

# National Tourism and Environmental Monitoring Programme Sliabh Liag 2024



**Fáilte  
Ireland**

Turasóireacht Náisiúnta  
An tÚdara Eorbartha  
National Tourism  
Development Authority

# National Tourism and Environmental Monitoring Programme

## Report for Sliabh Liag 2024

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## SLIABH LIAG – INTERESTING FINDS

### Interesting Finds

A mosaic of grassland, heath and bog habitats are found throughout the site. A diversity range of plants are found in these habitats, with Bell Heather, Bilberry, Bog Asphodel, Common Cow-wheat, Crowberry, English Stonecrop, Fairy Flax, Harebell, Heath Bedstraw, Ling Heather and Thrift among the numerous species recorded.



**English Stonecrop (*Sedum anglicum*)  
found at Sliabh Liag**

### Features of the Site

Car parking is located at the visitor centre, the lower car park and the upper car park.

- Toilet facilities are located at the lower car park.
- An interpretive centre, toilet facilities, a café and a gift shop are located at the Sliabh Liag visitor centre.
- A shuttle bus transports visitors from the Sliabh Liag visitor centre to the Bunglass viewing area.
- Vendors selling food, drinks and gifts are located at the Bunglass viewing area. Bins and picnic tables are also located here.
- Informational signage and warning signs are located around the Bunglass viewing area.

### Habitats

The following habitats were recorded on site:

- Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3)
- Dense bracken (HD1)
- Dry calcareous and neutral grassland (GS1)
- Dry-humid acid grassland (GS3)
- Dry siliceous heath (HH1)
- Dystrophic lakes (FL1)
- Exposed circalittoral rock (SR4)
- Exposed siliceous rock (ER1)
- Montane heath (HH4)
- Poor fen and flush (PF2)
- Rocky sea cliffs (CS1)
- Sea inlets and bays (MW2)
- Upland blanket bogs (PB2)
- Wet heath (HH3)

### Key Recommendations

- Fencing or barriers should be at various locations for safety and for protection of habitats.
- Bike parking facilities at the upper car park should be considered.
- The installation of a safety barrier at Cnoc Ramhar should be considered.
- The installation of additional signage for safety, protection of habitats and birds, and protection of livestock should be considered.
- Connecting the formalised path between the Cnoc Ramhar viewing area and the Pilgrim's Path should be considered.
- Fáilte Ireland should support farmers and landowners and raise awareness on the benefits of sustainable grazing which would allow the habitat to recover.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

Roughan & O'Donovan (ROD) was appointed by Fáilte Ireland to conduct Visitor and Environmental Surveys as part of the National Environmental Surveying & Monitoring Programme. Fáilte Ireland regularly engages with environmental research that is used to make informed management decisions and produce robust guidelines to facilitate the protection of the environment. From its inception in 2014, the Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) Operational Monitoring Programme has been conducting research into the impacts of tourism on the receiving environment.

Building on the success of the WAW environmental monitoring programme which ran from 2015-2019, Fáilte Ireland expanded the programme to a national level. From 2021 to 2022 the programme monitored 19 individual sites located in all of Fáilte Ireland's regional areas: The Wild Atlantic Way, Irelands Hidden Heartlands, Ireland's Ancient East, and Dublin. This 2024 National Monitoring report builds on environmental surveying and monitoring undertaken on behalf of Fáilte Ireland as far back as 2015 and to date (excluding the 2024 data), the surveys have monitored a total of 57 sites and recorded the activities and effects of over 30,000 visitors at a range of popular sites, including inland, urban, coastal and WAW discovery points.

The environmental surveys and monitoring in 2023 followed the methodologies used in previous years. Following the completion of the 2023 surveys, a review of the methodology was undertaken. In developing the 2024 survey methodology, ROD considered the methodology for gathering the data, the presentation of the data, and the usefulness of the data gathered. The review also considered the time required to gather the data.

Ten sites were surveyed in 2024. Figure 1.1 below shows the locations of these sites. This report is for Sliabh Liag (or Slieve League), Co. Donegal.



Figure 1-1 Environmental Monitoring Programme 2024 locations. Basemap provided by Google.

## 1.2 Aim of the Report

The purpose of the monitoring programme is as follows:

- To gain insight from an environmental perspective at amenity and recreation sites across Ireland;
- To obtain data on path and trail conditions etc. for each site;
- To obtain data relating to habitats, flora, and fauna for each site;
- To identify observable trends or variations among the sites;
- To make recommendations where appropriate for site management for the benefit of the site, the visitor, and the natural environment.

## 1.3 Site Description of Sliabh Liag

Sliabh Liag is a series of sea cliffs standing c. 600m above sea level located in southwest Co. Donegal, 3km southwest of the village of Carrick. It is accessible via a local road network connected to the R263, which runs through Carrick. The area being surveyed for this report (“the site”) consists of the road leading to the ‘upper car park’ / Sliabh Liag viewing area (c. 200m east of the ‘lower car park’), the pathway leading from the Bunglass viewing area as far as the Cnoc Ramhar viewing area and the lands adjacent to the road / pathway. The site boundary, along with various points of interest is presented in Figure 1.1.

The sea cliffs at Sliabh Liag are the second highest in Ireland, after Croaghau in Co. Mayo, and the sixth highest in Europe, making the site a popular tourist attraction. Sliabh Liag is recognised as one of three ‘signature Discovery Points’ in Donegal in the ‘Donegal County Development Plan 2024 – 2030’. Policy TOU-P-1 of the Development Plan is dedicated to ensuring the continued maintenance of the Sliabh Liag site, as well as ensuring that the site is accessible to all visitors (Donegal County Council, 2024).

The main viewing area for the site is located at the upper car park at Bunglass, which offers panoramic views of the cliffs. Informative signage and retail vendors selling gifts, food and drinks are located at the Bunglass viewing area. There are also bins provided. Travelling along the top of sea cliffs is a pathway that leads visitors to various viewpoints and rocky outcrops that offer views of the cliffs to the southeast of the site. Way-markers and signs warning against approaching too close to the cliffs edge are found throughout the site. The site does not have bike parking facilities. Toilets facilities are located at the lower car park.

The site is located within the Slieve League Special Area of Conservation (SAC) [Site Code 000189], the West Donegal Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) [Site Code 004150] and the Slieve League proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) boundary [Site Code: 000189].

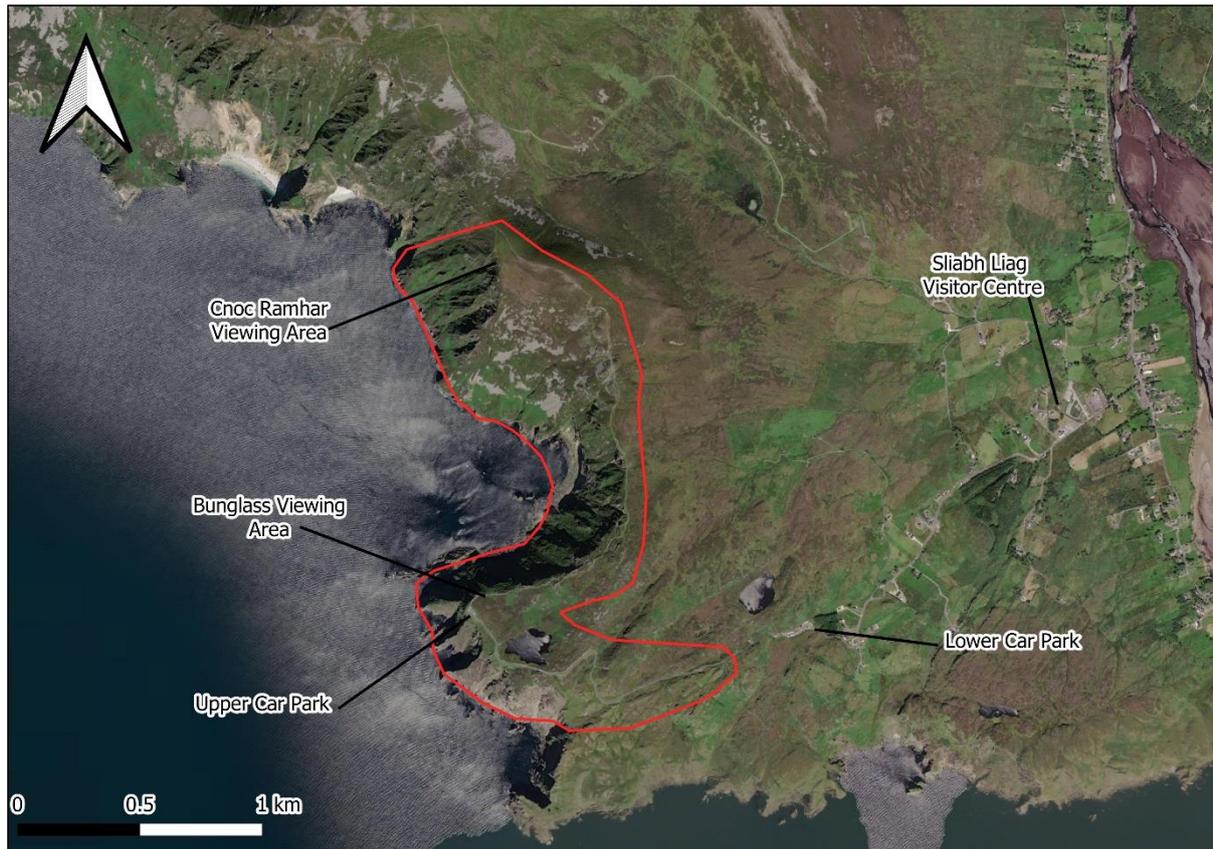


Figure 1.1 Site boundary outlined in red. Basemap provided by ESRI.

#### 1.4 Critical Infrastructure

Tables 1.1 - 1.3 below provide information on the infrastructure at Sliabh Liag. Uisce Éireann’s website was used to access information on the Water Supply and Wastewater Treatment Capacity Registers for County Donegal (Uisce Éireann 2024a, b).

Table 1.1 Sliabh Liag Wastewater Infrastructure

Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)	Uisce Éireann Indication of Capacity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toilet facilities are available at the lower car park.</li> <li>• There is no WWTP onsite.</li> <li>• The nearest settlements with a WWTP are located in Kilcar (WWTP Reg #D0520), Carrick (WWTP Reg #A0367) and Killybegs (WWTP Reg #D0011).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is spare capacity available at Kilcar and Killybegs WWTP and no spare capacity at Carrick WWTP.</li> </ul>

**Table 1.2 Summary of Drinking Water Infrastructure at Sliabh Liag Beach**

Drinking Water	Water Resource Name (WRZ)	Uisce Éireann Indication of Capacity
Nearest serviced settlement to Sliabh Liag is An Charraig (Carrick)	Owenteskiny	Potential capacity available (level of service improvement required).

**Table 1.3 Summary of Transport Infrastructure at Sliabh Liag**

Nearest Settlement	Current Transport Infrastructure	Comment
Carrick and Teelin	<p>Sliabh Liag is accessed by a local road network which branches off the R263 c. 4km north of the site. There are two car parks - the 'lower car park' and the 'upper car park'. The lower car park is a c. 45 min walk from the Bunglass viewing area. The 'upper car park' is located at the Bunglass viewing area and is primarily designated for use by retail vendors and visitors with mobility issues. General car access is not permitted to the upper car park.</p> <p>Another car park is located at the visitor centre (a c. 5 min drive from the site), from which visitors can travel via shuttle bus to the Bunglass viewing area and back to the visitor centre.</p>	<p>The 490 Bus Éireann bus service stops at the village of Carrick, which is located c. 3.3km from the Sliabh Liag Visitor Centre. This is an approx. 45-minute walk. From the visitor centre a shuttle bus service is available to take visitors to the site.</p> <p>The TFI local link bus No. 293 (Glencolmcille to Donegal Town) also stops at the town of Carrick.</p>

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

The following surveys were undertaken:

- Habitat survey
- Pathway condition survey
- Survey of the features, signage and hazards
- Supplementary pathway assessment of the 'Pilgrim's Path'.

The survey at Sliabh Liag was undertaken on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2024. The weather conditions were overcast with light wind and drizzle. The sub-sections below present the methodology used.

### 2.1 Habitat Condition Assessment Methodology

The habitats within the site were classified and mapped in accordance with *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland* (Fossitt, 2000) and *Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Surveying and Mapping* (Smith et al. 2011). Notes were taken on species composition and habitat condition. Fossitt habitats corresponding to Annex I habitats were noted using the *Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats* (EC, 2013). Given the large size of the site and inaccessibility of certain areas due to mountainous terrain and steep cliffs, the survey visit focused on the habitats immediately surrounding the walking trail and the areas accessed by visitors. Habitats beyond these areas were mapped by analysing satellite imagery in conjunction with habitat maps previously created by Perrin *et al.* (NPWS, 2013) in the '*National Survey of Upland Habitat*'. A desktop study was also undertaken to identify designated sites and rare and protected species in the vicinity of the site. Incidental sightings of birds, mammals, reptiles, etc. were also recorded during the site surveys.

The condition of the habitat in each polygon or line were noted, including any damage and the likely cause of the damage. The areas along pathways are outlined by the pathway condition assessment in Section 2.2 below. The following criteria were used to assess habitat condition:

- Extent of habitat degradation;
- Impact of habitat degradation (localised or widespread);
- Potential for the habitat to recover; and
- Whether or not intervention is required.

### 2.2 Pathway Condition Assessment Methodology

The main pathways were defined during the site visit and a desk study which included a review of the Strava heat maps ([www.strava.com/heatmap](http://www.strava.com/heatmap)), and a review of the previous site monitoring reports, if available. Typically, the main paths are formalised waymarked trails or heavily trafficked pathways that are not formalised. These paths usually link the site entry points and carparks to a destination or feature of interest. The pathways were categorised into sections by type and composition. The different types of pathways are described in Table 2.1 below. Visitor research was undertaken by Red C and is presented in Appendix A of this report.



Each path section is described as 'satisfactory' or 'unsatisfactory' based on the condition of the path and whether or not it could accommodate the current levels of use. Indicators that a path was not suitable for the current levels of use included the presence of wet areas, erosion, trip hazards, damaged pavement, braiding, path widening and habitat loss along the path. Paths that generally facilitated unobstructed movement between locations were deemed as 'satisfactory'. It should be noted that the methodology outlined here is independent of and not linked to the trail registration and management process run by Sport Ireland Outdoors.

**Table 2.1 Pathway Types**

Pathway Type	Description
Paved Car Park	An area used for parking, wider than the road, that is paved, usually with tarmacadam.
Gravel Car Park	An area used for parking, wider than the road, that is gravel or crushed stone.
Paved Road	A road that is paved with tarmacadam or similar hard material.
Gravel Road	A road consisting of gravel or crushed stone, with no grass in the middle.
Gravel Track	A single vehicle pathway used by small numbers of vehicles. Tracks are normally paved with gravel and can have grass in the middle
Grassy Track	A single vehicle pathway used by small numbers of vehicles. These tracks are not paved and are used primarily by tractors, quads or small numbers of private vehicles.
Paved Path	A path is primarily for foot traffic. Paved paths are found in more developed areas, to cater for higher levels of traffic.
Gravel Path	A path is primarily for foot traffic and can be a single track or a track wide enough for several people to walk abreast. Gravel paths are found in more developed areas, to cater for higher levels of traffic.
Grassy Path	A path is primarily for foot traffic and can be a single track or a track wide enough for several people to walk abreast. Grassy paths are found in less developed areas, often beyond feature of interest, and are used less frequently.
Bare Ground Path	These paths occur where the vegetation had been eroded by foot traffic and is bare ground, or damages vegetation. These paths are often widespread on sites where formal waymarked trails are not provided.

### 2.3 Features, Signage and Hazards

Signage, features of interest, and hazards were recorded, photographed and mapped. Features includes built heritage, sculptures as well as toilets and bins. Hazards including unstable walls, broken fences or unprotected cliff tops.

### 2.4 Pilgrim's Path Assessment

The Pilgrim's Path ( '*Cosán an Oilithrigh*' in Irish) is a c. 4km walking trail leading to the peak of Sliabh Liag, commencing from a carpark located c. 1.2km northwest of Teelin (as opposed to the more frequently utilised access point that commences southwest of Teelin Sliabh Liag Lower Carpark / the Bunglass viewing area). The cliffs were formerly a site of Christian pilgrimage and this path was historically utilised by pilgrims to access the site. It now provides an alternative route to the peak and was formerly used by Mountain Rescue services to access Sliabh Liag until a flash flood in 2009 rendered it unsuitable for vehicular access. As part of the site survey, the condition of this pathway was assessed.

The location of this path and the assessment area with respect to the site is shown below in Figure 1.2.

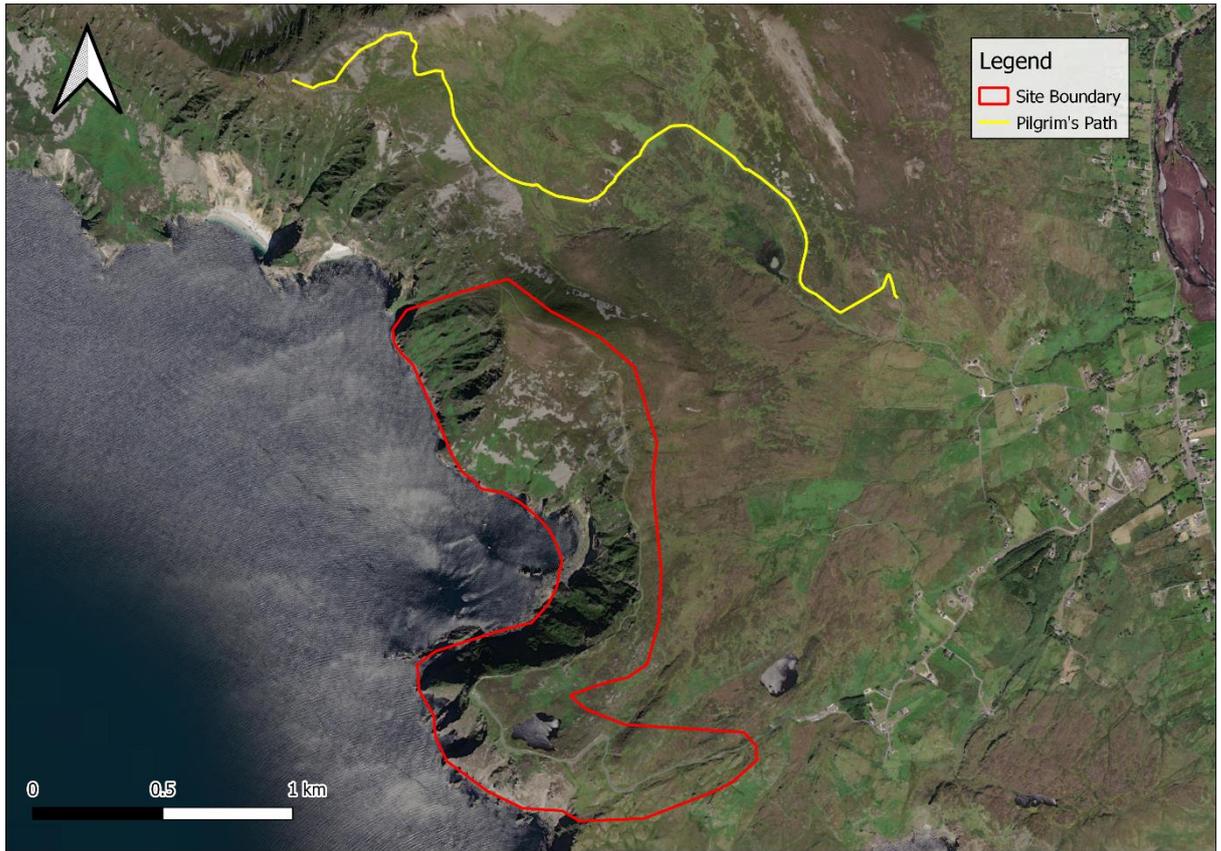


Figure 1.2 Pilgrim's Path assessment area. Basemap provided by ESRI.

