



# **Moor than meets the eye**

## **Skill Audit for Dartmoor**

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# Research background

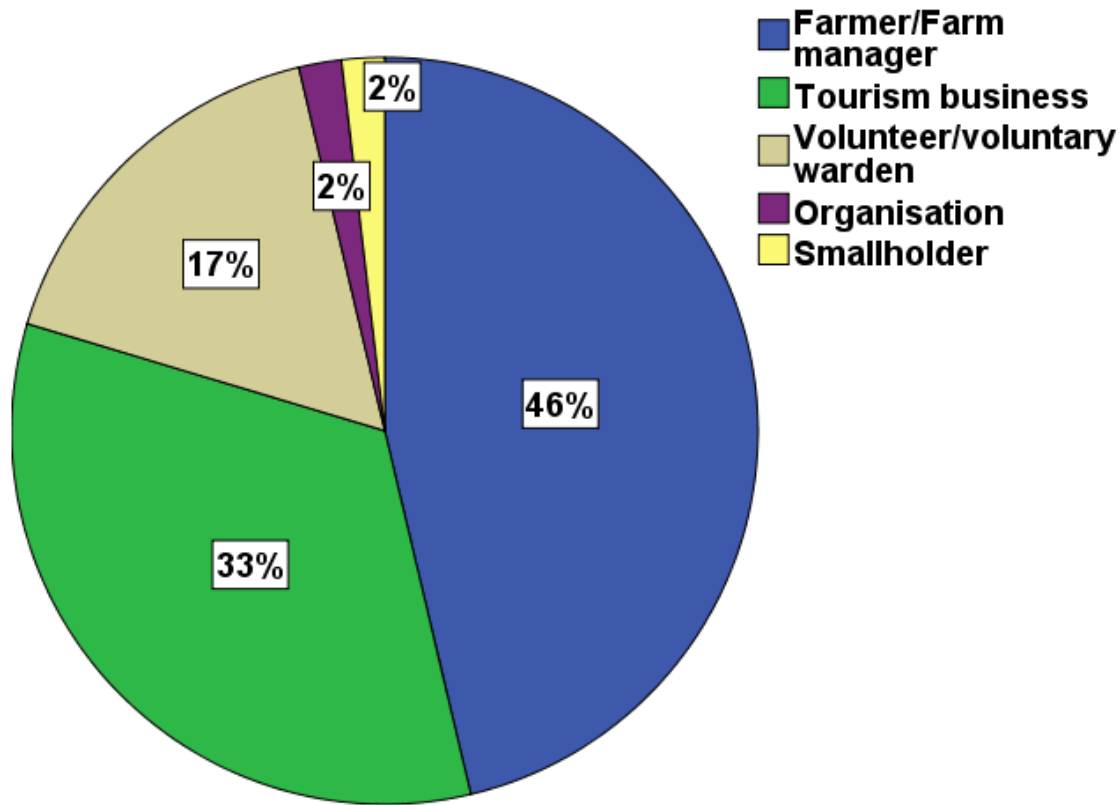
- This survey was carried out as part of the Skills Audit to support the drawdown of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)
- 3 focus groups were also undertaken as part of this project – 1 with Hill Farmers, 1 with tourism businesses/representatives and 1 with voluntary organisations to scope the range of skills to include in the quantitative stage of the research.
- These have previously been debriefed and informed the range of skills covered in this stage.

# Research methodology

- Postal surveys were sent out to all those on the Hill Farm Project database by DNPA
- Surveys were handed out to volunteer staff and others
- An online survey was developed and the link emailed to members of the Dartmoor Partnership (although no direct link established on the member part of the Discover Dartmoor website)
- The response rate was disappointingly low despite the perceived level of engagement and communications about the need for the survey, the original deadline being extended and reminders being sent out by the participating organisations. Using an incentive was discussed but rejected as it may potentially raise concerns about the use of DNPA funds.
- A total of 61 surveys were completed (22 postal and 39 online) therefore most of the responses have been reported at a holistic level as sample sizes become too small to be significant if the data is cut at a sub group level.

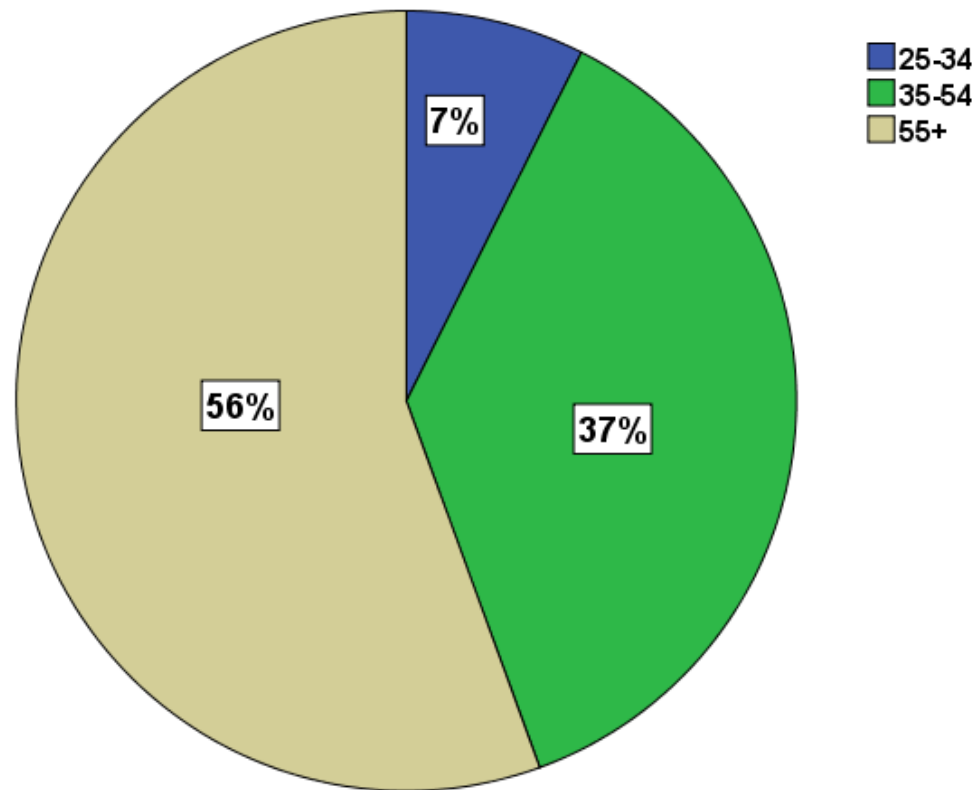
# Classification

There was a spread of responses from the various groups that were included in the survey.

