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*Front page photograph of Mentro Allan, Pembroke
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This issue... 'Changing Social Behaviour'.

- Catch a Kid and Change a Life • Encouraging Pro-Social Behaviour Amongst Young People • Phoenix Futures Conservation Therapy Programme
- Mentro Allan: some of the stuff we've learnt so far... • Does Adventure Education Mitigate Violent and Aggressive Behaviour in Individuals and Groups
- Volunteering at Anglesey Abbey • Volunteering in the Natural Outdoors: A new report from CRN • CRN Conference 2008
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Countryside Recreation Network

Countryside Recreation Network (CRN)

CRN is a network which:

- covers the UK and the Republic of Ireland
- 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 in three areas:

Research:

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

Chair: Geoff Hughes

Vice-chair: John Watkins, Countryside Council for Wales

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Visit CRN on the Internet!

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Countryside Recreation Editorial Policy

Countryside Recreation is the journal of the Countryside Recreation Network. The purpose of the journal is to act as an exchange for sharing information, ideas and practical solutions that promotes best policy and practice in countryside recreation across the UK and Ireland. Countryside Recreation is free and is published three times a year. We welcome articles and letters from all readers. The editorial policy for the journal is to provide a platform for a fair and honest discussion on issues relating to countryside recreation.

Articles will be accepted from anyone from the Network organisations and other organisations and individuals who wish to share their knowledge, research findings, practical experiences or promote policies and strategies in the provision and management of access, recreation, sport and active tourism.

The Journal is not a lobbying or campaigning platform. We will not accept articles that are defamatory and potentially libellous. Rights of reply will be offered when organisations' actions are brought into question.

The Response section is used to enable comments to be made on specific articles. Articles offered for this section may be edited for length.

The journal is managed by the CRN Network Manager and guided by an editorial panel made up of representatives from organisations in the Network. The editorial panel and CRN Network Manager reserve the right to reject articles and curtail discussion on specific subjects if the panel feel that the issues have been appropriately and satisfactorily dealt with. We will always discuss with authors the reason for rejecting articles.

The CRN Network Manager will commission articles related to the specific themes that are part of each journal. We will also accept articles on a range of subjects for each issue but they must be related to the business of the Network members' remits.

The Autumn/Winter journal will be based on the theme of 'CRN's 40th Anniversary with a link to access and Country Parks'.

If you would like to submit an article or a news item for consideration by the Editorial Board, please email the document in word format to the Network Manager (crn@shu.ac.uk).

Please note the following submission deadline dates:

Articles for editorial board consideration to be submitted by 22nd August 2008.

Commissioned articles to be submitted by 12th September 2008.

News items to be submitted by 26th September 2008.

Chair of Editorial Panel: Rachel Hughes, Sports Council for Wales



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Editorial

Dr Rachel Hughes, Sports Council for Wales

Social behaviours are complex and heterogenic; as such, any interventions that seek to change behaviour must take account of its complexity.

Organisationally or individually, we are increasingly facing the challenge of changing societal behaviour(s); however, before we can seek to change behaviour, we must firstly understand people: their motivations, their barriers, and their social context(s).

Outdoor space and more specifically, outdoor recreation have increasingly been seen as a method of facilitating behaviour change. Given the variety of outdoor recreational opportunities, both in terms of place and activity, outdoor recreation enables different 'types' of interventions to take place with the aim of changing different 'types' of social behaviour(s).

Providers of outdoor recreation need to understand the wider social benefits that their activity can have so that they can communicate this with those who are endeavouring to change social behaviour. Similarly, those organisations that are tasked with changing social behaviour should be aware of the role that outdoor recreation can have in facilitating this.

Building on a recent CRN seminar on changing social behaviours, I am pleased to introduce a collection of articles that further explore this interesting and topical issue.

We begin with Mick Watson's fascinating story of the development of *Get Hooked on Fishing*; an innovative project where fishing is used as a tool to divert young people from crime and anti-social behaviour. He exemplifies some of the social outcomes of the project with a couple of inspiring personal success stories. Mick concludes with some useful advice for all those wanting to deliver social benefit.

Encouraging pro-social behaviour is a subject that Judy Nixon discusses in her article. Drawing on evidence from two pilot projects in Yorkshire, she argues that the use of behavioural rewards and incentive schemes with young people can stimulate active citizenship and respectful behaviour.

In his article, Jon Hall illustrates a unique and innovative conservation therapy programme provided by *Phoenix Futures*. The programme engages people who utilise *Phoenix Futures'* care and rehabilitation services for drug and alcohol problems, to work as teams in assisting in the conservation of specific areas of countryside. Jon argues that the programme provides tangible results to those engaged and local communities, as well as genuine benefits to the environment.

Becca Mattingley and Richard Harry explore the Sports Council for Wales' *Mentro Allan* (*Venture Out* in English) programme. The main aim of *Mentro Allan* is to increase activity levels amongst the 'hard to reach' sedentary population by increasing their recreational use of the natural environment of Wales. Through the use of two case studies, they argue that while the approaches taken and planned outcomes are somewhat different, both projects have successfully engaged individuals and groups, resulting in wider positive outcomes for participants.

Through the work of *Getaway Girls*, a voluntary and community sector organisation based in Leeds, Viv Carnea explores whether Adventure Education can mitigate violent and aggressive behaviour in individuals and groups. Viv uses two case studies to facilitate this. She argues that structural social inequalities frequently underpin anti-social behaviour, and that adventure education can be effective in giving young women the self-confidence and strategies to challenge their social exclusion, and move on in their lives.

The National Trust welcomes the assistance of volunteers, and is fortunate in having a number of people who are retired or for other reasons have time to spare to help out. Richard Todd describes how the Trust has been pro-active in offering volunteering opportunities in the gardens of Anglesey Abbey in Cambridgeshire to a wider range of people; namely, unemployed people, those with mental health problems, and young people. He illustrates both the social benefits of being a volunteer gardener through the use of a couple of case studies, and the associated benefits of working with volunteers from a range of backgrounds.

Moving away from the theme of the issue, despite there being clear synergies with Richard Todd's article, I would like to highlight an important outcome of the work of CRN. One of the benefits of being a network of organisations is collaborative working. There are many cross-cutting themes and issues that are pertinent to those involved in CRN, many that warrant further exploration; natural outdoors volunteering is one such issue.

In May 2007, CRN commissioned a report to explore how natural outdoors volunteering fits with current and developing trends in the countryside, and how opportunities for this form of volunteering could be enhanced, encouraged and its potential be realised.

The report written for CRN by the Tomorrow Project, a charity specialising in futures work, was published in May 2008. The report, which contains sixteen illustrated case studies, is in five parts: natural outdoors volunteering today; the benefits of natural outdoors volunteering; natural outdoors volunteering and public policy; and issues, perceptions, opportunities and threats.

Richard Worsley's article maps out the content of the report, and moves on to illuminate the programme of events that took place at the report's launch at Wimpole Hall in Cambridgeshire. The full report is available from CRN.

I hope that you find this an enjoyable and informative issue, and that it provides you with the opportunity to both reflect and engage in some stimulating debates around changing social behaviour(s).

Dr Rachel Hughes, Sports Council for Wales

Catch a Kid and Change a Life

Mick Watson, Get Hooked on Fishing



Fishing is often described as a pastime that involves a worm at one end and a fool at the other, yet it is known by millions to be the thing that saved them from a path of self-destruction.

This is true of myself and I doubt I would have become a police officer if angling had not been such a significant part of my life. So when tasked by my senior officers within Durham Constabulary to come up with an innovative project that could divert young people from crime and anti-social behaviour, fishing was my obvious choice.

Starting out

In 1999, social inclusion, partnership working and Youth Offending teams were very much in their infancy. The agencies involved with young people were all working independently without any cohesion where it mattered most - "out on the streets". Being a police officer allowed me to approach young people and ask what they needed, and more seriously to look at how we could prevent them from entering the criminal justice system. When I suggested fishing it was clear that if we could offer tuition from

appropriate people, provide equipment and then show them where they could go on their own, by far the majority wanted to give it a go.

I had also at this time, on my days off, designed a fishery in the North East and it was here in 1999 that a fellow fisher, aged 14, and I sat down and created Get Hooked on Fishing. Philip Farley was a bright intellectual young man whose knowledge of current affairs and benevolence would never have been seen if he had not been fishing. It allowed some interesting conversations about young people and the police to take place, and in the space of a few weeks we had the idea on paper. What other sport would have enabled this?

Get Hooked would be an initiative that helped build a brighter future for young people and it would be user-led; it is exactly the same today eight years later. My Chief Constable, George Hedges, grasped it straight away and granted me time to commence the scheme. With the aid of Durham Agency Against Crime we began creating all the policies and strategies, we entered the network of Local Government Agencies and began fundraising.

At first it was difficult explaining how fishing would fit in with the traditional sports on offer (football, swimming, rugby and cricket, for example) and the funding effort reflected this. So with some fishing tackle and £1,000 in the bank we launched the project in April 2000. Those first few events could have been filled 20 times over and we

immediately had resource issues. The media took an interest from far and wide and then the Government wanted to know what it was all about.

Development

Enter the Government in the shape of then Sports Minister Kate Hoey, she helped shape the plan to spread the project around the UK. Kate understood the need for such projects but also had the knowledge that the fishing world could not deliver the sports benefits in its then current form. Along with the Environment Agency, Get Hooked on Fishing began describing what was needed to structure fishing to capitalise and sustain a huge increase in development. Coaching numbers was the first issue, then came the difficult task of getting three governing bodies to have a joined-up approach. We all agreed that this was the main inhibiting factor in attracting funding; the sport was very amateurish and it certainly couldn't work effectively without multi-agency partnerships. We all knew it would be difficult and indeed it is only now in 2008 that we can say we are nearly there.

So whilst all this was going on, Get Hooked continued to deliver its programmes; we had trained our first peer-led coaches, Philip Farley being at the forefront of this first cohort. We introduced hundreds of young people and had 100% success rate in diverting them away from the negative things in life. They came from urban and rural areas, some had serious problems, some had a few, but all of them needed our help in one shape or form. The profile of the project has caused us to attend various shows and events from Game Fairs, where we demonstrate in front of crowded grandstands, to exhibitions when the peer-led staff would be available to talk to prospective new schemes.



By 2002, it was apparent that we would have to finance the project away from the local tax payers in Durham and with the help of other agencies I commenced a career break from Durham Constabulary. In 2003 we began the process of forming The Get Hooked on Fishing Charitable Trust and we had five schemes up and running around the country. As we approached 2004, I realised that in order for the whole project to continue we needed new expertise. Our enquiries had grown to over a hundred and funding continued to dominate our short-term life.

With the help of now retired Chief Constable George Hedges, we reviewed all aspects of Get Hooked and created a national strategy, a training manual, and more importantly a development plan that would provide stability and the direction for the project to move on. In September 2005, we employed Anne Moyle as Chief Executive, her background in banking and business administration would see the Charity expand rapidly.

Out of the blue, a chance visit to the Durham project was about to have a far-reaching positive impact on the direction of Get Hooked. Dr Adam Brown a Senior Research Fellow at Manchester Metropolitan University visited the project. This was in part owing to the fact that he was an angler but also that he had a professional interest in the interventions that sport could achieve. Adam was subsequently deployed by the Government and Get Hooked to produce a research report on the project. The document "Get Hooked on Fishing, Angling and Youth Inclusion" demonstrated the need for us to follow our plans across the charity's business.

Personal success stories

Whilst all this high level process was developing, the projects on the ground continued to deliver high-level interventions in each area it worked. The inspiration behind each scheme was a local co-ordinator who with the aid of multi-agency partners offered young people a chance to change. By hanging their lives in and around fishing some students were now beginning to show just how far they could go in life. I will provide a few case studies which are not unusual when it comes to Get Hooked.

At aged 13 a young man came to us through his school. His father and uncles were all well known to the criminal justice system, and family life could only be described as disjointed. The lad himself was always polite but had the inherent dislike of police, teachers and other forms of authority. He also had a limited vocabulary that was adapted with profuse foul language. It was felt by a number of agencies that this person was highly at risk of offending and that his family would encourage this. Whilst acting as a peer-led coach he helped over a hundred young people without incident. Here we are now eight years down the road, he has exceeded expectations at school, followed a professional apprenticeship, runs his own home, owns a car, and has never entered into criminality.

At aged 14 the next person came from an affluent background and had never been in trouble. He attended school and was one of the most academic pupils in attendance. He had low-self esteem and confidence issues partly due to his parents divorce and partly due to a speech impediment. He began to respond to male role models and rapidly became pivotal to the local schemes' delivery. His issues began to diminish and he was confident at leading groups of other young people and talking with adults from all walks of life. Eight years later and he has had a highly successful university education and is destined for great things.

Last but not least is the story of Philip Farley, now 24 years old and an English and Drama teacher at a local comprehensive school.

Sustainability

The third sector's most commonly used word has never been taken lightly within Get Hooked. Those early days saw us plan for three years and very quickly we realised it needed to be ten. There are three areas in which we need to ensure the impact of Get Hooked is sustained. Firstly in that the young people that we work with need to have a benefit for a lifetime not just that initial taster. We are now delivering a product that is appropriate in the work environment; NVQs, BTECs and OCN qualifications that relate to customer services, retail management, and conservation, and the coaching of the sport.

All of these contribute to our people being more attractive to prospective employers, and if they are in work, they have more opportunities to excel. We spend a lot of time and money in this country looking into how to affect unemployment and its generational symptoms, perhaps through Get Hooked we have found something that can make a difference.

