BOWLES GREEN LTD

With Jonathan Branthwaite Design

Northumberland National Park

Sounding the Sill: Design Your Day

Consultants' Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project was commissioned to identify the best ways to engage young people (aged 11-18) in 'The Sill'. The work involved secondary research, focus groups with young people and pilot projects to test response to different activities.

The recommendations are for three areas of activity, as follows; the rationale for each is also explained.

Develop and Promote a Web Presence Targeted at Young People, because:

- Better information, delivered to young people, is likely to increase the number of visits to the countryside by young people
- Internet use is highest amongst young people and young people are quicker than adults to embrace new technologies
- Use of social networking and sharing sites is growing fast
- The internet is an increasingly important resource for school pupils
- The most common sources of information used to plan countryside visits are older people, organisations, the internet and television
- The most common leisure activities for locally based young people are using the internet (surfing and social networking sites), watching TV, being with friends and undertaking a range of activities/special interests
- Young people would find information on what to do and where to go in the National Park, resources to use when doing homework and competitions useful on the NNPA website

Work Through Existing Youth Organisations to Develop a Dialogue with Young People Guiding the Development of The Sill, because:

- Those living beyond the study area (for example in Hexham) are unlikely to make independent trips into the study area
- Trips by these youngsters into the area are most likely to be organised by a youth club or school
- Youth organisations visit the area for events, thought his tends to be reactive to opportunities offered (for example a ranger offering to organise an event) rather than in any planned way
- The most common sources of information used to plan countryside visits are older people, organisations, the internet and television
- Working through existing youth groups to deliver a programme of activity is a more effective way to engage young people in the countryside than encouraging them to do so independently

Work Through Local Youth Organisations to Develop and Promote a Programme of Activities, Events and Trails for Young People, because:

- The most common leisure activities for locally-based young people are using the internet (surfing and social networking sites), watching TV, being with friends and undertaking a range of activities/special interests
- The most liked aspect of visits to the countryside is discovering unexpected, surprising or unknown things
- The least liked aspect of visiting the countryside is long, boring walks
- For younger people in the age group, decisions to visit the countryside are made by older people – parents, organisations, siblings or older members of groups of friends
- For older people in the age group, decision on trips tend to be suggested by one member of a group then agreed by peers; organisations are also important

- Those living beyond the study area (for example in Hexham) are unlikely to make independent trips into the study area
- Trips by these youngsters into the area are most likely to be organised by a youth club or school
- Youth organisations visit the area for events, thought his tends to be reactive to opportunities offered (for example a ranger offering to organise an event) rather than in any planned way
- Young people are interested in taking part in a variety of activities in the countryside
- The preferred way to learn about the landscape was to undertake activities in the landscape
- Working through existing youth groups to deliver a programme of activity is a more effective way to engage young people in the countryside than encouraging them to do so independently

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   This report describes research work undertaken by consultants Bowles Green Limited, with Jonathan Branthwaite Design, for the Northumberland National Park Authority in connection with the development of its visitor centre at Once Brewed as 'The Sill' - a Centre for Wild Landscapes', with the intention of interpreting the landscape, which is the setting for Hadrian's Wall

Background

1.2   The Sill would complement the existing visitor attractions at Housesteads and Vindolanda, which focus on the Roman story. It would also explain and promote the work of the National Park Authority in managing the landscape.

1.3   The Authority and its partners have undertaken detailed market research which identified a number of target audiences most likely to respond to The Sill. The Authority commissioned the work described in this report to engage with young people aged 11-18 in order to inform the planning of the interpretive content of the new visitor centre.

Aim

1.4   The aim of the Design Your Day project was to identify the best interpretive methodologies to communicate with young people aged 11-18.

Objectives

1.5   The specific objectives of the work are as follows:

- To research how local youth organisations and their members currently use the study area

- To engage at least three groups (and at least 30 individuals) in the project

- To deliver at least three outdoor activities (incorporating sustainable transport) to raise awareness of opportunities to explore and enjoy the study area, and to peer review them

- To involve the target audience in creating and managing a web presence to promote their understanding and enjoyment of the study area

- To design and manage a web presence relevant to the target audience promoting the pilot activities

- To create an advisory/contact group of young people who can advise the continued development of the Sill and other activities in the National Park

- To produce an end of project report with recommendations on how the NNPA can best engage with this group to inform the development and management of The Sill – A Centre for Wild Landscapes

Summary of the Work

1.6   The work was done in five stages, as follows:

1. Briefing and work planning
2. Research – how does the target audience use the study area at present?
3. Pilot projects – planning, delivering and evaluating the pilot projects
4. Analysis and recommendations – drawing conclusions and making recommendations
5. Reporting

Briefing and Work Planning

1.7   An initial briefing meeting was held during which Duncan Wise and Yvonne Conchie of the Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) briefed the consultants, answered the consultants' initial questions and agreed a timetable for delivery of the project. The NNPA officers continued to liaise with the consultants throughout the project and provided information and guidance as required.

Research

1.8   In the first instance, secondary research was undertaken to inform the project; this consisted of:

- Familiarisation with the existing market research undertaken to inform development of The Sill
- Review of research into how people obtain information on visits to the countryside
- Researching social media

1.9   Primary research was then undertaken with representatives of the target audience. This consisted of focus groups to explore how participants engaged with the study area and their perceptions of it, how they would like to engage with it, what kinds of activities, information and promotion would encourage them to engage more and their response to various engagement media.

Pilot Projects

1.10   Three pilot projects of activities in the study area were then planned, delivered and evaluated.

Analysis and Recommendations

1.11   The findings were analysed and the consultants drew a number of conclusions which enabled recommendations to be made for effective ways to engage this audience with The Sill in the future. In addition, draft designs were produced for the media proposals.

Reporting

1.12   Finally draft and final reports were produced.

Outputs

1.13   The specific outputs for the work were as follows:

1.   A Report at an early stage, on how local youth groups and their members currently use Northumberland National Park and Hadrian's Wall and an assessment of how the Authority engages with them, with recommendations for proposed appropriate activities,

2.   At least 3 groups (Minimum of 30 people in total) of young people from target communities engaged, either within formal education or informally, via youth organisations

3.   At least 3 outdoor activities planned, undertaken and peer reviewed, to raise awareness of existing opportunities to explore and enjoy Hadrian's Wall and Northumberland National Park for target audience (to include use of sustainable transport where possible)

4.   New, target audience-led & owned marketing material and populated websites promoting their enjoyment & understanding of Hadrian's Wall Country and Northumberland National Park.

5.   Develop, design and manage the National Park's popular media presence that is used by target audience to promote & discuss these activities, for example, they could capture video and still footage of these activities to be used in the media being developed, improving the Authority's use of media, content & style (e.g. facebook/Bebo/networking pages, geocaches, Google map tags, etc.)

6.   An identified group of young people, or establishments (schools, youth centres) who have developed and want to maintain a positive relationship with the Authority post-project who will be consulted with and invited to contribute to the development of The Sill – A Centre for Wild Landscapes.

7.   A Review report at the end of the project that makes recommendations on how this approach can best influence future activity of the Authority to engage people about their natural and cultural heritage as well as informing the development of the Sill – A Centre for Wild Landscapes

2 RESEARCH

Secondary Research

2.1 Secondary research considered includes the following:

- Recent research into outdoor trip planning by Countryside Council for Wales and Visit Wales and by Natural England
- The National Parks' Mosaic project
- Research into how people use mapped information in the countryside
- Desk research into social media

Outdoor Trip Planning

2.2 The Outdoor Wales research developed a segmentation based on outdoor activity participants which appears to work for holidays, daytrips and local use. It identifies four segments within the outdoor activity market, which have distinctly different behavioural characteristics; these are summarised in the table below:

- Enthusiasts
- Dabblers
- Learners
- Samplers

Table 2: Summary of Outdoor Activity Segments

Segment	Description
Enthusiasts	▪ Regularly take part in an outdoor activity (or activities) and are very keen ▪ Experts in activities that require knowledge and skill ▪ Participation in outdoor activities will usually be the primary purpose of their holidays and day trips
Dabblers	▪ Also keen on an outdoor activity (or activities) but participate only on an occasional basis ▪ Have learned how to undertake their chosen activity (where a degree of skill is needed) and will have some knowledge and skill, but will not be regularly undertaking the activity ▪ Holidays can provide the opportunity to undertake outdoor activities for these people
Learners	▪ Learning an outdoor activity, or seeking to improve their skills
Samplers	▪ Only take part in outdoor activities on a very occasional basis or are trying out an outdoor activity for the first time ▪ Participation in outdoor activities is not a significant part of holidays or day trips for these people ▪ Tend to take part in outdoor activities very much as unplanned secondary holiday and day trip activities

