

Strategaeth Partneriaeth Hamdden Awyr Agored Gogledd Orllewin Cymru

North West Wales Outdoor Recreation Partnership Strategy

Our Vision

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

Our Mission

To improve opportunities for more local people in North West Wales to achieve their potential through outdoor activities.

Organisations that have contributed to the Partnership and this Strategy document include:

Sports Council for Wales, Plas Menai, Plas y Brenin, Canolfan Conway Centre, N E Wales Outdoor Education Service, Nant Bwlch yr Haearn Outdoor Education Centre, Mountain Leader Training Wales, Snowdonia -Active, Camre Cymru-Outlook Expeditions, University of Wales Bangor, Cyngor Gwynedd, Anglesey County Borough Council and Conwy County Borough Council, The Countryside Council for Wales and the Gwynedd Local Health Board.

Contents

1.0 Introduction	Page 3
2.0 The Case for Outdoor Education, Outdoor Recreation and Outdoor Pursuits	Page 5
2.1 A Unique Natural Environment.	
2.2 Economic impact	
2.3 The Cultural Context	
2.4 Health and Well Being	
2.5 Education and Life Long Learning	
2.6 Sports Development Structures	
2.7 Why North West Wales?	
3.0 The Current Position	Page 10
3.1 Participation Levels	
3.2 Volunteering in Sport	
3.3 Outdoor Activity Volunteering and the Governing Body Role	
3.4 Employment and Training	
3.5 Current Role of Outdoor Activity Providers	
3.6 Current Levels of Provision by Primary and Secondary Schools in NW Wales	
3.7 Health and Physical Activity Levels	
4.0 Priority Areas for Action	Page 14
4.1 Foundation Level Opportunities	
4.2 Participation Level Opportunities	
4.3 Achieving Your Potential (Performance and Excellence)	
4.4 Increased Support for Voluntary Base	
4.5 Increased Levels of Employment of Local People	
4.6 Outdoor Education Provision	
5.0 Implementation of the Strategy	Page 15
5.1 Dedicated Outdoor Activity Development Posts	
5.2 North West Wales Outdoor Club	
Appendices	Page 17
Appendix 1. Case Study – Clwb Antur Dyffryn Peris	
Appendix 2: Case Study -“Rwsters” Llanrwst	
Appendix 3: Case Study -Partnership Proposals between the Conway Centre and the Isle of Anglesey County Council	
Appendix 4: The Development Model	
Appendix 5: Sports Council for Wales Statistics	
Appendix 6: Research carried out on behalf of the partnership by the School for Business and Regional Development, University of Wales- Bangor	
Appendix 7: Attendees and Contributors to the Plas Menai Seminar (12/7/04)	
References	Page 32

1.0 Introduction

The North West Wales Outdoor Recreation Partnership was formed at the beginning of 2004 following the Welsh Assembly Governments Sports Summit to bring together key stakeholders within the outdoor recreation sector with the primary aim of exploring ways of widening access to outdoor recreation by local people in the region.

It was felt that the Welsh Assembly “Better Wales” and “Climbing Higher” strategies provided an excellent and timely platform on which to build a successful initiative.

The vision of “an active, healthy and inclusive Wales, where sport, active recreation and physical activity provide a common platform for participation, fun and achievement, which binds communities and the nation and where the outstanding environment of Wales is used sustainably to enhance confidence in ourselves and our place in the world” provided in “Climbing Higher” emphasised this synergy

Recent legal changes in terms of access arrangements also provide a timely opportunity. A real challenge lies in ensuring that these areas are truly accessible to and well used by local people.

North West Wales was defined as the three local authority areas of Gwynedd, Conwy and Mon. The reasoning behind this was that the three local authority areas shared many common characteristics, challenges and opportunities.

All three local authority areas have a wealth of natural resources appropriate for use in terms of outdoor recreation. They all have a well-developed outdoor sector catering mainly for tourists and educational visitors from outside the region. They share common cultural and linguistic characteristics. They share a commitment to bilingual provision. They also have a significant number of rural communities, which are currently facing severe economic and social challenges. It was felt that these communities could benefit considerably from the outdoor sector if access was widened.

A series of meetings were convened to explore the level of commitment to the proposal and also to see if there was sufficient common ground to move forward in a pro-active manner.

The agencies represented at these and subsequent meetings of the partnership include Sports Council for Wales, Plas Menai, Plas y Brenin, Canolfan Conway Centre, N E Wales Outdoor Education Service, Nant Bwlch yr Haearn Outdoor Education Centre, Mountain Leader Training Wales, Snowdonia -Active, Camre Cymru-Outlook Expeditions, University of Wales Bangor, Cyngor Gwynedd, Anglesey County Borough Council and Conwy County Borough Council. The Countryside Council for Wales and the Local Health Boards have also been invited more recently to contribute to the project.

Although the above list is not exhaustive it was felt that it represented the sector appropriately but also provided a manageable group which could be effective in producing change.

Early on it became clear that there was a genuine desire to bring about positive change and that the agencies involved shared a common understanding of the nature of the problem, action required and the benefits that would be accrued socially, culturally, economically and in health terms.

On this basis it was agreed that we should try to move the agenda forward through research, consultation and ultimately the production of a strategy.

The University of Wales Bangor on behalf of the partnership has carried out primary research and we have also drawn upon relevant reports produced by other agencies including Sports Council for Wales, Snowdonia Active and the British Medical Association.

The consultation process included the hosting of a successful half-day seminar at Plas Menai in July 2004. Over 60 delegates attended representing a wide range of organisations involved in health, environment, education and training, leisure and sports development as well as the outdoor activity sector. The seminar provided the partnership with an opportunity to present some key principles and objectives and also to gather opinions and suggestions from the delegates. (A full list of delegates can be found in Appendix 7).

On the basis of this process of research and consultation we now present a long term strategy with associated shorter term action plans which we believe addresses the relevant issues relating to widening access to the outdoors by local people in North West Wales.

2.0 The Case for Outdoor Education, Outdoor Recreation and Outdoor Pursuits

2.1 A Unique Natural Environment.

The mountains, hills, crags, rivers, lakes and sea of North Wales provide world class outdoor venues. There is good access and short travelling distances to local centres of population.

Wales has a unique and valued natural environment with huge potential to contribute in a sustainable way to the overall well being of its people.

In North West Wales the mountains of Snowdonia, coasts of Conwy, Llŷn and Ynys Mon, its rivers, lakes and forests are sources of inspiration and challenge to many visitors, but only in a limited to manner to its local communities.

