



Nurturing skills for 21st Century Parks

Paul O'Brien,
Chief Executive, APSE

What has happened to Parks services?

- Average cuts v's areas of deprivation
- Parks £1B
- Average cut 26% unadjusted, 32% inflation – 353 parks authorities

The Parks Action Group

- Communities and local government select committee public parks inquiry – examine impact of reduced L.A. budgets on parks & open spaces Feb 17
- MHCLG tasked with reporting on ensuring future sustainability of parks
- Parks Action Group (PAG) launched Sept 17 by Government
- Government – MHCLG, Defra, DoH, Home Office, DCMS, DoE
- Sector – APSE, Parks Alliance, NFPGS, Fields in Trust, LGA, HLF, National Trust, Natural England, KBT, Groundwork
- Joint launch meeting
- Meetings and workshops

Workstreams

- Vision and values
- Finance
- Knowledge and skills
- Standards
- Increasing usage
- Empowering communities





PEOPLE

OPERATIONS

VISION STRATEGY POLICIES

ENVIRONMENT

INCOME & PERFORMANCE

apse

Knowledge and skills

- No two places the same
- Context and skills can't be separated
- Traditional horticultural skills important
- Skills gaps
- Framework of competencies
- Training provision
- Career paths
- Apprenticeship levy
- Sharing best practice and knowledge
- Overall business case

Figure 3: Draft competency framework for parks professions

GRADE	SENIOR MANAGEMENT SCP 39+	MANAGEMENT SCP 25-38	OFFICER & SUPERVISORY SCP 18-27	HORTICULTURAL SCP 10-20	APPRENTICE/ TRAINEE SCP 6-13
POST TITLE	Parks Manager	Assistant Parks Manager/ Team Leader	Senior Officer/ Supervisor	Arborist/ Gardener	Apprentice/ Trainee
Interpersonal and empathy skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Customer care skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promotes and understanding of Health and Safety requirements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Political sensitivity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promotes equality and diversity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promotes best practice and continuous improvement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Broad knowledge of horticultural skills and practices	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Promotes pursuit of additional funding and income generation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Leadership and communication	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Promotion of stakeholder and community partnerships	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Internal and external project management skills	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Strategic vision and service planning	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Management of revenue and capital budgets	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Management of performance management systems	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Succession planning and training provision	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Analytical and problem solving abilities	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Understanding and championing of service within council priorities	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Organisational change and improvement	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗

KEY COMPETENCIES

Key

Strategic	People Management
Operational	Finance



Draft Greenprint for Parks Professionals

Entry Level	In-situ (progressing)	New Entrants (Supervisory/middle management)	Senior Management ('the experts')
Further Education training courses (NVQ)	City & Guilds (certificated courses e.g Certificate of Competence - Horticulture Practices)	Income generation/volunteer and community liaison/bids and additional funding/project management etc	
Apprenticeships	Training days - specific role development - e.g play inspections		Coaching and mentoring/ succession planning/ knowledge sharing
'On-the-job' learning		Leadership/communication/ PM systems/Financial management	
	Specialist training courses (e.g arboriculture, fine turf maintenance) leading to specialist roles		Political skills/advocacy/strategic vision and planning
Equality and diversity, health and safety, customer care		Networking/best value/innovation/research skills	
	Formal horticultural qualifications	Degrees and Masters courses	
	Chartered membership		

Progress and deliverables

- Develop skills & knowledge 'greenprint' for next decade
- Consult on competency framework with parks managers, institutes & training providers – closes 28 June
- Identify coherent career path for profession
- Clear coherent recognition of the parks profession with institute(s)
- Create learning networks, coaching and mentoring for existing parks managers
- Establish apprenticeship standards
- Launch event September

