

Countryside Recreation



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*Exchanging and Spreading Information to develop best Policy
and Practice in Countryside Recreation*



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- The Recreational Purpose of National Parks
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- Is this the future of information centres and visitor facilities?

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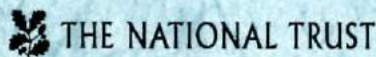
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- gives easy access to information on countryside and related recreation matters
- reaches organisations and individuals in the public, private and voluntary sectors networks thousands of interested people

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to encourage co-operation between members in identifying and promoting the need for research related to countryside recreation, to encourage joint ventures in undertaking research, and to disseminate information about members' recreation programmes.

Liaison:

to promote information exchange relating to countryside recreation, and to foster general debate about relevant trends and issues.

Good Practice:

to spread information to develop best practice through training and professional development in provision for and management of countryside recreation.

Chair: John Thomson, Scottish Natural Heritage

Vice-chair: Geoff Hughes, SportEngland

Countryside Recreation is free and is published four times a year. We welcome articles and letters from all readers. The copy date for the next issue is 13th December 2002 with the theme of mountain biking.

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Editorial

This issue of Countryside Recreation is devoted to the theme of 'National Parks'. It is hopefully a timely contribution to an ongoing debate about the role of national parks in the UK. Over 165 years since William Wordsworth first wrote of the Lake District as "*a sort of national property, in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a hear to enjoy*", 2002 has seen:

- ♦ the designation of Scotland's first national park (and work towards the establishment of a second);
- ♦ progress towards the designation of two new national parks in England;
- ♦ growing pressure for the designation of a national park in Northern Ireland
- ♦ publication of a review of English National Park Authorities; and proposals for a review of National Park Authorities in Wales

A common theme amongst these initiatives and the articles published in this issue is defining what national parks are for and who they are for. There is a general consensus that national parks in the UK should be 'greenprints' for sustainable development, linking landscape and livelihood (see the articles by Tony Gates and David Leslie). If they are to achieve this goal then consideration will have to be given as to how the experience of national parks can be disseminated to those involved in the management of the 'wider countryside' and, importantly, vice versa. There is a potential role for CRN, and its constituent agencies, in ensuring that this 'learning network' is in place. The Government also has an important role to play, it must ensure that its rhetoric about joined-up government and agricultural reform become reality. Initiatives such as the Peak District Land Management initiative must be allowed to proceed if we are to use national parks as test-beds for sustainable development.

As well as reaching new professional audiences, national parks are also under pressure to attract a more diverse range of visitors. The article by Hugh Llewelyn outlines the nature of this challenge and reminds us of the benefits, in a crowded and ever more busy world, of being able to 'wonder lonely as a cloud'. Many national park authorities are rising to this challenge through projects aimed at building new links with urban communities and providing opportunities for all sectors of society to enjoy their special qualities. The article by Claire Coxon et al. explains what the Lake District National Park Authority is doing to make the Lake District accessible for all.

National Parks - Will Northern Ireland get what it has always needed?

Tony Gates, Trust Manager, Mourne Heritage Trust

On June 21 2002 the Minister for the Environment in the Northern Ireland Assembly, Dermot Nesbitt MLA, announced that he had commissioned a study by Europarc Consulting to assess the potential for the designation of one or more national parks in Northern Ireland.

This move marks a departure from the previous advice to the Minister from the Environment and Heritage Service of DoE(NI) who felt the matter of national parks should not be moved forward until the designation of a suite of AONB's had been completed.

The Minister has, however, made a point of stating that national parks are not off the agenda, his recent announcement seems to back up this statement, and his timing could hardly be better.

Northern Ireland is well known for its beautiful natural environment, it prides itself, on a clean and green image and indeed markets itself as such. However, as it emerges from over thirty years of political conflict, locally known as "the troubles", Northern Ireland will have to use the opportunities presented by its natural resources to the full if the objectives set within the Northern Ireland Programme for Government and the Strategic Planning Framework for Northern Ireland are to be achieved.

Northern Ireland has had Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty since 1965, however, it now lags over 50 years behind the first national parks to be designated in England and Wales. Whilst not all of Northern Ireland's protected landscapes are suitable for national park designation, there are some areas that are, and where the lack of protection which could have been in place through a national park designation has led to a deterioration of the natural

resource.

For some key parts of Northern Ireland such as the Mountains of Mourne and the Antrim Coast and Glens, AONB has in many ways been the wrong designation. The AONB designation has not helped to protect the landscape of these areas, leading to a gradual de-valuation of overall landscape quality. In addition, areas such as the Mourne are nationally important for access and recreation, with the Mourne alone accounting for 25% of all home visits within Northern Ireland. This has put pressures on the landscape and natural habitats of the area which have not been adequately addressed in the context of AONB management.

However, it is not only in terms of protection of the natural environment where national parks could have a part to play in Northern Ireland, rural tourism also needs a boost, which the brand recognition of a national park could bring.

Following over 30 years of political conflict, Northern Ireland tourism has been performing relatively poorly in comparison to its nearest competitors, Tourism in Northern Ireland currently contributes 2% to GDP (NITB 1999), whereas in the Republic of Ireland it is 4.6%, a figure of 5% for the rest of the UK.

In its recent Draft Corporate Plan (2002) the Northern Ireland Tourist Board has set itself challenging targets to be achieved up to the end of 2005. These include a 7% increase in visitor numbers, a 9% increase in visitor spend and a 1% increase in the share of all Ireland visitors.

The development of tourism infrastructure in our key natural resource areas has not kept pace with similar

areas in mainland UK and Republic of Ireland. If tourism is to grow at the rate expected then we will need to put in place the necessary infrastructure, skills and facilities that are key to the development of a sustainable tourism product.

If tourism in Northern Ireland's key natural resource areas is to increase its share of visitors to Ireland, they will have to 'stand out' in the international market place. This is critical as Northern Ireland is now marketed on an all-island basis with the Republic of Ireland and is therefore competing directly with other parts of Ireland for those visitors arriving at our airports and ports.

However, unlike the Republic of Ireland whose key natural resource areas are national parks, Northern Ireland has no areas designated within this internationally recognised brand. It is worrying in this respect that Northern Ireland is now the only country in the British Isles and Western Europe not to have national park designation and management.

Evidence from the Countryside Commission shows that visitors stay longer and spend more in national parks, this would bring a most welcome boost to employment in some of Northern Ireland's key disadvantaged rural areas and deliver economic and social returns to key natural resource areas experiencing the adverse affects of the decline in traditional industries especially agriculture.

Tourism in itself represents a threat to the environment and the robust structure of national park management would help ensure that tourism development in Northern Ireland's key natural resource areas takes place in a truly sustainable way.

With current government policy at the Northern Ireland, UK and EU levels supportive of more robust management of the environment perhaps now is the time for Northern Ireland to designate its first national park.

The unique land ownership pattern in Ireland, and the presence of dispersed rural community will dictate, as

we have seen most recently with the designation of national parks in Scotland, that a custom-designed approach to national parks will be required to fit the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland.

The development of a custom-designed national park model, and wide ranging consultations on the aims, purposes, selection criteria, and functions of national parks in Scotland, underpinned Scottish Natural Heritage's advice to Government, which was accepted as the basis for legislative proposals by the Scottish Parliament. Any custom-made national park model in Northern Ireland should be designed to meet the specific needs of each area, with a much greater emphasis on issues such as community involvement and socio-economic development.

Perhaps then as we await a flood of international visitors, the designation of national parks in Northern Ireland will form a key framework for ensuring the protection and enhancement of our best natural resources. National park designations themselves may even provide the hook which helps attract these much needed tourists.

The Minister has promised a further statement on the way forward, after consideration of the report by Europarc Consulting (which is due for submission in the autumn of 2002). Should the Minister announce the designation of one or more national parks in Northern Ireland, and there appears to be a strong case for him to do so, then perhaps Northern Ireland may soon get what it has always needed.

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The Mourne Heritage Trust is an independent body established as a partnership of central and local government, the local community and other key interests, to manage the Mourne Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

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National Parks and the Tourism Sector

David Leslie, Glasgow Caledonian University

*....the environment has an intrinsic value
which outweighs its value as a leisure asset.*

(DoE, 1994)

Introduction

National park status, the Gold Medal of outstanding landscape, has served well to protect the attractiveness of such designated areas and conserve them for the future. But, such success has also been instrumental in furthering leisure demand which in some areas in terms of the sector which promotes and responds to such demand i.e. tourism, may now overly dominate the local economy. A situation probably not envisaged by Dower (though may have been by Wordsworth!) and one which in combination with the substantial issues challenging rural communities bodes ill for the future - for the sustainability - of the local economy and long term well being of the community. As the following discussion seeks to illustrate, this is the case in the Lake District National Park, in response to which, it is argued, there is a need for the tourism sector to address this issue through more widely and more substantially 'going green' and adopting environmental performance appraisal and management practices and significantly, actively seeking to sustain and promote enterprise in other sectors of the local economy.

The Lake District National Park (LDNP)

The Lake District has been popular for centuries. The principal constant of demand is the physical attractiveness of the area - its scenic qualities - complemented by high quality air, peace and tranquillity. The quintessential element of this is the landscape - moulded into its present form by farming and grazing. As such it may not have an easily distinguishable 'local product' but it does have a

distinctive and renowned landscape. The character of 'the place' has been very much influenced by the way tourism supply has developed to meet visitor demands and their needs for well over the last century. These factors all influenced the area's designation as one of the first national parks in the UK. However, the situation in the LDNP is that some areas are dominated by tourism.

