

PE1556/B

Date : 25 May 2015
To : Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee
Cc : Scottish Campaign for National Parks
Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland
From : Andrew Bauer

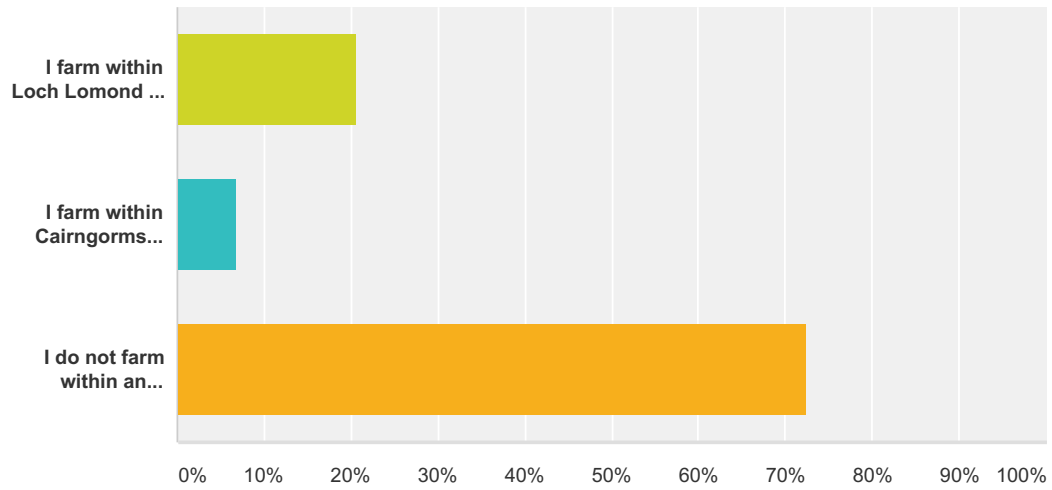
PETITION PA1556

1. NFU Scotland welcomes the opportunity to briefly give its views on the petition.
 - 1.1. NFU Scotland notes that it has recently met with Scottish Campaign for National Parks (SCNP) and Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland (APRS) to discuss the petition.
2. In order to inform its submission, NFU Scotland polled its membership to gather views about both the existing national parks and the proposal for new national parks. 29 responses were received – eight of which were from farmers within the existing national parks.
 - 2.1. The results of this poll accompany this submission.
3. Whilst NFU Scotland acknowledges the limitations of this poll, it considers the results largely in line with other feedback it has received from its membership.
4. The headline messages are that the existing national parks are not viewed as having made a satisfactorily positive difference on farming matters, and are perceived as having increased bureaucracy and access-related issues.

- 4.1. Some respondents are positive about some aspects of national park designation (e.g. their ability to capitalise on increased visitor numbers), but a larger number are negative or view them as marginally relevant.
5. NFU Scotland acknowledges that in recent years the existing national parks have made some efforts to increase their engagement with the farming community via dedicated staff. This is a welcome development, but one which on its own will not address the perception that the national parks have, and often continue to, under deliver for the needs, aspirations, and potential of their farming constituents.
6. NFU Scotland is to date unconvinced that the case has been made for the creation of new national parks.
 - 6.1. The existing national parks have not satisfactorily applied themselves to ensuring that farming is satisfactorily accounted for in the delivery of their forth statutory aim (“to promote sustainable social and economic development of area’s communities”).
 - 6.2. There are also many unanswered questions about how new parks would be funded and structured to deliver for the farming community.
7. A pre-requisite for NFU Scotland changing its views would be independent evidence of the value that existing parks bring (to farmers and others), and a similarly robust case for why the outcomes sought via new national parks could not be achieved by other means.

Q1 Which of these statements best describes you?

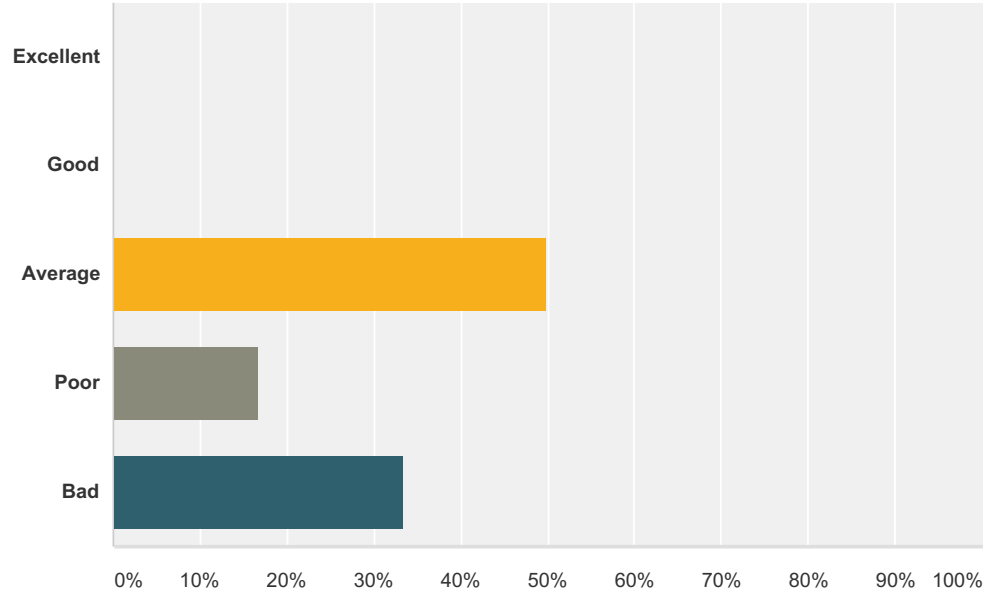
Answered: 29 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
I farm within Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park	20.69% 6
I farm within Cairngorms National Park	6.90% 2
I do not farm within an existing national park	72.41% 21
Total	29