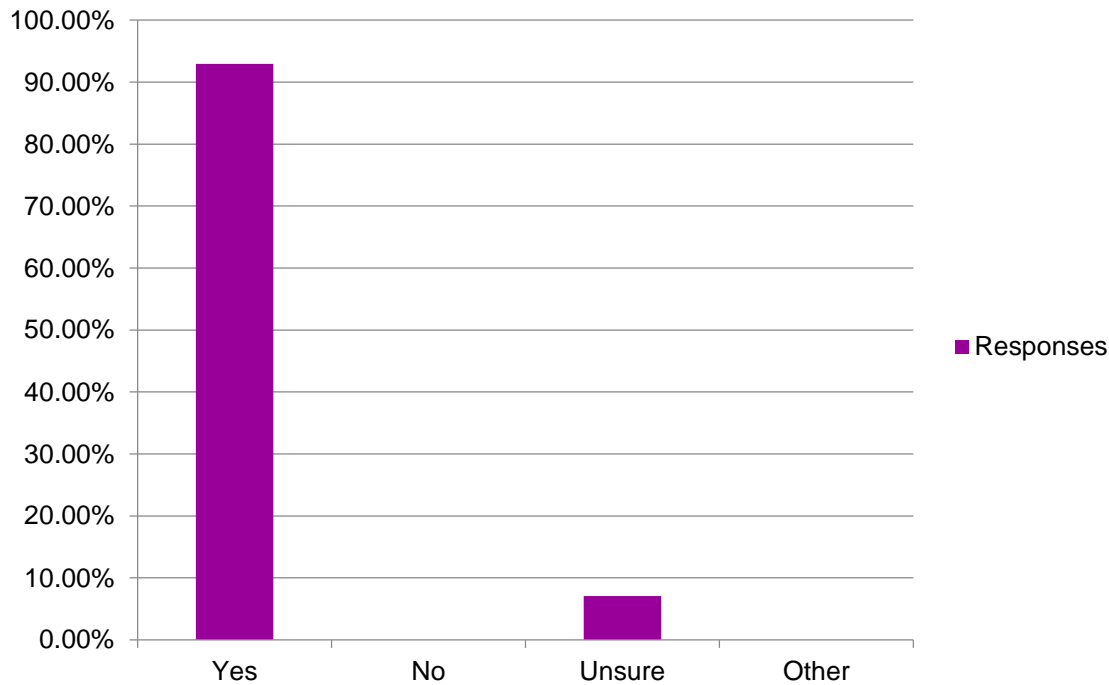


Parks Competency Framework

Survey Analysis



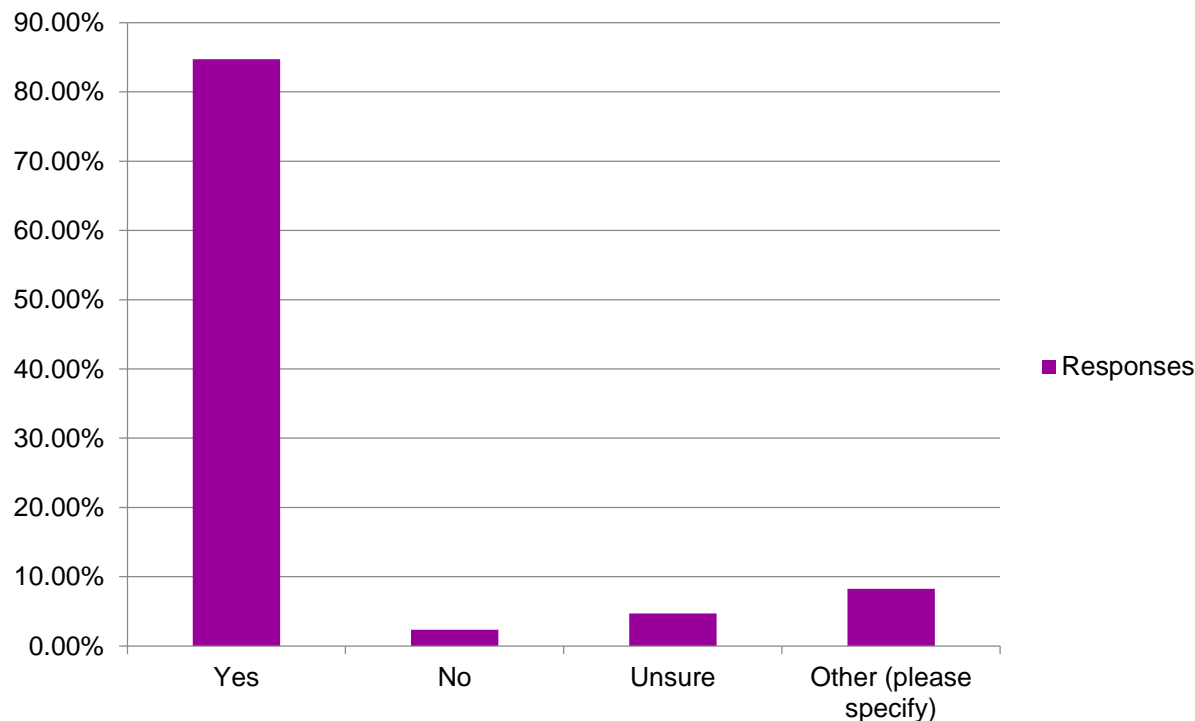
Do you believe that it is important that a 'greenprint' is established for Knowledge and Skills development in Parks Management for the next decade?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	92.94%	79
No	0.00%	0
Unsure	7.06%	6
Other	0.00%	0
	Answered	85



