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Recreation

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



I N S I D E

Recreational Cycling

· Prior Park Case Study

Snowdonia Transport Study

Moorsbus

- Transport Alternatives
- · Ecotourism Debate



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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please note that from September 1999 the CRN address will change to the following:

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Countryside Recreation Network

CRN is a network which:

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

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

Liaison:

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

Good Practice:

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

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Countryside Recreation is free and is published four times a year. We welcome articles and letters from all readers. The Autumn and Winter issues of Countryside will focus on the themes of constitutional/institutional change in the recreation sectors and future trends for countryside recreation. The copy date for the next issue is 1st October 1999.

For more information, please contact: Jo Hughes, Network Manager Department of City & Regional Planning, Cardiff University, Glamorgan Building, King Edward VII Avenue, Cardiff, CF10 3WA

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Editors: Jo Hughes & Kevin Bishop

Editorial

"The poetry of motion! The real way to travel! O bliss! O poop poop! O my!" Grahame, K. (1908) "The Wind in the Willows", Methuen, London.

This was the view of motoring as expressed by Toad of Toad Hall in the early twentieth century. As we approach the new millennium this pleasure has been eroded by congestion, concerns about safety, the impact on environmental quality and human health. We no longer speak about the 'great car economy' but about an integrated transport system. Like buses, the last twelve months or so have seen a plethora of White Papers and subsequent policy statements on Integrated Transport arriving in quick succession. This issue of Countryside Recreation is devoted to the theme of transport in the countryside and the practical delivery of an integrated transport strategy.

It is appropriate that the first paper is about recreational cycling as one of the great ironies of road transport is that the campaign for the establishment of a modern road system was led, in part, by the cyclists. Les Lumsdon, drawing on experience from northern Europe and Canada, argues for a more strategic approach to the planning and design of facilities for recreational cyclists. Without such an approach he fears that integration with other forms of transport will not be possible and that the local economic benefits of recreational cycle will not be maximised.

The article on the Northern Snowdonia Study outlines a proposed Integrated Traffic Management Scheme (ITMS) for the northern section of the National Park. The aim of this scheme is not just to reduce reliance on the private motor car but to deliver a more sustainable form of development. As Owen et al. note, the area is rich in natural beauty but poor in economic terms. The proposed ITMS would help to maximise the economic benefits associated with visitors to the area but it needs strong political leadership and commitment if it is to be implemented.

Moorsbus is a working example of a highly successful public transport initiative that connects town and country and provides a viable alternative to the private motor car. As Bill Breakell traces the evolution of this initiative and the thinking that accompanied its incremental development over the last twenty years. The paper by Matthew Ward outlines another successful public transport-led recreational facility - Prior Park Gardens, Bath.

Given the recent controversy surrounding John Prescott's ability to deliver an integrated transport strategy Lydia and Colin Speakman's call for an 'alternative culture' is timely. They remind us that 'sticks' and 'carrots' are only part of the picture and that the integrated transport planner needs to be just as concerned with initiatives as with re-educating policy-makers and motorists. They argue for the hypothecation of car park revenue, comprehensive marketing initiatives and a general re-educating of policy-makers to make them 'public transport friendly'.

CRN is currently organising a workshop on Sustainable Transport (to be held late 1999/early 2000) if you would like to be sent further details or to submit a paper then please contact Jo Hughes at CRN.

Kevin Bishop

Integrating Transport and Tourism: Recreational Cycling

Les Lumsdon, Staffordshire University



Surveying Recreational Cyclists at Parsley Hay

Cycling has enjoyed a higher profile in recent years primarily on the grounds of healthy living, and sustainability (Department of Health, 1992). The National Cycling Strategy (Department of Transport, 1996) included a target of doubling cycle use by 2002, and the Transport White Paper (DETR, 1998) endorsed cycling, and the proposed National Cycle Network. While these policy frameworks give recognition to cycling as a recreational pursuit, the emphasis of the documentation and funding has focussed firmly on increasing cycling's share of urban trips.

In terms of recreation, the recently published government paper on tourism, *Tomorrow's Tourism* (DCMS, 1999) encourages the tourism sector to adopt sustainable development strategies in much the same way as previous policy planning guidelines. It draws attention to the need to encourage more environmentally sensitive forms of transport for tourism, but the concept of traffic reduction through the encouragement of non-motorised forms of recreational activity is not well developed. Herein lies

a great potential for recreational cycling and at the same time it presents a major challenge.

Researchers have tended to define recreational cycling by purpose and type of cycle used, for example as competition and events riding, mountain biking, or cycle touring. Initially, it is useful to distinguish between local recreational cycling and cycle tourism. The former relates to local, very short trips from home such as a ride through the park or by a canal. There is, however, little or no data about these trips. Cycle tourism encompasses day trips away from home (of more than 3 hours duration), short breaks and longer touring holidays. The defining characteristic is that the visitor experience is enhanced by the cycling (Lumsdon, 1996). The UK Day Visitor Survey 1994 records that 4 per cent of visitors cycle as the main activity during a same-day visit, accounting for over 80 million recreational trips per annum (Countryside Recreation Network, 1996). Cycling holidays account for less than 1 per cent of all holiday trips.

Market Trends

An analysis of the market for cycling in the UK presents a confusing picture. Cycle ownership illustrates a pattern of growth across Europe and in the UK where over 2.3 million new cycles are sold per annum (DGVII E-1, 1997). However, an examination of use reveals a completely different scenario with cycling at an all time low in the UK. Only 2 per cent of journeys are by cycle and annual mileage cycled is in decline, although this may have bottomed out now (CTC, 1999). This contrasts sharply with other north European countries where cycling accounts for between 10 and 18 per cent of all trips (McClintock and Shacklock, 1996). The reasons are well documented in the literature; traffic levels and fear of accidents are the main barriers (Tolley, 1997).

Cycling for recreational purposes tends to be given a low priority within transport planning, yet this is where the current growth is mainly being witnessed. Accordingly to National Travel Statistics cycle journeys for leisure equal trips to work, standing at 39 and 40 percent respectively. It is estimated that there is still growth in recreational cycling after a boost in the late 1980s, and it is increasing faster than any other active leisure pursuit (Mintel, 1996), (Social Trends, 1996). Adult participation in cycling (respondents indicating that they had cycled during the previous month) stood at 8 per cent in 1987, but had increased to 11 per cent by 1996, at a time when participation in other pursuits has remained static or in decline (General Household Survey, 1996). A recent survey undertaken in Scotland indicated that 55 per cent of adults mentioned leisure as a main reason for cycling with well being and keeping fit being the two key motivational categories (Scottish National Heritage, 1998).

The Supply of Recreational Cycling in the UK

The provision of recreational cycling facilities in the UK during the past two decades has been incremental, and focused at a local level. The main providers have traditionally been local authorities,

but landowners such as Forest Enterprise, British Waterways and several water companies have also invested in recreational cycling facilities. For the most part this has been on a site specific basis, or where opportunities arise, rather than part of a wider master plan. This approach contrasts with the position in North America where 750 Rail-Trails and over 2000 Millennium routes form part of a federal initiative coordinated by one organisation, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. It is also different to several other northern Europe countries, in particular the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland, which have planned cycling networks at a state or national level. For example, in Denmark where the national network has been designed not only as a transport system but also for tourism, 15 per cent of all trips are made by cycle (Cushing, 1997).

There have been few attempts in the UK until recently to coordinate the provision of recreational networks across regions and countries with the exception of international EuroVelo routes such as the North Sea Cycle Route. A major opportunity lies with the 12,800km National Cycle Network (NCN), launched in 1996 by Sustrans, as a combination of traffic-free paths and traffic-calmed minor roads. The aim is to establish a national network of routes by 2005, which will be financed and implemented by a multitude of partners. While primarily designed for transport purposes, the network could also have the potential to be a major sustainable tourism attraction. This type of network has the capability of generating large number of recreational trips and substantial economic benefit to local economies. For example, La Route verte, a 3,400 km network being developed in Québec and with proposed links to New England in the USA has been designed not solely as a transport system but also with recreational appeal (Pronovost and Joly, 1998).

In 1996 the Urbanisation National Research Institute undertook a preliminary study of the potential tourism impacts of La Route verte. These findings were then subject to further analysis (Archambault et al., 1997) using an input-output multiplier model to estimate direct and indirect effects on the Québec economy. The level of spending per staying visitor has been calculated at two levels, a lower estimate per head of \$40 and a higher estimate of \$60 per trip. When complete, La Route verte will generate expenditure within the range of \$25,894,000 and \$31,267,000 (Canadian \$) of which approximately 10 per cent would be new visitors attracted by the network. Retention of existing domestic tourism generates a further 13 per cent. Thus, approximately one quarter of the additional cyclists' spending in the Québec economy will be attributed to the overall appeal of La Route verte as a tourism attraction in its own right, rather than being simply a transport network (Couture et al., 1998).

The network developed in Münsterland, Germany is another pertinent example of the way in which a network approach can yield high economic returns. During the 1980s the authorities decided to invest in recreational cycle routes, particularly the flagship link known as the One Hundred Castles Route. The returns have been substantial. Between 1980 and 1990, for example, the number of cycles available for hire increased from 431 to 4200, thus supporting numerous small businesses. Steiner (1995) estimates that the 10,000 kilometre network attracts in total between 10-15 million cyclist trips, with over 1 million overnight stays per annum. This represents about one third of the total overnight stays generated in the area. A more recent estimate suggests that this has grown to approximately 1.5 million overnight stays, cycle tourism accounting for 50 per cent of all overnight stays in the region (Datzer, 1998).

