



# STOCKSBRIDGE TRACKS AND ACTIVITIES AT UNDERBANK RESERVOIR CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

THE OUTDOOR TOWN IN THE OUTDOOR CITY



WELCOME TO  
**STOCKSBRIDGE**



Yorkshire Water



HM Government

# The Consultation 19th October 2023

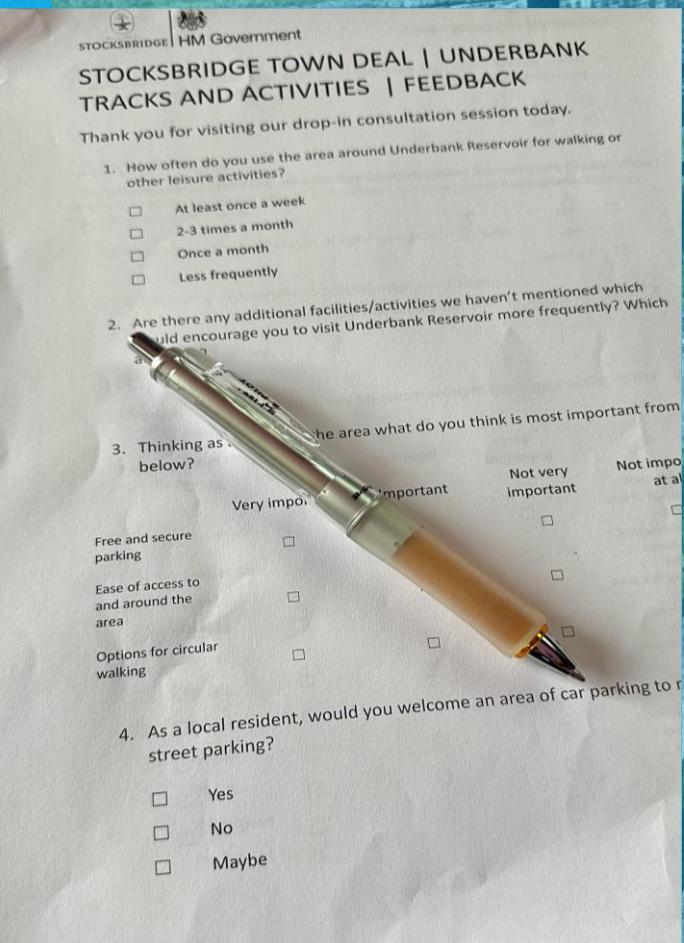
## Location

Smithy Moor Community Centre  
4 hour drop in consultation session

## Present:

Amanda Holmes (SCC / STF)  
Graham Silverwood (STF Board Member)  
John Crawshaw (STF Board Member)  
Cllr Julie Grocott (STF Board Member)  
Neil Curtis (STF Board Member)  
Alastair Harvey (YW)

Circa 250 attendees, 83 returned questionnaires completed



STOCKSBIDGE | HM Government

STOCKSBIDGE TOWN DEAL | UNDERBANK TRACKS AND ACTIVITIES | FEEDBACK

Thank you for visiting our drop-in consultation session today.

1. How often do you use the area around Underbank Reservoir for walking or other leisure activities?

At least once a week  
 2-3 times a month  
 Once a month  
 Less frequently

2. Are there any additional facilities/activities we haven't mentioned which would encourage you to visit Underbank Reservoir more frequently? Which

3. Thinking about the area what do you think is most important from below?

Very important      Important      Not very important      Not important at all

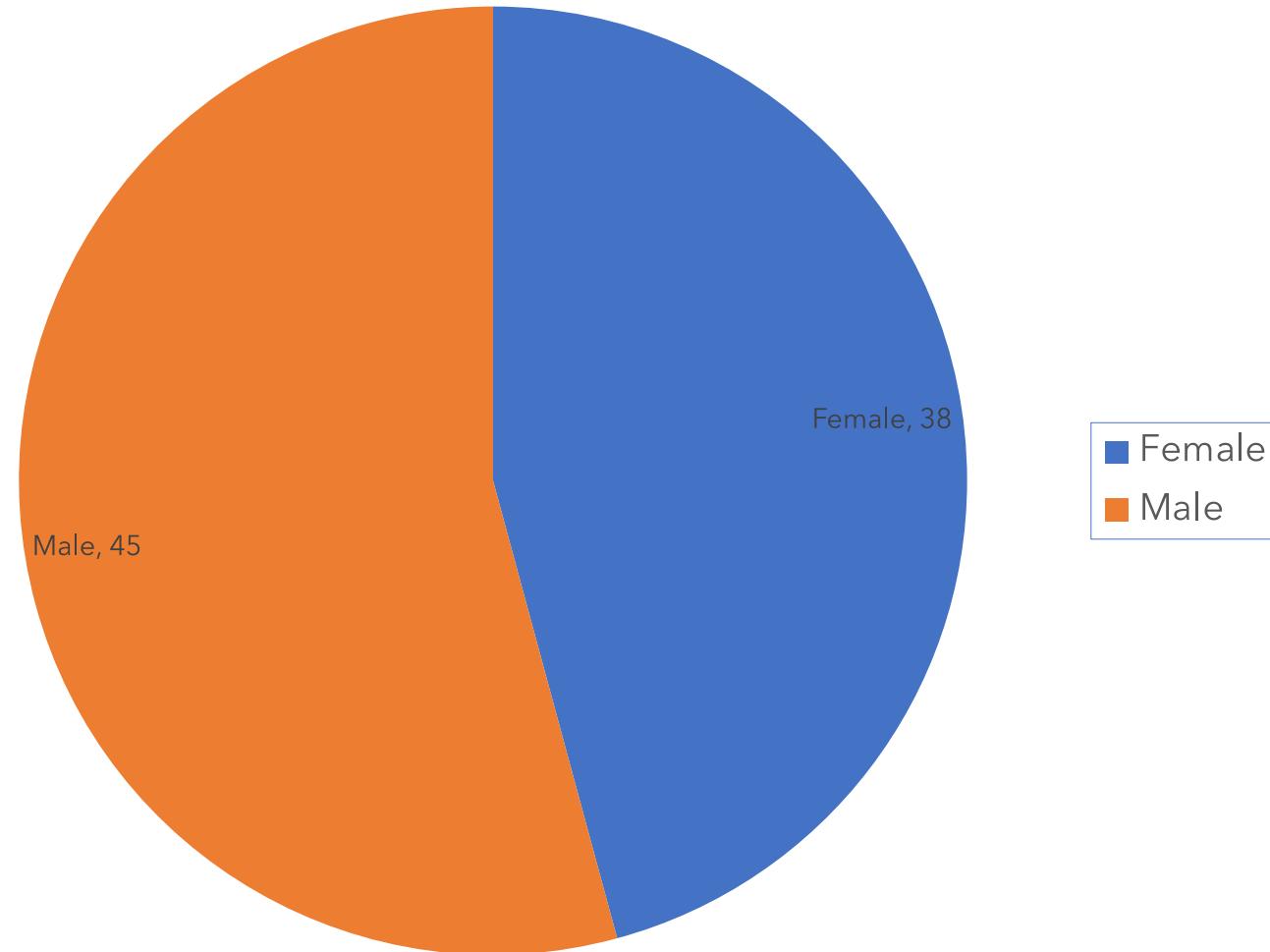
Free and secure parking      Ease of access to and around the area      Options for circular walking