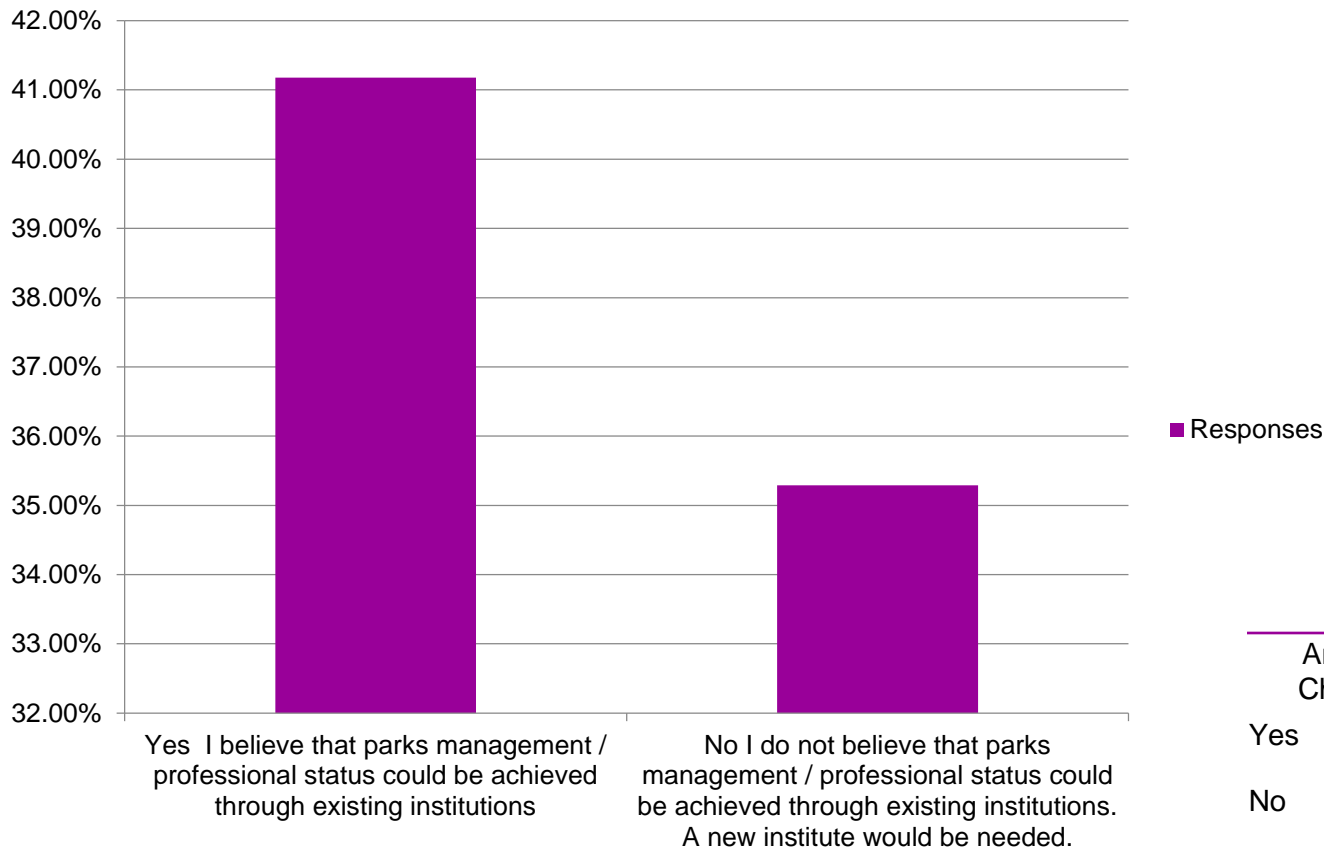
Do you believe that it is important that Parks Management has its own distinct and clear professional status?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	84.71%	72
No	2.35%	2
Unsure	4.71%	4
Answered		85

