

Who: Homan Yousofi
Where: Snowdonia National Park
Lives: Bangor

What has been your best experience in a National Park?



“It was taking a group I brought up from London into Snowdonia National Park. I hired a minibus and took a group of young people from Iran and Afghanistan.

The best bit was seeing their reaction when we got to the top of the mountain and seeing how that went down with them. It was the same as the first time I went up there. Whatever you have in the back of your mind, however you imagine it

beforehand – nothing beats the peace and sense of scale – that fundamental feeling you get when you are out there on the mountain. I can’t really explain that fundamental feeling – it is like letting the landscape do its thing.

“...that fundamental feeling – it is like letting the landscape do its thing”

It was a lovely day and they weren’t expecting north Snowdonia to be that dramatic – it blew them away.

Two of them have said they are doing more outdoors stuff since the visit and they want to come back. The group is in touch asking when are we going to the next one. I’ve been really busy but I want to try and find the money to do another one.

I’d like to take more people from Bangor. I work as a cleaner at the university and there are a lot of international staff and students there who are not aware of what’s on their own doorstep. I’m happy just to put people into the back of my car and take them up there. One of the girls who works there has children and I’ve been thinking about easier routes up the mountain that the kids would be able to do.”

In early 2014 we interviewed nine Community Champions with the Mosaic Project to find out more about the impact National Parks have had on them. Our Case Studies series documents these interviews. To find out more about Mosaic in Wales, please visit www.cnp.org.uk/mosaic

How has visiting National Parks has improved your health or attitude to life?

“Oh yes - I’ve been doing loads, loads more health and fitness stuff and I don’t think it is completely coincidental. I did lots this summer swimming round the lakes and getting into the National Park as much as possible.”

What other green spaces have you visited since learning more about National Parks?

“I’ve been doing the coastal walk. I didn’t have car for ages but then I was gagging to go and do stuff.

I started organising book walks around local writers and poets. So I’d get together a small group and we’d read the book and then walk around where it was set. The books always paled into comparison with the countryside – that was the idea really.

**“You need
National
Parks for the
soul.”**

On our book tours we’ve walked around Dorothea Quarry with poet Rhys Trimble, around Betws y Coed and went up Cwm Idwal. The word has spread and another writer got hold of young Welsh poet Laureate Martin Daws who wants to do one and there are another three or four that are hopefully going to happen. I’m keen to include many people from diverse backgrounds in those walks.”

Would you say that you and your family have adopted a more healthy lifestyle since getting more involved in Mosaic and National Parks?



“Thank you to you guys for running Mosaic – it has been a real inspiration. My parents are going to visit me soon and I told them to start getting fit because we are going to be climbing some mountains. They obviously used to do a lot of mountain climbing in Afghanistan – it’s sort of in the genes – but they haven’t done any in the last 20 years since they’ve been living here. I’m planning to get them back into mountain climbing.”

Why should people care about National Parks?

“National Parks are good for the soul. You’ve got to get out there to see the benefits there are for everyone. It’s easy to get lost in what the world is when you live in the city and you need to get out into National Parks and familiarise yourself with what the world has to offer.”