



SOUTH WEST PEAK LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP

FINAL PROJECT REPORT

Name of Project	Mosaic
Delivery Partner	Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA)
Name of Person Completing Report	Helen Betts
Start Date of Project	January 2018
End Date of Project	October 2021
Date of Report	September 2021



Aims and Objectives of the Project

The Mosaic Champion model (more here: [How Mosaic works | Campaign for National Parks \(cnp.org.uk\)](https://www.cnp.org.uk)) is based on the desire to engage more people from under-represented groups in the natural environment. Here we planned to actively recruit new volunteers from four target under-represented groups: black and ethnic minority community, people with health inequalities, young people, and people from deprived communities (i.e. indices of multiple deprivations). These groups have been prioritised by DEFRA. Using our existing contacts developed through the Stepping Stones to Nature Partnership Project and the expertise provided by Peak District Mosaic, we planned to visit

communities in key urban centres surrounding the South West Peak and recruit twelve volunteers into Mosaic Champion roles.

Recruitment would be carried out by the SWPLP Vocational Training Officer (VTO) working with members from Peak District Mosaic (PDM). This would involve the officer and PDM firstly raising the profile of the SWPLP and SWP Mosaic within communities. New volunteers would undergo an informal interview process that would ensure that the twelve champion positions would be filled by enthusiastic and committed individuals. Champions would then be tasked with building a bridge between communities traditionally disconnected from the natural environment and national parks.

Champions would be trained and supported to plan, organise and deliver visits to key places in the South West Peak. They would be expected to introduce people from their own community to the heritage assets of the landscape partnership area, sharing their knowledge and interpreting the South West Peak with small groups of visitors. Each Champion would be asked to introduce one new group to the area, focusing on a destination of their own choice and would be supported to plan their visit by staff from the SWPLP and PDNPA.

Project Delivery

The project was delivered by a combination of staff resource and contractor time to recruit and train volunteer community champions, giving them the skills and the confidence to lead their own visits to the South West Peak or other parts of the Peak District. The original aim was for 12 champions to each organise and lead two visits with 10 participants on each visit, with support provided by staff and mentors.

Staff resource

The project was delivered by the SWPLP Vocational Training Officer whose primary role was delivering the Future Custodians project. Approximately one day a week was spent on the Mosaic project.

Budget resource

The initial planned project budget for Mosaic was £20,400 (figures excluding VAT) and was subdivided as follows, showing planned and actual costs incurred against each budget heading:

NLHF Budget Heading	Example Items	Intended cost	Actual cost
Training for volunteers	Peakwise People training	£6,200	£3,837
Travel and expenses for volunteers	Volunteer PPE - waterproof jacket and trousers for each Champion. Plus travel and support grants c.£200 per Champion	£3,600	£3,045
Other costs (activity)	Venue hire and catering for training events. Plus minibus hire and fuel for visits (£200 per visit)	£3,600	£4,270

Professional fees relating to any of the above (activity)	Peak District Mosaic consultancy fee for advice, mentoring etc	£6,000	£6,386
Publicity and promotion	Marketing for recruitment of volunteer champions	£1,000	£250
TOTAL		£20,400	£17,788

In addition, the project received non-cash contributions of £550 and volunteer time valued at £10,107.

Partnership working – team involvement, steering group etc

The PDNPA Engagement Team delivered ‘Peak Wise People’ training, following a model which had been developed for broader Peak District Mosaic champion training delivered in previous years. One member of the SWPLP team helped provide the training on delivering guided walks as part of this training package.

Three PDNPA rangers provided mentoring for the new champions assisting with training events, initial walks and checking risk assessments. Hill skills training was delivered by the PDNPA Youth Engagement Officer.

Volunteers

11 volunteer champions were trained to lead activities and trips in the South West Peak. 1 additional volunteer helped with the Mosaic celebration event in October 2021 where we brought many of the champions and their families together.

Consultants and contractors

Peak District Mosaic (a registered charity) was contracted to research organisations in Stoke-on-Trent and Macclesfield representing our target audiences and recruit champions from these areas.

A contractor was appointed to deliver a training course in outdoor first aid, which was attended by 7 champions.

