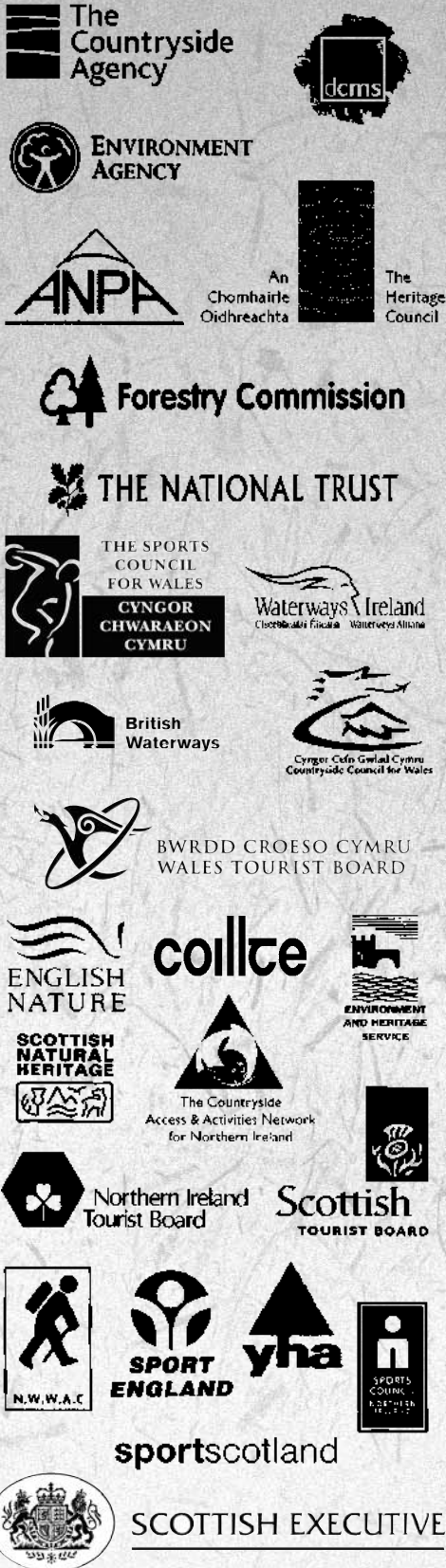


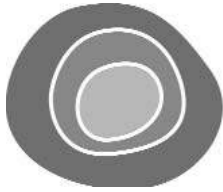
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# Countryside Recreation Network

## 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: Jo Burgon, The National Trust**

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See our home page at:

**[www.countrysiderecreation.org.uk](http://www.countrysiderecreation.org.uk)**

## 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 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 Spring journal will be based on the theme of 'Access to Coastal Recreation/Marine Bill'**

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 [m.bull@shu.ac.uk](mailto:m.bull@shu.ac.uk).

### **Please note the following submission deadline dates:**

*Articles for editorial board consideration to be submitted by 6th January 2006*

*Commissioned articles to be submitted by 27th January 2006.*

*News Items to be submitted by 10th February 2006.*

**Chair of Editorial Panel: Jo Burgon, The National Trust**

# Editorial

Lynn Crowe, Sheffield Hallam University



This edition of *Countryside Recreation* launches our new editorial policy. Towards the end of this journal you will also find our new **Response** section which includes comments relating to our last edition on *Motorised Recreation in the Countryside*. We would like to encourage our readers to send any comments they may have on articles in *Countryside Recreation* for possible inclusion in this section.

The main focus of this edition of *Countryside Recreation* is the issue of training and the need for the right professional skills and expertise in our industry. Lantra, the sector skills council for the land-based industries, estimates the size of the countryside management /environmental conservation sector to be "4,900 organisations employing 56,100 members of staff, and involving an estimated 200,000 volunteers". The profession seems to be expanding, yet Lantra are increasingly concerned that there is a growing skills gap within the industry which threatens the future of this sector.

Four articles in this edition explore different views of this issue - from the perspective of policy makers, practitioners and providers of training. These articles address the growing need for well trained staff, as well as the difficulties in ensuring that training provision is designed to meet those needs.

The first article by Edward Hobson, Deputy Director of CABE Space, highlights the need to promote a wider and growing skills base so that there are people available to look after our parks and green spaces. The article is based on research summarised in the CABE Space report *Parks need People*, which emphasises the need to invest in the quality of our greenspace in terms of both its physical infrastructure and also the professional staff who manage and promote its use. Important links to the government's sustainable communities agenda are made and CABE Space has already launched several initiatives to address the apparent skills gap.

Jont Bulbeck from the Countryside Council for Wales

summarises recent research assessing the staffing needs and training issues associated with public rights of way and access management. Whilst the research was confined to Wales, it also considered training provision from further afield as well. Many of the issues highlighted will be familiar to local authorities elsewhere, as the new provisions of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000, are implemented across England and Wales, and the Outdoor Access Code takes effect in Scotland.

Our article from the perspective of a higher education provider highlights the difficulties in trying to predict the interests of the students of tomorrow whilst also meeting the needs of the industry. Universities and colleges need to work closely with professional bodies and prospective employers to ensure that courses are relevant and provide graduates with the skills which enhance their 'employability' in the real world. But whilst there appears to be a growing demand for skilled graduates, we are also noting a decline in recruitment to these courses throughout the country. So do employers also have a job to do in enhancing the image of the profession in order to attract high quality recruits?

Finally, the article from Andy Maginnis provides a practitioner's view of the importance of continuing professional development. This article emphasises that training should be more than the usual short courses and formal qualifications, and can also include pursuing other opportunities such as secondments, mentoring, and networking throughout the profession.

The overwhelming message from all these articles is that policy makers, practitioners and training providers need to liaise with each other to ensure that the needs of each are clearly articulated. Training must be relevant, but must also be accessible in order to ensure a sound education at the beginning of people's careers, and continuing professional development as they progress in the industry.

Of course, the Countryside Recreation Network also has a pivotal role to play in the provision of training. Network members will continue to develop a programme of workshops, seminars and conferences which they believe meet the needs of the industry. These are open to anyone working in the field or to those just interested in current developments. Do check out the CRN web site for more information about forthcoming events or reports from previous events.

Lynn Crowe  
Sheffield Hallam University

# "People Make Parks"

Edward Hobson, Deputy Director, CABE Space

## Summary

*The renaissance of parks and green spaces across the country is bringing greater benefits for local communities. Investment in these places is visible and welcomed, though with an eye on the future sustenance of these places, CABE Space is conscious of the need to promote a wider and growing skills base so there are the people to continue to look after our parks and green spaces. The extent of the problem is highlighted in the Parks need People report, while CABE Space with a series of partners' support has proceeded to launch the Parkforce campaign to champion putting staff back into parks, a vital element in providing places that people want to use.*

## Introduction

In the *Cleaner Safer Greener* agenda the government has recognised the valuable contribution that good quality parks, gardens and green spaces make to the well-being of our towns and cities and the people who live and work in them. Over 2.5 billion visits are made to parks each year by an estimated 33 million people in the UK. It is surely a timely intervention as many working within the sector will testify. Years of national and local under investment in the infrastructure of our public spaces and their design, management and maintenance has left a hugely varying landscape of quality. Despite the recognition of the problem and genuine attempts to address these complex problems, the challenge remains that while huge numbers of people benefit from parks, there are fewer and fewer people who have the skills to look after them.

## Parks need people

CABE Space, alongside a number of other national organisations, was concerned by anecdotal reports of the shortages of skilled professionals to bring parks and green spaces out of their neglect. However the evidence base was patchy and a clearer picture of the state of professional skills was required. Together the partners commissioned a study to look at the good practice lessons that could be drawn out from the success of the councils achieving 'beacon' status for

the quality of provision of their green spaces.

The research mapped the occupations, skills and careers of those responsible for delivering green space management and maintenance in six of the seven Beacon Councils, along with those of their contractors where applicable. It examined the profile of people working in the sector: their terms, conditions and prospects, their skills and experience, their training needs and opportunities, their aspirations and frustrations, and identified 'success factors' and weaknesses in practice within Beacon Councils.

The research was particularly interesting since, while there were exemplary good practices across the authorities, more striking were the common issues of how far these authorities were hugely dependent on the skills of a few senior managers who were adept in steering the authorities' parks service. This factor often accounted for their success, rather than being able to point to a robust and enduring investment in staff development. The research also revealed the ageing profile of the staff across the sector. Taken together, this implied that those with the skills to achieve success were about to retire while there were concerns about where the next wave of well-rounded, skilled managers were coming from and in the longer term worries about the numbers of young people entering the profession and perceiving there could be a career for them in the green space sector.



The research was undertaken with a small sample and it cannot claim to be representative of all local authorities across the country but the strength of the issues arising from the study are compelling nonetheless and resonate across many authorities further afield that just those in the study.

### **Organisational issues**

Successive local government restructurings had led to a loss of status of parks departments. In most local authorities the parks department was a sub-section of a larger department – such as leisure services, cultural services, or even street cleansing. This had often led to a loss of identity and sometimes left the service lacking a recognised or recognisable home within local government. Some parks departments had been the neglected sibling and as a result been relatively uncompetitive within the authority for funds: it was not always apparent where responsibilities and key reporting lines lay.

### **Lack of diversity**

Staff composition was not necessarily representative of the community of park users and the working population as a whole, comprising predominantly white males aged over 40. There was very little ethnic diversity and the proportion of women working in the sector was only around 10%. The workforce was an ageing one, with 68% over 40 and 92% over 30 years old.

### **Qualifications, skills and training**

Despite a number of highly skilled staff dedicated to the management and maintenance of green spaces, the study identified a deficiency in specific skills at all levels within the sector. At the operational and supervisory levels this was attributed to the lack of apprenticeships and the lack of provision of anything more than basic, mandatory training (e.g. health and safety) of a short duration. At the managerial level, there was a clear need identified for training in strategic thinking, vision and leadership across the sector.

Although horticulture rated highest in importance amongst the practical skills at the operational level, it was management, promotional, presentational and interpersonal skills that were most lacking. To meet the needs of local communities, there was clearly a requirement for more people-oriented training to be made more widely available to workers already in the sector, as part of a structured framework of Continuing Professional Development (CPD), as well as apprenticeships and school work-experience placements.

### **Career prospects**

Significantly, career prospects were rated as poor, very poor or non-existent by 54% overall. There was felt to be a lack of development within the sector with promotion generally being a long time in coming, with 77% of respondents expecting to wait over four years, and 44% over seven years, to move into the next post. Around 60% of staff had been in the same post for more than ten years with the exception of one council, where only 16% have been in the same post for this period.

### **Staff recruitment and retention**

Though staff retention was good it can mask career stagnation and a lack of opportunity. There were clearly identified benefits to working in the sector but these were not well communicated outside the sector. Principal obstacles to recruiting skilled and young staff



were seen by most respondents as low status and recognition, poor career development prospects and bureaucratic difficulties with recruitment procedures. Low pay in the sector, particularly at entry level, was also a contributory factor.

### Poor public image

It was felt that the public perceived work in parks to be low skilled, mundane, physical and boring: in short, not a stimulating career. However the impressive range of activities undertaken by staff (such as working with people, nature conservation, horticulture, education, ecology and so on) highlights the absurdity of treating the management of parks as if they were similar contractual tasks to street cleaning, verge maintenance and refuse collection.

