



Outdoor Recreation Network

**Outdoor Recreation Network
Participate Outdoors Conference e-journal**



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About the Outdoor Recreation Network (ORN)

ORN is a membership organisation comprising representatives from government departments, agencies and other organisations with a role in outdoor recreation.

The Network's members meet quarterly to discuss outdoor recreation matters and share best practise, as well as working collaboratively on research and other projects.

To communicate with its wider subscriber-based audience, ORN publishes journals, hosts conferences and seminars, and issues e-newsletters. This is coordinated by the Network's management team and secretariat, the latter of which is staffed on a part-time basis.

The Network's key aims are to:

1. Encourage cooperation between members in identifying and promoting the need for research related to outdoor recreation, to encourage joint ventures in undertaking research and to disseminate information about members' recreation programmes.
2. Promote information exchange relating to outdoor recreation and to foster general debate about relevant trends and issues.
3. Share information to develop best practice through training and professional development in provision for and management of outdoor recreation.

Write for the ORN Journal

If your organisation is doing something innovative, inspiring or groundbreaking in the field of outdoor recreation, we'd love to chat to you about becoming an author for our journal.

To discuss writing for a future edition of the ORN journal please contact our secretariat.

Author guidance and the Network's editorial policy is available on our website at www.outdoorrecreation.org.uk/publications.

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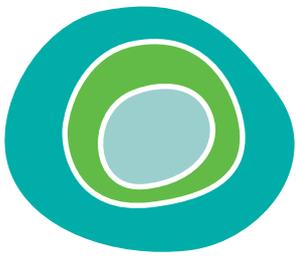
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Outdoor Recreation Network

Welcome and Introduction

By Guest Editor Paddy Harrop, Forestry Commission England

I am delighted to be editing the first journal of the newly named Outdoor Recreation Network. The journal focusses on participation and summarises the presentations and discussions at our recent conference in York.

Participation in outdoor sport, recreation and conservation has been taking place in the UK and Ireland for hundreds if not thousands of years with traditional festivals and recreational hunting having close associations and dependences on the natural environment. Mass participation is a relatively new phenomenon dating back 100 years or so following increased leisure time available due to improvements in working conditions through Trades Union activity and a growing middle class with more leisure time and money to spend.

In England recreational climbing started just over 130 years ago with Hackett Smith's ascent of Napes Needle and the formation of the British Mountaineering Council 60 years later in 1944; The National Council of Ramblers was formed in 1931 to promote walking; British Horse Society in 1947 doing the same for equestrian access; the Conservation Corps founded in 1959 as the forerunner of The Conservation Volunteers; and mountainbiking only arrived in the 1980's, although the Rough-Stuff fellowship had been around since the 1955 promoting off-road cycling. Much of the early mass enjoyment of the outdoors was driven by clubs, societies and groups of friends and families. Introduction to outdoor activities were provided by friends, kit used was basic and participation was as much a social activity as anything else.

1960's saw concerns about 'over use' of our special countryside by the great unwashed urban population and public policy focussed on managed provision and protection of the most sensitive locations and the growth of semi-urban country parks to relieve pressure from more sensitive environments. In general this over use has not occurred although car traffic remains an issue in many of our National Parks and some paths and locations are overflowing on good days and bank holidays.

In his keynote talk Simon Bell focussed on recent trends and challenges: an ageing population and effectively 'new youth' as many people remain active into later life; the obesity and inactivity epidemic and it's impact on health and wellbeing; the network society and effects for good or ill; new communities and changing cultural norms with a more and more diverse ethnicity in society; the recent economic recession leading to less disposable income but possibly supporting staycations in the UK and Ireland; and the impacts of the risk society and how this may be impacting on childhood.

Simon made it clear that despite investment in large events such as the 2012 Olympics and 2014 Commonwealth games increasing participation remains a huge challenge for the outdoor sector.

With one of the mildest winters on record, weather remains at the forefront of the landowner and tourism sectors collective mind. An increasingly variable climate makes for harder planning of events and facilities and less reliable income streams. The generally mild and wet weather brings other challenges for the land manager with flooding, high winds and new pests and diseases as evidenced by the spread of *Phytophthora ramorum* and *Chalara fraxinae* impacting on larch and ash trees across the UK and Ireland.

The Morning workshops focussed on the WHO, people who participate across a range of demographics including: women; young people; local communities and; black and minority ethnic groups. Overcoming barriers was a key issue and a common theme focussed on the importance of social aspects of activities such as cup of tea and biscuit and a chat and that shared issues exist across different groups and Clare Parsons, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, provided ten top tips that would be useful for most participation programmes see her article on BME Communities Engagement with Outdoor Recreation in this journal.

Andrew Denton from the Outdoors Industries Association presented the Britain on Foot campaign launched in 2012. The campaign is an umbrella partnership trying to get as many people as possible outdoors and active and has received widespread industry and political support.

Afternoon workshops focused on the HOW, what facilities and technologies and programmes can help to encourage greater participations. Technology was presented as an enabler rather than detractor from outdoor participation; consumer/customer focus was encouraged; provisions of good quality facilities both in and around cities and in the wider countryside were seen to have results; as were targeted events and programmes. Philip Broadbent-Yale demonstrates that number of visitors to can be increased using the National Trust property at Gibside as an example where visits have almost doubled over a five year period.

The wide range of experience and knowledge from all corners of the UK and Ireland provided for an interesting and packed conference much of which is summarised in these short presentations. If you want to know more contact the speakers or PARTICIPATE in the next Outdoor Recreation Network event!

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Trends in participation and motivational forces for outdoor recreation

Keynote: Simon Bell, OPENspace Research Centre, University of Edinburgh



Introduction

We live in fast-changing times – economically, socially and environmentally. Outdoor recreation patterns have been changing already for several years in response to a number of social, economic and technological drivers. This short paper summarises some of the current trends and motivational forces in outdoor recreation and relates them to some recent and current research which aims to understand them better, thus hopefully helping planners, designers and managers of outdoor recreation to meet the demands of the public more effectively.

In 2004, the Henley Centre/Headlight Vision produced a foresight study for Natural England on the anticipated drivers of outdoor recreation in England for the next 20 years, up to 2024. I participated in one of the workshops, as probably did several CRN members. This was a valuable piece of work and in the years since, in my research, teaching and practice I have found it important to keep tabs on the way the different drivers have or have not followed the trends suggested by the foresight study. My colleagues Catharine Ward Thompson and Peter Aspinall and I founded OPENspace in 2001 with a special development grant from the then Scottish Higher Education Funding Council. At the time we anticipated our focus would be on accessibility by people with disabilities, general recreational research and some tourism-related work in all type of outdoor landscapes. We also had our eye on health aspects of landscape but we did not anticipate the surge in interest in this field, which has swiftly developed into an important area with hot-spots of research excellence in the UK, Scandinavia, the Netherlands, the USA, Japan and Australia in particular. We have carried out research for a range

of Government departments and agencies and also been involved in EU or research council funded research projects.

We are 10 years or half way through this 20 year foresight period and it is worth considering how some of the trends have matched up to expectations and how the current trends are affecting demand and motivation. In 2004 we were well into the period of the Labour government and its high rate of public spending on social and welfare issues. We were assured that the long period of economic growth signalled an end to the boom and bust cycles of previous decades. Optimism was high. Since then of course all that has changed, with financial crisis, recession, cuts in public spending and a change in government. This has clearly had some effect but what exactly and how might the picture develop from now? Let us consider a few of the trends which I consider to be the more significant. These are the ageing society, continuing concerns about physical and mental health and wellbeing, technology and the networked society, immigration, the effects of the recession and increased risk aversion. I will also illustrate some of the research we in OPENspace have done or are doing in relation to most of these fields.

The ageing society. Of all the trends in the original study this is the one which we most predictable in many ways, since the people who are destined to be pensioners in 2024 are already born. Life expectancy continues to rise. The number of centenarians is increasing. More older people remain active and have the time to participate in outdoor recreation. However, since the study the “pension time bomb” has gone off, so that in future we will have to work longer and take our (smaller)

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pensions later. Thus the period of retirement will shrink and the incomes of pensioners are unlikely to be as good as the baby boomers of today so that the purchasing power of the “grey pound” is likely to decline, with effects on discretionary expenditure and leisure trips needing the car and costing money.

Curiously, while we live longer we also stay younger longer, middle age now starts at 55 according to a BBC poll of 2012 (BBC, 17/9/2012) and the time of growing up and reaching adulthood seems to be put off more and more by the younger generation. This has effects on the kind of activities and lengthens the duration of our lives when we are fit enough to do really strenuous activities. People also have children when they are older and nowadays increasing numbers still live at home owing to the prices of houses and rents. In many ways it is not an ageing society but one feeling progressively younger at older ages – a more juvenile society! Once we get really old then our bodies start to give up and it is the older people with physical and mental health problems who stand to gain most from maintaining activity and going beyond their front doors. The OPENspace led consortium project 'DGO – Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors studied the barriers older people face in leaving their homes to go to a park or green space. Many useful guidelines were developed and a predictive model, the “park simulator” to help identify what elements or aspects of a park would most attract older people to use it. You can find more at <http://www.idgo.ac.uk/>. Other projects related to age are Going Outdoors: Falls, Ageing & Resilience (Go Far) and Mobility, Mood and Place (see www.openspace.eca.ac.uk for more details).

Physical and mental health and wellbeing

Over the last decade we have seen much work in research, policy and practice trying to get more people active and fitter, in reducing obesity and overcoming stress and depression. This is one of the major growth areas of research as noted above. Unfortunately, the most recent statistics suggest that we are losing the war on obesity. According to The Health and Social Care Information Centre (2013) the proportion of overweight adults including obese increased from 58% to 65% in men and from 49% to 58% in women between 1993 and 2011 while there was also a marked increase in the proportion of adults that were obese from 13% in 1993 to 24% in 2011 for men and from 16% to 26% for women. In terms of the balance of calories outdoor recreation cannot do a lot but studies show that more exercise outdoors also has benefits for mental health. We do not need to spend too much time on serious fitness training or sporty activity but relatively short bursts of vigorous exercise and generally being active and walking a lot are the best things to do, which means that projects such as SPARCOLL, the Scottish Physical Activity Research Collaboration and its Walking for Wellbeing in the West (of Scotland), of which OPENspace is a lead partner, have a lot to offer. You can find out more at <http://www.sparcoll.org.uk/>.

