

Report of: Head of Engagement and Inclusion

Subject: Well-being Objective Deep Dive/ Self-Assessment: Connection - To create a Park that is a natural health service that supports people to be healthier, happier and more connected to the landscape, nature and heritage.

Management Team Leads: Head of Engagement and Inclusion. Head of Regenerative Tourism. Head of Nature Recovery. Head of People Services.

Outcomes for Objective:

- People are supported to lead a more physically active lifestyle by accessing the National Park, through promoting sustainable outdoor recreational opportunities.
- People are supported to report that accessing the National Park has had a positive impact on their health and wellbeing.
- PCNPA has helped address where possible the barriers that can impact on people from diverse backgrounds or facing socio-economic disadvantage from connecting with nature and heritage opportunities in the Park.
- Provide support to enable people of all ages to develop an understanding of the National Park.
- Infrastructure is maintained, including the Public Rights of Way network, heritage assets and access points to enable people to continue to gain access to and enjoy the National Park.
- Historic assets in the National Park are protected and appreciated.

Outcomes this report is focusing on:

- People are supported to report that accessing the National Park has had a positive impact on their health and wellbeing.
- PCNPA has helped address where possible the barriers that can impact on people from diverse backgrounds or facing socio-economic disadvantage from connecting with nature and heritage opportunities in the Park.

1. Progress Assessment

Delivery Plan	Activities [The things that are being done with these resources]	Inputs [The resources (staff, time, money) being put into an intervention]	Outputs [A count of what has happened as a result of these activities] Outcomes [The immediate consequences and change.] Impact [The higher level and longer-term results.]
Health, Wellbeing and Access	West Wales Walking for Wellbeing – project completed December 2023.		Full report provided in paper and by presentation to this Committee.
	Get Outdoors scheme delivering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beach wheelchair and outdoor equipment service. • Supported walking activities. • Engagement with service users to audit locations and services to identify opportunities for improvement. • Mapping and marketing social prescribing opportunities offered by PCNPA. 	Health and Wellbeing Officer and 2 x Get Outdoors Co-ordinators. External funding for Get Outdoors in place for 1 year – continuation funding will be sought in year. Cost £70,000 per year.	3,545 participants in supported walking sessions in 2023/24 across Pembrokeshire West Wales Walking for Well-being, Walkability and Wild, Well-being Wanderer sessions. This includes sessions for Exercise/ Cardiac Rehab referrals, VC Gallery, Value Independence, and Dementia Supportive Sessions. 399 beach wheelchair and mobility equipment bookings in 2023/24. Get Outdoors aims to support continuation and development of this work to ensure that more people are enabled to access the health and wellbeing benefits of the Park, regardless of circumstances. The National Park and the Authority are more inclusive and seen as places for everyone, delivering services that meet the needs of everyone in society.
	Stakeholder mapping exercise to identify under-	All members of Engagement and	To identify target groups for future intervention and collaborative working.