### Parkforce

Considering the poor self-image of park staff, the findings from the *Parks need people* report provided a major stimulus to recasting the role of all those who work in parks. Traditionally the park keeper has been perceived as an authoritarian figure, or one who simply picks up litter. Comics such as *The Beano* and *Viz* have probably had quite an influence in colouring some stereotypes of those who work in parks. The modern staff in parks comprising rangers, wardens, and horticulturalists, undertake much more than this narrowly perceived role, including tasks such as running educational programmes, engaging with local schools and community groups, running events and fundraising to name but a few.



***The importance of gaining experience on the job***

The campaign, launched in September, celebrates the central role that those working in parks contribute to the quality of that neighbourhood, be they in the local authority's employ, or volunteers. Ensuring that this modern 'parkforce' is in place is recognition that many of the problems that are seen to affect the quality of parks and people's enjoyment of them, such as perceived safety issues, can be resolved by smarter staffing of parks. The campaign is calling on local authorities to:

- recognise the value of having staff on-site during daylight hours in every significant park in the borough;
- commit to finding ways of developing and sustaining investment in people who care for public space; and,
- view the 'parkforce' as an integral part of the wider neighbourhood management team.

There has already been an exceedingly positive response to the campaign which we hope to sustain over the forthcoming months, pushing forward the need to prioritise on the ground staffing. No matter how successful this specific campaign is, the broader skills problems will remain. In the light of this, we have been concentrating on targeting the capacity and training across the sector are pleased to highlight two initiatives that flow directly from the *Parks need people* report.

The Royal Horticultural Society and Lantra (the sector skills council) are co-ordinating a number of professional bodies in addressing the skills gaps highlighted by the report. The combination of training and education providers coming together with the clients and employers of parks staff is impressive and to be complemented, especially if this is combined with an overall vision for the direction of these distinct initiatives.

CABE Space has been particularly keen in moving the issue of green space skills to the mainstream of the skills agenda in terms of creating sustainable

communities. The success of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's investment in the Housing Market Growth and Renewal Areas - across England's South East and the North & Midlands respectively - is partly dependent on the quality of the green spaces designed and managed for these areas. In 2004 ODPM announced the creation of the Academy for Sustainable Communities to encourage cross-disciplinary working, facilitating the transfer of generic skills such as project management, communication and team-working. Given the needs identified in the *Parks need people* report, CABE Space is pleased to have influenced the Academy to include green spaces in their remit and to provide the level of support to the sector which professionals across the planning, regeneration and housing sectors will be receiving. With the Academy's support, CABE intends to offer an annual green space managers' residential training event which will help those working in the green space sector to become more effective in their pursuit of pushing parks and green spaces' quality to the fore. The course will start in February 2006 and further details are available from [skills@cabe.org.uk](mailto:skills@cabe.org.uk)



**Ogden Water, Calderdale**

These initiatives are a start. Neither is a universal panacea, as addressing the long term issues requires a coherent response from across the sector. These represent green shoots which, in time, will bear fruit, delivering and sustaining the quality of public space.

*CABE Space is part of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. It was established by CABE at the request of ODPM in May 2002 to champion the quality of public space, in particular parks and green spaces. Edward Hobson is its Deputy Director and leads the policy and research work of the unit. The Parks need people report was commissioned and supported by a partnership of organisations comprising CABE Space, The Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature, Lantra and Sport England.*

#### **Photographs**

*'Chorlton, Manchester' credited to The Countryside Agency*

*'Ogden Water, Calderdale' credited to The Countryside Agency*

*'The importance of gaining experience on the job' credited to Alan Barber*

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# *An Assessment of Rights of Way and Access Staff and Training Needs in Wales 2005*

*Jont Bulbeck, Countryside Council for Wales*

## **Introduction**

The difficulty of recruiting staff with public rights of way (ROW) or access experience has been highlighted by national organisations representing public ROW interests in local government, including the CSS Countryside Working Group, Institute of Public Rights of Way Officers (IPROW) and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). There is also a general desire to find improved ways to support and enhance the professional development of ROW and access officers.

Against this background, CCW in 2004 commissioned Rural Resources Ltd. with Asken Ltd. to conduct research to assess the staffing and staff training issues for public rights of way and access staff in Wales.

This article is based on the research report produced and provides a summary of how the research was carried out, the key findings and considers a number of the issues it raised. The full report and associated methodology report are available on the Access and Recreation pages of CCW's website: [www.ccw.gov.uk](http://www.ccw.gov.uk)

## **Background**

Previous research by CCW in 2001 (into Definitive Map work) and 2002 (into the condition of ROW) suggests that no highway authority in Wales is meeting, even in pragmatic terms, its existing duties for public rights of way (ROW).

The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 has introduced new requirements for local highway authorities in their management of public rights of way. The CROW Act also gives new powers to local authorities for the management of the new rights of access to open country to be introduced from 2005.

These new duties, together with the existing backlogs of work on the public rights of way network in local authorities across Wales, increase the demands on the skills and expertise of a relatively small number of professional staff.

The Welsh Assembly Government allocated an additional £2.4 million per year to local authorities to meet their new CROW Act duties. A number of the new duties require additional staff. There are also requirements for new skills and competencies.

## **What were the aims of CCW's research?**

The overall aim of the research was to look at the current staffing position and relate this to work demands and workloads, existing training provision and training take up. The detailed objectives were set out as:

- A characterisation of the roles, functions and staffing levels required to meet existing and anticipated workloads;
- An assessment of key skills requirements;
- An assessment of the current skills and knowledge gaps;
- Identification of priorities for training and development of existing and new staff;
- A strategic quantification of staff needs to address backlogs of work and predicted future workloads;
- A strategic review of existing training and development provision available (across England and Wales) which is specific or relevant to ROW and access staff in Wales;



- A description of the nature, amount and level of training currently undertaken and the extent to which it meets staff needs;
- An assessment of the key factors motivating or inhibiting staff's training and development, and of the preferred and most effective approaches, leading to recommendations for future provision.

### How was the research carried out?

Given the varied and potentially complex information sought, a questionnaire-based approach was taken. One questionnaire was aimed at ROW Managers, seeking an overview of ROW and Access work in their Authority, including their assessment of staffing capacity requirements and staff training needs. Another questionnaire was distributed [by the ROW managers] to other staff significantly involved in the delivery of ROW and Access work in the Authority. This focused on issues at an individual level. Both questionnaires used the same task-based breakdown of ROW and Access work.

Telephone-based interviews were undertaken with key training providers and support organisations in England and Wales that offer targeted ROW and access training.

The information gathered was analysed within a 'resource needs analysis' and 'training needs analysis' (TNA) framework. The approach builds a picture to assess the resource and knowledge gaps and the best way to close these gaps.

In the case of this research, the focus was on finding out whether the gaps identified were related to staffing numbers (capacity) and/or training needs (capabilities).

The questionnaire was sent to all the [25] highway and national park authorities in Wales. ROW managers from 11 Authorities returned ROW Managers' Questionnaires.

The 11 responding local authorities in Wales

collectively represent:

- 32% of ROW (by length) in Wales;
- 17% of land *provisionally* mapped as CRoW access land in Wales;
- 44% of the resident Welsh population.

### What were the findings?

Although not conclusive at the all Wales level, the research does provide a good picture of the current and estimated requirements for ROW and access staffing levels and skills. It has also been able to describe current training provision and uptake. Some of the key findings were:

#### Main staffing requirements

- Increases in staffing are sought mostly for staff with the same skills as now, although Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIPs) related work is requiring new skills.
- The two key work areas that managers say extra staff capacity is required are ROW maintenance and improvement, and Definitive Map work.
- A total of 25.5 FTE staff capacity is said to be needed by the Authorities who responded.
- Grossing up on a 'per Unitary Authority' basis, this suggests a need for an additional 62-88 FTE nationally in Wales.
- Assuming average cost of £23,300/FTE, this is a funding requirement of £1.4m - £2m.

#### Main skills requirements

- The tasks that ROW managers see as most important for performance are ROW maintenance and improvement work, the ROWIP and Definitive Map work.

- The biggest skill problem areas described by ROW managers are: the ROWIP; Open Access work relating to managing exclusions and restrictions; Definitive Map work around dealing with public inquiries, hearings and written representations.
- Training providers suggest needs for strategic planning and management skills.

### Current training uptake

- The most common barriers to training uptake were the costs of courses and the availability of budgets.
- The main motivation for undertaking training was to gain specific knowledge, as well as an associated benefit of networking with other PROW staff to exchange experience, ideas and knowledge.
- 10% of staff responding had not received any training whilst in their current post.
- The most commonly used providers were Plas Tan y Bwlch (Snowdonia National Park) and IPROW.
- Nearly 50 other providers were named.
- The subjects that staff thought would most improve their performance were IT use and GIS, and ROW law.

### Training provision

- The main training providers used by responding staff are Plas Tan y Bwlch, IPROW, ROWLR, Losehill Hall and Sheffield Hallam University.
- Other providers that may provide additional opportunities include CSS, CCW [for example in relation to Open Access functions and ROWIPs] and WLGA.

- Currently, there is no formal co-ordination of provision between training providers or any structured training progression package for individuals.
- Sector-specific Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is offered through IPROW.
- The main providers are keen to work together, and have begun to do so through establishing a group called the Countryside and Environmental Trainers Group.

### Issues and recommendations

The key issues and recommendations are summarised below and relate to the headings used within the full report. A number of issues arising from the final report will help to inform the actions that need to be taken

#### Staff numbers

##### *Issues:*

- Wide variation in staffing numbers and organisational structures across Authorities in Wales
- No consistent correlation between staff numbers and the size of the access resources to be managed (or size of the resident population)
- Staff capacity shortage, quantified as lying between 62 and 88 FTEs for the 22 unitary authorities throughout Wales
- Assuming an average cost per FTE of £23,300, this equates to a total funding requirement of £1.4m to £2m, plus any direct costs- less any new appointments that have been made to meet this perceived need.
- The above estimates are likely to be at the upper end of the range.
- There is a continuing need for more evidence

about staff numbers, focusing particularly on *how* figures are being reached and moving away from a 'wish list'. This includes better quantification of backlogs of outstanding work and of ongoing work required.

**Recommendations:**

- *Evidenced* data about staffing capacity needs from *all* Authorities' ROW & Access teams across Wales is still required.
- CCW and local authorities that have provided quantified data, should develop actions to try to meet the agreed need.
- Authorities should commit staff time to providing the evidence still needed and to planning solutions.
- CCW and the Authorities to work together to develop and increase the use of resources needs analysis, and that this is linked to the ROWIP.

**Joint Authority working**

**Issues:**

- Limited staff numbers in some Authorities.
- Wide range of tasks, and therefore skills, required of some ROW & access staff.
- Differences in skills, knowledge and experience of particular aspects of ROW and Access work between Authorities.

**Recommendations:**

- The benefits and practical implications of developing joint working relationships between Authorities need to be investigated further.
- Consideration should be given to the benefits and practical implications of developing

Authority-based Centres of Excellence.

**Contracting out work**

**Issues:**

- A shortage of staff time and in some cases, skills to undertake all tasks required;
- A track record within the sector of contracting out key ROW and Access tasks, either to other departments in the same Authority or to external parties;
- Certain tasks are more suitable for contracting out than others, e.g. because there are clear boundaries to the task and clear performance measures.

