

OUTDOOR ALLIANCE (WALES)

OUTLINE BUSINESS PLAN

November 2017

(To be considered in conjunction with the 'Creating an Effective Outdoor Sector Network' Report and 'The Outdoor Alliance' Prospectus)

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Outdoor Alliance (Wales) Outline Business Plan

Business Name	Outdoor Alliance
Mission Statement	To catalyse transformational economic, health, social and environmental change for a resilient Wales by harnessing the skills and knowledge of the OUTDOOR SECTOR and people they reach every year.
Business Summary	This business proposal is to create an alliance for the Outdoor Sector in Wales by providing a virtual portal through which policy and activity can effectively engage.
Business Aims	<p>The long term aim of the Alliance is to raise the level of collaborative and innovative working between outdoor sector organisations to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Encourage government-level strategy that supports environmental action and inclusivity in the outdoor sector2. Work with government to develop long-term strategies for a thriving rural economy3. Find new ways of working that increase understanding and care of nature to build resilience4. Work with the Public Service Boards to inspire a generational change to more active, health living.5. 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.6. Facilitate more opportunities that prove that transformative, sector-scale change to sustainable working is possible <p>These aims are based on the 6 key principals that were signed up to by 35 key Outdoor Sector organisations in March 2016.</p>

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Introduction

The Outdoor Sector in Wales contributes significantly to the social and economic benefit of Wales through education, physical activity, environment, heritage and tourism. Activity tourism is worth at least £481m to the Welsh Economy with a further £304m added value supporting over 8000 FTE jobs (Millar 2014). This takes no account of the education, recreation and health sector in Wales. This contribution comprises 12% of the Welsh tourism economy.

The Outdoor Sector in Wales mainly comprises a multitude of micro businesses and organisations that support Active, Appreciative, and/or Adventurous activity. These organisations include:

- Activity and education providers
- Outdoor activity clubs and volunteer groups
- Equipment manufacturing & retail
- National governing bodies of sport and recreation
- Business and tourism associations
- Training and qualifications organisations
- Safety management organisations
- Landowner / land management organisations
- Local & national government agencies

During the Year of Adventure 2016 the outdoor sector was brought together on a number of occasions to discuss its future. There was general agreement that the sector would benefit from working closer together to address these key issues:

- The outdoor sector comprises of a majority of small stakeholders/micro enterprises;
- It needs a “single voice” speaking on behalf of the sector;
- It needs a uniform message to raise the profile to a level that enhances the contribution the sector makes;
- It needs a "one stop shop" to which external agencies can engage.

This is a proposal for a constituted body that enables more efficient cross sector partnerships, involving a wide range of businesses in the outdoor sector. The sector has concluded the most effective model would be to form an ‘Alliance’ of existing organisations that can come together through a ‘Portal’ to use the combined ability of all the organisations to promote the sector and co-deliver projects.

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The Alliance	<p>Structurally, it is envisaged that the Alliance would comprise of a Not for Profit Limited Company registered with Companies House. It would have 7 directors, including a Chair, all made up of representatives from across the sector with role specific responsibilities (e.g. Governance, Health, Education, Economy/ Business, Skills, Participation, Finance). This would allow for the application of funding, demonstrating professionalism and commitment.</p> <p>The Alliance would help member organisations from across the sector to work together on projects that deliver against the core aims of the Alliance. The Alliance could act as a coordinator for these projects and submit funding applications. Any funding accessed by the Alliance would carry a management charge that would contribute to the salary of a coordinator post, employed directly by the company. Any business or organisation in the outdoor sector, no matter how big or small, will be able to join. Initial membership will be based on signing up to the '6 Key Principals'.</p> <p>If a member business or organisation would like to initiate, or participate in, a project run through the Alliance, the relationship would be managed through individually agreed MOUs setting out the expectations of the company, the contribution of the member and relationship that exists between the member and the company.</p> <p>There would be no regular face to face meetings associated with the company, all communication would be carried out online. The directors would meet virtually to discuss business matters and support the co-ordinator. AGMs and voting would also be carried out online.</p>
The Portal	<p>In order to increase communication efficiency across a geographically wide and diverse sector, there is a need to find a user friendly solution to simplify sharing information and initiate discussion on relevant topics quickly. This could be achieved through a central online Portal where everybody in the Alliance can access all the relevant information, communications and documents in one place. This central Portal would be an easy way to stay up to date and reference with relevant news, increase communication between stakeholders, and ensure easy access to key documents and reports.</p> <p>Within the Portal an online discussion forum could bring together everybody who has joined the Alliance (government, practitioners, authorities, and conservationists) and allow for an open discussion on any topic which would be beneficial. This would include a space where participants can ask questions, discuss projects, issues, and opportunities which will help bond everybody within the Alliance. Such a space will help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disseminate and archive knowledge and best practice• Bring all interested stakeholders into the conversation• Increase transparency within and outside the sector• Avoid projects being duplicated or developed in silos <p>The Portal could also be supported by traditional communication plans and face to face networking opportunities such as the quarterly email update or an annual conference.</p>