If suitably planned and developed tourism can create opportunities for entrepreneurs and employment and thereby contribute to the local economy. But, and most importantly, it can also support and help to sustain the local community. This, it may be argued, is essential given the current crisis in farming - a mainstay of the economy of national parks. Farming is in decline for many reasons, not the least of which is a drop in income leading to decline in employment and a shift towards part-time farming and part-time employment with its resulting impact on other sectors (see: Wilson, 1999). This decline in farm incomes (by 60% in period 1994-1999 [ETC/CA, 2000, p.6]) has substantial implications for the visual and ecological well-being of national parks, their economy and communities. It will generate additional pressures on farmers to diversify into other activities e.g. tourism.

Whilst diversification holds some prospects for development it is not the case that farmers can easily diversify into tourism; there are a number of factors such as location and access, and available capital which need to be considered first. Provision of accommodation, e.g. B&B or self-catering, also is not so simple; apart from other considerations, accommodation supply in the area is highly competitive and there is evidence of over supply. Having said that, tourism itself has a potentially substantial role to play in addressing this decline in

farming and supporting the farming community through regenerating the historical/traditional links between farmer and locally based consumers.

The LDNP and tourism

However, although as a destination the LDNP may be considered successful in terms of demand, it may not be so well judged in terms of the way it has developed. As Kaiser and Helber argued in 1978: *"success in building a tourism destination can be seen as centering around a formula of 4 E's: economics, environment, enrichment (social and financial) and exchange"* (p.17).

Due to a range of factors - not least the designation of the area as a national park - the growth that has occurred may reflect, to an extent, the comparatively recent imperative from Government policy that, *"growth has to respect the environment"* (DoE, 1990, p.1). But, has this growth in demand and supply respected the environment - taken in its widest sense? In particular, has it been successful in terms of the other three 'Es' when examined in the context of the local economy, the environment and the community? These factors which have since been reinforced in policies by the Government, notably so, in the terms of reference for the Government's Task Force, established in the wake of the White paper - *'This Common Inheritance'* (DoE, 1990), i.e. *"to draw up guidance on how the tourism industry and other agencies might ensure that their present activities and policies as well as future tourism developments are in harmony with the need to conserve and preserve the environment, and to serve the well being of host communities"* (ETB & EDG, 1991, p.5).

A key need in achieving such an objective is that tourism, which is inextricably entwined with all the dimensions of a locality, is not treated in isolation of the rest of the local economy and particularly of the community who are the oft cited key beneficiaries of tourism. It draws on local resources and through the production and delivery of services returns pollution and waste back into the locality. As demand and supply expand, so does the consumption of resources and production of waste (including packaging etc).

Thus, if tourism AND the locality are to be sustained there is a need, *"to establish means by which the industry's wastes and resulting environmental impacts can be reduced, thereby approaching a state where a balance can be achieved between environmental exploitation and consumer utility"* (Wallis & Woodward, 1997, p.95).

It is therefore essential for all enterprises and those organisations involved in tourism - as well as the visitors themselves - to address these issues of resource usage, consumption and waste. In effect to 'go green', many aspects of which have been promoted over the last decade by the Government and leading organisations through their policies and initiatives designed to enhance the wider benefits of tourism development and, overall, to improve the 'greenness' - the environmental performance - of the tourism sector.

Assessing the situation

In recognition of this a comprehensive study was commissioned by Friends of the Lake District to establish the current situation regarding the 'greenness' of tourism enterprises, and incorporating wider dimensions of sustainable development. In the process to establish to what extent the initiatives and related practices promoted in a range of policies for tourism and the countryside by the Government and related agencies, launched predominantly in the early 1990s, have been realised (Leslie, 2001).

An extensive methodology was formulated involving eleven surveys and environmental audits. The focus was primarily on the serviced accommodation sector in recognition of its significance in terms of the volume and value of tourism to a destination. The secondary focus sought to examine other sectors of tourism supply, namely restaurants, inns, caravan and camping sites, self-catering and attractions. The key tool identified to establish the 'greenness' of these tourism enterprises was 'sustainability indicators'. Thus, the methodology included the derivation of a comprehensive range of such indicators on which the surveys and environmental audits were subsequently based. Amongst many outcomes, the study

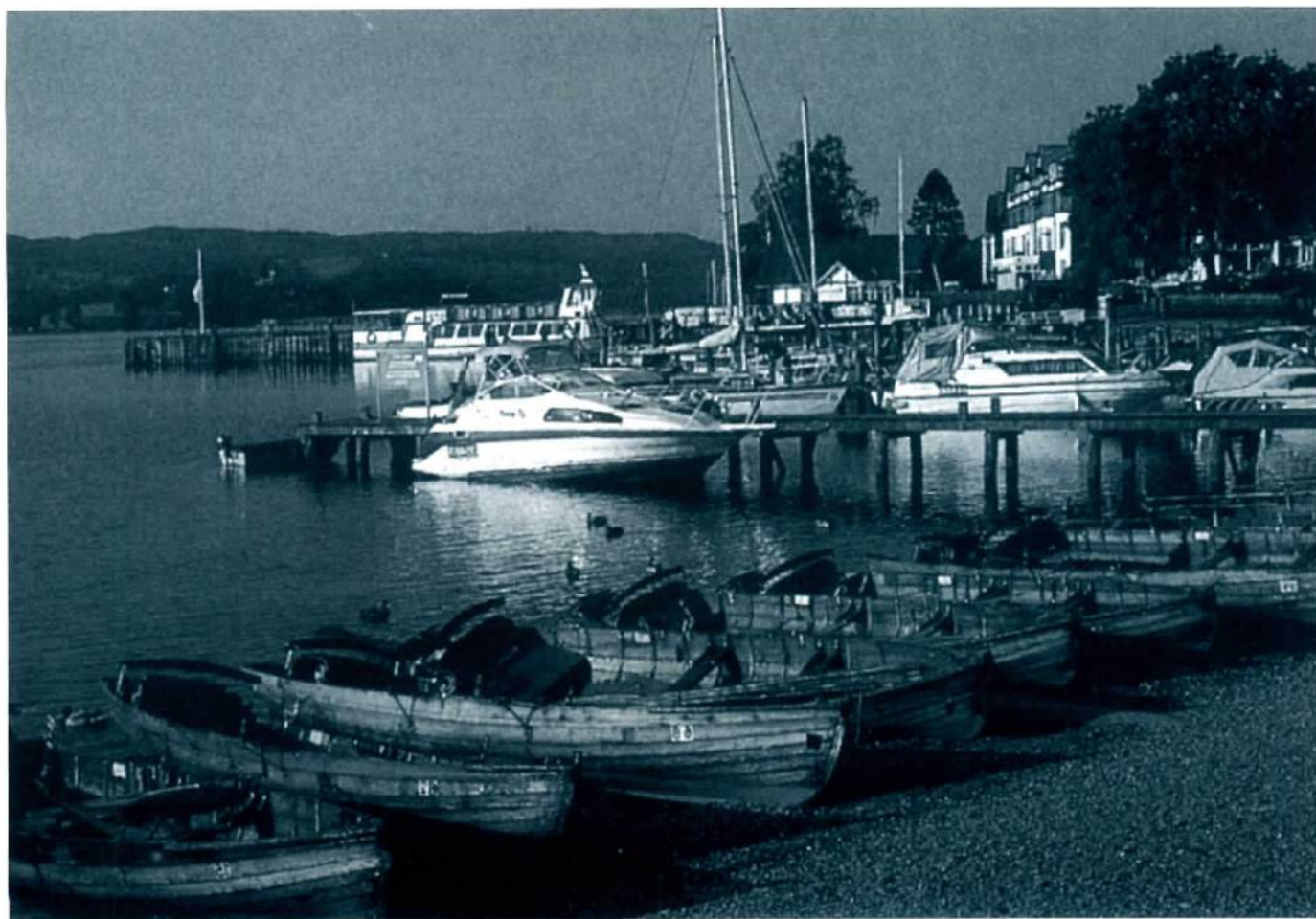
established three key facts. First, there is no doubt that the tourism sector is the key player in the economy, the environment and the community of the LDNP, exemplified here through employment by the tourism enterprises.

The dominance of tourism

Tourism supply in the area almost entirely comprises micro-businesses which collectively are the backbone of tourism supply. Whilst individually they may only employ a few staff, collectively employment is substantial. Although the levels of employment cited in the study pertain to the enterprises responding, it is possible to use these figures to project total employment based on the category and number of businesses identified in preparation for the surveys. On this basis the projected number of employees is approximately 15,600 (approx. 10,000 full-time and 5,600 part-time staff); a figure which excludes owners and managers (an indicative figure would be 1,200

persons). These figures suggest that the English Tourist Board estimate of approximately 18,000 employed in 'tourism related industries' for Cumbria as a whole is understated. However, this depends on just how the figures were derived and in what way part-time jobs are accounted for. Even so, if employees in other sectors such as nightclubs, libraries, sport and other recreational activities (all of which are included in the English Tourism Council's figures) are added to the study's projected figure then it appears that in the order of 50% of the population, even allowing for those employees not from the area, of the LDNP (approx. 42,000) is directly supported by tourism. These figures demonstrate all too clearly that even short term falls in tourist demand have potentially substantial implications for the local economy whilst, and more importantly, bring into question the longer term sustainability of an area so dependent on tourists.