Our local projects also needed to develop and grow. Grant Aid culture is very apparent at both a local and national level and we all have to change that thinking. Get Hooked North East (the first scheme) realised as early as 2002 that it had to find ways of generating its own revenue, revenue that wasn't restricted and subject to hundreds of conditions. We needed to be able to pay for twelve young people to go to France to say thank you or to give them something to aim for. We also needed to be able to buy in a qualification for a particular person who either didn't fulfil criteria or lived in the wrong postcode area. So our second strategy for sustainability became social enterprise. It has enabled the project to own its own fishing centre and generate money from the commercial sector to drive its social aims. The less reliant on grant assistance it becomes, the more empowered the people are; ambition, knowledge, enterprise and community service are all integral to the success of the business. This is now one of the main strategies of the national charity and it hopes to have at least two of its

projects become social enterprises by the beginning of 2009. The third and final element of the sustainability jigsaw is that of its national umbrella body. The Trust currently retains sixteen Charter Marked projects across the UK with current developments projecting twenty-one schemes by 2009 and thirty by 2010. It employs nine staff with two running national operations and strategy; it is heavily reliant on grants and donations. How to sustain and develop this vehicle? Well we have loads of ideas and a couple of plans in place. You will just have to wait and see.

We have done OK since we started with a bit of fishing tackle and £1,000, may it all continue and I hope it acts as an inspiration for others who know they can make a difference.

Advice

There will be some people reading this who have a passion about delivering social benefit. For what it's worth, I thought I would include some top tips:

1. Keep to your social aims (never lose sight of what and who you want to help);
2. Look after the people who help you;
3. Don't be frightened to bring in new people who can do certain things better than you;
4. Look after the money;
5. Maintain and develop networks;
6. Take a peek through every window of opportunity;
7. Monitor and evaluate;
8. Qualitative evidence makes you realise you are doing the right thing;
9. Quantity only appeases politicians (not all) or career climbers;
10. Don't discount anyone, you never know who might need your help.

Photographic References

All photographs credited to Get Hooked North East

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Encouraging Pro-Social Behaviour Amongst Young People

Judy Nixon, Sheffield Hallam University



This photograph is credited to Belfast Activity Centre (BAC). This is not a photograph of anti-social youths, but is just being used to illustrate the article. Belfast Activity Centre initiated in 1988, is a personal development charity that aims to engage people from all backgrounds in programmes of activity that encourage them to reach their full potential and explore their social and personal development.

Encouraging pro-social behaviour amongst young people - will a reward scheme work in your community?

Introduction

Behavioural rewards and incentive schemes for young people are becoming widely used to address a broad range of issues, including health and educational needs, with an emphasis on stimulating active citizenship and respectful behaviour. Examples of pro-social reward schemes can be found in schools (e.g. targeting truancy), and to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and to promote community activity by young people (e.g. Community Merit Awards). Researchers at Sheffield Hallam University have examined both the wider literature on the use of reward schemes and evaluated the impact of two Joseph Rowntree Foundation funded pilot reward schemes designed to promote the valuable contributions young people can make to their communities and to

stimulate growth in tolerance towards young people and their preferred activities.

The study focussed on two projects located in Bradford and York which had a shared framework in which young people were given 'points' for undertaking activities such as dog walking, litter collecting, helping out at community events, undertaking environmental activities including tree and bulb planting etc. The points could then be 'cashed in' for rewards such as meals out, trips to the cinema etc, or converted into a monetary reward to be spent on goods such as sports shoes or clothing. Both schemes targeted young people in the 11-15 age group. Recruitment was principally undertaken through word of mouth with the Bradford scheme successfully engaging four groups of 10 -12 young people over the course of the evaluation. The York scheme was managed by a part time project co-ordinator employed by a local housing association while the Bradford scheme was staffed by two dedicated project workers each working 15 hours per week. This difference in staffing resources proved to be significant with the Bradford scheme much more successful in recruiting and retaining members and organising a greater range of activities.

Drawing on the findings from the study this article provides guidance for agencies including community groups, youth groups, councils, housing associations and any other groups that are thinking of setting up a reward scheme for young people in their community.

Will a rewards scheme work for your community?

Most rewards schemes are small scale and need to be firmly rooted in their local context. Prior to investing time and resources in establishing a scheme, it is good practice to gather information and consult widely with residents, young people and other agencies working in the neighbourhood.

The experiences of the two pilot rewards schemes located in York and Bradford suggests that the following factors are critical in determining how rewards schemes can maximise effectiveness:

1. The organisation responsible for setting up the scheme needs to have credibility within the local community.
2. Depending on the nature of the problem to be addressed, alternative interventions might be more effective, e.g. provision of more general facilities for young people, such as youth shelters, diversionary activities, provision of youth work.
3. Questions of fairness and justice may be raised if young people are asked to undertake levels of volunteering and engagement in community activities when such acts of citizenship are not common amongst adult members of the community.
4. Existing community groups can provide a useful forum where ideas can be discussed and priorities agreed, potential solutions assessed and an action plan produced.

The wider literature on rewards schemes indicates there can be a range of benefits associated with rewards schemes, e.g. they have a role to play in engaging young people in stimulating activities, they can improve the self-confidence and esteem of participants and lead to a heightened awareness of others and community issues. At the same time, however, it should be recognised that the outcomes of existing rewards schemes for young people are complex, mixed and often include unintended negative consequences.

Getting started

Co-operation and interaction with existing youth provision should be sought in order to ensure that there is no duplication of provision. Prior to establishing a rewards scheme it is advisable to carry out a feasibility study, which may include the following elements:

- an audit of existing youth facilities and services;
- activities and meetings with different key stakeholders in the local community to establish whether there is general support for a rewards scheme. At this stage it is important to ensure that the widest possible range of members of the community have a voice including:
 - potential adult volunteers;
 - parents/guardians;
 - local agencies including schools and educational and training groups;
 - established youth groups;
- consultation with young people of different ages/genders and with different interests (schools and existing youth schemes may be able to help facilitate this).

Box 1: The pros and cons of rewards schemes

Positive Outcomes	Negative Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improved self-confidence and self-esteem of participants ● Improved awareness of others and community issues ● Enhanced educational attainment and formal qualifications ● Material and financial gains for participants ● Improved access for young people to educational, leisure and social facilities ● Improved community relations (e.g. between young and elderly people) and tangible benefits for the recipients of volunteering activities ● Promotion of positive role models and positive behaviour ● Reduced levels of fear of crime and young people ● Increasing levels of local social capital ● Improved local physical environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduced self esteem if not eligible for rewards ● Further alienation and disaffection ● Increased propensity to engage in anti-social behaviour ● Increasing existing gaps between individuals' access to services and life opportunities ● Polarisation between those receiving and not receiving rewards ● Resentment among targeted and non-targeted groups ● Further perception that young people are being stigmatised and punished ● Positive behaviour becomes dependent on receiving rewards and additional incentives ● Increasing costs and resources

The rationale and philosophy of rewards schemes

Rewards schemes cannot substitute for mainstream youth provision. It is essential that everyone involved is clear about the rationale and underlying philosophy of the scheme (see Box 2).

Box 2: Clarifying the rationale and philosophy of the rewards scheme

1. Which groups of young people are the scheme seeking to target/reach and why?
2. What behaviours is the scheme seeking to address?
3. Are rewards to be given for not taking part in unwanted behaviours or do they require a pro active demonstration of required behaviour?
4. Are the rights and responsibilities associated with membership of the scheme clearly stated and explained to participants?
5. How can you avoid the danger of simply benefiting young people who are already motivated and involved in community activities?
6. Is the scheme based on a clear understanding of the type of incentives that will be valued by young people?
7. If the scheme is to target young people who appear disaffected and/or isolated, how can the rewards/incentives be crafted so that they are attractive to the target group?
8. Is there recognition that activities may be valued for reasons other than monetary reward? For example, less tangible benefits that can be powerful incentives for young people include: public recognition of contribution; social and personal benefits; and skill development that may lead to increased opportunities for paid employment and further training?
9. Will the scheme help provide solutions to problems that young people experience, and assist them achieve their goals?

Involving young people in setting up and running a rewards scheme

Young people should be given a central role in the design, implementation and management of rewards schemes. By encouraging young people to take ownership of the scheme, this will ensure that the target activities and rewards match their particular needs (see Box 3).

Box 3: Finding out what young people value

Rewards schemes should be based on a clear understanding about what type of activities and rewards and incentives are attractive to young people.

1. What do young people value about the neighbourhood where they live and what would they like to see changed?
2. What sort of rewards schemes are young people already involved in and what do they feel about existing schemes?
3. What are the best ways of recruiting young people to the scheme and which local organisations could help in the promotion of the scheme?
4. What eligibility criteria should be used and what if any sanctions should be employed?
5. What are the barriers that would prevent young people from joining a scheme and how could they be overcome? (Consider transport and access arrangements, the location and timing of activities, the influence of peer pressure, etc.)
6. How can the scheme maximise the opportunities for ineligible individuals to gain or regain eligibility for rewards?
7. What sort of additional support would young people value in order to meet the expectations of required behaviour?
8. What activities would young people enjoy doing for gaining rewards? Is there a need to provide a choice of different activities/rewards for different target age/gender/interest groups?
9. What types of rewards/incentives are valued by different groups of young people?
10. Should activities and rewards be individual or collective, or a mixture of the two?

Managing a rewards scheme

Rewards schemes are resource intensive. The most successful schemes are based on open and democratic decision-making processes, in which young people's views and opinions are given priority. Whatever the management structures adopted by the scheme, it is vital that young people have a voice on the decision-making body.

Further, it should be recognised that running a rewards scheme requires specialist skills but retaining staff and volunteers can be very difficult in a climate of funding uncertainty.

While initial recruitment of young people may not be problematic, sustaining interest can prove more difficult. The employment of dedicated project staff is a critical influence on whether schemes are successful in attracting young people to participate and will also help to ensure that the scheme is sufficiently flexible to craft rewards that meet the specific needs of the young people involved.

In the evaluation of the two Joseph Rowntree Foundation funded schemes, the following factors were found to be instrumental in influencing the continued engagement of young people:

- maximisation of recruitment of young people, by working in partnership with local schools and youth organisations to promote the scheme;
- retaining flexibility and the ability to change in response to young people's views and needs;
- designing credible activities taking into account age and gender differences;
- while financial rewards alone are not sufficient to generate a commitment to participate in pro-social activities, if the reward is seen as too minimal or tokenistic this will put others off taking part;
- it should be recognised that activities may be valued for reasons other than monetary reward – including public recognition, personal relationships, increased self esteem, and enhanced skills, which may lead to increased opportunities for paid employment, training etc;
- the style and approach of project staff can be critical in gaining confidence of young people, adult residents and volunteers.

Managing the public profile of schemes

Schemes benefit from high-profile events. Gaining local press coverage for activities and arranging public presentations not only provides participants with recognition that their activities and contributions are valued, it can also help promote the scheme within the local community and contribute towards building greater tolerance of the visible presence of young people (see Box 4).

Box 4: Publicity and marketing

1. How will the scheme formally and publicly recognise participants' activities and contributions?
2. Prior to marketing and profiling the scheme locally, is it clear exactly what rewards will be employed?
3. Could the scheme link activities and rewards to formal accreditation and qualifications?
4. How could the scheme attract a wide range of partners, for example to include local businesses and transport providers?

Key lessons emerging from the evaluation of the use of reward schemes suggest that:

- When developing a scheme it is essential that everyone involved understands the rationale and underlying philosophy of the scheme;
- Age emerged as a critical factor in the recruitment process with schemes most suitable for those under the age of 15;
- Offering rewards can play an important role in attracting young people to join schemes but the nature and amount of the reward should be carefully considered and will not generally on its own be enough to keep young people engaged;
- Staff levels need to be sufficiently high to generate enjoyable activities and to provide a clearly structured framework within which to facilitate the growth of trust between participants and encourage the development of peer support.

Further information

The full report '**An evaluation of two initiatives to reward young people**' by Julia Hirst, Eleanor Formby, Sadie Parr, Judy Nixon, Caroline Hunter and John Flint is published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, along with a summary of its findings. These are both available as free downloads on the JRF website, www.jrf.org.uk.

Photographic References

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Phoenix Futures Conservation Therapy Programme

Jon Hall, Phoenix Futures



Phoenix Futures is the leading provider of care and rehabilitation services for people with drug and alcohol problems in the UK. Through thirty-eight years experience of transforming lives we have developed a diverse portfolio of services across community, prison and residential settings.

Since 2001, *Phoenix Futures* has run the unique and innovative Conservation Therapy Programme (CTP) in conjunction with Natural England, and more recently in partnership with the National Trust and South Lanarkshire County Council. The programme engages service users from *Phoenix Futures'* substance misuse treatment services to work as teams in assisting in the conservation of specific areas of the countryside. It provides tangible results to those engaged and local communities, as well as providing genuine benefits to the environment.

The aim of the programme is to empower service users in rediscovering themselves through producing tangible results to their input in nature rich settings whilst working as part of

a therapeutic team. A new and alternative treatment away from the traditional settings, the CTP creates a powerful therapeutic tool that benefits people going through rehabilitation by building self-esteem and confidence.

The impact of the programme can be evidenced by *Phoenix Futures'* statistical data which indicates an increased retention in residential rehabilitation programmes of 24% amongst service users involved with the CTP compared with those who were not, over a twelve week comparative period.

Conservation Therapy Programme Locations

The CTP currently runs in the following locations:

Natural England's Derbyshire Dales National Nature Reserve (NNR) in the Peak District National Park, in conjunction with *Phoenix Futures'* *Storth Oaks Adult Residential Service* based in Sheffield. NNRs worked on included Hay Dale, Cressbrook Dale, and Lathkill Dale. This was the first partnership location.

Natural England's Castle Eden Dene NNR near Peterlee, County Durham, in conjunction with *Phoenix Futures'* *South Shields Adult Residential Service*. This programme has also worked on the Lindisfarne NNR.

Natural England's Kingley Vale NNR on the South Downs, in conjunction with *Phoenix Futures'* *Alpha Adult Residential Service*.

A partnership between *South Lanarkshire County Council* and *Phoenix Futures South Lanarkshire Structured Day Service* and *Glasgow Adult Residential Service*, at Chaterault Country Park in South Lanarkshire. 'Forest Schools' also run alongside the Conservation Therapy Programme at this location.