How Should the Market be Segmented

In order to develop this potential it is important to understand the market for recreational cycling. Different forms of segmentation have been presented during the past decade; most commonly three segments - the experienced cycle holiday tourer, the casual short break taker and the day cyclist. It is also important to take note of the

findings of three main empirical studies, one from Denmark (Danmarks Turistråd, 1998) and the others from Eire (Bord Fáilte, 1998), and Scotland (Scottish Tourist Board, 1998). All three studies segment the cycle tourist market into two sub-categories, dedicated cyclists, who cycle most of the time during a holiday and occasional cyclists, who might cycle for one or more days as part of the holiday. In each case the occasional market segment is at least twice the size of the dedicated market segment. An analysis of users of Cycle and See routes in North Staffordshire also highlights the major differences between lifestyle cyclists (i.e cycle regularly for all purposes) and casual recreational cyclists who rarely cycle and for recreational purposes only (Downward and Lumsdon, 1998).

Discussion

These findings point to a need to review current approaches to the planning and design of facilities for recreational cyclists:

- 1. Currently, most cycle routes and trails are designed and promoted as visitor attractions, and encourage mainly occasional cyclists and car based day trips. There has been no detailed attempt to measure whether such facilities bring an overall net environmental benefit or not. Does the fact that visitors cycle during the day rather than tour the area by car outweigh the generation of car trips to the trail or route? A major consideration in future planning will be how to ensure that these facilities can be made more sustainable in terms of access.
- 2. The network approach, as developed by Sustrans, offers a potentially more sustainable approach in that it might be possible to encourage more recreational trips on to the network from home. A survey undertaken on behalf of the Countryside Commission indicated that 75 percent wanted to start their cycle trips from home (Countryside Commission, 1994). There is also potential to encourage rail-bike trips perhaps by dedicated cyclists, but this is dependent on investment by

the train operating companies. Initial evidence from Switzerland indicates that it is feasible to generate such trips (Anrig, 1998).

3. The potential of local recreational networks in urban areas might also be important. The 'Greenways' currently being tested in England by the Countryside Agency aims is to develop attractive links for non-motorised travel between towns and their surrounding countryside. Quiet Roads might also feature in this approach, but it will be more difficult to reduce traffic in periurban road systems. This will necessitate the need to evaluate routes between parks and along watersides to leisure, sporting and retail facilities.

Conclusions

While there is clearly a growth in the demand for both recreational cycling and the supply of facilities, there appears to be a lesser commitment to the integration of transport, recreation and tourism within the policy and funding framework within which cycling strategies are being developed. The contribution that cycle tourism could make to local economies and creating urban routes with recreational appeal requires more detailed evaluation but examples from elsewhere point to the potential. Applying the core design principles of sustainability will mean that developing isolated cycle routes and trails which attract increasing numbers of car borne visitors will no longer be appropriate. Recreational cycling could play a more important role in the development of sustainable tourism, but evidence from continental Europe and North America suggests that there will be a need to re appraise policy frameworks and strengthen the resource base if progress is to be made.

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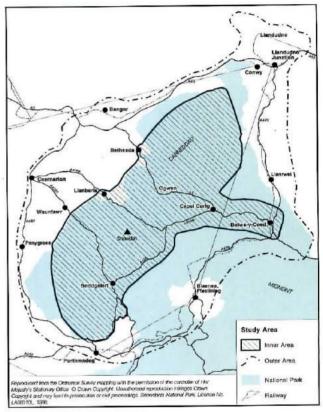
The Northern Snowdonia Study -An innovative approach to sustainable tourism development

Elwyn Owen, Leisure Consultant, Kevin Bishop, Cardiff University and Colin Speakman, Transport for Leisure Ltd.

The Northern Snowdonia Study, was commissioned by a broadly constituted consortium of local authorities and other bodies⁽¹⁾ with a view to considering the potential for an innovative sustainable development initiative that would make visitors to Northern Snowdonia less dependent on the private motor car, whilst at the same time generating greater economic benefits for the host community and helping to improve the quality of the environment. This article has been written by the three senior members of the multi-disciplinary team of consultants charged with conducting the study.

The focus of the study was on the mountainous area in the north of the Snowdonia National Park and, in particular the Inner Study Area identified within figure 1. The following statements help to set the scene for the study:

- Snowdonia, especially its northern mountains, attracts at least 6.6 million visitors per year. 90% of these visitors will arrive and depart by car, contributing little to the economy. Their vehicles pollute the environment whilst their use at peak periods of the extensive, free linear parking along roadsides detracts from the visual character of the area and offends other visitors and residents alike. The significant upgrading of the A55 trunk road has made it very much easier for visitors to reach Snowdonia quickly from the conurbations of north west England.
- Areas of exquisite natural beauty co-exist side by side with small communities experiencing acute deprivation, in the wake of the run down in their traditional sources of employment. The scale of the problem is illustrated by the decision of Gwynedd



- Council to launch its Slate Areas Initiative, aimed at drastically improving the economic and social fabric of communities such as Bethesda, Llanberis, Waunfawr and Dyffryn Nantlle.
- North Wales in general and Gwynedd in particular remain a stronghold of traditional Welsh culture, with the Welsh language forming an important defining feature of local socio-cultural identity. Overall, about two thirds of the population of the Inner Study Area is Welsh speaking: it is highest in the traditional slate quarrying settlements such as Llanberis (78%) and is lowest in the smaller and more rural settlements such as Capel Curig (54%), which are attractive for second homes and retirement.

• Tourism is particularly important for the local economy, being the largest single industry in both Gwynedd and Conwy local authority areas. Looking to the future, tourism is seen as a key option for creating income and employment, although there is concern that growth should not be to the detriment of the environment and at the expense of local culture. A high proportion of holiday visitors stay in major resorts such as Llandudno or elsewhere in North Wales and so the fortunes of Northern Snowdonia are closely linked with those of its hinterland.

It was clear from the outset that this would be a more than usually challenging study. The aspirations and policy agendas of the individual sponsors might not always coincide and effective means had to be found to seek the views of the local community on complex and sensitive issues. From the very outset inaccurate press reporting was fuelling fears about draconian study outcomes and so the study was highly visible and potentially contentious.

Issues and Opportunities

Six focus group meetings were convened in key settlements, in order to elicit the views of local people living and working within the area or having some interest in the study. Their key findings are summarised below:

- Congestion: although localised problems do occur, congestion was not perceived to be widespread.
 Nevertheless, the expectation was that congestion will reappear and so there is no room for complacency.
- Parking: a significant and growing problem of car parking exists, especially linear road-side parking at Pen-y-Gwryd and Betws-y-Coed, which is visually intrusive and potentially dangerous. Indiscriminate parking is also a problem in many settlements.
- Tourism trends: holiday visits have become shorter, more seasonally dispersed and more likely to involve an active pursuit. Improved access and changing

lifestyles have led to a dramatic increase in day visitors. Although tourism is acknowledged as being an important activity, certain types of visitor contribute little to the economy and show a disregard for the interests of the host community.

- Action is needed: tolerating the present situations is not considered acceptable but it is feared that solutions will not easily be found. The car is an integral component of the tourism experience for most people visiting Snowdonia, and persuading visitors to change the habits of a lifetime will not be easy.
- Park and ride: the principle of developing alternative forms of travel based on the park and ride model was supported, although some saw problems in putting it into practice in Snowdonia. To be attractive services would have to be regular, frequent and attractively priced, and there were doubts as to whether sufficient use would be made to render them available.
- Consultation: whilst everyone welcomed the opportunity to participate in the meetings, many were sceptical about the likely outcome. Fears were expressed that the product would be just another consultants' report, destined to sit on the shelf alongside many others. Focus group participants were anxious to remain involved, to learn about the study outcome and to be part of the process of implementing its proposals.

Towards a solution

The study considered three principal options for encouraging visitors to use public transport rather than cars.

- Option 1: visitors are persuaded to leave their cars at home, and use public transport for their entire journey
- Option 2: visitors are intercepted on route at a gateway, somewhere between their home and Snowdonia;

 Option 3: visitors are intercepted at the threshold of the popular area of the National Park (i.e. as they enter the Inner Study Area shown on figure 1)

From Principles to Practice

The study report's cornerstone is a proposal for an Integrated Management Scheme (ITMS). This does not involve banning cars from the national park as the more alarmist press reports have suggested. Rather, it will, involve offering a real choice of alternative forms of travel to the motor car. The scheme envisages the use of both 'carrots' and 'sticks'.

The main carrots on offer will include:

- creating an enhanced bus network, linked to rail connections and providing new tourism opportunities especially for walking and cycling;
- establishing and promoting a series of 'gateways',
 where visitors can leave their car and travel around
 the area by bus. These gateways would either
 function as 'Park and Ride Gateways' from which bus
 services into the inner area would operate, and/or as
 'Public Transport Gateways' where public transport
 interchanges provide opportunities to use the new
 bus service;
- introducing 'positive parking', offering clearly signed and safe parking areas at the outer and inner Gateways and at limited sites within the inner study area. Income from car parks within the scheme would be used to cross-subsidise the bus service.
- promotion of 'Pass Snowdonia', a combined long stay car park and bus ticket entitling two persons to unlimited travel on the enhanced bus network (with add-ons for additional passengers); and
- effective and positive marketing of the whole scheme using the 'Trans Eryri' label as a corporate identity for all signposts, participating buses and other promotional literature.

