

# Natural Health & Enterprise

Catalysing new approaches to Wales' outdoors and natural resources through collaboration, integration & long term thinking.



## Report and recommendations

PARTNERIAETH AWYR-AGORED  
*Profiad • Mwynhau • Llwyddo*



*Experience • Enjoy • Achieve*  
OUTDOOR PARTNERSHIP

**WATO**  
WALES  
ADVENTURE  
TOURISM  
ORGANISATION  
*ORGANIZACIWN  
TOURISMA*

March 2016

### Foreword

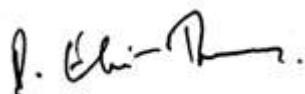
Wales' natural spaces and urban parks provide unparalleled opportunities for a wide range of activities that are good for people, the economy and nature. Increasing interest and engagement in physical activity in daily lives helps communities improve health, reduce costs, reconnect to nature and improve confidence. A new all-Wales project is bringing together health, adventure and community specialists in ground-breaking ways. This documents shows how Wales' growing outdoor sector can build social capital, reduce cost and support government targets in innovative new ways.

Wales' outdoor industry reaches across sectors including education and skills, tourism, well-being, sport, environment, business and safety. The Key Principles outlined below have been developed by industry stakeholders, committed to collaborate and deliver more for Wales.

Our approach is focused, increasing effectiveness by catalyzing new ways of working in Wales' outdoor spaces to boost health, employability and the sustainable management of natural resources. 2016 is the first time the industry has come together in such a strategic way, and the initiative is supportive of both the Year of Adventure and the review of National Landscapes.

Six Key Principles support the development of shared goals that deliver better outcomes with less resources. Significant benefits can be delivered through collaboration, integration and long term thinking, increasing Gross Value Added and employment whilst reducing costs of health and unemployment.

The principle statements acknowledge the Well Being of Future Generation Act goals and support the need to create prosperous and resilient communities across Wales. We want to see: a) a healthier nation that is more able to work and increase output; b) engaged communities that know how to optimise the rich mix of public, private and third sector agencies. The outdoor industry offers an encouraging, enabling and supporting approach to health, wellbeing and innovation that can give more of better, for less.



Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM  
Dwyfor Meirionnydd

### Introduction

The 'Key Proposals for Action on the Outdoors' highlight six key principles that have been identified by key outdoor sector stakeholders. The Year of Adventure in 2016 has already provided the opportunity for outdoor sector organisations in Wales to work together in new ways.

The key principles are as a result of collaborative working between the Wales Adventure Tourism Organisation (WATO) and The Outdoor Partnership (TOP). WATO and TOP share many of the same aims and this collaborative work sought to focus on wider perspectives in the outdoors to add scope and its importance to Wales as a whole.

WATO is a forum consisting of representation from:

- Three regional organisations - Snowdonia-Active (S-A), Pembrokeshire Outdoor Charter Group, (POCG) & South Wales Outdoor Activity Providers Group (SWOAPG);
- Five Welsh Government organisations/departments: Visit Wales (VW), Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Sport Wales, Public Health Wales & the Department for Education and Skills (DfES);
- The Adventure Activities Licensing Service (AALS), and
- Third Sector Representation - The Outdoor Partnership.

WATO's overall objective is to support the sustainable development of the adventure activity tourism sector throughout Wales. WATO's three regional organisations represent 800+ businesses, employing 10,000+ people and an annual turnover of over £480 million.

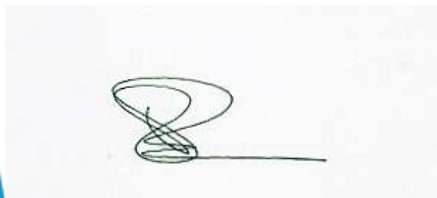
TOP's membership consists of public, private and third sector organisations. Its mission is to improve opportunities for people in Wales to achieve their potential through outdoor activities.