A new Countryside Code launched in July 2004, under the banner **Respect – Protect –Enjoy**, seeks to encourage people to visit the countryside for recreation and pleasure. In May 2005 the introduction of the right of access to open country will be implemented. This will provide over 125,00ha. of newly mapped open country and common land for public enjoyment in North West Wales. In addition the Forestry Commission will be dedicating up to 24,000 ha. of its forest for recreation.

Learning to Live Differently, the Welsh Assembly Government's Strategy for Sustainable Development, points the way to the potential synergy between active recreation and the environment. We need to enthuse and inform our young people about the outdoors and help them share in its special sense of place.

Climbing Higher, has at least three aims and interim targets in its strategy appropriate for our initiative. Aim 1 seeks by 2012 to have 45% of adults up to the age of 65 participating in at least moderate –intensity physical activity for 30 minutes five times a week. Aim 12 seeks by 2007 that the percentage of people in Wales using the natural environment for outdoor activities will increase to 45%. Aim 13 seeks a traffic-free footpath, jogging trail or cycle path within a ten-minute walk for people in Wales. Other elements of the strategy on social inclusion, health and economy are also relevant to us.

Our strategy can contribute positively to the *Climbing Higher* Action Plan to deliver these aims, working in partnership of ASPBs, local authorities, outdoor centres, local communities and voluntary bodies.

2.2 Economic impact

The outdoor industry was recently benchmarked at contributing £140 million to the local economy (Snowdonia-Active, 'The Active Economy' 2004) and WTB figures indicate that the tourism sector as a whole may have grown by as much as 15% over the previous 12 months.

The Adventurous Outdoor Industry has the capacity to deliver jobs that few other sectors are capable of, i.e. healthy, sustainable and well paid jobs in the countryside.

At a time when traditional countryside jobs particularly those in agriculture, forestry and fishing etc are facing more and more threats, the outdoor activity industry is demonstrating increased participation levels and strong levels of employment.

For those wishing to remain in their communities whilst working outdoors the industry represents one of the few opportunities so to do without having to embark on a career within an area of decline.

Unfortunately there is at present a low level of participation within the sector by young Welsh speaking people. The result of this is that there are few Welsh speaking instructors and front line staff employed by outdoor businesses. Recent research carried out on behalf of the partnership has shown that just 4% of instructors and 22% of managers in outdoor centres are fluent Welsh speakers compared with 58% of support staff. Although support workers carry out a vital and valued role within the sector it is important to note that generally instructional and managerial posts are better paid and require higher-levels of experience and qualifications. The research indicates that the region is currently failing to capitalise on these employment opportunities in any significant way.

2.3 The Cultural Context

It is crucial that local communities are able to contribute to, benefit from and ultimately shape the future of this significant sector of our rural economy.

The UWB research carried out on behalf of the partnership clearly shows that the sector has largely been developed by people who have moved into the region. A small minority of outdoor centre managers were educated in the region and fewer still are fluent Welsh speakers.

If local people do not contribute positively to the sector we face a number of significant issues, some of which are already in evidence:

- ❑ The Anglicisation of Welsh place names – lack of local involvement means that many original names for ridges, valleys and streams will be lost or mutated into versions more easily repeated by visitors.
- ❑ The missed opportunity of enriching the experience of “outdoor” visitors to NW Wales by presenting the local culture, language and heritage in a positive way.
- ❑ An increased feeling of alienation from local people who see their local areas being used for leisure purposes by tourists and yet feel that they have no control or involvement in the sector. This may be particularly acute amongst young people.

We are currently facing a cultural vicious circle. Low levels of participation in outdoor activities traditionally mean that today’s generation of teachers and parents are less likely to encourage participation in the younger generation. Parental influence or the influence of teachers is crucial in determining participation in outdoor activities as they are generally less accessible in comparison with other sports such as football. These young people grow up uninvolved in the sector and possibly with a negative view of it. They will be unable to access employment in the sector due to lack of experience/ qualifications. They will grow up to become parents and teachers and the

cycle will go on. The lack of Welsh medium provision within the sector is also reproduced in this way.

We can compare this pattern with that of cultural activities such as music and drama which are strongly encouraged and supported within rural communities in NW Wales. There is a strong tradition of participation, which is passed from generation to generation.

Positive action must be taken in terms of outdoor activities if this cycle is to be broken.

The region has produced over the years a small group of highly successful individuals. We as a region should be immensely proud of people such as Eric Jones and Richard Tudor and should do more to utilise individuals such as these as positive role models for the next generation of local mountaineers and sailors. As will always be the case some highly motivated individuals will succeed in their chosen fields despite the lack of co-ordinated opportunities. The challenge is to utilise positive role models to demonstrate to our young people that it is possible to achieve great things and that the outdoors belongs to them and not just to visitors to our region.

2.4 Health and Well Being

The natural environment of NorthWest Wales provides an unparalleled opportunity for local people to participate in health-promoting outdoor activities. Outdoor activities develop cardio-vascular fitness and reduces hypertension. Being more physically active helps tackle major diseases associated with a sedentary lifestyle, including heart disease and diabetes, both of which are issues of concern here in North Wales. In addition to the physical health benefits, participation in increased levels of physical activity within the natural environment can have a positive impact on mental health and well being and is an excellent way to improve social integration and reduce social isolation.

Each of the Local Authority areas in NW Wales are currently developing their respective Health, Social Care and Well Being strategies under the auspices of their respective multi disciplinary HSCWB Partnership Boards. A 'Needs Assessment' undertaken to support the development of this strategy in each county identified similarly low levels of participation in 'health enhancing' physical activity on a par with the Wales average, where 72% of the adult population do not do the minimum recommended 30 minutes a day, at least five days a week, needed to confer health benefits. These strategies also identify priority target groups, settings and diseases in each county, and acknowledge that inactivity is an important determinant of poor health.

In contrast to traditional sports where accumulated sports injuries tend to curb participation by mid-life, outdoor activities such as walking and water sports are relatively low-impact and can be enjoyed late into life. If introduced to young people during their school years, these activities offer the possibility for local people to lead active, healthy lives from early childhood to old age. It is this life-long involvement in active outdoor recreation that presents a significant opportunity to positively influence the health of local people. With minimal participation costs beyond equipment and

transport, these activities are potentially accessible to people from across the socio-economic spectrum.