The study report recommends using one stout stick:

 a Rural Clearway Order should be established to restrict indiscriminate car parking opportunities within the inner study area. It would be established using a Traffic Regulation Order and would prevent motorists stopping or parking on the roadside within the specified area. The area covered by the Order would be marked by simple roadside structures built of local materials and appropriate road markings at a series of 'threshold' locations. Existing settlements would be excluded from the Order.

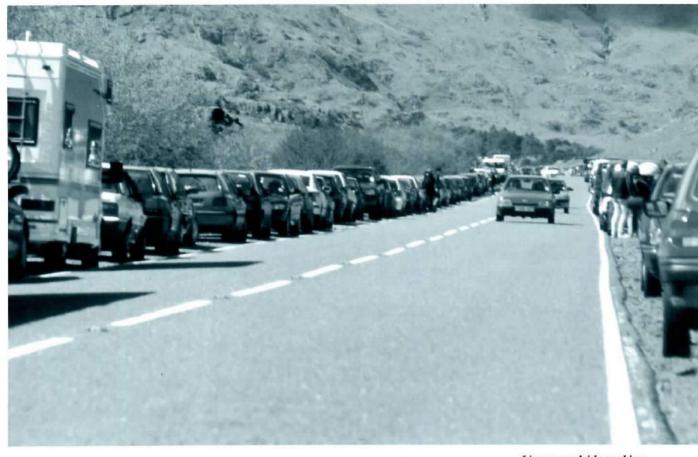
These carrots and stick would be reinforced by a comprehensive programme of marketing and interpretation.

The prospects of success

It is a gross understatement to say that persuading the car borne visitor to use public transport will not be easy. The system will succeed only if the service is frequent, cheap, reliable, comfortable and easy to understand. In short, it must be a high quality service that forms part of the visitor experience. A bus service meeting these requirements would operate every 30 minutes over the entire area (15 minutes along the busiest routes) during the 'summer' season and every hour over the main network throughout the remainder of the year).

The study recommends that the principal 'Park and Ride Gateways' should be located at Betws-y-Coed, Llanberis and, in the longer term, Bethesda. These are ideal locations, in the sense that they are at the threshold of the busiest and most environmentally sensitive areas. They provide direct access to easy walking and cycling opportunities and they also offer other spending opportunities for visitors (eating, shopping and specific visitor attractions).

It is estimated that the initial capital/establishment costs for the ITMS would be in the region of £1.8 million. This sounds a lot of money but is the equivalent of constructing only 130 metres of the



Linear roadside parking

A55 Expressway! In addition, £1.1 million would be needed to operate the network each year. The figures might appear large but much of the capital costs could be raised through grant aid and the running costs would be subsidised by revenue from car parking charges and sales of 'Pass Snowdonia'. The consultancy team believes that, given only a modest modal switch, the scheme could become self-funding over a five year period assuming the capital costs are met through grant aid.

The ITMS has the potential to deliver real benefits to local communities. For example, the enhanced bus service that is central to the scheme would be of benefit to local people and be funded largely by visitors. The creation of over 100 jobs through the implementation of the ITMS is not unrealistic. An enhanced bus service could create up to 25 full-time jobs. Even better are the benefits associated with

visitors spending more on local services (a real opportunity given that visitors will be attracted, through their greater reliance on public transport, into local communities). If all the visitors who currently spend nothing spent just 10 pence per visit this would generate between 11 and 20 full-time jobs. A 30 pence spend would create between 35 and 60 full-time jobs. If each day visitor was to spend 70 pence more (the cost of a cup of tea or coffee) this would generate between 34 and 57 new full-time jobs. A 10 per cent increase in the number of visits by public transport users would generate between 34 and 57 new full-time jobs.

Conclusions

There is a view that restrictions on the use of the private motor would put people off visiting Northern Snowdonia. This might be true if the scheme were only considering restrictions on private car use. In

reality, the scheme is about increasing the options available to visitors and locals alike. It would free people from their cars: to walk linear routes; to travel to work or school by public transport. Over time, it is likely that the scheme would actually make Snowdonia more attractive as a place to visit.

The final report is currently being scrutinised by the sponsoring agencies, who must determine whether or not to take the recommendations forward. Whilst it remains to be seen what happens next, there are grounds for optimism. Now that the area is eligible for Objective 1 funding the scheme has the real potential of securing appropriate resources. It may also hold considerable appeal to the new National Assembly for Wales which has a legal duty to promote sustainable development and will be anxious to win hearts and minds in north Wales.

Copies of the "Northern Snowdonia Study: Developing Local Economic Opportunities through the Management of Visitor Traffic" are available from the Publications Secretary, Department of City and Regional Planning, Cardiff University, Glamorgan Building, King Edward VII Avenue, Cardiff CF10 3WA.

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¹ The research was commissioned by: Conwy County Council, Countryside Council for Wales, Gwynedd County Council, Institute of Welsh Affairs, National Trust, North Wales Police, Welsh Development Agency, Wales Tourist Board and Welsh Office Highways. It was undertaken by Dr. Kevin Bishop (Cardiff University), Professor R. Elwyn Owen (Independent Leisure Consultant), Colin Speakman (Transport for Leisure) and the Babtie Group.

Moorbus - on the Right Road

Bill Breakell, North York Moors NPA

Nine Fifteen on a Sunday morning.

Passive countryside lovers await The Archers' verdict on rural life. Countryfile is still a couple of hours off. But in hundreds of homes between the Pennines and the North Sea, boots have been laced, spare nappies packed, and timetables checked. It is a Moorsbus day!

Outside Scarborough Railway Station, Stan Davies waits for his last passengers to sit down, closes the doors on his brand-new low-floor bus and it gracefully rises from the kerb, like a pilgrim rising from prayer. 40 miles to the west John Duff is driving another low-floor bus north away from the noise of York Minster's bells. The tower of another Minster, this one at Beverley, dwarfs the East Yorkshire bus approaching from Hull with forty passengers. Almost a hundred miles to the north-west, a turquoise and cream Arriva bus is preparing to leave Darlington. Its twin left an hour earlier and is nearing Guisborough where it will rendezvous with two other Moorsbuses, all three heading for different destinations in the North York Moors.

Each bus carries the telltale bright green triangle proclaiming 'Moorsbus'. Between them they're carrying several hundred passengers. Some just want to be alone with nature. Others seek company: the weekly chance to meet new-found friends, and to share plans for the day. Some will walk, some will just ride. The drivers know their regulars but are aware of the newcomers. They welcome them with a smile and suggestions of things to do or where to get the best scones and jam. There are families will small children... students... men and women of every age - some born before the first motor charabanc rumbled over the setts of Middlesborough.

On this warm Sunday they have yet to glimpse the purple of the moors, or hear the cry of a curlew. But

yellow midi-coach below them as it takes the rest of its passengers to other starting points for the Cleveland Way National Trail. For the next 10 or 11 hours these 17 buses and coaches will weave the intricate web over the North York Moors which is the 1999 Moorsbus Network.

The Journey Begins...

Moorsbus can be traced back almost 20 years. In the 1980s its prime purpose was what we would now call the social exclusion agenda: it aimed to provide access to open areas of the North York Moors National Park for those without a car, especially those from the urban areas of Teeside and York. It consisted of three buses heading into the National Park at the start of the day, and returning in the afternoon.

By the early 90s, surveys showed that both residents and visitors considered traffic and transport to be the main issues affecting the North York Moors. Moorsbus became a key part of a strategy to safeguard and enhance access for all, but at the least environmental cost.

Moorsbus arrivals and departures were co-ordinated so passengers could interchange between 'long-haul' routes and in-Park shuttle services. By 1995, the idea of a 'network' was developing. This was partly to overcome a fallacy that 'Moorsbus' was simply one bus – probably old and noisy – which trundled around the National Park all day long. The image the Park wished to create was one of a modern, comfortable service in which users could have complete confidence.

Paths and Patterns

Understanding the perceptions (and misconceptions) of visitors has been the key. From visitor surveys it became clear that for many Park users, their day consisted of visiting several locations: a museum here, a short walk there, a coffee here,

lunch over there. A little like the moorland sheep, they were 'grazing'. After studying these patterns in time and space, the Moorsbus Network set out to replicate many of these car journeys.

The idea of the Network map – unashamedly borrowed from the Underground – was not accidental. It suggested connections and reliability. To build this confidence further a team of coordinators was recruited. Their role was to assist passengers – many of whom were new to public transport – and to take practical management decisions should problems arise due to heavy traffic, road closures or breakdowns. They were based at the two main interchange points, but mobile if necessary and able to offer an emergency 'get you back on route' service for passengers.

Co-ordinators also supported drivers when they had queries. For many drivers the Moorsbus shift was a welcome relief from city centre driving, but they were often on unfamiliar territory, sometimes a hundred miles from their normal routes. The aim has always been to help drivers achieve even greater professionalism: a driver's pack included background information, maps and lists of contact points. This was updated several times during the season through drivers' notes, providing new information and overall comment on successes and achievements on the Network.

Easing Car Drivers away from their Cars

At the same time that the 'Network' concept was being promoted, the target market was also expanded. Rather than simply providing for those without a car, the aim shifted to persuading those with a car to abandon it for the day. If they would leave it in their garage or drive, so much the better. If they had to drive to the edge of the Park, Moorsbus would pick them up there. For some passengers there appeared a challenge of travelling the furthest, or by the most complex travel

arrangement: sometimes taxi, local bus, two trains and then Moorsbus (all to be repeated as the traveller headed back to Newark or Neston)!

