39	40-59	≥60	<i>p</i>
Museums	51.3	47.8	55.1	59.6	<0.001
Historic sites	42.3	40.5	45.2	43.3	<0.001
Monuments	42.0	40.7	46.2	36.6	<0.001
Religious sites	31.8	28.2	36.3	39.0	<0.001
Art galleries	20.2	20.2	19.7	22.4	-
Traditional festivals	19.0	19.4	17.6	21.2	0.013
Cinema	18.9	24.1	12.2	9.6	<0.001
Heritage/craft centres	18.4	16.8	21.1	19.8	<0.001
Theatres	14.9	16.4	12.7	12.6	<0.001
Pop concerts	8.9	12.7	4.1	1.9	<0.001
Dance events	8.5	10.5	5.9	5.0	<0.001
World music events	6.0	7.8	3.6	3.0	<0.001
Classical music events	5.7	5.4	5.6	8.1	0.001

Table 7.10 The cultural attractions respondents like to visit, by combined age groups (ATLAS survey, n=11, 012)

It seems a desire to visit museums, religious sites and classical music events increases with age, whereas in respect of the theatre, the cinema, pop concerts, world music events and dance events it decreases with age. Several cultural attraction types seem to be of more interest to the middle-aged rather than the young or elderly, for example monuments, historic sites and heritage/craft centres. This suggests that the young are more attracted by ‘popular’ culture; the middle-aged by heritage and the elderly have a greater interest in high culture. The appeal of art galleries seems to remain constant across the age ranges.

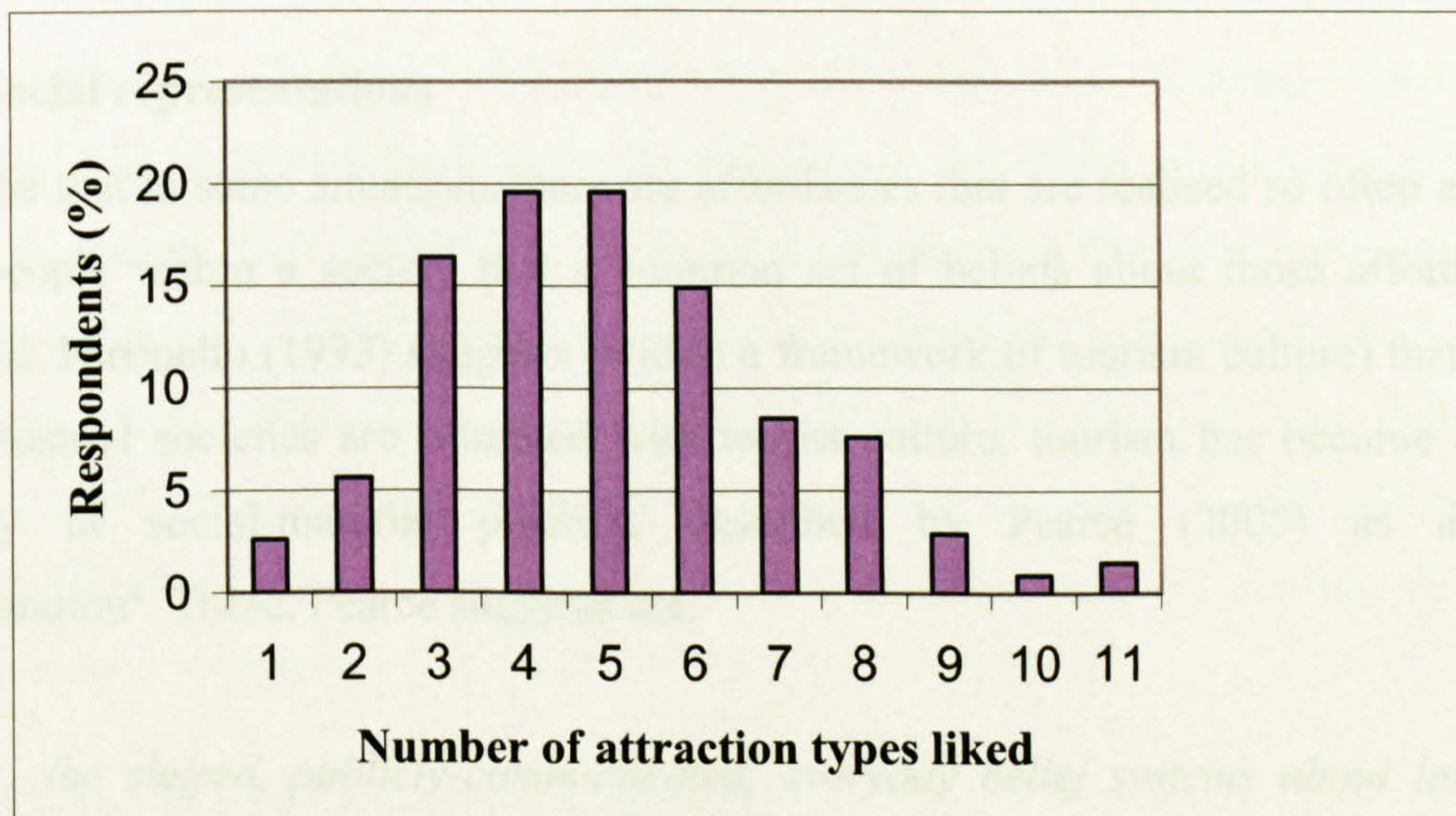
The final sets of data cover a wider range of attractions. Using responses obtained from the resident survey it can be seen that a natural place was the most popular choice of attraction amongst the respondents as a whole, but some types of attraction appealed to respondents of all ages (gardens/parks, pubs/restaurants, historic towns/properties and museums/art galleries), whilst others attracted different age groups (Table 7.11). The youngest age group were more likely to choose natural places, shopping complexes, entertainment complexes, leisure centres, zoos and amusement or theme parks, than the older age groups. The middle-aged group (45 – 64 years) had a greater preference for gardens, historic places and sporting events than the other two age groups, but only the latter had a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.013$). The oldest group of respondents were the least likely to choose any of the attraction types compared to the younger or middle-aged respondents.

Attraction type (%)	All	16-44	45-64	≥ 65	<i>p</i>
Natural place	91.5	95.5	94.0	86.7	0.048
Garden, park	66.7	61.8	72.4	62.2	-
Pub, restaurant	62.9	69.7	66.4	55.1	(0.085)
Historic town or property	61.7	52.8	67.9	60.2	(0.073)
Shopping complex, market	52.6	62.9	54.5	41.8	0.014
Museum, art gallery	39.2	40.4	39.6	35.7	-
Entertainment complex	32.5	53.9	31.3	15.3	<0.001
Leisure centre, health spa	30.1	52.8	26.9	14.3	<0.001
Zoo, safari park	27.2	42.7	26.1	13.3	<0.001
Sporting event	18.7	21.3	23.9	9.2	0.013
Amusement or theme park	16.4	41.6	10.4	4.1	<0.001

**Table 7.11 Attraction types respondents like to visit, by age
(Resident survey, n=345)**

This data seems to suggest that younger people like a wider range of attraction types than middle-aged or older people. To assess this, the number of different types of attractions liked was calculated for each respondent. The mean number of types was five, with a range of 10 (from 1 – 11) (Figure 7.2).

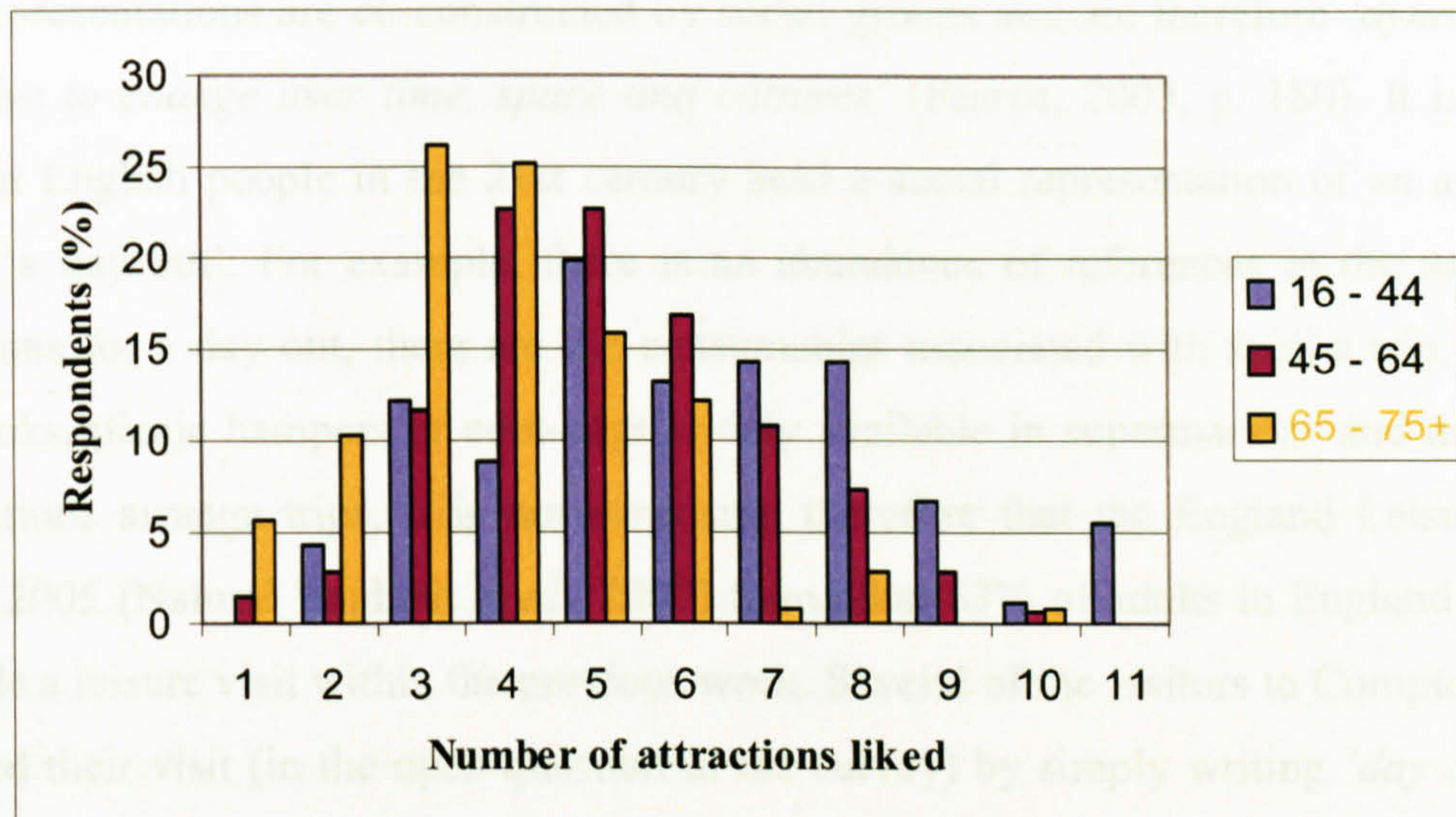
**Figure 7.2 Types of attraction liked by respondents
(Resident survey)**



There was no difference between the numbers of types of attractions liked by gender. There was, however a variation with age – using the combined age groups, a distinctive

pattern emerged (Figure 7.3). Adults over 65 liked fewer attractions, whilst those under 45 liked a wider range of attraction types.

**Figure 7.3 The number of attractions liked by respondents, by age group
(Resident survey)**



It has been recorded that the older the respondent, the narrower the range of leisure activities participated in (McGuiggan, 2001) and this study seems to suggest that the same pattern applies to attraction visiting. One resident (RI03) suggested in her interview, that as she had got older, going out demanded more effort, so she had become more selective in where she went. Whether this is generally the case, cannot be shown.

7.6.3. Social representations

It may be that in some situations there are affordances that are realised so often and by so many people within a society that a common set of beliefs about those affordances is mediated. Parrinello (1993) suggests (within a framework of tourism culture) that because post-industrial societies are saturated with tourist culture, tourism has become a special category of social-material practice, described by Pearce (2005) as a 'social representation'. These, Pearce suggests are:

...the shared, publicly-communicated, everyday belief systems about large-scale topics such as sex, health, madness and ...tourists. Social representations are more than attitudes and values: they are driven by large-scale themes and images, they derive their meaning from multiple sources and they organise areas of people's

everyday understanding and behaviour. Social representations are our everyday theories and knowledge networks about sizeable chunks of the social world. (Pearce, 2005, p. 20).

These representations are co-constructed by social groups and are therefore *'dynamic and responsive to change over time, space and cultures'* (Pearce, 2005, p. 180). It is argued here, that English people in the 21st century hold a social representation of an attraction visit or 'a day out'. For example, there is an abundance of references in the media for suggestions for a day out, there are the consumables associated with such a trip, such as guidebooks, picnic hampers or cool-bags widely available in supermarkets and numerous organisations arrange trips. It is not surprising therefore that the England Leisure Visit Survey, 2005 (Natural England *et al.*, 2007) found that 63% of adults in England in 2005 had made a leisure visit within the previous week. Several of the visitors to Compton Acres explained their visit (in the open question in the survey) by simply writing *'day out'*. For this retired couple a visit to a garden is a key element:

VI92: *We do like to, if we go anywhere we like to think there's a garden open to look round as well, you know?*

D: That's part of the day out?

VI92a: *Yes.*

It is demonstrated in Chapters 4 and 6 that many of the visitors to Compton Acres were on holiday and it is suggested that visiting an attraction is part of the social representation of tourism. Academia often makes this assumption, for example Boniface and Cooper state that *'attractions are the raison d'être for tourism'* (Boniface and Cooper, 2001, p. 30). Simply put, it may be that visiting an attraction is what people expect to do on holiday and it is this social imperative that prompts visits, in addition to the spatial and temporal aspects that holidays afford. Some visitors at Compton Acres, again in response to the open question, wrote *'sight seeing'*.

7.6.4. The participants' explanatory repertoires

The sections above have proposed that the participants' perceptions of their social and cultural environments have influenced them in respect of visiting gardens. This has already been demonstrated, for example, in Chapter 5 a woman spoke of looking at a garden for

inspiration and the influence of the media as described above is clearly recognisable. In another example a resident, a middle-aged lady, who owns a small hotel, in describing the garden at the Priest's House Museum, in Wimborne, Dorset, said:

RI06: *I go and sit in the garden sometimes for a couple of hours if I just want to escape, that's where you'll find me.*

Furthermore participants, such as this woman interviewed at Wakehurst Place, showed that their explanations might not be consistent:

VI86a: *I think we've run out of National Trust in Sussex, haven't we? We've done them all.*

DF: Is that a problem - that you feel that you're running out?

VI86a: *Oh, no, we don't mind going back.*

7.7. Chapter summary

This chapter has identified further affordances to visiting gardens which were not included in the explanations given in response to the 'grand tour' question. It is suggested that the participants were perhaps less sensitive of these factors or that they seemed too obvious to mention. It is shown that awareness of garden-like spaces appears to be universal in England and that peoples' historic perceptions of these spaces enables them to anticipate whether a visit to a garden would afford the benefits they seek. This may also be an explanation of why only a few participants referred to the experience of visiting a garden as being extraordinary in any way. The chapter then discussed a further influence of family and friends and proposed that the people closest to an individual can 'set an example' by visiting. A discussion of representations of gardens and garden visiting in the media, particularly books and television, suggested that these representations afforded visiting, by creating not only awareness that such places exist and what they might be like, but also, as 'structuring dispositions' of who might visit and why they might go.

The chapter then considered the influence of interests other than gardening which might afford visiting. Interests in heritage, the environment and personal well-being were shown to be significant. However, the relationship between culture and gardens was found to be less important and the reasons for this were examined. The chapter then moved from

considering affordances as individual and separate, to being multiple and part of a cascade. It was posited that groups of people having characteristics in common, such as gender and age would also share a commonality: of affordances and their attraction visiting behaviour would reflect this. Finally it was argued that if people's social environment influenced their behaviour in respect of visiting gardens, it would also have an impact on their behaviour in other areas, such as holidays (and even their responses to this research).

The next chapter continues to consider cascades of affordances and suggests that because affordances are dynamic and graded a person may or may not be able to visit a garden. Other aspects of affordance theory discussed in the literature are considered and then by revealing the decision-making practices of the participants in relation to garden visiting, the findings of the thesis are completed.

Chapter 8 – An affordance approach to participation in garden visiting

8.1. Introduction

This chapter begins by continuing to consider multiple affordance and introduces the concept of impedance. Affordance and impedance are shown to have graded properties and a visit to a garden proceeds when it is anticipated that affordances are realisable and any impedances are negotiable. Bandura (1989) suggested that people are not only influenced by their environment but are active in partially determining the nature of it and the strategies of participants who seek to create and realise affordances are therefore discussed.

The middle section of the chapter discusses the suggestion that a person's perception of affordances depends first upon the attunement of the perceiver and secondly whether the information in the environment is contained in an 'event' (McArthur and Baron, 1983). Attunement, Zebrowitz (1990) proposed, is a consequence of a person's perceptual experience, together with their personal goals and abilities. The events referred to by McArthur and Baron are dynamic changes over space and time and are referred to as 'affordance events' in the remainder of the thesis in order to distinguish them from visitor attraction events.

The final part of the chapter considers the social-material practices of garden visitors, concentrating on the decisions made prior to a visit. Two main types of practices can be identified from the interview data. The first type, a 'specific visit' refers to a trip to a particular garden in direct response to the proximal affordances discussed in Chapter 6, for example, a feature on a television programme. The second type, a 'non-specific visit' occurs when more than one location is considered and the visit is *informed* by social-material agents, rather than prompted. Examples of each are discussed and the practices potential visitors use to consider the details of a garden visit are reviewed.

8.2. Extending the depiction of affordance

Previously the thesis has implied that affordance is a positive relationship between a person and their environment, but this section begins by describing circumstances when

this may not be the case. It then further develops the portrayal of an affordance as being an absolute, by showing that affordances may also have graded characteristics. Thirdly, the section extends an affordance approach, by demonstrating that garden visitors do not only react to factors in their environment but that they can be pro-active in shaping that environment.

8.2.1. Impedance

Some affordances may *not* be considered as beneficial by the perceiver; these have variously been termed constraints (Mannell and Kleiber, 1997), negative affordances (Tapsell *et al.*, 2001) and impedance (Wallace, 2004). If such an affordance is perceived, a planned visit may not go ahead. Two residents, a woman and her husband confirmed this:

DF: If you see something like that [an advertisement in a community magazine] and you think oh I'd like to go, what do you do then...?

RI03: *Oh put it in the diary normally and then depending on the enthusiasm, when it gets nearer, we'll decide whether we'll go or not.*

DF: So what will affect your enthusiasm?

RI03a: *The weather! Very much, if it's pouring with rain we're not going to go, are we?*

In this next extract another resident describes how their anticipated holiday activity of spending time on the beach with their young children was no longer afforded, but they then realised the alternative affordances of visiting gardens:

RI02a: *We had that holiday in Cornwall where we thought we were going to have a sea and sand holiday. We booked ourselves into a nice caravan... but unfortunately my boy had to have an operation on his eyes so it meant that he then couldn't play, he couldn't be in the sand, couldn't do anything like that. It completely changed the idea of the holiday so we therefore went to visit lots of different gardens and they had a ball.*

As in that example, participants often revealed that a cascade of affordances *and* impedances had influenced their visit. For example:

VI34a: *I saw it advertised in the local paper...I told him it was on, was he interested, not realising that he had the day off. 'Cause I can't go to it, they've taken the buses off you see, there's no bus route [elderly woman at the Craft and Garden Show].*

Some factors which impede a visit cannot be overcome and visiting a garden is no longer an option. An elderly couple at the Craft and Garden Show explained that they could no longer visit gardens whilst they were on holiday because:

VI46: *...we've got to the stage now where, um, neither of us are very good walkers, we've, I've got knees and he's got feet problems and um, when you get to our age you do.*

One participant, however, gave a different reason for ceasing visits to gardens:

VI78: *I think I've seen them all round here...So I mean, I have been to them all, you know Stourhead and all those places [female allotment holder].*

8.2.2. Graded affordances

Some of the affordances and impedances discussed in this thesis are absolutes but many can have graded properties; for example, the amount of an admission fee to a garden can afford or impede a visit.

