

Outdoor Recreation and Access Strategic Action Plan 2015 - 2020

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Our Action Plan

What we want to achieve:

More people in Wales participating in, and benefitting from, outdoor recreation more often

Why do we want to achieve this?

To deliver the following benefits:

- Increase people’s appreciation of and care for the environment
- Improve social equity and cohesion of people and communities
- Increase the economic benefits to Wales
- Improve people’s health and wellbeing

How will we achieve our aim and deliver the associated benefits?

We will do this through ensuring:

1. Access opportunities are provided and improved that best meet people’s needs for recreational enjoyment of the outdoors
2. Promotional information and engagement about recreational access opportunities are widely available in appropriate formats
3. Recreational users have an increased understanding of how to act responsibly in the natural environment
4. Effective planning for the sustainable recreational use and management of natural resources is embedded in our work
5. Effective mechanisms for the delivery of the benefits of outdoor recreational are developed and embedded in our work

We have three **overarching principles** that form the basis of our delivery. These are that:

1. All outdoor recreational provision delivered, facilitated or funded by NRW will adhere to the principles of least restrictive access and be developed and delivered in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
 2. We will align our work to deliver the benefits of recreation and access through spatial targeting, focussing first on those areas that deliver the greatest benefit for people and communities.
 3. We will be an enabling organisation, working with partners and others to facilitate outdoor recreation and access activity both on and off our own land.

The following tables give overarching areas of work through which we aim to deliver our identified outcome and associated benefits. Each Directorate Delivery Plan will provide a more detailed programme of work, including key internal and external partners, aimed at delivering our outcome and associated benefits.

1. Access opportunities are provided and improved that best meet people's needs for recreational enjoyment of the outdoors

Our priorities are:

- Identifying people's and communities' needs for outdoor recreation opportunities and activities
- Provision of opportunities that bring the greatest health and well-being benefits to people and communities
- Provision of opportunities that bring the greatest social benefits, particularly in relation to social equity and cohesion
- Provision of opportunities that maximise the economic benefits across Wales
- Opportunities that support or lead to more sustainable use of natural resources [including linked to active travel]
- Opportunities that are provided close to where people live, work and visit
- Opportunities that improve integration of recreational access networks

Ref	Action	How will we do this?					Why will we do this?				Lead and support Directorates	Notes and Comments
		Providing access opportunities	Encouraging Responsible recreation	Promotion, marketing, engagement	Recreation Planning	Mechanisms – improved ways of working	Health and well-being	Economy	Caring for the Environment	Social Equity and cohesion		
1.1	We will continue to deliver our responsibilities for CRoW, and maintain our liabilities to help ensure public safety on land we manage	✓			✓		✓			✓	Operations North and Mid, Operations South, KSP	
1.2	We will continue our programme of dedicating as CRoW open access our suite of NNRs and other suitable NRW managed land	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓	KSP, Operations North and Mid, Operations South	
1.3	We will manage our recreation infrastructure and sites in accordance with NRW Operational Guidance Notes	✓			✓		✓		✓		Operations North and Mid, Operations South	
1.4	We will manage our land around recreational sites in order to maximise the benefits to people of recreational access.	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Operations North and Mid, Operations South, Communications	Work programmes should include, for example, ensuring safe and welcoming entrances, sightlines, transforming to CCF where appropriate
1.5	In line with our priorities we will proactively encourage use of our own managed land for recreational and access opportunities delivered by others, including commercial opportunities, utilising Woodlands and You and its successor scheme.	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	KSP, Operations North and Mid, Operations South, National Services, Communications	
1.6	We will create and maintain a high quality visitor experience on our own managed land, focusing first on those sites that deliver greatest benefit for people and communities	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		Operations North and Mid, Operations South: KSP, Communications	As prioritised by our spatial planning approach
1.7	We will align our infrastructure and recreational provision on our own land to those communities and areas identified by spatial targeting.	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Operations North and Mid, Operations South; KSP	
1.8	We will continue to develop our position on access to inland water for recreational activity on our own managed land	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	KSP, National Services	