Since TOP started in October 2005, it has created over 70,000 participation opportunities; established 80 community-based, volunteer-led, outdoor activity clubs in North Wales boasting annual membership of over 8000 active members; trained over 2500 volunteers with a social return on investment (SROI) of £10million (based on commercial instructor rates) and supported over 300 local unemployed people into sustained employment in the sector with a SROI of £4.5 million (based on £15k salary).



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Whilst the outdoor sector recognises its greater positioning within the areas of tourism, recreation and sport, it also recognises that its benefits reach across many Welsh Government department areas, including Environment, Education, Skills, Business, Health and Culture. The multiple public benefits of a thriving outdoor sector are reflected throughout the document as are policy and priorities from Welsh Government stakeholders.



Paul Donovan  
Chair – Wales Adventure  
Tourism Organisation (WATO)



Tracey Evans  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Outdoor Partnership (TOP)



## Purpose

Our mission is to catalyse transformational economic, health, social and environmental change for a resilient Wales by harnessing the skills and knowledge of Adventure NOW's network of outdoor professionals and the million people they reach every year.

## Executive Summary

This document relates specifically to the six Key Principles listed in the appendix and signed up to by many key stakeholders. In taking into account these principles, the document considers the outdoor sectors:

### 1. Future Outcomes

### 2. Key Priorities / Aims

### 3. Strategic Objectives

- Identify common areas of threat, risk and opportunity;
- Benchmark activities in Wales against global best practice;
- Optimise the use of Wales' outdoors for health, social and personal development;
- Explore new approaches to risk, choice and responsibility;
- Create a coherent outdoor sector alliance that is capable of delivering national programmes to address health, wellbeing and social justice;
- Build relationships between currently unconnected sectors to create new opportunities.

### 4. Key Partners and Stakeholders

In addition, key stakeholders have reviewed relevant strategies across many sectors to highlight their relevance to the outdoor sector, which demonstrates the significance of engagement with the outdoor sector. The outcome of this review can be found in the Conclusion:

### 5. Conclusion

### 6. Appendices

- Six Principles

### 1. Future Outcomes

The Natural Health & Enterprise initiative seeks new levels of collaboration and innovative working with government departments, agencies, outdoor sector organisations and outdoor providers. In doing so, we can collectively deliver dramatically improved benefits for the people of Wales and its visitors, including:

- 1.11.1 Capitalise on the good practice of Welsh adventure businesses who contribute to community resilience through delivery of outdoor-based activities that improve health activities at lower cost and greater effectiveness than their traditional alternatives;
- 1.2 Increased social engagement, building on proven examples of how nature-based activities can engage people with pro-environment behaviours and increase awareness of the connections between work, play and resilience;
- 1.3 Supporting the shift towards a circular and sharing economies and the elimination of negative externalities.
- 1.4 'Foundation level' engagement of the outdoor sector, with Adventure instructors and guides who actively encourage their customers to step onto lifetime journeys of adventure, and signpost the organisations and networks that can help them do this.
- 1.5 A Wales leading the way in demonstrating a partnership approach to providing exemplar recreational experiences that immerse people in the great outdoors as a lifelong recreation whilst creating a love and respect for nature;
- 1.6 A clear employment pathway with entry and exit routes to allow a young person as a first time user to ultimately progress through to employment or elite participant: Pathways are currently integrated and complimentary for education and vocational training.



### 2. Key Priorities / Aims

#### 2.1 Skills, Training and Employment

2.1.1 Develop an outdoor sector displaying innovation, excellence, life-long personal development, a sense of community and a skilled passionate workforce.

#### 2.2 Environment

2.2.2 Grow people's understanding and appreciation of the natural environment by connecting outdoor activity with the conservation and work-based actions that protect it.

#### 2.3 Visitor Economy

2.3.1 Develop and implement adventure activities and outdoor recreation product-led approach that bolster reason to work and play Wales.

#### 2.4 Health and Well-being

2.4.1 To achieve an active, healthy and inclusive Wales, where adventure activities and outdoor recreation provides a common platform for participation, fun, achievement and employment which binds local communities, creates sustainable use and understanding of the environment.

