



# Contributions: NAFW 55

This note is collated by NRW from submissions from NRW staff and Forum members prior to National Access Forum Meetings in order to facilitate the sharing of information. Please note that items are included as provided by their author.

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## British Horse Society: Mark Weston

### Dead Slow

The Society launched its “Dead Slow” campaign on 24 March, following some of the awful incidents that have occurred on the roads recently, most notably the shocking one involving Mark Evans who sadly lost his carriage horse Will:

<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/horrific-aftermath-accident-saw-car-10953991>

The Dead Slow campaign is all about encouraging drivers to pass horses at a maximum of 15 miles per hour. We are trying to change the attitudes and behaviour of drivers through education. Obviously we are not just talking about speed though – it is about giving enough space, not revving the engine etc.

You can see the visuals that have been produced via the following link

<http://www.bhs.org.uk/safety-and-accidents/dead-slow>

The Campaign has received considerable publicity including BBC Radio Wales, BBC Breakfast, Five Live, in the Mail and Telegraph.

### BHS Paths for Communities for Communities Fund

The Society set the fund up in 2014 to provide multi-user routes in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and Bridleways and Restricted Byways in England and Wales. This year the Society has topped the fund back up to £25K. In 2015 we received bids totalling circa £14K, if all of these are implemented it will enable schemes to the value of in excess £100K to proceed.

A scheme in Wales has recently been completed, namely, the creation of a 400m length of totally new permissive bridleway at Coed Cymerau near Eglwys-fach in North Ceredigion, secured for 10 years. The permissive route is created by the kind permission of the landowners; Mr & Mrs Jones, Ynys-hir farm, Mrs Bredow, Cymerau Hall and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). The fund provided funding of £2K with a further £300 worth of match funding being provided by The Ceredigion Bridleways Group.

### Training

We continue to provide a comprehensive training programme for our Access Officers across Wales, and in addition have provided two ‘2026’ training courses in partnership with the Ramblers and the Open Spaces Society in Llandudno and Chepstow. The courses assist people researching old routes that ought to be on the map. We’re training people how to look at a map, try to judge what routes might be missing; go to the record office; look up the relevant documents and put together the case for that route being shown on the definitive map as a public highway.

British Horse Society Access & Rights of Way Training rotates around Wales offering courses ranging from Levels 1-3 up to a mock Public Inquiry. Although primarily aimed at our BHS Access & Bridleway Officers, our members, and members of our affiliated Bridleway Groups attend to gain the knowledge they need to be as effective as they can be in the defense of the routes in their area.

Training costs £5 for BHS Access and Bridleway Officers, members of The British Horse Society, BHS Equestrian Access Groups and British Riding Clubs. In 2016 this

offer is also extended to members of The British Driving Society. Training costs £10 for all others wishing to attend, and [additional donations](#) to assist with our charitable work to defend, extend and promote safe off-road equestrian access are gratefully received. To find out more visit [www.bhs.org.uk](http://www.bhs.org.uk).

## BHS Ride Out UK Week WALES



**Ride Out UK Week 2016** in Wales was a great success with many people showcasing the access work in their areas, holding fundraising rides and generally spreading the word about the work the BHS and its many great volunteers in Wales do to protect and improve safe off road access for riders and carriage drivers. This year the BHS partnered with top UK manufacturer and supplier of equestrian clothing “Bridleway Equestrian” to **create and supply A3 maps** – free to the public for equestrian stores in Mid and West Glamorgan. These summarised access in Wales and showcased the popular yet challenging 472km BHS Great Dragon Ride which links Wales from North to South and East to West on mainly all off road routes. These were greatly welcomed and donations were received to help our charitable work in exchange for these. See attached for copy or online here for high res PDF: [https://www.bridlewayequestrian.com/maps/Map\\_Wales.pdf](https://www.bridlewayequestrian.com/maps/Map_Wales.pdf) Our online Hoofometer collated miles ridden by equestrians throughout Wales during the week itself, and we are just waiting for the total figure on this. Photography and Fundraising competitions were held with great participation from many equestrians, the winners of which can be viewed on our facebook site [www.facebook.com/BHSEquestrianAccessGroups](http://www.facebook.com/BHSEquestrianAccessGroups)

### **BHS Access & Bridleways Officer for Conwy Carol Bryce organised a clearance party on 4 June between Cefn y Bidwel and Sowrach**

As you will see there is a great difference after they finished from when he first rode through! A total of over half a mile of bridleway. Thanks to Denbighshire County Council through Adrian Walls Highways Information Manager for the donation of the really useful set of tools. Before and After pics below.





**Bridleway Equestrian is the official fundraising partner for Ride Out UK Week so ask your Bridleway stockist about how to help with fundraising activity for this great cause.**

**It's simple...**

...to organise a Ride Out UK Week event, or to get involved in something near you.

Visit [bhs.org.uk/rideoutukweek](http://bhs.org.uk/rideoutukweek), call 02476 840515 or email [access@bhs.org.uk](mailto:access@bhs.org.uk) for more information and details on how you can get involved.

We'd love to hear about your favourite routes. Share photos or route information on Bridleway Equestrian's or the BHS's Facebook and Twitter pages and make sure you log your ride on the BHS website so that we can celebrate the distances covered by everyone!

#rideoutuk



**BRIDLEWAY**  
equestrian

## Canoe Wales: Steve Rayner

After several years of disengagement, Canoe Wales is now seeking to re-engage fully with the access community across Wales and has aligned its policies and practices closely with those of the UK National Governing Body, British Canoeing. To this end we have recently formulated a 'position statement' relating to access and environmental issues (latest draft set out in full below) and have engaged with key stakeholders in a number of current access-related issues (summarised below).