4. As a local resident, would you welcome an area of car parking to replace street parking?

Yes  
 No  
 Maybe



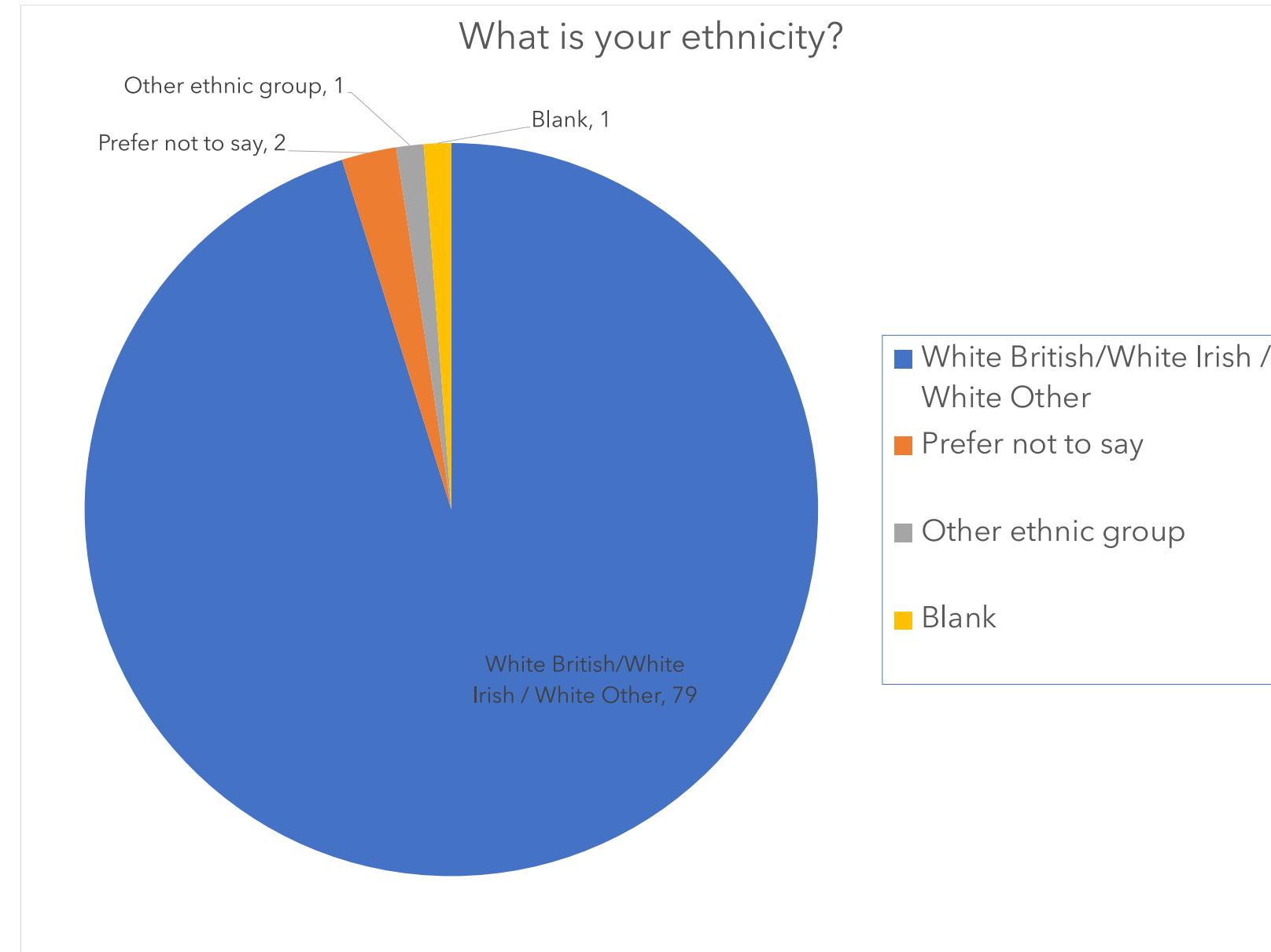
Gender of Consultation Attendees



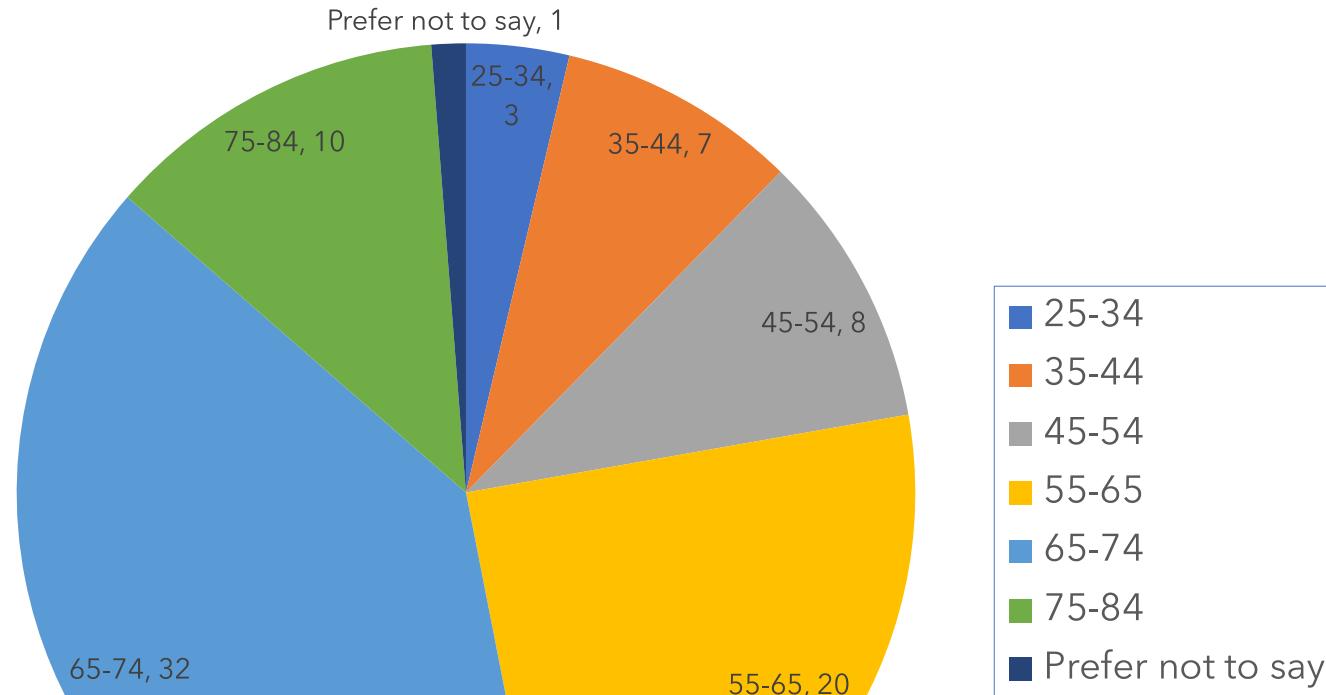
About You



About You



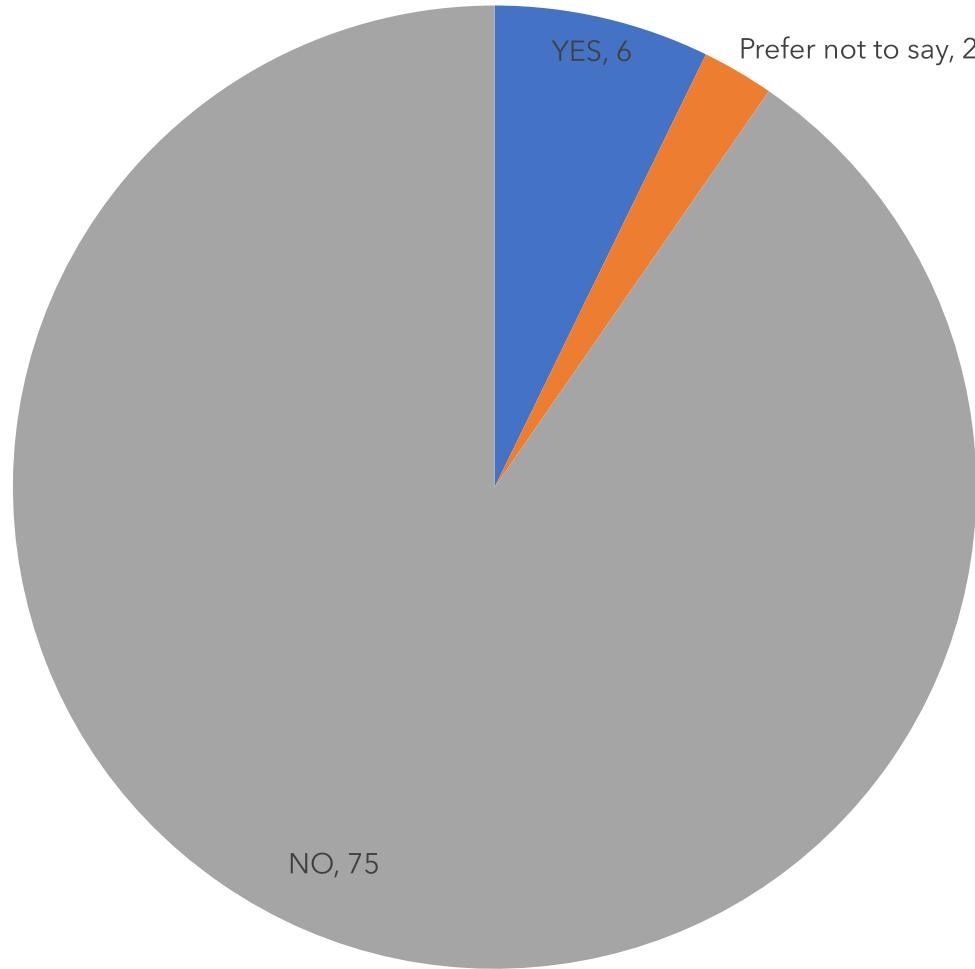
## Age of Consultation Attendees



About You



## Do you have any disability?



- YES
- Prefer not to say
- NO

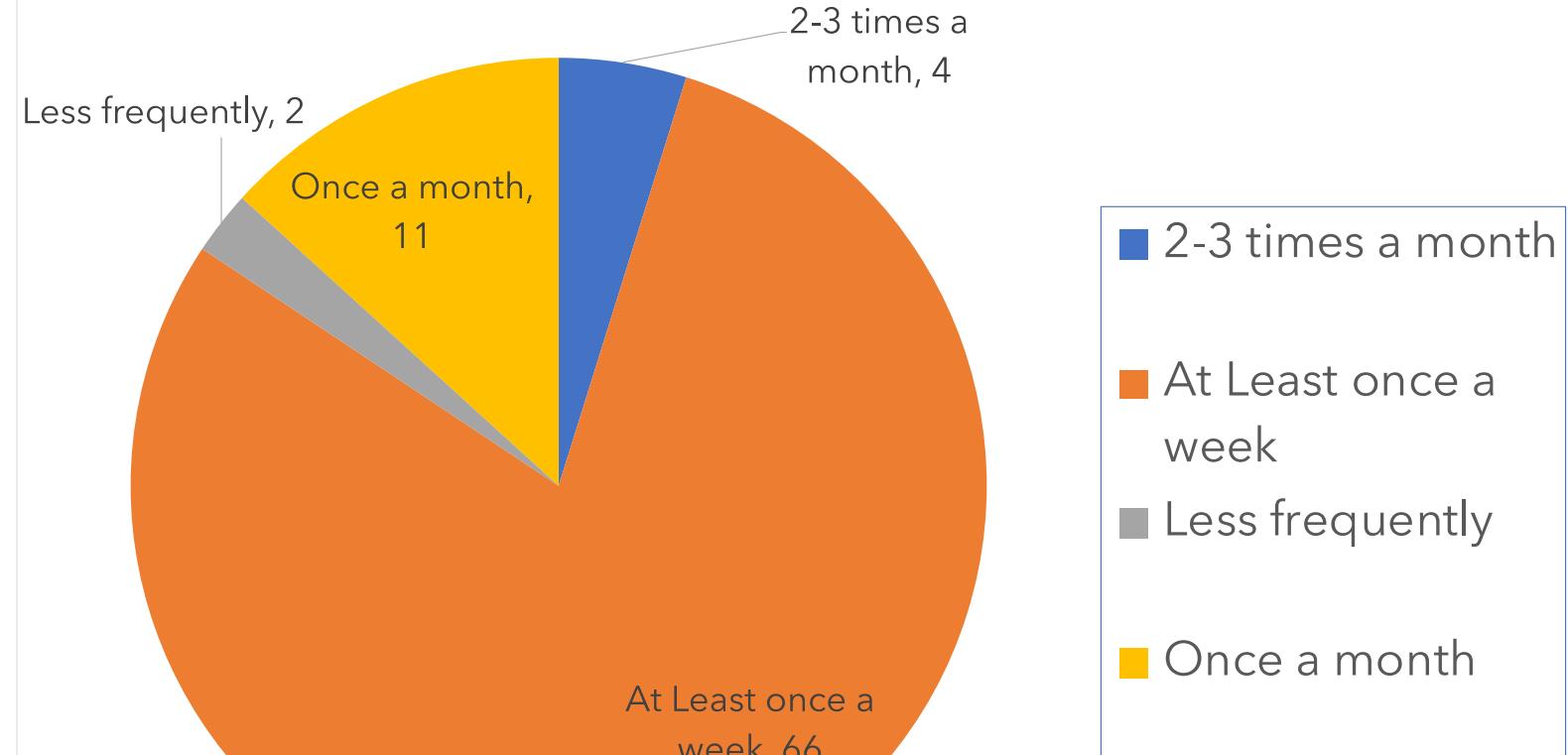
About You



## What is your connection to Stocksbridge and Deepcar?



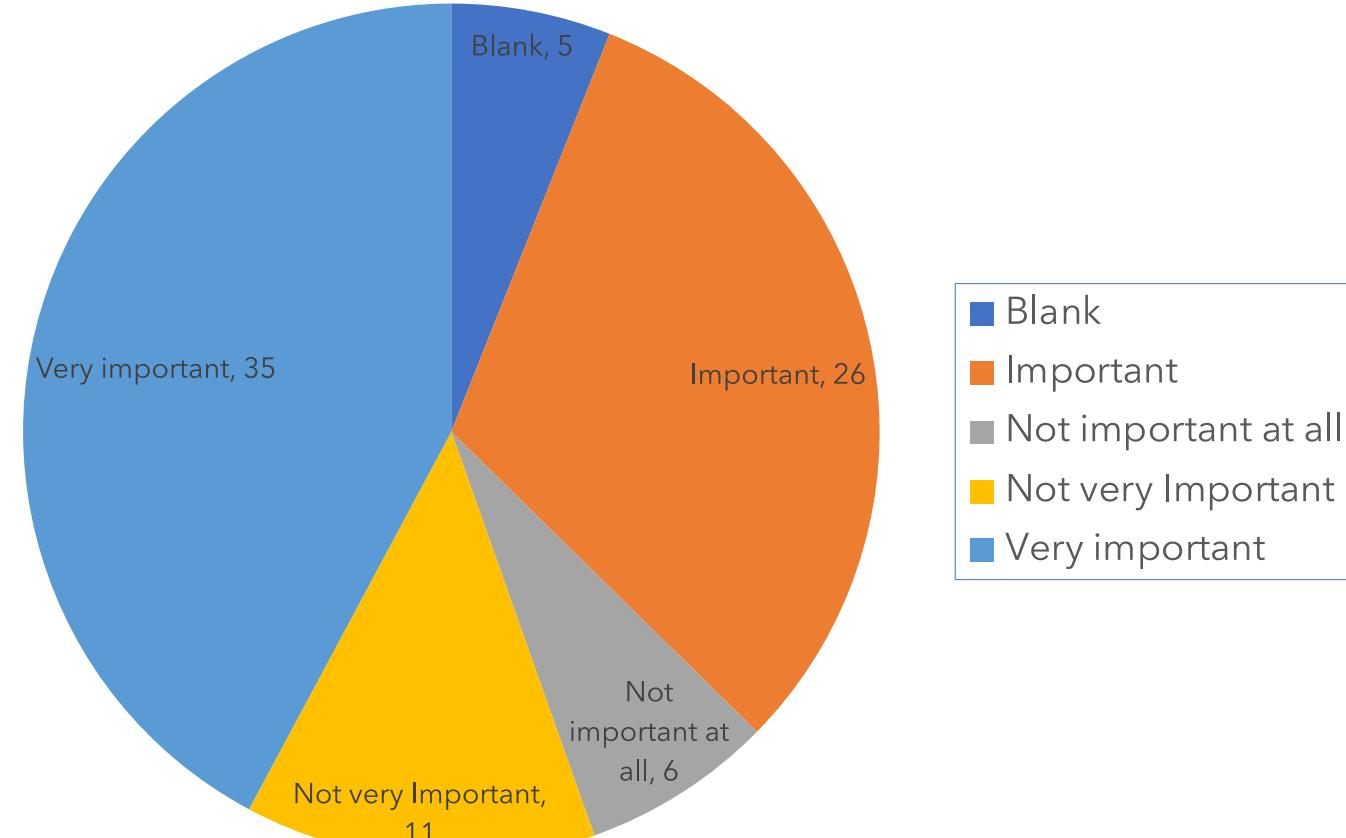
## Frequency of Underbank Reservoir by Attendees