Q2 On matters other than agriculture, how would you rate Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park?

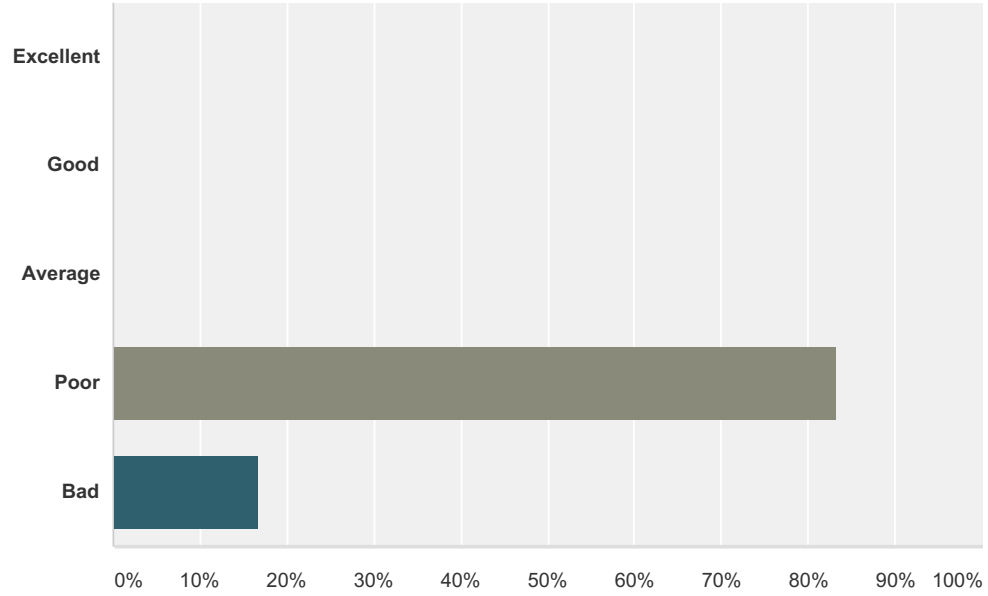
Answered: 6 Skipped: 23



Answer Choices	Responses
Excellent	0.00% 0
Good	0.00% 0
Average	50.00% 3
Poor	16.67% 1
Bad	33.33% 2
Total	6

Q3 On agricultural matters, how would you rate Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park?

