REPORT OF ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLAN GROUP

Subject: PCNPA Engagement Action Plan Group Report

Contents

1. Introduction

The National Principles of Public Engagement in Wales define Engagement, Consultation and Participation as follows:

Engagement: An active and participative process by which people can influence and shape policy and services that includes a wide range of different methods and techniques.

Consultation: A formal process by which policy makers and service providers ask for the views of interested groups and individuals.

Participation: People being actively involved with policy makers and service planners from an early stage of policy and service planning and review[1]

The Authority undertakes a range of engagement and consultation activities at different levels using a range of different methods and techniques. Examples include:

- Formalised consultation process relating to strategic plans such as the National Park Management Plan and Local Development Plan
- Community level engagement led by the Rangers team, particularly in relation to recreation management

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[1] Participation Cymru, National Principles of Public Engagement In Wales: https://wcva.cymru/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/National-Principles-for-Public-Engagement-Egwyddorion-Cenedlaethol-ar-gyfer-Ymgysylltu-ar-Cyhoedd.pdf

- Planning Officer engagement with Community and Town Councils
- Facilitating networks and groups for stakeholders to share their views
- Online engagement via social media and feedback tools (Centres – Trip Advisor/ Google Reviews)
- Project development and evaluation

The creation of the engagement action plan and its monitoring group came about as result of staff identifying a need for the Authority to take a cross team approach to engagement, which supported shared learning and using different expertise from across teams. This happened as the Authority was reviewing its National Park Management Plan. Officers recognised that there was a range of different engagement activities the Authority could pursue, but to lead to improvement in our approach across the Authority within the resources available there was a need to have some clear set priority areas. The plan does not focus on all the Authority's engagement activities but focuses on areas that could help lead to improvements in our approach. Although it is a staff level led plan and group, work has been carried out to gain Leadership Team representation on the group, with the Director of Planning and Direction; and Communications and Marketing Manager attending the group meetings.

The group during 2020/21 carried out a self-assessment on involvement based on the proposals for improvement within the Audit Wales – Review of Involvement Report. Following this activity the group would like to engage with Leadership Team, Members and staff to review the engagement action plan, particularly in relation to its longer term aims in order to ensure there is a shared vision on engagement and involvement priorities going forward. It will also help identify where there is a need to develop specific projects, there are resource gaps or other areas of improvement that need to be addressed.

2. Legislative Context

Involvement is one of the five Ways of Working under the Well-being of Future Generations Act that public bodies are required to take into account when applying the sustainable development principle under the Act. The Act requires that the Authority ensure that the people we involve reflect the diversity of the population that we serve. This entails involving the people and communities whose well-being we are seeking to improve.[2]

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, the Authority is required to involve people who it considers represent the interests of one or more of the protected groups. To comply with the socio economic duty the Authority also needs to consider how it engages with people who are experiencing socio economic disadvantage to inform its strategic decision-making.

There are also engagement expectations relating to statutory documents including Local Development Plan, National Park Management Plan and Equality Plan and

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[2] Welsh Government, SPSF 1: Core guidance: WFG Act Statutory Guidance (gov.wales)

Objectives. Engagement is also a requirement of many of the external funders for project work across the Authority as part of project bid creation, planning, monitoring and evaluation.

The Authority must also ensure that it complies with Welsh Language Standards when carrying out engagement and involvement activities.

3. Engagement Principals/ Standards

There is a range of Engagement Principals and Standards that the Authority needs to consider and should seek to apply to ensure that its engagement is meaningful and effective. Including:

- The National Principles for Engagement (The Authority is signed up to these principles)
- The National Participation Standards for Children and Young People
- Citizen- Centered Governance Principles for Public Engagement
- Future Generations Commissioner's Journey Trackers – A Journey to Involvement
- Audit Wales also included in Exhibit 2 in its Review of Involvement the characteristics of a public body which has an effective approach to involvement

An Authority Officer sits on the Pembrokeshire Co-production network.

The Co-production network for Wales defines Co-production as:

"An asset-based approach to public services that enables people providing and people receiving services to share power and responsibility, and to work together in equal, reciprocal and caring relationships. It creates opportunities for people to access support when they need it, and to contribute to social change."

The aim of this approach is the build on everyone's strengths, develop networks across silos, focus on people's lives not system, work on basis of great relationships and enable people to be change makers.[3]

Co-production is particularly relevant for the Authority in terms of when it is developing health and well-being related projects, engagement and projects targeting particular groups of people, community level projects or activities, engagement with staff and Members and its engagement work with volunteers and young people.

4. Engagement Action Plan

The Authority's engagement action plan sets out the Authority's priority actions for engagement to drive progress in this area and share best practice and learning.

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[3] Co-production Network for Wales: Co-production Network for Wales (copronet.wales)

The plan does not focus on all the Authority's engagement activities but focuses on areas that could help lead to improvements in our approach.

