



Welcome to the

IOL NW
Conference
2026

[#IOLNWConf26](https://twitter.com/IOLNWConf26)

Plan for the day



0900 - 0930	Arrivals, registration and workshop sign up
0930 - 0950	Introductions – IOL NW Committee
0950 - 1055	Workshop 1
1055 - 1115	Break
1115 - 1215	Workshop 2
1215 - 1315	Sector updates
1315 - 1415	Lunch
1415 - 1500	Keynote
1500 – 1630	Workshop 3
1630	Final gathering and conference close
1645 -1700	IOL NW committee – what next?

So - what's it all about?



Challenges

- Mental health
- Finance
- Climate change
- Inequitable access
- AI



What's happening?

- **Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill**
- **Youth Strategy**
- **Enrichment framework**
- **Tim Farron MP Andy MacNae MP Phil Brickell MP**
- **All Party Parliamentary Groups – Outdoor Learning and Outdoor Recreation and Access to Nature**
- **Natural History GCSE**



**Nature, outdoor and
adventure**

Including time outdoors,
climate education and
sustainability projects ,
gardening, residential and
camps

Conference
feedback



Sector Updates





IOL Update for IOL North West of England Conference

6th February 2026

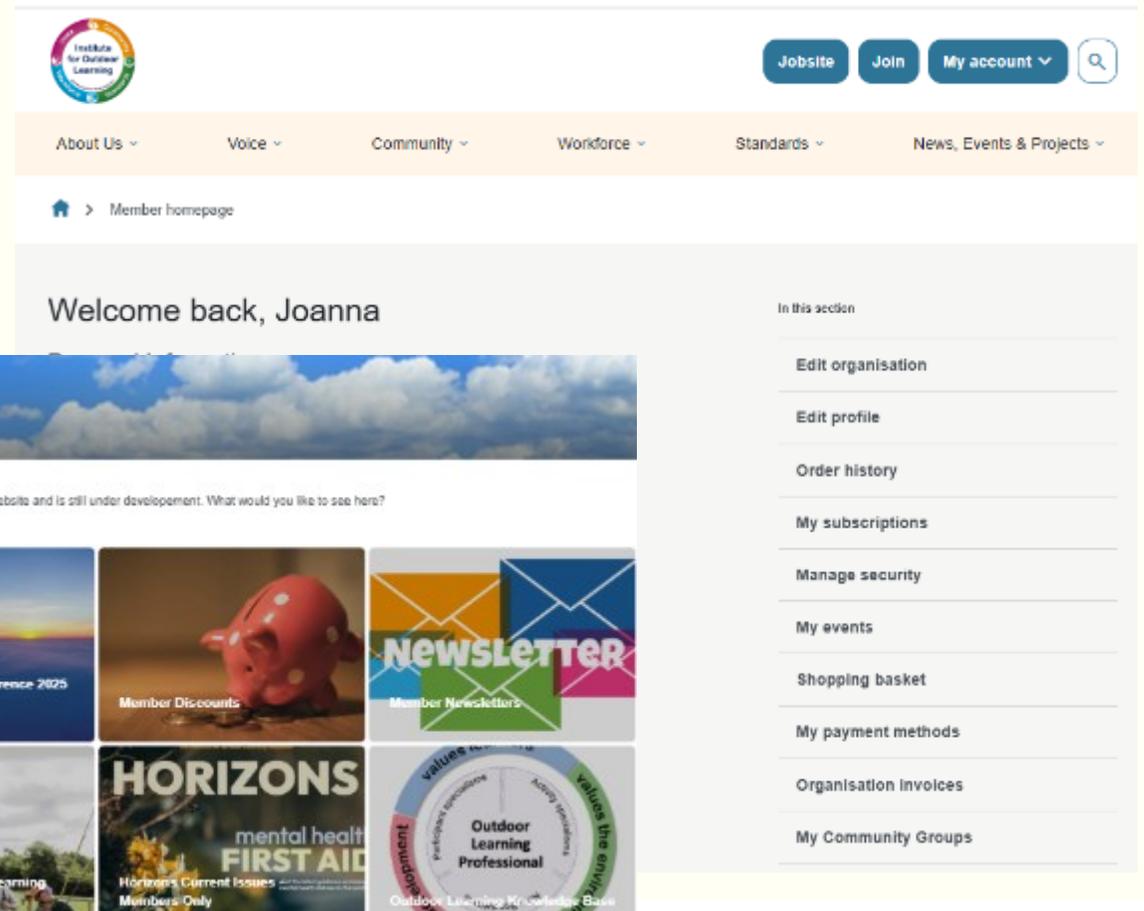
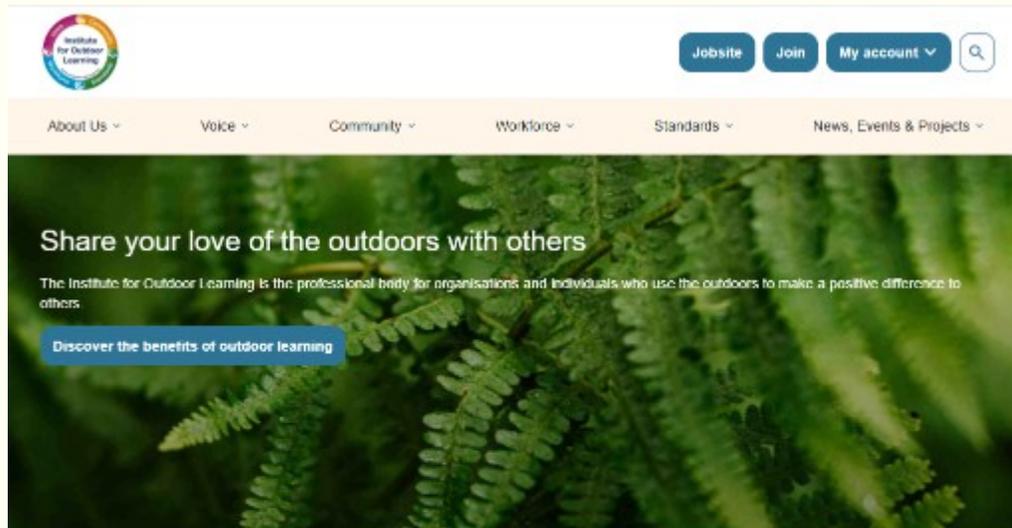
Steve Randles – IOL Trustee

Share your love of the outdoors with others

The Institute for Outdoor Learning is the professional body for organisations and individuals who use the outdoors to make a positive difference to others.

Institute for Outdoor Learning

Make the most of the IOLE website... Register for events, info, membership extras.