About You

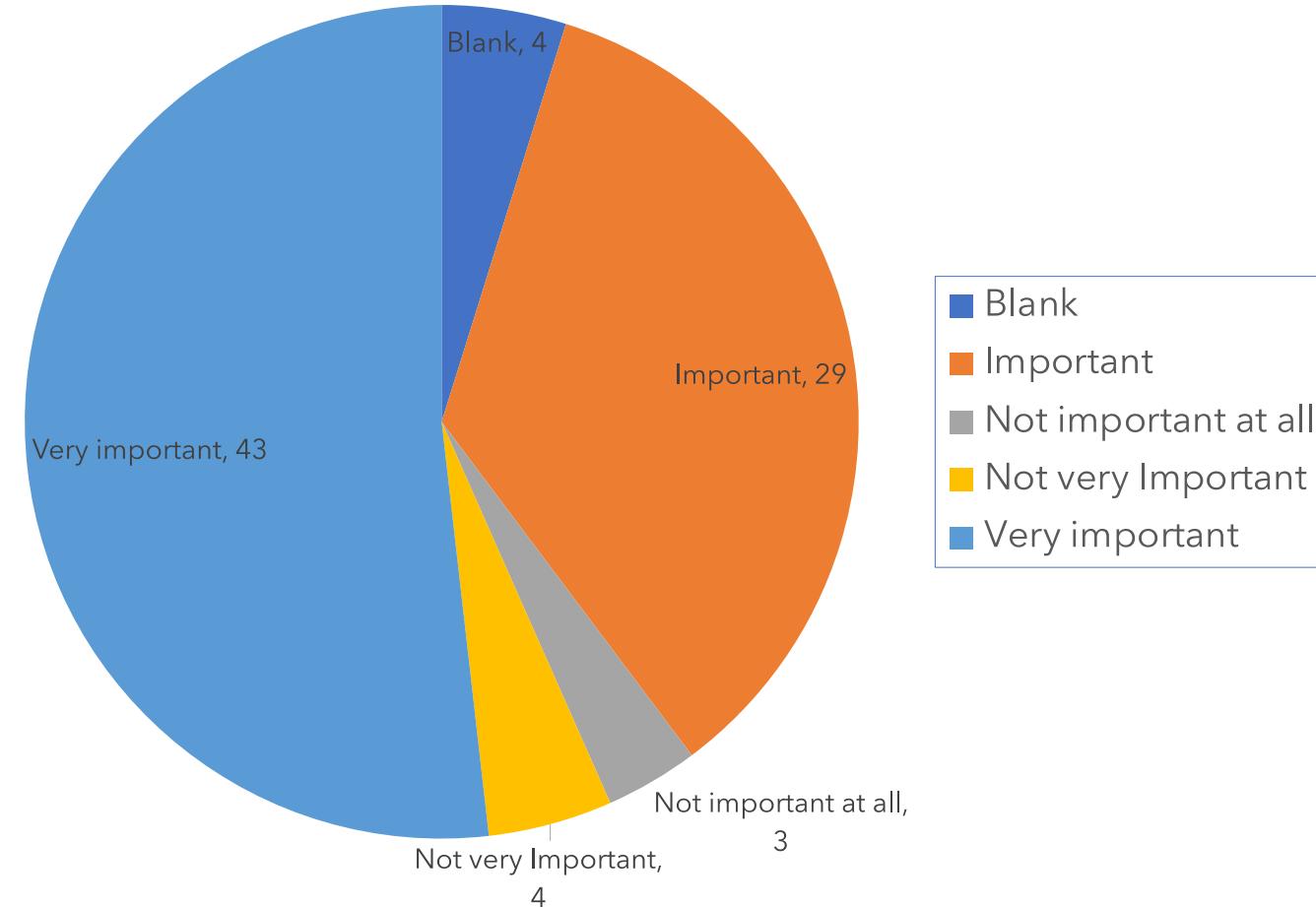


## Free and Secure Parking: Thinking as a visitor to the area what do you think is most important



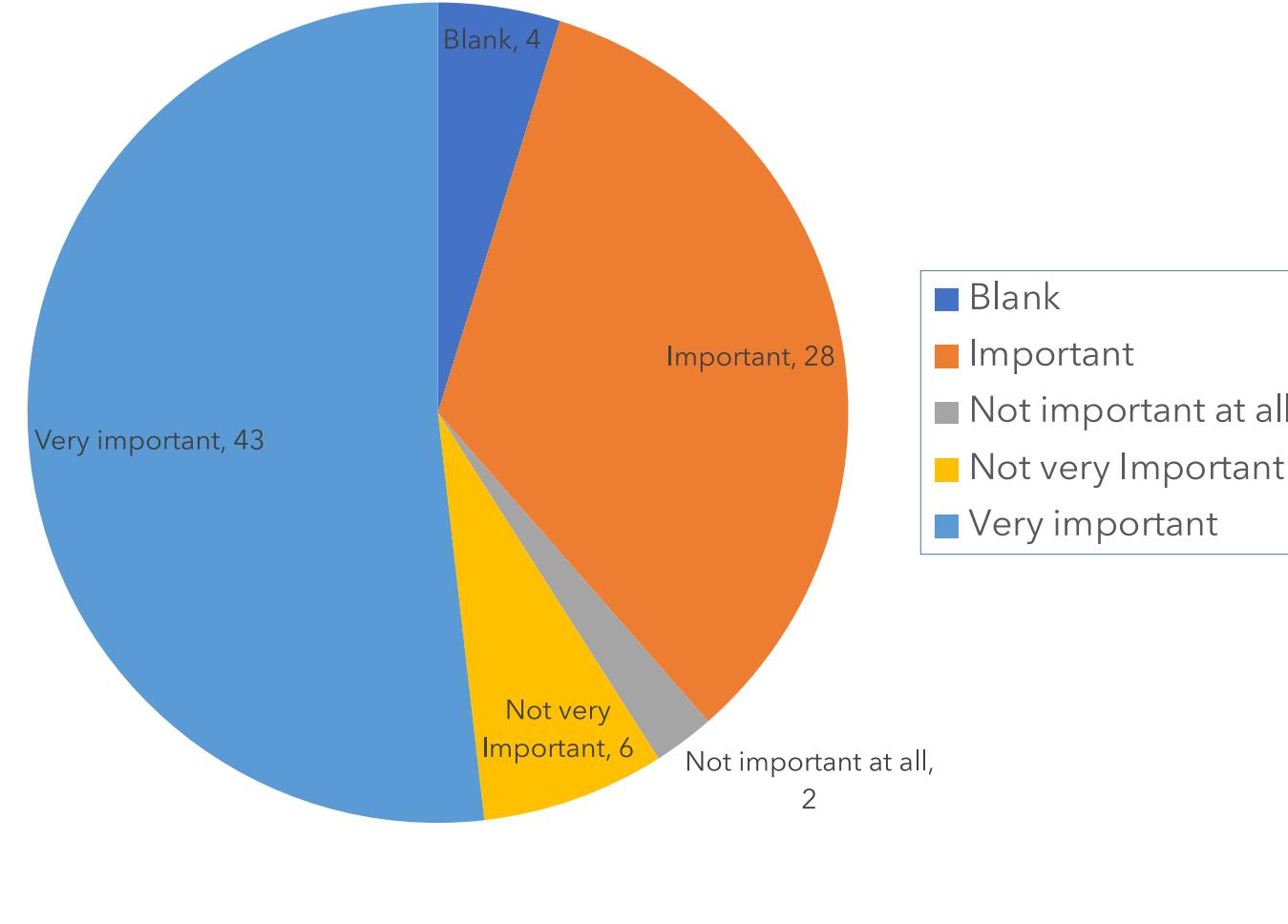


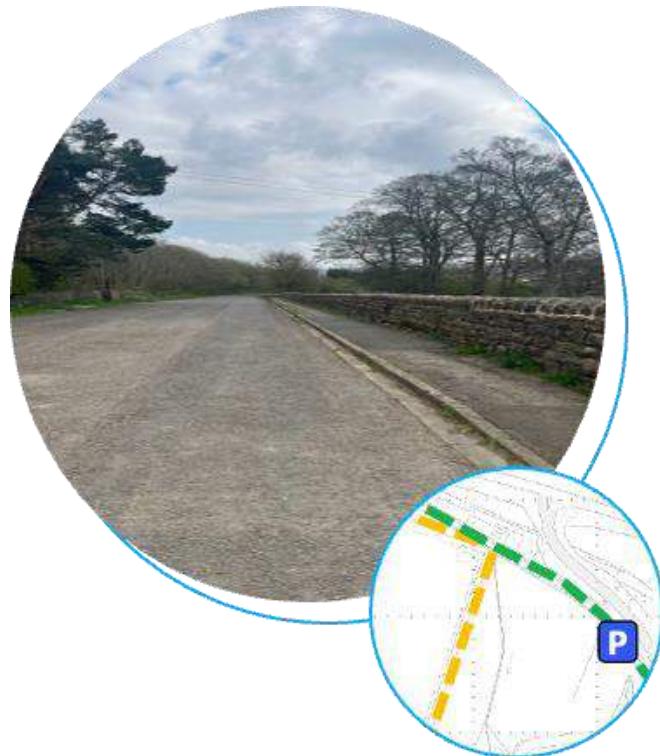
## **Ease of access to and around the area:** Thinking as a visitor to the area what do you think is most important



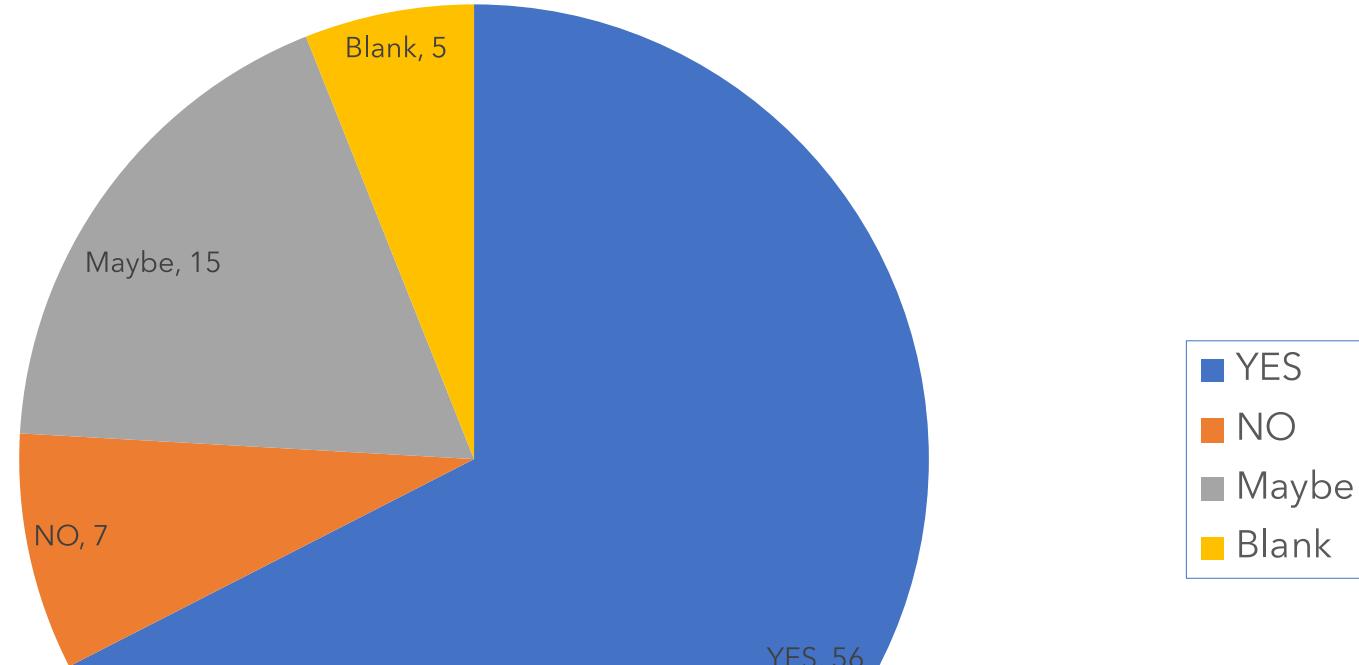


## Options for circular walking: Thinking as a visitor to the area what do you think is most important

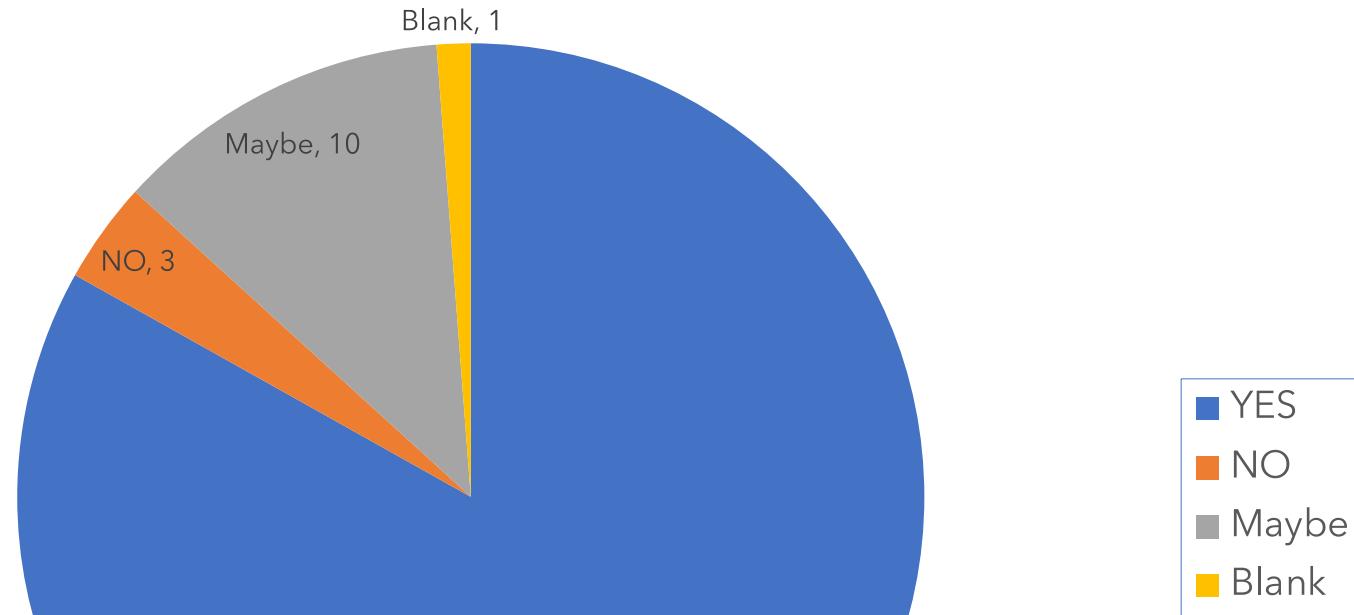




As a local resident, would you welcome an area of car parking to relieve on street parking?