The plan is monitored and progress assessed by the Engagement Action Plan Group which is made up of representatives from across teams within the Authority.

The plan is a live document enabling the group to reflect and amend actions under priority areas following learning from trying new approaches and identifying new or best practice opportunities.

At present it is focused on 3 priority areas and then has 3 longer term aims.

Priority Area	Outcome
1. Engaging with people through National Park Management Plan implementation	✓ National Park Management Plan action plans take account of different perspectives including views of seldom heard groups ✓ Delivery of the action plans takes place in collaboration with communities and seeks opportunities to engage with new audiences ✓ The National Park Authority carries the learning and relationships from action plan development and delivery forward into preparation of the next Management Plan
2. Development of mechanisms for young people to influence the work of the Authority	✓ National Park Authority work takes account of Youth Manifesto commitments ✓ Young people help shape the work of the Authority and Park ✓ Young People have shaped the engagement mechanisms developed ✓ Staff and Members have greater awareness of views, experiences and needs of younger people.
3. Engaging Volunteers and Service Users	✓ Volunteers and service users help shape the work of the Authority and Park ✓ Volunteer offer is shaped and improved through engaging with Volunteers ✓ Future projects and how projects are delivered is informed by the experience of service users

Longer Term Areas	Outcome
1. Staff Involvement with Engagement	✓ Engagement approach of Authority is co-produced with staff and other stakeholders (Members, volunteers, public) through learning from the application of engagement principals and methods in practice ✓ Staff are applying engagement principles to their area of work ✓ Staff have the skills to carry out engagement activities

2. Online Engagement and Interpretation	✓ Effective online engagement mechanisms are in use that enable people to find out more, interact and feedback about the Authority and Park ✓ Our approach is reflective of how diverse audiences engage with different online platforms
3. Integrated approach to collation and analysis of feedback and engagement	✓ Qualitative data and feedback is captured and available to staff to inform work they carry out ✓ Collation and analysis methods are in place to enable insights to be drawn from this data easily, facilitating an ongoing conversation and insight about the Park and work of the Authority

5. Key achievements to date in relation to the Plan

5.1 Early engagement in relation to the National Park Management Plan

As part of the review of National Park Management Plan, the Authority took an early engagement approach in order to inform the plans revision through an Opportunities and Challenges phase. This provided opportunities to trial approaches to capture views to inform the development of the plan from groups who would not normally contribute via the formal consultation process. Through the Discovery Officer engagement workshops were held with Travelling Ahead Gypsy forum, Solva Care and Youth Rangers and staff attending Play Day event and Ateb Social Housing Association tenants and resident/ day to ask questions to inform the plan.

5.2 Formation of Youth Committee

One of the plans priorities focuses on how we can improve engagement with younger people and ensure their voices influence the decisions and activities of the Authority. At the November 2018 NPA Youth Ranger Members presented the Youth Manifesto to Members. In February 2019 a joint meeting was held between Youth Rangers and Members and priority areas were identified, including a need to focus on young people's involvement in governance structures. It was decided that the Authority would look to establish a Youth Committee.

To support development of Youth Committee a Youth Committee Residential was held on the 13th – 15th March 2020 Pentre Ifan Centre. Facilitated by Discovery Team Officers and PCC Children and Young People's Rights Officer. Residential attended by 10 young people (13-25 years, 4 Youth Rangers, 4 Youth Assembly Members and 2 other young people.) Activities during the residential included:

- Workshop providing some background on National Parks, the UNHCR Rights of the Child, and participation and engagement.
- Darkness walk around Pentre Ifan woods.
- Workshop introducing the Youth Manifesto.

- Discovery walk around Ty Canol, St Brynach's Cave and Pentre Ifan cromlech to help the young people to reflect on the special qualities of the National Park and understand the role of the Authority in providing services to achieve our purposes.
- Informal and positive discussion with Chief Executive and Vice Chair including the potential role and work of the Youth Committee, the resources and support available from the Authority, how the YC could integrate with PCNPA etc.
- Chair of PCNPA took part in a workshop with the young people examining the Youth Manifesto and identifying many further issues / detail on ones already established.
- Undertook a 'Mystery Shopper' exercise at Castell Henllys

Feedback from the Youth Committee about the residential weekend was extremely positive.

As a result of Covid 19 meetings of the Youth Committee moved online during 2020/21, with one meeting held in person when restrictions allowed at Picton field. Member representative attended Youth Committee meetings during 2020/21 and Youth Committee meeting minutes shared with all Members with opportunity for them to comment on them through NPA.

A Youth Committee Member application for £1000 to Pembrokeshire Youth Bank on behalf of the Committee was approved. The youth bank panel liked how the application linked to the criteria of low carbon Wales, community and mental health and wellbeing, and is also a good example of a youth led project.

