

PARTNERIAETH AWYR-AGORED  
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**OUTDOOR PARTNERSHIP**

# Enhancing People's Lives Through Outdoor Activity



# 2022 CHAIR'S REPORT

The Outdoor Partnership (TOP) is a registered Charity, established in 2004 to improve opportunities for local people to achieve their potential through outdoor activity.

Each year the charity provides thousands of opportunities for people to engage with their natural resources through participation, social prescribing, volunteering, training and employability programmes, improving people's health, social and economic well-being.

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2022 has been another challenging year for our communities, our partner organisations and both the groups and individuals with whom we work as we move out of the Pandemic. There has however been much to celebrate and I hope this brief report manages to capture a flavour of the positive work that has taken place during the past 12 months.

We are grateful to all of our funders, sponsors, volunteers and stakeholders for their continued support. This has enabled us to continue working throughout the pandemic although it has necessitated adapting the ways in which we work.

Our thanks go to both employees and the partners of TOP who have given their time and expertise to help others during this difficult period.

*Collectively the charity has created 28,442 outdoor activity opportunities for local residents across Wales, Cumbria, Northern Ireland and Ayrshire as well as an influential role in a number of ground breaking national projects.*

## Community Development Programme

Led by our Outdoor Activity Development Officers in Anglesey, Conwy & Gwynedd, Mid Wales, Central South, Gwent, Swansea Bay, Ayrshire, Cumbria and Northern Ireland, aims to inspire children, young people and adults to take up outdoor activities as a life-long pursuit.

**13,707** (6507 adults and 7200 under 18's) took part in taster sessions and development programmes. A total of **198** community-based outdoor activity clubs were supported by our staff team, 8 of which are **NEW** and established by TOP.

**11938** are members of these clubs (adult males 4063; Junior males 2648; adult females 3068; junior females 2159)



## Volunteer Programme

Our volunteering project has expanded to all areas of Wales and UK regions through our new OADOs in the new regions, overseen and managed by our Volunteer Officer.

**379** volunteers attending National Governing Body Awards of which **86** were **NEW** to volunteering. In partnership with the Snowdonia Society, National Trust and the Snowdonia National Park Authority, the Outdoor Partnership has continued to support a volunteer programme to help manage visitor impacts.

The commitment of you, our volunteers is astounding. If the same contribution had to be purchased it would cost a minimum of £1.7m per annum.

## Pathways to Employment

Our employability programme saw a total of **264** young people attend weekly outdoor activity sessions including visits to local employers, trips outside of Wales (Scotland and Lake District) to help build their Mountain Leader Logbooks as well as attending pre-requisite and NGB courses. Again, this successful project which started in North Wales has been shared with our new officers in Mid and South Wales.

25 moved on to further learning and training

15 gained NGB Awards

13 moved on to volunteering in their local community

14 gained sustained employment as a result of their attendance on the programme





## 'This Girl's Adventure'

'This Girls Adventure' programme saw some new exciting projects start in 2021/22 with a total of **525** women and girls benefited from this project. Example of one of the projects 'The New Horizons' is a Sailing/ Adventure Sport Initiative – A partnership between Ocean Youth Trust (Scotland) and The Outdoor Partnership and RYA Cymru to address the inequalities in participation in the outdoor sector and specifically to begin to address a national shortage of female skippers in the boating world.

## Health and Wellbeing/ Social Prescribing programme

We were able to develop new Social Prescribing projects to improve people's mental and physical health and wellbeing. We have been working with new partners and social prescribers, in new areas across Wales and work with new target groups. We were able to develop and implement the successful pilot from North Wales in our four new regions across Wales, Ayrshire, Cumbria and Northern Ireland. A total of **105** people benefited from our social prescribing projects in 2021.



## Inclusive Adventure

Our project which engages with people with physical disabilities engaged with **1524** people with disabilities. One group that we helped establish in 2019 has now become a registered charity providing sailing and water sports opportunities for disabled people and their families throughout the spring/summer and land-based activities throughout autumn/winter.

We continue to offer advice where needed i.e., guidance on bilingualism and funding opportunities



## Our new 10 year Strategy

Teaching respect and care for our natural environment, TOP works to support the people of Wales and other UK areas to take up outdoor activities as a life-long pursuit. Its new strategy has defined its VISION for the next ten years of 'Enhancing people's lives through outdoor activity'. This VISION means enhancing people's physical and mental health and wellbeing, the economic return (including employment), the social value through outdoor activity, grassroots participation in outdoor activities.

## Our objectives

Seek to deliver generational change to encourage lifelong participation in outdoor activity and support the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Building capacity to support local participation, performance, skills development (first time experiences – through to long term sustainability and repeat activities) and employment of all ages

Enhancing the partner delivery model to develop the current framework across the rest of Wales and throughout the UK.

Development of quality products to provide enjoyable outdoor experiences.



The Outdoor Partnership is well placed to help divert people from the NHS improving peoples' mental health, increasing physical activity levels and reducing diseases such as obesity and diabetes.

TOP can create community cohesion by supporting existing and creating new community-based outdoor clubs and hubs and capitalise on the fantastic volunteer workforce that has evolved from this pandemic and ensure opportunities are inclusive to all.

### Our Priorities for the coming years ...

- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion by targeting underrepresented and disadvantaged groups
- Focus on disadvantaged young people
- Sustainable use of the environment and natural resources
- Improving people's mental and physical wellbeing
- Employability & education projects
- Shared learning & knowledge and good practice
- Tackling & breaking down barriers e.g., transport/social norms/EDI
- Volunteering – building capacity and community clubs and groups
- Develop an Outdoor Adventure Learning Framework to support and encourage schools in Wales to offer outdoor learning as part of the new National Curriculum for Wales
- Engage and recruit up to 4 new areas as part of the UK project
- Maintain and strengthen current areas of operation and secure future funding and engagement for long term sustainability and independence

### We're now almost 4 years into our 7 year UK Expansion project.

Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund the project currently works in Scotland, England and Northern Ireland to establish programmes which will inspire more people to regularly engage in healthy activities outdoors. In 2023 up to 4 new regions across the UK will be coming on board. The project is managed by our Programme Manager and supported by our Programme Support Officer, our Delivery Partners RPT Consulting and Aqua Marketing.

We are already seeing examples of sharing knowledge and good practice across all four home nations.

## FINAL WORDS....



Last year the charity's efforts to become a fully inclusive organisation were rewarded by becoming the first Third Sector organisation in Wales to be awarded the Disability Sport Wales Insport Silver Accreditation. We are currently on our journey towards Gold.

## THE NEXT STEPS...

I would like to thank our Chief Executive Officer, who is responsible for driving and leading the partnership strategically and operationally. Thanks to her and all the staff team on behalf of the Board for their tireless work. This year has been an exceptional challenge and they have proved to be an exceptional team.

Next year we will continue to look for opportunities to influence nationally and share our experience with other regions across Wales and the UK, without losing focus and the impact we have in the North of Wales. This pandemic has taught us all just how important it is that our communities access the outdoors, the importance of nature and the natural environment and that that we all could do with a little help with using it sensibly, safely and in a sustainable way.



**Our success is due to our Members, Volunteers, Trustees and our Staff Team.**

**DIOLCH YN FAWR - THANK YOU**