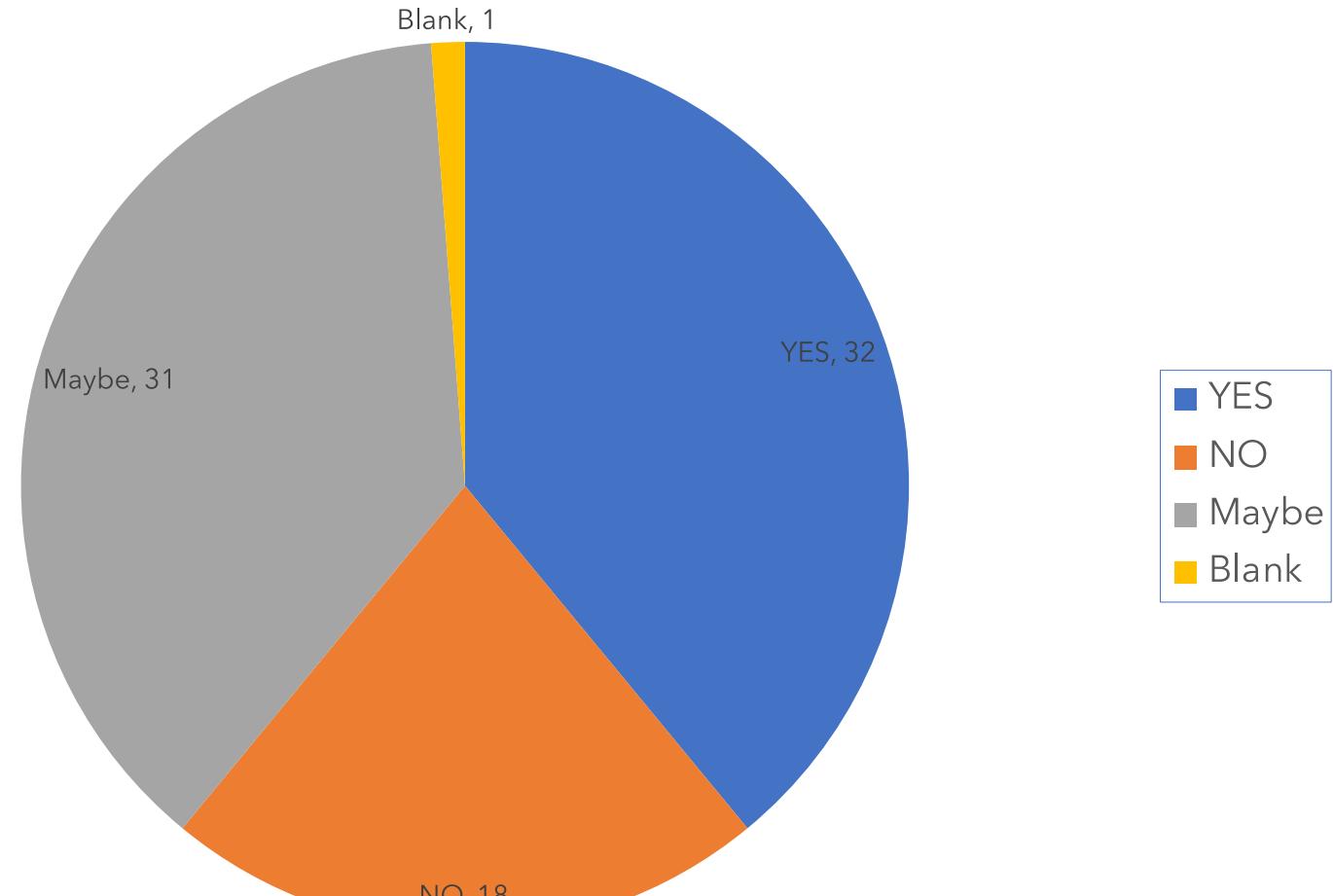


Would you like Underbank Reservoir to be more accessible for users including the mobility impaired ?

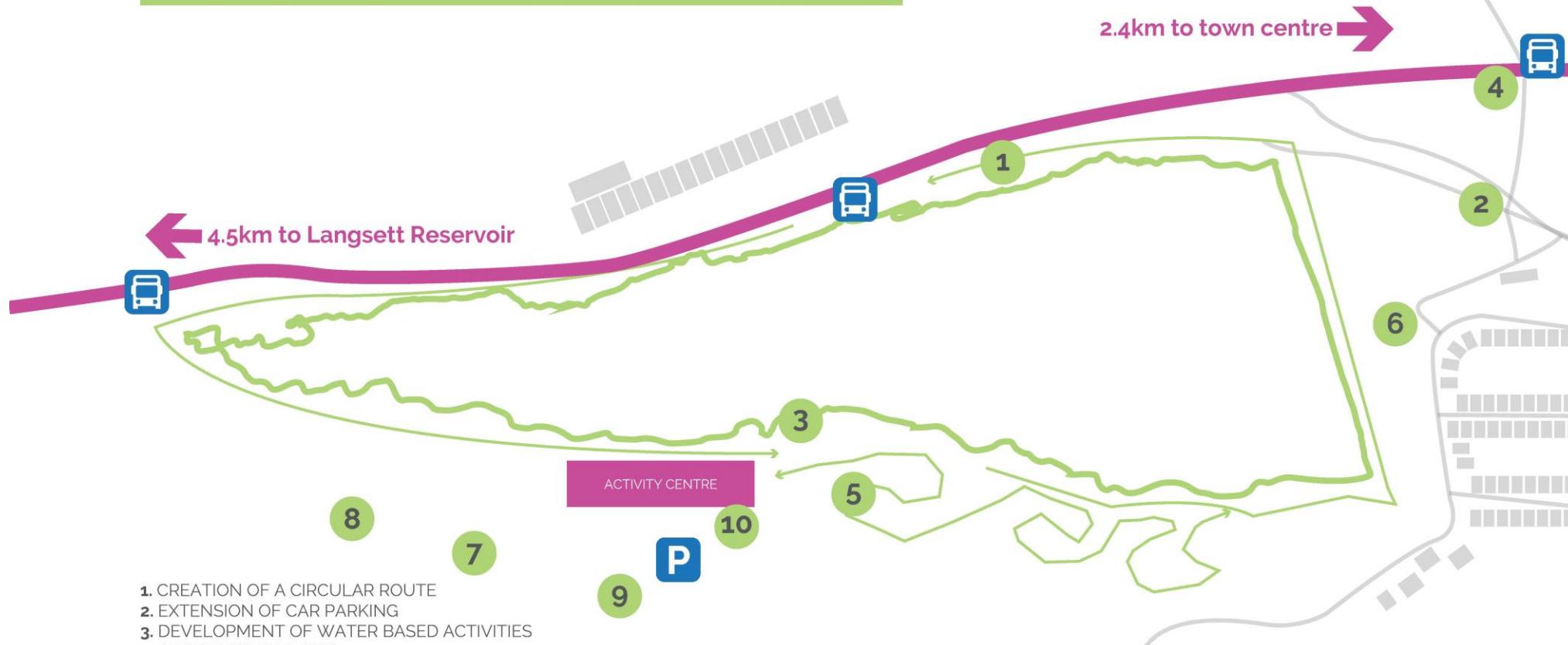




Would you like there to be additional activities for the wider community at Underbank Reservoir?



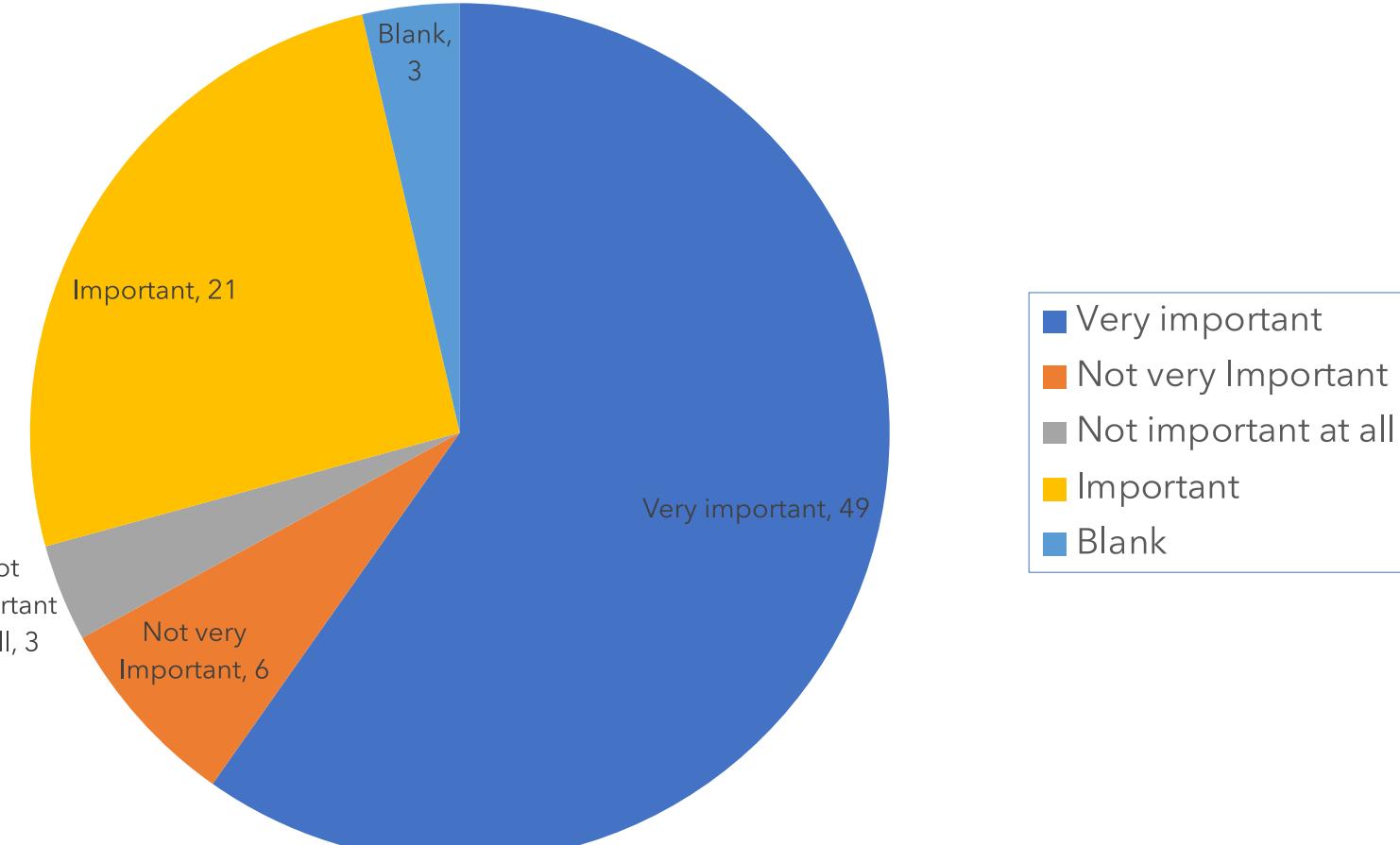
# The Masterplan

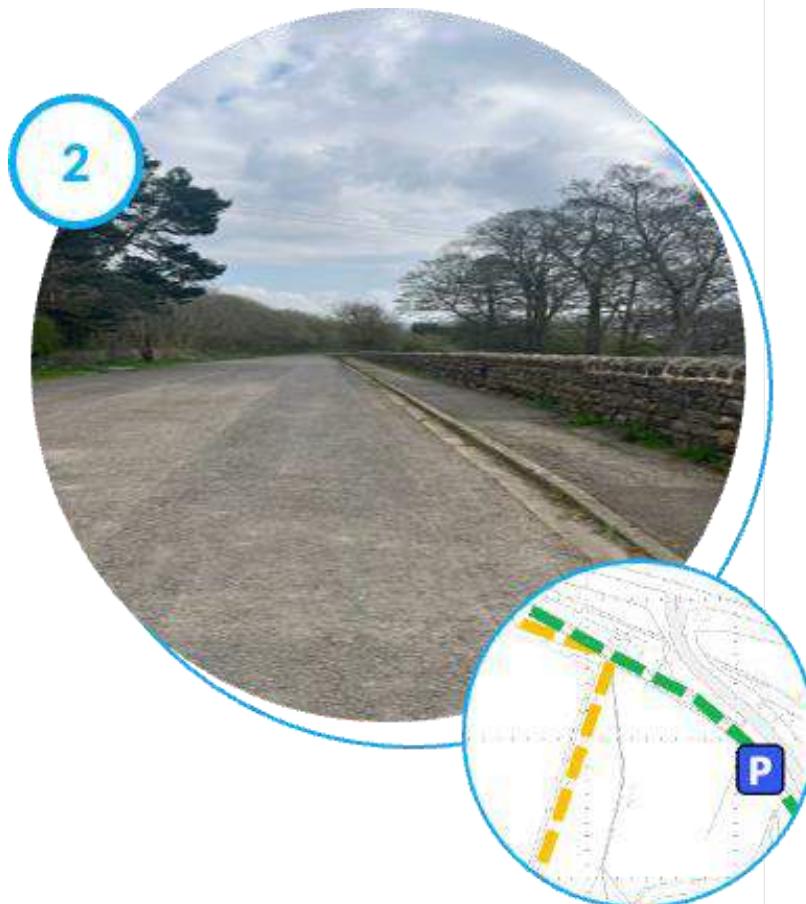


1. CREATION OF A CIRCULAR ROUTE
2. EXTENSION OF CAR PARKING
3. DEVELOPMENT OF WATER BASED ACTIVITIES
4. ACCESSING THE AREA
5. FAMILY-FRIENDLY LOOP WALKS
6. CREATION OF NEW BRIDLEWAY
7. EXTENSION OF BRIDLEWAY
8. WOODLAND CREATION & FORESTRY TRACK
9. FORESTRY TRACK TRACK EXTENSION
10. FOOTPATH DIVERSIONS