Committee Members have produced a video linked to UNICEF 'Rights of the Child' project looking at the impact of climate change on young people.

Discovery Officer with engagement development responsibilities compiled a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis by contacting members individually and collating views on the work carried out over the past year. They are also working with the Committee on a recruitment drive to engage new members to join the Committee. This is important in terms of helping ensure the sustainability of the Committee going forwards. Although digital engagement has helped the Committee to continue to operate during COVID 19, face to face engagement as restrictions ease may help address potential issues around online engagement fatigue.

5.3 Volunteer Forum

Volunteers are an important Authority stakeholder as both service users and contributors to delivering activities that support the Park and the Authority's well-being Objectives. In 2019/20 a volunteer forum was set up, those involved represent a diverse range of volunteering opportunities and projects, including voluntary wardens, Pathways, Events and Activities Leaders, Walkability

support. The forum aims to shape direction of and our volunteer offer and provide opportunity for volunteers to influence our plans and policies.

Despite COVID 19 and its wider impact on restricting some PCNPA volunteering opportunities during the year, volunteer forum meetings continued to be held in 2020/21 as virtual meetings. Members of the volunteer forum took part in activity to review volunteer action plan in 2020/21. An Authority Member representative attends meetings.

A Strategic Review of Volunteering is now underway. This is as a commissioned piece of work for the Authority, and one of its key objectives is to engage with volunteers to gain a better understanding of how they view their involvement with PCNPA.

5.4 Trialling new approaches to evaluation

As part of the Pathways supported volunteering and outdoor engagement project a communities of enquiry approach has been used as part of the projects evaluation. Community of enquiry is a workshop-style session that offers space for a group of people to collaboratively explore ideas with sessions often using different sorts of prompts to get participants thinking. For example one of the Pathways evaluation events included pictorial engagement approach where participants took a picture that represents their experience with Pathways with a quote. This approach offered an accessible way to engage with Pathways participants. A transcript was provided from the community of enquiry approach.

5.5 Experiences for All

Although this project is not yet completed, the funding of this project via Welsh Government additional funding offers a good example of when it is beneficial for the Authority to take a more targeted approach to engagement. For example when looking to engage with groups who may have specific needs or who may be underrepresented within formal engagement activities. The Experiences for All project is engaging with Park users, the wider community and stakeholders to identify opportunities to improve access to Pembrokeshire Coast National Park for under-represented groups.

5.6 Social Media Engagement – COVID 19

Communicating out of COVID 19 activities have helped the Authority reach wider audiences. The 'Nature's Recovery' films were viewed nearly 500k times and engaged with over 600k people across our social channels in the first weekend of airing, connecting with audiences around the world. Worked with

influencer Steffan Rhodri, best known for his role as Dave Coaches on the hit BBC comedy series Gavin and Stacey to engage with non traditional audience following months of issues surrounding anti-social behaviour. Using PCNPA social media channels, a special message from Steffan was recorded and issued, encouraging people to use designated campsites when visiting the National Park and to respect the area. The video reached over half a million people (650k) and generated over a quarter of a million views over the first four days of being posted, and provided an excellent example of the benefits of using influencers to engage with public sector messaging at minimal cost.

The specially commissioned 'Tread Lightly' poem filmed with actor Charles Dale launched over Whitsun and has proved incredibly popular with visitors, the tourism trade and local communities, generating a reach of over 1.3million in just two weeks, with 280,000 views and over 2,100 shares. Work also continues with partners to promote responsible visitor behaviour.

Other teams across the Authority also increased their online social media based engagement in 2020/22, including

- Rangers team producing a range of videos relating to biodiversity/ engaging with nature and also respecting the Park
- PODs promoting outdoor learning materials across social media platforms particularly when families where having to home school children during lock down
- OYP hosting a digital Dragon Parade across its social media platforms, with submissions from the public

5.6 Shared Learning and facilitating conversations between departments.

One of the strengths of the plan and group has been the opportunity for staff from across teams to come together to talk about engagement. This means that staff with different skills ranging from policy, direct engagement skills, community engagement skills, communications skills, data analysis skills are able to discuss issues and learn from each other and also find out about what different teams within the Authority are doing.

One example of this is the group looking to gain understanding and learning from the growth of digital engagement activities that occurred in 2020/21 as a result of a need to adapt services due to the impact of COVID 19. A shared learning report from the group has been created to capture this learning, see Appendix 1.

6. Audit Wales Proposal for Improvement – Self Assessment

Audit Wales included a self-assessment for the Authority's to use to identify the strengths and weaknesses of its current approach to involvement in its

on PCNPA. Audit Wales expected the Authority to use this tool to evaluate its current performance and to identify how it can improve its work.