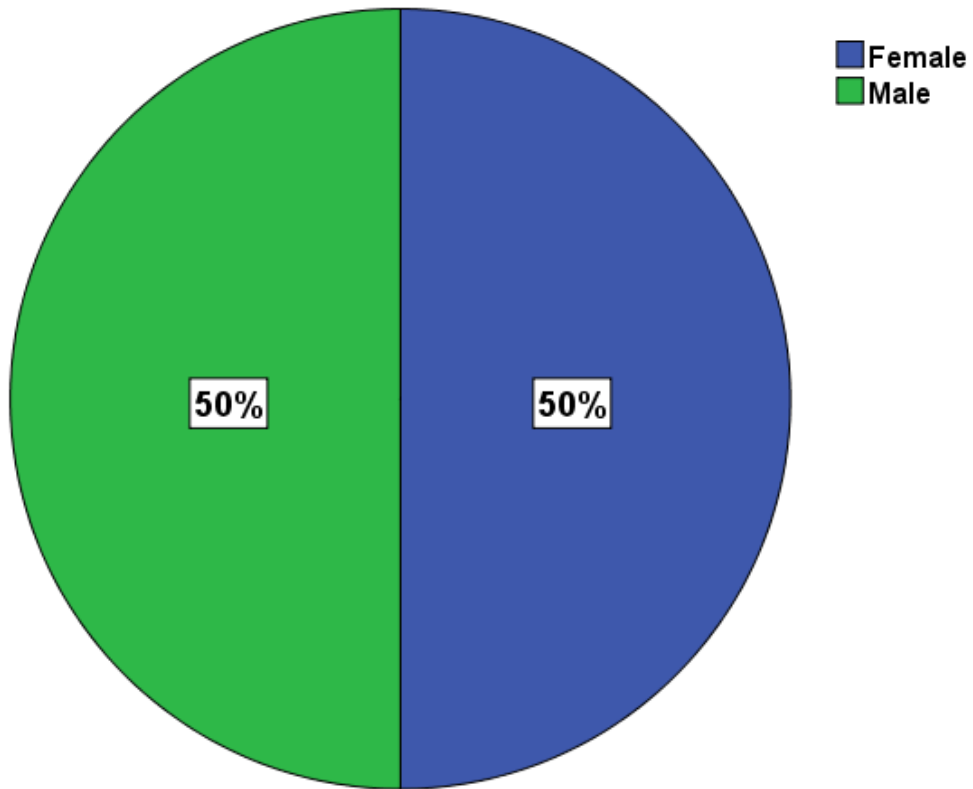


# Classification – Age bands of those who responded

As you may possibly expect, the majority of responses came from those aged 35+.