Paying an entrance fee

Connell (2005) found that 95% of gardens in her survey of gardens in Great Britain, charged an entry fee, with an average amount of £3.74. In comparison to other attraction types, this appears low but Connell established that the number of gardens opening for charity fund-raising, such as for the NGS, reduces the average, with 79% of gardens charging less than £3.00. The survey of gardens in England in 2005 by VisitBritain (2006), which tends to include gardens opening for commercial or wider charitable purposes (for example, the National Trust) as well as local authority owned gardens, found that 88% charged an entry fee, with an average of £4.51 per adult.

A man visiting the NGS garden said:

VI95a: *Well this is actually quite cheap, this one, some, some, the usual, the usual entry is three pounds, three fifty, for gardens these days.*

Whereas a woman who often visited plant nurseries, when asked if she visited gardens said:

VI43a: *Not gardens, not normally. We've seen most around and they're very expensive. To pay the National Trust ... they're drastically over-priced. You know for two of us to go, we could buy quite a lot of plants for that money.*

Many gardens offer reductions for children; families and groups and also occasionally have other special offers. In the resident survey three-quarters of respondents agreed that receiving a special offer or free admission to a garden affords visiting.

Another strategy adopted is to join an organisation such as the National Trust or the RHS. Having paid an annual membership, this provides many affordances, such as guidebooks and free entry to attractions – for example RHS members have free entry not only to the four gardens of the RHS, but also to over 130 other gardens at selected times (including Compton Acres):

VI17: *Well I'm a member of the Royal Horticultural Society.*

DF: Oh right... you had free entrance today?

VI17: *Yes [woman at Compton Acres].*

A middle-aged woman wrote several qualifying comments on her questionnaire for the resident survey including a post-script at the end:

RS215: *P.S. We would visit more stately homes, gardens etc. if entrance fees were more reasonable.*

A visitor in the Pleasure Gardens when asked if she would pay to visit a garden said:

VI104: *Yes, I think so, if it's like not a big amount of money.*

DF: But a reasonable amount?

VI104: *Yes, yes.*

Visitors have their own view as to what is reasonable. Here a resident describes a visit to Compton Acres and then goes on to discuss the economic outlay to her of other garden visits:

RI05: *...we got as far as the door and saw the admission price and came away again. We were late in the afternoon, if you were going to go for the whole morning, I can't remember, it was something ridiculous then, £12 - £15 per person to go in, I think they've put it down again now, we thought no we're not going to pay that just for a couple of hours.*

DF: Do you judge entrance price by the amount of time, you'll be there?

RI05: *Yes, I think so, to a certain extent, the average is about £5 or £6 which you don't mind paying, but more than that, if you're going to go in for the whole day, it's not too bad...Stapehill, the Abbey¹, yes, that's extremely expensive to go in. Last time we went it was about £12 each.*

DF: The Eden Project?

RI05: *It wasn't that expensive, could spend hours there. Stapehill is a nice place to go, there's a lot of wandering around, but for the money, I didn't think it was very good value for money, whereas the Eden Project is.²*

What is interesting here is first, her perception of the entry costs, rather than the actual costs. Compton Acres and Stapehill Abbey each charge about £6-7 per adult, approximately half the figure that she believes and close to the amount which she said she did not mind paying. Secondly, it seems that she assesses a ratio of the value of the admission charge to a garden, to the amount of time which she would spend there.

Here is a further example where *each* of the affordances has graded properties. The resident cited above who wrote several additional comments on the survey instrument

¹ Stapehill Abbey is a garden near Wimborne, Dorset.

² The adult entry charge to the Eden Project in 2005 was £12.50 (VisitBritain, 2006a)

added in relation to the question ‘would you still go to a garden that day if the entry price was £2.00 more than you had thought’ wrote:

RS215: *Long distance Yes Local No.*

She added that a ‘long distance’ was over 25 miles.

In Chapter 5 the features which gardens afford were discussed and each visitor perceives many of these subjectively. The couple in the next extract showed the basis of their decisions of whether a garden affords sufficient benefits to visit:

VI95: *Um, we’re a little bit choosy, if it’s um, if it’s a very small garden, we perhaps wouldn’t go out of our way to go to it, ‘cause our garden is what, two-thirds...*

VI95a: *Point four of an acre. So we’ve got a big, a big ornamental garden ourselves, so we might as well sit in our own garden.*

This sub-section has shown that affordances may have graded properties which add further complexity to a decision to visit a garden. In deciding whether to visit, people ‘weigh up’ the affordances which they anticipate being able to realise in a garden against any impedances which they have perceived.

8.2.3. Shaping affordances

Bandura (1989) suggested that people are not only influenced by the social-material environment but are active in partially determining the nature of it. It has already been shown how people are reactive in realising affordances, but here it is confirmed that people are often pro-active in order to shape them as well. By reviewing the practice of visitors, this section demonstrates some of the strategies which the participants adopted; to either enable a visit to take place or to make it a beneficial experience. In an interview with a woman at the NGS garden (VI95) she revealed that she buys a ‘yellow’ book at the beginning of the year so that she can plan her visits to NGS gardens in advance.

A different example occurs when a second source of information is deliberately sought out to supplement the material from a first source. Here a man at the Craft and Garden Show explains how he knew about the show from the local free press:

DF: How did you know about the show?

VI23: *Friends told me.... It was in the Advertiser, I saw it in the Advertiser.*

DF: So did you see it in the Advertiser first or did your friends tell you first?

VI23: *Friends told me.*

DF: So were you looking when you went through the Advertiser for it or did you just happen to be reading and saw it?

VI23: *I looked through the Advertiser mainly to find more information, how much it was etcetera.*

Another strategy relates to the location of gardens, in particular the problem of the distance to a garden. (This was identified in Table 6.4 as the most frequently given reason for not having visited a garden which respondents had seen on television and wanted to visit). A woman interviewed at Wakehurst Place described what she does:

DF: Do you visit other National Trust gardens?

VI88: *...Yeah, always...Obviously we've done all the ones round here, we sort of going out that way, and we've nearly done all of Kent I suppose, um, you sort of get, you know when you go on holiday, you go a lot further afield, then you realise you're missing what's on your door step. So now we've started doing weekends away or even weekdays away to take in the National Trust places that are a bit too far.*

DF: Oh, you stay over night?

VI88: *Yeah, yeah, two or three nights...I mean, I've been on about a long time, I want to go to Cliveden and I've never been there...My son has recently... moved out of the city and he now works at Henley, and he keeps saying oh Mum you must come to Henley for a few days and I go, well I will and I'll combine it with Cliveden.*

DF: So take advantage of being there with him?

VI88: *Yeah.*

This resident described her approach – she does not often initiate a visit but waits for someone else to create an affordance for her and then she lets them know that she'd like to join them by suggesting an affordance which she can create for them. Other affordances in the cascade are her daughter's membership of the Landmark Trust, the leaflet the Trust sent and the special opening of a wild flower site:

RI01: *...I shall go if it gets mentioned by anybody, then I'll say oh yeah I'll come... Well, they've [her daughter and son-in-law] joined the um, what's it called now, the Landmark Trust, they've joined that, so she said she had this leaflet come through and there's different places that are going to be for view on a certain day and uh, I'm hoping, I said, um, I'll help towards the petrol, hint, hint!*

This elderly woman interviewed with her daughter at Stewarts Gardenlands would ask her daughter to take her, but was reluctant to do so:

DF: If you saw a garden or somebody told you about a garden that you really wanted to visit, would you ask your daughter if she'd take you one day?

VI68: *Yes [hesitantly], I would, but as I say, they've got so much to do themselves and you know that they have. ... so therefore as I say, ... I try not to bother her.*

8.2.4. 'Synchronising' affordances

People are affected by society as well as participating in it, so for a visit to a garden to happen, it seems that there needs to be a 'synchronisation' of affordances. So for example, if a garden opens on certain days of the week, a potential visitor must also be able to visit on that day. Social agency decides not just the opening days of the garden, but may also decide the days of the week a person does not have work or other obligations. Therefore, the two affordances need to be synchronised. This couple visiting the NGS garden explained, when asked why they had visited it:

VI92: *Well, because we love the Purbecks.*

VI92a: *Yes. Location, plus the fact that it's only this week that we can get here...so we thought right, got a free day, off we come.*

DF: Did you think about going to any gardens at all this weekend, the sort of gardens that people pay to visit, like Exbury or Compton Acres?

VI64: *We're going to, we were going to Exbury, but I mean, on a Bank Holiday, we don't bother, we always stay round local.*

DF: Why is that?

VI64: *Because of the crowds.*

DF: What at the garden?

VI64: *Yes, yes so we'll be going to Exbury on Wednesday or Thursday [woman at Stewarts Gardenlands]*

Work commitments can be re-arranged too:

VI34: *...I changed a few things to come today because I teach karate in the afternoons on a Saturday and I've got someone to cover my class [man at the Craft and Garden Show].*

8.3. The perception of affordances

McArthur and Baron (1983) recognised that the perception of affordances depends upon the attunement of the perceiver. First, attunement may be species-wide or individual and it is the latter that is discussed in this section. Secondly, they argued that an individual's perceptual experience, goals and action capabilities can all impact on their attunement and thirdly, that information in the environment can be contained in 'events', which can enhance perception of the properties of an environment. These three aspects of affordance theory are discussed in this section.

8.3.1. Attunement to gardens

In the previous chapter it is suggested that people who have characteristics in common are also likely to share a commonality of affordances and that therefore their behaviour is more likely to be homogeneous. The assumption behind this claim is that a group of people are likely to be attuned to a similar social-material environment. At a macro-level, it has been shown that people in England are almost universally familiar with 'gardenscapes', but at the micro-level, differences in attunement are observable, as this section shows. Attunement can vary not only between people but can be dependent upon the circumstances as the participants demonstrated. Two young women revealed that they

perceived the same place (the Pleasure Gardens) very differently, even though they were sat on the same area of grass:

VI104: *I like the flowers a lot, its colour and it's ... well taken care of.*

VI107a: *It's quite nice to sit down, in, when it's not so dirty. You've got to find a clear patch....there's loads of cigarettes.*

How attuned a person is to gardens will influence what they perceive Here a visitor to Compton Acres shares her impressions on her first visit to the garden:

DF: ...do you often visit gardens?

VI04: *Yes, I love gardens.*

DF: And what do you think of this one so far?

VI04: *Beautiful, nicely laid out, um, some very elegant trees, landscape, it's looking very nice.*

DF: Was it what you expected to see?

VI04: *Yes, yes, I think it is, um although maybe a little better. Um, the Japanese garden I thought was lovely...*

It seems probable that she is very differently attuned to gardens than the young men interviewed in the Pleasure Gardens, who had just left an amusement arcade:

DF: What made you come into the gardens though?

VI115: *It's nice.*

VI115b: *It's the nicest area in Bournemouth, probably.*

VI115: *Yeah, it's nice and hot too, sunny.*

VI115c: *You have to walk through the gardens, to get back from the Arcade.*

Someone who is less attuned to gardens may perceive the garden in a more general way and will therefore anticipate the affordances less specifically. For example here a woman and a man, interviewed separately and who have both visited Compton Acres before, give their reasons for their current visit:

VI06a: *Just been before I suppose and knew that we'd get a nice lot of garden and a nice lot of things to do, so that's the reason we came really.*

VI02a: *As far as the trees and the layout in the Italian garden is just as I remember it, but I'm interested to see the Japanese garden which I remember particularly was nice, last time I came.*

8.3.2. Personal goals

The differences in attunement to an affordance between people can be influenced by the personal goals and interests of the perceiver (McArthur and Baron, 1983). This suggests that the more enthusiastic a visitor to gardens may be, the more attuned they will be to the various affordances of garden visiting already discussed and the more active they may be in seeking out affordances.

Three principal conceptualisations have been described in the leisure literature to distinguish between varying levels of dedication for participating in an activity:

1. Recreational specialisation
2. Casual/serious leisure
3. Leisure involvement

Bryan (1977) originally developed the concept of recreational specialisation and suggested that there are distinct classes of participants who exhibit unique styles of involvement for a given recreational activity and that these may vary from a general interest to a very focused involvement. Previous experience, knowledge about the activity, and the level of investment in the activity all assist in classifying a person as having a specialist interest.

Stebbins (1997a, 1997b) initiated the conceptualisation of casual and serious leisure and he defined casual leisure as:

...immediately, intrinsically rewarding, relatively short-lived pleasurable activity requiring little or no special training to enjoy it (Stebbins, 1997a, p. 18)

and:

...serious leisure is the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer activity that participants find so substantial and interesting that, in the typical case, they launch themselves on a career centred on acquiring and expressing its special skills, knowledge and experience (Stebbins, 1997b, p. 117).

Leisure involvement is more problematic because it has been operationalised as a multidimensional construct (Iwasaki and Havitz, 1998). Three dimensions have received strongest support in the literature (Havitz and Mannell, 2005). ‘Attraction’ is the perceived importance or interest in the activity and the pleasure derived from participation. ‘Centrality’ refers to the degree to which a person structures their life to participate in it and ‘sign’ refers to ‘*the unspoken statements that ... participation conveys about the person*’ (Iwasaki and Havitz, 1998, p. 259).

This conversation, with a woman on the allotment society coach trip to Wakehurst Place, demonstrates a cascade of affordances that are a mix of her personal interests, what she has perceived in the past and how this relates to what she imagines the visit will be like:

DF: So, what made you want to come on the trip today?

VI80: *Well actually our friends invited us but we're interested in gardens anyway and we'd heard of Wakehurst Place so we thought it would be a nice place to go... There's a lot of plants isn't there, named Wakehurst, or whatever, and ... we've seen it on the television, yes, quite interesting and ... [inaudible due to the noise of the coach].*

DF: Do you often visit gardens?

VI80: *Um, yes I do go to gardens, yes, I mean, not all the time, but if we've got an opportunity to visit.*

DF: So do you look out for particular features or particular sorts of gardens or will any garden appeal?

VI80: *Uh, any garden really, if it's pretty and what have you. I mean I love roses, I love poppies and it's the time of year to have a look at those sort of things.*

The woman at the NGS garden referred to in Section 8.2.2 above said:

VI95: *Yellow book...every year, I get the booklet...I look through and see which are open, at the beginning of the year I do this...I highlight the ones I want...
...And I put a green 'g' on the calendar that means look in the book, because in the past, we've missed some. We've said oh there's this garden to see, oh, it was last week. So, I put a green 'g' on the calendar, which means look in the book and then I've highlighted them. Um, so it's a question of dates, so that if it's a nice sunny day and we want to go to a garden we immediately know that there is one that we're interested in.*

This interviewee also showed evidence of an affordance event, in her case, a sunny day. The literature review showed that these events are a re-configuration of the cascade. This may result from a change in the environment or a person's abilities (Chemero, 2003). In the example above, the change was in the natural environmental - the weather. In the next section, some of the changes in people's lives that led to a change in the perception of garden visiting affordances are described.

8.3.3. Affordance events

A weakness of visitor surveys is that because their results tend to be obtained in single periods of research rather than longitudinally, they give an impression of participation in attraction visiting that is stable. It appears that visitors' knowledge, experiences and perceptions remain constant in an unchanging social-material environment. However the environment is a combination of static and dynamic elements and so the affordances may not be constant. A young woman interviewed at Stewarts Gardenlands had confirmed her enthusiasm for visiting gardens, which she linked to owning her own garden. Therefore, the researcher asked her companion:

DF: Do you think you'll be like your sister when you get a garden?

VI73a: *We were saying that earlier. Am I going to turn out like you? Because you were never like this, until you know, you've got your own house, your own garden now, am I going to be like that?*

Another stage in life, when changes in leisure participation occur is on retirement:

VI88: ...when I first retired, we did about an eight week course, it was called 'Through the Garden Gate', through the local Education Authority and we had, I don't know if she was a teacher, but she'd got the where with all to get us in to different private gardens [woman at Wakehurst Place]. -

This part of the chapter has shown how affordance theory can be employed to understand the strategies some visitors have used to participate in garden visiting. In the next part, the decision-making process is discussed.

8.4. The social-material practices of garden visitors

The findings have shown that performatory action is nested within perceptual activity and *vice versa*, but the participants have revealed that there is quite often a period of time between perceiving a specific affordance and the actualisation of behaviour. The visitor survey at Compton Acres asked respondents when they had first thought about visiting the garden and when they had decided to go. The results show that half of the respondents had *decided* to visit the garden that day, but only half of those had *first thought* of going that day. 75% had first thought of visiting within a week of the visit, but for 13% it was more than a year previously. 90% of respondents had made the decision to visit within the previous week, this left 10% of respondents who had decided to visit more than a week earlier.

Two main types of visiting decision-making practices can be identified from the interview data. The first type, a 'specific visit' refers to a trip to a particular garden in direct response to the proximal affordances discussed in Chapter 6, for example, a feature on a television programme. The second type, a 'non-specific visit' occurs when more than one location is considered and may be informed by social-material agents.

8.4.1. 'Specific' visits

A 'specific' visit refers to a proposal to visit a particular garden. The first kind of 'specific' visit is often limited to those people who can use their knowledge of gardens or marketing sources to pave the way for a visit. The interviews showed that these people are enthusiastic visitors who are more active in seeking out affordances (Section 8.2.3). The example of the visitors to the NGS garden, who described buying the 'yellow' book early in the year and planning which gardens to visit, has already been cited. Here is a different

instance; a resident talks about her visit with her grandchildren, to an unnamed garden in Cornwall:

RI04: *You can go on this little train all round this big, um, garden, it was huge and you can then sort of go to a children's playground and then there's restaurants and then there's walks and things like that, which is quite nice.*

DF: ...How did you know that?

RI04: *By ... the tourist books, you know, you can send off for a Cornwall booklet...I think those were ones we did through the newspaper, which has supplements – if you want so many free brochures you tick the boxes.*

The second type of 'specific visit' is in response to an unsolicited agent. Affordance theory suggests that people who are attuned to visiting a garden are more likely to perceive these affordances than someone who is not:

DF: So why have you come here today?

VI07: *Um, we just saw a brochure in the hotel this morning, impulse [man at Compton Acres].*

A man at the Craft and Garden Show said:

VI47: *To be honest we were really just passing through and we were driving up the road and then we saw the signpost.*

A woman at Wakehurst Place shows how another 'chance happening' is one of a cascade of affordances:

VI90: *Um, we came from the Isle of Sheppey, which is the South side of Kent, and we were visiting my son at Biggin Hill overnight. And instead of actually turning round and going home, we decided to come down to Sheffield Park. But for some reason or other we ended up turning right, probably a little too early and ended up on the road to Wakehurst Place and as we're members of everything anyway, we thought oh, we'll do that instead. So here we are!*

8.4.2. 'Non-specific' visits

The second type of visit arises in a 'Let's go *somewhere*' situation. A male resident said:

RI02: *I think though, every now and then we think oh we must do something, let's go and...*

In these cases the time that lapses between first thinking of a visit and deciding to go, is usually short. People consider either a type of attraction to go to, for example, a garden, or a particular attraction, for example, Compton Acres. Considering the first example, some people will not even think of visiting a garden – garden visiting is not a part of the *habitus* in which they have developed. This young woman in the Pleasure Gardens was asked about pay-to-visit gardens:

DF: You're aware that there are places like that?

