

Outdoor Tourism Equality Assessment Report



Report prepared for the Outdoor Tourism INTERREG IVA Partnership

By Catalys Ltd.



Outdoor Tourism Equality Assessment Report

Exec summary

The Outdoor Tourism Project commissioned Catalys to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), in order to gain a better understanding of equalities issues relating to the project and to identify areas where practical improvements could be made. The EqIA, which is an initial (or ex ante) assessment, has identified a number of key issues that are likely to be faced and makes recommendations how the OT Project can best address them.

The study found that the project partners have demonstrated their commitment to good practice in equalities, inclusion and diversity through their existing policies and through previous projects and initiatives. In fact, both Welsh and Irish partners have a good track record in this regard; for example, Kildare CC, through its “DARA has the CRAIC” initiative showed how Irish authorities are able to challenge themselves to improve equalities performance in service delivery. On the Welsh side, the 5x60 initiative is really opening up outdoor activities to younger local people.

In addition, providers in the sector think positively about equalities. This is due in no small part to the sector’s history in the Outdoor Education movement and the deep-rooted understanding of the Transformational and Personal Development potential of Outdoor Experiences by those who work in the sector.

There are many other examples of good practice from project partners, and the **first challenge** for the OT Project is to demonstrate this good practice has influenced project design and practice. As, at the moment, examples quoted are almost exclusively from outside the project.

The **second challenge** is to be more systematic about the way in which equalities is addressed within the project and in the longer term, by the sector as a whole. For example, the needs of some groups such as disabled people are relatively well understood and providers have a genuine commitment to enabling those with disabilities to get involved, when they express an interest. However, some groups appear to be getting less attention, e.g., older people, those on lower incomes and those from minority ethnic groups.

The report suggests actions to improve practice to meet these challenges. A good first step would be to make sure that information gathered about actual and potential participants is of a good enough quality to inform project and business planning and marketing. We also recommend increasing the level of structured dialogue with representative bodies and building the capacity of the sector to respond through training and business development.

There are opportunities that come with embracing these challenges. For example, there are clear business benefits to embracing equalities, as it will help sector

businesses to understand that some of the groups who are currently under-represented are business growth opportunities. The Irish Equality Authority has been promoting this idea for some time and wider use of their excellent “Business Benefits” Tool would help sector businesses and the project make some significant strides forward.

In summary, by stepping up to these challenges, the OT Project can establish itself as leading equalities issues in the sector, with relatively little effort. The initial to do list includes:

Establish an Equalities policy for the project – for example: *The OT project is committed to promoting inclusion and to combatting discrimination through dialogue, capacity building and ensuring that activities are open to all as far as possible.*

Establish a single information sharing system for collection, sharing and reporting of equalities data. Led by the Equalities Champion.

Consult - with equalities groups, or regarding equalities issues

Targeted Promotion – using appropriate media

Engagement and participation of individuals from potentially excluded groups – through all project activities, including taster sessions, development sessions, apprenticeships, business support, etc..

Raise awareness and skills of providers - working with businesses and sector bodies.

Re-run the assessment - a light touch process towards the end of the project to assess progress; that is linked to final evaluation. This will demonstrate that the project’s commitments have been followed through into real action.

Sustaining performance – identifying how these responsibilities will be taken forward, along with the tools and mechanisms that have been developed.

These actions are spelt out in more detail in the Recommendations and Action Plan.

Word cloud (Cover illustration)

The complex nature of both the sector and the issues involved lend themselves to this presentation. The word cloud was developed by feeding all the responses to the survey into the “Wordle” app; so in one sense it is very empirical, as it is a simple presentation of all that was said in response to the questionnaires. On the other hand it is a fairly blunt instrument.

However, one or two things are evident – firstly, that there is a great deal of terminology associated with the sector and the word cloud can help make sense of this. Secondly, the issue that is mentioned most often seems to be disability (and associated issues of accessibility. Gender, Travellers, Race and Welsh also emerge with some prominence.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the study

Kildare County Council contracted with Catalys Ltd to produce an Equality Impact Assessment within the scope of the Outdoor Tourism INTERREG IVA project.

The following text is taken from the original brief and has been modified for clarity following the Inception meeting. The specification is set out in the brief; the purpose of the inception report is to clarify the brief based on discussion between Kildare County Council and Catalys Ltd at the inception meeting 3rd October 2012.

Primary Purpose - The primary purpose of the outputs from this study is to inform policy and influence a new approach to equality within the Outdoor Tourism sector. The report will inform the subsequent authorities and agencies involved in providing and promoting outdoor tourism in the Irish and Welsh context.

Objective - The objective is to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment on Outdoor Tourism for the project area through:

- 1) Baseline equality study of the Outdoor Tourism providers in each partner area,
- 2) Analysis the equality data gathered on Outdoor Tourism of each area.
- 3) Recommendations and conclusions to inform policy and eliminate discrimination in the outdoor tourism area.

The primary purpose of the study is to **inform policy**, influence a new approach to equality within the Outdoor Tourism sector. to eliminate discrimination, and allow inclusion for all in the Outdoor Tourism sector. The report will:

- **inform the project partners**, and government departments along with the Tourism Boards in both Ireland and Wales.
- **inform the subsequent authorities and agencies** involved in providing and promoting outdoor tourism in the Irish and Welsh context.

1.2 Responding to the brief

The Inception stage of the project discussed the requirements and concluded that the study is two linked questions; firstly a focused review of policy and practice regarding equalities in the OT project areas as it relates to Outdoor Tourism; and secondly an examination of how the OT project can and does address the issues identified in the first step.

The consulting team agreed to provide:

- Review of Policy and Practice
- Recommendations for improvement
- Monitoring tool

This was based on the following assumptions

- **Expectation management** –*Few studies and data exist that link Outdoor Tourism and equalities and it is also an issue that those involved in the project are relatively inexperienced. Hence, whilst the study will make the best use of the available data, it will be breaking new ground to a certain extent there will inevitably be data gaps.*
- **Consultation** – *in the absence of much comparable data, the study has to rely on information collected through consultation. This is by definition anecdotal and does not constitute empirical data collection.*

1.3 What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a process that seeks to test whether a proposed plan, programme or policy:

- **Promotes equality for;**
- **Accommodates diversity for;** and
- **Does not discriminate** (including making reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities) against individuals and groups that experience inequality as defined by the twelve “grounds” for unlawful discrimination cited in the equality legislation.

The EqIA is a valuable means of seeking to ensure that an equality and diversity perspective, based on the twelve grounds covered by the equality legislation, is incorporated into the project, its planning, programming and policy design and review.

1.4 The “Grounds”

Irish and Welsh equality legislation is founded on the establishment of “grounds” for which discrimination is unlawful. The Grounds are similar in the two countries, but there are small but important differences. In Ireland there ten grounds, i.e., gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, membership of the Traveller community, race, religious belief and same sex civil partnerships. In Wales the Grounds are age, disability, faith, gender, human rights, language, race, sexual orientation, transgender. These therefore constitute the grounds for unlawful discrimination that are relevant to the project.

The purpose of this study and report is to help provide an overview of equality issues to assist implementation of the project.

2 Context

2.1 Introducing outdoor tourism

The term outdoor tourism includes a wide range of open air activities undertaken on holiday, either as a central or incidental part of the holiday. It includes activities such as walking, hiking, climbing, cycling, watersports, horse riding, angling, skiing, snowboarding, multi-activity and wildlife watching. We do not include formal outdoor sports such as golf and ball games in this definition, or motorised sports.

The sector includes large residential centres for skills development (often tied into outdoor education and personal development) to one person lifestyle businesses based on a personal skill or passion. It includes traditional activities such as trekking and mountain climbing and newer activities such as paragliding and kite surfing. It often includes an element of personal challenge, risk and adventure.

Emerging from the outdoor pursuits sector and often previously associated with local education authorities and post-military careers, outdoor tourism now represents one of the fastest growing markets in tourism worldwide and it is a market that Wales and Ireland are superbly well positioned to optimise. The high quality environments, well educated populations, ready access to markets and other factors make Wales and Ireland highly attractive and well suited to the development of the outdoor tourism sector.

The activity tourism market in Ireland was worth €1.1 billion in 2009, €653 million from overseas visitors and €404 million from the domestic market. Overseas visitors to Ireland who engage in activity tourism are a high yield segment and spend 33% more than the average visitor. Mainland Europe drives demand for activity products among overseas visitors accounting for almost half of demand for hiking/walking, equestrian and water-based activities, respectively. Britain is an important market for angling in Ireland.

Recent investment in Wales has included nearly £16 million of public funding being awarded to boost outdoor and adventure activities, mostly coming from European funding, with local councils and other creating centres of excellence for different activities. In north Wales, more than £6m has been spent improving cycling facilities and activities capitalising upon the area's outstanding natural beauty. The projects include a North Wales Cycling Activity Tourism Centre of Excellence, which includes a £2.2m plan to improve facilities across Denbighshire and Conwy. Four centres in southern Meirionnydd have been linked together under the heading Snowdonia – one big adventure and a new Sailing Academy and Events Centre built in Pwllheli.

Outdoor tourism is particularly well suited to short breaks, repeat visits and extending the year-round tourism offer. It can also represent high-spend, high-value activities, and it fits well with health and well-being agendas.

Looking at published material, much of it defaults to adventure tourism, then splitting into higher skill/higher risk 'hard' adventure tourist and 'soft' adventure tourists, the latter often including the 'dabbler' market, or those who want a more gentle introductory activity, sometimes as part of a more general holiday. According to an Adventure Tourism Market report by The George Washington University School of Business, The Adventure Travel Trade Association, and Xola Consulting (2010),

Who are adventure travellers? They are fairly evenly split male to female, even within in category of "hard" adventure sports. Soft adventurers skew slightly more female, but not as much as other types of travellers who are predominantly female (62.3%). The average age of an adventure traveller is 35 (again, this may seem low from the perspective of adventure travel tour operators, however, this number reflects the overall adventure traveller, not just consumers of tours), slightly younger than the "other" traveller who is on average 42.

Adventure travellers are more likely to be single or married; less than 10% are divorced or separated. They are also more highly educated than other types of travellers, with 70% of hard adventures having post- secondary education and 63% of soft adventurers having post-secondary education. 47% of other travellers have a two year degree or higher. Considering these demographic trends, it is unsurprising that adventure travellers also have higher levels of household income.