**Recommendations:**

- There are opportunities for contracting out work, beyond that already done by some Authorities.

**Monitoring and performance**

**Issues:**

- That many Authorities do not have performance indicators beyond those required of them externally;
- That Authorities recognise key work areas where they are struggling to meet their duties and responsibilities;
- That performance measurement can be seen as burdensome and time-consuming.

**Recommendations:**

- That the value, development and use of internal performance indicators, such as time taken per DMMO or PPO, time taken to respond to and deal with an obstruction should be considered e.g. as part of section 71 of CROW for local

authorities to report on their ROW functions. This could be done through a Task and Finish-type group, comprising Authorities interested in investigating the idea. Topics for discussion could include: advantages and disadvantages of this approach; agreement on useful and workable indicators; a workplan for implementing the approach; guidelines on monitoring and using the indicator-based findings.

### **Training delivery**

#### **Issues:**

- That the research has identified some key areas of need for further training, whilst our experience also suggests others that should be considered;
- The logistics of delivering training and/or other professional development support are significant, in particular cost and location;
- To date, there has been informal co-ordination and communication between key specialist providers, but there is an interest and a specified need to develop this, particularly in relation to providing a co-ordinated and stepped training package for ROW and Access staff.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The detailed needs for specific GIS and other IT support across access teams and how it can be delivered are identified.
- That CCW continues to offer Authorities workshop-based training events.
- That CCW opens a discussion with IPROW and CSS in Wales about the opportunities to develop a pilot for co-ordinated, locally held training and support.
- That action to increase the uptake of training and support by individual ROW and Access staff are developed and taken forward.

### **Other forms of professional development support**

#### **Issues:**

- That training courses are just one way of staff building their knowledge, skills and experience around ROW and Access;
- That respondents to this research valued opportunities for networking and were interested in mentoring as a vehicle for on-going support;
- That most of the staff responding to this research were not members of relevant professional bodies;
- That there was no mention of the Web-based PROW Good Practice Guide by respondents to this research.

#### **Recommendations:**

- That CCW work with relevant professional bodies to investigate the benefits and practicalities of establishing improved networking opportunities between PROW staff.
- The benefits that membership of and the activities of professional bodies can offer in relation to upskilling Welsh Authority ROW and Access staff is reviewed.
- How to effectively promote the sharing and take-up of good practice in the sector needs to be reconsidered.

### **Policy & influencing**

#### **Issues:**

- That Authority ROW and Access teams are not operating in a vacuum, rather they are subject to a wide variety of local, regional and national circumstances that affect how they can operate and perform;
- That CCW has a role to play in forming policy and influencing key players;

- That ROW and Access is often perceived as a 'poor relation' in terms of services within a Local Authority, which can affect the support and resources it receives.

#### **Recommendations:**

- That CCW, Authorities and professional bodies work together to consider the establishment of a Wales-wide benchmarking process for PROW performance.
- There is a need to raise awareness amongst ROW managers of the purpose, value and methodology of accurate assessment of staffing needs, particularly as part of the ROWIP process e.g. using the resource and training needs analysis approach.
- Key interests need to promote the ROW and Access function amongst key decision-makers and policy makers in Authorities across Wales.
- The opportunities to develop the potential of generic academic courses to provide learning about ROW and Access topics are developed further.

#### **Beyond the research?**

The Welsh Assembly Government has also set out in its strategy for public service improvements in Wales, 'Making the Connections', its intention for more co-ordination between providers to deliver sustainable, quality and responsive services.

Rights of way improvement plans have cemented a change in the way many rights of way and countryside staff approach their work. The outcomes sought in these plans will be to maximise the many benefits for the public that ROW and countryside access can bring. People are at the heart of this thinking. People, are also at the heart of making it happen.

The research has provided some answers, posed many questions, and given a direction to start

answering others. In developing the way forward from this point it will only be the commitment and input from many players across different sectors that will lead to improvements in staff development; and thereby ROW and countryside access for the public in Wales.

#### **Acknowledgement**

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# *Is There Really A Skills Shortage? And what can we do about it?*

*Lynn Crowe and John Rose, Sheffield Hallam University*



***Studying maps and site assessment***

## **Introduction**

Countryside and environmental management careers have never been pursued in the hope of high financial rewards - our profession has always been more of a vocation. This is true whether you have focused on the ecological management end of our sector, or on recreation, access and visitor management.

The long established requirements of both practical experience (often obtained as a volunteer or in a poorly paid part-time or temporary post) alongside

good academic qualifications, don't appear to have created too many problems for employers in the past. They have become used to a pool of enthusiastic and often well qualified staff. However, there is now considerable evidence that this is no longer true. Indeed, it would now appear that in some areas the situation is reversed, with employers struggling to find suitably qualified potential employees.

## **Growth in demand**

Why might this be the case? In recent years there has



been a considerable expansion in environmental legislation with many Directives coming out of Europe which are being enacted in UK legislation. This has meant that government agencies, NGOs and private organisations all need expertise to help them interpret this legislation. In addition to these statutory requirements, concerns about corporate reputations have also contributed to the growth of the environmental sector.

A recent review of the private consultancy sector showed that its value had expanded from approximately £150 million in 1987/8 to an estimated £900 million in 2002/3 (ENDS 2003). Ecological management accounted for approximately 5% of this sector and will also contribute to other sectors. In 2002/3 the slowdown in the economy led to a temporary slowdown in the growth of the environmental consultancy sector. However, the sector appears to have recovered again and a recent report by Environmental Data Services (ENDS 2004) noted a major increase in demand for ecologists. This was attributed to the EU habitats and water framework Directives, and also for EIA and ecological impact specialists to work on offshore wind farms and other sustainable energy developments. Ecology has also been identified as a particular area of growth in the current ENDS 2005 Report.

Other articles in this journal point to the increase in demand for countryside managers and access professionals, particularly driven by legislation such as the Countryside And Rights of Way Act, 2000, in England and Wales, and the Scottish Land Reform Act, 2003. The new demands of urban regeneration and rural regeneration, hand in hand with sustainable development, also require greenspace management skills of a wide and varying nature. Increasing focus on customer service has meant that `people skills` are often as highly valued as land management skills.

The sector skills council for the land-based industries, Lantra, estimates the size of the countryside management/environmental conservation sector to be "4,900 organisations employing 56,100 members of staff and involving and estimated 200,000 volunteers"

(Lantra *Environment and Conservation draft industry action plan*). The profession is not small, and it is probably growing.

### **Skills shortages**

This increase in demand may be contributing to the apparent lack of well trained professionals in the industry. A relatively small pool of appropriately trained staff will find themselves in growing demand. At Sheffield Hallam University (SHU), we work very closely with professional bodies such as the Countryside Management Association (CMA), the Institute of Public Rights of Way Officers (IPROW), and the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM). These professional bodies report increasing difficulties in recruiting adequately qualified and skilled staff, both with new entrants to the profession and in the middle management area.

The industry itself needs to identify how it can respond to increasing demand and changing needs. Lantra are working closely with employers across the UK, to identify and develop initiatives to meet training needs within the sector. They have also recently established a working group in order to address the skills gap which Lantra has identified as threatening the future of the environmental conservation sector.

Skills shortages can be addressed in many ways. Just one area to consider is attention to the types of educational courses potential employees are taking in the first instance, but also the `on the job` training employees might undertake while in work. Clearly, training is needed at a variety of levels and for a range of skills - practical, technical and managerial. This article focuses on the types of training which can be provided by higher education institutions - either at undergraduate or postgraduate level.

### **Recruitment decline**

At Sheffield Hallam University, we have provided vocational degrees at undergraduate and postgraduate level in environmental conservation, countryside recreation management, and

environmental management, for many years. These courses are well-regarded and we work closely with potential employers. The undergraduate degrees are traditional full-time degrees, but are often taken by mature students who wish to pursue a change in career as well as the usual 18 year olds. At post-graduate level, we offer part-time and distance learning options as well as full-time degrees, in order to encourage applicants who are already in work.

Unfortunately, the increase in demand for well-qualified graduates does not seem to be reflected in increasing applicants for related environmental and countryside courses. It is difficult to get accurate figures, as the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) aggregates applications from a range of associated courses. However, the data they publish does show some worrying declines. Applications for biology courses have dropped from around 6,000 in the mid 1990s to below 5,000 in 2004. The figures for botany are even more worrying. Applications for botanical courses have never been particularly high with around 70 applicants in the mid 1990s. However, by 2004 the number had dropped to a mere 20

applicants - a particularly worrying trend for those employers actively seeking people with good field naturalist skills.

This is of no surprise to teaching staff at Sheffield Hallam University, as recruitment to our countryside and environmental courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate level is also on the decline. This seems to be a trend mirrored across the UK, and several courses at other universities and colleges have already closed. As we turn out fewer graduates, then so the potential employee market for our professional sector also declines.

It is very difficult for either educational and training institutions, or the employers themselves, to identify the specific reasons for this decline. We recently commissioned research to investigate training and educational needs within the countryside and environmental sectors (Claire Herring Associates, 2004). Other bodies have undertaken similar research - such as the recent study by CABI Space, explored elsewhere in this journal.



***Developing group skills in the outdoors***

It is possible that there are simply reducing numbers of young people interested in environmental issues, or that fewer schools are insisting on compulsory GCSEs in subjects such as geography and biology. The potential high salaries in other professions may compare too favourably with the more `cerebral` rewards within the environmental professions! For many years, there was perhaps an over-supply of young graduates and the difficulties in finding relevant work are still seen as a problem within the profession (even if the perception does not necessarily match the reality today). Perhaps our profession is just not `sexy` any more (any suggestions as to how we might address this can be sent on to the CRN on a postcard please!)?

We are also aware that concerns about student fees may be affecting the mature student market in particular, and of course employers seem to find it increasingly difficult to fund postgraduate training for their staff.

The SHU research attempted to establish the characteristics of the industry which may be off putting to young people in terms of a future career. We interviewed a wide range of employers within the industry. A variety of reasons were suggested for the current shortage of suitable applicants for middle management roles:

- Potential employees are no longer able (willing?) to take a low paid or voluntary position in order to get on the first rung in the conservation sector due to the high debt burden that people carry from their first degrees. Short-term contracts are equally off-putting.
- High employment levels nationally mean that graduates are able to enter higher paying sectors without the anti-social hours or short term contracts associated with this sector.
- Without a period in a lower paid or voluntary role, candidates are unable to gain the practical experience identified by many employers as critical to being short-listed for such posts.
- Employers are reluctant to take on staff without

such experience on short term contracts, as staff are needed who can `hit the ground running` rather than be trained `on the job` in more permanent positions.

- Both public and voluntary sector organisations are experiencing difficult financial constraints. Training budgets are often the first to be cut back and employers can be reluctant to provide financial assistance to employees to undertake further training.

### **How do we address the problem?**

There does appear to be an increasing problem, which will affect both educational institutions and the profession alike. Higher education is now taking a much more business like approach to its educational portfolio. If the decline in student recruitment continues, then relevant courses will close. So how do we match up the educational and training needs of the industry with the courses we provide?

