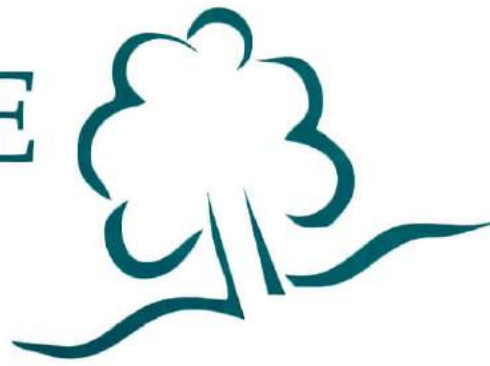


COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION



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– Planning & Countryside Recreation

Sport and Recreation
(PPG 17)

Technical Advisory
Notes in Wales

The Mourne
Heritage Trust

'Wildland' in
Scotland

National Parks

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

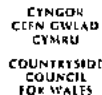
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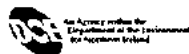
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Photo: Brecon Beacons NPA

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of CRN member agencies.



Countryside Recreation Network

CRN is a network which:

- is UK wide
- 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

The Network helps the work of agencies and individuals by:

- identifying and helping to meet the needs of CRN members for advice, information and research
- promoting co-operation between member agencies in formulating and executing research on countryside and related recreation issues
- encouraging and assisting the dissemination of countryside research and best practice on the ground.

Chair: Richard Broadhurst,
Forestry Commission

Vice-chair: Glenn Millar,
British Waterways

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 25 August.

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Editorial

The Town & Country Planning system in the UK has attracted both criticism and praise. There can be few local newspapers that have not, at one time or another, carried reports about disputes between local people and planning officials over some form of proposed development. Whether over the siting of a new road, landfill site or power station; the designation of an area for special protection; or the choice of materials for renovation or building, 'planning' is frequently an emotive issue, and certainly a major shaping force in our countryside, towns and cities.

In the sphere of countryside recreation too, planning has an important role to play. High profile public debates, for example over the use of motorised craft on Lake Windermere, or skiing development in the Cairngorms, illustrate well some of the planning concerns relating to recreation. Should our countryside be reserved only for 'quiet enjoyment' or is there a legitimate place for 'noisy' forms of recreation? This was the main thrust of debate over the use of speedboats and jet-skis on Windermere in the Lake District. Should development be allowed if it threatens rare and fragile habitats, beautiful landscapes, or even more intangible values such as wildness? Recent discussions over proposed developments to the Aviemore skiing resort in the Cairngorms focused very much around such issues.

Of course, other activities such as walking and horse-riding do not demand development on the same scale as skiing, nor do they necessarily impinge upon other people's 'quiet enjoyment' to the same degree as speedboats, jet-skis, motorbikes and off-road vehicles. And yet even these 'traditional' activities can present planning problems, for example, through the need for visitor centres, toilets, car parks, and traffic control measures.

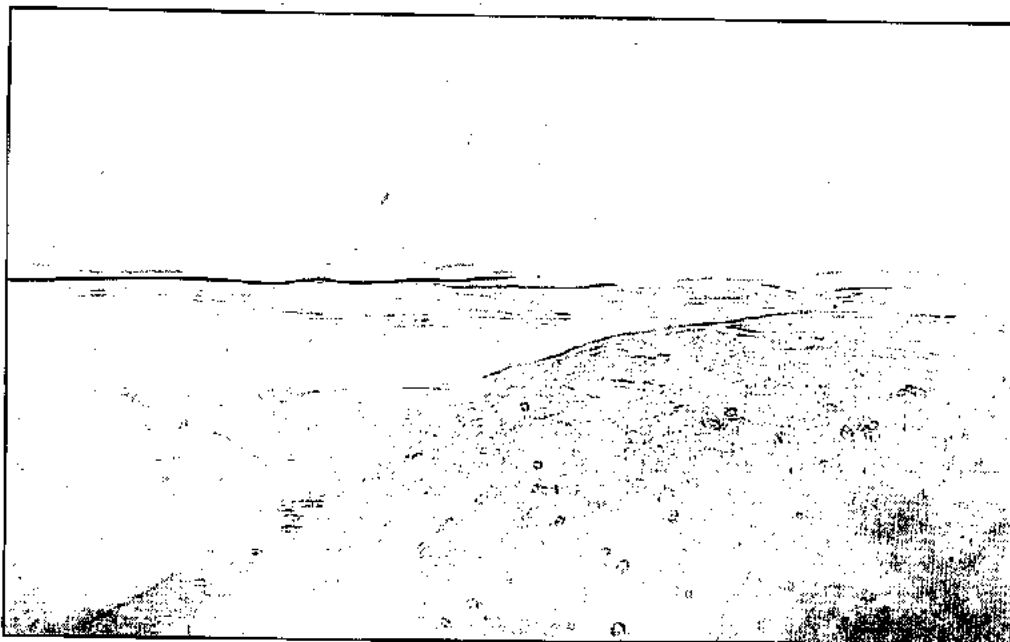
In this issue of Countryside Recreation, a number of recreation planning issues are discussed. John Harrison assesses the limitations of Technical Advisory Notes in planning for sport and recreation in Wales, and Martin Elson discusses recent work appraising PPG17 'Sport and Recreation'. 'Calmer Waters: Guidelines for Planning and Managing Watersports on Inland Waters in Scotland' (published by the Scottish Sports Council) is one of four publications reviewed in this edition of Countryside Recreation.

And now for something completely different...as someone from Monty Python once said. You might like to know that Catherine Etchell (the former Network Manager) has been awarded a Churchill Fellowship to conduct research into canoeing access in New Zealand. She has agreed to report back to CRN when she returns from her travels.

Matthew Jones

National Park Re-organisation: a Welsh Perspective

Chris Ledbury, Brecon Beacons National Park



*Mynydd Du in the
Brecon Beacons
National Park*

Photo: Kevin Bishop

On April Fools Day 1996 the three Welsh National Parks became free-standing, single-purpose Local Government Authorities. This ended a long phase of National Park administration extending back to 1951 when the Snowdonia National Park was set up.

