

Y BARTNERIAETH AWYR AGORED

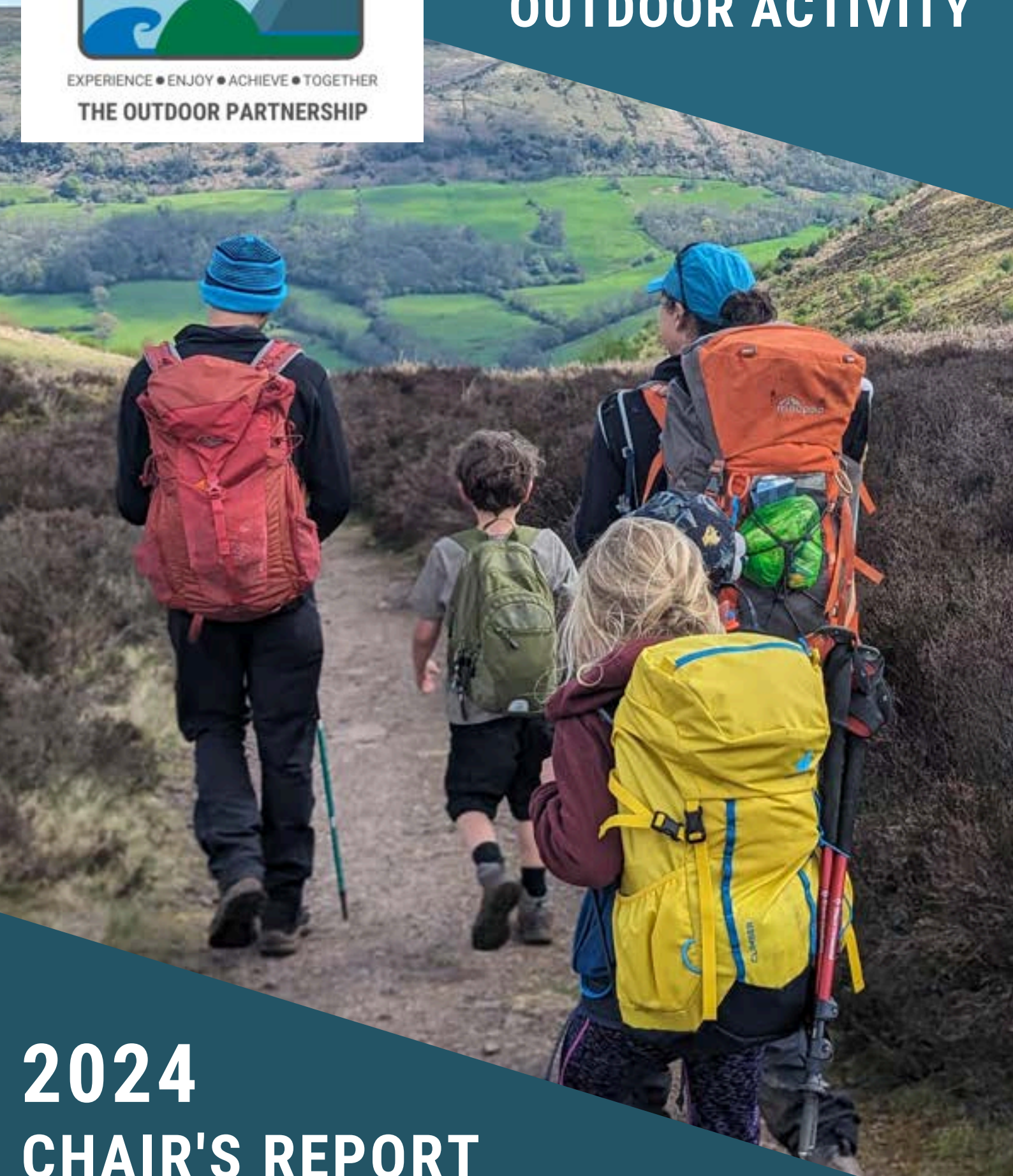
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THE OUTDOOR PARTNERSHIP

ENHANCING PEOPLE'S LIVES THROUGH OUTDOOR ACTIVITY



2024 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 enhances people's lives by providing thousands of opportunities for people to engage with their natural resources through participation, social prescribing, volunteering, training and employability programmes and improving people's health, social and economic well-being.