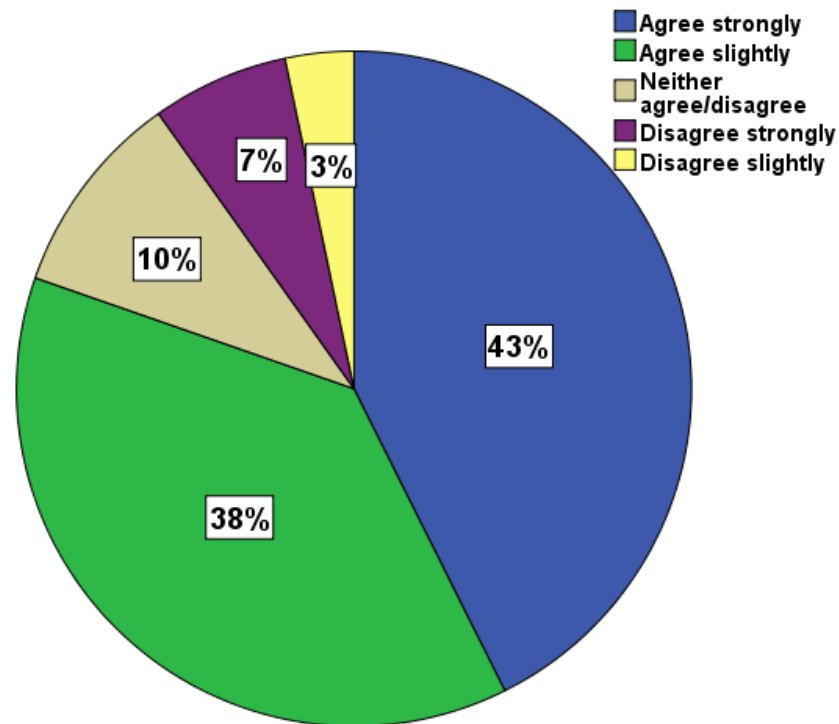


# Classification – Gender



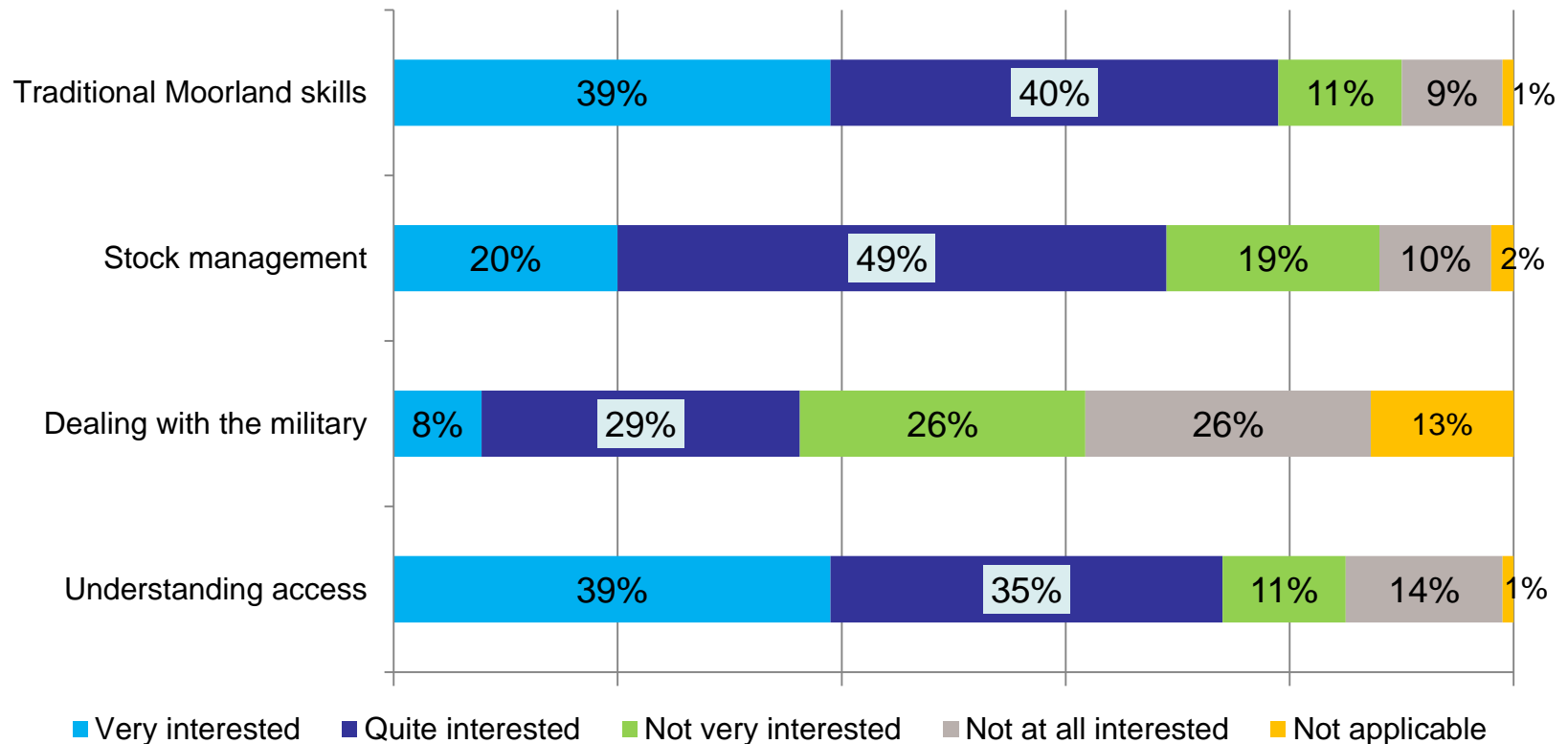
# To what extent do you agree or disagree that you could benefit from an increase in skills or knowledge?

Encouragingly, there was a high level of agreement with this statement. However reading the comments, there is a real split between those who think there is always something you can learn and those who think they already know it all.....



# How interested are you in acquiring the following skills....Land management?

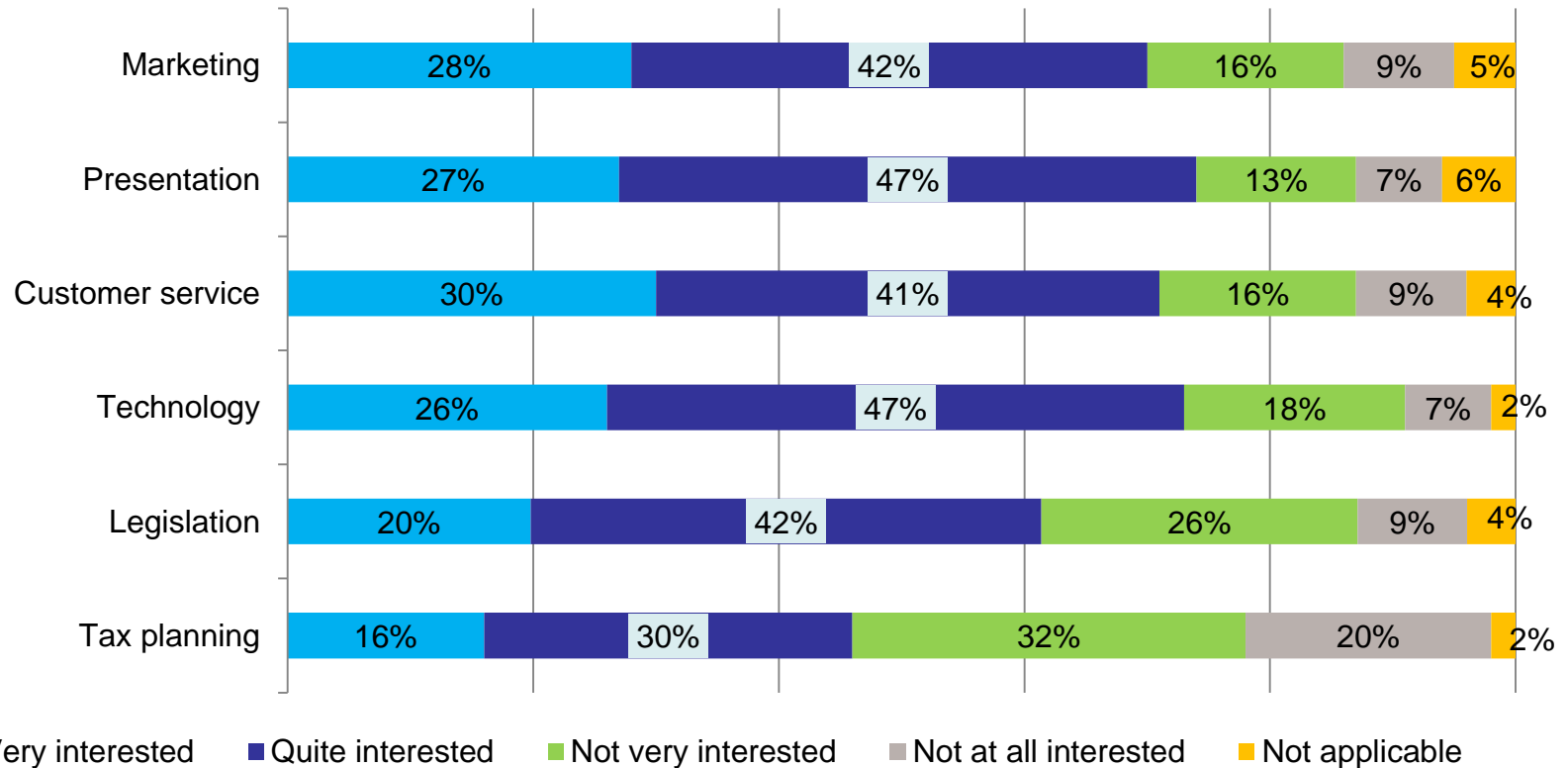
Traditional moorland skills and understanding access were the key skills in the land management section that respondents were interested in. Dealing with the military was less likely to be required due to the fact that it applied to fewer respondents.





