



# Active Outdoors

## Providers Scheme

Introducing a new framework for  
developing relationships with third  
party providers



**“If a generation grows up without experiencing the outdoors they are less likely to value and protect it”**

**- Sir David Attenborough -**

# A shared goal

Looking after places in our care now and in the future is our first responsibility. But our strategy is also about how we rise to the big challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and how we work with others to find solutions.

After all, the health of the countryside, protection of heritage and the wellbeing of people living in towns and cities is where the national trust started.

Our 21st century ambition is to meet the needs of an environment under pressure, and the challenges and expectations of a fast-moving world. We want to continue to maintain the highest standards of care for everything we look after, while working in a way that feels relevant and necessary to people and their day-to-day lives.

**Helen Ghosh – National Trust  
Director General (2012 - 2018)**

## Working together for a healthy and beautiful environment

We recognise that there are a huge number of outdoor providers who are, like us, concerned about damage caused to the environment by an increased use of the outdoors for organised recreational activities. We know that we share values and the goal of helping people access and enjoy the benefits of being in the great outdoors.

# Definition of 'outdoor providers'

## The Active Outdoors Providers Scheme covers:

**Planned and purposeful active experiences organised in the outdoors by a third party**

Activities could be taking place either solely or partially on National Trust land.

The participants could be our visitors or the third party's own customers, taking part in activities for the purpose of exercise, recreation, competition, education or fundraising.

The third party could be a commercial organisation, a charity, education or community group.

# What's in, what's not

## Activities covered by the scheme include but is not limited to:

- Run groups
- Led cycle rides
- Charity challenge fundraising events
- Triathlons, trail races
- Sponsored walks
- Sportives
- Rock Climbing
- Gorge walking
- Archery

## The scheme does **not** cover:

- Commercial dog walking
- 4x4 driving
- Off road motorbikes
- Horse riding
- Hunting
- Shooting activities

These are not within the scheme, but the National Trust are tackling these damaging activities within different projects

# Impact of activity



**Rubbish left after 3 peaks challenge**



**After a mountain bike event on the Dorset coast**

**This is about finding the best way to work with you to make sure people are able to enjoy the benefits of natural places whilst managing impact**



**Path alongside Esk Gorge**

# Current situation

- **Situation:** There's been a fantastic boom in outdoor exercise and events. We want to welcome and encourage providers – from independent instructors to large-scale event organisers.
- **Problem:** A few years ago we launched a 'one-size fits all' approach to managing relationships with third-party providers (by issuing a licence to everyone). This didn't work, wasn't realistic or appropriate.
- **Implication:** We needed a more flexible approach to framing our relationships with outdoor providers – one that sets the right tone, establishes a clear sense of respect and responsibility, and protects our liability and our 'assets' – the land and its wildlife.

# Our Solution

- We've listened to feedback and are introducing a new framework, **'The Active Outdoors Providers Scheme'**.
- This recognises the breadth of activities, giving our teams a structure that:
  - fits the needs of individual parties
  - establishes clear roles and responsibilities and a sense of shared responsibility for conservation
  - creates a process for thinking through impact on all users – minimising the potential for conflicts
  - sets the parameters for long-term, mutually-beneficial relationships.
- We've worked with external stakeholders to develop the new approach. These include IOL, BMC, WATO, AALA, AHOEC among many others.

# Summary

- **It's a framework and a process.** There's a simple process to understand, assess and categorise relationships. This is designed to set the right tone and establish a clear sense of roles and responsibility for the land. It also helps our teams think through implications for **all** stakeholders and is flexible enough to deal with local issues and challenges.
- **It's worth the time.** A bit of time spent up front in establishing relationships, getting them off on the right footing with the aim of bringing benefits to all.



**Our role is to protect the land** as well as provide access. Impact and conservation is our priority when we're considering and setting up relationships with third-party providers.