(Source: Outdoor Wales Information Framework, 2006)

2.3 The Outdoor Wales research also identifies five stages in planning and taking a visit at which people seek and use information, after they have taken a decision to visit a particular place (the latter is the domain of promotional material, such as advertising, destination guides and websites) as follows:

Table 3: Summary of Stages of Planning and Taking a Visit

	Stage	Description
Pre Visit	Decision to visit	▪ Triggered by promotional activity
	Research	▪ Finding and booking accommodation and other main components of the trip
	Planning	▪ Finding and planning things to do on the trip – not necessarily booking them in advance, but obtaining information to plan out the trip
During Visit	Arrival	▪ Those who have not planned the trip in advance will seek information at this stage from TICs, accommodation and other sources
	Duration of visit	▪ During the trip, people will require information on local conditions (e.g. weather, tides, etc) ▪ Others will require further information to continue planning or for alternative activities in the event of poor conditions, etc

(Source: Outdoor Wales Information Framework, 2006)

2.4   The above analysis omits the 'return home' stage, which is important for Design Your Day. At this stage, people might want to do one or more of the following:

- ▪ Share information about their experience with others
- ▪ Provide feedback or comment
- ▪ Report and issue/complain about something

2.5   The research also establishes at what stages each of the segments seek information. This is summarised in the table below. It suggests that 'dabblers' and 'samplers' are most likely to look to websites for information on outdoor activities.

Table 4: How Different Segments Use Information

Segment	Research	Planning	Arrival	Duration
Enthusiasts	Research and plan booking of activity packages, accommodation, equipment hire	Research and plan independent activity		Information on local conditions, etc.
Dabblers				
Learners				
Samplers	Research and booking accommodation		Obtaining information to plan visit	Obtaining information on what to do next

(Source: Outdoor Wales Information Framework, 2006)

2.6   The relative proportions of these four segments (and therefore the absolute size of each sub segment) varies for different outdoor activity markets. As a general rule, it appears that more dangerous activities which require a high level of skill, such as climbing, caving and

paragliding have a high proportion of enthusiasts, whereas activities that have a lower entry skill level, such as walking, enjoying nature and mountain biking, have a broader mix of enthusiasts, dabblers and samplers.

2.7 The way in which dabblers and samplers seek information on outdoor activities is different and suggests that the dabblers will be the key target market for on-line mapping information on the Welsh countryside.

- *Dabblers* may use literature and websites for information on outdoor activities at the Research and Planning stages. They may also contact TICs at these stages.

- *Samplers* will not usually plan participation in outdoor activities in advance. Their primary source of information on outdoor activities will be leaflets and guides provided by accommodation establishments, or recommendations from accommodation owners and staff. They will also use TICs for ideas and information on outdoor activity opportunities suitable for their needs.

Outdoors Online

2.8 The Outdoors Online research was commissioned by Natural England to provide guidance on the development of an on-line information service about where to go and what to do in the English countryside. It included questions in an omnibus survey and focus groups to identify relevant target market segments and to explore people's use of the internet for planning trips to the countryside. It was less focused on outdoor activities than the Welsh research. It found that:
- Internet usage was higher than average amongst those who regularly take trips to the countryside (67%) compared to those who do not (51%)
- The most common trip planning activities were:
  o Looking at maps (54%)
  o Route planning (29%)
- Only 5% had used the internet to plan a walking or cycling trip
- 58% said they would be more likely to participate or to participate more in visiting the countryside if there were better information
- 17% of the adult population (11% total adult population) with internet access is very likely to use Outdoors Online and 45% is likely to use it

2.9 Whilst looking at maps and using maps for route planning were common activities for people using the internet to plan countryside visits, it appears that this is mostly to plan routes to be driven to a destination in the countryside and only 5% had used the internet to plan a walking or cycling route.

2.10 Of the 58% who are likely to visit the countryside more as a result of better information (of all kinds, not just on-line information); different groups of people are likely to respond differently. Better information is most likely to have a positive impact on the following, and less of an impact on older people:
- People ages 16 – 34
- Young, independent singles
- Older families
- Young independent couples
- Members of ethnic groups

2.11   Care should be taken in extrapolating the proportion of people who say they would use Outdoors Online, as people tend to over-estimate their interest in research of this kind. It should also be noted that most of those who say they will use the site are already regular visitors to the countryside.

2.12   The researchers also asked and analysed a number of profile and attitude questions in order to identify six market segments, as follows:

Table 5: Outdoors Online Segmentation

Segment	Description	Participate in Monthly Outdoor Recreation	Likely to Use Outdoors Online
Experience seekers	17% of population - AB, comfortably off - Higher than average proportion take outdoor trips	71%	69%
Active greys	12% of population - AB, retired, wealthy achievers - Higher than average proportion take outdoor trips	74%	53%
Active couples	17% of population - C1C2, urban prosperity - Higher than average proportion take outdoor trips	68%	53%
Juggling families	17% of population - BC1s, relatively wealthy, starting out - Lower than average proportion take outdoor visits	54%	43%
Struggling singles	21% of population - C2DE, moderate means, hard pressed - Low proportion take outdoor visits	33%	26%
	15% of population - Retired, wide SEG spread - Lower than average proportion take outdoor visits	49%	18%

Restricted retirees			

(Source: Natural England Outdoors Online research, 2007)

2.13   From analysis of the segmentation, it was concluded that four segments are most likely to be influenced to take countryside trips or to take more countryside trips through the provision and promotion of Outdoors Online, as follows:

- Juggling families – older children
- Active couples
- Active greys
- Juggling families – younger children

2.14   There would appear to be some similarity between the 'active couples' and juggling families' segments and 'young explorers' and 'explorer families'. Neither of these research projects took account of the behaviour of young people.

2.15   Focus groups undertaken with representatives from each of these 'priority' market segments explored people's information needs in more depth and found that:

- More urban places, close to home where walks or other countryside activities might be undertaken were not considered as 'outdoors'
- Taking short walks or rides close to home and longer 'days out' are seen as distinctly different activities
- The internet was considered a helpful source of information for planning routes (though mostly where to drive)
- Quality of information on destinations for days out was considered to be very 'variable' and often dominated by sites promoted by big, commercial sector organisations
- Awareness of websites with outdoor recreation information is low
- Websites must function properly and quickly and be easy to use otherwise users will become bored and move on

2.16   When asked specifically about what they thought should feature on the Outdoors Online website and how it should work, the key findings were as follows:

- It must be comprehensive, accurate, quick, up to date, not too commercial
- No point in duplicating existing information – hot links
- It should contain
    o Ideas for days out, activities and events
    o Ability to search by specific places, specific things to do within distances of a town or postcode
    o Route planning with printable driving instructions
    o Local weather forecast
    o Opportunity for feedback to give user comments on sites visited (participants liked sites where they could read other people's opinions about places they are considering visiting)
    o Public transport information
    o Information on disabled access provision
    o Information on other facilities available close to the countryside site – e.g. places to eat and drink, other things to do
    o Information on play facilities

       o   Information on wildlife and especially seasonal wildlife events

Mosaic

2.17   The Mosaic Project is a national project involving all National Parks in England. It aims to strengthen links between National Parks and the Black and Minority Ethnic communities in their respective urban communities nearby, through the recruitment of 'community champions'.   The project has been well received by those participating in the scheme and more visits are being planned as a result.

2.18   This model of 'recruiting community champions' has also been applied successfully in Dartmoor and Exmoor in supporting young 'champions' who encourage other young people to visit or engage with the park. This information only became available to the current project whilst the pilot projects were being developed, but it has been incorporated into the analysis and recommendations stage of work.

Mapped Information

2.19   Research into how people use mapped information on leisure trips in the countryside[1] demonstrated that there re significant differences in the way different people understand and use mapped information.

2.20   Three independent but linked systems, which take place in different parts of the brain, are used to understand mapped information. These are:

- Landmark Knowledge – the ability to recognise individual landmarks and associate actions to them
- Route knowledge – the ability to join together a series of landmarks and actions in order to follow a specific route
- Survey Knowledge – the ability to understand the relative positions of different landmarks even if they cannot be seen, so that complex decisions can be made, for example calculating an alternative route if a way is blocked or taking a short cut

2.21   There are some differences in people's ability to understand and use maps. Women rely more on landmark knowledge than men and men rely more on survey knowledge than women. However, it is also true that not all men rely more on survey knowledge than women. Similarly, children, older people and people with less experience of visiting the countryside and of using maps seem to struggle with survey knowledge – i.e. reading a map.

