

Our Great Outdoors

The Draft Outdoor Recreation Action Plan For Northern Ireland



For Consultation

Contents	Page No
1. Introduction	3
2. Why have an Outdoor Recreation Action Plan?	4 - 5
DIAGRAM 1 The breadth of Outdoor Recreation	6
3. Background	7
4. Process of Developing the Outdoor Recreation Action Plan.	8 - 9
5. The Consultation Process	10
6. Key Themes	11
7. Actions	12
A: Structures	12 - 13
B: Policy and Legislation	14 - 15
C: Funding	15 - 16
D: Communication	17 – 18
E: Making the outdoors more accessible	19
F: Volunteers	20
G: Research	21
Appendix 1 – Steering group members	22
Appendix 2 – Organisations involved in consultation	23 - 25
Appendix 3 – Current and potential local outdoor recreation forums	26

1. Introduction

Northern Ireland has a combination of extremely varied land and seascapes with beautiful scenery within a very small geographical area. Mountains, moorlands, winding river valleys, green rolling countryside, extensive inland waterways, a spectacular coastline, woodlands and forests all make up the Northern Ireland environment. Towns and cities in Northern Ireland tend to be small and are bounded by fantastic scenery and the outdoor environment provides a resource that has tremendous potential to attract visitors and to promote enjoyment, health and well-being for local communities.

This new 10 year action plan to continue to develop outdoor recreation is being coordinated by a steering group comprising a range of government organisations, Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland (ORNI); (formerly the Countryside Access and Activities Network - CAAN) and land owning representatives. This co-ordinated approach demonstrates a strong commitment to realise the value of the outdoors.

It provides key recommendations for actions and challenges that need to be addressed to make Northern Ireland a place where outdoor recreation can genuinely deliver:

1. Healthy lifestyles for local people
2. Economic growth through encouraging visitors to come and enjoy the outdoors
3. Protection of habitats and ecosystems for future generations.

The recommendations provide the focus for the steering group to decide what actions and activities are pursued. It has been prepared by the consultants working alongside officers of the steering group and is the result of an extensive examination of the issues and a wide consultation with interested groups and individuals who have contributed to the process in meetings and written responses setting out what needs to be done. A list of all those organisations who responded to the consultation can be found in Appendix 1

THE VISION

The vision for a new Outdoor Recreation Action Plan is:

“To continue to build a dynamic culture of sustainable outdoor recreation in Northern Ireland.”

To achieve this vision the aim is for Northern Ireland to be a place where:

*There are increasing opportunities and improved access and infrastructure for sustained and increased participation by all in the broadest possible range of outdoor recreation activities.

*There are accompanying benefits to communities in terms of health, social cohesion and economic development.

*People enjoy the outdoors and show a high degree of responsibility for themselves, towards others and the environment they are using and play their part in maintaining, supporting and enhancing that environment.

2. Why have an Outdoor Recreation Action Plan?

A love for the natural environment, its special landscapes, secret places, fantastic coastlines and the wildlife that inhabits these areas, is a strong part of the fabric and culture of life in Northern Ireland. However, the opportunity to benefit from the resources that we value is not accessible to all. It is therefore necessary for government, businesses and voluntary organisations to work together to provide opportunities to grow this interest and love for the outdoors in a sustainable manner so that the full potential of the outdoors can be realised. The Outdoor Recreation Action Plan (ORAP) will be the key driver to make this happen.

Outdoor recreation for relaxation and enjoyment brings a range of significant benefits to society, communities and to individuals.

These benefits include:

- Health, well-being and enjoyment for all.

An accessible environment could be a significant resource for local people to enhance their quality of life by enjoying the outdoors. There is clear evidence highlighting the very strong connection between health and green spaces, including research undertaken by the Countryside Recreation Network in 2005¹. CAAN research in 2008 and 2010 into trends in outdoor sports² and walking, cycling and horse riding³ has also shown that there has been a significant growth in demand for outdoor recreation activities – especially those that are undertaken independently, rather than through an organised club or body.

- Economic benefit and sustainability.

The spectacular landscapes, seascapes and habitats of Northern Ireland are a vital tourism product. There has been a very significant growth in the adventure and activity tourism sector – with only a handful of commercial providers in 1998 and now well in excess of 100 businesses operating across Northern Ireland. The growing number of retailers and outlet stores selling “outdoor equipment” also reflects the growth in this sector. There is increasing recognition in other parts of the UK and Europe of the economic benefits that outdoor recreation can bring. Studies in Wales⁴ and Scotland⁵ have demonstrated the wider economic value of the sector for not only activity providers but also accommodation providers, cafés, restaurants, pubs and bars.

- Education – about the environment, self and others.