	<p>represented groups and their community/ support groups.</p> <p>Roots to Recovery programme of supported, people-led activity to improve mental health and wellbeing through being outdoors. Activities are based at hubs in Haverfordwest, Pembroke and for 2024, Narberth and Hubberston, and may be very local or venture further afield into the National Park and include walks, gardening, conservation work, wildlife spotting, learning new skills and social interaction. The project has recruited a number of peer mentors who provide additional support to participants and aims to develop individual skillset and confidence of mentors.</p>	<p>Inclusion Team through several workshops.</p> <p>Big Lottery People and Places Grant - £340,000, Sept 2021 - March 2025. Partnership with Mind Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire, 3 project staff, 2 based in PCNPA and 1 in Mind. Learning and Inclusion Team Leader provides project management.</p>	<p>Activities delivered have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree planting at various location during the Autumn/Winter of 22/23 • Work on the community garden located adjacent to Mind’s centre in Haverfordwest • ‘Green Fingers’ sessions at South Pembrokeshire Hospital and a garden project at Withybush Hospital (2 projects delivered with Hywell Dda Health Board involving the Roots to Recovery volunteers) • management work on a community orchard in Pembroke • Green woodworking crafts and spoon carving workshops at various locations • Conservation management work including coppicing and tree felling. • Discovery walks on the Pembrokeshire Coast Path at various locations • Management of habitats around Pembroke Mill Ponds (including sowing a wildflower meadow) • Beach clean days at various locations • Mindfulness sessions at the Springwood Centre <p>Participant numbers are always high, and activities are well attended. Each session is planned to achieve all the five ways to wellbeing. Participant confidence continues to increase and the Roots to Recovery Facebook page documents the enjoyment participants are gaining from the group activities.</p>
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	<p>Experiences for All – take forward the recommendations of Experiences for All Report</p>	<p>Future project in development will require external funding to co-ordinate and deliver this work.</p>	<p>Build links and empower external groups supporting people who are under-represented or who face additional barriers to access the outdoors and nature to increase access and participation in health and well-being benefits of the Park. The health and wellbeing opportunities of the National Park are more accessible to and better used by people who may derive the greatest benefit from them.</p>
	<p>First 1000 Days Project providing programmes of activity and support for young families and pre-school children. Including working with early years settings supporting families facing poverty.</p>	<p>Externally funded through PCNP Trust and PCC Early Years Intervention Support Grant. In-year fundraising required to extend the project beyond the end of the financial year. 2x p/t project staff, supported by Learning and</p>	<p>2,498 participants in Authority’s early years work in 2023/24.</p> <p>Children from five north Pembrokeshire pre-school settings took part in an event at Castell Henllys designed to connect young children with nature. 50 pre-school age children attended. Verbal feedback from Castell Henllys event: ‘<i>Great morning for both staff and children’s wellbeing</i>’ / ‘<i>brilliant selection of experiences and learning for the children.</i>’</p>

		<p>Inclusion Team Leader. Cost £32,000/year.</p>	<p>Supported local Early Years settings and Nurseries who may not have a great amount of natural play space at their setting to access Colby Gardens. Children had a full sensory experience getting muddy, pond dipping and feeling the textures of the leaves and moss, whilst listening to the bird song and the stream running. This would have been the first outing for many of the children involved. It gave the staff confidence to use the site themselves in the future. Staff commented that children who don't choose to play outdoors in the setting, fully engaged in all the activities provided. Children learnt to respect spring flowers and the importance of collecting litter from the ground. This event achieved a huge well-being boost for both the adults and children involved.</p> <p>There is a widely reported disconnect between many children and the natural environment around them. This project is enabling more pre-school children to spend more time outdoors, understanding that these experiences have significant benefits for the children and parents/carers.</p> <p>It is increasing nursery leaders' confidence to take children out from their setting to do activities in the community, experiencing new environments.</p>
<p>Engagement, Involvement and Learning about the Park</p>	<p>Volunteering and social action provides a variety of opportunities for people to improve their health and</p>	<p>Activity is co-ordinated by Volunteer Development Officer and Assistant but delivered by many</p>	<p>2023/24: 1,129 social action days, 3007 volunteer days, 1,150 community volunteering and social action days. Opportunities are provided for school/college students and other groups to take part in practical activities to support their wellbeing and</p>

	<p>wellbeing through physical activity in the outdoors.</p>	<p>officers in the Engagement and Inclusion, Nature Recovery and Regenerative Tourism Services.</p>	<p>contribute to improving the environment, conservation, or heritage of the National Park. Social action provides an entry route into further volunteering with PCNPA and provides skills for future training or employment.</p> <p>Individuals and groups are supported to volunteer in a wide variety of roles from gardening to wildlife surveys, path maintenance and heritage restoration. Regular volunteer groups include the Voluntary Warden team, Carew Castle Volunteers, Friends of the National Park and Newport Paths Group. Volunteering helps people to keep fit and active, make social connections, learn new skills and to contribute to caring for the Park.</p>
	<p>Pathways supported volunteering project enables individuals who face barriers to volunteering to participate by providing transport, support of volunteer leaders and other support.</p>	<p>Activity delivered by Pathways Volunteer Officer 4 days/week. Externally funded until March 2026.</p>	<p>Pathways benefits from the support of 5 registered 'leaders', who take on more responsibility than the general volunteer. This means that they can develop their professional portfolio and skillset as well as support less able volunteers that are part of the Pathways volunteering group.</p> <p>Activities in 2023/24 included a range of practical access, conservation and site work.</p> <p>Ongoing work at Conservation site – Sunny Hill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coppicing skills / woodland management • Heritage farming knowledge • Sustainable living experiences