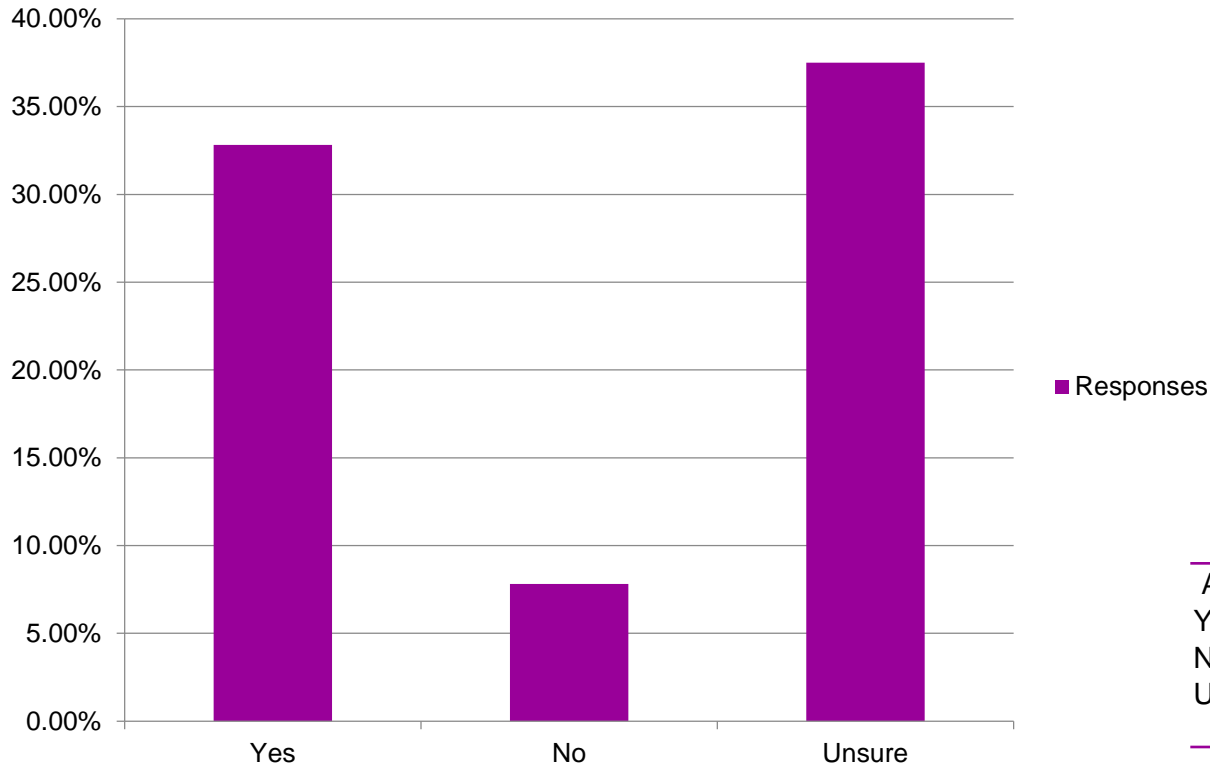


Do you believe that this could be contained within existing professional institutions? Or do you believe it needs one of its own?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	41.18%	35
No	35.29%	30
	Answered	85