Outdoor enthusiasts feel a strong connection with wild landscapes and coastlines and it is in the interests of the users themselves, land managers and those who

¹ A Countryside for Health and Wellbeing CRN 2005 ISBN 1 84387 137 8

² Trends in Outdoor Recreation (1995 – 2008) www.outdoorrecreationni.com/publications/research-reports/

³ Trends in Walking, Cycling and Horse riding in Northern Ireland (1995 – 2010) www.outdoorrecreationni.com/publications/research-reports/

⁴ The Economic Impact of Walking and Hill Walking in Wales - Welsh Economy Research Unit, Cardiff University.

⁵ Assessing the economic impacts of nature based tourism in Scotland - a report commissioned by Scottish Natural Heritage

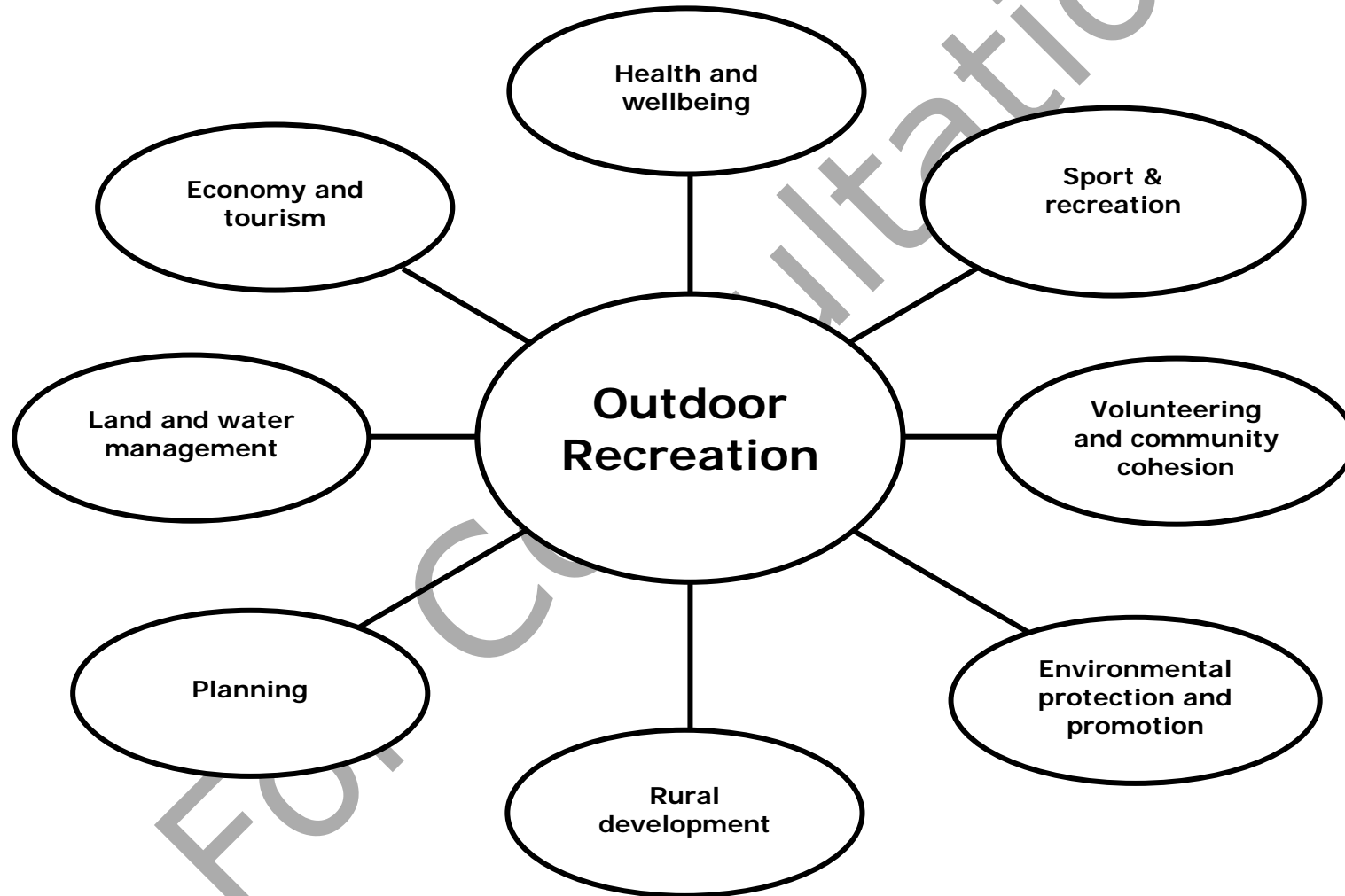
organise activities to work in partnership with nature conservation bodies to ensure that these areas are protected and their special qualities maintained. There is a long history of the Education and Library Boards providing high quality educational courses for their own schools and youth groups through the use of the outdoors. In recent years this has been matched by a significant growth in the number of pupils opting to do outdoor activities as part of the GCSE PE curriculum. Outdoor environments have also been extensively used for team development in the corporate sector. The development and value of volunteering is now a strong feature of the work undertaken by organisations such as the National Trust, ORNI and Mourne Heritage Trust bringing with it a wide range of benefits to the individuals and organisations involved.