Our Members have a shared vision of Outdoor Learning as a highly valued form of development, education and employment in UK society.

- Voice**
Are you interested in championing outdoor learning to policy makers, national organisations and governments?
- Community**
Are you seeking others in outdoor learning to join up to share and develop practice?
- Workforce**
Are you looking for career advice, professional development and recognition?
- Standards**
Are you interested in knowing about, developing and sharing research and good practice?



North West England

[Geographical Groups' Operational Guidance](#)

Outdoor Learning in the North West

The North West includes the mountains, lakes and coastline of Cumbria, the Pennines, Howgills and Eden valley, Yorkshire Dales, Morecambe coast and Lune estuary, Trough of Bowland, Manchester and Merseyside conurbation, and the Wirral. There is a strong tradition of residential Outdoor Learning centres in the area, specialist recreational and activity provision, and a vibrant community of freelance practitioners. IOL members work in outdoor education, personal development, professional development, outdoor therapy, outdoor sports and adventure tourism.

The voluntary committee represents IOL in your region, get in touch with us. We wish to represent your views.



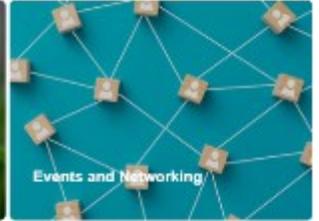
03 Jul 2024
 IOL NW - Mines in Cumbria - Updated 2024.pdf
 NW England - Updates

Mines access in Cumbria

Many thanks to the centres that have supported this project so far. The first day of inspections has been completed and the reports are available to members of the Cumbrian Mine Inspection Report Scheme. Membership is £100 and gives you access to the mine inspection reports and the fee is used to fund further inspections of venues which require a one-off inspection prior to use. A side benefit is that some more complex venues are being pre-inspected, and this may lead to a further project to develop group mine use in the area but would require more regular inspection to



News
IOL North West Conference 2026
 Friday 6 February at Brathay Hall, Ambleside, Cumbria. Put the date in your diary!
[Find out more...](#)



Displaying 5 of 5 results

Members only

11 May 2025
 IOL NW - Newsletter 11-05-25.pdf
 NW England Newsletter

Members only

10 Sep 2024
 IOL NW newsletter 06-09-24
 NW England Newsletter

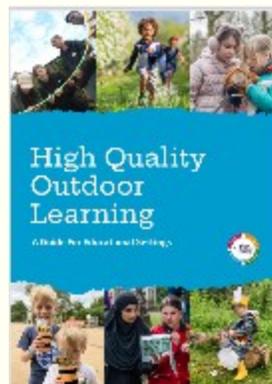
Updates



APPG Map
17,063 views to date.
Friday 12th June
MP Nature & Adventure
Day



HQOL for Educational
Settings - **Free
PDF Download**
Chinese translation of
Guide for All



Accessible Outdoor
Learning Group
Spring 2026
Climbing for All (MLTE)



Apprenticeships
Resources for
Apprentices &
Employers too.
Early Career Package



Jobs Page
107,803
views in 2025

NOTTS Outdoors	Head of Centre - Nottingham Contract type: Full time / Permanent Salary: £ 38,157 - 64,075 Per annum FT, Permanent £35,102 - £44,075 C The Mill Adventure Base
VENTURE FORCE	Expedition Manager - Re Contract type: Part time Salary: £ 20 Closing date: 25 Jan 2025 02:55 PM P/T 0.6 £26,500 to £27,300 per pa C Venture Force
Pike Peradelli	Head - South Wales Contract type: Full time / Permanent C FT, Permanent £ Scourby Scale, 800



QUICK SUMMARY
Snapshot Survey 2026

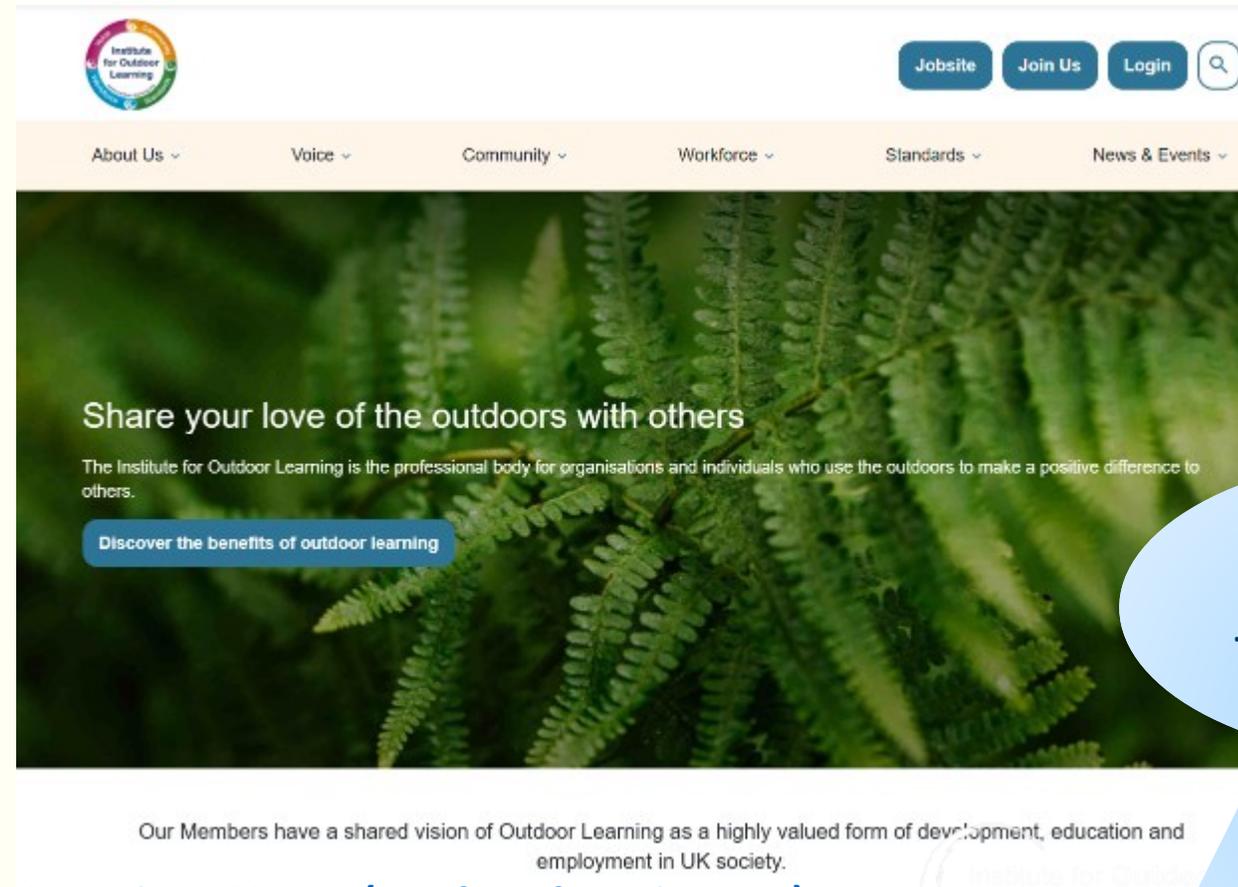
To sign up for the survey
Scan the QR code to access the
online [Consent Form](#).