Outdoor tourism can also be an element of rural tourism, cultural tourism and ecotourism. It can also be a part of social tourism, which is the provision of tourism and leisure opportunities to those on low income. Traditionally, in many areas, outdoor tourism providers have initially been attracted by the nature and challenge of the local environment and may have moved from more urban areas. Indigenous outdoor businesses in rural areas have therefore been infrequent and have been established to address this, both in terms of employment and increasing levels of participation. The Outdoor Partnership in North West Wales has as its vision:

"To achieve an active, healthy and inclusive Wales, where outdoor recreation provides a common platform for participation, fun, achievement and employment, which binds local communities, creates sustainable use and understanding of the environment."

2.2 How the outdoor tourism project has sought to provide support

The primary aim of the project is to understand the issues that currently prevent growth for businesses in the outdoor sector and address these challenges through cross border support whilst exploring new and innovative approaches to marketing the outdoor tourism sector. The project also looks to develop a link between local communities in Wales and Ireland and their natural environment, inspiring their

communities to take part in recreational and voluntary activities and to aspire to work in the outdoor tourism sector. It seeks to ensure social inclusion and parity of access by all parts of society to this significant tourism growth sector.

To ensure inclusion and equality across the spectrum of diversity within the project, partners committed to:

- Review and set equality objectives this will ensure equality of participation as well as equality of outcomes
- Ensure the same quality of information to everyone
- Provide services and advice in a way that respects the confidence and anonymity of the user
- Support an open and fair recruitment process that will include a positive targeting of individuals in disadvantaged communities

2.3 Introducing equality

Equality involves tackling discrimination. In Ireland the grounds of discrimination are gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, membership of the Traveller community, race, and religious belief. In Wales they are age, disability, faith, gender, human rights, language, race, sexual orientation, transgender.

For the purposes of this project the “Grounds” will be summarised as follows:

Grounds	Including	Wales, Ireland or both
Race		Both
Travellers	Membership of the Traveller community	Ireland
Disability		Both
Gender		Both
Age	Younger / older	Both
Faith	Faith in Wales & Religious Belief in Ireland	Both
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian / Bisexual / Gay	Both
Transsexual	& Gender reassignment	Wales
Language	Wales and Ireland have specific legislation covering the Welsh & Irish languages respectively	Both
Marital status	inc. same sex civil - as amended by 2010 legislation partnership	Ireland
Family status		Ireland
Human rights	Broad based Human Rights legislation	Wales
Other - outside legal definitions		
Low income		

The legislative framework in Ireland includes the 1998 Employment Equality Act (which established the 9 grounds for employment discrimination) and the 1999 National Disability Authority Act. In 2000 the same 9 grounds listed above were adopted for all services available to the public, including refreshment, entertainment and transport services. This also applies to private clubs that discriminate in relation to members or applicants. In 2004 the Equality Act was implemented to comply with EU Directive 2000/78, followed by the updated 2005 Disability Act. Amendments were made to the legislation in 2010 to allow for same-sex civil partnerships from January 2011.

In Wales, relevant legislation is mainly covered by the 2010 Equality Act, which provides the basic framework of protection against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation in services and public functions, in premises, at work, in education, by associations, and with transport. This replaces and updates all previous equalities legislation drawn up at UK level before Devolution. Further aspects are dealt with under the 2011 Welsh Language Act.

Equality organisations include the European Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Equality Authority in Ireland. According to Angela Kerins, Chairperson of the Equality Authority at the launch of the 2011 Annual Report, the final annual report of the Authority before its merger with the Irish Human Rights Commission:

The Equality Authority, over the course of its existence, has contributed significantly to the promotion of equality in Ireland. One of the longest-lasting legacies of the Authority will be the educational measures undertaken with schools and with community groups and the business community, in addition to the awareness campaigns targeted at the general public, that have ensured that, across generations and across backgrounds, many more people have a deeper understanding of a diversity of cultures and views. We have had successful campaigns raising awareness of the issues of racism, age discrimination, gender discrimination and homophobic bullying, to name but a few

As the merger of the Equality Authority and the IHRC progresses the Authority looks forward to a new strong institution which will promote equality, defend victims of discrimination and enhance human rights.

The Equality Mainstreaming Unit is one of the initiatives set up under the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme 2007-2013 in Ireland. The main objective of the Equality Mainstreaming Unit is to contribute to addressing labour market gaps in Ireland for specific groups that are experiencing barriers to participation and employment, including those created by gender inequality and wider inequalities. The programme consists of a set of measures that seeks to improve labour market access and participation of groups experiencing inequality across the nine grounds covered by the Equality legislation. The Equality Mainstreaming Unit is based in the Equality Authority.

The Equality Benefits Tool provides a set of easy-to-use tools to help organisations to make the most of equality for employees, customers or services users.

- **Your Service Users and You: Realising the Benefits in the Public Sector** is designed for public sector organisations. It shows how to embed equality in services, how to review services and how to plan for equality in services.
- **Your Customers and You: Realising the Benefits in the Private Sector** is designed for private sector companies. It shows how to assess a company's performance on equality for customers and how to develop equality action plans.
- **Employment** is designed for public and private sector organisations. It provides tools for embedding equality in employment policies and procedures.

The Equality Mainstreaming Unit also provides the means for conducting Equality and Diversity Customer Service Audits.

The UK Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) is the department for economic growth. The department invests in skills and education to promote trade, boost innovation and help people to start and grow a business. BIS also protects consumers and reduces the impact of regulation. It has a number of assessment and monitoring tools available to businesses in relation to equality and other issues. It encourages structured dialogue through fora, provides reporting frameworks and forms of legal redress.

2.4 In relation to INTERREG

In accordance with European Union legislation and protocol it is required that the Member States and the Commission shall take appropriate steps to **prevent any discrimination** based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the various stages of implementation of the Funds and, in particular, in the access to them. In particular, accessibility for disabled persons shall be one of the criteria to be observed in defining operations co-financed by the Funds and to be taken into account during the various stages of implementation.
ARTICLE 16 1083/2006

In the context of its effort in favour of economic and social cohesion, the Community, at all stages of implementation of the Funds, has as its goals to **eliminate inequalities** and to **promote equality between men and women** as enshrined in Articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty, as well as combating discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

3 of 4 best practice examples, i.e., comprehensive mainstreaming, cited in Commission-supported review were in W Wales, UK-Ireland & NW England. (Review of Article 16; PPMI, 2009)

2.5 Outdoor Tourism project commitments

The Outdoor Tourism project has committed itself to the following:

“The Outdoor Tourism project will apply the Equal Opportunities policies of all partners and implement the Equal Opportunities objectives as set out in the Operational Document for the Ireland Wales Programme 2007 – 2013, preventing discrimination on the basis of gender, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

At the beginning of the project, a person will be appointed to be responsible for equal opportunities and an Equality Impact Assessment (D5.2) will be completed. Additionally, the performance of the following stated principles will be monitored regularly within project meetings by an Environment and Equalities Management System.

To ensure inclusion from all segments of society partners will provide the following services:

- *Sign language interpretation for the deaf*
- *It will be bi-lingual service with access to all equipment e.g. hearing, braille*
- *Use of loop systems within large meetings for people with hearing aids*
- *Use of easy-to-read documents for people with learning difficulties, literacy issues, and those who do not have English as their first language*
- *Use of mobility aids (ramps, buildings with wheelchair access)*
- *To ensure inclusion and equality across the spectrum of diversity within the project, partners will:*
 - *Review and set equality objectives this will ensure equality of participation as well as equality of outcomes*
 - *Ensure the same quality of information to everyone*
 - *Provide services and advice in a way that respects the confidence and anonymity of the user*
 - *Support an open and fair recruitment process that will include a positive targeting of individuals in disadvantaged communities*

Specifically, each Welsh local authority partner is bound to abide by the ‘Welsh Language Scheme.’ Conwy County Borough Council uses ‘The Big Word’ interpretation service ensuring instant access to over 3,300 qualified linguists in over 234 languages for verbal and written communication. Kildare LEADER Partnership’s ethos embodies community development principles of inclusion and equality, delivering a social inclusion program aimed at resourcing and supporting socially excluded groups within the community.

North Wales Outdoor Partnership's equal opportunities policy is committed to providing equality within all employed work programmes and activities. Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council's Equality and Access Officer will monitor adherence to the Council's Equality Policy in the implementation of the project, the project serving as an opportunity to increase access for people with disabilities to outdoor facilities. Gwynedd Council's equal opportunities policy is committed to providing equality in all aspect of its work involvement.

2.6 General equalities commitments

Public bodies are required to set out their commitment to equalities in both Ireland and Wales. The Irish Sports Council provides a relevant example:

- *Promoting equality and diversity for all by implementing equality legislation and eliminating all barriers to service access for those experiencing poverty, social exclusion and those facing geographic barriers*
- *We are fully committed to providing a service that is accessible and relevant to all our clients*
- *We are fully committed to providing a service that accommodates the specific needs and aspirations of particular client groups, and that seeks an equality of outcome*
- *We will consult with our clients to ensure that their access needs are addressed*
- *We will provide appropriate staff training to support the equal status policy*
- *The Irish Sports Council (ISC) aims to provide a quality service through English, Irish, or English and Irish*

Interestingly, the ISC statement goes beyond the "grounds" defined in legislation by including a commitment to *eliminating all barriers to service access for those experiencing poverty, social exclusion and those facing geographic barriers*. The work done by the Equality Impact Assessment also identified the need to move beyond the legally defined "grounds"; particularly in the area of poverty and social exclusion. This issue is explored in more depth in Section 4.7.

2.7 The Experience of Discrimination and Exclusion

In judging the appropriateness of policy and practice, it is important to understand the experience from those who experience discrimination and exclusion. Indeed, different groups can experience discrimination and exclusion in different ways, e.g.:

...disabled people's ability to participate in mainstream recreational pursuits and establish 'normal' social contacts and relationships is severely restricted as a result of the economic, environmental and social barriers....

Source: Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination : A case for anti-discrimination legislation, Colin Barnes

Experience of discrimination in Ireland in sectors that approximate to tourism, i.e., hospitality, transport and other public services indicates that the following groups experience high levels of discrimination:

- People from ethnic minorities – were 2 - 4.7 times more likely to experience discrimination than the population average
- Disabled people were 2.8 times more likely; and
- Unemployed people were 1.7 times more likely.

Source: Russell, Quinn, et al., 2008; Analysis of Quarterly National Household Survey

Research quoted by the Cynnwys project (undertaken for Gwynedd CC) states “...one in three disabled people have had services refused to them in a public place such as a cinema, restaurant, theatre, pub/club or even a leisure centre. The Disability Discrimination Act has acted as a catalyst for commercial and public sector providers of goods and services to improve physical access as part of their service to disabled people.”