### Canoe Wales Waterways and Environment Position Statement 2016

#### Canoe Wales believes:

- in increasing the opportunities for paddlers to participate in their chosen sport;
- that paddlers should be able to enjoy water responsibly in ways that are compatible with the conservation of the environment and wildlife;
- therefore, in developing and promoting access to and along the waterways of Wales, to increase sustainable water-based recreation while protecting and conserving the natural and urban environment;
- that the decision whether or not to paddle at any location in Wales at any time is the responsibility of the individual paddler, who should take into account such advice and guidance as may be available to support that decision;
- that paddling activity in Wales should be governed primarily by the statute and common law of England and Wales and by everyone's responsibilities to respect the rights of others;
- that paddling does not, in general, affect fish stocks in rivers; but that at certain times of year, especially when river levels are low, there may be some potential for grounding of boats which could disturb spawning fish; and that paddlers should endeavour to minimise this risk;
- that paddlers have a public right of navigation on tidal waters in and around Wales and on waterways in Wales where there is a statutory or dedicated right of navigation;
- that published research contests the assumption, long-held by some parties, that rights of navigation on physically-navigable, non-tidal rivers in Wales are private except where deemed otherwise by statute; but acknowledges the different opinions on the legal position where public rights have not been recognised;
- that public or private rights to the use of waterways do not in themselves grant paddlers any rights to cross land to access those waterways;
- that any legislation enacted to provide equal rights for the use of non-tidal waterways in Wales must incorporate management measures that serve all parties and the public and help to achieve wider social, recreational and economic benefits;
- that appropriate management measures, with or without changes in legislation, are an acceptable means of agreeing shared use of waterways when they:
  - are agreed, collaborative and inclusive, where all parties share the same rights and responsibilities; are managed jointly and locally; and help to protect the environment and respect the rights of all user interests;
  - are without prejudice to the views of the legal position of either Canoe Wales or riparian owners and other interests; and
  - neither confirm nor reject any party's views or interpretation of the legal situation;

but that such Arrangements shall not invalidate public rights to non-tidal waters should it subsequently be established that such rights have not been

extinguished or the historic use of such waters is recognised to provide that right.

### **Canoe Wales will:**

- encourage paddlers to paddle where they have the right to do so, within the law and with respect and consideration for others and the environment;
- work with the other home nations to share information for the benefit of the paddling community around the UK.
- encourage paddlers to seek permission to access the water when it is clear and unambiguous in law that they do not have the right to do so;
- promote good environmental practice and responsible use and consideration for others on all waters;
- work constructively with partners, agencies, the local community, interest groups and clubs to support and develop the shared use of physically-navigable non-tidal waters when environmental conditions (especially water levels) are suitable;
- in particular, work with Natural Resources Wales and others to minimise the risk of paddlers disturbing important species and habitats including spawning fish;
- develop management measures with partners, agencies, the local community, interest groups and clubs, with or without changes in legislation, to protect the environment and enable the wider use of all waterways at all times;
- make such arrangements publicly available to paddlers for self-regulation; and encourage paddlers to follow the guidelines of such arrangements; and
- will not regulate or police such arrangements or grant access to any waterways; but will promote sustainable canoeing by advising paddlers to paddle only when conditions are suitable.

### **Current Canoeing Access Issues**

#### **River Access Arrangements**

Canoe Wales is very keen to develop partnerships with other river users to promote and work towards sustainable canoeing throughout Wales. Canoe Wales has joined the Navigation Steering Groups of the Wye and Usk Foundation and Welsh Dee Partnership, which have negotiated for their respective rivers navigation arrangements with riparian owners, angling associations and commercial paddlesport operators; with the support of Local Authorities and Natural Resources Wales. However, these arrangements – which are often held up as exemplars for canoeing Voluntary Access Agreements – have not been agreed by representatives of recreational paddlers and do not meet our criteria for ‘appropriate management measures’ (see above), so we are unable to endorse these arrangements as they stand.

We believe it is critical that such arrangements gain endorsement from the National Governing Body if they are to continue to be promoted as exemplars, so to this end we have asked both bodies to discuss with us the scope for amending their arrangements to make them acceptable to recreational paddlers and to allow us to endorse and promote them. The Wye and Usk Foundation is currently resisting such discussions, while the Welsh Dee Partnership has shown some willingness to explore options.

Meanwhile Powys County Council has published revised access arrangements for the launching of canoes from Council-owned land at Glasbury, covering the 5-mile

stretch of the Wye immediately upstream of the statutory right of navigation which starts at Hay-on-Wye. In making this arrangement the Council has liaised with riparian owners, angling associations and Natural Resources Wales; as well as Canoe Wales and commercial canoe operators. The tenet of the arrangement is that the Council will permit launching of canoes from its land between 10am and 4pm subject to paddlers and operators abiding by a code-of-conduct that includes restricted landing rights downstream of the launch point. While Canoe Wales is concerned that the time constraints (which have long been in place) may be unnecessarily restrictive, we acknowledge that this is an arrangement that is intended to promote both shared use of the river and protection of the environment, so we are prepared to endorse this arrangement for a trial period of 12 months.

### **Access to Glandŵr Cymru (Canal & River Trust in Wales) Canals**

We have held initial discussions with Glandŵr Cymru with a view to working together to develop canoeing access on their canal network in Wales and to ensure that canoeing 'shares the space' effectively and appropriately with other canal users.

### **Access to Welsh Water/Dŵr Cymru Reservoirs**

We have held initial discussions with Welsh Water/Dŵr Cymru with a view to extending access to its reservoirs for canoeing and are hopeful that we will be able to extend the arrangements of the Reservoir Passport Scheme currently administered by the Brecon Beacons National Park to cover other reservoirs in Wales and to attract a wider range of paddlers.

### **Control of Invasive Non-Native Species**

Canoe Wales is acutely aware that continued access to waterways in Wales is contingent upon paddlers taking a responsible approach to protecting the environment and, in particular, to help control the spread of Invasive Non-Native Species around the UK. To this end we have begun promoting and disseminating simple, practical advice to encourage paddlers to adopt the Check-Clean-Dry routine to stop their spread via their boats and equipment. We are also developing an Environmental Awareness Programme with British Canoeing to help inform and educate paddlers of potential threats to the natural environment and the importance of protecting our native wildlife.

### **Informing and Educating Paddlers**

Following several years when many paddlers in Wales have believed that they may "paddle wherever and whenever they like", Canoe Wales recognises that it has a significant task in informing and educating paddlers about their actual rights and responsibilities wherever we agree that they are less than this perceived 'ideal' – especially when the law remains unclear regarding navigation on non-tidal rivers; and the access arrangements that are currently in place are widely derided by paddlers. Canoe Wales will need the support of the wider access community in Wales if we are credibly to influence our own paddling community as we seek to address this challenge.