## 3.0 RESULTS

### 3.1 Habitat Condition Assessment

Habitats were surveyed during the optimum habitat survey season i.e., April to September (Smith et al., 2011). Habitats were classified according to *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland* (Fossitt, 2000). Table 3.1 lists the habitats identified in Sliabh Liag along with their potential corresponding Annex I habitats as per Fossitt (2000). It should be noted that having a corresponding Annex I habitat does not mean the Annex I habitat is automatically present. A habitat map is presented in Figure 3.2.

**Table 3.1 Fossitt (2000) habitats and links to Annex I habitats.**

Fossitt 2000 Habitat	Corresponding Annex I habitats (Natura 2000 code) <sup>1</sup>
Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3)	None
Rocky sea cliffs (CS1)	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts (1230)
Siliceous scree and loose rock (ER3)**	Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels ( <i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i> ) (8110)
Dystrophic lakes (FL1)	Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds (3160)
Dry calcareous and neutral grassland (GS1)	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates ( <i>Festuco-Brometea</i> ) (*important orchid sites) (6210) <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands (5130) Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> (6130)
Dry-humid acid grassland (GS3)	*Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas in continental Europe) (6230) Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> (6130)
Dense bracken (HD1)	None
Dry siliceous heath (HH1)	European dry heaths (4030) <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands (5130)
Wet heath (HH3)	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> (4010)
Montane heath (HH4)	Alpine and Boreal heaths (4060)
Sea inlets and bays (MW2)	Large shallow inlets and bays (1160)
Upland blanket bog (PB2)	Blanket bog (*if active bog) (7130) Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> (7150)
Poor fen and flush (PF2)	None
Exposed circalittoral rock (SR4)	Reefs (1170)

#### **Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3)**

This habitat is found in the car parks and on the road leading up to the Bunglass viewing area, where the trail along the cliff commences from. This habitat is not of any biodiversity value.

<sup>1</sup> \* Indicates priority habitat

### **Rocky sea cliffs (CS1)**

This habitat is present along the land-sea interface at the site. The cliffs are composed of quartzite (McClure et al., 2019). The slopes above the cliffs exhibit a mosaic of bare rock and a number of different habitats, namely, Dense bracken (HD1), Dry siliceous heath (HH1) and Siliceous scree and loose rock (ER3). It corresponds to the Annex I habitat 'Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts (1230)'. This habitat is shown below in Plate 3.1.



**Plate 3.1 Mosaic of Dense bracken (HD1), Dry siliceous heath (HH1) and Siliceous scree and loose rock (ER3) habitats at Sliabh Liag.**

### **Siliceous scree and loose rock (ER3)**

This habitat occurs along the mountain slopes at the site. It is comprised of swathes of unvegetated, bare, fragmented siliceous rock which has accumulated on the steep slopes of the mountain. This habitat corresponds to the Annex I habitat 'Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopsietalia ladanii*) (8110)'.

### **Dystrophic lakes (FL1)**

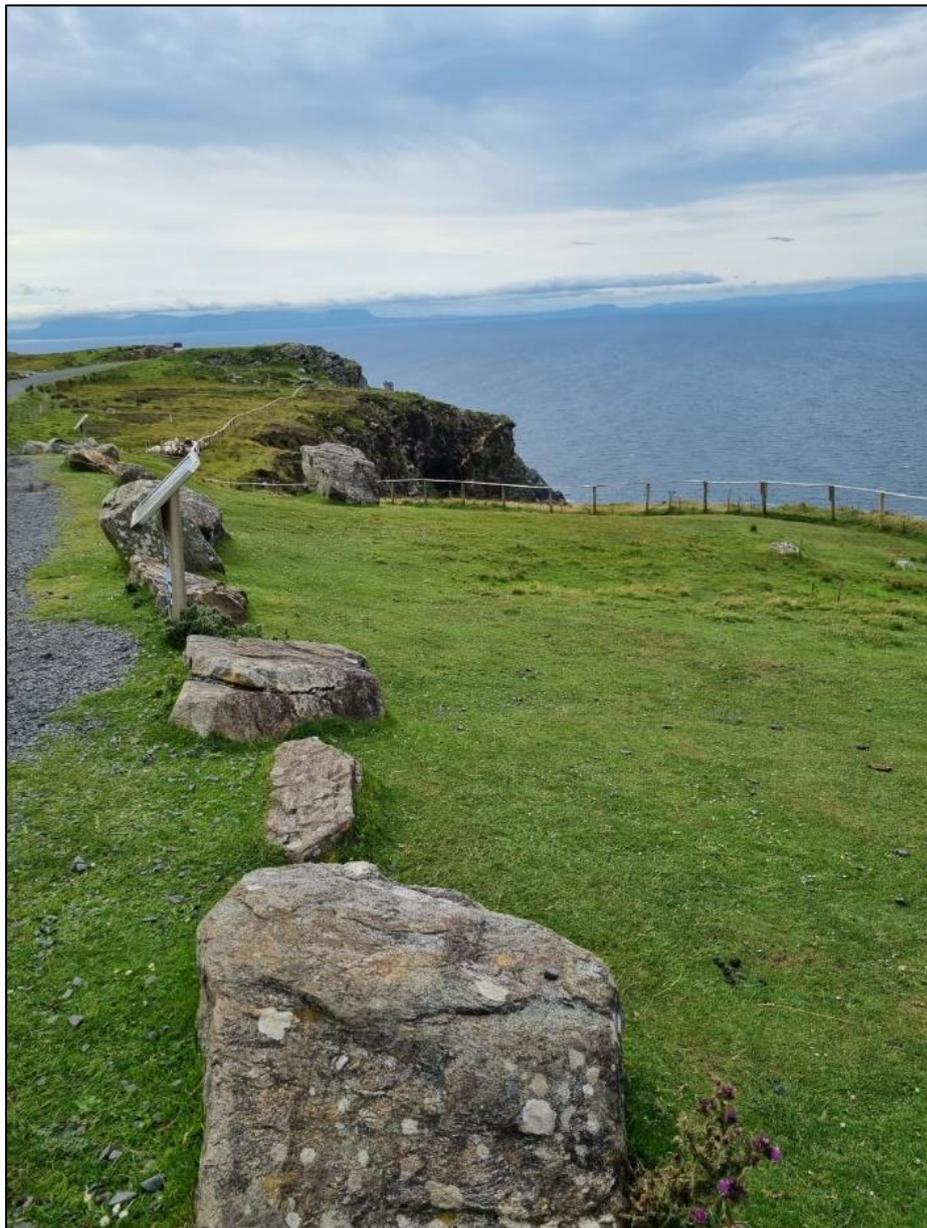
This habitat occurs at Lough O'Mulligan north of the road leading to the Bunglass viewing area. This habitat corresponds to the Annex I habitat 'Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds (3160)'.

### **Dry calcareous and neutral grassland (GS1)**

A small patch of this habitat occurs south of the road leading to the Bunglass viewing area. This habitat corresponds to the Annex I habitats 'Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometea*) (\*important orchid sites)' (6210), '*Juniperus communis* formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands' (5130) and 'Calaminarian grasslands of the *Violetalia calaminariae*' (6130).

### **Dry-humid acid grassland (GS3)**

This habitat predominately occurs to the south of the road leading to the Bunglass viewing area, with some small patches also occurring adjacent to the path along the cliffs. Much of this habitat has been heavily grazed by sheep, resulting in a low sward. Species found in this habitat include Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), Bog Pimpernel (*Angagallis tenella*), Buck's-horn Plantain (*Plantago coronopus*), Crested Dog's Tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*) Daisy (*Bellis perrenis*), English Stonecrop (*Sedum anglicum*), Fairy Flax (*Linum catharticum*), Field Scabious (*Knautia arvensis*), Harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*), Heath bedstraw (*Veronica officinalis*) Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), Spear Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*) Thrift (*Ameria maritima*) Thyme-leaved speedwell (*Veronica serpyllifolia*), Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) and White Clover (*Trifolium repens*). This habitat corresponds to the Annex I habitats 'Species-rich *Nardus* grasslands on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas in continental Europe) (6230)' and 'Calaminarian grasslands of the *Violetalia calaminariae* (6130)'. This habitat is shown below in Plate 3.2.



**Plate 3.2 Dry-humid acid grassland (GS3) habitat which has been heavily grazed at Sliabh Liag.**

### **Dense bracken (HD1)**

This habitat occurs in small patches amongst the dry siliceous heath habitat east of the Bunglass viewing area and along large swathes of the cliffs. This habitat is dominated by Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*). This habitat does not correspond to any Annex I habitats.

### **Dry siliceous heath (HH1)**

This habitat occurs in large expanses on both sides of the road leading to the Bunglass viewing area and in the areas adjacent the path traveling along the cliff. In some areas it has been damaged by trampling caused by visitors. It is largely dominated by Ling (*Calluna vulgaris*). Other species found in this habitat include Bell heather (*Erica cinerea*), Bent grasses (*Agrostis* spp.), Common Cotton-grass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*), Compact Rush (*Juncus conglomeratus*), Green-ribbed Sedge (*Carex binervis*), Heath Wood Rush (*Luzula multiflora*), Heath Rush (*Juncus squarrosus*), Jointed Rush (*Juncus articulatus*), and Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*). This habitat corresponds to the Annex I habitat 'European dry heaths (4030)' and 'Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands (5130)'. This habitat is shown below in Plate 3.3.



**Plate 3.3 Dry siliceous heath (HH1) habitat exhibiting damage due to trampling at Sliabh Liag.**

### **Wet heath (HH3)**

Small patches of this habitat occur in the areas north of the road leading to the Bunglass viewing area and off the path leading to the Cnoc Ramhar viewing area. Species found in this habitat include Bell Heather (*Ercia cinerea*), Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), Carnation Sedge (*Carex panicea*), Common Cotton-grass, Common Haircup Moss (*Polytrichum commune*), Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*), Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*), Deergrass (*Trichophorum caespitum*), Green-ribbed Sedge, Heath bedstraw, Heath Rush, Ling, *Sphagnum* spp. Sweet Vernal Grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*) and Tormentil. This habitat corresponds to the Annex I habitat 'Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* (4010)'.

#### **Montane heath (HH4)**

This habitat occurs at higher elevations at the site, along the slopes either side of the path around the Cnoc Ramhar viewing area. Ling, substantially stunted in growth by the wind, is the dominant species found in this habitat. Other species which occur at this habitat include Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), Bilberry, Common Cow-wheat (*Melampyrum pratense*) Crowberry, Sheep's Sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) and Wild Thyme (*Thymus drucei*). This habitat corresponds to the Annex I habitat 'Alpine and Boreal heaths (4060)'.

#### **Sea inlets and bays (MW2)**

This habitat occurs in the sea at the base of the cliffs located along the western section of the site. This habitat corresponds to the Annex I habitat 'large shallow inlets and bays (1160)'.

#### **Upland blanket bogs (PB2)**

Small patches of this habitat occur in the areas off the path around the Cnoc Ramhar viewing area. Species found in this habitat include Bearberry, Bilberry, Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), Common Cotton-grass, Cross-leaved Heath, Crowberry, Deergrass, Hare's-tail Cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*), Ling, Reindeer lichen (*Cladonia* spp.), Sweet Vernal Grass, *Sphagnum* spp., Woolly Fringe-moss (*Racomitrium lanuginosum*) and Tormentil. This habitat corresponds to the Annex I habitats 'Blanket bog (\*if active bog) (7130)' and 'Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion (7150)'.

#### **Poor fen and flush (PF2)**

This habitat occurs in small strips to the north and south of the road leading to the Bunglass viewing area. This habitat does not correspond to any Annex I habitats.

#### **Exposed circalittoral rock (SR4)**

This habitat occurs at the base of the cliffs located along the western section of the site. This habitat corresponds to the Annex I habitats 'Reefs (1170)' and 'Submerged or partially submerged sea caves (8330)'.

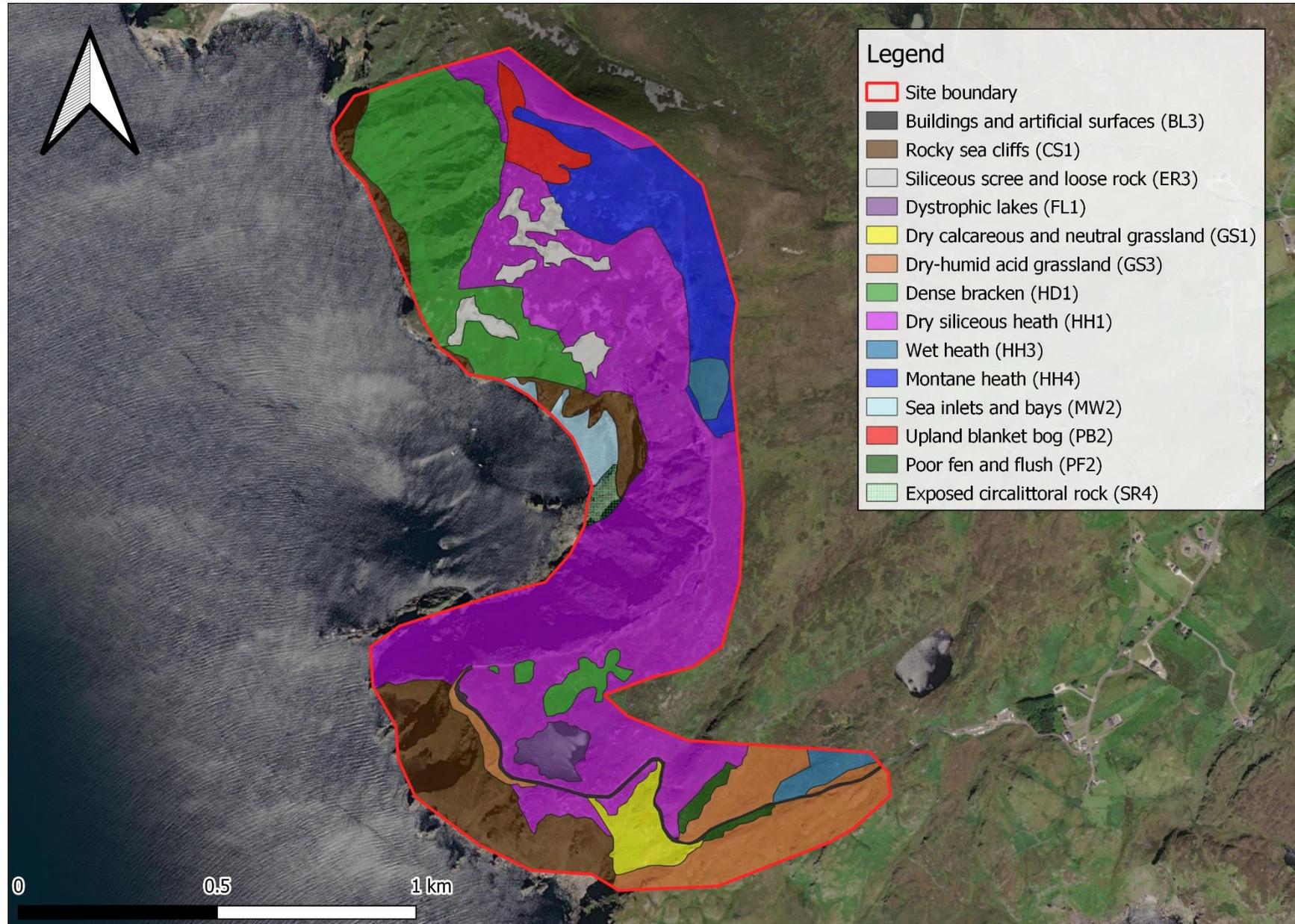


Figure 3.2 Habitat map of Sliabh Liag. Basemap provided by ESRI.

### 3.2 Pathway Condition Assessment

Commencing from the lower car park, a c. 1.6 km paved road in satisfactory condition leads visitors westward up the mountain towards the upper car park / Bunglass viewing area where a viewing platform and a number of vendors selling gifts, food and drinks are located. Within the heath habitat adjacent to the viewing area are several informal bare ground paths which are in an unsatisfactory condition. These trails surround the start of the cliff path and the viewing platform. Travelling northward from the viewing platform, the cliff path is comprised of a mixture of gravel and stone which has been inlaid into the ground as far as the Cnoc Ramhar viewing area. This path is in a satisfactory condition. Branching off this main pathway into the surrounding heath areas are a number of small bare ground paths which are in unsatisfactory condition due to the trampling of vegetation which has eroded and widened the path and damaged the surrounding heath habitat. These trampled pathways are short in length and generally occur to access various viewpoints. The majority of these paths occur close the Bunglass viewing area and become less frequent the further along the trail, presumably as a smaller proportion of visitors reach Cnoc Ramhar. Plate 3.4. below presents images of the main pathways found at the site.

Figure 3.3 presents a Strava heat map for the site. Strava aggregates data from users on its app who opt-in to share their activities and locations. The pathway condition assessment map is presented in Figure 3.4 below.