The original vision in the 1940s had of course been for all the Parks to be relatively independent and indeed the Peak and Lake District National Parks were set up as planning boards rather than as joint committees of county councils. The other Parks were treated very differently. In the Brecon Beacons for example, a joint committee of Breconshire, Monmouthshire and Carmarthenshire existed to 1974 when a new National Park Authority was set up with its own staff and budget. At this stage the Authority became a joint committee of Powys, Dyfed, Gwent and Mid Glamorgan County Councils. Powys acted as the employer and as owner of most of the land and properties purchased for Park purposes. Seventy five percent of the National Park budget came via the Welsh Office,

with 25% from the counties. However, the 25% was not a legal commitment and the trouble with gentlemen's agreements is often the lack of gentlemen.

From 1 April 1996 the 25% has been a precept on the Council Tax so that once the overall budget is set we know exactly how much we have available. This is a major improvement. The Welsh Office is also making a separate capital grant to the three Welsh Parks each year which is a genuine boost to expenditure on the ground. Employees are now employed by the NPA rather than by the counties, and the NPA can now own land and enter into legal agreements rather than rely on parent bodies.

Preparing for the new status brought the three Welsh Parks much closer together, especially in areas such as finance and administration. Adoption of a new financial system, preparation of new Standing Orders, establishing agency agreements with neighbouring authorities for payroll schemes etc. were areas where we could help each other to develop best practice. Having

our own legal and financial staff means we can set our own priorities more easily and the change has undoubtedly resulted in a better service to the public with less confusion about NPA responsibilities. Losing the protective cloak or shield of the counties has not proved to be a problem. Indeed I can think of no significant disadvantage resulting from the change of status in the Brecon Beacons National Park.

Inevitably the three NPAs still work closely with the unitary authorities. Two thirds of the members are after all elected unitary authority members; the other third being appointed by the Secretary of State for Wales. Taking countryside recreation as an example, our traffic management strategy will inevitably be developed with the highway authorities. Much of the funding for cycling developments is being channelled through the unitary authorities and we are working closely together on developing a better network. Although nearly all rights of way work has now been delegated in the Brecon Beacons we cannot make Traffic Regulation Orders in the Powys part of the Park. Recreational use of unsurfaced routes will continue to be a problem in this area and one

where a joint approach is crucial.

However, independence does allow us to operate from a position of greater strength. We now have the backing of the Environment Act which states that where conflicts arise all public bodies must have regard for conserving the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Park. It will be interesting to see how seriously public bodies take that part of the Act.

Chris Ledbury is Assistant National Park Officer for Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.

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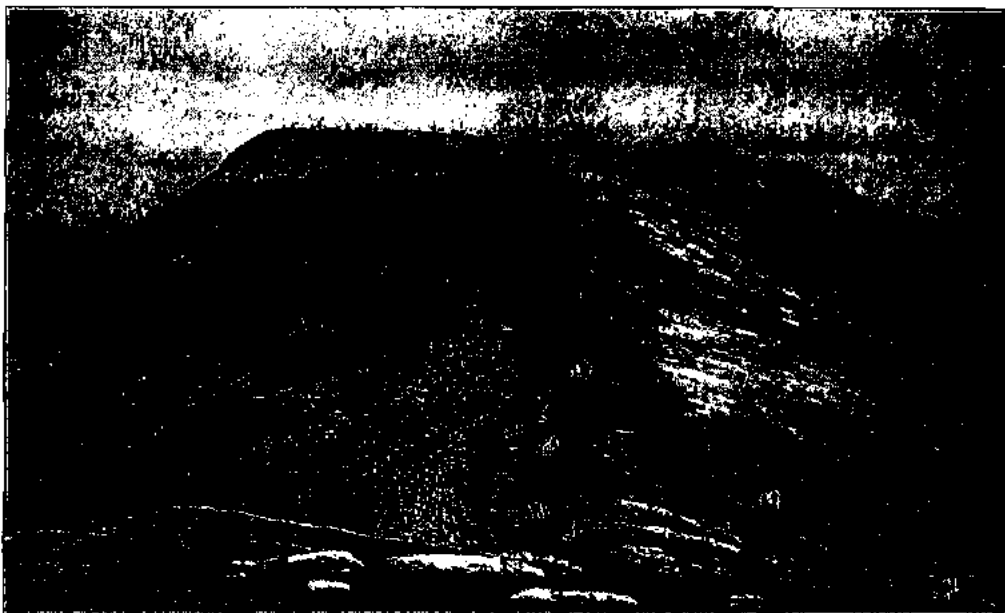


Photo: Brecon Beacons NPA

Footpath erosion on Pen y Fan in the central Beacons

Leaner is Not Always Fitter

John Harrison, Sports Council for Wales, discusses planning without PPGs in Wales

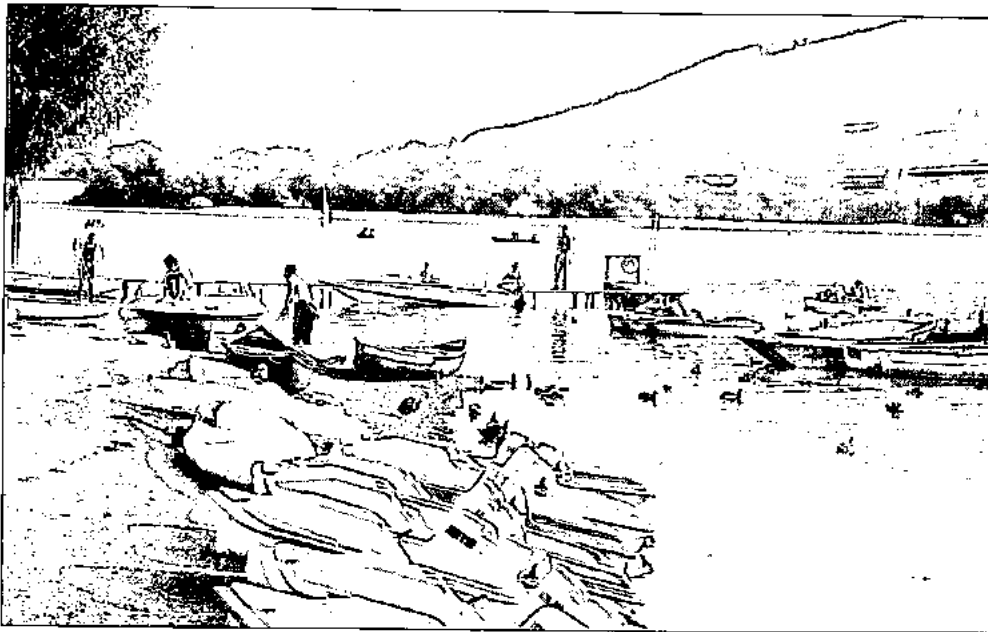


Photo: Brecon Beacons NPA

Llangorse Lake: where should watersports such as water-skiing and jet-skiing be allowed in the countryside?