- We currently have **60** organisational participants
- In total, we have **96** different sites or centres participating, across the various organisations.

Championing Outdoor Learning

Contact Us



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+44 (0)1228 564580

Website: [Institute for Outdoor Learning - Home \(outdoor-learning.org\)](https://www.outdoor-learning.org)

Email: institute@outdoor-learning.org

Institute for Outdoor Learning

The Forest School Association is the professional body and UK wide voice for Forest School, promoting best practice, cohesion and '*quality Forest School for all*'.



FOREST S
ASSOC



📍 If you are Forest School providers the FSA Recognised FS Provider Scheme is open and there are free, live information webinars about this every half term, next one is Tues 12th March



📍 If you network with other FS leaders in their region and would like to formalise things a little more and become FSA affiliated we welcome conversations about this (there is no charge for this)

📍 Webinar: Forest School in Schools: The Francis Review and EIF with Matt Harder, FSA Chair 11th February at 8pm Register here:



The Forest School Association is the professional body and UK wide voice for Forest School, promoting best practice, cohesion and '*quality Forest School for all*'.



FOREST SCHOOL
ASSOCIATION

We are coming to the end of a lengthy review of the suite of FS qualifications with the Forest School Awarding Organisation Forum and these new quals will be live from 1st Sept 2026.

Forest School Trainers can join the Endorsed Forest School Trainer scheme for peer support

FSA National Conference 2026 The Power of Play

alongside the **Forest School Show**
25–27 September 2026 | Walesby Activity
Centre – Notts

We need workshop providers



FSA ROADSHOW | Weston Park
Weston Park, Shropshire

 Saturday 21st February 2026

 09:00 arrival | 09:30–17:00 event



Scotswood Garden Roadshow

FSA North East Roadshow

 Scotswood Gardens, Newcastle Upon
Tyne

 Sunday 29th March 2026

 09:00 arrival | 09:30 – 17:00 event







UK educational charity helping nurture a lifelong journey of learning, appreciation and respect for the countryside through a range of Outdoor Learning experiences.

Focus of our work now...

We Give

As a fund-giving educational charity, we give grants, fund Outdoor Learning and find innovative ways to work with funding partners.

We Teach

We provide and fund Outdoor Learning programmes for children and young people.

We Share

We do all this with partners and collaborators, maximising our impact and influence.





CONTACT

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 Quenington
 Gloucestershire
 England GL7 5BN

T: 01285 712492

Head Office – hello@ernestcooktrust.org.uk
 Trustees – chief.executive@ernestcooktrust.org.uk
 Learning – learning@ernestcooktrust.org.uk
 Grants – grants@ernestcooktrust.org.uk

Alison.Cross@ernestcooktrust.org.uk

As a landowning educational charity, we are naturally unique.
 Read more stories of people, land and learning in our Annual Report:
www.ernestcooktrust.org.uk



**Mountain
Training**

Update for IOL 2026

Guy Jarvis

Executive Officer, Mountain Training England



Digital badges

Coming very soon

- No longer issue physical certificates.
- Instead, issue candidates with digital badges when they gain a qualification.
- verified and shareable, issued through the tahdah platform.
- use 'blockchain technology' which makes them secure and tamper-proof. More info : <https://www.tahdah.me/products/digital-badges>

The screenshot shows the user profile for John Cousins (ID: 31461) on the tahdah platform. The profile includes a navigation menu with links for Providers, Courses, Workshops, Shop, and Contact. Below the name, there is a 'logs 1' button. The 'Awards Completed' section displays five Mountain Training badges: WMC1, MCI, MLW, RCI, and GUIDE. The 'Member Of' section shows logos for BMC and another organization, while the 'Expired Memberships' section shows a logo for AMI.



Bouldering Wall Instru

Launched in 2025 completes our qualification suite

Min. age for training: 16

Min. age for assessment: 18

Training: 1 day

Assessment: 3 hrs

Ideal for: Bouldering wall staff, young people who've completed NICAS Bouldering Level 4 or 5, people who run bouldering sessions on artificial walls or towers.