Our research asked potential employers about their concerns with provision in higher education generally. The following areas were raised by a range of professionals working in the sector:

- Prospective students are not sure how different courses will be relevant to future careers, and are confused by the wide variety of courses currently available.
- Some very academic courses have not been developed with future careers in mind - institutions need to work more closely with the professions.
- Educational bodies need to think about what skills the sector's jobs entail now and what will be required in five years time.
- All levels of higher education, but particularly postgraduate, are not well understood or well promoted - to either prospective students or their potential employers.

- Traditional modes of study (both full-time and part-time) are not flexible enough for either potential students or their potential funding employers. We need to be much more innovative in the types of provision on offer.

Following the research, we are currently pursuing several recommendations for future course development:

- Developing partnerships with professional bodies and potential employers - to explore the development of specific vocational courses and shared modules relevant to the sector. Our M.Sc. degree in Public Rights of Way and Countryside Access Management, developed in partnership with IPROW, is a good example of this approach.
- Developing flexible forms of learning, based on distance learning and short courses as well as the more traditional on site provision, which would allow employers and their staff to tailor-make educational programmes to suit their specific needs.
- Enhancing the contribution of work based learning and placements within both our undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. We are also exploring the development of modules which allow students to utilise learning `on the job` as part of accredited qualifications.
- Organising CPD short courses based around the skills gaps identified by the professional bodies. We have already organised some short course provision in the area of field naturalist skills, following concerns expressed by IEEM.
- Recognising the need to compete for students in a possibly declining market by proactively marketing our course provision to industry with much more targeted promotional material. We also need to make much more explicit the benefits of higher education and study for both practitioners and employers.

Higher education institutions such as Sheffield Hallam University already regard themselves as `professional universities` - providing excellent educational and training opportunities for our relevant industry sectors. But we need to work much more closely with our industry partners to ensure that not only are we providing the right training and qualifications, but in ways which their staff can access and make best use of.

Equally, employers need to be telling us what they need and making best use of opportunities:

- If a University approaches you requesting that you get involved in their course validation process - view it as an opportunity to ensure the course meets your needs.
- Consider initiating contact with local colleges and universities to discuss how courses might be modified to more closely meet your needs - either in terms of content or in terms of modes of delivery.
- Many institutions are setting up so-called `employability` initiatives - again, view these as a chance to explain to prospective employees the opportunities which exist in your sector. Universities will be only too keen to get practitioners involved.
- Students also need to hear about professional practice direct from people in the industry - so try to keep up those talks and field visits with your local institution. It will be really appreciated and again provides an excellent opportunity to `sell` the profession.
- Employers might also need to review the training provision which they are prepared to fund and to consider the development of trainee type posts backed up by accredited qualifications.

Your local university will be only too happy to discuss creative ideas from enthusiastic future employers. Between us, we can find those solutions.

**Lynn Crowe and John Rose are lecturers in environmental management and countryside recreation in the Faculty of Organisation and Management, Sheffield Hallam University.**

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All photographs are credited to Sheffield Hallam University

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**Graduation Day**

# *So You Want A Career in Countryside Recreation?*

*Andy Maginnis, Local Government Association*

## **Introduction**

So, you've got your degree. All you have to do now is sit back and relax as your perfect career unfolds, right? Wrong. In reality this is where the hard work really starts and, for those who wish to make the most of the opportunities that any career has to offer, it is a never-ending process. In this article I have drawn on the experiences of three professionals working in the countryside recreation sector to illustrate some of the ways that you can gain experience and develop a career that is right for you. In doing so I have come up with my top ten tips for success.

## **Case studies**

It is not possible to provide a truly representative sample of people working in the sector in such a brief article. However, I have sought to offer some breadth of insight by selecting colleagues from different backgrounds who work for different types of organisations and whose careers have developed in different ways. You can find out more about them in the personal profile boxes.

## **Top ten tips**

### **Consider volunteering**

Many students expect to be able to walk straight into a job when they leave school, college or university. However, for every employer keen to get their hands on a raw recruit there are twice as many who put a premium on experience. Rachel says, "I was led to believe that when I left University I would be able to walk straight into a relatively senior, well-paid position in the sector. Dozens of unsuccessful applications later, I adjusted my sights and started work as a volunteer. The experience I gained there was invaluable and also gave me the opportunity to get a few vocational qualifications under my belt".

Volunteering does not have to be full-time and can be conducted while holding down a paid job - even if it's not in the sector in which you eventually want to work.

### **Recognise that it takes time to gain experience**

Some experiences can be gained in a relatively short space of time. However, a really holistic understanding of your chosen profession takes time. As Rachel says, "When you start your career it's easy to think you know everything. However, the quality of the knowledge you obtain is often much greater if it is learned over a longer period. Some things happen in cycles - whether that's budgets, natural processes or development projects - and you don't fully understand them unless you see the full cycle through. For example, I have a much better understanding of the budget for which I am currently responsible now that I have been through the annual cycle of planning, bidding, managing and monitoring it a couple of times".

### **Be prepared to start from (or at least visit) the shop floor**

It is not necessary (or desirable) for every policy-maker, researcher or strategist to have worked on the shop floor. However, an understanding of the operational end of your business is essential. Ceri says, "Although I work in policy now, I am sure that my experiences as a ranger dealing with landowners, meeting members of the public and directly managing a recreational resource have helped to ensure that my policy recommendations are realistic. When I worked for the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and had moved away from the shop floor, so to speak, I still made the time to keep in touch with the personnel directly responsible for the Ministry's land and who know how sensible - or otherwise - it is to allow public access on a live firing range. It's easy to become out of touch".



## The Operations Manager

**Rachel Datlen**



Rachel is in her 20s and is Countryside Greenspace Manager for Worcestershire County Council. She attained a BSc in Environmental Biology at Bangor and a Masters in Global Biodiversity at the University of Hull. Rachel began her career by volunteering with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) where she took the opportunity to get a number of practical qualifications under her belt such as mini-bus driving and using chainsaws. While in this position Rachel also had the opportunity to apply some of her academic knowledge in a practical environment and was given the responsibility of managing small projects and budgets. She then volunteered on a project called Aqua Vitae 21 that was supported by Worcestershire County Council (WCC), Severn Trent Water and the Environment Agency to restore 21 derelict ponds in Worcestershire. Following on from this she secured a temporary position with the County Council as a Project Officer helping local communities to improve their environment. Rachel then successfully applied for the position of Assistant Conservation and Landscape Manager with WCC leading a team of Project Officers. She secured her current position two years later following a re-structure within the organisation. Rachel is now responsible for WCC's entire countryside and urban greenspace estate of country parks, local nature reserves, visitor centres, and commons. Her team also gives advice to local communities on improving their own environment and is responsible for delivering WCC's responsibilities with regard to Access Land.

### **Be prepared to work outside the confines of your job description**

Broadly speaking there are good reasons for working within the scope of your job description. It gives you

confidence that you are doing what your employer expects of you, hopefully it ensures that you are being properly rewarded for the work you do and it helps to ensure that you are not exceeding your own competence or level of responsibility. Nevertheless, properly agreed departures from the confines of your job description can allow you to gain extra experience, it allows you to demonstrate to your employer that you are capable of greater things and it shows that you are flexible. Rachel says, "I have worked outside the strict confines of my job description on numerous occasions. This has typically arisen when I have been asked to deputise for a senior colleague at a meeting, draft a report, help out with a special project or deal with a crisis. The rewards for this are not always immediate or financial, however, in the longer term it has usually proved beneficial to my career". She continues, "My current employer will sometimes pay an honorarium to a member of staff who takes on extra responsibilities temporarily and is prepared to review someone's job description – which sometimes leads to a pay increase – if they have pushed the boundaries of their job in an appropriate manner".

### **Keep your options open**

You may be extremely focused on your career-path and achieve all you wish. However, even the best laid plans of mice and men sometimes do not materialise or your circumstances may change. For this reason it is important to keep your options open and for many people this may mean developing more generic management and leadership skills. Glenn says, "Although my specialist knowledge is in market research and strategic fund-raising, I have also taken the time to develop my general management skills". Glenn has obtained Diplomas in Management Studies (DMS) and Marketing while with British Waterways (BW) and has found them extremely useful in his career. Glenn says, "Although I daresay the diplomas wouldn't do any harm on my CV, to be honest it has been their practical application which I have found of most benefit. The DMS in particular gave me an insight into the context of my specialist role within BW and has furnished me with a lot of useful information that would be of value in any management role inside

or outside this sector”.

### **Take opportunities to network**

Networking is perhaps an over-used term and one that is scoffed at by those who have not benefited from it. Nevertheless, It is one of the most effective ways of keeping up to date with what is happening in the sector, avoiding reinventing the wheel, making useful contacts, developing and maintaining business relationships and promoting your organisation. Networking opportunities arise in a number of formats including websites, e-mail groups, seminars, social events, through membership of professional associations and through formal networks such as CRN. Glenn says, “As my career has developed I consider networking to be one of the most effective ways that I have managed to keep ahead of the game. It also presents opportunities to collaborate with other organisations and make optimum use of resources by taking advantage of economies of scale”.

### **Create your own luck**

Even if you cannot create your own luck, you can sometimes create your own opportunities. This often arises when you carry out a focused piece of work that results in you becoming an actual or perceived expert or which leads to the organisation reviewing its policies. This creates opportunities for you to move your career in a different direction either by moving into a different (but existing) role within your organisation or that of another – or by the organisation creating a new role as the result of your work.. Glenn says, “Research that I carried out on economic development highlighted the importance of health and recreation. This led to the focus of my role adjusting as BW recognised the significance of these findings and amended their policies. It wasn’t always possible to fund all of the research we wanted to do internally and that led to me exploring the opportunities for trans-national funding. By one thing leading to another my role has gradually changed from that of an economic market researcher to one that combines economic and social development research with a specialism in European funding streams”.

## **The Policy Adviser**

### **Ceri Daugherty**



Ceri is in her early 30s and is Health and Recreation Policy Officer for the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW). Having attained a BSc in Geography and Geology at Bristol University she secured a job running the Green Action Team Project for young people which she had benefited from herself while at school. She then took a year out to travel in Australia before returning to Wales working in a number of temporary positions while completing a Masters in Environmental Impact Assessment through a distance-learning course offered by the University of Wales in Aberystwyth.

Having worked in a number of voluntary positions for organisations such as BTCV and the Glamorgan Wildlife Trust , Ceri then secured a position as East Gower Area Ranger with the City and County of Swansea (for whom she had also previously volunteered), which she stayed in for four years before moving to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) as Environmental Advisor (Access and Recreation) - a position with a UK-wide remit. She then successfully applied for the new position of Senior Countryside Policy Advisor for the MoD which she occupied for two years before becoming Health and Recreation Policy Officer with CCW in 2005.

### **Take opportunities to attend training courses**

Whether they are internally or externally run, lead to a qualification or not, are formal or informal, there are some fantastic training opportunities available. Some have modest practical application but look great on your CV while others teach you things the value of which extends way beyond your career. Rachel says, “I attended a number of vocational training events – many of which were only one day – at the beginning

of my career. They helped me get my first paid employment and had great practical application. Later I attended longer courses at training centres such as Losehill Hall, that gave me a greater insight into some of the more strategic aspects of my work. More recently I have attended a number of internal one day management competency training workshops which I have found invaluable in developing my general management and leadership skills”.