Integrating opportunities for participation in outdoor activities with existing provision for the population presents considerable scope for added value. The Healthy Schools Project operating in schools throughout the region may wish to explore how they might utilise the activities available in the natural environment to enhance what they can offer school children, their teachers and their parents/guardians. Where health professionals currently refer individuals for activity sessions in a Local Authority fitness room, it may be worth considering how they might refer to an outdoor activity centre. We need to get more people, more active, more often in NW Wales to both prevent the onset of ill health and recover after a health problem, and what better way to achieve this than by using the natural resources we have around us.

2.5 Education and Life Long Learning

Outdoor Education and activities are particularly effective in promoting active, healthy living, raising self-esteem and developing the ability of participants to overcome personal challenge and work co-operatively with others. Within lifelong learning, the development of these vital life skills has relevance to young and old alike. Within the formal educational Curriculum, they contribute directly to the development of Personal and Social Education and the wider Key Skills that sit at the heart of the *Learning Pathways* 14-19 Education strategy and the Welsh Baccalaureate.

Exciting activities and inspiring environments combine to ensure that Outdoor Education is a powerful motivational tool for engaging people in learning and personal development. Teachers report positive effects on standards of achievement for pupils of all academic abilities on return to the classroom. Participants return home buzzing with experiences and memories that will last and positively influence their development into the future.

2.6 Sports Development Structures

North West Wales has one of the highest concentrations of outdoor sports development structures in the UK.

- The National Governing Bodies for canoeing, sailing and mountaineering in Wales are all based in North West Wales and promote personal proficiency and coaching qualifications in outdoor activities.
- The area has a structure of canoeing, sailing, mountaineering, mountain biking, orienteering, skiing, water-skiing and rowing clubs. Many of these clubs however struggle to accommodate significant numbers of novices and young beginners.
- Organisations such as Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Scouts, Guides, Cadets and local youth clubs provide some introductory level outdoor experiences.
- Sports Councils' National Centres such as Plas Menai, Plas Y Brenin and Canolfan Tryweryn, all organise proficiency and coach education programmes in outdoor activities.

2.7 Why North West Wales?

The region is unique in terms of location and opportunity factors. There is a large untapped potential, which if appropriately utilised can bring about significant change. However a regional strategy produced and fine tuned here in North West Wales could ultimately be used as a model for increasing participation across Wales. The location and opportunity factors include:

- ❑ A high density of qualified, experienced outdoor leaders resident in the region.
- ❑ There are more fully equipped, AALA licensed outdoor centres in NW Wales than in any other part of the UK
- ❑ The local infrastructure is well established and documented (guide books, cycle maps, transport)
- ❑ There are already established key partners committed to delivering change (National Centres, LEA Centres, Clubs)

3.0 The Current Position

3.1 Participation Levels

Sports Council for Wales surveys measure participation in sport amongst the general participation and gather evidence on participation in outdoor activities.

The partnership feels however that more work needs to be done in refining current methodology to accurately assess how many people take part on a regular basis rather than as a one off activity. Improved data collection would provide a meaningful tool in which to track the progress of this initiative. Over the coming months, the partnership will be working with UWB to develop a possible methodology and gather base line statistics.

SCW statistical evidence indicates only a small percentage of the population of Wales/ North Wales participates in sport, and even fewer are engaged in outdoor activities. (See Appendix 5 for statistics)

Most recent surveys indicate a latent demand of 4.8% of the 7-11 year old population, 14.1% of the 11-16 year old population and 25.6% of the adult North Wales population wanting more opportunity to participate in outdoor activities.

3.2 Volunteering in Sport

Other than the elite sector, the fabric of sport in Wales is founded on the voluntary sector. A minority of coaches, instructors and administrators enable the majority to pursue their chosen sport. These voluntary structures are fundamental to the development and use of our natural environment.

Current volunteering levels in Wales across all sports according to SCW statistics are

All Wales	2.3 %
North Wales	3.3 %
Conwy	2.2 %
Gwynedd	3.6 %
Mon	2.6 %

As overall levels are generally low it can be safely assumed that very small numbers are currently involved in a voluntary capacity in outdoor activities within NW Wales.

3.3 Outdoor Activity Volunteering and the Governing Body Role

The Welsh Canoeing Association, Mountain Leader Training Wales and the Welsh Yachting Association are well placed and prepared to support volunteers acting within local communities.

The British Mountaineering Council and associated clubs are also committed to this strategy.

Mountain Leader Training UK is prepared to help establish training networks to enable experienced participants to provide instruction on a voluntary basis.

3.4 Employment and Training

Adventurous Outdoor Activities presently support at least 8,400 jobs in Gwynedd Conwy and Mon, this represents almost 6% of all employment in the region. (Snowdonia-Active, 'The Active Economy' 2004)

These jobs come in a wide variety of forms and are not limited to instructional / training jobs. Outdoor centres have requirements for management, housekeeping, cooking, maintenance and accountancy jobs. Outdoor freelancers and centres use the services of web designers and leaflet creators etc for their marketing. Outdoor visitors need somewhere to stay, eat and shop creating the related jobs in accommodation, hospitality and retail, all directly related to the sector and depending on it for trade.

The sector itself needs a certain amount of governance with NGBs, professional and trade bodies for all the disciplines. A very large proportion of professional training and assessment takes place in the region leading to a high standard of provider specialising in training other instructors. There is a healthy outdoor journalism trade with writers, photographers, film makers, designers, editors etc providing informational and entertainment material for the outdoor user. Finally the users and centres require a large amount of technical clothing and equipment, a proportion of which is produced locally with jobs in engineering, technical design, sales, marketing and management etc.

Alongside this are a number of jobs in support sectors and countryside management sectors that have developed to meet or manage the demand of outdoor users, jobs such as Warden posts in the National Park and National Trust. There are also outdoor activity related jobs in Local Government, the CCW, Environment Agency, WTB, Sports Council, HE & FE Colleges.

There are some training opportunities currently available through Further Education Colleges and Outdoor Centres in terms of trainee posts. Unfortunately due to low general participation levels amongst local young people few have the necessary background to apply for these opportunities. Local education and training providers could benefit from this strategy and work together to provide a coherent pathway for young people wishing to work within the sector.

3.5 Current Contribution of Outdoor Activity Providers

There are 35 residential providers of outdoor activities for children & adults in North West Wales. There are 15 non-residential providers of outdoor activities for children. There are 30 other individual providers of leader & coach training for potential group leaders.