Community involvement

Asha is a charity based in Stoke-on-Trent, formed in 2005 to help men, women and children seeking refuge from persecution. They actively promote social inclusion for asylum seekers and refugees. Asha staff and volunteers got involved in this project as both champions and participants.

What Has (and has not) Been Achieved

Outputs

	Intended Output	Delivered Output
1	12 community champions recruited and trained	11 champions were trained

2	336 volunteer hours given by trained champions	325 hours were given by volunteers champions
3	24 visits for new audiences delivered	19 visits were delivered during 2019 and 2021
4	240 people taking part in visits	158 people took part in visits and activities

Key Outputs

The numbers of participants on trips was not as high as hoped due to ability (nervousness and disabilities) of some of the leaders, transport challenges and the impact of the covid-19 pandemic. The overall numbers were boosted by the excellent turn out for the project celebration event on a cold wet Saturday in October 2021.

The number of hours put in by champions compared with the number of trips is higher than expected due to the additional difficulties of arranging trips during 2020 and 2021, and as many of the champions shared the responsibility for trips and supported each other rather than relying on mentors who often lived at some distance.

Outcomes

	Intended Outcome	Delivered Outcome
1	Under-represented audiences are offered support tailored to their individual needs	Champions from BAME, with disabilities, asthma and shyness have been trained and led groups making visits in and around the SWP area.
2	Peak Wise People training will introduce volunteer champions to the South West Peak, explain its value and explore the relevance of the landscape and its heritage to the individual	Many of the trips took place just outside the SWP due to better accessibility, transport links etc, but the general appreciation of the countryside was apparent in the smiles and responses of the participants.
3	Supported field visits, arranged by Champions, for new audiences will offer a safe and enjoyable experience which we hope will encourage future enjoyment	Champions generally supported each other to organise successful trips.
4	More people will know about recreational options and be able to take opportunities to explore the South West Peak in different ways, feeling better as a result of each experience	Participants have taken part in pond dipping, walking, visiting historical places, cycling and canoeing.
5	South West Peak Champions will be advocating on behalf of the landscape within urban communities	One champion in particular wears their SWPLP coat with pride as a talking point.

Key Outcomes

The training delivered to the Mosaic champions (notably Peak Wise People and Hill Skills Training) provided great opportunities to learn and support each other – see the separate case studies for more information.

What Made The Difference

Working with Asha and having the involvement of an organisation in Stoke-on-Trent that needed support and funding to run visits resulted in a productive relationship.

Challenges

Communication with the recruited champions was challenging, the VTO tried using email and phone calls. Very few people responded to emails; phone calls were difficult as some champions did not have very good English skills, and again had to ring several times to get an answer. This was very time consuming and it was more difficult to get the relevant information across compared with using email. Whatsapp proved a better tool for getting quick responses.

The covid-19 pandemic hit this project particularly hard, really highlighting the practical and psychological barriers to accessing the countryside. Many of the champions did not have their own transport, usually relying on lift sharing and public transport, which during the pandemic was unacceptable and undesirable. Some champions came from ethnic minority groups and some had health problems, thus were particularly vulnerable to covid and were understandably more cautious with regards meeting up, even outside.

With the risks from covid slowly reducing, in the summer of 2021, it was important to remember why we were encouraging people to get outside. An email from one champion pointed out how many people struggle with mental health and how being outside can help:

“My availability has changed lots over lockdown and I was considering dropping out as I do not have the commitment/availability anymore, however, over the past few weeks since we have been able to meet friends / family outdoors, I have noticed a huge impact on people's mental health post lockdown and noticed that lots of people have not been in Peak Park (or even out in their local area) for over 12 months.

As that came as such a shock, it changed my mindset on dropping out as I would love to organise the 2 walks for people suffering with low mental health and get them outdoors this Summer.”

The Asha champions were very reliant on one volunteer at the organisation, so if that one person did not come to an event then the other Asha champions didn't either. The Asha organisation was closed for a long time after the covid lockdowns and champions were not allowed to do anything with Asha participants during this period.

Case Studies

See also the separate case study reports on the Peak Wise People and Hill Skills training which are available on our website.

Subina, September 2019

Walk and swim

Subina planned to take 10 family members to Buxton Pavillion Gardens to have a walk around the gardens and go swimming at the indoor pool.