2.8 The transformative potential of outdoor activity

In addition to the obvious health benefits of taking exercise and the associated increased wellbeing of the individual, outdoor activity can also be a valuable social activity and a means of de-stressing and rebalancing one’s lifestyle, it can also be recreational in the literal sense of recreating and refreshing a person’s connection with one’s self. Romantic writers such as Rousseau and Thoreau have written extensively of the merits of engaging with nature and wilderness activity and more recent writers such as Amory Lovins (who wrote *Eryri Mountains of Longing*), Welsh and Irish poets such as TH Parry Williams and RS Thomas, WB Yeats and Seamus Heaney, have all drawn inspiration from the great outdoors.

Outdoor activity can take people out of themselves, in terms of their usual lifestyle and the environment they normally inhabit. This can be particularly effective for those who might otherwise live a sedentary urban life or in poor environmental and social surroundings.

Taking young offenders or potential offenders from a tough urban housing estate can help provide different perspectives and prospects from the ones they are otherwise subjected to and this can be an effective way of opening new doors and opportunities. Other groups not strongly associated with outdoor activity, such as ethnic minorities, young mothers or older sedentary residents, can also benefit from such experiences. It is for the very reason that such groups are often excluded for economic, social or environmental reasons that equality and inclusion are built into the outdoor activity and tourism fields.

2.9 The economic potential of outdoor tourism for the project areas and the benefits of embracing equality issues

Not only are there strong social reasons for equality and inclusion, the economic benefits can also be considerable. According to the Eryri Centre of Excellence *one big adventure* initiative, the development of Meirionnydd's outdoor adventure sector has the potential to spread economic and social opportunities to surrounding businesses and communities through enhanced facilities and business opportunities. It can provide direct and indirect employment opportunities, offering the chance for local employment generation (in many rural areas, residents have often tended not to engage with the outdoor sector as much as enthusiastic incomers and trained professionals). It can add to a business's bottom line by expanding the customer base, extending the season and adding new activities.

There is a demonstrably strong link between positive action on minorities and high net worth, good return on investment, sales and return on equity. Evidence from 76 US minority-friendly firms indicated that these firms outperformed the market by achieving superior financial performance measured by return on investment, sales and equity. A study of the diversity of FTSE 100 directors in the UK found that there was a very strong link between high market capitalisation and the appointment of minority ethnic directors. A study of 353 Fortune 500 companies found that those with the highest female representation in senior management positions had 35% higher return on equity and 34% higher total return to shareholders than those with the lower level of female representation.

2.10 Equality in Outdoor Tourism – identifying the issues and matching them to the types of activity

One of the first challenges of outdoor tourism is that of perception, its association with fit, skilled, risk-taking individuals, often alpha male in character and from a privileged background. Traditional marketing material, imagery and rhetoric, have tended to reinforce this image, something which is now being addressed by bodies such as Gwynedd Council and Tourism Partnership North Wales. According to a Tourism Insights report (2003) by Andrew Keeling:

Research into the Welsh adventure tourism market identified the following eight adventure tourist market segments:

- **Samplers** - people undertaking an adventure activity, or range of adventure activities, for the first time, either on a packaged multi-activity holiday or through a taster session. In many cases, participation in activities will be very much on an incidental and one-off basis, and will not be a factor in holiday and destination choice.
- **Learners** - people wanting to learn an adventure sport or activity, or develop their skills, with a view to future independent participation.

- **Enthusiasts** - experienced adventure sports participants, undertaking their chosen sport/s on a regular basis, including participation in competitive adventure sports events.
- **Dabblers** - people who have learned how to undertake an adventure activity but who participate only on an occasional basis.
- **Corporate Groups** - companies and organisations using adventure activities as a focus for team building and development, management training, or incentive/reward days and weekends.
- **Education and Youth Groups** - school, college and university groups, scout and guide groups, disabled groups, and other youth groups primarily using LEA outdoor education centres, or commercially-operated activity centres for residential personal development courses, possibly combined with field study trips.
- **Special Occasion Buyers** - people buying, or being bought, adventure activity packages for special occasions and celebrations, e.g. stag and hen parties, landmark birthdays or anniversaries.
- **Activity Clubs** - activity clubs, e.g. a canoe club or caving club, organising trips away for their members.

According to research and market intelligence information available at the time, he found the following key characteristics for the UK adventure tourism market:

- The age profile of adventure tourists is much younger than for all holiday visitors. The 16-34 age group accounts for 55-60% of holiday trips for most adventure activities (compared to 37% for all holidays). The 35-55 age group does, however, participate in adventure activities, and there is evidence of growth in the over 50s market.
- The majority of UK adventure holidays are taken on an independent basis, rather than a packaged basis.
- Independent participation in adventure activities tends to be by individuals and small groups of (usually male) friends. Couples also participate, and the family market can be significant for some activities.
- Activity operators cater primarily for groups. Many operators find it difficult to cater for individuals, families and small groups because of the economics of running courses for very small numbers.
- Adventure holiday takers are more likely to stay in commercial accommodation than UK holiday visitors in general.
- Self-catering accommodation and camping are used significantly more by adventure holiday takers than other types of holiday visitor.
- Watersports holidays are more seasonally peaked than holidays in general. Climbing holidays and adrenaline sports holidays, however, have a less peaked season.

This indicates a broader audience and one with potential for growth with different socio-economic and demographic groups. Keeling identified the following prospects for growth by market segment:

- The Dabblers and Enthusiasts markets are likely to see the strongest growth.
- The Learners market should also grow. This is a relatively small market segment, however, and in absolute numbers it is unlikely to become that much more significant.
- The growth of the Samplers market could be constrained by the supply of activity operators that are able and willing to cater for this market (due to the economics of running courses and sessions for very small numbers of people).
- Growth in the Corporate Groups market will depend on the economic climate. The current economic slowdown may see a decline in this market, at least in the short term. Growth in this market may also be constrained by the supply of activity operators that are able to cater adequately for the needs of the corporate market, particularly in terms of providing the quality of team development training that companies are looking for.
- The Education and Youth Groups market may possibly decline as a result of reductions in LEA budgets.
- The Special Occasion Buyers market has grown substantially in recent years (albeit from a small base). The extent to which this is a short-term fashion or part of a longer-term trend remains to be seen.
- For all market segments, there may well be a lifecycle for some activities. Hang gliding has, for example, reduced in popularity since the growth in paragliding. The same may happen to other activities as new activities become more popular and fashionable.

Another question that has received some attention in the literature is that everyone's experience of the outdoor environment is different and this should not be overlooked, particularly given the personal development component of much Outdoor Education provision, e.g., through Education led centres and Institutions such as Outward Bound. According to Mortlock, (1984, *The Adventure Alternative*), every challenge is different to each individual who undertakes it. By the same token inclusion for a physically disabled child doesn't mean doing exactly the same as their peers, however, the opportunity is needed to explore the same environment, within their own personal limitations.

2.11 Networks that support Outdoor Tourism businesses

In addition to the Outdoor Tourism project itself, several other networks exist, including the Outdoor Partnership (formerly known as the North West Wales Outdoor Partnership) formed at the beginning of 2004 following the Welsh Assembly Government's Sports Summit to bring together key stakeholders from across the outdoor recreation sector with the primary aim of exploring ways of widening access to outdoor recreation by local people in the region.

The Outdoor Partnership's vision is:

to achieve an active, healthy and inclusive Wales, where outdoor recreation provides a common platform for participation, fun, achievement and employment, which binds local communities, creates sustainable use and understanding of the environment.

Its mission is to improve opportunities for more local people in Wales to achieve their potential through outdoor activities.

The Visit Wales sponsored Wales Activity Tourism Organisation (WATO) is a national forum established to link existing outdoor sector organisations in Wales' three National Parks, with the aim of sharing best practice across the outdoor sector in Wales. It functions regionally through Pembrokeshire Outdoor Charter Group, Snowdonia-Active and South Wales Outdoor Activity Providers Group. WATO has recommended the establishment of a Wales Outdoor Recreation Network which could:

- Be an inclusive network for exchange of information and good practice for the outdoor sector in Wales for all stakeholders. Seek solutions where conflicts exist, and give support to all organisations that are involved in the development, management and promotion of outdoor recreation and the natural environment / access across Wales.
 - Increase the opportunities for training and employment within the outdoor sector and equip those already involved in outdoor recreation, whether in a professional or volunteering capacity, with the necessary skills, knowledge and training to enable them to carry out their roles and duties more effectively.
 - Increase the awareness of the local population and visitors to Wales to the opportunities that exist for taking part in outdoor recreation.
 - Develop and promote nationally recognised good practice for outdoor recreation to ensure the protection of the environments and wildlife of Wales. Support the development of sustainable access solutions and increased provision for outdoor recreation.
 - Inform the need for, and oversee the development of effectively managed and sustainable outdoor recreation facilities across Wales where appropriate ensuring a high quality experience for all users.
1. Undertake ongoing monitoring and engagement with the sector to inform future policies to maximise the benefits for outdoor recreation.
- To develop and co-ordinate outdoor recreation participation programmes for the local community, resulting in increased participation and ultimately improved physical and mental health.

Discussions are still under way with Welsh Government on how this will be taken forward, especially in the context of the new single environmental body, Natural Resources Wales.

Outdoor Education Ireland is the national network of Outdoor Education Centres under the patronage of Vocational Education Committees. Supported by the Department of Education and Science through these local Vocational Education

Committees it provides an Outdoor Education service to schools, colleges and youth services in addition to a range of adventure sports and related courses for individual adults and youths. In this context, outdoor education can be defined in a broad context as including aspects of adventure sports, ecology and environmental studies with the general aim of contributing to an individual's physical, social and personal development while endeavouring to ensure that these individuals become more aware of the environment and the importance of conserving it for future generations.