Research was carried out by the University of Wales Bangor into current levels of provision by local outdoor centres for young people living in NorthWest Wales. (For full details and results please see Appendix ?)

The sample was based on the Adventurous Activity Licensing Authority Database and therefore covered public, private and voluntary sector providers working with children and young people. It should be noted that many local authorities outside of NorthWest Wales have chosen the region for their outdoor education programmes because of the

outstanding natural environment offered. Of the 50 providers surveyed only 1 is owned and managed by a North Wales LEA.

70% of the centres involved made some provision for local young people, however only 30% provide on a regular basis i.e. weekly or monthly. The remainder are providing on a one off / once a year basis.

When asked if they would like to increase their provision to the local community, 89% of centres answered positively. The main barriers identified were lack of demand from local schools/ groups (88%), lack of funding (61%) and lack of local contacts/ community links (61%).

The survey also gathered data relevant to the social and linguistic characteristics of the staff employed within the outdoor activity organisations. The sector provides a substantial number of jobs within generally rural communities. The vast majority of those employed in managerial and instructional aspects (74% and 93% respectively) are imported from outside the region. The only aspect in which the region makes a significant input is in terms of support staff i.e. catering, cleaning and administration. These are generally occupations requiring lower levels of qualifications and are therefore generally low paid.

The linguistic capability of the staff employed further reinforces this picture with only 4% of permanent instructional staff being fluent Welsh speakers. It is important to remember that many of these organisations are operating in the traditional heartland of the Welsh language. 78% of the organisations stated that they would like to employ more Welsh-speaking staff.

3.6 Current Levels of Provision by Primary and Secondary Schools in NW Wales (See Appendix 6 for full details)

3.6.1 Secondary School Findings

61% of secondary schools in the region currently provide some outdoor activity experience for their pupils.

In terms of frequency of provision only 22% of secondary schools made regular provision i.e. weekly or monthly. 39% are therefore providing on a once a year basis and a further 39% make no provision whatsoever.

100% of respondents said that they would like to increase their provision. When asked what the barriers were to increasing provision currently the schools responded as follows lack of finance to buy assistance or equipment, lack of time within the curriculum, safety worries/ high level of responsibility and lack of transport.

100% of schools believed that their pupils benefited from an involvement in outdoor activities. The teachers involved demonstrated a sound understanding of the potential benefits. The main benefits cited were self-confidence, team-work/ social skills, environmental awareness and the development of a life long past time.

3.6.2 Primary School Findings

71% of primary schools responding claimed to make some outdoor recreation provision. This figure should be treated with some caution due to the fact that it became clear in some questionnaires responses that head teachers were re-defining “outdoor activities” and broadening the meaning to include physical education outdoors rather than those activities with an adventurous nature which we identified early on in the questionnaire.

Of those providing 35% made provision during school hours, 15% made extra curricular provision and 53% provided during residential visits. There is a clear tendency to make the vast majority of provision to year 5 & 6 pupils.

In terms of frequency of provision, only 6% of schools made regular provision. The remaining 65% make one off annual provision.

84% of primary schools said that they would like to increase their provision. The main barriers to increased provision were lack of time within the curriculum, safety concerns/ responsibility, lack of finance, lack of expertise within the school and lack of transport.

Schools were also asked what would help them to provide more. The main factors noted were additional funding, access to qualified leaders/ outdoor centres, training for teachers, transport, volunteers and help with risk assessments etc.

100% of schools believed that participation in outdoor activities would benefit their pupils. The most significant benefits cited were teamwork, health/ fitness, self-confidence, and environmental awareness/ “adnabod cynefin”.

3.7 Health and Physical Activity Levels

In 1998 only 28% of the adult population in Wales exercised enough to meet health Benefit recommendations (Wellbeing in Wales 2002).

Obesity is rising in Wales. Clear links have been made between obesity, diet, life style and lack of exercise. There are also well recognised links between obesity, coronary heart disease and type 2 diabetes .

The population in Wales is ageing, resulting in increased pressure on primary care services – these services may not be affordable in the long term.

4.0 Priority Areas for Action

4.1 Foundation Level Opportunities

The provision of appropriate opportunities to gain first experiences of outdoor activities. These may include taster sessions aimed at particular target groups e.g. young people, girls, families etc. These opportunities must be closely linked to ongoing, sustainable opportunities at the next level.

4.2 Participation Level Opportunities

The provision of new club based outdoor recreation opportunities across the entire region. These opportunities must be appropriate, of high quality, accessible and sustainable

The opportunities should be available to children, young people and adults. Family involvement would be especially welcomed and facilitate the delivery of the strategy. A medium to long term aim would be to ensure the availability of bilingual provision. This should occur naturally as local participation increases.

4.3 Achieving Your Potential (Performance and Excellence)

Identification of appropriate opportunities through partnership for individuals to progress to higher levels of performance, competition and leadership if they so wish. This could also involve registration with appropriate governing bodies and higher level training and assessment opportunities.

4.4 Increased Support For Voluntary Base

Appropriate Recruitment, Retention, Training and Support mechanisms put into place to facilitate the development of the network.

Existing clubs and governing bodies could be used to access potential volunteers.

4.5 Increased Levels of Employment of Local People

Identification of a system which allows local people through participation, experience, skills and qualification to access employment within the sector.

The Careers Service and local education and training providers will need to ensure coherent pathways for some of the young people produced by the initiatives outlined above.

4.6 Outdoor Education Provision

To establish targets within the Education Plan of each of the three local authorities to increase and strengthen current levels of provision e.g. increased frequency of provision and involvement in schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

5.0 Implementation of the Strategy

The Partnership will create structures, which allow the existing physical and human resources to be used to maximum effect. We will do this by providing professional support, which will co-ordinate the work of the partners and at the same time establish a sustainable volunteer network. This will increase participation opportunities for all sectors of the community and provide clear pathways for progress in achieving potential.

5.1 Dedicated Outdoor Activity Development Posts

For maximum effect we believe that there needs to be an **Outdoor Activity Development Worker (OADW)** in each local authority area (i.e. Anglesey, Conwy and Gwynedd). We envisage that these OADWs will be employed by the local authorities and will meet regularly to share information and good practise.

