

Sustainability Committee

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Sustainability Committee Inquiry into Access to Inland Water

Written Evidence: Countryside Council for Wales

September 2009

Recommendations

Research for the Countryside Council for Wales suggests that there is currently unmet demand for water related recreation from the population of Wales. Seeking to address this demand is a worthwhile pursuit because there is ample evidence that outdoor recreation is good for personal health, human development, quality of life, and is a significant economic generator.

The key tests that were applied in relation to evaluating options for securing access to mountain, moor, heath, down, and common land related to the provision of sufficient quality, extent, permanency, clarity, and certainty. An additional component was to gauge the equity of the access being provided to meet the needs of the broadest population. It is a moot point whether these tests are currently being met in relation to inland water access, but there is effort being made to address them where possible within the existing frameworks.

Nature conservation considerations are locally important, but they are not significant issues on most inland waters, particularly when combined with appropriate management, raising awareness, and suitably targeted codes of conduct.

CCW would wish to highlight the following key points and recommendations to the Committee:

1. The five tests of sufficient quality, extent, permanency, clarity and certainty are legitimate tests when considering access to inland water. A clear proposal or desired outcome is required if meaningful evidence against the tests it to be collated, and the cost/benefit of meeting them through different approaches properly evaluated.
2. Further exploration of the latent demand that is suggested in the Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey 2008 is advisable to properly understand the nature of supply required for the resident population.
3. Alternatives to the current approaches that the National Assembly for Wales may wish to advocate should build on the typologies contained in the review of international approaches conducted for CCW in 2007, and allow for management approaches to reduce inter/intra user conflict and to safeguard the environment.
4. Whilst most rivers and lakes are not especially sensitive to recreational impacts, safeguards would be required to protect the currently small minority of sites that are sensitive and/or experience high recreational pressure.
5. A consistent and integrated approach to the use and promotion of Code(s) of Conduct geared around acquiring appropriate outdoor skills has the

potential to simultaneously mitigate negative impacts and promote increased participation.

Introduction

The Countryside Council for Wales is the Government's statutory advisor on sustaining natural beauty, wildlife and the opportunity for outdoor enjoyment in Wales and its inshore waters.

CCW champions the environment and landscapes of Wales and its coastal waters as sources of natural and cultural riches, as a foundation for economic and social activity, and as a place for leisure and learning opportunities. We aim to make the environment a valued part of everyone's life in Wales.

This evidence to the Sustainability Committee builds on our brief submission to the informal inquiry undertaken by the Petitions Committee in response to petition "P-03-118 - Welsh Canoeing Association".

Existing Activity

As an Assembly Government Sponsored Public Body we receive, each year, our Ministerial instructions in a remit letter. These instructions have included working on:

- A Strategic Plan for Water Related Recreation in Wales

CCW was a member of the steering group that supported the Environment Agency Wales on the development of the strategic plan for water-based recreation in Wales, published in 2008. The purpose of the Strategic Plan was to identify clear and succinct priorities for the protection and development of water related recreation in Wales, within the context of the current legislation.

- Water 'Exemplar' Projects

Running concurrently with the development of the strategic plan, our remit letter for 2007/08 charged us to initiate pilot projects to facilitate potential new opportunities for recreational access to water. In a letter from WAG it was made clear to CCW that: "Ministers are very keen to secure greater public access to rivers and lakes in Wales for recreational use. They wish to see this facilitated by non statutory means so far as possible".

In partnership with Forestry Commission Wales we supported 5 such projects delivered by Forestry Commission Wales, British Waterways, National Trust, Wye and Usk Foundation, and Pembrokeshire National Park Authority. These projects were selected on the basis that there were landowners in the areas concerned who were prepared to explore provision for water related recreation or where there were management arrangements in place where an increase or wider range of uses could be accommodated. An independent evaluation of the 5 projects concluded that:

- they successfully improved opportunities by establishing agreements, providing infrastructure and information or promoting activity.
- long term benefits will accrue from the small scale infrastructure improvements or information provision.
- improved understanding between landowners and occupiers, conservationists and the different recreation interests which may lead to other opportunities.

- a variety of approaches need to be employed in enhancing opportunities if the potential is to be realised, partnership working to build consensus will be key at national and local level.

The projects were evaluated against the objectives sought by WAG as part of the funding arrangements, and not against the five tests of sufficient quality, extent, permanency, clarity, and certainty which are more suited to the consideration of the merits of a preferred national approach.

- The “Splash” fund

Administered for WAG by Environment Agency Wales, CCW is a member of the steering group that advises on grant awards. The fund has emerged since the exemplars were supported, and so this should provide an illustration of whether providing a short-term challenge fund incentive will deliver meaningfully on quality, extent, permanency, clarity and certainty.