3 Methodology

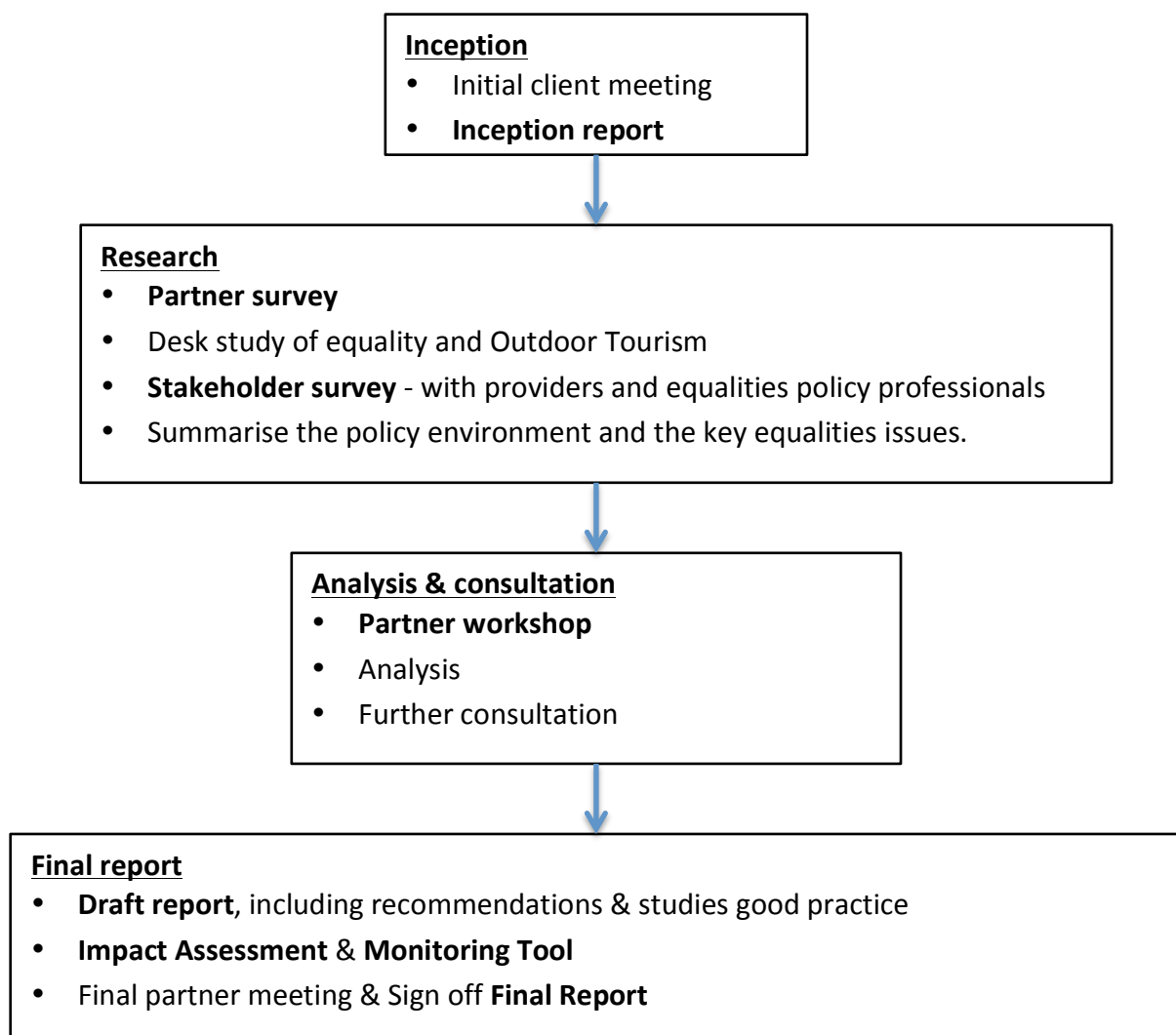
The project was conducted following these steps:

1. Inception
2. Desk study
3. Workshop
4. Questionnaire design
5. Survey
 - Partner
 - Stakeholder
6. Analysis
7. Assessment
8. Report

The primary information was collected from the two surveys.

Methodology

(Deliverables in bold)



3.1 The study process

The study team reviewed information and data provided by the client, and undertook an extensive literature review, see References at Annex 4.

The early findings were presented to a workshop of the client group and a series of questions were asked of this group that supplemented the structured partner survey.

The partner survey was followed by a survey of wider stakeholders, the survey results are presented in Section 4 and the survey tools are in the Annexes.

The study team then compiled the project assessment, as a composite from the information collected through the research steps and also used this step to derive the recommended survey tool.

3.2 Inception

The study team met with representatives of Kildare County Council on behalf of the Outdoor Tourism Partnership at the outset of the project to clarify the brief, discuss the methodology and work programme and to agree key steps. There were direct consequences for the methodology from the discussion held, as the discussion helped to clarify the study purpose and as a result we have simplified our initial ideas, so that they tightly focused on this core purpose.

In particular, it was agreed that the study does not need to undertake as much consultation with businesses as originally envisaged, as few businesses have addressed this issue and little is to be gained from direct consultation. Added to this the study is at an early stage, so few businesses are yet meaningfully engaged with the project. It was felt that far more meaningful discussions can be held with representative bodies, such the tourism boards, trade bodies and alliances; as well as equalities bodies.

The following issues arose from the Inception phase

1. **Aspirations for the project** – the meeting discussed the clients' aspirations for the study. It is intended as a policy study produced by the OT project which provides a broad overview of equalities within the Outdoor Tourism sector and which provides practical advice for the OT project.
2. The **monitoring tool** developed through the project will be designed so that the results can be revisited in the light of experience in late 2014 to test and update the conclusions drawn at that time. The final report for the study will suggest a format and process for the follow up study.

3. **Definition of Outdoor Tourism** – There is no precise definition. The term is generally held to cover the area of Outdoor pursuits, including fishing, walking, cycling, climbing, canoeing/kayaking, and other similar/related water and land based pursuits. It does not include the formal equestrian or horse racing sector, golf or organised team sports such as football, rugby and Gaelic games. Neither the inclusions nor the exclusions are intended to be exclusive.
4. **Balance of activity between areas** – it was noted that the Welsh areas appeared to be more advanced in terms of development of the sector; due mostly to the long tradition of outdoor activity in areas such as Snowdonia and the Welsh coast. This means the project can provide a good basis for transnational learning, particularly where lessons and developments in Wales can provide lessons for current and future development in Ireland.
5. **Definition of social tourism** – tourism initiatives aimed at promoting social inclusion.
6. **Case studies** – it was agreed that case studies could be a good way of demonstrating how the Outdoor Tourism sector can create pathways for social inclusion. Examples could include Jelly Beans.
7. **Relevant documents** – Barrow Corridor Study, Council policy statements on equality (for all areas, plus National Park), Tourism Boards/Bord Failte, Equalities and Human Rights Commission in Wales and the Equality Authority in Ireland.
8. **Other partners/stakeholders** to be approached – include Snowdonia Active, Outdoor Partnership, Tourism Boards/Bord Failte and the Equality Authority.
9. **Business questionnaires** – Catalys to suggest additional questions for inclusion in the Training Needs Analysis.
10. **Key issues** –
 - Social and economic inclusion;
 - Young people’s opportunities for training and employment;
 - Facilities and training to promote inclusion of people with disabilities;
 - Access for All and promotion of opportunities for disadvantaged people to engage in education;
 - Identification of standards and promotion of meeting those standards;
 - Links between market opportunity and the equality agenda.
 - The position of Traveller communities.
11. The project is designed primarily as a **policy study** that will inform the implementation of the OT project, as well as the policy of the project partners. The study will therefore focus on engagement with intermediary bodies.

12. Precise **beneficiary definition** is not feasible at this stage with regard to this project, in part because the beneficiaries are slow to come forward due to the current economic conditions.

13. **Supplementary beneficiary information** was requested from the Training Needs Analysis to be run for the area as a whole, however, this was not forthcoming.

3.3 Desk research

The outcomes of the desk research are summarised in the context section above. The findings of the Desk Research have informed the research process as a whole and its results are found throughout the report.

3.3.1 Desk research methodology -

Starting with the data and information received from the project partners, the study team established a proportionate and focused evidence base to support the assessment. This included information on:

- Existing baseline data and studies
- Stakeholders and interest groups
- Project activities and their impacts, intended and unintended
- Project equality issues
- Relevant material from comparable areas, e.g., tourism equality impact assessments from comparable areas.

The above desk study was cognisant of national statutory and best practice guidance that exists in each country. We used a Rapid Evidence Assessment approach (REA), to draw out the key data from the evidence base. Essentially, REA is a tool for getting on top of the available research evidence as comprehensively as possible but within the constraints of a given timetable. This review was undertaken in line with the best practice, as advised by the European Rural Observatory and DG Agriculture's European Network for Rural Development.

3.4 Partner Survey

The partner survey (which is found in Annex XX) was conducted using a model equality impact assessment previously used in the public sector in Wales. The assessment asked a series of questions:

- Existence and state of equality policy
- State of knowledge about equalities issues
- Research undertaken on equalities
- Groups identified through equalities policy
- Consultation on equalities

- Issues relating to each group identified
- Self-assessment of current state of awareness and action on equalities
- Action planning

The study reviewed the policies of the Authorities with direct responsibility for oversight of the project, because one of the key roles of the assessment is to ensure that the policies of the partners are feeding through into the actions undertaken through the project. This is because in the original application for INTERREG support, the partners stated that equalities policies were in place and that the project was expected to abide by these policies and follow them through into project actions.

Each of the individual survey questions is reported separately in the Findings below. Each has a purpose with respect to different aspects of strategic management of equalities within the project and has been designed to capture a project baseline and allow that baseline to be re-examined later in the project. Thus the surveys are the prototype for the project's equality impact monitoring tool (EqIMT). In terms of the information and data collected, it needs to be remembered that this is an early snapshot of equalities practice in the project and so it is unlikely that large quantities of hard project data will be available.

A key element of the survey is the Self-assessment. This series of linked questions was asked both of the Partner and Stakeholder Surveys. This allows comparison of the overall assessment from each respondent of the state of policy and practice, having first answered the survey's questions. Self Assessment is a powerful tool in raising standards and equalities is no exception. The EqIMT has been designed so that it can help providers examine their own practices, but it will also enable comparisons to be made and the project will be able to learn from its own activities and drive improvement.

3.5 Workshop

Following receipt of the Partner Surveys, the study conducted a workshop with partners to examine the issues raised. The Partner Workshop was a key vehicle through which to provide a "grounded" assessment of the data collected and to identify good practice. In addition to confirming the issues that arose from the survey, the following issues were raised:

- Image of the sector & the inclusiveness of images used – active images can be interpreted as a barrier
- Sustaining improvement – how can positive improvements be maintained after the project is finished?
- Good practice in service delivery – good practice examples were offered by respondents
- Organisational commitments – understanding the importance of organisational commitments

At the workshop we also asked the following questions –

“What does success look like” with regard to the equalities agenda?

“What are the equalities issues for the project?”

“Which groups are treated unequally?”

3.6 Stakeholder Survey

The Stakeholder survey used a similar question framework to that used by the Partner questionnaire. Key differences were that it used a simpler questionnaire format to that used for the Partner survey. It was also more focused on current provider practice and less on the detailed policy framework (which was more appropriately aimed at project partners).

The survey was sent out by email to addresses agreed with the client and in each case they were sent to a named recipient whose appropriateness was confirmed by phone.

3.7 Responses

The response rates to the partner survey were good with all partners returning forms. The Stakeholder survey was however more difficult and despite being issued with clear deadlines responses were only received from only 9 out of 25 of the stakeholders identified. Whilst this would represent an acceptable level of response for population or market research surveys in general, it presents difficulties to this study, as there is not a large group of stakeholders who could answer the sort of questions posed by the survey.