Photo by Friends of the Lake District, 2001 (Report - Green Horizons)



Lake Windermere

How 'green' are the enterprises?

Second, and in terms of the tourism enterprises overall, there has been limited adoption of 'green' practices. Significantly, these enterprises hold tremendous potential to contribute towards achieving a better balance between the economy, the environment and the community, especially through adopting, and promoting, 'green' (alternatively termed 'environmentally friendly practices') which may then diffuse into the wider community through, in the first instance, the adoption of such practices by the enterprises and owners/managers own households. Evidently there is substantial scope for enhancing this role and developing the environmental performance - the sustainability of tourism enterprises; as such the adoption of the key aims of sustainable development - achieving a balance between the local environment, local economy and local people.

The objective of a 'greener' tourism sector demands that tourism enterprises operate in a more sustainable way and developing and building on more extensive and stronger links with other sectors of the area's economy and with the community more generally. But also, better support and systems need to be developed to encourage and facilitate these objectives.

Further, it is not just a question of tourism enterprises alone addressing their environmental performance and introducing environmental policies and management practices. This is applicable to all enterprises throughout the economy and particularly organisations which seek to promote and influence the adoption of such an approach.

Impact of government initiatives

The third area, and particularly disconcerting given this lack of progress, is the fact that attention to the 'greening' - the environmental performance - of tourism enterprises has been promoted a range of organisations since the early 1990s. Government, both central and local, have been largely ineffective given that the former has been advocating the 'greening of tourism' since the start of the 1990s, a position taken up by the network of National and

Regional Tourist Boards, and local government has been charged with developing Local Agenda 21 plans since 1992. Such ineffectiveness is not limited to government and related agencies with involvement in tourism, but also the professional associations such as the HCIMA and the WTTC et al who, for example, stated in 1996 that in the longer term, tourism's future development would depend on the actions taken now in support of Agenda 21 (WTTC et al, 1996, p5). More recently, and of particular concern, is that neither the first Summit of the English Tourism Council nor the Government's recent Tourism Research Paper discussed or identified as an issue the environmental performance of tourism enterprises (ETC, 2000; Bargett, 2000). This omission, though exemplified by government, is equally applicable at local levels, particularly so in the LDNP where there is a need for much better co-operation and co-ordination between the many organisations involved.

This outcomes, whilst perhaps not surprising given the lack of progress evident in the 1990s does bring into question the efficacy of national policies. They effectively demonstrate that the policies presented by the leading bodies involved are often little more than rhetoric on 'good practice'. But, and as the study's findings attest, awareness in itself is not necessarily the key factor. Quintessentially tourism enterprises are managed by people who predominantly live and work in the LDNP. Rather it is the attitudes and values of the individual - in this case predominantly enterprise owners - which, combined with their knowledge and understanding of environmental issues and related practices, is the key influence.

Looking to the Future

Progress towards a 'greener' tourism sector, which certainly at a basic level is, in effect, no more than 'good housekeeping' will become increasingly important as the century unfolds. The long term sustainability of the community in the LDNP will depend on an economic base which is as diverse as possible. It is therefore very important that tourism continues to bolster the economy, but this should be just one of many facets of a more strongly diversified local economy. Given the current strength of

tourism's economic contribution there is a very real danger of over reliance on this sector and the loss of sight of the need to ensure a diversified economy. Tourism is so dominant that it has a key role to play in building much stronger linkages with, and indeed promoting the development of, other sectors for example, greater production and utilisation of local produce and products, thereby contributing to a stronger economy with more diverse opportunities for employment. Such an approach supports the view that, *"The environment may also be under greater protection when the economy springs from the community rather than being dislocated from the community or imposed upon it"* (DETR, 2000, p9).

This is all the more important if demand declines. Even if such a decline is short term; witness the impact of the fuel supply 'crisis' in mid-September 2000 and the 'Foot and Mouth' epidemic of 2001. Through such development the area will be far better positioned to withstand fluctuations in demand and a shift in fashion; as well as addressing any opportunities and threats that may arise.

Conclusion

Overall, there is a long way to go to improve current individual concern about environmental awareness and practice, and collective commitment to cultural and social sustainability is poor at the moment. Redressing this situation is not just a matter for the tourism sector but rather, *"Responsibility for our environment is shared by all of us: it is not a duty for the Government alone. Businesses, central and local government, schools, voluntary bodies and individuals must all work together to take good care of our common inheritance (the environment)"* (DoE, 1990, p3).

However, tourism enterprises are slowly but increasingly beginning to review their operational activities to become more 'green' but further and more direct encouragement and promotion and support systems are required. As the Countryside Agency argued, ways must be developed, *"to encourage new and existing tourism businesses to adopt socially and environmentally sustainable practice."* (ETC/CA, 2000).

In effect, there is a requirement for more creative planning in order to maximise the cross sectoral economic links that can be achieved in the development of tourism. This demands the adoption of a more comprehensive, integrated approach as proposed in the Rural Tourism consultation paper (ETC/CA, 2000, p5). But, this must be underpinned by, *"a much more robust understanding of the multi-layered meaning and utility of the land which is particularly relevant in an almost post-agricultural environment and it is one that - within limits - provides space for tourism"* (Hull, 2000).

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The Recreational Purpose of National Parks

Hugh Llewelyn - Head, Landscape Protection Branch

Photo taken by Ray Manley, Peak District National Park Authority



William Clough

The theme of this article is the part that national parks are intended to play in the recreational life of England and Wales. I will not be covering Scotland which has separate national park legislation. I would like to focus on the past, the present and, most importantly, the future.

The Past

The seven national parks in England and three in Wales were set up in the 1950's whilst the Broads Authority was established in 1989 under its own legislation.

The ten national parks arose out of the national parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (the 1949 Act) but their inspiration was very much older. In the 19th Century painters and poets such as Wordsworth portrayed a vision of the Lake District and other areas of beautiful landscape as national treasures which

should be immunised from what they perceived as the disease of modern industrial society. Right from the start it was felt by these 'romantics' that, not only should the landscape be preserved in its own right, but that people should be able to visit these beautiful areas to enjoy and appreciate their charms. But the great mass of urban dwellers had little chance to relax as the ever-expanding Georgian and Victorian cities made the countryside more and more remote from the lives of the factory worker and miner.

As railways and better roads spread, and as improvements in working conditions and hours took place, towards the end of the 19th Century more and more ordinary people had the time and opportunity to visit the countryside. Walking became increasingly popular, particularly in mountain areas, despite the difficulties of limited public access.

The horrors of The Great War resulted in its survivors being less willing to put up with restrictions on what they saw as their rights – and one of these was ‘the right to roam’. This climaxed in the mass trespass on Kinder Scout in 1932. At the same time as this movement for better public access was growing, so was the wish to have stronger protection for our best landscapes – the Yellowstone National Park of the United States serving as an example. What is sometimes forgotten is that the federal government ‘relocated’ the indigenous Native American population from the Park to ensure that it “retained” its wilderness character. Fortunately, a similar process was never followed in Britain!

The Second World War saw yet another seismic shift in society’s attitudes. The growing movement for national parks culminated in two reports by John Dower (1945) and the Hobhouse Committee (1947), into how national parks should be established and administered. The Dower Report described the concept of a national park as “*an extensive area of beautiful and relatively wild country*” in which the landscape was preserved, access for public open-air enjoyment provided, wildlife and historic buildings protected, and established farming maintained.

As a result, the 1949 Act was passed which laid down the criteria for national parks: their natural beauty, the opportunity they afford for open air recreation and their proximity to centres of population. It also has to be ‘especially desirable’ that the ‘necessary measures’ (i.e. those that accompany designation as a national park) be taken for the purposes of a national park.

The Act laid down two purposes of a national park: to preserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area; and to promote its enjoyment by the public. Following the Edwards Report of 1991, the purposes were amended by the Environment Act 1995. They are now, firstly, to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area and, secondly, to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.

The Environment Act 1995 Act also gave legal effect to the ‘Sandford Principle’ that, where there was a conflict between the two purposes, then the first (conservation) should prevail over the second (enjoyment). This principle does not apply to the Broads, which has three purposes set out in the Broads Act 1988. The first two purposes of the Broads mirror the original two in the 1949 Act (and have not been amended) whilst the third relates to the maintenance of navigation.

The 1995 Act also included an important section (Section 62) whereby all ‘relevant authorities’ have a duty to pay regard to the amended national park purposes in their own activities. There is no comprehensive definition of what is a ‘relevant authority’ but it certainly includes all public bodies. It is also certain that the section does not apply only to the first purpose of conservation and enhancement, but also to the second, of understanding and enjoyment. It does not always seem to be the case that these ‘relevant authorities’ follow Section 62 – or are even fully aware of it. Perhaps this article will help a little.

Circular 12/96 explained the provisions of the Environmental Act 1995 and set out the then Government’s policy on recreational activity in National Parks. During the passage of the Bill there had been pressure to promote only quiet enjoyment but the Circular made clear that a more complex balance needed to be struck:

“13. The National Park Authorities should continue to promote the widest range of opportunities for recreation to reflect the variety of ways in which the Parks can be enjoyed. But the conservation values which the Parks represent and which have led to so many appreciating their special qualities must be fully respected. The National Park Authorities will need to take into account the Parks’ limited environmental capacity. It will not be appropriate for all forms of recreation to take place in every part of the Parks and the Government accepts that some recreational activities could cause unacceptable damage or disturbance to their natural beauty, wildlife or cultural heritage. The intrusive nature

of some recreational activities or the damage they cause to conservation interests may unacceptably affect other people's understanding and enjoyment of the Parks.