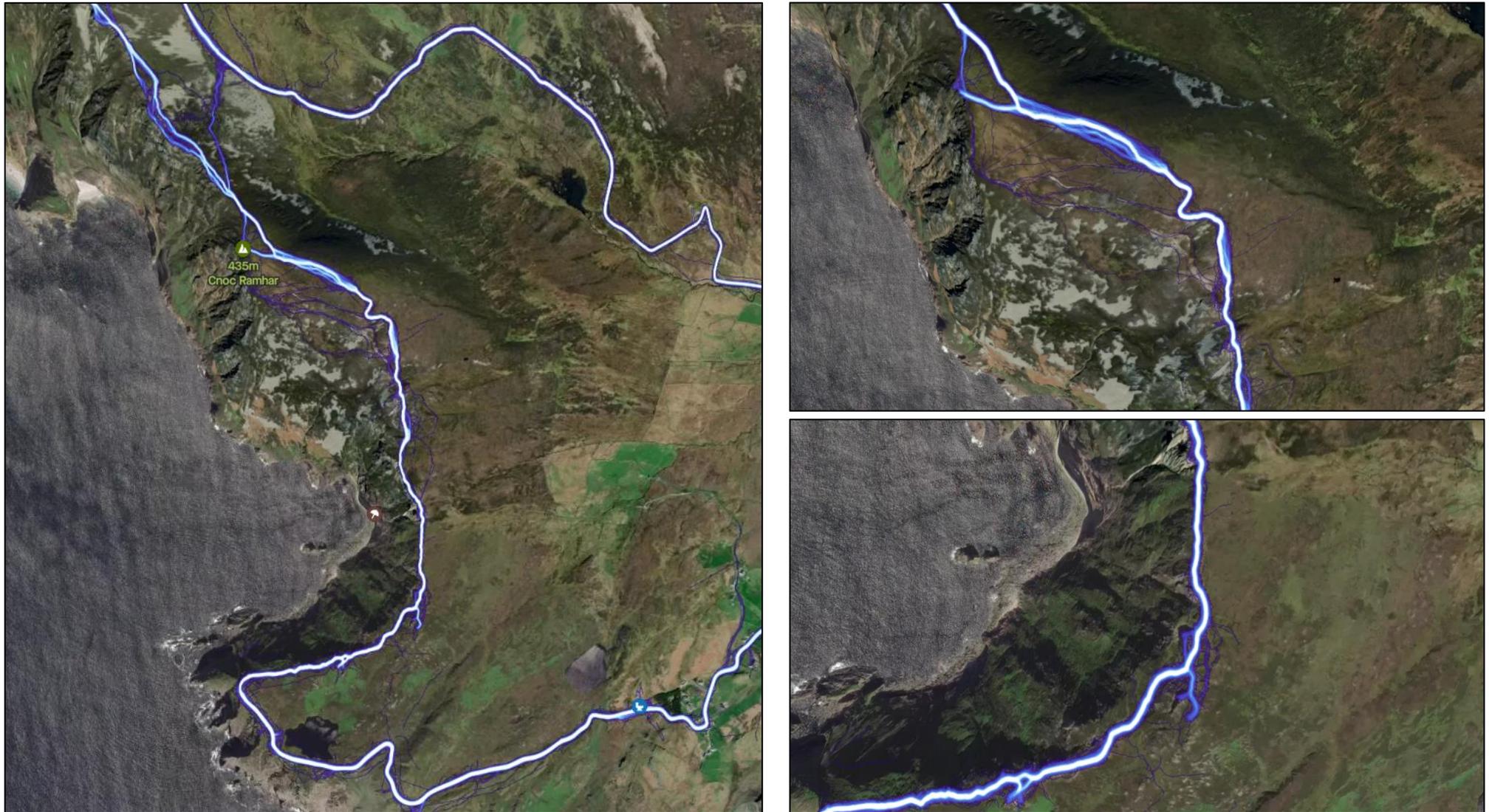


Figure 3.3 Heat map of visitor movements in Sliabh Liag (Strava, 2024).

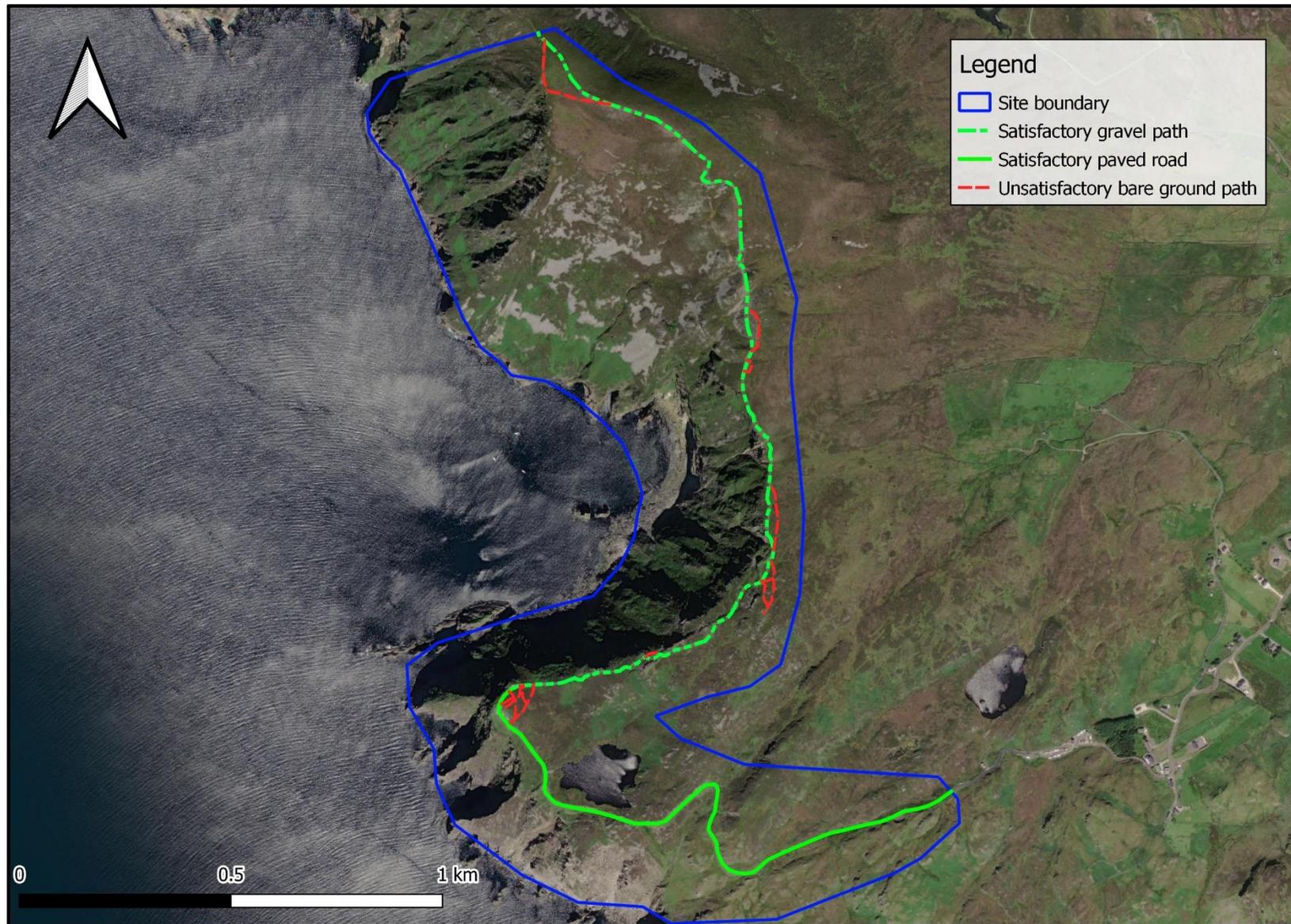


Figure 3.4 Pathway types and conditions present on the site. Basemap provided by ESRI.



**Satisfactory gravel path (Bunglass viewing area)**



**Satisfactory gravel path (with inlaid stone)**



**Unatisfactory bare ground path (through heath habitat)**



**Unatisfactory bare ground path (adjacent to the cliffside path)**

**Plate 3.4 The main pathway types recorded in Sliabh Liag.**

### 3.3 Features, Signage and Hazards

#### 3.3.1 Features and Signage

No bicycle parking facilities are available at the Sliabh Liag car parks or viewing area, but are found at the visitor centre. Toilet facilities are available at the lower car park. Bins are available at the upper car park / Bunglass viewing area where gifts, food and drink are sold from a number of vendors. Picnic benches, a viewing platform constructed from wood and instructional signs warning visitors to avoid littering, clean up dog waste and to avoid camping at the site are also located in this area. A number of signs throughout the site warn visitors from getting too close to the cliff edges. Several other signs display information about the history, geography and ecology of the site. Way-markers direct visitors along the cliff path throughout the site. Plates 3.5 and 3.6 below show selected signs and features at the site.



Plate 3.5 Informational and instructional signage at Sliabh Liag.



**Plate 3.6 Pathways, way-markers and the viewing platform at Bunglass.**

### **3.3.2 Hazards**

The main hazard at the site is presented by the cliffs. Barriers have been erected along some sections of the cliffs, mainly at Bunglass, and there are numerous signs warning visitors of this hazard are located throughout the site (See Plate 3.7 below). Figure 3.5 presents a map showing the location of features, signage and hazards at the site.



**Plate 3.7** Sign warning visitors to approach the cliffs with caution.

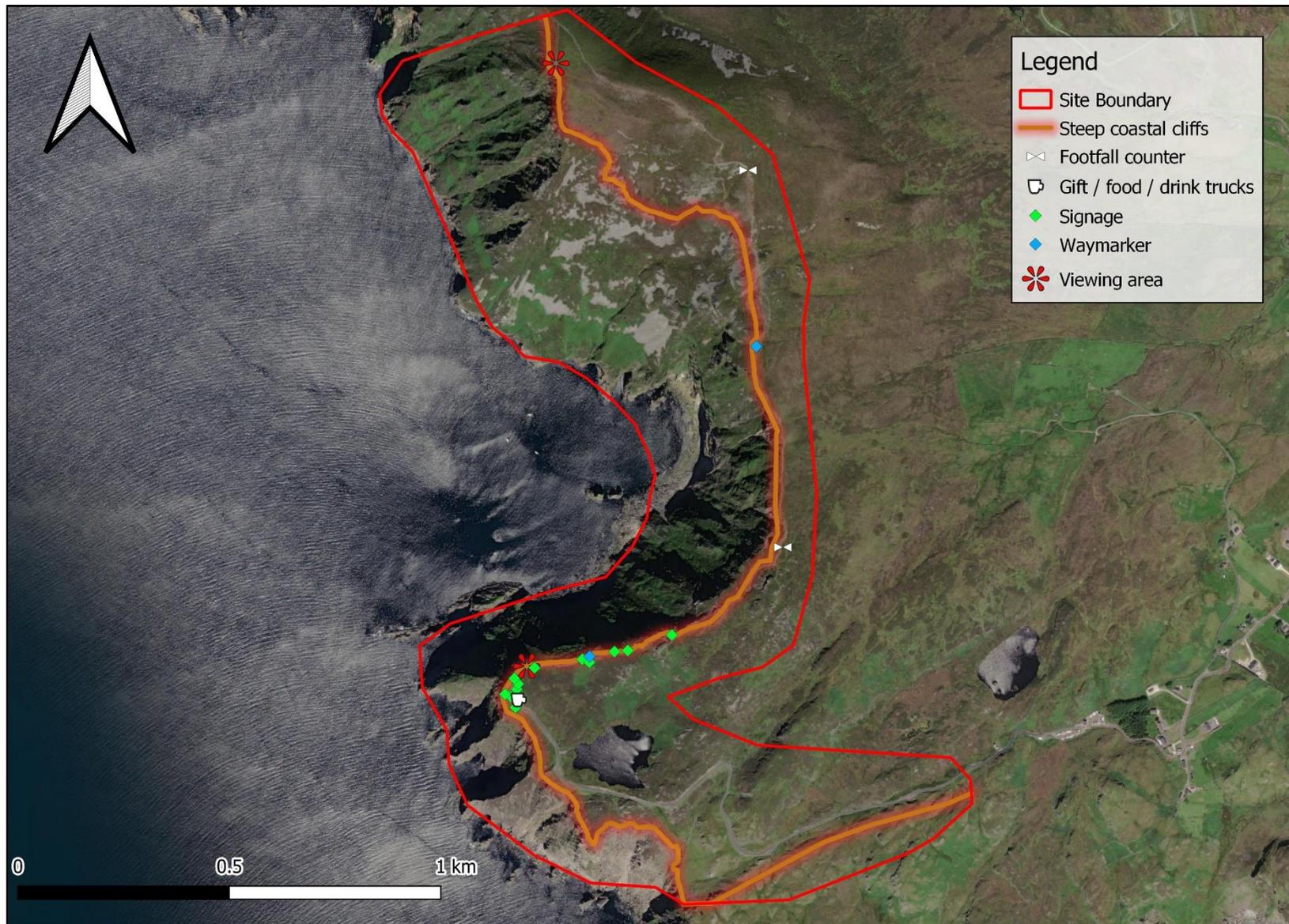


Figure 3.5 Features, signage and hazard (cliffs) at Sliabh Liag. Basemap provided by ESRI.

### 3.3.3 Pilgrim's Path Assessment

An informal bare ground pathway is present between the Pilgrim's Path and the Cnoc Ramhar viewing area. This path travels along the landward side of the mountain and offers an alternative route to visitors who do not wish to proceed to the peak of Sliabh Liag to join with the Pilgrim's Path. This path is in unsatisfactory condition due to the high level of trampling and erosion present in some sections (See Plate 3.7 below).



**Plate 3.7 Heavy trampling on the path leading from Cnoc Ramhar to the Pilgrim's Path.**

This informal path travels northward for c. 500m before connecting to the Pilgrim's Path. At this location and towards the cliff ridge, the Pilgrim's Path is in an unsatisfactory condition due to erosion caused by weather and walkers. The erosion on this section of the Pilgrim's Path (which is comprised of gravel, cobbles, boulders and vegetation) renders the path unsuitable for vehicular use, given the hazard presented by the rocky and uneven terrain.

This gravel path eventually grades to a stretch of pathway that is in satisfactory condition, devoid of significant potholes and erosion and the surface is largely even. This section, suitable for vehicular access, and begins c. 250m west of the westernmost stone monument on the Pilgrim's Path and continues for c. 1.3km in a southeasterly direction as far as the car park which is located at the starting point of the Pilgrim's Path. A map showing the condition of the Pilgrim's Path pathway is presented in Figure 3.6. Plate 3.8 show sections of the pathway that are in satisfactory and unsatisfactory condition (for vehicle access).



**Gravel path in unsatisfactory condition**



**Gravel path in unsatisfactory condition**



**Gravel path in satisfactory condition**



**Gravel path in satisfactory condition**

**Plate 3.8 Sections of the Pilgrims Path.**

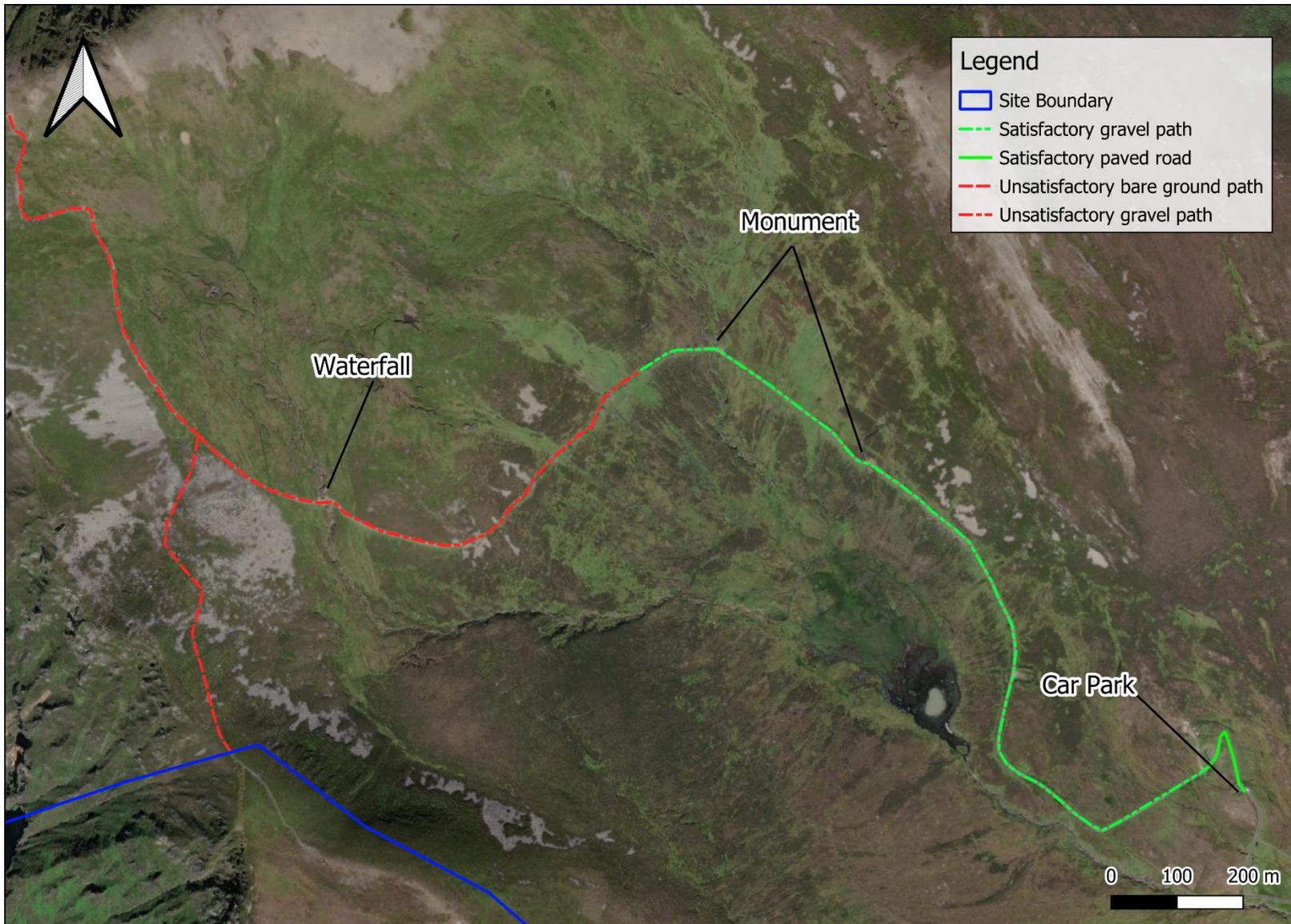


Figure 3.6 Pilgrim's Path pathway condition assessment. Basemap provided by ESRI.

### 3.4 Ecological Constraints

#### 3.4.1 Protected Sites

As discussed in Section 2.1, a desk study was undertaken to identify designated sites and rare and protected species in the vicinity of the site. There are two European sites (SACs and SPAs) and one nationally designated site (NHAs and pNHAs) within the site. Information on these sites was obtained from the NPWS website and their respective Natura 2000 Standard Data Forms. These sites are described in Table 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2 Designated sites within 2 km of the Sliabh Liag site.**

Site Name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interests	Distance (km) from Site	Pressures and Threats (those related to recreation are in bold)
<b>European Sites</b>			
West Donegal Coast SPA [004150]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009]</li> <li>• Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017]</li> <li>• Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018]</li> <li>• Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103]</li> <li>• Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184]</li> <li>• Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188]</li> <li>• Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200]</li> <li>• Chough (<i>Pyrhacorax pyrrhacorax</i>) [A346]</li> </ul>	Within the site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Predation</b></li> <li>• <b>Disturbance</b></li> <li>• Competition (fauna)</li> <li>• Fertilisation</li> </ul>
Slieve League SAC [000189]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reefs [1170]</li> <li>• Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]</li> <li>• Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]</li> <li>• European dry heaths [4030]</li> <li>• Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]</li> <li>• Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430]</li> <li>• Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</li> </ul>	Within site boundary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles</b></li> <li>• <b>Mountaineering &amp; rock climbing</b></li> <li>• <b>Trampling, overuse</b></li> <li>• <b>Car parks and parking areas</b></li> <li>• <b>Disposal of household / recreational facility waste</b></li> <li>• <b>Fences, fencing</b></li> <li>• Invasive non-native species</li> <li>• Mechanical removal of peat</li> <li>• Intensive sheep grazing</li> <li>• Hand cutting of peat</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110]</li> <li>• Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]</li> <li>• Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disposal of inert materials</li> <li>• Potting</li> <li>• Stock feeding</li> </ul>
<b>Nationally Designated Sites</b>			
Slieve League pNHA [000189]	No site description. Refer to Slieve League SAC and SPA.	Within the site boundary	No site description

### 3.4.2 Incidental Species Recorded

Sliabh Liag supports a range of habitats and species. Table 3.3 below presents the bird species recorded during the ecological surveys at Sliabh Liag, along with their Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCCI) status (2020–2026) (Gilbert et al., 2021).