"...We give nothing so freely as advice" remarked Duc de la Rochefoucauld in his maxims, but for a free commodity, advice on Welsh planning is becoming scarce.

It was John Redwood's gift, to set rolling the idea that PPG's were repetitious and that much could be taken from each, and put into a single general statement, leaving leaner, fitter topic papers. There were certainly advantages in the new high fibre diet. It ironed out inconsistent wordings which had constipated public inquiries while quote was pitched against counter-quote with no useful outcome. The sheer bulk of advice had become daunting to occasional users of the planning system, and even to full-time professionals straining to keep an overview of the whole thrust of advice.

So what spoiled the new healthy lifestyle? Firstly Planning Guidance Wales hit the office doormat in May 1996 with a rather light footprint. There was a great deal of policy which had not found a new home. Never mind, we were assured

that Technical Advice Notes (TANs) would bridge that gap. But the draft TANs were slow to follow, and were not quite the creatures many thought they had been promised. They were simply too small to fill the gap between the old PPG and the new Planning Guidance. The two replacement contributions for sport and recreation added up to only a third of the length of PPG 17.

Big topics had gone. There was no rationale for sport, to say why the public sector was involved with it and what it would deliver. There was no discussion of trends, no recommendation of standards, no clarification of the place of sport in special areas like the urban fringe and National Parks. A principle had been followed not to repeat information available elsewhere, but as the Welsh Office does not independently carry out research in many of the areas covered by TANs, no figures were offered at all, no sport is mentioned by name. The 'advice' becomes so brief it has an elusive feel to it. The picture is the same for tourism and other topics.

Since most planners have an in-tray that requires immediate attention, the short-term will see a pragmatic determination to make the best of what we have. In the long term, Mike Flynn, the Welsh Policy Officer for the RTPI, looks for a "much more creative dialogue" with the new administration in Cathays Park, and a review which might favour returning to a PPG style approach. Welsh Office officials have been happy to meet interested parties and explain and develop their views. They rightly emphasise that this is a consultation draft, and point out that for some respondents, the merits of simplification outweigh any concerns about omissions.

In the meantime some topics, including sport and recreation, face an interregnum between the old and the new. Most of PPG17 has been withdrawn, and the only policy guidance in place are the twenty lines in the general Planning Guidance (Wales) document. The proposed TAN 22 for Sport and Recreation has only been issued in draft, so Welsh sport is 55 paragraphs worse off for advice than it was in May 1996. PPG17 is still fully endorsed in England. Labour's new team in Cathays Park, with all the challenges of a Welsh Assembly ahead of it, will not begin by tidying up planning policy. Planners face a second year on short rations.

A brief spell working in the Welsh Office will not let me forget that many people seek central advice, and then complain about constraints and interference when they get it. But over and far above the usual inertia to change, is a feeling that advice that wasn't broken is unavailable, because it is being fixed. In the absence of full guidance, local policies and decisions diverge. Some of this will be sensible adaptation to local needs, but the PPGs were never so prescriptive that they prevented this happening anyway. What is more worrying, is that planners under pressure, with perhaps few local resources on specialist topics, will make the best ad hoc decision they can. They are unlikely to dig out policy publications by non-departmental public bodies like the Wales Tourist Board or the Sports Council for Wales, and trawl them for strategic advice. Even if they do, that advice is not statutory, so this is not a role others can fulfil.

The old system contained repetition and some inconsistencies. The latter has to be solved by scrupulous editing, whatever approach is

adopted. The former is a nuisance but is no reason to reduce the level of advice. Ironically it is now the reduction of the advice content which is the most prominent feature of the changes, even though this was never an explicit purpose of the review. The new style PG (Wales) with supporting TANs can work, and work well, but only if the TANs are strong, informative, and authoritative. Why would we want to go forward with anything less?

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Caring for Wild Places

John Mackay, Scottish Natural Heritage, examines the meaning and value of wildland in the UK



Photo: John Mackay

Loch Quoich: looking west into Knoydart...but does the enlarged hydro-reservoir loch reduce the quality of the wildland?

The 1964 US Wilderness Act was the culmination of a long debate in that country about the need to protect America's diminishing wildlands. It was a milestone not just for America, but a stimulus to the protection of wild places elsewhere, and it is an inspiration in setting down a simple vision in clear and cogent language. A wilderness, says the Act, is "...hereby recognised as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man is a visitor who does not remain".

How relevant is this vision to densely populated Britain, where most land has an economic use, often serving multiple uses, and where there is little left which has not been modified by human influence? There is no simple answer to this question. Obviously there are major contrasts in the way we administer and manage areas of conservation importance, most of our land being in private ownership (American wilderness protection is for Federal land), and in the more modest extent of land in Britain having wild qualities. The American wilderness system

now extends to a huge acreage, the largest designated area in Alaska being over 4 million acres. But many of these areas are also modest in scale and comparable with Britain's wilder enclaves. For example, in Arizona, 21 of the 35 wilderness units are less than 25,000 acres, although the largest is a quarter of a million acres.

But even if geography and cultural contexts differ, the human spirit of engagement with wild places is a universal force. When W H Murray said of the Cairngorm plateaux that they have "...a majesty great enough to cast a spell on the mind" he was reflecting a powerful sense of people being both humbled and refreshed by the power of wild places; the same message promoted by the early sponsors of wilderness protection in America, such as John Muir and Aldo Leopold. Murray went on to say about the Cairngorms that "...they have given a wilderness experience that could be found nowhere else in such fullness. But every man-made road driven into the interior and every building put there diminishes that experience. The

process has gone too far and should be halted; their loss is becoming irreparable." So we should not be modest about the quality of some of our wilder countryside: modified it may be and limited in extent, but it has high intrinsic quality.

