



An update from Outdoor Alliance Wales

1. Outdoor Education (Wales) Bill

Earlier this summer, Sam Rowlands MS (Vice Chair of the Cross Party Group for the Outdoor Activity Sector) to put together a suggestion for an Outdoor Education Bill to be submitted as a private member's bill to the Senedd. This was part of a ballot of 45 ideas for private members' bills submitted, and was the one selected by the speaker to take forward. This then led to key individuals from OAW to work with Sam and a team of researchers from the Senedd, to produce an Explanatory Memorandum. This is the next step before a full bill can be presented. This Explanatory Memorandum has been published, presented to the Senedd on 26th October 2022, resulting in it receiving Senedd support for further parliamentary time to develop this into a full bill for the Senedd to consider bringing into law.

In short, the Outdoor Education (Wales) Bill would make an outdoor education residential visit of one week mandatory for every child and young person at school in Wales at some point in their school journey, and that the Welsh Government will fund this residential so that no child misses out. There are many documented and evidenced benefits of outdoor learning, and this bill seeks to move outdoor learning from enrichment to entitlement i.e. an explicit part of the curriculum. It is a matter of equity for the children and young people of Wales so that no one misses out the benefits of learning outdoors as part of a residential visit.

Some words of thanks from Sam Rowlands MS

"I am so pleased that we got the votes over the line, and I am very grateful to individual members for their support in making this happen despite significant pressure on some to do otherwise. This vote outcome happened because you provided clear reasoning and data behind the proposal and did a fantastic job of lobbying behind the scenes and getting me into a good a position as possible to deliver this in the Senedd today.

Let me be clear, your collective work, effort, and support from the beginning of this process has been second to none, thank you and well done.

I am encouraged also by the words of the minister on this topic and think he is genuine in his desire to do more work in this area; I will reach out to him to understand how we can move his words into action. I am also pleased with the public debate and attention we have been able to create as a result of your efforts and I think we should make the most of this momentum that has been built up."

Next steps.....

Over the next 12 months, Sam will continue to work with key individuals from OAW and the team of researchers from the Senedd to produce a full Bill proposal for the Senedd to consider bringing to law. There is much work to be done and the support of the outdoor sector will be much needed if this proposal is to succeed.



2. Adventure UK & Option 3

Adventure UK a body formed following the consultation held by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in 2017, on the non-statutory replacement of the Adventurous Activity Licensing Authority (AALA) scheme. Over the last few years Adventure UK has been developing a proposal for a sector-led scheme as an alternative to the current AALA.

Website is here: <https://adventureuk.org.uk/>

Contact details: info@adventureuk.org.uk

The Chair of the Option 3 Working Group gave an online presentation recently, outlining the journey they have been on to develop a proposal. Here are some of the highlights from the presentation:

- A scoping exercise was completed in 2017 which reviewed 10 outdoor sector accreditation schemes in the UK.
- The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) set out clear criteria for a sector-led accreditation scheme.
- The sector-led scheme proposal was drafted, taking into consideration the initial scoping exercise findings & recommendations which indicated enhancing the breadth of a sector-led scheme to incorporate aspects of the 10 schemes that worked well, and the HSE required criteria.
- The proposal puts the provider at the centre of the process, with Adventure UK as the Accrediting Body, the Adventure Activities Industry Advisory Committee (AAIAC) as the Advisory Body and an independent contracted Inspectorate to facilitate inspections based on what the provider offers.
- The scope of the proposed scheme would include: Health, Safety & Risk Management; Operational requirements; Facilities compliance and management (only where applicable); Learning & Development; Leadership, management & professional services; Customer Care; Environmental Sustainability; and a Review/Developmental cycle.

With the sector-led scheme proposal (Option 3) for an alternative accreditation scheme to Adventure Activity Licensing in the UK complete, the Adventure UK Board recently sent out an online survey to key organisations for their members to complete. The survey closed at the end of October and Adventure UK is in the process of collating the results.

The timeline is to have an alternative scheme ready by March 2023. The result of the survey will help to gauge the likely scale of the take up of this new sector-led scheme should AALA be withdrawn.

Next steps.....

1. Adventure UK to present the sector-led scheme proposal and business plan to HSE, who in turn will present to the HSE Board for scrutiny against the HSE criteria and their approval.
2. If approved, there will be a public consultation, administered by HSE.



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3. If the HSE Board are satisfied with the outcome of the public consultation, the Chair of the HSE Board will present their recommendations to the Under Secretary of State for Employment, for the sector-led scheme proposal to be accepted as an alternative to the current AALA scheme.
4. The Under Secretary of State for Employment will need to seek Parliamentary time in Westminster for a debate, requesting that the Activity Centres (Young Persons' Safety) Act be removed from the statute - timeframe unknown.
5. The aim of Adventure UK is for a sector-led scheme to be in place by April 2025, although there are many steps along the way that are outside of their control.
6. If Westminster Parliament decides against taking the Act off the statute, it's Plan B for Adventure UK.

3. Cross Party Group (CPG) for the Outdoor Activity Sector in Wales

A CPG for the Outdoor Activity Sector in Wales was established in July 2021. The Chair is Huw Irranca-Davies MS and the two Vice Chairs are Sam Rowlands MS & Cefin Campbell MS. Secretariat is provided Paul Donovan (Chair - OAW) and Rebecca Brough (Ramblers Cymru & OAW Full Member). The agreed purpose of the CPG is:

1. To inform and influence future policy;
2. To elevate the status of the outdoor activity sector in Wales and support its sustainable growth;
3. To support the advancement of equitable access to the natural environment for outdoor learning and activities.

The CPG is open to all who are involved and have an interest in the outdoor sector. The members of OAW are notified of future meetings of the CPG.

Outdoor Alliance Wales

Outdoor Alliance Wales plays a vital role in creating and sustaining a strong sense of advocacy for and to the outdoor sector in Wales. Through collaborative engagement, the membership of the Outdoor Alliance in its matrix-based approach will share the common values in a way that they will make a significant contribution to the economic, health & well-being, social, cultural and environmental developments of Wales.

The vision subscribed to by Outdoor Alliance Wales is '*Sustainable, active, appreciative outdoor practices for a resilient, healthy Nation*'.

Outdoor Alliance Wales aims to develop a more coordinated approach within the wider pan Wales outdoor sector by harnessing the experience, skills and knowledge of its Key Stakeholders and the people they reach to facilitate sustainable economic, health, social and environmental change, for a resilient Wales.

There are currently 40+ organisations who are members of OAW, including the Wales Adventure Tourism Organisation (WATO) and its core members: Pembrokeshire outdoor Charter Group (POCG), South Wales Outdoor Activity Providers Group (SWOAPG) and Snowdonia-Active (S-A).