### **Look for opportunities to develop on the job**

Formal training certainly has an important role. However, the value of structured on the job training should not be underestimated. This may include developing skills and experience central to your role or which may be much more developmental. Rachel says, “Worcestershire County Council is keen on giving people opportunities to develop on the job. This might entail being asked to chair a difficult meeting, brief senior management on a contentious issue or negotiate a deal with an external partner. As long as you are properly supported it can be a great way to learn new skills and gain further experience”. Rachel continued, “Sometimes there are longer-term opportunities available such as secondments or exchanges and these are worth considering too”.

### **Join a professional association**

Professional associations or institutes generally share a number of characteristics. These include a networking function; a professional accreditation process; a requirement to demonstrate Continuing Professional Development; a code of standards and ethics and a championing role for the sector it represents and those who work within it. Ceri, who is Vice Chair of the Countryside Management Association (CMA) says, “I find my membership invaluable. Not only do I benefit from having direct access to the knowledge and expertise of other professionals, but by serving on various committees over the years I have been able to expand my CV. I joined CMA’s Marketing Group at a time when I had had very little experience of sitting on a committee and next to no knowledge of marketing whatsoever!

By the time I left the group I was much more comfortable in a committee environment and had at least a working knowledge of a new discipline”. But Ceri warns, “You’ll only get as much out of your professional association as you’re prepared to put in”.

## **The Researcher and Funding Adviser**



### **Glenn Millar**

Glenn is in his early 50s and is Economic Development Manager with British Waterways (BW). Glenn attained a BSc in Geography at Queen’s University in Belfast before taking a Masters in Town and Country Planning. Having done two or three temporary jobs, Glenn secured a position working for a road transport company in London. He then started work for BW researching the market for its freight enterprise.

Glenn’s marketing expertise saw him re-deployed within BW as it began conducting market and policy research on its leisure and recreation function. This necessitated securing external funding, particularly from Europe, and this responsibility was added to Glenn’s portfolio. His current responsibilities therefore include strategic, economic and social development research and trans-national fundraising.

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# RESPONSE

*The views expressed within this section are not necessarily those of the Countryside Recreation Network member agencies.*

*The Summer Journal theme on Motorised Recreation provoked the following responses from the Council for National Parks and the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Alliance.*

## **Recreational motor vehicle use – a National Parks perspective**

**Donna O'Brien, Council for National Parks**

The media loves a conflict and the issue of motorised recreation in the countryside is a particular favourite. Increasingly these dramas are being played out in the National Parks, as inspired by shows such as "Top Gear" and the advertising industry, drivers with "all terrain" vehicles are seeking the freedom and challenge offered by remote landscapes.



**Use of 4 wheel drives on Pont Rhyd-y-Cnau green Lane in the Brecon Beacons National Park.** (photographic credit: A Michael)

CNP has a long history of identifying and responding to current issues and threats to the National Parks, including the rising tide of motor traffic and car-borne visitors to these areas. It was only in 2004 that CNP began to gather information from the National Park Authorities to identify the trends emerging in so-called "off road" vehicle use on open country and rights of way. By 2005 we had enough information to publish our findings<sup>i</sup>.

Our report found that the majority of National Park Authorities now consider this to be their most pressing recreational issue and contrary to National Park

purposes of conservation and enhancement of their natural and cultural heritage (for example through impacts on the peace and tranquillity and on green lanes of great antiquity), and understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities (for example through conflict with quiet enjoyment). Legal and illegal use of recreational motor vehicles on rights of way and on open country is now having a significant impact on the Brecon Beacons, Exmoor, Lake District, Northumberland, North York Moors, designated South Downs<sup>1</sup> and Yorkshire Dales National Parks.

National Park Authorities have generally worked hard to accommodate legitimate use and often work with vehicle user groups to help educate and inform irresponsible or illegal users. Examples include that of the North York Moors National Park Authority, Cleveland Police and vehicle user groups in tackling illegal use, or the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority's "zero tolerance" policy on illegal activity.

### **Measuring impacts on National Parks**

The focus of practical management and studies on this issue has so far tended to be on the physical aspects of the activity, such as level of use, surface impacts or whether conflict between users is real or perceived.

For example, the efforts of the Lake District National Park Authority's Hierarchy of Trail Routes was documented in the previous edition of CRN. The approach has not sought to measure the more intangible ways in which recreational vehicle use can cause harm to increasingly scarce commodities of peace, tranquillity and scenic beauty which National Parks offer (nor was it ever intended to). However, as

the most sophisticated monitoring system in the National Parks it does help give firm statistics on the actual levels of use on monitored routes, the vehicles involved and the locations most affected. The next phase of the project will now look at the effectiveness of the management that has been put in place in order more fully to determine what has been a success and what has not.

Some pioneering work has since been undertaken in the Yorkshire Dales National Park<sup>ii</sup> which considered the effects (including perceptual) on the special qualities of the area. Four green lanes which were the source of much contention were selected for Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs) for a period of 18 months. The effect of the ETROs was to prohibit public motor vehicles only on these routes while allowing necessary private vehicular access. The experiment was designed to test the effectiveness of the TROs according to the following criteria: compliance by motorised users, the effects of agricultural vehicle use on the surface of the green lanes, the effect on perceptions of other users and the ability of the routes to recover from damage without major intervention. Six vehicle loggers continuously monitored the activity, the condition of the routes were assessed by staff at North Yorkshire County Council and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, and over 700 face to face surveys with rights of way users were conducted with the help of interested volunteer groups.

The experiment has been effective in a number of areas:

- Compliance with the ETROs has been good and the majority of recreational vehicle users have respected the closures. The level of use by motorbikes dropped overall by 90% on all routes.
- Agricultural use of the routes was significant, with higher levels of use particularly in winter months. Current levels of use appeared to be sustainable and generally confined to lower sections of routes with stone surfaces (with one exception).
- Overall the routes covered by the ETROs

showed little change in surface condition through the first year of the experiment, but there were signs of recovery and grassing over on two of the routes. Where maintenance works have been carried out they are assisting recovery of the lanes and have shown no signs of deterioration.

Importantly the effect on, or perception of other users was measured. Different recreational users enjoy different special qualities in the National Park, but overall scenic beauty, peace and tranquillity and its landscape features were found to be most highly regarded. This chimes well with a recent national survey of why people visit the National Parks, which found fresh air, dramatic scenery and peace and quiet were the top three attractions<sup>iii</sup>. During the ETRO period more users felt that nothing could have improved their day out and fewer cited meeting motor vehicles as something that had reduced their enjoyment. Interviewees favoured either total prohibition of motor vehicles or acceptance only on routes which have a surface to sustain such use, and the vast majority of correspondence received by the National Park Authority during the experimental period has been in favour of the ETROs.

The ETROs are to be made permanent with a review period built in after 12 months for discussion with vehicle user groups and other users as to potential policy and management solutions for green lanes (from TROs through to full reconstruction) across the county. There is much to learn from the experiment in the Yorkshire Dales which can be used by other authorities in protected landscapes.

### **Barriers to effective management**

Although each National Park Authority has its own unique issues and management approach, the general picture is that the reports of conflict and damage continue. CNP's report identified that the following issues needed to be addressed:

#### **1. Government policy**

When it comes to dealing with motorised recreation

there is a lack of government guidance on the special circumstances and protective policies that operate in the National Parks. Documents which focus on management of the activity talk in general terms about the countryside – such as *Making the Best of Byways* – and the special purposes of these areas is barely mentioned, nor the “Sandford Principle” enshrined in Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 which allows primacy to be given to the purpose of conservation and enhancement where the second purpose of understanding and enjoyment is in irreconcilable conflict.

So how long should we have to wait for a robust government guidance on this issue in our nationally protected landscapes? A trawl through the archives demonstrates that progress has been painfully slow.

In 1945 John Dower wrote his seminal report which led to the creation of National Parks. Even though motor vehicle use was much lower then, it was clearly becoming an issue and he recommended that a national policy was urgently needed for the immense mileage of green lanes, to deal with the frustration felt not just by motorists who could not use these routes comfortably but also by farmers, riders, cyclists and walkers who felt that growing vehicle use was both dangerous and damaging<sup>iv</sup>. Dower went on to recommend that in the National Parks such routes should be shared out between motorists and non-motorists, and pointed to a generous share for the latter where there would be no improvement and minimum maintenance of routes reserved for walkers, cyclists and horse drawn traffic and closed to motor vehicles other than those needed by farms.

By 1991 the most recent National Parks Review report<sup>v</sup> found that the forms of outdoor recreation to be encouraged in the parks should be those which involve quiet enjoyment and do no lasting or serious environmental damage. It recommended to government that the place for noisy and intrusive recreational activities should only be on sites where they caused no undue annoyance to other park users and no lasting environmental damage to the fabric of the park.

In 2004 a Countryside Agency commissioned report<sup>vi</sup> was clear that there was a need for both consistency of policy and clearly expressed government guidance on the issue, since most National Park Authorities considered that promotion of motorised sports within national parks conflicted with protection of their special qualities.

Defra and the Welsh Assembly Government now have an opportunity to rectify this in forthcoming policy reviews such as *Making the Best of Byways*.

## **2. Powers and resources for the National Park Authorities**

The lack of powers to make Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) is also leading to delays in managing the activity on some of the most damaged routes in the National Parks. CNP is seeking these powers for the National Park Authorities as an amendment to the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill.

It is also apparent that National Park Authorities are increasingly shouldering the burden of repairing their “green lane” networks. Although many National Park Authorities have a delegated agreement to maintain rights of way with their respective highway authorities, the delegated funding is often not so forthcoming. The additional money that National Park Authorities are putting into maintaining the network needs to be recognised in their annual government grant.

## **3. Enforcement**

Many of the National Park Authorities are engaged in crackdowns over illegal activity but remain dependent on police priorities. The police are a relevant authority<sup>2</sup> which should have regard to the purposes of National Parks. It is hoped that the planned new enforcement guidance from government will clearly set out this duty along with the powers of prosecution available to both the police and highway authorities. Most National Park Authorities commented to CNP that just one prosecution would help bring home the message to illegal and antisocial drivers.



#### 4. Bringing clarity to the legal status of routes

In January 2005, the government announced a package of measures to deal with the vehicular use of green lanes in England and Wales<sup>vii</sup>. Crucially, the new Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill should, as drafted, make it no longer possible to claim a byway open to motor vehicles on the basis of historical evidence of use by a horse and cart. This is welcome but any delays in implementation of the Bill could allow more routes to be claimed for vehicle use.

There also is a real need for action over routes where vehicular rights are generally accepted and exercised regardless of status. For example, the status of "unclassified county roads" remains unclear and has been paid little attention in the government's framework for action. These routes form the majority of the green lane network in some the upland National Parks.

#### Conclusion

We need to remind ourselves of the core values and spirit for which National Parks were set up in the first place when adopting management solutions to motorised recreation. In CNP's view the starting point is that these highways and byways are themselves "special qualities" of the National Parks which help deliver Park purposes through both their protection and sustainable use. Elsewhere the government is already convinced we need to make less use of the car, engage in healthy exercise and respond to climate change. Only by clear guidance and equipping National Park Authorities with the powers and resources to take action will it begin to make headway on an issue which encompasses all of these worthy goals.