Murray's words were written in the 1960s, since when the pressures for change to our wilder countryside have grown considerably. In a crowded Britain, wild places can be perceived as empty and thereby available for activities which are difficult to locate elsewhere. There are changes from phases of development, which have come in waves, each having important benefits, but each pushing back the frontier of the wild. Thus in Scotland, hydro-electric power development in the 1950s and 60s was a major cause of change to wild country; the expansion of conifer afforestation made its contribution; better accessibility to remote areas though public road improvements have had a major effect, and private bulldozed roads have scarred the hills; while fish farming developments on the western seaboard have intruded on the wilder coastline and, at present, renewable energy proposals threaten to leave their mark. Wild places everywhere are at risk from land use change and development, even the growth of recreational use of these places contributes to loss of quality.

But people live and work in or close to wild countryside or depend on its resources for their livelihood. Many of the changes to wild places

mentioned above have been important in strengthening the economy of remote rural communities and in enhancing their quality of life. For some, the word wilderness would be offensive, bearing in mind the sensitive, historical background involved in upland Scotland in the links with the past and present uses of land. All our wild places are modified and the imprint of past human use of these areas may often be visible. We should not ignore this past in pursuing today's needs. But we should be able to conduct a wider debate about the role of these wild places to society as a whole, bearing in mind the economic benefit arising from people coming to enjoy them.

If we accept there has been much attrition to wild countryside, how do we define that which needs protection? Perhaps our exploration of the definition of wildland should begin with the concept of wildness, which people can enjoy in many parts of the countryside throughout Britain, often lonely places in the uplands or at the coast, but even close to built-up areas. Wildness itself is not easily defined because it is both an aesthetic and an experiential concept, but most people would include naturalness, solitude, and a sense of challenge and hazard as key components in its definition. Each of us knows wildness when we experience it, but the threshold at which people perceive wildness may vary according to sensitivity or past experience.



Photo: John Mackay

Visitors enjoying the scenes of winter wildness on Ben Macdui. Increased recreational use can threaten these special qualities though.

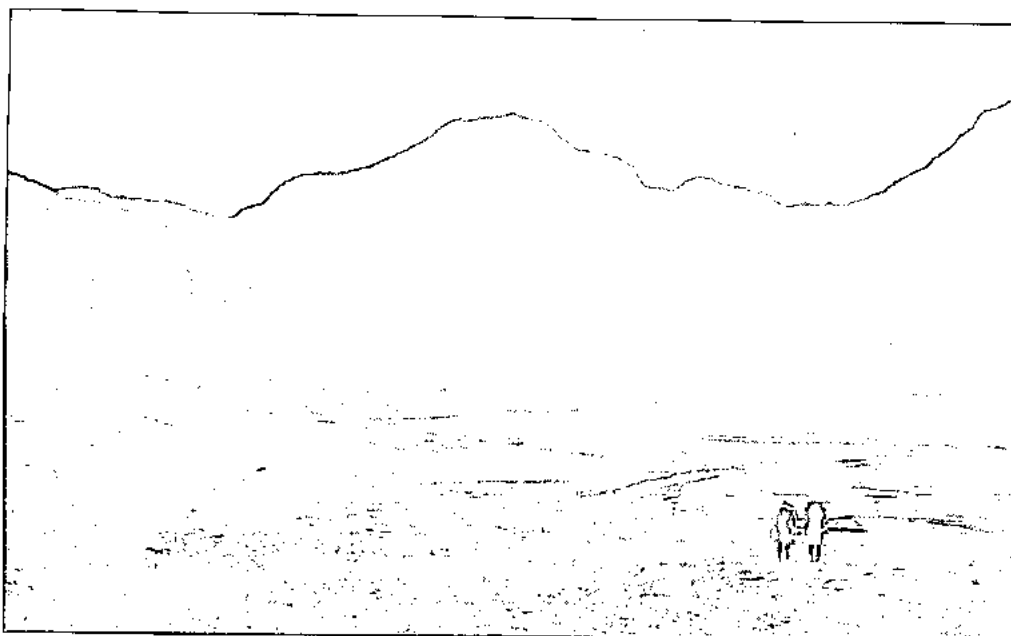


Photo: John Mackay

Much of the Highlands appears wild and natural but has in fact been modified from the pristine

Perhaps wildland can simply be defined as places (often extensive) where the qualities of wildness are best expressed, but ways will need to be found to give geographic meaning to an open definition of this kind. However, this definition is based on human enjoyment and experience of wild places. Another view of wildland is as a sanctuary for nature. Most of our wilder countryside lies in the uplands and to most visitors it is natural in aspect, but in truth, it is often highly modified and ecologically impoverished, with much less woodland than would exist in a natural state. That may not greatly affect people's enjoyment, but wild places should also be important in restoring a more natural landscape and for wildlife which needs extensive territories, or freedom from disturbance.

If wildland is valued, even if it is difficult to define, and if it is also suffering attrition to its quality and extent, how can better protection be provided? Is it just a subset of existing values protected under scenic or nature conservation designations, or should it have its own distinctive protection? Some people would argue for a separate designation, but that would be a controversial route to pursue in times when there is continued debate about the number and extent of designations, and given also that any such designation would be bound to overlap greatly with existing systems.

In thinking about the best way forward, perhaps the first need is to raise awareness and understanding of the issue. Many people, whether living in remote areas or in towns, are committed to the care of our wilder places, but the argument may need to be heard and agreed more widely, so that wildness can be more clearly identified as an important value of land which needs better protection. A more universal recognition of wildland values could be the starting point to identifying the extent of the resource, and then to promote debate about its care and enhancement by a variety of measures. But that requires political will by all with an interest, hence the first step must be to develop consensus in order to engage support and commitment to action.

John Mackay is National Strategy Manager for Scottish Natural Heritage

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Planning for Outdoor Sport in the Southern Region

A report by Georgina Reynolds, Nicola Mendham & Martin Elson

Aim of Research

The Planning Policies Research Group at Oxford Brookes University was commissioned by the English Sports Council (South) to undertake a research project to inform the development of a countryside and water strategy for the Southern Region. The study sought to identify opportunities and constraints for a range of outdoor sports and recreational activities in the Southern Region (Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight).

The Southern Region has the highest participation rate for sport and recreation in the country. People in the South participate more than the national average across the whole range of sports and recreational activities, but particularly so in countryside and water activities.