They will report to a “Resource Co-ordinator” and be responsible for:

- Liasing with other OADWs
- Promoting outdoor activities to schools, youth groups and others.
- Actively developing and delivering programmes of outdoor activities.
- Establishing partnership networks between outdoor centres, activity providers, clubs, participants and others
- Supporting local outdoor clubs and community groups
- Creating networks of competent outdoor volunteers
- Communicating with local people to identify needs

In addition, the post of **Resource Co-ordinator** will be established by the Partnership. This will be a senior appointment with overall responsibility for the Partnerships’ outdoor programs and activities. They will report to the Partnership Steering Group and will have responsibility for:

- The co-ordination and supervision of the OADW’s work and work programmes
- Monitoring and evaluation of Partnership initiatives
- Establishing and supporting the NW Wales Outdoor Club
- Strategic planning
- Liasing with Local Authorities, WDA, WAG etc
- Budgets and financial performance

We estimate that the above posts will cost £150K per annum (3x £30K + 1 x £40K plus travel and project costs etc). We envisage that there may be some partnership “match” funding to support these posts. Appointments will be for an initial 3-year period and will be reviewed annually. Detailed budgets to be established by the Resource Co-ordinator.

5.2 North West Wales Outdoor Club

The model illustrates the inter-related factors involved with the development of a multi base club for outdoor activities in the three counties of Ynys Mon, Anglesey and Conwy. Activities will be provided at a number of outdoor centres or sports specific clubs on a regular basis using the expertise available locally. Thus a range of activities will be available to residents across the 3 counties with reasonable access.

Introduction to and membership of the club will start a continuum, which will allow members to develop their skills and achieve their potential within recognised sites, which can progress from general provision to “centres of development” and “centres of excellence”. Ultimately the club can provide a route to employment within the local outdoor industry.

Essential to the club will be the support by volunteers who, under the guidance of qualified instructors, can progress their knowledge through the recognised qualification structure provided by National Governing Bodies of Sport. Most often these qualifications and underpinning experience can be gained through club activities.

Each site will operate independently but within the overall structure of the club. Facilities and opportunities will vary depending on the level of development of each site. While some sites can assist access (i.e. through transport support arrangements) others will depend upon family support for access. In some cases mutual support within the club can assist access.

Appendices

Appendix 1.

Case Study : Clwb Antur Dyffryn Peris

Barry Davies

The Vision – Clwb Antur Dyffryn Peris was formed in 2001 by a small group of local people from the Dyffryn Peris area whom were interested in ensuring that local youngsters from the area were provided with the opportunity to experience adventure activities that involved the great outdoors.

The group was established as a result of the initiative of one individual who had been involved in outdoor pursuits for a number of years, and who believed in the benefits that participants would gain from participating in ‘adventure’ activities.

The Aim – The primary aim of setting up the club and organising the activities was to provide the opportunity for young local people to gain a greater understanding of the natural environment. It was also hoped that local adults would also become interested in the activities, and as time progressed, they themselves would become confident enough to enjoy the sports without the need to be supervised, and therefore would introduce, and encourage others to participate in the sport.

We live in an area where there is a perception that only the ‘visitor’ is able to enjoy outdoor activities. Equally, a number of Local Authorities operate outdoor centres in the area, providing opportunities for young people that reside well outside the local area.

The Action – Following extensive local interest, and a clear demonstration of support to the principle of the idea from Iain Peter from Plas y Brenin National Mountain Centre, and Phil Nelson and Nick Cunliff from ‘Surflines’, the organizers adopted a constitution, and formed ‘Clwb Antur Dyffryn Peris’.

The Benefits – The benefits of providing outdoor opportunities for young people (and adults) are very far reaching. In the UK, there is a general tendency for governing bodies and possibly local authorities, to focus on ‘Team Sports’, and academic qualifications. Whilst this is of paramount importance, there appears to be a blinkered view, and a lack of understanding on the benefits that are gained from participating in adventure activities that involve the great outdoors.

By participating in outdoor pursuits, participants are provided with the opportunity to meet with a diversity of physical and mental challenges that the sport provides. The challenges that one encounter is always enjoyable, and always provides a positive result, with the participant achieving success no matter what the level of capability may be.

By participating in outdoor pursuits, the individual gains a greater and better understanding of the natural environment that surrounds us all, and hopefully become aware of the impact society has on such a sensitive and fragile environment.

The participants are provided with the exciting opportunity to work with others, and gain a better understanding of the importance of co-operating with others; gain self confidence; gain a sense of achievement; gain respect for oneself and learn to respect others; understands the need to respect the environment, and participates in activities that is of immense benefit to their own health and well being.

The benefits of participating in outdoor pursuits are far reaching, and in the long term, this participation could eventually lead to local employment within the industry. It has been demonstrated that there are very few local people employed in a coaching capacity within the industry locally.

The Problems – The group operates voluntarily, and is dependant on the goodwill of others. There is concern that if the main activist was to discontinue with the activities, it would be very unlikely that the club would continue in its present format.

The group presently does not own any equipment, do not have a permanent base, and do not at present have access to the loan of specialist equipment. Since its formation, activities have been provided to local people on a voluntary basis by two main support organisations: Plas y Brenin, where Iain Peter is instrumental in ensuring that local people benefit from the enjoyment that is gained from outdoor pursuits and secondly, ‘Surflines’ Llanberis, who are very supportive to local needs and have provided the group with kayak and ‘coasteering’ experiences.

It is very clear that there are numerous organizations located in the area that could further assist in providing local youngsters with the opportunity to participate in outdoor pursuits.

Transport has been a major obstacle and a high cost element to date. A provision could be made whereby local volunteer organisations have access to transport that is owned by the Local Authority, or other similar organisations such as the ‘Sports Council For Wales’. Clarification should also be sought as to the complexity of driving limited capacity vehicles in the UK.

The Future – It has been extensively proven that there is a substantial local demand for the provision of opportunities involving outdoor pursuits, especially amongst young people. The organiser of Clwb Antur Dyffryn Peris is inundated by requests from members of the public asking for further opportunities to participate in adventure activities.

The most beneficial development for the future would be for local volunteer groups to gain support in acquiring equipment, and to be able to identify a suitable operating base in liaison with the Local Authority, or with a local centre that is sympathetic to the group’s aims and beliefs.

Local centres that specialize in outdoor pursuits could also be more pro-active, and take a far more positive role in providing opportunities for local people at a cost that is affordable, and where the activities are sustainable without the need for continued professional supervision throughout.

Whilst in Gwynedd there are five swimming pools owned by the Local Authority, no canoeing training sessions are organized during the winter months.

North Wales provides the best environment for participating in outdoor pursuits in the UK, if not in Europe. There is a duty upon us to provide local young people with the opportunity to participate in the diverse challenges that are provided by the natural environment. This will contribute substantially towards creating better communities, and health conscious future generations.