## Disabled Ramblers: John Cuthbertson

On Wednesday 15th June I gave my presentation "New Barriers to Disabled Access" to the Southern Snowdonia LAF. It was well received and we had a lively discussion about many of the points it raised. I will be giving the presentation to the Northern Snowdonia LAF on 5th September.

On the following two days I checked out potential rambles along the Mawddach Trail from Dolgellau, around Coed-y-Brenin and around Llyn Trawsfynydd with a view to running rambles here in the future. As with many potential rambles we are restricted by the size of the car parking area due to the large vehicles and trailers our members now use which means that many of the locations we once used are no longer viable. However, I'm pleased to say that there is adequate parking at these locations.

## Dwr Cymru Welsh water: Tom Packham

Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) currently have four reservoir sites that are managed actively for public access and recreation, these are Elan Valley, Llandegfedd, Llyn Brenig and Llys y fran.

[www.elanvalley.org.uk](http://www.elanvalley.org.uk)  
[www.llandegfedd.co.uk](http://www.llandegfedd.co.uk)  
[www.llyn-brenig.co.uk](http://www.llyn-brenig.co.uk)  
[www.llys-y-fran.co.uk](http://www.llys-y-fran.co.uk)

This number is due to increase to 5 as Welsh Water has recently made a strategic acquisition of a reservoir site in the Cardiff City suburbs of Lisvane / Llanishen. Welsh Water plan to promote public access and recreation at this site.

<http://www.dwrcymru.com/en/Media-Centre/News-Summary/2016/01/Welsh-Water-buys-Lisvane-and-Llanishen-reservoirs.aspx> (press release Jan 2016)  
<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/local-news/victory-last-battle-save-llanishen-10748581> (press coverage Jan 2016)

Llys y Fran is programmed for a £4m redevelopment project to become Pembrokeshires ' Great-Welsh-Water-Park ' .  
<http://www.dwrcymru.com/en/Media-Centre/News-Summary/2015/09/Welsh-Water-unveils-plans-to-transform-Llys-y-Fran-reservoir-into-a-Great-Welsh-Water-Park.aspx> (press release Sept 2015)  
<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/4m-plans-unveiled-turn-pembrokeshire-10078879>  
[http://www.westerntelegraph.co.uk/news/13766342.4m\\_redevelopment\\_plans\\_for\\_Llys\\_y\\_Fran\\_reservoir\\_unveiled/?ref=rss](http://www.westerntelegraph.co.uk/news/13766342.4m_redevelopment_plans_for_Llys_y_Fran_reservoir_unveiled/?ref=rss) (press coverage Sept 2015 )

Other access and recreation offerings that will be of interest to the NAFW Forum are:

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and DCWW work in partnership to make a group of reservoirs in the Brecon Beacons available to organised groups of paddlers (canoeists) via the Brecon Beacons Passport Scheme.

As a key part of the improvements at Llys y Fran, we would like to create a new cycle trail from Llys y Fran Reservoir to Rosebush reservoir, because this would make Llys y Fran a mountain bikers hub for the Preseli Hills area as a whole.

## Glandŵr Cymru: Andrew Stumpf



Glandŵr  
Cymru

The Canal & River Trust in Wales

### **WELSH LANGUAGE**

CRT is reviewing its existing Welsh Language Scheme in light of the new Standards and its own change in status. We would be very interested in working with other major charities in Wales and particularly those working cross border.

### **MID WALES TOURISM**

Has issued the final version/s of their new 'Moving Adventures – Brand Toolkit'. Information is online on [www.movingadventures.co.uk](http://www.movingadventures.co.uk) providing tourism businesses and organisations with access to downloadable resources.

### **CYCLE WALES PROJECT**

The cycling market is growing rapidly and as the demand rises more parts of the UK are taking advantage by providing new routes and facilities for potential visitors. Consultants, including BRO Partnership, Sustrans Cymru and GWYRDD, have been appointed by the 10 South East Wales local authorities, led by Newport City Council, to develop a new toolkit to be available during early 2016.

The toolkit will include an interactive map to highlight the varied attractions that can be reached by bicycle in South East Wales. Our canals are among 1,400 miles of trails in SE Wales which together contribute £90 million to the Welsh economy

### **LEGISLATION AND CONSULTATIONS**

**Wales Bill** – Given the change to the “Reserved Powers” model we are concerned that an informed decision is taken with regard to devolution of competence for canals.

### **Water Act 2003 - abstractions**

CRT responded to Defra, Welsh Government, the EA and NRW's consultation on implementation of the Water Act 2003 and the transitional regulations under which licensing will take place. To date navigation authorities received exemption for abstraction and impoundment of surface water. In future they will need to apply for licences which, as proposed, could dramatically affect canal water supply, reliability

and level of service and therefore the ability to maintain “working heritage”. 10% of CRT’s entire abstractions are in Wales.

## **MON & BREC CANAL**

### **NHS Endorsement**

Andrew Goodall Director General HSSG/Chief Executive NHS Wales has endorsed the overall Mon & Brec canal project and has suggested two names, one from Welsh Government and the other the Director of Public Health for Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, for the steering group overseeing the well-being research work being undertaken by the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare.

### **Water supply**

The Usk & Wye Abstraction Group (UWAG) continues to work collaboratively to achieve a sustainable and improved abstraction regime on the Rivers Usk and Wye while maintaining standards of public water supply and the operation of the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal. On the Usk, the Canal and River Trust has taken measures to reduce the demand for water for the canal and Welsh Water has made improvements to the daily pattern of their abstraction to reduce the effects of abstraction on the protected species.

### **Funding**

Torfaen CBC’s application to Visit Wales Attractor Destination ERDF Project which included improvements to facilities at Pontymoile basin and improved links to Pontypool town centre and railway station has been approved but subject to match funding also being approved.

## **SWANSEA CANAL**

The City and County of Swansea has agreed in principle to gift the land containing Clydach lock to CRT enabling the two sections of canal – and as importantly the foot / cycle path - to connect.

## **MONTGOMERY CANAL**

A stage 2 HLF submission was submitted in June 2016. Two new canals adoptions are now in place in Welshpool area.