Engagement Action Plan Members assessed each Statement within the self-assessment against the following:

We do this well on every occasion and do not need to improve our approach at all	We do this well some of the time but there are opportunities to improve our approach	We are not good at this and need to improve our approach	What practical action could we take to improve our approach in this area for the future?

Across the 23 statements nobody felt that: we do this well on every occasion and do not need to improve our approach at all. This suggests that members of the group felt that there are areas and opportunities for improvement across all the statement areas within the self-assessment.

From this exercise members of the group were asked to draw out what they felt were the three priority areas for improvement for the Authority. From the responses from group members, five potential priority improvement areas were identified.

1. **Corporate and Team level (where appropriate) Stakeholder Engagement Analysis, which is then reviewed annually.** This approach could engage with team leaders and individual teams and it was felt could be more productive than training. It would need to have officer time allocated to it in order for it to be effective. Later discussions highlighted that terminology stakeholder analysis may not be that accessible to staff with suggestion of engagement audit – who we work/ engage with and why as an alternative.
2. **Plan annually and take a co-ordinated approach across the Authority for joint consultation and analysis.** One idea noted to support cross team involvement was to develop an activity such as a simple questionnaire/game which could be delivered by staff 'on the ground' where the questions are regularly/ annually updated.
3. **Develop a standardised approach to evaluation that can be used across Authority teams**. This could be in the form of an evaluation toolkit/template they can complete. Alongside this it was noted that it would be beneficial to develop a process for findings from these evaluations to be circulated, shared and discussed across and between departments. However it was noted that a 'one size fits all' approach to evaluation might not yield the best results due to the different nature of projects.
4. **Engagement Training for Staff and Members.** In particular to ensure a common understanding of the principles of engagement. Engagement training should form part of Authority, Member and team training plans. However there was some concern that training if done in isolation might not get the best results, so stakeholder analysis activities may be a way to engage and develop staff and Member understanding in this area.

5. **Leadership Team to consider resource, budget and officer time implications to enable effective engagement to take place across relevant areas**. Including considering if there is a need for a corporate engagement budget that teams across the Authority can utilise or engagement costs factored into budgets for individual teams where this isn't currently the case. There was a feeling that the Engagement Action Plan and group should continue to identify and drive areas for improvement but it was important it linked in and sought support from Leadership Team when needed to progress areas. Further consideration is needed on how to manage effectively capacity within and across teams in terms of involvement, and to clarify the strategic role of the Discovery officer with specific engagement development responsibilities.

From this discussion some quick win activities were identified and these have been fed back into the engagement action plan:

- Create Engagement audit framework: who we work/engage with and why – that can be used by team leaders to carry out stakeholder analysis with their team
- Create Mapping Document to support annual approach and cross co-ordination between teams
- Mechanism to signpost to completed evaluations and other consultation information and documents
- Increase staff awareness through items in staff newsletter and attend team leader meeting
- Report for Leadership Team and Members, highlighting achievements to data, self assessment process and capture their views on engagement and involvement priorities.

7. **Conclusion**

Staff within the Authority recognise the importance of involving and engaging with people to support effective decisions making and delivery of the Authority's Well-being Objectives and Park purposes. The engagement action plan and group has helped cross team engagement and significant progress on the core priority areas in the plan. However the group recognises that the Authority is on a journey in terms of its involvement approach and this is why the action plan is a living and learning document. To help progress the Authority on its journey it would welcome any comments from Members on the contents of this document and the longer term aims in the engagement action plan. This is in order to ensure there is a shared vision and commitment to delivery on engagement and involvement priorities going forward across the Authority. This includes ensuring appropriate resources are in place or specific projects developed where needed.

Appendix 1

PCNPA Engagement Action Plan Group: Shared Learning Report

Adapting our approach in response to COVID 19 Pandemic: Use of virtual/ digital approaches in 2020/21

1. Introduction

During 2019/20 COVID 19 had a significant impact on how the Authority carried out its business, in particular it found that for large parts of the year it could not rely on traditional face to face engagement activities. Across the Authority different teams adapted to this new reality through utilising and embracing virtual and digital approaches. This shared learning report highlights a sample of some of the activities undertaken, a SWOT analysis and some top tips on digital/virtual engagement from staff.

Thank you to staff across the Authority who provided feedback and information to feed into this report.

2. Examples of virtual/ digital approaches in 2020/21

2.1 Governance Activities

- The Authority moved to virtual committees via Lifesize in May 2020 following changes to regulations as a result of the *The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020.* Attendance for Committee's in 2020/21 increased from 82.53% in 2019/20 to 91.08% in 2020/21.
- The Authority also moved to the live web streaming of Committees. The live streaming of Committees, has enabled staff and the public to view Committees and provides greater flexibility for people to drop in an out of a meeting, depending on the item of interest. Across 2020/21 there were 30 Committee live streams with 342 views. A breakdown of views by Committee is noted below. As would be expected DM Committees had the most views.