Appendix 2

Case Study: “Rwsters”

Rob Murray, Llanrwst Canoe Club and Llanrwst Youth Project

Llanrwst Canoe club was formed by Rob and Mona Murray and Helen and Kith Webber in March 2003. Their aim was to build a club that would;

- encourage and enable access for local people to canoeing irrespective of physical ability, age or personal background
- meet at a time suitable for young people to participate
- provide up to date equipment and coaching

After early days relying on personal and donated equipment, the club has successfully applied for £750 community chest funding from Conwy Leisure Department and a further £8,548 Sport Lottery minor equipment grant (£2,500 of which the club has had to raise through fund-raising and support by the Welsh Canoeing Association). The Welsh Canoeing Association has also provided valuable advice. This, along with a £20 annual membership fee and £2.50 fee per swimming pool canoe session has enabled the club to pay for equipment and National Governing Body Award training and assessment courses.

Current membership of the club is 60 with an equal balance of male and female members and an age range of 8 to 52 (the majority of who are under 20). The club has reached current capacity and is finding it increasingly difficult to meet demand. The club runs sessions on local lakes and rivers for its members and occasional sessions for local school groups.

The club works in partnership with the Llanrwst Youth Project (Rwsters) to deliver canoeing to local young people. Other outdoor activities offered to Rwsters members depend on the qualifications and experience of voluntary leaders and include rock climbing, mountain biking and mountain walking. Rwsters currently has 100 young people on its books. Participation levels have been exceptional and both Rwsters and the canoe club have found that they cannot meet the demand for outdoor activities.

Both the club and Rwsters have identified young people who have potential to become outdoor instructors. The club is keen to develop work placement and trainee instructor opportunities with local outdoor centres in order to support a career path into the industry for these young people.

The club has identified the following as key issues that need to be addressed in order to support the development of local outdoor clubs;

- Transport – major cost for clubs. Suggest community bus fleet for use by clubs. Linked to this problem is the issue of driver licence legislation – if PSV licences are to be mandatory, this could prove to be another major financial hurdle for local clubs.
- Voluntary support by local Outdoor and other professionals – the help of 8 or 9 individuals has been invaluable to the work of this club.

- A central bank of equipment for use by local clubs – or access to use local Outdoor Centre equipment when not in use. Storage space for this equipment – perhaps a multi-club base at a central location.
- Someone to draw together advice on grants for clubs to ensure they are aware of and can apply for these.
- Access to public swimming pools for canoe sessions.
- Someone to advise on issues such as child protection, risk assessment, NGB training and assessment, equipment monitoring.

Appendix 3

Case Study :Partnership Proposals Between the Conway Centre and the Isle of Anglesey County Council

Aled Roberts, Isle of Anglesey County Borough Council

The Conway Centre offers short stay residential and day activities for over 16,000 pupils and students each year, and is operated by Cheshire L.E.A. on land leased from the National Trust on the shores of the Menai Straits.

A range of activities are offered to include, outdoor and adventurous activities, arts, science, physical education, and field studies.

The Isle of Anglesey has a population of 66,829, of which 13,021 are aged under 16 years old. The Authority provides education in 53 Primary and 5 Secondary Schools. There is also a Special Needs School and an annexe of Coleg Menai on the Island. There are currently 40 Youth Clubs meeting regularly in communities across the Island.

Unlike many other Authorities in Wales, Anglesey does not have its own Outdoor Education Centre

The New Opportunities Fund (Physical Education and School Sports) required that up to 5% of the funding granted to each Local Authority be directed to Outdoor Adventure.

Anglesey decided to allocate £71k for this purpose, and to support two separate schemes, with the following contributions.

£31k to improve the Day User facilities in the Kelvin Building at the Conway Centre (£40k towards new facilities at the Urdd Centre, Glan Llyn, Bala)

The contribution to the Conway Centre will refurbish the Day-Users facilities, located in the Kelvin Building, improving the changing and showering facilities, and conforming to D.D.A. requirements.

In return for this investment Anglesey County Council will have priority for booking the Kelvin Building facilities on Mondays and Fridays throughout the year, subject to present booking procedures. Schools on the Island will have the opportunity to arrange half or full day visits to experience a range of different outdoor activities

Similarly the County Youth Service will be able to access facilities on a regular basis, and young people from the current 40 Youth Clubs on the Island, will be given an opportunity to experience outdoor adventure activities.

The Conway Centre Management recognises the need to involve the local communities in its activities, both in experiencing outdoor adventure, and in delivering courses and services in paid employment.