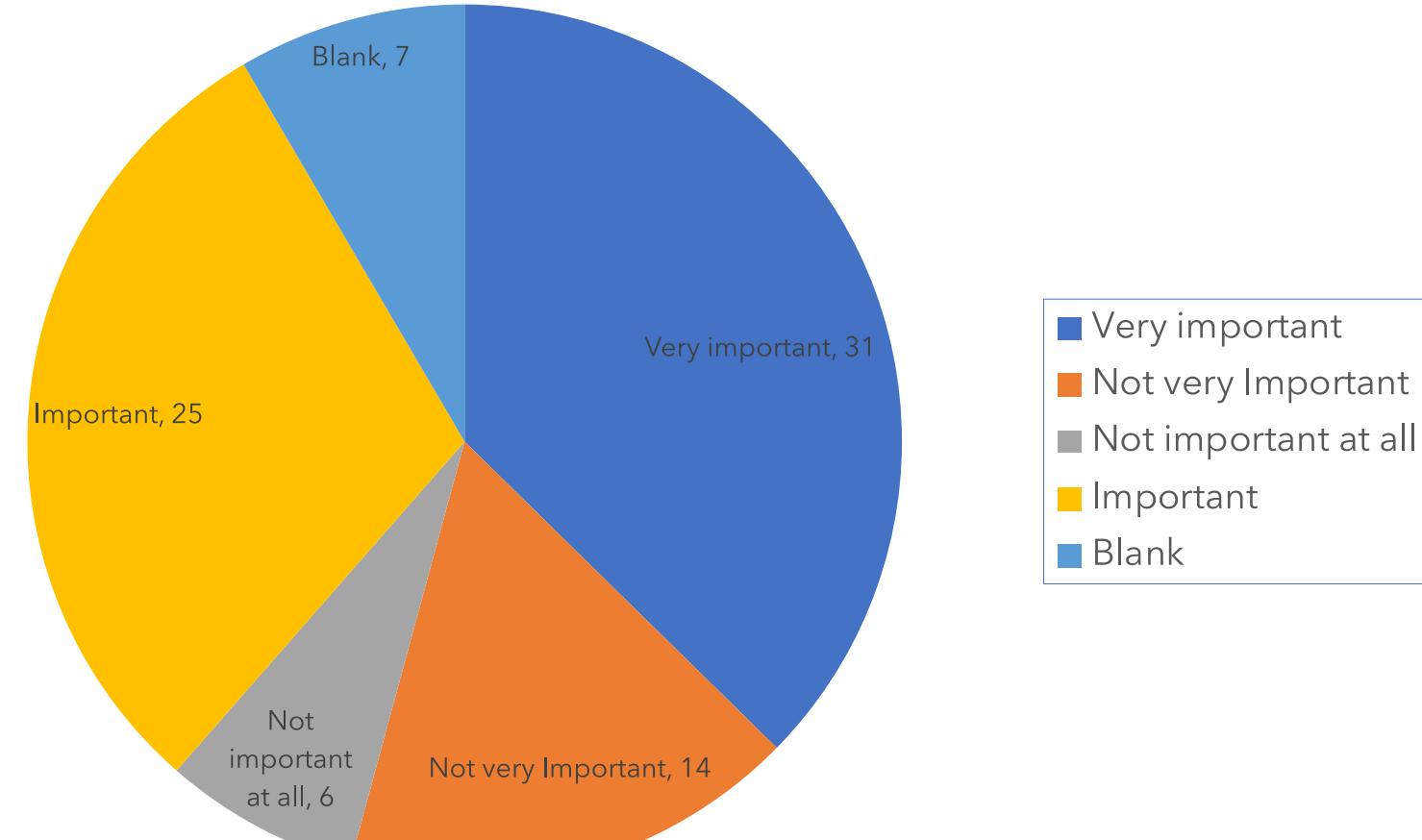


## Creation of a circular route: Which of the suggested improvements do you think are the most important?

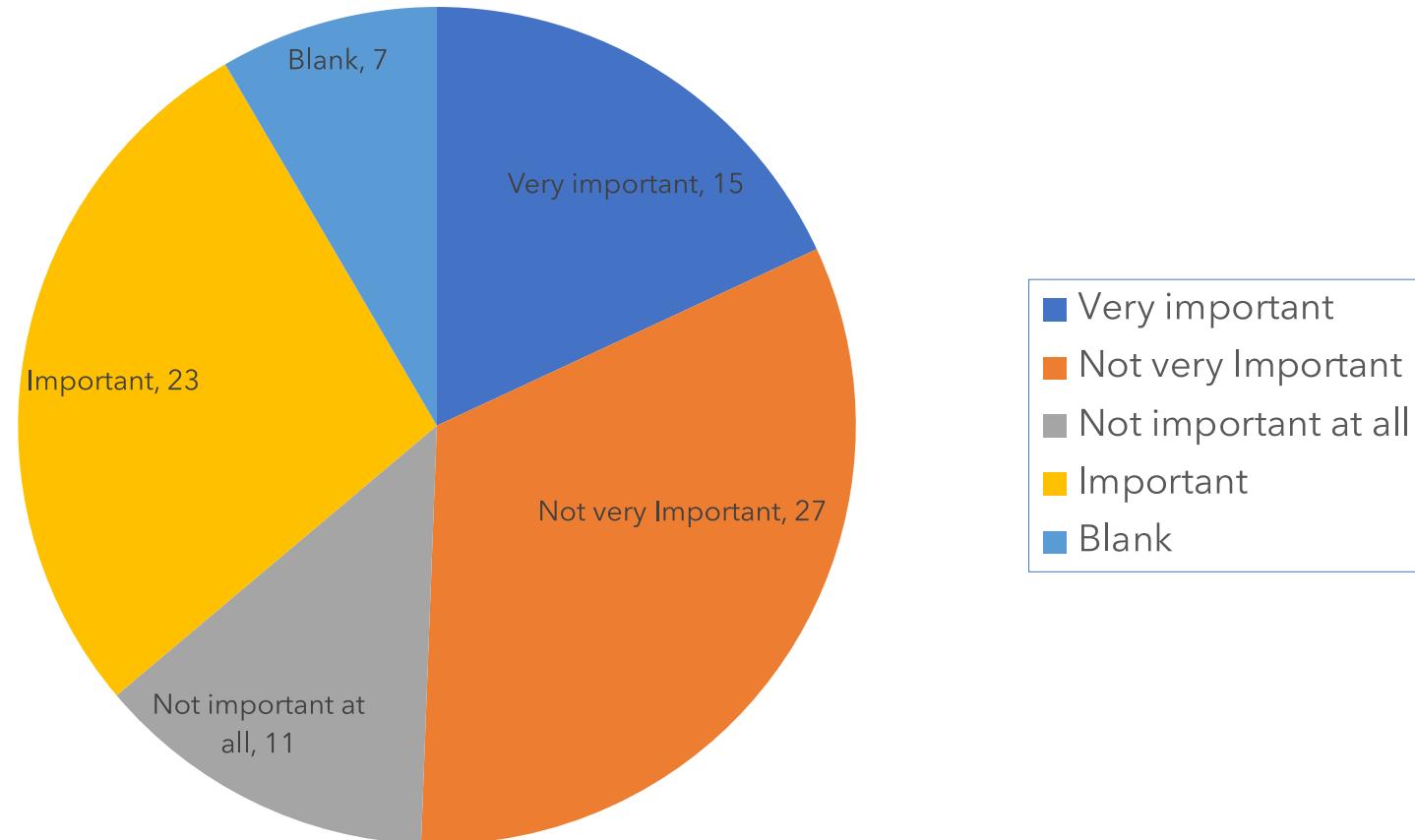
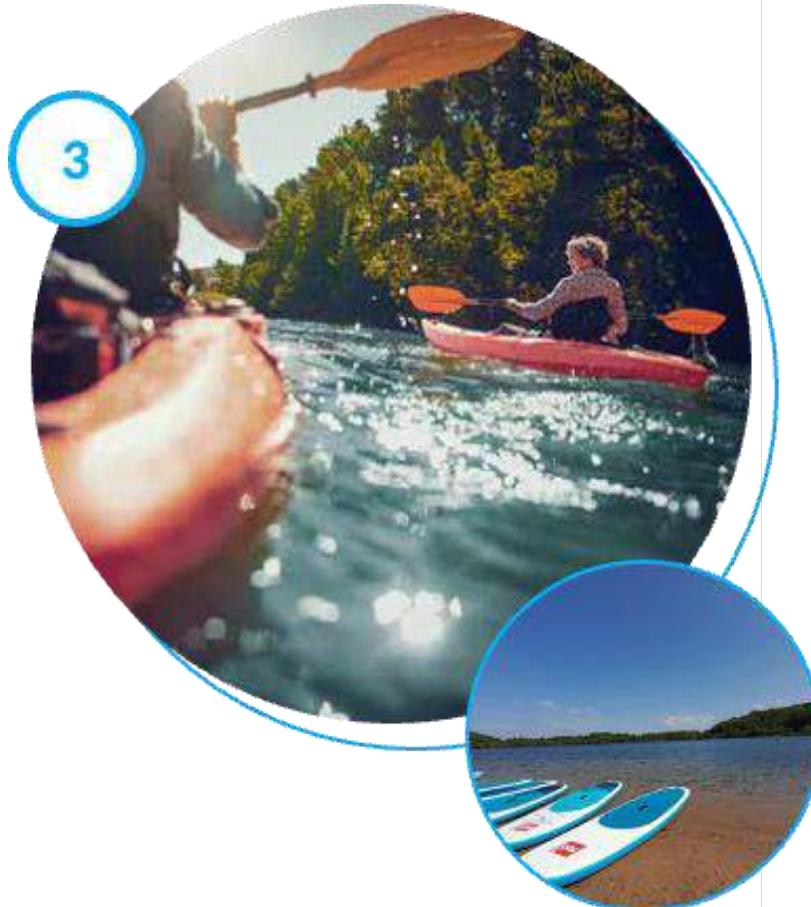