VI118: *Yeah!*

DF: But you just wouldn't think of going?

VI118: *No, no.*

As this woman, also interviewed in the Pleasure Gardens shows, even though she has actually visited a garden in the past, it's just not a place she usually considers:

DF: And do you go to gardens that you pay to visit?

VI100: *Haven't done, no, no. Although there again in Oxford, we've got Blenheim Palace, which you pay to go into and they've got, you know, the Palace, the gardens and everything, you know.*

DF: You've been there, have you?

VI100: *Yes, yes.*

DF: Why wouldn't you go? Is it just something that you don't think about doing or that you wouldn't like?

VI100: *Um, um...*

DF: Or you couldn't get there?

VI100: *Something I don't really think about... Yeah, that's it, just don't think about it, yeah, nothing to do with cost or anything.*

Some people may only think of visiting a garden at a particular time. Here a woman on holiday from Cardiff (and therefore close to the new National Botanic Garden of Wales), demonstrated this, when interviewed at Stewarts Gardenlands:

DF: There's been a lot of publicity about the new Millennium gardens - you haven't been there?

VI59: *I haven't been there, no.*

DF: Can you tell me why?

VI59: *I don't know really, I haven't really thought about it, it's not a priority, I suppose... We normally do these things when people come, when our family come down to visit, we take them.*

A garden may not be considered because an affordance has not been perceived. An elderly lady who lived locally was asked in the Pleasure Gardens whether she knew about Compton Acres, she replied:

VI119: *Oh, we've never been to Compton Acres.*

DF: Oh, why's that, have you just never got round to it?

VI119: *Just never been there, I don't know why. Is parking bad there? Have they got parking?*

Some people, however, do have a place in mind that they would like to visit. This couple at the Craft and Garden Show were asked if they knew about Compton Acres:

VI32: *That's one we're going to go, in fact.*

VI32a: *That's one we're going to do actually...yes, we've never been, 'cause we go into Bournemouth and places quite a lot and they've got a big outbuilding there and we said oh we must do that this year, 'cause it looks like a lovely garden and a nice day out.*

Two residents described what they do:

DF: How did you know about Osborne House, when you went there?

RI04: *Um, I've always known it's there and there's been programmes on the tele, you, you, it's one of the things you say, oh I wouldn't mind going there and sort of saying, well perhaps next time we go over we might go and visit. But it's usually from sort of different things we've picked up on, on TV or read something in an article.*

DF: If you see anything nice on television or a place that you fancy going, or friends tell you about it, will you make a note to help you try and remember, or do you have a good memory?

RI05: *Not as good as it used to be [laughter]. I'll make a mental note I suppose and keep it at the back of my mind.*

Another resident told how he and his wife know about the special openings at Kingston Lacy, a National Trust property near Wimborne:

RI02: *You used to read things in the Echo [a local newspaper] and go, oh, Kingston Lacy's opening for the...snowdrops and things, that's how we got onto that, now we just know.*

They may have a place in mind because they want to return there for a repeat visit. Several participants told the researcher how they hoped to go back to a garden:

VI41: *There's one thing I have got on my agenda for this year is to go to, forgot the name of it, um, where they've just redone it, oh Canford, at Canford Cliffs.*

DF: Compton Acres?

VI41: *Compton Acres, that's it.*

DF: I was there last summer.

VI41: *Well I was there, last spring, well no, last winter really, this time last year and they were just redoing it, so I want to go and visit that. Because I want to go and see, you know, the improvements they've made [woman at the Craft and Garden Show].*

If, however, they have nowhere in mind, they may seek information, either about places in general or about gardens:

DF: Who knew about the show first of all?

VI43: *Well Sarah was flicking through the Blackmore Vale and uh...*

DF: So were you looking for somewhere to go out or just reading the paper?

VI43: *Just looking for somewhere to go out... [woman at the Craft and Garden Show].*

Another woman interviewed at the show distinguished between when she is at home and when not:

DF: How do you decide which garden to go to?

VI41: *Um, usually I just, I look through the paper or if I'm visiting somewhere I usually try and find out where there is a garden to visit, if I'm going away or if I'm visiting family. I've got family in different areas, different places, so I usually find out where, you know if there's a garden there to visit.*

Obviously the further from home, the less likely one is to have existing knowledge and so the greater the need for sources of information:

VI73: *When I was in New Zealand and Australia, my friend and I, we went to every single garden that they had. Melbourne - it's beautiful, I loved it there [inaudible] and when we went to New Zealand [inaudible] I think everywhere we went, we said have they got gardens here?*

DF: So you were trying to find out if there were gardens there?

VI73: *Yeah, we did.*

DF: What sources did you use for information?

VI73: *We had little guidebooks with us [young woman at Stewarts Gardenlands].*

8.4.3. Choosing between attractions

All of the participants on a 'non-specific' visit used one of two techniques to choose where to go - the first is labelled here the 'reject-accept' style of choosing and appears to be adopted more frequently. The second is the one usually discussed in the attraction

literature, employing choice-sets (for example, Stemerding *et al.*, 1999). In the first instance, people think of a place to visit and then consider whether the affordances to visiting are in place. If so, they go, if not, they reject that place and then consider another. For example:

DF: Did you consider visiting anywhere else today... instead of coming here?

VI08: *Well, we was thinking of going to Studland, like, just for a walk along the beach, there...*

DF: What made you choose the garden rather than the beach today?

VI08: *...Just, uh, the weather not being so nice, so you know, we thought we'd do a detour on the gardens. We thought we'd have a look [man at Compton Acres].*

DF: Did you consider going anywhere else today?

VI06: [Pause] *It was going to be a garden, it might have been Exbury, but then obviously the rhododendrons have gone over, the azaleas are gone over, so, we thought this was probably the next best thing, so, or near to us, so that was fine [woman at Compton Acres].*

The other style of choosing a place to visit (using a choice-set) is usually used in circumstances where the participants do not have detailed knowledge of potential attractions to visit, for example, when they are on holiday or the garden is opening as a special event:

VI97: *What we tend to do, we've got a motor home, so we sort of travel around a bit and if we're going to a certain area, north, south, east or west, we tend to get out the National Trust book and the RHS book and look and see what's around... [woman at the NGS garden].*

Here another couple interviewed at the NGS garden described how they had chosen which garden to visit that day. It is interesting that features of the gardens were not the deciding affordances - instead it was opening times and location:

DF: So there are three open today, there's Ivy Cottage I think...

VI95: *Yes.*

DF: ... how did you choose which one...?

VI95: *We've already been to Ivy Cottage... Which was the third one?*

VI95a: *Hilltop, Stour Provost.*

VI95: *Yeah, that's, that's open again, so that's on my list, maybe to go another time... We saw in the Echo that there is a concert tonight in Swanage, the organist from St Martin's in the Field Church is doing an organ recital so that made us decide to come today, because what we're going to do after this, we're going to go on to that later on this evening.*

So in this method, two or more places are evaluated at the same time, for the affordances they offer.

8.4.4. A summary of 'specific' and 'non-specific' visits

The data has demonstrated that four types of visits occur, two where a specific garden is identified from the beginning of the planning, and two where the decision of where to visit is taken subsequently. A matrix analysis, of all the visits to the three gardens where interviews were carried out, is shown in Appendix I. It was not possible to tell from some of the interviews, which technique they definitely used but, the data does suggest that the choice set method referred to in the literature is not often adopted.

8.4.5. Group negotiations

It has been shown that people rarely visit a garden alone and so their companions influence the decision-making. A woman at Stewarts Gardenlands said:

VI55: *...I've got family round here somewhere.*

DF: So do they enjoy different aspects?

VI55: *Yes they do, um, my daughter's here with her boy friend and my husband's somewhere as well, so there's a bit for everybody in the family.*

DF: Oh right, so that influences you when you decide where to go?

VI55: *Yes definite.*

Thornton *et al.* (2000) suggest that:

Since the group exerts a powerful influence on the individual to conform to particular values and norms, the result, in terms of behaviour, is often a negotiated (or imposed) compromise rather than the enactment of any one individual's desires (Thornton et al., 2000, p. 21).

Such negotiations are demonstrated in the following conversations:

DF: Did you consider going anywhere else today?

VI60: *Yes, probably we're going on to, well this is my idea, Katherine doesn't know, well I think probably knows it, this, but there is a, she says I take all the decisions [laughter]. Um, there is a pine shop in um, in Burley; I think we ought to look at...*

[And later]

DF: Can you tell me when you decided to go to the Chelsea Show?

VI60: *When we decided?*

VI60a: *Another of your decisions!* [man and woman at Stewarts Gardenlands].

The next quotation shows a similar situation:

VI118a: *We go to them, yeah [pay-to-visit gardens]. We've, not all the time, but we do go, yeah.*

DF: Any thoughts about going while you're on holiday down here?

VI118a: *No, we won't go, not while we're down here.*

DF: Why's that?

VI118a: *We're with them and they don't like it [woman in the Pleasure Gardens].*

A man interviewed at Wakehurst Place explained a way that a compromise can come about:

DF: So was it your suggestion to come here today or theirs?

VI84: *No, no it was theirs, because ... they provide the cars, so therefore we leave them to say.*

In families where there are young children, the adults can decide what they think is best for the children. Shaw and Dawson (2001) concluded that leisure for families with children is often *'purposive in that it was organized and facilitated by parents in order to achieve particular short- and long-term goals'* (Shaw and Dawson, 2001, p. 217). Often these goals did not relate to what the children might want to do, but rather the parents desires to enhance family cohesion and for their children to learn positive values and develop healthy lifestyles. Support for this view is provided by an interview with a man at Compton Acres:

DF: What made you come to the gardens today please?

VI20: *Um, really we were just coming down to the seaside and we thought we'd come to the gardens. We came here a few years ago before we had children and we thought we'd come and have a look.*

DF: And did you think it would be a good place to bring children?

VI20: *Yes.*

DF: Why's that?

VI20: *Um, well its educational.*

DF: Any particular aspects?

VI20: *Not really and they seem to like walking round gardens.*

But in families with older children, there is negotiation with the children in the selection process. Although, in the next extract, the banter between father and son is light-hearted it does show that there are differences in authority, when family leisure choices are made:

DF: What was your reaction, when they said you were coming to a garden today?

VI09b: [teenage boy] *Ah, well I've been here once before and it was good, because there were all the rhododendrons out and it was actually really, really pretty. And then this time when we've come out it's just as good because there's different plants out this time, so it looks just as good even though there aren't as many pretty flowers out.*

DF: Would you rather have done something else today?

VI09b: *Um, no since I've actually been here before, I thought it was actually really good, so we just came here to show Granny basically.*

DF: So do you get some say in where you go at the weekends, when you go out for the day?...Or do your parents always decide?

VI09b: *Well I do get some say but it's mostly ignored.*

VI09a : [father] *Nonsense. [laughter]. Erase tape!*¹ [more laughter]...

DF: So do you think sometimes they go to places that you'd enjoy rather than just places that they would enjoy?

VI09b: [teenage boy] *Well I think it's mostly, we go to places where everyone would enjoy it, which is good.*

VI09: [mother] *We take the final decision where we're going but its having considered everybody else's point of view definitely, consider how we can make everybody happy really, because nobody wants to walk round gardens with miserable teenagers and the children moaning.*

VI09d [grandmother] *They've played crazy golf and they went on the trampoline didn't you and things, so they had their things yesterday.*

VI09: [mother] *We did a few things they think are fun and then we all do something together as a family.*

This extract demonstrates the negotiated arrangements of family leisure. In the next section, the participants reveal some of the other considerations in deciding on a garden visit.

8.4.6. Considering options

Whether a trip is a 'specific' or 'non-specific' visit participants revealed that there were many minor considerations necessary before going ahead. In each case, affordance and/or impedance, as already described, is taken into account.

Considering whether to go

When perceiving information about a garden, a person who is attuned to garden visiting, may consider visiting it. Here a visitor at Wakehurst Place describes her experience in this situation:

VI88: *I rung up another cutting garden friend and said 'Do you want to come' and she said 'Oh I'd love to but couldn't' she said, 'but I did go last year'. She said 'I*

¹ He subsequently reassured the researcher that this was said in jest and that the conversation could be quoted.

loved it, but Bob my husband didn't reckon much of it because it was too untidy', so I went, thinking it was, you know, got a few weeds about and untidy, but they sort of sail along don't they, and get away with it [laughter] but it wasn't! I was so agreeably surprised, it was really beautifully maintained and all planted, it was all beds and gravel paths round all the beds and ... rows of Alliums, just going over and these beautiful, I don't know if they were Shirley poppies or what they were, all coming up in the same row, with lots of things like that... [woman at Wakehurst place].

Therefore, even though there some impedance may be experienced during a visit, anticipated affordances may be sufficient to support a visit proceeding.

Considering when to go

Changing the timing of a visit in order that an affordance can be realised was mentioned several times - here the researcher influenced their plans:

DF: You say Wednesday or Thursday...?

VI64: *Yeah.*

DF: The forecast isn't very good for Wednesday.

VI64: *Isn't it? Oh, we won't be going Wednesday then!*

DF: ...will that affect your decision?

VI64: *Oh, yes, yes, yes, especially when we're down here, I mean if you were making that specific trip to go, you'd go wouldn't you, but when you've got, somewhere, we just don't bother to go out you know. I do my sewing and knitting and that's it, you know [woman at Stewarts Gardenlands].*

Alternatively, there may be some additional feature in the attraction at a particular time that provides incentive to visit then. For example, there is a bandstand in the Pleasure Gardens where occasional concerts are held. An elderly woman interviewed with her husband in the Gardens describes how this affects their plans:

VII19a: *Well we like to come down if the band's playing, we make an effort to come down. Perhaps on a Sunday even, you know, when we're going to lunch in town, we say, we'll forget that we'll come and listen to the band instead.*

Or there may be another impedance which is anticipated and allowed for:

DF: Did you think about going anywhere else...?

VI62b: *I do go to other places.*

DF: But you didn't think about those today?

VI62b: *Well um, that was partly because it's Bank Holiday Monday.*

DF: So how does that affect things?

VI62b: *Well we don't like being out on the roads on a Bank Holiday Monday*
[woman at Stewarts Gardenlands].

Considering with whom to go

The participants have shown (in Chapter 5) how companionship is an important affordance to garden visiting. So does it matter to participants whom they visit with? One young man in the Pleasure Gardens said he would only visit a garden with his 'mates' (VI115c). This resident considered members of her family as possible companions:

DF: When you visit a garden, does the person you go with change the way you feel about the garden? Or do you always go with your Mum?

RI06: *Usually my Mum.*

DF: Would you take your children?

RI06: *No.*

DF: Why's that?

RI06: *Because they haven't got the slightest interest, they'd be bored senseless. I took my daughter once, we were out at, when we first came down here, she would have been about 12, we were at Corfe and there was a tiny garden at Corfe, she was 'when are we going home', 'when are we going to the caf', 'what are all those flowers for'...*

DF: And what about your boyfriend, would you take him to a garden? [pause] Have you?

RI06: *No I haven't. Would I take him, I'd take him and he'd tolerate it.*

So clearly people are able to anticipate who around them would enjoy a visit and who would not, and they seem to arrange their leisure time accordingly:

DF: So you've left the two men behind, I gather?

VI73a: *Yes.*

VI73: *Oh, yes. Mine is fishing, so he's in touch with the fish somewhere and yours is partying with friends.*

VI73a: *Gone to a barbecue.*

DF: Do they mind you coming?

VI73a: *No.*

VI73: *No, they know that we're close sisters, as we've got older we've got closer...they'll find something else to do to please them [young women at Stewarts Gardenlands].*

One woman at the Craft and Garden Show described how she substituted a companion:

VI24a: *Well I wanted to come, but I'm not very good at going to places on my own, so I was trying, I did arrange for someone else to come with me, but they couldn't make it, so then I asked her.*

Considering where to go

In considering where to go, an additional feature in the attraction that does not appeal to the decision-makers directly, but to their family may be influential – although as this quote from a resident shows, it is not always necessary:

RI02: *If we go to Exbury, it's because there's the steam train or because the azaleas are out and there's a steam train. Um, if, if we wanted to go to a particular garden and they had something for them, [their young children] it would encourage us more, but if we thought we really must go to this garden, 'cause look at this picture, you know, it looks fantastic, um, then off we'd go, we'd take them with us and buy them an ice cream!*

A couple interviewed in the Pleasure Gardens described how they were able to take their dogs with them into the public gardens, but that they didn't usually visit pay-to-visit gardens because this affordance was often absent:

VII11a: *We were going to go to Compton Acres, but they don't allow dogs in, so we couldn't go there.*

DF: *..No dogs?.*

VII11a: *No dogs. That's a restriction when we're on holiday isn't it?*

VII11: [inaudible]. *It's a fairly general thing.*

DF: *Is it? How do you work round it?*

VII11: *Well we just come to places that allow dogs. There's plenty of places that do take dogs, so we just go to those.*

DF: *So you 'phone and check first?*

VII11: *Oh, yeah... We always do.*

It was suggested in Chapter 5 that people anticipate the general affordances that may be realisable during a visit to a garden from *inter alia* their experiences of other gardens. However, participants also demonstrated that they use their knowledge of one garden specifically to anticipate what a visit to another might afford. For example a man interviewed at the allotment said this on the day before the visit to Wakehurst Place¹:

VI75: *I thoroughly enjoyed Kew so you know, I thought, this must be as good.*

Other participants demonstrated that they had perceived some gardens opening under the auspices of the major charitable organisations as having what in essence amounts to a 'brand' and that this too can be an affordance when deciding where to visit. In the following extracts two couples in the NGS garden at Swanage who are familiar with both NGS gardens and National Trust gardens discuss their perceptions of the two types of gardens.

DF: *How do you think a garden like this compares to a National Trust garden, is it the same do you think?*

VI95: *No.*

VI95a: *No, the National Trust have got limitless funds, to throw at gardens, whereas this is the labours of a couple of people basically, and uh, clearly they're starting to get a little older and uh, I would imagine it's starting to become a bit of*

¹ Wakehurst Place is described as 'Kew's country garden' (RBG Kew, 2007)

a struggle for them. Uh, it more or less says that in the leaflet...National Trust can be very uh, what's the word, sterile, antiseptic.

VI97: They're [NGS gardens] far less, much more informal than National Trust gardens or, I mean so many of the National Trust places are very formal aren't they?

VI97a: I think most of the thing with the NGS gardens is they're private, they're private houses...

VI97: You can relate to them more.

VI97a: ...So it's your, it's the owner's garden, it's the owner's stamp on it, whereas a National Trust garden, is much more, well it's...

VI97: What they feel it ought to be.

8.5. Chapter summary

This chapter has sought to show how affordance theory can inform an understanding of participation in garden visiting. The first part of the chapter demonstrated that not only is visiting a garden a result of the realisation of cascades of affordances, but also that there may have to be some synchronisation of affordances or negotiation of impedances. The data also revealed how people could be pro-active in making a visit possible. The chapter then discussed attunement and that the heterogeneity identified in Chapter 4, in relation to garden visitation, may be attributable to the variation in attunement between people.