1.9	We will continue to develop our position on motorised recreational activity on our own managed land	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	KSP, National Services, Operations North and Mid, Operations South	Encompassing our continuing work with the Motor Sports Association, Wales Rally GB etc, and the feasibility of new opportunities
1.10	We will continue to develop and facilitate approaches such as Actif Woods and Come Outside! focusing on those areas and people of Wales identified as most deprived.	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	KSP; Operations North and Mid, Operations South, Communications	
1.11	We will continue to facilitate and deliver the Wales programme for National Trails partnership with others, particularly managing authorities, Natural England and Walk Unlimited	✓				✓	✓	✓			KSP, Communications	
1.12	With our partnership group, we will continue to develop and implement a programme assuring and promoting premium recreational routes product for Wales	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			KSP, Communications	
1.13	We will continue to develop and enable a Wales Coast Path programme in partnership with LAs and WG	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	KSP; Operations North and Mid, Operations South, Communications	Including development of technical and quality standards, marketing and enhanced economic benefit to local communities
1.14	We will continue to work with Welsh Government and partners to deliver our priorities as applied to water related recreation, including any successor to the Splash programme.	✓				✓	✓			✓	KSP; Operations North and Mid, Operations South, Communications	
1.15	We will continue to develop and deliver angling access improvement works through sustainable fisheries programmes	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	KSP; Operations North and Mid, Operations South, Communications	Cross reference to our strategy – 'Sustainable Inland Fisheries – an agenda for change'
1.16	We will continue to work with Glandwr Cymru and Dwr Cymru to encourage and develop recreational opportunities around water-bodies and waterways	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	KSP; Operations North and Mid, Operations South, Communications	
1.17	We will facilitate and encourage the development of accessible green and blue space for outdoor recreational activity close to where people live and work, and visit in order to deliver the benefits we seek	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	KSP; Operations North and Mid, Operations South, Communications	
1.18	We will work with Welsh Government, Local Authorities and stakeholders on reviewing the legislation related to PRow and access, should Welsh Government prioritise this	✓			✓	✓					KSP, Communications	

2. Promotional information and engagement about recreational access opportunities are widely available in appropriate formats

Our priorities are promotion, marketing and engagement that:

- Increases responsible outdoor recreation in, and care for, the environment of Wales
- Maximises the benefits to people and communities with the greatest health and social needs
- Maximises the greatest economic benefits to Wales
- Is responsive to people's identified needs and preferences for outdoor recreation

Ref	Action	How will we do this?					Why will we do this?				Lead and support Directorates	Notes and Comments
		Providing access opportunities	Encouraging Responsible recreation	Promotion, marketing, engagement	Recreation Planning	Mechanisms – improved ways of working	Health and well-being	Economy	Caring for the Environment	Social Equity and cohesion		
2.1	We will develop and implement a Communications and Recreation marketing strategy for our own managed sites and for our work with partners (e.g. National Trails, Wales Coast Path, premium promoted routes), ensuring synergy across our work			✓	✓	✓					KSP, Communications;	
2.2	We will ensure access and recreation opportunities on land we manage are promoted and marketed through a visitor focused NRW website, and other websites where appropriate	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	KSP, Communications, Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
2.3	We will work with Welsh Government, Visit Wales and other partners to provide our recreation and access information and data through our own web site and other websites or digital means as best meets audiences needs and preferences	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	KSP, Communications, Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
2.4	We will provide and work with partners to use social and broadcast media outlets, such as Apps, facebook, twitter, TV and radio to promote and market our own managed recreational offer	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	KSP, Communications, Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
2.5	We will work with partners to promote wider recreational access opportunities and associated benefits within programmes we support	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	KSP, Communications, Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
2.6	We will provide and use events, social media outlets, such as Apps, facebook and twitter, to promote and market our partnership programmes	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	KSP, Communications, Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
2.7	We will develop a strategic interpretative plan for NRW outdoor recreation and access provision, ensuring it aligns with other interpretative approaches across		✓	✓			✓		✓		KSP, Operations North and Mid; Operations South	

	Wales, and increases understanding of NRW and our work											
2.8	We will develop site based interpretative plans as an integral aspect of the overall site based recreation plan, focusing first on those sites that deliver greatest benefit for people and communities, recognising that this will help build our brand	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
2.9	We will develop a successor to our Discovery Pass scheme, in order to encourage repeat visits and visitor loyalty to a number of prioritised sites.	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		KSP; National Services; Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
2.10	We will develop our approach to our retail and food offer at our Visitor Centres and online, providing consistency and quality of offer across Wales			✓		✓		✓	✓		KSP; National Services; Operations North and Mid; Operations South	

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3. Recreational users have an increased understanding of how to act responsibly in the natural environment

Our priorities are:

- To work with partners to ensure the widespread understanding and use by recreational users and stakeholders of the ‘family’ of Countryside and Recreational Activity Codes and Guidance
- Ensuring our recreational access activities and programmes include actions for increasing responsible use and care for the natural environment
- Ensuring our recreational activities and programmes support co-operative behaviours based on fair, equitable and sustainable use of natural resources
- Ensuring that we help the public and staff use our sites and infrastructure safely