Research Methods

The research was divided into three main stages:

- desk-based research to assemble information on known sites and a review of the policy context including: national and regional policy guidance; development plan policies, local authorities' sports, recreation and leisure strategies; sport and recreation codes of practice; and site-specific local codes and management plans;
- fieldwork involving: consultation with national and regional organisations and local authorities in the region; interviews with major landowners, including the Ministry of Defence, the regional water companies, Forest Enterprise, the National Trust, the Country Landowners Association, British Waterways and English Nature; and a postal survey of sports' governing bodies and other countryside and water contacts to help identify further site-based information;

- preparation of a comprehensive database.

Research Outcomes

The outcomes of the project are:

- the database, a copy of which is held by the English Sports Council (South). PPRG have a contract to update the database periodically.
- a summary report *Planning for Outdoor Sport in the Southern Region*, which provides the land use planning context for the study.

The report, contains a review of national and regional planning guidance, development plan policies, local authorities' sports, recreation and leisure strategies, sport and recreation codes of practice, and site-specific local codes and management plans. It includes information about current initiatives being undertaken in the region relating to the English Sports Council's three priorities of Young People, the Pursuit of Excellence and the Sports Lottery Fund and a comprehensive list of references. Twelve case studies of good management practice are also included.

Copies of the summary report are available from the English Sports Council (South). Enquiries about the database should be addressed to Linda McCauley at:

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PPG17 'Sport & Recreation'

Martin Elson, Oxford Brookes University, reports on current research examining the effectiveness of planning guidance on 'Sport and Recreation'

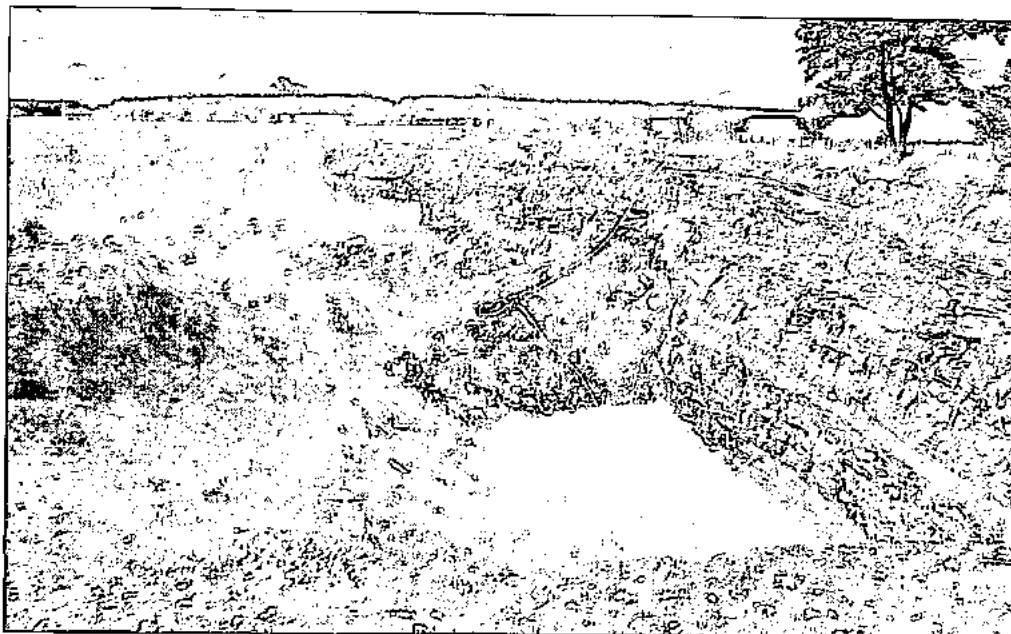


Photo: Kevin Bishop

Finding space for motorised water sports – using old mineral workings is one possibility

Planning Policy Guidance note 17 'Sport and Recreation' was the first comprehensive advice to local planning authorities in England and Wales on how the planning system should provide for sport and recreation. In addition to dealing with how policies should be incorporated into development plans, the guidance includes sections on topics such as the urban fringe, green belts, statutorily designated areas in the countryside, and specific activities such as golf and air sports.

It is now over five years since the publication of the original guidance on sport and recreation in September 1991. The need to review the effectiveness of the guidance was acknowledged in an undertaking in the White Paper 'Rural England' in 1995, as well as in the Government response to the House of Commons Environment Committee report on 'The Environmental Impact of Leisure Activities', published in the same year.

The particular concerns prompting the review, stated in these documents, were:

- a possible need to update the PPG to bring it in line with evolving Government policies for sustainable development;
- a wish to examine the planning implications of sport and recreation in the countryside, including golf courses; and
- a wish to reassess the implications for the countryside and planning of rapidly growing leisure activities, including noisy and obtrusive activities.

The review was commissioned by the Department of the Environment, in conjunction with the English Sports Council, in May 1996. The research team comprised the Planning Policies Research Group at Oxford Brookes University and Fuller Peiser, a firm specialising in planning and development advice, mainly to private sector clients.

The research is assessing *inter alia*:

- how fully sport and recreation interests are incorporated in the process of development plan preparation;
- the extent to which development plans, development control and planning appeal decisions reflect PPG 17 guidance; and
- any significant gaps in coverage of sport and recreation issues in PPG 17.

Since 1991 we have seen many changes to the policy and organisational 'landscapes' of the UK. Organisationally we have seen the establishment of the Environment Agency, with a strong recreation remit, and the English Sports Council with newly-focused objectives relating to excellence and young people. All National Parks became separate planning authorities in England in 1997 (1996 in Wales), and significant new guidance on recreation in National Parks (Circular 12/96) was introduced in September 1996. This suggested that particular sports and recreation activities should not be excluded from the Parks, but that National Park Authorities would need to take account of the Parks' limited capacities in planning for recreation. There will also be significant interactions between PPG 17 and PPG 13 'Transport', published in 1994.