Two main types of visiting procedures are identified from the interview data, of which the limited use of the 'choice set' procedure seems again, to be at odds with the prevailing view of what occurs. The complexity of decision-making in relation to visiting a garden has been demonstrated. In particular the subjectivity and graduation of influencing factors has been shown, which further weakens support for the calculation of models of attraction choice. Whilst this thesis has principally addressed the perspective of the visitors to gardens in the next chapter the attention turns to the supply-side in order to situate the research within the wider visitor attraction environment.

Chapter 9 – Evaluation and discussion of the research

9.1. Introduction

This chapter presents an evaluation and discussion of the findings from the five phases of primary and secondary data collection and interprets them in the light of affordance theory. First, an evaluation of the thesis, considering the theoretical, methodological and analytical approaches used in the study is made to assess the effectiveness with which the research has been carried out. Secondly, a summary of the findings is presented and thirdly, building on this discussion, the implications of the research are considered. Further work directly arising from the study is then proposed, together with suggestions for future research that could develop the use of affordance theory in leisure and tourism studies. The chapter concludes with some reflections on the personal journey of the researcher and a final statement setting out her understanding of garden visitors in England at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

9.2. Evaluation of the theoretical, methodological and analytical approaches

Undertaking an evaluation of the theoretical, methodological and analytical approaches had two aims; first, to demonstrate the integrity of the conclusions generated by the research and, secondly, to provide an extensive and critical reflection as part of the researcher's professional development. The evaluation of the methods used was comprehensive because of the latter aim and so the detailed findings are presented in Appendix J and a summary is given in this section in order to defend the discussion and conclusions presented later in the chapter.

9.2.1. Evaluation of the theoretical approach

As the interviews progressed, it became clear that the motivational theories referred to in leisure and tourism studies were unsatisfactory in supporting an understanding of garden visiting as the theories all have a common assumption of the individual as agent. As Veal (1997) had recognised, the leisure choices people make are constrained and manipulated by economic and political structures which are outside of a person's control and other forms of agency, relating to the social and natural world, were also referred to in the explanations given by the interviewees.

The interviews also highlighted a second dilemma in understanding garden visiting; how far back in time should be considered relevant. In conventional terms, when does the motivational process begin? Traditional leisure and tourism studies often recognise some prompt to a visit, such as an advertisement, as the start of the motivational process but this then leads back to what motivated the person to see the advertisement, and so on.

It was at this time that the researcher was directed to affordance theory which appeared to be a conceptual tool which was capable of recognising all of these factors and their interdependence, whilst remaining non-deterministic as to their causes. Affordances could exist not only between an individual visitor and other people but also *inter alia* between visitors, artefacts and social-material practices. Affordance theory could therefore embrace psychological, sociological, ecological and cultural explanations of behaviour. At this point it is therefore appropriate to consider whether adopting affordance theory has been effective.

The research findings identified the explanatory repertoires of the participants and, whilst many of their explanations would be excluded by motivational theories, they could be encompassed in affordance theory. For example, it was shown that there is almost universal awareness and familiarity with garden-like spaces in southern England, particularly domestic gardens and public parks. Many people have grown up in a *habitus* where there are representations of gardens and garden visiting in literature and television broadcasting. The people around them, their friends and family, may well have visited a garden at some time, as participation is so widespread. These past experiences contribute to their level of attunement and if their current activities have a relationship with gardens, for example, being interested in gardening, they are also likely to be attuned to agents which promote garden visitation. Cultural practices such as visiting an attraction on holiday or Mother's Day; social-material practices, for example, taking visiting friends and family out to an attraction; or a sunny day in England's unpredictable weather may all prompt a garden visit. Anticipating the benefits of being in a garden, including both environmental and social effects, also encourages potential visitors to manipulate their environment whether family, work, location etc. to enable a visit to take place.

Factors such as these, particularly those that are distal, are rarely referred to in studies of the visitors to attractions. This may be because the more distal an affordance, the less observable it is by a researcher or less available to narration by a participant. Yet it is only by recognising and acknowledging the distal affordances that an understanding of why the proximal affordances are perceived by visitors, can be obtained. This nesting of affordances, and a person's attunement to them, can provide a means of understanding all the findings of this research; for example, participants who state that they do not visit a garden simply because it does not occur to them to do so. Comprehension of 'secondary participants', that is the third of visitors to gardens who were otherwise unlikely to visit, is similarly helped. Equally affordance theory can enable an understanding, not only of why a visitor might seek inspiration for their design of their domestic garden, but also why they believe improving their garden may increase the value of their home. Affordance theory can embrace explanations of behaviour that are physiological, psychological, sociological, ecological, cultural and economic.

For these reasons a major re-evaluation of the conceptual framework of the research was justified. However, a limitation of the approach is that it has not been widely used in other leisure studies. Affordance theory has been adopted to examine the functional aspects of environments (for example, Clark and Uzzell, 2002; Harrison and Tweed, 2006; Loucks-Atkinson, 2000; Uzzell *et al.*, 2005). In Yates and Littleton (1999) the theory was used to understand the *experience* of computer game cultures, but this research appears to be the first to adopt affordance theory as a means of understanding *participation* in a leisure activity.

9.2.2. Evaluation of the methodological approach

Yates (2004) suggests that a method can be selected either by taking a position in relation to a specific philosophical approach or on more pragmatic grounds. This research adopted the latter approach and considered the research aims and objectives and the resources and time available as the criteria for the decisions. This led to the use of a mixed method for the primary data collection, comprising sequential phases of quantitative and qualitative data collection and each analysis was given similar weight for different aspects of the presentation and interpretation of the findings. This enabled the making of complementary findings that together elaborated understanding of the phenomenon of garden visitation. By describing garden visitors at both the micro- and the macro-level and, it is suggested, by

using both descriptive and numerical material, a more interesting and persuasive thesis was possible.

As the need for contemporary socio-demographic data on garden visitors which had partially prompted the resident survey, was subsequently met by Connell (2004a), with hindsight, the quantitative phases may have been more effective if they had been carried out after the qualitative research. Exchanging the order of the phases would have enabled the survey instruments to include questions and /response choices which had developed from the findings of the interviews.

Assessing the individual phases of the research is complex, because as Brannen (2005) notes:

Universal agreement seems to have been reached that quality concepts developed for quantitative research... ought not to be applied to qualitative research (Brannen, 2005. p. 25).

Bryman (2001) suggests that the most important criterion for evaluating quantitative research is *validity* and, in respect of qualitative research, *trustworthiness*. However, in this research the quantitative data was descriptive and used in a cross-sectional design unlike most quantitative research where some measurement of the concepts is undertaken. Therefore, it was considered more effective that all the primary data phases should be evaluated using the criterion of trustworthiness. A detailed review of the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of each of the phases of primary data collection is given in Appendix J. In this section four general aspects of trustworthiness are considered, *credibility, transferability, dependability* and *confirmability*.

* *Credibility* refers to how believable the findings are: in response, it is suggested that this research has been carried out in accordance with good practice. Many qualitative researchers submit their findings for confirmation to members of the social world they have studied, but this research relies upon crosschecking through the triangulation of the findings of the four phases.

Next, consideration can be given to whether the findings apply to other contexts, i.e. their *transferability*. It was intended at the start of the research that the findings would be generalisable to the whole of England, rather than just the part of southern England where the research was carried out, but the findings given in Section 4.3 has suggested that there may be geographical differences in garden visiting within England. Therefore, the only claim being made is that the statistical findings are representative of the 'BH' post-code area of England in which the research was undertaken. Linked to this is the *dependability* of the findings - whether the findings are likely to apply at other times, but again, the findings have suggested that changes in garden visiting have occurred since the study made a quarter of a century ago by Gallagher (1983) and so it is recognised that the findings relate only to the present time.

Finally, the *confirmability* of the findings relates to whether the researcher has acted in good faith. In acknowledging that complete objectivity is impossible in social research the researcher has not knowingly allowed her personal values or theoretical inclinations to sway the conduct of the research or the findings derived from them, beyond that described in this thesis.

Overall the detailed assessment, given in Appendix J, shows that some minor improvements could be made, but predominantly the methods have been effective in achieving the aims and objectives of the research with the time and economic resources available. Furthermore the innovative use of informal conversation as an interview technique in probing responses to the 'grand tour' question and interviewing the visitor group as a whole rather than visitors on their own were together particularly suited in the environment of a garden and contributed to the success of that phase of the research.

9.2.3. Evaluation of the analytical approaches

Quantitative data analysis

Univariate (frequency) and bivariate statistics (the χ^2 test for independence) were used to describe the data and to assess whether there were differences between sub-groups of the independent variables. The χ^2 test was used, as it could not be assumed that the population of the surveys were distributed normally and so a parametric test was inappropriate. However, using a non-parametric technique had the disadvantage of being less sensitive

and it may therefore have failed to detect a difference between sub-groups that a more powerful parametric test might have detected (Pallant, 2001).

For some variables, for example, age groups, the data did not meet the criteria for the χ^2 test as the lowest expected frequency in any cell was less than 5. Where feasible the data was merged and re-coded into fewer groups prior to analysis. It is argued that this was appropriate as it still enabled a reasonable interpretation of the data to be made which was suitable for the purposes of the research.

A further concern in evaluating the quantitative data is the rate of response, first, for the questionnaires as a whole and secondly, for the individual questions. The response rate of 94% in the visitor survey poses no problems, but the lower rate of 37% in the resident survey needs to be addressed (Bryman, 2001). The main concern is whether non-respondents differ in significant ways from the respondents. The request in the follow-up letter left at households where a questionnaire was not collected that they return the completed questionnaire by post and the anonymity in completing the questionnaire, means that it is impossible to identify non-responders and to establish if they are significantly different from respondents.

It was suggested in Section 4.3.1 that the proportion of respondents to the resident survey who had visited a garden in 2002 was considerably higher than the average recorded by Mintel (2006) and therefore there must be some concern that findings relating to *all* respondents may not be representative. However, many of the findings refer only to visitors to gardens and for these findings, there is no evidence available to suggest that non-respondents are different to respondents.

Qualitative data analysis

Sarantakos (2005) suggests that there is '*simply no consensus as to how qualitative analysis should proceed, or what makes an acceptable analysis*' (Sarantakos, 2005, p. 344). In this research qualitative thematic analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Seale, 2004) and a form of grounded theory analysis (Glaser, 1998) informed the qualitative data analysis. This approach had several strengths, but also a weakness. The first strength was that whilst the initial codes were identified from the quantitative phases of the study, more codes were added as necessary during coding of the interviews which incorporated

flexibility. This also allowed minority or divergent views to be presented. The categories arising in response to the ‘grand tour’ question were derived from the interview data rather than the researcher’s preconceptions and so the findings flow from what was found in the field.

Secondly, a matrix of the initial responses to the ‘grand tour’ question is given in Appendix G and *verbatim* quotes are used in the previous chapters. As all quotes and examples are referenced, they can be traced back to a particular participant and setting. Third, the researcher carried out all the interviews, transcription and analysis (and there was no need to translate any of the interviews), so there are no inter-researcher differences. Finally, the findings of the qualitative data analysis are complemented by the results of the quantitative data analysis.

The weakness of the analysis derives from the methods used and relates to having the findings validated by the participants. This was impossible with the findings of the visitor interviews as all participants were anonymous and non-contactable. The participants in the resident interviews were contactable, but this research is different to most qualitative research carried out in an interpretist tradition. This study has considered a very broad view of the phenomenon of garden visiting and therefore the residents’ contribution related to only a very small part of the research. It was therefore considered inappropriate to approach them for a third time. However, this limitation of the methods was overcome to a great extent by carrying out the interviews, both resident and visitor on an iterative basis, whereby the data from one interviewee could be validated in a subsequent interview.

In conclusion, this section has demonstrated the overall comprehensiveness and rigour of the research, although as with any study there are weaknesses as well as strengths. The weight of the former it is argued, however, do not lessen the value of the research and so in the next section a summary of the findings is presented.

9.3. Summary of the findings

The main aim of this research was to understand participation in garden visiting. To achieve this, five principal research objectives were formulated:

1. to define and enumerate the gardens open to the public

2. to establish a socio-demographic profile of visitors
3. to identify the affordances to garden visiting
4. to describe the social-material practices of garden visitors
5. to present a diagrammatic illustration of the theoretical underpinnings of the affordance approach to garden visiting.

9.3.1. The definition and enumeration of gardens

A range of media sources were identified to enumerate the gardens in England open to the public in 2002. Eight hundred and eighty places promoted a garden in some way as part of an enterprise which had business or horticultural aims (and therefore opened for more than 12 days per annum), rather than mainly amenity or fundraising aspirations. Approximately 3000 further gardens opened on a fundraising basis. This secondary data was then used to describe different types of gardens, based on characteristics including ownership. Over half the gardens were found to be privately owned, with a further third owned by charitable trusts. When this phase of the research had been completed, Connell (2004a; 2004b; 2005) published papers providing data on the gardens and visitors to gardens in Great Britain. She included attractions open to the public on a regular and/or commercial basis and estimated that a total of 5000 gardens are open to the public in Great Britain (Connell, 2005). As the data sources used by Connell had also been used in this research it is perhaps not surprising that the results are similar.

Having established the number of gardens open to the public in England, comparisons can be made to other countries. France, for example, had 784 gardens open to the public in 2002 (Comité Départemental du Tourisme de l'Yonne, 2003). England therefore has a much *larger* number of gardens which the public can visit. This suggests that the substantial number of gardens in England could afford garden visiting, not only through their widespread availability enhancing geographic accessibility, but also by generating and shaping the cascade of other affordances identified in this research, including for example, the interest of the media, government agencies and charitable organisations.

9.3.2. The establishment of a socio-demographic profile of visitors

The research demonstrated the popularity of visiting a garden for a sample of the population living in the BH postcode area of southern England. Eighty-three per cent of respondents to the resident survey had visited a garden as an adult and over three-quarters

had made a visit in 2002. This figure was considerably higher than the average recorded by Mintel (2006). The disparity it was suggested, in line with affordance theory, is due to the perception of different cascades of affordances, *inter alia* as a result of geographic variation. It is also possible that the respondents' interest in visiting gardens afforded stimulation to completing the questionnaire. Generalisation of the quantitative data to the population of England as a whole is therefore inappropriate. The resident survey also confirmed that over a third of respondents had made 3 or more visits to a garden during 2002 and so visiting for some is not a one-off activity.

Data from the resident and visitor surveys was then presented and compared to the existing literature (from market research and on-site visitor surveys respectively) to establish a socio-demographic profile of garden visitors. The recent literature, the resident survey and the visitor survey all show a similar pattern. More middle-aged and older people than younger people and more members of the higher occupational groups visit a garden. Although there is little gender variation in the propensity to visit, variations between sub-groups exist and it was demonstrated that visitors are heterogeneous. In terms of statistically significant differences (using the χ^2 test) in who visited a garden in 2002, more women who are younger or older visited than the younger or older men, but, in the middle age group, men were slightly more frequent visitors. In the middle and lower occupational groups women visited more than men. Conversely there were more men who visited than women in the higher occupational groups. Amongst the enthusiastic gardeners a greater proportion of women visited than men, while the willing or unwilling gardeners on the other hand, who had visited a garden, were more often male than female.

This section has demonstrated that the visitors to gardens are heterogeneous in terms of socio-demographic characteristics and so a central tenet of this thesis is that participation in garden visiting is distributed across society. Whilst there is some individual differences in visiting, these differences are, as Rojek *et al.* (2006) argue '*situated and freedom conditioned by social, cultural, political and economic variables*' (Rojek *et al.*, 2006, p. 11). This study has concentrated on gender, age, occupational group and employment status. All of these:

- *are perceived as being substantially different materially or culturally;*

- *are long-lasting and sustained by dominant cultural beliefs, the organisation of social institutions and individual interaction;*
- *confer unequal access to resources – and thus different life chances and lifestyles;*
- *engender shared identities in terms of perceived difference from those in an alternative category of the same division (Crichter, 2006, p.271).*

Structural conditions such as income, which can determine, for example, whether a visit can be afforded or whether access to a car is available have been discussed extensively in the leisure literature and so this research does not focus on these aspects.

9.3.3. The affordances to garden visiting

Affordance theory identifies the possibilities for behaviour in a person's environment. The behaviour may be performed as thoughts, feelings or actions. The social-material environment is a combination of static and dynamic elements and so the relationship between a visitor and their environment is a dynamic interactive system. This research used the participants' explanatory repertoires to identify many of the affordances to visiting a garden. Initially, affordances were described in this thesis as though they are individual influences, but the participants demonstrated that their visits could not be understood in terms of single, separate affordances. They revealed that the affordances which influenced them were multiple and could emerge together or sequentially and be interconnected in 'cascades'.

The affordances were described in Chapters 5 – 7. Chapter 5 identified that previous experiences of visiting gardens affords subsequent visiting. Most participants included descriptions of affordances perceived from previous visits to gardens and it was notable that in the visitor survey, when asked what had made them go to Compton Acres that day (the location of the survey), 35 respondents wrote with reference to a previous visit to the garden as part of their explanation for the current visit. Visitors use their perceptions of affordances perceived within a garden to anticipate future visits. Other past experiences, together with a person's present interests and future goals determines their attunement to aspects of their environment, both inside and outside of a garden.

The participants' perceptions of being in a garden derived from both the natural environment and the anthropogenic aspects of the 'attraction'. The quantitative data from

the surveys demonstrated the importance to the respondents of those aspects of a garden which afford opportunities for gentle, relaxed enjoyment (as opposed to an exhilarating experience), for example, the pleasure gained from viewing a garden and experiencing the peacefulness found there. Respondents also found the chances to obtain horticultural knowledge and to be with family or friends important.

The qualitative data highlighted both the experiential and the performative opportunities which a garden affords. The participants spoke of their pleasure of being in an environment which is formed from natural elements, and the positive effects this had on them. They contrasted being outdoors and having fresh-air, with being indoors at work or home. Many participants identified what they liked to see in a garden, corroborating the quantitative data, but additionally revealing a depth and variety of interests. They also spoke of how they liked to move around a garden, confirming the importance of the performative element of affordance theory. However, just sitting, thinking, remembering were also emphasised as integral parts of a visit.

The participants' explanatory repertoires included references to how the proprietors' actions beyond the maintenance of the garden *per se* afforded hedonic opportunities. These included providing interpretation and horticultural knowledge, together with facilities for purchasing refreshments and plants amongst others. Participants also recognised that other people are affordances in gardens, not just the pleasure of being with one's own family or friends, but also the other visitors.

In Chapter 6, the participants' responses to the 'grand tour' question, 'What made you come to the gardens today?' put to the participants in the visitor interviews and as an open question in the visitor survey, revealed further affordances, which are (temporally) proximal to a visit. First, family and friends were shown to be important in *prompting* a visit. The quantitative data from the resident survey revealed that friends had a slightly greater role in inspiring a visit than family and the qualitative data provided numerous examples of each. One group of participants were designated in this research as 'prime movers'. They were found to be an important affordance to another group, labelled 'secondary participants'; this was a member of their family or a friend who accompanied the 'prime mover' on a visit to a garden – without them, the 'secondary participant' was unlikely to have made a visit.

Secondly, the outputs of other social agents, for example, the media, were also established as affordances to visiting. Examples of references to Compton Acres in different types of publications were given to demonstrate what the editors believe their particular readers are attuned to. A free guide, for example, described Compton Acres as taking you on a relaxing journey around the gardens of the world, whereas the RHS Handbook described the micro-climate and the pruning. References to direct marketing by the owners of Compton Acres, the National Trust and the National Gardens Scheme were also given and quotations from the participants demonstrated that they had perceived and been influenced by many of these marketing affordances.