Although not developed as a further challenge for these travellers, from 1995 more routes and more frequent services were developed. 16 seater minibuses were used where larger vehicles would not be acceptable. Low floor buses offered ease of access for the elderly, better visibility than coaches and more manoeuvrability for rucksacks or pushchairs.

Although the Network was extending, the principle of incremental improvement was firmly upheld. Radical change would counter the confidencebuilding exercise, although this in itself brought about yet more concern. Those involved in the slowly evolving service over a number of years whether as policy-makers, co-ordinators, passengers or drivers - were tempted to take things for granted. The main routes, the principal of the service, even the branding and delivery, was part of the culture. But newcomers were starting from scratch. There was a need to start at the beginning: to explain the whole system. There could be no short cuts, no assumptions. Every poster or press release, every timetable and flyer had to assume that there were new readers, potential passengers who could be confused if the message was not a step-by-step introduction to public transport and Moorsbus. Every year the service has had to be viewed through the eyes of a new visitor.

Adding Value

Although it was claimed that the Moorsbus all-day fare offers good value (it is, after all, less than the cost of a gallon of petrol), other financial lures were built into the package. National Park car park tickets gave £1 off Moorsbus travel.

Discount vouchers worth over £20 at attractions on the Network were incorporated in the timetable for,



Moorsbus at Helmsley

English Heritage and National Trust properties, museums, cycle hire and guided walks. The discount scheme was extended in 1998 to include cafes, pubs and restaurants giving a range of offers to Moorsbus users, usually 10% off the bill.

When the government announced the Rural Bus Grant in 1998, the Park was ready to take full advantage and Moorsbus services went daily during the school holidays. One unforeseen effect was the expectation of local fares and with routes of over 80 miles for some services, this added a further complication to ticketing. However, a fare structure based on 50p increments achieved a balance between providing a local facility whilst retaining the simple, all-in fare for most recreational users.

Multi-modal tickets were tested in 1997 when Environment Minister Angela Eagle launched a deal between rail operator Northern Spirit and Moorsbus. The following year this 'Moorslink' ticket was extended to include travel anywhere on Northern Spirit's Esk Valley Railway, travel on the North Yorkshire Moors steam railway, and on the full Moorsbus Network.

In 1999 the all-day Moors Zone fare is £2.50: a level based on local consumer research. This fare has risen from £1 in 1996 and £2 in 1998, but with little passenger resistance. The 'long-haul' fare from places such as York, Hull, Hartlepool and Darlington was £5. Most recreational car journeys in the Park carried between 2 and 3 people so family tickets were pitched at twice the normal fare (£5 for the Moors Zone, £10 for the Outer Zone) for 2 adults and up to 4 children. The aim was to build a fare structure which was perceived by many car drivers as a fair comparison with the cost of car use for the day.

Listening Hard

The Moorsbus Network was based on the highest standards of customer care and from 1994 a comprehensive and consistent survey was undertaken. This measured satisfaction with six elements of the service (route, time, cost, reliability, comfort and co-ordination). In addition the survey gathered data on information sources used, trip patterns, activities undertaken, visitor origins, social class of user and newspaper readership.

What became evident was that increasing numbers were making a choice to leave their cars in favour of the bus: growing from 25% of users who had access to a car in 1994 to 50% in 1998. But these 'switchers' were likely to be Guardian, Times or Independent readers: those with a green conscience and from the higher social classes. This reinforced the vision of a National Park which appeals largely to middle-aged, middle class visitors.

However, much of the feedback was from less formal sources: through the co-ordinators, information centre staff, drivers and frequent informal chats on the buses themselves. This resulted in heart-warming stories of how much the Moorsbus meant to visitors: how it had returned independence to elderly people: how it had given freedom to mothers with children.

Spreading the Word

With three target groups (day visitors, staying holidaymakers and local residents) marketing was not easy and made even more difficult by a concern, even a paranoia, that promotion of the Moorsbus network could be construed as promotion of the National Park. Very limited press advertising was undertaken, although editorial space was frequently used. Early research established that the transmission area and listener profile of the local radio station offered an excellent match with the National Park day visitor profile. Thus a weekly local radio slot was used for 3 years, broadcast on a Saturday morning in order to influence day trip planning for the Sunday. In addition, Moorsbus stories featured on all national

radio and TV networks – even Radio 1 – over the last few years.

Timetables were distributed through all local information centres, as well as to many libraries, post offices, caravan sites and accommodation. The aim was to have a timetable wherever a 'conversion' was likely. The Countrygoer internet site placed that information within reach of millions.

Back on the Bus

Nine-fifteen on a Sunday morning.

The Moorsbus passengers do not feel part of a transport strategy. The only milestones they know are at the side of the A169, and best value, to them, is whether the pot of tea at the Rosedale Bakery is cheaper than in Hull.

They do not need to know that politicians watch the Moorsbus Network with more than passing interest. They wouldn't guess that its success it attributed to 'the five Cs of Moorbus' – confidence, cost, continuity, comfort and communications. They are here to enjoy the landscape, to escape from the turmoil of the world.

The Moorsbus Network? It's only a bus service after all.

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Cars Prohibited: a Case Study of Public Access to the National Trust's Prior Park Gardens

Matthew Ward, National Trust

After a period of prolonged negotiation, the National Trust finally took on responsibility for Prior Park Landscape Garden, Bath in May 1993. There followed a period of hectic activity to carry out vital repairs to the Palladian Bridge and dams. During this period of major engineering the only public access was in small prearranged parties.

It was decided to allow public access as soon as these disruptive activities were over and so the inevitable question was asked "where was the car park going to be?" Nowhere was obvious as there was only limited space in the area nearest to the entrance off the road. This problem was turned into the positive decision to open the garden without a car park and encourage visitors to arrive by public transport, on foot, taxi, bicycle or with a coach party. There has been a growing trend towards encouraging visitors to arrive at properties by means other than their own cars and here was an opportunity to insist on this being the case. If such a scheme could work anywhere then surely it was here as a bus route passed by the gates and the garden is about a mile from Bath city centre for those fit enough to walk.

When the scheme was announced the reaction was mixed. Many saw it as a bold move, a strong local lobby did not believe it could work. They were afraid that people would turn up in their cars anyway, park in the local streets and cause problems in those areas.

The opinion of local councillors was also split and when it came to granting permission for Prior Park Landscape Garden opening, the vote was very close. A trial period of two years was set for the Trust to prove that the scheme could work. Conditions were set, the Trust was to pay for double yellow lines to be painted on Ralph Allen Drive (the main access road) and all visits were to be monitored to determine the

means by which people were choosing to travel to the garden.

The garden finally opened on July 18th 1996.

During the two year trial period, 48,756 visitors passed through the gates: 40% arriving by bus, 45% on foot, 6% with a coach party, 2.5% used one of the three disabled parking spaces we have, 1.5% in taxis and the rest by bicycle, train, boat (on the canal) and motorbike. Careful records were kept for presentation to the council planners when they came to reconsider the Trust's case. It did not take long to prove that people were willing to make the effort, leave their cars behind and get here by other means. The local councillor who opposed our opening changed his mind and has become a great ally.

Much work has been done to publicise the scheme and distribute a leaflet entitled "Priory Park - How to Get There". As with most cities, Bath has horrendous traffic problems and the positive aspects of our scheme were soon being held up as a model of sustainability. We still get enquiries from interested bodies in this country and abroad.

We offer an incentive to all those who spend money to get to us, by bus, coach party or taxi. One pound off the admission for non-members or £1 voucher for Trust Members to spend at the NT shops and tearooms.

The application to have the trial clause removed from our permission to operate finally went to a meeting of the planners on November 11th last year. It went through smoothly, largely thanks to our now supportive councillor. Congratulations were offered to the Trust for the initiative taken and thoroughness of its public relations work. The following evening the

meeting of the planners on November 11th last year. It went through smoothly, largely thanks to our now supportive councillor. Congratulations were offered to the Trust for the initiative taken and thoroughness of its public relations work. The following evening the Bath Chronicle ran an editorial which stated "Today's news that the garden has won permanent planning consent also puts seal on a textbook marketing and public relations campaign by the National Trust".

In December the Trust received awards from the West Country Tourist Board and Bath and District Business Environment Association in recognition of the success of the scheme and there are other awards we are being considered for.

It is difficult to say whether we would have had many more visitors if a car park could have been installed. We are happy to continue as we are. Our advertising is aimed at tourists who flock to Bath's many attractions as well as Trust Members who just need encouraging to make that extra effort to visit. Although the restoration may have happened sooner, had we not been forced to develop and test the greener transport policy, it was a useful exercise and has led to a scheme which is a significant step in changing the car orientated nature of most visits to Trust properties.

The Trust has a Travel and Transport Group which promotes good practice across the organisation and champions the development of green transport schemes. For further information please contact either:

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Car-dependency and Countryside Recreation - the Need for an Alternative Culture

Lydia Speakman and Colin Speakman, Transport for Leisure Ltd.