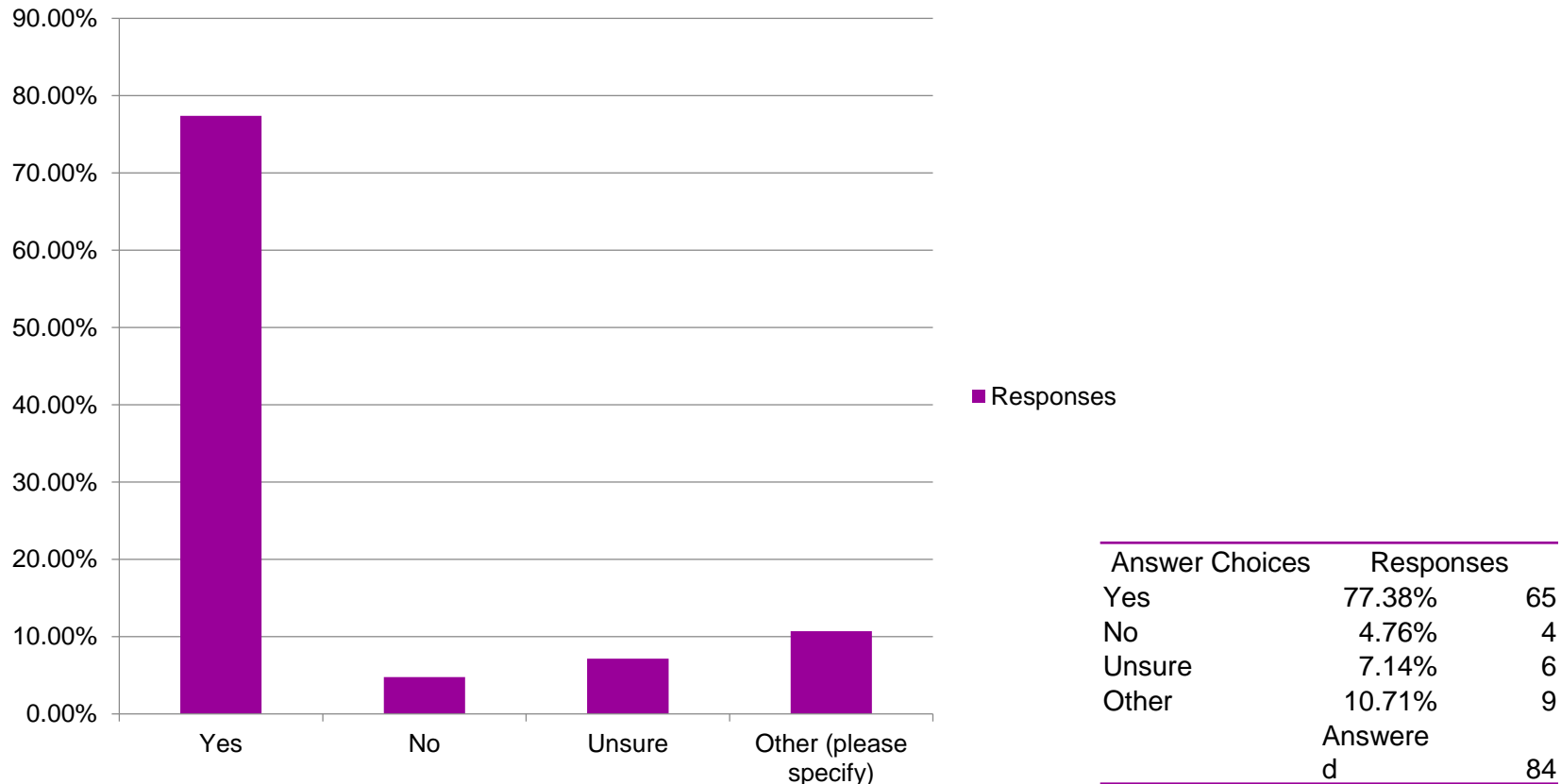
If you are a professional institute would you give status to Parks Managers if they achieved a level of competency / experience / qualifications aligned with the competency framework?



