

Come Outside!

Programme Update 5



HALF TERM ADVENTURE DAYS

Come Outside! recently ran two events over the February half term in South Wales, to give community members an opportunity to try new things, and inspire them to get outdoors and get active.

Taking place in NRW's Llanwonno Forest in the Rhondda and at Parc Bryn Bach in Tredegar, the two events together brought over 700 people outside enjoying their natural environment.

The events took place thanks to collaborative working both within NRW as well as external partners such as the social landlord Tai Calon, the team of volunteers at the Daerwynno Outdoor Centre, the Blaenau Gwent Countryside Team, and many others.

Over the two days, hundreds of families from the local area and groups from organisations such as DrugAid, Gofal, and Communities First had loads of fun getting outdoors. Activities on offer ranged from solar observation and environmental crafts like willow weaving, to canoeing (above) and mountain biking.

Both events were opportunities for NRW and its partners to gather feedback from the participants. Surveys were filled out by the majority of people who attended and the data will be used to identify how local people view these greenspaces and what they see as important to them in terms of access, outdoor activity, active travel, and what the barriers they face to using the outdoors are.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. One participant said afterwards:

I've actually been back since the event. I'd never been there before, and I never normally would have gone there. We usually just go to a nearby park and I sit in the car and wait for my kids. But I had such a good time I wanted to go back with my husband this time. It was just such a nice day and I enjoyed getting out and trying things. We signed up to do some more cycling activities there, and I'm going to go back there a lot because it's so nice and it's different to what I'm used to.

Come Outside! aims to support partners to inspire, motivate and enable people from Communities First cluster areas to enjoy the outdoors, to experience the benefits of the natural environment, and to value and care for their local countryside and green spaces.



GETTING INTO NATURE



The Swansea Family Learning Unit have taken part in a Seashore Safari, Beach art, storytelling, Geocaching and outdoor cooking as part of an accredited training course developed by Gower Landscape Programme.

Over 10 weeks parents from Mayhill in Swansea have been learning about what they can do outside with their families on the Gower and in their local community. Based on their experiences, the group have put together a leaflet for local families detailing the activities on offer. Due to the success of the course, Gower Landscape Project along with Lifelong Learning have been discussing running it again across Swansea. Come Outside! will

continue to work with the group to encourage more people to get involved and get outdoors.



A group from Recovery Cymru in Barry got the chance to experience outdoor cooking, foraging and falconry in Pontneddfechan with Mountain and River Activities. Some members of the group were nervous about taking part and one was stopped in her tracks when she heard that they would need to gut and prepare a fish for lunch!

However, by the time they had walked down to the site across difficult terrain through beautiful surroundings, everyone got into the survival mood and got involved. One person overcame health problems to get to the site and with a bit of support, made the walk and was rewarded with a cup of tea and made on an open fire.

The day was inspirational for the group and they are keen to take other members out.

"What a fantastic day out in the Brecons learning about survival skills and flying a hawk called Fern...thanks to Come Outside!, Jeff from Mountain and River Activities, his lovely assistant Gillian and Andrew from Rheola Falconry. We came away feeling exhilarated and wanting to learn more...I felt so humbled"

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Come Outside! end of year 2 Evaluation Report Summary

Our end of year 2 Evaluation Report Summary is now available to read at <http://bit.ly/1zSyPGI>. It has been prepared by our evaluation consultants, Shepherd and Moyes, and includes feedback from nearly 100 group leaders and support workers involved with Come Outside! who responded to our e-survey.

BUILDING A FUTURE



Come Outside! has been working with Canolfan Llwybrau Ni pupil referral unit which is part of the service that Gwynedd local authority provides for pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural needs.

Using a local start-up company Rhyddid Adventures, we have engaged with 16 pupils through a number of different activities which have all been linked to the curriculum the young people follow at the centre. Historical walks, mountain biking and a camp-out have all featured.

An end of term camp-out was part of the course work the pupils are following on 'Camp Crafft' by Agored Cymru.

A member of staff at the centre said, "From the camp-out they are learning how to work as a team in the outdoors, and how to divide tasks in order to complete a larger goal.

For example in order to eat they will have to collect fire wood, build a camp fire area and then finally cook on it – all before eating."



"They have learnt so many skills just from this activity."



Canolfan Llwybrau Ni has been impressed with how the pupils have engaged and benefited from the outdoor activities Come Outside! has introduced them to.

As a result they have made a significant financial investment in outdoor activities and are now working with Rhyddid Adventures to deliver the Duke of Edinburghs Award Scheme, National Navigation Awards and First Aid in the outdoors to all pupils at the centre.

PATTERNS IN THE SKY

A group in Ely, Cardiff have just completed an 8 week course on 'Patterns in the Sky' with Allan Trow from Dark Sky Wales. This has been jointly funded by Come Outside! and Communities First. Since November the group have had the opportunity

to do some solar observations and to measure light pollution in their community in order to identify the best spot for star gazing. Following on from achieving this Agored Cymru accreditation the group are keen to share what they've learned

with others and are hoping to lead Dark Skies walks locally as well as looking at options for continuing with their learning. A great reason to get outside on those cold, clear winter nights.

TREASURE HUNTING



Come Outside! is a big fan of Geocaching, the digital world-wide treasure hunt that



anyone can have a go at. It involves hunting out hidden items using coordinates published on www.geocaching.com.

But we like to plant our own temporary caches tailored to our group's interests too.

By theming Geocaches to group's interests, Come Outside! has been able to get across different messages to a wide range of groups across Wales. This has often led to introducing them to the wonders of Geocaching which people can do in their own time anywhere in the world.

In December a group in Pen-tre-bane Cardiff headed out into the woods next to the school to hunt out arts and crafts activities and are keen to learn more about Geocaching.

In Ely, Geocaches were set out as part of a Health and Wellbeing event with messages in the caches to promote positive mental health over the festive season.

Gellideg Walking group (pictured) from Merthyr have even been out Geocaching in the snow and ice on a beautiful winter's day.

HEALTH WALK LEADERS

Members of community groups from various areas including Cardiff, Barry, Newport, Rhondda Fach and Merthyr Tydfil who have been taking part in walks with Come Outside! have achieved accreditation with Ramblers Cymru on the Health Walk Leaders courses.

This enables them to lead walks with their groups and have access to free insurance to cover their sessions.

Keep your eye out for our walk leaders, you can't miss them in their new Hi Vis jackets.



Come Outside! were selected to be part of the British Heart Foundation National Conference 2014; Creative Partnerships; Promoting Physical Activity by Stealth.

This conference looked at the concept of stealth interventions and explored how the latest research, theory and practice can be applied to the promotion of physical activity. 'Stealth interventions aim to piggy-

back on existing movements or causes where people are doing physical activity, but their primary reason for doing physical activity is something different.'

We learnt that Come Outside! is already promoting this way of working across Wales. By tapping into people's interests, physical activity is a byproduct of getting outdoors to do things that people

are interested in. Come Outside! has been doing this through Dark Skies walks, Edible Trails, Heritage tours, Geocaching, Bushcraft, gardening and much more.

Our poster for the event is available via this link: <http://bit.ly/1ExztPk>

BHF's Sharing Good Practice Booklet featuring Come Outside! is online at <http://bit.ly/1B170am>



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



To get in touch, email us at ComeOutside@NaturalResourcesWales.gov.uk