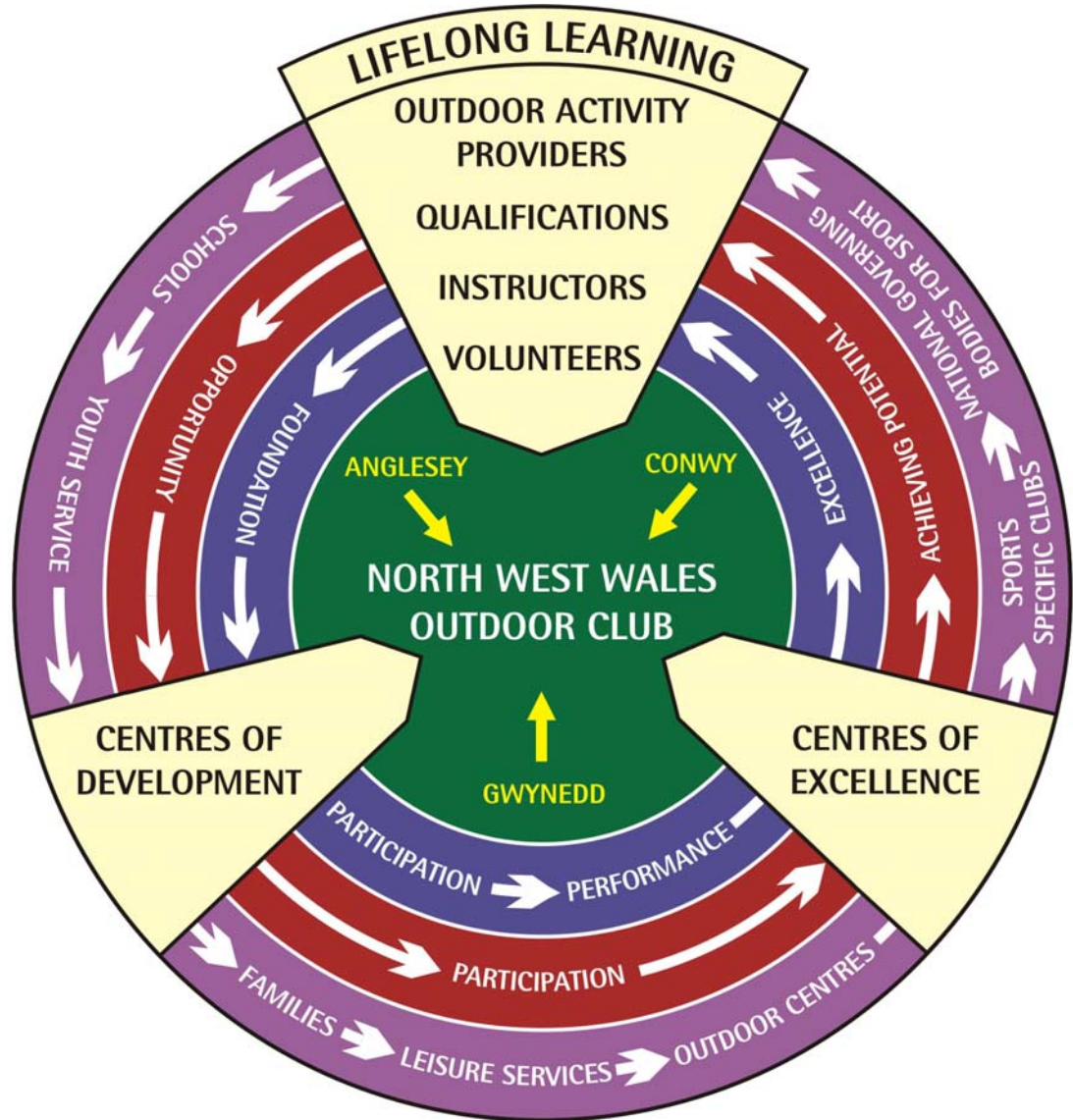
Many children and young people on the Island have been given the opportunity within their schools, to combine outdoor adventure with a residential experience. The

increasing cost of this combined package is not conducive to equal opportunities and the alternative full or half-day arrangement is a more viable option.

As a consequence of these developments, Anglesey is discussing partnership schemes with the Conway Centre to include: -

- Regular Use of the Centre facilities for Full and Half Day Course by Primary and Secondary schools.
- Regular Use of the Centre facilities by the County Youth Service.
- Regular Use of the Conway Centre by the wider community on the Island.
- The establishment of an Outdoor Adventure Club in the Conway Centre, managed by volunteers, and drawing its membership from the local communities. This club would sit very naturally alongside other clubs established by the partnership.
- Joint approach to increasing awareness and offering opportunities in outdoor adventure on the Island, both for participants and for those aspiring to qualify as Leaders and Coaches.

Appendix 4
The Development Model



Appendix 5

Sports Council For Wales Statistics

The figures for junior participation in outdoor activities at the ‘all Wales’ level are:

	7-11 year olds	11-16 year olds
Curricular	26.9%	11.6%
Extracurricular	10.0%	3.6%
Club based	5.6%	3.6%

37% of the adult population take part in outdoor pursuits. When walking as an activity is excluded this figure falls to 10.3% of adults.

Other participation rates for outdoor activities in North Wales include:

Walking	31.2 %
Mountaineering	0.2%
Canoeing	0.4%
Sailing	1.1%
Cycling	5.1 %
Fishing	1.7 %

Source:

SCW Sports Update 51- Secondary School-aged Children’s Participation in Sport (2003)

SCW Sports Update 53- Primary School Children’s Participation in Sport (2002)

Most Recent SCW Adult Survey (2003) Unpublished

Appendix 6

Research carried out on behalf of the partnership by the School for Business and Regional Development, University of Wales- Bangor

Summary of Outdoor Centre Findings

A survey was undertaken of all relevant Outdoor Activity Centres in the region. The sample was based on the Adventurous Activity Licensing Authority Database and therefore covered public, private and voluntary sector providers working with children and young people.

27 questionnaires were returned which represented a 54% return rate.

70% of the centres involved made some provision for local young people, however only 30% provide on a regular basis i.e. weekly or monthly. The remainder are providing on a one off / once a year basis. The centres combined provide 9179 pupil days per year to local schools, youth and community groups. This figure was dominated by a group of 4 major providers (responsible for 7200 pupil days between them).

When asked if they would like to increase their provision to the local community, 89% of centres answered positively. The main barriers identified were:

- Lack of demand from local schools/ groups (88%)
- Lack of funding (61%)
- Lack of local contacts/ community links (61%)

The survey also gathered data relevant to the social and linguistic characteristics of the staff employed within the outdoor activity organisations.

Fig. 1 Social and Linguistic Characteristics of Employees

	Numbers employed	% that received secondary education in NW Wales	% of Fluent Welsh Speakers	% of Welsh Learners
Managerial staff	62	26%	22%	27%
Permanent instructional staff	170	7%	4%	11%
Part time/ seasonal instructors	325	7%	10%	4%
Support staff	258	67%	58%	4%

From Fig. 1 a number of issues become clear. The sector provides a substantial number of jobs within generally rural communities. The vast majority of those employed in managerial and instructional aspects (74% and 93% respectively) are imported from outside the region. The only aspect in which the region produces a significant input is in terms of support staff i.e. catering, cleaning and administration.

It should also be made clear that these are occupations requiring lower levels of qualifications and are therefore generally low paid.

The linguistic capability of the staff employed further reinforces this picture with only 4% of permanent instructional staff being fluent Welsh speakers. It is important to remember that many of these organisations are operating in the traditional heartland of the Welsh language. 78% of the organisations stated that they would like to employ more Welsh-speaking staff. The main reason for the failure to do so in the past was the lack of Welsh Speakers with appropriate activity qualifications and experience. The linguistic statistics are significant in two ways. Firstly they reinforce the point that the region is failing to produce suitably qualified staff to be employed in the outdoor sector. They also highlight a potential reason for poor community liaison in the past and one that should be addressed in the future in terms of creating new working relationships between these organisations and their communities.

Within the rural communities of the region the sector offers real opportunities in terms of economic regeneration and meaningful sustainable employment for young people within their own communities. This will however only be achieved in the long term through widening access at participation level now and working in partnership over the coming years with education and training agencies to deliver coherent career pathways.