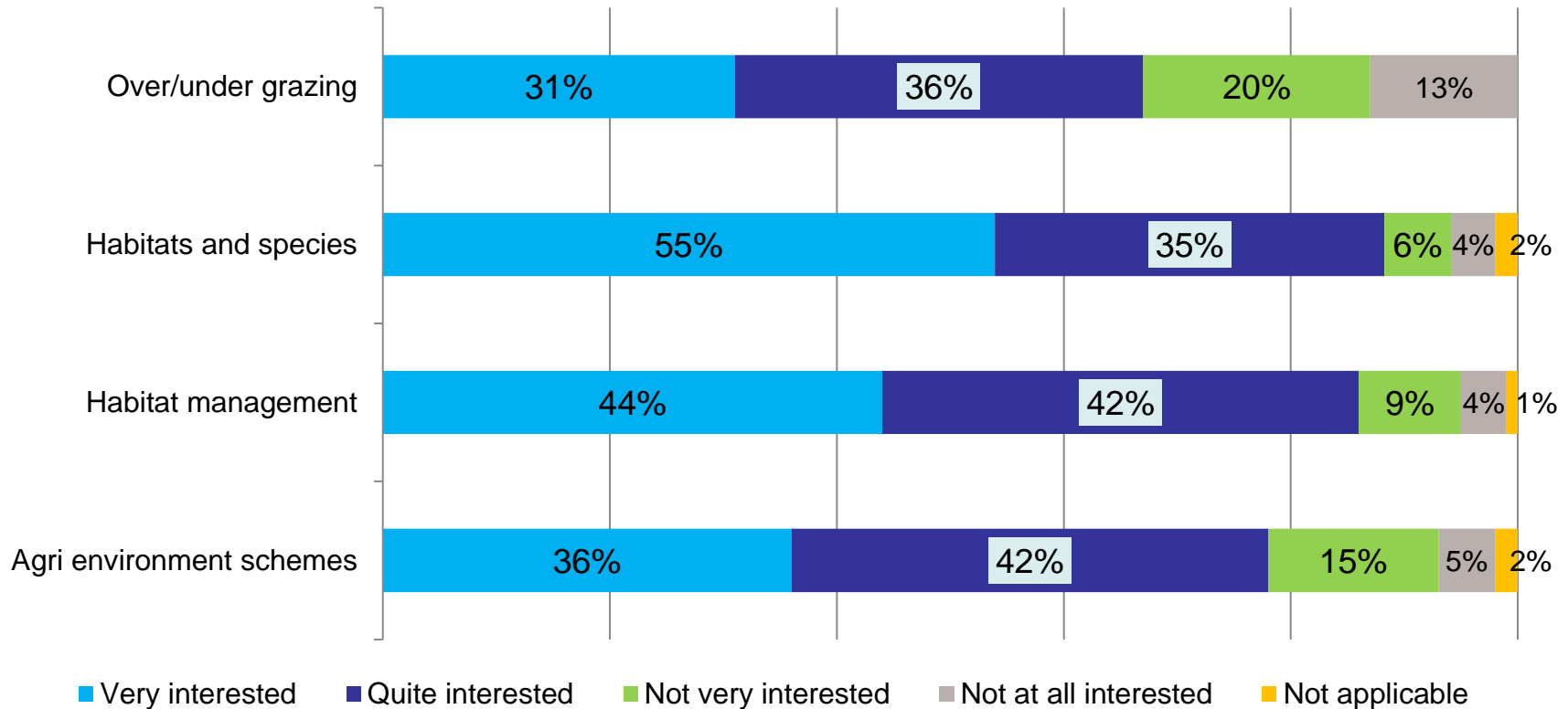
# How interested are you in acquiring the following skills....Business?

The majority were interested in acquiring business related skills which would help them run and promote their businesses – including those who were farmers as many of them also had associated tourism businesses eg. Holiday cottages/B and B.



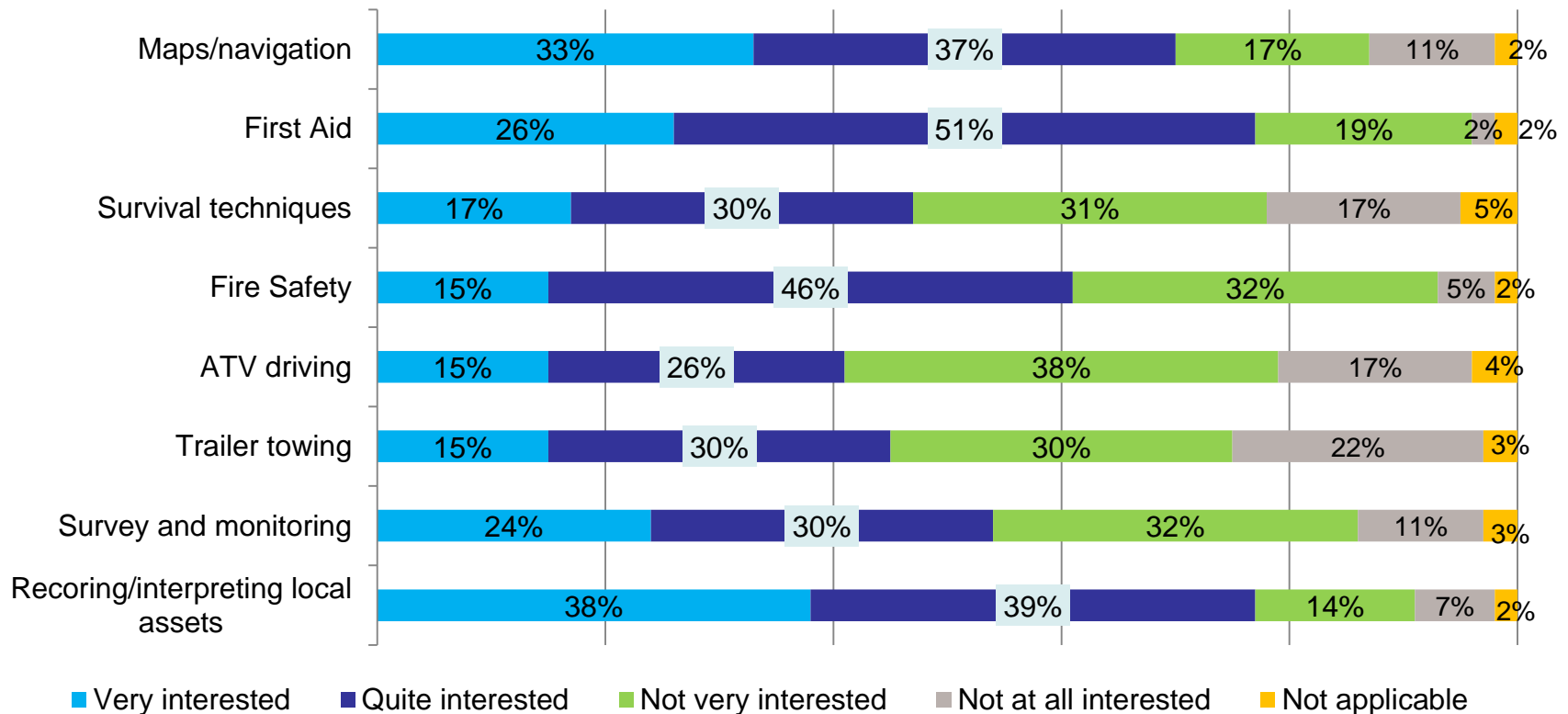
# How interested are you in acquiring the following skills....Environment?