Few people concerned with any aspect of environmental or countryside management will be unaware of the major shifts in public perception over the last decade, reflecting major Government policy changes about transport and the environment. An avalanche of reports and policy statements, including the two authoritative reports on Transport and the Environment by the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution(1), PPG 13(2), the UK Transport White Paper(3), and its daughter papers and corresponding documents for both Wales and Scotland, have hammered home the new agenda. The message is clear: unrestricted growth in car travel cannot be accommodated by the existing road network. New road building, as the Newbury bypass demonstrates⁽⁴⁾, whilst appearing to solve immediate problems, can actually make the situation even worse, by generating yet more traffic, literally moving the traffic jams elsewhere.

Whilst politicians and policy makers urge us to use cars less and travel more by public transport, bike and by foot, Britons continue to be ever more car dependent. Traffic grows at about 2% per annum, whilst walking and cycling continue to decline as forms of travel⁽⁵⁾, and though rail travel is increasing and local bus use has at least stabilised, as several surveys show,^{(6) (7)} in the countryside the car is ever more dominant. Around 90% of all countryside trips are now based around the car, leaving a paltry 10% shared jointly between the modes of walking, cycling, buses, trains and coaches.

Demand management as a solution to traffic problems is now rising high on the political agenda. Road pricing, "smart cards", and workplace parking charges are now actively under consideration, together with the still somewhat nebulous concept of "Integrated Transport".

However, these are essentially urban concepts and rely on the fact that the most effective demand management mechanism of all is already in place congestion. Gridlock is the best possible mechanism to persuade even the most determined motorist to abandon their vehicle for a tram, train or guided bus, but only if the service either has absolute priority over near stationary traffic, or parking is prohibitively difficult or expensive at the destination.

Such conditions don't apply in the countryside. In most areas, congestion is still no more than a seasonal or occasional problem, confined to attractive market towns and popular beauty spots. But congestion is only one of the many problems caused by traffic growth in the countryside. Others include air pollution, visual impact, danger to vulnerable users and wildlife on narrow roads caused by speeding traffic, noise and loss of tranquillity, and loss of countryside character. These are problems caused by traffic in popular areas of countryside, which may rarely experience anything approaching urban levels of congestion even on fine summer days.

Unfortunately, though the motorised visitor inflicts these problems on others, they are not ones which are generally perceived from the car driver's seat. As long as delays are not too severe compared with the morning drive to work, and there is somewhere to park (preferably free of charge) by a roadside, most people do not perceive that there is a problem.

This largely explains why most efforts at demand management in the countryside have so far failed. In many areas the so-called carrot and stick approach has been reasonably successful in terms of creating the carrot of new and innovative recreational bus services (e.g. the Snowdon Sherpa, Moorsbus, Peak Wayfarer and Beacons Bus). However, sticks in terms

of traffic management or parking controls have been singularly unsuccessful, invariably bitterly opposed by local tourist interests and residents' groups, who see any attempt to curb the freedom of the motorist as a fundamental attack on their livelihoods or way of life.

Sticks by their very nature antagonise and alienate. The reality is that by polarising solutions or giving them labels, blunt and usually ineffective instruments are created. What is required is a more subtle, holistic approach which, whilst still addressing seasonal and sometimes severe problems of traffic in the countryside by good management measures, allows what might best be described as an alternative culture to the car to be developed.

This alternative culture is one based around understanding and using the three interlinked, greener and more benign modes of public transport (rail and bus), walking and cycling to, and within, the countryside.

Public transport cannot and never will compete with the private car (in most cases) in terms of speed or in its ability to carry lots of luggage, children and infirm relatives. Its sheer convenience and flexibility will ensure that, for the foreseeable future, and barring total economic collapse, the car will remain the dominant form of transport in the countryside. That is beyond dispute. But motoring isn't always as convenient or as pleasant as the huge car advertising campaigns pretend. Driving long hours down ever more crowded motorways will become increasingly a form of self torture as congestion and stress worsens in the decades ahead. Recent research by the RAC(8) highlights that a third of the population now wish to travel less by car. It's also a major health risk to drivers and passengers alike, not only from pollution, but lack of exercise as many even extremely short journeys are now done by car. Security is an increasing concern as thieves target rural motorists (especially walkers) who leave their vehicles in a remote location. A car is also a nuisance and encumbrance if you are walking a long distance

trail or any linear route.

The alternative culture is about both opportunity and choice. It should be built around the needs and experience of what is still a very small percentage of countryside users, the public transport literate. These are people who, for whatever reason, do not own or use a car but visit the countryside regularly. They can read a timetable and work out for themselves what is available in terms of access to the countryside. Yet these are the very people who have been most marginalised over the last few decades by a carculture which ensures almost all countryside provision is car centred, with visitor centres away from bus routes, guided and self-guided walks often starting at places or at times which are inaccessible except by car, promotional material which guides the visitor from the nearest motorway junction or trunk road yet ignores the local bus or train service.

However non-car users as a whole are not a small minority. Around 30% of households in the UK do not own a car, and a car in a household does not equate to individuals, such as teenage children, older relatives or many women in particular, having regular access to that car. Lack of consideration or provision for those who do not drive or choose not to drive in the countryside is a blatant form of discrimination which would be censured in almost every other walk of life.

Removal of social exclusion is a powerful theme throughout the Transport White Paper, and the new Rural Bus Grant has done much to make travel to and within the UK countryside for those without cars much easier - though there are still many popular areas of fine countryside where non car users are excluded, despite huge amounts of public money being spend on visitor facilities. Try reaching the Elan Valley in Central Wales, one of the nation's top countryside attractions, without a car at a weekend, for instance.

The new culture needs to begin at the top, not just with policy makers, but with decision takers at every level to ensure that all new countryside facilities and related recreational development are public transport accessible. There needs to be a recognition among all conservationists and planners that transport is a vital dimension of any rural conservation or sustainability strategy, that reducing car dependency is a far, far more vital issue than recycled paper or low energy light bulbs in terms of resource consumption and environmental impact.

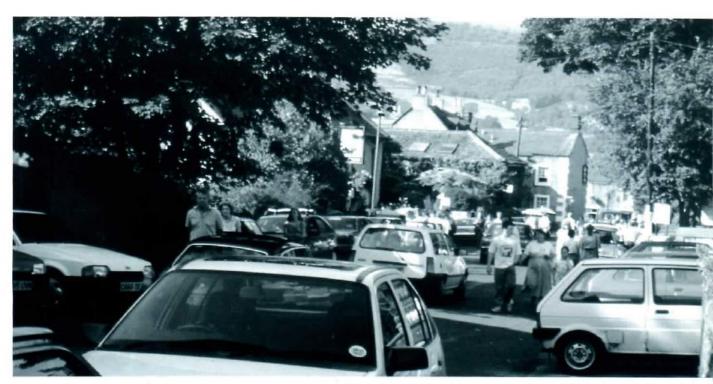
Developing and marketing good quality, low cost public transport networks helps to reduce social exclusion by giving new opportunity and choice, but it is also a mechanism to develop the new agenda. It's a practical educational process, especially relevant in areas of protected landscape where the promotion of the wider conservation ethic is, or should be, a primary concern and opportunity. Changing attitudes among visitors and local communities, by example and good practice, will itself help make traffic management measures when and where they are required, more palatable.

It's also about appealing to self interest. Good quality

public transport can, in the right circumstances, be a better, healthier, more enjoyable, more rewarding way of getting around and exploring the countryside than a car. To succeed the network must not be basic, low cost "occasional" transport provision for those too poor or feckless to own a car, but regular, reliable, clean and efficient, capable of attracting the car driver out of the comfort of a car.

Nor are cars excluded from this. Park, ride and walk is part of the green agenda. "Green Point" car parks where the motorist can leave a car for the day, in a secure car park, and enjoy the freedom of the bus and the footpath, is part of the process of educating people away from car dependency. RAC research⁽⁹⁾ suggests that the best way of persuading drivers to switch modes is to target those journeys which drivers find easiest to switch.

Of course providing good public transport networks costs money, especially in the countryside. In the cities, hypothecation of revenue from car parking and congestion charges towards good public transport provision is being suggested; the same



Traffic congestion in Castleton, Peak District National Park

principle must apply to the countryside, especially heavily visited areas such as National Parks, AONBs and Heritage Coasts. A modest proportion of all car park charges should be ring-fenced to part fund quality public transport for motorists and nonmotorists alike. This forms a fundamental part of the approach suggested for Northern Snowdonia, described elsewhere in this issue. One authority in England, Mendip District Council, is already supporting local buses from car parking fees and other local authorities, including National Park Authorities, should be doing the same, perhaps offering motorists incentive discounts on the bus to park and ride and walk, again linking the fact to a strong green message, perhaps even on the car park ticket, which also suggests taking the bus or train all the way. "Next Time Relax and Come by Train" isn't a bad environmental message.

Fundamental is high quality marketing provision. Marketing is more than just providing information

(i.e. simply producing conventional timetables, which are incomprehensible to most of the population). High quality promotional literature imaginatively designed, with good motivational copy linked to interpretation of destinations and the countryside product is the key to the modal switch. The Internet also has a growing role, especially among younger, more environmentally aware visitors who are slightly less likely to be addicted to their cars. Good marketing increases revenue and reduces subsidy; providing subsidised bus services without also funding decent marketing, as happens in so many parts of rural Britain is an irresponsible waste of scarce taxpayers' money, a grave disservice to local people and visitors alike. Nor should this vital task be left to often cash and personnel strapped local authority transport officers - tourism and countryside managers should co-operate to achieve what are major common goals. Areas like the North York Moors, Dartmoor and Brecon Beacons National Parks are models of this approach, and evidence shows that it works(10).