- Favourable Condition

Much of CCW's effort is spent on seeking to secure favourable condition on special sites to protect threatened habitats and species. We have management agreements with landowners for streamside corridors (particularly prevalent on the Cleddau Rivers in Pembrokeshire under the Living Rivers scheme). These have been paid for to prevent livestock access to the river and to allow a shrub layer to develop for the otter. New access provisions need to be sensitive to the kinds of interventions currently deployed for nature conservation purposes.

The Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey 2008

The results of this survey, commissioned jointly by the Countryside Council for Wales and Forestry Commission Wales, represent the responses of residents of Wales on their use of the outdoors, places visited, and other issues such as their motivations and barriers. It includes the following activities relevant to this inquiry;

- Swimming (outdoors) – includes swimming in the sea, rivers / lakes, or outdoor pool
- Fishing – includes sea angling (from the shore or from a boat), coarse fishing, or game fishing
- Non-motorised Watersports – includes canoeing / kayaking, surfing, rowing, diving, snorkelling, sailing, or yachting
- Motorised Watersports – includes water-skiing, jet skiing, or power boating.

A fuller briefing on these activities is included at Annex 1.

‘Non-motorised Watersports’ and ‘Fishing’ are undertaken equally, with 10% of respondents taking part at least once over a 12 month period. (Non-motorised Watersports includes canoeing / kayaking, surfing, rowing, diving, snorkelling, sailing, or yachting).

The participation rates drop considerably when respondents are asked which activities they have undertaken at least once in the last 4 weeks. This would suggest that within overall participation rate there is a core of participants who

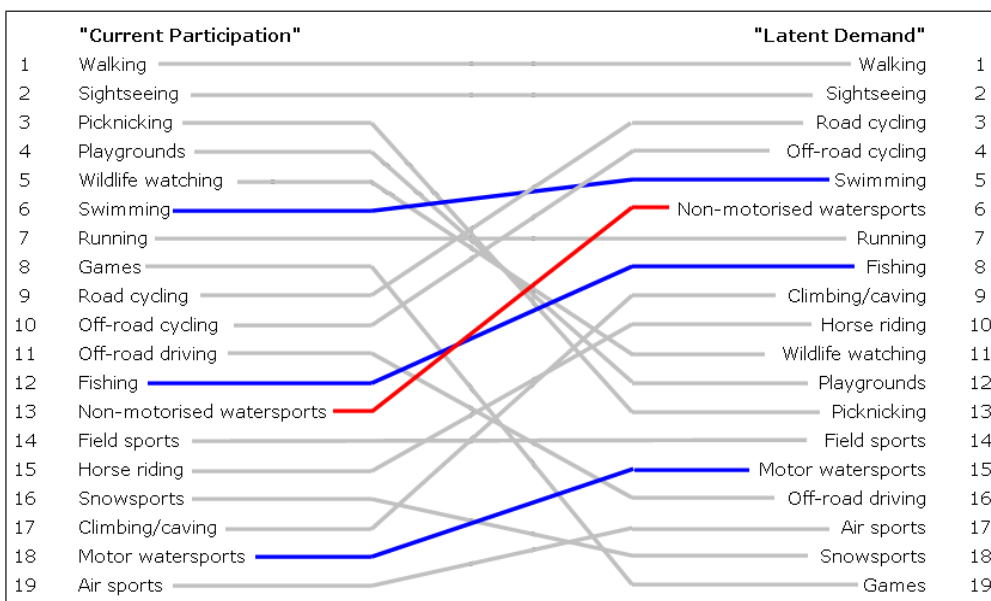
participate more frequently. 'Fishing' - with 4% of respondents undertaking this activity at least once in the last 4 weeks - is now slightly higher relative to 'Non-motorised Watersports' (at 3%). These rates are very similar to those of a number of other activities, such as horse riding, field sports and off-road driving, and are more than the number of respondents who went climbing and caving over the same period.

The survey included a category on 'river, lake or canal' in the list of places that respondents had visited on their most recent trip to the outdoors. Overall, 29% of visits were made to inland water locations. This was more than visits to farmland, beaches or the sea, but less than trips to woodlands, local parks, or mountains and moors.

The demographic profiles of the four water-based activities show certain similarities, in particular in relation to being undertaken by young adults, but there is clear evidence to show that each of the four activities (swimming, fishing, non-motorised watersports, motorised watersports) are associated with different social groups. Such differences, when combined with the cultures and traditions of the respective disciplines, may well serve to exacerbate actual or introduce perceived conflict on and around the water. It may also warrant further exploration in relation to the influence of such profiles on the equity of current provision, something that was important to the Petitions Committee in their conclusions.