<u>Education</u>

2.22   Children are taught map reading at school. In the National Curriculum, map-reading skills (using OS maps) are specifically mentioned in recommended guidance on schemes of work at Key Stage 3 for Year 7 pupils. All school age children get some educational experience at this point. Ordnance Survey has made available free OS Explorer Maps for Year 7 pupils, with more than 700,000 maps distributed across Great Britain each year. The map becomes the pupil's personal property for use at home as well as school. A potential 3.8 million could have benefited by having a map of their own to keep.

2.23   A study carried out for the initial year of the OS scheme, shows that:

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[1] Countryside Mapping Scoping Study, August 2008, Bowles Green Limited

- Children who go out and about in rural areas are more likely to become better map readers than those confined to urban areas
- The mapping skills of pupils in inner urban schools were significantly more limited than those attending schools in rural areas
- Pupils who walk or cycle to school tended to have significantly higher standards of map-reading skills than those driven on the home-school run
- Children who travelled more widely in their neighbourhoods by walking or cycling became more aware of their surroundings and so may go on to develop better map skills

2.24   The OS research also found that the free maps scheme is having an impact on the children who participated. Since the launch of the initiative:

- The number of pupils confident in their understanding of maps has doubled
- The number of pupils who enjoy using maps has trebled
- The proportion of children who perceive maps as important has doubled.

2.25   At A level a relatively high level of map reading skills is developed in a theoretical way as students use maps for a variety of purposes. They do not, however, specifically develop further navigational skills.

2.26   Overall, the number of school pupils studying geography (and therefore developing higher map reading skills) is falling. Geography remains in the top ten most popular subjects studied at GCSE, but numbers are falling. In 2007, 213,124 students sat the subject at GCSE, but this represented an 11 per cent fall on 2003. At A level, the number of students also fell by more than 11 per cent, to 31,653 over the same period. In addition, OFSTED reported recently that there has been a massive decline in opportunities for fieldwork and trips at all levels.

2.27   Other youth organisations active in the outdoors – Scouts Association, Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, Army Cadets principally, all develop navigation skills using OS maps. OS maps are the de facto standard used in the development of map reading and navigation skills for young people in education in the UK, though the percentage that achieves any degree of competence is small. It also does not mean that the OS format is necessarily the best format for use by the population as a whole or even by young people – just that it is widely available.

Technology

2.28   Rapid changes have occurred in technology in the last 5-10 years and younger people are quicker to embrace them than older people; they include:

- Mapping and aerial photography available electronically on CD-ROMs and on the internet
- Electronic mapping working in conjunction with hand-held GPS units
- Mobile telephones with internet access
- Mobile telephones with GPS
- Satellite navigation systems
- The first tablet computer – the I-pad
- The forthcoming launch of I-phone4 which will further push the boundaries of how we use hand-held communications devices

2.29   One consequence of the proliferation of satellite navigation devices is that people increasingly use postcodes as a means of locating a particular place. Postcode references are more widely available and easier for people to use than grid references.

2.30   Many recreation planners and managers are unfamiliar with, or at least not regular users of these new technologies, whilst a growing proportion of the public, especially younger people, use them frequently. An increasing number of organisations now provide route maps as downloadable files on their websites and some have experimented with providing mapping for outdoor recreation using new technology. However, for most recreation managers this area is one they do not fully understand and an area where guidance is required. Many recreation planners think new technology is a serious threat to map reading, however, it is also a significant opportunity.

2.31   Whilst providing maps as downloadable files is cheaper than printing them, doing this as an alternative to producing and distributing printed maps will exclude some groups (older people, less well-off people, people with learning difficulties, etc). Some useful guidance is available on the provision of downloadable maps, as follows:

   ▪ Ensure a quick download
   ▪ Remember most people's printers take A4 paper
   ▪ Users' printers might be of poorer quality than the ones you are used to so keep mapping simple

2.32   The over-riding message from the mapping scoping research is that people use a variety of strategies for reading/interpreting mapped information and, though there are differences in the way different types of people understand mapped information, these are not definitive. For example although males in general understand and can use maps better than females, some females understand maps better than some males. The same appears to be so for the other two continuums identified above – age and experience.

2.33   The research concludes that good practice is to supply information in a variety of forms – mapped, waymarks and written route descriptions, so that the widest possible audience will be able to understand it. Tables 6 and 7 below provide a summary of the different types of map user and the kinds of information recreation managers should put in place to help them.

Table 6: Characteristics of Different Map Users

Male		Female	
▪ Use survey knowledge Good at using maps for navigation		▪ Use landmark knowledge ▪ Experience high levels of anxiety over getting lost	
Younger	**Mid-aged**	**Older**	
▪ Struggle to understand the environment other than from their own perspective	▪ Better at reading maps	▪ Lose the capacity to understand mapped information	
Experienced		**Inexperienced**	
▪ Good at reading mapped information ▪ Can understand mapped relief		▪ Mapped relief confuses the inexperienced ▪ Experience high levels of anxiety over getting lost	

Table 7: Information for Different Map Users

Male	Female	
O/S style maps	▪ Waymarks linked to simple maps	
Younger	**Mid-aged**	**Older**
▪ Waymarks linked to simple maps	▪ O/S style maps	▪ Waymarks linked to simple maps ▪ Written route description
Experienced	**Inexperienced**	
▪ O/S style maps	▪ Waymarks linked to simple maps ▪ Written route description	

2.34   Further aspects of good practice, which can be drawn from the scientific and the anecdotal review are as follows:

▪ Promotional leaflet maps should show site in relation to major roads, settlements and significant features or landmarks. They should include a grid reference and a postcode (this can be used by satellite navigation devices)
▪ Use 3-D illustrated maps for promotion, orientation, interpretation and landscape appreciation
▪ Use flat maps preferably linked to features and waymarks for navigation
▪ Use colour in a simple and consistent way, as follows:
  o Brown – with lighter to darker shading to denote height
  o Green for woodland
  o Blue for water features
▪ Only use contours if you shade the space between as suggested above
▪ Using dotted lines for routes enables the viewer to see what the route is crossing over/through
▪ Produce downloadable maps at A4 size, ensure they load quickly and keep them simple so that they reproduce on poor quality printers, but beware copyright issues also the 'currency' of the map data
▪ Make sure that maps on panels are aligned to the perspective of the viewer
▪ Where possible, also ensure that maps on leaflets are also aligned from the perspective of the viewer – i.e. from the main arrival point (this is more difficult when there are multiple arrival points of equal importance

Social Media Research

2.35   Research was undertaken within the current project to understand the nature, popularity and trends in the use of various forms of social networking based on the use of Web2. It should be noted that this is a very fluid sector – new platforms are being introduced constantly and the popularity of different platforms is changing constantly. The description here, therefore, will require regular up-dating to take account of change.

2.36   Web 2.0 is commonly associated with web applications that facilitate interactive information sharing, interoperability, user-centred design and collaboration. Examples of Web 2.0 include web-based communities, web applications, social-networking sites, video-sharing sites and blogs. The key fundamental to Web 2.0 is that is allows its users to interact with other users, or to change website content, in contrast to non-interactive websites where users are limited to the passive viewing of information that is provided to them.

2.37   User generated content is partially or totally monitored by website administrators to avoid offensive content or language, copyright infringement issues, or simply to determine if the content posted is relevant to the site's general theme.

2.38   The popularity of Social Media continues to rise rapidly in the UK, now accounting for almost 11% of the share of UK Internet visits – continually closing the gap on search and entertainment websites. The most popular and common social media platforms online are:

- Facebook (Social Network)
- Bebo (Social Network)
- YouTube (Video Sharing)
- Vimeo (Video Sharing)
- Flickr (Photo/Image Sharing)
- Twitter (Micro-Blogging)
- WordPress (Blog)
- Tumblr (Blog)
- Blogger (Blog)

Social Networking

2.39   A social network service focuses on the building and reflecting of social networks or social relations among people, e.g., people who share interests and/or activities. A social network service essentially consists of a representation of each user (often a profile), his/her social links, and a variety of additional services. Ultimately, social networking sites allow users to share ideas, activities, events, and interests within their individual contacts/networks.

2.40   A report from The Nielsen Company showed that there has been a huge increase of 82% in time spent on social networking sites. Across the globe over the past year average time spent on social networking sites grew from 3 hours per month to 5.5 hours. In addition Nielsen concluded that overall social media sites such as Facebook are now the most common homepages for users and that people now spend the majority of their internet time using social networks or blogs. In May 2010, hits on social networking sites exceeded hits on Google for the first time and Facebook hits exceeded Google hits in the USA for the first time (Experian Hitwise).