Transport can no longer be dismissed as a marginal issue. It is rightly high on the political agenda. How people reach, perceive and get around the countryside is a fundamental part of their experience of the countryside and of the environmental, social and economic impact they make on it. But changes in behaviour do not happen overnight. There is a huge, long-term educational job to be done, and carrots and sticks are only a very small part of it.

The Countrygoer website (/www.countrygoer.org/) provides information on how to get to and around the UK countryside by public transport. It also includes details of Countrygoer News, a quarterly magazine that focuses on green travel and tourism issues in the countryside.

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Replaying an Old Tune? A Debate on Ecotourism

Alison Stancliffe, Tourism Concern

"I wondered lonely as a cloud That floats on high o'er vales and hills"

At a public debate on ecotourism held in Manchester's Bridgewater Hall in June, William Wordsworth's famous words were printed on the programme. Why? Well, read Daffodils for yourself and you'll find that the experience recounted in it mirrors what today's ecotourists are seeking - an enriching moment in an 'unspoiled' environment which will stay with them once they're back in 'civilisation'.

This search for special experiences in nature seemed to be one of the few common elements in two differing versions of ecotourism presented at the debate. Entitled 'Ecotourism is a threat not a blessing to the Lakes, the Peaks and the Pennines' the debate was the third in a series organised jointly by The Guardian, Tourism Concern and the University of North London to mark Tourism Concern's tenth anniversary. It proved to be a good title for provoking lively discussion, but also demonstrated the perils of failing to define terms beforehand, particularly one as disputed as 'ecotourism'.

Speaking for the motion, The Guardian's John Vidal declared ecotourism to be no more than a niche product in a mass tourist industry, with the Lakes and Peaks providing painful reminders of what happens when lonely places become accessible to all and sundry. This is a view widely shared by those who have grappled with a term that once related fairly strictly to small-scale conservation-linked operations in far-flung, fragile rainforests, but is now used to describe just about any kind of individual or small group travel to enjoy natural scenery.

Leading the case against the motion was Jonathan

Smales, Director of the Earth Centre near Doncaster and a former director of Greenpeace. He saw ecotourism as an approach rather than a profit-making product, with the potential to manage the impact of visitors in environmentally fragile areas so that both they and the areas concerned benefited. "Walking, cycling, riding a horse - this is ecotourism," he declared, arguing for our wild places to be protected by buffer zones, where car parks, shops and other tourist facilities would be located.

His first witness, Chris Collier of the Cumbria Tourist Board, agreed enthusiastically with this vision. In her view, ecotourism equated with 'sustainable tourism', an approach which, she said, "provides jobs for all levels of abilities and social classes, with 'real careers'; it sustains local distinctiveness; it bases itself on small locally owned businesses, thus retaining income in the community; and it results in better local facilities and services for the community." Her own tourist board was committed to this approach, having signed up to a new accreditation programme run by Green Globe, which "provides a framework for bringing together all partners in formulating an action plan."

For Martin Doughty, Smales' second witness and Chair of the Peak National Park, ecotourism was also a matter of careful management and in particular, about management of the huge numbers of car visitors from Manchester and beyond. In the context of his own national park landscapes, he saw it as much less of a threat than modern agricultural practices.

It was noticeable that Smales and his team based their argument not so much on the current situation but on an optimistic vision of what could be achieved if tourism were properly managed, which current situation but on an optimistic vision of what could be achieved if tourism were properly managed, which in most cases seemed to be about controlling large numbers of people, most of them in cars. In this brave new world public transport would be improved, local businesses supported, interpretative centres built and footpaths repaired.

Rather than looking to the future to support their argument Vidal and his team looked to the past and deplored present realities as they saw them. "Ecotourism", said Vidal, "pretends to be virtuous, with images of people closing gates behind them and treading softly on the land, but really it's simply undeveloped tourism. It pretends to allow people to personally relate with nature, but the collective effect of individual ecotourists is massively damaging. Behind every ecotourist is a giant industry - the sweatshops of Malaysia are producing boots for tourists even now. The inescapable fact is that ecotourism is just as much about consumption as conventional tourism, and consumption en masse threatens local people's way of life wherever it occurs."

"Tourism is tourism however it's branded." echoed lan Brodie, Director of the Friends of the Lake District. Then paying homage to the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 which created the national parks, he said, "national parks are for those with the eyes to perceive and the hearts to enjoy. Ecotourists have an eye to the brochure and a purse to buy."

His team mate, journalist Jim Perrin, developed the argument further."Tourism is about acquisitiveness," he said. He painted an eloquent picture of a place he loved in Wales, the kind of wild, lonely place which one might associate with ecotourism.

"I love simply being there. I don't want to acquire the experience of having visited it." He urged the audience to burn their Wainwrights and get hold of a civil disobedience manual "because once this lot get in they'll manage it all to death - beware!" The spectre of elitism haunted the arguments of Vidal and his team and won them few friends in the audience. And in the arguments from the floor, the central dilemma of any countryside recreation policy was frequently aired: how to reconcile greater access for all kinds of people without threatening the qualities essential for 'quiet enjoyment'.

All this is reminiscent of the debates around what we were calling Green tourism ten years ago, with the same confusion reigning as to whether we were dealing with a product or an approach. But my own inclination is to see ecotourism as the former, since it is undoubtedly an economic activity, whatever else is involved.

Is ecotourism thus defined a threat, and if so, to whom? To the natural environment, undoubtedly, if one small scale operator, or one occasional visitor, is replaced by a dozen operators and hundreds of visitors, all after the same special experience; and the evidence seems to indicate that small successful tourism businesses have a habit of expanding, often uncontrollably. To local communities, certainly, if it means that local people are priced out of property, restricted in their choice of jobs and engulfed by incomers - as evidenced in growing tourist economies the world over. So we delude ourselves that ecotourism in our national parks is not a threat.

But equally, it would be hard to deny that tourism of all kinds, including ecotourism, has proved a blessing to many communities in hills and dales of the areas named in the debate title. As regards its impact on the natural environment, the kind of techniques and strategies identified by Jonathan Smales and his team as the way forward are still in their infancy but have undoubtedly moved on since the Green tourism era, and supporters can now point to success stories in visitor management, with the Peak District providing a number of them.

Although the motion was soundly defeated at the debate, tourism is undoubtedly a two-edged sword, and if Vidal is right about small-scale tourism's the Peaks, Pennines and Lakes are to remain places of 'quiet enjoyment', the creeping intrusion of tourism into previously lonely areas is not one that will be as easily managed in reality as in the paper plans for Green Globe.

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email tourconcern@gn.apc.uk

News Releases

NEW NATIONAL COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM

The National Countryside Access Forum (NCAF) held its first meeting on the 21st July. The forum includes representatives from a wide range of organisations and independent experts and will meet regularly in the next two years. During its first year, the Forum will concentrate on the preparation for legislation providing a right of access to open countryside and improvements to rights of way. After agreeing terms of reference, way of working and a programme for the year ahead, the Forum discussed the types of land to which access will be provided and preparation for mapping access land. Subsequent meetings are planned for September and December 99.

Progress on Access Work

a. Advice on access to 'other' categories of land

A study has been commissioned from Surrey University to advise on current provision, distribution and use of access to coast, watersides, woods and cliffs. A market research study has also been commissioned to determine the potential demand for additional access to above categories of land, and additional provision of access for riders and other 'higher' users.

For further details contact: Paul Johnson or Chris Moos

b. Mapping

An analysis is being carried out of usefulness of existing data and to create and test a methodology for widespread mapping. (Mapping Advisory Group includes OS, FRCA, ITE, National Parks) Trial mapping will be carried out from Oct 99 to Sept 2000 and mapping of access categories throughout England will start in Spring 2000.

For further details contact: Roger Ward or Chris Moos

c. Codes of Practice for Visitors, Land Managers and Local Authorities

Papers are being prepared to be presented to the NCAF in December 1999.

For further details contact the following:

Gavin Stark - Codes of Practice for Visitors

Chris Moos - Code of Practice for Land Managers

Paul Mutch - Code of Practice for Local Authorities

d. Local Countryside Access Forums (LCAFs)Paper to be presented to NCAF in September 99.

For further details contact: Nadia Little

e. National Access Register

The Ordnance Survey are producing preliminary advice on the approach with a paper planned to be presented to the NCAF in December 99.

For further details contact: Roger Ward

Details of the NCAF meetings are available on the Countryside Agency's website: www.countryside.gov.uk/

IMPROVING THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK

On 8 March Michael Meacher, Minister for the Environment, announced the Government's intention to legislate to improve the rights of way system as part of a wider package of measures to give people more freedom to enjoy the countryside. A consultation paper released in July sets out the Government's more detailed proposals for rights of way. These take account of recommendations made by the former Countryside Commission (now the Countryside Agency), including measures to encourage the creation of new routes, particularly for horse riders and cyclists who will not as such benefit from the Government's proposals for a statutory right of access to open countryside for people on foot; proposals for reducing obstructions on rights of way; and measures to encourage completion of the historic record. The paper also includes proposals to give local authorities more powers to determine objections to rights of way orders; measures to assist crime prevention; measures to protect important wildlife habitats in fulfilment of the UK's obligations under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives; and proposals to increase access to rights of way for disabled people.

Copies of the consultation paper can be obtained from DETR, P.O. Box 236, Wetherby, W. Yorkshire, LS23 7NB. Tel: 0870 01226236. Fax: 0870 1226237.