Whilst Figure 1, below, is rather crude it does serve to highlight that some degree of latent demand exists for water related recreation. "Non-motorised watersports" shows the greatest change in rank, where participation is dominated by 'canoeing/kayaking'. Further analysis and refinement would be required to understand if this is a result of existing participants who would want to increase the frequency of their participation or potential new participants, and whether either of these findings would indicate a need to either increase the extent of provision, promote existing opportunities, or introduce management measures in areas of existing provision.

Figure 1: Relative ranking of activities comparing "current participation" with "latent demand" positions



Source: Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey 2008

Within the results it would appear that high levels of participation tends to be those activities that are low involvement (i.e. which don't require specialist equipment and acquired skills), easily accessible, and where there is a lot of supply e.g. going for a short walk.

Existing legislation

The current legal position in relation to access to inland water is complex and, at very least, disputed. There can be no doubt that this complexity frustrates some participants, land owners, and agencies. But whether the volume of benefits that could accrue from clarifying the law universally would justify its pursuit is a moot point, and would depend on the rationale for change and the outcomes being sought i.e. what changes to the status of sufficient quality, extent, permanency, clarity, and certainty is deemed necessary to deliver a particular set of benefits. To date, WAG has expressed a preference for securing new opportunities through agreements within the existing statutory framework, and this has been the context for CCW's advice and activity to date.

A clear statement of outcomes would be required against which to judge the merit of any way forward. We believe that the five tests of sufficient quality, extent, permanency, clarity and certainty should feature within the evaluation of any proposal.

Previous advice

In 1999, as part of the consultation and drafting period of the CRoW Act 2000, CCW at the request of Government confirmed its advice about ways forward for securing increased access to 'other types of open country'. Watersides and waterspace were amongst the 'other types of open country' considered. The proposals made by Government for increasing access opportunities in open countryside had moved forward on the basis of provision for pedestrians, so much of CCW's advice at the time was governed by this consideration. This meant that the recommendations were primarily focussed on pedestrians at the waterside rather than other users of waterspace.

Within the constraints of the advice sought and the timetable for providing the advice CCW was cautious in its recommendations, and concluded that access to waterspace and waterside should not be conferred as a statutory right at that time but that Highway Authorities and Environment Agency in partnership with CCW and working through local access forums should confirm the apparent gaps in access provision for pedestrians along water courses and waterspace for other recreational users - canoeists in particular.

In relation to securing access on foot to mountain, moor, heath, down, and common land, CCW concluded that a statutory approach was required to meet the five tests of sufficient quality, extent, permanency, clarity and certainty laid down by government.

Since 1999 CCW has not been asked by the Welsh Assembly Government for any advice specifically on the merits of creating a statutory right of access to water, with effort being focussed on the implementation of the new statutory measures which were included in the CRoW Act.

International Approaches

A review of international approaches conducted for CCW in 2007 suggests that all countries studied have some form of 'right of access' supplemented with management approaches to reduce inter/intra user conflict and to safeguard the environment. The research (which the Committee has heard about from its author, Dr John Powell, at the opening session of this Inquiry) reviewed a wide range of countries, encompassing most of Europe (including Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland), along with the USA and New Zealand. For most countries there was a difference between how access was 'secured' and how subsequent use was then managed. Under these two different areas, a wide variety of approaches were found, and the research conducted a series of interviews with key stakeholders in order to understand their potential applicability to Wales.

The review of other countries found that the 'voluntary' approach only existed on a countrywide level in England and Wales. The usual approach of seeking temporary permission for use of the water from the landowner and / or the holder of the riparian rights has also now been supplemented by the first example of voluntary dedication under CRow on the River Mersey, achieved through the work of the Environment Agency. Voluntary dedication under CRow secures the access permanently. Overall, it was felt that this type of approach had the potential to help protect environmentally sensitive sites (as it relies on permission being granted), and could be used to control numbers of users. However, some respondents believed that the potentially short-term nature of voluntary agreements and the ability for permission to be withdrawn at any time leads to a relatively unstable access situation, although this is overcome through dedication. The need to gain voluntary permission is also cited as a potential barrier to providing access in the places where it is most needed.

How applicable a 'right of access' might be in Wales resulted in a wide range of different responses from the stakeholders, with some supporting this approach and others considering that it would not be appropriate. Supporters of such an approach felt that granting informal recreation users a right of access would provide clarity in relation to where people could go, and that in turn could have potential benefits for increasing participation. However, others raised strong concerns as to potential conflict between different users and the possibility of activities damaging sensitive environmental sites.