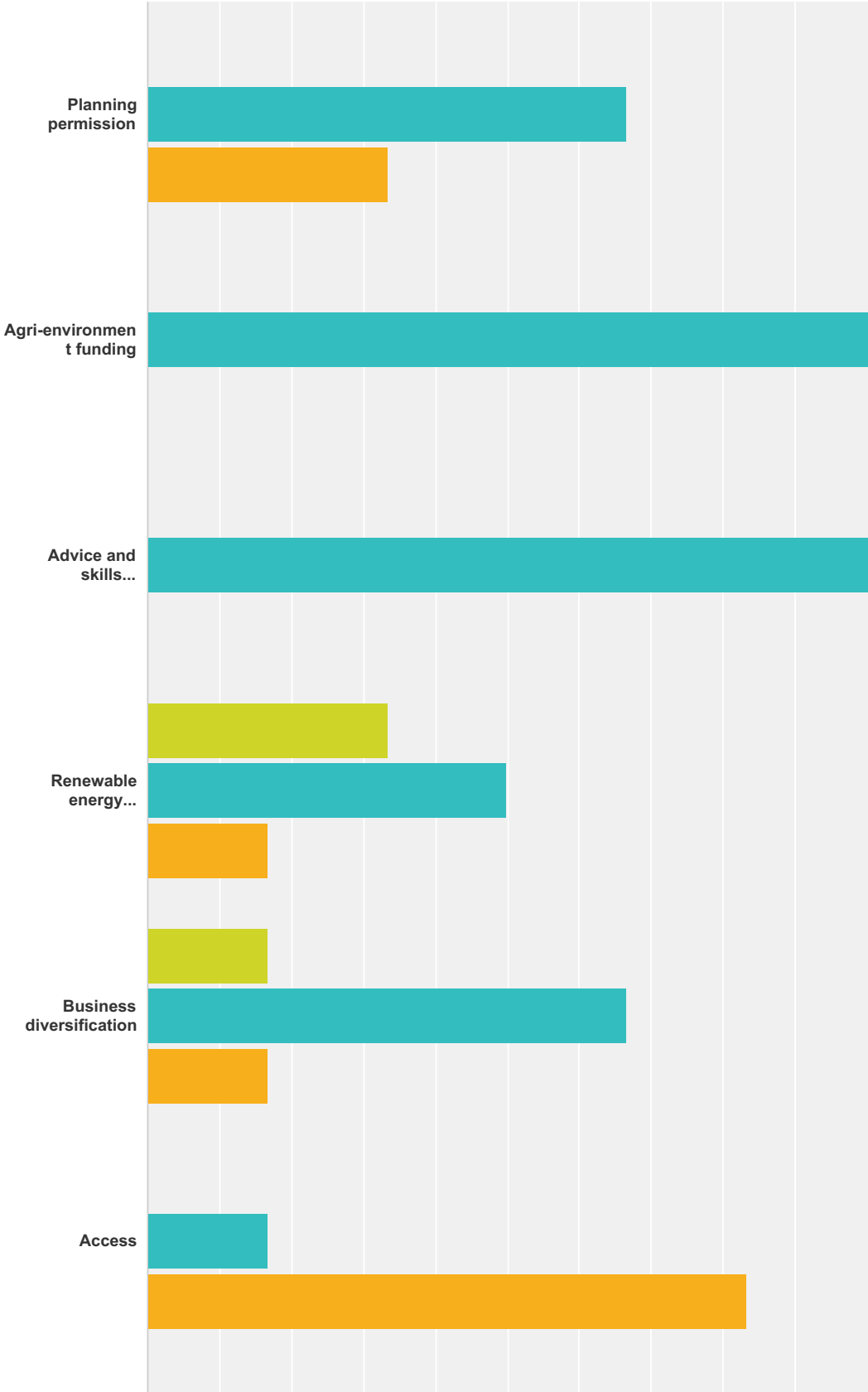
Answered: 6 Skipped: 23



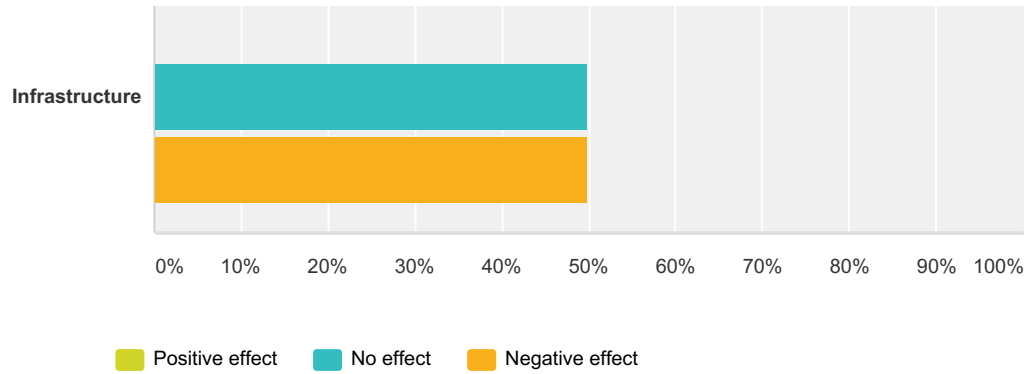
Answer Choices	Responses
Excellent	0.00% 0
Good	0.00% 0
Average	0.00% 0
Poor	83.33% 5
Bad	16.67% 1
Total	6

Q4 Please indicate how being in the national park has affected your business.

Answered: 6 Skipped: 23



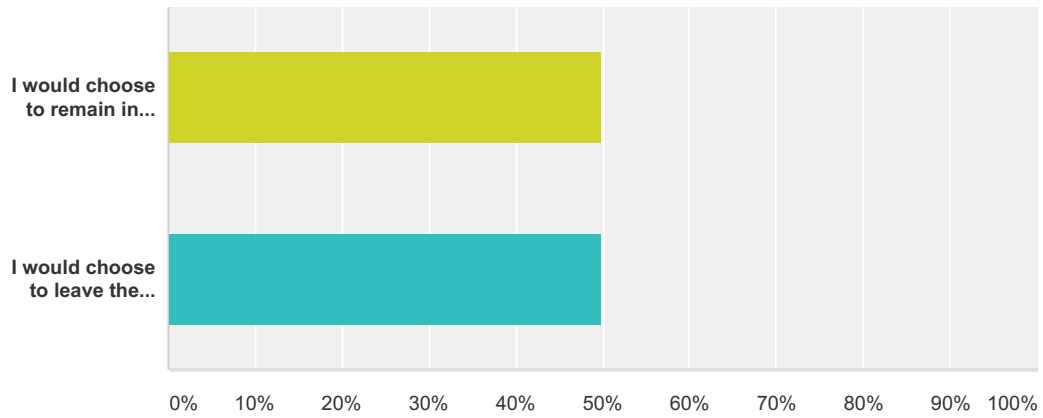
National Parks - snap poll of members



	Positive effect	No effect	Negative effect	Total
Planning permission	0.00% 0	66.67% 4	33.33% 2	6
Agri-environment funding	0.00% 0	100.00% 6	0.00% 0	6
Advice and skills development	0.00% 0	100.00% 6	0.00% 0	6
Renewable energy development	33.33% 2	50.00% 3	16.67% 1	6
Business diversification	16.67% 1	66.67% 4	16.67% 1	6
Access	0.00% 0	16.67% 1	83.33% 5	6
Infrastructure	0.00% 0	50.00% 3	50.00% 3	6

Q5 If you were in a position to choose, which of the following would you opt for?