Facebook – *www.facebook.com*

2.41   Facebook is a social networking website intended to connect friends, family, and business associates. It is the largest of the networking sites. It began as a college/university networking website and has expanded to include anyone and everyone.

2.42   Facebook users create a profile page that shows their friends and networks information about themselves. The profile typically includes the following: Information, Status, Friends, Friends in Other Networks, Photos, Notes, Groups, and the users 'wall'. Users can add friends and send them messages.

2.43   Facebook has over 400 million users worldwide, with an estimated 700,000 new users per day, and 21 million new users per month. Facebook's growth in the UK continues with a reported 24 million active users. It now accounts for over half of all visits to social networking sites in the UK, with YouTube sitting in second with over 17% of visits.

2.44   Anyone over the age of 13 with a valid e-mail address (and not residing in one of the countries where it is banned) can become a Facebook user.

2.45   Key applications within Facebook:

- Photos - where users can upload albums of photos, tag friends, and comment on photos. The unlimited amount of storage available gives Facebook a major advantage over other social networking sites that have photograph sharing capabilities, making it the number 1 photo sharing application on the web.
- Videos - Users can add their videos by uploading, adding video through Facebook Mobile, and using a webcam recording feature. Additionally, users can "tag" their friends in videos they add much like the way users can tag their friends in photos. Videos cannot be placed in categories, whereas photos are sorted by albums .

Facebook Pages and Groups

2.46   Facebook allows different networks and groups to which many users can join. Groups are used for discussions and events etc. Groups are a way of enabling a number of people to come together online to share information and discuss specific subjects. They are increasingly used by clubs, companies and public sector organizations to engage with stakeholders – be they members of the public, employees, members, service users, shareholders or customers. A group includes but is not limited to the following: the members who have joined, recent news contents, discussion board contents, wall contents, photos, posted items, videos and all associated comments of such items. In this respect, groups are similar to pages but contain more features.

2.47   Individuals or organisations can create "Pages" which allows users to "become a fan" of the individual, product, service, or concept. Facebook Pages can be thought of in much the same way as normal profiles on the site – brand or celebrity Pages have the ability to have friends, they can add pictures, and they have walls that fans can post on. Pages communicate by "updates" which show on the update tab or a person's wall if they're a fan and have allowed the page to show updates. They have two walls, one of what the Page owner writes, and one just for fans to write their own messages. Like a normal Facebook profile, Pages have tabs that uncover more information. Pages can have applications so a Page can essentially be more personalized and show more content.

2.48   Facebook Groups are set up for more personal interaction. Groups are also directly connected to the people who administer them, meaning that activities that go on there could reflect on you personally. Pages, on the other hand, don't list the names of administrators, and are thought of as a person, almost like a corporate entity. Facebook considers groups to be an extension of your personal actions. When you post something as a group administrator, it appears to be coming from you and is attached to your personal profile. Pages, on the other hand, can create content that comes from the Page itself, so that content doesn't have to be linked to you personally.

2.49   Groups offer far more control over who gets to participate. Permissions settings make it possible for group administrators to restrict access to a group, so that new members have to be approved. Access to a Page, however, can only be restricted by certain ages and locations. This makes groups more like a private club.

2.50   Neither Groups nor Pages have great moderation features. They can both be a little granular as to how things get posted, who can post, and what kind of media can be posted, but that's about it. Also, if someone posts spam on your Group or your Page, you have to remove it

manually, and you can also remove specific members. One key difference between Groups and Pages is that Pages are indexed by external search engines such as Google while Groups are not.

Bebo *– www.bebo.com*

2.51   Bebo is similar to other social networking sites. Each profile must include two specific modules, a comment section where other users can leave a message, and a list of the user's friends. Users can select from many more modules to add. By default, when an account is created the profile is private, which limits access to friends specifically added. The user may select the "Public Profile" option so as the profile will still be visible to any other members of a school they may have joined. Profiles may be personalized by a design template that is the background of the user's profile, known as a skin.

2.52   Members can view the recent changes friends have made to their homepage from the 'Home' menu. These changes can include uploaded photos, updated flashboxes, videos and friends. A friend's updates to Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and other services can also be viewed, if those friends have linked those accounts to their Bebo profile.

2.53   Bebo's success is fully UK-based: It is visited by 12% of online Britons, compared with just 1% of the US online population. Over half of Bebo's users are 24 and under – the largest demographic being 17 and under.

Video Sharing

YouTube *– www.youtube.com*

2.54   YouTube is a video sharing website on which users can upload and share videos. Unregistered users can watch the videos, while registered users are permitted to upload an unlimited number of videos. Videos that are considered to contain potentially offensive content are available only to registered users over the age of 18.

2.55   Videos uploaded to YouTube by standard account holders are limited to ten minutes in length and a file size of 2 GB. One of the key features of YouTube is the ability of users to view its videos on web pages outside the site. Each YouTube video is accompanied by a piece of HTML, which can be used to embed it on a page outside the YouTube website. This functionality is often used to embed YouTube videos in social networking pages and blogs.

Vimeo *– www.vimeo.com*

2.56   Vimeo is a video-centric social networking which launched in November 2004. The site supports embedding, sharing, video storage, and allows user-commenting on each video page. Users must register to upload content. Registered users may also create a profile and upload small user pictures as their avatars, comment and "like" videos.

2.57   Vimeo does not allow anything not created by the user to be hosted on the site. Vimeo has gained a reputation as catering to a high end, artistic crowd because of its high bitrate, resolution, and relative HD support.

2.58   As of March 2010, Vimeo has over 3 million members and an average of more than 16,000 new videos uploaded daily

Photo/Image Sharing

Flickr – *www.flickr.com*

2.59   Flickr is an image and video online community. In addition to being a popular website for users to share and embed personal photographs, the service is widely used by bloggers to host images that they embed in blogs and social media.

Micro-Blogging

Twitter – *www.twitter.com*

2.60   Twitter is a social networking and micro-blogging service that allows people to communicate and share information by sending short text messages, 140 characters in length, called "tweets", to their friends or "followers."

2.61   The short format of the tweet is a defining characteristic of the service, allowing informal collaboration and quick information sharing that provides relief from rising email and instant messaging fatigue. Twittering is also a less gated method of communication: you can share information with people that you wouldn't normally communicate with, opening up your circle of contacts to an ever-growing community of like-minded people.

2.62   Twitter has many uses for both personal and corporate use. It's an easy way to keep in touch with friends and quickly broadcast information about where you are and what you're up to.   For business, Twitter can be used to broadcast your company's latest news and blog posts, interact with your customers, or to enable easy internal collaboration and group communication.

2.63   When you just can't wait for information, Twitter can't be beaten for getting your question to a large group. It's impractical to do this with e-mail. People's inboxes are already cluttered with spam and you have no way of getting your message to people you don't know. Also, through "re-tweeting," a message can reach a large number of people who aren't on your follower list. This brings new perspectives to the conversation and gives you the opportunity to discover people you wouldn't have otherwise met.

2.64   The fastest growing segment on Twitter is among people 24 and younger. However, unlike most social networks Twitter started out being more popular with adults before it caught on with younger users. This changed as celebrity tweets caught on, and mainstream media started talking about the service more. At the end of 2009, more than 30% of Twitter's visitors were under 25, according to comSource.

2.65   However, despite the media coverage and growth of Twitter over the past year the micro-blogging site makes up only around 2% of visits to social media sites in the UK, only just surpassing Bebo.

Blogs

WordPress – *www.wordpress.org*

2.66   WordPress is a state-of-the-art publishing platform with a focus on aesthetics, web standards, and usability. WordPress started as just a blogging system, but has evolved to be used as a full content management system that can be integrated into any website and so much more through the thousands of plug-ins, widgets, and themes.

2.67   Used by over 2% of the 10,000 biggest websites, WordPress is the most popular blog software in use today. It uses different levels of authorization for publishing and moderating – these are administrator(s), control over everything and contributors. Contributors have few privileges allowing only to write and submit, giving the administrator(s) final power in publishing.

2.68   Administrators have access to the whole site content, allowing full management of pages and posts, as well as the ability to grow the site. Published posts have the ability to be commented on; however again, comments can be sent for approval from the administrator(s) to prevent un-authorized content.

Tumblr – *www.tumblr.com*

2.69   Tumblr is a blogging platform that allows users to post text, images, video, links, quotes, and audio to their tumblelog - a short-form blog. Users are able to "follow" other users and see their posts together on their dashboard. Users can "like" or "reblog" posts from other blogs on the site. The service emphasizes customizability and ease of use.

2.70   Tumblr is used by millions of people, sharing the things they do, find, love, hate, think or create. The average Tumblr user creates 14 original posts each month and re-blogs 3 times. Half of those posts are photos. The rest are split between text, links, quotes, music and video.