**Table 3.3 Incidental Species Records**

Scientific Name	Common Name
<b>Red Status</b>	
<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Meadow Pipit
<b>Amber</b>	
<i>Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	Chough
<i>Fulmaris glacialis</i>	Fulmar
<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Herring gull
<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Lesser Black-backed Gull
<b>Green</b>	
<i>Corvus cornix</i>	Hooded Crow
<i>Larus marinus</i>	Great Black-backed Gull
<i>Motacilla alba yarrelli</i>	Pied Wagtail
<i>Corvus corax</i>	Raven
<i>Anthus petrosus</i>	Rock pipit

### 3.4.3 Records of Rare, Protected and Invasive Species

Records of rare, protected, and invasive species from the past ten years from Grid Reference G57 were obtained the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) online database. These records are presented in Table 3.4 below.

**Table 3.4 Rare, protected, and invasive species recorded in the past decade from Grid Reference G57 from NBDC database.**

Scientific name	Common Name	Date of last record	Status <sup>2</sup>
<b>Marine Mammals</b>			
<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	Bottle-nosed Dolphin	04/08/2020	Annex II, HD; WA
<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	Common Dolphin	11/10/2020	Annex IV HD; WA
<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	Common Porpoise	11/10/2020	Annex II, HD; WA
<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	Common Seal	15/01/2016	Annex II, V HD; WA
<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	Fin whale	08/08/2020	Annex IV HD; WA
<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	Minke Whale	22/09/2017	Annex IV HD; WA
<b>Birds</b>			
<i>Numenius arquata</i>	Curlew	06/03/2018	Annex II, BD; WA; Red List
<i>Larus marinus</i>	Great Black-backed Gull	01/08/2019	WA; Amber List
<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	House Martin	22/05/2016	WA; Amber List
<i>Morus bassanus</i>	Gannet	23/05/2016	WA; Amber List
<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Wheatear	06/04/2020	WA; Amber List
<i>Pyrhacorax pyrrhacorax</i>	Red-billed Chough	29/07/2019	Annex I BD; WA; Amber List
<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	Ring Ouzel	23/04/2016	WA; Red List
<b>Reptiles &amp; Amphibians</b>			
<i>Rana temporaria</i>	Common Frog	20/05/2020	Annex V HD; WA
<b>Cartilaginous Fish</b>			
<i>Cetorhinus maximus</i>	Basking Shark	14/04/2019	OSPAR Convention
<i>Raja montagui</i>	Spotted Ray	14/04/2019	OSPAR Convention
<b>Terrestrial Mammals</b>			
<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	Daubenton's Bat	26/08/2016	Annex IV HD; WA
<i>Lutra lutra</i>	Otter	15/01/2016	Annex II, IV HD; WA
<i>Lepus timidus hibernicus</i>	Irish Hare	14/07/2018	WA
<i>Mustela erminea hibernica</i>	Irish Stoat	25/08/2015	WA
<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Soprano Pipistrelle	26/08/2016	Annex IV HD; WA
<b>Invasive Species</b>			
<i>Persicaria wallichii</i>	Japanese Knotweed	04/07/2021	High Impact Invasive
<i>Potamopyrgus antipodarum</i>	Jenkin's Spire Snail	05/09/2018	Medium Impact Invasive
<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	Rhododendron	26/04/2019	High Impact Invasive
<i>Sargassum muticum</i>	Wireweed	19/03/2022	High Impact Invasive

<sup>2</sup>Abbreviations: Annex II/IV/V (non-avian species) = Habitats Directive (HD); Annex I, II, III = Birds Directive (BD); Red/Amber List = Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland 2020-2026 (BOCCI) (Gilbert et al., 2021); WA = Wildlife Act

## 4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the information discussed in this report, the following recommendations are made:

- As detailed in Section 3.2.2 above, there are exposed cliffs around the viewing area at Cnoc Ramhar and at other areas which present a hazard. A review of the safety along the paths, particularly at the viewing points and at heavily trafficked locations should be undertaken, taking learning's from similar interventions underway e.g. Cliffs of Moher, Co. Clare.
- Signage advising of the safety risk beyond Bunglass should be considered. Signage should indicate that inexperienced hikers are not advised to proceed beyond this point, and that hiking here is not to be undertaken in poor weather conditions.
- The installation of bicycle parking at the upper car park should be considered.
- Signage advising recreation and amenity users to stay on the cliff path and avoid the cliff edges and natural habitats should be considered. This would reduce habitat degradation as a result of visitor movements through these habitats. This measure should be accompanied by signage indicating that dogs should remain on a lead at all times, given that the site is of value to foraging and ground-nesting birds, as well as the danger of the cliffs and presence of livestock on the site.
- The formalisation of the paths connecting the Cnoc Ramhar viewing area to the Pilgrim's Path should be considered. This would provide an alternative route for visitors who do not wish to ascend to the peak of Sliabh Liag and to those who wish to complete a loop walk. This could be achieved by installing sections of boardwalk or by utilising a similar mix of in-laid stone and gravel which has been used in other areas of the site.
- Fáilte Ireland should support key stakeholders in the upgrade of the Pilgrims Path to facilitate mountain rescue.
- Grassland vegetation at the site has been heavily grazed, which can exacerbate the effects of trampling by visitors. Fáilte Ireland should support farmers and landowners and raise awareness on the benefits of sustainable grazing which would allow the habitat to recover.

## 5.0 REFERENCES

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**APPENDIX A**  
**Fáilte Ireland Visitor Characterisation Survey**

**REDC**



# Fáilte Ireland Sliabh Liag Visitor Research September 2024 (Wave 3)

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September 2024

Job Ref: 716924



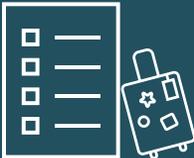
# Background & Methodology

- As part of the Investment Performance Monitoring Programme (IPMP), Fáilte Ireland wished to monitor the performance and measure the overall impact that Fáilte Ireland capital investment has had on Sliabh Liag, Co. Donegal.
- A key aim of the study is to understand how the attraction has performed to-date and to review the current visitor experience.
- After an initial run of research in September 2023, this research project will run over the period of 3 years, conducting 3 waves per year, for a total of 9 waves.  
Comparisons to research conducted in Sep-23 and Apr-24 have been made where applicable.
- The findings within this report are based on Face-to-Face interviews that have been conducted on site at Sliabh Liag among visitors aged 18+.
- Fieldwork took place across the following dates:
  - Pilot Wave: 16-17<sup>th</sup> September 2023
  - Wave 1: 27-28<sup>th</sup> April 2024
  - Wave 2: 6-7<sup>th</sup> July 2024
  - Wave 3: 14-15<sup>th</sup> September 2024

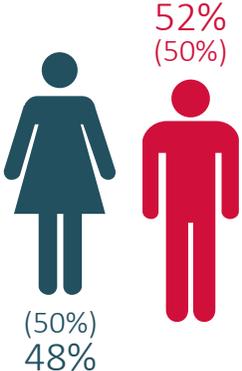
Caution: Caution must be exercised when viewing any demographical data due to small base sizes.



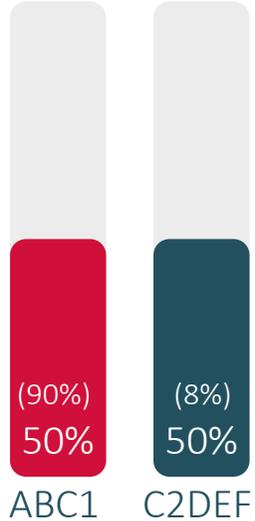
# Sample Profile



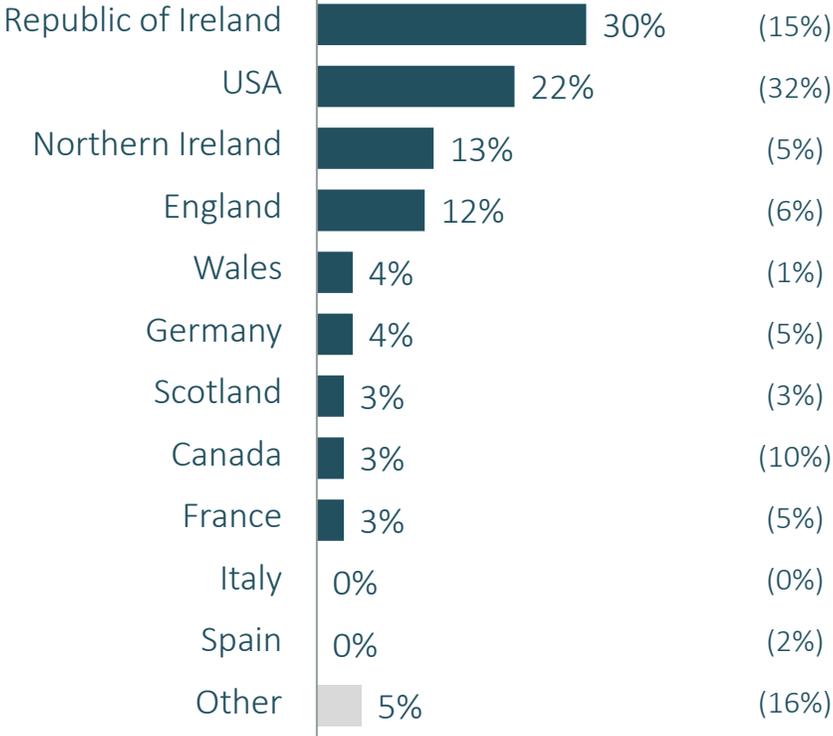
## Gender



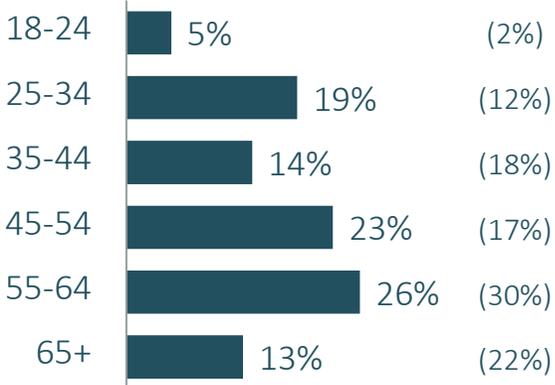
## Social Class



## Country of Residence



## Age of Visitors



NET: Domestic Visitors 43% (42%)  
 NET: International Visitors 57% (58%)

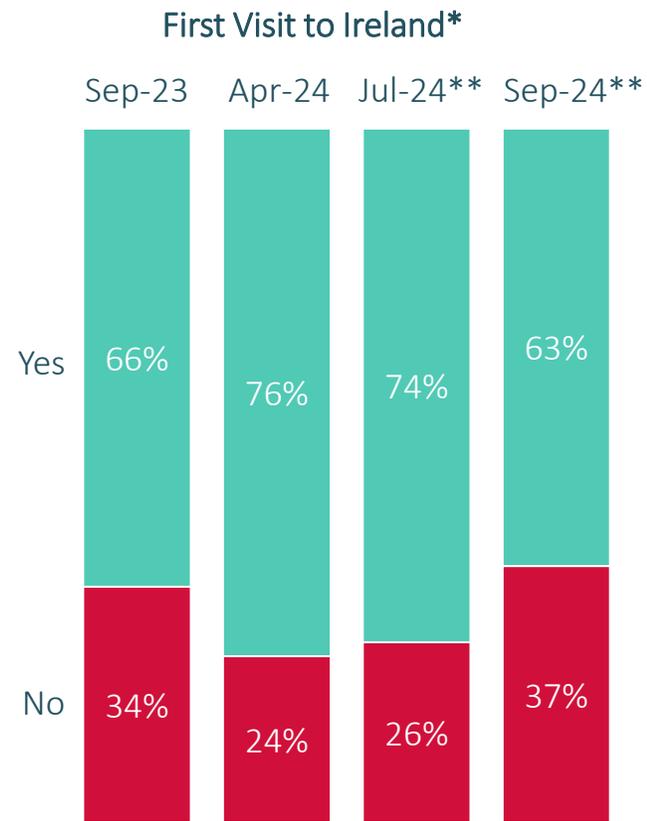
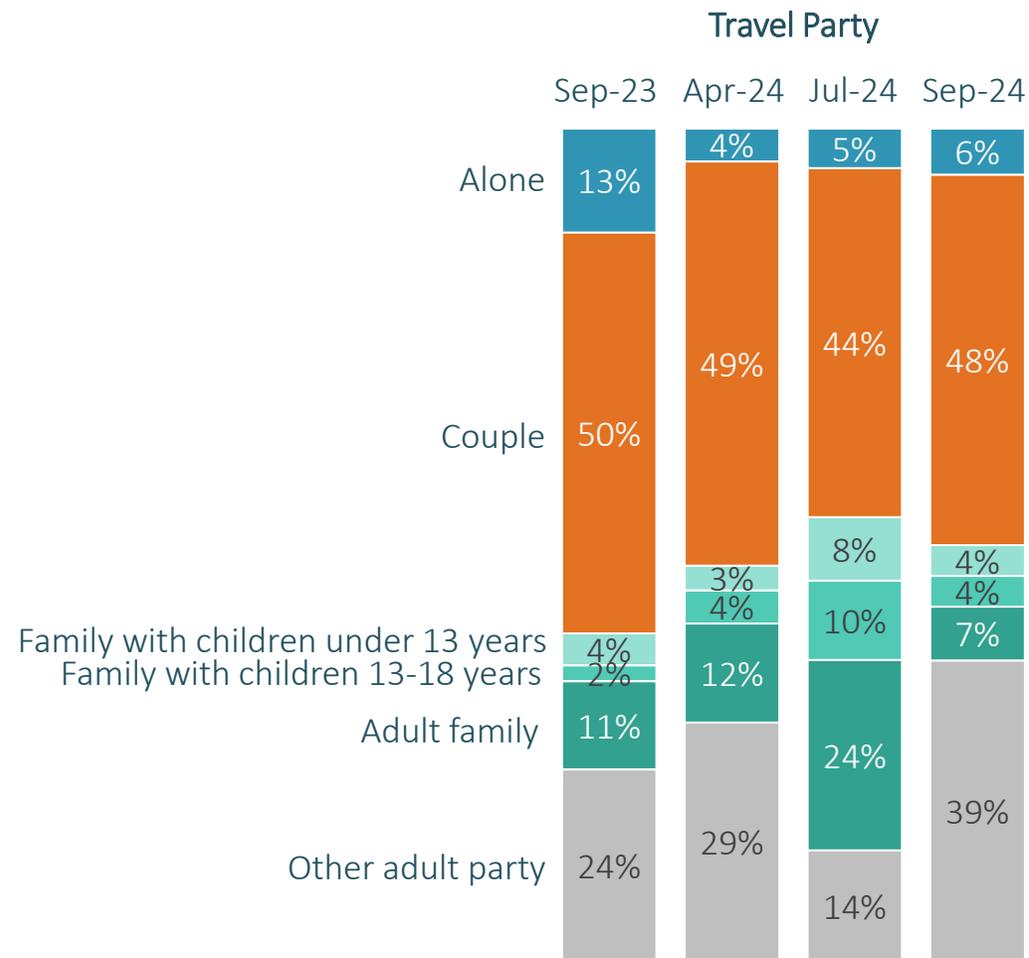
### Definitions

- Domestic Visitor**
- Visitors residing in either the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland
- International Visitor**
- Visitors residing outside of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

*Note: Almost half of the domestic visitors were from Donegal, Dublin and Antrim (n=50, small base).*

() = Sep-23 data  
 (Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sep-24; n=94)

# Sample Profile II



Almost two-thirds of international visitors to Sliabh Liag in September 2024 stated it was their first time to Ireland, in-line with research conducted a year previous in September 2023

\*Asked only of international visitors

\*\*CAUTION: Small Base Size

(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors; Sep-23 n=111, Apr-24 n=115, Jul-24 n=120, Sept-24 n=94)

(Base: All overseas visitors; Sep-23 n=88, Apr-24 n=92, Jul-24 n=70, Sept-24 n= 54)

# What is this Report Telling us?



1

In previous waves of research, visitors spent upwards of 1hr 45mins at Sliabh Liag. However, in Sep-24, visitors spent on average 1hr 17mins with the reduction in time spent likely due to poorer weather conditions experienced during fieldwork.

2

Over 4-in-5 of overnight visitors stay outside of Co. Donegal ahead of their visit to Sliabh Liag with the most popular county to overnight in being Dublin, with Sligo, Antrim, and Derry/Londonderry following suit. Sligo and Dublin are the likely counties for visitors to stay overnight post their visit to Sliabh Liag.

Again, over 4-in-5 travelled to Sliabh Liag via car, whether rented or personal.

3

As per previous waves, over 4-in-5 visitors planned on visiting Sliabh Liag before arriving in Ireland / Donegal. Just over one-third mentioned that Sliabh Liag influenced their decision to visit Ireland / Donegal, showing a decrease against the two-thirds influenced in Jul-24. Only 15% of visitors accessed the official Sliabh Liag website ahead of their visit, with even fewer pre-booking their tickets.

4

In Sep-24, almost half of the visitors to Sliabh Liag heard about it through word of mouth from friends or family, a source that has been growing incrementally since the pilot wave conducted in Sep-23.

Guidebooks, Social Media, and Travel Programmes all see similar weighting as to where visitors heard/saw about Sliabh Liag.

5

Despite poorer weather conditions experienced in Sep-24, visitors overall satisfaction was not affected. In fact, visitors have been incrementally rating their overall satisfaction as a '7 – extremely satisfied' and has grown significantly since the pilot study.

Value for money continues to perform well, with all visitors (100%) finding it to be good VFM with close to all having the intent to visit again in the future. While expectations were either met or exceeded, those stating Sliabh Liag exceeded their expectations dropped in Sep-24, which may be driven by poorer weather conditions creating harder viewing conditions.