Bouldering Wall Instructor

Candidate handbook





Mountain Training Association

Supporting candidates

Members' groups and volunteers throughout every region of the UK and Ireland

Mentoring programme to help candidates through their qualification

400+ personal and professional development workshops

The Professional Mountaineer - peer written and reviewed quarterly magazine

Insurance offer for qualified members

Discounts clothing and equipment, guide books, courses and accommodation





Mountain Training Developments

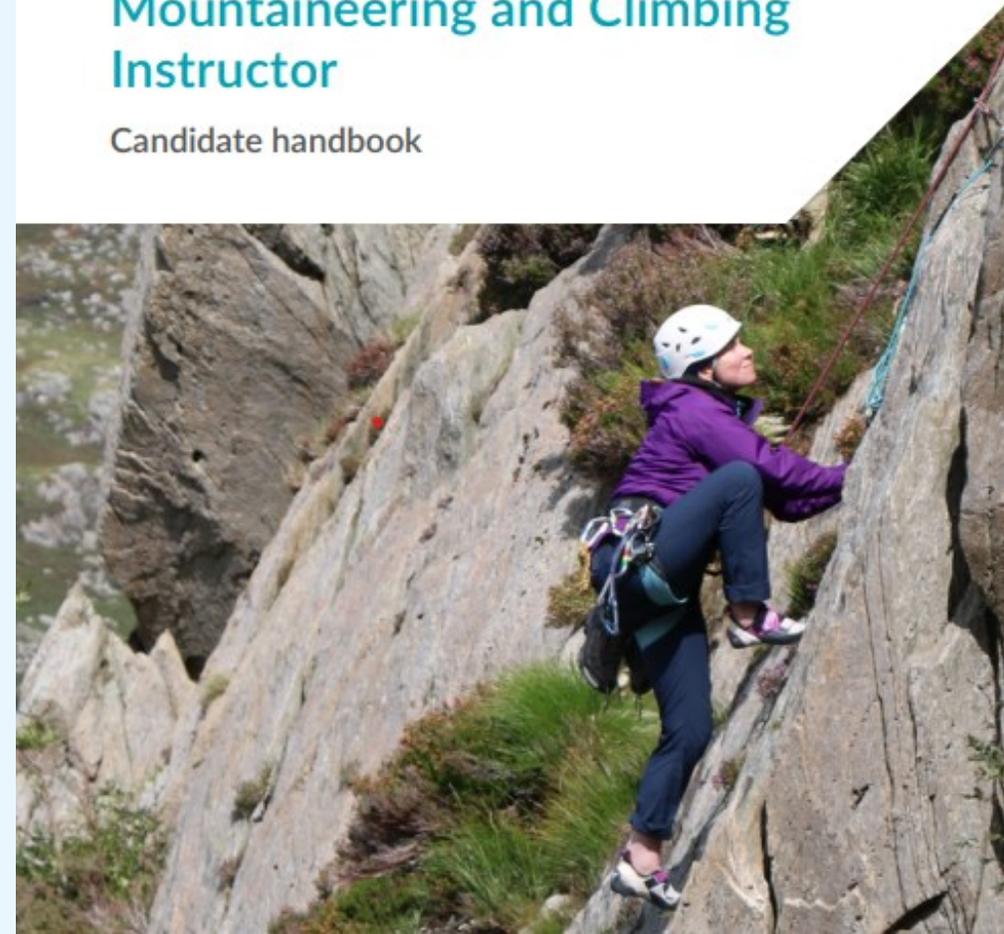
Reviews underway

- Mountaineering & Climbing Instructor
- International Mountain Leader
- Coaching Scheme
- Skills training delivery



Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor

Candidate handbook

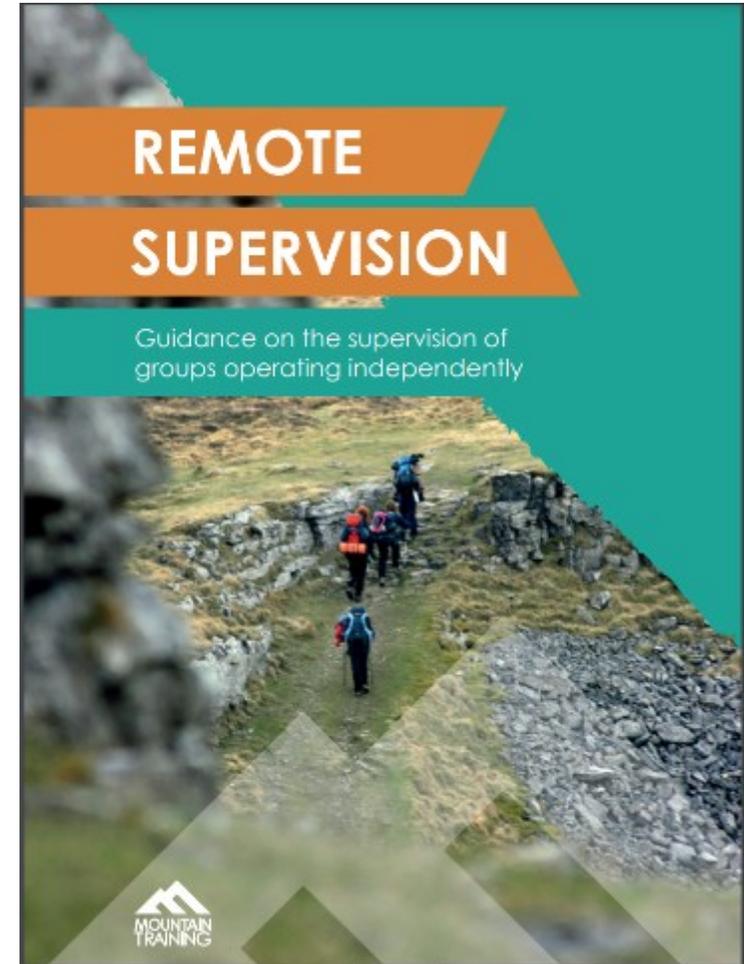




Remote supervision

Online CPD course

- Delivered through the MTA workshop platform
- Open to all qualified leaders (MT and other organisations)
- 5 hour online face to face course in two modules – with workbook.
- Focuses on planning and decision making.
- Created in consultation with D of E and Ten Tors.





Online training



[About](#) [Skills courses](#) [Qualifications](#) [Help](#) [Shop](#) [Login](#) [Association](#) 

 [Select Language](#) 



 [Tags](#) [Mountain Training](#)