Answered: 6 Skipped: 23



Answer Choices	Responses
I would choose to remain in the National Park	50.00% 3
I would choose to leave the National Park	50.00% 3
Total	6

National Parks - snap poll of members

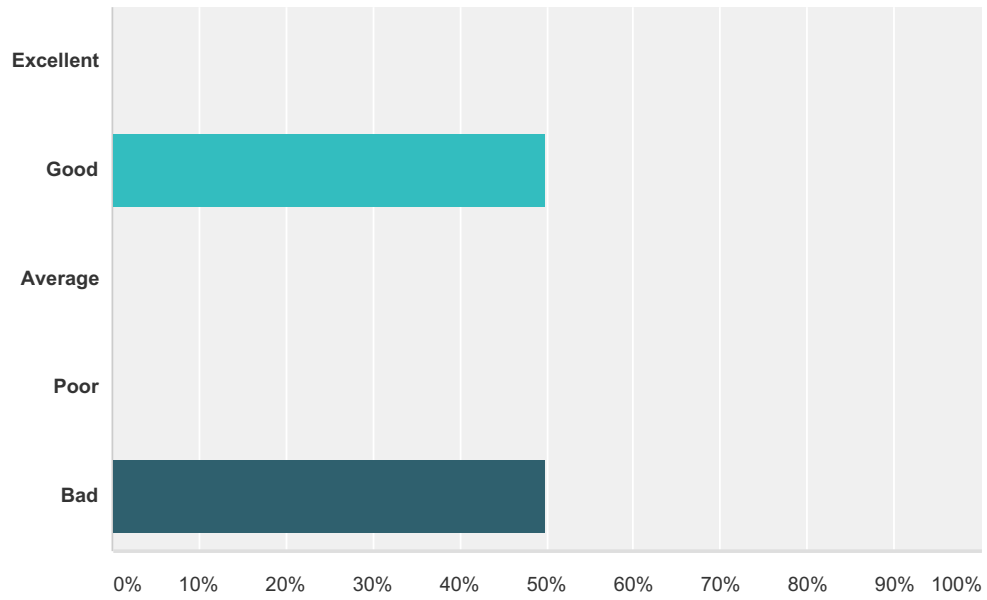
Q6 Please use the space below to provide any other comments you have about Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park.

Answered: 4 Skipped: 25

#	Responses	Date
1	The national park is a gross waste of money, which is spent on a bloated self serving and arrogant organisation, doing the bidding of left wing politicians, and there also left wing supporting agencies, which have their own narrow agenda, who seem to be the only people that they the politicians will listen to. With a total disregard for the wishes of the people living and working within the park.	5/23/2015 9:39 AM
2	LLTNP may have increased the number of visitors to area or the number may have gone up anyway. So more pressure on countryside and little help from NPA to deal with it. The above question is not easy to answer-unsure as may have helped manage visitors in some respects although may have generated even more. NPA has little to do with farming community.	5/20/2015 9:23 PM
3	The Park is probably still trying to find a reason for it's existance other than a political ideal. There appear to be very poor links between the park and the councils and it really seems as if it is a waste of taxpayer's money. Stirling council for example did a fine job before the park came along.	5/20/2015 11:06 AM
4	Things were fine before the np was created. It is really just another unnecessary tier of government at extra cost to the tax payer. Their still seems to be friction between the park and councils.	5/20/2015 9:33 AM

Q7 On matters other than agriculture, how would you rate Cairngorms National Park?