The third type of affordance highlighted in Chapter 6 is meteorological. Several participants spoke of aborted trips to gardens because the weather was inclement and over three-quarters of respondents in the resident survey indicated that if they were told it was going to rain all day, just as they were leaving home, they would not continue with a visit to a garden. The extent of the weather's influence was further demonstrated using national figures for garden visiting from the literature.

The fourth and fifth types of affordances were temporal and spatial affordances. The former included not just having time free from other obligations, but sufficient free time to participate in a visit. Other aspects linked to this included the differentiation of time, between ordinary, 'everyday time' and special occasions. Several participants referred to socially mediated occasions such as birthdays and Father's Day for example, as being an explanation of their visit. Being close to a garden is a practical affordance which many participants recognised. Connected to this are transportation affordances, such as the organisation of coach trips, having access to a car, quiet roads and available car parking. Holidays were found to afford both time and geographical access and there were a few occasions mentioned by the participants where the holiday destination had been selected specifically to afford garden visiting.

Finally described in Chapter 6 were the responses to the 'grand tour' question which referred to the participants' perceptions of themselves as an explanation of their visiting. These perceptions were also therefore an affordance to visiting. Each participant's unique past experiences, and varying present interests and future goals shaped the person's

attunement to other affordances. Typical examples included statements relating to their 'love' of garden visiting or their enthusiasm for gardening.

In the following chapter it was then proposed that there are further affordances to visiting gardens which were not included in the explanations given in response to the 'grand tour' question. It is suggested that the participants were perhaps less sensitive of these factors or that they seemed too obvious to mention. The proximal affordances, described above, are nested within distal affordances and only following the prior perception of both might a visit to a garden be a possibility. The principal sources of these distal affordances are those felt directly, so first, experiences of spaces, which are similar to gardens, were examined. It is shown that awareness of garden-like spaces appears to be extremely widespread in England and that peoples' historic perceptions of these spaces enables them to anticipate whether a visit to a garden would afford the benefits they seek. This may also be an explanation of why only a few participants referred to the experience of visiting a garden as being extraordinary in any way.

Secondly, the history of family and friends in visiting gardens is considered and it was proposed that the people close to an individual can 'set an example' by visiting. A discussion of representations of gardens and garden visiting in the media, particularly books and television, suggested that these representations afforded visiting, by creating not only awareness that such places exist and what they might be like, but also, as 'structuring dispositions' of who might visit and why they might go.

In considering the influence of interests other than gardening which might afford visiting, interests in heritage, the environment and personal wellbeing were shown to be significant. However, the relationship between culture and gardens was found to be less important and the reasons for this were examined. It was then argued that if people's social environment influenced their behaviour in respect of visiting gardens, it would also have an impact on their behaviour in other areas, such as holidays (and even their responses to this research).

It was shown that affordances are not usually individual and independent as initially portrayed, but multiple and interconnected in 'cascades of affordances'. Thereafter it was posited that groups of people having characteristics in common, such as gender and age may also share a commonality of affordances and their attraction visiting behaviour might

reflect this. It was shown using the statistical correlations of the quantitative data that there were gender differences in relation to what companions afford participants in respect of garden visiting and differences between the age groups as to the types of attractions which they visit.

9.3.4. The social-material practices of garden visitors

Chapter 8 began by extending the understanding of affordance by recognising that not all affordances may be beneficial and that some can be described as impeding a visit. Both affordances and impedances were then shown in some cases to have graded properties. Visitors to gardens were revealed as pro-active in their visiting behaviours and showed various strategies to create affordance out of other afforded behaviours including ‘synchronising’ affordances to realise an affordance or negotiate impedance. The chapter then sought to show how levels of attunement to affordance could vary between individuals and circumstances. This variation in attunement developed from their past history of perceptual experiences, their present interests and their future goals.

Analysis of the qualitative data revealed that the participants had described four types of visits, two, where a specific garden was identified from the beginning of the planning and two, where the decision of where to visit was taken subsequently. The ‘specific visits’ were in response to affordances which had either been sought purposely, or which were unsolicited. The ‘non-specific visits’ arose in a ‘Let’s go somewhere’ situation. The participants described how they had considered either a type of attraction to visit, (for example, a garden) or a particular place, (Compton Acres). They also described two techniques to choose where to go. The first was labelled the ‘reject-accept’ style of choosing and was adopted more frequently than the second, the choice-set approach described in the literature (for example, Stemerding *et al.*, 1999).

9.3.5. A diagrammatic illustration of the findings

The final objective of the research was to create a diagram illustrating the theoretical underpinnings of the affordance approach to understanding garden visiting. Chapter 2 refers to several characteristics of affordances, but to incorporate each in relation to the main groups of affordances to garden visiting would be too complex. Instead one key characteristic is illustrated; one that is central to a social theoretical perspective of affordance (as opposed to a biological perspective, for example), and is discussed by Kytta

(2003), who notes that affordances may be sequential, co-emergent or nested. As already discussed, it is a cascade of affordances, rather than any single motivational factor that induces a person to visit and experience a garden.

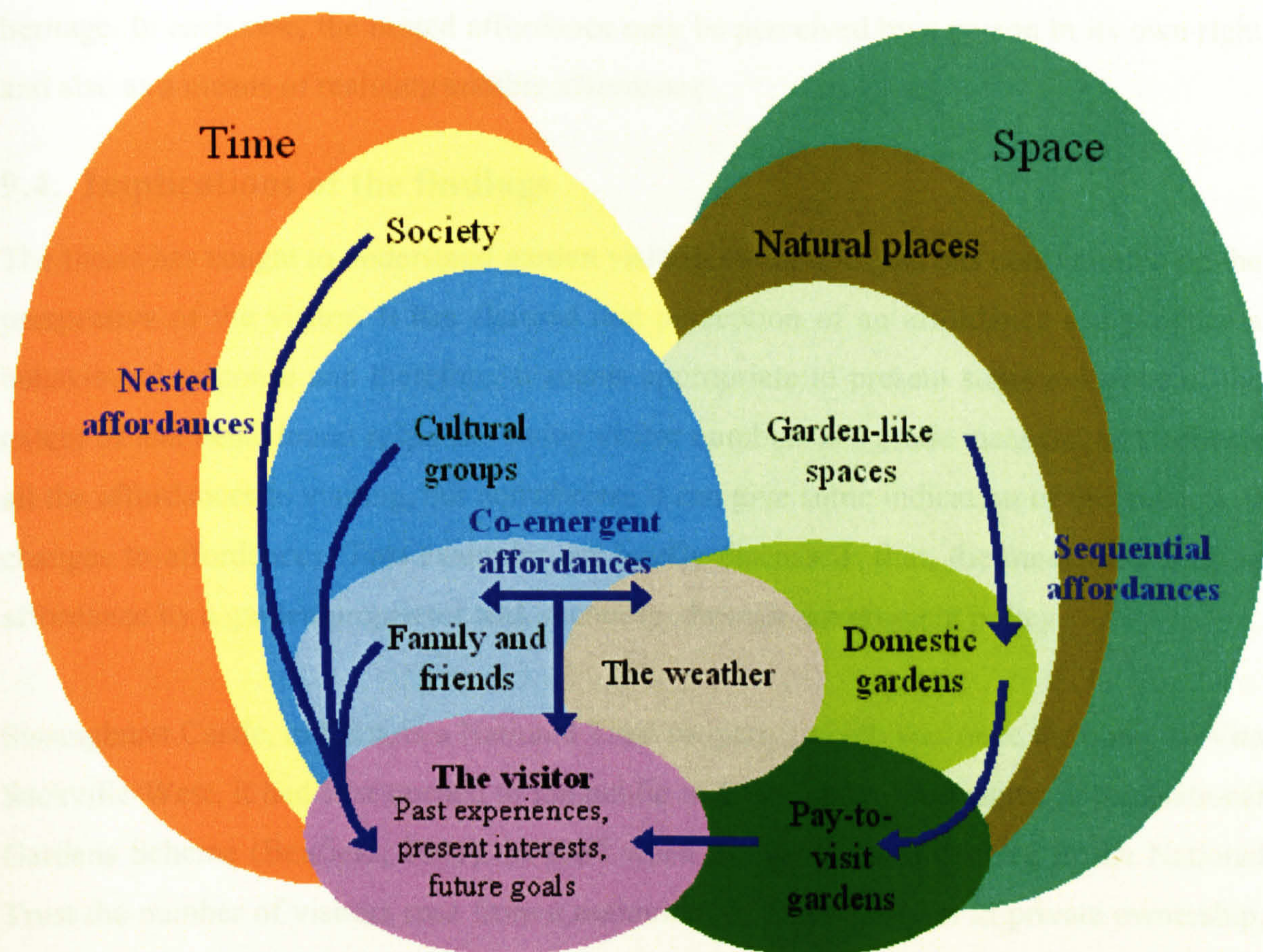


Figure 9.1 A cascade of nested, co-emergent and sequential affordances to visiting a garden

Figure 9.1 shows examples of sequential, co-emergent and nested affordances in a cascade. For a person who grows up in a household without a garden, perception of the possibilities offered by a domestic garden may only become apparent after a familiarity with garden-like spaces (such as parks) has developed. Having perceived the affordances of a domestic garden (perhaps by having chosen to buy a property with a garden), the person may then be attuned to the affordances of a pay-to-visit garden. Acting on one perceptible affordance leads to information indicating new affordances.

Other affordances may be perceived simultaneously – noting that the weather is propitious for a garden visit may occur at the same time as friends decide to go out for a day. Finally, many affordances are nested affordances. It has been shown how English society affords a

tradition of garden visiting through its history of land ownership, empire etc. English society, however, also affords the support for the organisations that now protect, maintain and open historic gardens, for example, the National Trust. Furthermore, that same society encourages parents to informally ‘educate’ their children, for example, about English heritage. In each case, the nested affordance may be perceived by a person in its own right and also as a means of realising another affordance.

9.4. Implications of the findings

The thesis has sought to understand garden visiting but in doing so has concentrated on the perspective of the visitor. It has claimed that perception of an affordance can produce a behavioural response and therefore, it seems appropriate to present some evidence of the extent of that behavioural response. Using visitor numbers is a crude measure, as it reflects all the affordances to visiting, but nonetheless it can give some indication of the impacts of changes to affordances. Two examples are briefly discussed: first, the modification of an affordance by a garden proprietor and, secondly, through government policy.

Sissinghurst Castle, in Kent, is a National Trust property, which was once the home of Vita Sackville-West. It had first opened to the public in 1938, under the auspice of the National Gardens Scheme (Benfield, 2001). In 1967 when the garden was donated to the National Trust the number of visitors rose from a maximum of 28,000, whilst in private ownership, to 67,000 in the first year of Trust ownership. The approach by management during the 1970’s and 1980’s was to facilitate greater number of visitors, for example by adding paths, catering facilities, a gift shop etc. By the end of that period, however, more than 100,000 additional visits were being made each year and the realisation came that:

...the large numbers of visitors was clearly acting to diminish the psychological, particularly the aesthetic, nature of the garden tourism experience (Benfield, 2001, p. 210).

During the early 1990’s various restrictive systems were trialled, culminating with the introduction of a timed entry system in 1992 and a total cessation of paid advertising of the garden in 1997. Visitor numbers have since remained fairly constant at under 160,000. This demonstrates how affordances (for example, transfer of ownership to the National Trust and/or better facilities) initially encouraged greater visitor numbers to the garden.

However, the visitors themselves then changed an affordance within the garden, summarised by Benfield above, which led to a deliberate policy by management, to modify an affordance (unrestricted entry). Subsequently there was a levelling-off of visitor numbers.

The second example is the unintended consequences for gardens ensuing from the governments' actions in response to the foot-and-mouth epidemic in 2001. Freedom of movement on the road and footpath networks was impeded by closures in the countryside close to visitor attractions. Without their visitors being able to gain access, attractions were forced to temporarily close. In the beginning the crisis was treated as an agricultural issue and so the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF, later DEFRA) took control (Anderson, 2002). The widespread closure of footpaths was ordered although there was 'no correlation' between the occurrences of foot-and-mouth and the opening of attractions (Jeffery, 2001). The majority of National Trust properties were closed for at least part of the crisis; with most not open until at least April. Beningbrough Hall was particularly hard hit with visitor numbers falling from 76,000 in the previous year to 10,218 in 2001 (National Trust, 2002). At Wakehurst Place the garden had to shut for six weeks during the epidemic and then had to stay closed for a further four weeks because of its location close to a deer park. A spokesperson there is quoted as saying; '*...we are never going to catch up on visitor numbers for this year*' (BBC News, 2001a). Visitor numbers that year fell by 15%.

MAFF had modified an affordance (legal access to the countryside in some places) without considering the wider consequences for industries other than agriculture. An inquiry into the outbreak subsequently reported that the impacts on tourism were not initially recognised by MAFF (Anderson, 2002). Overall those gardens which were able to stay open received an increase of 5% in visitors in the year, whilst those which had to close saw a smaller increase of 2% (English Tourism Council *et al.*, 2002).

These two examples have demonstrated the impact of modifying affordances that was difficult to show with the data obtained in this study. In doing so, they emphasise the interconnectedness and complexity of the factors influencing an understanding of participation in garden visiting. Kleiber *et al.* (2005) suggest that:

...future research would do well to examine not only what individuals perceive as preventing them from participating in enjoyable leisure experiences, but also what they perceive in the environment that makes leisure experience a distinct possibility (Kleiber et al., 2005, p. 241).

Recognising the scope of factors that influence leisure participation is not new, Torkildsen (1999) lists over forty, but this research has accentuated the breadth of factors that *support* participation in garden visiting. Affordance theory has offered a unified means of incorporating these diverse factors into a research study and has also offered a means of understanding the interdependency between them.

Furthermore, as this research has shown, more distal affordances can be less observable and less available to narration and perhaps for these reasons they have tended to be overlooked in visitor attraction studies. It is argued that proximal affordances are nested within distal affordances and so by failing to consider the distal affordances, the influence of proximal affordances becomes less comprehensible. It has therefore been essential to identify and describe these distal factors as well as those that are more proximal.

The findings have also highlighted several other aspects which warrant further discussion. The different phases of a visit to an attraction have been recognised in the literature; for example, Swarbrooke (1995) describes a visit to an attraction as an experience:

...which begins with the anticipation of visiting the attraction and the planning of the trip. There is then the visit itself, including the journey to and from the attraction, and the time spent at the attraction. Finally there are the memories once the visit is over (Swarbrooke, 1995, p.38).

Borrie and Roggenbuck (2001) have shown that the experience of leisure in an outdoor recreational activity may also be *'dynamic, emergent, and multi-phasic during the on-site phase'* (Borrie and Roggenbuck, 2001, p. 202). The findings of this study, however, have demonstrated the *dynamic* nature of leisure experiences, before, during and after a visit to a garden. The findings have identified the constant interaction between a person and their environment.

The findings have also emphasised that a person's environment is not simply social *or* material but a social-material environment and their practices within such an environment, must therefore be considered as social-material practices. For example, participants have spoken not just of the weather, but also the influence of weather forecasts; the literature has discussed the impact of climate on gardens, and subsequently in this chapter the influence of climate change is considered. Urry (2000) suggests that social-material transformations are occurring in the development of human societies which transform *'the possibilities and opportunities of any 'science' seeking to interrogate such societies'* (Urry, 2000, p. 1). This research has tried to seize this opportunity by adopting affordance theory.

9.4.1. Looking to the future

Finally in this section, it is appropriate to consider how an understanding of affordance theory and the behaviour of visitors can contribute to the challenges facing all organisations involved in garden visiting in the future. Consistent with the whole thesis, social-material practices are considered, beginning with climate change.

Climate change

As the climate changes, it is predicted that the weather will become more extreme and variable (Bisgrove and Hadley, 2002) and as this research has shown, the weather has a major influence on whether a visit is made to a garden. This may result in greater fluctuations of income for owners, making investment in the garden more difficult. More immediate impacts may come from the visitor's behaviour. Grass paths are seen as particularly vulnerable and the soil after exceptionally wet or dry weather may become severely compacted. To afford movement around a garden may therefore require either the replacement of grass with hard surfaces or the use of intensive management techniques developed originally in the sports turf industry. Visitors may become unsatisfied with their visit, for example, a participant complained to the researcher at Compton Acres about empty flowerbeds due to unsuitable planting conditions. Similar feelings may be aroused by brown rather than green grass; tender plants destroyed by early frosts and plants damaged by the geographical spread of pathogens or pests.

Participants spoke of their visit being afforded by a particular plant in flower, but climate change may lead not only to changes in temperature and hydration impacting on flowering times, but also increased levels of carbon dioxide which will accelerate plant growth and

development (Bisgrove and Hadley, 2002). Visitors may therefore become unsure of the appropriate days to visit. Heritage gardens may find it harder to grow the plants associated with the initial design or the period of the property, which may make their conservation objectives difficult to achieve. Other visual elements in a garden may also be affected, for example, autumn leaf colour, water features, wildlife and the range of plants grown. A positive example of this is Trelassick in Cornwall, where 30 plants were recorded in flower in January 1991. In January 2004, this figure had risen to 220 (Watson, 2006) and therefore a longer growing season and higher summer temperatures may well encourage more visitors to gardens rather than less.

Travelling to gardens

Leisure and tourism is the fastest growing contributor to increases in car use and 94% of National Trust visitors arrive by car (National Trust 2006b). Notwithstanding the contribution to climate change as a result of emissions from car use, this sub-section considers some of the other transport related issues raised by the participants. Comments to the researcher included references to the increasing cost of a visit to a garden as oil prices rise, the frustration and delays caused by road congestion and problems with parking. Exclusion from visiting as a consequence of lack of transport was also highlighted. A motion at the National Trust's AGM in 2005, calling for the promotion of car-free travel, was overwhelmingly defeated. This *'generated a greater member response than any issue in recent memory...they regarded the free parking perk to be one of membership's biggest bonuses'* (National Trust, 2006c). Use of a car is recognised by visitors as a key affordance to visiting a garden and as economic and environmental pressures increase on car owners, visitor numbers are likely to be affected.

Changing demographics

The demographic structure of England is changing in several ways. The 'baby boomer' generation is maturing and over the period 2006-2011, the age group 45-54 years old is expected to increase in numbers, more than any other age group (Intel, 2006). This research has shown that this is the age group most likely to visit gardens and so for the remainder of the decade, garden visiting may see a steady growth, for this reason alone. In the medium term, as this group retires, there should be a reasonably affluent and healthy segment with plenty of leisure time. However, in the longer term, as the 'bulge' grows older, the potential market in terms of age is likely to contract, particularly as the

retirement age is raised and the amount of pension paid to people becomes more problematic.

Currently, another major segment of the garden visiting market is also growing. The upper social occupational groups (AB and C1) have each expanded over 10% during the period, 2001 – 2006. Whilst upward mobility is expected to increase over the next five years, the rate of growth is expected to decline (Intel, 2006). Continuing increases in visitor numbers as a result of this demographic change therefore cannot be expected to continue indefinitely.

Finally migration of populations between countries may impact on garden visitation. Migration into the country increased to 582,000 in 2004, with immigrants more likely to be young and male. Emigration amounted to 360,000 in the same year and since 1999, there has been a net outflow of British citizens aged 45 to state pension age (ESRC, 2006). Therefore the main segments of garden visitors are shrinking. Secondly this research has shown that identifying with the heritage of gardens is an affordance to visiting, as are social representations. Newcomers to England are less likely to have the same social identity and visiting an attraction on a birthday, for example, may not occur to them in the same way as it does to many of the present population.