It was unusually cold and wet for September and only three people attended. Subina was disappointed with the group size but also glad as she feels nervous talking in front of larger groups. The VTO recommended that she leads more than her planned two trips but takes out fewer people each time to build her confidence.

Due to covid Subina lost her confidence in trying to organize any trips. She did not respond to any emails, texts, telephone calls or Whatsapp messages from the VTO or her mentor.

Carole, October 2019

Emotional wellbeing weekend

Carole ran an emotional wellbeing weekend for people she had met through her work. Many clients were interested in the weekend but she was disappointed that few came. There were 3 people with emotional and disability needs and they were accompanied by parents, carers and other support workers. Carole was very glad that she did not cancel as she felt that the participants gained a great deal from the weekend.

Carole organized 2 walks over the weekend. Saturday's walk from Back Dane to Hanging Stone was attended by 9 people, 5 people stayed at Back Dane overnight and 8 people attended the walk on Sunday to the Ship Inn.

At our information-sharing event in February, Carole shared what she had learned including to make sure to write everything down when doing a planning walk as you will not remember on the day. Also next time she recommends writing a tick list on what she should take on her walk; she was so busy making sure everyone else was ok she forgot her own bag. This was not serious as she could share water and the first aid kit was in another champion's bag. Carole thought that she could be more flexible when leading so she could check to see if the group wanted to carry on as several people were tired on the second day. The weekend was a great success for the participants in overcoming fears such as heights and being outside, and pushing themselves to achieve more than they thought they could. Both Carole and another participant have volunteered for Back Dane (a residential centre for underprivileged groups) and when choosing a present at a later day another participant chose a boot for her charm bracelet to remind her of the weekend.



13/10/19
Lovely weekend, fab place to
come.
Thank you Lisa.

13/10/19
What an amazing weekend, The place is
lovely and everything you could ever wish for.
Did 2 Great Walks.
Thank you so much.
Michelle, Tia + Holly x

13/10/19 Great place, well maintained
lovely views + great walks
lots to do, love the swings
and playing in the stream
Corde x,
+ Ray.

Guigui & Tasha, December 2019
Asha Football Team walk at the Roaches

In their own words

“The walk on Saturday was a great success. We had 13 young men from the football team plus 7 champions (including Jayne and Carol) and 3 volunteer drivers who also joined the walk. We did a circular walk around the Roaches. Thank you for organising the clothes to borrow and those for ASHA. The hats and gloves were certainly needed alongside boots, trousers and coats.”

The champions are very good at supporting each other on the planned walks. We used NLHF funding to buy hats, gloves and 4 rucksacks before the walk and borrowed boots and waterproof coats from PDNPA engagement team. The Asha champions did a great job in organising this walk at this time of year including providing hot food at a PDNPA centre nearby at the end of the walk.



Photoshoot at the Roaches trig point



Overlooking Tittesworth Reservoir



Hot meal at Marsh Farm PDNPA Volunteer Centre

Tony & Shiya, December 2019

Disability Walk at the Buxton Pavillion Gardens and the Dome

Shiya and Tony took three other people to Buxton for the day. They started in the Pavillion car park, walked up to the Dome, back past the pump room and St Anne's Well and back to the Pavillion. Finally they had a meal before going back to Stoke-on-Trent.





Shiya did a fair bit of research about the Dome to tell the participants but it was the experience of being there that was even more memorable:

"..and we noticed that it had great toilet facilities for the disabled and very good access and parking, what everybody totally enjoyed was the echoing sound of your voice and how it repeated"

The weather was cold and Shiya had to shorten the walk around the gardens, which shows excellent leadership skills in looking after her participants:

"we also found a lovely map at the main gates which was very helpful so we could explain the garden and the size of it, even though we couldn't see it all we've managed to explain some of the features actually in the Gardens"

Shiya later said the walk made them think about themselves and interaction with able-bodied people. Shiya was glad she knew each participants disabilities before the trip, however, she did not realise how much the cold would affect her group but she was able to make changes and keep the group safe.