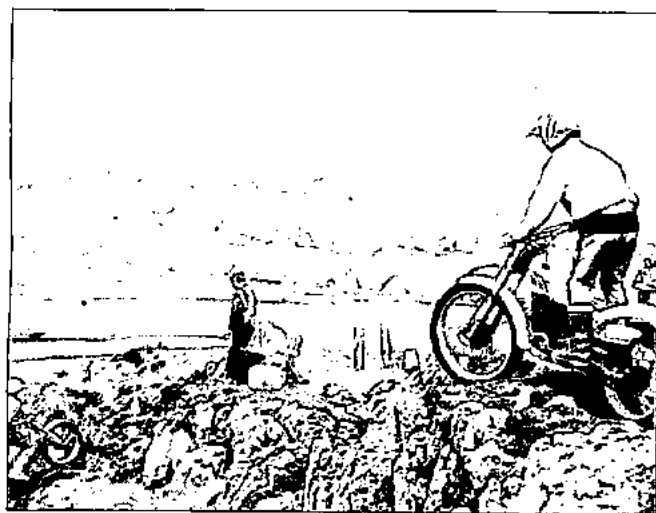


Photo: Peak District NPA

Of particular significance recently has been the introduction of Lottery funding for sport and recreation. The Lottery Sports Fund, for example, can assist new sport and recreation provision in the countryside, including informal recreation schemes of strategic significance for access or participation. The Heritage and Millennium Funds have also assisted schemes which provide new forms of access to the countryside, for example through major programmes such as the National Cycle Network and Millennium Greens. This type of funding appears destined to grow.

The Scottish Office has also recently produced National Planning Policy Guideline (NPPG 11) on 'Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space' (1996). This provides an up-to-date benchmark for guidance on sport and recreation, incorporating new material on sustainable development, intensive sports use, the needs of rural residents, and issues such as combat games and cycling in the countryside.

The review in England and Wales is currently being written up. It will recommend any revisions to PPG 17 that are considered necessary. Following this the new Government will have to decide how to proceed.

Professor Martin Elson leads the Planning Policies Research Group in the School of Planning at Oxford Brookes University.

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*'Noisy' and 'obtrusive'
activities?*

Creating a New Agenda

Ross Millar describes the origin and aims of the Mourne Heritage Trust in Northern Ireland



Photo: Environment & Heritage Service

The Mourne Mountains are within easy reach of Belfast

The Mourne Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty lies in the South East corner of Northern Ireland, centring on the well known range of hills which give the area such a dramatic backdrop. The Mourne are a compact range of hills running for about 15 miles along or near the coast and averaging only seven miles in width. Their proximity to Belfast (about 30 miles) and the fact that much of the high Mourne are in public ownership make them extremely popular for hill-walking, climbing and other outdoor pursuits, particularly amongst school parties and other organised groups. The hills are surrounded by a magnificent landscape of stone-walled fields, forests, Forest Parks and dramatic coastline that together merited designation as an Area of Outstanding Beauty in 1986. In Northern Ireland this designation bestows a duty to promote and manage recreation, as well as protecting the quality of the environment.

Whilst designation of AONBs is part of the remit of the Department of the Environment for

Northern Ireland, responsibility for the provision and management of recreational facilities lies with the relevant district councils; there are three with a direct interest in the Mourne area. Recreation within state forests is managed by the Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture for Northern Ireland, and public land in the high Mourne has traditionally been managed by various agencies of the Department of the Environment. Despite the best efforts of all concerned, to coordinate and integrate their activities, it has proven difficult to attain a balanced and effective management of the area since its designation. Accordingly, it was widely felt that it would be more profitable to develop a common agenda for coordinated action, and explore different mechanisms by which such an agenda could be made to work. This thinking, led, in 1994, to the commissioning of 'The Mourne Environmental and Visitor Management Strategy'(1). This Strategy had a number of

objectives, including:

- catering for and managing the growth in visitor numbers;
- providing a more robust and effective planning framework;
- developing and supporting community initiatives and supporting economic and environmental regeneration;
- fostering goodwill between different parties for the good of the environment and the local community.

Taking the Strategy Forward

Through its various recommendations, and the spirit of cooperation and attention to detail involved in its preparation, the Strategy persuaded all concerned of the value of collaborative action. When the rural development arm of the Department of Agriculture signed up to the Strategy, as a way of delivering its 'bottom-up' economic development programme, it was immediately apparent that the new atmosphere of cooperation created by the Strategy would be of great benefit.

The Strategy recommended a number of mechanisms for taking forward the agenda, but the idea of establishing an independent, charitable Trust found most favour amongst the various parties. It was felt that such a Trust could:

- act as a 'champion' for the area;
- build a wider partnership working with (or on behalf of) the community, and with public, private and voluntary organisations;
- plan, coordinate and implement action on a wide range of activities, such as access provision, planning control, local economic development, and environmental protection and management.

Furthermore, it was recognised that such a body could access new or alternative sources of funding, for example from the National Lottery, or from various private sector sources.

Establishing the Trust

A Development Plan and Action Programme were prepared to examine in full the implications of establishing a Charitable Trust (e.g. staffing,

financial and legal considerations). Six funding partners have agreed on a financial package to cover operational costs (around £160,000 per annum), and Trustees have been appointed: a Trust Manager and Strategy Manager have taken up post and a further four staff, including two 'in-house' manual staff, are due to follow. Regular meetings of the 20 Trustees will ensure the accountability of Trust staff, whilst meetings, tied-in with annual funding agreements, between Trust staff and the funding partners, will direct the work programme and establish goals and priorities for action.

A detailed Action Programme, will be re-prioritised, costed and implemented. This will reflect existing development initiatives in the area, and will aim to take full account of the concerns and aspirations of local people.

It is still early days for the Trust, but already it has injected new enthusiasm into the community and the various funding partners. The secret to its future success will be to ensure that it remains alive to the concerns and aspirations of local communities, whilst at the same time protecting the environment and providing quality recreation for the public. My own opinion is that the Mourne Heritage Trust will prove a classic case of 'the whole being greater than the sum of its parts'.

References

Peter Scott Planning Services (1994) **Mourne Environmental and Visitor Management Strategy**, unpublished report, Environment and Heritage Service/Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

Ross Millar is Access and A.O.N.B. Officer with the Environment and Heritage Service (Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland)

Commonwealth House
35 Castle Street
Belfast
BT1 1GU

Tel: 01232 546553.

A leaflet on the establishment of the Mourne Heritage Trust is available from the Trust's offices at Mourne Countryside Centre, 91 Central Promenade, Newcastle, Co. Down BT33 0HH Tel: 01396 724059.

Publications

'Calmer Waters: Guidelines for Planning and Managing Watersports on Inland Waters in Scotland'

These guidelines are intended to provide inspiration, advice, and information for organisations with roles in planning and managing inland waters, including:

- local authorities, as planning authorities and managers of inland waters for recreation;
- water authorities, which have responsibilities for some 320 lochs and reservoirs for water supply, catchment management and related purposes;
- private owners and managers, including owners of riparian lands and fishing rights;
- sports, recreation and tourism organisations, such as watersports clubs and commercial operators, individual sports participants and tourism associations;
- community councils and other community groups;
- conservation and amenity organisations, including national agencies, & others interested in safeguarding the scenic, natural and heritage values of inland waters.