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>The South Downs was proposed as a National Park in December 2002, and a Designation Order has been published and public inquiry held. A Ministerial decision is expected in spring 2006. The area

proposed encompasses two existing Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), the Sussex Downs AONB and East Hampshire AONB.

<sup>2</sup> Section 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 as amended by Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995

#### References

<sup>i</sup> Council for National Parks (2005) 'Off-road or off-limits? Recreational driving in the National Parks', London, 21pp. Available online at [www.cnp.org.uk](http://www.cnp.org.uk)

<sup>ii</sup> (2005) 'The effectiveness of Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders as a management tool for "green lanes" in the Yorkshire Dales National Park' North Yorkshire County Council and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, 65pp.

<sup>iii</sup> Tickbox.net survey (2005) 'The Great Outdoors' survey for the Association of National Park Authorities, [online]. Last accessed on 21 September 2005 at <http://www.anpa.gov.uk/News/viewarticle.asp?ID=996&LanguageID=1&PageID=177>

<sup>iv</sup> Dower, J (1945) 'National Parks in England and Wales', Ministry of Town and Country Planning, London, p. 25

<sup>v</sup> Edwards, Prof R (1991) 'Fit for the Future', Report of the National Parks Review Panel, pp.36

<sup>vi</sup> Crowe, L (2004) 'Demand for outdoor recreation in the English National Parks' Centre for Environmental Conservation and Outdoor Leisure, Sheffield Hallam University, p. 27

<sup>vii</sup> (2005) 'Use of mechanically propelled vehicles on rights of way: the government's framework for action' Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs/Welsh Assembly Government 104pp.

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## Motorised Recreation: An Alternative View

**Michael Bartholomew, Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Alliance**

In the last issue of *Countryside Recreation*, a one-sided succession of articles argued that, if properly managed, motor-vehicles on unsealed byways in the countryside are entirely benign. They are not. Motor vehicles invariably cause damage and nuisance. If people whose idea of pleasure is taking to the countryside on motorbikes and in 4x4s could be persuaded - or, if necessary, compelled - to leave their vehicles where the tarmac stops, the countryside would have a much brighter future. Rights would obviously be curtailed, but the curtailment would be justified. As individuals, our obligation should be to make as small an impact as we can on the landscape, and it is plain that we make a far smaller impact - measured by reference to the damage we cause both to the fabric of the byways, and to the peace and tranquillity that the countryside is supposed to embody - if we leave our vehicles behind and take to the byways on pedal cycles, on horses, or on our feet.

The motor vehicle lobby and its apologists blankly resist this modest proposal. Trying to persuade them to leave their motor vehicles behind is like trying to persuade them to have their teeth pulled out. The prospect of a network of traffic-free green lanes (save for the traffic generated by farmers and other people going about their business) does not fire their imaginations. On the contrary, their vision of the countryside is one in which green lanes, running from horizon to horizon, from Land's End to John O'Groats, remain open to motorbikes and 4x4s. How do they justify this? The articles in the last issue of *Countryside Recreation* are typical.

As a first example, one of the conclusions of the article on 'Validating the Anecdotal Viewpoints of Rights of Way Officers Managing Byways' is that conflict between motorised and non-motorised users on shared byway routes is 'minimal'. If this conclusion is sound, we must consider that, for instance, an encounter on a narrow green lane, deep in the countryside, between half a dozen motorcyclists and a group of disabled people, or parents with small children, is likely to be essentially harmonious. This is highly improbable, and the article presents no supporting evidence of a supposed general absence

of conflict between motorised and non-motorised users of green byways.

Secondly, the article on the Lake District hierarchy concludes that the scheme has been a success. But no criteria for the assessment of success or failure are presented. The scheme cost £68,500 in 1999-2000, plus untold hours of voluntary labour, yet it is so vaguely formulated that either an increase or decrease in the number of vehicle miles travelled by recreational vehicles in the National Park may be counted as a success. In the light of both the vagueness of the scheme and its great expense, other highway authorities would be unwise to take it as a model for the management of their own problems with motor vehicles on green lanes.

Thirdly, the article on 'Cowboy Motoring' concentrated exclusively on illegal and irresponsible use. It did not examine the severe impacts that are caused by legal users. This tacit exoneration of the legal user is mistaken. English Nature, for example, have produced a report on the state of Blubberhouses Moor, in Nidderdale, Yorkshire, which shows that recreational vehicles (and the vast majority of them will have been street-legal), ridden and driven along perfectly legal routes, have damaged the moor so severely that if vehicles were to be prohibited for five years, some sections of the moor will still not have recovered.

People who ride and drive recreational vehicles in the countryside are not hooligans. They rightly say that a good deal of highway law is on their side. But they are committed to a brutal way of encountering the countryside that is both environmentally unsustainable, and increasingly offensive to people who go to the countryside for peace and quiet, and for the beauty of the formerly unspoilt green lanes that are such a fortunate legacy from the horse-drawn age. We will eventually have to get used to the idea that we must leave our vehicles where the tarmac stops. Most recreational vehicle users probably realise this. They will, however, fight a tenacious and long-drawn-out rearguard action. *Countryside Recreation* could speed the acceptance of the idea of tranquil, traffic-free green lanes if it stopped publishing articles that promote the very activity that will inevitably have to be given up.

**Contact:** Michael Bartholomew, Chairman, Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Alliance, The Civic Centre, Cross Green, Otley, West Yorkshire. LS21 1HD

# NEWS

## COILLTE TEORANTA (IRISH FORESTRY BOARD)

### COILLTE PRESENTS MINISTER WITH NEW RECREATION POLICY

The Chairman of Coillte, Mr. Brendan McKenna presented the Minister for Agriculture and Food, Ms. Mary Coughlan, T.D. with a copy of Coillte's new Recreation Policy Healthy Forests, Healthy Nation at Drumboe Woods, Ballybofey, during a visit by the Board of Coillte to Donegal on Friday 30th September last.

Speaking at the presentation, Mr. McKenna said, "The objective of Coillte's Recreation Policy is to deliver worthwhile recreation experiences to all users, while managing our estate to deliver economic, environmental and social benefits".

Coillte wishes to encourage greater public use of its 1.1 million acres of forest land. Present day forest recreation users are more active and environmentally aware than those a generation ago. New and increasing demands are being made on the forest for recreation including new uses e.g. mountain biking and horse riding.

In 2003, Coillte initiated a review of its policy on recreation to meet the changing needs of modern Irish society. This review was completed in 2005 and a new policy adopted and Coillte was very pleased to present the Minister with the first copy in Donegal, Mr. McKenna added.

The Minister said she was very pleased that Coillte had adopted a new policy that would encourage greater public use of the forest. The Minister also said she was very pleased that Coillte has identified Drumboe Woods as an area where facilities will be improved in the coming year as part of a project

supported by Failte Ireland to improve forest recreation facilities. Plans for Drumboe include provision of car parks, upgrading walks, providing a barbecue stand and picnic furniture, upgrading signage and waymarking.

Recreational use of Coillte's forests makes a significant contribution to national well being and social capital. Forests also contribute to Ireland's tourism industry by providing an extensive network of recreational facilities. The process to review Coillte's Recreation Policy, which took almost two years to complete, was undertaken by a Review Group representative of Coillte, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), the Countryside Access and Activities Network (Northern Ireland) and the Forestry Department of UCD. The group consulted hundreds of organisations here in Ireland and received extensive input to the policy. The Group also undertook research abroad to establish best practice in managing forests for recreation purposes. To view the Recreation Policy, please visit:

[www.coillte.ie/publications/recreationpolicy.htm](http://www.coillte.ie/publications/recreationpolicy.htm)

*For further information please contact: Ms. Clíodhna Parker, Media and Public Relations Manager, Tel: 00353 (0)1-2011143 or Mr. Bill Murphy, Recreation Manager, Tel: 00 353 (0)12011135*

## COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS AND ACTIVITIES NETWORK FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

### ECOTRAILS – PHASE II

The first ecotrail in phase II of the project was launched last week bringing the total completed across Northern Ireland to six. Before the end of December this will have increased to ten as work is at advanced stages on another four and negotiations are also underway on another three. If all these go

ahead, Northern Ireland will have a network of 13 ecotrails.

The ecotrails project seeks to promote a knowledge, appreciation and understanding of and responsibility to the local natural and built environment using the sport of orienteering.

Phase II has seen the project now being promoted in the new CD-Rom format. The CD-Rom holds all the information and worksheets necessary to complete the ecotrail, including downloadable maps. This information is also now available to download on the ecotrail's recently revamped web site: [www.ecotrails.co.uk](http://www.ecotrails.co.uk).

*For further information please contact the Network by email: [info@countysiderecreation.com](mailto:info@countysiderecreation.com)*

### **THE UK'S FIRST 'FLAT' MOUNTAIN BIKING TRAIL AT CRAIGAVON LAKES!**

A mountain bike trail usually brings to mind hills and mountains and not flat wide open spaces. Thanks to a partnership between the Countryside Access and Activities Network and Craigavon Borough Council, Northern Ireland has now got its first purpose built off-road family mountain bike trail at the flat Craigavon City Park!

The unique 10km trail follows a figure of 8 around the scenic Craigavon Lakes, woodland and picturesque countryside and is suitable for all cyclists with basic off-road riding skills, and yet is still challenging enough for competent riders to cycle again and again. The majority of the trail is purpose-built single track, linked with some wider tarmac sections. It is sign-posted throughout for cyclists who can also clearly see the route on an interpretation panel at the Watersports centre along with detailed information about the track, area and nearby facilities.

The trail, launched in September by David Hanson, MP, Minister for DCAL, was designed by internationally acclaimed mountain bike consultant Daffyd Davies who says that the trail is unique within the UK. "Most mountain bike trails have some sort of inclines but this does not. Nevertheless, it's a real challenge for those who engage in the sport while at

the same time it can offer the weekend biker a moderate cycle".

The trail has also got the seal of approval by Irish Olympian and champion mountain biker Glyn O'Brien who has just returned from six months training in Canada. He says, 'It's great to see that Northern Ireland is finally developing tracks that are required to accommodate an increasingly popular sport.'

## **COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY**

### **HISTORIC RIGHT OF ACCESS IS COMPLETED ACROSS ENGLAND**

The new right of access to the countryside will be completed across England on 31 October 2005. The introduction of the new right, for which people have been campaigning for over 100 years, allows people to walk freely across mapped access land without the need to stick to paths.

From 31 October people will have the chance to enjoy about 935,000 hectares (6,250 square miles) of mapped areas of mountain, moor, heath, down and registered common land: much of which was previously off-limits. This equates to 7.0% of the total land in England or 1.6 million football pitches.

Pam Warhurst, Countryside Agency Deputy Chair and Chair of the National Countryside Access Forum said: "This is an historic day. People can have fun exploring more of England's beautiful and varied landscapes. Of course with this new right comes new responsibilities, so it's important to follow the Countryside Code.

"The Countryside Agency, and the Countryside Commission before it, has worked to increase opportunities for public enjoyment of the countryside for over 50 years and this new right of access is a major landmark in working towards this. By giving every member of the public more opportunities to get out and enjoy the countryside we can in time build a healthier, more environmentally aware society."