Outdoor recreation is therefore very broad and encompassing, as Diagram 1 highlights and has a great potential to provide many benefits to society. The importance of joint working between the organisations that recognise these benefits of Outdoor Recreation is critical and the inter-relationships between users, agencies, land owners / managers and providers is fundamental for success in this plan.

For Consultation

DIAGRAM 1

The breadth of Outdoor Recreation



3. Background

Northern Ireland's first Countryside Recreation Strategy was developed by the Environment and Heritage Service of the Department of Environment (now NIEA) and the Sports Council of Northern Ireland (now SNI) in 1998.

The vision of the strategy was "to develop and sustain a vibrant countryside recreation culture in which responsible and well informed people enjoy high quality, sustainable and appropriate activities in an accessible, well managed yet challenging environment; where landowners and managers are welcoming and there are accompanying benefits to local communities both in social and economic terms."

There were 3 principles underpinning this vision:

- Mutual respect between all interested parties;
- Sustainable access;
- Quality of the experience.

One of the main outcomes from the strategy was the creation of a network of key stakeholders including CAAN and an associated company limited by guarantee, to deliver the products and the infrastructure required for the implementation of the strategy. The success of CAAN is well noted and the prominence of outdoor recreation has significantly increased in the past 12 years, however it has been recognised that more needs to be done.

In March 2009, Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) commissioned an independent review of this Strategy. The review concluded that the majority of the overall 'agendas' and actions set out in the Countryside Recreation Strategy and subsequent Operational Plans for CAAN had been achieved and indeed exceeded. It concluded that, given changing priorities and responsibilities, there now needed to be an agreed wider framework for action linking new public health, personal wellbeing and economic agendas, tied-in with an emerging role for Local Government with the anticipated reform of that sector.

The key recommendation emanating from that review was that Government should now prepare a new Outdoor Recreation Strategy for Northern Ireland.

4. Process of Developing the Outdoor Recreation Action Plan.

Following discussions between Government Departments it was agreed that the logical way forward would be to develop an Outdoor Recreation Action Plan (ORAP) that feeds into "Sport Matters" the NI Strategy for Sport 2009-19. Targets for increased participation, sustainable access and improved infrastructure have already provided the focus for a wide range of bodies to work together. Sport Matters has been adopted by the Executive and is a cross departmental strategy with the necessary governance and monitoring arrangements already established.

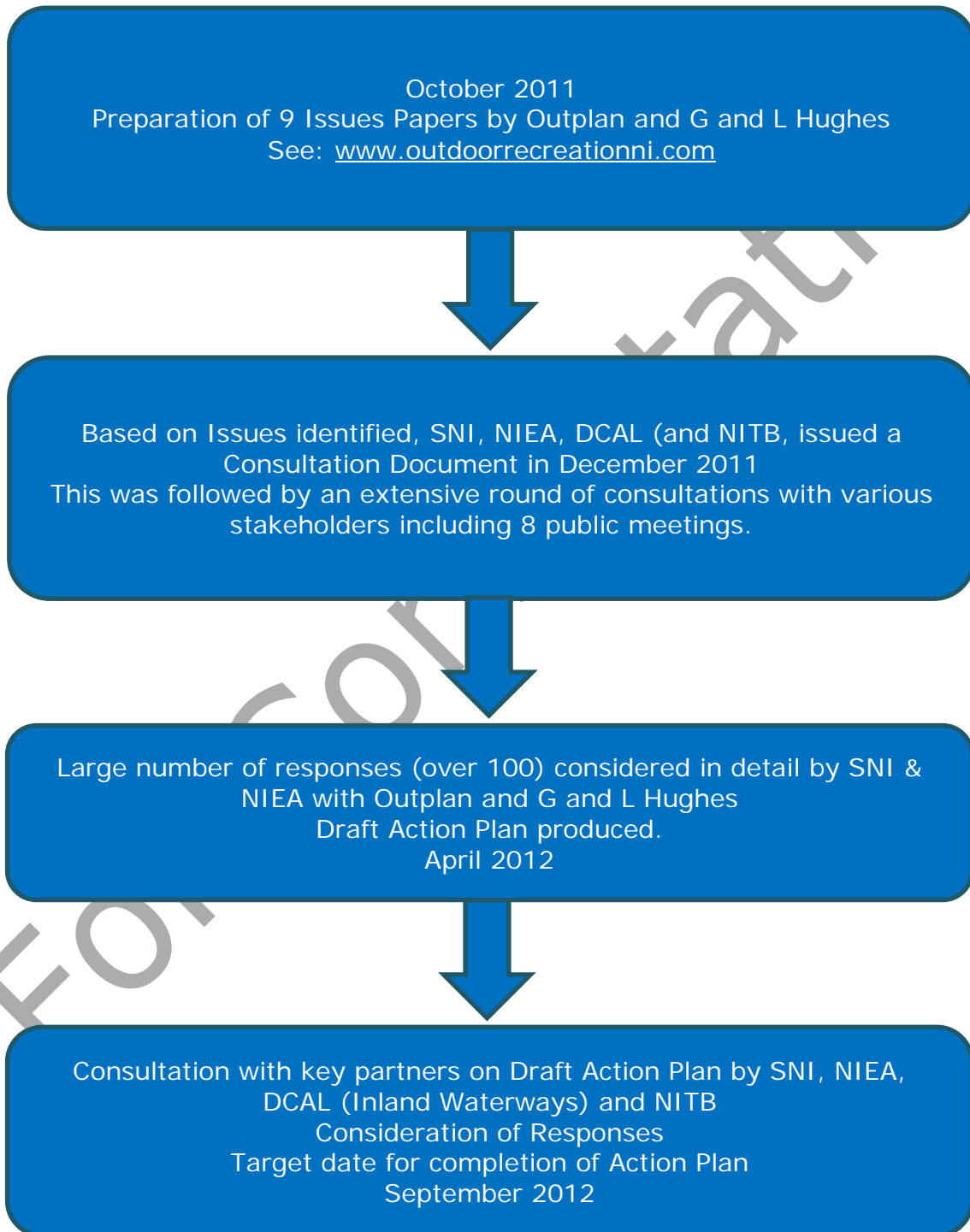
Associating the ORAP with Sport Matters offers the potential to deliver on a range of other government strategies and policies including:

- "Our Passion, Our Place" – the NIEA strategic priorities 2012 – 2022.
- A Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020.
- A Fitter Future for all – Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland 2012-2022.
- "Shaping our Future" The Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025.
- "Everyone's Involved" The Sustainable Development Strategy.
- The NI Rural Development Programme 2007 – 13.
- "Join In, Get Involved: Build a Better Future - A Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2012."
- The "Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy – People and Place"

Early in the discussions amongst the stakeholders it was agreed that the plan had to be backed up by clear targets and actions to be undertaken.

The process for developing the plan

The development of the plan was commissioned by Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) with support from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure Inland Waterways Branch (DCAL).



5. The Consultation Process

SNI in partnership with NIEA, DCAL Inland Waterways and the NI Tourist Board commissioned the consultants to prepare a series of nine separate papers to identify the primary issues that influence outdoor recreation. The topics identified were:

- Healthy Lifestyles
- Widening Participation
- Environmental Awareness, Engagement and Sustainability (supporting conservation through outdoor recreation) incorporating education
- Governance and Partnership Working (integrated outdoor recreation management) incorporating access
- Promotion and Raising Awareness
- Volunteering and Community Engagement / participation
- Activity Tourism and Entrepreneurship (rural and economic development)
- Facilities
- Monitoring and Evaluation

These Issues Papers provide valuable background information, identifying more than 189 issues that could be addressed to develop outdoor recreation in Northern Ireland. The papers are available on line at www.outdoorrecreationni.com.

A number of key and recurring themes emerged from the Issues Papers.

1. A need for a review and development of legislation, policy and responsibilities.
2. The importance of partnerships and structures for developing, managing and advocating a coordinated approach to outdoor recreation.
3. The critical issue of investment; whether that is time, energy or resources.
4. The importance of communication, marketing and promotion.
5. The provision of appropriate facilities and infrastructure that meets the needs of those who wish to take part to ensure that current and future participation is sustainable.
6. The importance of research, monitoring and evaluation to provide a strong evidence base to provide the rationale for the development and management of activities and facilities.

Following the preparation of the Issues Papers the steering group developed a wide ranging consultation programme to examine the key themes and issues to ensure that the development of outdoor recreation meets the needs of land owners, users, statutory authorities, governing bodies and activity providers. The consultation took a number of forms:

- Web based survey for individuals and / or organisations.
- Meetings with focus groups such as Countryside Officers, activity providers, governing bodies etc.
- A series of 8 regional open meetings for interested parties to hear first-hand about the proposed action plan and feed in their views on the emerging issues.

The consultation exercise generated widespread support for the preparation of the ORAP and the key recommendations and actions to move forward are based on the extensive responses provided. The detailed examination of the responses received has led to thirty four key recommendations being identified that if implemented will address the key barriers, issues and problems and enable the realisation of the vision.

6. Key Themes

The main themes to emerge from the issues papers and confirmed by the consultation process are outlined below and the proposed actions highlight which theme and issues they will address:

Theme 1

A review and development of legislation, policy and responsibilities.

The issue of the differences in and inadequacy of access legislation in Northern Ireland compared to the rest of the UK and Europe was extensively highlighted in both the issues papers and through the vast majority of the responses to the consultation. These brought up a high level of response on the importance of policy on access to public land. The complex arrangements and responsibilities for policy and provision of outdoor recreation were also highlighted across a number of the issues papers.

Theme 2

The importance of partnerships and structures for developing, managing and advocating outdoor recreation.

There is a great range of organisations and agencies that have an interest in outdoor recreation and consequently there is a risk of independent working and duplication of effort as well as certain aspects being neglected as a consequence of the lack of a joined up approach. While there are some very good examples of co-ordination, there are further opportunities to create stronger mechanisms to help achieve the vision and a more joined up approach.