## **LLANGOLLEN CANAL**

CRT is working with Wrexham County Borough Council and Eastman (formerly Solutia UK Ltd) to develop an all-encompassing masterplan for the former Flexys site in Cefn Mawr on the Llangollen Canal. This masterplan will establish a defined programme of work for the next ten to fifteen years. Consultants will be appointed later this year for the work to be completed early 2017.

CRT is also part of Blaenavon’s **World Heritage Sites Youth Ambassador** pilot programme recruiting five 13-25 year old ambassadors for the Llangollen and supporting the bid to HLF.

The Waterway Partnership chair is leading the review of the WHS Management Plan and the Governance Structure on behalf of the Pontcysyllte WHS Board. CRT is also working with (and part funding) Torfaen CBC’s review of the Blaenavon WHS Management Plan.

## **ARTISTS IN RESIDENCY**

The last two artists in residency have now been appointed and funding is being sought for the final exhibition in Newtown in 2017. Nicky Coutts, a UK based artist, has been appointed to the Newtown – Emscher residency and Dan Rees, a Welsh artist, to Cardiff – Venice. They join Andrew Dodds an Irish artist living in London; Alan Goulbourne based in Cardiff; Mair Hughes based in Newtown; Cheon Pyo Lee a Korean artist based in New York; Mo Abd-Ulla an Iraqi artist based in the Netherlands.

### **DATES FOR THE DIARY**

July 13<sup>th</sup> Trustees reception in Chester

July 18 / 21 CRT will again be at the Royal Welsh Show

## **IPRoW: Ruth Rourke**

We have been corresponding with Welsh Government to see if information regarding Definitive Map Modification Order cases can be put on their web site. It is important for Local Authorities and others to see what decisions are being made and why.

We are concerned that there may be an impact on long term funding of WCP and other EU pro funded projects at a time when LA'S already seeing cuts in budgets. This will need to be monitored.

Discussions are now occurring between authorities regarding the RoWIP review. Some authorities are now starting the process and will be contacting all interested parties shortly. However there remains a concern that this time there is no funding allocated to complete the lengthy process.

## **National Parks: Peter Rutherford, Snowdonia NPA**

- Work continues on the Snowdon circular footpath with assistance from WG funding
- Substantial works carried out in Betws Y Coed area on riverside access improvements in conjunction with Conwy and Welsh Government ROWIP funding
- Substantial remedial works ongoing on Snowdon (Llanberis Path) following the difficult and wet winter damage
- Working towards Sect 16 CROW dedication of 4 woodlands in Snowdonia National parks own woodlands.

## **National Parks: Richard Ball, Brecon Beacons NPA**

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA) is busy spending its Welsh Government access grant and ROWIP grant.

Welsh Government funding is being spent largely in the uplands and we have used it to match funding provided by BMC Mend our Mountains, land owners, Dwr Cymru Welsh Water and volunteers.

BBNPA Members took the decision in February to serve notice on the RoW delegating Authorities to hand back the function from 1 April 2017 to allow us to, should we choose to do so. However, our preferred position is to enter into negotiations to revise funding arrangements and we are in the process of doing this.

We are into our 3<sup>rd</sup> year of operating the reservoir passport scheme on behalf of Welsh Water and it is progressing without major incident. The Wye and Usk Foundation continue to manage Access arrangements on the Usk and Wye and BBNPA sits on its navigation steering group and Canoe Wales has recently attended. The same old questions continue to be raised ie is there a legal right of navigation on waterways not explicitly covered by Acts of parliament (such as the lower Wye) and this makes it a difficult environment to operate in.

We have extended our upland path volunteer scheme – (maintaining upland paths). We have developed an informal partnership with Gwent drug and alcohol service to encourage its clients to participate and offer them various elements of LANTRA training to encourage integration and provide skills etc to equip them for work.

## National Trust: Richard Neale

### Coastal Connections / Cysylltu'r Glannau

Early discussions are ongoing about this potential project to enhance access provision and visitor enjoyment on the Welsh coast. Initial ideas include:

- Investigate opportunities for improving the line of the WCP on NT coastal properties, and prepare costed proposals.
- Voluntary dedication of Access Land (under CROW Act) on NT coastal properties, to provide access corridor / spreading room, as well as linear access on path.
- Dedicating permissive sections of WCP on NT land as statutory ROW.



### COASTodians / MORLINofalwyr

This community engagement trial initiative was launched in May and we now have seven voluntary Community COASTodians checking and looking after stretches of coast in Gower, Pembrokeshire and Llŷn. We also have up to 60 Junior COASTodians at two schools regularly visiting their local beach.



### Pen y Gogarth / Great Orme

A new Seasonal Ranger (Doug Don) has started in May. Working closely with the Conwy Council Wardens, Doug is now planning the provision of access routes on the newly acquired NT land, which will be

established over the next year or so with volunteers and community groups.



### **Cemlyn, Ynys Môn**

We are currently consulting on a long-term vision for this important destination for bird-watchers and coast path walkers. The exercise has been prompted by the twin challenges of sea-level rise and the proposed construction of Wylfa Newydd on neighbouring land.

### **Cwm Ivy, Gŵyr / Gower**

Discussions are continuing with Swansea City Council, the local ramblers group and the local community on solutions to the loss of the path over the breached sea-wall. NT and NRW are proposing an alternative low-level circular route.



Am wybodaeth bellach cysylltwch â/ For more information, contact:  
[richard.neale@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:richard.neale@nationaltrust.org.uk)

## **Open Spaces Society: Kate Ashbrook**

We published our Action Plan for Wales which we sent to all candidates in the election and are now following up with supportive AMs.

We have helped members in Bridgend to save open spaces which were threatened with development.

We ran a training day in Chepstow in early June to enable people to learn how to research historic, unrecorded paths with a view to applying to have them added to the definitive map before 1 January 2026.

We continue to respond to applications for works on common land and to advise members on commons, greens, open spaces and paths.