# Visitor Behaviour

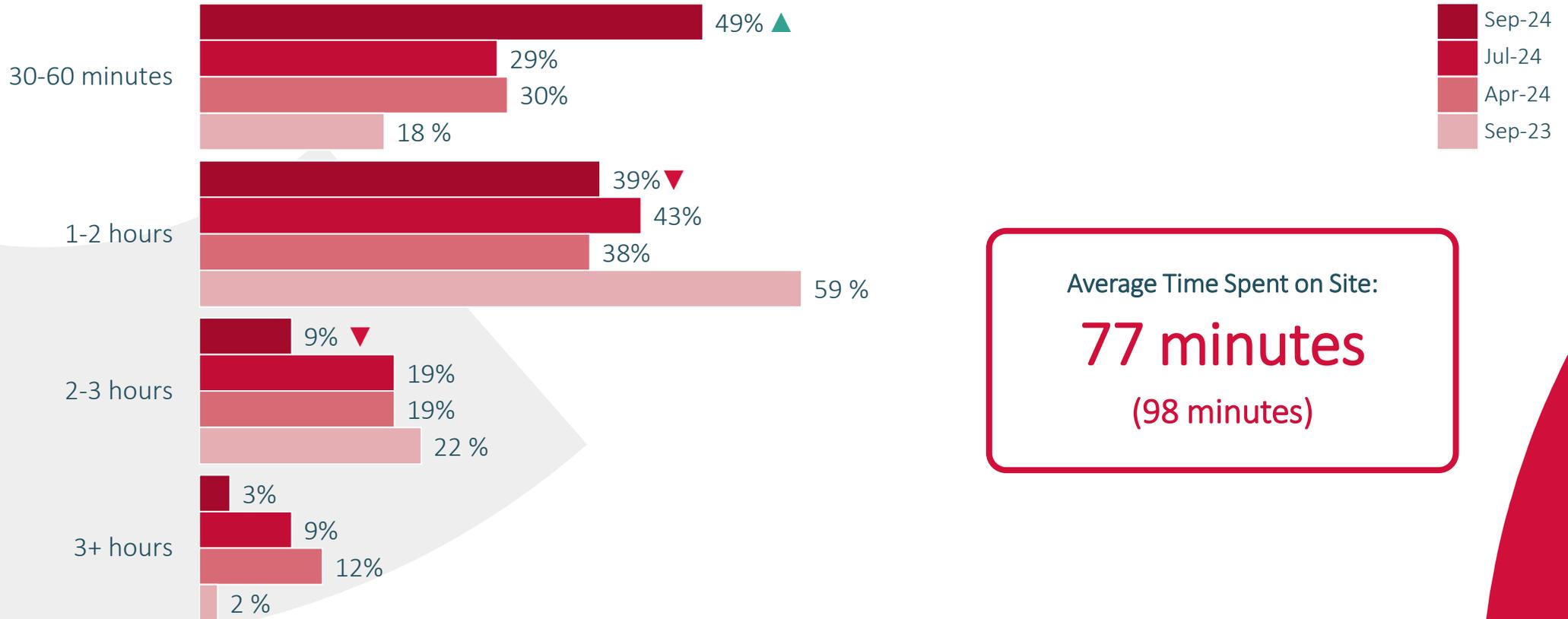


# Visitors spent, on average, 1hr 17mins at Sliabh Liag in Sep-24



Dwell time at Sliabh Liag in September 2024 is lower than previous waves, likely due to poorer weather during fieldwork.

## Time Spent at the Attraction



Average Time Spent on Site:  
**77 minutes**  
(98 minutes)

▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sept-23

() = Sep-23 data

Q1 "How long have you spent so far today in Sliabh Liag?"

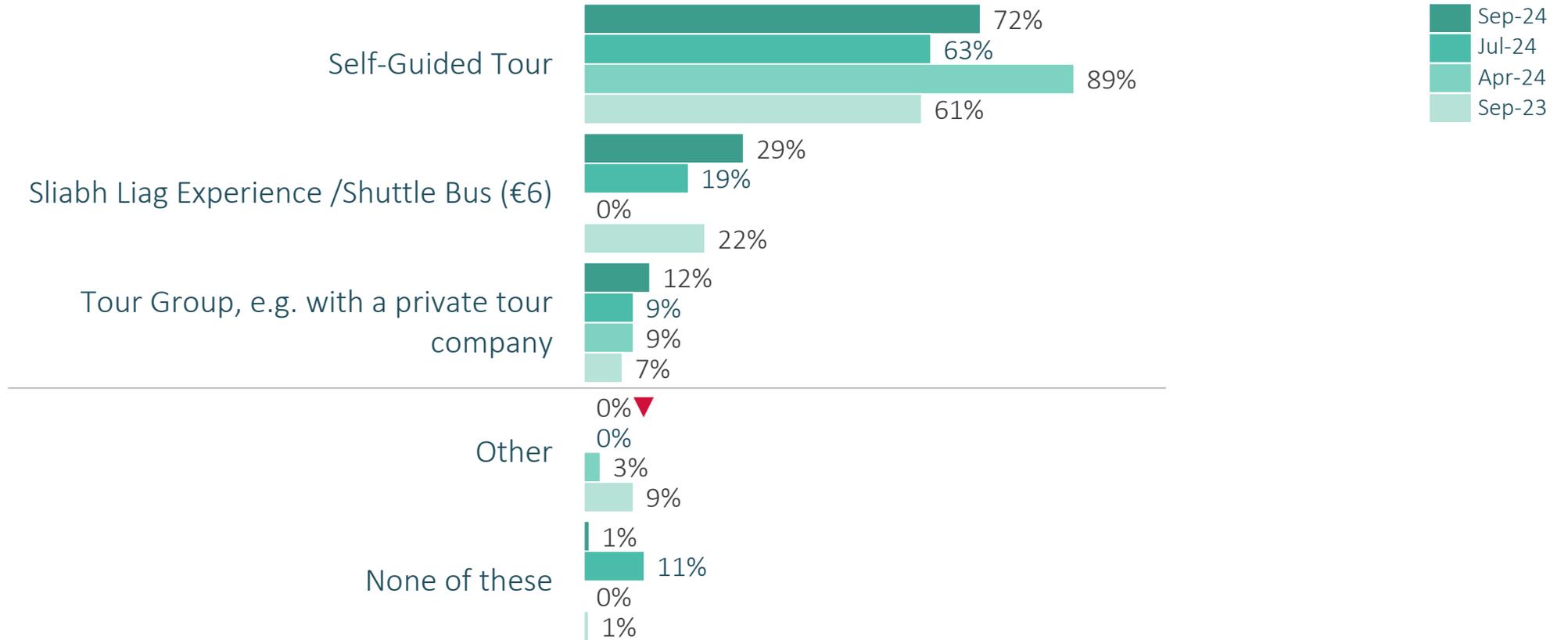
(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sept-24; n=94)

# Majority of visitors opt for a self-guided tour of Sliabh Liag



Both the Sliabh Liag Experience / Shuttle Bus and option for Self-Guided Tour saw an increase in usage during September 2024 compared with July 2024.

## Tour Activities Partaken In



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sept-23

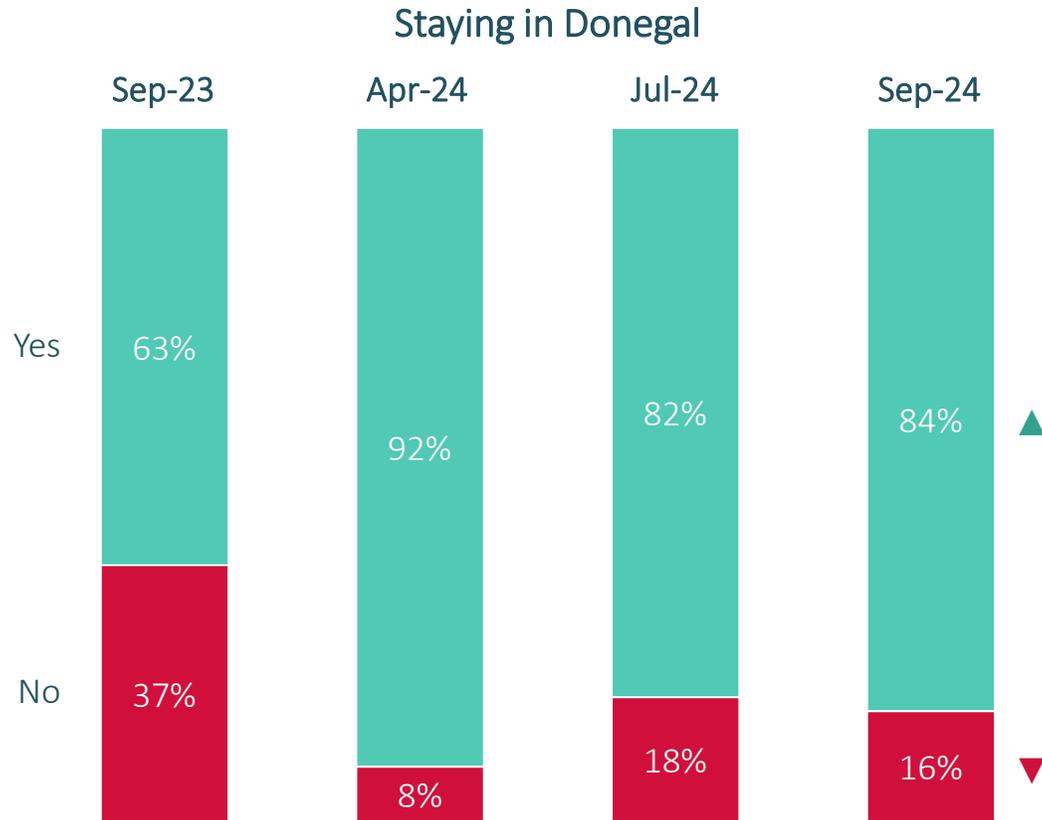
Sliabh Liag Cliffs Shuttlebus and Highlights Tour (€30) / Melodies of the Mountain/Tin Whistle Workshop (€20)/Navigating Stories/A Map Reading and Placelore (Dinnseanchas) Workshop (€20)

Q2 "Which of the following have you done during your visit today to Sliabh Liag?"

(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sept-24; n=94)

# A large portion of visitors are staying overnight in Donegal

Trip Type



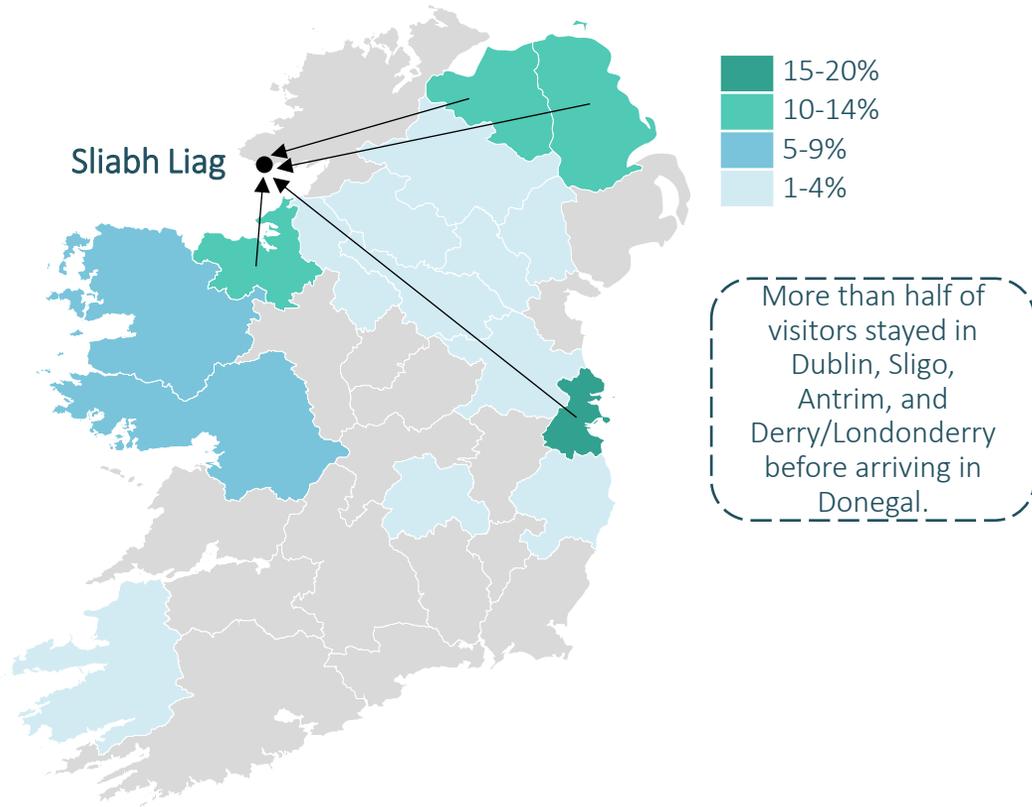
Q6b "Have you been staying overnight in Co. Donegal during your trip?"  
(Base: All Slabh Liag visitors excl. those who reside in Co. Donegal, Sept-24; n=83)

# Visitors tend to stay in Dublin before visiting Sliabh Liag

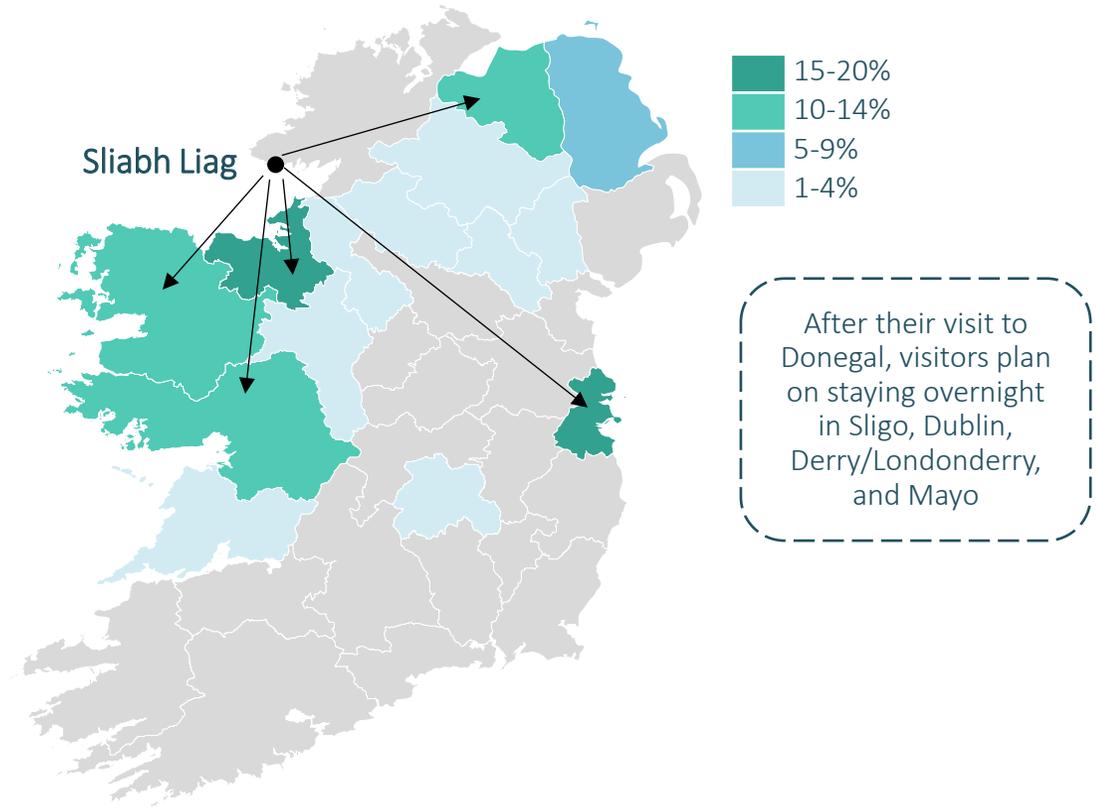


Visitors prefer to stay overnight in Dublin, Sligo, and Antrim before visiting Sliabh Liag. After visiting Donegal, they tend to favour staying in either Sligo or Dublin.

County Stayed in Before coming to Co. Donegal



County Staying in After visiting Co. Donegal



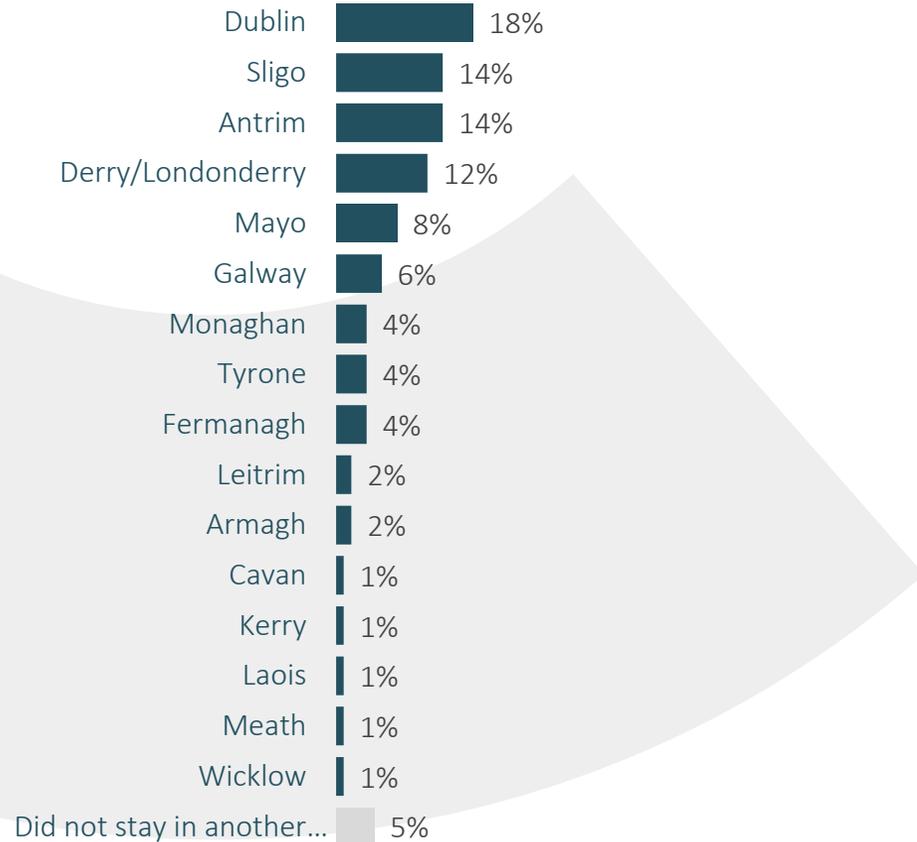
Q6c "What County did you stay in before coming to Co. Donegal?"  
Q6d "What County in Ireland will you be staying in after leaving Co. Donegal?"  
(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors excl. those who reside in Co. Donegal, Sep-24; n=94)

# Visitors to Donegal stay in Dublin before visiting Sliabh Liag

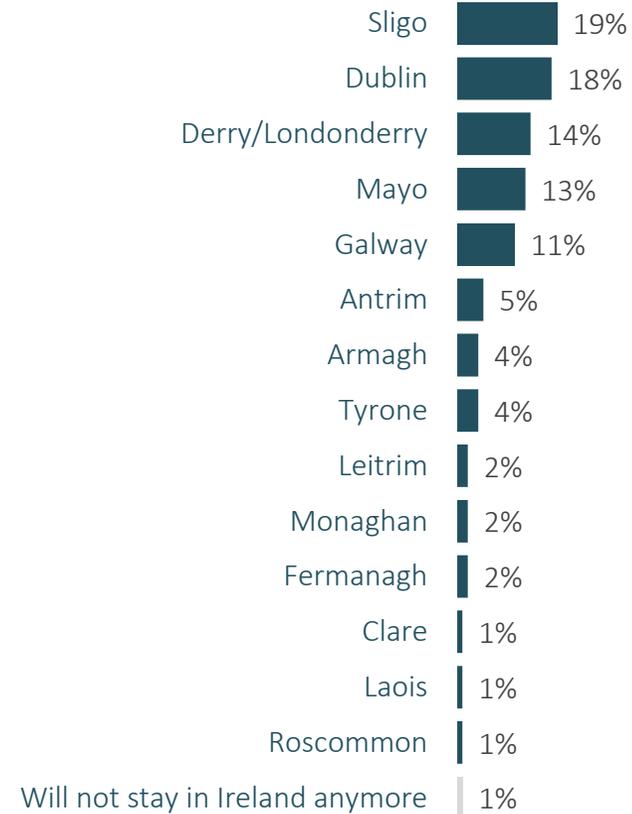


Dublin is the county where most visitors stay the night before arriving in Donegal. After leaving Donegal, they tend to visit nearby counties such as Sligo, as well as the capital, Dublin.