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Yes	32.81%	21
No	7.81%	5
Unsure	37.50%	24
Answered		64

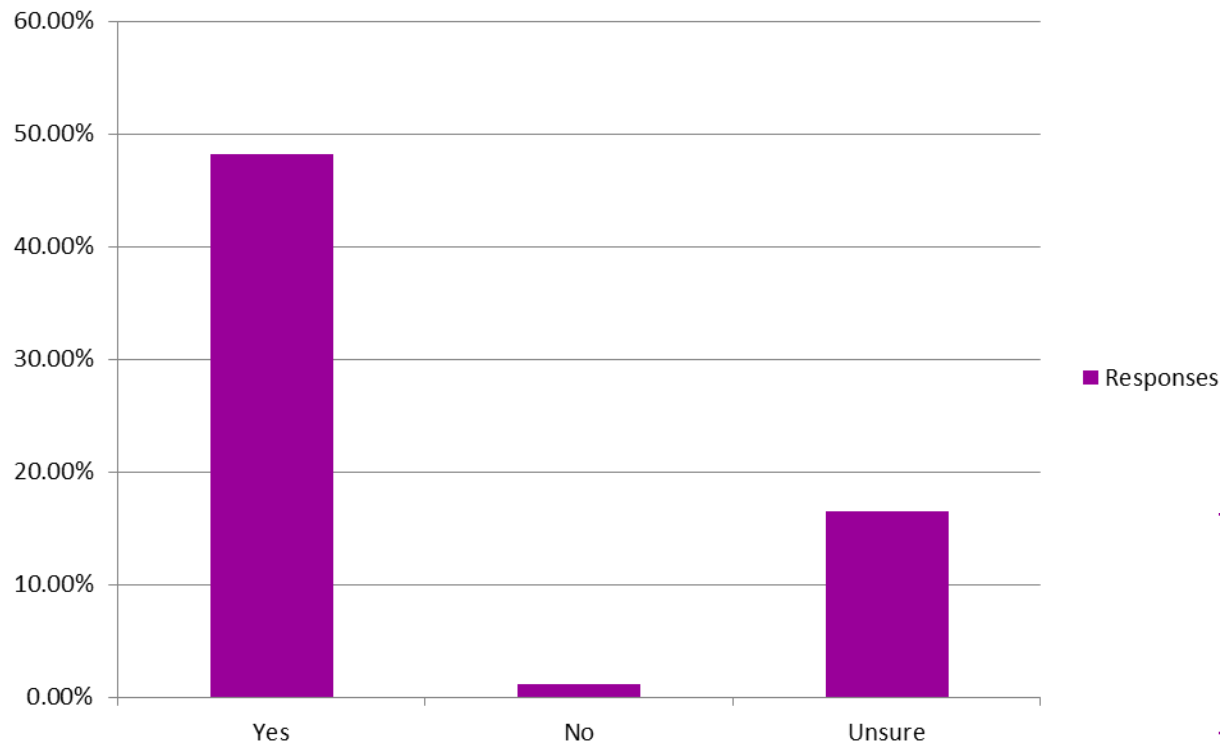


Do you agree with the idea of having a clear and distinct career path for the Parks professional?