The East and West are the final mapping regions to open in England, completing the roll out of the new right.

New editions of Ordnance Survey Explorer maps show all known access land. Ordnance Survey aims to publish new maps covering the whole of England and Wales by April next year.

*For further information on the new access rights, maps of access land or to download the Countryside Code, visit the website [www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk) or email [openaccess@countryside.gov.uk](mailto:openaccess@countryside.gov.uk)*

## COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES

### WORK STARTS ON CORS CARON BIRD HIDE

A state-of-the-art bird hide is being built on Cors Caron National Nature Reserve near Tregaron, which will give unprecedented views of the area's rich and varied bird life.

The hide is due to be ready by February next year, in time for bird watchers to enjoy the reserve's winter residents including many species of wading birds and birds of prey. Paul Culyer, Cors Caron Senior Reserve Manager said: "The bird hide is just one aspect of making Cors Caron, and many other National Nature Reserves, great places for people to enjoy nature at its best. "Around 20,000 people currently visit this internationally renowned wetland, but we hope that many more will pay us a visit as the visitor facilities improve. The reserve's value as an outdoor class room for schools will also be enhanced once the bird hide is ready for use. "CCW is very grateful to Mr and Mrs Davies, Maesllyn Farm, who are tenants on the land in Cors Caron for their co-operation throughout this project."

The hide, built of Welsh oak, has been designed by Machynlleth-based architects George & Tomos. It is being built by local contractors and will be accessible to everyone, including wheelchair users. Its power supply will come from photovoltaic cells that turn sunlight into electricity.

### Cors Caron's winter highlights:

- Hen harriers
- Whooper swans
- Flocks of teal and wigeon

- Peregrine Falcons
- Little Egrets

The bird hide is funded by the European Union's Objective One programme as part of a series of projects to improve visitor facilities on some of Wales' most well-known National Nature Reserves.

*For further information, please contact Helen Evans on (01248) 385500 or 07717225589, or Cors Caron Warden Paul Culyer on 01974 298480.*

## COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

### CMA CORPORATE MEMBER & SENIOR OFFICER'S SEMINAR.

The CMA held its first seminar for corporate members and senior officers at Losehill Hall in April. Over 50 members and potential members attended and the themes included:

- Finding out more about what members want and how the CMA can improve its services; and
- The regional and rural agenda in relation to countryside and urban greenspace management.

CMA Chair Mike Woods observed that as the CMA approaches its 40th birthday it had reached an important crossroads in its evolution. Mike felt strongly that the CMA could not afford to rest on its laurels, and needed to face up to the many challenges facing countryside and urban greenspace management in the 21st Century.

Three workshops were held including one on the training and development of countryside and urban greenspace professionals. The delegates argued for a greater emphasis on people skills and training which addressed the health, well-being and social inclusion agendas.

Key workshop recommendations stressed CMA involvement in:

- Supporting managers by providing training profiles for generic posts.

- Facilitating placements, exchanges and secondments.
- Providing information of training course availability, perhaps providing accreditation of both short and long courses.
- Encouraging longer-term information sharing that mirrors the annual training review cycle.
- Networking by outlining what each organisation delivers, and listing internal training events and marketing these to other organisations.
- The identification of training to meet change and new initiatives.

### So what next?

The CMA National Council has agreed to look at ways of realising many of the recommendations that came from this seminar and will be reporting back to members on progress to this end over the next few months.

*For more information contact: Ian Bamforth, Countryside Services Manager, Worcestershire County Council 01905-768210  
[ibamforth@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:ibamforth@worcestershire.gov.uk)*

### COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION AND LOSEHILL HALL SIGN NEW MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

As part of the Countryside Management Association's (CMA) policy of building mutually beneficial partnerships with relevant organisations, a Memorandum of Agreement was recently signed by Mike Woods, CMA Chair and Richard Campen, Losehill Hall's Head of Environmental Education.

In this agreement CMA will offer Losehill Hall opportunities to use CMA communication channels for disseminating training information and other corporate member benefits whilst for their part, Losehill will offer CMA members discounted rates on training/residential courses and promote CMA to attendees on relevant training courses.

Building on this agreement, CMA have already held a corporate members seminar and their annual training seminar (Integrated Land Management) at Losehill Hall

## ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

### ENVIRONMENT AGENCY REAPPOINTS BARBARA YOUNG AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Barbara Young has been re-appointed as Chief Executive of the Environment Agency.

Sir John Harman, Chairman of the Environment Agency said: "I am delighted Barbara Young has accepted reappointment as Chief Executive of the Environment Agency.

"Barbara Young will continue to play a pivotal role in the Environment Agency's future action in protecting and improving our environment.

"Barbara will build on the momentum already invested in leading the organisation and help make the environment a cleaner and better place to live and work, now and for the future."

Barbara Young was previously appointed as the Environment Agency's Chief Executive in 2000 on a five-year term.

As Chief Executive, Barbara Young will continue to be a member of the board of the Environment Agency.

## FOREST RESEARCH

### EVALUATION OF THE CHOPWELL WOOD HEALTH PROJECT

The Chopwell Wood Health Project was developed to examine the potential for offering enjoyable health promoting activities in an attractive environment. Chopwell Wood is a 360 hectare woodland near Gateshead in the Northeast managed by Forest Enterprise. The project was a partnership between the Forestry Commission, Gateshead Primary Care Trust, Derwentside Primary Care Trust and the Friends of Chopwell Wood.

The partnership developed two key areas of work based on the respective interests of the two Primary Care Trusts.

- 1) A General Practice (GP) woodland based activity



referral scheme in Gateshead.

2) A programme of school visits to support County Durham and Darlington Healthy School Standard. These two areas of work were evaluated using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

### Key findings

#### GP referral scheme

- 33 people were referred to exercise in the wood with 30 completing the 13 week referral programme.
- Proactive promotion of the project contributed to 128 additional attendances at Chopwell Wood Health project activities.

#### School visits

- Over 200 young people and staff from 4 local primary schools participated.
- Post programme there was a significant increase in the percentage of pupils regarding the wood as a healthy place.
- Following the programme there was an increased usage of Chopwell Wood amongst young people, staff and families.

*The report is available to download at <http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/chopwellhealth>  
Liz O'Brien, Social Research, Forest Research, Alice Holt Lodge, Farnham, Surrey.GU10 4LH*

## GREENSPACE

### COUNTRY PARKS NETWORK (CPN)

The Country Parks Network (CPN) has been hosted at GreenSpace, on behalf of the Countryside Agency since 2001. The Civic Trust will take over the CPN project from 1st November 2005, and it will run for another two years. During its time at GreenSpace, the CPN has undertaken a variety of activities including the first research of the state of country parks 'Towards a Country Park Renaissance' as well as recent activities, including a new marketing leaflet that aims to raise the profile and advocate the benefits of country parks.

*For more information, please contact Malcolm Hankey, Civic Trust tel: 0151 231 6906 or email: [mhankey@greenflagaward.org.uk](mailto:mhankey@greenflagaward.org.uk)*

## GREENSPACE SCOTLAND

### PLACEMAKING COMES TO SCOTLAND

Greenspace Scotland has joined forces with Project for Public Spaces (a New York based non-profit) to bring Placemaking to Scotland. From October 2005 to January 2006, we will be collaborating on a pilot Placemaking programme.

Placemaking is an innovative and pioneering people and place-centred approach to the regeneration and revitalisation of communities, neighbourhoods and parks that has been developed and refined by Project for Public Spaces (PPS) over the last 30 years. It involves creating and sustaining public places that build communities and helps people to grow their public spaces into vital community places.

Placemaking in Scotland will draw on international best practice and has the potential to offer significant new insights and approaches to current practice.

During the pilot phase we will work on 3 demonstration projects: two in Inverclyde and one in Edinburgh. The pilots will use Placemaking in a number of settings: at a neighbourhood level focused on a currently unused greenspace created by the clearance of blocks of flats; in a more formal civic space and in a park which forms the boundary between two communities and is currently underused. To build capacity in Scotland for Placemaking a team of 'associates' has been recruited and will receive advanced training. The associates have been drawn from the Greenspace Scotland network of members and partner organisations. The training of a team of associates will build a capacity in Scotland to develop Placemaking beyond the pilot programme.

With its focus on use, function, triangulation and experimentation, Placemaking offers a different vehicle to traditional project-driven and design-led schemes. Over the course of the pilot we will be comparing the Placemaking approach with 'how we usually do things' to draw out any key learning points in relation to the engagement and involvement of communities in regeneration and greenspace projects, and in the way the community vision is translated into design and management plans for

great places, we'll be looking particularly at the role of short-term implementation experiments. With national and local partners, we will be conducting a comprehensive and rigorous evaluation of the pilot programme to explore whether the Placemaking approach has something to offer to greenspace and regeneration practice in Scotland.

We are grateful for support for the pilot Placemaking programme from the Scottish Centre for Regeneration, Scottish Executive (Development – Housing and Area Regeneration), Inverclyde and City of Edinburgh Councils.

*As the pilot programme progresses we will provide updates through the e-bulletin and our website at [www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/placemaking](http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/placemaking)*

## INSTITUTE FOR OUTDOOR LEARNING

### LEADING AND MANAGING GROUPS IN THE OUTDOORS

We are delighted to announce the publication of the new and revised edition of Ken Ogilvie's book *'Leading and Managing Groups in the Outdoors'*. 300 pages of updated and revised text - vital reading for everyone leading and working with groups in the outdoors. The first edition of *Leading and Managing Groups in the Outdoors* established itself as a classic text for those seeking to work with others in the outdoors

Key topics covered include:

- Aims & Values
- Personal Experience
- Ideas about Leaders & Leadership
- Leadership Models & Styles
- Leader Awareness, Attitudes & Approaches
- Management of Risk
- Leadership & Management Skills

With wonderful and humorous cartoon illustrations by Lyn Noble

#### **New Revised Edition**

In the early 1990s, after four children died in a canoeing accident in Lyme Bay off the Dorset coast, a

working committee was set up by the government to report on the incident and to suggest guidelines for such expeditions. One of the books the committee was advised to read was *Leading and Managing Groups in the Outdoors* which reflects over 50 years of the authors' in depth knowledge and professional expertise in the outdoors.

This first-hand experience ensures the authenticity and reliability of a manual for anyone who takes groups climbing or canoeing, sailing or skiing, caving or hillwalking. The task of the leader is one of responsible supervision, a task that cannot be assumed lightly and a task that involves learning a set of essential skills.

This book is packed with sound advice and helpful counsel. From aims and values and the vital fundamental of personal experience, the narrative moves on to discuss leadership models and styles, leader awareness and attitudes, and a range of skills from planning and checking to managing risks and solving problems. Balancing down-to-earth guidance with wisdom that at times verges on the philosophical, this thoroughly practical handbook is well structured and purposefully presented. Its readership is clearly targeted. If those men and women in charge of groups absorbed and acted on the principles and programmes described within, there would be fewer accidents and the response and enjoyment of the participants would be greatly enhanced by having competent and caring leaders.

Very amusingly illustrated, this book is primarily concerned with the people skills of outdoor leadership. It is neither a handbook on safety or technique, nor a lyrical account of the spirit of the hills and their natural history. But leaders, whether humble or conceited, autocratic or democratic, will find much to learn from it.