### County Stayed in Before coming to Co. Donegal

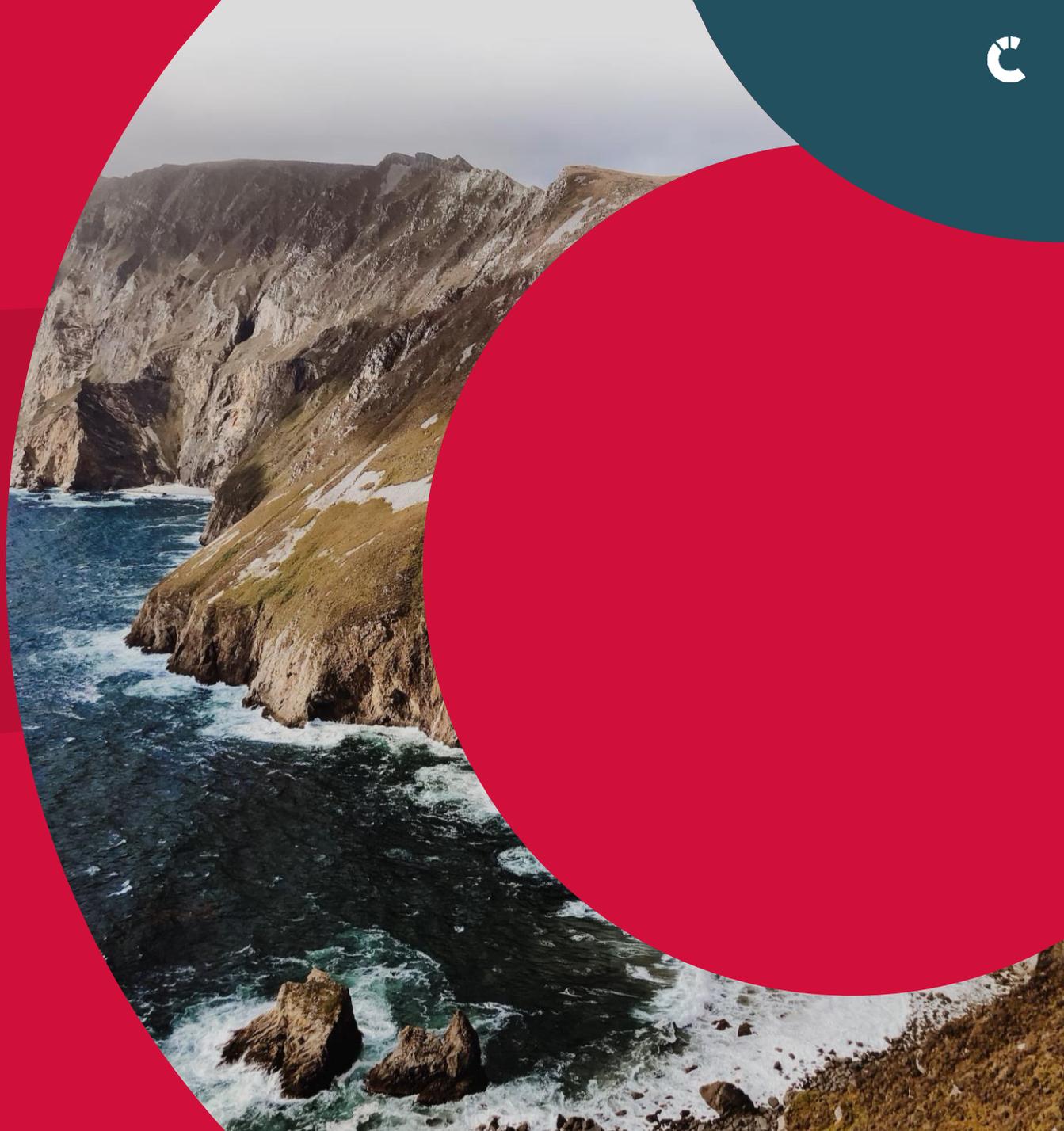


### County Staying in After visiting Co. Donegal



Q6c "What County did you stay in before coming to Co. Donegal?"  
Q6d "What County in Ireland will you be staying in after leaving Co. Donegal?"  
(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors excl. those who reside in Co. Donegal, Sept-24; n=83)

# Pre-Attraction Experience

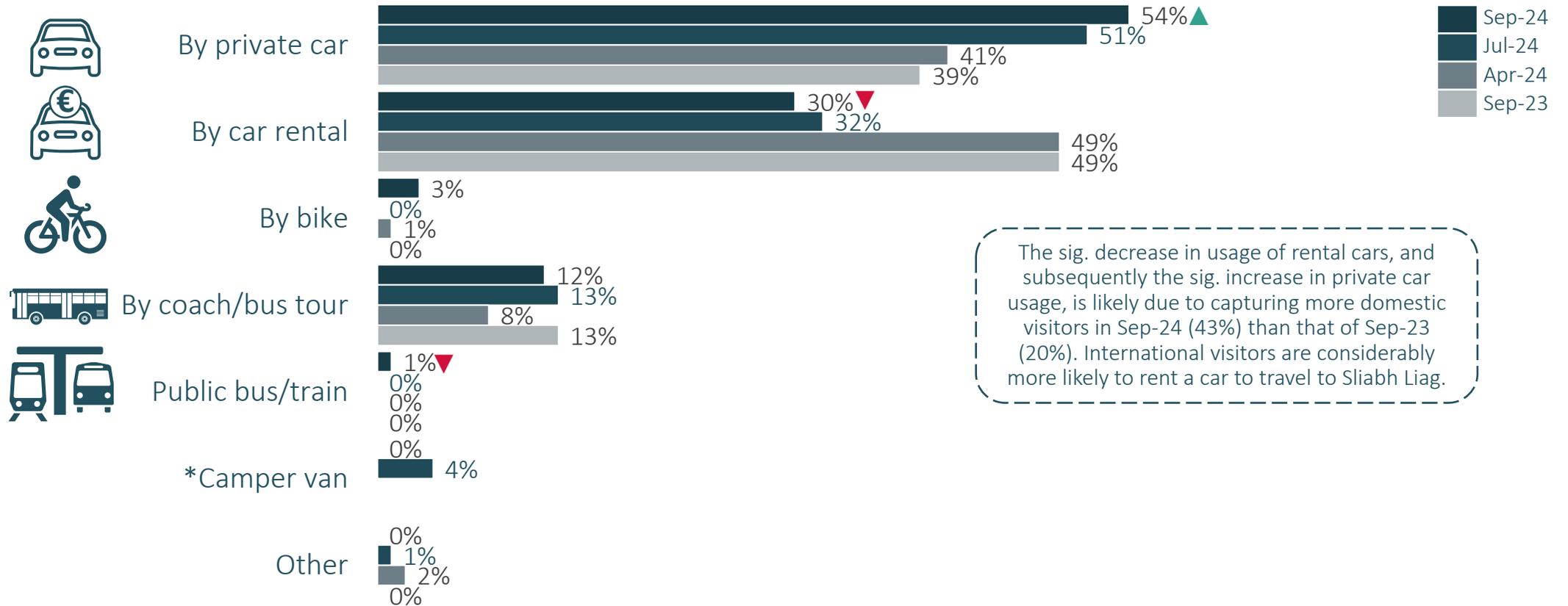


# Private car is the preferred mode of travel to Sliabh Liag



Since Sept-23, those using rental cars to travel to Sliabh Liag has decreased significantly in Sept-24 and a similar number reported in Jul-24 as well. Use of Coach / Tour Bus has remained stable with 1-in-10 arriving via this means.

## Mode of travel to Sliabh Liag



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sept-23

\*Statement added in Jul-24

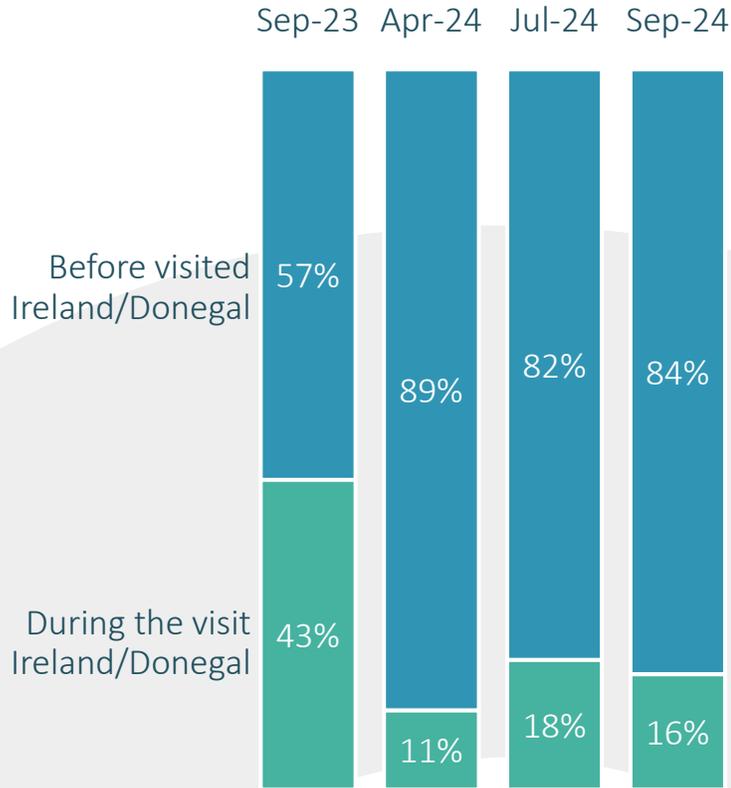
Q7b "How did you travel to Sliabh Liag today?"

(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sep-24; n=94)

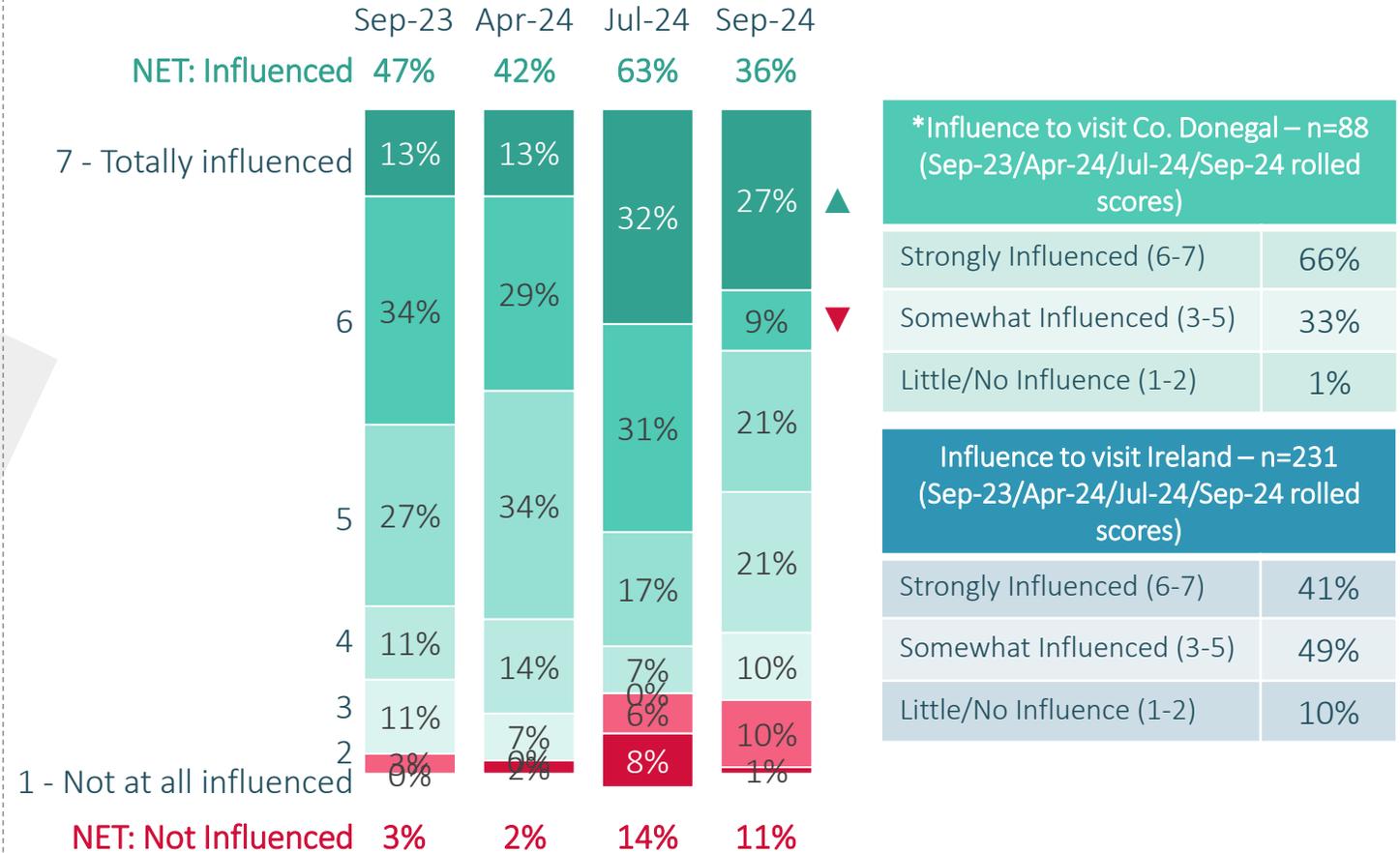
# Majority planned visiting Sliabh Liag ahead of visit to Donegal/Ireland

Despite the majority of visitors pre-planning their visit to Sliabh Liag, only one-third were influenced to visit Donegal / Ireland due to Sliabh Liag showing a sig. decline vs. previous waves.

### When Planned to Visit Sliabh Liag



### Influence of Sliabh Liag on Visiting Donegal/Ireland



\*CAUTION: Small Base Size

▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sept-23

Q8b "When did you plan on visiting Sliabh Liag?"

Q9a "To what extent did Sliabh Liag influence you to visit Donegal / Ireland?"

(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors excl. those who reside in Co. Donegal, Sep-24; n=83)

Please note question was worded as 'visit to Donegal' for Irish residents and 'visit to Ireland' for international visitors  
(Base: All pre-planning visit to Sliabh Liag; n=90)

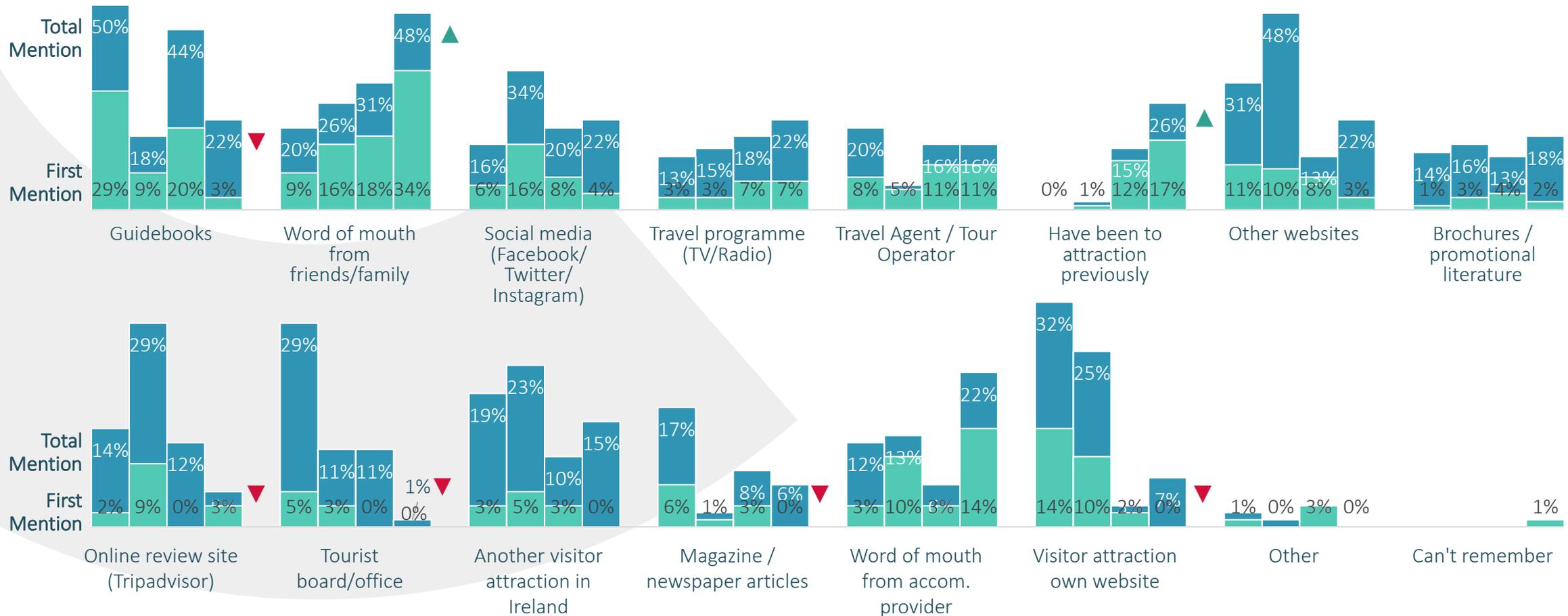
# Awareness driven primarily by word of mouth from friends/family

Significant increase for Word of Mouth versus Sept-23. Meanwhile, Guidebooks suffers a big drop and now shares second position with Social Media and Travel Programme as places heard/seen about Sliabh Liag.