A number of respondents provided additional comments. These included:

“The imbalance of provision is frustrating and embarrassing. We would desperately like to do more.”

“We need to develop a culture of outdoor activity participation from school age onwards and provide recognised pathways for young people to become outdoor activity instructors.”

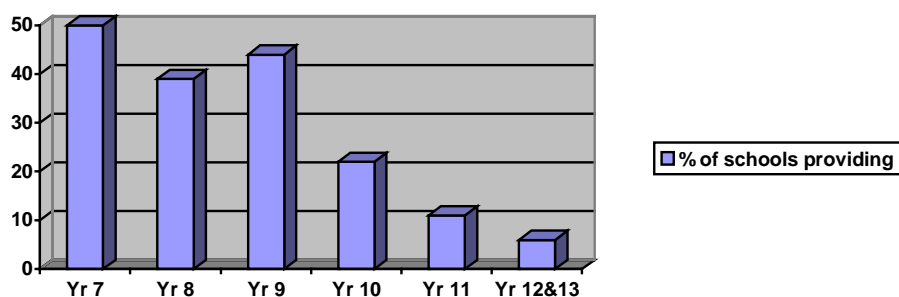
Summary of Secondary School Findings

Questionnaires were distributed with the assistance of the local authorities to all Secondary School Heads of Physical Education.

18 questionnaires were returned which represented a 69% return rate.

61% of schools currently provide some outdoor activity experience for their pupils. All of these schools made some provision during curriculum time. 22% of schools made provision in extra curricular time and 33% made provision during residential visits.

Fig. 2 Provision of Outdoor Activities in terms of Year Groups



A clear pattern emerged in terms of which pupils benefited most from outdoor activity opportunities. The vast majority of provision is made in the first 3 years of secondary school and tails off sharply from year 10 onwards. A strong argument could be made that young people between 15 and 18 years of age could benefit greatly from participation in outdoor activities.

In terms of frequency of provision only 22% of schools made regular provision i.e. weekly or monthly. 39% are therefore providing on a once a year basis and a further 39% make no provision whatsoever.

The schools were asked about the way their provision was organised. 62% of schools providing used school employees to deliver activities, 27% used UK based activity providers, 11% used overseas activity providers and none made use of the voluntary sector.

100% of respondents said that they would like to increase their provision. 89% stated that they would like to make extra provision during school hours and 56% wanted to make additional extra curricular provision.

When asked what the barriers were to increasing provision currently the schools responded as follows:

(Ranked- most significant first)

- Lack of finance to buy assistance or equipment
- Lack of time within the curriculum
- Safety worries/ high level of responsibility
- Lack of transport

Although only 27% of respondents were currently buying in expertise from outdoor activity providers there was a clear desire to increase this type of arrangement partially due to the fact that many teachers felt ill prepared / qualified to deliver themselves.

100% of schools believed that their pupils benefited from an involvement in outdoor activities. The teachers involved demonstrated a sound understanding of the potential benefits. The main benefits cited were:

(Ranked – most significant first)

Self Confidence

Team-work/ Social Skills

Environmental Awareness

Life Long past time.

Once school that currently fails to provide responded in the following way in the additional comments section:

“I can not believe that with the local environment, there is no provision for OE here, being aware from experience outside of Gwynedd how much of a priority this is in other counties.”

Summary of Primary School Findings

Once again questionnaires were distributed to all primary schools in the region with the assistance of the local authorities. Questionnaires were in almost all cases completed by headteachers.

79 questionnaires were returned, producing a 34% return rate. This was likely to be lower than the secondary school return rate due to the wider responsibility of primary heads in comparison with secondary heads of Physical Education.

71% of primary schools responding claimed to make some outdoor recreation provision. This figure should be treated with some caution due to the fact that it became clear in some questionnaires responses that head teachers were re-defining "outdoor activities" and broadening the meaning to include physical education outdoors rather than those activities with an adventurous nature which we identified early on in the questionnaire.

Of those providing 35% made provision during school hours, 15% made extra curricular provision and 53% provided during residential visits.

Fig. 3 The Percentage of Schools Providing to Each Year Group

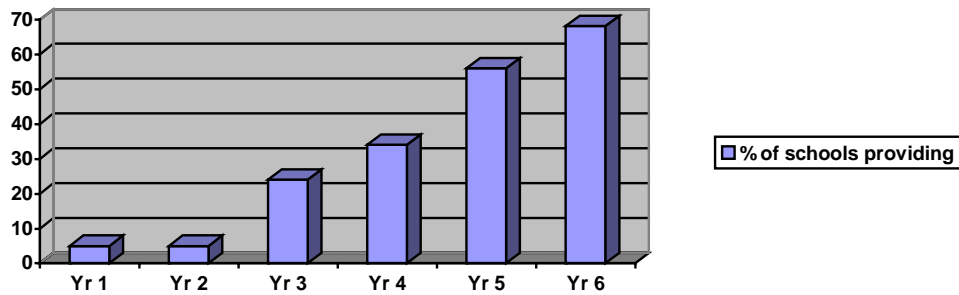


Fig. 3 demonstrates the clear tendency to make the vast majority of provision to year 5 & 6 pupils. When this chart is aligned with Fig. 2 (the corresponding secondary school chart) a clear picture emerges whereby the vast majority of provision is made around the end of primary and beginning of secondary education.

In terms of frequency of provision, only 6% of schools made regular provision. The remaining 65% make one off annual provision.

The 69% of provision was made in partnership with UK based Outdoor activity Providers, 27% of provision was made by school employees and 3% by the voluntary sector.

84% of primary schools said that they would like to increase their provision. 71% said that they would like to make more provision during school hours. 44% would like to make increased extra curricula provision and 33% said that they would like to do both.

The main barriers to increased provision were:
(Ranked- most significant first)

- Lack of time within the curriculum
- Safety Concerns/ Responsibility
- Lack of finance
- Lack of expertise within the school
- Lack of transport

Schools were also asked what would help them to provide more. The factors below are ranked, again most significant first:

- Additional funding
- Access to qualified leaders/ outdoor centres
- Training for teachers
- Transport
- Volunteers
- Volunteers
- Help with risk assessments etc.

100% of schools believed that participation in outdoor activities would benefit their pupils.

The most significant benefits cited were:

- Team work
- Health/ fitness
- Self confidence
- Environmental awareness/ “adnabod cynefin”

Appendix 7: Attendees and Contributors to the Plas Menai Seminar (12/7/04)

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