Committee	Views
DM Committee	227
NPA	55
Audit and Corporate Services Committee	23
SDF Committee	14
Personnel	10
Operational Review Committee	9

Standards	4

- Provision of workshops and training for Members continued virtually, with attendance increasing from 58.33% in 2019/20 to 77.27% in 2020/21.
- Virtual site visits were also delivered to Members through the Development Management team.

2.2 Events and Activities

- A range of virtual archaeology events were held during the year. Approximately 180 people attended the live session of the Authority's virtual Archaeology Day delivered in partnership with PLANED, it was delivered via YouTube/ Zoom in November 2020. Further evaluation of the event can be found in the following Committee Report: 16_20-Archaeology-Day-Evaluation.pdf (pembrokeshirecoast.wales) . This is a good example of in depth analysis and evaluation of a virtual event. A virtual event via Lifesize was held in August 2020 to highlight the archaeological wonders of the National Park. A virtual talk via Zoom was given to the Reading and District Welsh Society on the National Park and archaeology in October 2020.
- OYP hosted an online exhibition (due to its closure in December). This was the Friends of Oriel y Parc's annual competition for schoolchildren across the St Davids Campuses. The topic of the competition was the children's response to Covid-19. It would have normally been displayed in the Tower.
- New website meant online bookings could be taken for events and for visitor slots at the Centres.
- The Ceredigion Co-ordinator for West Wales Walking for Well-being Project created a range of virtual walk challenges to support people during the year, particularly as restrictions impacted on the availability of in person supported walking opportunities. Information on the walking challenges can be found here: Virtual Walks – West Wales Walking for Wellbeing
- Stitch in Time Project hosted with PLANED an online best practice event.

2.3 Online Volunteer Training

- Using virtual training opportunities has boosted the number of volunteers attending training sessions to 297, a 36.9% increase compared to 2019/20. A wide variety of training sessions have been provided to volunteers virtually including Archaeology, Climate Change, INNS, Pembrokeshire Coast National Trail, Sea Birds, Searching for Scabious - Bee ID workshop with Bugslife, Butterfley Training, Wildlife recording, 'Geology' rocks session, Welsh in the Landscape and Wildflower and Pollinator course.
- Virtual training has helped the Authority recruit and train volunteers to monitor scheduled monuments. Virtual training events via Lifesize took place in June

and July 2020 to recruit volunteers to monitor scheduled monuments. Through the sessions 16 heritage volunteers were recruited to monitor all publicly accessibly scheduled monuments in the national park or approx. 50% of all scheduled monuments in the national park. Some of these volunteers received follow-on training out at sites, while others did not require this extra training. By the end of 2020, 70 scheduled monuments had received a visit from volunteers. The volunteers are submitting data using the ArcGIS Survey123 system.

- Virtual walk leader training has been delivered to volunteer walk leaders, leisure centre staff and participants from Flying Start Centre, Cruse Bereavement and Community Choice.

2.3 Social Media Engagement

- Communicating out of COVID 19 activities have helped Authority reach wider audiences. The 'Nature's Recovery' films were viewed nearly 500k times and engaged with over 600k people across our social channels in the first weekend of airing, connecting with audiences around the world. Work was carried out with influencer Steffan Rhodri, best known for his role as Dave Coaches on the hit BBC comedy series Gavin and Stacey to engage with non traditional audience following months of issues surrounding anti-social behaviour. Using PCNPA social media channels, a special message from Steffan was recorded and issued, encouraging people to use designated campsites when visiting the National Park and to respect the area. The video reached over half a million people (650k) and generated over a quarter of a million views over the first four days of being posted, and provided an excellent example of the benefits of using influencers to engage with public sector messaging at minimal cost. The specially commissioned 'Tread Lightly' poem filmed with actor Charles Dale launched over Whitsun and has proved incredibly popular with visitors, the tourism trade and local communities, generating a reach of over 1.3million in just two weeks, with 280,000 views and over 2,100 shares. Work also continues with partners to promote responsible visitor behaviour.
- Rangers team produced a range of videos relating to biodiversity/ engaging with nature and also respecting the Park. These films were a particularly beneficial way for rangers to continue to engage with people during lockdown periods.
- PODs promoting outdoor learning materials across social media platforms particularly when families where having to home school children during lock down
- Due to the impact of COVID 19 Oriel y Parc was forced to cancel the 2020 Really Wild Food and Countryside Festival on Saturday 30th May. In response it held a Virtual Really Wild Food & Countryside Festival in May. Throughout May it used social media to showcase the small businesses, charities,

organisations and artists who would have been at the Festival, through posting a little about each one on its Facebook pages.