Blogger – *www.blogger.com*

2.71   Blogger is a Google blog storage service that allows private or multi-user blogs with time-stamped entries. It is funded by on-screen ads. Generally, the blogs are hosted by Google at sub-domains of blogspot.com.

2.72   Unlike other web-publishing tools such as WordPress and Tumblr, Blogger has severe limitations in that individual pages are limited to 1MB each, the blog as a whole has 1GB storage for photos and images which must be linked through the users Picasa (Google Photo Sharing network) account, and the contributor access is capped at 100 users.

Other Relevant Media Trends

Internet Use

2.73   A number of organisations are researching use of the internet and in general, the following appears to be the case:

- Use of all forms of internet access continues to increase worldwide (though more slowly in countries that have well developed levels of use already)
- Two thirds of the UK population now have regular access to the internet
- Access to broadband is increasing, allowing people to download larger files more quickly
- Mobile internet access is increasing considerably faster than PC internet access in the UK
- Increasing time spent on the internet is reducing the amount of time people spend watching TV, but does not appear to be reducing time spent on other activities

2.74   Overall access to the internet has increased rapidly throughout the UK in recent years. Tables 8 and 9 show the proportion of households with internet access and the type of internet access.

Table 8: Percentage of UK Households with Internet Access

Year	Internet Access
2006	57%
2007	61%
2008	65%
2009	70%

Source: Office for National Statistics

Table 9: Percentage of UK Households with Broadband Connection

Year	Broadband Connection
2006	40%
2007	51%
2008	56%
2009	63%

Source: Office for National Statistics

2.75   It is clear that the use of the internet and recently use of the internet accessed by mobile devices have grown to become the most important sources of information on a range of topics, including travel. In addition the use of social networking sites is growing rapidly. Some key research findings, identified through internet research, are summarised here:

- 77% of UK web users have bought on-line, the highest proportion of any country surveyed (Web Usage Survey, Ipos Reid, 2003)
- Between 2000 and 2003 use of on-line banking doubled from 20% to 37% amongst web users in the USA, Canada, the UK and Germany (Web Usage Survey, Ipsos Reid, 2003)
- More than two thirds of web users sent pictures or video clips (Web Usage Survey, Ipsos Reid, 2003)
- 64% of school pupils see the internet as highly useful with endless possibilities (Connected, The Jerusalem Trust, 2009)
- 82% of school pupils spend at least one hour a day logged onto the internet and 61% use it for research purposes; 57% never use a library (Connected, The Jerusalem Trust, 2009)
- 77% of school pupils own a games console and 72% use it for at least 1 hour a day (Connected, The Jerusalem Trust, 2009)
- 65% of school pupils use their mobile phones more than they did a year ago; 55% use e-mail more than they did a year ago (Connected, The Jerusalem Trust, 2009)
- 7.5 million UK residents now access the internet through their mobile telephones (Neilson Research, 2008)
- Mobile access of the internet increased eight times faster than home/PC access in 2008 (Neilson Research 2008)

- Mobile internet is increasingly popular with young people; 25% of mobile internet users are aged 16 – 24 (Neilson Research, 2008)
- 96% of UK 16-24 year-olds access the internet and 86% of them access the internet every day as opposed to 73% on average (Office for National Statistics)
- 40% of UK residents used a social networking site in 2009 compared to 20% in 2008 (Office for National Statistics
- 6% of UK residents used a WiFi point in 2009 compared to 2% in 2008

2.76   The fact that mobile internet access is increasing rapidly, especially amongst young people (which suggests that this activity will grow in the longer term as younger people age), has been recognised by marketers who are developing increasingly sophisticated methods of reaching this market.

2.77   Whilst a body of research now suggests that mobile internet access in increasingly used by a high proportion of mobile phone users, especially the young, the use of this platform for accessing information for trips to the countryside is not known.

Mobile Phone Apps

2.78   The research also identified some important trends in use of the internet in general. Since the launch of the I-phone, applications, or 'apps' have developed as an important way to obtain and communicate information. The availability and use of apps has increased and this growth is likely to continue with the recent launch of the I-pad and the I-phone 4. In fact, during his keynote speech at the launch of the I-phone 4, Apple director Steve Jobs announced that in the previous week (week ending 4th June 2010) Apple had recorded a total of 5 billion app downloads to date from the Apple App store. At present, only a small number of visitor destinations or attractions have an App, but the number is likely to grow rapidly in the future. The National Trust App is easy to use and becoming increasingly popular[2].

Mobile Phone Targeted Advertising

2.79   The mobile phone advertising market is well established. It is currently dominated by Google and Microsoft. However, in April 2010, Apple launched I-ads. This enables advertisers to deliver adverts to mobile phone owners as they enter a specific geographic location. Including a unique voucher number in the ad enables recipients to obtain a discount on a service, enabling accurate diagnostics on conversion.   This method of geographically delivering adverts has opened up a new level of targeting and presents interesting opportunities for visitor destinations[3].

Primary Research

2.80   Three primary research projects were proposed in order to inform this project, as follows:

- Focus groups with youth groups
- A multi-media focus group
- On-line survey promoted through schools

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[2] http://live.gdgt.com/2010/06/07/live-wwdc-2010-keynote-coverage/#11-55-25-am
[3] http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/how-apples-new-iphone-brings-minority-report-a-step-closer-to-reality-1940723.html

2.81   In the event, the project took place during the spring and into the summer term and schools were not able to participate in the on-line survey because teachers were committed to revision timetables and exam programmes. However, the focus and multi-media discussion groups took place, as described below.

Focus Groups

2.82   In order to inform the development of pilot activity sessions, a multi-media project and youth advisory panel, two focus groups were organised. The topic guide of questions was discussed in advance with NNA staff and youth group organisers. Both focus groups were held on 24th March, 2010, as follows:

- Members of Hexham Youth Initiative, aged between 13 and 16, mostly resident in Hexham (7 participants)
- Members of Greenhead Youth Club, mostly aged 11-12 (range 10-15), resident in Greenhead, Haltwhistle and surrounding area (12 participants)

2.83   Because of the ages of participants, the Hexham group can be considered representative of the views of older members of the target audience and the Greenhead group of younger members. Participants were recruited by the youth group leaders. Youth group leaders were present throughout both group sessions in order to comply with these organisations' child protection policies.

2.84   Bowles Green Limited provided parental consent forms. In the event, these were not used. Both youth organisations are in possession of blanket consent forms from participants' parents on condition that a youth group leader is present at activities, which involve adults from outside of the club.

2.85   A topic guide was developed to guide the sessions (a copy of this is included in the appendix) and sessions were recorded and transcribed to aid analysis. The questions asked of the participants were as follows; a summary of the responses is provided in the following paragraphs:

- What do you do in your leisure time?
- Thinking about the things you do on day trips, what are the aspects you like most and why?
- Thinking of the last time you planned a day trip, how did the decision come about?
- Again thinking about the last day trip you made, where did you find information in advance of the trip
- And what sources of information did you use on the trip itself?
- What is your impression of these (sample) designs?
- Are there things that you would like to do in the countryside, but currently don't or can't?
- Would you be interested in these (sample of) activities?
- How do you share your experiences with friends and family when you get home and are there additional ways in which you would like to do this?

What do you do in your Leisure Time?

2.86   The most common leisure time activities were computer-related – either communicating with friends (chiefly on Facebook – MSN was used by some of the older group, but the

younger ones found this and other social networking sites including Bebo to be boring/less attractive) or generally surfing the web – or involved spending time with friends. Participants also took part in several special interests or activities, including attending a youth club, BMX biking, playing football, listening to music and dancing.

2.87   Those who lived in the countryside (Greenhead and surrounding area) were more likely to take part in country walks (alone or with friends), making dens and playing on quad bikes or motorbikes. Participants from both groups were taken on trips to the countryside and other places by their parents.

Thinking About the Things you do on Day Trips, What are the Aspects you Like Most and Why?

2.88   Likes ranged fairly widely, subject to individual tastes and interests, but participants from both groups enjoyed the 'unexpected' aspects of visiting the countryside, for example stumbling across a previously unknown feature, 'finding things you don't expect like old buildings, caves 'n stuff' (Josh, 15, Greenhead) or an interesting area of riverside 'searching for stuff down by the burn (Brandon, 22, Greenhead).

2.89   Negative aspects included long, dull walks, walking up hill and walking through mud. Though the latter was also a source of amusement as two participants at Hexham looked back with laughter about losing a boot in the mud, "actually it was quite funny, we'll remember that" (Laura, 13, Hexham).