New Leader Responsibilities e-learning course

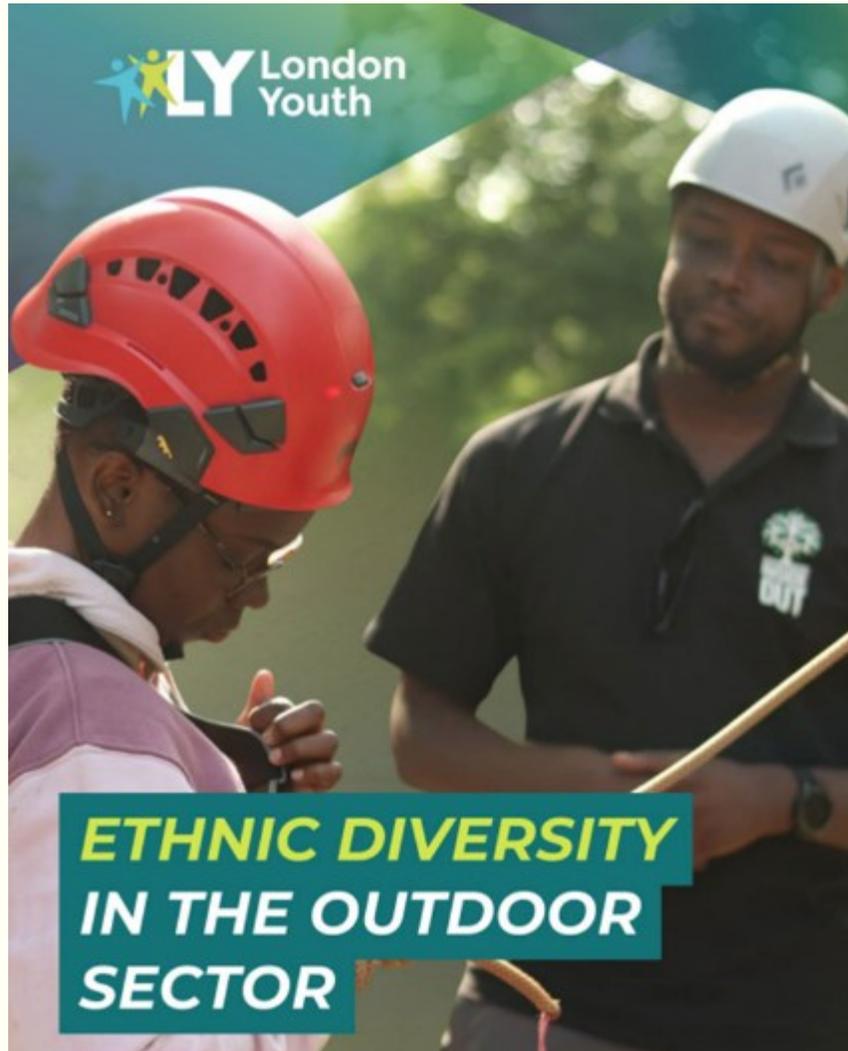
🕒 31.03.25

Mountain Training has created a new Leader Responsibilities e-learning course, launching alongside the new Bouldering Wall Instructor qualification. The course is suitable for people pursuing any of our leadership or instructional qualifications as the Leader/Instructor responsibilities competencies are shared by all our walking and climbing qualifications.



Danny McCullagh

Research reports



The cover has a white background. At the top right, there is a grid of eight small icons representing various outdoor activities, with the text 'Council for Learning Outside the Classroom' below them. Below this is the 'EVOLVE' logo with 'eduFOCUS' underneath. The title is centered in a large, black, sans-serif font. Below the title, the publication date is given. At the bottom, there is a photograph of a group of people in blue helmets and red life jackets paddling a blue inflatable raft on a river. A small caption for the image is located at the bottom right of the photo. The footer text is centered at the very bottom.

Council for Learning Outside the Classroom

EVOLVE
eduFOCUS

**Different Journeys:
Regional variations in English
school residential visits and
changes over time.**

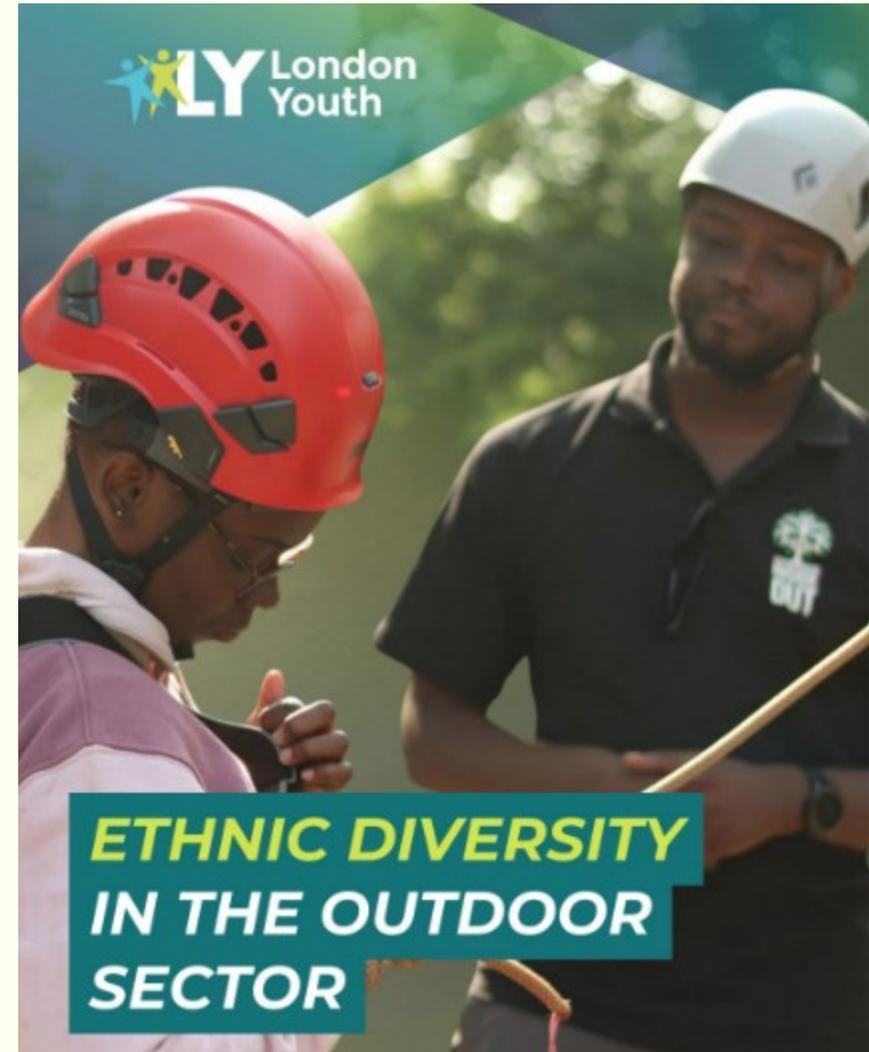
Published December 2025

Image: Stubbers Adventure Centre

Report produced in partnership between
Council for Learning Outside the Classroom and eduFOCUS Limited