THE VALUE OF SPORT

Sport England has launched a major new document called, The Value of Sport, which focuses on the benefits sport brings to all of society. It is the first product in a 'Best Value Tool Kit' that Sport England is developing to assist local authorities demonstrate best value through sport. It demonstrates sport's importance to individuals and communities all over the country; it proves that sport can help to tackle problems and create new economic opportunities; and its combination of authoritative research and inspiring case studies should encourage many decision-makers - at the central, regional and local levels - to reassess positively the priority they attach to sport. The publication has been endorsed by both the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Health Education Authority (HEA).

Copies of the Value of Sport can be obtained from Publications Despatch, P.O. Box 255, Wetherby, LS23 7LZ. Tel: 0990210255. Fax: 0990210266.

ENGLISH TOURISM COUNCIL

The Government's announcement on 27 April confirmed the transformation of the English Tourist Board (ETB) into the English Tourism Council (ETC) and clarified its new remit and budget. ETC was launched on 19 July. The main changes are that the ETC will gradually move away from its operational role in, for example, management of the Tourist Information Centre network, training schemes, and away from domestic tourism promotion. Instead it will focus on providing strategic support to the tourism industry and will have a specific role in delivering the Government's new tourism strategy -Tomorrow's Tourism, launched in February 1999. In future the ETC will concentrate in three distinct areas in support of tourism: improving the quality of the tourism experience for domestic and overseas visitors, strengthening the competitiveness of the industry in England and encouraging the wise growth of the industry, ensuring that the growth practices of the industry and the policy framework are conducive to a longer-term and sustainable development.

GREENWAYS AND QUIET ROADS

The Countryside Agency 'launched' its Greenways and Quiet Roads website (http://www.greenways.gov.uk or http://www.quiet-roads.gov.uk) on 7th July 1999 at National Walking Strategy Conference. Greenways and Quiet Roads are Countryside Agency initiatives which aim to increase the amount of access for people on foot, bike, or horseback and provide an alternative travel and recreation network that is attractive and enjoyable. The website is aimed at professionals in the transport, planning, local governments, recreation, sport and health sectors. It will provide information about the Greenways and Quiet Roads demonstrations, the advisory service, technical and research information. The discussion forum enables people to air their views, swap information about initiatives and ask for solutions to problems. There are links to related websites. Both initiatives are part of the Countryside Agency's transport work and through the creation of a network for non-motorised users, will assist the government to deliver its integrated transport policy - as well as providing recreational and health benefits.

ANGLERS, CANOEISTS AND LANDOWNERS AGREE NEW ACCESS GUIDE

A new guide to help secure more voluntary access for canoeing on inland waterways was launched by the Angling & Canoeing Liaison Group (ACLG) on the 30th July. Agreeing Access to Water for Canoeing has been published by the Environment Agency on behalf of the Angling and Canoeing Liaison Group (ACLG) which includes representatives from angling, canoeing and landowner interest groups. The guide aims to help create a common understanding among riparian owners, anglers and canoeists by offering advice and guidance on the often complex issues of ownership, property and access rights of the nontidal waters in England.

Agreeing Access to Water for Canoeing is available free of charge from the Environment Agency. Tel: 01454 624376.

British Waterways welcomes its new chairman, Dr. George Greener, who succeeds the outgoing chairman Bernard Henderson on 10th July 1999. Dr. Greener arrives at an important time for British Waterways, as it embarks on the biggest ever nationwide survey on the future of the country's inland waterways. A national programme of public consultation on a proposed membership scheme and an allied charitable trust is now underway to seek the views of all those who use, visit, or who have an interest in the waterways, their heritage, natural environments and opportunities for recreation and regeneration.

For further information on the consultation study please

contact: Vanessa Wiggins.

Tel: 01923 201361. Fax: 01923 201300. e-mail: Vanessa@bwmedia.demon.co.uk

GUIDE ON COMMUNITY BUSES

Run by local people, driven by unpaid volunteers, usually funded by the local authority or the Countryside Agency, Community Buses increasingly being seen as the answer to the lack of proper bus services in the more remote rural areas of the UK. Now there is a book available which answers every question you may have about setting up and running your own Community Bus. "Community Buses – the operation of local bus services by voluntary and community groups" is published by the Community Transport Association as part of their Rural Transport Initiative funded by the Countryside Agency. The clearly-written, well laid-out guide describes in detail the laws, regulations and agreed good practice that govern the environment in which a Section 22 Community Bus needs to operate.

For further information please contact:

Martin Jones, CTA UK, 211 Arlington Road, Camden Town, London NW1 7HD

WOODS FOR ALL CASE STUDIES 1997 - 1999

Reforesting Scotland's Woods for all initiative has produced an innovative collection of case studies, featuring woodland access and woodland activities involving disabled people. The areas covered are Fife, Craigmillar in Edinburgh, Mid-Argyll, Aberdeenshire,

Banffshire and the Borders. Some of the projects are part of Woods for All's regular work programme, and some are separate but have had some level of input from the initiative. The Booklet is titled 'Woods for all Case Studies 1997 – 1999' and includes useful information on relevant organisations and potential sources of funding. Launched in 1997, the Woods for All initiative's main funders are the Millennium Forest for Scotland Trust and Scottish Natural Heritage.

To obtain a copy write to Woods for all, Reforesting Scotland, 21a Coates Crescent, Edinburgh, EH3 7AF.

CTC LAUNCHES CYCLE ROUTE GRADING SYSTEM

The CTC have established a cycle route grading system to enable recreational cyclists choose a route that is right for them and their family. After reviewing a number of alternative approaches, it has decided to adopt a modified version of the colour coded system developed so successfully for skiers on the piste. So Green (easy) graded routes can be expected to be easy enough for grandma to use with her "sit up and beg" Hercules, and Black (severe) routes should only be attempted by the brave - or foolhardy - on their full suspension Cannondales. Somewhere in between will come the Blue (moderate), and Red (difficult) routes. The route grading system has been primarily designed for grading promoted routes which have been developed by local authorities, countryside agencies or commercial publishers and are supported by maps, leaflets and/or waymarking. This means that as the system gains acceptance, then cyclists will be confident that their choice of route is broadly in line with their level of skill and expectations. A comprehensive protocol has been developed with the Forestry Commission in consultation with other land managers including the National Trust. This will ensure that all routes can be slotted into one of the four categories with a reasonable degree of uniformity.

For further details contact:

CTC, Cotterell House, 69 Meadrow, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 3HS

Tel: 01483 417217 Fax:01483 426994 e-mail:cycling@ctc.org.uk www.ctc.org.uk

A LIVING COUNTRYSIDE

The supplement to June issue of Landscape Design `A living countryside: the pursuit of an ideal" provides an assessment of the Countryside Agency in a year which co-incides with the 50th anniversary of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. It concentrates upon three areas of countryside policy which have proved significant in the last 50 years, and are likely to be of equal if not greater importance in the next 50: access (with particular reference to recreation) community and environment.

Copies can be obtained from: the Landscape Design Trust, 13a West Street, Reigate, Surrey RH2 9BL

Tel: 01737 223 294 fax: 01737 224 206

e-mail: LDT@landscape.co.uk

NOTE

If you would like details of new initiatives, publications or consultation documents to be included in the News Section of the next edition of Countryside Recreation please send details to Jo Hughes, Network Manager by the 1st October 1999.

Countryside Recreation and Training Events

CRN EVENTS FOR 1999/2000

CRN Annual Conference on Community "Working Together" 29th and 30th November 1999 in Newcastle upon Tyne (For further details see enclosed flier)

Events planned for late 1999/early 2000 include:

- Sustainable transport
- New access provisions

(Further details will be available in the near future).

September 1999

1-3 September

Landscape: What a Character!

(CEI Associates) Guildford

Cost: £430 Reduced: £215

6-8 September

Fundraising and Financial

Management

(Birkbeck College) London

Cost: £132

6-8 September Surveying and Map

Interpretation Skills

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £445 Reduced: £222

6-10 September Monitoring for Nature Conservation

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £430 Reduced: £215

7-8 September

AONBs: The Next 50 Years

(The Association of AONBs) Royal Agricultural College Cost: to be confirmed

10-12 September A Way with Wood

(Dyfed Permaculture Farm Trust)

Dyfed Cost: £49

15 September

National Environmental Education Training Day

(Stockton Council) Stockton-on-Tees Cost: £30

16 September

Innovative Partnership in Sport, Leisure and Cultural Services in the Context of Best Value

(Chief Leisure Officers Association)

Northampton

Cost: £115 CLOA members: £105

16-18 September Footpath Assessment and Management

(Ross & Cromarty Footpath Trust)

Torridon Cost: £400

18-24 September

Conservation Law, Organisation and Policy

(Birkbeck College)

London Cost: £400

21 September

Public Consultation Techniques

(Environmental Trainers Network)

York

Cost: £59.80

21-23 September

Environmental Consensus and

Conflict Resolution

(Edinburgh Research & Innovation

Ltd.) Edinburgh

Cost: £323.13 Reduced: £205.63

23 September

European Funding for

Environmental Organisations

(Environmental Trainers Network)

Birmingham Cost: £63.46

25 September-1 October Sustainable Tourism and

Heritage Protection

(Birkbeck College) Slovenia

Cost: £420

27-28 September; 28-29

September

Guided Walks Workshop

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £137 for 1 part; £274.50 for

both parts.