Theme 3

Investment of time, energy and resources.

As public funding is likely to continue to decline in future years, the importance of innovation, sustainability, volunteering and buy-in from users and private sector businesses will become increasingly important.

Theme 4

The importance of communication, marketing and promotion.

With good evidence of the growth in interest and participation in outdoor recreation there is a need to ensure that participants know where they can go, how to behave responsibly and what opportunities exist.

Theme 5

The provision of appropriate facilities to ensure that current and future participation is sustainable.

The growth in demand for outdoor recreation which is being experienced has to be managed. There is a need to ensure that the full potential of taking part can be realised in a way that does not compromise the habitats and eco-systems on which the experience relies.

Theme 6

The importance of research, monitoring and evaluation to provide for evidence based development and management.

Although not a "hot topic" as part of the consultation it is clear from the issues papers that Northern Ireland lags behind the rest of the UK and other parts of Europe in having a needs and evidence base to underpin investment decisions in outdoor recreation. With scarce resources it is necessary to answer the question what "works and why?"

Draft Outdoor Recreation Action Plan

7. Recommended Actions:

Note that a list of the Acronyms for the lead bodies is provided in Appendix 4

A: Structures

This key series of actions relates to the creation or continued use of a number of committee and networking structures. These will allow for the proper consideration of and action on matters highlighted both in the Issues Papers and affirmed through the Consultation process.

Action No	Structures	Lead body and Partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
A1	<p>Create a 'Strategic Outdoor Recreation Group' * to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure overall delivery of this Plan Address any strategic issues identified by Departments of Government, local authorities, other national organisations Address relevant matters raised by the proposed National Outdoor Recreation Forum (referred to below). <p>This Group will comprise Agencies and Government Departments with responsibility for outdoor recreation and must have an acknowledged role in agreeing a joined up approach to policy on access, inputting to/advising on proposed legislation, requesting consideration of legislative changes especially in the area of access and liability, and in considering the appropriate role for and on-going responsibilities of local authorities post RPA.</p> <p>The Group may form specific and time-limited Working Groups on specific matters. Early consideration should be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross border access issues, and an all-Ireland approach to development of activities where appropriate Ways to work with the health sector Potential to improve the economy. <p>* The Group may have another name.</p>	<p>Lead Body(ies) DOE/DCAL</p> <p>Key Partners SNI NIEA NITB DARD Forest Service NI Public Health Agency Waterways Ireland NI Water ORNI (Secretariat)</p>	Establish in Q1 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop clear terms of reference for the role and membership of the Group. Create necessary administrative support mechanisms. Canvas views of Permanent Secretaries, CEO's / Chairs of Departments and Agencies. Use next round of consultation to establish concept. Group should report to the chair of SMMG

Action No	Structures	Lead body and Partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
A2	<p>Establish a 'National Forum' to address strategic issues, solutions and actions.</p> <p>This Forum will sit outside Government and have the capacity to 'lobby' and invite / request presentations or papers. Membership will be comprised from local forums (A3) and strategic partnerships with observers from national agencies.</p>	<p>Independent Chair*</p> <p>ORNI secretariat Supported by SNI</p>	<p>Establish by end of 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Terms of Reference and membership. • *Chair should have 'profile'
A3	<p>Create a network of 'Local Outdoor Recreation Forums'.</p> <p>These will identify local issues, potential solutions and actions. Unresolved or 'common' issues will be referred to the National Forum.</p> <p>Membership will include LA Access Officers, Activity Tourism providers, Education Board staff, Outdoor Sports clubs representatives and users, AONB or land management bodies and appropriate National Governing Body representatives.</p> <p>Appendix 3 highlights the current and some potential forums</p>	<p>Chairs selected locally.</p> <p>Secretariat 'in house' or from local authorities.</p> <p>Supported by SNI/NIEA</p>	<p>Some already exist but a good spread of forums to be in place by end of 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of best way forward for LA representation and role post RPA. • Consideration of the role of landowners and conservation interests.
A4	<p>Develop, support and enable private sector partnerships for the development of access, promotion of messages and participation in outdoor recreation: To include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The retail sector (including hospitality) The activity tourism sector The hospitality sector Landowners 	<p>Lead Body(ies) DETI / NITB</p> <p>Key Partners Activity Tourism Forum Local Tourism Reps ORNI(secretariat)</p>	<p>By 2014</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission research to examine the synergy between the needs of users and the outdoor industry. Look into options for corporate sponsorship and marry this to access development priorities and sustainable use.

B: Policy and Legislation

The areas of policy and legislation featured heavily in the Issues Papers prepared for this Plan and also had the highest response rate of any area in terms of the Consultation document. It is clear that a broad body of opinion thinks that changes are fundamentally necessary for progress to be made. The actions that follow are intended to address such matters but will require determination and Political support at a national level.