Mental health issues are also getting more serious among the population and the evidence for green and natural areas helping to reduce these is increasing. One aspect of concern is that since green spaces in urban areas are not equally distributed not everyone can obtain the same

level of benefits. This is especially the case for people living in deprived areas where levels of mental health problems can also be high. Research OPENspace and others into the levels of stress among unemployed people in deprived areas in Dundee tested using the hormone cortisol as a marker found statistically significant relationships between higher stress levels and lower amounts of green space in the residential neighbourhoods. A current project is looking at levels of psychological wellbeing associated with Forestry Commission Scotland funded woodlands in and around towns (WIAT). Find out more here:

http://www.phr.nihr.ac.uk/funded_projects/10_3005_18.asp

A further aspect of the problem of stress more generally has recently received a good deal of attention and that is linked to the next aspect. Technology and the networked society. Since 2004 the degree of networking the power of wifi and the spread of high speed broadband has increased connectivity enormously and hand held smartphones and other devices make us connected and mobile almost everywhere and all the time. Facebook had only just been launched in 2004 and is now already passé among the younger generation. However, this connectivity has positive effects in terms of speeding up social planning and arranging activities, especially among single young people who are members of virtual communities and engage in active sports and leisure. The word gets around very fast about what is cool and what is not. Rating websites such as Tripadvisor wield enormous power.

Technology is not just about the internet but there are recreational activities needing increasingly sophisticated and expensive equipment offering adrenaline activities. Mountain biking goes from strength to strength but things like wakeboarding which have become commercial ventures in recent years and were not really on the radar a few years ago as mass participation activities.

Being connected all the time has its downside. In September 2013 the Times carried an article which claimed that we are suffering an “epidemic of tiredness” resulting from over-stimulation and information overload – as a result of being hooked into our technology. This is known as hyper arousal or, according to Dr Ramlakhan of the London Hospital, we are “Tired but wired” (The Times 28/9/13, Ramlakhan, 2013). Switching off and going into landscapes which offer a different kind of stimulation – such as green or natural areas – can help us to wind down and overcome this. This problem is also raising interest in the therapeutic approach known as “Mindfulness” and how this can be used in natural landscapes (Ambrose-Oji 2013)

Immigration. In 2004, while immigration had of course been happening for several decades, the opening of the EU to the east had not taken place and the enormous influx of labour immigration (much of it seasonal) had not taken place. The Polish plumber or builder, the Latvian hotel receptionist and the Slovakian fruit picker had not become ubiquitous figures. The most recent census showed that, as anticipated in the foresight review, demographic growth in the UK has been from immigration and not natural growth from a positive birth rate. Something was known about the different ways in which people from ethnic

minorities used or did not use countryside or green spaces but it took a project funded by CABESpace which we did to focus on this in more depth. This showed indeed that immigrants and ethnic minority people in deprived urban areas use green areas less and in some cases, such as young girls from certain Muslim communities, hardly go out of doors at all and certainly not unaccompanied by male family members. Concerns about low Vitamin D levels in such communities as a result of low exposure to sunlight have also emerged recently. The work on use of green spaces by ethnic minorities can be found here:

http://www.openspace.eca.ac.uk/pdf/appendix/OPENspacewebsite_APPENDIX_F_resource_1.pdf

The effects of the recession. In 2004 we were, as noted in the introduction, riding the wave of a long and supposedly unprecedented economic boom, only later revealed to have been funded by massive borrowing by us all. The subsequent crash was a wake-up call and seriously affected our self confidence. The devaluation of the pound and lack of money made holiday travel abroad more expensive or unaffordable, despite the continuing growth of Ryanair, Wizzair and Easyjet. Thus, in straightened times cheaper recreation closer to home became more attractive as did the “staycation”, much to the relief of hard pressed tourism operators. The word “staycation” seems to have been coined in around 2003 but became a buzzword in 2008 as the crash hit. Now, as the economy recovers it seems our spending power is still not increasing and discretionary spending is still under pressure. Competition for the spare cash is fierce in the market place with hi-tech gadgets and indoor game consoles vying for attention and youngsters preferring such activity over going out to play.

Of course the effects of the national debt are felt in the severe cutbacks in public spending, with a lot less money available to manage and maintain green areas. This is likely to affect use by some groups if parks or woodlands start to feel less looked after and unwelcoming, as this has a big effect on levels of use, for example by older people or women.

Increased risk aversion. This was seen as a factor affecting how many people use green areas – or do not use them. Children’s lack of exercise and lower use of the outdoors is not just a factor of alternative indoor electronic attractions but also in the unwillingness of many parents to let the children out to play by themselves. This has been highlighted very effectively by Richard Louv in his book “The last child in the woods” (Louv, 2005). It has not been helped by what many see as undue risk aversion by public authorities in providing interesting and challenging play environments which contain a degree of acceptable risk. The Forestry Commission has made an attempt to redress this (see Forestry commission England at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-play>) while research at OPENspace for Natural England into teenagers and their use of green spaces shows that this neglected group can gain a lot from “Wild adventure space”: see here for more details http://www.openspace.eca.ac.uk/pdf/appendix/OPENspacewebsite_APPENDIX_F_resource_4.pdf. In fact children need to learn about how to deal with different risks as an essential part of their physical and emotional development and

cocooning them or restricting them to ultra-safe and boring standard play grounds can be positively harmful.

Summary and Conclusions

This short paper has only been able to scratch the surface of the whole range of issues affecting drivers and motivations for undertaking – or avoiding – outdoor recreation. It is clear a complex subject and many other factors which featured in the 2004 foresight study could have been discussed. What is clear is that while trying to make predictions is very difficult – especially about the future (to paraphrase Niels Bohr) the whole area of outdoor recreation is driven by many competing yet interconnected factors – and it just keeps on getting more complicated. Constant feedback from visitor surveys, trend spotting, policy development as well as market-driven, demand-led management, backed up by serious applied research is essential to ensure that supply meets demand and that limited resources are put to the best use.



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Youth Participation in Outdoor Recreation

Catherine Miles, Snowdonia-Active

The benefits of youth participation in outdoor recreation are widely acknowledged, leading to the development of numerous youth engagement programmes across the UK. Yet the dissociation of young people and nature is still a pertinent issue in society today. Connecting youth with the outdoors has critical implications for the health of future generations and the preservation of unique landscapes, this article explores how.

The Learning Outside the Classroom manifesto launched by the government in 2006 states that the advantages to getting outside include increased self-esteem, better communication skills, more

effective decision making and reduce discipline and behavioral issues. There is vast body of research to support these claims making it very difficult to dispute the beneficial effects of nature. Prominent figures in this area of research are Rachel and Stephen Kaplan who have written extensively on the benefits associated with a person's connection to nature concluding they are associated with positive biological, mental, social, environmental and economic outcomes. Today a substantial body of literature exists from a range of sources supporting the benefits of outside time.

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- ² R.Kaplan & S.Kaplan, (1989), The Experience of Nature: A Psychological Perspective. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York.
- ³ The Outdoor Foundation (2010), Special Report on Youth: The next generation of outdoor champions.
- ⁴ Ofsted (2004), Outdoor Education: Aspects of Good Practice.
- ⁵ The Outward Bound Trust (2009), Social Impact Report

The period of youth represent a critical transition in the life span where growth and identify formation happen at a tremendous pace. Many adolescents are exposed to pressures to engage in high risk behavior during this period. Encouraging young people to engage in constructive activities such as outdoor recreation during adolescence has been shown to have critical implications for personal, social and emotional development .

Acknowledging the importance of outside time, numerous programmes in the UK operate with the aim of increasing youth participation in outdoor recreation. Young people become involved in outdoor recreation through a variety of different contexts.

Local Education Authority centres offer young people the opportunity to engage in outdoor activities who may not otherwise even have the chance to experience the countryside. In 2004 Ofsted identified in the report 'Outdoor Education – Aspects of Good Practice' , that: "Outdoor education gives depth to the curriculum and makes an important contribution to students' physical, personal and social education".

The Outward Bound Trust is possibly one of the most well-known outdoor adventure programmes in the UK and overseas. Outward Bound inspires young people to learn about themselves using outdoor activities as a medium for development. A recent report commissioned by The Outward Bound Trust reports that 93% of teachers agree that Outward Bound influences their pupils' personal development .

Some youth engagement programmes such as the John Muir Award place greater emphasis on environment and conservation. The John Muir award encourages awareness and responsibility for the natural environment through fun, adventure and exploration. Also, with a focus on the environment, the National Trust have delivered over a 100 programmes of educational sessions across England and Wales enabling hands-on learning through outdoor activities based around the national curriculum as part of their Guardianship Scheme.

Outdoor education has a key role to play in social inclusion as recognised by The Challenge Network and Duke of Edinburgh which both aim to build a more integrated society whilst offering a chance to learn new skills. These charities provide a balanced programme of activities that develop the whole person. An element of outdoor adventurous activity is embedded in each of these programmes to enable young people to experience the personal and team challenges outdoor recreation can offer.

A unique programme to north Wales is The Outdoor Partnership which focuses on widening access to outdoor recreation, in particular through the development of outdoor clubs for young people. Over the last eight years the partnership has developed 55 community based outdoor clubs, facilitated opportunities for volunteering, mentoring, National Governing Body training and assessment and

more recently is developing pathways to employment in the outdoor sector.

With inspiring success stories and a vast range of organisations functioning to ensure young people are provided with opportunities to experience outdoor recreation, why is there still concern that young people in the UK are not getting enough outside time?