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication / social skills development – liaising with landowners. <p>Previous volunteers have moved on to obtain employment (for example Rights of Way Officer) using skillsets developed through this project. Volunteers from a range of backgrounds are involved in caring for and exploring the National Park. Individuals have recognised the benefits of taking part for both their own health and wellbeing and the positive contributions they are able to make to the local environment.</p>
	<p>Next Generation and Youth Committee programmes including ongoing review and promotion of the PCNPA Youth Manifesto and magnification of Youth Voice in addressing issues related to the National Park and areas for priority action.</p>	<p>Next Generation activity delivered by Inclusion Officer (2 days a week).</p>	<p>Young people developed the Next Generation banner for Authority’s work with young people.</p> <p>2023/24: 450 participants in Next Generation Activities – Engagement with young people (figure includes Youth Committee, Youth Rangers, D of E, Point Youth Centre, Futureworks, Brownies, Beavers participants).</p> <p>During 2023/24 joint sessions have been delivered with Bannau Brycheiniog Youth Wardens. Funding for collaborative working across the 3 Welsh National Parks youth voice initiatives provided through support from Amex awarded through National Parks UK. A joint residential took place in March.</p> <p>Youth Committee has explored a range of themes in 2023/24, including review of Youth Manifesto - Pembrokeshire Coast National Park (looking to hear</p>

			<p>from expert witnesses on diversity and equality, climate change and mental health and young people), information on new volunteering system Better Impact, group has contributed to a Welsh Government Consultation on Wales Child Poverty Strategy and Plan, and discussion on NPMP.</p> <p>Pembrokeshire Youth Manifesto has informed Authority's priorities and review of strategic documents and priorities – Well-being Objectives, National Park Management Plan. Ensuring we take account of issues that impact on young people. In particular, concerns around climate, affordable housing, transport, working, education, training and involvement.</p>
	<p>Duke of Edinburgh Award participants: a rolling scheme for young people to achieve the volunteering element of their DofE award through practical conservation work</p>	<p>Monthly activity day provided by Ranger Service</p>	<p>2023/34: 63 participants in D of E sessions. D of E Participants volunteering contributed to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planting of 40m of new hedging at Urdd Gobaith Cymru's new Pentre Ifan site. • Himalayan Balsalm pulling at West Williamston. • Tree Planting at Croescoch • Clear up work/removal of rubbish on Skomer Island • Cutting back vegetation on coast path between Pembroke and Pembroke Dock <p>Young people are better connected to the National Park and empowered to take action to care for it, developing good citizenship skills. This scheme provides an entry route for participants in Next Generation and other volunteer schemes.</p>

<p>Supporting Regenerative Tourism through the Visitor Economy</p>	<p>Develop and implement inclusion/ accessibility action plans for centres to support delivery of regenerative tourism</p>		<p>This will build on the following activities: Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement of existing health, wellbeing and inclusion groups in the Lost Words exhibition • Use of centres as a base for Walkability, First 1000 days and other activities. • Use of Forest Holidays travel bursary to support schools to travel to Lost Words exhibition. • Use of easy read menus at Carew • Sensory friendly ‘quiet hour’ and ‘power hour’ sessions at Carew and Castell Henllys. In 2023/24 there were 664 visits during CH Quiet Hour. • Volunteering for Plas Dwbl College students at Castell Henllys who have assisted with site maintenance work. • Homeschooling events at Castell Henllys
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2. Case Studies

2.1 CASE STUDY

Carew Castle & Tidal Mill

The team at Carew Castle have worked hard to develop the site to become a centre for wellbeing and inclusion. The 'Walking for Wellbeing' group use the site for their base and walk the local paths weekly, as well as using the tearoom for refreshments. The site also regularly hosts groups such as Roots to Recovery and Walkability throughout the year for both onsite activities and days out.