Action No	Policy and Legislation	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
B1	<p>The Strategic Group (as in 1 above) will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop policies and propose legislative priorities, changes and developments to maximise the benefits and opportunities for Outdoor Recreation. 2. Create supportive and co-ordinated policy frameworks and priorities that will provide clarity and recommendations on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Who is responsible for what – DOE, Sport NI, District Councils (including post- RPA responsibilities) b. Communication on the responsibilities of both users and landowners c. Policies on access to all appropriate public land d. Public rights of way and permissive paths (including gating orders) e. Access and management within any proposed National Parks and existing Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) f. Planning policy – with respect to the role of both Area Plans and the associated Planning Application process g. Inland water h. Coastal access 	Government Departments and Agencies led by DCAL/DOE (through Strategic Group)	In line with the creation of strategic group.	<p>Terms of Reference of the Strategic Group to include this role.</p> <p>Political realisation that such changes that are recommended are implemented for the public good.</p> <p>The aim must be to develop joined up policy amongst the statutory bodies.</p>

Action No	Policy and Legislation	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
B2	The Strategic Group will facilitate the development and implementation of consistent and complementary departmental policies to support Outdoor Recreation. These must include access to publicly owned land and the approach of public bodies to managing risk.	Each Department / Agency reporting to the Strategic Group	To Commence in 2014	This is a national target through 'Sport Matters' so would be monitored by Sport NI
B3	The Strategic Group would foster an approach to ensure full recognition of the benefits of outdoor recreation and the need to continue implementation of this Action Plan in the next Programme for Government.	Strategic Group led by DCAL & DOE	During 2014	Working groups comprising of relevant Officers would prepare papers for the Strategic Group and commission joint research to develop the evidence base.
B4	Ensure that full account is taken of outdoor recreation in each AONB Management Plan and provide guidance for the development of local action plans.	Strategic Group led by DCAL/DOE	2016	As AONB Management Plans are developed or revised.
B5	<p>Embed the value of outdoor education in providing the steps towards lifelong healthy active lifestyles and understanding of the environment by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curriculum development with CCEA/Colleges; - Implementing the Manifesto for Learning Outside the Classroom in Northern Ireland; <p>Creating links to local academic institutions, and their education and land management courses.</p>	<p>Department of Education</p> <p>Environmental Education Forum, Wardens Association, Council for Learning Outside the Classroom.</p>	To commence in 2013-14	Way forward to be clarified following discussions between working group and Department for Education

C: Funding

Funding is crucial for the development and maintenance of infrastructure, for the promotion of opportunities and to lever other funds. It was a key issue which emerged from the consultation.

Action No	Funding	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
C1	Investigate, develop and implement opportunities for funding and supporting access to the natural environment through Government, lottery funded programmes, SEUPB (Interreg), agri-environment schemes, Rural Development Programme, LEADER and identify funding for events.	Strategic Group led by DCAL/DOE.	2014	Academic institution to be commissioned to identify and provide ongoing service to Government Departments and Agencies. Provide clarity about where access development may reduce eligible area within agri-environment schemes.
C2	Promote information about key new funding programmes which could be used to develop Outdoor Recreation	ORNI	2014	Good communication mechanisms to be explored to be able to reach all sectors
C3	Broker partnership for 3 year grant scheme for access - funding pot for developing greenways, links to communities, core path networks and high pressure sites to maximise opportunities for local access and reconcile conflicts.	Strategic Group led by DOE	2016	Once research in C1 above is completed.
C4	Investigate and provide information on cost effective insurance for volunteers, groups and land managers.	ORNI	2014	Dialogue with insurance industry based on evidence from legal cases.

D: Communication

The Consultation responses in particular highlighted the need to disseminate good news stories about access, to promote good practice and to increase awareness about both opportunities and personal responsibility. Good communication from the full range of organisations involved in outdoor recreation is also essential in maximising partnership working.

Action No	Communication	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
D1	Develop and promote clear messages about personal responsibility and Occupiers Liability.	SNI & DOE & HSE & DSO	2013	Information needs already known and some work has been done on this – however, a continual process for this is essential.
D2	Develop and provide information and guidance/tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. For local authorities – how to manage/develop recreation. b. For landowners - how to manage/develop recreation. 	CLOA/Sport NI/NIEA	2014	Good practice handbook and guidance on standards is required to ensure a consistent approach.
D3	Promote 'good news'. Engage with broader media and personalities. Include benefits to society – including healthy lifestyles and economy.	ORNI with info provided by all	On-going	Through ORNI's existing capacity.
D4	Promote good practice in the management of recreation and especially large scale events on protected sites and priority habitats.	ORNI, Local outdoor recreation forums / NIEA	2012	Through ORNI's existing capacity.
D5	Provide clear communication (including into the school curriculum) on social (inter-user/dogs) and environmental responsibility (in connection with LNT and/or Countryside Code). Provide information about invasive species and biosecurity.	NIEA/SNI/DE/ ORNI	2013	Consider to be connected to B5 as well as D1.