A recent study commissioned by the RSPB suggests that only 1 in 5 children (8-12 years old) are 'connected to nature' which the RSPB defines as enjoying nature, having empathy for creatures, experiencing a sense of oneness whilst in nature and recognising a sense of responsibility for nature. The children of today are tomorrow's adults, raising thoughts on what more can be done to increase this statistic.

In his influential book, *The Last Child in the Woods*⁷, Richard Louv presents a compelling case on how the staggering divide between young people and the outdoors is contributing to the rise in childhood trends such as obesity, attention disorders and depression. In his book, Louv coins the term 'nature-deficit disorder' which describes "the human cost of alienation from nature among them: diminished use of senses, attention difficulties and higher emotional and physical illness".

Adding to concerns, one in three Local Authority outdoor education centres are now facing closure, meaning more young people could be denied the potential for life changing experiences through outdoor education.

Inspiring young people to spend time outdoors is not only critical to the health of future generations but also the health of the natural environment which needs the support and protection of individuals with strong connection to the outdoors. Today's youth are tomorrow's adult enthusiasts and conservationists but sadly less young people are heading outside each year, raising the question of what can be done to increase opportunities for young people to get outside and get active.

As a response to 'Natural Childhood'⁸, a report commissioned by the National Trust, a two month enquiry took evidence from leading experts and the public looking at how to reconnect young people to the natural world. Out of this debate sprung The Wild Network , uniting organisations and individuals who are passionate about the outdoors. The Wild Network, launched in 2013 exists to promote and support connection with nature and wildness in children and young people. A joined up approach from those who champion the wonders of being outside can only been seen as a step in the right direction and maybe, given adequate governmental support we do have hope of seeing a generational shift where spending time outside becomes the norm.

References

⁶ RSPB (2013), Connecting with Nature.

⁷ R.Louv (2005), *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our children from nature-deficit disorder*. Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books.

⁸ National Trust (2012), *Natural Childhood*.

⁹ The Wild Network www.projectwildthing.com

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South Yorkshire Community Woodlands

Kelly Brindley, Forestry Commission

Background

The South Yorkshire Community Woodlands are former colliery sites which have been transformed within the heart of the local communities into well used and loved Community Woodlands. The Sites are owned by the Land Trust and managed by the Forestry Commission. Part of the management is to engage with the local communities to increase positive site usage and to encourage people to take pride in their local sites. The Community Woodlands range in size from 37 to 100 hectares. The woodlands encourage people to visit for walking, cycling, horse riding and spotting the variety of wildlife the site has to offer. As the sites are often situated in the heart of the local communities, these sites give us a great opportunity to provide a wide range of activities to increase activity levels, both physical health and mental health and learning new skills.

The network of paths allow good access to walking routes, for a variety of abilities, and as they were former colliery sites they offer good hills and views across the landscape. On the sites the Rangers run a variety of programmes, which all increase mental and physical health. There are weekly conservation volunteer events that take place on the sites and other activities include: health walks; buggy walks aimed at young parents and; Nordic walking. All of the groups that take part in activities on site add a great value to the site and create a sense of local ownership. We believe the community woodlands, like many other green spaces and woodlands have a lot to offer to increase individual's activity levels and improve their mental health. On the majority of sites there are permanent orienteering markers set up, which are available for groups to use.

Consultation with local people is important: Forestry Commission staff talk to people to find out what they would like on their sites; regularly run consultation events; and on some sites there are local 'friends' groups.



Programmes

Three programmes have been run, with great success.

Deaf Conservation Group

The deaf conservation group has been taking place for the last 4 years. The deaf group was set up with partnership working between the Forestry Commission, Sue Ryder care and the Doncaster MBC sensory team. It was initially set up to provide the deaf community an opportunity to access the woodlands in a way in which they would feel safe and happy. We like to encourage socially isolated groups to have the opportunity to come out on site and take part in site tasks. The group had very little confidence about coming out onto site on the first session we ran. With a great interpreter, building up tasks slowly, cups of tea and learning sign language the group flourished. Their confidence grew, their conservation skills increased and their physical and mental health improved. The deaf conservation group has been a great group to work with and see develop and we have learnt a lot too about working with the group.

Nordic walking programmes

Nordic walking programmes have also proved to be popular. Nordic walking is a great all over body exercise that can suit a variety of ages and fitness levels. It can increase fitness levels, confidence, help with losing weight, posture etc.

Important things we have learnt when delivering activities have included to listen to people. Find out what their capabilities are and what their goals are. Start off slowly – don't rush people into things and let people work at their own pace. A cuppa and a biscuit (a healthy one of course) are such an important part to the group. The social aspect to the groups is really important to people too.

Right up Our Street

Another key achievement has been the inclusion of Bentley Community Woodlands in an Arts Council England funded project, Right Up Our Street (RUOS). This project which falls within the Creative People and Places initiative is all about Doncaster people choosing, making, seeing and sharing brilliant cultural ideas and encompasses poetry to performance, film to radio, sculpture to design, and technology to physical activity in exciting and surprising ways.

As part of this project, RUOS commissioned a real life, real time reality game called Hand in Hand, to be played over 5 locations over 5 days. Locations included Cusworth Hall, a beautiful grade 1 listed Georgian mansion, Brodsworth Hall, an English Heritage Victorian country house and Bentley Community Woodlands, a Forestry Commission managed site on what was the industrial and inaccessible slagheap for Bentley Colliery! For our community woodland to be put in the

same bracket as these two key regional properties was incredibly exciting and a big achievement for the team as it was the Community Woodland Ranger who built up the partnership with the RUOS team and persuaded them as to the benefits of including the site in their project.

The game was billed as "A Tale of Tragedy, Murder and Love" and involved participants (who were members of the public who had signed up to play) visiting the different locations, interacting with actors and finding clues - at Bentley Woodlands we hosted a tepee dwelling, fortune telling eco warrior! Around 200 people took part over two consecutive weekends, with everyone who had played the game invited to a wedding at Brodsworth Hall and the final big reveal of the story! The event was extremely popular and well received.

Partnering on an initiative like this is mutually beneficial as it helps bring new visitors to our community woodland as well as helping new people engage with the arts in an environment where they feel comfortable so it is something we would be keen to repeat if the opportunity were to arise again.



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Enabling BME community engagement in outdoor recreation

Clare Parsons, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

Introduction

The article aims to share some of Brecon Beacons National Park Authority's experience of enabling BME Communities to access, enjoy and benefit from the National Park and wider outdoor environment.

Brecon Beacons National Park

Brecon Beacons National Park extends over 500 square miles of outstanding landscape, including Pen y Fan- the highest peak in southern Britain. There are 33,000 residents within the Park, and substantial larger populations just to the south of the boundary in the south Wales Valleys. The nearest substantial BME populations are found in the cities of Newport, Swansea and Cardiff, each approximately 20 miles south of the Park boundary.

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

National Park Authorities have two statutory purposes and a statutory duty:

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Parks
- to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park

- seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities

The three Welsh NPAs have agreed a Social Inclusion Strategy & Action Plan. Each NPA has locally specific actions within a two year Action Plan:

<http://www.beacons-mpa.gov.uk/the-authority/Document%20Library/social-inclusion-and-child-poverty-action-plans>

2 of the 4 aims in the strategy are particularly relevant to the engagement of BME communities:

- NPAs promote inclusive opportunities for the understanding and sustainable enjoyment of the special qualities of the Parks for the people of Wales and beyond.
- NPAs contribute to the eradication of Child Poverty in Wales (reducing inequalities in participation)

How does BBNPA do this work with BME communities?

Partnership -through the Mosaic projects with Campaign for National Parks, other NPAs and Youth Hostels Association. Over the Mosaic projects BBNPA has benefited from the dual approach:

- Recruiting and developing BME Champions who act as trusted intermediaries and advocates for National Parks

- Seeking feedback from programme participants to inform organisational change. Feedback direct from BME community representatives has been invaluable in informing NPA actions. These have included changing images in information materials, training for staff & Members, NPA staff attending BME events in the south Wales cities, developing links between BME representatives and tourism businesses in the Park

Pump-priming: BBNPA has invested in a range of programmes-under the umbrella “Cross Park Boundaries” (supported by Countryside Council for Wales and Natural Resources Wales) to enable excluded communities to benefit from the Park. These have invested resources in working with local community amateurs to increase their capacity to access the National Park to meet their groups’ needs. Work has included introductory visits and training days for paid and voluntary community group leaders and activists, working with excluded communities including: Learning disabilities, older people, carers, young carers, BME. Many groups have included a combination of interests eg BME young people.

At the request of participants, BBNPA has developed sample itineraries which are “menus” for a visit for different groups and to a range of sites- shortcutting the need for groups and families to negotiate unfamiliar territory to plan a first visit. There is evidence that many groups subsequently make return visits “under their own steam”, or with limited input from NPA staff. Crossing Park Boundaries projects have focused on activities popular with a range of new countryside users, including developing Geocaching. Geocaching has proved popular across the age ranges, including young people (11-25 years) and older peoples’ groups. BME Champions advise that following initial visits and training, the link to the National Park visitor centre staff for 1:1 advice by telephone, supplemented by access to the National Park website has proved crucial.

Prioritising interventions: Many of the actual and perceptual barriers highlighted by BME communities are not BME specific but apply equally to other urban communities and have been raised in consultations on BBNPA’s Social Inclusion Strategy & Action Plan. First amongst these is transport. Work has focused on enabling communities to organise transport, understanding National Park geography and provision of a “Fairplay” fund to provide subsidised transport for an initial visit. The fund has been taken up by BME community groups and by schools with substantial BME populations.

What evidence is there of outcomes: increasing BME visitors to BBNP? NPA staff report anecdotal evidence of increasing numbers of BME visitors at different visitor locations across the National Park.

