

Outdoor Recreation Network
Annual Report
2014-15



Image courtesy of Outdoor Recreation NI

A View from the Chair

Jo Burgon, March 2015

Opening a conference on 'Public Health and the Outdoors' out of doors is an entirely appropriate way to get proceedings easily underway and conversations happening. This is how our annual conference started in Newport, Gwent this March. Learning some new skills from Nordic Walking to simple bushcraft activities were part of the mix demonstrated at Tredegar Park, courtesy of the National Trust. These brief participatory events by delegates set the scene for our subsequent indoor sessions and ensured that conversation levels remained high throughout.



Becoming and staying involved with a network like ours is dependent on well thought out and planned events. The subject matter has to be relevant to an increasingly diverse range of professional interests who value the role that outdoor recreation contributes to people's well being and lifestyles. This includes the way in which outdoor recreation activity can be used to raise awareness, understanding and support for the care of natural and cultural environments. The interdependency between these two facets are growing stronger.

The Network's activities this year have taken place at Stackpole, in Pembrokeshire National Park, Killaloe, in Co. Clare on the Shannon and Cheltenham on the edge of the Cotswolds. Being close to water, we inevitably experienced and enjoyed a variety of watersports as part of our meetings. Having a go at coasteering or paddle-boarding at least allows us to realise what is involved, what type of instruction is involved and an understanding what attracts people to participate in an increasing array of different recreational activities. We like to challenge ourselves and to be challenged. The open seminars at these meetings are proving popular with local ORN subscribers. At Stackpole we gained an overview of how the Wales Coast Path is contributing to people's enjoyment of the coastline as well as the contribution it is making to the local economy, we heard of Natural Resources Wales' plans for the future as it brings together 3 organisations under one roof. In Killaloe our focus was on the contribution water based activities make to building confidence and self esteem amongst the young as well as the contribution it makes for everyday well being.

These two events were hosted by the National Trust and Waterways Ireland respectively. They both pulled together exceedingly good programmes and hosted us well creating the atmosphere for good quality networking.

The meeting in Cheltenham was our annual look at research agendas. This year we studied the research associated with values, both in theory and practice. A good spread of interests were present from the academic community, policy folk and those involved with commissioning research within organisations. This event was organised by the Canal and River Trust in conjunction with Countryside and Community Research Institute at the University of Gloucestershire who hosted the event.

Full details of these events along with many other resources including our annual journal are available from the ORN website. ORN exists to develop, support and communicate best practice, issues, opportunities and developments in the outdoor recreation sector. To this end the E-journal which goes out to approximately 1,100 people and the various proceedings from seminars and conferences are all available to download from the website and these fantastic resources not only share important sets of information but also promote the work that the member agencies are involved with.

My thanks to all who helped make these events happen, to those who contribute articles and presentations and also to those who attended.

None of this would happen without promotion and organisation to get people to the right place at the right time. The support the Network has received from ORNI over the last 3 years has been tremendous. Their term of providing these secretariat services comes to an end on 31st March. So I must acknowledge and thank in particular Caro-lyne Ferris who as Director of ORNI established the means by which such services would be provided, but a special grateful thanks to Kathryn Callaghan who has managed the day to day affairs of the Network with great skill and charm.

Our new providers of Secretariat Services from 1st April are AKTA Partnership - a relatively new private consultancy but with a wealth of experience in managing networks like ours. I am pleased to say that ORNI will stay involved in providing us with financial services.

We enter this next phase with the ambition of disseminating and sharing experiences and good practice by continuing to meet across the UK and Ireland including holding open seminars as part of those meetings, enhancing the website and using social media more effectively to keep the outdoor recreation community in touch itself.

Membership

ORN is funded by the annual fees raised by its executive and support member organisations. It is these very members who shape the Network's activities, and who ensure that it continues to meet their needs and the needs of the sector as a whole. Throughout 2014-15 our members have continued to support the growth of the Network's open seminar programme, thereby increasing information-sharing and networking opportunities for members and the wider outdoor recreation industry within which we function. Our members take voluntary positions within the management group and engage wholeheartedly with each business meeting by means of providing advance organisational updates and through personal attendance.

