

Mosaic Wales Mid-term Evaluation Summary

January 2014

The Mosaic project in Wales is a three year project. It started in January 2012 and is due to finish in January 2015. The mid-term evaluation was conducted between October 2013 and December 2013. This paper summarises the conclusions and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation.

Background

The aim of the Mosaic project is 'to cement long-term sustainable engagement between black and minority ethnic (BME) communities and National Parks in Wales'.

The Mosaic project is led by the Campaign for National Parks (CNP). CNP is working in partnership with the Youth Hostels Association (YHA) and with the three National Park Authorities (NPAs) in Wales; Brecon Beacons NPA, Pembrokeshire Coast NPA and Snowdonia NPA.

The project is taking place over a three year period, from January 2012 to January 2015. The project is funded through the Big Lottery Fund's People and Places programme, with cash and in-kind funding contributions from the project partners.

The project has six key outcomes as follows:

- 1) 60 Community Champions with the requisite skills, knowledge and confidence to champion National Parks with people from BME communities.
- 2) 5 Partner organisations (3 NPAs, YHA, CNP) demonstrate concrete examples of changes from strategic to ground level policy, decision making and practice to engage and involve people from BME communities
- 3) Established partnerships and relationships between the local BME voluntary sector and National Parks
- 4) Community Champions are influencing the National Park Authorities through both formal and informal decision-making fora.
- 5) 1,260 people from BME communities have enjoyed the natural environment through participating in activities in National Parks.
- 6) Improved relations and new relationships between urban BME communities and rural communities in the National Parks.

Key Conclusions of the mid-term evaluation

The Mosaic Wales project is working well. The project team is delivering very effectively. The project officers are successfully recruiting champions from the target areas. They are providing excellent support to the champions with the result that one champion cluster has already been established and champions have introduced over 1,000 ethnic minority people to the National Parks for the first time.

The project is making good progress towards its aim of cementing long-term sustainable engagement between ethnic minority communities and National Parks in Wales. The 56 champions have already introduced over 1,000 people from ethnic minority communities to the National Parks, including almost 500 people who have been taken to the National Parks for the first time on visits organised by the champions. The champions are enthusiastic and highly committed. They intend to continue to promote and champion the National Parks beyond the Mosaic project period, but are wary as to whether there will be continued willingness for engagement from the NPAs after the Mosaic support has ended.

The project has produced many inspiring stories about personal growth and development for the individuals who have taken part, both as champions and as participants in champion-led activities. These stories demonstrate what is special about the National Parks and why it is so important that everyone should have the opportunity to enjoy them. The project team should ensure that some of these stories are written up and shared through newsletters, press releases, and on the project website, where they can inspire and encourage others to find out what the National Parks can offer.

The Mosaic Project Business Plan envisages that the partner organisations will make “concrete changes” to improve their engagement and involvement with ethnic minority communities. Few changes have been made and not all partners are clear about what these changes might be. Action in this area should be viewed as a priority for the remainder of the project, with the aim of securing a commitment from the NPAs to adopt at least one proposal for change.

Project delivery

The project is making good progress in delivering the actions and outputs associated with its intended outcomes.

The project is working best in the outcome areas which are most clearly defined and which are underpinned by specific actions with quantified targets (Outcomes 1, 3 & 5). The actions in these areas have resulted in successful recruitment and training of almost the full complement of champions; the establishment of Diversity Outdoors; and almost 500 ethnic minority people visiting the National Parks for the first time.

Evaluations of previous Mosaic projects, and the feedback from the community champion focus group, show that the champions believe very strongly that to maintain their engagement with ethnic minority communities in the long term, the NPAs need to

develop and retain an organisational commitment which goes beyond those staff who are actively involved during the Mosaic project period. Mosaic is seeking changes in the NPAs that would ensure that Mosaic is the starting point, rather than the solution to solving the problem of low ethnic minority engagement with the National Parks.

Measuring economic impacts

The interim evaluation explored ways to measure the economic impact of the Mosaic project.

It would be possible to calculate the direct economic benefits of increasing the number of visitors to the National Parks in terms of increased spending by those visitors. This would be relatively straightforward to do if the NPAs are able to provide detailed data on average spend for local visitors to the National Parks from their STEAM data or other sources. This could be done within the current project period.

The indirect economic benefits arising from improved health and well-being of people who are introduced to the National Parks will not be easy to quantify. An initial review the evidence suggests that there are limited physical health benefits for people who make irregular use of green spaces. There is evidence of psychological benefits from this type of use, but little data on the quantified value of these. Further research required to identify whether there are established economic value data for the psychological benefits of increased access to natural spaces. The Mosaic partners may also wish to consider whether and how future projects of this type might measure the well-being of participants using validated HRQOL scales.

There is an established taxonomy of economic values relating to the natural environment, as used by government departments. This might also be used in calculating the economic impacts of Mosaic, by balancing economic losses from misuse of the natural environment (through littering, trespassing, harm to wildlife etc.) with economic gains from increased understanding and regard for the natural environment.

Project Sustainability

The final year of the Mosaic project should be focused on maximising the potential for the project's aim and outcomes to be sustained beyond the project period. The actions to achieve this should prioritise the following areas:

A continued focus on supporting champions to develop formal or informal clusters;

- Ensuring that all champions have the core skills that will be necessary for them to act independently in the future;
- Seeking a commitment from partner organisations to identify the measures they will adopt to ensure continued work to increase ethnic minority engagement and involvement with the National Parks after the Mosaic project ends. A range of suggested measures is included in this report which may provide a helpful starting point for discussions about what is realistic for partners to commit to. It

would be a fantastic achievement for the Mosaic project if the partners were to seek to be ambitious in their commitments for future work in this area;

- Considering whether any further steps can be taken to establish or strength the relationships between the NPAs/YHA and ethnic minority voluntary organisations,

in addition to those organisations that are represented by the champions;

- Considering whether it would be an achievable and valuable legacy for the Mosaic project to develop a framework for comprehensive ethnicity monitoring within all National Park visitor data;
- Considering whether further actions could be taken to build links between rural organisations and urban ethnic minority communities, particularly by NPAs taking a leadership role in encouraging rural organisations to share the aims and learning from the Mosaic project.

For further information about Mosaic, please visit our website: www.cnp.org.uk/mosaic