

VALE ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES NETWORK NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2021

Welcome to the first edition of the Vale Adventure Activities Network Newsletter, we hope you enjoy this round up of what has been happening over the past few months.

Contributions

If you would like to contribute an article or join the Vale Adventure Activities Network, contact: Paul Donovan.

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Vision & Mission

The agreed vision subscribed to by the VAAN is: **'Sustainable, enjoyable, respectful & responsible outdoor practices for a healthy Vale of Glamorgan'**.

Its mission is: **'to develop a coordinated approach within the wider adventure activity sector by harnessing the experience, skills and knowledge of its membership and the people they reach to facilitate its vision'**.

Virtual Portal

The VAAN has established its very own virtual portal for all of its members to access, enabling them to communicate with each other and share thoughts/ideas to assist networks developments.



The road to establishing an adventure activities network in the Vale

In 2018, the Vale of Glamorgan (VoG) through its Creative Rural Communities (CRC) team, commissioned Wales Adventure Tourism Organisation (WATO) to undertake a feasibility study to determine the type of 'adventure' appropriate to its 'coast', and highlight some of its findings through a showcase event. Through open consultation event with relevant stakeholders, several 1:1 engagement sessions and two surveys, WATO completed its investigation during 2019, resulting in a report that identified a range of phased (short, medium & long-term) and structured



The Brand Guidelines are currently in draft form but will be agreed shortly, enabling a clear understanding of how and when to use the Brand.

Aims & Objectives

Five core aims & objectives have been identified by the members. They are to provide:

- a means of communication for the members;
- a pro-active role in working with and positively influencing relevant local organisations;
- a support mechanism for members, providing a route to advice and consultation;
- a 'hub' for relevant training and the sharing of 'best practice';
- support in promoting/undertaking environmental improvement projects.

recommendations for the VoG CRC to consider and prioritise in its



work programme over the next five years.

Short term recommendations

The report identified 15 short term recommendations, two of which were prioritised by CRC, with an allocation of funds made available to establishing a Vale based activity network and developing an online portal.

Facilitated by Paul Donovan of Escape Routes, the Vale Adventure Activities Network (VAAN) held its first meeting in October 2020. The interest in being part of this network has grown over the past few months, with 26 people from a range of businesses and organisations joining the network.

Conversations during the four meetings that have been held to date have include topics such as: a VAAN definition of adventure and associated activities; what is the networks vision & mission; how does the network wish to be governed; how might the network identify itself.



The current Covid-19 pandemic has meant that most of the networks meetings have been virtual, although with restrictions relaxed in early December, a Walk & Talk meeting took place along the Glamorgan Heritage Coast. It is hoped that future meetings will

involve a range of activities alongside equally important conversations regarding the ongoing development and sustainability of the network.