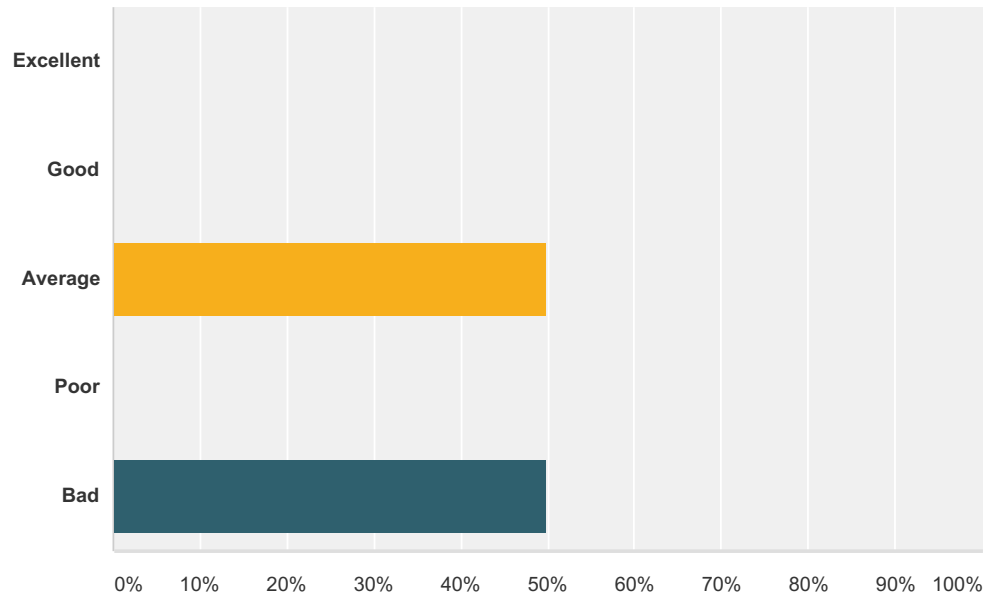
Answered: 2 Skipped: 27



Answer Choices	Responses
Excellent	0.00% 0
Good	50.00% 1
Average	0.00% 0
Poor	0.00% 0
Bad	50.00% 1
Total	2

Q8 On agricultural matters, how would you rate Cairngorms National Park?