**We want to work with you to achieve shared goals.**

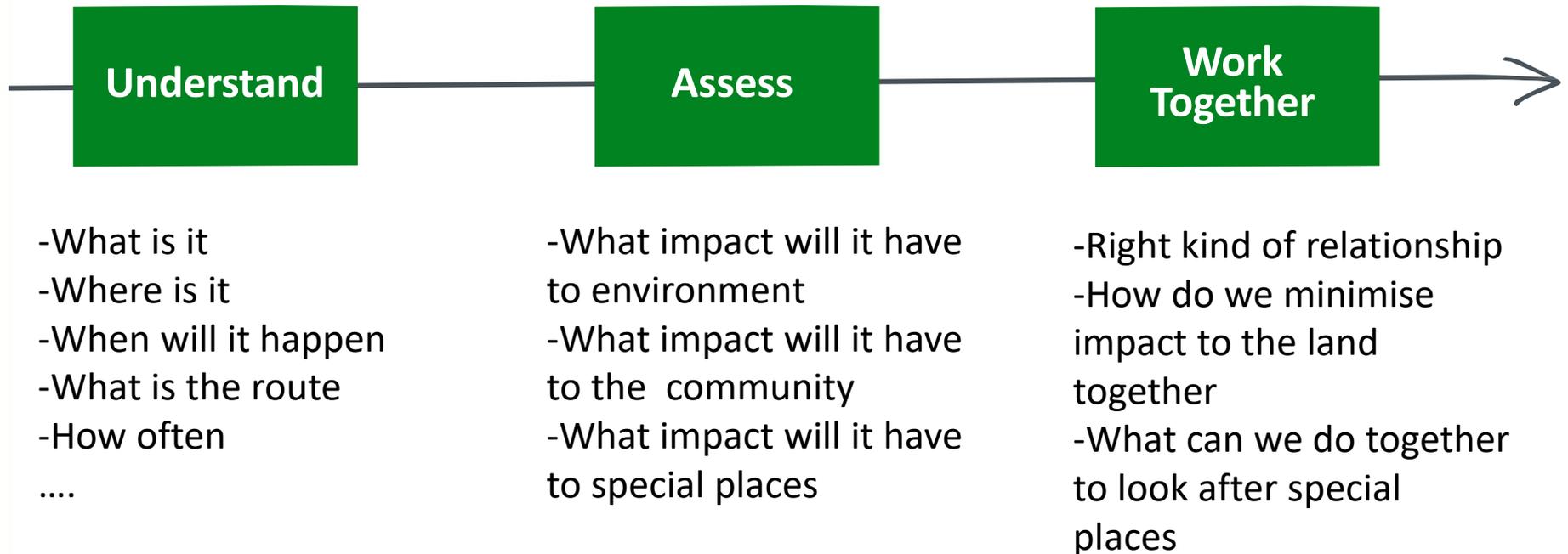
**In principle, we want to encourage people to use our land.**

We want to welcome and encourage providers – from independent instructors to large-scale event organisers.