A new partnership between *Phoenix Futures Trafford Structured Day Service* and The National Trust has been delivered at Alderley Edge since November 2007.

Future Developments

Two new developments will be starting in May 2008 between *Phoenix Futures* and the Wirral Country Park. *Phoenix Futures' Wirral Adult Residential Service* and a partnership of locally based rehabilitation services will each have a project at this new location.

Programme Content

Service users participate in practical conservation tasks that are delivered in accordance with our partners' site management plans; the objectives of which are fully discussed with participants. Where necessary, practical facilitators are employed to advise on the delivery of the work, and assist in teaching the group the necessary skills. Large constructive tasks are always the most popular as they enable our partners to complete tasks they would otherwise be unable to attempt without help.

Service users are invited to come on to the programme as soon as they are established in their respective service. CTP is designed as an initial intervention, the guiding therapeutic principle being one of self-actualisation/efficacy through participation in genuine conservation activities. Self-esteem and confidence are enhanced through one, or a combination of three identified factors acting as catalysts for personal development:

The Activity - influential therapeutic drivers include deferred gratification, 'ownership' of the activity, and tangible, positive results.

The Environment – the power of being in and producing something with the natural environment is often undervalued.

Relationships (Communication) – genuine bonding and team working with peers in real life/work settings.

Academic Framework

An academic framework for developing and evaluating the programme has been an important element within the CTP. Academic underpinning of the programme is being enhanced through research aimed at producing a PhD.

The Conservation Therapy Programme is currently supported academically by *Phoenix Futures*, and a report - '*Conservation Therapy Programme; Underpinning Theory*' by Jon Hall MSc, was published by English Nature (now Natural England) as Research Report Number 611 in 2004.



Investment of Funds

The Conservation Therapy Programme is funded purely through voluntary donations. Charitable trusts, foundations and corporate support maintain the delivery of our programme nationally. Local authorities value the programme as it works towards their regional objectives. They are prepared to support the programme financially as they see it benefiting the local community as a conservation project, making an area more accessible for example, and at the same time reducing incidences of perceived crime in the local area.

Funds are raised either as a general donation towards the costs of the programme, or can be raised locally for a specific regional project. The main costs are staffing, specialist equipment for participants and transport from the local *Phoenix Futures* residential rehabilitation service to the project that service users are working on.

Service user feedback, statistics and outcomes are all collected and used to provide donors with regular updates on how their investments are flourishing through evidencing the positive difference that their support has made to the

programme outcomes.

We are happy to arrange bespoke visits to the project at a mutually convenient time. This gives potential funders the opportunity to meet the service users who are benefiting from the programme and find out more about the value of the programme for both the local environment, and our partners.

Corporate and Social responsibility

CTP is a valuable asset for local communities as service users work on conservation and bio-diversity projects.

By supporting our work funders will also be helping Natural England and the National Trust to ensure that local communities continue to benefit from their work. Nationally, *Phoenix Futures'* CTP participants provide over 14,000 on site hours of practical conservation work per year.



Service User and Partner Feedback

Adrian M: *“My life has been on self-destruct for at least ten years, I put all my efforts into harmful things for my body and mind. From a dark place where I thought I was trapped and must admit I became comfortable with and was willing to be that way for the rest of my days. My way of thinking finally changed which led to Phoenix Futures. Ecology has just been a breath of fresh air to rekindle what I once had and can have again, only much improved. Not only does it give me what I need physically but mentally it is very therapeutic and is, and will, help my recovery.”*

Annette B: *“My life had become so chaotic due to my drugs and I had lost all touch with any life skills I had. I did also over the years become unemployable which made me isolate myself. Since coming to Phoenix Futures and attending ecology I have built up confidence in all areas of my life like my self belief, teamwork skills and bonding skills.*

I find it very therapeutic being in the outdoors doing something positive knowing it may even be there for years to come. Ecology has helped me a lot – a very important part of my recovery.”

Ben Le Bas, NNR Management Co-ordinator, Natural England: *“Natural England’s partnership with Phoenix Futures has become an integral part of the management of our participating reserves since its inception several years ago. Not only is excellent quality work delivered which enhances the biodiversity and infrastructure of the reserves, but the projects contribute to Natural England’s health and social inclusion agendas.”*

Further information

For further information about *Phoenix Futures'* Conservation Therapy Programme please contact Jon Hall or visit their website www.phoenix-futures.org.uk

Photographic References

All photographs credited to Phoenix Futures

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Mentro Allan: some of the stuff we've learnt so far...

Becca Mattingley and Richard Harry, Sports Council for Wales



A Merthyr/Blaenau Gwent Group Canoeing

About 'Mentro Allan'

Mentro Allan is the Welsh element of the Community Sport Initiative, funded by the Big Lottery Fund and aiming to increase physical activity amongst people who experience barriers to participation. The chosen focus of the Welsh programme is on outdoor activity, and a cohort of 15 projects have therefore been established across Wales, supported by a national partnership drawing membership from a range of statutory and voluntary bodies. Figure 1 details the projects and their target groups.

The main aim of Mentro Allan is to increase activity levels amongst the "hard to reach" sedentary population by increasing their recreational use of the natural environment of Wales. Hard to reach is defined as those sections of the population that face specific barriers to participation above and beyond those that are experienced by most people. The 'hard to reach' population sections at a national level were identified by The Big Lottery Fund.

The selection of target areas by the National Partnership was founded on desk-based research identifying areas that couple low participation with available natural resources, as well as wider stakeholder input. Project partnerships were then developed, in order to develop proposals further and prioritise particular target groups within the chosen areas, based on their knowledge of local issues.

Projects are funded for four years with the primary aim of increasing the physical activity levels of their target group, making best use of the natural outdoor environment close to where people live. The projects seek to identify and remove the barriers to activity that are experienced by these groups within society. By making links to the natural resources of Wales, both urban and rural, it will go some way to making parks, waterways, coastal environments and countryside accessible to a wide range of people that might otherwise never use them. The central concern is on the needs of defined populations as opposed to the promotion of certain activities. For many of the target groups, however, the outdoor environment is being used as a tool to improve other aspects of participants' lives.

It is a key aim of Mentro Allan to create an evidence base to show what works in getting people active in this context and to illustrate how people's behaviour may have been changed. Throughout their development and implementation, projects will provide valuable research on the effectiveness of interventions designed to increase the physical activity levels of the target groups. Both quantitative and qualitative data is collected through a variety of methods.

Figure 1: Mentro Allan projects across Wales

Target Area	Target Group
Anglesey	Young women age 16-30
Flintshire and Wrexham	People with physical and learning difficulties
Rhyl	Young people at risk of disengagement, young women (16-25) and people on low incomes
Powys - Dyfi Valley	People experiencing rural isolation
Bridgend	Older people
Caerphilly and Torfaen	Hard to reach groups including over 50s, disadvantaged young people and residents with low level mental health concerns
Cardiff	Children and adults with disabilities
Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan	Black and minority ethnic groups, particularly women (age 16-64)
Greater Bargoed and Gilfach	People on low incomes
Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent	People with mental health problems
Newport	Black and minority ethnic groups
Rhondda Cynon Taf	People on low incomes
Neath Port Talbot	Young people aged 11-25, at risk of disengagement
Pembroke Dock	Young people aged 11-25
Swansea	Carers

The approach for the evaluation of the programme is based on Participatory Action Research. Action research tries to continually feed new knowledge in to action. It does this mostly by involving people in the planning of projects and by being flexible and responsive to situations and people. Action research is a methodology that ensures that new learning is immediately used in practice and that issues for further research emerge from practice.

Project case studies

The following two case studies have different target areas and groups, often with differing barriers to participating in physical activities in the natural environment. While the approaches taken and planned outcomes are somewhat different, both projects have successfully engaged with those individuals and groups, resulting in wider positive outcomes for participants.

CASE STUDY: MERTHYR TYDFIL AND BLAENAU GWENT

Target group: People with mental health problems living in the Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent local authority areas.

Lead organisations: Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Staff: A full-time project coordinator has been in post since May 2007.

Current activities: Walking, archery, gardening, exergaming, climbing, cycling, canoeing and mountain biking have taken place so far.

Participants registered at present: 154

Total participant occasions (April 2007-March 2008): 1077

Percentage of participants who achieved recommended amounts of physical activity when joining the scheme: 8%

Launching the project and attracting participants

Promotion of the activities is currently targeted through existing groups of mental health service users. During 2007 the coordinator built links with 37 different agencies. A referral protocol was drawn up and the agencies were then asked to refer their clients to the Mentro Allan activities. This approach is working well, particularly with local authority partners. The target group is very diverse and is a mixture of different needs, age groups, geographical locations and abilities. Older people have been harder to engage in activities other than gardening and for some of the walks, whereas the younger groups have shown more interest in the outdoors and more adventurous activities.

Participants have been easy to target because they access services: there is a ready contact point. Face to face contact with participants has been very important in encouraging them to take part and to continue taking part. The coordinator spends a lot of time attending the activities, though there is now sufficient support from some activity providers for this to reduce over time. The activity providers have been involved throughout the project in planning activities and therefore have 'bought in' to the project as a whole. Feedback from the activity providers helps decide what is and what isn't working.

Barriers to participation and access

The coordinator feels that a barrier for people with mental health issues is individual motivation. Service users have support in that other people do things for them and unless the project goes directly to them initially they are unlikely to attend. Low self-confidence, and being nervous and shy about coming along to an activity for the first time, have been identified as factors which suppress motivation.

A major practical barrier for this group is a lack of transport – public transport is not available at relevant times in many of the communities across Blaenau Gwent and currently participants are picked up by minibus. Organising doorstep activity is a major issue for this project as the target group live the length and breadth of two local authority areas and in the main do not have access to their own transport.

Where there is public transport, free bus passes are available but it requires effort and motivation from the individual, self-confidence and the need to overcome nerves. Once the group has met a few times this begins to diminish, but it is unlikely an individual would get to the stage of attending a group of their own accord without initial support and help from a coordinator or support worker.

Cold weather is another barrier for this target group and sometimes indoor locations are used for archery or rock climbing training – providing skill development which can lead towards participation in an outdoor activity.

Continuation of provision, even if it is indoors, encourages the group to keep attending and provides a back up for when bad weather prevents an activity from happening.

Once the target group is engaged, the coordinator felt that there was no real preference for particular types of activities at this stage – anything outdoors was enjoyed because the vast majority of the rest of their week is spent indoors. The coordinator has noticed that participants with more severe mental health issues care less about the type of activity that is offered whereas those with less severe issues are more likely to be interested in what is on and offer suggestions on what they would like.

Outcomes to date

In line with the ethos of Mentro Allan, evaluation events are organised by coordinators to uncover the opinions of relevant stakeholders, including participants. Feedback from an evaluation event with service providers and referring agencies found that significant benefits to service users' wellbeing had occurred through engagement in outdoor recreation:

- I've seen a huge improvement in clients;
- Participants having their say in evaluation process – brilliant;
- I've seen huge changes in 6 months, socialisation, communication skills, 'normalizing';
- One boy was referred to Friday gardening. He didn't speak or go outside his door, now he's doing 5 days a week and does outreach gardening in the community;
- People are going to the activities week after week – that's a success in itself. And enjoying it!

A similar event was held with participants, and feedback was positive about all the activities. Comments referred to:

- Gardening – learning something different, enjoyment in the outdoors and the fresh air;
- Confidence building;
- Meeting similar people;
- Coming out from the centre;
- Meeting people, doing something different;
- Getting out and about.

Furthermore, one group of participants have stopped coming to the organised sessions and have formed their own group, because they were more capable than others attending the session and wanted to do longer walks. This is very positive and shows that Mentro Allan has instigated independent physical activity.

Future challenges

The next stage of the project is to expand and target people with mental health problems who do not access local authority mental health service provision. There are barriers

for these individuals in that they might not want to be associated with service users and even among groups there are different severities of issues and groups would not necessarily be able to mix freely. The first year has only been promoted through existing agencies, but the coordinator now plans to promote Mentro Allan to the general public during 2008.

Launching the project and attracting participants

The project was initially promoted through existing clubs, organisations and in the case of younger people, through schools. Youth clubs, sports clubs, scouts, youth workers and the Prince's Trust have all been targeted, making sure as many people know about it as possible to raise the profile of Go4It (the name given to the project). Newspaper adverts and radio interviews did not attract participants; the coordinator has found that the best way to promote the project is through organising and attending events and going out and meeting people.

The need to work through activity providers also creates another layer of stakeholders who need to 'buy into' and understand the aims of Mentro Allan. The coordinator has found that activity providers are good when they consistently lead a group, but for some types of activity there may be a team of 20 or more leaders who don't have continued contact with the group. This can be a problem when there are potential discipline problems to deal with. It has been noted that there is a difference depending on whether a leader just 'provides' a session or whether they make it an 'experience'. Regular providers are more likely to be able to understand the needs of the group and provide the latter and motivate participants than those used less frequently.

The development, timing and frequency of the activity sessions are guided by the participants' feedback and the activity providers' experience. An example is the provision of training to be qualified in water sports, after the young people fed back that they wanted to develop skills and get accreditation.

Barriers to participation and access

There is a need to set up different sessions for the different groups. One barrier that was identified for girls is that they felt that the boys were spoiling their sessions through bullying and 'thinking they were better'. As a result of this feedback, 'Girl 4 It' sessions were developed. This was found to be useful as a way of breaking the ice and encouraging girls to attend. Girls do attend the mixed sessions as well and tend to favour different activity types to boys, such as horse riding.

Behaviour issues have been a problem on occasions and a traffic light card system has been developed to deal with this. If a person receives a red card as a result of three occasions of bad behaviour then they are barred from the activity. This has been enforced by the activity providers and has worked well. Poor behaviour by one or two individuals was noted to affect the whole group's attitude and by removing these people on a temporary basis this was addressed.