There was interest from all groups with regards to learning more about habitats and habitat management with the majority of the farm businesses wanting to know more about AES in particular.



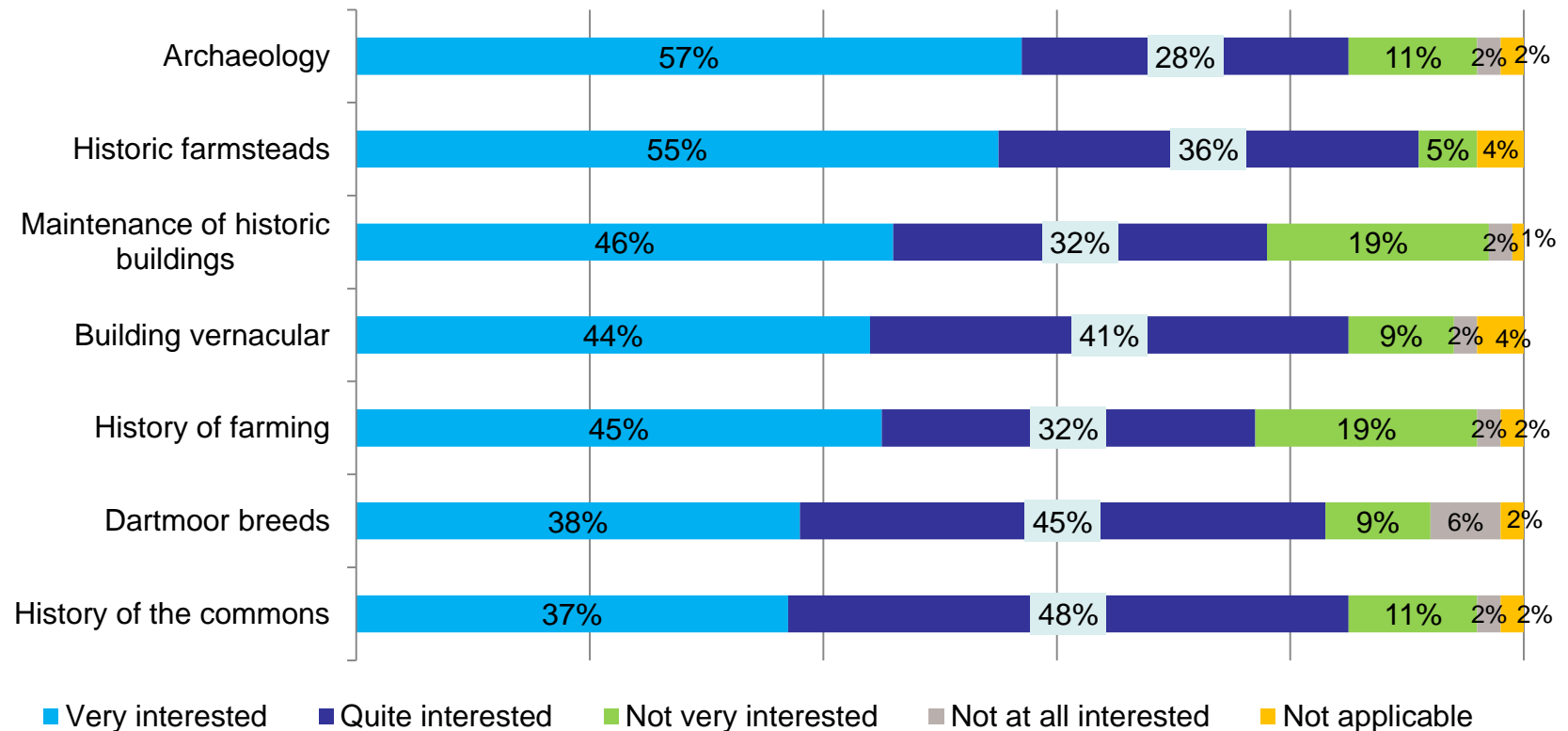
# How interested are you in acquiring the following skills....Locality?

There was a good level of interest in maps and recording local assets with a large majority wanting First Aid training in particular. Less required ATV driving/trailer towing (specific to a specific group) and survival techniques.



# How interested are you in acquiring the following skills....Heritage?

High levels of interest in most skills in this sector with tourism businesses /volunteers recognising the importance of being able to add value to the visitors' experiences.