## Ramblers Cymru: Rebecca Brough

### The Big Pathwatch

The Big Pathwatch was our most ambitious campaign ever, we set out to walk and survey every footpath in England and Wales. Data gathering closed on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

#### The Pathwatch Report

A full report, and summary report for England and Wales is being launched on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016. A Wales key statistics report is being launched at 2pm, on 19<sup>th</sup> July at the Royal Welsh Show. National Access Forum Members will be welcome to attend – details will be available shortly

#### The Pathwatch app

We've built an app that allows the reporting of features on the go. The app can report positive and negative features, send photos and share discoveries via social media. Using GPS and a phone signal, the app can locate users on OS maps and will allow people to report what they've found with the press of a few buttons. The app also works offline and allows people to download OS grid square maps for their walks.

#### Pathwatch online

The online version of the app is slightly different but still gets us all the information we (and local authorities) need. It also syncs up with the features recorded on the app, so users can view all their reported features. Online, features can be reported anonymously and won't need someone to register or login. Just like the app, users can scroll around Britain on OS Map data to find the location of the feature they're reporting.

### Rights of Way and Access Group

We have reconvened a group of our most knowledgeable and keen volunteers to meet on a quarterly basis to inform the strategic direction of Ramblers Cymru's work, and to contribute to communications, tools and resources regarding Rights of Way and access.

### Paths for People

We have updated and printed a 'guide to public paths for members of town and community councils'. We are developing our work engaging at this local level, explaining the powers local councils have, and linking our volunteer footpath maintenance teams to their councils.

### Walk About Festival

From 3rd September to 11th September the Ramblers will be running a national walking festival, sponsored by People's Postcode Lottery (PPL).

This will involve all Ramblers groups, Walking for Health Schemes and Let's Walk Cymru running walks that showcase their full programme of activity. These will be complemented by 3 flagship events, one in each nation.

In Wales our Flagship Festival is taking place on 10th September at Margam Park in Swansea where you can come and join Ramblers Cymru for a fun-filled day of free walks for all abilities! We're offering guided and self-led walks for new and experienced walkers as part of the Festival.

Our marquee will be full of exciting games for all of the family with music, refreshments and free route maps also available. Everyone is welcome to celebrate getting Wales walking!

## Sport Wales: Rebecca Mattingley

**School Sport Survey and outdoor recreation** [www.schoolsportsurvey.org.uk](http://www.schoolsportsurvey.org.uk)

The School Sport Survey is an online survey of pupils' sports participation and school provision of Physical Education (PE) and sport. The latest *School Sport Survey* took place in the summer term of 2015. Pupils complete a questionnaire on their participation and attitudes towards Physical Education (PE) and sport, in school and in the community. A member of staff from each school is asked to complete a questionnaire on PE and sports provision at their school. This is usually completed by the PE coordinator in primary schools or the Head of PE in secondary schools.

In the 2015 survey, 115,039 Year 3-11 pupils (ages 7-16) and 1,094 teachers took part, making this the largest UK survey of young people and sport to date.

### ***Some analysis of our data on outdoor recreation in 2015***

In 2015, 28% (**52,000 pupils**) aged 7 to 16 said they had been to an outdoor activity centre to do sport or exercise. Unlike some sports, there was virtually no difference according to gender – 29% of boys and 27% of girls had been to an outdoor activity centre in the last year.

The survey covers a variety of outdoor activities and records the percentage of pupils who take part, and in what setting – i.e. as a school-organised extracurricular activity, with a community based club, or 'other settings' outside of school. Overall, we found that:

- 11% of pupils aged 7 to 16 (Years 3 to 11) have done canoeing or kayaking – that equates to 31,000 pupils
- 29,000 have been surfing (10%)
- 15,000 have done rowing (5%)



- 13,000 have been sailing (4%)

Generally, trend data from these surveys show that participation levels and demand for individual sports and activities tend to fall as pupils get older, with female pupils in Years 10 and 11 least likely to be physically active. However, demand to do more canoeing/kayaking increases for older girls and is higher than that of the boys. Older girls of secondary school age also have higher levels of demand for lifesaving, sailing and swimming when compared with boys.

Girls (all ages primary and secondary) also have a higher level of demand for surfing (a quarter want to do more compared with a fifth of boys) and canoeing and kayaking (16% compared with 15% want to do more)

Boys want to do more rowing (14% compared with 10% of girls).

When comparing disabled and non-disabled pupils, participation levels in outdoor pursuit type activities are similar or even higher. Proportionally, disabled pupils are more likely to do rowing, sailing and lifesaving than non-disabled pupils, and they also have higher levels of demand for these activities.

Secondary school pupils are asked about their participation in 'adventure activities'. A quarter of secondary school pupils took part in adventure activities in 2015 – that's 40,000 pupils.

Over a fifth of secondary school pupils wanted to do more adventure activities – and the **girls had a higher level of demand for this than boys** (24% compared with 19%).

## Official Statistics

Full sets of data tables with geographical, age and gender breakdowns are available here:

<http://sport.wales/research--policy/surveys-and-statistics/statistics.aspx>

Contact: [research@sport.wales](mailto:research@sport.wales) or [schoolsportsurvey@sportwales.org.uk](mailto:schoolsportsurvey@sportwales.org.uk)

## Sustrans: Gwyn Smith

### Active Travel

Existing routes map (ERM) – Sustrans has been working with many local authorities across Wales to complete the first task laid out by the Active Travel Act (ATA). As

with all new processes there have been a few problems along the way and some authorities have had to resubmit their maps. Most of these have now been completed and authorities are getting stuck into the next task

The Integrated Network Map (INM) – Sustrans has been supporting Welsh Government and the WLGA to run a series of four workshops all over Wales. This gave authorities an opportunity to feedback on the ERM process as well as getting prepared to create the INM. The INM process should enable Local Authorities to develop a 15 year plan that will set out what improvements they will make to existing routes and what new routes they propose to develop. This plan will set out a prioritised list that they would wish to complete (funding willing) over the short, medium and long term. The process is in the data gathering/talking to stakeholder phase which will lead up to an INM that will be put out for public consultation in 2017. The INM must be submitted to Welsh Government by September 2017

### **New route in Pembrey**

Sustrans working with Carmarthen County Council has just completed a new traffic free section of National Cycle Route (NCN) 4 to the west of Burry Port. This was a lottery funded scheme and was built to avoid sections within Pembrey forest that flood on a regular basis. It will also form part of the All Wales Coastal Path

### **Across the beacons route**

Working with the Brecon Beacons National Park, Sustrans and the Bro partnership have developed a route for more experienced cyclists from Llandeilo to Abergavenny. Part of the challenge was to provide signage across the route at low cost. This was achieved by using a modified “stick on” system developed by Sustrans that makes use of existing street furniture on which to put the signs. More information can be found here and if anyone tries out the route we would really



welcome feedback in order to constantly improve it.