14. Nevertheless the Government does not accept that particular activities should be excluded from throughout the Parks as a matter of principle.. They contain a variety of landscapes, capable of accepting and absorbing many different types of leisure activity. In most instances, it should be possible to reconcile any conflict which may arise by co-operation between relevant interests and the National Park Authorities and through careful planning and positive management strategies." (DoE, 1996 para 13 and 14)

The Present

The present Government has endorsed and developed the policies it inherited. In the national parks and elsewhere, its guiding principle has been that countryside recreation should be the delight of the many, not the preserve of the few.

In 1999, the Deputy Prime Minister announced the Government's intention to ask the Countryside Agency to consider the case for national parks in the New Forest and South Downs. In relation to this, Michael Meacher, Minister for the Environment, asked the Countryside Agency to look again at how they applied the criteria for designating national parks. He explained that in the Government's view it was no longer appropriate to limit special management by a National Park Authority to predominately open and rugged countryside. Further, the Government considered that *"more account should be taken than in the past of the need to provide improved opportunities for open air recreation for the population at large, including by providing recreational opportunities close to where people live."*

In February 2000, the Countryside Agency issued a new policy for applying national park designation criteria. It was agreed that the key areas to be considered – other than natural beauty – were the potential for an area to provide a markedly superior recreational experience and whether it should benefit

from the special management that designation would bring.

Also in February 2000, the Government publicly endorsed the policy on recreation in national parks set out in Circular 12/96. In confirming a speed limit on Lake Windermere, it made clear that it was not doing so because activities such as power boating and water-skiing should be excluded from national parks as a matter of principle. It was doing so because such activities were fundamentally incompatible with other water-based activities in that particular place.

The Government also made clear its concerns that countryside recreation should be widely-based in the Rural White Paper (Our Countryside: The Future A Fair Deal for Rural England) published later in 2000. It noted that such recreation was largely the preserve of the white, middle-aged and male. Recommendations intended to redress this included a requirement that local authorities give priority to links between town and country in their rights of way improvement plans and local transport plans. The White Paper confirmed the Government's belief that by careful planning and management there was a place in the countryside for all activities. In many instances that would require local authorities, including National Park Authorities, and others to identify the demand for activities in their areas and to see how it could be accommodated.

The Government also recognised a general need to know what more can be done to provide opportunities for disabled people, ethnic minorities, residents of inner city estates, and young people to enjoy countryside recreation. The Rural White Paper announced that the Government had asked the Countryside Agency to carry out a diversity review, to find out how more socially excluded people could be encouraged to visit the countryside and participate in country activities.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 was another important demonstration of the Government's commitment to increasing recreational opportunities for all in national parks. Much of the

open country and registered common land to which the new statutory right of access on foot will apply is in the national parks and National Park Authorities were given important roles.

Enhancing recreational opportunities has been made a clear priority for National Park Authorities. Fortunately, instances of incompatibility of uses as on Lake Windermere, are rare and in many areas National Park Authorities are showing how diverse uses can be managed.

The Future

Where there is potential conflict between the two purposes of national parks, we must be careful to avoid recreation that damages the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of our Parks. But we need to take care not to restrict activities just because they do not seem to 'fit in'. The recently published Review into national parks has looked afresh at the balance to be struck. (DEFRA, 2002)

The Review reaffirms the wide ranging recreational aim of Circular 12/96. It also recommends that Park Authorities invest in facilities designed to help, and reduce barriers that prevent, people from all sections of society visiting and appreciating the Parks. It points out that less traditional forms of recreation could rekindle interest in the Parks among young people, women, minorities and urban constituencies without eroding the Parks' special qualities.

Some respondents to the Review's consultations argued that the Sandford principle supported their view that Parks should be primarily about conservation and that only quiet, traditional forms of recreation should be allowed. Others said that some Park Authorities used the Sandford principle as an excuse not to promote Parks widely as tourist destinations or to welcome visitors - to the disbenefit of local businesses and communities.

The Review looked at exactly what the Sandford principle is. It found Sandford intended that conservation should prevail over recreation only as a measure of last resort and where the conflict was

acute. Sandford had concluded that:

"...Good management can protect the Parks and cater for visitors with diverse inclinations by providing opportunities and facilities for differing kinds of public enjoyment in different parts of each Park, according to the varying qualities and circumstances. By developing the capacity of suitable areas to absorb greater numbers of the more gregarious visitors, pressures may be diverted from the wilder and more sensitive areas. But, where it is not possible to prevent excessive or unsuitable use by such means, so that conflict between the dual purposes becomes acute, the first must prevail in order that the beauty and ecological qualities of the national parks may be maintained."

Recreational pressures may be greater now than in Sandford's day, partly due to new forms of recreation, but his approach still holds good. The Review recognises that many people's enjoyment of national parks derives from the feeling of peace and tranquillity - getting away from the stresses of modern-day living.

At the same time, the Review recognises the concerns about recreational activities damaging Parks, particularly from motor vehicles and more intensive forms of recreation. Park Authorities should work with transport operators and tourism organisations to encourage more people to come, and travel within, the Parks by means other than the private car. That would extend choice and reduce environmental damage.

Positive management of visitors is important, particularly in 'honey pot' areas and where more intensive activity occurs. Nevertheless, we should not exaggerate the damage that recreation may cause. national parks contain fragile features but, taken as a whole, they seem relatively robust environments, capable of absorbing a range of recreational users.

The Review recommends that all Park Authorities continue to develop policies appropriate for modern-day recreation. It points out that DEFRA's recently published vision document 'Working for the Essentials of Life' states, "we will expect National Park Authorities

to identify and manage demands for recreation in their areas, not just from those who have traditionally enjoyed the Parks' special qualities, but from the whole of society".

To support that process, the Review suggests further research into different recreational demands in the Parks and the capacity of each Park to accommodate them. The potential of zoning policies - protecting tranquil areas, while allowing more intensive use elsewhere - should form part of the research. This approach would be fully consistent with Sandford and with current Government policy.

Whatever arises out of the national parks review, we cannot escape from a world where society's aspirations and ideas seem to be changing at an ever-

increasing pace. We must keep up with them if the usefulness of our Parks to people is not to decline. We must ensure that the Parks remain relevant to people's recreational needs yet without losing the very qualities that attracted them there in the first place. That is a challenge for all of us concerned about their future.

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Photo taken by Ray Manley, Peak District National Park Authority



Howden Dam

Access All Areas - Lake District National Park in Focus

Various Authors, Lake District National Park

National Parks

Access to national parks in England has now been a fact of life for millions of people for half a century. Every year, more than 70 million visitors are attracted to the English national parks which are also home to around 175,00 people. 7% of England is covered by national park designation. That's a significant area, offering wonderful opportunities for all sectors of society.

Every year, visitors spend 22 million visitor days in the Lake District National Park (1994, All Parks Visitor Survey). It is a unique and diverse landscape of moorland, woodland, farmland and settlements stretching over 2,292 sq km with a resident population of over 42,000. There are 80 km of coastline and 9,158 km of watercourses, 179 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and eight National Nature Reserves. Although the Lake District National Park Authority is charged with the stewardship of the area, and fulfilling the twin purposes of conservation and the promotion of understanding of the special qualities of the landscape, it only owns 3.9% of the land. Like all British National Park Authorities, most of our work is in partnership with other land managers. That is the most potent way in which we can help people to understand and enjoy these special landscapes.

In 2003/03 the Lake District National Park Authority benefited from a 15% increase in its grant from central government. This funding signified not only continued ministerial support for our finest landscapes, but also a will from central government to place National Park Authorities at the centre of preparations for the new right of access to open countryside under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

Part 1 of the CROW Act 2000 will give people greater freedom to explore open country. This will be achieved through new rights of access on foot for open-air recreation on access land. The new access rights will apply to registered commons, mountain land over 600 metres and land that is wholly or predominantly moor, heath or down. It will also apply to any land voluntarily dedicated by its owner for permanent access.

Above all else, for National Park Authorities, the Act brought the issue of access for recreational purposes in to sharp focus, and reinforced this area of work as a priority.

Local Access Forums

In order to provide local people and visitors with a voice in the management of access, highway authorities and National Park Authorities were also assigned a duty to set up Local Access Forums as part of the CROW Act. The Lake District Local Access Forum has now been running training sessions and briefings for its members for a few months whilst awaiting final regulations from DEFRA. Now that the regulations are in place the Forum will move to a statutory footing from November.

The primary purpose of the Forum is to advise the National Park Authority and the Countryside Agency on how to make the countryside more accessible and enjoyable for open air recreation. In achieving this, the Forum is expected to address social, economic and environmental issues. Fundamentally it will encourage and assist access provision, whilst giving advice on issues of particular local interest. But that's not where its responsibility ends, the Forum will take an advisory role in developing recreation and access

strategies for a wide range of people; considering strategic improvements to the right of way network; and the implementation, management and review of the statutory right of access to open countryside.

The representatives on the Forum will be a sounding board for landowners, farmers, walkers and other countryside users. The 20 members have been chosen for their breadth of experience in land management, and which include people with experience of farming, nature conservation, heritage, outdoor recreation, tourism, trade unions and transport.