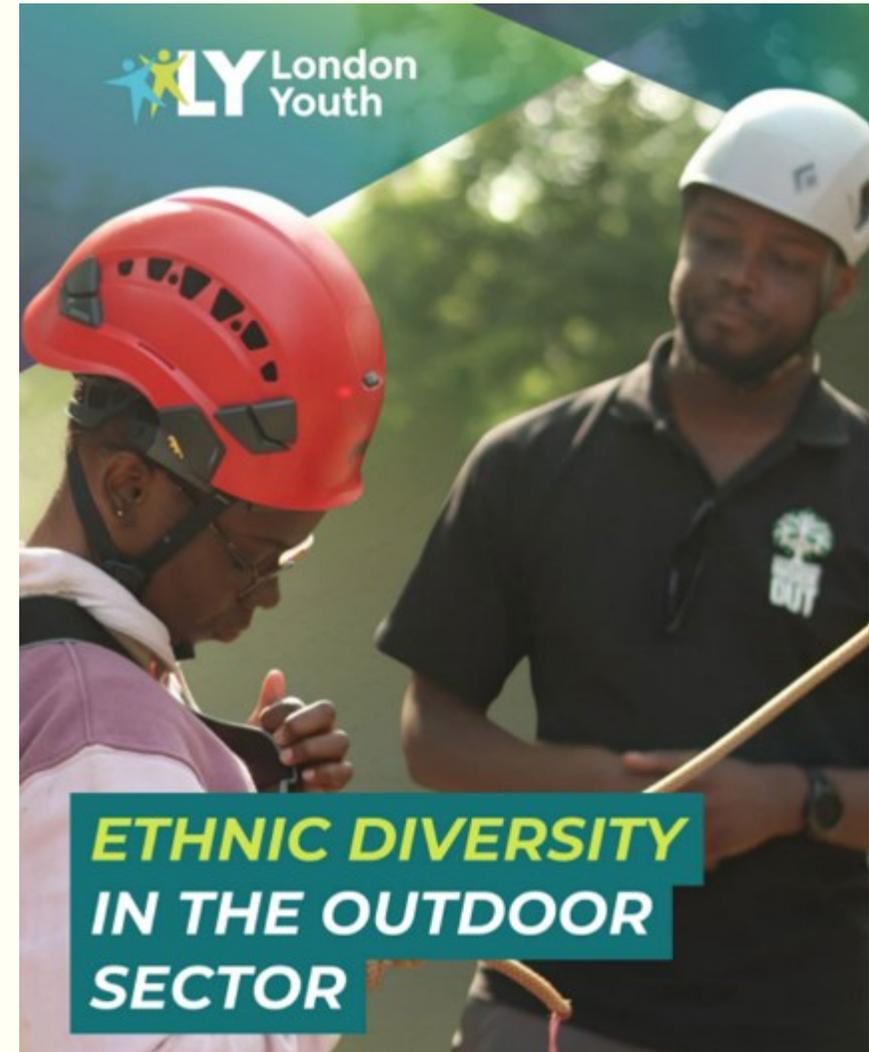
Headlines

- Overwhelmingly White workforce
- Minimal representation in leadership
- Low diversity in qualifications
- Underrepresentation in apprenticeships
- Disparities in participation and progression
- Inconsistent and limited data collection



Recommendations

- Developing a joint sector strategy
- Enhancing data capture and visibility
- Promoting positive interventions
- Future research



Different Journeys



Clear evidence of widening inequalities between North and South

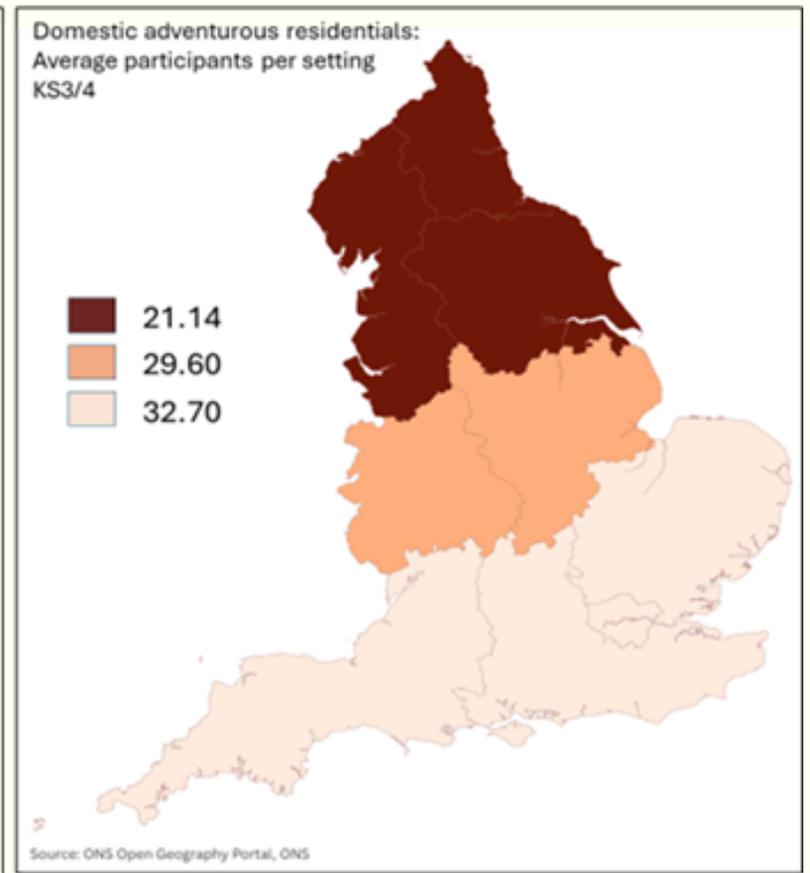
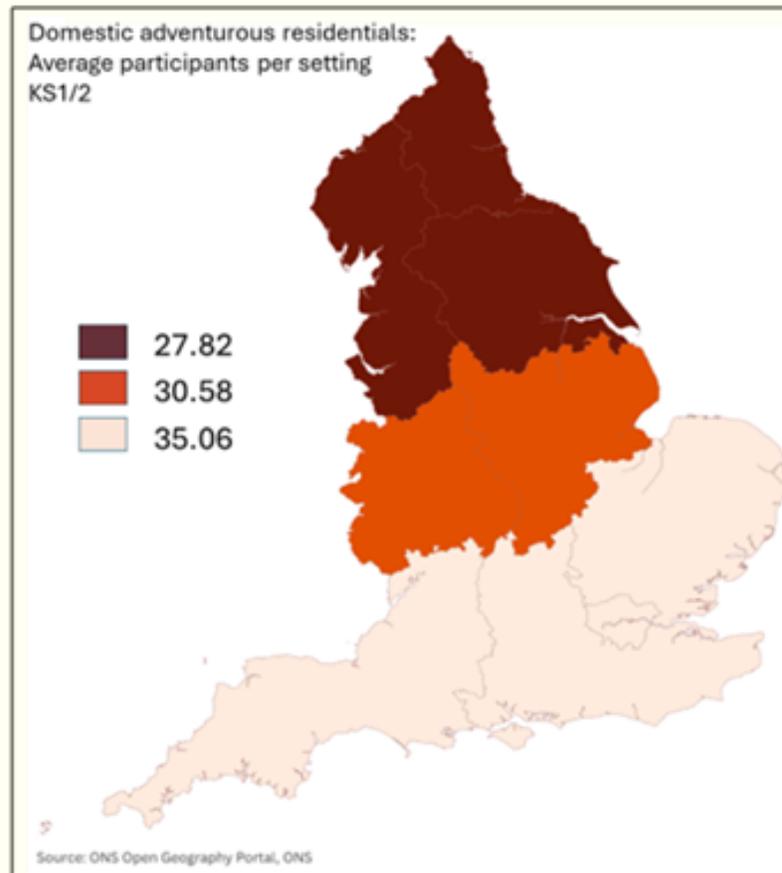
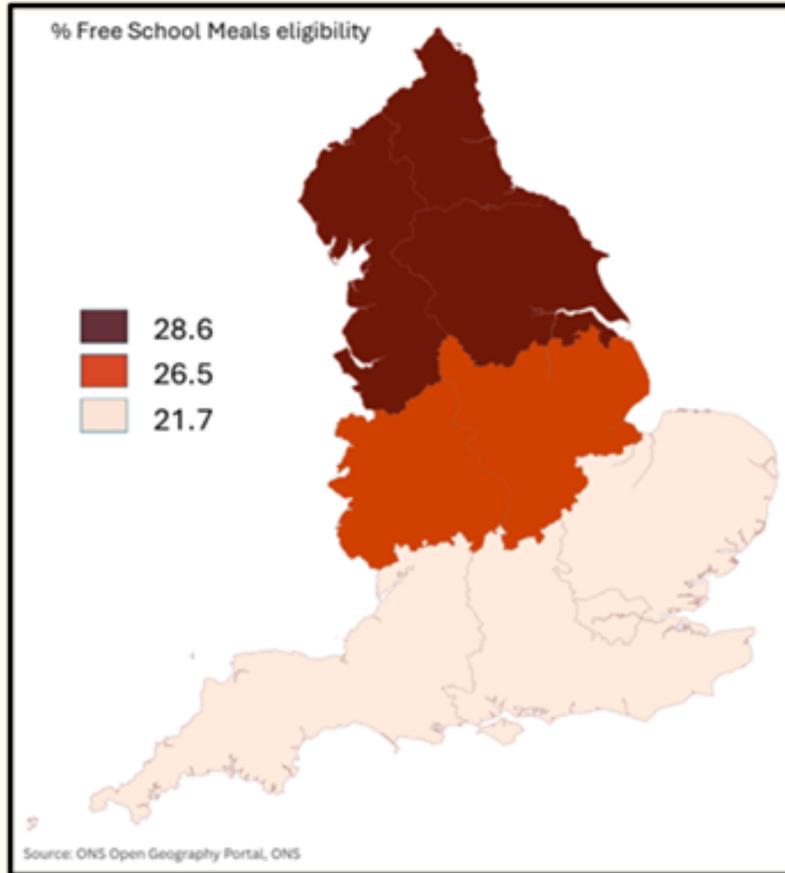
Anecdotal evidence of regional variations in visit provision