BBNPA undertakes an annual survey of visitors to the National Park visitor centre at Libanus near Brecon. Over 3 years BME visitors as a percentage of visitors has increased: 2010 (6%) 2011 (8%) 2012 (13%)

BBNPA’s Top 10 tips for enabling BME access to the Countryside:

1. Work with trusted intermediaries/champions/ advocates - they are invaluable and know their group best- be prepared to amend to their feedback (eg. a short walk means different things to different people)
2. Don’t worry (too much) about the weather
3. Invest in developing relationships between key staff & community representatives
4. No “one size fits all”: clearly not all BME groups are the same- some want a challenging high level walk/ cycle, other a 1km walk- it’s not always who you think!
5. Look for similarities- many BME groups have really valued visiting a landscape like their home country- mountains and lakes have been particularly popular.
6. Look for similarities- everyone wants their group to have a good day out- no or minor tweaks may be all that is needed for BME visitors; eg. preplanning about food or venue
7. Be aware of the differences : e.g. - we’ve found that in most (not all) cases BME groups value good food as essential to a good day a out (a cheese sandwich just doesn’t cut it).
8. Think about your provision’s USP. National Parks are safe and inspirational. Brecon Beacons NP isn’t the nearest countryside for our BME visitors. However many visitors from cities have mentioned it feels safe and/ or inspirational- sometimes inspiring behaviour change eg one Mosaic Champion taking up cycling again after 20 years.
9. Be aware of cultural comprehension differences. E.g. on one visit hedgelaying meant nothing when the group were not familiar with hedges.
10. Above all remember participants are usually at leisure and/or volunteers- make the visit something they would like to repeat & share- enjoyable/ challenging-above all FUN.



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Britain on Foot™ - Getting Britain Active Outdoors

Paddy Harrop, Forestry Commission

Based on the keynote presentation by Andrew Denton, Outdoor Industries Association

1. What's it about?

Britain on Foot, created by the Outdoor Industries Association, is a campaign to inspire our nation to encourage more people in Britain to get active outdoors and aims to support the many hundreds of local, regional and national Outdoor initiatives already in place.

2. Background

The UK has very high levels of inactivity and as is the least active country in Europe with 25% of the population classified as Obese. Getting active outdoors just five times a week reduces the risk of an early death and lowers the risk of premature cancers, cardio disease and Type 2 diabetes, and increases mental wellbeing.

Inactivity is the world's fourth largest killer accounting for around 16% of all deaths just 29% of men and 29% of women achieve their target levels of minimum physical activity. This costs the NHS an estimates £8.2 Billion a year.

Traditional gym based sports activity has had little impact on levels of activity; the outdoors provides a space where keeping fit and healthy can be a fun, exciting life-changing experience.

The Outdoor economy is worth £20 billion, represents 1.65% of the UK's GDP and is a major part of the GB tourism market -the 6th largest industry in Britain.

Britain on Foot is a partnership between a wide range of organizations including manufacturers, retailers, activity providers, sport and recreation organisations and land managers.

3. The Campaign

The campaign was launched at the Houses of Parliament in September 2012. It is a simple call to action 'to get Britain active outdoors supported by a logo and web site and hundreds of partners. As well as GB logo Welsh

and Scottish variants are also available to reflect country based activity and programmes

The Britain on Foot™ website acts as an exciting, interactive and educational online community providing links to many fantastic activities and information on how to take part. Activities offered include: walking, cycling, geocaching, climbing, running and adventure racing. The site allows people to make recommendations, share experiences and keep updated on absolutely everything 'outdoors'.

The web pages also provide health links packed full of interesting, inspiring and educational information including: top weight losing tips; national stats and facts, it's all on-hand to encourage people to get out there and enjoy the outdoors.

The Outdoors for All Working Group conference, held at the Wetland Centre in London in November 2013 brought together a wide range of experts and organizations to discuss how the outdoors can provide natural solutions for tackling health inequalities. Delivery of the campaign is all about the partners who are running programmes using the Britain on Foot™ logo. Examples include use of the campaign in:

- hfholidays in advertising and website;
- Camping and Caravanning Club website;
- Berghaus catalogue;
- feature in the Rohan catalogue;

- Ordnance Survey first aid kit give-away;
- Keswick Mountain Festival activity programme;
- Ramblers May walking campaign.

4. Recognition

The campaign has already had widespread recognition, from partners and wider outdoor industry and also, importantly from politicians: Dr Dan Poulter, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health "This government recognises the enormous value that outdoor activity has for the physical and mental well-being of the nation. Getting outdoors and being active is an easy, low cost way of meeting the Chief Medical Officers' guidelines on physical activity – something that everyone can do. It benefits individuals and the health of local communities."

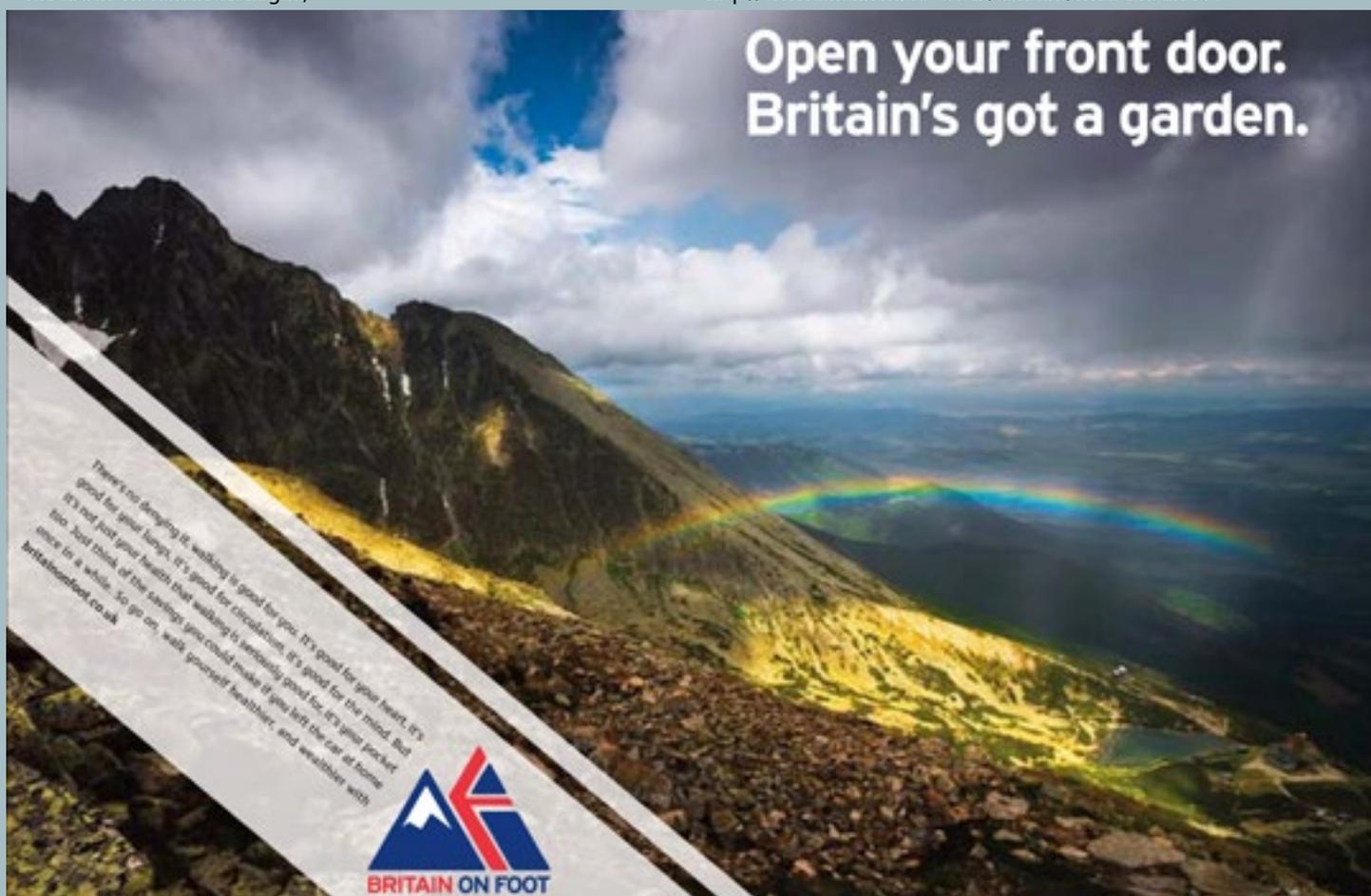
Hugh Robertson – Minister for Sport, Tourism and Olympic Legacy "My hon. Friend the Member for Macclesfield (David Rutley) will be pleased to hear that the DCMS is entirely supportive of the aims of the Britain on Foot campaign, as they align with increasing activity in the great outdoors and the subsequent benefit for tourism businesses."

5. Next Steps

Britain on Foot™ continues to go from strength to strength and welcome more partners from across all aspects of the outdoor industry and programmes to increase physical activity outdoors.

To get involved visit

<http://www.britainonfoot.co.uk/content/what-britain-foot>



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Using information and technology to enable participation in outdoor recreation

Amanda Searle, Walk Unlimited

The outdoor recreation audience generally divide into two groups: those who have a desire to get out and enjoy the outdoors but lack the motivation, and those who are motivated, and already 'out there' but are looking for further information and opportunities to enhance their experience.

The question is how can we best use technology to motivate and enable these two different audiences to participate fully in outdoor recreation?

All Change!

Technology and the web in particular have changed significantly in recent years. Where once people accessed the web via their desktop PC at home or at work, things have changed. Accessing information is now more mobile, more exciting and from a providers point of view more challenging.

Smart phones and tablets have brought about a revolution – today 89% of people interact with online content while out and about. (Nat. Statistics UK Sept. 2013). If we want to engage with the outdoor market we need to consider mobile technology – it is made for the outdoors!

Current technology is amazing – offering fabulous options to inspire inform and motivate - but how do we make sure we get it right?

Choosing the right technology

The temptation to jump on the current technology bandwagon is strong. How many times have we heard "Let's have an app"?