Action No	Communication	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
D6	Develop website and downloadable information of what you can do near to you, (including 'Apps' and social media) and ensure web sites are connected to show: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Where you can go; b. Information on accessibility (disabled toilets, paths for buggies, wheelchairs and people with limited mobility, how to get there etc); c. Events d. Local clubs. 	ORNI	Commencing in 2013	Through ORNI's existing capacity.
D7	Develop guidance re signage and promote good practice	ORNI DRD Roads Service	2015	Through ORNI's existing capacity.
D8	Provide training for activity providers, clubs and recreational land managers. Training designed to encourage diversity through innovative approaches and including an understanding of the motivations and aspirations of different user groups.	ORNI / DSNI / SNI	2013 – on-going	Further discussion between providers and clubs etc on how diversity can be embedded.
D9	Promote value of external accreditation to demonstrate compliance regarding safety and quality of provision.	Sport NI, NITB	2013	Adventuremark New 'Qualitymark' Green flag
D10	Market NI/Ireland as a tourism destination for outdoor recreation including attracting National and international events. Boost the profile of the region and the opportunities presented for more specialist activities.	NITB, Failte Ireland	On-going	Existing funding
D11	Provide appropriate funding streams for a range of scales of events including small grants programmes.	NITB / Sport NI	2014	On-going funding commitment

E: Making the outdoors more accessible

This requirement received considerable coverage in the Issues Papers. Furthermore the Consultation process showed that there is a strong desire for more facilities and equality of access to them. The need to develop concept plans and core path networks also featured highly in responses to the Consultation.

Action No	Making the outdoors more accessible	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
E1	Map current hubs for outdoor recreation and identify geographical gaps in provision. Develop framework for creating recreational 'master plans' for these hubs to ensure appropriate infrastructure and management. Include economic benefits and other ecosystem services (ecosystem services are the processes by which the environment produces resources utilised by humans such as clean air, water, food and materials).	NIEA / SNI /CLOA/ ORNI	Commencing in 2013	Links to A3
E2	Develop a systematic toolkit for community path networks and trial this toolkit (with funding package) for a target area.	DOE & DOE Planning & PHA	By 2016	Joint approach to be agreed.
E3	Identify special areas of significance for outdoor sport through utilisation of existing ORNI database with governing bodies and relevant organisations. This will also identify gaps in site and club provision. Audit of angling has not yet been undertaken and is required.	Sport NI/ DCAL	By 2015	Joint approach to be agreed.
E4	Development and adoption of national standards for outdoor recreation facilities including sustainable trail development way marked routes and other recreational facilities.	Sport NI, ORNI, NIEA	2014	Production of good practice guides and agreement on acceptable standards.

F: Volunteers

The role and importance of volunteers in outdoor recreation provision and management should never be underestimated. There is widespread understanding of the need to mobilise and properly utilise this valuable resource.

Action No	Volunteering	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
F1	<p>Promote the value of and signpost opportunities for volunteering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a form of Outdoor Recreation; - For individuals; - For organisations (businesses), and <p>The creation of "Friends of" groups.</p>	ORNI, DSD, Volunteering Now	2014	Further dialogue required with DSD and Volunteering Now to raise the profile of outdoor volunteering.
F2	<p>Share good practice and provide training for volunteers in a range of skills and to build capacity through partnerships with other NGOs.</p>	DSD, ORNI, Volunteering Now	2014	Volunteer workshops Greater engagement with NIEL

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G: Research

The Consultation re-iterated the importance of relevant and focussed research as highlighted in the Issues Papers. Feedback clearly supported the need for studies on the economic value of outdoor recreation and its benefits to participants and value to society. There was also felt to be an immediate need to evaluate existing provision and identify gaps at a strategic NI wide level.

Action No	Research and monitoring	Lead Body and partners	Timescale	Enabling Factors
G1	Undertake public surveys to identify recreation demand – who participates, what do they participate in, who doesn't (and why) and where people want to go. (In parallel with similar surveys in GB e.g. Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) which is intended to provide baseline and trend data on how people use the natural environment in England.)	Sport NI, NIEA	2015	Funding
G2	Undertake research into the economic & social (community cohesion) benefits of outdoor recreation. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activity tourism; - Volunteering; - Health savings and - Ecosystem services * (defined at E1 above) - 	Sport NI, NIEA, NITB, DSD, DCAL, PHA	By 2014	Agreement on the importance of this research and joint funding.
G3	Develop a joined up approach (systems and procedures) for monitoring and evaluation of facility use at a national level.	Strategic Group (A1)	2014	Co-ordinated approach required
G4	Research into current and needed infrastructure for camping in key areas, particularly in the Mourne and Antrim Hills.	Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, Sport NI, DARD	2013	Co-ordination and funding

Appendix 1

The following individuals and organisations were invited to be part of the steering group