Greater freedom to explore the open countryside can only be enjoyed once the relevant land has been mapped and widespread consultation carried out. The Forum will therefore initially be involved in consultation about the draft mapping of open country. The whole process is expected to be completed in 12 months but the commencement of the right of open access is unlikely before 2004. The Forum will also consider the adequacy of ranger and warden services and the possible imposition of local byelaws. It will also express views on long term closure of access land in connection with matters such as land management, nature conservation, fire risks and even crises such as Foot and Mouth disease.

"Implementing the new rights of access and other aspects of the CRoW Act 2000 is a major task and it is good that the Local Access Forum is now in place to help us carry out this work," says Mark Eccles, Access Manager for the National Park Authority.

"We want to ensure that social, economic, local and environmental interests are addressed at every stage so that all can benefit from this important new legislation."

New rights, new responsibilities

Although this legislation is welcomed by National Park Authorities, it must be approached in a way that ensures that our landscapes, wildlife and cultural heritage do not pay a high price.

The CRoW Act 2000 does offer greater protection to

wildlife and natural features, as well as better protection for SSSIs and more effective enforcement of wildlife legislation. It also protects Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty with legislation similar to that for national parks. The Lake District National Park Authority's expanding team is not only in place to implement the legislation. It will cover every aspect of access and recreation, and work towards managed solutions to the problems that access to the national park can bring.

Green Road Driving

Using recreational vehicles on unsurfaced roads in national parks has long been an emotive subject, and there are many who would like to see this activity banned. Although the Lake District National Park Authority has stated that green road driving is not compatible with national park purposes, it is following current Government advice in looking for management solutions.

Vehicles can be used legally on all 'Byways open to all traffic' (BOATs) while use is presumed but not proven on 'Unclassified County Roads' (UCRs). Although motor vehicles bring greater mobility and opportunity to most of us, the number of all-terrain vehicles brings with it some very particular problems. Concerns about pollution, noise, erosion and the needs of other trail users are all issues that need addressing.

Earlier this year a two-year experimental scheme to minimise four-wheel drive vehicle and motorbike damage in the national park countryside moved into a new phase. Routes are now to be categorised as red, amber and green as part of the latest initiative to encourage responsible driving.

David Robinson, Trails Management Officer for the National Park Authority (NPA) says: *"We consider recreational driving an inappropriate activity for a protected countryside where the welfare of the environment and peace and quiet are fundamental values. But while the law allows vehicles on certain green lanes and other routes we will work to minimise the damage and encourage co-operation from drivers and riders."*

Categories are assigned to the routes according to the amount of wear and tear they can take. The level of use, condition and complaints received for each route are logged in an activity register to provide data for coding the routes. Green routes are those that are rarely used, have sustainable surfaces and where no problems or complaints have been observed. Amber signifies more sensitive routes where an increase in the level of use could lead to a deterioration in condition or an increase in conflict. Red routes include all the high fell routes and others where heavy use has led to damage and many complaints.

We will be concentrating our resources on 20-25 of the most problematic routes, and on communicating with drivers and motorcyclists who persist in ignoring the management measures. So far there has been encouraging co-operation from the Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA) and some clubs and commercial operators. But the majority of users do not belong to any organisation or club and new ways of liaising with them will need to be identified.

The new colour codes for routes and a campaign to raise awareness of them will run for two years.

Upland Path work

A consequence of access to the Lake District National Park has been an ongoing and seemingly endless battle against upland path erosion. A survey has identified about 140 seriously eroded upland paths in the Lake District National Park, and it could take more than £5m and about ten years to repair them all.

Earlier this year, a campaign to repair the eroded footpaths took another step forward thanks to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

HLF awarded £282,158 for this year's work which will join other funding totalling £91,000 contributed by the National Park Authority, English Nature, and The National Trust (the three organisations who work as the Lake District Upland Access Management Group). In-kind contributions and labour will also be made by partner organisations. There has also been generous sponsorship from the outdoor-inspired clothing

company, Hawkshead. Work parties can now work on making upland routes easier to walk and less of an eyesore on the fells.

But as Richard Fox, the NPA's Upland Paths Officer says: *"However much work we manage, erosion is happening every single day on the fells and we always appeal to walkers to try to minimise the damage. People must try to stay on the paths and avoid taking short cuts or diversions."*

Some of the paths are very seriously eroded, and getting worse as walkers skirt round the damaged sections. Others are still reasonably intact but will definitely deteriorate soon and we need to carry out urgent preventative work. Paths widened by erosion can be seen from miles around."

The Lake District Upland Access Management Group has bid for Heritage Lottery funding for a five-year programme to repair 70 paths at a total cost of £2.6m. Last year HLF gave a fast-track award of £97,856 as a kick-start to the project in the aftermath of the foot and mouth crisis. As there is no regular source of funding for this area of work the money is a real boost to efforts, but so much more is needed and awareness raising is as key to maintenance as the path consolidation work itself.

Integrated Access Initiatives

Access to the Lake District National Park is not guaranteed for everyone though. Following a wide ranging study into the needs and preferences of visitors, many areas for access improvement in the Lake District National Park were highlighted. They include the need for more access alternatives via public transport, improvements for those with limited mobility, and the opportunity for ethnic minorities to access national parks.

In response to the survey, Project Officer Barney Hill has been leading 'Open Return', a joint initiative between the Countryside Agency and the National Park Authority. Under the umbrella project, 6 access initiatives will be piloted over a two year period.

Its first is the Coniston/Grizedale B4 (Boat, Bike, Boot and Bus) Network - a new way for visitors to travel around this beautiful part of the Lake District without using their cars.

A Cross Lakes Shuttle service, which has been available from Easter this year, has an integrated timetable and through-tickets as well as cycle carriage. In Coniston, a new bus along Lake Road connects the village with the National Park Authority's Boating Centre.

A network of cycle and walking routes is being constructed and waymarked over the next two years, with the help of the National Trust, Forest Enterprise and Cumbria County Council. The routes will connect Coniston, Hawkshead and Grizedale with tourist attractions and boat and bus stops. This will provide a traffic-free network of graded routes, which will be

particularly attractive to families, novice cyclists and those who haven't cycled for some time.

The second initiative has been pioneered with the Council for National Parks, National Park Authorities and the Black Environment Network. The 'Mosaic Project' aims to break down the real and potential barriers that prevent minority groups using the national parks. Two visiting groups have already been hosted by the Lake District with great success.

The whole concept of Open Return is to ensure that everyone can enjoy the special qualities of the national park easily and conveniently, while creating social and economic benefits for the wider community. It is a clear demonstration of how an integrated approach can help the public gain the most benefit from access to the countryside.

Copyright of Charlie Hedley (freelance photographer)



Newlands and the Skiddaw Massif

Rights of Way

Crucial for access to countryside, is the accurate recording of rights of way via the definitive mapping process. The CROW Act provides a cut-off date of 1st January 2026 for the recording of certain rights of way on definitive maps and the extinguishment of those not so recorded by that date.

We already face a growing backlog of work related to the definitive mapping, and due to a new right for owners and occupiers to apply for an order to divert or extinguish a footpath or bridleway across their land this workload is going to increase in the future. To halt and reverse this backlog, thanks to increased Government grant this year, we are currently recruiting extra Definitive Map Officers and associated support staff.

Not only does the CROW Act ensure that the mapping process is completed within 25 years, but it introduces stronger measures for dealing with obstructions to rights of way. Anyone may serve notice on the authority to secure the removal of certain obstructions and if necessary seek a magistrate's court order requiring it to comply with the notice. Authorities may themselves apply for orders to remove an obstruction, failure to comply itself becoming an offence.

Every highway authority is now required to produce a rights of way improvement plan, with 10 yearly reviews ensuring that the rights of way network remains at the centre of access work. Rightly, we also have to have regard to the needs of disabled people when authorising gates and other barriers across rights of way and there are powers to enter agreements to improve or replace existing barriers.

Access Success?

So what will all this investment in access result in for the national parks? In the Forward to the recent DEFRA review of the English National Park Authorities, Alun Michael, (Minister of Rural Affairs) and Michael Meacher (Minister of State, Environment) state: "We have a clear purpose: to make the most of our national parks as a national asset, now and for the future, while

ensuring that they form part of a living countryside – sustainable in social, economic and environmental terms". (DEFRA, 2002, p.6)

Our national parks can only fulfil this role if they are fully accessible to the nation. The Lake District, along with the entire family of National Park Authorities is now meeting the challenge to make sure that's exactly what they are.

References

1994, All Parks Visitor Survey commissioned by the Countryside Agency and carried out by Centre for Leisure Research, Edinburgh

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (2002) Review of English National Park Authorities, DEFRA, London

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Is this the future of information centres and visitor facilities?

Mark Wilkinson, Countryside Recreation Manager, Warwickshire County Council

How many of you have spent hours with architects designing your dream visitor centre only to find out that the initial costs are way over budget, leaving you little money to equip the building, with anything other than second hand furniture and laminated photographs stuck onto tatty display panels? If you have, then I might just have the answer – steel framed modular buildings.

Forget the old style portakabin and the mobile classrooms you may have boiled in during the summer and frozen in during the winter months at school, the new style modular buildings available on the market are the answer. They offer a relatively cheap, flexible and innovative approach to the provision of high class visitor facilities.