<http://www.breconbeacons.org/cycleacrossthebeacons>

### **SE Wales Cycling**

Sustrans and the Bro partnership were commissioned by the 10 local authorities of south east Wales to develop an integrated map for cycling visitors and a toolkit for local businesses on how they can tap into the cycling market. The work is complete and links to the map and toolkit will be available soon.

[www.cyclewales.org](http://www.cyclewales.org)

### **Cymru Travel Challenge**

This ran from 6th to 23rd of May, 2016 and if you missed this one there will be another in the autumn. The aim of the challenge was to get as many people as possible travelling sustainably for local journeys. There were a number of prizes won along the way by the individuals and businesses competing.

The aim of the challenge was to reduce the number of journeys made by car as a solo occupant and in doing so increase physical activity. Any journey could be logged increasing your total and your teams. These could include the commute to work; taking the kids to school; a trip to the shops or in your leisure time. Every journey counts by foot, bike, public transport and car share

<https://travelchallenge.getmeactive-cymru.org.uk/>

### **Railway Ramblers grant**

The 38th AGM of Railway Rambles recently voted £2,500 to Sustrans for improvements to the surface of the Peregrine Way from Monmouth towards Symonds Yat. We hope this will be completed by mid June

### **Share the space**

We will be sharing a space with the Canals and Rivers trust on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June at Pontymoile basin (Near Pontypool) to promote responsible use of the Canal Tow path and other walking and cycling routes in the area.

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/our-towpath-code>

### **Rhondda Tunnel.**

The society are pressing ahead with plans to open this tunnel again to create the second longest walking and cycling tunnel in the world. Sustrans has work with both Welsh Government and the Society to make this long term project a reality.

We recently gave the committee members a guided tour of our Bath Two Tunnels scheme.

<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/bath-tunnels-providing-inspiration-rhonddas-11293324>

## **Visit Wales, Welsh Government: Kerry Thatcher**

### **New Cabinet Minister for Economy and Infrastructure**

Following the recent Welsh elections, the First Minister has announced his new cabinet and Ken Skates will be the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure which includes the Tourism portfolio.

### **Wales's Year of Legends 2017**

The Welsh Government has confirmed that Wales will celebrate the Year of Legends in 2017. It is a chance for tourism providers, attractions and businesses across Wales to get involved.

The Year of Legends follows on from the success of the 2016 Year of Adventure, which so far has seen a nationwide celebration, an international marketing campaign and the commercial success of a huge dragon sculpture at Caerphilly Castle.

Further information will be shared with the industry through the Visit Wales newsletters and e-mails which you can subscribe to here [online subscription form](#)

## Wales Adventure Tourism Organisation (WATO): Catherine Williams

Through WATO, the Chair, Paul Donovan and three regional groups continue to work with Visit Wales and other organisations, advising on various aspects of adventure tourism in Wales. Specifically:

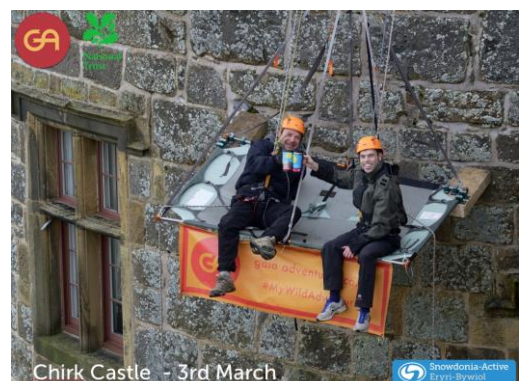
- Ongoing discussion and development of the Visit Wales accreditation process for adventure activity listings.
- Contribution to the Visit Wales themed year approach.
- Liaison with National Trust regarding activity licensing in England and alternative options for Wales.
- Promoting the Six key principles document along with the recommendations of the Natural Health and Enterprise Report. This report was presented in the Senedd on 29th March, sponsored by Lord Ellis-Thomas.
- Dialogue with Natural Resources Wales and Outdoor Partnership and a Wales national network for outdoor recreation.

Specific updates from the regional member organisations of WATO:

### Snowdonia-Active (S-A)

#### Pop Up Adventures

Visit Wales funded project for the Year of Adventure. 10 pop up adventure events providing the opportunity for adventure in unexpected places. Events ranged from abseiling on castles, climbing walls in town centres and mountain bike skills on promenades. Outdoor providers linked up with National Trust, Cadw, Local Authorities and Visit Wales delivering events to over 700 people. Deputy Minister, Ken Skates launched the series at Chirk Castle on 3rd March.



#### Outdoor North Wales Forum

26th April - Glasdir, Llanrwst. This annual forum organised by S-A brought together those working or with an interest in outdoor tourism. The day include discussion on the future of the sector, workshops which ranged from photography, connection to

nature and brand Wales and also a networking opportunity during the post conference Purple Moose & Great Orme sponsored session.

#### Padarn Refections 16 - 24th July 2016

As part of our Loving our Lake project, S-A have organised a week-long celebration of the importance of Llyn Padarn to people and wildlife. Loving our Lake is a behavioural change project supported by Dŵr Cymru and Natural Resources Wales. Padarn Reflections has also received some support from Snowdonia National Park Cae fund. Details on all the events taking place during the week can be found on the Loving Our Lake facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/llynpadarn/events?modal=composer&key=events>

#### **Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum/Outdoor Charter (PCF)**

##### Environmental training for the outdoor sector

28th April - Key issues facing the ocean environment and how messages can be integrated into activity sessions. Speakers and workshop leaders included representatives from TYF, Keep Wales Tidy, Wildlife Trust, Marine Conservation Society, RNLI, National Trust and Surfers Against Sewage.

25th May - Flora of Pembrokeshire. Led in partnership with National Trust, Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership and Pembrokeshire County Council.