Some of the target group suffer more barriers than others and have irregular attendance patterns, such as those who care for disabled parents or are fostered. The coordinator noted that these personal circumstances sometimes are linked to challenging behaviour.

Another barrier for the target group is a lack of confidence, but this can be overcome if people can be persuaded to attend a couple of sessions. When young people are asked what they want to do, they do not cite outdoor activities other than football and this may be a result of a lack of awareness of what is available.

Outcomes to date

The evaluation process also has helped establish some of the benefits to the target group. Feedback from a young mums group has been positive – they enjoy being outside and seeing trees and water. Parents have noted that behaviour is

CASE STUDY: PEMBROKE DOCK

Target group: Young people aged 11-25, able and disabled, living in Pembroke Dock

Lead organisation: Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

Staff: A part-time project coordinator has been in post since mid-August 2006. More recently, a part-time administrator has been assisting with the project.

Current activities: Activities run to date include climbing, mountain biking, horse riding, gardening, walking, canoeing and kayaking.

Participants registered at present: 146

Total participant occasions (April 2007-March 2008): 1170

Percentage of participants who achieved recommended amounts of physical activity when joining the scheme: adults 33%, young people 17%

changing and that confidence is improving among the participants. Having 'a better attitude' was also mentioned by parents. Further comments included:

- Enjoys outdoors more;
- Confidence building;
- Keeping up general fitness;
- She is happy and excited when she gets home from riding;
- She is happier for longer.

An activity leader also made the following comments about the benefits observed:

- 'More confident when coming regularly';
- 'Helping their friends';
- 'Give each other more confidence';
- 'Succeeding – didn't realise they could';
- 'More energetic – able to do more athletic moves, willing to have a go'.

Another event held with activity providers, centre managers and key members of local clubs aimed to encourage people to share their experiences of young people taking part in outdoor activities and to gather feedback on what was working well and how the project could become sustainable. Feedback highlighted that the same people continue to attend which shows commitment and that it has given young people the opportunity to mix and make new friends. They have had an 'opportunity to shine'. Young people at a horse riding event also reported they felt 'happier' and 'fitter'; it was 'fun'; new friends were being made; and that they enjoyed learning about the animals.

Future challenges

Progression and development is occurring and now there are groups of young people with different skill levels in the activities. A normal 'sports development' route would be to steer these people towards local clubs, but many existing clubs are either full or unwilling to develop opportunities for youth groups because of past difficulties involving young people. In the next stage of the project, the coordinator hopes to set up activity clubs with the participants having their own committee meetings to help them develop their own programme. Potentially this will allow them to be able to participate long term. A properly constituted club would also then have the option to apply for other funding streams to ensure activities continued.

Developing leadership skills among this group is problematic – for governing bodies, potential leaders need to be 18 for most awards and training to be a mountain bike leader for example requires individual commitment of at least 40 mountain days experience on top of the training. One option is to link to Duke of Edinburgh Awards where recognition is given for volunteering.

Conclusion

As the projects detailed above show, learning outcomes are already beginning to emerge from the Mentro Allan programme. Moreover, due to staggered start dates between projects, many Mentro Allan projects have only in recent months begun to deliver activity to their target group. It is therefore hoped that as the programme develops and evolves over its lifespan, we will learn more both about how to engage the 'hard to reach' population, and the wider positive outcomes that can arise when utilising the natural environment.

Further information

For further information about Mentro Allan and contact details for the local projects, visit the Mentro Allan website at www.mentroallan.co.uk, or for information about the programme overall contact Jane Lorimer, Project Manager: jane.lorimer@scw.org.uk or 029 2033 8326.



Mentro Allan

Photographic References

A Merthyr/Blaenau Gwent Group canoeing, credited to Carwyn Jones

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Does Adventure Education Mitigate **Violent and Aggressive Behaviour** in Individuals and Groups?

Viv Carnea, National Cycling Organisation



This paper explores the issue from the evidence of an inner-city agency which has the following mission statement:

Getaway Girls enables young women to build confidence, develop new skills and take positive risks in an environment which offers co-operation and support.

We achieve this using an innovative combination of activities. These include adventure education, creative arts and issue based group work to encourage everyone to reach their full potential.

Getaway Girls is a voluntary and community sector organisation in Leeds which was established in 1987. It offers adventure education activities to girls and young women between the ages of 13 and 25 and was set up to engage those who had turned their backs on such experiences, often for underlying issues of low self-esteem and gender-related social pressures.

Body image is an over-riding concern of many young women and inherently linked to their sense of self. This means that they will reject anything which they perceive will undermine how they look, and one of the hardest parts of the first session with a new group is to persuade the young women to put on the necessary clothing or gear. There is absolutely no way that many would do this in a mixed group. Moreover, most believe they will fail at the activity, whatever it is. The positive side of this is that, when they do succeed, the impact on their consciousness is often out of all proportion to what they have actually done, the emotion expressed is considerable, and there is a palpable understanding that, at that moment, they had broken through an unseen barrier which had limited them in their lives.

Getaway Girls has a track record of engaging girls and young women who have experienced discrimination and/or social exclusion and works with: those from ethnic minority communities, including 'hard-to-reach' communities (Bengalis, travellers), young mothers, young women with eating disorders or who self-harm, young women excluded from schools, and young women from Youth Offending Teams. Their social marginalization compounds the gender-related social pressures. Many display challenging, sometimes violent, behaviour; others are seriously withdrawn.

This paper frames the question about effective strategies within adventure education that promote pro-social behaviour. However, the adoption of a youth work approach

with the following elements is just as critical:

- An ability to engage with young people
- An understanding of the young women's chaotic lives and issues in their lives
- Partnerships with those professionals who are known to and respected by the young people
- Establishment of boundaries which are consistently adhered to (e.g. use of working agreement/ground rules drawn up with staff and young women)
- Persistence: e.g. in last resort, going to houses and dragging young women out of bed and into mini-bus.

All this needs to be combined with skills and experience in the outdoors to ensure the safety of the group, and to achieve a balance between challenge and sensitivity to their needs. Only then will Adventure Education programmes be efficacious.

The example of a climbing session may serve as an illustration of this. The moving vertically upward to the top of a climb is but one element of the overall experience and, indeed, only one part of the sense of achievement felt by the participants. Other roles include: belaying the climber by taking in the rope and holding any slip or fall; anchoring the belayer; backing up the rope; and photographing the action. Moving and communicating together and effectively is both crucial and seen to be so by the participants.

The outcomes of a climbing session are a mixture of the individual and social:

- Raised activity levels
- Increase in self-confidence ('I can . . .')
- Increase in self-esteem (body image)
- More trust in others
- Improved communication
- Development of a sense of wonder to counteract the feelings of distress and anger often experienced
- Discussion facilitated re issues relevant to young women
- Modified behaviour as result of influence of group, plus imperatives of activity.

The premise of many Adventure Education practitioners is that the value of what they offer lies in the unique and powerful dynamic of the challenging nature of the activity on the one hand, and of group process on the other. There is an abundance of anecdotal literature to support this, and many

'adventure theorists' centre their advocacy on intense, dissonant adventure experiences which are seen to have the capacity to change individuals in ways that are difficult to replicate. The group framework provides both the support and the means – through cooperative effort – to overcome the challenge and fear generated by perceived dangerous activities and/or environments. Aggressive and violent behaviour invokes negative responses from the group because it undermines this process; withdrawn and introverted patterns of behaviour are similarly disrupted. The experience is sufficiently intense in nature for the pro-social learning that occurs to be carried through to 'real life'. The adventure education programmes at Getaway Girls reflect this premise, and it has underpinned much of my work in the field in many different settings.

Two case studies may ground the question: '*Does adventure education mitigate violent and aggressive behaviour in individuals and groups?*' One is of a young woman from Getaway Girls, the second from an outdoor residential centre in Wales. Names have been changed.

Case Study 1

Vicky is a white girl from a run-down council estate on outskirts of Leeds who attended a half-day/week issue-based group: in the early days of her involvement, she would shout racist taunts from the minibus as we travelled through what was a South Asian community, and she was verbally abusive to staff and group.

She loved the rock-climbing sessions that always form part of such programmes and so took up a place on a week's backpacking expedition in a racially mixed group. The group was made up of five white girls and five of either Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin; many of these young women were living in the same part of the city, but had completely separate lives, felt and experienced mutual hostility.

Part of the project's remit was to bring together individuals from diverse backgrounds. Our strategies as staff members on the expedition were many and varied but, essentially involved facilitating many different types of opportunity for the young people to work together, 'chill', and chat together; even 'time-out' was structured, albeit discretely.

Two events occurred which could not have contrived better, both involving Vicky. The first was when she was acutely anxious about walking through a flock of sheep on the hillside, so much so that we spent about fifteen minutes cajoling her and getting nowhere; but we needed to get past the sheep – there was no other way. The group came up with the solution of forming a circle around Vicky, linking arms, and moving through the flock in that way. The strategy worked, and there was a tangible shift in attitudes from that point.

The next day, Vicky managed to sink into a bog to her thighs, causing much hilarity until the group members realised how serious it was and worked out a way of pulling her out, using emptied rucksacks (to lie on and spread the weight), and a line of people physically pulling on the one in front. We were able to relax our supervision from then on; at the end of the week, all the young women were exchanging mobile phone numbers; and some kept in touch for several months.

Vicky is now a young mother, she attends another of our groups, which is ethnically very mixed, and lives close to the project in one of the streets where she had once hurled racist abuse. She is also a peer mentor in the Adventure Education programme.

Case Study 2

Wayne was 17 years old and serving time in a Young Offenders' Institute. He had been sent on a week's 'adventure course' in mid-Wales, with only one hour's notice, when a fellow in-mate had returned after being accused of a theft en route.

Wayne was very angry; I chatted to him about his life and background on his first evening at the centre, when we were sitting in kayaks on the beautiful and tranquil Mawddach Estuary. He threw up his arms; 'Why the f... am I here; what's the f.....point, I'll be back in that place soon, this is like f..... torture!' It seemed that he had been sent as part of a rehabilitation package, even though he had not long been 'inside'.

I was not working with Wayne's group, but I heard from other staff that he was not faring well, refusing to take part in the activities, he was a loner, antagonistic towards others in the group, and had been in a fight with one of them. He was sent back shortly after.

Adventure Education can be a powerful tool in promoting pro-social behaviour but it cannot be a panacea for working with challenging young people. There is an argument that the influence of the group on individual behaviour can restrict personal growth, that Adventure Education does not allow for deviant behaviour: the physical situation itself is seen as too threatening.

There is an imperative towards group cohesion so that the observed changes in participants' behaviour relate directly to the particular circumstances which engendered them. These changes may be profound but are not necessarily transferable to other and very different circumstances. This means that Adventure Education is not able, by itself, to address the causes of violent and aggressive behaviour which themselves will be multiple and complex.

The real worlds in which people live will have triggers for

anti-social and violent behaviour. But there are always positive role models and social networks in any community, and these will need to be part of integrated and long-term support and provision of opportunities if the behavioural changes are to be sustained.

The staff at Getaway Girls recognise that structural social inequalities (education, employment, housing) frequently underpin anti-social behaviour. Adventure Education can be effective in giving the young women the self-confidence and strategies to challenge their social exclusion, and to move on in their lives.

Photographic References

All photographs credited to Getaway Girls

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Volunteering at Anglesey Abbey

Richard Todd, The National Trust



The landscape tapestry of the gardens in autumn

The landscape gardens of Anglesey Abbey in Cambridgeshire were the creation and much-prized possession of Huttleston Broughton, the first Lord Fairhaven (1896-1966). The Broughtons bought Anglesey Abbey in 1926 and during their time filled the house with many fine objects and created a superb country house style garden of 114 acres in this Cambridge Fen edge estate.

After Lord Fairhaven's death in 1966 he gave the entire estate to the National Trust who took over the property and continues to maintain the house and garden in his style. The gardens incorporate a wide range of habitats including rough woodland, immaculate lawns, formal bedding, a renowned Winter Garden and many other garden features. The aim is to have something of interest in all seasons while maintaining the immaculate presentation insisted upon by the founder. The gardens currently attract about 200,000 visitors per year.

To maintain these gardens, the Trust employs a team of six full-time gardeners. This is not enough to manage the entire estate, so we welcome assistance from volunteers and are fortunate in having a number who are retired or for other reasons have time to spare and come regularly to help out, both in the house and in the garden. I have however for many years been convinced that we should be pro-active in offering volunteering opportunities to a wider range of people, and that we should try to involve groups who may not always be an obvious choice for gardening work of a practical nature. I was convinced that not only would we gain from the help given, but that there were many who would benefit from the pleasure of working in the delightful environment of Anglesey Abbey.

A great opportunity to expand our volunteering opportunities came with the decision to convert a long-neglected area of the estate, previously used for breeding pheasants and known as Hoe Fen, into a wildlife area open to visitors. This was not a task which the Trust could afford on its own, nor could the existing staff and volunteers hope to maintain it in the future. A much greater volunteer effort was required if the Hoe Fen Wildlife Discovery Area was to become a reality.

I was therefore very pleased when the Trust allowed me a three-month sabbatical leave to explore and develop the opportunities for wider community involvement with Anglesey Abbey. There was a very positive response from the organisations to which I spoke, I knew that not all of these contacts could be followed up immediately and some

would take time to be developed. The following describes the progress so far of some of the groups with which we are now working.



Volunteers at the Study Resource Centre at Hoe Fen

Richmond Fellowship

This is an organisation that assists rehabilitation back into employment by supporting clients who may have had a period of mental illness. We have been able to provide a volunteering opportunity for their recently formed Cambridge Garden Team. They come every Monday and have made a very important contribution to the maintenance of the Hoe Fen area. The work has in turn enabled some of their clients to regain confidence and skills and several have now returned to full time employment.

Cambridge Mencap

This society also has a small gardening team. This group comes every fortnight to maintain a designated area of the Hoe Fen site, giving their clients a valuable opportunity to gain confidence, learn new skills and interact with others outside their normal routine.