*To order a copy, please contact: Institute for Outdoor Learning, Plumpton Old Hall, Plumpton, Penrith, Cumbria - CA11 9NP - UK Tel: +44 (0)1768 885 800 Fax: +44 (0)1768 885 80. Email: [institute@outdoor-learning.org](mailto:institute@outdoor-learning.org). Website: <http://outdoor-learning.org> Special price for IOL Members: £16.50. Usual price (non-IOL members): £18.95 plus postage. Quantity discounts available - please enquire.*

## SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE

### LOCHABER WOODLAND PROJECT RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR NATURE CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

Lochaber woodland project receives international award for nature conservation management

A Lochaber-based project that has been restoring local oak forests to their former glory has won international honours.

The Sunart Oakwoods Initiative in Ardnamurchan and Morvern has won a 2005 Eurosite Award for demonstrating best practice in nature conservation management.

The Sunart Oakwoods Initiative (SOI) was first established in 1996 to restore and expand the native woodlands of the Sunart area of Ardnamurchan and Morvern to recreate an extensive native forest. The work has included the removal of non-native conifer trees that were planted among the Atlantic oakwoods - Scotland's own rainforests - in the post-war drive to re-establish a national timber reserve. Rhododendron removal and control of grazing was also carried out. The initiative has involved national forests managed by Forestry Commission Scotland, as well as privately owned woods. It has combined nature conservation with economic and amenity benefits to the local community, and has reaffirmed the cultural links with the natural environment.

The Sunart initiative received the award for its outstanding contribution to the positive management of Natura 2000, the network of nature conservation sites across the European Union.

Welcoming the award, Deputy Minister for the Environment and Rural Development, Rhona Brankin, said:

"Sunart is a very special place in international terms and is widely recognised as one of the best examples of woodland habitat in the UK.

"The award recognises the considerable efforts of Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission

Scotland and a great many other people who have worked together over a number of years.

"This partnership has delivered very real and long term positive effects on some of the outstanding natural features that we are fortunate enough to have on our doorstep.

"A mix of European, lottery and Scottish Executive funding has made it possible to restore and enhance the woodlands. This funding has also delivered important economic benefits to many of the people who live and work here, including the creation of new opportunities for employment and skills development."

"Only last week, in Edinburgh's Royal Botanic Garden, I was privileged to open the stunning Aig An Oir / At the Edge exhibition of art from the Atlantic oakwoods of Scotland's west coast, including the Sunart oakwoods. This brought home to me just how special these woods are, and how deserving this project has been of our support."

The partners in the project include the communities of West Lochaber, Forestry Commission Scotland, Lochaber Enterprise, The Highland Council and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). Funding was secured from the European LIFE-Nature Fund, the Scottish Executive and the Heritage Lottery Fund. This has been put towards the restoration of important habitats, access and interpretation provision, and investment in the local communities through training and skills projects.

Eurosite is a network of more than 80 organisations across 25 countries devoted to nature conservation management. The awards reflect outstanding examples from around the European Union that promote important sites and share best practice through management, interpretation and community participation.

The award is being presented to Brian Eardley of Scottish Natural Heritage on behalf of the partners at a ceremony at the European Nature Conference today (Friday 23rd Sept) in Apeldoorn in the Netherlands.

*For further information, please contact Calum Macfarlane, Scottish Natural Heritage, Inverness on 01463 723106*



## COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION NETWORK EVENTS



### ACTIVITY TOURISM From Strategy to Delivery

**The Priory Rooms, Birmingham - 21st March 2006**

Activity tourism is an important and growing element of the domestic market in the UK. Statistics show that seven in every ten UK holidays involve participation in an outdoor activity and for more than 10% of holidays, participation in a specific activity is the main motivation for the trip. Activity tourism is particularly significant in Scotland and Wales but also in Northern Ireland and the Republic and in many English destinations including the Lake District, Peak District, Yorkshire, the South-West and the South Coast.

#### Seminar Aims

- To provide an overview of the importance of activity tourism and its contribution to the economic and social prosperity of local communities;
- To share experiences of organisations involved in setting and delivering evidence-based policy and strategy for the activity tourism sector;
- To learn from organisations and practitioners who have been involved in the development and promotion of activity tourism products and destinations.

#### Target Audience

The seminar is aimed at those who have an interest in activity tourism in the public, private and voluntary sectors. It should be of particular relevance to government agency and local authority staff involved in policy development and practitioners involved in developing and marketing the activity tourism product throughout the UK.

#### Contact Details

To receive further information on this event please contact Katherine Powell, Countryside Recreation Network Assistant by Email: [k.j.powell@shu.ac.uk](mailto:k.j.powell@shu.ac.uk) or Telephone: 0114 225 4653/4494

## DELIVERING A COUNTRYSIDE FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING Carlingford, Ireland, 26th - 27th January 2006

The potential of the countryside to contribute to the nation's health and well-being is increasingly recognised.

To further explore this relationship, several Irish members of the Countryside Recreation Network (CRN) are holding a two day conference, building on the seminar previously held by CRN in Birmingham in May 2005.

The conference will specifically consider the results of the most recent research undertaken in the field of countryside recreation and health and wellbeing, the benefits and costs, how much activity is already underway, case studies of best practice from across the UK and Ireland, lessons to be learnt from current projects and initiatives and consideration of the most effective way forward for partnership working.

**Venue:** Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co Louth. (approximately 1 hour 15 minutes drive from Dublin Airport)

**Cost:** Full conference including accommodation - £195

**Contact Details:** To obtain a copy of the full conference programme and further details on booking email [sylvia@countrysiderecreation.com](mailto:sylvia@countrysiderecreation.com)

# Countryside Recreation and Training Events

## DEC 2005

**14 December 2005**  
**Engaging Communities Through Consultation**  
 (Environmental Trainers Network)  
 Venue: Doncaster  
 Cost: £105/££155 + VAT

## JAN 2006

**11-13 January 2006**  
**Project Management**  
 (Losehill Hall)  
 Cost: £503 (£460 Voluntary Organisations)

**17-20 January 2006**  
**The CROW Act**  
 (Plas Tan y Bwlch)  
 Venue: Snowdonia  
 Cost: £265

**26-27 January 2006**  
**Delivering a Countryside for Health and Wellbeing Ireland**  
 (Countryside Access and Activities Network (NI))  
 Venue: Carlingford, Ireland  
 Cost: £195 including accommodation

## FEB 2006

**13-15 February 2006**  
**Rights if Way: The Next Steps**  
 (Losehill Hall)  
 Cost: £491 (£449 Voluntary Organisations)

**13-15 February 2006**  
**Access for All - Managing and Delivering Countryside Access for People with Disabilities**  
 (Plas Tan y Bwlch)  
 Venue: Snowdonia  
 Cost: £265

**20-23 February 2006**  
**Advanced Ranger Training**  
 (Losehill Hall)  
 Cost: £497 (£454 Voluntary Organisations)

**28 February 2006**  
**Students' Seminar: Planning, Landscapes & The Natural Heritage**  
 (Environmental Trainers Network)  
 Venue: Birmingham  
 Cost: £105/££155 + VAT

## MARCH 2006

**2 March 2006**  
**Mental health and How the Environment Can Help**  
 (Environmental Trainers Network)  
 Venue: Birmingham  
 Cost: £105/££155 + VAT

**21 March 2006**  
**Activity Tourism - From Strategy to Delivery**  
 (Countryside Recreation Network)  
 Venue: Birmingham  
 Cost: £100/£125

**29-31 March 2006**  
**Getting More from Urban Greenspaces**  
 (Losehill Hall)  
 Cost: £461 (£421 Voluntary Organisations)

## Contact details for training/events organisers

### Environmental Trainers Network

Tel: 0121 358 2155  
[www.btcv.org/etn/](http://www.btcv.org/etn/)

### Field Studies Council

Tel: 01743 852100  
[www.field-studies-council.org](http://www.field-studies-council.org)

### Institute of Public Rights of Way (IPROW)

Tel: 01439 788093  
[www.iprow.co.uk](http://www.iprow.co.uk)

### Losehill Hall

Tel: 01433 620 373  
[www.losehill-training.org.uk](http://www.losehill-training.org.uk)

### Plas Tan y Bwlch

Tel: 0871 8714004  
[www.eryri-npa.co.uk/ptyb\\_base/e\\_800.html](http://www.eryri-npa.co.uk/ptyb_base/e_800.html)

### Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

Tel: 01962 868626  
[www.ieem.org.uk/Workshops.htm](http://www.ieem.org.uk/Workshops.htm)

### BTCV Training

Tel: 01491 821600  
[www.btcv.org](http://www.btcv.org)

# Countryside Recreation Network Publications List

	Price (incl.postage)	Tick
<b>REPORTS</b>		
A Countryside for Health and Wellbeing: The Physical and Mental Health Benefits of Green Exercise	£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"/>
<b>CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS</b>		
Removing Barriers; Creating Opportunities: Social Inclusion in the Countryside (2001)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing the Challenge of Access (2000)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the Honeypot Overflowing? (1998)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making Access for All a Reality (1997)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Today's Thinking for Tomorrow's Countryside (1995)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communities in their Countryside (1994)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS</b>		
Reasonable Access? (available November 2005)	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Question of Respect; Conservation and Countryside Recreation (2005)	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivering a Countryside for Health and Wellbeing (2005)	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitor Safety in the Countryside (2005)	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>
'And Your Evidence Is?' Evaluation Frameworks (2004)	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitor Information and Wayfinding Needs (2004)	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demonstrating the Economic Value of Countryside Recreation (2004)	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accessible Greenspace (2003)	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>
Country Parks II (2003)(Country Parks I & II can be purchased together for £20)	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>
Country Parks I(2003)	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Rights of Way Improvement Plans (2002)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Funding for Social Projects (2002)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opening Up Access In and Around Towns (2002)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitor Payback Schemes (2002)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Access Forums (2001)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fundraising and the Lottery (2001)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are We Getting There? Delivering Sustainable Transport in the Countryside (2000)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breaking New Ground in Sustainable Tourism (2000)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using Local Distinctiveness as an Economic Development Tool (1999)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Just Walking the Dog (1999)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sponsorship (1998)	£8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making Ends Meet (1997)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
GIS & Countryside Management - Theory and Application (1997)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to Water - Sharing Access on Reservoirs and Rivers (1997)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do Visitor Surveys Count? - Making use of Surveys of Countryside Recreation (1996)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consensus in the Countryside I - Reaching Shared agreement in policy, planning and management (1996)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Brush with the Land - Art in the Countryside II (1996)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Brush with the Land - Art in the Countryside I (1995)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playing Safe? Managing Visitor Safety in the Countryside (1995)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
GIS & Access to the Countryside (1995)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sport in the Countryside (1995)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Drive in the Country? - Examining the Problems of Recreational Travel (1994)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental Economics, Sustainable Management and the Countryside (1994)	£6	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CRN RESEARCH DIRECTORY</b> An annual directory of the research work carried out by the CRN agencies during the year		
Research Directory 1998	£5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research Directory 1997	£5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research Directory 1996	£2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research Directory 1995	£2	<input type="checkbox"/>
UK Day Visits Survey 1994 (1996)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>
UK Day Visits Survey 1993 (1995)	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>

Title \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

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