The site has implemented new initiatives to welcome diverse groups, such as easy read picture menus in the tearoom and sensory-friendly sessions, which enable visitors with additional needs to enjoy a welcoming and accommodating environment tailored to their specific requirements.



A loyal group of volunteers has developed in recent years who have so far clocked up 499 volunteer hours in 2024, activities undertaken are varied and diverse including conservation works, gardening, general maintenance as well as helping out at activities and events.

2.2 CASE STUDY

Castell Henllys

Castell Henllys continues to offer a weekly Sunday morning quiet hour, encouraging people who would not have otherwise visited the site to come along and discover more about the lives of their ancient ancestors. The site has also developed a new initiative of hosting home-schooling days, welcoming 86 children over 3 events in the past 6 months, offering children from more diverse backgrounds the opportunity to take part in its popular education programme, as well as the opportunity for home-schooling families to meet and make important connections across the community.



The centre also plays an important part in the wider Authority's work and has helped host an event for the first 1000 days project with the Engagement and Inclusion team, as well as hosting an annual Sustainable Living Day and Dark Skies events with colleagues across the Authority, helping a range of audiences to understand the importance of the National Park, and their impact upon the natural world.

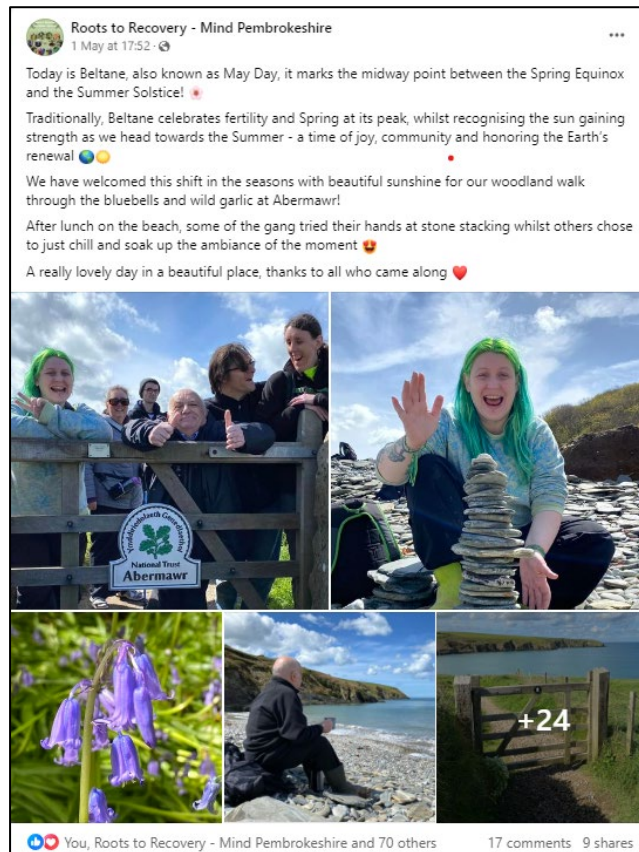
The centre continues to be a hub for Welsh language promotion and now also hosts Mudiad Meithrin for their weekly Welsh language toddler group.



2.3 CASE STUDY

Roots to Recovery

The project team work hard to engage existing and new participants in Roots to Recovery activities in a variety of ways, face to face through drop-in sessions at Mind Resource Centres and other community hubs and through engaging newsletters and social media posts.



Roots to Recovery is a people centred project so participants suggest and choose the activities they would like to do which can vary from gentle strolls to beach games, practical conservation work, gardening or exploring the National Park.