Some support for such a contention is provided by a survey carried out for English Heritage (2004) which showed that 40% of white respondents said they had made a special trip to see a historic garden or park in the last 12 months, compared to 36% of Black respondents and 32% of Asian respondents. Whilst the data is important it is limited to historic gardens or parks and the samples of Black and Asian respondents were relatively small (44 and 71 respectively). Nonetheless it does demonstrate that there may be different affordances to visiting between racial groups in England.

Variations in personal wealth

Personal disposal income is projected to continue increasing, towards 2011 (Intel, 2006) and so in the short-term there is unlikely to be a decrease in garden visits due to economic factors. Particularly as visitors, as this research has shown, come from the higher occupational groups, whose spending options are usually more flexible than others. The taking of holidays, it is suggested, have become unaffected due to fluctuations in personal

income, but a downturn in the economy could lead to a switch from overseas to domestic breaks, which could increase visitor numbers to gardens in English holiday regions. However, making day trips is not immune to economic fluctuations and so some existing visitors could become marginalised and unable to afford to continue visiting gardens which make an entry charge. This group could perceive that the same affordances which attract them to pay-to-visit gardens are realisable at local authority amenity parks and gardens, country parks, open spaces etc. and therefore change the setting of a day-trip.

9.5. Further research

Undertaking this thesis has identified further research which could be productive. In the context of visiting gardens, it has demonstrated that there is geographical variation in participation. Possible reasons for this on the demand side, include the differences in the demography of the population in terms of combinations of gender, age and occupational group and, as shown by English Heritage (2004), ethnicity. Other factors identified in this thesis, include the changing interest in gardening, the weather and the media representations which stimulate a visit. In addition, there appears to have been little evaluation of the supply side of garden visiting, beyond the limited work carried out at the beginning of this research and that published by Connell (2005).

Such research would not only have intrinsic value, but would also have instrumental value, when one considers the investment which is made in the creation and maintenance of gardens, often with public funding. The forecast of visitor numbers for the NBGW, for example, was calculated '*... on an average penetration rate of 2% of the 10 million residents and tourists within 2 hours of the site*' (Wales Audit Office, 2005, p. 15).

No evidence was provided to show why this particular percentage had been selected but the number of actual visitors to the garden fell below the projected figures. Furthermore if all gardens are treated as offering identical affordances, funding for gardens may be unnecessarily withheld. Smit (2001) commented that leisure experts and as a result financiers '*swear*' by using isochrones and yet he argued, rightly with hindsight, that '*a must-see*' attraction such as he was proposing at the Eden Project, would break the rules (Smit, 2001, p. 88).

A further £25 million of lottery funding is currently being sought for The Calyx Project, a new garden-based attraction due to open in Perth, Scotland in 2010. Predicted visitor numbers there are over 250,000 per annum, 20% higher than was predicted for the NBGW (The Calyx, 2005). As this research has shown, the factors influencing participation in garden visiting in Scotland are likely to be different to those in Wales or England, but it may be that the same percentage (an average penetration rate of 2% at the NBGW) may have been used in the calculation.

Considering next the visitor attraction sector as a whole, in Section 7.6.2, it was shown that there are statistically significant differences between age groups in the visiting of horticultural and cultural attractions. It seems an interest in visiting some cultural attractions increases with age, whereas in respect of others it decreases with age. Several cultural attraction types seem to be of more interest to the middle-aged rather than the young or elderly. The results suggested that the young are more attracted by 'popular' culture; the middle-aged by heritage and the elderly have a greater interest in high culture. Only the appeal of art galleries seems to remain constant across the age ranges. Further investigation of this phenomenon is needed to identify what are the different affordances perceived by people at various ages; whether this finding is repeated across all the attractions sector and what changes in this respect have occurred over time.

Affordance theory has shown its value in helping to understand participation in garden visiting. It could therefore be adopted in considering alternative forms of leisure behaviour, for example, visiting other types of attractions or tourist destinations. It may also be valuable in understanding forms of leisure behaviour which are considered 'undesirable', for example, 'binge' drinking and 'anti-social' behaviour. Finally affordance theory is often integrated as a part of actor-network perspectives (see the contributions in Law and Hassard, 1999). Van der Duim writing on tourism adopts this perspective as he seeks to understand how, *'people and things, nature and culture, the 'global' and the 'local' work together, how they shape one another and how they hold one another in place'* (Van der Duim, 2005, p. 17). Affordance theory could therefore, it is suggested, contribute to a much wider understanding of leisure behaviour than presently exists.

9.6. A personal journey

In the opening chapter a personal narrative was given, it therefore seems appropriate at the end of the thesis that a personal reflection on the research journey should be provided. Every research project is a process of continuous learning and periods of reflection, which occurred during the research, have already been referred to. Therefore the following subsection describes the concluding evaluation.

I began this research from a background which saw the natural science model as the ‘gold standard’ for all research. Initial difficulties arose as many authors writing about methodology distinguish between a positivist-based paradigm as more appropriate to studying the natural world and some form of constructivist (or interpretist) if one is researching people. However, this research is concerned with people in a social-material world. Gradually, therefore, I have had to reconcile a view of the world as operating in a systematic way with the recognition that people can be individualistic, social, creative, irrational, *et al.* Finally I came to recognise that as a researcher, the way I think is a consequence of my personal ‘world’ and that research itself is socially mediated. Therefore I have not privileged any one paradigm, but instead have drawn on the strengths of many.

Additionally I have always treated knowledge with respect, but I have now learnt that knowledge is powerful and should therefore be treated with care. Knowledge is constituted in language and words have meanings not just outside of their everyday use but also shared within disciplines. Having no previous experience in a social science and feeling free to draw on numerous disciplines, I have therefore tried to heed the advice of Bazerman:

Getting the words right is more than a fine tuning of grace and clarity: it is defining the entire enterprise. And getting the words right depends not just on an individual’s choice. The words are shaped by the discipline – in its communally developed linguistic resources and expectations...The words arise out of the activity, procedures, and relationships within the community (Bazerman, 1988, p. 47).

9.7. An understanding of garden visitors

This research has sought to understand why people visit gardens in England at the beginning of the twenty-first century. It has drawn on the literature and the findings to show the complexity of factors that have been influential over time. One must begin by recognising the contribution of England's varied geology which has created numerous different soil types which support a wealth of diverse flora. Britain's position on the westerly edge of Eurasia and the warming effects of the Gulf Stream, not only contribute to the excellent growing environment but also provide a pleasant environment for a visit to a garden throughout much of the year. Historically, the affects of British imperialism and the birth of the industrial revolution in Britain contributed to the wealth which enabled stately homes and their surrounding gardens and parklands to develop. This wealth supported the exploration and subsequent importation of flora from throughout the world and led to the upper classes visiting each other's properties. Economic and social factors similarly contributed to a form of housing development in England that provides wide scale opportunities for domestic garden ownership, (in contrast, for example, to the development of tenements in Scotland or apartments in continental Europe).

These factors have enabled a large number of diverse gardens to be created in England and this has not only provided a large 'pool' from which opening to the public is a possibility, but also an 'infrastructure' in support of garden visiting. Furthermore, together with Victorian philanthropy which made possible the nation-wide provision of public parks and open spaces, it has led to an almost universal familiarity with garden-like spaces amongst the English population.

The media has supported this familiarity too. Literary references to gardens have been at the heart of English culture and modern means of mass communication, including new electronic sources, have continued this tradition. Other aspects of our society, for example, customs such as Mother's Day and patterns of working hours create the temporal opportunities to visit. Whilst transportation networks and a practice of taking holidays away from home, enables access to distant gardens as well as those accessible during what has become socially mediated as a 'day-trip'. The formation of charitable organisations is integral to our society and the enterprise of organisations such as the National Trust together with the actions of government at a national and local level help to support garden

visiting. Structural conditions may have allowed some groups of people to visit gardens more than others, but biological differences also seem to be influential, with patterns of visiting changing over the life-course.

At the micro-level of society, family and friends afford garden visiting through a variety of ways. However, a visit would not occur were it not that people have found the experience of being in a garden, a pleasurable one. Whether this is because people have learnt to appreciate the aesthetic creativity of garden proprietors and the outcomes of the interactions between human-kind and the rest of the natural world or whether there is a positive response to the natural world that has an evolutionary source is uncertain. Irrespective of the cause, people enjoy visiting gardens and the memories of one visit can enable a person to anticipate the benefits of another. It is only when all of these aspects are considered together that we can come close to understanding why people in England visit gardens.

Garden visiting is a traditional leisure activity in England, but there have been different factors influencing participation over time. Constantly, however, visitation gives pleasure to many people although until recently the subject has been overlooked by academics. Gardens, like other attractions, face a difficult future, with increasing competition between them to attract visitors, whose spending enables the conservation and development of the attraction to continue. This research has extended the knowledge of garden visiting by identifying many new factors which influence participation. Finally, not only has the research afforded the discussion of affordance theory with a wider audience, but also it has reflectively made a contribution to the advancement of the theory.

You have done an excellent job of the park and we enjoyed walking round every month and noticing the changes. Hope you get more funding to finish the park. Good Luck.

Local resident

The Leasowes

28th of August 2005.



Vice-Chancellor:
Professor Gillian I. Saker
MSc MA DPhil ChMath
FIRAF FRSA

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Retail & Tourism
Industries*

Head of School
Nigel Cunningham
BSc(Hon) PhD
FHCMA FICPO

July 2002

Dear Sir or Madam

I am a post-graduate researcher at Bournemouth University investigating garden-based visitor attractions. I need the help of your household in completing the attached questionnaire – your property is one of a number of postcodes that were randomly selected. If there is more than one occupier, please would the adult, who will next have a birthday, complete the questions. All answers will be completely confidential.

I will collect the questionnaires on Tuesday. If you do not wish to be disturbed or if you will be out, please leave the completed form in a plastic bag on your doorstep.

Thank you for your help.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "D.G. Fox".

D.G. Fox
BSc (Hons)

Donet House Talbot Campus Fern Barrow Poole Dorset BH12 5BH
Telephone: (01202) 545110 Fax: (01202) 515707

Q1 The South of England has many different attractions to visit. Which of the following types of attraction do you, personally, like to visit?

1) Natural place - e.g. beach, forest countryside	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2) Historic town or property, stately home, cathedral	<input type="checkbox"/>	02
3) Garden, park	<input type="checkbox"/>	03
4) Amusement or theme park, fairground	<input type="checkbox"/>	04
5) Zoo, safari park	<input type="checkbox"/>	05
6) Museum or art gallery	<input type="checkbox"/>	06
7) Shopping complex, market	<input type="checkbox"/>	07
8) Entertainment complex, cinema, casino, theatre	<input type="checkbox"/>	08
9) Pub, restaurant, disco	<input type="checkbox"/>	09
10) Leisure centre, health spa, sports facility	<input type="checkbox"/>	10
11) Sporting event	<input type="checkbox"/>	11
12) Other - please write in	<input type="checkbox"/>	12

Q2 Which one do you most prefer?

1

Q3 What are your reasons for visiting the attraction you most prefer? Please tick the boxes to show how important the motives are to you.

	very important	quite important	not important
To enjoy myself/have a good time	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
The pleasure of viewing the attraction	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
To be entertained	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
To relax	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
To exercise	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
To be informed/learn something	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
To be with family or friends	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

Q4 Please would you think about the type of garden that people pay to visit. (For example, a National Trust garden, a garden open for charity, or one like Compton Acres.) What three words do you think best describe this type of garden?

1	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	3

Q5 How enjoyable do you think a visit to a garden like this, would be?

Very enjoyable	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Quite enjoyable	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Not enjoyable	<input type="checkbox"/>	3

Q6 As an adult have you ever visited the type of garden I have described above?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
No please go on to question 22	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Don't know please go on to question 22	<input type="checkbox"/>	3

Please turn over the page to question 7

3

Q7	How many times have you visited this type of garden in 2002?	0..... <input type="checkbox"/>	1
		1-2..... <input type="checkbox"/>	2
		3-4..... <input type="checkbox"/>	3
		5 or more..... <input type="checkbox"/>	4
Q8	Who do you most frequently visit a garden with?	I go alone please go on to question 11..... <input type="checkbox"/>	1
		With a family member or members..... <input type="checkbox"/>	2
		With a friend or friends..... <input type="checkbox"/>	3
		With other members of a horticultural society or gardening club etc..... <input type="checkbox"/>	4
Q9	Which member of the group most wants to visit a garden?	I do please go on to question 11..... <input type="checkbox"/>	1
		My companion does..... <input type="checkbox"/>	2
		Both of us please go on to question 11..... <input type="checkbox"/>	3
Q10	Why do you accompany that person when they are visiting a garden? <input type="checkbox"/>	1
Q11	When you are visiting a garden who do you like to talk to? Tick as many boxes as you like.	Nobody..... <input type="checkbox"/>	1
		My companion(s)..... <input type="checkbox"/>	2
		Other visitors..... <input type="checkbox"/>	3
		The professional gardeners..... <input type="checkbox"/>	4
Q12	Which of the following items, do you like to learn about whilst visiting a garden?	I don't go to learn..... <input type="checkbox"/>	1
		The garden's history..... <input type="checkbox"/>	2
		The names of the plants..... <input type="checkbox"/>	3
		How to care for the plants..... <input type="checkbox"/>	4
		Other - please describe..... <input type="checkbox"/>	5
Q13	During your trip to visit a garden, do you ever do any of the following?	Visit a second garden..... <input type="checkbox"/>	1
		Visit another attraction..... <input type="checkbox"/>	2
		Stop for a meal, snack, icecream, drink etc..... <input type="checkbox"/>	3
		Combine the visit with another leisure activity, eg shopping..... <input type="checkbox"/>	4
		Do something that another member of the group may enjoy..... <input type="checkbox"/>	5
		Do another hobby, eg photography..... <input type="checkbox"/>	6
Q14	Do you think gardens have a distinctive sense of place?	Yes..... <input type="checkbox"/>	1
		No please go on to question 16..... <input type="checkbox"/>	2
		Don't know please go on to question 16..... <input type="checkbox"/>	3
Q15	If you answered yes in question 14, how would you describe this 'sense of place'?	1

4

Q16 Have you ever visited a garden that has a special meaning to you? If yes, please could you describe why that is.

.....

Q17 Whilst walking in a garden have you ever noticed the scent of a particular plant or tree?

Yes..... 1
 No Please go on to Question 19.. 2

Q18 Can you still recall the scent now?

Yes..... 1
 No..... 2

Q19 Please think back to the last garden you visited. Which garden was it?

1

Q20 Why did you visit it on this occasion? Please tick one box only.

Because you knew about this particular garden and wanted to visit it..... 1
 Because you wanted to go to a garden and then chose this one..... 2
 Because you wanted to go out somewhere and then chose this garden..... 3
 Because your companion knew about this garden and wanted to visit it..... 4
 Because your companion wanted to go to a garden and then chose this one..... 5
 Because your companion wanted to go out somewhere and then chose this garden..... 6
 Because you were offered the opportunity to visit e.g. on an organised trip..... 7
 I cannot remember..... 8

Q21 How important to you, are the following motives for visiting a garden? Please tick the boxes to show the importance of the reasons.

	very important	quite important	not important
To enjoy myself/ have a good time	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
To relax	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
To be entertained	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
For a lunch or tea	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
The exercise	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
To be with family or friends	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
The freedom	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
The peace & quiet	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Gardens are safe places to walk	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

Q22 Please would you think about people you know. How many of them do you think like to visit gardens?

	none	some	most	not applicable
Female relatives	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Male relatives	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Female friends	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Male friends	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

5

Q23	How often do you watch the programme, 'Gardeners' World' on television?	As often as I can.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1		
		Sometimes if I happen to see it on.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2		
		Sometimes, because another member of the household watches it.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3		
		Never Please go on to Question 28.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4		
Q24	Programmes like 'Gardeners World' often feature the sort of garden that people pay to visit. Have you ever seen this type of garden on the television?	Yes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1		
		No Please go on to Question 28.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2		
		Don't know Please go on to Question 28.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3		
Q25	Having seen a garden, did it make you want to visit it?	Yes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1		
		No Please go on to Question 28.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2		
Q26	Have you subsequently visited that garden?	Yes Please go on to Question 28.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1		
		No.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2		
Q27	Why haven't you visited that garden?	Too far away.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1		
		Family commitments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2		
		Just not got round to it yet.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3		
		Too expensive.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4		
		Work commitments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	5		
		No one to go with.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	6		
		No transport.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	7		
		Other leisure commitments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	8		
		Other - please describe.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	9		
Q28	Next, please would you imagine that all the arrangements have been made for you to visit a garden. Just as you are leaving home you are told one of the following. Would you still go to the garden that day if:	It is going to rain all day	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	1	No <input type="checkbox"/>	2
		The cafe/restaurant at the garden would be closed	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
		The person you were visiting with, couldn't go	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
		There would be no plants for sale	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
		The entry price was £2.00 more than you had thought	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
		The garden will be very crowded	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2

Please turn over the page to question 29

6

Q29 This time please could you imagine that you have arrived at the entrance to the garden. Would you then still go into the garden if:

	Yes		No	
It is going to rain all day	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
The cafe/restaurant would be closed	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
The person you were visiting with decided to stay in the coach or car etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
There would be no plants for sale	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
The entry price was £2.00 more than you had thought	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
The garden will be very crowded	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2

Now I would like to ask you some questions about other types of attractions that are garden-based.

Q30 How often have you visited a garden centre, plant nursery or plant fair in 2002?

	0	1-2	3-4	5 or more
Garden centre	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Plant Nursery	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Plant Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

Q31 Have you ever visited plants in their natural habitat, eg bluebells in a wood?

Yes..... 1

No..... 2

Don't know..... 3

Q32 Would you think about the type of flower festivals that are often held for a few days, often in churches. Have you ever visited this type of festival?

Yes..... 1

No..... 2

Don't know..... 3

Q33 Much larger types of festivals, often lasting several months, are also held. Have you ever visited this type of festival?

Yes..... 1

No..... 2

Don't know..... 3

Q34 I would like to ask you some questions about horticultural shows. The first type of show, I will call a celebrity show. They are very large shows, with gardening celebrities, show gardens etc. Have you ever visited this type of show?

Yes please go on to question 35..... 1

No..... 2

Don't know..... 3

Q35 Although you have not visited a celebrity show, would you like to, if it were possible?

Yes..... 1

No..... 2

Don't know..... 3

7

Q36 The next type of show, is not quite so large. I will call it a professional show, because it has professional exhibitors selling plants and gardening equipment etc, but no show gardens etc. They are often held in the grounds of stately homes. Have you ever visited this type of show?

Yes *Please go on to question 38* 1
 No 2
 Don't know 3

Q37 Although you have not visited a professional show, would you like to, if it were possible?

Yes 1
 No 2
 Don't know 3

Q38 The last type of show I will call an amateur show. This is the kind of show which is held in a community hall or marquee. Gardeners compete for prizes, for the flowers or vegetables they have grown. Have you ever visited this type of show?

Yes 1
 No 2
 Don't know 3

Q39 How many times have you visited these types of shows in 2002?

	0	1	2	3	4
Celebrity show	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional show	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amateur show	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q40 What are your reasons for visiting gardens and shows?

	Garden	Celebrity show	Professional show	Amateur show
Not visited	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buy plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Go somewhere prestigious or unique	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Habit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compare my plants to the ones there	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspiration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curiosity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
See new plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meet famous people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support the event/organiser	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accompany someone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q41 Each year several of the celebrity shows are featured on television programmes. Have you ever seen any of these programmes?