2.90   Whilst most felt that being taken on a long walk was boring, there was recognition of the benefits of a country walk 'sometimes you just need to get out of the house and have a good long walk' (Janice, 16, Hexham).

Thinking of the Last Time you Planned a Day Trip, How Did the Decision Come About?

2.91   For younger children, the decision is usually made by a parent (in relation to family trips out) or by an older child in the group 'the oldest one basically (makes the decision), (Dan, 12, Greenhead). Older children tend to make decisions collectively. One in a group will suggest something, the idea is discussed and either rejected or accepted.

2.92   For both groups, organised trips, either with family, school or youth club (for Duke of Edinburgh training) were important 'motivators' of countryside visits.

Thinking About the Last Day Trip you Made, Where Did you Find Information in Advance of the Trip

2.93   Younger children used only their existing knowledge to plan their own (essentially local) trips into the countryside. Otherwise they relied on the knowledge/leadership of older children (siblings of friends), parents or youth clubs.

2.94   Older children obtained information on things to do and places to go (not just in the countryside) from a variety of places, including – recommendations from friends, suggestions from parents, television programmes or advertisements and the internet. They were aware of tourist information centres, but did not use them, chiefly because they perceive that they are stocked with leaflets of the usual style (i.e. aimed at older people) and they are staffed by older people.

2.95   Those from the older group who used the internet regularly were surprised to learn that the National Park has a website – non had visited it.

What Sources of Information Did you Use on the Trip Itself?

2.96   The younger group participants did not use any information on trips in the countryside, relying on their existing knowledge or just finding out, 'I just set off somewhere, see where I end up, then go back' (Josh, 15, Greenhead), 'I don't care where I go so long as I get home' (Dan, 12, Greenhead). Members of the older group were more likely to use a map. Some felt that they had a basic understanding of map reading from school and Duke of Edinburgh learning. Following signs or just following a path were also used.
What is your Impression of These Designs?

2.97   Existing publications and web pages from countryside organisations (Northumbria National Park, National Trust, North Pennines AONB) were universally perceived as boring and participants would not bother reading them or clicking through to web pages beyond, 'the one for walking just looks dull' (Greenhead participant), 'that looks like something my parents would pick up' (Chloe, 13, Hexham). Images of adults led participants to believe that their content is aimed at adults "if you show people of different ages as well 'cos there it's just people who are elderly..." (John, 16, Hexham).

2.98   Participants would be encouraged to pick up leaflets or look at web pages if they were more colourful, had more images and fewer words, had images of people their own ages enjoying themselves, especially doing activities, 'if you want to appeal to younger people the whole point is you need younger people advertising them (Tom, 16, Hexham), "we'd pick one up maybe with teenagers on it – not really young children 'cos they're normally forced to do it..." (Laura, 13, Hexham.

2.99   Overall, to appeal to this age group, leaflets and web pages need to be colourful with few words and good images of youngsters from the same age group enjoying themselves; Avis (short video clips) on web sites would also appeal.

Are There Things That you would Like to do in the Countryside, But Currently Don't or Can't?
Would you be Interested in These Activities?

2.100   Responses to these questions were similar. Participants were interested in a wide range of activities; most involved some kind of outdoor specialist pursuit; these included: rock climbing, abseiling, canoeing, rowing, orienteering, cycling (though the response to cycling was mixed with an equal number saying they would not like to cycle in the countryside), horse riding, paint balling. Those who did not want to cycle listed danger from traffic and the fact that the activity was too strenuous (especially in the area where they live) as the main constraints.

2.101   Outdoor food was generally sought after. Activities with a purpose or with a competitive element were attractive. There was wide support for the idea of filming a visit. Non-active activities were also sought including archaeological dig, music concert, picking flowers, following a treasure map. Younger participants enjoy role-play.

How do you Share Your Experiences with Friends and Family when you get Home and are There Additional Ways in Which you would Like to do This?

2.102   Sharing experience consists of talking about it – Mondays at school were a place to talk about things done over the weekend and find out what friends have done.

2.103   Electronically Facebook is by far the preferred method for sharing via social networking. You-tube was also mentioned. Participants would be interested in adding pictures and experiences to a gallery on the NNPA website or a Facebook fan page, but were concerned that they would not know the people who would view the images.

2.104   There was widespread support for the idea of working on a film or other media project which would be publicised through the NNPA website and for helping provide ideas and comments in relation to any development at Once Brewed.

Multi-Media Discussion

2.105   The initial comments of information and website design were passed on to the consultant team' designer. He produced some sample design styles for use of web pages and a Facebook group and these were tested with a group of youngsters a Hexham Youth initiative on 20th April. Five youngsters took part. At the same time, various possibilities for content were discussed. The findings can be summarised as follows:

- A 'scrapbook' design style was preferred
- Preferred content included:
  - Information on getting to the study area and ideas for things to do
  - Content that can be used in home work
  - Competitions

Consultation With Youth Group Organisers

2.106   Youth group organisers were consulted for their opinions on obtaining on-going advice on development of The Sill and on future engagement of young people in the Sill. Their two key recommendations were as follows:

- The most effective way to manage feedback on development proposals for The Sill would be for NNPA to establish contact with the youth group organisers and for the latter to manage discussions within the youth groups and feed back to NNPA
- Future engagement would be most effective if it if organised through the youth groups, rather than relying on young people to respond individually to engagement opportunities

3   **PILOT PROJECTS**

3.1   Following the research, three engagement pilots were arranged, as follows:

- Nature detective session, from Once Brewed Visitor Centre on 2nd May
- Members of youth groups invited to range of activities (creative landscape, growing landscape and discovering landscape themes) at Walltown on 15th, 21st and 22nd May
- Introduction to orienteering at Walltown Quarry on 2nd June

3.2   The projects consisted of the following activities:

Nature Detective

3.3   7 participants (including members of Hexham Youth Initiative and independent youngsters) took part in a two-hour nature detective session. Participants were met at Once Brewed by guide and wildlife expert Martin Kitchen of Wildlife Tour Operator Northern Experience Wildlife Tours (NEWT). From here, they were driven to Steel Rigg whence they took a guided walking tour of the surrounding area.

Looking for wildlife in a pond

3.4   On the short walk, participants were encouraged to stop to observe and discuss a range of habitats, including grassland, wetland, woodland and micro-habitats including stone walls and small ponds. The guide identified and provided information on each of the habitats and on a selection of species present. He explained how some of them were affected by climate change. Where relevant, he also explained about what measures are being taken to address some of the impacts of climate change – for example restoring mires.

Discovering micro habitats

Landscape Activity Programme

3.5   The Landscape activity programme consisted of a number of activities – story-telling, orienteering, green wood techniques, outdoor food and cooking.   Whilst none of the invited local youngsters attended, six young people took part in the activities with other members of their families.

Making a candle stick

3.6   The activities were planned to engage participants with the landscape and to give the organisers the opportunity to interpret aspects of the landscape. This enabled them to talk about the effects of climate change on the local landscape and to talk about management measures to address them. For example, during greenwood techniques it was appropriate to talk about woodland, how the area was once more wooded, why it was deforested, how forestry plantations had affected upland mires and how these are now being restored, and why woodland in an appropriate management option; orienteering provided the opportunity to talk about different habit types within Walltown Quarry and the surrounding area, broadening out to how climate change affects different habitats, and the same was the case when searching for outdoor foods to cook.

Introduction to Orienteering

Orientation briefing

3.7   Following discussions with organisers of Greenhead Youth group, an evening orienteering session was organised in Walltown Quarry. Ruth Wilson of Newcastle and Tyneside Orienteers, using the permanent course, managed the session. The session consisted of an initial introduction to orienteering and map reading techniques followed by a competition, is small groups, over the course. Members of the consultancy team accompanied some of the groups and took the opportunity to explain the different habitat types through which the participants were passing and talk about the wider aspects of the landscape and climate change. Fifteen young people took part.

Looking for a station

Sustainable Transport

3.8   Publicity for the landscape activities and information provided to the youth groups included the timetable and prices for the AD122 Hadrian bus service. The youth groups were offered free travel on the bus as an additional incentive to use it. Some members of Hexham Youth Initiative (HYI) who took part in the Nature Detective session used the Hadrian bus service to travel from Hexham to Once Brewed.

Arriving at Once Brewed on the AD122

3.9   The HYI organisers were unaware of the bus service. To date the organisation had hired minibuses to transport members taking part in Duke of Edinburgh training and assessment between Hexham and various points along the Wall. The organisers became aware, through the current project, that the AD122 service is cheaper and more convenient and propose to use it for Duke of Edinburgh trips in the future.