In addition, a great deal of effort and time was spent getting the response rate up to this level, including assistance provided by project partners. The initial responses by the deadlines given were much lower than the levels eventually achieved. A number of *lessons have been learnt from trialling the monitoring tool* and the questions have been simplified and refined as a result.

One interesting aspect of this survey was the number of respondees, particularly from the strategic authorities, such as the Equality Authority and Bord Falite felt unable to answer a number of questions due to the lack of empirical data. One respondent, Visit Wales, declined to respond to the survey altogether for this reason.

The raw response data is in Annex **XXX**, the key findings are drawn out in the next section (Findings XX). The responses themselves have been lodged with the client.

3.8 Analysis and synthesis

The analysis phase of the assessment has sought to answer a number of questions that flow from the brief. The questions considered during the study are listed below. The raw data for answering the questions was principally acquired from the surveys, workshop and the desk study. It was not possible to answer all questions directly from the research and survey findings, however, all these questions have been considered and have informed the conclusions and recommendations.

Group 1 questions - Equality and project impact on equality

- Did the project partners identify all affected groups accurately?
- Have their interests and the potential impacts of the project been mapped accurately, with regard to the project, e.g., what are the interests of young unemployed people in the project and has the project been constructed appropriately with these interests in mind?
- Has the project taken effective steps to enhance positive impacts and mitigate negative ones with regard to the 12 groups or “grounds” identified?
- What more might be done?

Group 2 Questions - Social impact – has the project been designed and implemented so that:

- The health, security and well being of all people is to be protected and enhanced?
- Fosters and support an open and tolerant society with equal rights and opportunities for all citizens and reduce inequalities, including income inequalities?
- Promotes viable and sustainable communities and improve integration between the provision of housing and essential supporting social and community infrastructure?
- Promotes and enhance culture, social heritage and the arts?
- Promotes personal development through education?

Group 3 questions - Project impact

- Description and scale of monetised costs and benefits for the main affected groups?
- Description and scale of non-monetised costs and benefits for the main affected groups?
- Are the intended impacts, with regard to equality, in line with project aims and objectives?
- Is the project taking proportionate action to address negative and promote positive impacts?
- Have additional impacts (positive or negative) been identified that will require project changes to be made.
- Are the risks identified and assumptions made at the outset of the project still appropriate.
- Have any new risks been identified with regard to equality.

- What horizontal policy connections to related policy areas have arisen through the inquiry and analysis phases?
- Coherence issues – is the project internally coherent and appropriately aligned with other related activity, with regard to equality?
- Is the project stimulating activity that will be sustainable in the long term after project support has ceased, with regard to equality?
- Have all costs been identified, both within the project period and beyond, with regard to equality?
- Does the project adequately provide for the practical implications of diversity across the twelve grounds? does it ensure that reasonable accommodation is made for people with disabilities?
- Does the project contribute to achieving equality for groups and their individual members who experience inequality?
- What barriers do each of the groups and their individual members across the twelve grounds face?
- Are there particular issues that need to be addressed to ensure a reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities?
- How to engage with external providers and outline how they would adhere to Equality Policy?

3.9 Shortfalls or best practice findings

The brief asked the study to consider shortfalls and best practice findings. One outcome of the analysis and synthesis will be to provide the evidence and analysis to support the project partners to consider the issues raised and to provide practical proposals for changes to the delivery method, to identify good practice and provide a framework for consideration of project impact with regard to equalities.

3.10 Impact assessment

The impact assessment followed a methodology in line with those prescribed in the national and EU guidance, i.e., the UK government Green Book guidance and supplementary guidance on Impact Assessment. Through the survey, the study devised and tested sets of questions for consideration in the final Impact Assessment process. The survey was designed using a standard impact assessment methodology that had been implemented previously in Wales in the health sector and adapted the questions to the Outdoor Tourism sector. The **Monitoring Tool** was then designed using an adapted form of this set of questions; refined following feedback from carrying out the surveys.

3.11 Final report process

The project team used the findings of the research, consultation and survey stages in the development of the final report within which it has provided:

- Contextual review
- Recommendations for improvements, mitigatory or adaptive action by the OT project partners regarding:
 - Policies in need of redress;
 - Process review – regarding management, monitoring, review and evaluation; and
 - Communication.

The report aims to be practical and as far as possible to be free of jargon and technical language, to assist adoption and delivery. The recommendations focus on those areas where benefits can be accrued to the project and which address the key issues identified.

The report also identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the current monitoring, review and evaluation arrangements and proposes a monitoring tool for project partners to maintain a view on progress in addressing Equalities issues. It includes a monitoring template model to check the impact of the project on the groups and their individual members.

4 Findings

The purpose of this section is to set out the findings of the study as a set of results that are then referenced in the Discussion and following sections. The raw data is in the appendix. This findings section is drawn from the survey and the desk review.

4.1 Data and Information

The nature of an impact assessment is to provide an assessment of the likely or estimated impact of a project in advance of or at an early stage of implementation. This means that such an assessment is normally reliant on the views and expectations of partners and stakeholders and information from any comparable projects. This presents a number of challenges for this particular assessment, as data is so sparse regarding this subject.

The lack of comparable data has presented particular problems for the creation of the baseline for the study. As a result, it has been difficult to find proxy values for the issues raised. Although the team anticipated this issue, it was a surprise to find so little information of a comparable nature. This was particularly borne out by the survey responses, in that a number of respondents felt unable to provide answers to some of the survey questions (and in one case to provide any answers at all) due to the lack of relevant or comparable data.

Interestingly, lack of data was a consistently identified as a problem by those who had a strategic overview for the sector, such as Fáilte Ireland, Visit Wales and the Irish Equality Authority and this lack of systematic work in this sector constitutes a finding in itself.

After discussion with the clients, it was felt that it would not be fruitful to conduct a comprehensive survey of providers and businesses, as perception of these issues was at a low level. In the event, some providers were included in the surveys and although results were anecdotal, there is clearly some understanding of the issues involved.

Given the lack of relevant research and the views of the strategic bodies outlined above, the positive actions and approaches taken by the providers we spoke to do not appear to have come about as a result of a systematic awareness raising across the sector.

4.2 Defining equality

Equality is surprisingly difficult to define, with successive political and legal definitions, particularly over the past 20 years adding many layers to our understanding of the concept. The starting point for defining equality for the project

is the legal framework in Ireland and in Wales. Section 2.3 sets out the grounds on which this legislation is set out.

At its simplest and most general, legally defined equality means that all are equal before the law and all citizens of Ireland and Wales are entitled to equality of opportunity and equal access to public services. In both Ireland and Wales, there are higher expectations of the public sector in this regard, than there is of the private sector and this is defined in a series of legislation.

There is however a level of conflation, if not confusion about the issue and this was revealed by the answers to the survey, with for instance, the related concepts of equality, inclusion, diversity and discrimination mentioned interchangeably. Whilst this isn't unhelpful to the project's objectives, it does mean that there appears to be a lack of clarity about identifying the project's objectives regarding equality.

A number of different terms are used for the documents that capture corporate commitments to equalities issues reflecting the flexible boundaries the issue, generally resulting from the tendency to broaden the scope of the issues under consideration.

4.3 Defining the sector

The study encountered another issue in understanding the boundaries of Outdoor Tourism. All agreed that OT is a broad sector, however, there was less agreement on what it included. The desk study also revealed a range of overlapping (and more commonly used) terms that relate to the sector such as Outdoor Recreation, Activities, Pursuits and Education. This presents a challenge to empirical data collection, as the absence of a commonly accepted sectoral definition means for instance that it is difficult to compare work on this project with other studies.

For this reason the Stakeholder survey proposed a definition of the sector. The first question asked whether respondents recognised the definition, which most respondents largely did. The definition was:

- **Remit of the Outdoor Tourism project** – The boundaries around Outdoor Tourism are imprecise, however it broadly covers the areas generally understood as activity, adventure and outdoor pursuits. The sectors supported by the project include walking; cycling; watersports, such as canoeing, sailing & windsurfing; other adventure pursuits, such as climbing, abseiling, Nordic walking, etc..

About half of the respondents added to the definition, either by adding further activities, including motorised sports, as well as adding supporting sectors, such as accommodation.

Another aspect of this issue is whether providers of Outdoor Tourism actually see themselves as working in a tourism market. Responses from providers in the project area; show that there is strong segmentation in Outdoor Tourism and that a substantial proportion of those providers do not see their role as providing a tourism product first and foremost. For example, Outdoor Education provision and its basis is informed by a particular ethos that is more developmental in its nature. Outdoor Recreation, Outdoor Pursuits and Outdoor Activities are all closer to Outdoor Tourism

Outdoor recreation or outdoor activity is defined as leisure pursuits engaged in the outdoors, especially in (but not limited to) natural or semi-natural settings out of town. Examples include adventure racing, backpacking, bicycling, camping, canoeing, caving, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, kayaking, mountaineering, photography, adventure park, rock climbing, running, sailing, skiing, and surfing. Outdoor recreation may also refer to a team sport game or practice held in an outdoor setting. The two primary purposes for outdoor recreation are beneficial use and pleasurable appreciation. Outdoor activities may also be pursued for the purposes of finding peace in nature, enjoying life, and relaxing. They are alternatives to expensive forms of tourism. Outdoor activities are also frequently used as a medium in education and teambuilding. (Rolston; H III. 1988. Environmental ethics: Duties to and values in the natural world. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.)

Outdoor Education is more structured, using Outdoor Activities as part of a developmental process; building in reflection and personal development into a structured programme of Outdoor Activities.

The relationship of these activities to Outdoor Tourism can be presented below.

	Definition	Relationship to Outdoor Tourism
Outdoor Activities	<p>Outdoor recreation activities have been defined as those activities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ are undertaken outside the confines of buildings (i.e. in the outdoors); and ■ do not involve organised competition or formal rules; and ■ can be undertaken without the existence of any built facility or infrastructure; and ■ may require large areas of land, water and/or air; and ■ may require outdoor areas of predominantly unmodified natural landscape. 	<p>Such activities can be included as part of a tourism experience, be it formal or informal, in a range of outdoor environments and locations</p>

	While facilities, site modifications or infrastructure may be provided to manage access to and the impacts of outdoor activities, outdoor activities can be undertaken without facilities, site modification or infrastructure.	
Outdoor Pursuits	Activities taking place, existing, or intended for use in the open air, usually of a strenuous nature	Can also be part of the tourism offer, but tend to be more active and adventure orientated
Outdoor Education	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of skills, whether technical, intellectual or social; ▪ Scientific or aesthetic appreciation of the outdoor environment; ▪ The concept of service, to society, the community, the environment or the activity; ▪ Personal development. 	Elements can form part of the outdoor tourism experience, but can also relate to green tourism, rural cultural tourism and ecotourism

In addition to these relationships, there a range of other related definitions, e.g., **Accessible Tourism**, which demonstrates the trend for developing tourism specifically for the disabled. Adventure travel for the disabled has become a \$13 billion USD a year industry in North America. Some adventure travel destinations offer diverse programs and job opportunities developed specifically for the disabled.