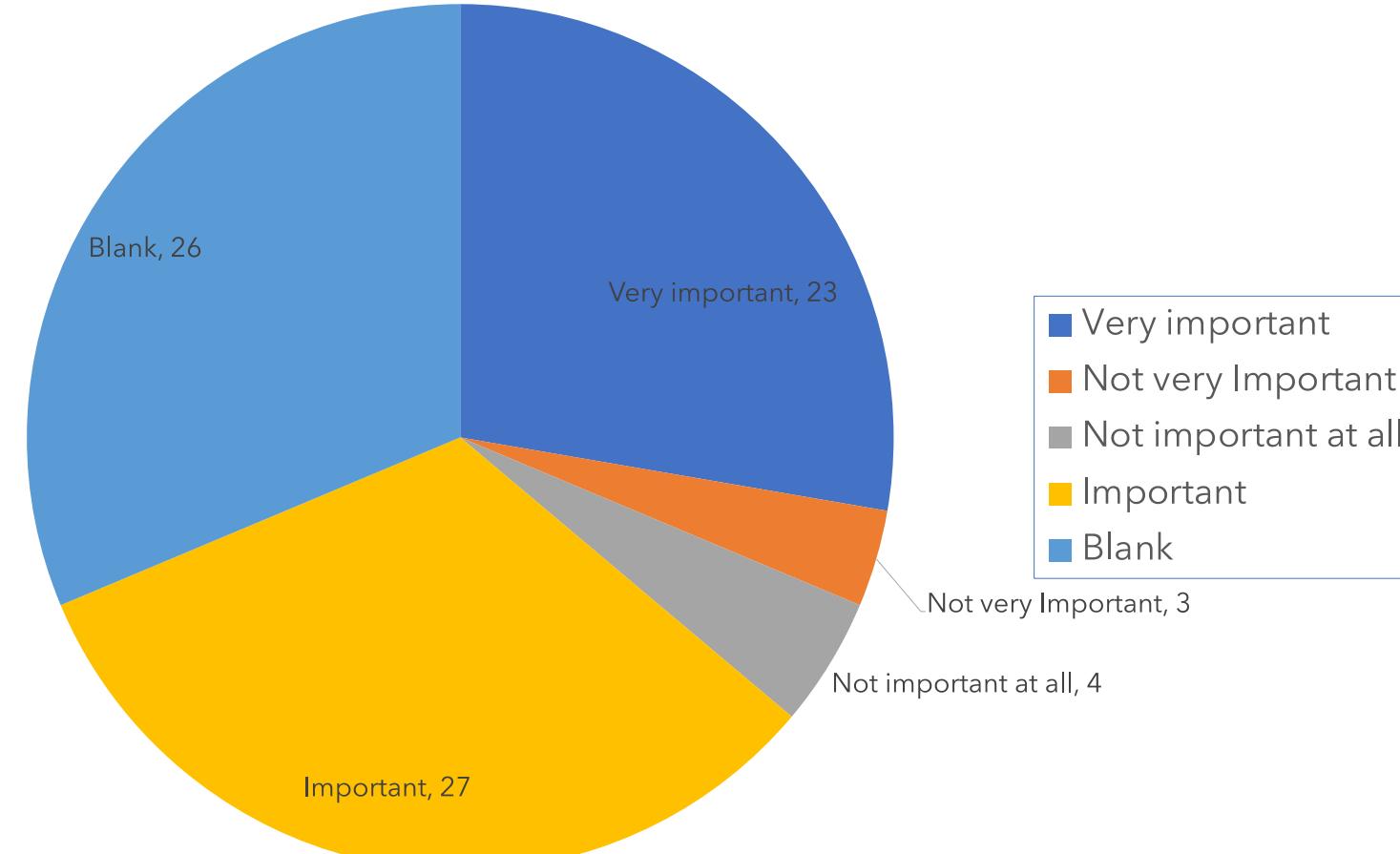
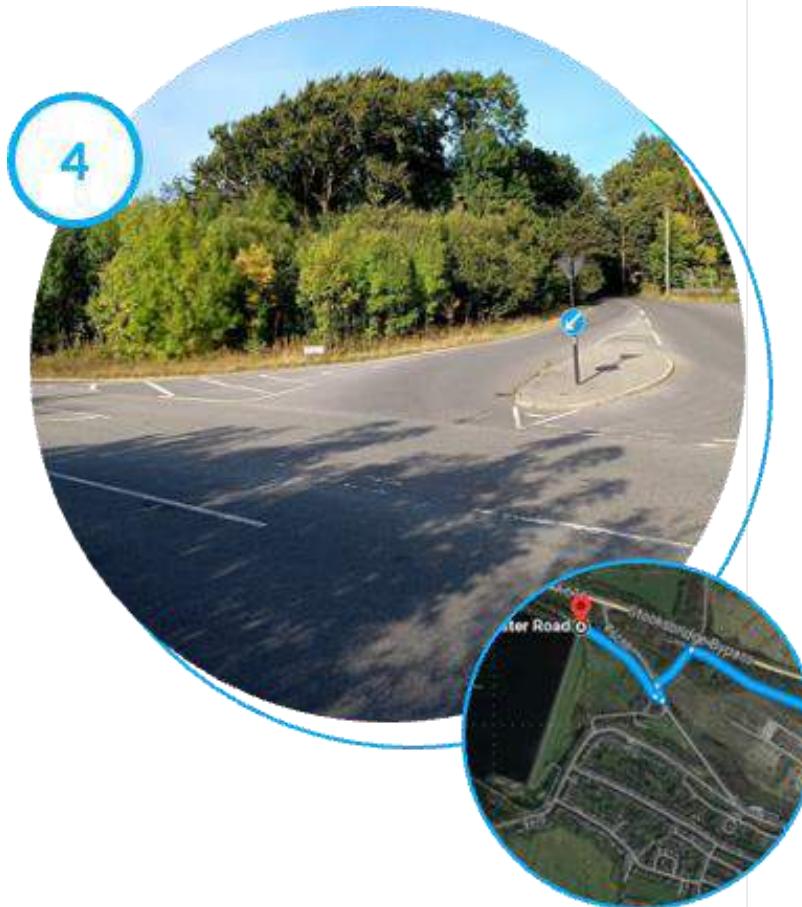
## Extension of free parking: Which of the suggested improvements do you think are the most important?



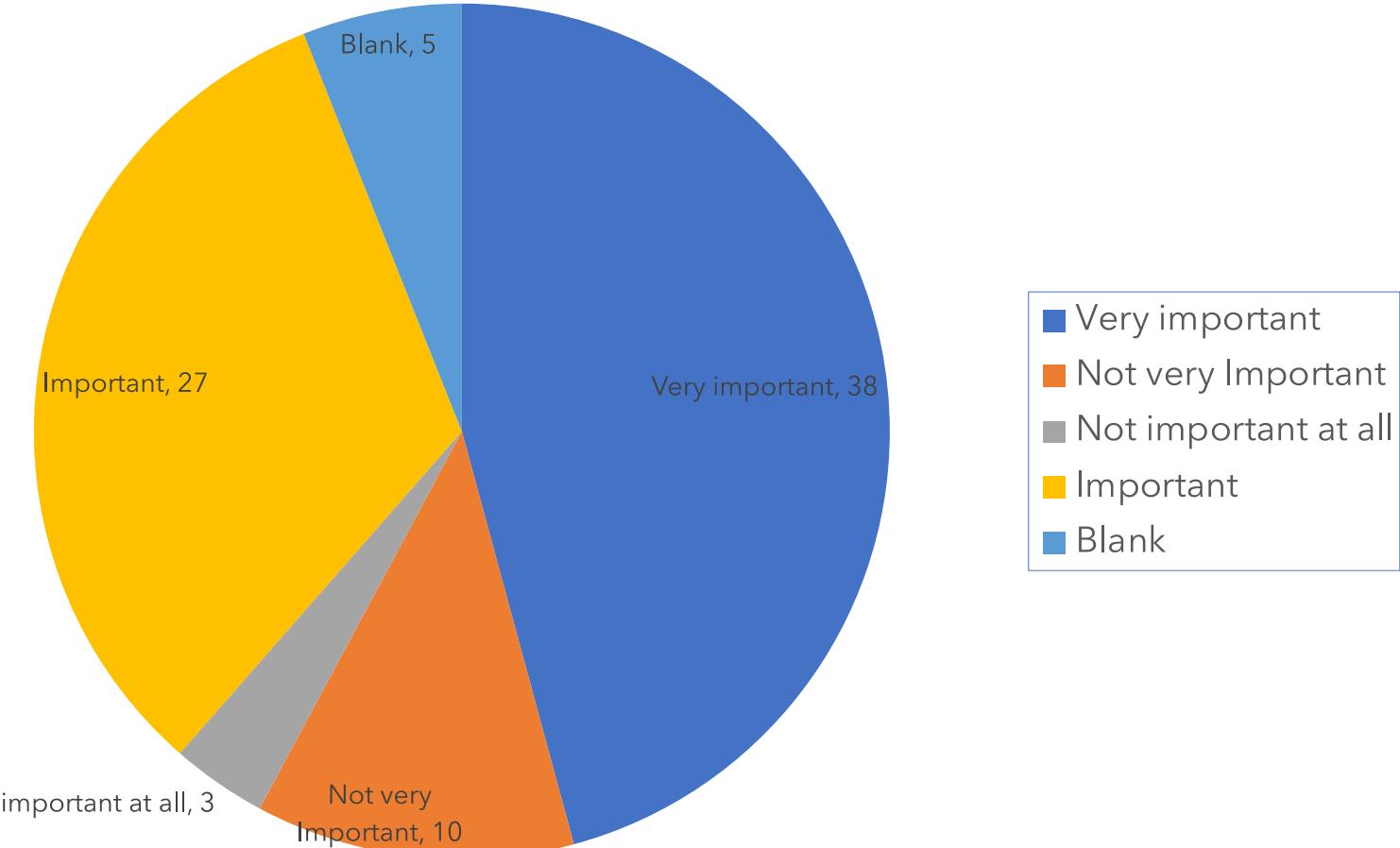
## Development of water-based activities: Which of the suggested improvements do you think are the most important?