What We Learnt from the Pilot Projects

3.10   Members of the consultant team attended the pilot activities and questioned participants during the activities and after the events to understand:

- What participants liked and disliked
- What they had learned about the landscape and climate change
- Their willingness to take part in similar activities in the future
- Their preferences for learning about the landscape

3.11   The findings are summarised here:

- All of the youngsters who took part in the pilot activities said that they had thoroughly enjoyed themselves and were keen to take part in further activities in the future
- Aspects that participants liked most were:
    o Being shown interesting things about the landscape by an expert
    o Learning how to do something new
    o Doing something unusual or different
- Whilst aspects of the landscape became apparent to participants these aspects appeared less significant than other aspects, such as being the quickest round the orienteering course or seeing some unexpected or previously unknown aspect of nature or eating something unusual cooked on a fire
- Similarly, whilst participants were aware of climate change and learned more about how it affects the landscape they were visiting, this was not felt by participants to be an important aspect of their trip. Reasons given for this were that climate change is presented (on the media and in school) as a negative thing and that this was not something they wanted to hear about on a trip they were taking for fun
- Participants felt that it was more interesting and enjoyable to learn about the landscape by doing activities in the landscape rather than learning by other methods, for example through an exhibition in a visitor centre or at school or on a website
- Few of the participants were likely to visit the study area to undertake the activities piloted independently; there were a number of reasons for this, chiefly:
    o Not knowing where to go
    o Not having the knowledge or expertise or equipment to do the activity
    o Not knowing how to get to the study area
    o Cost of transport
    o They would be unlikely to organise such a trip independently – too many other things happening, lack of motivation, not knowing if friends would want to take part, etc
- Awareness of the AD122 bus was low amongst young people and youth group organisers, but both expressed a willingness to use it in the future, as follows:
    o Young people felt that it would be a good way to get to interesting places, but the fare was a constraint
    o Youth group organisers felt that the bus would be a cheaper, greener and more efficient means of transport for DoE groups compared to hiring minibuses and so would use them in the future
- Participants would be significantly more likely to participate in activities in the future if there is an organised programme available through their respective youth organisation

3.12   Consultation with youth group organisers and with individuals who helped deliver the pilot activities confirmed that the most effective way to engage young people in activities is to

work through existing youth groups and clubs, and that attempts to encourage youngsters to organise their own activities is unlikely to succeed. This is a significant finding; it reflects the experience of other organisations who have tried to engage youngsters and this experience should be used by NNPOA to guide future activity in this field.

4   ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1   Here we analyse the findings of the secondary and primary research, summarise how young people currently use the study area, describe proposals for a web presence and make recommendations for how to engage with young people (11-18) to inform development of The Sill and to engage this group with the Sill project when it is developed.

Analysing the Research & Pilot Projects

4.2   The following key findings should guide the planning of engaging young people (aged 11-18) in the development and operation of The Sill:

- Young people have been identified as a 'missing audience' in the countryside and in National Parks
- Young people are most likely to be 'samplers' of outdoor activities – i. e. first time or occasional participants
- Better information, delivered to young people, is likely to increase the number of visits to the countryside by young people
- Internet use is highest amongst young people and young people are quicker than adults to embrace new technologies
- Use of the 'mobile internet' is growing fastest
- Use of social networking and sharing sites is growing fast
- Opportunities to deliver information on the countryside using new technology are proliferating
- The internet is an increasingly important resource for school pupils
- Providing free resources (for example Ordnance Survey maps) improves young people's ability to understand the countryside
- The most common leisure activities for locally based young people are using the internet (surfing and social networking sites), watching TV, being with friends and undertaking a range of activities/special interests
- The most liked aspect of visits to the countryside is discovering unexpected, surprising or unknown things
- The least liked aspect of visiting the countryside is long, boring walks
- For younger people in the age group, decisions to visit the countryside are made by older people – parents, organisations, siblings or older members of groups of friends
- For older people in the age group, decision on trips tend to be suggested by one member of a group then agreed by peers; organisations are also important
- The most common sources of information used to plan countryside visits are older people, organisations, the internet and television
- None of the young people engaged were aware that the Northumberland National Park Authority has a website
- Current NNPA printed and web designs do not appeal to young people or encourage them to pick up, click through or read
- Young people are interested in taking part in a variety of activities in the countryside
- Talking to friends and Facebook are the most commonly used methods of communicating about their experiences
- Young people would find information on what to do and where to go in the National Park, resources to use when doing homework and competitions useful on the NNPA website
- The preferred way to learn about the landscape was to undertake activities in the landscape

- Young people are aware of climate change but it was not seen as an important subject on a trip into the countryside
- Working through existing youth groups to deliver a programme of activity is a more effective way to engage young people in the countryside than encouraging them to do so independently

How Young People Currently Use the Study Area

4.3   Geography is a key factor in the way in which young people currently use the study area:

- Young people who live in or close to the study area make regular, informal trips into the area direct from home on foot or cycle, alone or in small groups of friends
- Those living beyond the study area (for example in Hexham) are unlikely to make independent trips into the study area
- Trips by these youngsters into the area are most likely to be organised by a youth club or school
- Local youngsters undertake Duke of Edinburgh bronze award training and assessment along Hadrian's Wall National Trail
- Youth organisations visit the area for events, thought his tends to be reactive to opportunities offered (for example a ranger offering to organise an event) rather than in any planned way

4.4   It would appear that many local youngsters do not visit the study area and that some have never visited it. Even though the study area is close to surrounding towns – Hexham, Prudhoe, Ponteland, Haltwhistle, Brampton – youngsters who live there do not find it easy to reach the study area. This would appear to be a combination of lack of access to transport, low awareness of public transport, lack of money to pay for public transport and lack of motivation, in the face of many competing activities for their time.

Conclusions and Rationale

4.5   Based on this analysis, the consultants recommend that NNPA should undertake work as follows to engage young people (aged 11-18) in The Sill:

- Conclusion 1: Develop and Promote a Web Presence Targeted at Young People

- Conclusion 2: Work Through Existing Youth Organisations to Develop a Dialogue with Young People Guiding the Development of The Sill

- Conclusion 3: Work Through Local Youth Organisations to Develop and Promote a Programme of Activities, Events and Trails for Young People

Rationale for Conclusion 1: Develop and Promote a Web Presence Targeted at Young People

4.6   The chief findings that gave rise to this conclusion are:

- Better information, delivered to young people, is likely to increase the number of visits to the countryside by young people
- Internet use is highest amongst young people and young people are quicker than adults to embrace new technologies
- Use of social networking and sharing sites is growing fast
- The internet is an increasingly important resource for school pupils

- The most common sources of information used to plan countryside visits are older people, organisations, the internet and television
- The most common leisure activities for locally based young people are using the internet (surfing and social networking sites), watching TV, being with friends and undertaking a range of activities/special interests
- Young people would find information on what to do and where to go in the National Park, resources to use when doing homework and competitions useful on the NNPA website

Rationale for Conclusion 2: Work Through Existing Youth Organisations to Develop a Dialogue with Young People Guiding the Development of The Sill

4.7   The findings that support this conclusion are:

- Those living beyond the study area (for example in Hexham) are unlikely to make independent trips into the study area
- Trips by these youngsters into the area are most likely to be organised by a youth club or school
- Youth organisations visit the area for events, thought his tends to be reactive to opportunities offered (for example a ranger offering to organise an event) rather than in any planned way
- The most common sources of information used to plan countryside visits are older people, organisations, the internet and television
- Working through existing youth groups to deliver a programme of activity is a more effective way to engage young people in the countryside than encouraging them to do so independently

Rationale Conclusion 3: Work Through Local Youth Organisations to Develop and Promote a Programme of Activities, Events and Trails for Young People

4.8   The following findings support this conclusion:

- The most common leisure activities for locally based young people are using the internet (surfing and social networking sites), watching TV, being with friends and undertaking a range of activities/special interests
- The most liked aspect of visits to the countryside is discovering unexpected, surprising or unknown things
- The least liked aspect of visiting the countryside is long, boring walks
- For younger people in the age group, decisions to visit the countryside are made by older people – parents, organisations, siblings or older members of groups of friends
- For older people in the age group, decision on trips tend to be suggested by one member of a group then agreed by peers; organisations are also important
- Those living beyond the study area (for example in Hexham) are unlikely to make independent trips into the study area
- Trips by these youngsters into the area are most likely to be organised by a youth club or school
- Youth organisations visit the area for events, thought his tends to be reactive to opportunities offered (for example a ranger offering to organise an event) rather than in any planned way
- Young people are interested in taking part in a variety of activities in the countryside

- The preferred way to learn about the landscape was to undertake activities in the landscape
- Working through existing youth groups to deliver a programme of activity is a more effective way to engage young people in the countryside than encouraging them to do so independently

Web Presence for Young People

4.9   The web presence for young people should consist of a new area of young people's pages on the NNPA website and Facebook Pages. These are described here.