But of course just because there is some new technology that doesn't mean it is right for what you want to do. Some of the biggest mistakes happen when the form of technology is chosen first without considering if it is appropriate. Often the needs of the intended audience become lost, and content is shoehorned into a space not suitable for it and where it can't be seen to its full advantage.

The two most common outcomes are text-heavy misguided products – or sparkingly clever designs that mask the information on the site, leaving your users thinking "It looks great but what does it do" or conversely "There's a ton of information here, lots of buttons but I can't find anything I want".

To help you get this right start by thinking about what your users will be doing – are they primarily completing a task or are they accessing information?

Web or app?

When considering your mobile options it is important to understand your audience, how, where, and when do they access your content or service, and what do you want to achieve – what is the purpose of what you are delivering.

An app is best suited to perform a specific function. It helps a user complete tasks. Simple customer services, e-commerce and database searches may be best delivered by an app. Apps also work well for tracking, recording and motivating. If you are looking to simply redeliver your website content then an app is not for you.

If you decide on an app then research what devices your target market use. Different demographics use different devices and in different ways. For example although there are more android users Iphone users purchase more apps.

There are different types of apps – the web app and the native app. The native app is dependent upon platform – it offers a very personal experience – but you will need a native app for each platform, which increases costs. A web app experience may not give as an effective user experience but it will be available to all users irrespective of device.

Do you really need an app if you have a website? If you want users to have the best possible experience of your website on their mobile device, then your answer is to make your website a responsive or adaptive design, both types are accessible on mobile devices.

Changing an existing website to be fully responsive can be expensive and may require a rebuild. It will mean however that your website will fluidly change and respond to fit any screen or device size giving a tailored experience for the user. A less expensive option may be to choose to develop an adaptive site, which will target a set of specific devices that your target market uses. This will be a less expensive and will not fulfil everyone's needs perfectly but it can be relatively simple to adapt an older site if budget is an issue.

The right technology for the right project.

It probably goes without saying that those looking for a tracking device that will enable users to record or follow a route whilst on the go should create an app. You will need a native app, as it will be dependent upon the device's GPS system. Incorporating a GPS is excellent for providing prompts to points of interest in the locality as the user passes through.

It may be that the content you want to promote is a simple database, a series of queries and results. Perhaps you have some ongoing walk events or volunteering schedule that people access on a regular basis. Rather than the user accessing the information via a browser on a mobile device, a much quicker solution would be to have an event app. You can also work in event reminder alerts; this type of information would work on a universal app where the system does not rely any special feature of the device.

If you are looking to motivate and inspire a new or reluctant audience you need a different product. Don't just rely on text and lists; the use of lifestyle and landscape photography is invaluable. For example, if you are persuading someone to give rock climbing a go you will need more than words and a database of local climbing centres. You need to seduce through imagery before the reluctant participant will be persuaded to find venues. A website is probably the right solution here, whether an adaptive or responsive depends on the information you want it to present.

If you are looking to promote a particular location with information but no interactive functionality then an adaptive website may be most suitable. However if you are looking to create a model that both inspires the user to get up and go and offers functionality to inform them about the area or venue when they are there then think responsive.

Using information and technology to enable participation in outdoor recreation depends on many criteria but the first things to consider are audience, purpose and budget.

There is great new technology available. As long as you think carefully about what you want it to do, who will be using it and how they behave. The options for engaging with the outdoor market through technology have never been better – because they can take your product with them!



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Welcoming Spaces on the Public Forest Estate. Mountain biking & other Cycling opportunities – Dalby Forest.

Alan Eves, Forestry Commission England

1.0 Forestry Commission

Forestry Commission England is the Government Agency responsible for managing 253,000 ha of forests and associated land in England with core objectives to; protect, improve and expand our woodland assets.

The Public Forest Estate is the largest single woodland resource in England producing 1.4 million cubic metres of timber per year (60% of England's softwood timber production) and welcomes 40 million visitors per annum.

Much of the Estate sits within important designated landscapes; 31% in National Parks and 14% in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The forests play an important role in sustaining the local economy and access opportunities for communities that improve quality of life, health and learning.

References

Allegra Strategies (2010) Allegra Project Velo UK Cycling Market Report, Strategic Analysis report, Allegra Strategies Limited.

Forestry Commission, 'Dalby Forest Project – Boosting Sustainable Tourism in Yorkshire'

2.0 Forest Recreation Centres – good for active outdoor recreation, good for tourism, good for the economy.

Adventure Tourism has seen a rapid growth in the 1990s and 2000s with an estimated 35% of the UK population taking part in an adventure tourism trip.

The provision of welcoming spaces that encourage people to engage in active pursuits provides benefits for health and well being, economic growth and adds vibrancy to rural communities.

In the UK mountain biking is playing an increasingly important role in this sector, partly as a result of the growth of mountain bike trail centres over the last 20 years.

3.0 Cycling

Cycling is now the biggest sporting goods market in the world in terms of revenue. * In the UK Allegra Strategies estimate that by 2015, the value of the market will exceed £3 billion.

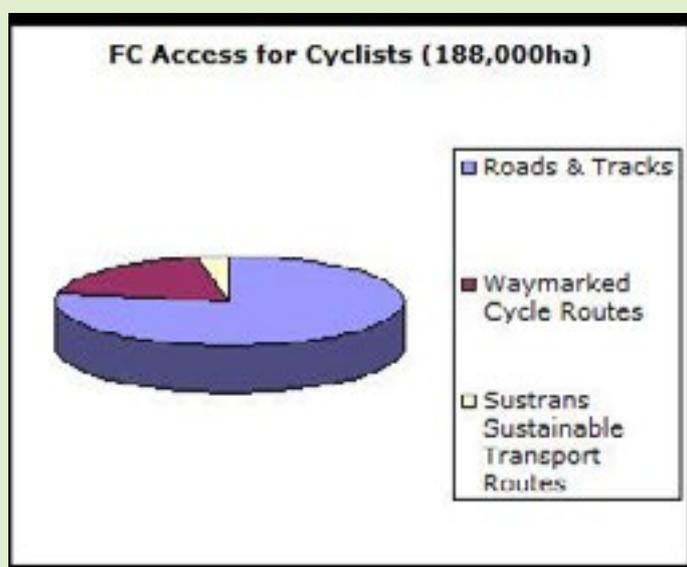


Fig. 1. Permissive cycle access on the Public Forest Estate in England

3.1 Dalby Forest.

Dalby Forest lies within the southern part of the North York Moors National Park. The 3597 ha woodland (72% conifer, 12% broadleaf, 16% open land) has 4 separate Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 83 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 600 other sites of cultural heritage interest.

Dalby and the adjoining estate make up the largest single resource of woodlands and forests in Yorkshire. Its size and distribution means that it is able to provide a unique range of benefits.

Forestry Commission England has been proactively managing mountain biking on the Public Forest Estate from the late 1980s with purpose built cycling trails developed from the mid 1990s. Improvements in bicycle technology have made off-road cycling accessible and enjoyable to more people. New facilities and events have helped to boost first time and off peak visitor numbers – cyclists are less weather and school holiday dependant than our family visitor base.

With an increasing provision of easy to follow, traffic free, purpose built trails that do not require map reading skills, presented alongside other facilities such as bike hire, cafes and picnic areas, there has been a rise in the number of cycling visits over the last 10 years.

Partnerships with the Cycling Tourist Club and British Cycling to deliver events including the MTB World Cup and the Tour of Britain, have further raised the profile of cycling.



4.0 Dalby Mountain Bike Trails - 'Build it and they will come'.

The Forest Centre development at Dalby demonstrates that investment in easy to use facilities attracts new participants to mountain biking in Forest Environments.

4.1. Project development

Although prior to 2003 Dalby was relatively undeveloped in terms of recreation provision, it was a popular visitor destination. There were a range of walking trails, a small visitor centre in a converted barn and sporadic refreshment offer with limited parking. As off road cycling began to rise in popularity, the trail network that had developed using

References

NPD Group <https://www.npd.com>

Peace, R. (2011) 'Cycling is now number one global sports market' <http://www.bikeradar.com/news/article/cycling-is-now-number-one-global-sports-market-31978/>

* Cycling is now the biggest sporting goods market in the world in terms of revenue. According to a survey by multinational market research company NPD Group.

Global sales totalled nearly €3 billion in 2010 and 137 million bicycles were sold. Cycling accounted for 15 percent of all sporting goods revenue

Sparks J, (2011) 'Centres of Attention' Cycle, CTC, UK.

existing paths and rides, began to suffer severe erosion and damage. Regional strategic planning outlined economic development as a high priority for Yorkshire and the Humber. Focusing on the distinct character of Dalby forest and the special qualities of the National Park, the Forestry Commission and partners saw an opportunity to support economic regeneration and encourage active outdoor recreation.

The project aimed to increase visitors to the area throughout the year by providing a mix of facilities, promote active recreation, support the local economy and increase understanding of environmental sustainability and forestry.

A £4.3 million investment between 2003 & 2007 has resulted in a remarkable transformation. With an attractively refurbished courtyard with offices, workshops, a permanent home for cycle hire and cycle wash facility, sustainably constructed visitor centre, and a vast network of cycle trails, Dalby Forest is proving to be a valuable asset in the region, giving the local economy a much needed boost by drawing in tourists from far and wide.

The 55km MTB of sustainably cycle trails built to IMBA (International Mountain Biking Association) standards provide access to an outstanding 'Rigg and Dale' landscape - valleys, upland, streams and a mix of broadleaf and pine forest. Dalby Forest is one of the most visited outdoor attractions in Yorkshire with over 400,000 visits a year and a centre of excellence for mountain biking in England.

4.2. Outcomes

The project has stimulated partnerships with the private sector - mountain bike hire and café, various small businesses and a new restaurant – ensuring the long term sustainable use of the forest with partner organisations.