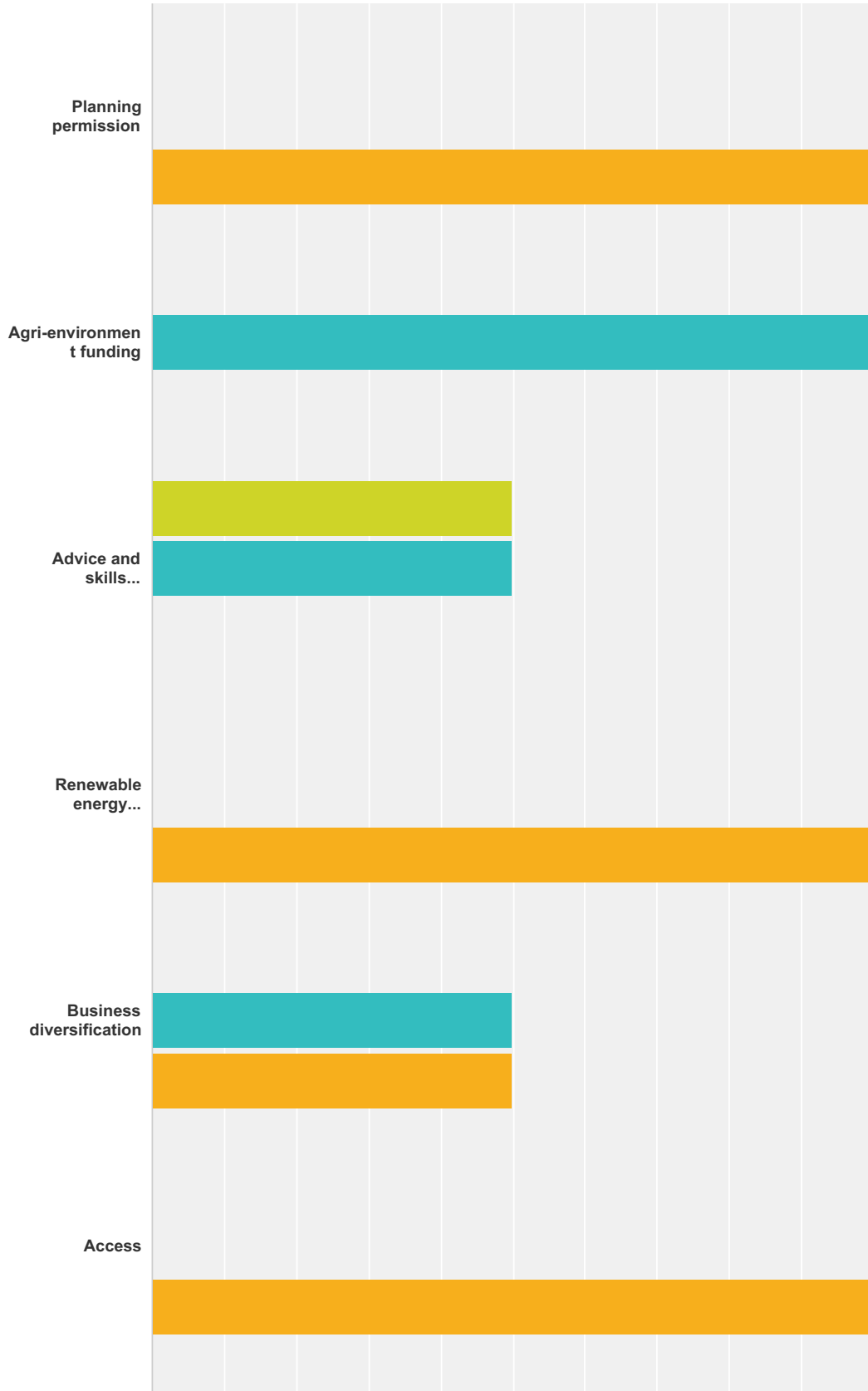
Answered: 2 Skipped: 27



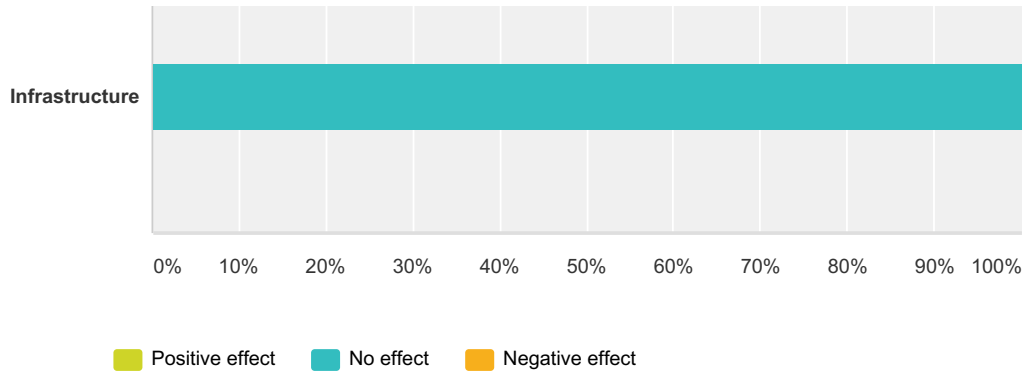
Answer Choices	Responses
Excellent	0.00% 0
Good	0.00% 0
Average	50.00% 1
Poor	0.00% 0
Bad	50.00% 1
Total	2

Q9 Please indicate how being in the national park has affected your business.

Answered: 2 Skipped: 27



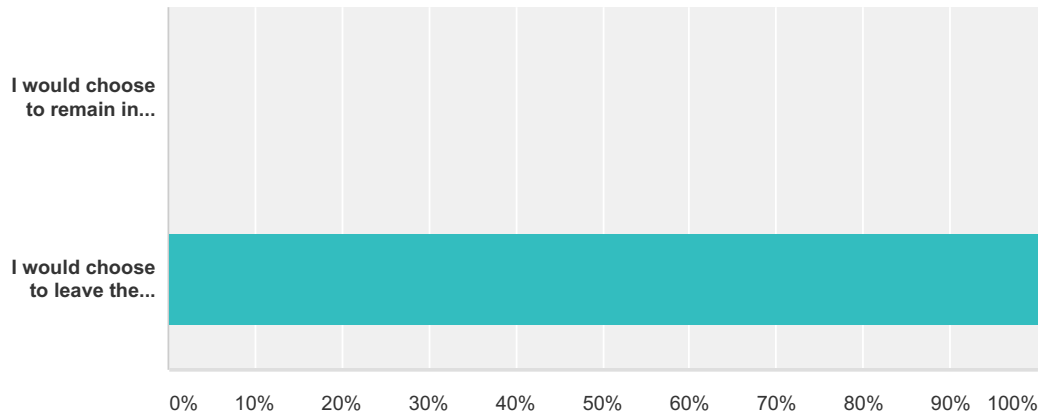
National Parks - snap poll of members



	Positive effect	No effect	Negative effect	Total
Planning permission	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 2	2
Agri-environment funding	0.00% 0	100.00% 2	0.00% 0	2
Advice and skills development	50.00% 1	50.00% 1	0.00% 0	2
Renewable energy development	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 2	2
Business diversification	0.00% 0	50.00% 1	50.00% 1	2
Access	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 2	2
Infrastructure	0.00% 0	100.00% 2	0.00% 0	2

Q10 If you were in a position to choose, which of the following would you opt for?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 27



Answer Choices	Responses
I would choose to remain in the National Park	0.00% 0
I would choose to leave the National Park	100.00% 2
Total	2

National Parks - snap poll of members

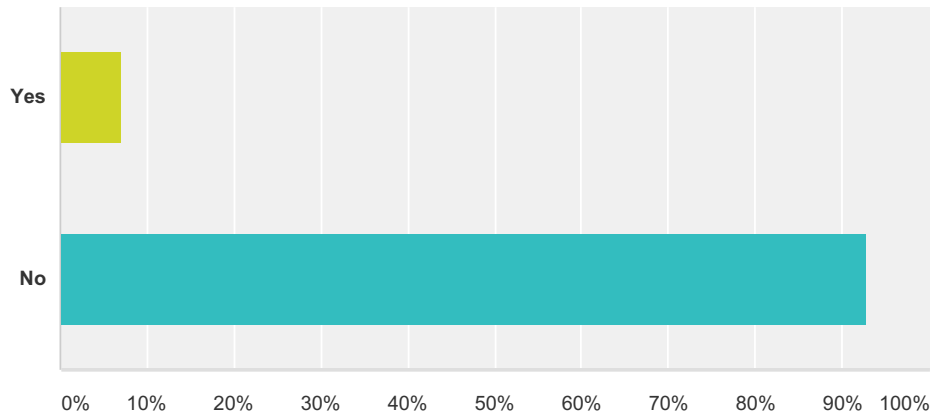
**Q11 Please use the space below to provide
any other comments you have about
Cairngorms National Park.**

Answered: 2 Skipped: 27

#	Responses	Date
1	An organisation which is detrimental to everyone living within its boundary	5/22/2015 10:55 PM
2	From an agricultural perspective, not clear what they bring to the party.	5/20/2015 6:09 PM

Q12 Do you think you farm within one of the areas proposed as a new national park?