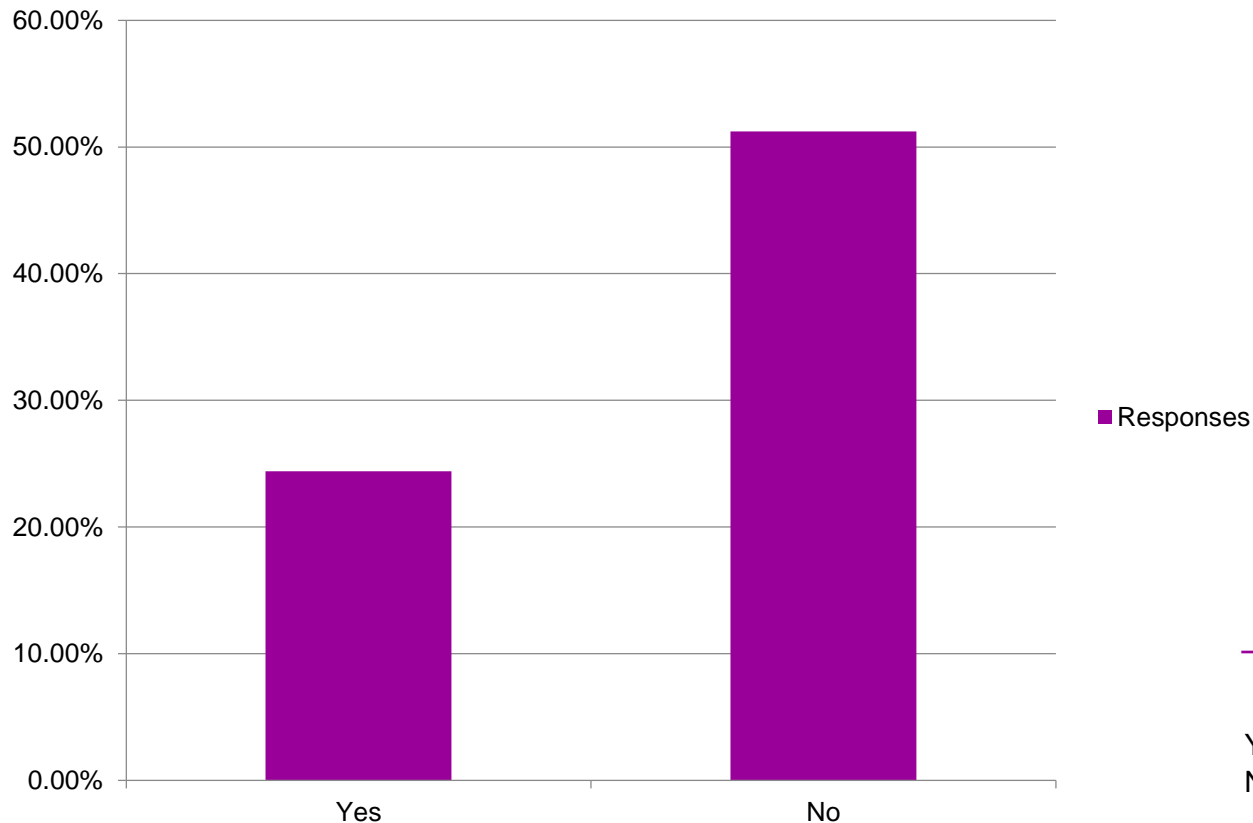
Do you agree with the draft competencies outlined in the framework for parks professionals?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	48.24%	41
No	1.18%	1
Unsure	16.47%	14
Answered		85



