



Meeting Summary

Title of Meeting:	National Access Forum (NAFW 56)		
Date of Meeting:	8 November 2016	Venue:	YHA Cardiff Central, East Tyndall St, Cardiff, CF10 4BB
Present:	Ruth Hall (NRW, Chair), Carys Drew (NRW), Rhian Jardine (NRW), Howard Davies (NRW), Mark Weston / Jeanne Hyett (BHS), Ray Wood* (BMC), Stuart France (CCC), Steve Rayner (Canoe Wales), Beverley Penney (OSS), David Evans (Elan Valley Trust), Richard Neale (NT), Jean Rosenfeld (CPRW), Bernard Griffiths (FUW), Charles de Winton (CLA Cymru), Mark Stafford-Tolley (WLGA, WROWMWG), Laura Lewis* (Glandŵr Cymru), Catrin Dellar (WG), Ieuan Llyr Jones (WG), Rebecca Brough (Ramblers Cymru), Gwyn Smith (Sustrans), John Cuthbertson (Disabled Ramblers), Duncan Green (LARA), Ed Parsons *(Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water), Jont Bulbeck (NRW), * (Disabled Ramblers), Ruth Rourke (IPROW*), Rowland Pittard (YHA),		
Apologies:	Elfyn Jones (BMC)*, Gwenda Owen (Cycling UK), Andrew Stumpf* (Glandŵr Cymru), Rachel Lewis Davies, (NFU Cymru), John Morgan (LAF National Representative), Lyn Cadwallader (One Voice Wales), Catherine Williams/ Paul Donovan (WATO), Peter Rutherford (Welsh National Parks), Jonathan Davies (Sport Wales), Tom Packham *(Dŵr Cymru) *denotes alternative representative attended.		

Item No:	Item	Action
1.	Welcome and Apologies.	
	Ruth welcomed everyone to the meeting. Three people were deputising for the usual attendee and the meeting noted that Elfyn Jones was unable to come to the meeting due to ongoing illness and medical treatment. The meeting recorded it's thanks to Elfyn for all his valuable contributions, and wished him a speedy recovery.	
	Most of the actions from the previous meeting were noted as complete.	
	Action 55.3: The Wales Coast Path report would available and circulated soon.	

Action 55.5: NRW had approached Jonathan Davies, Programme Director for Physical Activity – a joint role for Sport Wales, Public Health Wales and Welsh Government, Jonathan was unable to attend this meeting but is keen to attend the meeting in March.

2. **Wales Outdoor Recreation Survey: findings from the full report and workshop**

Sue Williams, NRW, presented an overview of the results from the Wales Outdoor Recreation Survey.

The Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey has been running since 2008, with a repeated survey in 2011 and 2014. It was originally commissioned by CCW and the Forestry Commission Wales, but is now run by NRW. It is the largest and most robust survey of participation in outdoor recreation in Wales, with a final sample size of over 6000 adults.

Sue's presentation covered the geographical basis for the survey, the headline results from the latest survey, the outdoor recreation activities which people participate in, and the places they visit. She also talked about the motivations and barriers to people undertaking outdoor recreation, and results relating to some of the benefits – economic and health.

(See presentation slides and speakers notes for further details)

The main report, technical report, and full data tables have been published and are available to download from NRW's website <https://naturalresources.wales/our-evidence-and-reports/welsh-outdoor-recreation-survey/?lang=en>

NRW are currently undertaking more detailed analysis on specific areas, and will be publishing a series of short 'Key Facts Reports'. These will be available by the end of the year from NRW's website.

There has been a significant change for all the population level surveys in Wales, including the Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey, which have now all been integrated into a single new National Survey for Wales. This means that there will be some changes in the future. Fieldwork has just commenced in April 2016 for the new National Survey, and it would be possible to provide further information in the middle of 2017.

Workshop

One of the headline results from the 2014 survey was that whilst overall participation remains high (93% visited at least once in 12 months), frequent participation has declined (from 27% to 22%). This point formed the basis of a workshop activity entitled:

‘Addressing the decline in frequent participation’
At this point the meeting split into 3 smaller groups.

The points from the workshop would be written up and shared with Forum members and NRW staff working on access and recreation advice.

See appendix for summary of workshop.

Discussion points:

- When asked whether it was possible to add and amend questions to the survey, it was noted that it was important that the survey questions remain the same year on year, to enable monitoring and comparison of results.

Action 56.1: Carys Drew to write-up and circulate workshop notes and circulate. Members could submit any further thoughts on the discussion to Carys by email.

Action 56.2: Sue Williams to be invited to present the result of the National Survey for Wales when results are available next year.