The engaging programme is designed to allow participants to grow their confidence and skills with over 15 long standing participants becoming Volunteer Mentors.



2.4 CASE STUDY

Geiriau Diflanedig/The Lost Words Exhibition at Oriol y Parc

Every exhibition we create as a partnership with Amgueddfa Cymru, and wider partners, is an opportunity to engage with people. For The Lost Words exhibition, we connected with schools and community groups in the lead up, as well as throughout the exhibition. We organised a workshop, with local artist Elly Morgan, at Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi to create 'word birds' for display in the visitor centre. Community groups such as PCNPA Pathways volunteers, Roots to Recovery and Value Independence were invited to collaborate on creating activities and nature displays to support the exhibition. The Pathways group made poetry boxes which have been placed around the Park to encourage people to write their own poem to share their experience with passers-by. The Roots to Recovery group made paper leaves and wildflowers for the curated displays of the exhibition. A Signalong resource for the exhibition of the nature words was created which led to walking for wellbeing groups regularly visiting the exhibition following a walk in the area with the words being presented in an accessible way. Value Independence provided feedback on the accessibility of the exhibition, reporting that they enjoyed pausing and listening to the bird song and the paintings made them feel happy. The visit encouraged the group to focus on nature as a theme for their creative artwork and we're looking forward to hosting an exhibition of this work in 2024.



The exhibition has seen an uplift in school visits with the North West Ranger leading booked sessions. Schools took part in activities in the exhibition, in the grounds around the visitor centre and through nature walks and activities around St Davids and to Caerfai and Newgale. Pembrokeshire school visits have been supported by the Education Team securing a travel bursary from Forest Holidays. 11 school sessions have been delivered for 345 pupils.

We extended the experience through creative family trails, craft and art workshops, special events with Jackie Morris and Mererid Hopwood and linked with local community festivals (e.g. Land and Sea and Wales Festival of Seaweed in St Davids), as well as retail tie-ins, to draw attention to the positive impact of nature and help visitors create their own memories.

3. Challenges and Opportunities

The Authority continues to grow our work to engage with people from diverse backgrounds and communities and we are delivering a considerable portfolio of projects and opportunities, however there are still many people in Pembrokeshire and elsewhere who do not feel that the National Park is for them or who face barriers to participation so there is still much work to be done. Engaging with people who don't currently use the Park, particularly those suffering from poor physical or mental health can be challenging; building trust is very important and working through trusted delivery partners is often the key to successful outcomes. This is clearly demonstrated by the Roots to Recovery project where our partnership with Mind Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire enables participants to gradually build up their engagement, starting with drop-ins at a Mind Resource Centre where they are accessing other mental health services and building up to day-long activities and visits as they get to know and trust the project staff, volunteers and participants.

Our inclusion, health and wellbeing work is largely delivered through a project-based approach, working in partnerships and accessing external funding. Whilst this gives us the opportunity to regularly evaluate and refine our approaches it also means that continuation of effective projects is a challenge. For example, it is currently not clear whether we will be able to continue to support all the walking activity which was developed through the West Wales Walking for Wellbeing project which has now ended while we look to develop the new Get Outdoors approach which is currently funded for 12 months.

The funding landscape has changed in recent years to become far more competitive, with more demands from the public and third sectors and even from within our own organisation. One way of overcoming this challenge is to interlink nature recovery, heritage and our centres' work with inclusion, health and wellbeing and there are several new initiatives and opportunities underway. The Pathways project will be partially funded by the Nature Networks funded Cysylltu Natur 25x25 project for the next two years to deliver many of the practical conservation elements of this project. The Lost Words Exhibition demonstrated the ways that diverse audiences could engage with exhibitions and take the work outside the Centre into the Park and will act as a blueprint for future working. Whenever we can, we will look to bursaries such as the Forest Holidays bursary which has supported schools access and other partnerships to support wider engagement at our Centres.