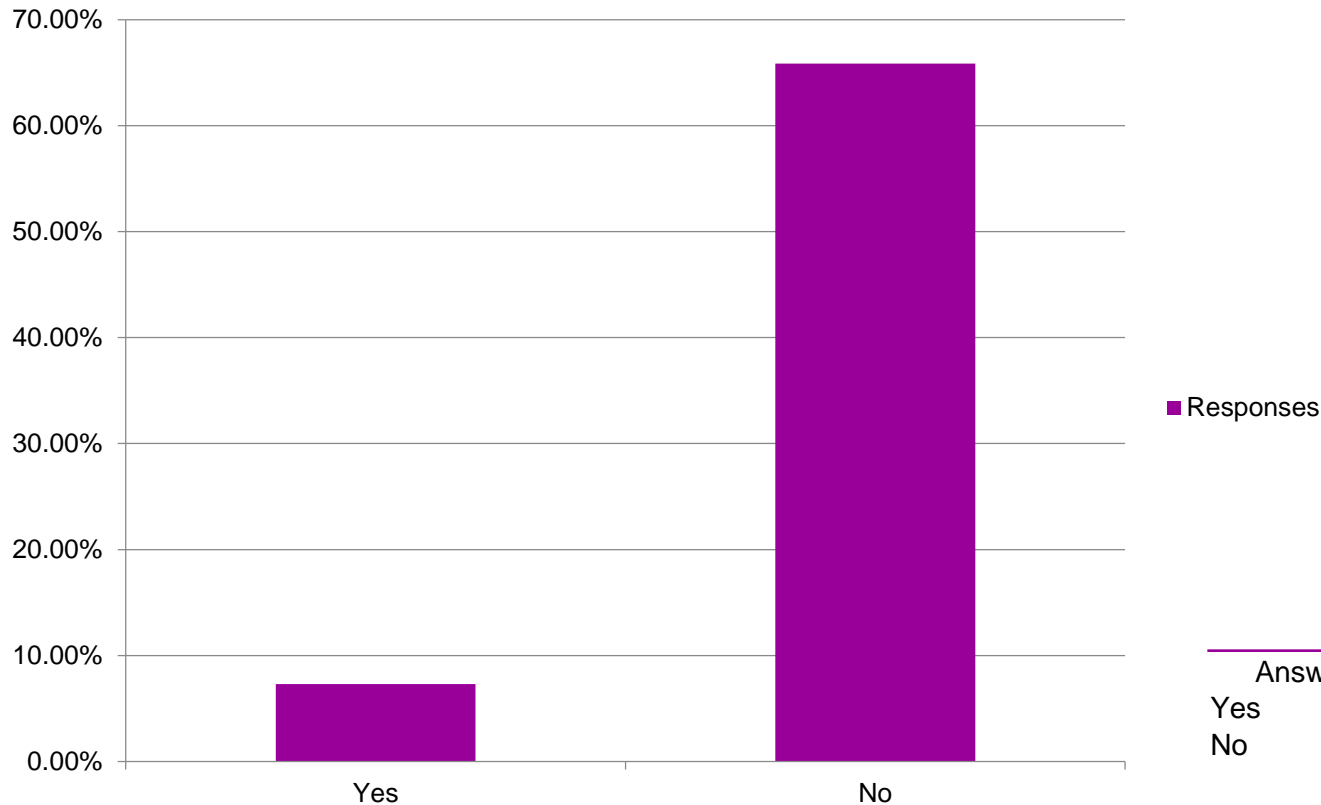
Do you currently provide training that would meet some or all of the requirements in the core competencies framework?



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	24.39% 20
No	51.22% 42
Answered	82



Do you currently provide learning networks where Parks Managers can undertake peer learning and development?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	7.32%	6
No	65.85%	54
	Answered	82

Conclusions

- Lots of support for notion of 'greenprint'
- Lots of support for Parks Management having its own professional status and career path
- Existing professional institutions need to work harder to convince people that they are a true home for parks managers
- Lots of bodies out there at present providing training and learning networks but not comprehensive needs joined up
- Lots of support for competency framework (enhanced version)
- Advisory board of parks managers needed to oversee how all this brought together

NEW MUNICIPALISM

Delivering for local people and local economies



Contact details

Paul O'Brien, Chief Executive

Email: po'brien@apse.org.uk

[@apsetweets](#)

Association for Public Service Excellence

3rd floor, Trafford House, Chester Road,
Old Trafford, Manchester M32 0RS.

telephone: 0161 772 1810

web: www.apse.org.uk



GB 11409



GB 11132



GB 14074