# Any other skills?

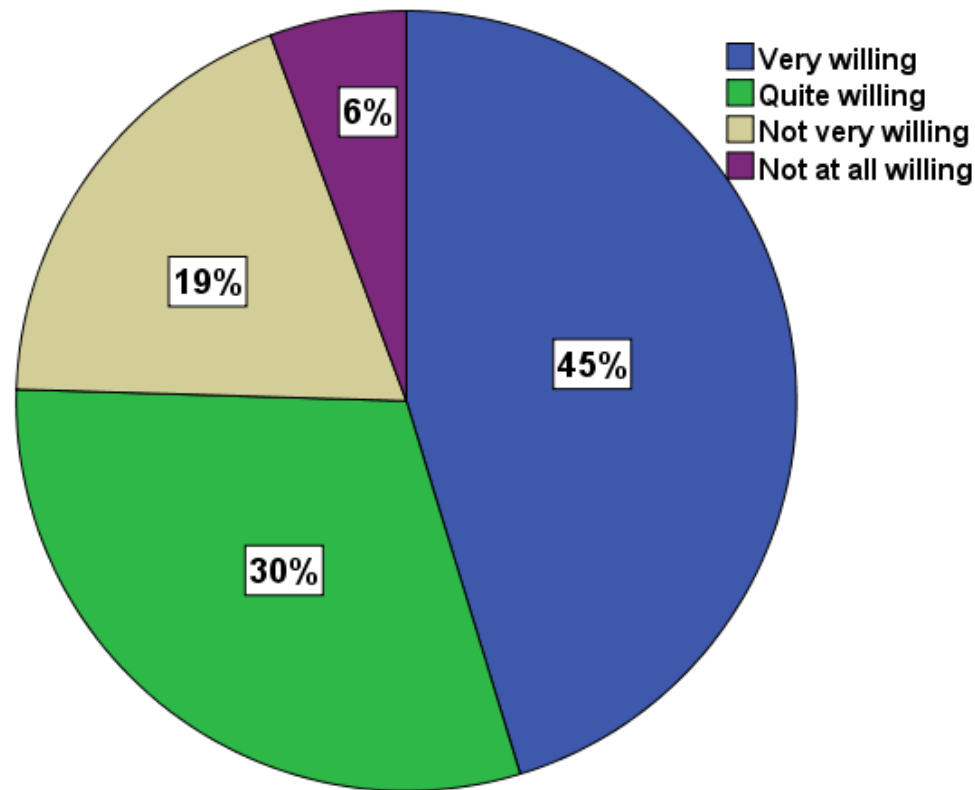
- There was no concensus on any other skills that people require.
- Some were very specific to specific needs e.g. bee keeping, traditional crafts, heavy horse driving and others took the opportunity to comment on various skills initiatives that have already been undertaken or to make a point:
  - “Charging tourism businesses for use of our land!”
  - “How to achieve communication effectively with no mobile reception and very slow internet!
  - “Understanding planning regulations”

# Any groups in particular?

- As in the focus groups, a lot felt that youngsters could and should benefit from skills/training
- Others included the guides, front of “house” staff and a number of the farmers feel that “visitors” could benefit from understanding more about Dartmoor and the fact that it is a working environment too.
- Also those who work for the various Authorities: DNPA, DEFRA, Natural England.....

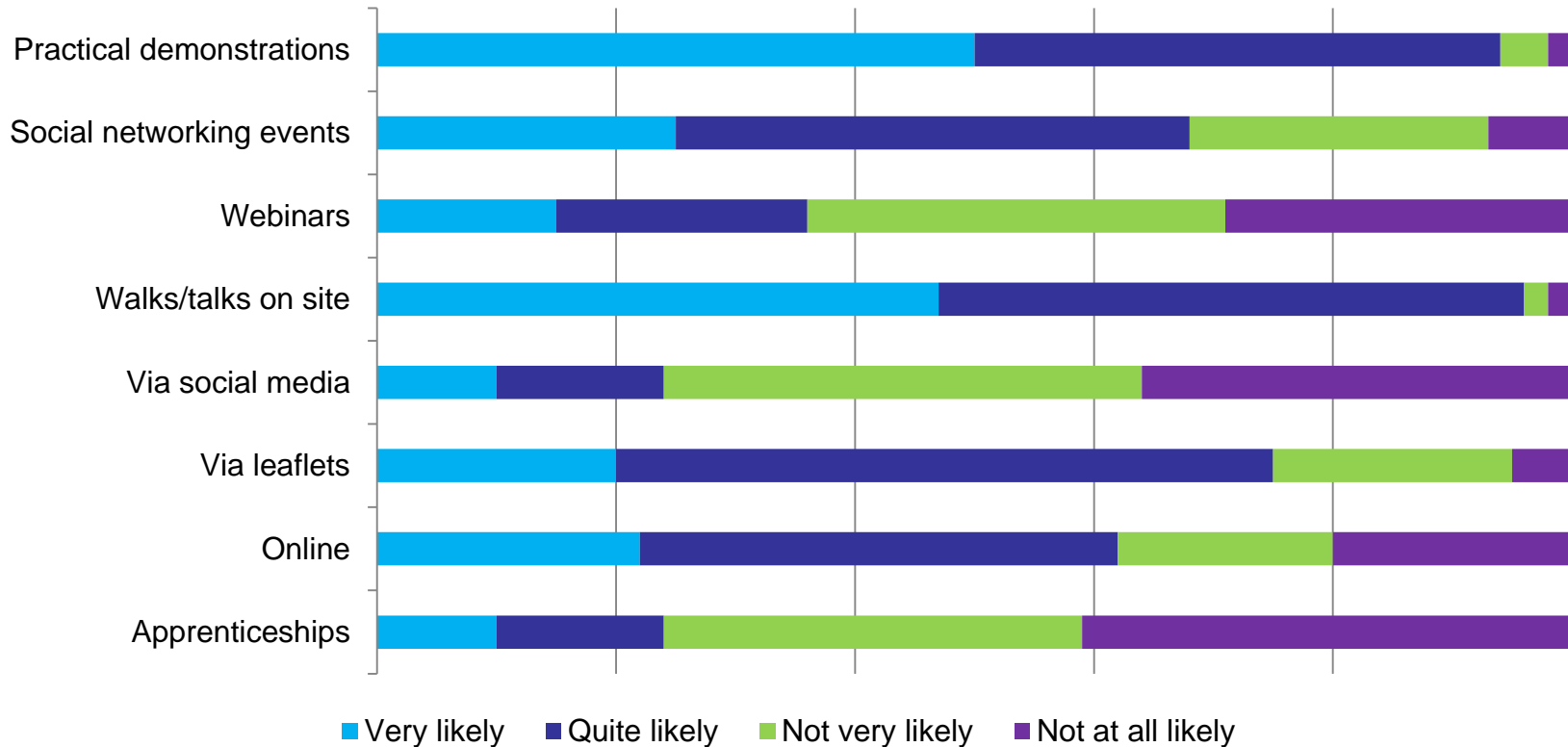
# How willing would you be to share the skills that you have with others?

$\frac{3}{4}$  of the respondents were willing to some extent to share their skills with others. For those that aren't, it appears to be more a question of them not feeling confident or feeling that their skills are not of interest/relevant to others.