The following organisations were members of CRN during 2014/15:

Executive members:

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Representative</u>
1. Association of National Park Authorities	Ally Kohler
2. Canal and River Trust	Brian MacAulay
3. Forestry Commission England	Paddy Harrop
4. Forestry Commission Scotland	James Ogilvie
5. National Trust	Philip Broadbent-Yale
6. Natural England	Wendy Thompson
7. Natural Resources Wales	Elinor Gwyn
8. Northern Ireland Environment Agency	Maia Taylor
9. Scottish Government	Helen Jones
10. Scottish Natural Heritage	Rob Garner
11. Sport Northern Ireland	Mike McClure
12. Sport Scotland	Campbell Gerrard/James Allen
13. Waterways Ireland	Sharon Roulston/Dawn Livingstone

Support members:

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Representative</u>
1. Heritage Council Ireland	Beatrice Kelly
2. Historic Scotland	Martin Gray
3. Lee Valley Regional Park	Nigel Foxall
4. Northern Ireland Tourist Board	Stephen Bill/Sheena Dickson
5. Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland	Caro-lynn Ferris
6. Scottish National Parks	Kenny Auld / Douglas Stewart
7. Sport and Recreation Alliance	Simon Butler/Hannah Dobbin
8. Welsh Assembly	Manon Philips

Network Activity

ORN shares information and provides a forum for discussion and debate through its annual programme of events, e-newsletters, journals and website. During 2014-15 a total of 3 agency meetings and open seminars were delivered, as well as an annual conference, 3 e-newsletters and 2 journals.

Events

During 2014-15 ORN organised a number of events to allow its members to network with each other and with regional and national industry experts. The overarching aim of these events is to share information, knowledge, best practice and ideas.

The following events were delivered during 2014-15:

Agency Meetings and open seminars

1. May 2014, Stackpole, Pembrokeshire, Wales

Theme: Looking towards the future: outdoor recreation in Wales

Host: National Trust

Meeting attendance: 15

Seminar attendance: 33

On the 15th and 16th May 2014, members of the Outdoor Recreation Network got together at the National Trust's Stackpole Centre, on the Pembrokeshire coast in Wales. On day 1 we conducted the Network's spring business meeting and experienced some fantastic outdoor activities, which included sea kayaking, mountain biking and coasteering. On day 2 we opened the doors to all interested parties for our seminar - 'Looking towards the future: outdoor recreation in Wales'.

Seminar speakers:

Elinor Gwynn	Natural Resources Wales
Richard Neale	National Trust
Catrin Dellar	Welsh Government
Emyr Roberts	Natural Resources Wales

Details of the event can be accessed here:

<http://www.outdoorrecreation.org.uk/events/41/orn-spring-seminar-2014-looking-towards-the-future-outdoor-recreation-in-wales/>

Feedback:

- “Feeling inspired and enthused! A good meeting, fantastic activities to stretch and challenge, great presentations and above all a huge amount of ‘networking!’”
- “Highlights were floating, discussing and campfire chats”.
- “More, shorter presentations?”
- “Excellent event, relaxing and very informative. Would be good to have range of presentations from different countries”.
- “Friday morning too short – would have preferred a full day. Surprisingly good given such senior staff who can sometimes inevitably be a bit cautious. Maybe a bit theoretical – some local presentation would be good”.
- “An outstandingly productive ORN meeting, a great mix of professionalism and enjoyment. It allows the stand-back overview of what we try to do every day, in company with and inspired by others facing the same issues and opportunities. Great!”
- “Great couple of days. Interesting presentations and activities – great company. Lots to think about and ideas to take back to Dartmoor!”
- “An excellent venue, in an awe inspiring location with a brilliantly varied programme and opportunity to network with like-minded professionals”.
- “Stackpole – a little bit of heaven 😊”
- “It was all very interesting and professionally informative”.
- “Floating meetings are the future”.
- “At last – ORN has got the format of the two days perfect!”

2. September 2014, Killaloe, Ireland

Theme: Youth: participation in outdoor adventure & inland water recreation
Host: Waterways Ireland
Meeting attendance: 10
Seminar attendance: 24

On 25th and 26th September, ORN held its Autumn 2014 business meeting and seminar in Killaloe, Ireland. Hosted by ORN member, Waterways Ireland, the 2-day event was a great success, with networking and information sharing at the top of our agenda. On day 1, after the business meeting, members had the opportunity to experience water activities first hand, followed by a networking

dinner also attended by local industry professionals. The seminar on day 2, entitled 'Youth - participation in outdoor adventure and inland water recreation', brought together members from across the British Isles, with local Irish experts and leaders in the field of outdoor water recreation.

Details of the event can be accessed here:

<http://www.outdoorrecreation.org.uk/events/42/orn-autumn-seminar-2014-youth-participation-in-outdoor-adventure-inland-water-recreation/>

Speakers:

Diarmuid O’Brian	National Water Activity Centre for Scouting Ireland
Mike Jones	University of Limerick Sports Centre
Olivia Cosgrove	Row the Erne
Liam Moloney	Lough Derg Yacht Club
Eanna Rowe	Waterways Ireland
Keith Wood	Healthy Ireland Council

Delegate feedback:

Please tell us what you will ‘take away’ from this event:

- “It is always refreshing to hear the great stories of work taking place to engage people from all communities. In these times of challenging organisational budgets, hearing how much can be done with little, is always an inspiration”
- “I will include my notes from the event in our notes for the preparation of the next LEADER programme. Outdoor recreation is vital to the Co Clare economy and to tourism and from the Local Development Companies’ point of view, the work of Waterways Ireland in Lough Derg is of huge importance.”
- “Well done to all for a wonderful and interesting event”
- “I very much enjoyed the event and gain insights into partnership working that were inspirational and educational in terms of striving to achieve common goals. “
- “This was an excellent event and very well run. I very much enjoyed being part of the event.”