## Heard/Seen About Sliabh Liag

Sep-23 Apr-24 Jul-24 Sep-24

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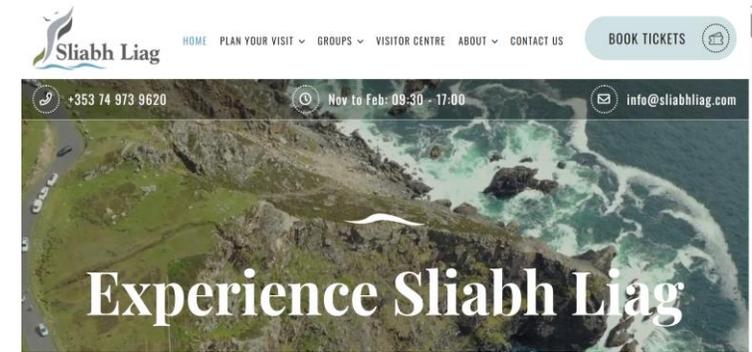
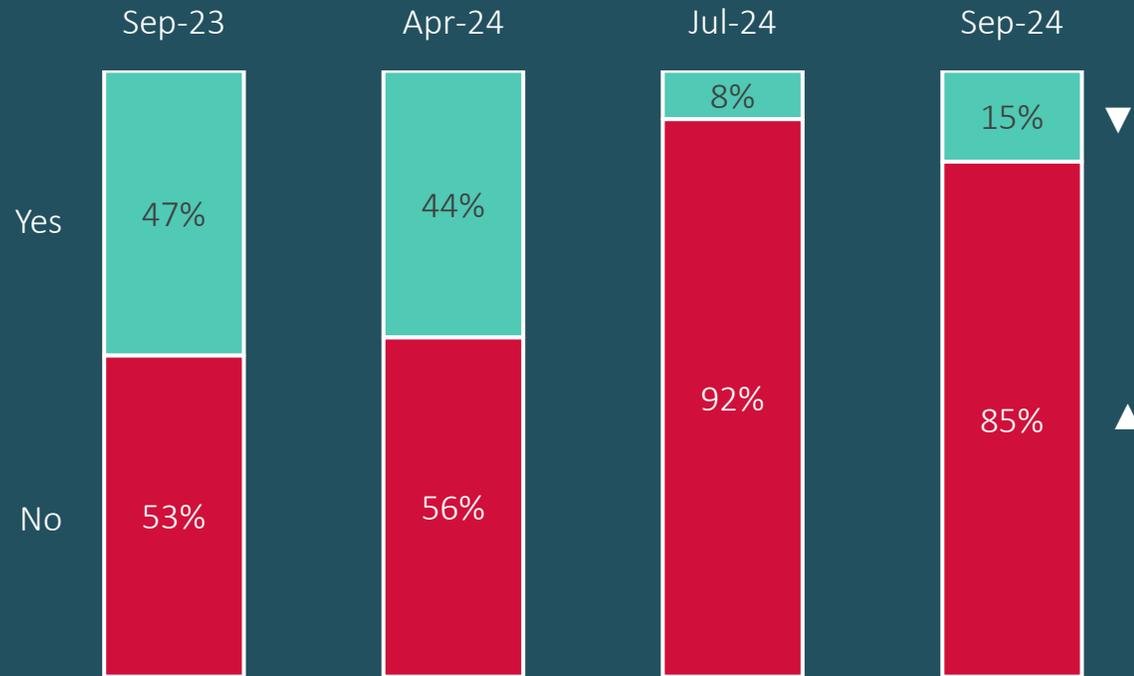


▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sept-23  
 Q10a/a11 "Where did you first/ else did you hear about Sliabh Liag?"  
 (Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sep-24; n=94)

# The bulk of visitors do not visit the official website before their visit



## Website Accessed Pre-Visit



The Sliabh Liag official website performed quite well on the “look & feel of the website” and “user-friendliness/navigation”, however this sentiment is based off of a very small sample size (n=14).

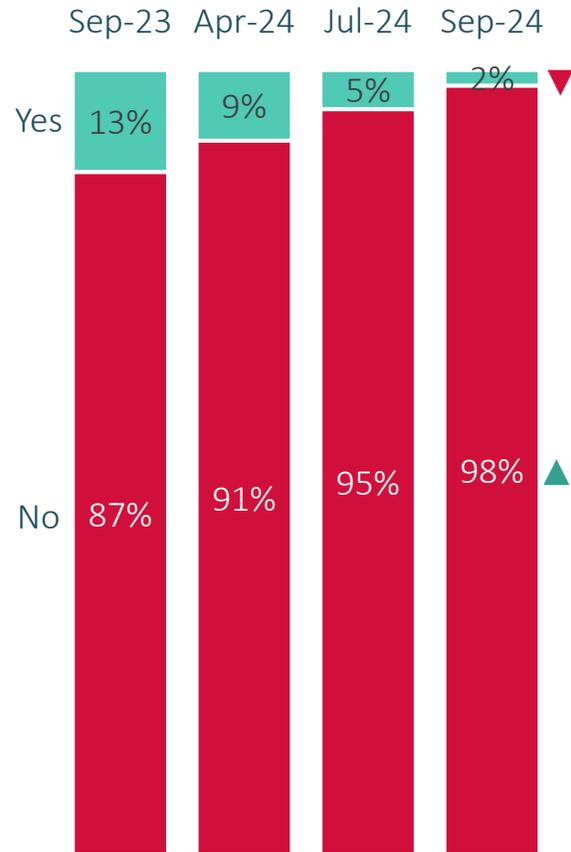
Those who visited the official Sliabh Liag did not book because was not need.

# Few visitors have made advance bookings for their visit to Sliabh Liag

Only 2% pre-booked their visit to Sliabh Liag. Of those that did pre-book, very small portion did it through the official website.



## Pre-Booked Visit



## Pre-Booked through Sliabh Liag Website\*



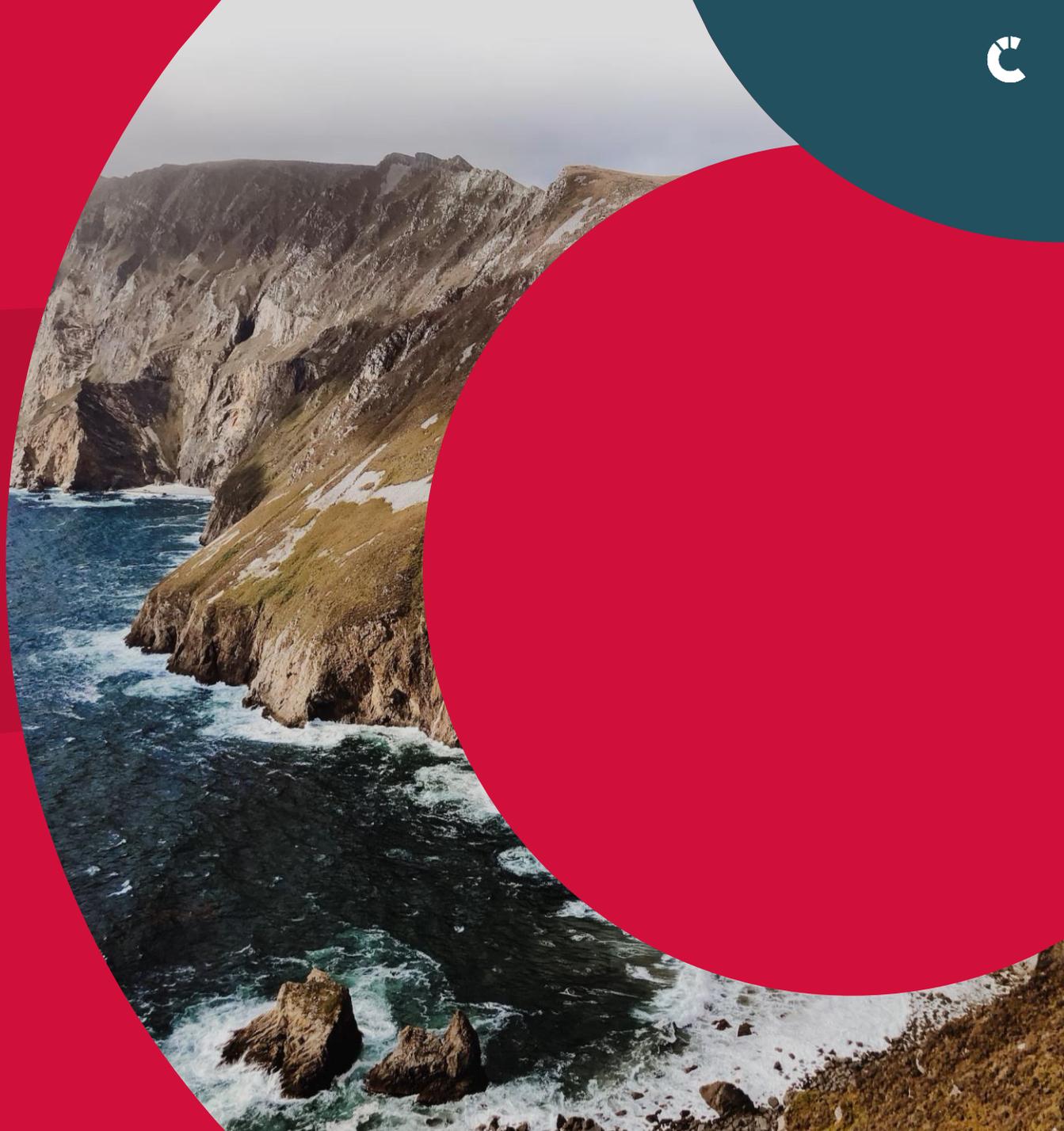
Of those that pre-booked their visit to Sliabh Liag, very few did so through the Official Sliabh Liag Website

When asked why participants didn't pre-book through the website, a common theme of a preference to "was no need to" or they weren't sure what day that they wanted to visit.

\*CAUTION: Small Base Size

▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sept-23  
Q11a "Did you pre-book your visit to Sliabh Liag?"  
Q11b "Did you visit the official website of Sliabh Liag to make this pre-booking?"  
(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sep-24; n=94)

# Evaluation of the Experience

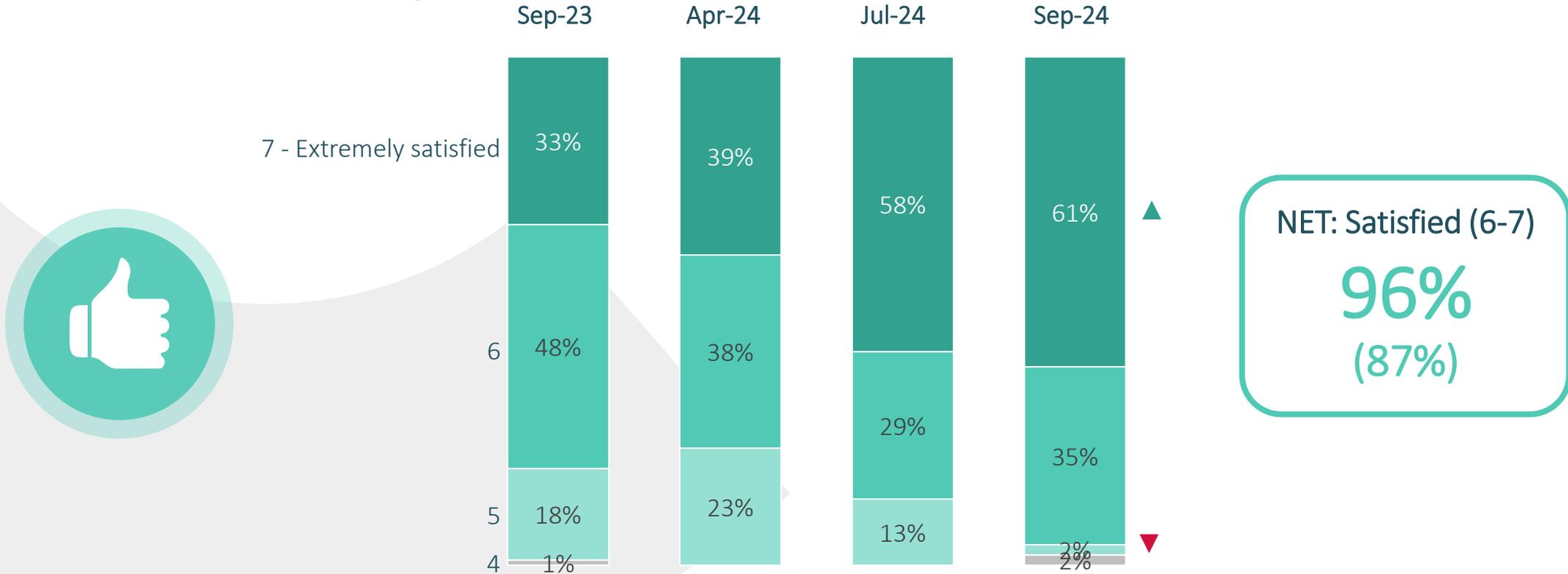


# Visitor satisfaction has shown a significant increase overall



Almost two-thirds of visitors to Sliabh Liag reported being “extremely satisfied” with their experience, in-line with Jul-24 and a significant increase compared to Sep-23.

## Overall Satisfaction with Sliabh Liag



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sept-23

Scale from 1-3 has been removed due to 0%

() = Jul-24 data

Q16 "How satisfied were you overall, taking into account all aspects of your experience at Sliabh Liag?"

(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sep-24; n=94)

# Satisfaction stems from the views available of the beautiful landscape at Sliabh Liag

## Verbatim Reasoning for Satisfaction Rating

### Visitors Satisfied (6-7) with their Visit to Sliabh Liag

NET: Satisfied  
96%



*"Interpretative centre that we missed every other visit"*



*"Ease of getting shuttle, no crowds and viewing platform"*



*"The peacefulness of the mountains early in morning before crowds arrive"*



*"Scenery, Michael the shuttlebus driver excellent"*



*"Spectacular views and lovely people"*



*"Natural beauty"*

### Visitors Dissatisfied (1-5) with their Visit to Sliabh Liag

NET: Dissatisfied  
4%

Response rates were low among those who rated their experience of Sliabh Liag as being less satisfied (1-5).

The main comments were in relation to the weather.

Q16a "Could you please tell us what the highlight of your experience has been?"

Q16b "Could you please tell us what you are less satisfied with?"

(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors who rated their experience between 6-7, Sep-24, n=90)

(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors who rated their experience between 1-5, Sep-24, n=4)

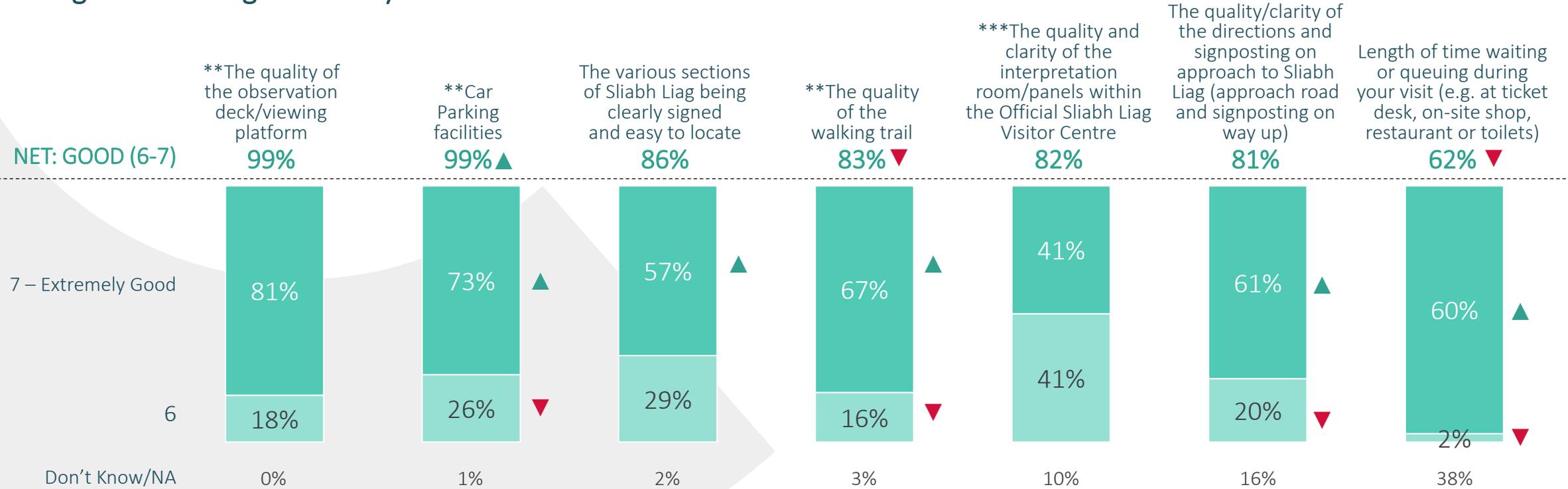


# Visitors expressed positivity across various aspects of Sliabh Liag



Car parking and quality of the directions/signs significantly increased versus last year on “extremely good”.

## Rating of Sliabh Liag Across Key Metrics



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sept-23

Scale from 1-5 has been removed due to 0%

\*CAUTION: Small Base Size

\*\*Statement split into two for Jul-24

\*\*\*Statement filtered to only show for those who experienced these touchpoints at Q13

Q14 "We would like to ask you to rate a series of specific aspects of your visit to Sliabh Liag"

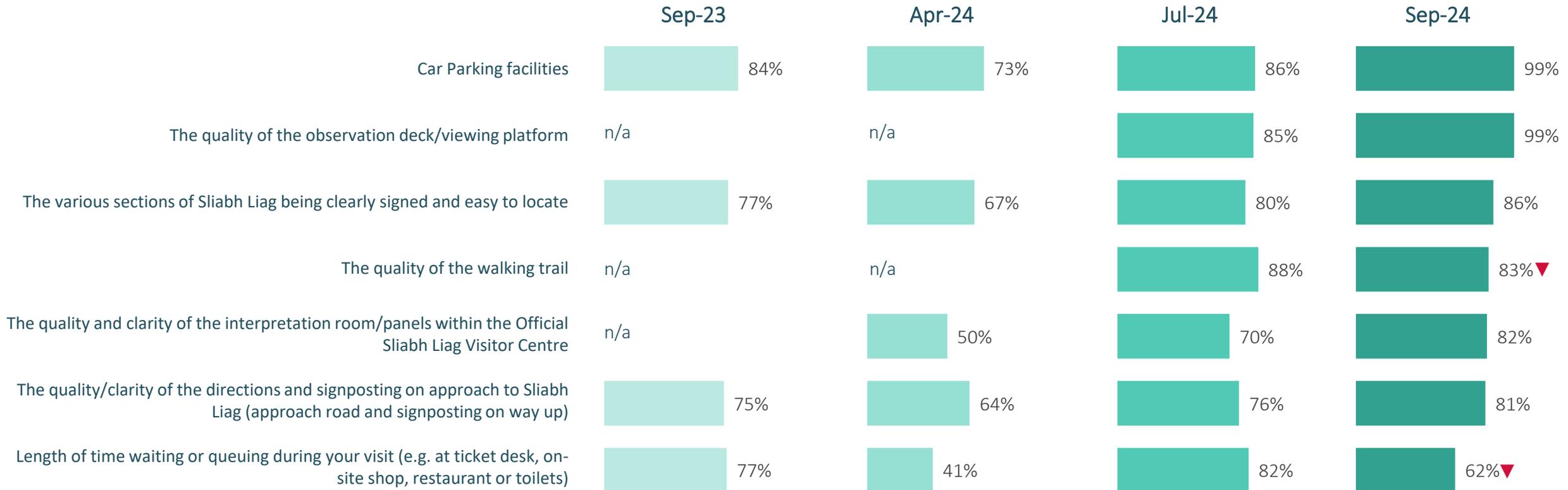
(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sep-24; n=94)

# Quality of the observation deck and parking facilities best rated



Since Sep-23, the rating for 'quality of walking trail' and 'length of time queuing' has decreased significantly, especially for 'time queuing'.