Yes 1
 No 2
 Don't know 3

			8
Q42	What are your main leisure activities?	1 2 3 4 5
Q43	Which of the following factors influence how you spend your leisure time?	children disability or ill-health other relatives pets television schedules transport weather your garden your mood at the time your religion other - please write it in,	01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11
Q44	What type of garden does your household have access to?	No garden Its own garden A communal garden An allotment A roof terrace or balcony where plants are grown	1 2 3 4 5
Q45	Which sentence best describes you?	I am an enthusiastic gardener I quite like gardening I would like to do some gardening, but I don't have a garden or allotment I would like to do some gardening, but someone else does it I used to like gardening, but I am no longer physically able to do it I don't really like gardening, but I do it to help another member of the household I don't really like gardening, but there is no one else to do it I don't like gardening and I don't do any	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Q46	What magazines or papers do you regularly read?	1 2 3 4 5 6

2

Q47 Are you a member of any of the following organisations?

National Trust (NT) 1
 Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) 2
 An allotment, gardening or horticultural society or club 3

Q48 Are you?

Male 1
 Female 2

Q49 In which age group are you?

18-24 1
 25-34 2
 35-44 3
 45-54 4
 55-64 5
 65-74 6
 75+ 7

Q50 How many adults are there in your household?

1 (myself) 1
 2 2
 3 or more 3

Q51 Are there any children in your household?

Yes 1
 No Please go on to question 53 2

Q52 Please state the children's ages.....

.....

Q53 Are you currently?

Retired 1
 Not employed 2
 Working full time 3
 Working part-time 4

Q54 What is (or was) your occupation?.....

.....

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire. All the information you have given will be treated confidentially. If you would be prepared to take part in further research into horticultural visitor attractions, please enter your name & address below.

Name:

Address and Postcode:

E-mail:

Please leave the completed questionnaire on your doorstep on the day shown on the accompanying letter.



Vice-Chancellor:
Professor Gillian L Slater
MSc MA DPhil CMath
FIMA FRSA

**School of
Service Industries**

*Serving the needs of
the Food, Hospitality,
Retail & Tourism
Industries*

Head of School
Professor Nigel Hemmington
BSc(Hons) PhD
FHCIMA FICPD

November 2002

Dear Sir or Madam

I am a post-graduate researcher at Bournemouth University investigating garden-based visitor attractions. I need the help of your household in completing the attached questionnaire – your property is one of a number of postcodes that were randomly selected. If there is more than one occupier, please would the adult, who will next have a birthday, complete the questions. All answers will be completely confidential.

I will collect the questionnaires on Tuesday. If you do not wish to be disturbed or if you will be out, please leave the completed form in a plastic bag on your doorstep.

Thank you for your help.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D Fox".

D.G. Fox
BSc (Hons)

Dorset House Talbot Campus Fern Barrow Poole Dorset BH12 5BB
Telephone: (01202) 595110 Fax: (01202) 515707

In Pursuit of Excellence in Vocational Education



Vice-Chancellor
Premier Centre 301W
M5, PO Box 100
Bournemouth

School of
Service Industries

Serving the needs of
the food, packaging,
textile and leisure
industries

Head of School
Premier School Havelock
B5 2JW, PO Box
100 Bournemouth

November 2002

Dear Sir or Madam

I am a part graduate researcher at Bournemouth University investigating garden-household visitor interactions. I recently delivered a questionnaire to you as your property was one of a number of postcodes that were randomly selected. I have called today to collect the form, but there was no-one at home. Please could the completed form be posted as soon as possible to:

Aun. Mrs Dorothy Fox
School of Service Industries
Bournemouth University
Dorset House, Talbot Campus
Fern Barrow
POOLE
BH12 5BB

I need the help of as many households as possible for my research to be accurate and of any value. If there is more than one occupier, please would the adult, who will not have a limiting, complete the questions. All answers will be completely confidential.

Thank you for your help

Yours sincerely

D.G. Fox
DSc (Hons)

BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY
PO BOX 100, BOURNEMOUTH, BH12 5BB
TELEPHONE (01202) 300000 FAX (01202) 300000
WWW.BOU-AC.UK



Vice-Chancellor:
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November 2002

Dear Sir or Madam

I am a post-graduate researcher at Bournemouth University investigating garden-based visitor attractions. I need the help of your household in completing the attached questionnaire – your property is one of a number of postcodes that were randomly selected. If there is more than one occupier, please would the adult, who will next have a birthday, complete the questions. All answers will be completely confidential.

I will collect the questionnaires on Friday. If you do not wish to be disturbed or if you will be out, please leave the completed form in a plastic bag on your doorstep.

Thank you for your help.

Yours Sincerely

D Fox

D.G. Fox
BSc (Hons)

Dorset House Talbot Campus Fern Barrow Poole Dorset BH12 5BB
Telephone: (01202) 595110 Fax: (01202) 515707

In Pursuit of Excellence in Vocational Education

The South of England has many different attractions to visit.

Page 1

- Q1 Which of the following types of attraction do you, personally, like to visit?**
- Please tick the appropriate boxes.
- 1) Natural place – e.g. beach, forest, countryside
 - 2) Historic town or property, stately home, cathedral.....
 - 3) Garden, park.....
 - 4) Amusement or theme park, fairground.....
 - 5) Zoo, safari park.....
 - 6) Museum, art gallery.....
 - 7) Shopping complex, market.....
 - 8) Entertainment complex, cinema, casino, theatre.....
 - 9) Pub, restaurant.....
 - 10) Leisure centre, health spa, sports facility.....
 - 11) Sporting event.....
 - 12) Other
- Please describe

Q2 Which attraction do you most prefer?

Q3 What are your reasons for visiting the attraction you most prefer?

Please tick one box in each row to show how important or unimportant, the motives are to you.

	very imp	quite imp	quite unimp	very unimp	No opinion
To enjoy myself/have a good time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The pleasure of viewing the attraction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To be entertained	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To relax	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To be with family or friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To be informed/learn something	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

There are many different gardens that people pay to visit. Some are owned by the National Trust, many are commercially operated and there are also private gardens which open for charity. All of the following questions are about these types of garden.

- Q4 How enjoyable do you think a visit to a garden like this, would be?**
- Very enjoyable.....
 - Quite enjoyable...
 - Quite unenjoyable.....
 - Very unenjoyable.....
 - Don't know.....

Q5 What words would you use to describe this type of garden?

- Q6 As an adult have you ever visited this type of garden?**
- Yes..... 1
 - No.....please go on to question 25 2

Please turn over the page to question 7

Q7 How many times have you visited a garden like this in 2002?
 0..... []
 1-2..... []
 3-4..... []
 5 or more..... []

Q8 How important to you, are the following motives for visiting a garden?
 Please tick one box in each row to show how important or unimportant, the motives are.

	Very Imp	Quite Imp	Quite Unimp	Very Unimp	No Opinion
To enjoy myself or have a good time	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
To relax	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
The pleasure of viewing the garden	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
To learn or be informed	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
To be with family or friends	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
The exercise	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
For a lunch or tea	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
The freedom	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
The peace - solitude	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Gardens are safe places to walk	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Q9 Who do you most frequently visit a garden with?
 Please tick one box.

With a family member or members.....	[]	1
With a friend or friends.....	[]	2
With other members of a horticultural society or gardening club etc.....please go on to question 13	[]	3
I go alone.....please go on to question 13	[]	4

Q10 Which member of the group most wants to visit a garden?

I do.....	[]	1
My companion does.....	[]	2
Both of us.....	[]	3

Q11 Why do you visit a garden with your family or friends?

Q12 Do you ever visit a garden with your companion, so that they will then accompany you somewhere else?

Yes.....	[]	1
No.....	[]	2

Q13 When you are visiting a garden, who do you like to talk to?

Nobody.....	[]	1
My companion(s).....	[]	2
Other visitors.....	[]	3
The professional gardeners.....	[]	4

Please turn over to question 14

Q14 Which, if any, of the following items, do you like to learn about, whilst visiting a garden?	I don't go to learn.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
	The garden's history.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
	The names of the plants.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
	How to care for the plants.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
	Other		
	- please describe.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	5

Q15 Here are some more reasons to visit a garden. Please tick one box in each row, to show how important or unimportant, the following are to you?		Very Imp		Quite Imp		Quite Unimp		Very Unimp		No Opinion
	To be somewhere prestigious or unique	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inspiration	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	To compare my plants with the ones there	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	To buy plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	To see plants I'm not familiar with	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Cunosity	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	To support the event or organiser	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Q16 Whilst travelling to or from a garden, do you ever do any of the following?	Visit a second garden.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
	Visit another attraction.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
	Stop for a meal, snack, icecream, drink etc.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
	Combine the visit with another leisure activity, eg shopping.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
	Do something that another member of the group may enjoy.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
	Do another hobby, eg photography.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	6

Q17 If you receive a special offer or free admission to a garden, does this provide an incentive to visit it?	Yes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
	No.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
	Don't know.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3

Q18 Do you sometimes like to revisit a garden?	Yes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
	No..... please go on to question 20	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
	Don't know..... please go on to question 20	<input type="checkbox"/>	3

Q19 Why do you like to return to a garden? Please tick the appropriate boxes and then draw a circle around the most important reason.	To see it in a different season.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
	To relive a happy memory.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
	To experience the sense of place.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
	To see how the garden developed.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
	Too much to see in one visit.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
	None of the above.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
	Other Please describe.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	7

Please turn over the page to question 20

Q20 Please think back to the last garden you visited. Which garden was it?

.....

Q21 Why did you visit it on this occasion?

Please tick one box only.

- Because you know about this particular garden and wanted to visit it.....
- Because you wanted to go to a garden and then chose this one.....
- Because you wanted to go out somewhere and then chose this garden.....
- Because your companion knew about this garden and wanted to visit it.....
- Because your companion wanted to go to a garden and then chose this one.....
- Because your companion wanted to go out somewhere and then chose this garden.....
- Because you were offered the opportunity to visit e.g. on an organised trip.....
- I cannot remember..... 8

Q22 Next, please would you imagine that all the arrangements have been made for you to visit a garden. Just as you are leaving home you are told one of the following. Would you still go to the garden that day if....?

Please tick one box in each row.

- | | Yes | | No | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
| It is going to rain all day | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| The café/restaurant at the garden would be closed | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| The person you were visiting with, couldn't go | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| There would be no plants for sale | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| The entry price was £2.00 more than you had thought | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| The garden will be very crowded | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Q23 This time, please could you imagine that you have arrived at the entrance to the garden. Would you then still go to into the garden that day if....?

Please tick one box in each row.

- | | Yes | | No | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
| It is going to rain all day | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| The café/restaurant at the garden would be closed | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| The person you were visiting with decided to stay in the coach or car | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| There would be no plants for sale | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| The entry price was £2.00 more than you had thought | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| The garden will be very crowded | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |

Please turn over the page to question 24

Page 5

Q24 Which of the following have inspired you to visit a garden?
Please tick the appropriate boxes and then draw a circle around the most important one.

Garden guide book.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Magazine article.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Newspaper article.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
National Trust Handbook.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
RHS Handbook.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Internet Page.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Tourist Office Information.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	7
Family.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
Friend.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	9
None of the above.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	10
Other		
Please describe.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	11

Q25 Please would you think about people you know. How many of them do you think like to visit gardens?
Please tick one box in each row.

	not applicable	1	2	3	4
Female relatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Male relatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Male friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q26 How often do you watch the programme, 'Gardeners World' on television?

As often as I can.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Sometimes if I happen to see it on.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Sometimes, because another member of the household watches it.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Never.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

Q27 Programmes like 'Gardeners World' often feature the sort of garden that people pay to visit. Have you ever seen this type of garden on the television?

Yes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
No..... Please go on to question 31	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Don't know..... Please go on to question 31	<input type="checkbox"/>	3

Q28 Having seen a garden, did it make you want to visit it?

Yes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
No..... Please go on to question 31	<input type="checkbox"/>	2

Q29 Have you subsequently visited that garden?

Yes..... Please go on to question 31	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
No.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2

Q30 Why haven't you visited that garden?
Please tick the appropriate boxes and then draw a circle around the most important reason.

Too far away.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Family commitments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Just not got round to it yet.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Too expensive.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Work commitments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
No-one to go with.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
No transport.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	7
Other leisure commitments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
Other		
Please describe.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	9

Now I would like to ask you some questions about other types of attractions that are garden-based.

Q31 Have you ever made a visit to see plants in their natural habitat, e.g. bluebells in a wood?

Yes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
No.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2

Q32 Would you think about the type of flower festivals that are often held for a few days, often in churches. Have you ever visited this type of festival?
 Yes..... 1
 No..... 2

Q33 Much larger festivals, often lasting several months, are also held. Have you ever visited this type of festival?
 Yes..... 1
 No..... 2

I would now like to ask you some questions about horticultural shows.

Q34 The first type of show, I will call a celebrity show. They are very large shows, with gardening celebrities, show gardens etc. Have you ever visited this type of show?
 Yes.....please go on to question 36 1
 No..... 2

Q35 Although you have not visited a celebrity show, would you like to, if it were possible?
 Yes..... 1
 No..... 2

Q36 The next type of show, is not quite so large. I will call it a professional show, because it has professional exhibitors selling plants and gardening equipment etc. but no show gardens etc. They are often held in the grounds of stately homes. Have you ever visited this type of show?
 Yes.....please go on to question 33 1
 No..... 2

Q37 Although you have not visited a professional show, would you like to, if it were possible?
 Yes..... 1
 No..... 2

Q38 The last type of show I will call an amateur show. This is the kind of show, which is held in a community hall or marquee. Gardeners compete for prizes, for the flowers or vegetables, they have grown. Have you ever visited this type of show?
 Yes.....please go on to question 40 1
 No..... 2

Q39 Although you have not visited an amateur show, would you like to, if it were possible?
 Yes.....
 No.....

Q40 How many times have you visited these types of shows in 2002?

	0	1-2	3-4	5 or more
Celebrity show	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional show	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amateur show	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tick one box in each row.

Q41 Each year several of the celebrity shows are featured on television programmes. Have you ever seen any of these programmes?
 Yes..... 1
 No..... 2
 Don't know..... 3

Q42 What are your main leisure activities?
 1
 2
 3

Q43 Which of the following factors influence how you spend your leisure time?

Please tick the appropriate boxes and then draw a circle around the most important factor.

children.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
disability or ill-health.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
other relatives.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
pets.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
television schedules.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
transport.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
weather.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	7
your garden.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
your mood at the time.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	9
your religion.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	10
none of the above.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	11
other please describe.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	12

Q44 What magazines or papers do you regularly read?

.....

.....

None.....

Q45 Which sentence best describes you?

Please tick one box.

I am an enthusiastic gardener.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
I quite like gardening.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
I would like to do some gardening, but I don't have a garden or allotment.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
I would like to do some gardening, but someone else does it.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
I used to like gardening, but I am no longer physically able to do it.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
I don't really like gardening, but I do it to help another member of the household.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
I don't really like gardening, but there is no-one else to do it.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	7
I don't like gardening and I don't do any.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	8

Q46 What type of garden does your household have access to?

No garden.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Its own garden.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
A communal garden.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
An allotment.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
A roof terrace or balcony where plants are grown... <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5

Q47 How many hours each week on average, do you spend gardening, in the summer? (E.g. mowing, digging, pruning, sowing etc.)

..... hours per week

Q48 How many hours each week on average, do you spend enjoying your garden in the summer? (E.g. relaxing, sunbathing, barbecues, playing with children etc.)

.....hours per week

Q49 How often is the grass in your garden cut?

There is no grass..... please go on to question 51	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never..... please go on to question 51	<input type="checkbox"/>
A few times per year.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
About monthly.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
About every fortnight.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weekly.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mowed more than once a week.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please turn over the page to question 50

- Q50 Who usually cuts the grass in your garden?**
- I do..... 1
 A male member of the household..... 2
 A female member of the household..... 3
 A professional gardener..... 4
 Other
 Please describe.....
- Q51 Are you a member of any of the following organisations?**
- National Trust (NT)..... 1
 Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)..... 2
 An allotment, gardening or horticultural society or club..... 3
 None of the above..... 4
- Q52 Are you?**
- Male..... 1
 Female..... 2
- Q53 In which age group are you?**
- 16-24..... 1
 25-34..... 2
 35-44..... 3
 45-54..... 4
 55-64..... 5
 65-74..... 6
 75+..... 7
- Q54 How many adults are there in your household?**
- 1 (myself)..... 1
 2..... 2
 3 or more..... 3
- Q55 Are there any children in your household?**
- Yes..... 1
 No.....please go on to question 57 2
- Q56 Please state the children's ages.....**
- Q57 Are you currently?**
- Retired..... 1
 Not employed..... 2
 Working full time..... 3
 Working part-time..... 4
- Q58 What is (or was) your occupation?**

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire. All the information you have given will be treated confidentially. If you would be prepared to take part in further research into horticultural visitor attractions, please enter your name & address below.

Name:
 Address:
 Postcode:
 E-mail address:

Please leave the completed questionnaire in a plastic bag, on your doorstep, on the day shown on the accompanying letter.



VISITOR QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is part of a worldwide research programme conducted by the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS). The aim of the study is to find out more about visitors to cultural events and attractions, their motivations, activities and impressions. We very much appreciate your participation in this research, and all responses will be treated confidentially.

SECTION A: YOUR VISIT TO THIS AREA

1. Where is your current place of residence?

- Local area (go to Q11) Abroad (country) _____
 Rest of the country

2. Have you ever been to this area before?

- Yes No

If yes, how many times have you visited before? _____

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (please circle a number from 1 to 5)

I am visiting this area to learn new things
 Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

I am visiting this area to be entertained
 Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

I want to find out more about the culture of this area
 Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

I want to experience the atmosphere of this area
 Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

I am visiting primarily for sightseeing
 Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

4. In what type of accommodation are you staying?

- Own home (go to Q6)
 Second residence
 Hotel
 Self catering accommodation
 Bed & breakfast/room in private house
 Caravan/tent
 With family & friends
 Youth hostel
 Other

5. How many nights will you be staying in this area?

Write in number _____

6. What is the primary purpose of your current trip? (please, tick no more than ONE option)

- Holiday (go to Q7) Cultural event
 Visiting relatives and friends
 Business
 Conference
 Sports event
 Shopping
 Other (go to Q8)

ATLAS 1994/95

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7. How would you describe your current holiday?

- Sun/Beach holiday Rural holiday
 Health/sports holiday Touring holiday
 Cultural holiday City trip
 Ecotourism/nature holiday Other

8. How did you arrange your trip?

- All-inclusive package (transport and accommodation booked via travel agent/tour operator) (go to Q9)
 Transport booked separately Accommodation booked separately
- Booked via travel agent or tour operator Booked via travel agent or tour operator
 Booked via Internet Booked via Internet
 Made own travel arrangements directly (phone, fax) Made own travel arrangements directly (phone, fax)
 Nothing booked in advance Nothing booked in advance

9. What sources of information did you consult about this area before you arrived here?

- Family/friends TV/Radio
 Previous visit Newspapers/Magazines
 Internet Tour operator brochure
 Tourist board Guide books
 Travel agency Other

10. What sources of information have you consulted in this area?

- Family/friends Local brochures
 Tourist information centre Guidebooks
 Internet TV/Radio
 Tour operator information Other
 Newspapers/Magazines

11. Have you visited or are you planning to visit any of the following cultural attractions or cultural events in this area?