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Background	<p>Within the past two years the following major reports and consultations have been undertaken within the outdoor sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• April 2014: Report on “the Economic Impact of Outdoor Activity Tourism in Wales” (Miller Consulting for WG)• November 2014: NRW commissioned a scoping study: ‘Towards an all-Wales Approach to Interpreting Natural, Historic and Cultural Heritage through outdoor activity’ (Snowdonia-Active).• October 2015: WATO and TOP, together with key individuals establish Six Key Principles aligned to the seven goals of the Well-being for Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.• February 2016: NRW, Sport Wales (SW) & Visit Wales (VW) hosted the ‘Inspiring Through Adventure Conference’ (ITAC) at Plas Menai.• March 2016: 50+ Key Stakeholders & Partners officially launched the Six Key Principles and the Natural Health & Enterprise Report at the Senedd, Cardiff.• July 2016: NRW contracted WATO and TOP report on the potential for ‘Creating an effective outdoor sector network in Wales’.• September 2016: Three regional consultation events were held – Over 90 participants attended.• November 2016: A national key stakeholder event was held in Newport with 26 attendees
Business Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welsh government aims to allow 60% of the population to visit the outdoors more often as a major contributor to improving health and well-being in Wales.• The Outdoor Sector in Wales mainly comprises a multitude of micro businesses. The sector agrees that by working together a greater combined benefit can be derived from “outdoor recreation” than the sum of the individual parts.• The sector feels its profile is lacking due to the disparate nature of the sector. By working together the sector feels it can demonstrate more effectively its real contribution across several platforms including economic, social, health and culture.• The sector has no clear lines of internal or external communication. This presents a confusing image to those outside the sector. Hence policy and decision making is confused – one solution often giving rise to a problem elsewhere.• Due to the ‘adventurous’ nature of the sector there is a need for a common safety code and CPD structure to add to the credibility of the sector.

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Business Aims	Strategic Objectives	Well-being Goals
<p>Partnership: We seek to capitalise on the contribution made by the outdoor sector to the economy, health and environment in Wales - working across the sector, with Welsh Government and other organisations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. We will create a coherent outdoor sector alliance that is capable of delivering closer working within the sector, coordinate & prioritise future development and enables the public sector to communicate effectively with those providing outdoor adventure opportunities. 1.2. We will use this alliance to build relationships between public, private and 3rd Sector organisations to co-create new ideas and programmes and influence cross-sector awareness of the benefits the outdoors can bring to health, wellbeing and social justice. 1.3. We will promote the equitable use of our outdoor spaces for all people to enjoy, embrace and be active in, including better outdoor recreation infrastructure. 	<p>A globally responsible Wales</p>
<p>Economy: We aim to ensure that the outdoor sector is present in long term strategies contributing to a thriving rural economy in Wales</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 We will identify outdoor adventure tourism USPs for Wales as a whole and innovative products that can be delivered locally and support these businesses and initiatives to maximise their success. This includes supporting the ‘Year’s of campaigns in order to raise Wales’ status in the ‘Adventure Capital’ race. 2.2 We will benchmark outdoor adventure in Wales against global best practice to make a strong evidence based case for the economic value of outdoor adventure activities. 2.3 We will engage with other partners, including local authorities, to develop and implement a Partner Delivery Plan that will attract investment in community based outdoor adventure and use ‘on the doorstep’ opportunities to increase the outdoor tourism season. 	<p>A prosperous Wales</p>

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Business Aims	Strategic Objectives	Well-being Goals
<p>Natural Resilience: We aim to increase understanding and care of nature to build ecological resilience</p>	<p>3.1 We will develop and promote common approaches to setting environmental operating standards and business models that represent good practice in sustainability.</p> <p>3.2 We will consider the capacity of the environment to ensure that it can cope with demands placed upon it and in doing so find ways of working that will reduce the impact of the sector’s activity on both a site and landscape level.</p> <p>3.3 We will use the outdoor sectors continual engagement with the public to help educate them about Sustainable Natural Resource Management and personal actions that will reduce their impact on the environment.</p>	<p>A resilient Wales</p>
<p>Health and Wellbeing: We aim to inspire a generational change towards more active, healthy living</p>	<p>4.1 We will promote closer working between the health and outdoor sectors, including promoting health related fitness through outdoor activities and pulling together existing evidence that substantiates claims that physical activity in general, and outdoor activity in particular, generate significant health benefits.</p> <p>4.2 We will support the creation and piloting of products that can be prescribed by GPs that will help inactive young people increase participation in physical outdoor activities. This will include training and CPD for instructors on health and wellbeing promotion and engaging with hard to reach communities.</p> <p>4.3 We will create standard pathways of progression in physical outdoor activities, considering possible agreed routes from first experiences through to life-long participation to help get ‘more people more active more often’. This will also include understanding and promoting the role of community groups, volunteers and employment in the continuum.</p>	<p>A healthier Wales</p> <p>A more equal Wales</p> <p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</p>