Misbah & Tasha, December 2019

Asha Visit to Chatsworth

Some of our champions joined in with a Christmas visit to Chatsworth House in Derbyshire, which was organized by Peak District Mosaic and Chatsworth House. Tasha organized the transport for the Asha group and Misbah organized the participants. The visit was attended by 177 adults and children from a wide range of nationalities and cultures coming in by coach from Sheffield and minibus from Stoke-on-Trent. This included 14 asylum seekers and refugees from Asha in Stoke-on-Trent.

Legacy

Skills/knowledge/experience

The trained champions have gained a range of skills and knowledge that, it is hoped, they will continue to use. The enthusiasm generated for exploring the landscape will hopefully continue and be passed on to family, friends and local communities.

Connections/collaboration

The collaboration with Asha worked across SWPLP projects with the group receiving a grant from the Engaging Communities project to provide additional support.

Educational Resources/Other Resources

History training pack from SWP Cultural Heritage Officer

Lessons Learned

Planning ahead

- Don't leave planning of trips to the end of the training course. At the end of each training session give homework to increase understanding and forward planning for organising visits.
- We were too late getting PDM started on scoping opportunities to recruit champions and this was maybe not the best way to recruit.
- PDM are too far away to successfully mentor Stoke champions and do not have enough knowledge of the SWP area.
- We were too late planning training for Peak Wise People, resulting in a clash of events with Asha and needed to rearrange one weekend and additional training (first aid and meet the mentors).
- Training needs to include what the participants carry in their bags as well as the leader. Asha participants did not have bags, planned for food to be eaten indoors but could have done with water and a snack with them.
- The paperwork behind the trips needs tighter control. For the Asha group, champions left some of the finance reporting to staff rather than taking control themselves.

Transport

- Transport poverty – not having access to a car is the biggest deterrent to visiting the countryside.
- More training with buses / timetables map-reading to or from the bus stop to where you live.
- More support needed on estimating timing to walk to catch the bus at the beginning and end of the day. What to do in an emergency – miss the bus, finishing the walk early, getting caught in bad weather, the bus not arriving.
- Factor in poor transport links on Sundays, and the cost of getting to the bus stop.
- Participants should be encouraged to visit local wildlife and access opportunities. The transport links are not suitable for non-drivers to come to the National Park and without the

funding, trips over half an hour away from homes are not sustainable due to the cost of transport.

- For a group with cars a £200 visit allowance for 10 people is great, they can come and hire canoes or have something to eat.
- For a group without cars it costs £200 (bus or taxi to a central place in Stoke then a minibus to attraction or walk area) to get 10 people to the SWP from Stoke. With training on buses and Stoke street maps this could be reduced to £100 but the places they can visit are limited to the bus route and consideration needs to be given for the additional walking from houses and to and from the bus stop (this is a lot to expect of a novice leader).
- Travel costs are higher than our usual volunteer travel allowance allows. More than half our champions are from Stoke. From Stoke-on-Trent to the edge of the South West Peak is a return journey of 25 miles and our usual cap for volunteer miles is 33 per day. We increased the usual volunteer mileage cap to allow for this.

Communication

- Getting used to working with people who do not respond to emails and rarely answer the phone.
- Covid – already some champions and groups nervous of unknown so even after restrictions were lifted they were still unwilling to come out.
- One champion stopped coming or responding to phone calls during the covid period.
- Asha champions and therefore attendees were still dependent on taxis, minibus with driver or cars for transport.
- One champion was shy to contact her mentor but we believe this improved at the information-sharing meeting held in February 2021. One mentor input to the Asha walk in December but could not join the walk and probably mentor attendance was not necessary considering 7 champions did attend. Three mentors did not contribute to visit planning partly due to difficulty in meeting up between Sheffield and Stoke, partly due to the lack of motivation to get in touch by phone or email but mostly due to the Asha group working together and supporting each other to plan.
- There is some issue with some mentors not knowing the South West Peak very well themselves but mentors were invited to a hill walking course which will go some way to improving local knowledge.

Costs

- Spending on food has been higher than expected and is due to trips taking place during December and participants wanting hot food, somewhere warm. For trips in the summer, a maximum limit for lunch per person is advised.

The Big Headlines

1 champion led a Toshi Art (art for everyone) session at the end of project celebration

1 champion excited - "I did it" when succeeding at fire lighting, and the look of pleasure on her face after canoeing.

Several participants getting out to areas themselves after the champion had taken them on a trip.