While the Guidelines focus principally on inland lochs and reservoirs, the recommended principles and practices are relevant to most inland and coastal waters, including canals, sea lochs and estuaries, and to watersports after-uses of mineral workings. The advice refers to all types of watersport, including motorised watersports, and water-and-shore-based sports and recreational activities.

The Guidelines provide practical advice on integrated and sustainable approaches to the planning and management of inland waters, which take account of the recreational, economic and conservation values of such waters. Importantly, they demonstrate the essential linkages between the development of strategic policies for watersports, the preparation of site-specific management plans and adoption of site-based management solutions and monitoring and review programmes.

Copies of the Guidelines are available priced £15 from:

*The Scottish Sports Council
Caledonia House
South Gyle
Edinburgh
EH12 9DQ
Tel: 0131 317 7200*

No Room! No Room! The Costs of the British Town and Country Planning System

Occasional Paper 79, 1988, ISBN 0-255 36214-5, pp 55

By Professor Alan Evans

The British Town and Country Planning system was originally designed to be a guide rather than a restriction on development. However it has grown into a system which prevents development across the board by imposing significant costs on the British economy. The system has led to spiralling prices for land, distorted the patterns of investment and increased costs to industry by stifling large and small firms alike.

Professor Evans provides a thoughtful and comprehensive analysis of the burden of the town and country planning system which will be of interest to a wide and diverse audience.

"The purpose of this Occasional Paper is to demonstrate and trace...all the economic costs of limiting development...the total effect of which is significantly to reduce the economic welfare of the community." - Alan Evans

Copies of this Occasional Paper can be obtained, price £5.00 (free postage & packing) from:

*The Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA)
No. 2 Lord North Street
London
SW1P 3LB*

Tel: 0171 799 3745

Conservation and the Countryside: By Quango or Market?

Studies on the Environment No. 6 1996, ISBN 0-255 36379-6, pp 68

By Mark Pennington

In this radical study Mark Pennington demonstrates that Government attempts to conserve and manage the countryside have failed due to bureaucratic mismanagement and special interest group manipulation. The various Government departments and quangos involved, often working at cross purposes, have manipulated the system to the detriment of both the environment and the wider interests of the public. Pennington argues:

"It would not be an exaggeration to state that almost every act of countryside destruction has resulted from the bureaucratic desire to increase budgets and the political desire to buy votes."

After exposing the failings of the system Pennington proposes an alternative institutional framework involving voluntary exchange, property rights and free-markets. He explains how ownership gives individuals the incentive to care for the countryside, as well as providing accountability, and cites numerous examples in the UK and US in which the private sector has surpassed the public sector in caring for the countryside. Pennington concludes:

"If countryside conservation is the aim, it is time to dismantle the vast paraphernalia of planning and the quango state and to return to the democracy of the market."

Copies are available, price £6.00 (free postage and packing) from:

The Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA)
No. 2 Lord North Street
London
SW1P 3LB

Tel: 0171 799 3745

The First Fifty Years: of the British Mountaineering Council

This book describes the political actions and struggles that have taken place in Britain in order to maintain the seemingly tranquil activity of mountaineering. To this end, the book chronicles an eventful political history, describing the BMC's problems, debates and achievements over the first half century of its existence.

'The First Fifty Years' is something of a *pot pourri* of contributions by many authors, rather than a focused account by a single historian. They vary in style and interest but for the most part are fresh, idiosyncratic and candid. Much scattered history is gathered and the overall result is a unique and somewhat unusual publication. It will be invaluable as a check on dates, events and personalities, but will also be of great interest to anyone wishing to know more about how political activity has shaped the sport and maintained the freedoms that mountaineers hold so dear.

The book can be obtained, price £16.00 from:

The British Mountaineering Council:
177 - 179 Burton Road
Manchester
M20 2BB

Tel: 0161 445 4747

Editor's note:

Please keep the Network Manager informed of any publications that may be of interest to the readers of *Countryside Recreation Network News*.

Contact details can be found on page 3.

All Change at the Parks

Roland Smith, describes the new-look National Park Authority in the Peak District

As with all other National Parks in England, the Peak National Park became an independent planning authority on April 1, 1997. The Peak Park Joint Planning Board, which has managed the National Park for 25 of its 46 years, disappears and is replaced by the new-look Peak National Park Authority.

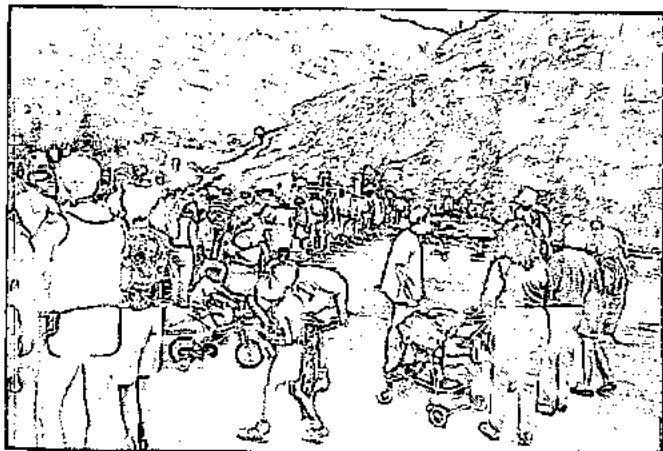


Photo: Peak District NPA

The membership of the new and slightly larger Authority consists of 38 people, just over half of whom are councillors representing the 12 local authorities within the Park area. These county, district and metropolitan councils contribute a quarter of the Park Authority's income. Just under half the membership is directly appointed by the Government (which continues to contribute 75 per cent of our funding), and eight of these new members have been nominated by the 130 parish councils within the Park.

The new Authority came into being under the provisions of the Environment Act (1995) which also gave the Park Authority newly-defined purposes. We now have a responsibility to conserve the cultural heritage of the National Park, as well as its natural beauty and wildlife. Our responsibilities for recreation now include

promoting the understanding of the special qualities of the landscape, which made it a National Park in the first place. And we also now have the duty to foster the economic and social well-being of the local communities in the Park, alongside other local authorities and agencies.