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There has been much to celebrate in 2023-2024 and it's been another successful year supporting our communities, our partner organisations and both the groups and individuals with whom we work. I hope this brief report manages to capture a flavour of the positive work that has taken place during the past 12 months.

In 2023/2024, over 21,000 people took part in a variety of outdoor activities for health, social and economic wellbeing across Wales, Sperrins AONB and South East Northern Ireland, Ayrshire, Cumbria, North Yorkshire, Plymouth and Coventry, 66% of which were from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

We are grateful to all our funders, sponsors, volunteers, and stakeholders for their continued support. Our thanks go to both employees and the partners and consultants of TOP who have given their time and expertise over the last twelve months.

Collectively the charity has created almost 22,000 outdoor activity opportunities for local residents across our 12 areas of operation as well as an influential role in a number of ground breaking national projects.

UK CORE PROGRAMMES IMPACT

April 2023 - March 2024

Total number of beneficiaries engaged and having direct benefit from our programmes

21,289



of which were from under-represented and disadvantaged groups

COMMUNITY COHESION

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Total number of participants attending taster sessions, come and try events etc.

11,048

6054 or 55%
of participants from under-represented, disadvantaged groups (e.g., ethnic minority, impaired, female identify gender another way)

CLUB DEVELOPMENT

Number of clubs members of TOP	69
Number of clubs accessing Coach Education funded by TOP	59
Total number of club members	7824



VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMME

Total number of volunteer leaders within clubs	1001
Number of NEW clubs established	2
Total number of volunteers receiving National Governing Body Awards (NGB)	252
Number of NEW volunteers receiving NGB awards	146
Number of females and other marginalized genders receiving NGB awards	109
Number of people from ethnic minority backgrounds receiving NGB awards	3



of people receiving NGB awards from disadvantaged and under-represented groups

SROI of £3million

of volunteer time in community-based outdoor activity clubs and groups



PATHWAYS TO EMPLOYMENT

Number of employability projects delivered	6
Number of people over 18 years of age participating	440
Number of people under 18 years of age participating	382
Total number of participants	822
Numbers of participants gaining National Governing Body (NGB) awards	130
Numbers of participants progressing to further learning and training	18
Numbers of participants progressing to volunteering	36
Numbers of participants progressing to full time employment	2



of participants progressing to further learning training, volunteering and employment

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Number of social prescribing projects delivered across the regions	32
Total number of beneficiaries	594
Number of people over 18 years of age participating	329
Number of people under 18 years of age participating	265

ADVENTURE LEARNING

The Outdoor Partnership's Adventure Learning Framework (TOP-ALF)

Number of schools engaged in pilot	12
Number of outdoor activity providers engaged	2
Number of teachers attending training courses	27



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

1175 opportunities taken up by young unpaid carers across Wales (AMSER Project), of which

724 were NEW to the Outdoor Partnership



of participants from under-represented, disadvantaged groups (e.g., ethnic minority, impaired, female identify gender another way)

FUNDING

Total amount of funding secured by the OADOs to delivery programmes, support clubs across the 12 regions

£686,850



SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT

For every £1 spent, there's added value of £7.12 through reduced health costs, economic benefit (Social Value Cymru June 2023)



1. Community Cohesion

The programme aims to inspire children, young people and adults to take up outdoor activities as a life-long pursuit. This year 6057 people benefited from the programme in a variety of targeted projects from taster sessions to competition level with 55% from under represented or disadvantaged groups.

Our development officers (OADOs) help establish new community-based outdoor activity clubs and groups, run courses, taster sessions and development programme, train volunteers, work with schools to create extra-curricular provision and exit routes into community clubs and groups, organise competitions with Secondary Schools and FE colleges and organise annual outdoor activity festivals and events.

For every £ invested in this programme there is £7.12 of social return on investment (Social Value Cymru, 2023).



2. Volunteer Programme

The aim is to recruit, deploy, retain and reward volunteers supporting the work of the Outdoor Partnership. The majority of volunteers support the extensive network of outdoor activity clubs in all our regions. The programme is supported by a full time Volunteer Officer. Activities include recruitment drives working closely with clubs, NGBs, FE and HE and Voluntary Services Councils to identify and deploy new volunteers; a well-established Coach Education programme providing volunteers with mentor support, NGB pre-requisite training, NGB qualifications and CPD including REC First Aid, Safeguarding and Inclusion training; recognition events to reward volunteers.