Romsey Mill – Cambridge

This organisation specialises in supporting young people aged between 11 and 21. We now have three groups coming, with their Romsey Mill support worker, from three Comprehensive Schools in Cambridge. All of the students take part in practical projects in Hoe Fen and gain a wide range of benefits from the experience. Many of these youngsters have found it difficult to fit into the normal academic life at school and so prevention of exclusion is vital for them at this stage of their lives. It is so good to hear these young folk say that they think that working outside is "cool"!

Red2Green and Bottisham Village College

This organisation is a Social Enterprise charity that offers help into employment and training opportunities to all ages who may have learning or physical issues. This group has now been able to link with us to re-establish part of the old Kitchen Garden that had been taken out of use approx 20 years ago. Together with the local Village College who use this project for their year 10 and 11 students, groups now come almost everyday of the week to work on this vegetable growing project that will then help supply local produce to the Restaurant at the NT Visitor Centre.

Other Schools

Introducing the younger generation to the importance of the natural environment is a key objective of what we do. Currently we have links for practical projects with seven local schools. One of these is an inner-city primary school where the majority of the children rarely go into the countryside. Each year-group is able to come and they have all been able to help by creating eco-piles that become homes to insects. They are completely engrossed by these activities and are of course even more excited when they discover what has used their piles of sticks as its home.

Business Involvement

The involvement of local and national business links has been vital both for the initial kick-start that was needed and for the continuing development of the Hoe Fen Project. Much of the preliminary work was done (and paid for) as a three-day project in 2006 by 350 summer interns of a major investment bank. In 2008 we will be hosting the event for the third time with a rise to over 500 interns for a four-day project; this shows a measure of its success. In 2007 we had additional support from 350 staff from other commercial partners, both in the Hoe Fen area and elsewhere in the garden. So far the project in Hoe Fen has created over 3000m of paths and built two oak bridges, a bird hide, many rustic seats, bird boxes and bird feeders, a reading circle and a log cabin Resource Centre. Plans for 2008 include the construction of two more oak bridges, the creation of a pond dipping platform and the development of a further six-acre site. All the capital costs are paid for by one of the commercial partners.

This range of facilities will allow us to further develop our links with other groups:

- **Arts and Minds** will be able to run a summer school to do sculpture and art- related projects for families with challenging family situations.
- **Community Mental Health Unit** groups will join on regular work activities to assist in their continuing recovery programmes.
- **Single mothers'** activity projects will be able to use the log cabin to both develop their parenting skills and gain

- healthy exercise.
- **Camsight** will assist us by developing tactile interpretation for the project while using the site themselves.
 - **Local Health and Sports Development** groups may be able to use the whole area as a “Green Gym” to take GP referrals that require exercise.

There are many possibilities; the only restriction is the constraints on our own time. Fortunately the Trust has seen the benefits of this type of outreach activity and we are in the process of applying for an additional full-time member of staff who will be able to dedicate time to supporting and developing the group activities in future.

The opportunity to manage and interact with a wide range of volunteers has also had a beneficial effect on the full-time garden staff. They have developed confidence and skills in assisting people who can be quite challenging to cope with – or who may be more gifted intellectually but have little hands-on practical experience. All of the garden team have grown hugely in knowledge and self-belief.

Finally here are a couple of examples of individuals, both young men in their twenties, who have been coming as volunteers with us for a number of years.

One now comes to us five days a week. He has had quite a disturbed background and has learning difficulties, but he is very able physically and is an asset to our team. It appears that Anglesey Abbey is the only place where he is totally calm and well-behaved – at most other times he has a history of physical aggression and unhelpful behaviour. The other has cerebral palsy and lacks co-ordination. However his contribution to the team brings much joy and fun as he has the ability to bring a great lightness to the working atmosphere and his presence lifts the spirits.

To my mind success must never be measured by the work outcomes of volunteer input only, it has much more to offer and can make our lives richer and more fulfilled through interaction with people of all abilities.

Volunteering is about willingly helping each other and it is a privilege to see such a wide range of people of differing abilities and backgrounds working together for the benefit of all and in the cause of preserving and developing an area of natural beauty for future generations to enjoy. Community spirit is not dead; it just requires a push in the right direction.

Photographic References

Tapestry of Gardens credited to Richard Todd

Volunteers at the Study Resource Centre at Hoe Fen credited to Richard Todd

School Links: Children gathering sticks to create mini beast homes credited to Felicity Norman

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School Links: Children gathering sticks to create mini beast homes

Volunteering in the Natural Outdoors: A New Report from CRN

Richard Worsley, The Tomorrow Project



Healthy Volunteering: Hampshire Case Study

In 2007, CRN commissioned a report to explore how natural outdoors volunteering fits with current and developing trends in the countryside; and how opportunities for this form of volunteering could be enhanced and encouraged and its potential realised.

The report, written for CRN by The Tomorrow Project, a charity specialising in futures work, was published in May 2008 and launched at a conference held at Wimpole Hall, a National Trust property near Cambridge.

A consultative approach

The report was prepared with the help of an initial scoping event and a later consultation involving representatives of business, local and national volunteer involving organisations, researchers and funders. The work was guided by a steering group including representatives of the CRN secretariat, the Sports Council for Wales, the Countryside Council for Wales, the Institute for Volunteering Research, the Forestry Commission and the National Trust.

The approach of this project has been to look at volunteering through the 'lens' of the natural outdoors rather than focusing on issues that are common to volunteering as a

whole. The report takes a positive, not neutral view, of the benefits of natural outdoors volunteering to individuals, organisations and society and aims to position natural outdoors volunteering alongside volunteering in, for example, formal sport, social care and health and to promote a more balanced perspective across the various categories of volunteering.

It has sought to differentiate itself from other volunteering projects and research by seeking valuable and fresh insights derived from debate and consultation rather than fresh quantitative research. This is not therefore a traditional research report – rather a scoping document based on the opinions of key stakeholders and current literature.

However, the report has been helpfully informed by a literature review. This was undertaken specifically for this purpose by Nick Ockenden of the Institute for Volunteering Research; a summary of which is included as an appendix.

Five perspectives

The report, which contains a series of sixteen illustrated case studies, is in five parts:

Natural outdoors volunteering today

This section, which includes a statistical review, reminds us that many players interact in natural outdoors volunteering, that it may be undertaken for a range of different purposes,

and that it may range from the formal and organised to the much less formal and self-organised; also that volunteering is not free of cost to organisations, that there is not an inexhaustible demand for volunteers, and that natural outdoors volunteering happens in towns and cities as well as in the wider countryside and on the coast and on waterways.

The benefits of natural outdoors volunteering

The benefits of this type of volunteering are reviewed under five headings: those to society, to the economy, to the environment, to individuals themselves and to the organisations involved. Its potential as a means of building links between people and the places and communities in which they live is also discussed.

Natural outdoors volunteering and public policy

Volunteering has an important link with the roles, aims and resources of government and is at the heart of the concepts of sustainable development and social enterprise. The report discusses the importance of enabling and empowering, as opposed to resources and substitution, as the motives for government interest in volunteering; also its potential as an additional form of engagement in decision-making. It suggests that the natural outdoors volunteering sector has some way to go in achieving the same profile and significance in Government's eyes as other sectors.

Issues and perceptions, opportunities and threats

The report suggests that this sector of volunteering is in need of a greater sense of cohesion between the organisations involved and the various forms of volunteering in which they are engaged, and of a higher profile as compared with other sectors.

There is an opportunity to use the potential of volunteering to help address problems of social exclusion, to realise the importance of young people gaining a better understanding of the countryside, and to provide opportunities for volunteering across generations and social groups.

The project's consultations suggested that many more people could be engaged in natural outdoors volunteering, making more of its value in environmental awareness, and its opportunities for enjoyment and personal fulfilment; also that there is substantial scope for expanding the role of employers in supporting natural outdoors volunteering, with its significant benefits for both employers and employees, the opportunity it provides for short 'taster' sessions, and its non-threatening nature.

The growing attention being given to climate change is another important opportunity for the environmental volunteering sector – especially in showing people that there

are real contributions that they as individuals can make to helping tackle the global warming threat.



Nercwys Kids, A Green Gym in Denbighshire Case Study

Conclusion and recommendations

The report concludes that the sector still has much to achieve in projecting itself, in its coherence and in bringing more high quality volunteer effort to bear.

It suggests that the sector should build on the many examples of excellence that already exist and should seek to achieve progress by focusing on the aims of better coherence and inter-action in the sector, on the image and profile of natural outdoors volunteering, and on the expansion of the scale of such volunteering, including an increase in the extent of employer supported volunteering.

Its recommendations are mainly aimed at organisations engaging outdoor volunteers, suggesting the scope there is to build on a strong track record, so that this powerful form of volunteering achieves its potential and secures its fair share of resources and attention from policy-makers and resource providers.

'A serious contribution to the current debate'

The report has been warmly welcomed. In her foreword, Baroness Neuberger, the Government's volunteering champion, commented:

'I am delighted to see this report emerge as a serious contribution to the current debate about volunteering. The Commission on the Future of Volunteering, which I chaired, did not have space to go into the details of different kinds of volunteering, in different settings, except in the broadest of

terms. So to read this report, with its painstaking work on how natural outdoors volunteering takes place and how it benefits everybody, was a real joy.'

Many people have paid tribute to the opportunity provided by the report and its consultations to interact with others in the sector and to have their thinking challenged and stimulated.

A launch in the countryside

The conference at Wimpole Hall on a sunny 1st May was attended by a cross-section of organisations with an interest in volunteering. Its aim was to discuss the recommendations and how to take them forward.

Following a presentation on the report itself, the conference was addressed by:

Alan Murray of the RSPB, who spoke of the dangers of stereotyping outdoor volunteers, the opportunities it provides for interaction with other charities, the importance of fitting volunteering opportunities round people's working and family lives, and the need to give volunteers a sense of ownership and of regarding the management of volunteers as a specialist skill;

Richard Todd, Head Gardener at Anglesey Abbey, another National Trust property, whose talk described the garden's interactions with volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds – including a moving tribute to the positive experiences of young people with behavioural and learning difficulties, the challenge of engaging volunteers in large numbers from Goldman Sachs, and the resultant benefits to the partner organisations, to the property and its staff; (See Richard Todd's article on Volunteering at Anglesey Abbey)

Dr. Liz O'Brien, Forestry Commission who described the results of her recent research on environmental volunteering - including its roles in assisting integration in society, in building social capital, in assisting community development and in reinforcing environmental values and connectedness with places (another theme in the report).

Responses and Reactions

After lunch, the conference participants split into three groups to consider the three sets of recommendations.

On **profile, image and coherence**, participants felt that the recommendations could have gone further and that if a distinct image of natural outdoors volunteering was to be achieved it needed to be more clearly defined. A wide definition, perhaps including heritage and conservation volunteering, could be beneficial. Key enabling roles could be fulfilled by Volunteering England and Natural England and their equivalents in the other territories. There was a view

that too close an association with climate change might be as much of a risk as an opportunity.

On **engaging more people**, there was a call (by some) for more emphasis on volunteering as a group activity and of the potential for reaching out to people through groups such as young people and religious groups as well as individuals. The marketing channels needed to be tailored to the groups concerned, especially in the case of young people. A sense of locality was essential, with promotion of opportunities close to where people lived. There was a limit to what the more established organisations could do and a view that the scope for growth lay significantly in expansion through self-organisation – with access to expertise and skills, and with a constant reminder that the quality of the volunteering experience was as important as quantity.

On **employer supported volunteering**, participants urged more activity by Volunteering England on the potential benefits for employers of natural outdoors volunteering – perhaps bringing out the value of longer-term projects through which mutually beneficial relationships could be forged. There was a case for a dedicated workshop to explore this potential further and to bring out examples of good practice and the opportunities for employers of all types and sizes, including those in the public sector. Again, there should be an appeal to a sense of locality – local volunteering groups working with local businesses. Organisations in the environmental/natural outdoors sector should show the way by providing employee volunteering schemes of their own. (On a show of hands, only a minority of organisations represented at the conference operated such a scheme.)



In conclusion...

There is no doubt that the publication of the report has struck a chord. The conference participants were not alone on having plenty to say on the subject – with strong feelings held on many aspects. There was insufficient time in a single day to bring out all these views and opportunities and

a clear message that the debate needs to continue.

There is a well justified feeling of pride in what this sector has achieved – but widespread concern that it is under-recognised. Heads nodded at the conference at the words of one of these consulted during the report's preparation:

'As a sector, the natural outdoors sector has huge experience, skills and knowledge of volunteering. We have been doing it for years, but are still seriously under-recognised.'

There is a limit to what CRN, with its finite resources, can do to take these points forward on its own. The results of the conference will be fed back into its own discussions but CRN's hope is that the recommendations and the comments made at the conference will now be picked up by other organisations as part of the growing debate on volunteering.

Photographic References

Healthy Volunteering: Hampshire Case Study credited to The National Trust

Nercwys Kids, A Green Gym in Denbighshire credited to Rhun Jones, Denbighshire Countryside Services

Operation Apple and Making an Impact credited to The National Trust

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Volunteering in the Natural Outdoors A Report for the Countryside Recreation Network

by The Tomorrow Project

Whether it's organising a walking for health initiative, clearing rhododendron in ancient woodlands, undertaking a beach clean up or monitoring wildlife in hay meadows, volunteering in the natural outdoors needs a better image and more people taking part. That's the call from research undertaken by the Countryside Recreation Network, the body which involves all the UK and Ireland major countryside and recreation agencies.

Copies of the report can be purchased for a limited price of £10.00 until November 2008

After this time, copies will be £15.00.

Payment can be made by cheque (made payable to 'Sheffield Hallam University') or credit card.

To purchase your copy, please contact:

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Agency Profile

Each issue of *Countryside Recreation* will profile a relevant agency/organisation.