- Museums Cinema
 Monuments Pop concerts
 Art galleries World music events
 Religious sites Classical music events
 Historic sites Dance events
 Theatres Traditional festivals
 Heritage/crafts centres

12. What forms of transport did you use to get to this area?

- Air Local transport (bus, metro, taxi)
 Own car Motorcycle
 Hire car Bicycle
 Coach Walking
 Train Other

13. Are you travelling:

- Alone With friends
 With your partner With a tour group
 With your family Other

Please turn over →

14. To what extent do you personally connect the following images to this area?

- Authentic sights
Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very much
- Historic architecture
Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very much
- Museums and cultural attractions
Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very much
- Festivals and events
Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very much
- Customs and traditions
Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very much
- Regional gastronomy
Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very much
- Hospitable local people
Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very much
- Lively atmosphere
Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very much
- Linguistic diversity
Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very much
- Culturally distinct region
Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very much
- Multicultural region
Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very much
- A fashionable place to be
Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very much

15. How satisfied are you with your visit to this area, on a scale from 1-10?

Very Unsatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very Satisfied

16. Can you indicate how much you have spent (or will spend) during your stay? (please, include the expenditure of all members of your travel party)

No. of people _____ Currency _____

Travel _____

Accommodation _____

Food and drink _____

Shopping _____

Attractions admissions _____

Total _____

17. Please tick from the following list the five cities which you think are most suitable for a cultural holiday

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amsterdam | <input type="checkbox"/> Dublin | <input type="checkbox"/> Moscow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Antwerp | <input type="checkbox"/> Edinburgh | <input type="checkbox"/> New York |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athens | <input type="checkbox"/> Florence | <input type="checkbox"/> Oporto |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barcelona | <input type="checkbox"/> Glasgow | <input type="checkbox"/> Paris |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Berlin | <input type="checkbox"/> Helsinki | <input type="checkbox"/> Prague |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brussels | <input type="checkbox"/> Hong Kong | <input type="checkbox"/> Rome |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budapest | <input type="checkbox"/> Istanbul | <input type="checkbox"/> Rotterdam |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buenos Aires | <input type="checkbox"/> Lisbon | <input type="checkbox"/> Sydney |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cape Town | <input type="checkbox"/> London | <input type="checkbox"/> Venice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cardiff | <input type="checkbox"/> Madrid | <input type="checkbox"/> Vienna |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cracow | | |

SECTION B: YOURSELF

18. Please, indicate your gender
 Male Female

19. Please, indicate your age group
 15 or younger 20-29 40-49 60 or over
 18-19 30-39 50-59

20. What is your highest level of educational qualification?
 Primary school Bachelor degree
 Secondary school Master or Doctoral degree
 Vocational education

21. Which of the following categories best describes your current position?
 Employee Housewife/men or carer
 Self employed Student (go to Q23)
 Retired Unemployed

22. Please indicate your current (or former) occupational group
 Director or manager
 Professional (doctor, lawyer, teacher, etc.)
 Technical professions (technicians, nursing)
 Clerical/administration
 Service and sales personnel
 Manual or crafts worker

23. Is your current occupation (or former occupation) connected with culture?
 Yes No

24. Which category best describes your annual household gross income group?
 £3,500 or less £20,001 - £27,000
 £3,501 - £6,500 £27,001 - £33,500
 £6,501 - £13,500 £33,501 - £40,500
 £13,501 - £20,000 More than £40,500

25. Which of the following organisations do you belong to?
 National Trust (NT)
 English Heritage (EH)
 Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)
 The Japanese Garden Society
 none of the above

SECTION C: YOUR VISIT TO COMPTON ACRES

26. What made you, personally, come to Compton Acres today?

27. Before coming here today, did you?

- 1 Already know about the garden (go to Q29)
- 2 Actively seek out information on places to visit
- 3 Actively seek out information on gardens to visit
- 4 Just came across information about the garden
- 5 Passed by the garden and saw it (go to Q29)
- 6 Heard about the garden from someone else (go to Q29)
- 7 The visit was arranged by someone else (go to Q29)

28. Did you see the garden featured in any of the following:

- 1 The Compton Acres leaflet
- 2 Information on an organised trip
- 3 A magazine feature
- 4 A newspaper feature
- 5 The internet
- 6 The Country Living Guide to Rural England
- 7 RHS Gardens to Visit pamphlet or RHS handbook
- 8 The 'Yellow Book'
- 9 None of the above
- 10 Other _____

29. When did you first think about coming to Compton Acres?

- 1 Today
- 2 During the past week
- 3 Between 1 week and a month ago
- 4 Between 1 month and 3 months ago
- 5 Between 3 months and a year ago
- 6 More than a year ago

30. When did you actually decide to come here today?

- 1 Today
- 2 During the past week
- 3 Between 1 week and a month ago
- 4 Between 1 month and 3 months ago
- 5 Between 3 months and a year ago
- 6 More than a year ago

31. Before you decided to come here today, which of the following did you personally feel?

- 1 A need to be in the open air
- 2 A need for peace and calm
- 3 A need to be with friends
- 4 A need to be with family
- 5 A need to be entertained
- 6 A need to relax
- 7 A need to learn or be informed
- 8 A need to please the organiser of the visit
- 9 A need to escape
- 10 A need to enjoy myself
- 11 A need for exercise
- 12 None of the above

32. Before you decided to come here today, how did you feel emotionally?

- 1 Bored
- 2 Excited
- 3 Happy
- 4 Kind
- 5 Spiritual
- 6 Curious
- 7 Interested
- 8 Resigned
- 9 Stressed
- 10 None of the above

33. Which, if any, of the following items, did you want to learn about, whilst visiting the garden?

- 1 I didn't come to learn
- 2 The garden's history
- 3 The names of the plants
- 4 Ideas for my garden
- 5 How to care for plants
- 6 The architecture
- 7 The type of plants
- 8 The origin of the plants
- 9 The garden's design
- 10 Other _____

34. Before you decided to come here today, which, if any, of the following made you personally want to visit the garden?

- 1 The natural environment
- 2 The pleasure of viewing the garden
- 3 To see how the garden has changed
- 4 To support the owners
- 5 The weather
- 6 Solitude
- 7 The freedom
- 8 The peace or tranquility
- 9 For a lunch or tea
- 10 To be somewhere unique or prestigious
- 11 To compare my plants with the ones here
- 12 Gardens are safe places to walk
- 13 To see plants I am not familiar with
- 14 For a day out
- 15 To show someone else
- 16 To paint or photograph
- 17 Inspiration
- 18 To buy plants
- 19 None of the above
- 20 A specific feature in the garden _____

35. When did you last visit here?

- Year _____ Month _____
- 1 Too long ago to remember
 - 2 This is my first visit

36. Which of the following have you ever visited?

- 1 A garden centre
- 2 A plant nursery
- 3 A plant fair
- 4 A flower festival
- 5 A horticultural show
- 6 None of the above

37. Which sentence best describes you?

- 1 I am an enthusiastic gardener
- 2 I quite like gardening
- 3 I would like to do some gardening, but I don't have a garden or allotment
- 4 I would like to do some gardening, but someone else does it
- 5 I used to like gardening, but I am no longer physically able to do it
- 6 I don't really like gardening, but I do it to help another member of the household
- 7 I don't really like gardening, but there is no-one else to do it
- 8 I don't like gardening and I don't do any

Comments: _____

Appendix F – The resident interview guide

Domestic Garden Ownership

Resident survey
question number
q46

Importance – feelings

Use

Looking at it

No garden: Would you like a garden?

Have you ever had access to a garden?

Has there ever been a garden that has been particularly important to you?

Gardening

q45

Do you like gardening?

Are you the gardener in the household?

Learning about gardening

How did you learn about gardening?

At school

From family

Reading about gardens or gardening?

Watching any of the gardening programmes on television

Radio

Internet

Membership of a gardening club or horticultural society

Visiting a garden

Never visited

q6

Anticipated future visit/last visit

The decision whether to visit a garden

Feelings as thought about it

Role of companions in decision-making

Reasons for visit

q8 15

Usual time of visit – season – day of week – special day (birthdays) – time of day

What do you get out of visiting a garden that you don't get from your own garden?

Is there a different feeling in a garden that you visit?

The pleasure of being in a garden

q4

Words used to describe a garden

q5

Particular features in gardens that you like to see when you go to visit them

Companionship – 'togetherness'

q9 10 11
22 22c 23c

Would you visit a garden on your own?

Learning about gardens

q14

Revisiting a garden

q18 19

Do you anticipate feeling nostalgic when you revisit a garden?

Does nostalgia make you want to revisit?

If you don't feel nostalgic from a previous visit, how do you feel?

Do you ever feel curious about a garden?

When you're in a garden do you like to see people working there?

q13

Constraints

q22 23 30

35 37 39 43

Tourism

Do you ever visit a garden whilst on holiday?

Do gardens influence destination choice?

What motivates you to go on holiday?

Is this different to visiting an attraction?

Attractions

You said that you like to visit.....

q1

What aspects about them is it that you like?

You said that you personally most prefer.....

q2

Why?

Do you enjoy looking at anything when you are there?

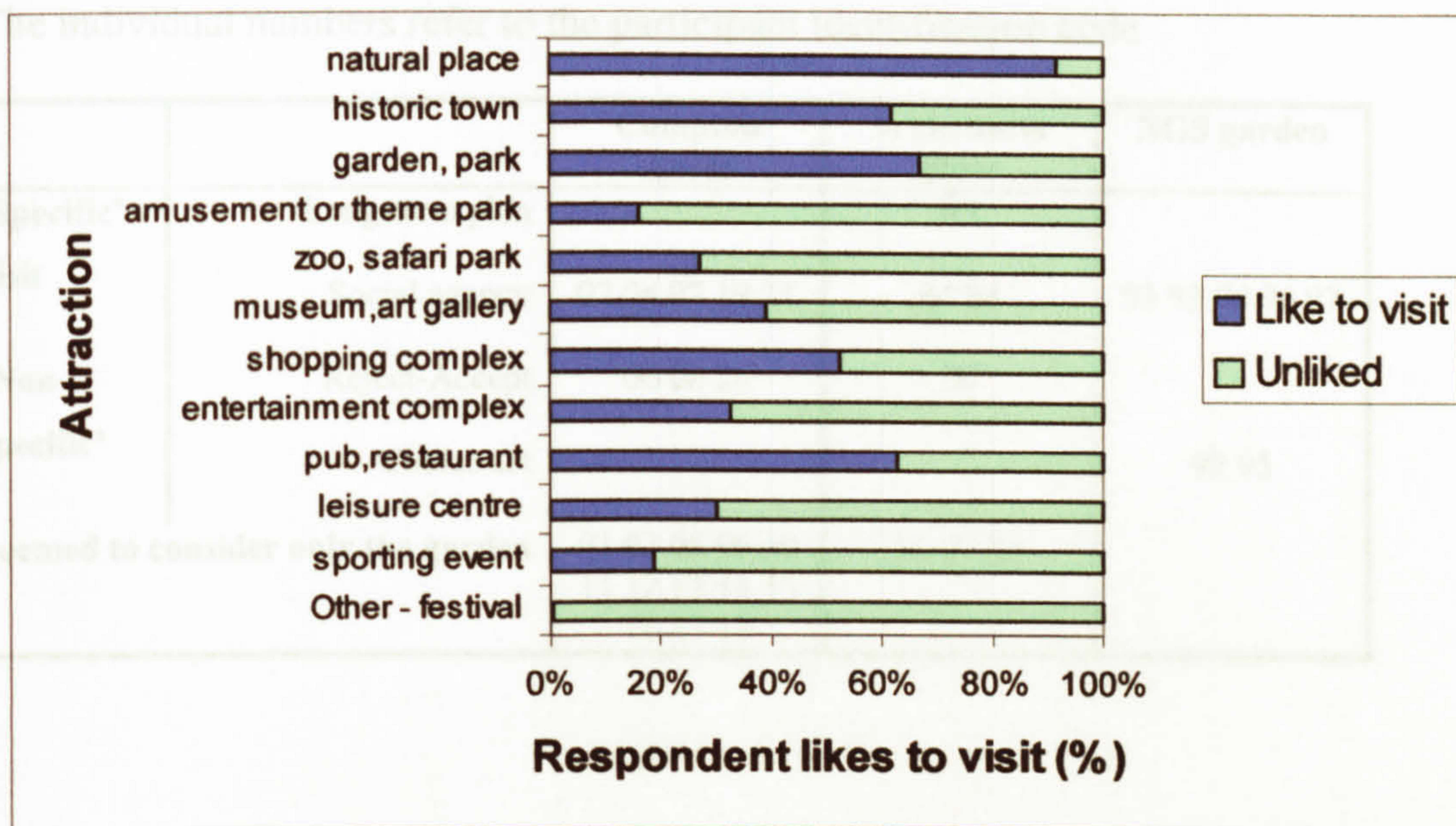
When did you last visit a.....?

What made you want to go there then?

Who did you go with?

Appendix H – The attractions which respondents like to visit

From Q1 of the resident survey



Appendix I – A matrix of responses for selecting a garden to visit

The individual numbers refer to the participant identification code

		Compton Acres	Wakehurst Place	NGS garden
'Specific' visit	Long-term plan		85	
	Social agency	02 04 07 19 21	84 89	91 93 94 96 97
'Non-specific'	Reject-Accept	06 08 20	90	
	Choice set			92 95
Seemed to consider only the garden		01 03 05 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18	86 87 88	

Appendix J – A detailed evaluation of the methods used

Resident survey			
	Strengths	Weaknesses	Indicators
Overall	Relatively quick and low-cost to undertake. Piloting improved performance. All data is anonymous.	Information obtained is more influenced by researcher	
<u>The sample</u> A multi-stage random cluster sample of adult residents in the BH post-code area	This included non-visitors as well as visitors to gardens. The clusters reduced the distances travelled between respondents, saving both time and money.	Not a <i>fully</i> random sample because clusters used. Using only one post-code area in England means that the results may not be generalisable to the whole of England.	
<u>Questionnaire Design</u> – 58 questions over 8 sides of A4 paper. Several question formats.	Allowed collection of large amount of quantitative data. Avoided repetition and boredom. Had open as well as closed questions.	May have contributed to respondent fatigue for some of or the entire questionnaire.	RS188 <i>It was a pleasure to fill in this form for you</i> RS326 <i>Sorry, ran out of steam, survey far too long</i> [answered first 19 questions only]
<u>Question content</u>	Pre-testing had eliminated ambiguities Excluded unnecessary intrusive questions	The scale used for questions was not well worded. A few questions subsequently irrelevant to main objectives of the thesis. Many questions not relevant to non-visitors.	RS207 <i>I do not think I have been much help as I ...rarely go to these kinds of places.</i>
<u>Question sequence</u> Simple questions at the start of the questionnaire, personal questions at the end	More likely to have wider appeal, encourage respondent to start filling in the questionnaire		
<u>Response format</u> Mainly tick boxes	Piloting showed respondents could complete the questionnaire in about 10 minutes		

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Indicators
<u>Covering letter</u> – leaving introductory letter with householder or with questionnaire	University logo gave credibility to the research		
<u>Questionnaire delivery</u> – left at residence Often after face-to-face contact with researcher	Respondent could complete in their own time. Opportunity for personal appeal.	Could not deliver during the evenings as data collection undertaken in November	324 householders met at 912 addresses, only 36 declined immediately, predominantly due to old age or infirmity. <i>RS323 We are both elderly pensioners... Thank you for your efforts, we are very sorry we are unable to assist you.</i>
<u>Follow-up letter</u> 568 left at addresses	Increased response rate	Only one reminder was given	58 questionnaires received in response to follow-up letter
<u>Response rate</u>	Reasonable response rate, can generalise across population	However, some under-representation by young men in completing the questionnaire	37% response rate
<u>Analysis</u> Use of χ^2 , Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests	Use of standard statistical tests appropriate to the type of data.	Some of the categories had to be merged and re-coded, to reduce cells with a count of less than 5	

Visitor survey			
	Strengths	Weaknesses	Indicators
<u>Overall</u>	All data is anonymous.	Unable to pilot questionnaire	
<u>The sample</u> A random sample of visitors to a garden, included local residents and tourists.	All adults over the age of 16, Can make generalisations about visitors to Compton Acres	Using only one garden in England means that the results may not be generalisable to the whole of England.	34% local residents, 64% tourists
<u>Questionnaire Design</u> Standardised questions from the ATLAS project and further questions specifically relevant to this research.	Able to make comparisons with very large dataset. Able to include affordances identified in the resident survey and Connell (2004).	Not all ATLAS questions directly relevant to this research	VS189 <i>So much of this is not applicable</i> [completed all questions re the garden, but not all of the ATLAS questions]
<u>Question content</u> 37 questions over 3 sides of A4	Had a variety of question types, which maintained interest.	Length may have contributed to respondent fatigue	VS80 <i>I quite enjoyed this questionnaire.</i> VS118 <i>Phew!</i>
<u>Questionnaire delivery</u> In person by researcher	Personal appeal of researcher – some verbal pre-notification at ticket office. In a place where seats and tables and views over harbour for companions. Not at exit, when visitors ready to leave. During the peak visiting time. Over 4 days, covering weekdays and weekends including Father's Day		
<u>Response rate</u>	Very high response		94%
<u>Analysis</u> Use of chi ²	Use of standard statistical tests appropriate to the type of data.		
<u>Research relationships</u>	Inclusion in international ATLAS project. Provided opportunity to work with local organisation, included one question at their request		Positive response to report provided to Compton Acres

Resident interviews			
	Strengths	Weaknesses	Indicators
<u>Overall</u>	Information obtained at relatively low-cost. All data is anonymous. Convenience	Transcribing data relatively time-consuming.	
<u>The sample</u> 9 'volunteers' from the resident survey		Majority of 'volunteers' contacted unable or unwilling to take part in interview. Limited range of participants, therefore not generalisable.	RS284 <i>I regret at the age of 82... we would not be suitable candidates... I wish you well in your interesting research.</i>
<u>Consent of participant</u>	Able to inform participants fully prior to meeting them		
<u>Interview structure</u> semi-structured	Allowed collection of in-depth qualitative data over particular areas of interest and some scope for introduction of further issues by participants.	Influence of researcher in asking questions. Some irrelevant conversation	Participants spoke of how much they had enjoyed the interviews
<u>Privacy</u>	Conducted in a private setting, mostly in their own homes		
<u>Right of withdrawal</u>	Participants could contact researcher if subsequently wished to withdraw (none did)		
<u>Use of software</u>	Ease of access to taped conversations. Enables responses on same topic to be grouped together	Time spent learning how to use	

Visitor interviews		
	Strengths	Weaknesses
Overall		Indicators
<u>The sample</u> Mix of purposive and probability sample of visitors to horticultural attractions	All data is anonymous. Convenience. A wide-range of people took part, including visitors and non-visitors to gardens, therefore some generalisation possible	Only 12 people approached, refused to take part, most stated that they were returning to work after lunch-break
<u>Interview structure</u> Unstructured - Informal conversation, after 'grand tour' question	Limited researcher-bias, very flexible	Some irrelevant conversation
<u>Interviewees</u> individual or visiting group	Interaction between participants. Enabled children and teenagers to contribute to research, with the approval and in the company of their parents.	
<u>Consent of participant</u>		Small amount of time to inform participant, no opportunity for them to consider
<u>Setting</u>	Conducted in a public place – therefore felt safe. Relaxed environment	Disturbance by store announcements, aircraft overhead, etc
<u>Privacy</u>	Not discussing particularly private matters if overheard	
<u>Right of withdrawal</u>		Participants could not contact researcher if subsequently wished to withdraw

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