- OYP hosted a virtual St Davids Day Dragon Parade event held across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram where people took part by sending in their creations of dragons via social media or email. There were 3 local school classes (Redhill Prep, Ysgol Glannau Gwaun and Ysgol Penryhn Dewi) as well as lots of submissions from St Davids Care in the Community and over 25 individuals who posted their artwork all of varying ages and abilities.
- Use of facebook to engage people with heritage watch scheme

2.4 Forums and groups

- Through working with young people on-line the Youth Committee was able to be set up during the 1st lockdown period, with virtual youth committee meetings being held over the year. Early engagement was positive including motivating some young people struggling with aspects of the pandemic and its impact on them. However potentially the lack of in person contact did have an impact on engagement with young people via the committee by the end of the year. This highlights the flexibility that online tools provide when in person meetings can't be held, but that in person contact particularly for younger people or certain stakeholder groups continues to be important. Basecamp is also being used by the Youth Committee.
- The Volunteer Forum moved to online facilitated sessions and online keeping in touch sessions have also been held.
- Youth Rangers have had some online meetings, however virtual activities are more challenging for this group, with outdoor engagement being pivotal part of working with this group.

2.5 Education – Virtual Sessions

- Castell Henllys developed and delivered 2 virtual sessions for schools.
- During January 2021, PCNPA produced Welsh and English short videos to teach pupils at Ysgol Gelli Aur about archaeology, the National Park and Neolithic Burial Chambers. As part of this production, the pupils were also given tasks to compliment their learning including researching and recreating burial chambers located in the National Park area and producing creative works alongside this. A second video was produced during February for Ysgol Gelli Aur. This focussed on the age of metals and included a quiz. The video hopes to get pupils interested in national park sites from this period. The video was delivered in Welsh and English. Originally, Ysgol Gelli Aur were due to receive a blend of virtual and physical sessions in line with COVID-19 restrictions, however only virtual was possible.
- Pembrokeshire Outdoor Schools has been delivering webinar INSET training sessions for teachers, the virtual nature of these event provides flexibility in timing and have attracted high level of attendance from teachers. The PODS

co-ordinator have also worked with the Discovery Tram student placement to produce and enhance the online content on the PODS website.

2.7 Stakeholder and Partner Engagement

- A series of 4 online workshops with West Wales Nature Based Health Service engaging with the sector were held across 8 weeks. West Wales Action for Mental Health provided funding to pay for external facilitators, as didn't have online facilitation skills at the time, however they now feel they wouldn't need external facilitators as have developed the skills needed.
- Online workshop held looking at sustainable tourism in June with all Welsh National Parks and other key partners.
- Online Recreation Plan Group engagement. Virtual engagement was really good for this, and enabled more swift and regular engagement in terms of recreation issues over the summer. Previously activity with stakeholders normally limited to one annual meeting. Stakeholders included PCC, PCF, Wildlife Trust, Port Authority and RNLI. Virtual meetings were beneficial for those with limited time as people could attend for one item and then go, easier to do in virtual context than in a physical meeting.
- West Wales Nature Based Service Basecamp Group, set up to increase engagement with members of the group (group includes Public Health practitioners, NRW, those involved in delivering projects on the ground, play partnership, Swansea University). Around 50 people engaged in the group– and at least 50% estimated as regular engagers. Useful for capturing areas of work to inform next year's priorities, to engage with partners and for people to explore topics.
- Social and Green Solutions for Health Basecamp Group set up following event Authority funded with Public Health Wales in January 2020. It was felt that it would be good to have a platform to engage with those who participated. PCNPA suggested use of Base Camp should be trialled, and Public Health Wales were interested in that. Really positive information and engagement on platform. New ideas are being developed via the chat function e.g. exploration around new directory for independent care and support providers in Pembrokeshire.
- A joint Heritage Watch training event took place with Cadw, Historic England, three of the four Welsh Police Forces, Cheshire Police, the three Welsh National Parks, NRW and the Four Welsh Archaeological Trusts. The training focussed on heritage crime and included over 50 people attended from all over Wales and beyond. In addition, the event was highlighted on the Facebook page and was well received by followers of the page with hundreds of views. A follow on meeting took place in September to discuss setting up Heritage Watch schemes in other parts of Wales.

- A joint survey, article and presentation on the impact of COVID-19 on the archaeological sector was written utilising google forms and holding meetings over Zoom.
- Stitch in Time Project officer presented the Stitch in Time project to the Wales Biodiversity Partnership online conference 'resilience in ecological networks' and received between 70 and 80 live views of the presentation from individuals and organisations across Wales.
- Staff across the Authority have been able to continue working with partners and stakeholders throughout the year through use of virtual meeting platforms.
- Successful partnership engagement, including online survey as part of the Roots to Recovery bid process, which has successfully gained £349K lottery support.