4.4 Equality in Outdoor Tourism

One of the interesting aspects of the study has been the discovery that so little work has been done in this subject area. Whilst this largely met with the study team’s expectations, we had expected some comparable data, but in fact it was not possible to find comparators that are directly relevant. The responses from providers show that they are aware of equality issues and make clear efforts to address the issues. In addition, providers are aware of the transformative effects of outdoor *activity* and for some providers it is clearly a key part of their motivation in providing outdoor experiences.

There does not however appear to be a systematic approach to the issue and where providers embrace equality issues, this appears to be from their own motivation rather than as a result of engagement and encouragement from equalities, tourism or sporting/activities’ bodies, or indeed from the OT project so far.

4.5 Principal Findings

Policy and legal framework – The study reviewed the policy and legal framework within which the project was developed and implemented. This framework is set out in the Context Sections 2.2 - 2.6. In addition to the national legal frameworks there are also equalities requirements attached to the INTERREG funding programme. This policy framework is both demanding and specific, not only in terms of the direct requirements, but also in terms of the monitoring that is involved, both directly and indirectly.

The requirements of the national legal and policy frameworks are overseen and monitored by the national strategic bodies, such as the Sports Councils and Equality Bodies in both countries. These bodies do not introduce additional regulation themselves, their role is to interpret the legislation and monitor its implementation; so they can and do introduce heightened levels of visibility to equality issues.

Each of the project partners has a policy statement in place that affirms its commitment to deliver the national legislation. In most cases these statements go beyond the benchmarks set by the legislation, for instance most also make commitments regarding diversity and social inclusion, particularly on economic inclusion grounds, i.e., the interests of those from deprived neighbourhoods, those experiencing poverty or unemployment, and those who are involved in drug or alcohol rehabilitation, on probation or at risk of offending/re-offending.

The OT Project has also made a set of equalities commitments of its own (See Section 2.5); the purpose of which is to demonstrate legal and regulatory compliance, plus making additional commitments. The study found that the OT project equality statements appear to meet requirements of the legal framework (including the requirements of the funders). The project's **equalities statements are not however accessible and have not been the subject of structured dialogue** with representatives of the potentially excluded groups, nor with the sector providers.

The OT project therefore operates within a clear equalities framework and the project is committed to the delivery and monitoring of **substantial equalities commitments**.

Self-Assessment – The two surveys (partners and stakeholders) included the same set of questions at the end of each questionnaire. This was designed so that each respondent could sum up the current “state of play” regarding equalities policy and practice in their organisation. It was placed at the end of the questionnaire, so that the respondents were able to answer these questions with the benefit of the reflection and thinking stimulated by answering the rest of the questions.

The responses are set out in the following three tables. Although there is a spread of responses for each question asked, a majority view emerges in each case and this is highlighted in the tables.

Table: Partner survey responses

	Yes	DK	No
Current policy and practice is optimising the opportunities for promoting equality and inclusion and little more can feasibly be done.		4	2
Policies and practice regarding the way in which the sector engages with and promotes the equalities agenda are based on good evidence and few significant gaps exist.	2	3	1
Current policy and practice is adequate and with a few amendments to remove areas of adverse impact or promote equality would represent good practice.	3	1	2
Significant gaps exist in the information and evidence on which to base decision-making regarding the way the sector relates to the equalities agenda	1	3	2
Current policy is inadequate and few attempts are made to explore how the Outdoor Tourism sector promotes equality and inclusion.	1	1	4
There is little or no appropriate evidence nor decision-making tools on which to base evidence based decisions.	1	4	1

Summaries of the responses given by each partner can be found in the [Annex xx](#)

Table: Stakeholder survey responses

	Yes	DK	No
Current policy and practice is optimising the opportunities for promoting equality and inclusion and little more can feasibly be done.	2	4	2
Policies and practice regarding the way in which the sector engages with and promotes the equalities agenda are based on good evidence and few significant gaps exist.	1	4	3
Current policy and practice is adequate and with a few amendments to remove areas of adverse impact or promote equality would represent good practice.	2	5	1

Significant gaps exist in the information and evidence on which to base decision-making regarding the way the sector relates to the equalities agenda	3	4	1
Current policy is inadequate and few attempts are made to explore how the Outdoor Tourism sector promotes equality and inclusion.		4	5
There is little or no appropriate evidence nor decision-making tools on which to base evidence based decisions.	1	5	2

Table: Composite Self Assessment

	Yes	DK	No
Current policy and practice is optimising the opportunities for promoting equality and inclusion and little more can feasibly be done.	2	8	4
Policies and practice regarding the way in which the sector engages with and promotes the equalities agenda are based on good evidence and few significant gaps exist.	3	7	4
Current policy and practice is adequate and with a few amendments to remove areas of adverse impact or promote equality would represent good practice.	5	6	3
Significant gaps exist in the information and evidence on which to base decision-making regarding the way the sector relates to the equalities agenda	4	7	3
Current policy is inadequate and few attempts are made to explore how the Outdoor Tourism sector promotes equality and inclusion.	1	4	9
There is little or no appropriate evidence nor decision-making tools on which to base evidence based decisions.	2	9	3

Reviewing the above tables shows there are a significant number of “Don't knows” against nearly all of the self-assessment questions. However, when the different types of respondent are taken into consideration very clear respondent patterns emerge:

Table: Comparison of response pattern between providers, intermediaries and strategic authorities

Questions*	Providers	Intermediaries	Strategic Authorities & interest groups
1	5,3,3	4,0,4	4,4,5
2	5,4,3	5,0,4	4,4,5
3	4,4,3	3,0,4	4,4,5

4	4,4,5	3,0,4	4,4,3
5	4,4,5	5,0,4	4,4,5
6	4,4,5	4,0,4	4,3,5

* Questions numbered 1-6 in the order of the above tables

Providers = Gogarth, Arthog, Athy Canoeing & Rowing

Intermediaries = Snowdonia Active & N Wales Outdoor Charter Group, Tourism Partnership North Wales, Conwy Equalities

Strategic Authorities... = Failte Ireland, Irish Equality Authority, Black Environment Network.

Response codes - 3 = Yes; 4 = Don't Know; 5 = No

4.6 Emerging messages

The message emerging from this analysis is that there are clearly and significantly different patterns between the different types of respondent and clear similarities between similar types of respondent. As well as the similarity of the response patterns within these groups, the providers are more likely to give a definite “Yes” or “No” response. Intermediaries and Strategic groups are more likely to answer “Don't Know”. The observed differences imply that providers have a more definite and more positive view of equalities performance than do strategic authorities. There are a number of inferences that can be drawn from this finding; which are drawn out in the discussion.

The self assessment throws up a number of interesting findings; however, looking the most significant results:

- 70% of respondents* of all types **disagree** that policy is inadequate and little is being done; and
- 70% of respondents of all types **do not know** whether evidence or decision-making tools are adequate to make evidence based decisions.

*The majority of the other 30% are activity providers – who said they do not know.

This would lead to the conclusion that a policy framework exists, but that the policies are not supported by tools and/or evidence and therefore it is hard to follow how the policy and legal framework can translate into action by providers. The lack of data and evidence cited by many further supports the conclusion that **whilst good practice exists; it is not happening due to the existence of effective evidence-based policy mechanisms.**

4.7 Other Key findings

Few respondents believe current policy and practice is optimal – Only 2 out of 16 respondents thought that current practice was as good as could be expected. The rest were either unsure, or sure it could be improved.

Few respondents believed policies and practice are based on good evidence and broadly adequate – Only 3 out of 16 respondents believed the evidence was adequate.

Lack of data, information and research – Overall there is very clearly a lack of sufficient research, data and evidence gathering. Linked to this, there is little development of decision support and performance improvement tools.

Equality issues that emerge - The groups that emerge as experiencing equality, discrimination and inclusion issues are –

- Those on low **income, unemployed** people and those living in **deprived areas** – whose access is limited by a range of factors, including income, education, awareness of opportunity, accessibility.
- **Disabled people** – the group of which there is the greatest awareness in terms of equality and inclusion. However, more can be done – for instance, activities are often suitable, but the transport has not been adapted adequately.
- **Older people** – who engage strongly in quieter pursuits such as walking; but the Outdoor Tourism profile includes other things where older people can participate that could also lead to business opportunities.
- **Ethnic minorities** – race issues are not widely recognised as an OT issue, however, feedback from those in equalities bodies and the literature indicates that more attention is needed in this area. Legislation in Wales and Ireland highlights discrimination on racial grounds as illegal. In addition, one ethnic group is mentioned specifically in Irish legislation, i.e., Travellers.
- **Gender** – The key issue appears to be image and initiatives such as RockChicks appear to be a way of overcoming these issues.
- **Language** – Irish and Welsh legislation also covers the Irish and Welsh languages and both languages require appropriate treatment, particularly by public sector bodies.
- **People in drug and alcohol rehabilitation and those on probation, at risk of offending, or re-offending** – this fairly large and heterogeneous group is an interesting challenge for the Outdoor sector, as although they are not defined by equalities legislation, they are a set of groups who face social exclusion due to the problems they cause their communities and society more widely. Inclusion activities with these groups offer business opportunities to the sector, as well as opportunities to demonstrate the transformative capacities of Outdoor Tourism.
- **Community issues** – in N Wales engagement between businesses and communities is a hot topic. Communities do not always understand the benefits of the Outdoor Tourism sector and there is a need for greater

engagement. For example, Conwy Council have looked to promote tourism awareness sessions for communities where there is a rub between communities and businesses. The related issue of **English Outdoor Education Centres in Wales** can be an issue in some communities, despite these centres meeting a number of challenging inclusion and equality objectives for children from often deprived areas in England; Welsh young people have not had the same benefit.

- **Health related inclusion** – some respondees are concerned with health issues, e.g., promoting activities to groups such as middle aged men and older people in general who would gain health benefits from outdoor activity. Taster sessions have been designed for health groups.

OT Project Performance on equalities to date is difficult to judge – This is only to be expected, as the EqIA is in effect an *ex ante* assessment of equalities issues as they apply to the project. Information reviewed to date shows good levels of community engagement in the project’s activities, but it does not give a break down of numbers of people in the “affected groups”, what barriers have been identified, nor how these barriers are addressed.