Having spent the best part of two years going down the conventional route of designing a new visitor and education centre at Ryton Pools Country Park (near Coventry), we were devastated when the initial costings came in well over budget. What could we do? re-design the building yet again, cut a few more corners, find further funding or start again. As we appeared to be going no where fast, we decided to stop and take stock of what we were trying to achieve and the best way of doing it. It needed a new approach.

Luckily for us, another section within our Department were using a modular building system at another site for a visitor centre building (they had experienced similar problems with the high cost of traditional style buildings). Using some of the original design ideas and adapting them to suit the modular building system we arrived pretty much at the final building in a matter of days. Various drawings were faxed back and forth and we ended up with a very functional,

attractive and most importantly affordable building. The cost came in at half that of a brick built building (with no architect or design fees – they were covered in the price quoted by Wraith), leaving us plenty of money to equip the education centre, visitor centre, shop, ranger's office, as well as, the hard and soft landscaping around the outside of the building.

The building complete with heaters and windows arrived on the back of eight lorries at 7-00 a.m. and one by one the modules were craned onto their foundations and connected together. The whole process was finished in a day. All that had to be done then, was to connect the building to the services e.g. water and electricity, construct the roof, lay the carpets and add the finishing touches.

To ensure that the new building fitted into its surroundings within the Country Park, the steel framed modular units were timber clad with larch panels and a pitched roof was added together with a canopy to provide shelter from the sun or rain. To the untrained eye, it would be hard to believe that the building was modular.

It is incredible to think that from the first phone call to the chosen company to the official opening was only 14 weeks. With grants and money becoming increasingly available at short notice e.g. Foot and Mouth Rural Recovery Fund, with this system it is now possible to provide these larger facilities in a very short period of time. This has got to be good for the visitor as it minimises site disruption, it does away with unsightly builders compounds (and the health and safety risks they bring) and it's good for the County Council as it means we are generating income from the site much quicker.

In addition to the advantages highlighted above, the building is constructed in such a way that if we need to extend or reduce the size of the building in the future, it can be done relatively easily. This brings a new dimension to the way facilities can be developed and managed.

With the success of this project we are now looking at future developments within the country's parks to see if the modular building system can be adapted to provide them e.g. toilet blocks.

Initial feedback from visitors has been extremely positive. What's more Smith's Concrete who provided the funding through Landfill Tax are delighted with the end product.

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Photo taken by Warwickshire County Council

Ryton Pools Country Park Visitor and Education Centre

News

THE JUBILEE SAILING TRUST CELEBRATES ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY

The Jubilee Sailing Trust (JST) celebrates its 25th anniversary as world leaders in their field. No other organisation has purpose built tall ships, designed specially for people with disabilities. The ship promotes integration of, not only physical ability, but of age, gender, culture and background. To date JST has taken over 20,000 voyage crew to sea, of whom nearly 8000 have been physically disabled including over 3000 people in wheelchairs.

This year the Jubilee Appeal to celebrate the Queens golden Jubilee and the JST's Silver Jubilee is being launched.

For further information and to make a donation, visit the website at: www.jst.org.uk/

Jubilee Charity Success Newsletter, 30/05/02

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL TRUST

A major organisational review of the National Trust was initiated in 2000, the internal changes to the organisation are now being implemented. "There are eight key aims behind the changes:

1. strengthen our ability to protect and care for our properties and countryside;
2. provide an even better service to volunteers, members, supporters, visitors, tenants, local communities and all who care about what we do;
3. strengthen our internal organisation and improve decision-making;
4. increase opportunities for staff development;
5. work more closely with others who share our aims;
6. share our experience and ideas more widely;
7. ensure better representation of our properties at the heart of the trust's decision-making;
8. provide improved skills and advice to properties"

Active Magazine, All Change, Spring 2002

CANAL KEEPERS – CARE FOR BRITAIN'S CANALS

At the launch of 'Canal Keepers', Environment Minister Michael Meacher said a biker gang called COBRA, (Coalition of Black Riders Association) anglers, local residents and boaters were just the type of model citizens he's looking for to help care for Britain's canals. The pilot scheme on the Grand Union and Regent's canals aims to recruit 40 volunteers this year. They will be fully trained and equipped to help thousands of visitors each year to enjoy their days out in safety, providing a visible and reassuring presence. It will form part of a network of people taking part in the care and protection of their local waterways.

British Waterways Monthly, Bikers kick start campaign, June 2002

MICHAEL PALIN BECOMES A 'FRIEND OF THE PEAK DISTRICT'

Michael Palin joins mountaineer Sir Chris Bonington and broadcaster and entertainer Mike Harding as an Honorary 'Friend of the Peak District'. The Friends is an independent voice arguing for protection of Peak District countryside and for putting the nation's need for beauty and tranquillity before profits.

At the Buxton Literary Festival he commented, "I am interested in supporting those who want to see responsible development of the Peak District and it seems to me that Friends of the Peak District are committed to the life of the national park as well as preserving its landscapes...The real challenge must be to keep the balance right and try to preserve the beauty of the Peak District and the idea that is lived in and that people who live here make their living from it".

For further information on the work of the Friends, visit the website at: www.friendsofthepeak.org.uk or Tel: 0114 266 5822

Press Release, Friends of the Peak District, Palin Befriends the Peak District, 16/07/02

'THE FOOD YOU BUY SHAPES OUR COUNTRYSIDE'

According to Countryside Agency findings, opinion formers have different priorities from the public for the challenges facing the countryside. The public put environment top and the threat of sub-urbanisation next, before proper access to services and then the future of farming, opinion leader put farming top.

The Countryside Agency warned that in reality the two are the means to each other. The public will not get a better environment or reduce the threat of sub urbanisation unless there is a radical overhaul of farming. People do not understand the link between the products they buy and having an attractive, economically vibrant countryside.

Ewen Cameron, Countryside Agency chairman and rural advocate said: "Consumers need to better understand what they buy has a direct impact on the future of the English countryside; while farmers are paid for producing in a sustainable fashion what the public want – high quality food and quality environment".

He urged farmers to re-engage with the public in a new contract to win back their confidence. He also pledged that the Countryside Agency would do its part to strengthen the links between town and country. Much of the work will be focused on the urban fringe where rural diversification into the recreational, health and local produce markets have the greatest potential to link town and country physically, socially and economically.

Countryside Agency News Release, The Public's top priority for the future countryside – the environment – can only be delivered through a new contract with farmers.....the food your buy shapes our countryside. 01/07/02

DEPRIVED AREAS TO BE REGENERATED THROUGH 'UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL' INITIATIVE.

'Unlocking the Potential' is a groundbreaking initiative from The Wildlife Trust to help regenerate some of England's most deprived areas. The Community Fund awarded the project a grant of £238,909 to help improve inner-city areas of dense population, areas of high unemployment, high crime and poor health. The initiative will enable The Wildlife Trust to work at a local and regional level in regeneration partnerships to improve local areas to benefit both wildlife and people.

Honor Gay, Head of People and Wildlife for The Wildlife Trust said, "We know that high quality green spaces have the power to improve people's health, morale and well-being. This exciting new project will help us to engage more fully in the regeneration of the 88 most deprived areas in England and work with a wider variety of people."

The Wildlife Trusts New Release, Breathing Wildlife into Deprived Areas, 05/07/02

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM FOOT AND MOUTH

An inquiry into the lessons learned from last year's Foot and Mouth crisis has been challenged to identify crucial errors in the governments "arrogant and incompetent" handling of the outbreak.

Dr Caroline Lucas, Green MEP for South East England and Vice-President of the European Parliament's own inquiry into the epidemic, said the Anderson Report, must put politics to one side and identify the government's key mistakes. Dr Lucas published her own list of lessons the government should have learned. She identifies ten key lessons that need to be learned from the government's mishandling of the outbreak.

1. Inadequate contingency plan
2. Inadequate resources
3. Slow response
4. Over centralisation
5. Wrong computer model
6. Wrong response Strategy
7. Failure of communication
8. Compensation
9. Import Controls
10. Globalisation of the food chain

Dr Lucas states, "It is quite unacceptable that last year's Foot and Mouth epidemic was allowed to devastate the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people in rural communities, and to lead to the reckless slaughter of nearly 11 million animals, many of then needlessly."

News Release from the Office of the Green MEP's, Foot & Mouth: 10 Lessons that Should be learned, Green MEP's challenge to government inquiry, 17/07/02

NEW NATURE RESERVE ON MOD SITE

An RAF bombing range on the coast of Lincolnshire is to be declared the first National Nature Reserve on land owned by the Ministry of Defence. The Donna Nook range is a haven for grey seals, rare orchids, natterjack toads and wading birds. The site is being made part of English Nature's network of reserves aimed at protecting the most important wildlife habitats in the country.

The MOD has been working with local volunteers from the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust to help manage the site. There are now 213 national nature reserves in England covering more than 86,000 hectares.

MoD site becomes nature reserve, 18/07/02

http://news.bbv.co.uk/hi/english/uk/england/newsid_2135000/2135029.stm

SCOTLAND'S FIRST NATIONAL PARK OPENS

The Princess Royal opened Scotland's first national park in July 2002. It is the second largest national park in the UK, of which Loch Lomond only makes up a small part. It is estimated that 900 jobs over a five year period will be created when the visitor attraction, which will include viewing galleries and an Imax cinema, is underway. It is also estimated that it will bring £35m a year to the local economy.