It would appear that other countries that have a right of access have addressed these potentially negative impacts through applying one or more of the following 'management' approaches, usually to specific areas as and when required:

- Codes of Conduct
- Time Zoning
- Area Zoning
- Management Plans
- Canoe Trails
- Permits, Fees and Licences

The research commissioned by the Countryside Council for Wales was not intended to provide the definitive answer to what single approach should be used to provide access to water for recreation in Wales. Instead, it has provided an extensive review of a wide range of possible approaches, particularly in relation to how recreational use could be managed where required. Each of the approaches makes a different contribution to the five tests. Most importantly,

with the inclusion of numerous case studies from around the world, the review for CCW provides practical, real-life examples of how such approaches can be successfully employed to address specific recreation management issues.

Nature Conservation

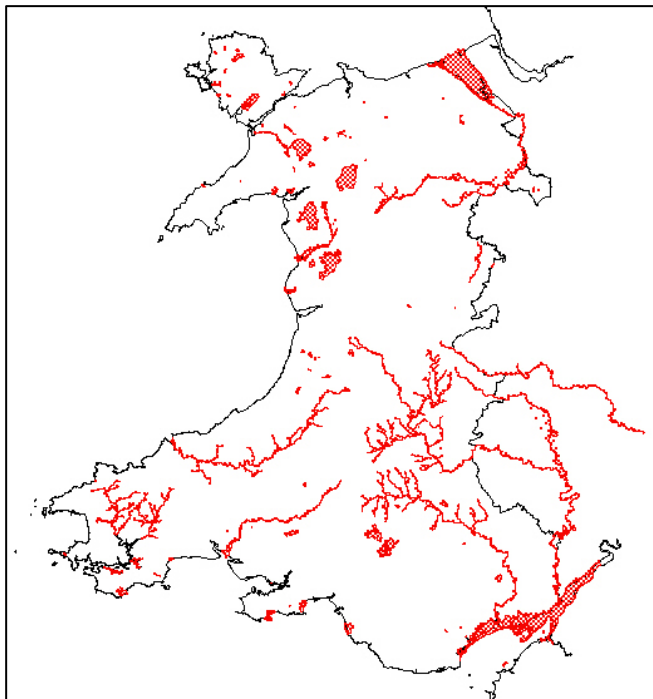
There are 8 rivers and one canal Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) in Wales, including some of the largest river systems (e.g. Wye, Usk, Teifi, Dee). Several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) also have sections of qualifying river.

There are 13 SACs for lakes in Wales, containing 73 lakes. 54 non-SAC lakes are designated as SSSIs for lake habitat, and a further 21 are designated because they support aquatic species.

There are 6 priority BAP freshwater habitats in Wales. Additionally, the Wales Biodiversity Partnership's Freshwater Ecosystem Group identified 73 Biodiversity Action Plan Priority species dependent on freshwaters in Wales.

A map of these protected sites is included in Figure 2, below, as an illustration of the extent of conservation designation on many of Wales's inland waters.

Figure 2: Extent of nature conservation designations affecting inland water and estuaries.



Our approach in relation to features of conservation interest is on a case by case basis, acknowledging that it is dependant on a number of factors including nature and intensity of activity as well as the type of habitat and particular local circumstances. The legal situation surrounding regulation of canoeing or other water related recreation activity with regard to conservation features is complex and the means available are governed by local circumstances.

Where rivers lie within a SSSI which are designated for habitats and species sensitive to the potential impacts of canoeing, landowners wishing to carry out or permit canoeing would need to obtain CCW's consent. Such consent can be withheld or issued subject to conditions (such as to control the timing of the activity, access points and so on). In some areas, recreational activities such as angling and canoeing are managed on a non-statutory basis through agreements between riparian landowners and sporting clubs and associations. Where canoeing activity takes place without the agreement of landowners, CCW's consenting powers under the SSSI provisions do not apply.

In some rivers where a licensing authority exercises its powers, for instance for rights of navigation, it is required to have regard to the implications of the activity upon any SSSIs, or 'Natura 2000' (SAC or SPA) sites designated for their wildlife under EU directives. This applies even if the area where activities are permitted lie outside the designated conservation areas. In general, before permitting any potentially damaging activities, the authority must consult with CCW and take account of our advice in deciding whether, and under what conditions, to permit the activity.