Sports Council for Wales



sports council wales
cyngor chwaraeon cymru

Dr Rachel Hughes, Research and Evaluation Manager, Sports Council for Wales

About the Sports Council for Wales

The Sports Council for Wales was established by Royal Charter in 1972, with the objectives of “fostering the knowledge and practice of sport and physical recreation among the public at large in Wales, and the provision of facilities thereto”.

As an Assembly Government Sponsored Body (AGSB), that is a non-departmental public body directly funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, our main aims are to:

- Develop and improve education and knowledge of, and practice and training in, sport and physical activity, in the interests of social welfare, and to encourage the attainment of high standards;
- Foster, support and undertake the provision of facilities for sport and physical recreation;
- Advise, encourage and assist individuals and teams participating in sport and physical activity, in their pursuit of health and social benefits, or achieving excellence in sport; and
- Be one of the deliverers of the Welsh Assembly Government’s strategy for sport and physical activity, ‘Climbing Higher’, and to facilitate and support the delivery of the Assembly Government’s ‘One Wales’ commitments.

We employ nearly 200 staff within our four regional offices (Cardiff, Carmarthen, Deeside, and Caernarfon) and two National Centres. Our Head Office is located at the Welsh Institute of Sport in Cardiff.

The Sports Council owns and manages two National Centres: the Welsh Institute of Sport, Cardiff, and Plas Menai

National Watersports Centre, Caernarfon.

The Welsh Institute of Sport is the premier training and competition venue for many sports in Wales. Supporting a wide range of sports and competitors, the Institute is the permanent base of a number of governing bodies and is ideally located to serve the needs of athletes and administrators alike.

Plas Menai is one of the largest outdoor centres in Britain and offers a wide range of governing body technical and coach education programmes. The Centre works very closely with the Royal Yachting Association, Welsh Yachting Association (whose headquarters are at Plas Menai), and the Welsh Canoeing Association, particularly on coach education and safety training programmes.



The Sports Council is also responsible for distributing funds generated by the Lottery to sport and physical activity in Wales. We do this through the operation of a number of funding schemes (more information can be found on: www.sports-council-wales.org.uk/grants-funding/grant-schemes). For 2008/09, we have a Lottery budget of

£12.9m, and as an AGSB, an Exchequer budget of £24m. We have a variety of programmes and funding streams that are in place to help meet our strategic and operational priorities.

In terms of outdoor recreation specifically, the Sports Council manages a couple of exciting programmes: Mentro Allan and Let's Walk Cymru.

Mentro Allan. The main aim of Mentro Allan is to increase activity levels amongst the 'hard to reach' sedentary population by increasing their recreational use of the natural environment of Wales. Mentro Allan has a strong focus on evaluation in order to increase the evidence base of what works in getting people active.

The programme provides four years of funding for 15 targeted projects that will seek to identify and remove the barriers to activity that are experienced by certain 'hard to reach' groups within society.

The approach for the evaluation of the Mentro Allan programme is based on Participatory Action Research. Projects carry out self evaluations focussing on the effectiveness of their activities, using action research methods. Each project is assisted by the Central Support Team who provides advice, training, networking opportunities and coordination of results.

Let's Walk Cymru. Building on the success of the Countryside Council for Wales' Walking the Way the Health programme, Let's Walk Cymru is a new Wales-wide initiative, developed in partnership with the Sports Council, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Countryside Council for Wales, tasked with increasing the number of people undertaking walking as a regular health benefiting activity. Let's Walk Cymru targets the inactive population and those who will benefit the most.

The programme has been developed to offer much more than just the traditional health walks; for example, Nordic walking increasing the use of countryside footpaths, developing orienteering routes, and improving navigation skills.



Outdoor Activities in Wales: a review. In addition, the Sports Council has recently completed a strategic review of outdoor activities in Wales. The primary focus of the review is on physical activity within the framework of Climbing

Higher, the Welsh Assembly Government's strategy for sport and physical activity.

In order for the twenty-year targets relating to physical activity to be met, we argue that long-term behaviour change among the majority of the general population is required, and that this could be best achieved, in the context of outdoor activities, by exploring 'doorstep' activities rather than many of the traditional sports associated with the countryside.

The Role of Research and Evaluation. It would be bereft of me not to refer to the important role Research and Evaluation plays within the Sports Council. Research and evaluation is embedded in the work of the Sports Council and provides high quality evidence on issues, processes, and outcomes to inform the development and delivery of policy. This includes the analysis and utilisation of comparative evidence from other sporting systems and cultures. The identification and exploration of gaps in knowledge, together with the utilisation and reporting on various methodological techniques are also integral functions. The Sports Council's Research and Evaluation department is in a strong position to influence both policy and academic debate.

Evidence-based approaches are central to the development of an active Wales and in shaping ongoing improvements. Research and Evaluation has an integral role to play in terms of:

- Evaluating the projects/programmes – this involves a combination of both process and case study evaluations;
- Identifying critical success factors;
- Identifying 'good practice' examples which can be utilised in the Sports Council's advocacy work;
- Providing advice and support to colleagues and partners in terms of monitoring outputs;
- Identifying and exploring gaps in knowledge; and
- Analysing and reporting on data.

We have developed a programme of research and evaluation which is aligned to the Council's projects/programmes and future direction. The data which this programme of work generates is invaluable in shaping the Sports Council's current project/programme development(s), provides an evidence-base for justifying our decisions to continue to invest in particular types of projects/programmes, fills gaps in our knowledge, as well as influencing the development and delivery of policy.

For further information about the Sports Council for Wales, please visit our website: www.sports-council-wales.org.uk.

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News



COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION NETWORK

New jobs service for *Countryside Recreation* Readers

The Countryside Recreation Network is pleased to offer a new job vacancies listing on its website. The aim of this service is to provide a current list of job vacancies relevant to countryside recreation and access professionals in the public, private and voluntary sectors. Please see below for details of how to advertise any relevant vacancies in this section:

Rate: £200.00 per vacancy (Max. 1 A4 page).

Payment: Once advertising arrangements have been confirmed, we will send you an invoice in the post. Once you receive the invoice, payment can be made by cheque, BACS or online via credit card.

Timescales: Job adverts can be displayed for a maximum of six weeks. Please allow at least two days notice for jobs to be uploaded on to our website.

Volunteer Jobs: These can be advertised free of charge.

If you are interested in advertising through the CRN website, please contact the CRN manager by email: crn@shu.ac.uk, or telephone 0114 2254494.

ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITIES (ANPA)

The National Park looks at bogs of a different kind

Four new projects have received funding from the New Forest National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund, totalling approximately £20,000.

The projects in this round of funding are aimed at maintaining and improving the Park's special qualities.

The Forestry Commission will be undertaking an investigation into the possibilities of making their toilets in the New Forest sustainable. The study will explore a range of options to minimise the impacts of the toilets by reducing water use and waste production and preventing anti-social behaviour.

Hale Parish Council has been awarded funding to improve Hatchett Green, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The current 'urban' style bollards and signs will be removed and replaced with signage and an interpretation board in keeping with the Forest landscape.

Beaulieu Estate will be replacing its existing run-down village bus shelter to one matching Beaulieu's historical character. It will look over Mill Pond (an SSSI) and Palace House and provide information and a viewpoint.

New Forest District Council has received funding to organise two 'meet the producer' events and manage a wood and craft fair in partnership with the Hants and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. Their aim is to promote and support local produce in the National Park.

For further information please contact: Karen Evans, Communications Officer, New Forest National Park Authority. Tel: 01590 646650 Email: karen.evans@newforestnpa.gov.uk

BRITISH WATERWAYS

British Waterways commissions major fish survey

British Waterways (BW) has commissioned The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) to carry out a major, three-year electronic fish tagging survey at the Tees Barrage, at Stockton on Tees.

The study began in April this year and is being managed by CEFAS (an Executive Agency of the Department for

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), and British Waterways. Funded by BW, the £500,000 project will provide baseline scientific data to help scientists, anglers and wildlife enthusiasts begin to understand the complex interactions and relationships around the fish, bird and mammal populations that use the Barrage as a focus for migration and feeding behaviour.

It is also anticipated that the Tees survey will add benefit to the other studies of rivers in the North East being carried out by CEFAS including the Tyne, where they are monitoring fish movements and the environmental factors that impact on fish migration.

Part of the focus for the Tees survey will be to establish data relating to seal predation and salmon and sea trout numbers in the Tees Estuary which has caused controversy amongst some angling groups.

Laurence Morgan, General Manager for British Waterways Yorkshire said: *"There are great many anecdotal views about the impact of the Tees Barrage on fishing, with some anglers saying it has improved while others argue it has declined. CEFAS are the leading experts in their field and we are confident that this study will enable them to provide reliable, scientific and indisputable data which can inform the future management of the structure and river."*

Since British Waterways took over management of the Tees Barrage in 2001, the quality of the water in the River Tees has continued to improve from its industrial and polluted past, and wildlife in general is thriving in the area. The structure has created a major watersports destination and one of the best coarse fisheries in the North East. While the study is being carried out British Waterways is undertaking a variety of interim measures, as recommended by the Environment Agency, including installing a 'penstock' to facilitate fish movement through the fish pass when water levels are high.

Trent Vale Project seeks people power

The Trent Vale Landscape Partnership (TVLP), led by British Waterways, has begun a period of recruitment and community involvement to identify a number of potential projects that could benefit local people, visitors and the natural and cultural heritage along the River Trent between Newark and West Stockwith.

The activity is part of the Trent Vale project, a 3-year scheme which was recently earmarked for a £1.76 million Stage 1* grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The project aims to develop a community focused sustainable development strategy for the area by linking a diverse series of small projects which include improving access to the river, habitat improvements with farmers, traditional skills training, archaeological investigations, production of visitor guides and

by raising the profile of Trent Vale locally, regionally and nationally.

*A Stage 1 Grant means the money has been earmarked by the Heritage Lottery Fund. While a Stage 1 pass does not guarantee funding, it is an indication of positive support and the money is set aside.

TVLP is now in a development stage - baseline studies and research will be undertaken and projects developed and costed as well as continued efforts to obtain additional funding. In addition the scheme will involve investigating the refurbishment of the former Victorian Old Willow Works at Beckingham for use as a community space, training and heritage centre, and office accommodation for the Trent Vale project.

The TVLP have recently appointed Nic Wort as Project Manager. With a background in countryside management and project development Nic will be responsible for putting together the Stage 2 application to HLF. The Stage 2 application will be submitted in February 2009 and the outcome of the application will be known in July 2009. In order to ensure full community involvement TVLP will also be recruiting a Community Development Worker to manage the development and input of community groups and individuals into the scheme.

Nic Wort said *"I'm really looking forward to getting involved with the communities in the Trent Vale area as they are the real emphasis of this project. I'm keen to raise awareness of the heritage and traditions of the local area and enable people to learn traditional crafts and skills."* He continues; *"We've already had a great deal of community support and I would be particularly interested to hear from any parish councils, community groups or individuals within Trent Vale who want to know more about the scheme or who have suggestions for possible conservation or heritage projects"*.

The Trent Vale Landscape Partnership is a delivery arm of the OnTrent Initiative - a long-term initiative intended to benefit local people and the natural and cultural heritage in the parishes along the River Trent between Stoke-on-Trent and the Humber Estuary.

COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS AND ACTIVITIES NETWORK NORTHERN IRELAND (CAAN)

Walk This Way - New walking brochure launched

Northern Ireland is fortunate to have so many beautiful regions, all with their own unique appeal. The new Walk Northern Ireland Brochure gives a taste of the vast array of stunning walking routes available. Each County receives its own section with walks available in a range of lengths and surroundings. Some walks will be familiar but there are also a few hidden gems.

The publication, available free of charge has been produced by Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN) and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) along with financial support from Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) and The National Trust. It contains 52 walks each of which are accredited under the "Quality Walks Scheme" meaning each walk has been assessed on the ground by walkers for walkers. By choosing a Quality Walk walkers can leave home with the knowledge their selected route is one of the best Northern Ireland has to offer. A directory in the back of the brochure provides information on over 130 Quality Walks in Northern Ireland, further information on these is available on CAAN's multi-award winning walking website www.walkni.com. "Avid walkers should regularly check the website as there are new Quality Walks being added each week" stressed Chris Scott, Marketing Officer, CAAN.

The brochure was officially launched at the National Outdoors Show in the Birmingham NEC on Friday 14th March.

Although the brochure will be used to attract tourists to Northern Ireland it is also of great use to home grown walkers. "Whether you are interested in summiting Slieve Donard or would just like a short stroll around your local Country Park then everything you require is contained within this publication; it will allow you to discover amazing countryside, parks and coastline. Some of which you will have never known existed. The information is clear, concise and should inspire people to go out and enjoy the beautiful countryside we have here in Northern Ireland." added Dr Caro-lynn Ferris, Director, CAAN.

The brochure will be widely available via the Belfast Welcome Centre Tourist Information Centre for Belfast and Northern Ireland and your local Tourist Information Centre. It can also be ordered online or downloaded from www.walkni.com or www.discovernorthernireland.com.

CAAN & Lough Erne Canoe Trail

Celebrates victory in Waterways Renaissance Awards 2008

The Lough Erne Canoe Trail has triumphed in the 'Innovation' category at this year's Waterways Renaissance Awards, run by The Waterways Trust and BURA (British Urban Regeneration Association).

For the first time in the awards' history, a project based in Northern Ireland was the recipient of an accolade. The Lough Erne Canoe Trail was recognised alongside projects organising ferry trips along the Mersey, the strengthening of a working Lock in Keadby, North Lincolnshire and a waterside education programme on a Fenland river, Cambridgeshire, as some of the best examples of waterway renewal in the country.

Now in their sixth year, the Waterways Renaissance Awards

aim to recognise best practice in sustainable waterway regeneration and development throughout the UK. The winners of the ten categories were announced at a prestigious awards ceremony and dinner, which took place at the Imperial War Museum North in Manchester on the 12th March 2008. The event was hosted by Jim Hancock, former BBC Political Editor and presenter of BBC News North West. He is now an associate of Vision, Creative and Communications Consultants.