## Rating of Sliabh Liag Across Key Metrics NET: GOOD (6-7)



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sept-23

\*CAUTION: Small Base Size

\*\*Statement split into two for Jul-24

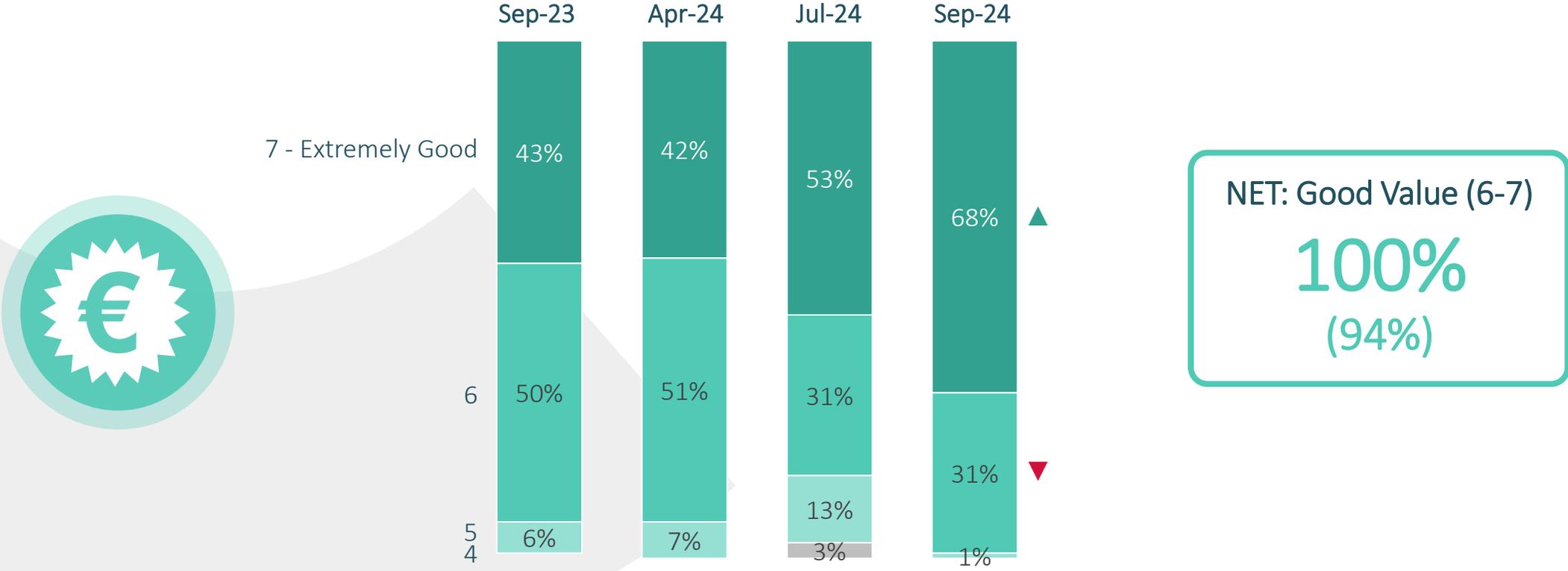
\*\*\*Statement filtered to only show for those who experienced these touchpoints at Q13 Q14 "We would like to ask you to rate a series of specific aspects of your visit to Sliabh Liag" (Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sep-24; n=94)

# Sliabh Liag delivers strong value for money to its visitors



More than half visitors feel that their experience is worth the money they have paid.

## Value for Money



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sept-23  
Scale from 1-3 has been removed due to 0%  
( ) = Sep-23 data  
Q18 "How would you rate the overall value for money you experienced at Sliabh Liag?"  
(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sep-24; n=94)

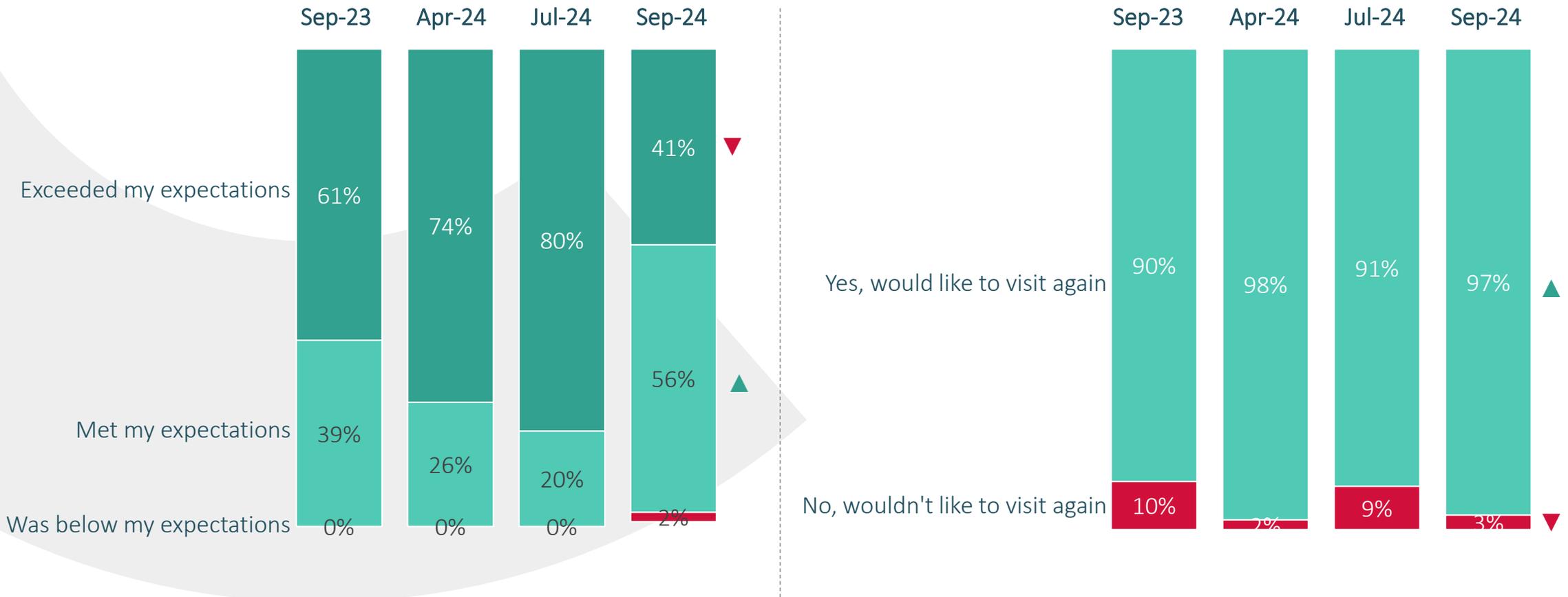


# Sig. drop in Sliabh Liag exceeding visitor expectations against Sep-23



Despite a lower level of those having their expectations exceeded by Sliabh Liag, close to all visitors would visit Sliabh Liag again in the future.

## Expectation of Sliabh Liag and desire to visit again in the future



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sep-23

Q17b "Did the quality of the experience met/exceeded/below your expectations?"

Q20 "Would you visit Sliabh Liag again in the future?"

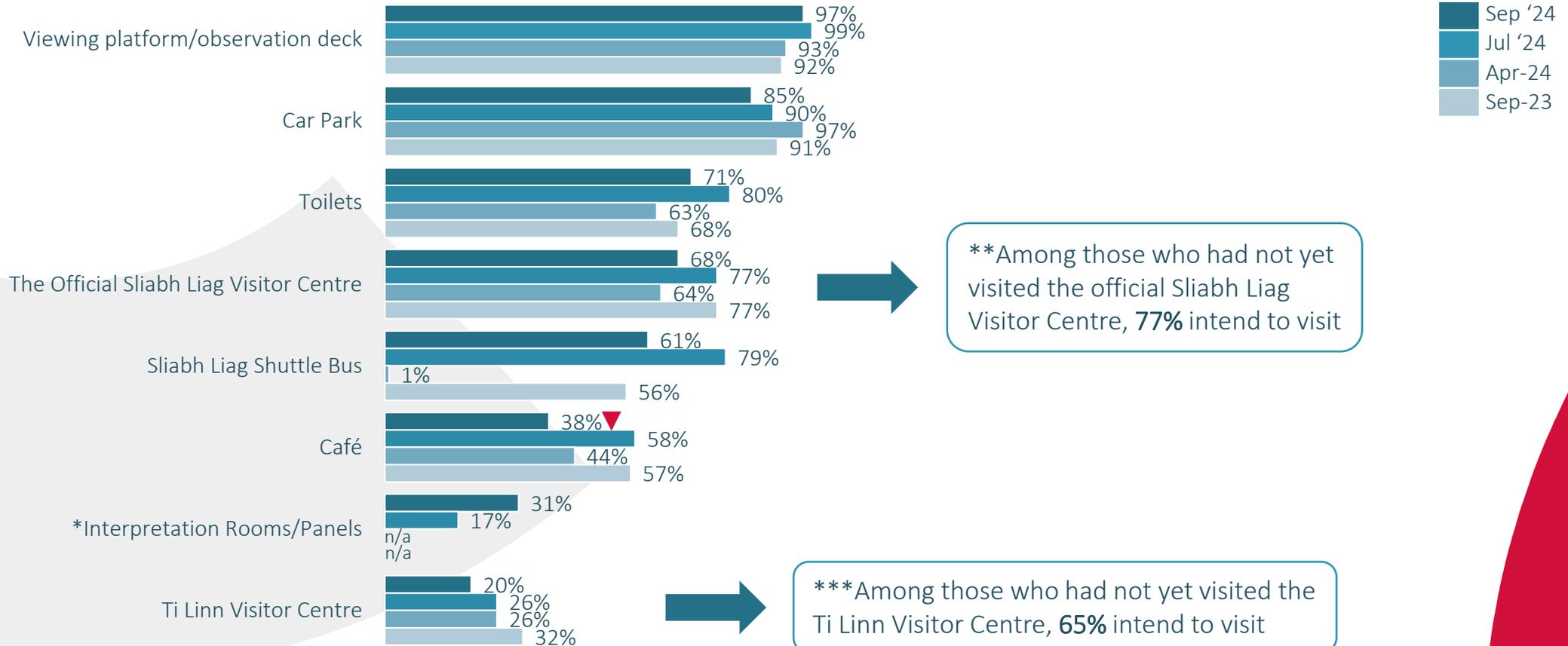
(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sep-24; n=94)

# Viewing Platform facility at Sliabh Liag is the most used



Overall facilities usage have dropped across all metrics, especially on Café.

## Facilities used in Sliabh Liag



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sep-23

\*New statement added in Jul-24

\*\*CAUTION: Small base size among those who haven't visited the SLVC; n=28

\*\*\*CAUTION: Small base size among those who haven't visited the Ti Linn VC; n=89

Q13 "Did you use any of the following during your visit to Sliabh Liag?"

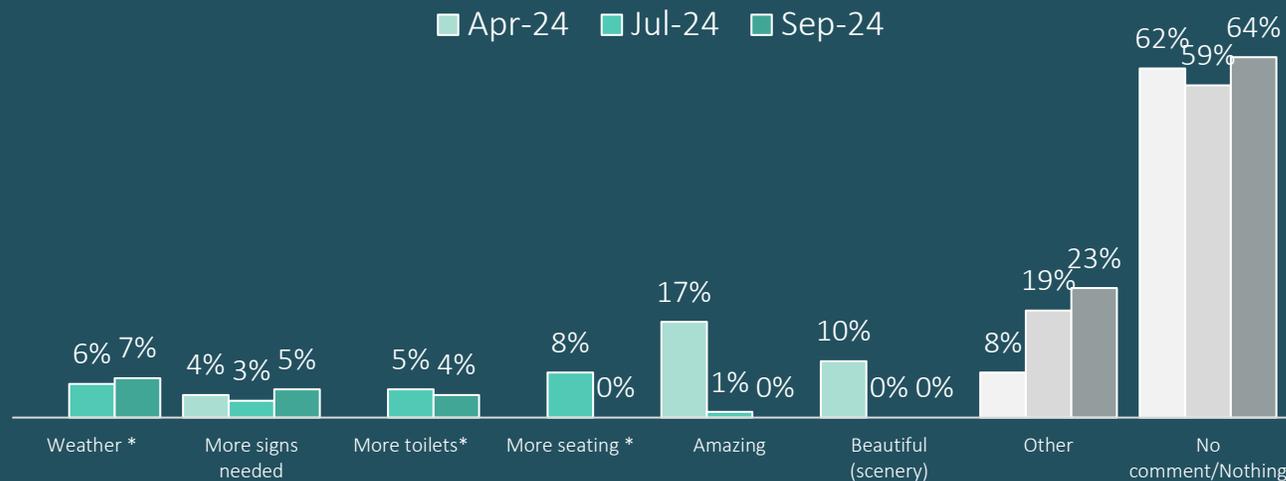
(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sep-24; n=94)



# Appendix

# Many have little feedback on suggested improvements for Sliabh Liag, with most feedback centring around positive experiences on site

Of those that did provide feedback for suggestions of improvements focused on the need to provide more information about the shuttle bus services and the availability of shelters and toilet facilities near the viewing platform.



\*Statements added to codeframe in Jul-24 wave

Q24 "Please use the space provided to write in any suggestions that could be made to improve your experience at Sliabh Liag"

(Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sep-24; n=94)

Handful of verbatims noting the need for additional paths, shelter, and toilet facilities at the viewing platform:



*Confusion over shuttle buses needs to be addressed.*



*A walking path up from car parks, very dangerous walkers on road in way of shuttle busses.*



*Provide a shelter near the viewing platform for when weather is wet.*



*Provide toilets near the viewing platform*



*Toilets at top car park*



*A few info boards on the walking trail with different facts about the area*



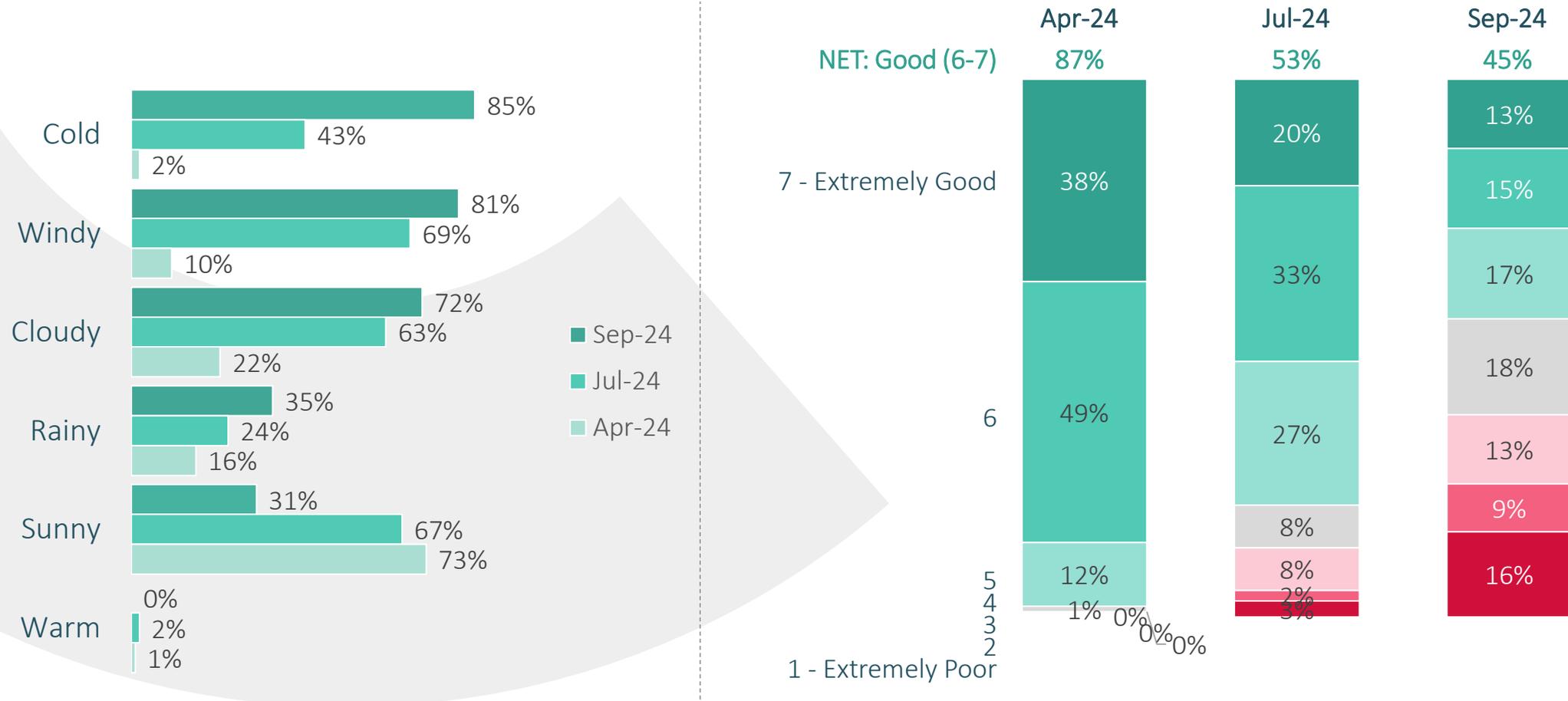
*Indicate how long it takes to walk up the hill*

# Visitors were met with inclement weather in Sep-24



Due to poorer weather conditions experienced by visitors to Sliabh Liag in Sep-24, this resulted in a reduced rating for weather overall.

## Weather Rating at Sliabh Liag



X.1 – Interviewers recorded the weather at the time of each interview  
 Q23 "How would you rate the weather during your current visit to Sliabh Liag?"  
 (Base: All Sliabh Liag visitors, Sep-24; n=94)



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