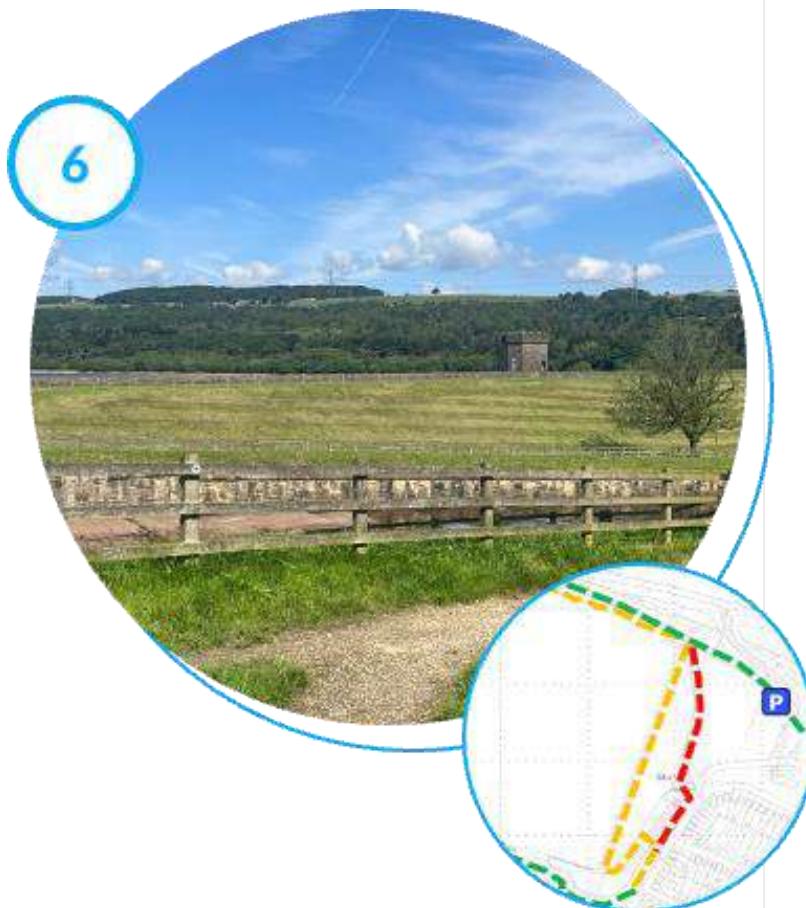


## Accessing the area: Which of the suggested improvements do you think are the most important?

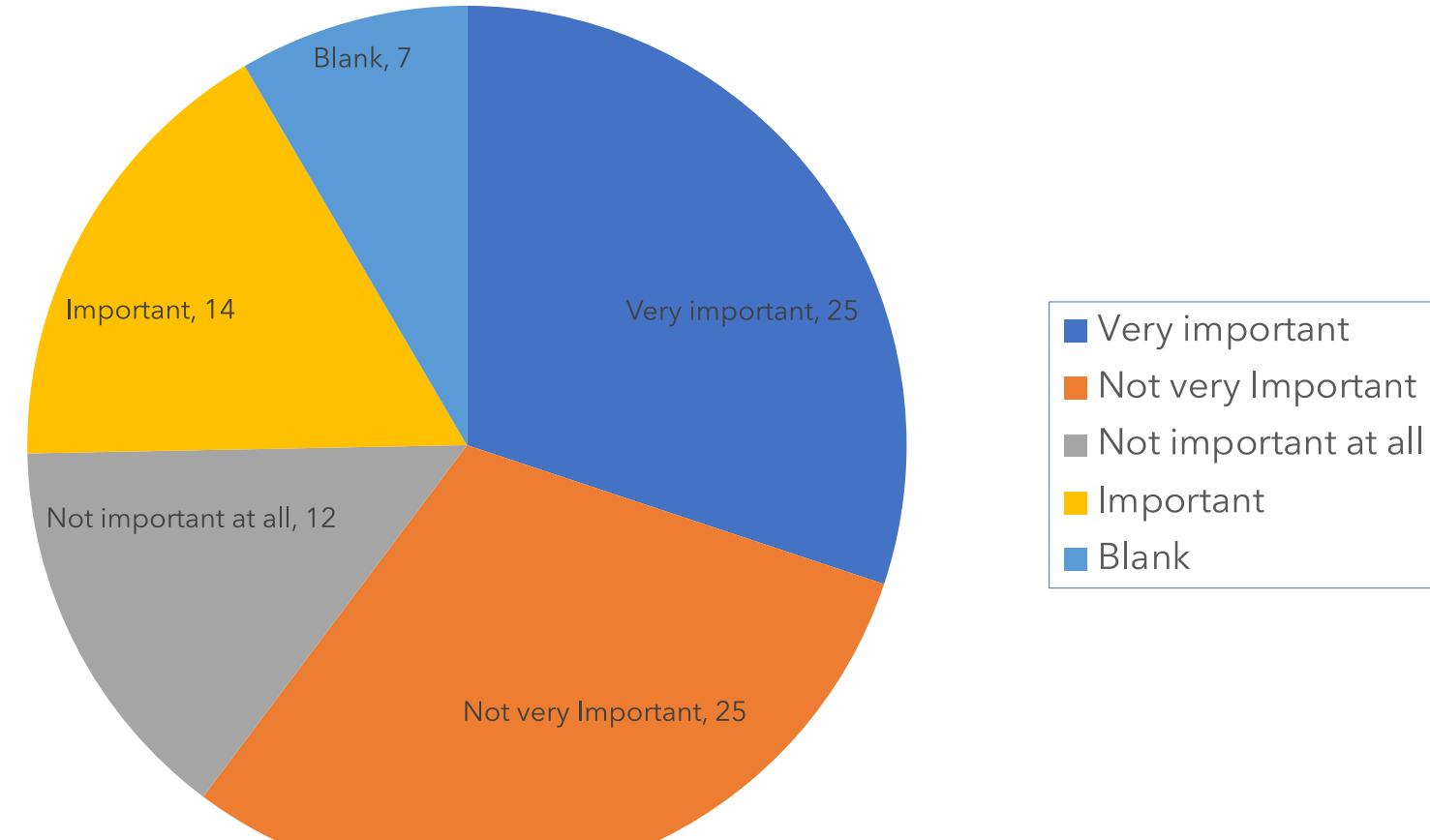


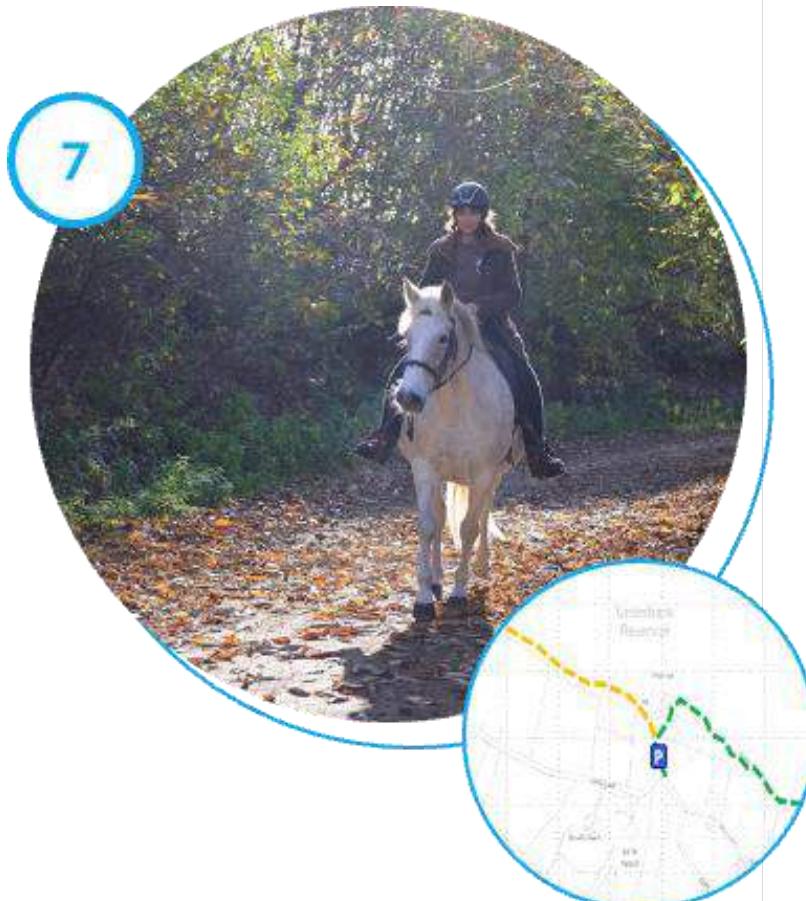
## Family-friendly loop walks: Which of the suggested improvements do you think are the most important?