3. January 2015, Cheltenham, England

Theme: Values in outdoor recreation
 Host: Countryside and Community Research Institute
 Lead by: Canal and River Trust
 Meeting attendance: 10
 Seminar attendance: 33

On 30th January 2015, ORN held its annual research seminar. This 1 day event was hosted by the Countryside and Community Research Institute. Focusing on the concept of 'values' in outdoor recreation, we looked at both the economic value of both the environment and of recreation activities – as well as concepts of wider social value, that are harder to measure yet still powerful and relevant to the outdoor recreation sector. We discussed the ecosystem approach as well as philosophical and methodological approaches, ranging from mainstream economics through to some of the more interpretative approaches of the arts and humanities.

Details of the event can be accessed here:

<http://www.outdoorrecreation.org.uk/events/44/orn-2015-research-seminar-values-in-outdoor-recreation/>

Speakers:

Dr Alex Franklin	Cardiff University
Dr Ria Dunkley	Cardiff University
Olivier Vardakoulias	NEF Consulting
Prof Alister Scott	Birmingham City University
Prof Diane Crone	University of Gloucestershire

Delegate feedback:

What were the key benefits to you in attending this seminar?

- "Hearing what is happening across the place and networking"
- "Greater understanding of research subjects, generation of contacts both for research and funding opportunities."
- "Networking information updating discussion of current issues"
- "To hear a range of views about the value of outdoor recreation."
- "Updating professional knowledge & networking"
- "Networking and learning more about the shared interests and policy/practitioner concerns of ORN members"
- "Keeping in touch with recent thinking and research; standing back and reflecting on how this contributes to projects I am currently working on; networking."
- "Briefing on new developments Networking"

Please provide any other feedback or comments about the seminar

- "Extremely professionally organised, and very welcoming cohort of seminar participants."
- "Excellent presentations and sufficient time for networking"
- "Well run event. Thank you."
- "I always find ORN events valuable. A better balance between theory and practice might have made this one even more useful."
- "Great to catch up with the ORNistas"

Annual Conference - March 2015, Newport, Wales

Theme: Public health and outdoor recreation
Lead by: Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority; National Trust
Attendance: 82

With a focus on public health this conference sought to emphasise how outdoor recreation promotes and protects health and wellbeing in terms of preventing ill health, as well as prolonging and enhancing quality of life. Through participating in a range of outdoor activities at Tredegar Estate, listening to a broad range of keynote presentations and workshop sessions and through the boulevard display exhibits, delegates were invited to discuss the principles shaping contemporary health and social care service sectors and to consider the opportunities for improving public health through the use of outdoor recreation.

This event was developed with support from the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority, in conjunction with Natural Resources Wales, the Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and the National Trust in Wales.

Details of the event can be found here:

<http://www.outdoorrecreation.org.uk/events/43/2015-annual-conference-public-health-and-outdoor-recreation/>

Keynote speakers:

Dr Ruth Hussey	Welsh Government
Malcolm Ward	Public Health Wales
Ambra Burls	National Parks and Wellbeing Forum
Ken Skates	Welsh Government
Prof Nadim Haboubi	NHS Wales
Bridget Finton	Scottish Natural Heritage
Dr Jessica Allen	Institute for Health Equity

Workshop presenters:

Mel Jones	Ramblers
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Kate Hamilton	Small Woods
Kim Buxton	British Heart Foundation
Sarah Worbey	Macmillan Cancer
Jonathan Lee	Venture Out

Boulevard display exhibitors:

Chris Thomas	Peers Clough Farm
Sheila Talbot	Natural England
Mark Weston	British Horse Society
Kevin Lafferty	Forestry Commission Scotland
Mandy Cook	Dundee University
Phil Jayne	Come Outside!
Karen Ingram	British Nordic Walking
Liz O'Brien	Forestry Commission
Hannah Buck	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

The proceedings from the conference are being collated into a special edition of the journal to be published later in 2015.

Delegate feedback:

- “Very interesting and informative. Well organised. Would have appreciated more ‘true’ workshop time. Thank you.”
- “Thank you. I found the conference both informative and useful. Info was useful and the provision of new contacts and networks will be essential. Look forward to receiving the notes.”
- “Great to hear from people from the other side!”