Chairman	Murray Cowan	SNI board member
Vice Chair	Maia Taylor	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Caro-Lynne Ferris	Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland	
Pat Wilson	Department of Culture Arts and Leisure Inland Waterways Branch	
Richard Schaible	Forest Service Northern Ireland	
Sean Fitzpatrick	Northern Ireland Agricultural Producer's Association	
Martin Carey	Northern Ireland Protected Area Network	
Alan Moore	Northern Ireland Water	
Niall McAleenan	Northern Ireland Environment Agency	
Rosemary Lightbody	Northern Ireland Tourist Board	
Michael Lipsett	Chief Leisure Officers Association	
John News	Sport Northern Ireland	
Mike McClure	Sport Northern Ireland	
David Gray	Department of Environment Environmental Planning Group	
Barbara Muhly	National Trust	
Jason Rankin	Ulster Farmers' Union	

For Consultation

Appendix 2

Organisations which provided input into the consultation process

1	Antrim Borough Council
2	Ardnabannon Outdoor Education Centre
3	Armagh District Council
4	Ballyholme Yacht Club
5	Ballymena Borough Council
6	Ballymoney Borough Council
7	Banbridge District Council
8	Belfast Canoe Club
9	Belfast City Council
10	Belfast Hills Partnership
11	British Horse Society
12	C3 Canoe Club
13	Canoe Association of Northern Ireland
14	Carrickfergus Sailing Club
15	Causeway Coast Adventure Racers
16	Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust
17	Causeway Open Award Centre
18	Climbni
19	Cloughey & District Community Association
20	Coleraine Borough Council
21	Colmcille Climbers
22	Conservation Volunteers NI
23	Cookstown District Council
24	Corralea Activity Centre Ltd
25	Countryside Alliance
26	Countryside Access and Activities Network
27	Craigavon District Council
28	Derry City Council
29	Down District Council
30	Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
31	Dungannon Borough Council

32	East Antrim Boat Club
33	Far and Wild
34	Fermanagh District Council
35	Fermanagh Ramblers and Hillwalkers
36	Forest Service NI
37	Foyle Hill walking & Rambling Club
38	Gortatole OEC
39	Green Party
40	Harps Cycling Club
41	Harps Cycling Club
42	Inland Waterways Association Ireland Newry & Portadown branch
43	International Mountain Biking Association
44	Island Wheelers
45	Jungle NI
46	Killowen Outdoor Education Centre
47	Lagan Canal Restoration Trust
48	Lagan Valley Regional Park
49	Larne Borough Council
50	Limavady Borough Council
51	Lisburn City Council
52	Lissan House, Cookstown
53	Lough Neagh Partnership
54	Loughs Agency
55	Maple Group Practice
56	Martin Crossin City Tours
57	Mencap
58	Mid Ulster Walking Club
59	Mountaineering Ireland
60	Mourne Heritage Trust
61	Moyola Angling Association
62	Newry and Mourne Council
63	NI Scouts
64	North Down Borough Council

65	NI Protected Area Network
66	NW Mountaineering
67	Ocean Youth Trust Ireland
68	Omagh District Council
69	Ring of Gullion AONB
70	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
71	Shannaghmore Outdoor Education Centre
72	South West College – Omagh campus
73	Sperrin Harriers Running Club
74	Sperrins Gateway Landscape Partnership
75	Sperrins Tourism
76	St Colmcille Climbing Club
77	Strabane District Council
78	Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership
79	Tidy NI
80	Tourism Ireland
81	TrailBadger.com
82	Ulster Angling Federation
83	Ulster Farmers Union
84	Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs
85	Ulster Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club
86	Ulster Rural Riders Association
87	Ulster Society for the Protection of the Countryside
88	Ulster Wildlife Trust
89	Upperlands Community Group
90	Visitor Monitoring Ireland
91	Waterways Ireland
92	Department of Social Development
93	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Appendix 3

List of Existing and potential Local Outdoor Recreation Forums

The consultation highlighted that these could be aligned to new Council boundaries under RPA, within AONB management areas or linked to tourism destination areas.

Existing Forums

Mourne Outdoor Recreation Forum (Facilitated by Mourne Heritage Trust and supported by SNI)

Causeway Coast and Glens Outdoor Recreation Forum (Facilitated by Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust and supported by SNI)

Lagan Valley Regional Park Outdoor Recreation Forum (Facilitated by LVPR)

Antrim Outdoor Recreation Forum (Facilitated by Antrim Borough Council)

The Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership (SLLP) effectively acts as a forum although there may be value in considering a recreation sub group for the partnership

Potential Forums

Sperrins

Fermanagh

Ring of Gullion

Lough Neagh / Lower Bann

For Consultation

Appendix 4 Glossary

Acronym	Body/Organisation
DOE	Department of Environment
DCAL	Department of Culture Arts and Leisure
SNI	Sport Northern Ireland
NIEA	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
NITB	Northern Ireland Tourist Board
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
ORNI	Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
PHA	Public Health Agency
DSD	Department of Social Development
DSNI	Disability Sport Northern Ireland
DRD	Department of Regional Development
CLOA	Chief Leisure Officers Association