# How likely would you be to access/acquire knowledge in the following ways?

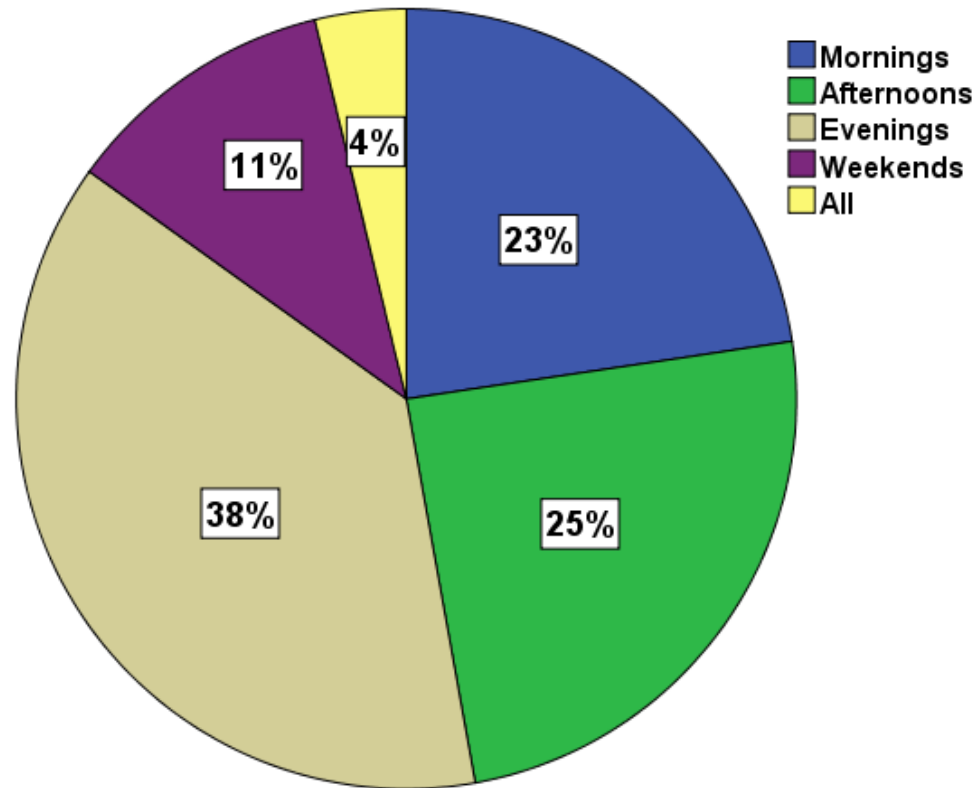
As with the focus groups, the most popular method of accessing skills is via practical demonstrations and walks/talks in the locality to make it relevant and real. Followed by social networking events – people with real “hands on” practical help/advice would appear to be the main requirement.





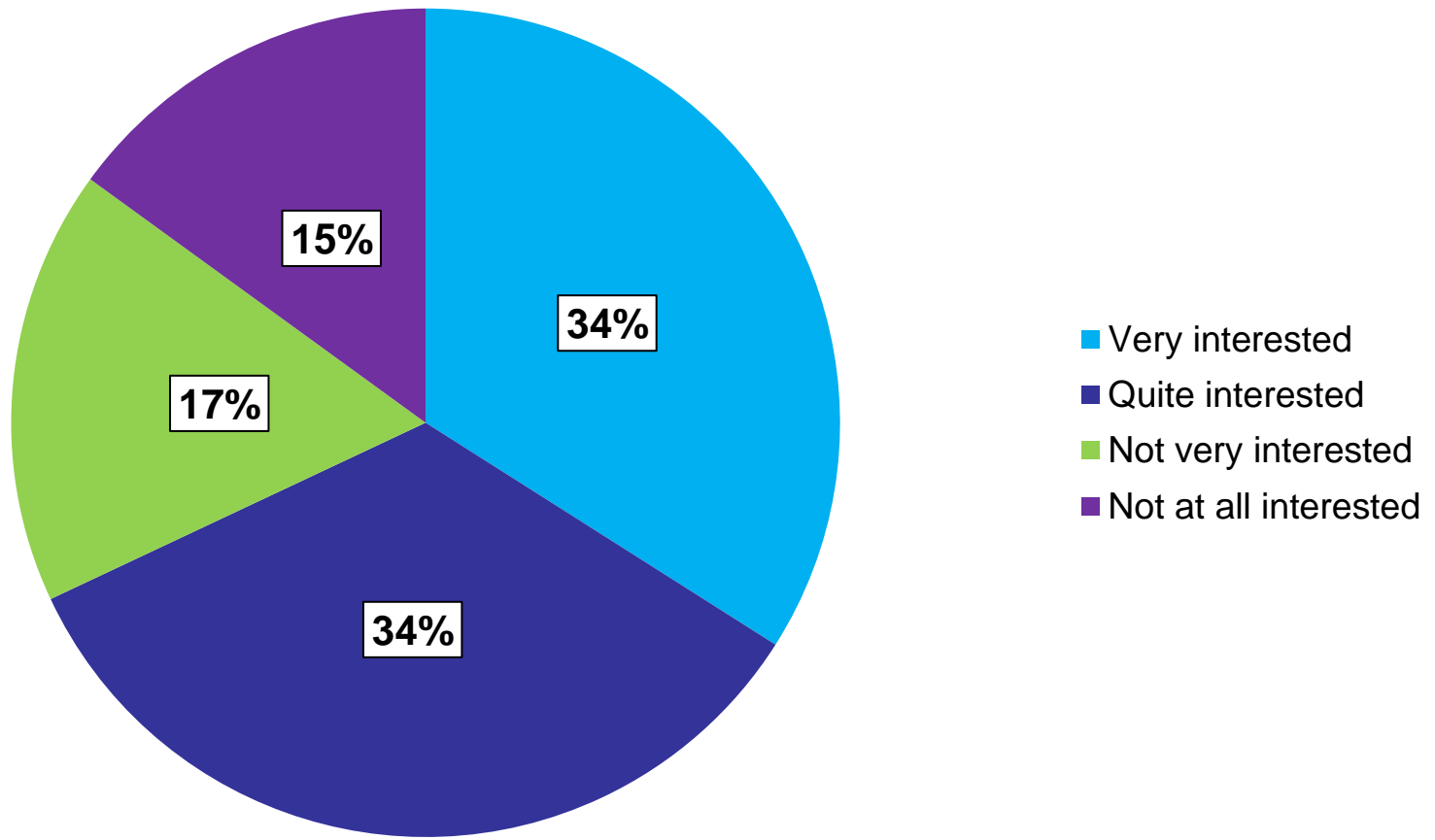
# When would be the best time for you to attend any events, talks, demonstrations?