Need to improve the evidence base enabling CLOtC to champion educational visits for all

Large available data set



Domestic adventurous residentials



Headlines

- Adventurous residentialials appear to be less affected than non-adventurous ones
- Regional variation
- Average visit length is reducing

Future concerns

- Increasing impact of anxiety
- Transport costs
- Provider costs
- School budgets
- Teacher expectations / confidence / skills
- Population demographic changes





Adventure UK

Adventure Sector Organisation Representatives



Elsbeth Mason LPIOL
AAIAC Chair

Assurance

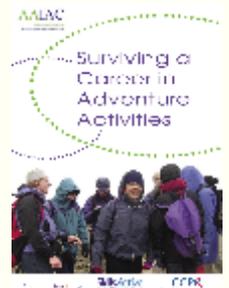
AAIAC

Adventure Activities
Industry Advisory Committee

Guidance



LOtC Quality Badge



AAIAC

Adventure Activities
Industry Advisory Committee



Participation and Incident Snapshot Survey 2026

INFORMATION PACK



*Helping to understand participation levels, incidents,
and contributory factors across the UK Outdoor
Adventure Activity Sector*

Proudly endorsed by:

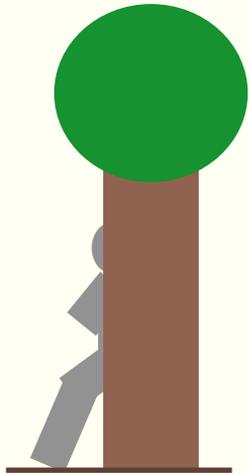


Wild Wee's

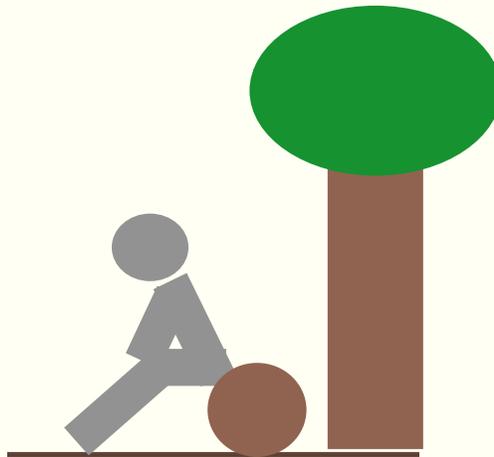
**Fundamental life skill?
Safeguarding issue?
Discrimination issue?
Pollutant?**

Wild Wees In the Woods

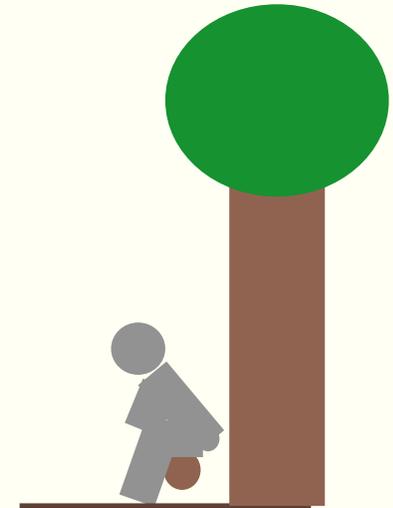
Consider if it is better to perch or lean rather than squat



Leaning against tree



Perching on a log



Sitting over a log

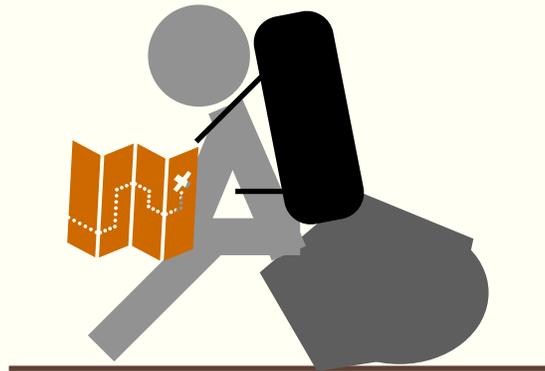
Wild Wees

On the Fells

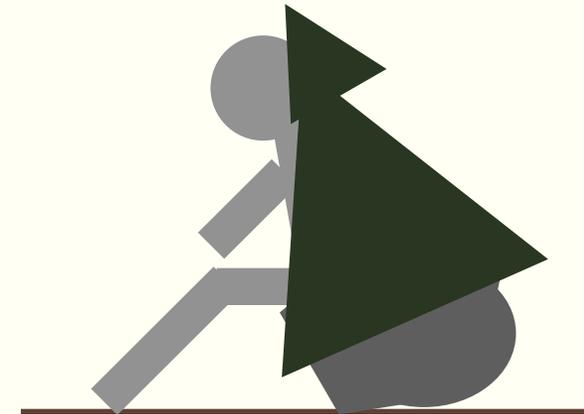
How to create your own shelter and privacy on open hillsides



Find a boulder, perch, keep rucksack on and look relaxed!