2.8 Internal Communication

- The 3CX Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) system was successfully implemented for home working staff/ staff based at Llanion.
- Staff have been utilising slack messaging system.
- Staff during 2020/21 become used to and are now comfortable with video conferencing, including arranging, facilitating and attending meetings.
- From late January, Wardens were given access to Lifesize Video Calling via a mobile app, with a dedicated VC Room, in order to support communication and remote contact. Helping supporting well-being, for staff previously without the facilities provided to Office based employees.
- An online employee survey was carried out.
- A staff meeting was held over zoom. This platform was chosen to help facilitate a quiz to help bring some fun and interaction to the meeting.
- Internal staff newsletter, circulated monthly, with submissions from teams across the Authority has helped raise awareness of key activities, news and health and well-being tips to staff.

3 SWOT Analysis

3.1 Strengths – Virtual and Digital Approaches

- Governance: One of the strengths of virtual committees and training is that Members who have a busy schedule are better able to attend more than one meeting in a day as there is no traveling involved, providing them with greater flexibility. It also helps reduce carbon emissions from travel.
- Events: Virtual events can draw in wider audiences than physical events, geographically and for those who may face other barriers to attending a physical event. Opportunities to upload videos of the event afterwards means people can access them after the event, if they couldn't attend the event at its scheduled time.

- Stakeholder Engagement: Online workshops and meetings cut down travel time, or people can dip in and out of items and this can be particularly useful for pan Wales or stakeholder events.
- Stakeholder Engagement – Basecamp Platform: Really useful for sharing information, making connections between stakeholders and exploring topics and feasibility of proposals. Has been a useful tool in terms of encouraging opportunities for engagement with health sector. Provides opportunities for people to connect with people they wouldn't normally be able to. In particular those working in NHS, who are short of time or have restrictions re meetings etc. so gives them an opportunity to access and join chats when they can and for others to engage with them.
- Events/ Community, Service User and Stakeholder Engagement: Virtual events and engagement limits the need to travel and breaks down geographical boundaries. Makes engaging more accessible to underrepresented groups and those with disabilities who may face barriers in terms of some physical engagement opportunities. Can increase efficiency. Saves money that would normally be used on travel and other expenses attending meetings etc. Can lead to greater flexibility.
- Online Training: Virtual training as proven very effective in terms of providing training opportunities to volunteers and teachers.
- Operational: Staff now technically competent and familiar with a range of platforms and happy to try new approaches.

3.2 Weaknesses – Virtual and Digital Approaches

- Governance: One of the challenges is the difficulties some people have in connecting – mostly due to poor broadband connection, but sometimes also due to the device being used.
- Governance: Consideration is needed in terms of public engagement and impact on those who do not have access to a computer. Although Lifesize does have the option to join by phone, the Freephone number is heavily oversubscribed and the alternative number is costly.
- Service User, Community and Stakeholder Engagement: Too much online engagement can make people become jaded in terms of these forms of engagement, so as the year progressed people started to get virtual engagement fatigue. The fact that meetings/events can be setup quicker means there is a risk of overload or fatigue for those involved.
- Service User Engagement: This method isn't always the best method for engaging with some service user groups, for example the Youth Rangers. Outdoor engagement for some service user groups remains the most accessible and effective form of engagement for them, and has added well-being benefits due to it being based in the outdoors.
- Service User/ Stakeholder Engagement: Can be issue with the current platform (Lifesize) in terms of limitations with its functionality, in areas such as

break out room. Staff have found ways around this but limits ability to be able to follow best practice in meeting facilitation.

- Stakeholder Engagement: Issues around different organisations familiarity with different virtual video conferencing systems/ platforms can make it difficult when they need to log in or access a new platform.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Virtual meetings don't always foster the same relationship building as face to face networking. Sometimes people have camera turned off for a variety of reasons this can make it hard to have full engagement with meeting, particularly if it is workshop focused.
- Stakeholder Engagement – Basecamp Platform: Very Corporate Platform, set up for corporate teams delivering work to a client. So platform can be confusing when adapted for non-corporate purpose in relation to stakeholder networks.
- Events/ Community, Service User and Stakeholder Engagement: Increased usage can lead to a higher carbon footprint due to the energy source used to power the connections.
- Training: Some training still needs to be delivered in person, for example First Aid Training for volunteers.
- Social Media: Staff outside of the communications team not always aware of how to create and post content in a way that maximises engagement and interaction on social media platforms, or how to respond to changes in social media platforms (e.g. changes in algorithms, responding to new platforms and how audiences interact with the platforms.)
- Operational: Issue of demand for use of new and competing online systems and platforms from staff, while needing to balance this with a need to take account of data protection, licencing, cost, online moderation, safeguarding, effectiveness of different systems and platforms and a need for consistency and corporate approaches in some areas.
- Data Protection/ Safeguarding/ Accessibility: A range of additional data protection, safeguarding and accessibility/ reasonable adjustment considerations need to be taken into account when carrying out different sorts of online engagement with different stakeholders and service users.