The nominations were judged by an independent assessment panel, comprising waterway, conservation and regeneration experts and chaired by Sir Neil Cossons. "The panel has no doubt that this is a truly innovative and inspirational project that has taken the simple idea of a canoe trail and successfully marketed it to promote the Lough Erne waterways as a whole. The involvement of canoeists in its design means the trail is both practical and attractive for users from around Ireland and beyond. It is a model that could be adapted and used elsewhere to encourage the use of waterways."

The 50 km Lough Erne Canoe Trail stretches from Muckross on Lower Lough Erne to Crom in Upper Lough Erne. Launched in May 2005, the trail has gone from strength to strength attracting avid canoeists from all over the world. The Canoe Trail was developed by the Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN) for Northern Ireland and the Canoe Association of Northern Ireland with financial support from Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Inland Waterways Division), Environment and Heritage Service, Fermanagh District Council and the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. The project also received support from The National Trust and Waterways Ireland. In her acceptance speech Clare Wright – Strategic Access Manager, CAAN stated "...we are absolutely delighted to win this award and to gain UK wide recognition for our work. This project was developed by a small team within a limited budget therefore Innovation was at the forefront of our planning and development throughout."

Roger Hanbury, Chief Executive of The Waterways Trust, said: "The modern renaissance of our waterways continues to transform our environment, creating education and business opportunities, injecting new life into formerly neglected areas and bringing communities together. All projects making the final list are excellent examples of what can be achieved with vision, commitment and partnership working."

The Lough Erne Canoe Trail has acted as a template for four other Canoe Trails in Northern Ireland. The Blackwater Canoe Trail was launched in November 2007, Lower Bann and Lough Neagh in February and April 2008 respectively with Strangford Lough completing the jig-saw in early July. More information is available on www.canoeni.com.

Audit of the Waymarked Ways - A Volunteer Ranger Programme

Since 1998 CAAN has developed ten Waymarked Ways and two further trails are under development. These Waymarked Ways are long distance (32-69km), multi-day walking routes throughout Northern Ireland based on the quality sections of the Ulster Way.

Each of these routes has common design: The trails are signed throughout with frequent way marking posts. Stiles, footbridges and other walking infrastructure are in place to help walkers cross any obstacles, and intermittent information boards provide details about the most interesting natural and historical features along the routes.

To ensure a high quality walking experience on the Waymarked Ways, CAAN is committed to encourage the management of the facilities on these routes. Therefore, CAAN has introduced a Volunteer Ranger Programme which aims to regularly audit on the quality and safety of these routes.

Ninety Volunteers registered last winter, most of who are active walkers and enjoy our unique landscapes. The registered volunteer rangers were invited to training sessions in February where the scheme was introduced to them, health and safety issues were discussed, and the Rangers were allocated sections of the Waymarked Ways for which they will be responsible. Also representatives of councils and other organisations involved in the maintenance of the Waymarked Ways were invited to the training sessions in order to establish good working relationships between the rangers and those who are maintaining the routes. During March and April the volunteer rangers successfully completed the audit on all sections of the Waymarked Ways and reported back to CAAN about the issues including signage, countryside furniture and path conditions etc. The result of the audit was submitted to the responsible bodies. The next audit will take place in autumn this year.

Since the scheme was successfully established CAAN hopes to extend it to other products such as off-road cycling trails, ecotrails and canoe trails.

For further information contact: Eszter Ballo, Research and Monitoring Officer, The Stableyard, Barnett's Demesne, Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5PB. Tel: 02890 303935. Email: eszter@countysiderecreation.com

Barriers to Participation. A review of why specific communities in Northern Ireland do not use the countryside for recreation.

The Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN) launched a groundbreaking piece of research for Northern Ireland in May.

Previous research from England and anecdotal evidence from Northern Ireland suggested that certain communities were less likely to participate in the countryside recreation activities than the general public. CAAN were commissioned by Environment and Heritage Service and funded in partnership with Sport Northern Ireland to carry out a review of why specific communities in Northern Ireland do not use the countryside for recreation hence "*Barriers to Participation*"

The aim of the research was twofold. Firstly to examine the barriers limiting participation in countryside recreation for people with a disability, people from minority ethnic communities and people living within an area of disadvantage.

Secondly to examine the barriers faced by providers of countryside recreation activities and amenities when working with these communities.

The research team also gathered information on current countryside recreation initiatives taking place in Northern Ireland and examined best practice case studies across the UK.

As a result of the research and in order to address the barriers for both participants and providers following recommendations are made, under seven key areas:

Raising awareness

This has to happen on a number of levels and with a variety of stakeholders. All organisations involved with countryside recreation as well as community leaders and health professionals have a role to play in raising awareness of the health benefits of countryside recreation and how to access opportunities to take part.

Information and marketing

Information should be made available in a wide range of formats to reach the greatest number of people in all communities. This can best be done through a rigorous marketing program and a dedicated marketing officer.

Leadership

A network of appropriately trained leaders throughout Northern Ireland, including those from within the targeted communities, should be developed to work within underrepresented groups and help to increase participation. This can best be done by a dedicated training officer working within a single coordinating body

Facilities

Regular maintenance programs should be in place to ensure the safety, comfort and enjoyment of all users. This includes indoor facilities and outdoor paths and spaces. Where necessary, wardens should be appointed to ensure facilities are well maintained and accessible to all.

Training and capacity building

All providers of countryside recreation should have rigorous training in meeting the needs of underrepresented groups;

this should include training in relevant legislation. People from within the targeted communities should have an opportunity to work within outdoor facilities and undertake leadership training.

Transport

Lack of an appropriate public transport system is a major barrier to participation, particularly amongst rural groups and some people with a disability. Consultation should take place between all stakeholders, including users, to try to reduce the impact of poor public transport systems for people from underrepresented groups.

Policy development and implementation

Many providers and organisations do not have appropriate policies or monitoring systems in place to ensure adequate provision of facilities and activities for underrepresented groups. Without adequate policies, procedures and monitoring systems, provision for under represented communities will be on an ad hoc basis, and little progress can be made in increasing their levels of participation in countryside recreation. A full time coordinator should be tasked with working across organizations and agencies involved with countryside recreation to develop a strategic and coordinated approach to these recommendations.

The document can be downloaded from CAAN's website (www.countrysiderecreation.com). Alternatively it can be obtained directly from CAAN, by calling Eszter 02890 303935 (email: eszter@countrysiderecreation.com)

COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES

Coastal programme kicks off

Work has started on a six-year programme which will eventually lead to an all-Wales coastal footpath. Sixteen local authorities in Wales are sharing £1.5 million in grants this year to start improving access to the coast.

They submitted plans to CCW, who are administering the Wales Coastal Access Improvement Programme on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government. Gwynedd, which has the longest coastline, received the highest sum of £174,400.

Work in the first year is mainly low-level improvement work, including better signs and gates, while many authorities have recruited officers to work on the coastal project.

DEFRA

One million people turn to act on CO₂ calculator for advice on fighting climate change

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY: The ACT ON CO₂ calculator – which helps people to work out and reduce their carbon

footprint – has received its one millionth unique visitor, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs announced today.

The calculator, which was launched last Summer, enables people to reliably calculate their carbon footprint from home energy, appliances and transport. It then develops a personalised action plan for users, with practical steps they can take to cut their emissions.

Climate Change Minister, Joan Ruddock, said:

“A significant part of the fight against climate change is about the action we can take as individuals. On World Environment Day it is really encouraging that so many people are deciding to Act on CO₂ to help the environment. Our calculator, www.direct.gov.uk/actonco2, has received a million visitors in a year.”

Joan Ruddock also attended the Birmingham City Council/ Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment Climate Change Festival, and added, *“I am always impressed at the imaginative and intelligent ways that people engage with the reality of climate change, as evidenced by some of the wonderful work we can see at this festival in Birmingham, where people of all ages and backgrounds are thinking about the future of their homes and their city and how they can work together as a community.”*

Ms Ruddock will be speaking as part of the launch of Birmingham's new climate change strategy and will praise the City's ambitious targets to become a truly low carbon city.

“Cities like Birmingham that are taking action now to reduce their carbon emissions and are starting to adapt to a changing climate are already becoming better places in which to live and work. Cities with a clear vision can inspire and motivate individuals and businesses to reduce their own carbon emissions.”

Environment Minister, Phil Woolas, said young people had a key role in tackling climate change.

Mr Woolas, who will today be attending Microsoft's 'Imagine Cup' awards in London, which promotes the work of young programmers and this year focuses on creating a sustainable environment, said: *“Technical innovation is the key to tackling climate change, and Britain has the talent and the vision to provide that innovation.”*

“We know that in the near future, the strongest economies will be low carbon economies. By facing these challenges head on, not only will we be able to help fight climate change in the UK, but we will be providing leadership and innovation, enabling millions of people around the world to fight climate change in their own lives.”

For further information visit www.defra.gov.uk

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Update on regional plans for water-related sport and recreation

In England, we have been heading projects to assess and shape provision for water-related recreational needs in the South West and East of England. Both initiatives are being funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and implemented with support from a range of partners with expertise in sport, leisure or tourism including Sport England, Natural England, British Waterways, Regional Assembly, Regional Development Agency and Government Offices.

The purpose of these studies has been to form a clear picture of where water activities take place and the challenges faced by growing demand, climate change and overcrowding.

Across the two English regions we have audited sporting and recreational use of nearly 1,200 miles of coastline, 500 square miles of estuaries, nearly 7500 miles of rivers or canals and around 40 square miles of lakes or reservoirs. In addition to auditing use, workshops took place last year to gather views on current and future provision from a wider range of interested groups, including governing bodies, local authorities, conservation agencies and landowners. Anyone with a keen interest in watersports and leisure pursuits, ranging from boaters and paddlers to ramblers and anglers has been encouraged to have their say by logging onto the project website to comment on opinions expressed and issues identified at the workshops.

As a result of this process draft plans for future provision of water-related sport and recreation have been developed for both pilot regions. The draft South West Plan is currently available for comment at www.brighton.ac.uk/waterrecreation/ and views are sought until the middle of June. The draft East of England plan will be available soon and comments are likely to be welcomed until late July.

Whilst we have been undertaking this work in England a similar project to plan new or improved water sport facilities in Wales also got underway in 2007, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and Environment Agency Wales. Another set of 'expert' partners, including the Countryside Council for Wales, Visit Wales, British Waterways, Forestry Commission Wales, Welsh Local Government Association and the Sports Council for Wales backed this initiative. Consultation on a draft plan closed earlier this year, responses have been considered and the final plan will be launched on the 5th June at Llandegfedd Reservoir Sailing Club, Pontypool. We are also awaiting an announcement from Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) on new funding that may be allocated to help pursue many of the recommendations of this plan.

Ultimately it is our aim that this approach to identify regional issues, opportunities and priorities is used to help decision makers such as local authorities, planners, governing bodies and funding agencies take an informed and innovative approach to meeting growing demands for water-related sport and leisure. In time, it is our intention that similar plans will be developed in other regions to provide a framework for action which encourages, supports and inspires responsible and sustainable use of the water environment for sport and recreation in years to come.

Call for water-wise business to shout about success

The Environment Agency is calling on innovative businesses and other organisations to lead by example and demonstrate their outstanding contribution to water conservation by entering the Water Efficiency Awards 2009.

The prestigious awards, which were launched today at the Think08 Sustainability for the Built Environment Conference in London, have been recognising and rewarding the efforts of water-saving companies and organisations across public, private and voluntary sectors for more than a decade.

Environment Agency Director of Water Management David King said the awards, held every two years, aimed to increase awareness about water efficiency and offered a platform to share good practice and demonstrate that water-saving measures could be cost effective.

"Water is one of our most valuable yet vulnerable resources and being water-wise is essential for the environment. But it also makes good business sense - watching a dripping tap is like watching money slip through your fingers," David King said.

"Our water resources are already under pressure from increasing demand, an expanding population and housing growth. Unavoidable impacts of climate change - such as more frequent drought and floods - also pose a threat to our supplies in the future. There's never been a more appropriate time for organisations to showcase the excellent work they are doing to save water."

The overall winner of the Water Efficiency Awards 2007 - The Malvern Hotel and The Blues Grill, in Kent - managed to reduce their water use by an impressive 46%, around 320 cubic metres per year, by raising awareness of the need to save water with guests. In the process, this family-run hotel made annual savings of £840. *"It just goes to show how small companies can make big savings that are truly worthwhile,"* David King added.

For 2009, the Water Efficiency Awards will have three new look categories open to all businesses and organisations, including those in the leisure and tourism and retail sectors. The categories, which will consider projects that are or were

operational between April 2006 and May 2008, are:

Water Shout Award - celebrating great campaigns that change the way people use water

Judges will be looking for a well planned and structured campaign, together with evidence of how much attitudes or behaviours of the target audience have changed as a result of the project.

Water Save Award - recognising practical measures that save water and money

Judges will be looking for evidence – such as meter readings - of the amount of water used both before and after the implementation of the project, together with clear information on the process used and how the project was communicated and delivered within the organisation.

Water Solve Award - acknowledging smart solutions for sustainable water use

Judges will be looking for evidence of how the project or research was conceived and implemented and not necessarily the amount of water saved.

The closing date for entries is 31 October 2008 and the winners will be announced at Think09 in London in May 2009. For further information visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk

GREENSPACE SCOTLAND

New greenspace quality ‘tool-kit’ is launched

A new tool-kit for assessing the quality of greenspace is launched today. Developed by **greenspace scotland** and the Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership, the ‘tool-kit’ will help local authorities, developers, housing associations and other greenspace managers to assess whether their greenspaces are ‘fit-for-purpose’ and to identify actions required to maintain and enhance quality.

Greenspace quality - a guide to assessment, planning and strategic development provides practical guidance to support local authorities in producing open space audits and strategies, as required by SPP11 Open Space and Physical Activity. It will also assist developers and housing associations in delivering on the aspirations set out in Firm Foundations for improving the quality of greenspace in residential areas to create better neighbourhoods and more sustainable places.