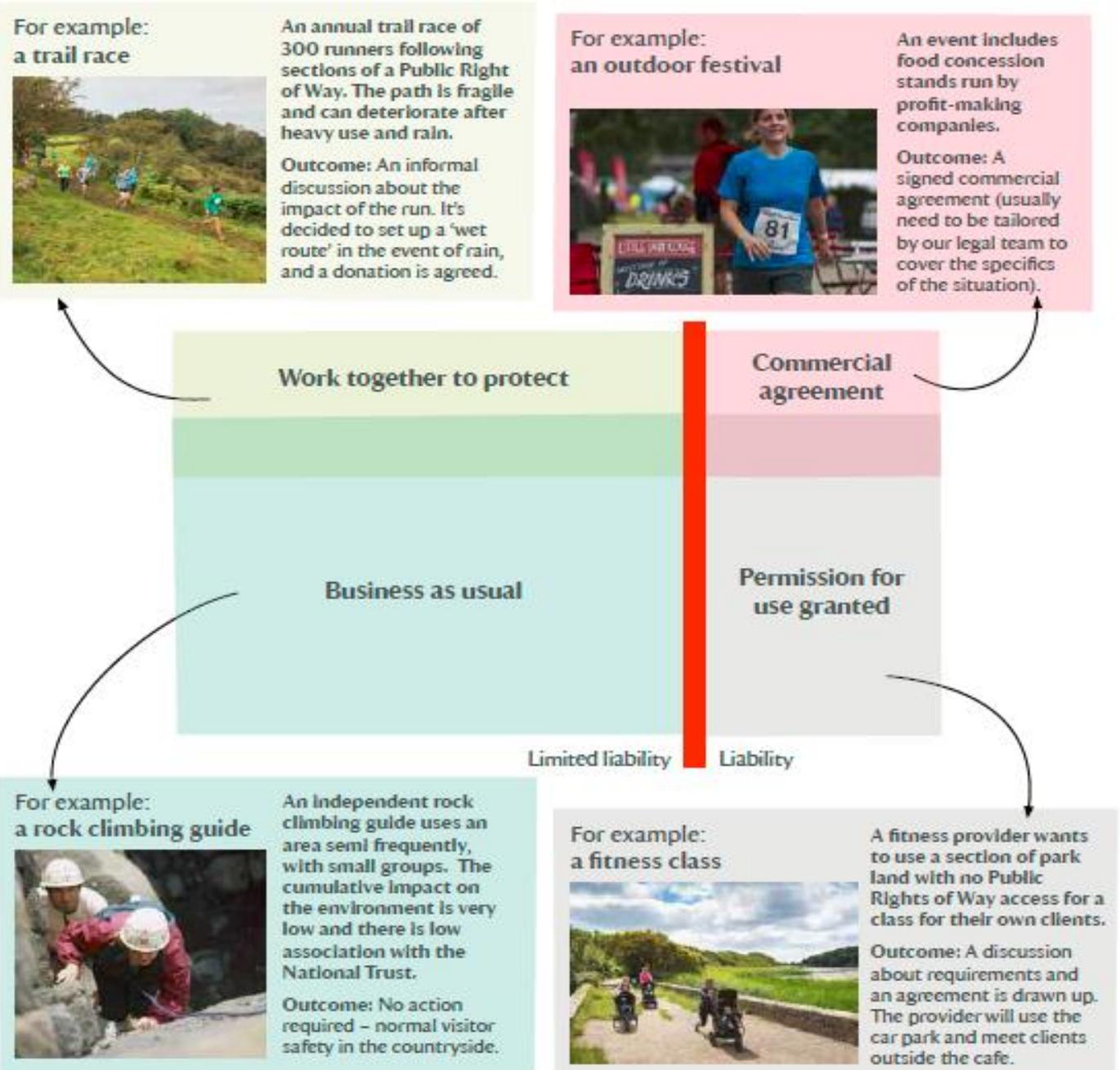
**It enables more people to enjoy National Trust places. It's why we're here.**



# The Process



Leading to  
National Trust  
classifying users



# Assess and decide which category applies

Our teams will assess which of the four categories of relationship applies: business as usual, work together to protect, permission granted, a commercial agreement.

## Summary of the assessment process:

Will there be any potential damage or disruption?	Will activities take place inside the pay barrier or use NT facilities?	Does the provider want to bring infrastructure onto the land?	Do they want to use land without right of access?	Is consent required from an external protection body?	Are there plans to sell anything on a commercial basis (food/drink, etc)?	Any statutory licences (eg music, alcohol) required?	
No to all of these questions							Business as usual
Yes to this question	No to all of these questions						Work together to protect
	Yes to any of these questions				No to these questions		Permission for use granted
					Yes to either of these questions		Commercial agreement

# What it could look like

## Donations towards conservation work

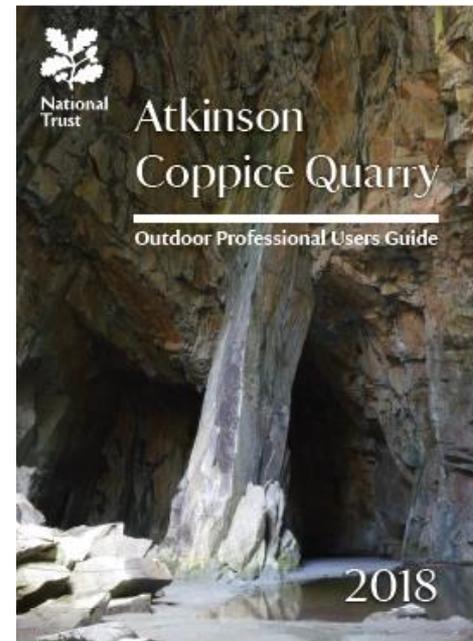
Time: volunteering

Money: specific conservation task



## Codes of conduct

Agreeing a voluntary code of conduct is a great way of communicating. Developed in collaboration with relevant outdoor providers to ensure it is mutually agreed.