- Visit numbers increased from 300,000 to 400,000 per annum.
- 20 jobs created and 70 volunteers deployed annually on the project.
- Hosted MTB world Cup in 2009 and 2010 (Voted best world venue by the UCI in 2009) and The Tour of Britain stage finish in 2008.
- Cycling visits have increased to 30% of visits compared to 7% in the year 2000.
- Trail development and maintenance is supported by SingletrAction, a voluntary group based in Yorkshire.
- CTC (UK largest cycling charity) work with the local bike business Pace to run the cycle hire shop and events programme
- It is estimated that £2.2 million will be generated within the economy per annum as a result of the Dalby Forest project creating up to 41.52 full time equivalent jobs, the majority within the local area.

5.0 2007 – 2014 & beyond.

A high quality Forest Centre providing car parks, walks and cycle trails, offering a range of adventure pursuits and quiet recreation sits at the core for recreation provision at Dalby.

A £1m reconfiguration of the café facilities at the Visitor Centre, new adventure play area, and a multi user trail scheduled for opening in spring 2014 demonstrates continuing investment. Access for all will remain a priority as demonstrated by the development of the Ellerburn multi-user trail. Ongoing partnerships with private businesses and public bodies continue to expand and improve recreational opportunities across the Estate.

The last seven years have seen the introduction of additional facilities such as;

- A beginner's skills park in partnership with CTC.
- A 4km low impact multi user trail providing access to the forest for disabled people.
- A World Cup Mountain Bike Course which provides us with the ability to host a range of cycle competition events on a challenging world class race course
- A new GoApe 'Tree Tops Junior' high ropes course for younger children to compliment the existing challenging ropes & zip slide facility.
- Segways – All terrain Forest Adventure.
- On going cycle trail development and maintenance supported by SingletrAction.



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Dalby Forest Pre-Conference Site Visit - 11 March 2014

Some of the conference attendees were able to attend the pre-conference site visit to nearby Dalby Forest, managed by the Forestry Commission. Participants visited the Bike Barn, Courtyard business

workshops and Lumberjills commemorative sculpture, and saw ongoing work to refurbish Forest Centre and play area and view the new Paths for Communities funded all ability trail.

Stepping Stones to Nature (SS2N) – Empowering Communities to Take Action

Jemma Sharman, Plymouth City Council

Plymouth is the second largest city in the Southwest after Bristol. It is located on the coast and has numerous green spaces for people to use such as parks, nature reserves, allotments, foreshore beaches, community gardens, etc. Around a third of the city is designated green/blue space, and Plymouth also borders three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Dartmoor National Park and a European Marine site. However, local and regional consultation prior to and at the start of the SS2N project identified a range of barriers to accessing green spaces by Plymouth's urban audience. These included negative perceptions and safety fears, as well as a lack of personal confidence. In addition people believed that there was a lack of accessible, good quality green space, particularly in more deprived neighbourhoods, and that a lack of transport and information about where to go prevented them from accessing spaces further afield.

Funded by Natural England through the Access to Nature scheme, the Stepping Stones to Nature (SS2N) partnership project was set up to in response to these issues and aimed to:

- 1) Promote a new approach to accessing natural spaces, putting inclusive participation at its heart, breaking down perceptual barriers
- 2) Facilitate lasting organisational change in the way green space and community and health professionals work together
- 3) Deliver quality improvements that ensure natural spaces are welcoming and accessible
- 4) Deliver a step change in the quality and focus of communications

- 5) Deliver a research programme that will report the benefits and changes evoked by the project.

A steering group of partners oversaw the project governance and consisted of: PCC Planning, Transport, Play and Parks, Dartmoor National Park, National Trust, NHS, Tamar Valley AONB, Plymouth University, BTCV, Groundwork, and the Marine Biological Association.

The project targeted residents in 6 of Plymouth's deprived neighbourhoods, delivering capital improvements to local nature reserves in these areas. It also delivered a range of small scale improvements to parks across the city alongside engagement/educational activities to improve access to the natural environment with school and community groups including mental health, disabilities, young people, young parents and minority groups.

SS2N made physical changes to six nature reserves (nearly 120 hectares) in Plymouth and 1 park. 22 new public rights of way were designated. Access to sites was improved including seating, signage, paths and play features. The SS2N team also created more online resources for people to find out about their local area and green spaces, what was there, how to get to them and what events were going on. The PCC Parks webpages were overhauled and included a new 'events' page. Website views doubled.



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SS2N also aimed to encourage collaborative working between organisations and the facilitation of the use of green spaces for events or activities which included sites within the city as well as further afield. Sixty organisations were regularly involved with SS2N (cross-sector including health, social housing, education, local government, community and voluntary). As a result, many people were engaged with SS2N over the course of the 4 years. The hope was to establish a sense of community cohesion and ownership towards the green spaces. Around 4000 people were directly involved in regular project activities, mainly from more deprived areas through the provision of 197 on-site events/activities and 53 trips to natural spaces further afield. Around 49000 people were indirectly involved in the project; attending an event and/or benefitting from improvements to their local green space, in Plymouth's more deprived areas. SS2N and associated organisations encouraged people to volunteer their time to help maintain the sites or to make improvements



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Getting Outdoors and Closer to Nature

Phillip Broadbent-Yale & Rob Joules, National Trust

With 19 million visits each year to our 300 pay for entry sites and over 30 million visits to our 200 main outdoor places, the outdoors offers unfulfilled potential to make a significant contribution to engagement, access and health priorities.

Our vision for the outdoors and nature is to *'grow the nation's love of nature and the outdoors'*.

We want to get more people enjoying the outdoors and feeling closer to nature. We want to inspire them through wonderful experiences, to care about special places as much as we do. We want them to connect with nature and the wider environment, to enrich their lives and to leave more aware that we all depend on nature as much as nature depends on us.

The National Trust is a charity, owning 254,000 hectares of land, with our outdoors comprising:

- Uplands and lakes

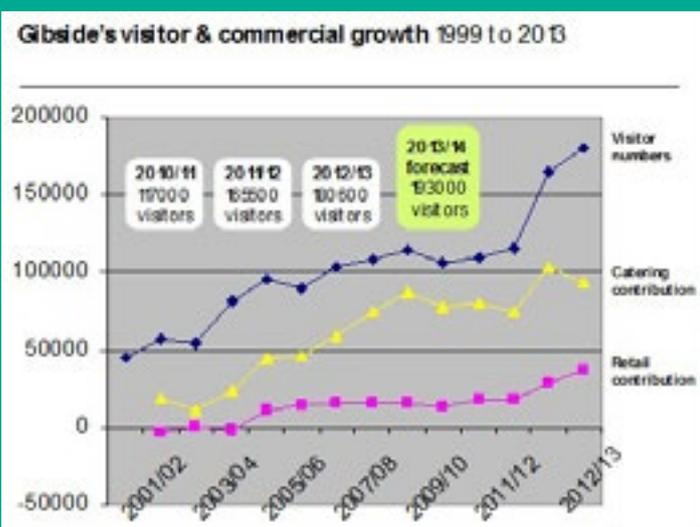
- Coastline - 1,200 kms of the English, Welsh and Northern Ireland Coastline.
- Historic Gardens
- Parks
- Lowland Estates
- and Views beyond our boundaries

Our 5,000 staff are supported by 4 million Members and 70,000 volunteers. Yet we are still known more for our Country Houses than we are for our outdoors sites.

To improve awareness of the outdoors and nature, we have structured a programme around four objectives and work streams:

- Engaging people and raising their awareness and understanding of what the outdoors can offer
- providing inspirational and memorable experiences of nature and the outdoors
- developing commercial enterprises and securing other income streams to help pay for conservation
- inspiring and enabling our staff and volunteers to be the best they can be

The programme is supported by teams within properties, our consultancy and central office. To date properties such as Gibside in Gateshead and Langdale in the Lake District have seen significant benefits in following elements suitable to their places.



Increases in visitors at Gibside from 100k pa to 193k in five years helping deliver an operating contribution increase from £40,000pa to £200,000 in the same period.

This has included '50 Things to do activities', a Sport Partnership officer developing 'Twilight Leagues' and seasonal running events, a community pub at weekends, pop-up weekend camping for 100 pitches, farm tenant offering Yurts for camping, a farmers market and a host of activities linking people with the 'spirit of place' that is Gibside.

At Langdale refurbishment of the car park and improvement of the welcome boards has increased income by 13%. We have purchased the neighbouring pub to act as an engagement location rather than building reception facilities. This is generating a further £150,000 net contribution. The campsite has also seen revenues increase from £163,000 to £214,000pa and Trip Advisor rating move up from 3 to 4.5.

Further initiatives we have been following comprise:

1. 50 Things to do before you are 11 ¾

Restoring the connection between children and the wider outdoors. Getting them off the sofa and away from the television. Activities include climbing a tree, building a den, camping in the wild, catching a crab, cooking on a campfire. It has been extremely popular with over 360 properties participating and visitor enjoyment scores increasing from 71% to 84%

2. Project Wild Thing

The National Trust has supported a film to draw further attention to the disconnect between children and the outdoors. See a preview at www.projectwildthing.org. This had a cinema release in September and is due to be shown on television in May. Over 1,000 partnership organisations have signed up to support the project.

3. Great British Walk

With walking being the most popular outdoor activity we have been raising the profile of beautiful places to walk, with over 4,700 walks at 399 places and over 1,050 downloadable walks at www.nationaltrust.org

4. Sports Partnership with Sport England

We have received a grant from Sport England of £500,000 to increase the number of sporting activities we offer and increase the number of people taking part in regular activity. Sports Development Officers have been successfully established at six places (Bristol, Exeter, Manchester, Shrewsbury, Newcastle, Wakefield). Sport England have been so pleased with the increase in participation from an estimated figure of 10,000 to a recorded figure of 60,000 in 2013. As a result they have agreed a further grant of £1.2 million to extend the programme. The programme will be expanded to a further 6 locations as well as a series of national programmes such as cycling and canoeing. The focus is on:

- Getting more beginners, especially those aged 14-25, to participate in sports like running, cycling and watersports.
- Creating more experiences at our places, with wild running trails, led cycling routes and wild swimming.
- Ensuring that the events are regular and sustainable, building on the requirements of the communities.