Birds

Overall, any impacts arising from access to inland waters are unlikely to be significant. There may only be issues in a very limited number of sites and if there is likely to be significant increases in access immediately adjacent to key breeding wader's sites. See Annex 2 for a brief overview. Prior to the enactment of the CRoW Act, there were concerns about impacts on key concentrations of birds, but these concerns have largely proven to be unfounded, largely because open access has not resulted in a significant increase in visitor activity. What is of most concern is where there may be prolonged or focused activity that is coincident with particular key bird concentrations. However, on the assumption that access to inland waters would be for activities on the water itself, and that any particularly sensitive sites can be identified and appropriate measures put in place (physical exclusion, or use of signage or, if necessary, seasonal wardening), then significant impact is very unlikely.

Perhaps of greater concern is increased activity on land adjacent to inland waters (access points, people coming to the shore) where nesting birds, particularly those that are ground-nesting, are vulnerable to disturbance, predation and physical damage or destruction of nests.

Mammals

CCW, with Natural England, have produced guidance on the application of the disturbance offence, as referred to in regulation 39(12) of the Habitats Regulations. The guidance asserts that "Dog-walking along river banks, intensive angling activity and motorised water sports are some of the recreational activities that are considered most likely to cause disturbance to otters, though this may not be considered deliberate disturbance under the Habitats Regulations." The guidance also acknowledges that it "is difficult (and probably largely meaningless) to prescribe specific 'safe' distances that should apply in every case, as local circumstances will come into play", but provides some suggestions about distances of paths from known shelters etc. It serves to highlight that any mechanism deployed to facilitate new access opportunities needs to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate local circumstances.

Scotland

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 is sometimes cited as an illustration that access can be provided unilaterally, without impact on conservation, thus implying that CCW's 'case by case' approach is too precautionary. We would assert that this is failing to properly understand the rights that have been created, and the powers that our sister agency (Scottish Natural Heritage) have retained and acquired to safeguard nature conservation features.

Under Section 29 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, Scottish Natural Heritage can put up signs (asking people to exercise access rights in a particular way) to protect the natural heritage. This legislation in Scotland does not relieve the Scottish Government or others of their responsibilities in relation to Habitat Regulations or Water Framework Directive, and so to suggest that because this legislation has been passed there can be no legitimate conservation issues to prevent increased access is incorrect. Safeguards have been built in to bolster and clarify existing powers within the new law, and the need to manage recreation in a way that does not damage special features of conservation remains as it did prior to the Act.

Invasive species

There is some risk of introducing non-native and invasive species into Welsh inland water through increased recreation activity, for example through plant fragments or eggs being transported on recreation equipment such as angling gear or boats. The consequences of introduction can be irreversible and economically and ecologically costly, as can be seen in Wales recently with the invasion of Cardiff Bay by zebra mussels and the colonisation of Holyhead Marina by an invasive sea squirt. The risks are reflected by the provisions for control of non-native species in UK legislation. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 prevents the introduction of any animal not naturally occurring in the wild, and also any of a list of both animals and plants which have been introduced previously and have proved to be invasive. Also, the Water Framework Directive requires water bodies to reach 'Good Ecological Status', which cannot happen if non-native species are disrupting the ecosystem. The issue of non-native species management is not necessarily incompatible with increased access, but the risks need to be taken into account, and appropriate safeguards introduced within any proposal.

In conclusion, it is CCW's view that any need to manage canoeing or any other activity on waterways to protect features of special conservation interest would be dependant on a number of factors including nature and intensity of activity as well as the type of habitat and particular local circumstances.

Codes of Conduct

Codes of conduct and similar guidance are a means of raising user awareness of potential conflicting issues and are often used by the environmental and outdoor sector to try to manage and mitigate the impacts of recreation and influence visitor behaviour.

Accessing inland water, whatever the legal situation, will inevitably involve complex interactions with other users, the environment and other countryside interests. For example, people accessing inland water and the areas adjacent may:

- Be unaware or not care about the availability of legal access to them – whether by rights, public paths, agreements or permissive arrangements – and in doing so break the law
- Impact on the environment – while often unnoticed, unintended and of limited longer-term significance, these may include, for example, ground erosion or disturbance of wildlife.
- Impinge on those living and/or working in the countryside – for example, by intruding on the privacy of countryside dwellers, or requiring farmers or foresters to alter their ways of working to take account of visitors' activities and avoid putting them at risk
- Pose an element of risk to the countryside users' safety and well-being - as the natural environment and productive countryside are seldom risk-free
- Not contribute to the local economy and help to support local services and amenities, such as local shops, pubs and public transport.

Over the last three years the Countryside Council for Wales has been exploring the process of creating codes of conduct; looking at where they are effective, what makes them work and how they can be tailored to suit their target audience.