Deputy First Minister, Jim Wallace said, "We've got a national park for the first time in Scotland and given that it was John Muir, a Scot, who had the vision of national parks over a century ago, it's overdue but it's very welcome".

It is hoped that national park status will allow the area's conflicting interests to be managed effectively, so that people do not destroy the landscape and wildlife they come to see.

Royal opening for national park,

24/07/02<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/2147363.stm>

POSTER WARNING MOTORISTS ABOUT HORSES

A poster warning motorists about horses on roads is a joint project between The British Horse Society and Redwings. John Archibald, Redwings CEO, said "We are delighted to fund the printing of this excellent poster. One of our valued volunteers was killed while riding on the road, so we know only too well the

dangers that horses face. Over 100 horses are killed on the roads every year, and these posters may help to reduce this number by raising awareness."

To get a copy of the poster contact:

BHS Safety Department, Stoneleigh Deer Park, Keilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2XZ or telephone 08701 201921

BHS Press Release, BHS and Redwing Safety Poster, 19/07/02

HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND BACKS PROJECT TO OPEN UP HISTORIC FARMLAND

Folly Farm, south of Bristol, is to be conserved, restored and opened up to the public as a rich heritage site and centre for environmental education. An extensive educational programme will be developed for community access as well as a focus on residential courses and training opportunities on the principles of biodiversity and sustainability in a heritage setting. The Heritage Lottery Fund announced that a Stage One Pass of £2,567,000 has been awarded to Avon Wildlife Trust for the comprehensive restoration and enhancement of Folly Farm Nature Reserve.

Heritage Lottery Fund News Release, Lottery backing for innovative project to open up historic farmland, 26/07/02

CASH INJECTION TO SAVE DAN YR OGOF CAVES

The future of Wales's oldest tourist attraction has been safeguarded by a grant aid from the Countryside Council for Wales. The grant aid of £10,000 will help the owners of the site to keep the massive cave complex fully open, and safeguarding 20 jobs. CCW and the owners of the site are exploring ways in which they can safeguard its existence in the longer term.

The cave complex is a site of Special Scientific Interest and is listed in the Geological Conservation Review as an internationally acclaimed site.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/wales/2231123.stm>

DISABLED RAMBLERS CONQUER PEN Y FAN

Members of the Disabled Ramblers have successfully climbed Pen y Fan, in South Wales at over 2,900 feet. The six disabled ramblers used 'Trampers' which are electronically powered pavement buggies to make the climb. The DDA Disabled Ramblers are affiliated to both the Disabled Driers' and to the Ramblers Associations. Three of the team of six reached the summit after a four hour climb up a continuously steep and rough path.

Mike Bruton, Chairman of the DDA, Disabled Ramblers said:

"The climb was a great success. It was right on the limits of what is possible for a pavement buggy, all of which are classed in law as wheelchairs. The Trampers proved up to the task, although progress was extremely slow due to the terrain. Six of us set out up the mountain, but it soon became clear that getting all of us to the top would be simply too slow. So, after climbing up about five hundred feet, we reduced the party down to three disabled people, with the other three, including myself, parked by the path side waiting for the summit group to return."

The Disable Ramblers, News Release, 21 October 2002

SNAPSHOT OF BRITAIN

A major national project was launched at the end of July, to create a visual 'state of the nation' report of the UK in 2002. Thousands of people across the country will be taking photographs of their neighbourhood to compile a unique map of the environmental highs and lows of Britain.

Anyone can participate in 'Your Neighbourhood – A snapshot of Britain'. It has been devised by the environmental regeneration charity Groundwork and is supported by Barclays. The project will aim to highlight what can be achieved and what needs to change, by mapping the best and worst of Britain's local environment.

Snapshot entries can be submitted by individuals or by groups, clubs or organisations. Details on how to get involved are available from the website at: www.snapshotuk.com or Tel: 0121 237 3616

Groundwork Press Release, National project aims to create a Snapshot of Britain 30/07/02

GOVERNMENT REJECTS SAFEGUARDS AGAINST PRIVATISATION OF COMMON LAND

DEFRA and the National Assembly for Wales have rejected a plan by the Open Spaces Society that local authorities should be compelled to defend commons against privatisation by new tracks, fencing, building, 'garden creep' and other encroachments.

Nicola Hodgson, Open Spaces Society case officer says;

"At present, local authorities plead lack of resources and do nothing when faced with attacks on commons...Although such encroachment are unlawful, nobody is required to act against them. The result is that hundreds of acres of public open space are despoiled each year...These proposals were made as long ago as 1986, by the Common Land Forum on which the local authorities were represented. We need it urgently, to tackle the existing unlawful encroachments and to deter new ones."

Open Spaces Society, News Release, Government rejects safeguards against privatisation of common land, 07/08/02

BARBOUR HELPS COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION INITIATIVE

Employees of Barbour are helping to kick start the company's new initiative aimed at supporting conservation in the British countryside. The 'Jack'et all in for Countryside Conservation' campaign aims to encourage members of the public to dig out their old wax jackets and hand them into participating country clothing retailers. Over 50 factory and office workers have handed in their old wax jackets to have them reconditioned and given to deserving conservation charities across Britain.

Andrew Geere says, "We asked a number of countryside conservation charities if they would be interested in receiving reconditioned, re-waxed jackets and the response was astounding...Most of these organisations have thousands of volunteers working in the outdoors and they presently receive no help with the provision of protective clothing...We have the resources and expertise to do something about that and all we need is the public's help".

The 'Jack'et all in' campaign will be launched to the public in September when countryside retailers will display collection points in their stores.

Any countryside conservation organisations not yet part of the scheme can contact Keely Holmes on 01941 265 7765 and apply to become a beneficiary.

TOOLS TO EXPLORE UK BIODIVERSITY

Exploring Biodiversity is a new website launched by The National History Museum (NHM) and provides a unique interactive introduction to UK biodiversity. The website is designed to introduce the concept of biodiversity to both students (GCSE and A level) and all those interested in British Wildlife. The website was developed by scientists, educators and conservationists from the NHM and the conservation charity Flora for Fauna.

Users of the site will be able to: investigate ways of measuring biodiversity; select and compare the floras of different postal districts; consider factors influencing species distribution; find ideas for outdoor and classroom based biodiversity studies.

For further information visit the website at:
www.nhm.ac.uk/eb

English Nature, Nature's newsletter, Issue 25, August 2002

'COUNTRYSIDE' ROSE RAISES £1000 FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

One pound from every Countryside Rose tree sold, has been donated to the ARC Addington Fund. The specially grown rose has raised £1000 for rural communities hit by the foot and mouth epidemic. The cheque for the proceeds was presented to the ARC Addington Fund, at the NFU Countryside Awards presentation in London.

NFU Countryside's Jan Rogers says "We are all well aware of how badly rural communities have been hit by last year's foot and mouth epidemic...The Countryside rose provided a very visible way of reminding us how important our rural heritage is to us, and the sale of the tree has given anyone who cares about the countryside the chance to make a small contribution to its renaissance."

The Countryside rose is available from the www.nfucountryside.org.uk website or telephone: 0870 840 2030

NFU Countryside Newsletter, 4 September 2002, 'Countryside' Rose raises £1000 for rural communities

EAT THE VIEW – PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE LOCAL PRODUCTS

'Eat the View – promoting sustainable local products' report was published on 21st August by the Countryside Agency. The report shows how people have successfully set up new businesses and regional and local groups to sell food and other countryside products. It sets out how the Countryside Agency is doing this and gives examples of projects which are actively developing the market for local and sustainably produced products.

Countryside Agency Chairman Ewen Cameron said: "As consumers, as visitors to the countryside, as taxpayers, or as producers and processors of food, we all have a role to play in encouraging more sustainable land management. The Countryside Agency through its Eat the View initiative is working to harness the power of the market, to encourage greater production and consumption of products that will help protect and enhance our countryside."

To receive a free copy of the 'Eat the View – promoting sustainable local products' from the Countryside Agency, call 0870 120 6466 or download a copy from the website at: www.Countryside.gov.uk. For more information about the Countryside Agency's Eat the View work or local sourcing initiatives visit the website: www.eat-the-view.org.uk

Countryside Agency News release, Take home the Countryside, 21/08/02

BEAUTY PACK

An information pack with facts and figures about England's national parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty is now available. The pack explains many of the issues protected countryside faces and the impact of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

For more information contact: Christine Tudor
Tel: 01242 524381 or download from the Association of National Park Authorities website at: www.anpa.gov.uk or a pack can also be downloaded from: www.countryside.gov.uk

Countryside Focus, Issue 21

SHERWOOD FOREST TRUST SECURES £3 MILLION HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND GRANT

The Sherwood Forest Trust has secured a £3 million Heritage Lottery Fund grant to restore the rich heritage of Sherwood Forest. The grant will contribute towards the Trust's £5.5 million Sherwood Initiative, which will take five years to complete.

Sir Andrew Buchanan, the Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire and patron of the Sherwood Forest Trust, said:

"I am delighted that the Trust's hard work in securing this funding has succeeded and would like to congratulate all those involved. We will now come together with local people, land managers and other interested parties to secure the restoration of our nation's most famous forest."