Julie Procter, Chief Executive of greenspace scotland commented: *“We know that high quality, multi-functional and accessible greenspace can make a real difference to the quality of life and sustainability of urban communities. Whilst local authorities have found it relatively easy to map and quantify greenspace, understanding and assessing the quality of greenspace has been a real challenge.”*

Max Hislop, Programme Manager for the Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership explained: *“The guide identifies five criteria for assessing quality - accessible and well connected; attractive and appealing places; biodiverse, supporting ecological networks; active, supporting health and wellbeing; and community supported - together with a framework for applying these across the PAN65 typology of open space and provides guidance on establishing local standards.”*

The guide also includes advice on developing a Strategic Framework for Greenspace, undertaking a Greenspace Audit, developing a Greenspace Strategy and establishing a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

A small number of local authorities and greenspace organisations have used the guidance in advance of its launch and have given positive feedback:

Nic Coombey from Solway Heritage reports: *“The ‘Greenspace Quality’ document was an invaluable aid to the delivery of the pilot greenspace audit for the North West Dumfries Neighbourhood Renewal. The guidance provides a much needed clear and flexible approach to the complex task of assessing the quality of greenspace.”*

Ewart McAuslane, Head of Environmental Services, Clackmannanshire Council reports: *“In Clackmannanshire, we recognise the need for support on how we assess the quality of our greenspace. This Guidance incorporates the key elements that we are looking for in terms of a quality assessment model and we hope that it will enable us to develop our own approach to understanding how local people value their greenspace. The publication of this guidance will provide a significant step forward in relation to open space strategy development and implementation.”*

The guide and summary is available to download at <http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/qualityguide>. For further information contact Deryck Irving on 01786 465934 or email: deryck.irving@greenspacescotland.org.uk

MOORS FOR THE FUTURE

Teachers’ welcome to outdoor classroom

How often do pupils stare through the window wishing they were outside?

Now there’s no reason not to be, when they can learn numeracy, literacy, science, geography, history and the arts in the giant outdoor classroom of the Peak District National Park.

The Moorland Discovery Centre, on the beautiful National Trust Longshaw Estate, has just launched a Teachers’ Pack DVD offering outdoor educational programmes from

pre-school right up to GCSE and A-level.

Opened just over a year ago, the Moorland Discovery Centre was developed by the Moors for the Future Partnership, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and European Union. It is jointly-run by the Peak District National Park Authority and the National Trust, and the Teachers Pack was financially-supported by the Ramblers Association and Sheffield Campaign for Access to Moorland.

Just over seven miles from Sheffield, the centre is ideally placed for opening the eyes of city-bound young people to an appreciation of the natural environment. In half- or full-day visits, some 4,000 pupils have already learned about moorland habitats, their ecology, geology, wildlife, history, legends, conservation and climate change.

Launching the CD at a presentation to Sheffield teachers, National Park chair Narendra Bajaria said: *"Learning in the outdoors has got to become an integral part of mainstream education. It is by far the best way to stimulate environmental interest in young people who will hand it on to future generations. The Moorland Discovery Centre offers a fantastic opportunity for schools if they choose to use it. The Teachers' Pack opens the door, and it's up to schools to lead their pupils through it to discover this unique environment for themselves."*

Mike Tones, the Department for Children, Schools and Families' national champion for learning outside the classroom, gave the keynote address: *"I'm utterly convinced that the best educational achievements are made through learning outside the classroom,"* he said.

"It's not about going out once a year on a sunny day, it's about learning core subjects regularly outside the classroom - maths, science, information technology, literacy. Direct experience has been proven to lead to deeper learning, raised educational standards and even improved behaviour."

"The Peak District is within easy reach of Sheffield and Manchester, and these facilities and services are now on offer. Millions of young people could benefit if the will is there in schools and community groups."

Mike Innerdale, property manager for the National Trust's Longshaw Estate, said: *"We hope the Teachers' Pack will be the start of a real drive to bring more young people out into the Peak District. The natural environment should not be an optional add-on, it's an enriching part of life which every young person should be able to experience, regardless of background."*

The Teachers' Pack DVD and education visits booklet is being sent to all schools in Sheffield and the Hope Valley, and is available by ringing 01433 637907. Teachers are encouraged to set up a free preliminary visit by ringing the

same number.

The Moorland Discovery Centre is a mile from Grindleford railway station, on a bus-route (get off at the Fox House Inn opposite the Longshaw Estate), or by road at the junction of the A6187 (Ringinglow road) and A625 to Hathersage (tel: 01433 637907).

On the Manchester side, similar educational facilities are on offer at the Longdendale Environmental Education Centre, jointly run with United Utilities, at Tintwistle (tel: 01457 868127).

Losehill Hall, the national park's learning and environmental conference centre near Castleton, also offers a full range of opportunities for schools (tel: 01433 620373).

For more information, go to www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk , www.nationaltrust.org.uk/peakdistrict or www.peakdistrict.gov.uk

Rangers to help climate change research

Peak District National Park volunteer rangers will be helping important climate change research on Peak District moorland over the next nine months.

The rangers will be measuring moorland water tables on a scale never conducted before.

Climate change is threatening to dry out sensitive moorlands, but moorland restoration can help to raise water tables. This will have positive effects for flood alleviation and carbon storage.

On March 11, the Moors for the Future Partnership, Environment Agency and University of Manchester are launching a major project to investigate the water tables on Bleaklow and Kinder Scout and look at effects of moorland restoration.

The National Park volunteer rangers will be involved in an intensive programme, starting by installing more than 400 dipwells - instruments buried in the ground to measure the depth from the ground surface to the water table. The rangers will then return to the dipwells every month to collect data.

University of Manchester researchers Dr Tim Allott and Dr Martin Evans will use these water table measures and combine them with high-precision digital terrain models to assess effects of restoration on water tables.

Dr Tim Allott said: *"This exciting and novel research will help us understand how moorland restoration can be used to adapt to climate change. Moorland water tables also influence run-off from the uplands during heavy rainfall"*

events, and so this work may also contribute to our understanding of downstream flooding.”

Andrew Jones, of the Moors for the Future research team, added: “The ranger service has worked with us on a number of our research projects in the past, and it’s great to have them on board again. This is a unique project, the water table of the Peak District moors has never been mapped on this scale before. The project requires the measurement of water table depth at each of the 400+ dipwells on the same day each month. Without the help of the rangers we simply wouldn’t be able to take the measurements concurrently, which is vital to the success of the project.”

Bluetooth and claws

Visitors to Bakewell with Bluetooth mobile phones can download a new dog-walking cartoon, for free.

A trailer for the ‘Paws on the Moors’ animation, a light-hearted guide to safe dog-walking on the moors, can be received near Bakewell Visitor Centre by following instructions displayed on the building.

Dan Boys, moor care officer for the Moors for the Future Partnership said, “We have temporarily installed a Bluetooth unit, provided by the Peak District Interpretation Partnership, in the visitor centre and the short animation is sent wirelessly to people’s mobiles. Due to the power of Bluetooth technology, the trailer can even be downloaded outside the centre’s opening hours.”

Although around 90 per cent of mobile phones now support Bluetooth - technology allowing computers and other devices to make contact - marketing of this kind is usually only found in big cities.

This is just one of a series of ‘new media’ projects promoting the natural and cultural heritage of the Peak District National Park, and follows in the footsteps of podcast audio trails developed by Moors for the Future. Dan Boys added “Receiving information by Bluetooth is free and doesn’t rely on mobile phone reception. No personal information is stored, and if people decline the invitation the unit will not try to communicate with their phone again.”

The full 15-minute animation may be downloaded from www.pawsonthemoors.org. The Kennel Club-approved website helps dog-walkers enjoy the Peak District moorlands with their pets, while helping to protect the special landscape, its wildlife and livestock. Dogs should be kept under close control in the breeding season (March 1 - July 31) to avoid harm to nests, lambs, calves and the dogs and their owners themselves. The website also advises on dog-friendly B&Bs, local kennels, vets and first aid for dogs. Walkers should also consult www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk to see where temporary access restrictions may be in place.

For further information on Paws on the Moors contact Dan Boys, Paws on the Moors project officer, 07795 328473

SNOWDONIA NATIONAL PARK

Park parking charges

Around mid-July, in partnership with the Snowdonia Green Key (SGK), the Snowdonia National Park will be introducing parking charges to three more of its car parks. All the proceeds from parking will be reinvested into footpath maintenance, car park facilities and the Sherpa bus service.

The Sherpa service is an important public transport link for northern Snowdonia. Although the service has a steadily growing number of users it does rely on a subsidy from the Welsh Assembly Government; enabling it to run all year round but this subsidy is decreasing yearly. It is intended that car parking charges will be used to help make-up the shortfall. Charging for car parking is common practice within National Parks.

The Snowdonia National Park car parks where charges will be introduced are Nant Peris, Llyn Cwellyn (Snowdon Ranger) and Pont Bethania (Watkin Path). With an all day parking ticket you will receive a Sherpa bus voucher which can then be swapped on the bus for a free Sherpa day ticket worth £4. This offer will apply to Dolbadarn car park in Llanberis. Rhyd Ddu, Ogwen and Betws-y-Coed car parks will also be part of the scheme although the revenue from these car parks will go to the Park Authority and not SGK.

Snowdonia Green Key hopes that these changes will encourage more people to use the bus and reduce the amount of traffic moving around the Park. The Sherpa service greatly increases the options for walkers looking to enjoy the many linear walks in the area.

For more information visit www.snowdoniagreenkey.co.uk

CORRECTION/AMENDMENTS FROM SPRING JOURNAL 2008

Green Infrastructure

Apologies to Helen Phillips, Chief Executive Officer, Natural England for the misspelling of her name.

Durlston: A Marketing Approach to Project Development

Apologies to Martin Cooke for the misspelling of his Company name, Heritage and Leisure Management. Martin’s website address is www.heritageandleisure.co.uk

If you would like to submit a News item for the Autumn/Winter 2008 Journal please email the Network Secretariat at crn@shu.ac.uk

CRN Seminars

Arts in the Outdoors

13 March 2008, The Lighthouse, Glasgow

This seminar attracted 17 delegates and was chaired by Sally Thomas of the Scottish Government. The seminar aimed to cover a wide variety of media, and bring together artists, organisers, facilitators and landowners. It looked at key concepts such as provision of and access to art and explored the practical aspects of art in the outdoors.

The morning session included presentations from Dave Pritchard on a review of art provision by the Forestry Commission he has been conducting and case studies from Lisa Shephard, Cannock Chase District Council, on an 'Arts and Health Trail' in Cannock Chase; Dan Hillier, Royal Observatory Edinburgh, on 'Dark Sky Scotland' trying to encourage engagement with astronomy in Scotland; and Alistair Hudson on the work of Grizedale Arts in Lakeland and around the world to link agriculture and 'culture culture'.

The afternoon saw two artists present how they have created works for the outdoors. Susheila Jamieson covered her work producing art with and for the community in the English and Scottish borders. Carl von Weiler presented work he had done including in the grounds of Cragside, a National Trust property. Liz and Simon Holmes shared their experience of organising and holding two music festivals a year at Knockengoroch.

The last presentation of the day was by James Johnson, working on behalf of NVA, and Nick Purdy, Forestry Commission, who showed the practicalities of staging outdoors events from the view point of both landowner and artist.

The proceedings from these events are available to purchase from our website:
www.countrysiderecreation.org.uk/publications

CRN EVENTS

Sustainable Leisure Travel
Thursday 25th September 2008
The Priory Rooms - Birmingham

Accessible Outdoor Recreation
Tuesday 18th November 2008
The Said Business School - Oxford

Growing Up Outdoors
CRN 40th Anniversary Conference
Wednesday 3rd December 2008
The Oval Cricket Ground, London

For further information please contact:

Kim Haigh
Acting Network Manager
Tel: 0114 225 4653
Email: k.haigh@shu.ac.uk

or visit our website:
www.countrysiderecreation.org.uk/events

Growing Up Outdoors



Countryside Recreation Network Conference

Date: Wednesday 3 December 2008

Venue: The Oval, Kennington, London. SE11 5SS

The CRN presents a landmark conference to explore the benefits and the challenges in encouraging children and young people to experience and enjoy the outdoors.

The conference will have a UK and Ireland wide perspective.

The Conference will address a range of questions including:

Are young people today increasingly disengaged from their natural environment?

What will this mean for their personal development and for society?

Whose responsibility is it to remove the barriers which prevent young people from enjoying the outdoors through play, recreation, sport and adventure?

What do young people themselves want? Can we make a difference?

The conference will include the following presentations:

'11 Million Reasons': a happy and healthy childhood - Sir Al Aynsley-Green, Children's Commissioner, England

Growing Adventure: a case study in a woodland context - Tim Gill, Rethinking Childhood

What Makes a Good Childhood? - Jim Davis, The Children's Society

with afternoon sessions focusing on

Natural Play Space

Wellbeing

Stepping Outdoors

Delegate rate: £175 (£150 for CRN member agencies)

To book your place now visit www.countrysiderecreation.org.uk/events

or for further information about the event

please email growingupoutdoors@shu.ac.uk **or telephone** 0114 225 4653

For information on sponsorship opportunities, please email m.bull@shu.ac.uk

Countryside Recreation Network Publications List

	Price (incl.postage)	Tick
REPORTS		
Volunteering in the Natural Outdoors (2008)	£10	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Countryside for Health and Wellbeing: The Physical and Mental Health Benefits of Green Exercise (2005)	£20	<input type="checkbox"/>
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"/>
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Today's Thinking for Tomorrow's Countryside (1995)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communities in their Countryside (1994)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS		
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Preparing for Climate Change in the Outdoor Recreation Sector (2008)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Young People in the Countryside (2006)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteering. Strategies and Practice for Engaging Volunteers in Countryside Recreation and Management (2006)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Just Walking the Dog (1999)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>

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