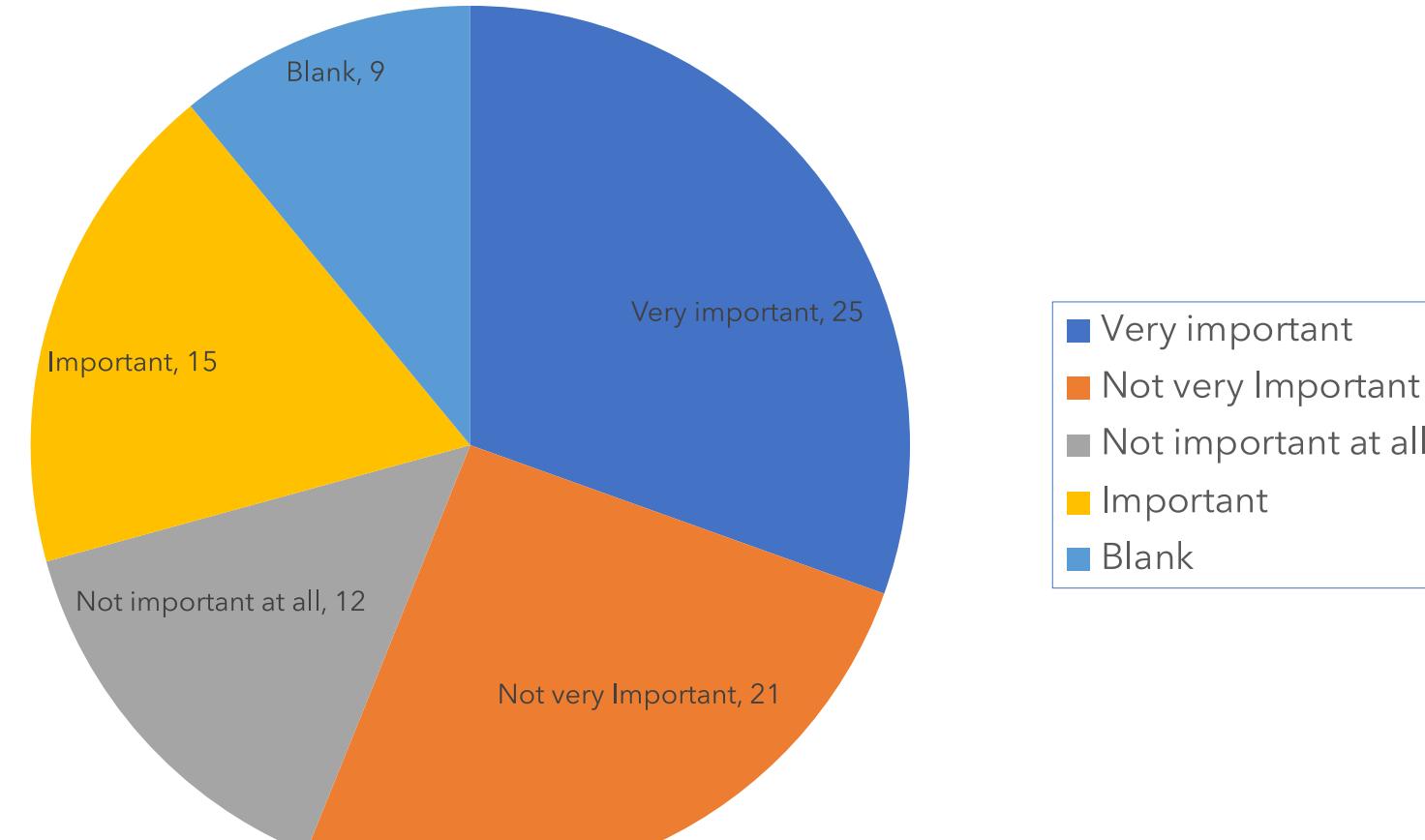


## Creation of new bridleway: Which of the suggested improvements do you think are the most important?



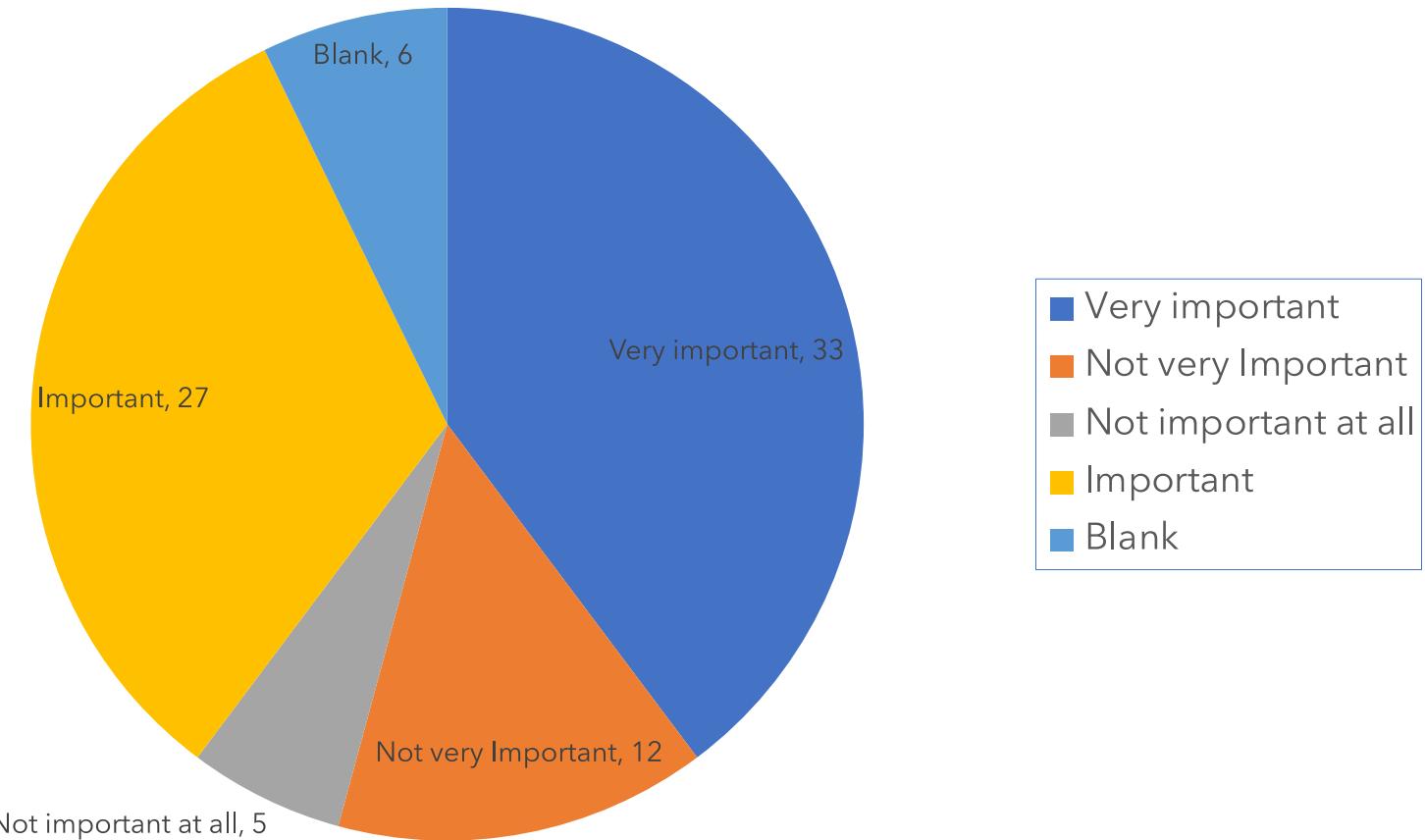


## Extension of bridleway: Which of the suggested improvements do you think are the most important?



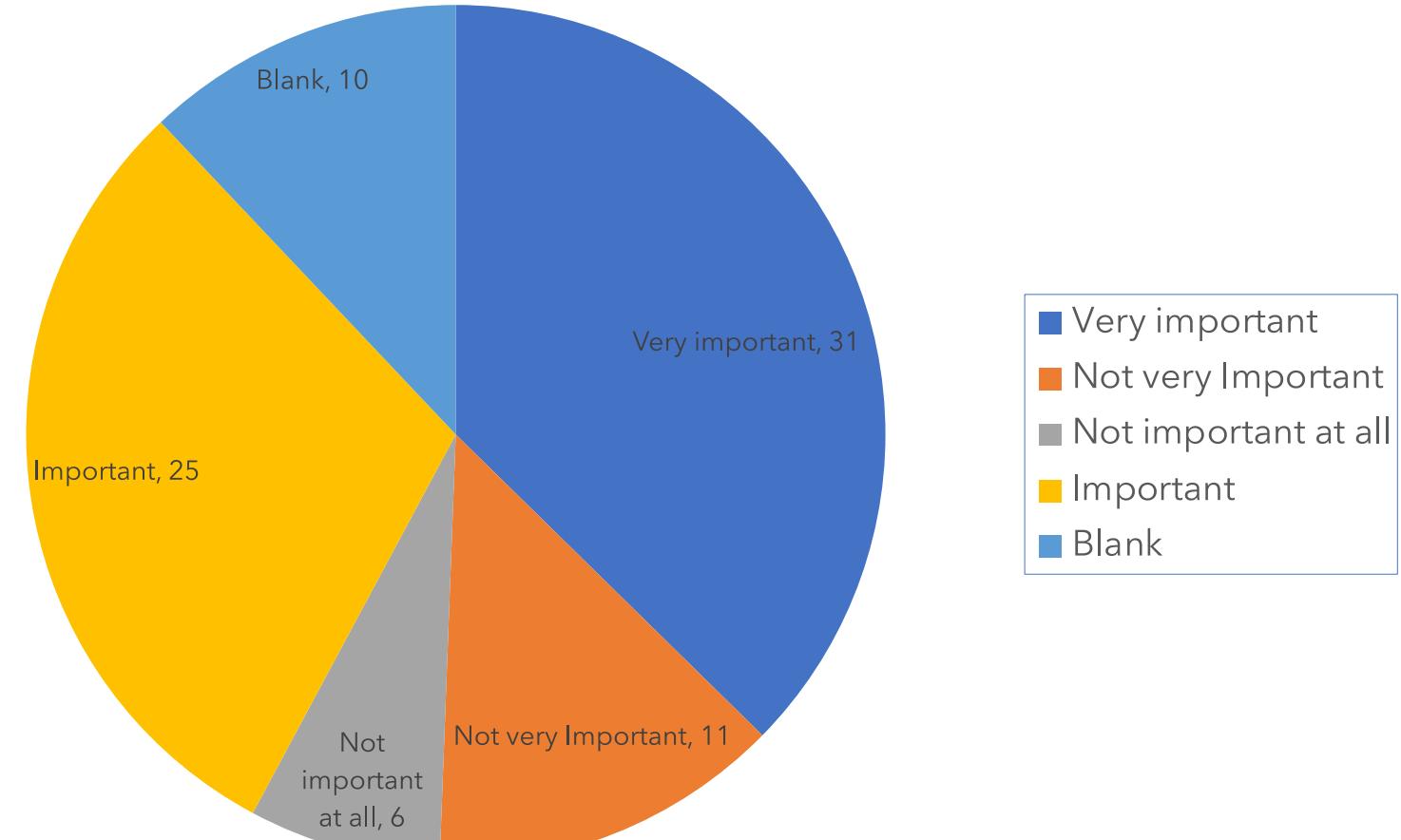


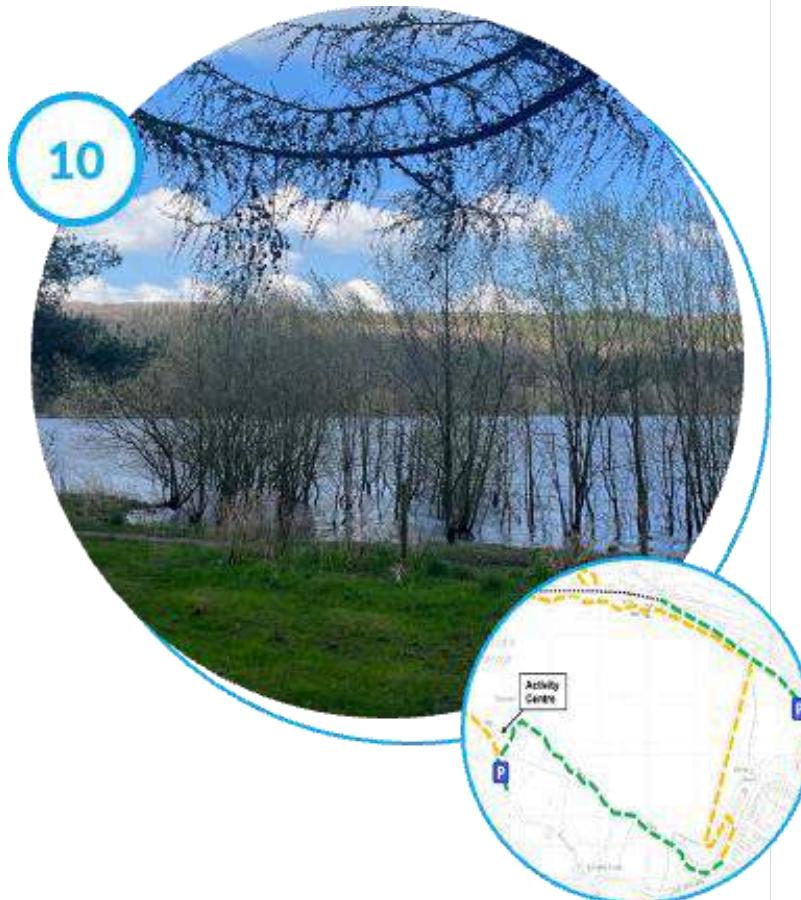
## Woodland creation & forestry track: Which of the suggested improvements do you think are the most important?



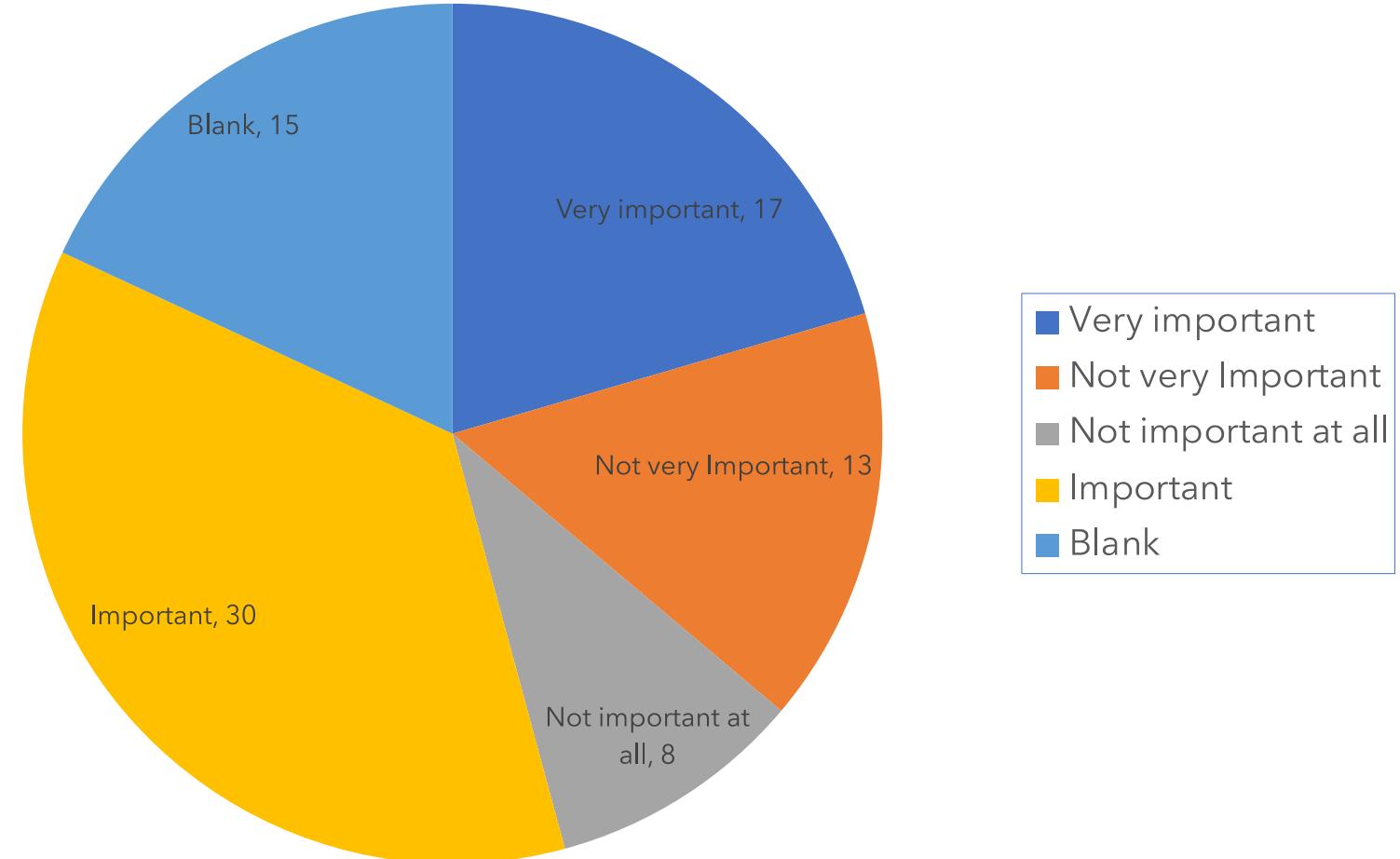


## Forestry track extension: Which of the suggested improvements do you think are the most important?





## Footpath diversions: Which of the suggested improvements do you think are the most important?



# Feedback & comments



## Additional feedback from viewing plans online:

As a keen hiker I think it would be a great addition to the plans if signage could be put up which links Underbank, Midhope and Langsett Reservoirs by the safest scenic route. The distance is fine but currently it seems the way to do it is all road which I am sure isn't correct. Not asking for extra paths just signage

*via [info@email.com](mailto:info@email.com)*

### Positive:

We look forward to seeing the detail for the access link from Bramall Lane to Old Manchester Road.

The forestry track extension from the Activity Centre will offer new options.

The new bridge at the west end of the reservoir will improve the existing loop walk by removing the road section at Midhopestones.

### Neutral:

The family friendly loop walks already exist. Upgrading these paths to be fully accessible would be an improvement.

The Loop route is in place, but the bridge will improve access at the west end of the reservoir.

### Negatives:

A Footpath diversion is proposed, close to the Activity Centre and launch ramp. In June 2018, when we were informally consulted on this change by SCC, we indicated we would object to any such diversion. Our view has not changed.

Sharing the route with Horses and cyclists will be less attractive to the current situation of sole access for walkers. This can be partially mitigated if the routes are significantly widened to allow safe passage.

The increase in parking on Old Manchester Road will improve access to the area and reduce parking on nearby roads.

Risk that antisocial behaviour and fly tipping (both of which occur at present) could be increased.

**A new signalised crossing of Manchester Road connecting to Underbank Lane and the existing Bramall Lane/Steel Valley trail which forms part of the Upper Don Trail into Fox Valley etc**

Welcomed. Needs designing alongside the crossing on the bypass by Equitrek.

**Various additions to the existing paths around Underbank with a new section around the western (Midhopestones) end including a new bridge and back to the car park**

The proposed new 'track' around the west and north sides of the reservoir looks extremely challenging and expensive.Duplicates the much more attractive and safer Little Don Extension of the UDT recently completed by Barnsley MBC on the old railway line.

Doesn't seem to connect with the new crossing of the bypass at Equitrek currently under construction or with . which just makes no sense. Nor does it connect to the Little Don Trail at Midhopestones village.

None of these circular interventions will do anything for active travel and are purely recreational.

**A short section of new bridleway connecting from the car park to the south end of the dam wall**

This may be a modest improvement for horse riders but have you asked any stakeholders ?

**Adding fifty spaces to the existing reservoir visitor car park**

Will draw more car traffic through the Stocksbridge centre, will not encourage active travel and could exacerbate existing issues around congestion as well as crime and anti-social behaviour.

**General comments**

No explanation of why the previous plan dropped

No plans re wayfinding.

Continue with the Underbank Lane/Manchester Road crossing, drop the car parking and loop elements and look at more strategic interventions on the Stocksbridge Trails network including signage and wayfinding.

***UDTT via email***

- The A616 Crossing is paid for by NH, not TFB, and it's under construction
- The proposed 80metre long footway widening app on the north side of Underbank Resr is not included in current delivery which means another period of traffic management will escalate the cost.
- Most of the other parts of this are funded by Yorkshire Water, not TFB
- Additional car parking at the closed Manchester Rd should be designed such that it does not compromise safe access for walkers, cyclists and equestrians on the Upper Don Trail/Barnsley boundary walk route which are aligned along this section of road through the site.
- Re Bridleway status extension on south shore of Underbank Resr - benefits of bridleway status are limited unless more space is found.
- Plans don't adequately address net zero objectives and encourage car based journeys without linking into public and active travel modes. Cycling is not encouraged by this scheme

*via info @ email*

## Summary and Conclusion Based on Questionnaire Findings: Context and Background

The proposed enhancements for Underbank Reservoir are part of the broader investment strategy for Stocksbridge, funded by the Stocksbridge Town Deal. While the area is of significant natural beauty and serves as a focal point for the local community, it has also been a subject of some concern due to issues such as parking problems on local roads and anti-social behaviour. These concerns reflect the balance between local needs and the potential for increased visitors to the area that enhancements and linking with the Town Centre present.

### Key Findings

#### Frequency of Visits

- **High Utilisation:** The reservoir is a significant part of local life, with **79.5%** of respondents visiting at least once a week.

#### Additional Facilities or Activities

- **Community Preferences:** Cafés, bars, and restaurants are the most requested additional facilities. There is also a call for practical enhancements such as toilets, showers, and additional bins. Of the ten interventions listed the most popular were:

- Circular route
- Family friendly loop walks
- Woodland creation and forestry track.

#### Importance of Free and Secure Parking

- **Sensitive Topic:** Parking is considered "Very Important" by **42.2%** of respondents, but this is a complex issue given past experiences with congestion, anti-social behaviour and the need to be sensitive to the properties closest to the parking area.

#### Demographics

- **Age and Gender:** The majority age group is 65-74 years, and there is a balanced gender distribution among respondents.

## Insights

- **Preservation vs. Enhancement:** The survey reflects a community that values what it already has, while also seeing room for specific, targeted improvements.
- **Parking Conundrum:** Parking remains a priority but needs to be approached sensitively around local concerns and those living closest to the car park.
- **Catering to the Majority:** The older age demographic suggests that any new facilities or improvements should focus on accessibility and ease of use for this age group.

## Thoughts

1. **Preserve and Enhance:** Any development should of course respect the reservoir's existing natural beauty and aim for a balance that meets community needs while providing an attractive destination and the opportunity to enjoy the reservoir.
2. **Parking Strategy:** Given its importance but also its sensitivity, the parking situation need more thought around interventions to mitigate anti-social behaviour and create a solution all local residents are comfortable with.
3. **Tailored Facilities:** The additional facilities that are being considered should reflect the practical and leisure needs of the existing local demographic
4. **Consultative Approach:** While the decision lies with the Town Deal Board, this data serves as a current piece of community consultation, capturing local residents' views and priorities.