27-30 September Woodlands that Work!

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £445 Reduced: £222

28 September

Getting Local People Active and

(Environmental Trainers Network)

Manchester Cost: £59.80

(Environmental Trainers Network) Birmingham

28 September Public Rights of Way - Inclosure Awards

(Rights of Way Law Review) Oxford

Cost: £175 Reduced: £150

28 September – 1 October Countryside Character and its Use as a Decision Making Tool (Losehill Hall)

Cost: £220

29 September

An Introduction to Rights of Way Law and Practice 1: Definitive Maps and Public Path Orders

(IPROW) Dartington

Cost: £97 Reduced: £49.50

30 September – 1 October Access for All - Working with Disabled People to Improve Countryside Access

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £185

30 September Low Cost Ideas for Environmental Interpretation

(Environmental Trainers Network)
Birmingham

Cost: £58.84

October 1999

1-3 October Sustainable Small Woodlands

(Bishops Wood Centre)

Worcestershire

Cost: £128

4-6 October

New Approaches to Interpretation: Taking

Interpretation into the New

Millennium

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £405 Reduced: £202

4-6 October

New Approaches to

Countryside Communication

(Yvonne Hosker Training and

Advice) Losehill Hall

Cost £183.50

4-6 October

An Introduction to Information Systems and their Application in Managing the Countryside

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £234 Reduced: £117

5-7 October

Interpretive Master Planning

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £344 Reduced: £258

6 & 13 October

Introduction to 'Planning for

Real'

(Environmental Trainers Network)

Birmingham

Cost: £109.62

11-15 October

Schools, Community and the

Countryside

(Low Bank O.E.C)

Coniston

Cost: £230

12 October

Make the Most of the Media

(Environmental Trainers Network)

Birmingham Cost: £65

14-15 October

Walking: the Way to Health

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £260 Reduced: £130

18-20 October

Animating Community Events: Involving Local Communities in

Sites through Animated Events

(Bishops Wood Centre)

Worcestershire

Cost: £122.50

18-22 October

Environmental Interpretation

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £597.50 Reduced: £299

19 October

Developing Multi User Green Routes for Cyclists and Other

Users

(Field Studies Council)

Preston Montford Field Centre

Cost: £80

19 October

Working With People with

Learning Disabilities

(Environmental Trainers Network)

Venue TBA

Cost: £60.77

21 October

Involving Children in

Environmental Activities

(Environmental Trainers Network)

Leeds

Cost: £58.93

25-27 October Broaden your Access Horizons. A Toolkit to Exploit New Opportunities for Countryside Access

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £405 Reduced: £202

25-27 October Public Participation and Networking

(Field Studies Council) Juniper Hall Field Centre

Cost: £100

25-29 October Wildlife Enhancement in Historic Gardens and Parklands

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £430 Reduced: £215

26-28 October Footpath Assessment and Management

(Ross & Cromarty Footpath Trust) Torridon

Cost: £400

26-29 October Management Skills for Countryside, Tourism and Heritage Staff Part 1 (Part 2 in March 2000)

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £767 Reduced: £630

27 October

Access in the Countryside for All **Abilities**

(Environmental Trainers Network)

London Cost: £60 27 October

An Introduction to Rights of Way Law and Practice 2: **Enforcement and Maintenance** (IPROW)

Darlington

Cost: £98 Reduced: £49

November 1999

1-2 November Working With Local Communities - Turning Needs into Action

(Field Studies Council) Juniper Hall Field Centre

Cost: £122

2 November

Using Community Arts For Environmental Consultation

(Environmental Trainers Network)

Birmingham Cost: £62.50

3-4 November

Risk Assessment on Rights of

Way Workshop

(Field Studies Council) Juniper Hall Field Centre

Cost: £117

8-10 November

A Passion for Place -Interpretation to Inspire, Delight and Change Attitudes

(Bishops Wood Centre)

Worcestershire

Cost: £130

8-12 November

Management Planning in the

Countryside

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £403 Reduced: £242

9 November

Marketing for Environmental and Countryside Staff

(Environmental Trainers Network)

Milton Keynes

Cost: £62.50

9 November

Using Environmental Art to **Reach New Audiences**

(University of Bristol)

Bristol

Cost: £140, Reduced: £70

10 November

Delivering Sustainability

(Lancaster University)

Lancaster

Cost: £120

12 November

Basic Training for Wardens and

Rangers

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £377 Reduced: £245

10-12 November

Community and Environment

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £405 Reduced: £202

15-19 November

Foundation Ranger Training

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £499 Reduced: £250

16 November

The Landfill Tax - 'Making

Waste Work'

(Environmental Trainers Network)

Birmingham

Cost: £59.62

16-18 November Management of Countryside

Sites

(Danywenallt Study Centre) Brecon Beacons National Park

Cost: £80

18 November Strategies for Sustainable Leisure

(Environmental Trainers Network)

Sheffield

Cost: £59.62

18-22 November
Basic Training for Wardens and
Rangers

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £245

21-24 November

A Practical Approach to Historic Landscape Characterisation

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £373 Reduced: £186

22-24 November

A Safe and Enjoyable Visit? An Integrated Approach to Managing Recreation, Access and Safety

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £405 Reduced: £202

22-26 November

Masters Level Course in Environmental Education:

Module 2

(Field Studies Council)
Flatford Mill Field Centre

Cost: Contact Centre for Details

24 November

Public Rights of Way -

Maintenance and Improvement

(Rights of Way Law Review) Wolfson College, Oxford

Cost: £150 Reduced: £130

24-26 November

National Parks Staff Induction

Course

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £160

29 November

Organising Programmes of Guided Walks, Rides and Events

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £210 Reduced: £105

29 November - 2 December

Sustainable Tourism Master

Plans

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: Contact centre for details

December 1999

6-8 December

Education for Sustainability

New Directions in

Environmental Sustainability

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £405 Reduced: £202

6-9 December

Access and Public Rights of Way

Law and Management

(Plas Tan y Bwlch)

Cost: £396 Reduced: £198

6-10 December

Environmental Task Force

Countryside Management

(Losehill Hall)

Cost: £499 Reduced: £290

7 December

Visitor Survey Techniques

(University of Bristol)

Bristol

Cost: £140 Reduced: £70

8 December

Risk Assessment in Access Work

(Environmental Trainers Network)

Venue TBA

Cost: £59.62

Contact details for Training/Events Organisers

Association of ANOBs Tel: 01323 644644

Birkbeck College Tel: 0171 631 6654

Bishops Wood Centre Tel: 01299 250513

University of Bristol, Biological Sciences Department Tel: 0117 9289035

CEI Associates Tel: 0161 274 3337

Chief Leisure Officers Association Tel: 0161 7764363

Danywenallt Study Centre Tel: 01874 676677

Dyfed Permaculture Tel: 01559 371427

Edinburgh Research and Innovation Ltd. Tel: 0131 650 7236

Environmental Trainers Network (ETN)

Tel: 0121 358 2155

The Fieldfare Trust Tel: 0114 2701668

Field Studies Council Tel: (Head Office) 01743 850 674 Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management (ILAM) ILAM Services Events Team Tel: 01491 874 854

ILAM Training Ltd Tel: 01291 626 322

Institute of Public Rights of Way (IPROW)

Tel: 07000 728 317

Lancaster University, Unit of Vegetation Science Tel: 01524 594503

Losehill Hall Tel: 01433 620 373

Low Bank O.E.C. Tel: 01539 441314

Plas Tan y Bwlch Tel: 01766 590324/590334

Rights of Way Law Review Tel: 01249 740 273

Ross & Cromarty Footpath Trust Tel: 01349 865 533

Yvonne Hosker Training and Advice

Tel: 0161 4325951

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

Countryside Recreation Network Publications List

I WELLCHIOLIS EISC			
	Price (incl.postage)		Tick
Conference Proceedings			
	¥ 30		
Making Access for All a Reality	£15		
Today's Thinking for Tomorrow's Countryside (1995)	£15		
Communities in their Countryside (1994)	£15		
Workshop Proceedings			
Environmental Economics, Sustainable Management		-	
and the Countryside (1994)	£6		
A Drive in the Country? - Examining the Problems of			1000
Recreational Travel (1994)	£7		
Sport in the Countryside (1995)	£8		
GIS & Access to the Countryside (1995)	£8		_
Playing Safe? Managing Visitor Safety in the Countryside	(100,0 0)		_
(1995)	£8		
A Brush with the Land – Art in the Countryside I (1995)	£8		_
A Brush with the Land – Art in the Countryside II (1996)	£8		ā
Consensus in the Countryside I – Reaching Shared			
agreement in policy, planning and management (1996)	£8		
Consensus in the Countryside II (1996)	£8		0
Do Visitor Survey's Count? – Making use of Surveys for			: Clarent
Countryside Recreation (1996)	£8		
Access to Water - Sharing Access on Reservoirs and			-
Rivers (1997)	£8		
GIS & Countryside Management – Theory and			
Application (1997)	£8		
Making Ends Meet (1997)	£8		
Sponsorship (1998)	£8		0
CRN Research Directory			
An annual directory of the research work carried out by the			
CRN agencies during the year			
CKN agencies during the year			
Research Directory 1997	£5		
Research Directory 1996	£2		
Research Directory 1995	£2		
UK Day Visits Survey 1994 (1996)	£15		
UK Day Visits Survey 1993 (1995)	£15		
	2.13		

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