3. Designated landscapes and access

Howard Davies, CEO National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and shared poetry, quotes, images and thoughts about landscape and highlighted how perception and value of landscape had changed over the years.

Over the period roughly between the 1750s and 1810 the UK saw a shift in landscape appreciation away from the classical and into the picturesque. It also became important and fashionable for tourism with examples of publications that made the landscape including the tour of the Wye Valley (Rev. William Gilpin 1782) and Wordsworth’s Guide to the Lakes in 1810.

In 1947 through the Hobhouse Committee, the Government identified a suite of conservation areas and National Parks in England and Wales, which are recognised as nationally important landscapes and funded and managed as such.

There are now 46 AONBs throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland covering 8000 square miles.

Howard covered the different management for protected landscapes (National Parks and AONBs) and noted the initial differences in purpose with NPs as well as the purpose to conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, a similar purpose had they have a secondary purpose to promote opportunities for the

understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public. AONBs Boards have since been given a similar secondary purpose.

Recreation and access are managed and promoted within protected landscapes. For example with 9 out of 11 of the National Trails going through or very close to AONBs and opportunities further enhanced with the designation of CROW access land. Howard shared examples of how access opportunities are promoted within the AONBs. Including a film about the protected landscapes of Wales available (with sound) here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dYkvOgxOfOw&feature=youtu.be>

Two examples of projects engaging communities with their landscape and aimed at combatting mental health and social isolation were shared. It was important to not make assumptions about people's familiarity with and confidence in using the outdoors.

The legislative context had changed and protected landscapes were familiar with the need to integrate different work and deliver sustainable management of natural resources (SMNR) in order to optimise the delivery of wellbeing goals. AONB management plans are locally led, collaborative plans and were based on a mature process.

There were challenges going forwards with the vote for Britain to leave the EU and he referenced Deloitte's 'The State of the State 2015-16' report as giving a good overview of all the challenges faced. <https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/pages/public-sector/articles/state-of-the-state.html>

Howard ended by highlighting the importance of outdoor recreation to counter people's increasingly busy lives.

Discussion points:

- Protected landscapes offer different opportunities than other areas for recreation and access, although lots of areas in Wales provide high quality experiences there are certain elements which benefit as a result of the greater protection e.g. dark night skies. In England there is a greater contrast between protected and un-protected landscapes. In Wales one of the biggest things is the infrastructure which has been developed since the 1950s – they are a draw for people wanting to participate in outdoor recreation.
- In terms of how to respond to the decline in available funding, it was noted that AONB Management Plans are agreed plans for what is needed in the area. There is a need to widen the scope of what is meant by 'resources' and not limit thinking just to money.
- In response to the [Independent Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales](#) the 'Marsden report' a programme of work had been

developed to look at the four aspects of the report (Governance, Vision, Innovation in resourcing, Rural Economy). Designated landscapes managers had come together with external interests to look at the intent and direction coming out of the review and develop a collaborative action plan

- It was noted that development planning in protected landscapes is more restrictive and that this could limit economic development which is necessary for communities to thrive
- Howard acknowledged that landscapes are a product of human endeavour and without economic activity they would cease to function. In AONBs there are a lot of landowners engaged with the management and opportunities for people to be involved. It is important to support farming and forestry, if young people are not supported then the AONB will not have a future.

4. **Sharing the findings from the Come Outside! Programme**

Juliet Michael, NRW

Juliet set out the background to Come Outside! which started in 2005 to identify good practice from across a range of initiatives around getting disengaged people engaged with the outdoors, following stakeholder workshop and pilots in 2007-2010 the Come Outside! approach was developed and the key components for successful delivery were identified.

The approach developed underpinned the 3 year Come Outside! Programme which ran was funded by Big Lottery, Welsh Government and my organisation, NRW from 2012 to March 2016 - aimed at engaging less physically active people in deprived areas, to increase involvement in outdoor activities

Juliet then set out 8 points of learning from the evaluation of the programme and shared a number of case studies to demonstrate the delivery model:

1. The value of working across sectors
2. More time and resources are needed to address multiple barriers
3. Behaviour change takes time
4. Delivery model – effective and replicable
5. Reach those who ‘have most to gain’ through the organisations who work to support them
6. Organisations value the natural environment when the benefits to their service users is demonstrated
7. Outdoor activities can be adapted to deliver greater benefits
8. The Come Outside! approach offers value for money

To enable community groups and service providers to have the knowledge and skills to be responsible for themselves and their groups in low-level outdoor activity the [Come Outside! Outdoor](#)

[Activity Learning Programme](#) was developed. The programme is accredited with Agored Cymru.