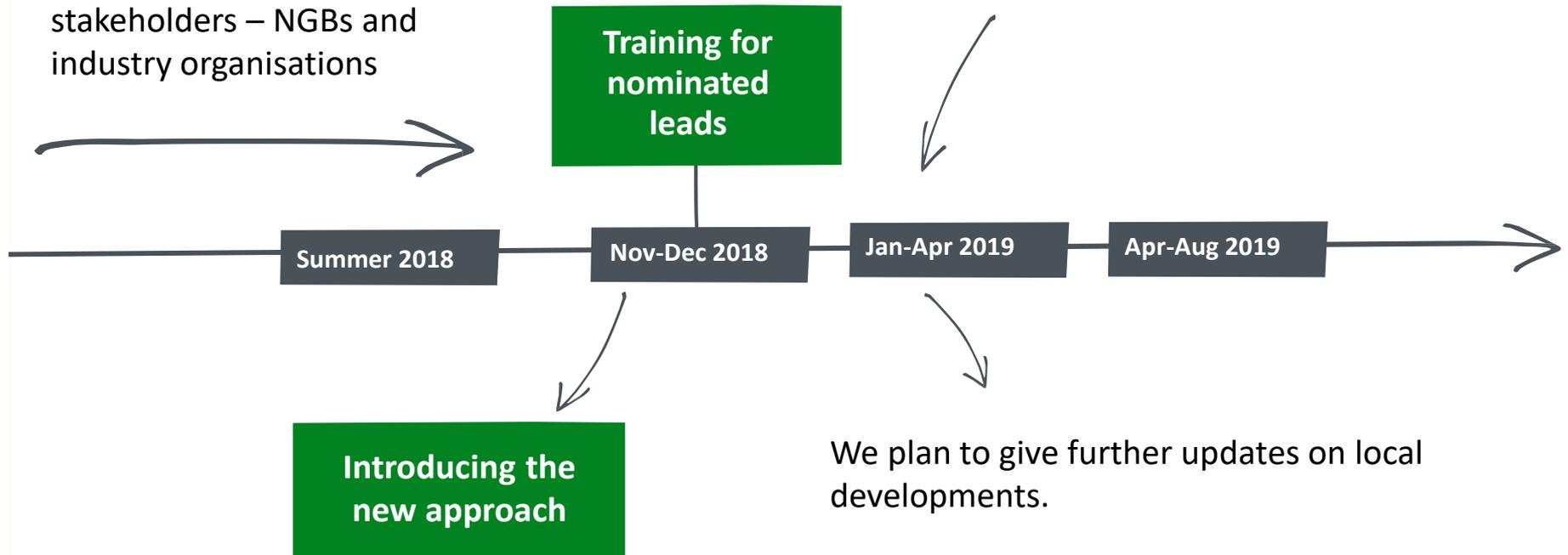
There are many possible outcomes, one of which is licensing

These will be bespoke licenses created in response to the individual requirements of the activity taking place. This is not a 'one size fits all approach'



# The journey

Consult on and develop new providers framework. This included consulting external stakeholders – NGBs and industry organisations



Follow-up support for nominated leads to check understanding, deepen knowledge, answer questions

**Introducing the new approach**

**Training for nominated leads**

We plan to give further updates on local developments.

In the meantime, feel free to email [aops@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:aops@nationaltrust.org.uk) if you have any questions

# How can you help

- **Develop local relationships.** Where do you use regularly? Get to know the local Ranger team.(remember the timescales we are working too). Get involved with organisations like IOL, AHOEC and local NGB groups
- **It's worth the time.** A bit of time spent up front in establishing relationships, getting them off on the right footing saves a lot of work in the long run and develops more mutually beneficial relationships.
- **Assess the venues you use, and be honest about your individual or cumulative impact**
- **What can you do to keep “your office” healthy and beautiful?**

# Next Steps

- Property leads will be trained over this winter. We plan to update local information in spring 2019.
- In the meantime you can contact me at [aops@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:aops@nationaltrust.org.uk)
- We will continue our dialogue with stakeholders and industry organisations to ensure the new approach is rolled out effectively across the country.