#### 2.5 Participation

2.5.1 Inspire more young people to be more active in the outdoors, catalysing a generational change and move towards health care rather than illness treatment.

#### 2.6 Partnerships

2.6.1 Bring key stakeholders together from education and skills, the environment, health, tourism, sport and recreation, safety, the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector and adventure businesses together strategically to support the radical changes that are needed each sector to fulfil climate, resource and social goals.

### 3. Strategic Objectives

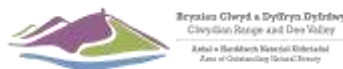
Partnership working will enable the listed key priorities to be achieved, resulting in the identified future outcomes also being met. Through Partnership Working the Outdoor Sector can be fully recognised for its ability to deliver cross-government strategy in the following sectors: Health, Sport & Recreation, Education, Business, Safety Management, Tourism and the Environment.

- 3.1** Establish Wales as world leader in practice that drives social and environmental benefit using outdoor & adventure experiences;
- 3.2** To ensure Wales is healthy, beautiful, rich in culture and nature, with a network of opportunities for our communities and tourists to immerse themselves in the great outdoors to contribute to a more healthy and happy society and a more lucrative tourist economy;
- 3.3** Create strong partnerships across the public, private and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector at national, regional and local levels to implement a Partner Delivery Plan and lever investment and new skills for community outdoor recreation;
- 3.4** Create a forum to collect and share behaviour that changes the game in this area;
- 3.5** Engaging with other partners, including local authorities, to support, sustain and secure investment in community outdoor recreation and to influence their investment in outdoor recreation;
- 3.6** Promote a 'sense of place' to create community ownership through:
  - Language of choice especially Welsh to promote the culture of Wales,
  - Recognise and provide for the needs of under-represented groups in the sector (e.g. women girls, disabled people),
  - Local, regional and national volunteer networks.



## 4. Key Stakeholders & Partners and future Key Stakeholders & Partners

The involvement of a wide range of stakeholders has been essential in the collaborative approach that has distinguished this project. Over 60 organisations have been involved in the process to date, and as our strategy is implemented, this process will continue.



### 5. Conclusion

The Future Outcomes, Key Priorities/Aims and Strategic Objectives to fall in line with the stated thinking behind 'Team Wales', which seeks to ensure the maximum effectiveness & flexibility of all departments across Welsh Government.

*By embracing the content and context of the six Key Principles, the next steps look to:*

- 5.1** Identify common areas of threat, risk and opportunity
- 5.2** Benchmark activities in Wales against global best practice
- 5.3** Optimise the use of Wales' outdoors for health, social and personal development
- 5.4** Explore new approaches to risk, choice and responsibility
- 5.5** Create a coherent outdoor sector alliance that is capable of delivering national programmes to address health, wellbeing and social justice.
- 5.6** Build relationships between currently unconnected sectors to create new opportunities

*In embracing the content and context of the six Key Principles, the benefits of participation will:*

- 5.7** Expand recreational & professional networks – 'a culturally more vibrant Wales'
- 5.8** Enhance Learning & Development opportunities – 'a more prosperous Wales'
- 5.9** Promote health related fitness through active participation & engagement – 'a healthier Wales'
- 5.10** Lead to discovering new approaches to leadership, communication, team building & problem solving – 'a more cohesive Wales'
- 5.11** Enable the sharing of expertise on the development of self: reliance, knowledge, confidence, concept, discipline & respect – 'a more resilient Wales'
- 5.12** Co-creating new ideas and programmes that relate risk to outcomes – 'an adventurous Wales'

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- 5.13** Increase the development of global links to organisations with similar experience and ambition – ‘a globally more responsible Wales’
- 5.14** Develop processes and competencies that link personal, group and environmental outcomes – ‘a more equal Wales’.