5. Parkrun

Parkrun is a free weekly 5km timed run that is delivered by a not for profit organisation called parkrun. It's all about entry level runners from the local community getting together for a run at 9am on a Saturday morning. There are 12 parkruns on NT land at present with several others being planned.

The oldest has been running at Killerton for 3 years now and has amazing support. Approx 200 runners arrive every Saturday at 8.30, have a 5km run, stop in the tea shop (that opens slightly early now) and leave again very happy by 10am. Each week we now have approximately 1700 parkrunners running on NT land at 9am on a Saturday, whatever the weather.

6. Canoeing

As part of the Sport England partnership we have been working with the British Canoe Union to look at offering more opportunities to go paddling. We have appointed a canoe development manager to lead this area of work due to the number of partners involved and higher complexity of delivering experiences (health and safety, equipment,

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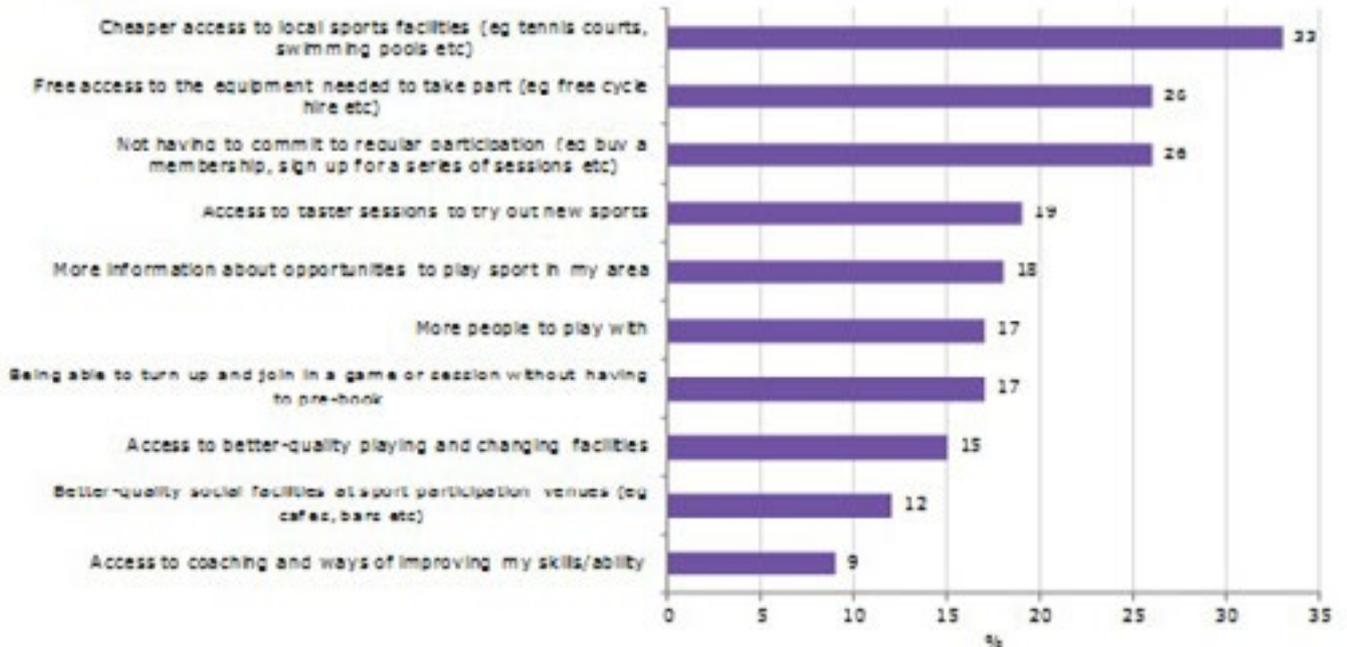
Rob Joules
Sports Partnership Manager
National Trust
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How to increase sports participation

Incentives to playing sport, May 2013

"Which of the following, if any, would make you more likely to take up a new sport, or participate more often in any you already play?"



qualifications etc). The main areas of development are:

- Taster sessions
- Self-hire
- Guided tours
- Events

In 2013 in its first year this new canoeing offer proved to be very successful. As an example at Fell Foot in the Lake District, we trialled canoe hire last summer for only a month at the end of the summer and we had 1033 people participate in 4 weeks.

5. Enterprise

As a charity we need to develop income streams to help pay for conservation and upkeep. Our aim is to increase net income by £2.5 million pa between 2012 and 2020. These include:

- Catering in the outdoors
- Camping and accommodation
 - Working with our farm tenants
 - Car Park charges
 - Partnering with other external providers - It will not be us organising everything.

We have to be mindful of choosing the right locations where these activities can take place. We have zoned properties to identify the main visitor areas and those more sensitive for habitats. Installing board walks and the siting of gates to management movement of visitors around the site are also important.

We are focusing on 200 of our more accessible sites for this initiative from over 650 outdoor properties. It is not everything everywhere. We hope that properties like Gibside, Langdale, Attingham, Carding Mill Valley, Studland, Box Hill and others will show the way for others to follow in encouraging visitors to get Outdoors and Closer to Nature.



Workshop Summaries and Conclusions

Paddy Harrop

CRN Member, Conference Journal Editor

Workshop Summaries

The morning and afternoon workshops provided an opportunity for the conference participants to share experiences and consider future trends and actions.

Workshop 1: Female participation in outdoor recreation – Women with Altitude, Ursula MacPherson

Facilitator – Maggie Still, British Horse Society

Key questions and discussion points from the workshop:

- Do women want to do mountaineering?
- Is mountaineering masculine?
- What next for the project – survey and report
- Raising the profile of women – what are the next objectives, priorities and budgets?
- How can the project work to influence sponsors
- What is the local impact as participants return to local environments?
- Discussion about women's representation in local governance – again the gender balance is predominantly male

Further discussion and resources included: Women's representation in sports such as equestrian – bridleways groups; links to BME participation – Mosaic; Campaign for National Parks <http://www.cnp.org.uk/>; Backbone; Petal Power <http://www.petalpowerbiking.co.uk/>; Women to lead <http://www.unfpa.org/public/publications/pid/378> and; Women on Wheels.

Workshop 2: Youth Participation in Outdoor Recreation, Catherine Miles, Snowdonia Active

Facilitator: James Ogilvie, Forestry Commission

Key questions and discussion points from the workshop:

- Youth covers a wide spectrum of age, there is a need to segment further to understand properly
- Outdoor also covers a wide spectrum including urban and rural areas
- Trend is towards participative events and away from unstructured nature 'roaming' (adrenalin sport versus quieter enjoyment)
- Barriers include risk aversion, which can become an inter-generational issue.
- Need to consider benefit as well as risks of youth engagement in outdoor activities

Further discussion and resources included: Snowdonia Active resources <http://www.snowdonia-active.com/>; Snowdonia-Active research and development www.snowdonia-active.org; the Wild Network <https://projectwildthing.com/thewildnetwork>; Forest Education Initiative <http://www.foresteducation.org/>; Richard Louv's website <http://richardlouv.com/>; Tim Gill's website www.rethinkingchildhood.com; Forestry Commission play resources <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-play>.

Workshop 3: South Yorkshire Community Woodlands, Kelly Brindley, Forestry Commission

Facilitator: Mike McClure, Sport NI

Key questions and discussion points from the workshop:

- Highlighted the importance of building sustainability into projects
- Creating effective partnerships
- Capacity and skill building for local communities
- Having clear guidelines on responsibilities between groups individuals and land owners
- Developing community ownership and management of programmes and managing autonomy of groups and projects

Further resources: Forestry Commission community engagement toolkit <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infid-5xmds8>

Workshop 4: BME Community Engagement in the Outdoor Recreation, Clare Parsons.

Facilitator: Yassar Mustafa, West Midlands Strategic Health Authority

Key questions and discussion points from the workshop:

- BME community is a heterogeneous mix – not one community – strategies have to be multifunctional
- Importance of accessing key gatekeepers with BME communities
- Using Mosaic champions to influence communities
- Important to have vision to empower BME communities for the future

Further discussion and resources: Idea to use Hindu Temples, Mosques and Synagogues to host Eid/ Diwali/ Tree Festivals etc. Practically engage with communities; use social media (Facebook/ Instagram/Twitter) to engage younger people in BME communities; BMC symposium at Haworth Hostel www.thebmc.co.uk



Workshop 5: Using Information and Technology to Enable Participation in Outdoor Recreation, Amanda Searle, walk.co.uk.

Facilitator: Bridgette Hall, Forestry Commission.

Key questions and discussion points from the workshop:

- What sort of technology is advisable for getting people out and participating in recreation? Need to think about the end user/target audience from the start and above everything else. The type of technology can come second.
- Has anyone had good feedback /use from the inclusion of interpretation rather than just information? Most feedback is that interpretation is not as useful, information delivery is more valued.
- What is the value/future of QR codes? OK for a particular audience but fairly limited, even less useful on a leaflet where a URL is easier to use. QR code user experiences are usually disappointing.

Further discussion:

Social media interaction can be viewed as a 'cocktail party'; the trick is not to be seen as the party bore. It is not a one way street of sending out loads of info; it does require a generosity of spirit in some organisations to get it going.

Alternative view that technology just leads to vapid empty experiences and over-reliance on technology rather than real experiences. Response that just because a person is using a mobile

device does not diminish experience; that it is about balance and to get people there in the first place through technology.

Workshop 6: Welcoming Spaces on the Public Forest Estate, Alan Eves, Forestry Commission.

