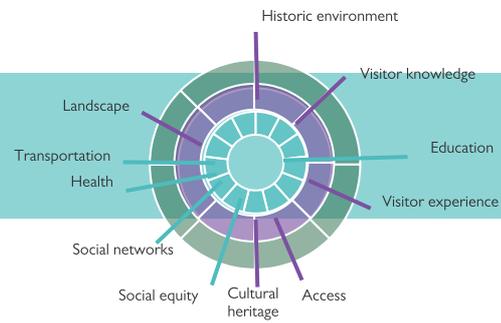


We believe that the National Park should be a landscape for all.

We will overcome the barriers to access experienced by some groups and communities to make the Park a welcoming and widely utilised resource for all.

Welsh indicators for relative deprivation and health outcomes highlight that several of the communities on the peripheries of the National Park are amongst the most economically deprived in the UK and have some of the highest levels of chronic disease, highest levels of mortality from major diseases and lowest levels of life expectancy in the UK ([Headington and MacBride-Stewart 2019](#)).

We know from research that the Park is valued by many within these communities, however there are barriers to access which if removed could provide positive benefits in relation to health and wellbeing outcomes.



Why this is important

Research shows there are strong connections between these communities and the Park. However, for a variety of reasons, not least lack of public transport, access is limited to a few 'known' places restricting the extent of meaningful interactions with the Park.

The barriers to access that these communities face can further add to deprivation experienced. Nature deficit disorder associated with restricted access to green space for informal interaction with the natural environment has been attributed to increased prevalence of anxiety disorders, especially amongst children.

We also know that positive interactions with natural environments are exceptionally beneficial to alleviating chronic stress disorders, especially those forms of chronic stress associated with socio-economic deprivation. Such interactions can be more effective than traditional drug therapy.

How the policy will be implemented

The complexity of socio-economic issues facing these communities suggests that no one solution will meet the challenge. Rather the NPA will coordinate an informal partnership of statutory and voluntary bodies to create a range of interventions aimed at increasing interactions.

Utilising social media and online platforms to provide improved digital access to the Park as a stepped approach to encouraging physical access amongst the most dissociated groups.

Advocating for improved sustainable public transport options from Southern peripheries into the National Park

Engaging with the outdoor activity sector to provide activity taster sessions.

What success looks like

There will be affordable accessible transport from the southern peripheries to the National Park which will be utilised by valleys' residents to access the Park for recreational activity. Some of that activity will be structured and organised by the Authority (or our partners), and some will not.

The environment of the National Park will have played a part in improving health outcomes for some of the most deprived wards in Wales

All barriers to accessing the Park will have been overcome.

How we will measure progress

We will monitor the proportion of visitors to the Park from valley communities using improved survey techniques better at capturing such interactions.

We will monitor health and wellbeing data within these areas, including levels of social prescribing linked to use of the Park from within the valleys' communities