NRW is no longer delivering the programme but there was value of the learning for future initiatives and to the wellbeing goals.

(See presentation slides and speakers notes for further details)

Further information including film about the programme is available on the [NRW website](#).

Discussion points:

- Attention was drawn to the [Mosaic Wales project](#) which YHA was involved with, Juliet noted that she had worked closely with this project to share learning.

Action 56.3 Carys Drew to circulate the presentation

5. Contributions from all

Members were thanked for their written contributions, but were reminded to use their contribution to update on the work of their organisation.

Ruth encouraged members to raise any concerns or issues that arise in relation to NRW with Carys Drew when they come up so that they can be dealt with most appropriately.

Action: 56.4: Members to raise any specific concerns with Carys Drew rather than include these in their written contribution.

Verbal updates:

Ramblers Cymru: Rebecca Brough

- The team of staff reduced to two, but was being built back up
- Funding had not been confirmed for the Let's Walk Cymru post
- The Big Welsh Walk is being planned for May 2017 with challenge walks linked to the countryside of S4C's Hinterland
- Ramblers had written to the Cabinet Secretary about the lack of outdoor access representatives on a group which involved landowners and wildlife interests.

YHA: Rowland Pittard

- YHA have developed an online magazine
- Rowland had met with the four companies bidding for the Wales and Borders railway line franchise, with a view to encouraging the successful company to promote opportunities for enjoying the outdoors.

National Trust: Richard Neale

- Paddle sports on the Pembrokeshire Coast – the level of adventure sports are reaching saturation point in Pembrokeshire and are being displaced to Ceredigion where there is less infrastructure.

Disabled Ramblers: John Cuthbertson

- A group had gone out with the [ITV Wales Coast and Country TV programme](#) (series 4 episode 20), using Trampers, and it showed how versatile these machines are and had generated a lot of interest from the public. He suggested that it would be great if NRW could place Trampers on some of its sites.

Canoe Wales: Steve Rayner

- Noted difficulties in getting agreement for access to water and requested support from statutory organisations including NRW and Dŵr Cymru to support finding a way.
- The BBNPA passport scheme was good in as far as it goes but only applies to organised groups.

Post meeting note: NRW has received correspondence since these contributions were issued from the Wye and Usk Foundation who have stated that they strongly disagree with this statement in relation to their work. We understand that Canoe Wales and the Wye and Usk Foundation have met since the meeting to discuss the access arrangement on the Wye and Usk.

CLA: Charles de Winton

- Brexit is casting a long shadow but Welsh Government are being proactive at engaging with stakeholders to talk and find a way forward.

BHS: Mark Weston/Jeanne Hyett

- Mark offered to give a presentation on the work on gates at a future meeting.
- People can contact the BHS for materials relating to their Dead Slow campaign which related to safety of horses and riders on roads.

LARA: Duncan Green

- Westminster government had given £3million to update the national digital map which was free to public bodies, it is desirable to be able to provide a single source of information locally.

Cambrian Caving Council: Stuart France

- Noted a number of successes and failures on access
- He was concerned about NRW's interpretation of caving did not include it as an activity taking 'air and exercise' or as recreation under the terms of the CROW Act 2000

- If WG want to promote Wales as a place where people can come for adventure then this approach needed to change

NRW: Jont Bulbeck

- NRW had been asked [by Stuart France/solicitor acting for him] for an interpretation of the CROW Act and whether caving could be considered as 'open air recreation' under the terms of the Act. NRW had interpreted that it could not. Jont noted that this view was also shared by Defra and Natural England. However, in the end interpretation of the law would be matter for the Courts to decide.
- NRW had exchanged correspondence with Stuart France and/or his solicitor on this issue and NRW was happy to make this available if members wished to see it (provided this was acceptable to Stuart France).
- Jont noted that the question of whether the activity is included in the terms of existing legislation was separate to the question of whether access rights for caving should be improved.
- Jont noted that he was unclear whether Stuart France in raising this matter was representing CCC's position, or Stuart was giving his personal views.
- The Chair said that it was not possible to reach agreement in the meeting since the views between NRW and CCC were polarised, however discussions of national legislative issues would need to involve Welsh Government.
- Access Mapping: NRW acknowledge and apologise for the continued lack of mapped information on open access. The IT web project to resolve is being taken forward and had reached the stage of specialised testing. If the project keeps to the current timetable, the mapped information on CRoW open access closures and restrictions will be available on NRW's website by the end of January.
- Wales Coast Path officer posts have now gone out to external advertisement.