Facilitator: Fiona Barbour, Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland

Key questions and discussion points from the workshop:

- Access for horse riding across Forestry Commission forest road network in Yorkshire.
- Dedicated staff time required to manage funding and audit process is an important investment.
- Pre-emptive planning and site master planning is key, currently considering how Phytopthera ramorum in larch will impact on recreation.
- Need to consider risks liability and emergency access.
- Methods to engage community by inviting new user groups to the site.

Further discussion and resources: information on Dalby Forest <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/dalbyforest> and [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/eng-woodfuel-yandh-dalby-cs.pdf/\\$FILE/eng-woodfuel-yandh-dalby-cs.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/eng-woodfuel-yandh-dalby-cs.pdf/$FILE/eng-woodfuel-yandh-dalby-cs.pdf)



Workshop 7: Stepping Stones to Nature - Empowering People to Take Action, Wendy Thompson, Natural England

What is the relationship between community engagement and outdoor recreation? Is community action an effective way to encourage people to participate outdoors? Alternatively did participation lead to people connecting with the natural environment and build a desire to want to help to look after it? What were the strengths and weaknesses of engaging people in community volunteering? How were people motivated and were there certain personalities, sectors of the population or communities likely to take action to improve their local environment? How/why did communities come together? What happens when the funding ends?

Further discussion: The benefits of engagement with the natural environment through community action were likely to be long-term. The process of facilitating the engagement tended to be resource intensive particularly when working with the more socially deprived parts of the community. A long lead in time is required to build partnerships and gain genuine community buy in. But the benefits are broad and deep. It was very important to provide people with skills to continue the work and to develop and understand the long term plan so that this could continue when the funding and facilitation ended. Evaluation of funded schemes was important to ensure lessons learnt were not forgotten.

Workshop 8: Getting Closer to Nature, Phillip Broadbent Yale and Rob Joules, National Trust

Key Questions and discussion points from the workshop

- Social Aspect is a benefit for outdoor activities
- Links to urban areas – use properties on the edge of cities making people aware of the benefit of public transport
- Partnership is important National Trust working with CTC and licensing a route to link sites together
- Make activities fun not just about sport
- Access for all – surfaced paths are for all users including wheelchairs and prams

Further discussion and resources: sports bodies can look at new ideas on how to draw audiences in, is the course too long, make it quicker and easier to use; volunteers want to help and can supplement resources e.g. Parkrun <http://www.parkrun.org.uk/> and walk leaders; Outdoor Partnership for Wales is funding training for volunteers <http://www.partneriaeth-awyr-agored.co.uk/>; Sport and Recreation Alliance 'The Value of Outdoor Recreation Report' due to be published April 2014 <http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/>.

Conclusions

With 80 participants from across the UK and Ireland including: sports bodies; health organisations; public, private and NGOs sectors; land managers and activity providers; the conference brought together a wealth of experience. The presentations and workshops demonstrated that participation in the outdoors can be increased through targeted programmes that focus on user's needs and through provision of high quality events, facilities and activities. 87% of attendees rated the conference as good or excellent and a key message from one participant was "Really good to catch up with people and developments. More ORN events please!". The Network has actively tried to engage more with members with recent meetings in Scotland and Northern Ireland and the next two events in Wales and the Republic of Ireland should provide more opportunities for involvement. This e-journal also provides a way for people to engage who could not attend the event. The <http://www.outdoorrecreation.org.uk/> web site has details of all our events and journals.

Sustaining outdoor recreation participation programmes is challenging and, with decreasing public funding, it is likely that volunteers and communities of place and interest will become even more important in delivery. Private sector activity providers and businesses also have an important role to play in getting people outdoors, providing them with appropriate skills and equipment and helping to sustain a vibrant outdoor culture in the UK and Ireland. Linking urban outdoor space and the wider countryside was an important theme throughout the conference, making those places close to communities an inspiration and stepping stone to visit the iconic landscapes of our national parks and other protected areas. The outdoors are there for everybody and the Outdoor Recreation Network plays an important role in sharing best practice to ensure future generations can enjoy them without detriment to the special places that have inspired past generation to get out and active.

Contact

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Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE)

Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) is a sample survey of the adult population which provides data on visits to the natural environment at regional and national level. It is being undertaken as part of a weekly in-home omnibus survey. It provides information to support a range of Natural England projects and programmes. The first 4 years of fieldwork have been completed and a 5th year [2013/14] is now underway. **MENE has been commissioned by Natural England, in conjunction with Defra and the Forestry Commission.**

- MENE provides the most comprehensive dataset available on people's use and enjoyment of the natural environment.
- It includes information on visits to the natural environment as well as other ways of enjoying the outdoors such as gardening, watching wildlife and volunteering.
- The growing database provides insight into trends in visit taking over time and allows analysis for smaller geographic areas and population groups.

MENE is designated as Official Statistics and is subject to the Statistics & Registration Services Act 2007. The statistics are collated, analysed and disseminated according to the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and the Pre-release Order 2008.



How is MENE being used?

Types of place visited – volume of visits 12/13



As indicator 13 in Public enjoyment of the natural environment for Biodiversity 2020.

As a data source in the Natural Environment White Paper section on reconnecting people and nature, highlighting the importance of the availability and quality of local green space.

Several Nature Improvement Area indicators; and Forestry Commission's State of England's Woodlands indicator visits to woodland.



As support data for the ONS Wellbeing analysis



As one of the datasets for the Public Health Outcomes Framework including local authority level weights that make the data more robust at local level.

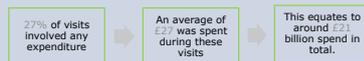


By other organisations e.g. the University of Brighton Nottingham National Ecosystem Assessment work

Outcomes of visits to the natural environment 12/13



Expenditure during visits to the natural environment 12/13



No significant variations over last four years of MENE.

For every £1 spent



Survey outputs



Access the outputs by going to: www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/research/mene.asp

Or go direct to the online viewer at: <http://naturalengland.tns-global.com/>





ORN Autumn Seminar 2014

Youth: Participation in Outdoor adventure & inland water recreation

Friday 26 September 2014, 09:30 – 14:00 (Includes lunch)

Lakeside Hotel, Killaloe, Co Clare, Ireland

Cost: €50.00

This seminar will focus on youth participation in the outdoors, particularly water-based activities.

We will explore why community organisations in the Killaloe area have been so successful in engaging with young people. We will also look at the role public authorities have in encouraging and motivating the younger generation to enjoy the natural resource on their doorstep throughout Ireland.

Booking will open soon. To register your interest please visit <http://orn.eventbrite.co.uk>

Keynote Speakers:

1: Adventure skills – Join the Queue Please.

Diarmuid O'Briain, Camp Chief

National Water Activity Centre Killaloe, Scouting Ireland

The National Water Activity Centre in Killaloe is one of 5 Scouting Ireland national campsites throughout Ireland. The 5th/22nd Killaloe Scout Group is the largest group in the western province and one of the largest in Ireland, with a membership of 240 ranging in age between 7 and 26 – with a waiting list to join. So why are they so successful in this technological age, what are they doing that continues to engage with young people and encourages them to participate in outdoor activities?

Diarmuid will take us through the many outdoor activities and opportunities the scouts offer and tell why they are so successful in Killaloe.

Keynote Speakers continued:

2: Lough Derg - An Activity Destination for Today's Youth

*Mike Jones, Operations Manager
UL Sport Adventure Centre*

With almost 2 decades of experience in the adventure industry ULSAC has gone from strength to strength. The centre provides a wide range of activities, state of the art equipment and top class professional staff – everything that is needed to make a first class adventure facility. ULSAC is owned and run by the University of Limerick Sports Department. As well as providing an excellent facility for the staff and students in University of Limerick the centre also caters all year round for the general public.

Mike will tell us about the work of the activity centre and how it gives children the opportunity to gain confidence through participation in water activities. But is this enough? He will also discuss one of the proposals put forward by the Lough Derg Destination Development Road Map 2014 -2017. Is there a need for an iconic attraction in the region? Would this attraction encourage participation, is it needed?

3: Row the Erne

*Olivia Cosgrove, Chairperson
Row the Erne*

Row the Erne is a community based organisation empowering people of all abilities and ages to build and row traditional craft on the Erne Waterway System in County Fermanagh. Row the Erne plans to build a 30 ft curach that will row 10 oars and have 2 sails in May/June this year. The project grew out of a very successful pilot trip that was made by the famous Colmcille curach (38ft long with 12 oars and 2 sails) to the Erne Waterways in the summer of 2013. The boat sparked local's interest in traditional boat rowing as a new activity that promotes equality and where young and old can row side by side. Once the curach is built Row the Erne plans to take an expedition from Lough Erne to Killaloe in time for the ORN event - camping overnight along the waterways giving people the opportunity to be part of crew along the way.

Olivia will talk to us about how she involved young people in the project, the part they play in the organisation, why it is important to keep them engaged and the difference they are making in the community through traditional rowing.

4: Water Matters - Education & More

*Éanna Rowe, Head of Marketing & Communications
Waterways Ireland*

A Waterways Primary School Teachers resource pack has been developed to integrate the inland waterways with the learning environment and provide learning experiences which are meaningful, accessible, engaging and stimulating. It included a range of activities which link to both the Irish Primary Curriculum and the Northern Ireland Curriculum. The pack also contains information relating to the inland waterways under the remit of Waterways Ireland to aid teachers when devising lesson plans.

Éanna will present Waterways Ireland's successful Education Programme and other initiatives which Waterways Ireland are planning for the future.

5: Juniors Afloat

*Speaker to be confirmed
Lough Derg Yacht Club, Dromineer*

Lough Derg Yacht Club provide a comprehensive programme of School Sailing for all local schools that wish to participate. The programme runs during term time from April to the end of October – weather permitting – and costs very little. This means that children can be introduced to sailing without having to buy a boat and all the gear. Sailing courses are also held during July giving participants the opportunity to learn in a variety of dinghies. Many of the young people who have completed this course, have graduated into Shannon One Designs, and quite a few now own one. Lough Derg Yacht Club is one of the oldest clubs in Ireland and the future is looking good.

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