We welcome these important changes and we have renewed our commitment to 'Care for a Living Landscape' – the vision which we adopted several years ago. We expect to be the driving force in partnership with others, in achieving these challenging new aims. But we realise that our job cannot be done without the involvement and support of local people, who after all are the stewards of the environment we aim to conserve.

All this has to be achieved against a background of substantial cuts in our budget over the past two years. We are doing our best to provide the best service we can, both for local people and visitors.

*Peak District National Park Authority
Aldern House
Baslow Road
Bakewell
Derbyshire
DE45 1AE*

Tel: 01629 816200

Countryside Recreation Training and Events

August

4th – 8th August

Introducing Rights of Way

A foundation course for rights of way officers (Losehill Hall)

Cost: £470 Subsidised: £235

Tel: 01433 620373

22nd – 29th August

Wild Birds & their Habitats in South East England

(FSC)

Venue: Juniper Hall (North Downs)

Cost: £275 residential

£221 non-residential

Contact: FSC Head Office

Tel: 01743 851074

24th – 27th August

Diving the Skomer Marine Reserve and Pembrokeshire Islands

(FSC)

Venue: Dale Fort

Cost: £148 residential

£111 non-residential

Contact: FSC Head Office

Tel: 01743 851074

September

2nd September

Leading Edge Workshop

A workshop to facilitate an exchange of ideas on environmental education activities for the 50+ age group

Venue: Battleby

Cost: £12

Contact: Awareness & Involvement Unit, Scottish Natural Heritage

Tel: 01738 627921

7th – 9th September

British Pond Landscapes – Action for Protection & Enhancement

Venue: University College, Chester

Cost: basic rate £65 (variable)

Contact: Dr John Boothby

Tel: 0151 2314044

8th – 10th September

Map and Surveying Skills: for public rights of way

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £425 Subsidised: £212.50

Tel: 01433 620373

8th – 10th September

Customer Care: a practical approach to implementing site-based 'Visitor Welcome' initiatives (Losehill Hall)

Cost: £425 Subsidised: £212.50

Tel: 01433 620373

11th – 12th September

Leading Animated Guided Walks

For anyone involved in public events and guided walks.

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £240 Subsidised: £120

Tel: 01433 620373

15th – 17th September

Marketing Techniques for Countryside Managers

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £385 Subsidised: £192.50

Tel: 01433 620373

15th – 19th September

Understanding & Assessing Landscape

(IBEM)

Venue: Losehill Hall

Cost: £470 Subsidised: £235

Tel: 01433 620373

17th – 19th September

Evaluating Interpretation & Visitor Services

(CEI & Countryside Commission)

Venue: Losehill Hall

Cost: £390 Subsidised: £195

Tel: 01433 620373

October

6th October

Making Ends Meet

A workshop aiming to provide delegates with an insight into the opportunities and pitfalls of securing external funding (e.g. from Government schemes, the National Lottery & European Social & Structural funds).

(CRN)

Venue: James Gracie Centre, Birmingham

Contact: 01222 874970

13th – 15th October

Developing Cycling & Walking Routes

(CEI / Countryside Commission)

Venue: Losehill Hall

Cost: £385 Subsidised: £192.50

Tel: 01433 620373

19th – 24th October

Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas: a European Conference

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £520

Tel: 01433 620373

Countryside Recreation Training and Events cont...

20th - 24th October
Environmental Interpretation
(Plas Tan y Bwlch)
Cost: £528 Subsidised: £264
Tel: 01766 590324

27th - 31st October
*Wildlife Enhancement in
Historic Gardens and Parklands*
(Plas Tan y Bwlch)
Cost: £400 Subsidised: £200
Tel: 01766 590324

28th - 31st October
*Management Skills for Countryside
Staff (Part 1)*
(Plas Tan y Bwlch)
Cost: £728 (incl. Part 2)
Tel: 01766 590324

November

3rd - 7th November
*Forests for All?
sustainable management of
multiple-use woodlands*
(Losehill Hall)
Cost: £470 Subsidised: £235
Tel: 01433 620373

4th November
Funding From Europe
(CEI England & Wales)
Venue: to be confirmed
Cost: £110 Subsidised: £55
Tel: 0161 2471067

6th - 8th November
*Public Rights of Way Survey and
Management*
(Plas Tan y Bwlch)
Cost: £165
Tel: 01766 590324

10th - 14th November
*Basic Training for Wardens &
Rangers*
(Plas Tan y Bwlch)
Cost: £346 Subsidised: £225
Tel: 01766 590324

12th - 17th November
*Working for a Sustainable
Countryside*
Examining the principles &
practice of sustainable
development
(CMA)
Venue: Swallow Hotel, York
Cost: £280 Subsidised: £230

17th - 19th November
*Your Place or theirs?
Involving Communities in
Interpreting their Place*
(CEI England & Wales)
Venue: to be confirmed
Cost: £370 Subsidised: £185
Tel: 0161 2471067

17th - 21st November
*Management Planning in the
Countryside*
(Plas Tan y Bwlch)
Cost: £368 Subsidised: £220
Tel: 01766 590324

December

3 & 4 December

*Making Access for All
a Reality*

Joint Countryside Recreation
Network & Fieldfare Trust
Annual Countryside
Recreation Conference
Stakis Hotel, Sheffield

*For further details contact the
CRN Network Manager*

Training / events organisers

CEI (England & Wales)
Centre for Environmental Interpretation
Tel: 0161 2471067

SCRA
Scottish Countryside Rangers' Association
Tel: 01250 881286

Plas Tan y Bwlch
Tel: 01766 590324

SFSA
Scottish Field Studies Association
Tel: 01250 881286

CASS
Centre for Applied Social Surveys
Tel: 01703 594548

CEI (Scotland)
Centre for Environmental Interpretation
Tel: 0131 650 8017

CMA
Countryside Management Association
Tel: 01565 636603

IBEM
Institute of Economic and Environmental
Management
Tel: 01635 37715

ILAM
Institute of Leisure and Amenity
Management
Tel: 01491 874222

Losehill Hall
Tel: 01433 620373

CEE
Council for Environmental Education
Tel: 0118 975 6061

FSC
Field Studies Council
Tel: (Head Office) 01743 850 674

ETO
Environment Training Organisation
Tel: 01452 840825