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Business Aims	Strategic Objectives	Well-being Goals
<p>Education: We seek to harness the skills learned through outdoor experiences to create benefits to Welsh communities, education and businesses</p>	<p>5.1 We will develop a more joined up approach to the training and CPD of outdoor instructors, to ensure they have the skill and resources to deliver appropriate messages on environment, cultural heritage and sustainability to their clients, including a greater capacity to deliver these in Welsh. This will include a full audit of the current CPD and training offer.</p> <p>5.2 We will seek to influence the development of the national curriculum to encourage greater use of the outdoors as a means of delivering learning and help more people be active from an early age. This includes exploring a change in perspective on risk, choice and responsibility.</p> <p>5.3 We will work towards better integration between National Governing Body qualifications and government sponsored apprenticeships schemes.</p>	<p>A Wales of cohesive communities</p>
<p>Sustainability: We seek opportunities that prove that transformative, sector-scale change to sustainable working is possible</p>	<p>6.1 We will use the unique skill set of the outdoor sector to identify exemplar activity and new approaches to personal development (leadership, communication, team building & problem solving) that can be used to encourage positive behaviour change.</p> <p>6.2 We will work with the public sector and academic institutions to identify current gaps in knowledge, develop the evidence base of the public benefits the sector can deliver on and find a common approach to monitoring change in the sector.</p> <p>6.3 We will develop global links to organisations with similar experience and ambition that will help establish Wales as world leader in practice that drives social and environmental benefit using outdoor & adventure experiences.</p>	<p>A globally responsible Wales</p>

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Deliverables	How	By Whom	Principal	By When
1. Establish a Structure	Use the recommendations of this business plan to establish a structure / constitution for the Alliance	Policy – Government, Land Owners & Managers, Existing Forums; Activity – Key Stakeholders, Outdoor Businesses, 3 rd Sector	P1.1	Month 1-6
2. Establish the Membership	Identify key stakeholders and invite them to help establish the Alliance. Agree the process for application for membership.	Wales Outdoor Alliance Executive	P1.1	Month 1-6
3. Grow the Membership	Capitalise on establishing the membership, growing it at a manageable rate with those who want to be part of the Alliance	Wales Outdoor Alliance & Outdoor Practitioners.	P1.1	Month 1-24
4. Establish a Manifesto	Use the 6 guiding principles and strategic objectives (as outlined above) to agree a manifesto and work program for the Alliance.	Wales Outdoor Alliance & Outdoor Practitioners.	P1.1, P1.2, P1.3	Month 6-12
5. Establish an Operational Plan	Work with key partners and members to establish an operational plan using combined expertise to take the Alliance forward in a sustainable, cohesive and resilient manner	Wales Outdoor Alliance, Key Partners & Outdoor Practitioners	P3.1, P5.1, P5.2, P5.3, P6.1, P6.2, P6.3	Month 12-24
6. Identify current activity in the sector	Establish what is already happening in the sector in relation to the business aims and establish 1 pilot project to explore how the alliance can add value	Wales Outdoor Alliance, Key Partners & Outdoor Practitioners	P3.1, P5.1, P5.2, P5.3, P6.1, P6.2, P6.3	Month 12-24
7. Establish Political 'buy in'	Identify effective "decision makers" in the various policy platforms to endorse the role and objectives of the Alliance	Wales Outdoor Alliance	P1.2	Month 12-24