By working with project participants to audit and develop our services and facilities and linking in with the Open to All project to support and develop services within the Tourism sector we have the opportunity to make effective long-term changes that will have real impact.

4. Contribution to Cross Cutting Outcomes:

Cross Cutting Outcome	Contribution – Activities and Impact
Sustainable Development Principles – 5 ways of working	Involvement is central to the approach of the Authority when developing its inclusion focused projects. The Authority is engaging beneficiaries in shaping projects informed by their lived experiences. To deliver projects effectively in this space, the Authority recognises the importance of working with partners with expertise and who already have relationships with people the projects are seeking to benefit. This successful collaborative approach has been shown through Roots to Recovery and ongoing engagement with Value Independence and VC Gallery. The projects and work programmes play an important preventative role linked to wider public health and social prescribing agenda in terms of supporting improved mental health, movement, well-being for early years and health benefits from accessing the outdoors. Activities in this area take an integrated approach, supporting wider Pembrokeshire strategies and priorities particularly in relation to early years and response to child poverty. One of the challenges in terms of taking long term approaches is the need to rely on project funding, this can impact on how projects are delivered.
Public Sector Equality Duty/ Socio Economic Duty / Reducing Child Poverty	Projects and activities play a central role in supporting Authority to deliver its Equality Objectives and Plan. Provision of a minibus service for Pathways and other activities has helped address barriers faced by participants to being able to access opportunities in the Park. Provision of mobility equipment has supported more people to be able to experience beaches and countryside of Pembrokeshire. The First 1000 Days Project is working to address barriers to accessing the outdoors for pre-school children and parents, with next phase focused on working with pre-school settings in Haverfordwest.
Promoting Welsh Language	Opportunities to look in the future at how we can promote the Welsh Language and Welsh in the landscape through our Outreach and Inclusion Work. Castell Henllys currently hosts Mudiad Meithrin for their weekly Welsh language toddler group. The 1 st 1000 days project works with Cylch Meithrin’s across the County.
Section 6 Biodiversity Duty / Sustainable Management of Natural Resources	Projects are supporting a wider range of people to engage with nature or take action for nature. The Pathways project has received part funding to deliver work which supports activities of Nature Recovery Team.
Engagement with Communities and Stakeholders	Roots to Recovery is a people centred project so participants suggest and choose the activities they would like to do. Beneficiaries of Pathways and Roots to Recovery have been

	involved in the development of these projects. Get Outdoors will engage service users in audit and 'mystery shopper' activities to help improve the accessibility of our sites and services. The Walking for Wellbeing project set out to provide walking opportunities based in local communities and accessible to the people who live there.
Staff Development / Volunteering Opportunities	Through working with partner organisations such as MIND and involving participants in project and service design, Authority staff are able to gain shared learning and greater understanding of how to design and deliver effective projects. Roots to Recovery have a mentoring scheme. Volunteer roles have been developed focused on supporting other volunteers. Volunteers, including volunteer activity leaders have attended range of training sessions covering topics such as Autism, Mental Health Awareness and Equality Training. Roots to Recovery Mentors have been able to access minibus (MIDAS) training, first aid and safeguarding training. Projects such as Roots to Recovery and Next Generation activities, have played a transformative role for some participants, helping to build confidence for participants to gain employment or further education/ skills development opportunities.

5. Overall Assessment and Next Steps

The Authority has a positive legacy of projects that have helped shape its current approach. It takes a participant-centred approach to enable people to shape the projects that are looking to benefit them. It has worked collaboratively with others developing strong connections with local support organisations. The five steps to mental well-being of connect, be active, keep learning, take notice, and give are embedded across the Authority's approaches. The stakeholder mapping work will help identify gaps and areas where we could do more, alongside taking on board learning from the Open for All partnership project with Visit Pembrokeshire.

We will continue to deliver projects with existing funding and seek additional funding to ensure that this important work continues to support people from diverse backgrounds, facing socio-economic disadvantage or other barriers, to access the Park, help look after the Park and have the well-being benefits of access to nature and the Park's special qualities.