There was a mixture of responses to this question indicating that a range of events need to be put on at different times during the day to provide a choice to attendees. Timing will of course also need to depend on the nature of the event/talk.



# How interested would you be in an “accredited” qualification e.g. Dartmoor Diploma?

There was a good level of interest in the Dartmoor diploma although some questions over the extent and range of subjects that would need to be covered.

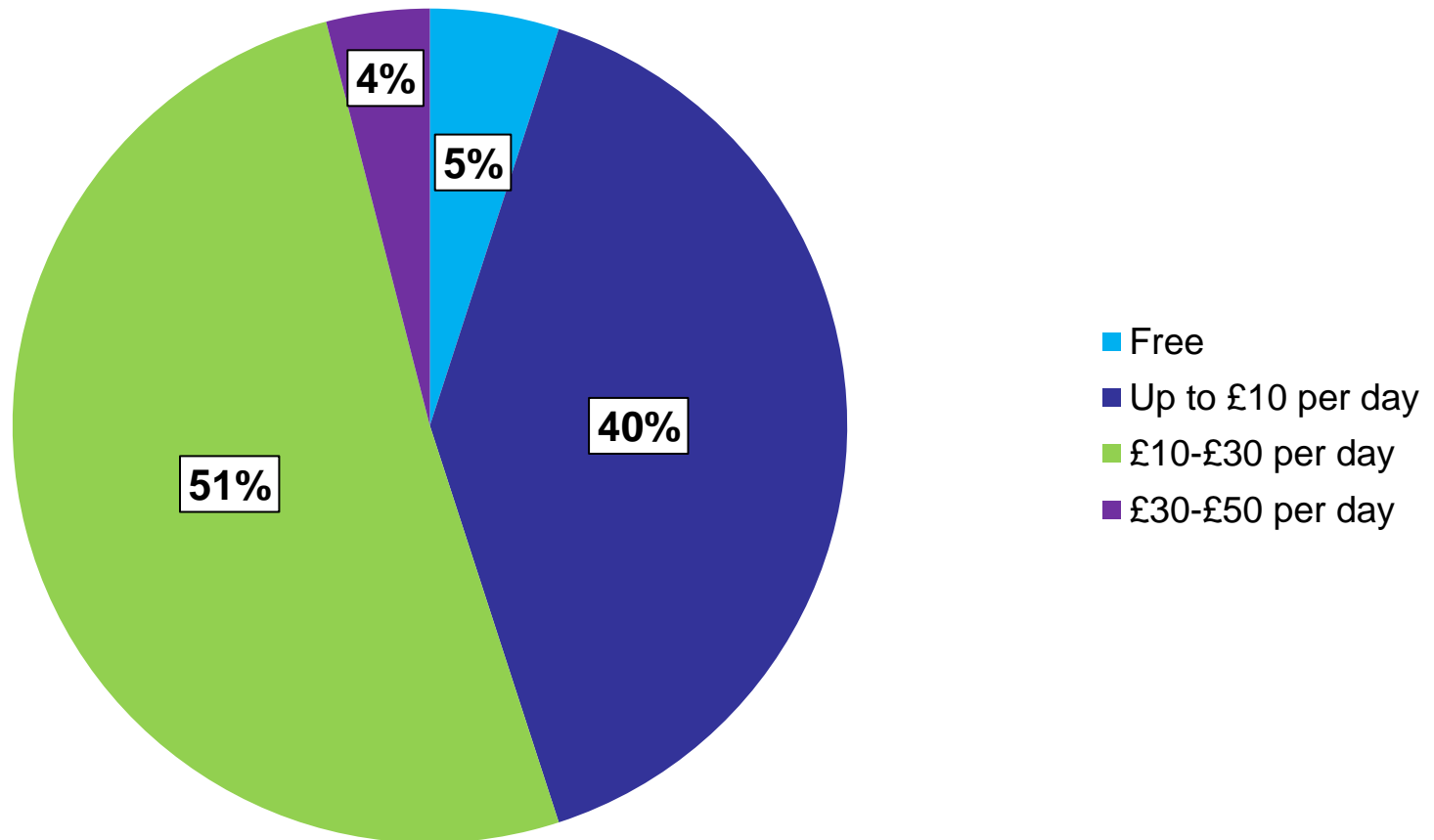


# Do you have any other comments regarding skills development, events, training?

- Again a very wide range of comments and suggestions:
  - “A Dartmoor message board might be helpful to pool information”
  - “Important to train younger generation”
  - “Practical tasks are far preferable to attending talks”
  - “Regs are something that constantly need updating”
  - “The usual problem is funding and time”
  - “Use available skill set”
  - “There is only so much training anyone can cope with”

# How much would you be willing to contribute towards events, activities, training?

The majority would be willing to pay up to £30 per day for any training or events although a number stated that it would “depend on the course”.



# Summary

- There would appear to be a good level of agreement that skills and knowledge could be beneficial whilst at the same time acknowledging that there is already a broad skill set that could be made use of across Dartmoor with a good number being willing to share their skills.
- Business skills would appear to be required across the groups with good levels of interest in traditional moorland skills, understanding of species and habitats and archeology/history of the area. Also First Aid and skills required to keep up with regulations appear high on most people's lists.
- The best way to provide such knowledge transfer (and those that appear to appeal to most) is through practical demonstrations and talks on site run at different times of the day with social networking offered in the evenings.
- A good level of interest in a Dartmoor diploma but again caution about the level of practical skills included ("not another paper qualification!") and the amount of skills that would be covered in a way that they are worthwhile and useful.

# Summary

- £30 would appear to be at the maximum most would pay towards any training although this does depend on the nature of the event, training. Inevitably some would like events to be “free”.
- Funding and time are mentioned as issues for going to events, doing training and there are comments about the amount of training that some have already received.
- A number of the farm businesses would appear to be somewhat resistant to the idea of others teaching them about their environment and would like the authorities and visitors to be the ones receiving the training.
- Inevitably the youth/younger generation are highlighted as being in need of the training and skills to retain them on Dartmoor.



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