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Beneficiaries	<p>The primary beneficiary will be the general public of Wales and tourists to Wales who want information and access to the outdoors. By setting standards, advocacy and information the users and potential users of the outdoors will be empowered and confident to access the outdoors.</p> <p>The unique feature of this business is that the contributors will also be the beneficiaries because the primary aims of this business is to help, support, develop, inform and sustain the outdoor sector. Hence examples of how beneficiaries would benefit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity and education providers - <i>supplying information, advocacy and sourcing good practice.</i> • Outdoor activity clubs and volunteer groups - <i>highlighting good practice, guidance support and funding.</i> • Equipment manufacturing & retail - <i>identify what the sector needs.</i> • National Governing Bodies (NGB's) of sport and recreation - <i>support, sharing good practice, standards.</i> • Business and tourism associations - <i>advocacy; raising profile; development funding; setting standards.</i> • Training and qualifications organisations - <i>seeking common standards; CPD.</i> • Safety management organisations - <i>setting standards; visualising expectations; common goals.</i> • Landowner / land management organisations - <i>agreeing environmental standards; access issues.</i> • Local and national government agencies - <i>advising on policy; research simplifying communications</i>
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Gap analysis	<p>During the consultation process, a number of existing organisations and networks have been identified that must be paid heed of. They are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Access Forum Wales – This is a professional forum hosted by NRW that considers developments in access and provides guidance to Welsh Government and other public agencies. • Outdoor Recreation Network – A UK wide membership organisation that coordinates and collates research in outdoor recreation • Sport and Recreation Alliance – A UK national umbrella body for the national governing bodies of sport and recreation • Welsh Sports Association – A Wales umbrella body for the national governing bodies of sport and recreation • Outdoor Industries Association – International advocacy and research body for the outdoor industries • English Outdoors Council – English umbrella body for organisations that work with or deliver outdoor education <p>The main gap in these current structures are that none of the existing networks represent all outdoor sector organisations and businesses, irrespective of size or activity; develop cross sector projects to deliver against common goals, and be able to access funds to deliver them; communicate with outdoor activity providers across all activities and disciplines; and provide a method of negotiating and unifying the sectors 'voice' and delivering it effectively to government.</p>
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	Strengths		Weaknesses	
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy level representation with a unified voice • Effective mechanism for joint working • Public sector recognition • Not competing with other organisations • Collectively promote the benefits of outdoor recreation • A platform to achieve the recommendations from the ITAC • Better Advocacy • A Legacy for future generations • An organic progression from our current position 	Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be unable to draw down own funds if not constituted as a new entity • Potentially cost and time input from members • Potentially lack of consistent leadership • Could be viewed as a 'talking shop' • Could become a blocking point • Could slow process down if overloaded • Cost implications for set-up and ongoing running costs 	Weaknesses
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An alliance can be more flexible to suit the fluidity and nature of the outdoor sector • New networking opportunities • To share good practice • To raise the profile of the sector amongst decision makers within Welsh Government and other public sector bodies • Strengthen its relationship with other sectors (e.g. the health sector) 	Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of formal structure would result in poor or no management & leadership resulting in lack of innovation and enthusiasm to drive the network forward • The changing political landscape means the network would have to rebuild relationships within Welsh Government after elections and re-align priorities in line with WG (e.g. Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015) • BREXIT (e.g. decreasing funding streams) • 'Another Network' could result in no or little sector 'buy in' • No funding made available to sustain the network (e.g. ongoing administration costs) 	Threats
	Opportunities		Threats	

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Potential funding sources	<p>One of the key aims of the Alliance is to allow organisations from different parts of the sector to work together on projects and put in joint funding applications. The Alliance will facilitate these contracts applying a management fee to pay for staff and upkeep. Possible funding pots include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Business development grants because a unified sector with structure, support and information will give confidence for future business development and expansion. • National Lottery to support development of community groups • Charitable funding routes to support community based initiatives
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially the Alliance may operate on an unincorporated basis but consideration should be given in the medium to long term to become an incorporated entity to provide reassurance to potential investors and security for the company principals. • In the medium to long term, the Alliance should comprise a Not for Profit Limited Company registered with Companies House. • The Alliance Memorandum and Articles should have health and education aims. • It should comprise, initially, 7 directors, including a Chairman, who should all have role specific responsibilities (e.g. Governance, Health, Education, Economy/ Business, Skills, Participation. Finance). • Initially the company will need to determine structural issues accompanied by consultation with the sector and secure membership to generate a support core. • In the early stages and in order to keep costs down the Company should seek to identify and engage specialists within the sector to advise and undertake work programmes on behalf of the sector where those programmes are of direct interest to the organisations from which the specialists are drawn. • The relationship between members and the company will be through individually agreed MOUs setting out the expectations of the company; the contribution and relationship that exists between the member and the company.
Success Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A group of 'Trustees' who will help establish the Alliance as an independent entity over an agreed period of time. • An agreed structure of the alliance that allows it to apply for project funding for agreed initiatives. • A 'Membership' structure and 'membership' sign-up. • A financially viable Alliance as a result of its ability to deliver its role efficiently and effectively across Wales • Defined local - national communication channels including maintaining cooperative links with existing forums. • Defined links and lines of communication with government departments/agencies and major landowners. • Surprise collaborations amongst organisations that contribute to shaping future agendas • Identifiable advocacy champions that ensure the Alliance is consulted by Welsh Government on policies and legislation