Use a map or coat and look like you are admiring the view!



Use unzipped jacket or poncho to provide shelter and privacy

Teaching Going to the Loo - without a loo to go to.....

Wild Wee's, Expedition Excretion Periods

Ps for leaders to remember!

To manage hygiene needs in the outdoors



- **Pees**
- **Poos**
- **Periods**

- **Place** - picking a good spot,
- **Privacy** - feeling safe
- **Position** - sitting comfortably

- **Products**
- **Pollution**
- **Personal Hygiene**

- **Preparation** - having the things you need
- **Packing out** - products you should not leave
- **Personal circumstances** : infections /Ostomy

Sport welfare officer network

- The Sport Welfare Officer project is here to support Club Welfare Officers, and their clubs, to create positive experiences for all.
- We offer club and organisational support on safeguarding and welfare
- Our team of 63 staff work across England, alongside National Governing Bodies, to provide an additional range of opportunities locally to help clubs to create a safer cultures.
- The support is free to access, and is funded by Sport England through National Lottery investment.
- The project contributes to the Sport England strategy 'Uniting the Movement', and was developed following Ann Whyte KC's review into British Gymnastics .

Scan the QR code to find out more



Examples of work here in Cumbria

- Being a local friendly face that can meet clubs for a cuppa.
- Regional training offers.
- Local bespoke training support.
- Supporting clubs with being able to join in with wider projects such as current project around suicide prevention and alcohol free childhoods.
- Supporting clubs to follow their NGB safeguarding procedures if they have a concern.
- Linking clubs up together in the club welfare officer network but also for peer-to-peer support.
- Supporting clubs to gain youth voice and to move that feedback forward.
- Linking clubs in with local safeguarding boards.



22nd January 2026

- Practitioners from climbing and outdoors in Cumbria came together through The Outdoor Partnership to undertake the UK Coaching safeguarding adults course. It was great to bring together like minded people for some in-depth discussions about how we keep people safe. This was followed by a practical application session on the climbing wall where participants reflected on issues around consent and checking in on their climbers well being.



Active Cumbria's Sport Welfare Officer – Liz Wright



Liz joined Active Cumbria in February following 22 years in Children's social care.

To request please contact Liz Wright

Sport Welfare Officer – Active Cumbria

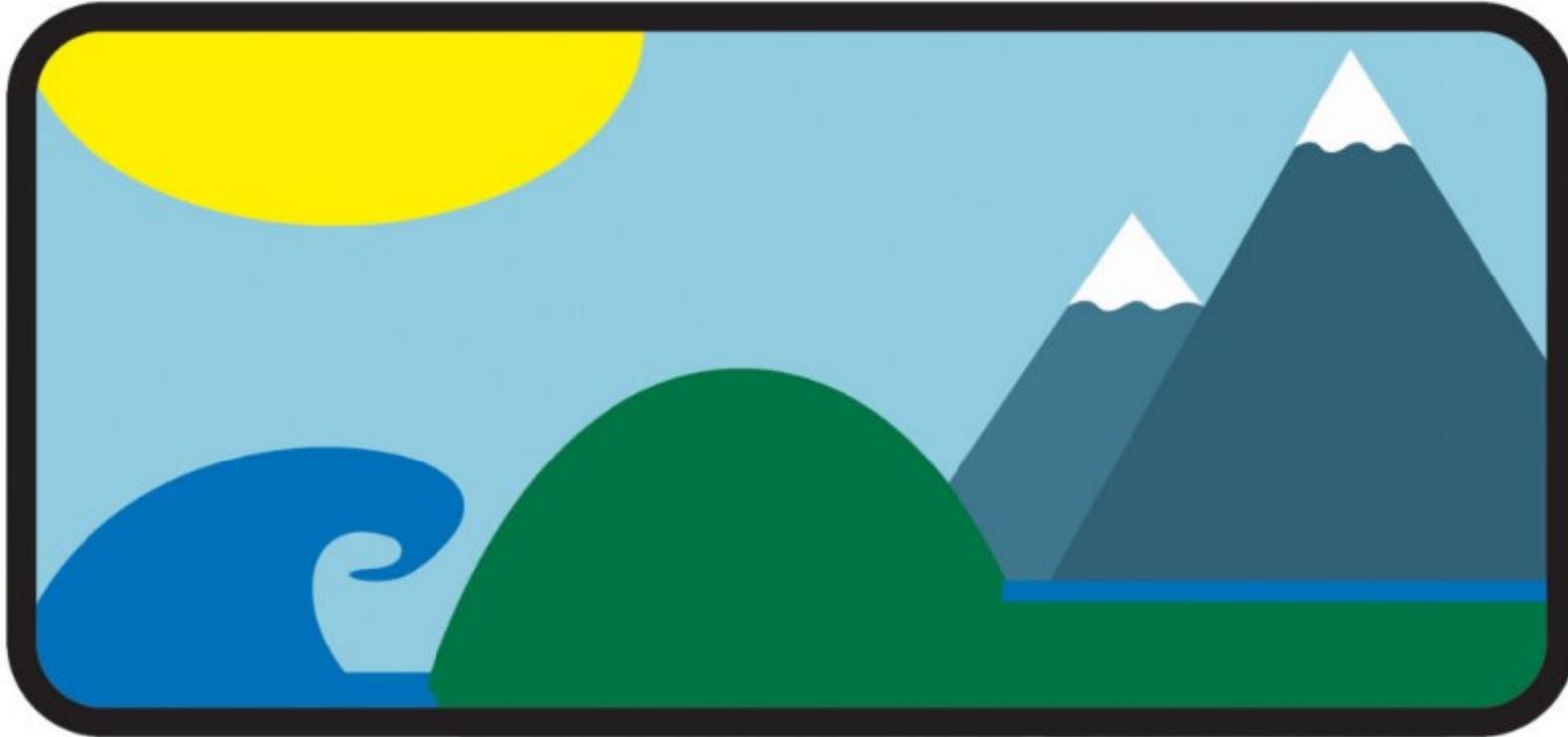
Tel: 07825340475

Email : liz.wright@cumberland.gov.uk



PARTNERIAETH AWYR AGORED

Profiad ● Llwyddo ● Mwynhau ● Gyda'n Gilydd



Experience ● Enjoy ● Achieve ● Together

OUTDOOR PARTNERSHIP

Molly
Campion



**Association for
Outdoor
Therapy**

Neal Anderson