##### Recreational Audit for Disabled Access (RADA)

RADA project aims to increase/improve recreational opportunities for disabled access by identifying barriers and exploring potential solutions. One year in to a three year project, survey work and stakeholder engagement has been conducted. Contact [paul.renfro@pembrokeshirecoastalforum.org.uk](mailto:paul.renfro@pembrokeshirecoastalforum.org.uk) if interested in a first year report.

##### Pembrokeshire Marine Code

Over the winter the Pembrokeshire Marine Code has undergone some refreshing including:

- Updated website - <http://www.pembrokeshiremarinecode.org.uk/>
- Undated codes of conduct (leaflet)
- Pembrokeshire Wildlife Fact sheets (waterproof and leaflet)
- Tide table with Marine code information

#### **South Wales Activity Providers Group (SWOAPG)**

##### Structural changes

SWOAPG are making structural changes to make them more of an independent entity.

##### Underground project

Working with Brecon Beacons National Park and attractions to promote the underground offer in South Wales to make underground experiences more accessible to the complete beginners.

### Mountain Rescue in gorge environments

4th May - Workshop included understanding of what MR and providers do, what to do if something goes wrong, what can be done to help yourselves and any casualty prior to arrival and possible evacuation plans and how to best prepare the scene for these.

## **WLGA: Mark Stafford-Tolley**

The statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan will for most Local Authorities be expiring in 2017. Guidance has not been provided for Local Authorities yet about the Statutory Review of these plans, but NRW have made their advice to Welsh Government available (in the form of draft guidance) for authorities to use if they wish to start the process to revise their plan until Welsh Government publish their Statutory Guidance.

The revision of the Circular 5/93 Guidance for Local Authorities regarding public rights of way is still awaiting approval.

The requirement to update public access legislation is long overdue. As such, the WLGA looks forward to being involved in developing the Bill through the legislative process. As such, it should also be recognised what benefits public access bring to health and well-being as well as the economy of Wales.

An agreement between Network Rail and public access professional bodies is being drawn up to make it clear how public access across railways crossings should be managed. This would be an agreement relevant in England and Wales.

## **NRW Contributions**

### **NRW: Richard Dearing**

#### **Canoe Access Glasbury**

The River Wye is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Powys County Council require a consent from NRW to allow canoes and kayaks to launch from Glasybont Common. The most recent consent issued commenced on 1 June 2016 until 30 September 2020 and includes conditions to safeguard the SSSI.

Concern has been raised by a number of parties (including bird watchers and the Powys Local Access Forum) that the breeding success of birds, including Little Ringed Plovers, on one shingle area 1.5km downstream of the bridge at Glasbury is being significantly hindered. While there was no concern about canoes passing by on the water, the issue was with large parties of canoeists accessing this one shingle bank.

A consent has now been issued to Powys County Council ensuring measures are in place to raise environmental awareness regarding the shingle banks and protection of ground nesting birds.

### **ROWIP Funding Programme**

Richard Dearing (Water Recreation & Access Advisor) has taken on the project manager role for the ROWIP Funding Programme. Susan Jackson will continue as ROWIP Funding Officer, and remains the day to day contact for authority staff

### **NRW: Rachel Parry**

#### **NRW's contribution to the Year of Adventure**

Continuing with the successful 10 of the Best series, NRW has been publishing 10 seasonal routes to tie in with Visit Wales' Year of Adventure starting with 10 winter walks and 10 of the best Activities drawn from NRW own or managed land/woodlands and National Nature Reserves. We recently published a set of 10 spring walks and the summer walks will be out next month. They are published on the 'Out and About' pages of the NRW website and are also available to download via the Viewranger and Trailzilla Apps which allows us to reach a wider audience and allows the user more flexibility in how to use the information and maps. Viewranger also give the routes a considerable promotional push by sharing the sets of 10 as they are published on social media.

See <https://naturalresources.wales/out-and-about/things-to-do/itinerary-ideas/?lang=en>

#### **Equality Impact Assessment of NRW's key visitor sites**

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) recently commissioned Phil Chambers Consultancy to carry out an audit of the discharge of our duty as a service provider under the Equality Act 2010, at 6 key visitor sites:

- Coed y Brenin
- Garwnant
- Nant Bwlch yr Arian
- Cadair Idris NNR
- Dyfi Ynyslas NNR
- Newborough Forest and NNR.

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) brought together and replaced the previous anti-discrimination laws such as the DDA.

The aim of the general duty under the Equality Act is to ensure that public authorities and those carrying out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in their day-to-day activities. The duty ensures that equality considerations are built into the design of policies and the delivery of services and that they are kept under review.

The Equality Act exists as a guide to how we should treat people in delivering our service to them. There are eight 'protected characteristics' of people who use our services. These are:

- Disability
- Sex (gender)
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Age

The Equality Impact Assessment work was carried out in relation to NRW as a public service provider of outdoor recreation and access facilities on 6 sites. Five of these sites have visitor centres and accessible trails and one has toilets and car park only as well as accessible trails. The assessment covered:

- Physical access to and within the visitor centre building and any external, associated buildings that are open to the public.
- The appropriateness of facilities and services provided within the building(s) for all protected characteristics
- Appropriateness of on-site signage to and within the building(s)
- A survey of awareness of equality and diversity among NRW site staff
- A survey of site visitors
- An indicative action plan for improvements where this is necessary
- A final report for each individual site and a final amalgamated report, drawing out key recommendations that could be applicable across all of our sites.

NRW has also recently set out its Strategic Equality Plan 2015/19 which provides an overarching framework for advancing equality and diversity. It is aimed at executive directors, board members and staff, and relates to all functions of the organisation. We also have an Equality and Diversity Forum group.

### **Quality of Visitor Experience Research 2015 Surveys**

A report commissioned by Natural Resources Wales shows how visitors rate the quality of their experiences on the woodlands and National Nature Reserves it manages. By providing well-managed, welcoming green spaces NRW is making a significant contribution to outdoor recreation provision in Wales and therefore to the physical and mental well-being of its visitors.

In 2015, Beaufort Research carried out over 1000 interviews with visitors<sup>1</sup> to forests, woodland sites and National Nature Reserves across Wales. Seven sites were surveyed to find out whether visitors think NRW recreation sites are well managed,

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<sup>1</sup> Note - by visitor we mean both residents of Wales and tourists to Wales



welcoming and safe , as well as what our visitors like to do when they visit NNRs or woodland sites.