The commitment of you, our volunteers is astounding. If the same contribution had to be purchased it would cost a minimum of £3 million per annum.

3. Employability programme

This programme uses outdoor activities to engage and support long-term unemployed people, people with long term illness or disability, those living in poverty and people suffering mental ill-health on a pathway to employment. Participants are often accessing outdoor activities for the first time or looking to develop their personal and/or professional skills, leading to a more active lifestyle. The instructor / participant ratio is often low depending on the abilities and additional needs of the participants.

The programme has supported over 700 people back into sustained employment since 2010.





4. Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

Our EDI programme supports people of all ages, gender, creed, nationalities, orientation, and socio-economic circumstances to take up outdoor activities as a life-long pursuit.

The programme proactively engages with underrepresented and disadvantaged groups in all our regions of operation and addresses the barriers that exist to participation, particularly women and other marginalised genders, Global Majority communities, children, young people and adults with pan disabilities and economically deprived groups.

5. Health and Wellbeing programme

The Health and Wellbeing programme utilises existing structures to bring together a collaboration of partners from the outdoor and health sectors to increase physical activity levels, improve mental and physical health and provides links with local community clubs and groups enabling people to lead independent long term active lifestyles.

For every £ invested in this programme there is £5.36 of social return on investment (Bangor University, 2022) with improved mental wellbeing, confidence, social connection and overall health reported by participants.



6. Adventure Learning

We have been working with Gethin Môn Thomas, the Education sector and the wider outdoor sector in Wales to develop a strategic Adventure Learning Framework (TOP-ALF) in line with the new National Curriculum for Wales (2022).

The intention of the framework is to support schools in their decision making and include Adventure Learning as an integral part of the school's curriculum throughout the year. TOP-ALF is designed to provide learners with an opportunity to experience a variety of outdoor and adventurous activities over an extended period, the experiences are organised into on-site and off-site/residential activities.



Social media coverage

Our Social Media impact increased in 2023/24 to over 15,000 followers and over 5 million reach/impressions via Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter.

Our "This Girls Adventure" Facebook page now has over 1400 followers.



Social Value

We continue to embed Social Value within the organisation. Working with Mantell Gwynedd and Social Value Cymru we have been developing a training package including 'train the trainer' for all our internal staff and trustees and have developed a toolkit to go with the training package in 2024 so all our staff are now able to demonstrate the social value of their work within communities they operate in. We will be producing our first Social Impact Report in January 2025 with the support from Mantell Gwynedd.

In 2023 we worked in partnership with Mantell Gwynedd and Social Value Cymru to produce a Social Return on Investment evaluation of our work across Wales during 2022/23. (The Social Impact of Opening Doors to the Outdoors) which as you may have noted above demonstrated that for every £1.00 invested in our work in Wales during this period we returned a total of £7.12 to our participants lives.

Equity, diversity and Inclusion

We are striving towards achieving Gold INSPORT Accreditation and have committed to the UK wide 'Moving to Inclusion' framework to play our part in making the outdoor sector more diverse, inclusive and socially responsible.





Our 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.
- 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 exists in the sector and ensure opportunities are inclusive to all.

Our priorities for the coming years ...

- Equity, 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.
- Maintain and strengthen current areas of operation and secure future funding and engagement for long term sustainability and independence.
- Create stronger links with Sports Councils in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland (we are already recognised as a National Partner with Sport Wales).

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

**For further information on our programmes, our impact and insights please visit
<https://outdoorpartnership.co.uk/> or visit our social media platforms
<https://www.facebook.com/OutdoorPartnership/>
<https://www.instagram.com/paa.top/>
@PAA_TOP**

FINAL WORDS....



A total of 21,289 people engaged and benefited from our programmes last year, 66% of which were from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

THE NEXT STEPS...

I would like to thank our Chief Executive Officer, who is responsible for driving and leading the Charity strategically and operationally. Thanks to her and all the staff team on behalf of the Board for their tireless work. This year has been another exceptional year 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 our regions across Wales and the UK, without losing focus and the impact we have in the North of Wales. Our work 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, Consultants and our dedicated and committed Staff Team.

DIOLCH YN FAWR - THANK YOU