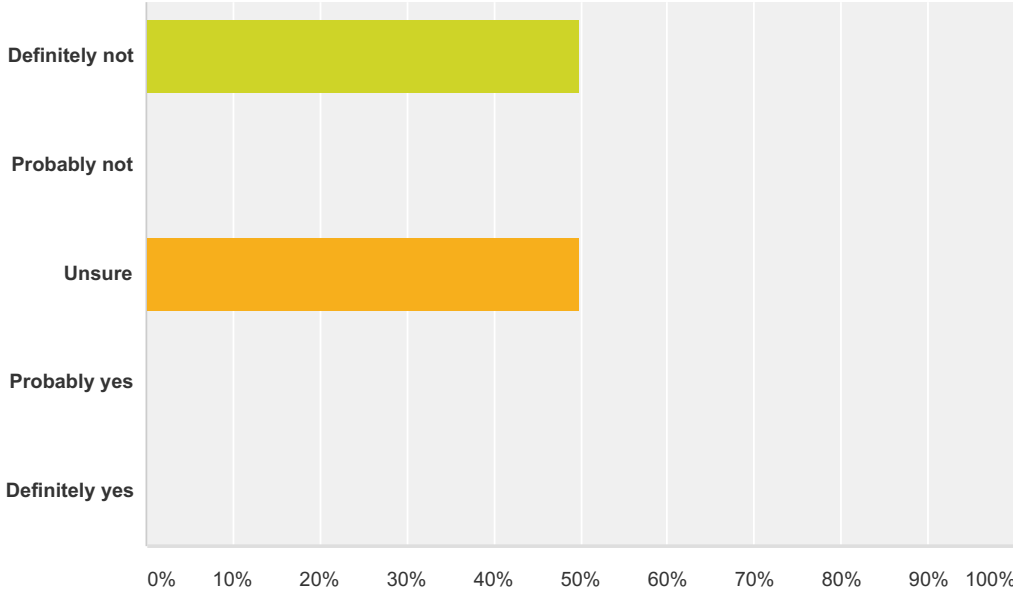
Answered: 28 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	7.14% 2
No	92.86% 26
Total	28

Q13 Do you support the creation of a new national park in your area?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 27



Answer Choices	Responses
Definitely not	50.00% 1
Probably not	0.00% 0
Unsure	50.00% 1
Probably yes	0.00% 0
Definitely yes	0.00% 0
Total	2

National Parks - snap poll of members

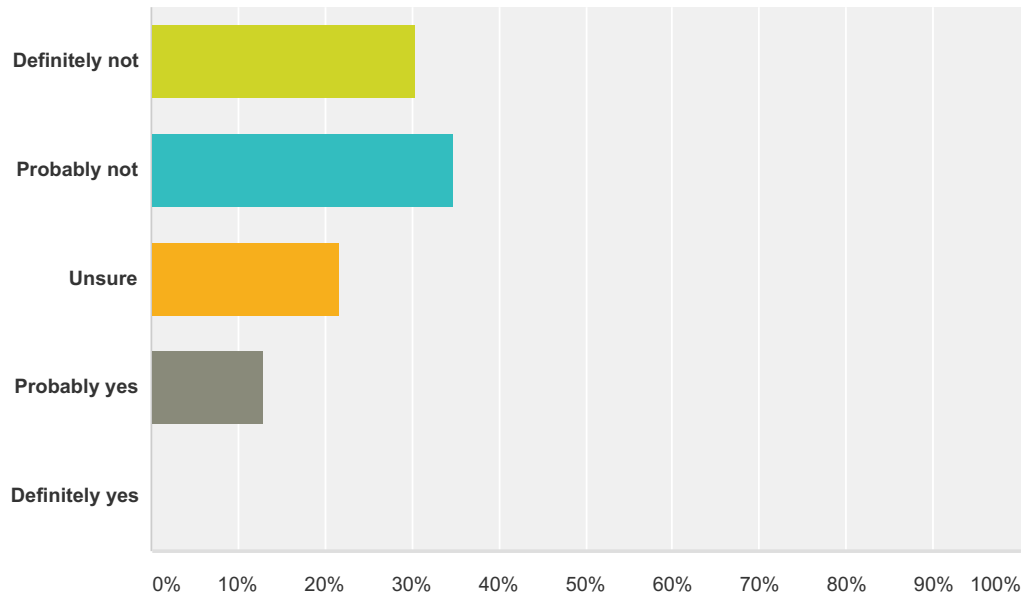
Q14 Please provide further details about why you answered the above question in the way you did.