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		Providing access opportunities	Encouraging Responsible recreation	Promotion, marketing, engagement	Recreation Planning	Mechanisms – improved ways of working	Health and well-being	Economy	Caring for the Environment	Social Equity and cohesion		
3.1	We will continue to develop, maintain and promote the family of Countryside Codes in conjunction with our partners and stakeholders		✓	✓		✓			✓		KSP, Communications	
3.2	We will continue to develop our suite of guidance aimed at recreation managers and activity providers		✓	✓	✓				✓		KSP, Operations North and Mid; Operations South, Communications	Will require separate but related guidance for our own managed land and for our wider partners and stakeholders
3.3	We will continue to develop and deliver with partners appropriate advice and guidance aimed at increasing responsible recreational use of the outdoors		✓	✓	✓				✓		KSP, Operations North and Mid; Operations South, Communications	Will require separate but related guidance for our own managed land and for our wider partners and stakeholders
3.4	We will develop our approach to helping the public – and colleagues – use our sites safely and decrease the instances of public incursions on work and harvesting sites.		✓		✓	✓	✓				KSP; National Services; Operations North and Mid; Operations South, Communications	
3.5	We will develop and build our evidence base on understanding behaviour change, particularly focusing on our target markets and audience needs		✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	Communications, KSP	

4. Effective planning for the sustainable recreational use and management of natural resources is embedded in our work

Our priorities are:

- Production of recreational access plans for NRW managed land focusing first on sites that will provide the greatest benefits for people and communities
- Ensuring recreation and access is linked to key strategies and programmes in Wales, particularly (forthcoming) Natural Resource Plans, Single Integrated Plans, the RDP and strategies for sport, tourism, transport, active travel and marine plans.
- To plan for and manage the impact of recreation, reducing and mitigating its impacts on habitats, species and landscapes of high value
- Support the development, integration and implementation of revised Rights of Way Improvement Plans in Wales.
- Ensuring our own infrastructure and sites are developed and maintained to industry standards and that staff are appropriately and routinely trained to develop and manage all types of recreational infrastructure and sites.

Ref	Action	How will we do this?					Why will we do this?				Lead and support Directorates	Notes and Comments
		Providing access opportunities	Encouraging Responsible recreation	Promotion, marketing, engagement	Recreation Planning	Mechanisms – improved ways of working	Health and well-being	Economy	Caring for the Environment	Social Equity and cohesion		
4.1	We will develop spatial planning and related methods to inform provision of recreation and access opportunities on land and water we and our partners manage, focussing our resource on sites that provide the greatest benefits for people and communities				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	KSP; Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
4.2	We will use spatial planning and related methods to advise and inform recreational management, use and event planning, prioritising provision of advice in relation to recreation affecting habitats, species and landscapes of high value		✓		✓	✓			✓		KSP: Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
4.3	We will work to ensure recreation and access is reflected in related NRW work and strategies, particularly in relation to natural resource management and the strategies for Education and Learning, Interpretation, Communications and Community and Regeneration.				✓	✓					KSP, Operations North and Mid; Operations South; Communications	
4.4	We will support and facilitate the revision and implementation of ROWIPs across Wales with WG and our LA partners	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	KSP, Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
4.5	We will produce recreational access plans for NRW managed sites, focusing first on sites that will provide the greatest benefit for people and communities.	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		Operations North and Mid; Operations South; KSP	Consider interventions that increase the diversity of activities available, especially those where there is a high level of demand; focus on a balance between local doorstep provision (associated with frequent participation) and places used for a day out (associated with longer duration visits); develop interventions that identify and target the 7 groups

												identified in WORS, based on different levels of physical activity, understanding motivations, barriers and preferences; focus interventions on increasing either intensity or frequency, depending on the target group. Ensure we use the evidence provided by the Communications Insights Programme.
4.6	We will develop a parking charges policy for sites managed by NRW, ensuring a 'once for Wales' framework of criteria and associated charges	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	KSP, National Service; Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
4.7	We will ensure our sites, trails and related infrastructure are developed, built and maintained to industry standards and deliver our obligations under the Equality Act 2010	✓			✓						Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
4.8	We will ensure appropriate staff are trained to a high standard to enable them to carry out their duties ensuring public and site safety and the delivery of our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.	✓			✓						Operations North and Mid; Operations South	We will require access to FCGB L&D courses – provided through the SLA – until such a time as NRW can provide bespoke courses

5. Effective mechanisms for the delivery of the benefits of outdoor recreational are developed and embedded in our work

Our priorities are:

- Working with communities in developing and implementing recreation and access work on land we manage
- Supporting local, regional and national networks that help to deliver the benefits of outdoor recreational access and our associated aims and priorities, including the local and national access forums
- Aligning our resources to support our outdoor recreation and access aims and priorities
- Continuing our partnership funding, in alignment with our Joint Working Partnership funding scheme.
- Acting as an exemplar organisation for the delivery of recreational access on our own managed land and in the programmes we manage
- Providing evidence, advice and guidance that improves delivery of the benefits of outdoor recreational access by NRW, Government and our partners.
- Establish mechanisms within NRW to manage the implementation of this strategy, action plan and associated work programmes
- Establish an RBA approach to monitor and evaluate delivery of the strategy and related activities.