Codes usually form only part of a countryside managers' 'toolbox' and are not a panacea for countryside and visitor management issues by themselves. Where codes are used, they may supplement a range of other management mechanisms, such as signs, published information, advice from wardens, way marked paths systems, byelaws, etc. A range of management mechanisms may be adopted – especially in more popular and/or more sensitive countryside sites. These will often be mutually supportive and are likely to be most effective, where they are developed, implemented and kept under review, as part of a countryside and/or visitor management strategy agreed by all key stakeholders.

In Wales, there is no single promoted method for creating codes of conduct. Generally, they are put together on an ad-hoc basis by whoever is trying to resolve the issue at the time. Skills and experience accrued from working in the field are rarely passed on from one organisation to another. The research on the effectiveness of Codes of Conduct found that each audience type had different needs when it came to gathering and responding to information. These needs could be categorised to help shape and target the creation of codes of conduct more effectively. It found that general users have very little knowledge of specific environmental issues. Most organisations approached produced single outputs, such as stand-alone codes of conduct. These are often produced without extensive research into how they are to be delivered and are very rarely monitored for their effectiveness. They are not particularly effective at influencing behaviour because they have very narrow penetration and do not consider behaviour change sufficiently, tending to over focus on the message.

For the desired outcomes to be achieved there may well be merit in advocating greater coordination of the development of codes of conduct, a role that CCW could facilitate.

Conclusion

In CCW's view there is currently unmet demand for water related recreation from the population of Wales, but currently no accepted understanding of the scale or nature of that demand. We would hope to help clarify this through our work

analysing the results of the Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey. Some of the projects emerging from the Splash fund may also help to gauge the nature of demand. Seeking to address demand is a worthwhile pursuit because there is ample evidence that outdoor recreation is good for personal health, human development, quality of life, and is a significant economic generator.

The key tests that have previously been applied in relation to the provision of access opportunities are: sufficient quality, extent, permanency, clarity, and certainty. It is a moot point to what extent these tests are currently being met, but there is effort being made to address them where possible within the existing frameworks. The review of international approaches undertaken for CCW provides an illustration (and typology) of approaches to securing and managing access currently used in other parts of the world. There is scope to build on the findings within this work to explore alternatives to the current approaches that the National Assembly for Wales may wish to advocate.

There is no significant barrier to the exploration of alternative approaches happening in conjunction with on-going implementation of the Strategic Plan for Water Related Recreation.

Nature conservation considerations are important, but they are not significant issues on most inland waters, particularly when combined with appropriate management, raising awareness, and suitably targeted codes of conduct.

Annex 1:

Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey 2008: Summary of results relating to Water Recreation

1. Introduction

The Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey (WORS) provides data on participation in the following water-based activities by residents of Wales during 2008:

- Swimming (outdoors) – includes swimming in the sea, rivers / lakes, or outdoor pool
- Fishing – includes sea angling (from the shore or from a boat), course fishing, or game fishing
- Non-motorised Watersports – includes canoeing / kayaking, surfing, rowing, diving, snorkelling, sailing, or yachting
- Motorised Watersports – includes water-skiing, jet skiing, or power boating.

The results are presented for the main activity type (i.e. swimming, fishing, non-motorised watersports, and motorised watersports). Disaggregated results for the more detailed activities are not available as the sub-sample sizes are too small for analysis. However, reviewing the combined data for each main activity type indicates that the results should be considered to be representative of the following:

- 'Swimming (outdoors)' category is predominantly 'swimming in the sea'
- 'Fishing' category mainly comprises of inland water angling (i.e. course and game fishing)
- 'Non-motorised Watersports' is predominantly 'canoeing/ kayaking'
- 'Motorised Watersports' category mainly represents 'power boating'

The WORS also includes data on the places that respondents visited, including a single category that covered 'river, lake or canal'. It should be noted that visits to these sites involved a wider range of recreation, other than the aforementioned water-based activities, and would include 'beside-water' activities such as walking, cycling etc.

2. Participation in Water-based Activities

'Swimming Outdoors' is the water-based activity that has been undertaken the most, with 27% of residents of Wales participating in this activity at least once in the last 12 months. This is less than 'walking', but is similar to the number of respondents who went wildlife watching or running, and more than the percentage who went cycling or mountain biking.

'Non-motorised Watersports' and 'Fishing' are undertaken equally, with 10% of respondents taking part at least once over a 12 month period. This is similar to the number of respondents who went off-road driving and more than the percentage who went horse riding.