English Nature, Nature's newsletter, Issue 25, August 2002

SUPPORTING RURAL WALES

The Welsh Development Agency underlined its commitment to Rural Wales with the publication of a new document setting out the Agency's strategic support to businesses, communities and individuals in rural areas. The 'Commitment to Rural Wales' report highlights three key priorities set out by the Agency:

- Supporting Businesses
- Sustaining Communities
- Empowering Individuals

WDA Chief Executive Graham Hawker said: "Our businesses, communities and individuals in rural Wales are critical to Wales' future in the 21st Century. We, as an economic development Agency, realise that rural areas are vital to the Welsh economy and we have ensured that our support is delivered to where it is needed."

The Agency is also involved in the delivery of the Rural Recovery Plan. Over three years some £20 million of extra money has been made available by the Welsh Assembly to the Agency, to reinforce programmes designed to regenerate rural communities, rebuild markets for Welsh food, to support rural businesses and to help them to diversify.

For further information please contact the WDA at, Welsh Development Agency, Ladywell House, Newtown, Powys, SY16 1JB, Tel: 01686 613134, Email: enquiries@wda.co.uk. Visit the website at: www.wda.co.uk

CONNECTING WITH LONDON'S NATURE – HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MAYOR'S BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

Mayor of London, July 2002

"The leaflet is about the Mayor of London's Biodiversity Strategy, one of eight strategies which the Mayor is required by law to produce. Highlights of the policies and proposals in the Biodiversity Strategy are:

Policy 1:

The Mayor will work with partners to protect, manage and enhance London's biodiversity

Policy 2:

The Mayor has set up a Blue Ribbon Network for the river Thames and London's other waterways. This will establish principles for the use and management of the water and land beside it.

Policy 3:

The Mayor will encourage the management, enhancement and creation of green space for biodiversity, and promote, public access and appreciation of nature.

Policy 4:

The Mayor will promote the conservation and enhancement of farmland biodiversity.

Policy 5:

The Mayor will encourage greening of the built environment and the use of open spaces in ecologically sensitive ways.

Policy 6 & 7:

The Mayor will encourage experience of the natural world and will promote environmental education.

Policy 8:

London's many species, and the landscapes where they are found, should be celebrated and promoted.

Policy 9:

The Mayor supports partnerships at Londonwide and local levels to produce and implement Biodiversity Action Plans.

Policy 10:

The Mayor will promote London as a world centre for biodiversity conservation, working with London's world-class organisations for greater influence globally and to learn from experience at home and abroad.

Policy 11:

The Mayor will encourage the business community to play a major role in implementing the programme for conserving London's biodiversity.

Policy 12:

The Mayor will encourage practices, and support existing initiatives, that reduce London's impact on biodiversity elsewhere.

Policy 13:

The Mayor is committed to increasing the funding for biodiversity projects in London, and wishes to ensure that major new development projects include provision for biodiversity.

Policy 14:

Progress in conserving London's biodiversity should be measured."

The leaflet only gives an introduction; if you want to see the full text of the Strategy visit the website at: www.london.gov.uk, or Tel: 020 7983 4323 and request a copy of the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy at a cost of £10 per copy.

Mayor of London, Connecting with London's nature – Highlights of the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, July 2002

THE COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP SCHEME 2003

The Countryside Stewardship Scheme 2003 - Information and how to apply handbook is now available. The Countryside Stewardship is a scheme run by Defra, which makes payments to farmers and land managers to improve the natural beauty and diversity of the countryside. It operates throughout England and is part of the England Rural Development Programme.

Countryside Stewardship is open to those who have management control over suitable land for ten years. This includes: farmers; non-farming land owners and managers; voluntary bodies; local authorities and community groups. Joint application can be made.

For a copy of the handbook and application form, please visit the website at: www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/regulat/forms/erdp/css/index.htm

Countryside Recreation and Training

For information about future events please contact the Countryside Recreation Network office at: crn@cardiff.ac.uk or Tel: 029 2087 4970

To find up to date information about CRN events and to book online visit our website at: www.CountrysideRecreation.org.uk

December 2002

2 – 6 December
Access and Public Rights of Way, Law and Management
 (Plas Tan y Bwlch)
 Venue: Snowdonia
 Cost: £345

5 December
Community Consultation Techniques
 (Environmental Trainers Network)
 Venue: Manchester
 Cost: £100/£150

January 2003

22 January
Interpretative Provision for Visitors with Special Needs
 (Environmental Trainers Network)
 Venue: London
 Cost: £100/£150

22 – 23 January
Promoting Health in the Environment
 (Losehill Hall)
 Venue: Castleton
 Cost: £290

22 – 24 January 2003
The CROW Act – Implications for Biodiversity Conservation and Wildlife Protection
 (Plas Tan y Bwlch)
 Venue: Snowdonia
 Cost: £200

February 2003

1 – 2 February
Woodland Management
 (BTCV)
 Venue: Clandeboye NI
 Cost: phone for details

6 – February
Adding Value to the Visitor's Experience Through Scotland's Wildlife
 (Scottish Natural Heritage)
 Venue: Battleby
 Cost: £50

11 February
Taking Environmental Youth Work Further
 (Environmental Trainers Network)
 Venue: Worcester
 Cost: £100/£150

17 – 19 February
Sustainable Tourism And Recreation
 (Losehill Hall)
 Venue: Castleton
 Cost: £435

March 2003

3 – 6 March
Large Scale Forest Conservation
 (Plas Tan y Bwlch)
 Venue: Snowdonia
 Cost: £280

24 – 28 March
Education in the Countryside
 (Losehill Hall)
 Venue: Castleton
 Cost: £550

**Contact details for training/
events organisers****BTCV Training**

Tel: 0121 358 2155
A.Groves@btcv.org.uk
www.btcv.org

Environmental Trainers Network

Tel: 0121 358 2155
ETN@ukgateway.net
www.btcv.org/etn

Losehill Hall

Tel: 01433 620373
Training.losehill@peakdistrict-
npa.gov.uk

Plas Tan y Bwlch

Tel: 01766 590324
plas@eryri-npa.gov.uk

Scottish Natural Heritage

Tel: 01738 458554
Lorna.brown@snh.gov.uk
www.snh.org.uk

CRN is keeping advance information of training events, conferences and workshops, in order to act as a clearing house for those who are planning events and wish to avoid clashes. A listing in these pages is free. If your organisation has event details please forward them to CRN.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

As of 1 April 2003 the Countryside Recreation Network (CRN) will be based at Sheffield Hallam University (SHU).

As part of the transfer arrangements the CRN database will be transferred to SHU. SHU have provided us with written assurance that the database will only be used for the purposes of CRN. If you have any objections to your contact details being transferred, please inform the CRN office on the details below, by December 31st 2002 and we will remove your details from the database.

If you have any questions relating to the transfer of the contract, please do not hesitate to contact us on the details below.

***Countryside Recreation Network
Department of City & Regional Planning
Cardiff University
Glamorgan Building
King Edward VII Avenue
Cardiff
CF10 3WA***

***Tel: 029 2087 4970
Fax: 029 2087 4728
e-mail: crn@cardiff.ac.uk***

Countryside Recreation Network Publications List

	Price (incl.postage)	Tick
REPORTS		
Social Exclusion in Countryside Leisure in the United Kingdom - the role of the countryside in addressing social exclusion (2001)	£10	<input type="checkbox"/>
CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS		
Removing Barriers; Creating Opportunities: Social Inclusion in the Countryside (2001)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing the Challenge of Access (2000)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the Honeypot Overflowing? (1998)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making Access for All a Reality (1997)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Today's Thinking for Tomorrow's Countryside (1995)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communities in their Countryside (1994)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS		
Public Rights of Way Improvement Plans (2002)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Funding for Social Projects (2002)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opening Up Access In and Around Towns (2002)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitor Payback Schemes (2002)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Access Forums (2001)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fundraising and the Lottery (2001)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are We Getting There? Delivering Sustainable Transport in the Countryside (2000)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breaking New Ground in Sustainable Tourism (2000)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using Local Distinctiveness as an Economic Development Tool (1999)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Just Walking the Dog (1999)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sponsorship (1998)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making Ends Meet (1997)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
GIS & Countryside Management - Theory and Application (1997)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to Water - Sharing Access on Reservoirs and Rivers (1997)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do Visitor Surveys Count? - Making use of Surveys of Countryside Recreation (1996)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consensus in the Countryside II (1996)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consensus in the Countryside I - Reaching Shared agreement in policy, planning and management (1996)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Brush with the Land - Art in the Countryside II (1996)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Brush with the Land - Art in the Countryside I (1995)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playing Safe? Managing Visitor Safety in the Countryside (1995)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
GIS & Access to the Countryside (1995)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sport in the Countryside (1995)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Drive in the Country? - Examining the Problems of Recreational Travel (1994)	£7	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental Economics, Sustainable Management and the Countryside (1994)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
CRN RESEARCH DIRECTORY An annual directory of the research work carried out by the CRN agencies during the year		
Research Directory 1998	£5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research Directory 1997	£5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research Directory 1996	£2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research Directory 1995	£2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Since 1998 we have been developing a searchable database on the CRN website. This has replaced the 'traditional' hard copy of the 'Research Directory'.		
UK Day Visits Survey 1994 (1996)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
UK Day Visits Survey 1993 (1995)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>

Title: _____ First name: _____ Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

E-Mail: _____ Tel: _____

Please photocopy this page and send it with a cheque made payable to 'University of Wales Cardiff' at the following address:
Countryside Recreation Network, Department of City & Regional Planning, Cardiff University, Glamorgan Building,
King Edward VII Avenue, Cardiff, CF10 3WA.