Answered: 2 Skipped: 27

#	Responses	Date
1	<p>There is enough areas designated to this criteria, with the freedom to roam people have all the access they require I look at Ben Lomond which is now a desert, it is devoid of the nature which was present when I visited as a boy, and areas like this have turned into an ecological disaster and deserts One of the biggest dangers is the presence of ticks, which are now spreading disease far and wide, so with the denuding of stock the control of pests and predators has risen, to the detriment of the general public The general public also cannot afford to access these areas, so the areas end up under the access and control of the financially wealthy, who do not understand or care about the financial sustainability of the rural areas or families</p>	5/21/2015 3:43 PM
2	<p>I am located in the Galloway and South Ayrshire Biosphere - and from my experience so far feel that this has achieved nothing apart from the employment of 3 people to advertise/run its website. I could be more supportive if I had an indication of how it would improve things for those resident in one of the existing parks.</p>	5/20/2015 11:32 AM

Q15 Do you support the creation of new national parks?

Answered: 23 Skipped: 6



Answer Choices	Responses
Definitely not	30.43% 7
Probably not	34.78% 8
Unsure	21.74% 5
Probably yes	13.04% 3
Definitely yes	0.00% 0
Total	23

National Parks - snap poll of members

Q16 Please provide further details about why you answered the above question in the way you did.

Answered: 16 Skipped: 13

#	Responses	Date
1	No need to designate Scotland any more. It only leads to more inhibitions on sensible development and more interference from outside interests.	5/23/2015 5:10 PM
2	Definitely not because they do not operate to help the farmers within the park who are saddled with even more laws rules and officials constantly interfering with every aspect of your farm business. As if farming on marginal land was not hard enough!	5/23/2015 9:47 AM
3	it is a backward step to form national parks as they are a barrier to progress and development	5/22/2015 10:59 PM
4	Existing parks have had no positive effect on landscape and added additional cost and burocracy to these areas. Planning consent for even farm scale renewables is problematic.	5/22/2015 7:03 PM
5	Not for Orkney but possibly could be considered in some poorer land quality areas.	5/22/2015 8:15 AM
6	Don't see any need to change. What's wring with the way the land looks or is used today. Loathing of bureaucracy, dead useless time. Probably with out any financial benefit .	5/22/2015 8:05 AM
7	There needs to be a reason for thier creation- not just that it is nice area. eg managing visitor pressure in LLTNP. If it can lead to better management of some aspect of an area fine otherwise don't bother.	5/20/2015 9:26 PM
8	Expensive to run, more regulation.	5/20/2015 6:10 PM
9	It's not clear what benefit it brings to the farming industry. I understand that there are conservation benefits - and possibly tourism - but it's not clear to me whether or not it would bring restrictions on current farming practices.	5/20/2015 5:17 PM
10	Not sure how it will effect landowners	5/20/2015 2:01 PM
11	Its added cost	5/20/2015 1:05 PM
12	I would support the creation of maritime parks which controlled dredging of inshore waters for shellfish etc. But they would have to cover the whole coastline otherwise boats woud just concentrate somewhere else.	5/20/2015 11:08 AM
13	Would only support if dredging for scallops etc was stopped in inshore waters	5/20/2015 9:36 AM
14	Provided they do not have planning powers and are properly funded to encourage development	5/20/2015 9:12 AM
15	National parks are a good idea if the farmers and business within them are not constricted by red tape and are allowed and helped to develop	5/19/2015 11:45 PM
16	Farming with the constraints of and additional burdens of a national park can be difficult. This is exacerbated by tight financial constraints.	5/19/2015 6:29 PM

National Parks - snap poll of members

Q17 Please use the space below to provide any other comments you have about national parks - existing or proposed - in Scotland.

Answered: 9 Skipped: 20

#	Responses	Date
1	What is the point of committing yet more public money and bureaucracy to areas of the country which currently happily look after themselves?	5/23/2015 4:31 PM
2	They are a complete waste of money providing lots of easy jobs for the boys. Existing councils can easily do most of what the park does for less money and bureaucracy.	5/23/2015 9:57 AM
3	they are a blot on the landscape	5/22/2015 11:00 PM
4	They areas which when come under the control of the people who can afford to access them, the whole ecology of the area changes, from being a Rural area which could sustain families and ways of life to become a playground for those who can afford it. No thought is giving to sustaining the rural population and making viable use of these resources, which should profit all and not the few who can afford access. The wildlife and nature change with outside interference dramactically and in some cases irreversably, you only have to look at they way that forestry land has changed the outlooks in many regions and the effect of denuding the land of population and nature, this is also true of the way in which SNH acts, a small band of people determined to ruin the landscape and the rural areas	5/21/2015 3:50 PM
5	In principle, a good thing, but we need more information on what the status means for landowners.	5/20/2015 5:18 PM
6	people already have a right to roam and there are already many restricting on farming practices making life difficult. More National Parks could well mean more restrictions on struggling businesses.	5/20/2015 2:02 PM
7	See previous comments	5/20/2015 11:09 AM
8	The whole of Scotland is a national park	5/20/2015 9:37 AM
9	Id rather be in one than just outside one	5/20/2015 9:12 AM