Motorised Watersports are undertaken the least, at only 5%. Although this is a low participation rate, it is the same as the number of respondents who went climbing, and more than those who went 'air sports' such as hang gliding.

The participation rates drop considerably when respondents are asked which activities they have undertaken at least once in the last 4 weeks. 'Swimming

Outdoors' is still the most commonly undertaken of the water-based activities, but this has fallen to only 6% of respondents. This now means that is undertaken by fewer respondents than cycling or mountain biking. However, it should be noted that 'swimming outdoors' showed a high degree of seasonality, with much higher participation rates in the summer and much lower in the winter.

'Fishing' - with 4% of respondents undertaking this activity at least once in the last 4 weeks - is now slightly higher relative to 'Non-motorised Watersports' (at 3%). These rates are very similar to those of a number of other activities, such as horse riding, field sports and off-road driving, and are more than the number of respondents who went climbing and caving.

'Motorised Watersports' remains the least undertaken of the water-based activities at only 1%. This is now less than 'climbing', but remains higher than the number of respondents who do air sports.

3. Water-based Activities: Participant Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of participants undertaking the different water-based activities are based on the 'visits in the last 12 months' data in order to ensure suitable sample sizes for analysis.

'Swimming Outdoors' has a statistically higher than average representation from the following groups:

- Young people (16-24's), with a lesser, but still significant, over-representation of middle-aged respondents (35-54's)
- Higher incomes: there is a linear correlation between income and participation in 'swimming outdoors', and it is statistically higher for those with household incomes in excess of £31,000
- Respondents who are resident in the Pembrokeshire Spatial Plan Area (although this does not necessarily mean that they are all undertaking this activity in the Pembrokeshire area)
- NS-SEC group 9, which is predominantly students
- Respondents who have children (although this does not necessarily mean that these children have accompanied the respondent in the activity)

Overall, the demographic profile of respondents who went swimming outdoors indicates two main groups: (a) young people, comprising of a high percentage of students, (b) reasonably affluent family groups accompanied by children.

'Fishing' has a statistically higher than average representation from the following groups:

- Young people (16-24's), with a lesser, but still significant, over-representation of middle-aged respondents (35-54's)
- A higher percentage of male participants, and very few female participants (this activity has the greatest differentiation in terms of gender)
- Respondents who are resident in the Pembrokeshire Spatial Plan Area
- NS-SEC group 4, which is predominantly self-employed people. Fishing also has a statistically high number of participants with trade qualifications.
- Respondents who have children
- People who are resident in rural areas (as opposed to cities or towns)

Overall, the demographics of this activity are associated with groups of adult male friends, who are either quite young or middle-aged, and who live in the countryside.

'Non-motorised Watersports' have a statistically higher than average representation from the following groups:

- Young people (16-24's). This activity has a stronger association with a single age group than the other water-based activities.
- Higher incomes: there is a linear correlation between income and participation, and it is statistically higher for those with household incomes in excess of £50,000
- A higher percentage of male participants than female, although this gender difference is less pronounced than for 'fishing'
- Respondents who are resident in the Pembrokeshire Spatial Plan Area
- NS-SEC group 1, which is predominantly senior managerial occupations. Non-motorised watersports also have a statistically higher percentage of participants with a degree.
- Respondents who have children
- People who are resident in rural areas (as opposed to cities or towns)

Overall, the demographic profile of 'non-motorised watersports' is associated with predominantly young people (both young adults and under 16's), although there is also an association with highly educated, affluent respondents in managerial positions who live in the countryside.

'Motorised Watersports' have a statistically higher than average representation from the following groups:

- Young people (16-24's)
- NS-SEC group 4, which predominantly represents self-employed people
- Higher incomes, although this is associated with one specific income band: £50,000 - £80,000 rather than a direct linear relationship between increasing income and participation.
- Respondents who are resident in the Pembrokeshire Spatial Plan Area

Overall, it is difficult to get a clear demographic picture of the demographic profile of motorised watersports, in part due to the small sample size that results from having fewer participants. However, it is associated with young groups of friends who are slightly or likely to be male and are reasonably affluent.

In conclusion, the demographic profiles of the four water-based activities show certain similarities, in particular in relation to being undertaken by young adults and being associated with respondents who are resident in the Pembrokeshire Spatial Plan Area. The activities also all share the same statistical association with participants who do not have a disability, whilst also showing no difference in participation rates between residents of Community 1st areas compared to non-Community 1st areas, nor between Welsh language speakers and non-Welsh speakers. However, there are clear differences between the demographics of each type of activity as highlighted above which show that each of the four activities are associated with different social groups.