Relatively low levels of systematic engagement in equality issues by the sector – The overall impression given by the survey and the other evidence gathered is that the sector as a whole is not very engaged in issues of equality. Whilst more than half of the respondents saw the issue as important, those most focused on the promotion of the sector felt that equality issues also had to be weighed with other issues, such as marketing. For example, when asked how important the issue of equality was to the sector TPNW stated: “*The main focus is getting all sectors of the market to recognise North Wales as a prime outdoor sector destination.*”

Whilst those concerned with the promotion of equality felt that the sector did not show a great deal of interest in the issues, those who provided services saw the importance of the human dimension, understood the transformative potential of outdoor activity, saw the importance of personal development and would do their best to accommodate the needs of all those who expressed a desire to be involved.

However, low levels of systematic engagement between these various bodies has given rise to a disconnection between the views of the bodies involved, which itself is rooted back to the fact that so little systematic research and development work has been done on these topics. This is borne out by the responses of strategic authorities to the stakeholder survey with several stating that they were unable to respond to parts of the survey due to lack of data and evidence.

As well as giving rise to mis-aligned understandings of what is being provided and what is wanted or needed, it is also probably leading to “missed” market opportunities. For example, if providers focus on hard-core adventure activities, then this is likely to exclude a lot of people. For example, older people (many of whom have high disposable income and much leisure time), will be put off by the

images, are likely to feel the activities are beyond their limits and have not been designed with them in mind.

Disparity between views of different type of stakeholders – An interesting aspect of the responses is that the providers and other sector bodies have different perceptions to those of equality bodies. Providers are focused on disadvantage faced by disabled people and lower income groups, whilst those concerned primarily with equalities have a broader view of the inequalities that are relevant to the sector. In the latter case, the sector is seen (fairly, or unfairly) as having an elitist, young, fit, male image; and that the sector overlooks race and gender issues in particular. The latter view is also supported by some of the information emerging from the literature review. One inference that could be drawn is that whilst the sector understands equality and the need for inclusiveness with those who want to become involved, there is a lack of understanding of the breadth of equality issues and the need to think about wider groups who simply find the sector out of reach.

There are insufficient evidence and tools to support improvement in practice - Whilst partners are confident about those things that are required by legislation. For instance, issues such as disabled access appear to be well understood, due to specific legislative requirements being place for well over a decade in both countries. There is however less understanding and confidence about those issues for which specific and detailed requirements do not exist and as providers are often small and fragmented there is insufficient capacity to bring about change.

Disability was identified as a key barrier – but it should not be seen as a ground for discrimination. In the words of one respondent: “Although it is hard to include disabled individuals in outdoor sports **it is doable.**”

Some barriers are hard to see - There is a view amongst providers that was stated a number of times, that provision adapts to whoever engages and there are only a few circumstances where someone could not be accommodated and this generally related to their physical requirements. This view however, overlooks those who do not engage and for whom the barriers of image, cost, accessibility, etc., are so great that they do not get to first base.

Catering for complex needs – a number of respondents stated that providers in the sector were well attuned to catering for diverse needs and that most needs could be accommodated, as long as the providers knew in advance. Limitations exist around the amount of appropriate kit that is available and accessible. One provider stated that all terrain wheelchairs were regarded as so cool, that everyone wanted to use them. The equipment deficit isn't just to do with the activities themselves, the issue can also relate to transport equipment. For example, one centre stated that although safe, all ability climbing areas exist, the lack of adapted transport means that it is effectively inaccessible for all but the able bodied. Whilst this is a positive assessment, inclusive approaches are more likely with educational activity, as the education centres have better access to adapted equipment.

The research has identified a great deal of good practice in the sector and by partners – Even though the equalities is not systematically promoted within the sector, there are plenty of examples of good practice which exist due to the sector’s inclusive practices and the positive policies of partners. Examples include:

- **Disability inclusion training** – Conwy
- **Tourism awareness sessions** - where there is a “rub” between businesses and communities – promoted by Conwy BC.
- **Jumping Jelly Beans** – project in Kildare that works with children with special needs and introduces them to outdoor activity.
- **Kilkenny Traveller horse project** – Leader project seeking to build bridges with the Traveller community.
- **5x60 initiative** – an initiative that seeks to give children in N Wales an opportunity to try out different sports.
- **Kilkenny Integration Forum** – an initiative that offers the opportunity for inter-community dialogue
- **Diversion and re-integration of offenders & drug users** – in Snowdonia

A fuller list is in Section 3 and 5 of the Assessment.

Many examples of good practice exist from beyond the project, for instance, Bendrigg Trust and Calvert Trust, in the Lake District, both have long experience of provision for people with disabilities and provide support for others who are seeking to improve their skills in this area.

It is not enough to be “Open” to all comers – if groups or individuals lack confidence, then they are unlikely to come forward in the first place. Positive action and Positive Targeting have a place in breaking down barriers and ensuring that the less confident can become engaged in Outdoor Activity.

Culture of excellence and learning – the sector benefits from professional staff, particularly in the outdoor centres, who have high expectations of those working in the sector, particularly regarding inclusion and personal development. In addition to which there is a strong learning ethos within the sector. One of the respondents noted:

I genuinely feel that in the outdoor sector no-one would want to deliberately fail any (equality) grounds but it may be that the awareness of the need is not refined enough to instigate any required change.

There is a sense of pride within the sector that is very powerful, for example in the words of one respondent:

I personally do not see the outdoor sector as having many equality issues. Generally the individuals are very accepting, and are open minded to give everybody a go so to suit their ability level. (If discrimination did occur providers)...would be mortified if any instructor were to alienate anybody in a group.

This is a two edged sword, however, and professional pride can lead to an inability to be objective about weaknesses that might exist. There was a qualitative difference between those who took a very positive view of the sector's equalities performance, essentially stating that the sector had no issues and those who were more reflective and critical. The significance of this disparity was that it was coming from the same areas.

Monitoring Systems - It is also clear that sufficient **monitoring systems** are not yet in place and where information has been available, it is not collected in a way that allows comparison between the areas within the project. The study was however set up in part to address this weakness and the recommendations are drafted accordingly.

Project partners are however used to monitoring regarding equalities issues, for example the Outdoor Partnership:

...have used monitoring tools from the Engagement gateway project and the Intermediate Labour Market project... providing... findings as they are compiled by the project sponsors... However, that may be an opportunity we have previously missed and it may be good for us to capitalise on that information.

Potentially excluded groups offer business opportunities – A number of respondents commented on the sector's tendency to focus on the purist adventure end of Outdoor Activity and the concern emerged that this was not simply an equality issue, but that this also could be resulting in missed business opportunities, for instance in relation to older people with plentiful time and reasonable disposable income, for whom a gentler version of these same experiences might prove very attractive. These issues can be explored by project partners through reference to the Irish Equality Authority's excellent Equality Benefits Tool which can be found at: <http://www.equality.ie/Files/Your-Customers-and-You.pdf>

Equality issues do not appear to be strongly aligned with legal definitions of equality and discrimination – The findings of the survey and the desk research both confirm that the legal definitions of equality and discrimination are narrower than the view that is often taken of equality. In particular income related issues and deprivation (neither of which are defined in equalities legislation) are quoted by nearly all sources as important causes of unequal access to Outdoor Tourism.

Opportunities exist for engagement by people from potentially excluded groups – The project includes a number of mechanisms through which people from potentially excluded groups might get involved; i.e., taster sessions, development sessions, coaching for volunteers, apprenticeship schemes, etc..

5 Monitoring Tool

A key objective of the project has been to produce a monitoring tool and this is in the final Annex, for easy reference. The Monitoring Tool has been developed by adapting existing best practice to a form most appropriate for use in the project. The Tool is comprised of 22 questions separated into 9 sections as follows:

1. Policy & Legal Framework

What are the key policies and the legal framework and what is their current status. Who is responsible for implementation and monitoring of the policy and how is monitoring information regarding policy and performance gathered and reported? What are the groups or “Grounds” to which the policy applies?

2. Beneficiary Information, Evidence and Research

What does the Project beneficiary data say? What research have partners undertaken that improves the understanding of the affected groups and their engagement in Outdoor Tourism? Have Partners and Stakeholders provided further information that adds to the evidence? What key evidence gaps remain?

3. Procurement and Sub-Contracting

What arrangements exist to ensure that ensure contracts let by the project adhere to project policy and the legislation that applies.

4. Assessing the impacts

What are the main barriers and the main negative impacts?

5. Addressing the Impacts

What measures have been taken to address discrimination and the main impacts and barriers identified.

6. Self Assessment

Given the issues outlined in sections 1-5, what is the overall assessment.

7. Action Planning

The actions planned to address the needs and interests of the affected groups.

8. Monitoring

The project’s approach to monitoring the assessment.

The approach is set out in more detail in the Action plan in Section 8.

6 Equality Impact Assessment for the Outdoor Tourism Project (EqIA)

The EqIA has been drafted using the information gathered from partners and stakeholders through the surveys.

6.1 Policy & Legal Framework

The purpose of this part of the assessment is to establish the policy framework within which the project is operating and to ensure that the policies that apply to the project are in place, that they are well understood, they are current and have been adopted.

Where a policy is referenced, links should be provided to the documents that reference the key policies of each partner organisation. The key document in this hierarchy is **the project's equalities policy statement**. This should capture all the commitments, legal and otherwise that apply to the project.

The Policy Framework includes the Legal Framework; the duties it confers, the resulting policies of the partner bodies and of the project, however, it is not necessary to restate that in the monitoring tool, as it changes less frequently and in this case is already set out in the EqIA report. In the case of an INTERREG funded project, it also includes the equality framework that is attached to the funding programme.

The Analysis below sets out the priorities for each partner organisation

	Policy	Status	Priorities
Kildare	Corporate equality report Citizen's Charter Equality & Diversity Management Policy Draft Equal Status Policy	Being updated	
Kilkenny Leader Partnership	Equal Opportunities Policy	Existing	Employees and clients
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown	Diversity & Access Policy Equality Policy Statement	Being updated	
The Outdoor Partnership	Employee Handbook	Existing	NA
Gwynedd	Polisiau Cydraddoldeb	Existing	race, disability, sex, religion and age
Conwy	Corporate Equality Policy, Equality Impact Assessment Policy		

	Language Policy		
Interreg	Commitments in INTERREG regulations and guidance	Current	Broad based See Section 2.6
Outdoor Tourism Project	Commitments in application document	Contractual	Broad based See Section 2.5

6.2 Priority Groups identified

The purpose of this section is to give both the full list of the priority groups as well as highlighting those groups that are priority for the OT project's focus and action. The reason for highlighting a smaller number of groups, is that some groups are more disadvantaged in their abilities to engage in Outdoor Tourism than others. The groups that emerged as strong candidates for prioritisation from the research are highlighted below.