The time is right to take the next steps for visitors to Wales and the people of Wales and create a network with the connections, expertise and commitment to deliver the changes that future generations need. The proposed Adventure Network for Outdoor Wales (Adventure NOW) seeks to maximise the benefits that a well-structured outdoor sector can continue to bring for the sustainable and economic development in Wales – improving the economic, social, environmental & cultural well-being of Wales.

We believe that with effective planning and sufficient alignment of resources, it is possible to create 4000 additional jobs and £300m of Gross Value Added by connecting the outdoors to innovation, enterprise and wellbeing. We invite you to join us on the journey to make that happen.



### Appendix - Six Key Principles

The Year of Adventure in 2016 presents a unique opportunity for organisations in Wales to work together to promote to the Welsh Government a set of core principles that focus on the outdoors and provide a foundation for future policy, acknowledging the seven goals of the Well-being for Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

#### **Principle 1: A globally responsible and more equal Wales.**

***We seek a government-level strategy that supports environmental action and inclusivity in the outdoor sector***

Outdoor sector organisations, agencies and government departments should continue to work together to agree, implement and fund a strategic programme which recognises the influence that outdoor recreation and adventure tourism can have on globally responsible behaviour, and accelerate approaches such as time banking that allow everyone to access the benefits of the outdoors

#### **Principle 2: A prosperous Wales**

***We seek close working with government to develop long-term strategies for a thriving rural economy***

The outdoor sector added value contribution to tourism of £ 304m accounts for 12% of the Welsh tourism economy (Miller 2014). Most of this economic activity is based within the rural economy and accounts for 8,243 jobs (FTE). The Welsh outdoor economy provides a platform for optimising its culture, education, environmental enjoyment, health, heritage, recreation and wellbeing. The variety of organisations, be they public, private or third sector, need recognition, encouragement and support in order to develop and grow to create a coherent outdoor sector alliance capable of contributing to national programmes.

#### **Principle 3: A resilient Wales**

***We seek new ways of working that increase understanding and care of nature to build resilience***

The natural landscape of Wales provides world class opportunities with superb rivers; lakes; canals; mountains; footpaths and cycle routes; award winning beaches as well as an extensive range of water sports, coastal activities, historical and cultural sites. These resources must continue to be managed sympathetically by users (land managers, adventure activity providers, conservationists and statutory



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bodies) working collaboratively with greater knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure environmental sustainability for the enjoyment and use by future generations.

### **Principle 4: A healthier & more equal Wales, with vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.**

***We commit to work with health, social services and government to inspire a generational change to more active, health living.***

The test of long-term successful participation in outdoor and adventurous activities is adults, particularly 16 – 25 year olds, participating outdoors as their leisure time choice. Realising this requires a generational change by influencing the lifestyles of the next generation now. Focus on children and young people, as a priority for investment must be 'wrapped' in a product that is actively engaging and enjoyable, delivered locally, regionally and nationally, in a timely manner with care for the environment by inspirational leaders and motivators.

### **Principle 5: A Wales of Cohesive Communities**

***We seek to work with key areas of government and public sector to use our sector's skills to build communities, schools and business' ability to solve challenges using skills learned through the outdoors.***

Recognising the value outdoors has to offer residents, visitors, Welsh culture and heritage requires strong communities. Building robust community networks allows interventions to be immediate and relevant. Community clubs and organisations, many already existing, require investment, direction and support to 'recalibrate to the art of the possible'. Strong communities support all interests and abilities in society allowing potential to be realised at an individual level.

### **Principle 6: A Sustainable Wales**

***We seek opportunities that prove that transformative, sector-scale change to sustainable working is possible.***

Achieving sustainable opportunities requires key delivery agents to work together embracing a continuum of development pathways. Pathways identifying exit routes allowing, for example, a young person as a first time user to ultimately progress through to employment or elite participant. Integrated and complimentary pathways are required for education, vocational training, skills development, volunteer training and support, participation and visitors/ tourists. Successful pathways are dependent on safe quality products, places and customer care.