4. Expressed Latent Demand for Water-based Activities

'Latent demand' has been expressed in the Survey as a response to participants being asked if there are any activities they would either like to start doing, or to

do more often. There are varying levels of latent demand for the four main types of water-based recreation, as follows:

- The highest level of expressed latent demand for water-based activities is for both 'Swimming Outdoors' and 'Non-motorised Watersports'.
- There is less latent demand for 'Fishing', and very little for 'Motorised Watersports'.

The latent demand for 'Non-motorised Watersports' is particularly strong from young people (16 – 24's), whilst the expressed demand for more 'Fishing' comes especially from those with trade qualifications. The demand for 'Outdoor Swimming' and 'Motorised Watersports' does not have any particular social group associated with it.

Of particular note is the relative position of the water-based activities when comparing the 'participated in' data (based on the 'activities undertaken at least once in the last 12 months') with the results of the 'latent demand' question. Both 'Swimming Outdoors' and 'Motorised Watersports' have held their relative positions, with swimming having a relatively high position compared to other recreation activities in terms of both 'current participation' and 'expressed demand', and motorised watersports having a reasonably low position.

However, 'Non-motorised Watersports' has shifted its relative position quite considerably. It is only the 13th activity in the list of all 19 recreation activities (both water and land based) undertaken in the last 12 months, but changes significantly to 6th position in the list of all activities for which there is latent demand. This indicates that although current participation in non-motorised watersports is relatively low, there is more latent demand for this activity than there is for some more commonly undertaken pursuits. There has also been a shift in the relative position of 'Fishing', although this is less pronounced than that for 'Non-motorised Watersports'.

5. Visits to Inland Water

The survey included a category on 'river, lake or canal' in the list of places that respondents had visited on their most recent trip to the outdoors. Overall, 29% of visits were made to inland water locations. This was more than visits to farmland, beaches or the sea, but less than trips to woodlands, local parks, or mountains and moors.

Overall, there were no significant differences in relation to the demographic profile of visits to rivers, lakes and canals, in terms of all age groups, genders, and disability categories. There were some differences in that these locations were visited more by respondents with very high household incomes (in excess of £80,000), who were self-employed, and had a trade qualification.

This summary, from the Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey 2008, was compiled by Sue Williams, Senior Recreation and Social Research Officer, Countryside Council for Wales.

Annex 2**Potential impacts of access to inland waters on birds**

Species	Conservation status	Legal status	Habitat	Potential impact of increased human access	Suggested management
Breeding little ringed plover	Increasing	*Schedule 1 species	Shingle banks	Ground-nester: vulnerable to trampling, disturbance and predation	Exclusion from known breeding sites during breeding season – main site in Wales is Afon Tywi SSSI
Breeding lapwing	Declining	**Section 42 species	Wet grassland	Ground-nester, vulnerable to disturbance and predation	Discourage access in areas adjacent to key breeding sites; use of signage if there is likely to be a conflict with very important breeding areas (based on RSPB key area maps)
Breeding curlew	Declining	**Section 42 species	Wet grassland	Ground-nester, vulnerable to disturbance and predation	Discourage access in areas adjacent to key breeding sites; use of signage if there is likely to be a conflict with very important breeding areas (based on RSPB key area maps)
Breeding yellow wagtail	Declining	**Section 42 species	Damp meadows and riverbanks	Ground-nesting, vulnerable to trampling and disturbance	Species distribution insufficiently known to target areas for exclusion of access. Instead, raise awareness of conservation status, and encourage responsible behaviour.
Breeding kingfisher	Fluctuating, thought to be stable	*Schedule 1 species	Riverine banks	Hole-nesting, vulnerable to disturbance	Species distribution insufficiently known to target areas for exclusion of access. Instead, raise awareness of legal status of kingfisher and encourage responsible behaviour.
Overwintering waders and wildfowl	Mixed population trends	No specific legal listings	Stillwater bodies and estuaries	Vulnerable to disturbance	Key concentrations are within designated sites, so measures already in place to avoid significant impacts
Wintering gull roosts	Mixed population trends, herring	Herring and black-headed	Limited number of stillwater	Vulnerable to disturbance	Only use waters for night-time roosting, so unlike

	and black-headed gull declining in breeding season, and breeding birds largely resident during winter.	gull are on **Section 42 (but due to breeding season decline)	bodies		to be significant conflict with users of waterbodies.
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* Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act lists those species for which it is an offence to disturb while it is nest building or is at or near a nest with eggs or young; or disturb the dependent young of such a bird .

** Section 42 of the NERC Act lists those species for which public bodies have a duty to 'have regard..... to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'.

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