By providing a quality visitor experience we can encourage people to come back (63% of visitors to NRW sites have been before) and to recommend our sites as a great place to visit, as well as encouraging new visitors to sites.

The quality of visitor experience depends not only on the facilities provided at a site (notice boards, playgrounds, toilets, car park, walking trails), but also on the 'sense of welcome' that the site provides.

- This 'sense of welcome' in turn depends both on the maintenance of the site (rubbish, dog dirt, brambles, mud) and also the nature of the site itself (light & open or dense & dark).
- 89% rated the Wales sites as 'excellent' or 'very good' on how safe and welcoming they are.
- Overall perceptions of all Wales' forest and NNR sites as places to visit were very positive, with the vast majority (93%) rating sites as 'excellent' or 'very good'

The majority of visitors to **all sites** said that it was highly likely that they would recommend the site they were visiting to other people.

About 60% of visitors to NRW's sites felt that the **main strengths** of the sites are the *scenery and beautiful views* while over half spoke of the *peace and tranquillity* of the sites and on the whole, these were the favourite things at each of the individual sites. A further two fifths of visitors liked the *walks, paths and trails* while a quarter enjoyed the *fresh air and being outside*. Another 21% mentioned that their favourite thing at the forest and NNR sites was the *wildlife and bird watching*.

### **What do people do at sites?**

- 91% of all visitors go for a walk whilst visiting one of our woodland or NNR sites
- 24% of all visitors bring their dog with them to enjoy the outdoors
- 24% of all visitors enjoy admiring the views and scenery
- 12% bring along a picnic to enjoy with friends and family

### **Facilities**

The vast majority of users of each individual site gave these very positive ratings for the facilities they had used. These included viewpoints, visitor centres, toilets, café/restaurant and picnic areas with most people rating them as 'very good' or 'excellent'.

## **NRW Partnerships Team South West – Recreation & Access work**

### **Glyn Lloyd-Jones, Partnerships Officer**

#### **Working together for a healthy River Towy**

NRW Partnerships and Natural Resource Management teams have been working together with Carmarthenshire County Council to submit a bid to the Welsh Government Rural Development Plan, Sustainable Management Scheme.

The proposed project would extend and develop a cycle-path along the Towy. Through close consultation, the route will be agreed and some areas raised to create natural boundaries between farm fields and the River Towy with the aim of reducing farm runoff, leading to much needed improvements in the riverine nitrate levels.

Another closely linked project developed by NRW Natural Resource Management Team staff and partners at ADAS in Aberystwyth has also been submitted for funding. This will complement the project greatly especially as it aims to further reduce farm runoff into an important fishing river which also supplies many thousands of homes with drinking water. The project involves a feasibility study into the strategic placement of a large Anaerobic Digestion plant which will help deal with excess levels of slurry produced when cattle have to be overwintered in sheds due to inclement weather.

The outputs of the feasibility study will help identify the potential of a sustainable natural resource management approach to managing organic nutrients in Carmarthenshire. The study will also recognise and explore the sustainable energy potential of these organic nutrients to provide a sustainable source of bio-resources (such as fuel) whilst also helping to improve and protect the local environment with the cooperation and time investment of our place based staff.

### **Phil Stone, Partnerships Officer**

#### **Working in Partnership with Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail**

NRW supports the National Trails in Wales by providing funding for the National Trail Officers (NTO's) and for the maintenance and improvement of the Trail. We have committed £171k for the coming year for the National Trail in Pembrokeshire, a very similar figure to the previous year. Pembrokeshire National Park Authority (PCNPA) match a large sum of this with additional finance and staff time.

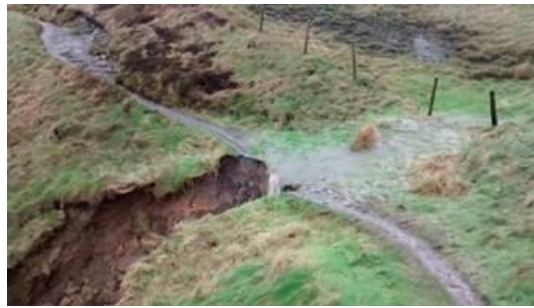
Our help enables PCNPA to manage and maintain the trail to the high standard that users expect. Nearly half of the staff time (209 days) was spent on vegetation control, with the other 216 days spent on repairs and renewals.

Coastal erosion had caused quite a problem last winter, but the Park teams dealt with these issues rapidly by identifying alternative routes and negotiating quickly with the relevant land owners.

Aber Mawr



Ceibwr



Mill Haven

The photos above illustrate examples of the collapses where the path was reopened within days of the issue being reported with minimal disruption to users.

## **Aled Davies, Partnerships Officer**

### **Communities and Nature**

Between July 2009 and October 2015, the Countryside Council for Wales (NRW after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013) led on a Convergence area initiative called Communities and Nature. It offered various organisations in both the voluntary and public sector, an opportunity to apply for funding to improve resources. It was part funded by the European Regional Development Fund and all physical work on the initiatives had come to an end by October 2015.

Part of the application process involved a commitment to lay out what economic improvements, the work carried out would bring: There was also an agreement that there would be post project monitoring carried out by NRW: All initiatives had signed up to be monitored for 5 years after the end of the initiative. This involved

- a) Recording the number of visitors attending these sites.
- b) Noting any new jobs created by the
- c) Keeping financial records e.g. income generated by increased footfall.

Case Study: Stackpole Mencap Walled Gardens:

Stackpole Mencap walled gardens, made an application to improve the tourism resources available at the garden by building a café, which would also combine a shop to sell home grown produce, and an office for staff works.

Before: April 2011: A rather unkempt wall and rough area.



After July 2013: A new café, shop and office.



Follow up visits have been made to ensure that, the site is open, and attracting visitors. Improvements were also made to footpaths, the car parking and to signage (although this was not paid for by CAN). All monitoring visits made so far have been satisfactory. So far, visitor numbers have increased from 8,139 in 2013 to 20,713 which demonstrates the success of the project in encouraging people to enjoy the outdoors.

**END.**