Note on Lifesize: Some functionality aspects of Lifesize did improve during the year.

3.4 Opportunities – Virtual and Digital Approaches

- Governance: Update Public Speaking Policy for DM Committee as a result of the move to virtual meetings.
- Governance: Consider the role of virtual committees as COVID 19 regulations relax and in face meetings are allowed.
- Events: Opportunity to run virtual events on certain topics alongside in person events in the future. Enabling a wider range of people to engage with topics about the National Park and looking after the Park.

- Training: Opportunity to take hybrid approach to training, providing some virtually and some in person. Opens up ability to provide more training opportunities that more people can access.
- Stakeholder and Partnership Events: Opportunity to take a hybrid approach, potentially one face to face physical meeting a year with the rest held virtually. The infrastructure, knowledge and skills developed during the pandemic has made this more viable.
- Events/ Community, Service User and Stakeholder Engagement: Virtual engagement provides the opportunity to have a positive impact on our Carbon Footprint, also it provides the ability to engage with a broader and new group of individuals. Geographical limitations reduces, meaning international engagement is possible. There is an opportunity to develop new skills. Potential to be dynamic in reacting to changing events as virtual engagement can be organised relatively quickly due to a reduction in logistics.
- Social Media: Opportunities for teams to build on growth of activity in 2020/21. Important teams engage with communications team to ensure content developed is effective, maximises reach and interactions and to address any content planning, moderation or training needs. Consider how we can incorporate behaviour change theory into Authority campaigns.
- Community, Service User and Stakeholder Engagement: Further involving staff and external stakeholders in developing our future online engagement approach and developing solutions to challenges that arise.

3.5 Threats – Virtual and Digital Approaches

- Governance/ Organisational: Authority's Lifesize video conferencing contract coming to an end.
- Events/ Community, Service User and Stakeholder Engagement: Virtual engagement can lead to digital fatigue and burnout. Large scale events may require more time than when undertaken as a physical event. Increase in carbon footprint due to the energy source used to power the connections.
- Events/ Community, Service User and Stakeholder Engagement: Some people may be excluded from participating in digital engagement activities due to digital inclusion and accessibility issues.
- Social Media: Risks associated with wasting time through creating content that people don't respond to/ engage with. Importance of teams engaging with communications team when looking to develop social media content in order to identify how to make sure content can maximise reach and interactions.
- Community, Service User and Stakeholder Engagement: Poor bandwidth/ connection issues for some stakeholders/ service users. Some platforms present more tech issues than others or are limited in their flexibility around opportunities for people to participate in meetings and this can lead to disengagement.

- Compliance: A need to ensure compliance with Authority obligations relating to data protection, health and safety, safeguarding, Welsh language and equality.

4 Top Tips for Digital Engagement from Staff

- Recommend doing a connection test with any participants not used to Lifesize (other platform being used) prior to any important meetings, to avoid problems on the day.
- If people are struggling with a poor connection, joining with their camera turned off can help.
- For WWNBHS meetings they have built in a half an hour virtual registration and coffee, this gets people loosened up before the meeting and provided time to overcome log in issues, help people who are less familiar, chance to meet and greet. Have found having this meet and greet creates greater buy in for the meeting and meetings are more productive.
- If you are planning a large scale event like the Archaeology Day, don't underestimate how much time needs to be spent on this.
- Know your limits, make sure you don't overburden yourself with too much virtual activities.
- Publicity is very important when carrying out public events.
- Make sure that you use a platform that works for what you are planning to do.
- Ensure that you develop a good mechanism for feedback and learn from your digital engagement activities.
- Be open to new ways of engaging and don't be scared of giving it a go.
- If using a platform for an event, make sure to rehearse to identify any potential technical glitches that might need to be overcome or addressed in advance.
- Accept that things might go wrong.
- Use a platform that is accessible to as many people as possible
- Use a range of different methods / styles / activities in a session (ie discussion / presentation / films / interactive elements). Small group discussions and someone feeding back works much better than a large group.
- Provide feedback reasonably timely fashion in way people want and will engage.
- MURAL – flipchart webapp is a great way to make meetings more participative.
- Talk to communications team to ensure your social media content creation and posting is effective.

5 Conclusion

Staff have shown great adaptability and innovation during 2020/21 to move to and trial different approaches using digital and virtual methods. Members, volunteers,

stakeholders and the public have also been responsive to these virtual opportunities. Going forwards in some areas face to face and outdoor engagement which is one of the strengths of the Authority will remain important and online engagement fatigue may in the short term have an impact on sustainability of some online engagement methods. However the learning from 2020/21 means that staff have the skills and experience to identify and deliver virtual opportunities to enhance the Authority's engagement with people going forward. Already in 2021/22 successful virtual Dark Sky/ Archaeology related events have been held.