- “Good spread of activities and presentations. Particularly valued Nadim Haboubi and Jessica Allen”
- “Great day. Some useful insights and topics to take forward.”
- “Well done with all the activities at Tredegar.”
- “Workshops could be more interactive and a chance to share ideas.”
- “Key note speakers – a presentation or speaker from someone on the ground – ranger, support worker, to tell it how it is and the difficulties in reaching people etc,. We know the objectives we are trying to reach and achieve – but in real life not that easy.”
- “Day1. Extremely well organised activities. Great fund, great venue. Day 2. Interesting ad thought provoking. Good mixture of speakers. Great Conference”
- “The best part of every conference (for me) is the opportunity for networking, so thanks for allowing time for that. I found the two keynote speakers after lunch rather dry. Excellent venue and I liked the cabaret style seating.”
- “An excellent event thought provoking and inspiring – the network has a strong role to play in the future.”
- “Excellent, well-balanced couple of days – inside and outside!”
- “Gave good scope for networking in an easy way.”
- “Lots of good ideas and contacts.”
- “Plus: Well organised. Good range of topics. Excellent Site Visits. Minus: Food. Accommodation costs.”
- “Suggestion: Fewer speakers, more (smaller) facilitated activities and workshops.”
- “Excellent mix of both delegates and speakers.”
- “Great event for networking, with good time and opportunity to capitalise on it.”
- “Thank you for a great meeting.”

Communications

Journals

In May 2014, volume 23 of the ORN journal was published. It was guest edited by Paddy Harrop of Forestry Commission England. It centred around the March 2014 annual conference proceedings 'Participate Outdoors' and contained articles associated with each of the keynote presentations and workshop sessions. This included contributions from the following organisations:

- OpenSpace research Centre
- Snowdonia Active
- Forestry Commission
- Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
- Outdoor Industries Association
- Walk Unlimited
- Plymouth City Council
- National Trust

In September 2014 volume 24, of the ORN journal was published. It was guest-edited by Mike McClure of Sport Northern Ireland. The theme was Outdoor Recreation in the 21st Century, which contained articles from a range of industry specialists from the following organisations:

- TNS
- Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute
- Meiji University
- Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust
- Moors Valley Country Park and Forest
- Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority
- Denbighshire County Council
- Sport and Recreation Alliance

Approximately 1,100 pdf copies of both journals were emailed to the ORN database. The journals were also made available on the ORN website.

Volume 25 is planned for completion during Spring 2015. This will include the March 2015 conference proceedings as well as articles from each of the conference speakers.

E-newsletters

During 2014-15 3 e-newsletters were published and disseminated in May 2014, October 2014 and March 2015. These were based on ORN agency meeting seminars and linked to guest speaker presentations. These can be viewed here:

May 2014 <http://crm.countrysiderecreation.com/ENewsletter.aspx?ID=18681>

October 2014 <http://crm.countrysiderecreation.com/ENewsletter.aspx?ID=5623>

March 2015 <http://crm.countrysiderecreation.com/ENewsletter.aspx?ID=22739>

Website

Google Analytics show that from April 1 2014 to March 24 2015, www.outdoorrecreation.org.uk received 4,564 unique visitors, who spent an average of 1 minute and 29 seconds on the site per visit. 78% of these people were first-time visitors. This represents an increase of 27% from the previous year in terms of site visitors.

The 10 most popular pages during 2014/15 were:

1. Home
2. Journals
3. Events
4. Public health conference 2015
5. Research archive
6. News
7. Reports and publications
8. E-news
9. Member updates
10. Participate Outdoors conference 2014

Financial Statement 2014/15

This is the financial position at 19 March 2015. Audited accounts will be available later in 2015.

EXPENDITURE

Item	Expenditure to date (19.03.15)
Travel and Subsistence for Chair and Secretariat	2,571.33
Journal (conference proceedings 2014)	1,008.00
Journal (Autumn 2014)	1,008.00
Salary of Secretariat	16,665.81
Overheads (15% of salary)	2,499.87
Conference 2014	348.44
Conference 2015	6,306.06
Seminars 2014	705.35
Seminars 2015	925.56
Web/IT	79.98
Miscellaneous*	718.00
Total	32,836.40

INCOME

Item	Amount
Carryover	17,211.00
Membership fees received in 2014/15 financial year (includes £4,050.00 received for 2015/16 membership)	28,300.00
Annual conference 2014	1,326.00
Annual conference 2015	996.28
Seminars 2014	501.70
Seminars 2015	1,510.00
Advertising	250.00
Publishers Licensing Society	39.81
Total	50,134.79
BALANCE	17,298.39

*

Information Commission	70.00
Solicitor	558.00
Room hire for tender scoring	90.00
TOTAL	718.00