The section also captures the Dialogue and consultation that has taken place and identifies areas for future consultation.

Groups (or "Grounds")	Covered by policy	Prioritised for action by project	Dialogue / consultation
<i>Race</i>	✓	Kilkenny	Community engagement
<i>Travellers</i>	✓	Kilkenny	Community engagement
<i>Disability</i>	✓	Conwy, Outdoor Partnership & others	Consultation & targeted activity
<i>Gender</i>	✓	Kildare, Outdoor Partnership	Advertising,
<i>Age</i>	✓	Conwy, Gwynedd through 5x60, Kildare	
<i>Faith</i>	✓	Outdoor Partnership	Consultation with faith centres
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	✓	None	
<i>Transsexual</i>	✓	None	
<i>Language</i>	✓	Gwynedd, Outdoor Partnership	Consultation with language based centre (Urdd)
<i>Marital status</i>	✓	None	
<i>Family status</i>		None	
<i>Human rights</i>	✓	None	
<i>Other - outside legal</i>	✓		

definitions			
Low income	✓	Kilkenny	Defined client group

6.3 Research, evidence and information regarding groups identified

This section sets out the additional data, information and research that has been undertaken by partners and serves to improve the understanding of the potentially excluded groups and their engagement in Outdoor Tourism.

	Research	Status	Relevance
Kildare	DARA has the CRAIC	Completed project report	Good practice in equalities
	Investing in Equality / Improving Services	Completed project report	Improving services to BME (inc. Traveller) people
Kilkenny Leader Partnership	Refugee integration Traveller projects SCTM	Project outputs	Improved community engagement
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown			
The Outdoor Partnership	Intermediate Labour Market monitoring	WCVA project	Example from project undertaken by OP
	OP equalities monitoring form		Example from project undertaken by OP
Gwynedd	Cynnwys	Completed project report	Project looking at ways to improve service delivery to potentially excluded groups
Conwy	5x60 project	Ongoing Sport Wales project	Leading to rise in young people's participation in Outdoor Activity (also Gwynedd)
Others			
Equality Authority	Equality Benefits Tool	Completed & Publicly available	Tool to help businesses review their equalities practice.
Arthog Outdoor Education Centre	Complex needs guidance	Adopted	Tool to assist in consideration of disabilities needs

6.4 Main barriers and impacts

This section sets out the barriers identified that contribute to unequal access, the impacts of those barriers and the positive actions taken or suggested by the project.

	Barriers	Negative impacts	Positive Actions
Race	Image – narrow and exclusive set of images used by magazines, websites and marketing material, i.e., white, young, elite & active	Deters those who do not have the same profile	
Travellers	The Traveller Community face multiple barriers, not specifically in this sector	General sense of exclusion	Outreach activities, e.g., in Kilkenny (see below)
Disability	Access to and participation in outdoor activities often physical constrained	Can be an absolute barrier in some activities; wider perceptual problem	<p>Accessible Taster Sessions (DLR)</p> <p><i>Wider availability of specialist equipment</i></p> <p><i>Easily accessible community owned disability outdoor kit</i></p> <p><i>Community Chest is available to clubs who can purchase specialised equipment</i></p>
Gender	Exclusivity due to Image and broader gender issues	Not seen as a welcoming and inclusive sector for all	Rock Chicks
Age	Cost, image, accessibility and “Strenuous” activity issues	Issues can combine to mean young and old are seriously under-represented	<p>5x60 Outdoor Education Centres – particularly those with a personal development ethos</p> <p><i>Older people - ?</i></p>
Faith			
Sexual Orientation			
Transsexual			

Language			
Marital status			
Family status			
Human rights			
Other - outside legal definitions			
Low income	High cost of participation in some activities	Overall impression of cost barriers	<i>Taster sessions can help to overcome perception and reality</i>
			Various supported employment opportunities have been used to help local people into work within the outdoor employers in Wales <i>Could also target NEETs for Apprenticeships</i>
Local engagement	Local Authority run centres in Wales not open to locals	Gives impression outdoor activities are not accessible to local people	Schools and youth projects, such as SportWales / 5x60 have increased participation
Overall			
			<i>Targeted marketing campaigns</i>

Actions in italics are suggestions.

6.5 Main responses to address barriers and impacts

In this section the tool is used demonstrate the main actions used to overcome the barriers observed by the project. At this stage the table includes a mixture of actions taken by the project and those undertaken by the project partners with other projects.

	Group	Action	Future Plans
Kildare	Youth Gender - Men	Facebook advertising Athy Men's Shed advertising	
Kilkenny Leader Partnership	Race, Travellers Low income / unemployed	Defined as client group for the project as KLP sets out to work with socially excluded groups, e.g., Traveller Horse Project, OT Project offers a forum for local community engagement for BME people	
	Disabilities	Kayaking for young disabled people with local sports partnership KRSP	
	Young / Old	Offers opportunity to try out activities in a safe environment	
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown	Disabled people	Accessible Taster Sessions Advertise in community newsletters and local newspapers; free communications channels do not exclude any sector of the community	
The Outdoor Partnership	Rock Chicks – all female climbing group	OP assisted group's development	
	Faith	OP consulted Christian Outdoor Centre in	
	Welsh language	OP consulted Urdd (Welsh language) Outdoor Centre as part of apprenticeship research	
		Employment opportunities for young Welsh speaking locals	
		Welsh speaking instructors can be arranged	
	Race	Flexibility in protective headgear for Sikhs	
Gwynedd	Drug & Alcohol rehabilitation clients	Taster sessions arranged for these groups	
	Language	Taster sessions available wherever possible in Welsh or bilingually	
		Many N Wales outdoor businesses and providers offer bilingual promotion, e.g., through websites	
		Individuals at risk of offending and re-offending introduced to Outdoor Activity as diversion and re-integration.	
Conwy	Disability Ski	Engaged in WP5	

	Group		
	Age	“Working across age boundaries” as part of WP5	
	Disability & Health	Bespoke taster sessions	
	Gender	Trying to broaden away from traditional male image	
Outdoor Tourism Project	All Groups	One respondee suggested quotas might help, i.e., reserving a set number of places for people from potentially excluded groups.	
		Citizen’s Charter – statement to demonstrate	
Others			
Local Authority run OE Centres	Race	Many, particularly English-run centres in Wales introduce large numbers of young people from ethnic minorities to Outdoor Activities.	
Arthog	Disability	Nearly all disabilities can be catered for, as long as they are properly planned in.	
	Training	There are issues about the way training is designed and delivered that encourage a “macho” culture	

6. Overall Assessment

The information presented shows that:

- the project is most likely to be in compliance with the legislation in force.
- project partners have a good understanding of equalities issues;
- project partners are committed to equality and inclusion;
- many partners engage in some aspect of inclusive activities, but few do so systematically; and
- although partners and stakeholders are keen to embrace best practice, they are unsure how to go about it.

Some issues do emerge where the project should monitor equalities performance carefully and these are:

- **Race (including Travellers)** – beneficiary data should be reviewed carefully to understand participation in project activities across different ethnicities;
- **Disability** - beneficiary data should be reviewed carefully to understand participation in project activities by people with disabilities;
- **Low Incomes** – This was one of the factors most often mentioned, even though it is not a legally defined “Ground”. Understanding where people live

will help to understand if demography is playing a part in OT project engagement.

- **Gender** – there was some evidence that the sector has a tendency to male domination, to which the existence of women only groups was a response.
- **Age** – young local people were seen to have low levels of participation, a situation that was being addressed through the OT project and other initiatives, such as 5x60. Older people could be a missed opportunity for the sector.
- **Images** portrayed on behalf of the project – ensure they do not reinforce the potential that exists for elitism, focusing on young high disposable income and an associated male bias;
- The **Welsh Language** is a particular issue, with ramifications for equality and inclusion.

In taking these issues forward, there are several key issues to bear in mind:

- a. Need for active monitoring through the project's own beneficiary monitoring;
- b. Need for greater engagement with the representative groups to improve understanding of all these factors and to identify mitigation, where appropriate;
- c. There is an absence of hard data on which to base empirical assessments, so there is a need for ongoing research. The project could fill an important gap by collecting participant data.

There is a *disconnect* between the experience of providers, the views of partners and stakeholders and the views of strategic bodies. This evidences the need for improved dialogue and information sharing.

7 Recommendations

1. Draft and publicise the **Equalities Policy for the OT project to demonstrate that Equality is a priority for the project**. Making this real will need to include appointing an equalities champion (possibly supported by a Working Group) to oversee action plan implementation and lead reporting commitment to Project Management Board and externally.
2. Develop and implement a **common monitoring system** that will enable the project to know what is being delivered to whom, how groups are targeted. This should enable it to gain an overall picture of its impact on equalities issues within its remit and to have confidence that it is delivering its commitments. The monitoring system should use the same or a directly comparable **Equality Impact Monitoring Tool (EqIMT)** and data collection approach. The data collected should be reported publicly, it should be publicly accessible to all stakeholders and it should be actively used to raise performance.
3. Undertake a more **comprehensive programme of consultation** to understand the needs, opportunities and barriers of priority groups.
4. Develop a **capacity building programme** that raises awareness of the need to address equalities issues, and in particular the benefits of doing so.
 - Training materials (& mentoring support) that support the implementation of the monitoring tool should be produced;
 - Develop and implement an “Equality Benefits” mini-programme through which the positive messages should be promoted.
5. Use the information gathered to develop **Positive Targeting Strategy (PTS)**. The PTS will select a series of SMART actions and targets that will demonstrate what can be achieved through well evidenced and well informed project activity and thereby demonstrate the benefits of inclusion and develop a portfolio of good practice within the OT project. Examples could include:
 - Specific taster sessions or similar introductory activity where representatives of the potentially excluded groups have been involved in the design and targeting of the activity.
 - Add further examples
6. Set **minimum standards of inclusion** policy and practice to be observed by all organising and delivering project activities.
 - Develop guidance for all providers regarding outreach promotion, information gathering and practical inclusion.
 - Establish conditionality of support for providers.
7. Review the project’s engagement with the **sector networking bodies** with a view to improving practice and the sustainability of project outcomes.

8. **Communication** – integrate equality and inclusion messages into the communication strategy for the project.
 - Make clear public commitment to promoting equalities in project delivery
 - Integrate equalities messages into project communications, e.g., website, procurement.
9. Supplement the information gathered by the project information collection systems by promoting the **need for research** in this area.
10. Revisit the findings of this work to understand and **report on progress** regarding the Findings, Recommendations and Action Plan at least twice before the end of the project.