Ref	Action	How will we do this?					Why will we do this?				Lead and support Directorates	Notes and Comments
		Providing access opportunities	Encouraging Responsible recreation	Promotion, marketing, engagement	Recreation Planning	Mechanisms – improved ways of working	Health and well-being	Economy	Caring for the Environment	Social Equity and cohesion		
5.1	We will continue to support and facilitate the Local Access Forums across Wales, and the National Access Forum for Wales and develop our approach to networks and forums relevant to our work.	✓					✓		✓		KSP; Operations North and Mid, Operations South, Communications	
5.2	We will develop and facilitate an internal mechanism that will allow NRW to share, implement and monitor this strategy, action plan and RBA, share best practice and maintain quality and standards					✓					KSP - all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of internal implementation /monitoring group - Further development of RBA indicators, measures and reporting arrangements - Roll-out of Strategy, including briefing/advising NRW staff re aligning R&A elements of DDPs and work programmes with the strategy for 2015/16 - Establish external roll-out and communication to partners
5.3	We will develop a mechanism for informing and reporting to stakeholders about how we are doing implementing the strategy					✓					KSP, Communications	
5.4	We will continue to act as advisors to Welsh Government on policy and programme development for outdoor recreation and access					✓					KSP	
5.5	We will develop and facilitate Woodlands and You, and its successor scheme,					✓					Operations North and Mid, Operations	

	embedding community based engagement and delivery in our work.										South; KSP, Communications	
5.6	We will develop, facilitate and deliver our outdoor recreation and access projects, programmes and partnerships in accordance with NRW Operational Guidance Note 33: Engaging with Stakeholders					✓					All	
5.7	We will manage our public engagement around forest operations using NRW Operational Guidance Note: Managing Public Engagement and Forest Operations on the Welsh Government Woodland Estate					✓					Operations North and Mid, Operations South: KSP, National Services, Communications	This OGN sets out our priorities and actions around forest operations in high and medium public use areas – focusing on recreation and access areas/sites
5.8	We will use existing evidence, such as the Wales Outdoor Recreation Survey (and successor), in order to ensure our decisions are evidenced based: we will develop a monitoring and evidence programme to fill identified knowledge gaps					✓					KSP	Cross reference: Working with Data and Evidence team to develop a programme to fill identified gaps
5.9	We will continue to develop our GIS and web browser (internal and external) capabilities in order to provide an interactive evidence base that is widely accessible to our partners and stakeholders					✓					KSP	
5.10	We will influence appropriate EU funding opportunities to ensure funding is available for outdoor recreation and access opportunities					✓					KSP	
5.11	We will ensure that our external funding opportunities (JWP and competitive) are aligned with our strategic objectives for outdoor recreation and access					✓					KSP, Operations North and Mid, Operations South	
5.12	We will support the implementation of a training programme for recreational leaders and activity providers in order that Wales can offer a consistent, high quality experience for visitors.	✓				✓		✓	✓		KSP	Cross reference to the Education, Learning and Sector Skills Strategy, where the action should read – we will develop and deliver...
5.13	We will work with ODPM and L&D to ensure appropriate staff skills are relevant and up to date										ODPM, KSP, Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
5.14	We will facilitate a programme of recreation and access related volunteering opportunities, within the Cyfoeth Framework	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	ODPM, Operations North and Mid; Operations South	
5.15	We will consider ways in which revenue can be generated from, and reinvested in, NRW's own outdoor recreational provision whilst not disadvantaging those people and communities we aim to benefit.					✓		✓			National Services, KSP; Operations North and Mid; Operations South	

5.16	We will continue to maintain and develop our range of concordats, SLAs and MoUs with national umbrella organisations to ensure consistency of approach and integrated ways of working across Wales					✓						KSP, Communications	
5.17	We will continue to maintain and develop our presence on relevant outdoor recreation and access related networks and groups in order to influence and guide a consistent NRW approach across Wales and with our partners			✓		✓						KSP; Operations North and Mid; Operations South, Communications	
5.18	Work with Visit Wales to ensure joined up working for the delivery of recreation related tourism and associated benefits			✓		✓						KSP, Communications	
5.19	We will enable recreation and access benefits to be recognised and realised through influencing partner and stakeholder plans, e.g. through Public Service Boards, Destination Management Plans.				✓	✓						KSP, Operations North and Mid, Operations South, Communications	