Sustrans: Gwyn Smith

- Sustrans have produced a leaflet to publicise the opportunity for public engagement in the development of the Integrated network Map as part of the Active Travel Act provisions

6. AOB

Members were urged to please ensure that they advise the secretariat if they are planning to attend the meeting to enable provision of adequate facilities.

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting dates and venues were confirmed as:

- 7 March 2017 – NRW Offices, Maes y Ffynnon, Bangor, LL57 2DW

All to note that meeting dates and papers will now be available on the NRW website:

<http://naturalresources.wales/out-and-about/recreation-and-access-policy-advice-and-guidance/networks-and-partnerships/national-access-forum-for-wales/?lang=en>

Appendix

Workshop summary

In order to encourage members to look at the Wales Outdoor Recreation data and consider what it means and how they can use it in the work of their own organisation. The meeting divided into three groups to consider two key questions for 'Addressing the decline in frequent participation':

Question 1: 'What can be done to address this:

- Collectively
- Practically?

Question 2: What can your organisation do to contribute to the solutions?

At the end of the workshop facilitators summarised key points, these are provided in the box. The detailed points recorded from each group are recorded below.

Summary of the discussion:

- Improve access to information – provide a central point
- Addressing physical access
- A need for more research into 'why?' there is a decline
- BHS: Dead slow campaign
- CLA: Bridge the gap between perceptions and reality
- Elan Valley: Heritage Lottery Fund
- Issues of 'why' experiences are good
- Available information and promotion
- Important, Possible, Acceptable
- Lack of coordinated approach as a sector – could be worked on. Year of Adventure example
- Consider including active travel journeys (walking and cycling) in people's consideration of their recreational activity
- Need to understand the reason behind the decline – possible perceptions of Active Travel
- Provide investment where there is demand

The detailed write up from each of the workshop groups is provided below.

Group 1: Juliet Michael

Question 1

- Wales-wide maps and information should be available in one central place like the Wales Coastal Path website brings the path information together – however maybe

those who are non/infrequent participants wouldn't think or know to go to an on-line place, need other options

- Make physical access easy to access, especially for less-able
- Need for research to understand the causes behind the data - why do people now get in their car and drive their dogs to a place to walk them instead of locally?
- People will stick to their comfort zone, places they know which makes changing habits very challenging
- Need to understand why some activity participation eg cycling and walking has increased – is this linked to media coverage?
- For horseriders there's a fear of poor, unsafe access routes
- Divert funding from elite events (in Rio each medal won, cost UK £4m in funding) and spend on facilities for everyone
- Preach to the unconverted – take the messages to where less active people are

Question 2

- BHS – 'Dead Slow' and other campaigns aimed at drivers, also Codes of Conduct - all improves quality of routes
- CLA – works to inform landowners of their access responsibilities and encourages Farm open Sundays – to develop public awareness of countryside access and opportunities
- Elan Valley – got HLF £3.3m funding for a People, Nature and Water landscape Partnership project which will improve access and get more people out (see their notes in the Contributions paper)

Group 2: Jont Bulbeck

Q1

Participation/competition with other activities:

- Availability of information
- Experiences and opportunities generally good
- Increase in participation in the Elan Valley and dwell time; honey pot area focussed (Elan Valley looking into users)
- Informal recreation

Needs to be: Important/Possible/Acceptable

- More activity into those three areas
- Importance of cultural factors

Q2 What can be done

- Wider sector focus on increasing use and therefore working collectively e.g. Visit Wales Campaign for the 'Year of Adventure'.
- Consider including active travel journeys (walking and cycling) in people's consideration of their recreational activity
- Capitalising on opportunities e.g. Wales as top 10 destination for activity
- Focussed activity/coordination e.g. opportunity

Individually – unravelling complicated legislation

- Better focus on where
- How does legislation background in Scotland affect participation

Group 3

Facilitator: Carys Drew

There is a need to understand

- the reason behind the decline – ie. further research in order to understand this
- the reason behind the increase in some activities

Investment in infrastructure and in promotion of the opportunities

There is a complicated economic/social picture

There is a need for greater connection between active travel and recreation

A question about whether respondents to the survey perceived their activity as recreational use or active travel and whether this could be accountable for the decline.

Suggestion:

- Case studies and examples of interventions that have been successful
- Is there evidence that investment infrastructure brings an increase in use
- That GPs prescribe walking to improve people's health – 'Let's Walk Cymru' is a scheme to introduce people to this activity
- That promotion of activities have remained static and that there is a need to promote outdoor recreation beyond the usual audiences.
- In Monmouthshire the local authority healthy walking scheme was oversubscribed, and had a waiting list – showing that there a demand for this type of support to introduce people to access opportunities.
- There is a need to identify different target markets e.g. families and young children

END.