Web Pages

4.10   The following basic principles should be followed to maximise the appeal of NNPA's web presence to young people (11-18):

- Content must be presented in a way that appeals – i.e. there should be a lot of still and moving images and limited text – certainly no blocks of text
- Content needs lots of **action** and **buzz** words to encourage clicking
- Where text is necessary, break it up with headings, bullets, colour, changes of font, etc
- Photographs of landscapes were generally thought boring – use interesting angles and light and liven them up with drawings or other additions to make them 'out of the ordinary'
- Ensure images of people feature members of the target audience to show that they can engage and to make them want to engage
- Design the site to minimise the number of clicks needed to reach each page
- Colour code the sections to make navigation easier and to make the site more clearly defined (see proposed site map, below)
- Promote a sense of ownership through the 'scrapbook' style, by enabling young people to add things to the site – photos, messages, comments
- Young people are aware of climate change but it was not seen as an important subject on a trip into the countryside

4.11   The 'scrapbook' style proposed was preferred by young people from a number of design styles. They particularly liked the fact that it is 'informal', 'friendly', 'engaging' and 'cool'. A scrapbook is accessible – anyone can make one. The proposed design style includes features that reinforce this feel – lined paper, post-it notes, Polaroids, tape, drawings. Handmade fonts. These help to give it a 'homemade' feel even though it is digital. Design suggestions are shown 'full-size' in the appendix.

4.12   The proposed layout for the site is summarised in Figure 2 – a draft 'site map'.

4.13   The walking/interacrtive map application would allow its users to input where it is they're going to in the National Park (or this could be suggested from the results of the route generator), and the types of things they'd be interested to see and learn about whilst en-route i.e. animals, plants, landscape, history, environmental issues. This could be used as a tool to engage the audience on trips/walks and give them something productive to do and hold their attention whilst out and about. From another angle the parents of the children could acquire the app or print-outs and give it to them whilst on the walk to give them an activity to do.

Figure 1: Example Scrapbook Design Pages   'Interactive' page
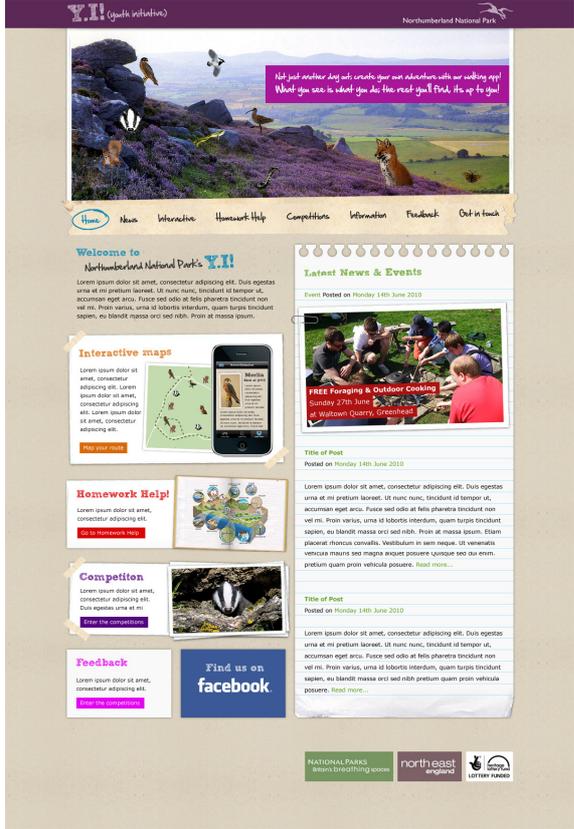
'Home' page
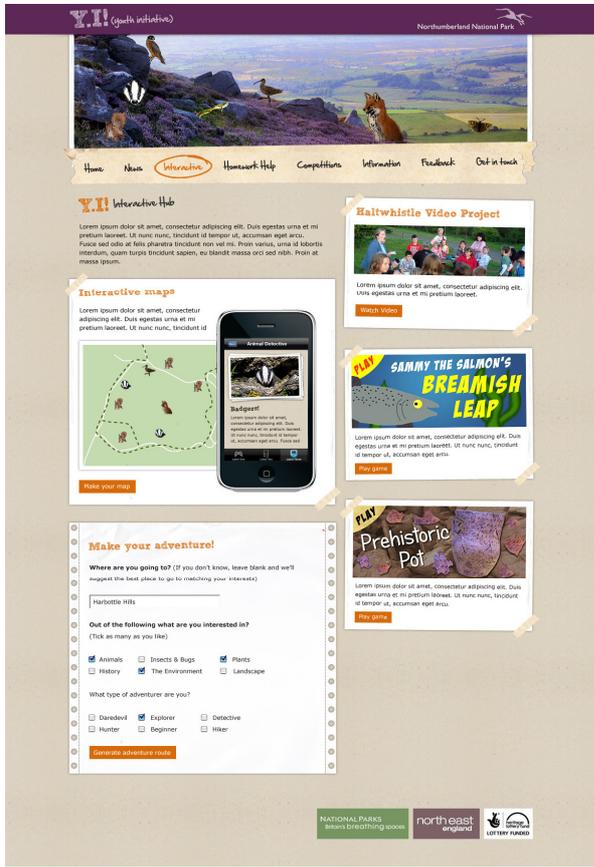
4.14   The application can be used in two ways - input the route and download the application to a mobile device/iPhone/iPod or alternatively the route and information can be printed out as A4 sheets, following the theme of the scrapbook website.

4.15   Encouraging young people to publish content on the site, through competitions, diary entries on a newsfeed of days out, events and activities, contributing to forums and giving feedback on questions and issues will encourage use of the site. It will also help to engender a higher level of computing and written skill and help to build individuals' confidence (i.e. through seeing what they have published on-line). This educational aspect will help to encourage schools to promote use of the site and to use it as an educational resource.

Figure 2: Proposed Site Map

HOME

Latest news and events feed, promoting: interactive maps, homework help, competitions, giving feedback and the Facebook Page to coincide with the micro site/ youth initiative.

NEWS / EVENTS

| **NEWS** | **UPCOMING EVENTS** | **PAST EVENTS** |

Latest news, promote and market upcoming events, archive past events allowing attendees to upload images to photo galleries and add feedback/comments (moderated by web team before publishing), add submitted photos to photo competition

INTERACTIVE

| **INTERACTIVE MAP** | **VIDEO** | **GAMES** |

Interactive map – allows user to specify how they are getting around the park: walk or cycle; select areas of interest e.g. nature, wildlife, history; where they are going - maps are generated for pdf print out or mobile application download. Video – media project, Games - existing NNPA online games as well as future additions

HOMEWORK HELP

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Existing resources on the NNPA main site as well as future additions relating to the cirriculum

COMPETITIONS

| **ABOUT / SUBMIT** | **PAST WINNERS** |

About the competitions available, prizes, submission form - in the future, archive past winners gallery

INFORMATION

| **TRAVELLING TO** | **GETTING AROUND** | **JUNIOR RANGER** | **JOBS / CAREERS** |

Information about travelling to the National Park (AD122 Hadrian's Wall Bus), information about getting round the area – cycle routes etc as well as facilities available, information about being a Junior Ranger as well as career opportunities e.g. job types/descriptions, staff profiles and background

FEEDBACK

FORUMS

Area for NNPA to attract feedback and opinions from the youth initiative, as well as allowing the users themselves to post forums - arrange activities, ask for advice/help on issues relating to NNPA and so forth

GET IN TOUCH

Facebook Page

4.16   Young people are unlikely to use or be exposed to the NNPA website every day. However, most will use Facebook every day. A Facebook page is therefore a useful promotional tool for this audience. The current Facebook group should be developed in to a page, which allows more features. The NNPA Facebook Page should include the following; a design proposal for the 'boxes' page – the only one where customisation is permitted – is shown in Figure 3 (and full-size in the Appendix):

- Information on events and activities
- New posts on the NNPA website
- Interactive map, games, etc
- Video publishing and commenting
- New posts on the NNPA website (with URL links to the posts)
- Event posting and RSVP invitations (with URL links to the event)
- 'Boxes' – interactive map, games and promotional elements (flyers for events, new products, etc

4.17   In addition, there should be a Facebook group specifically for the Youth Initiative, which will enable young people to see that other members of the group are of a similar age, although this would not exclude older members.

Figure 3: Facebook 'Boxes' Page
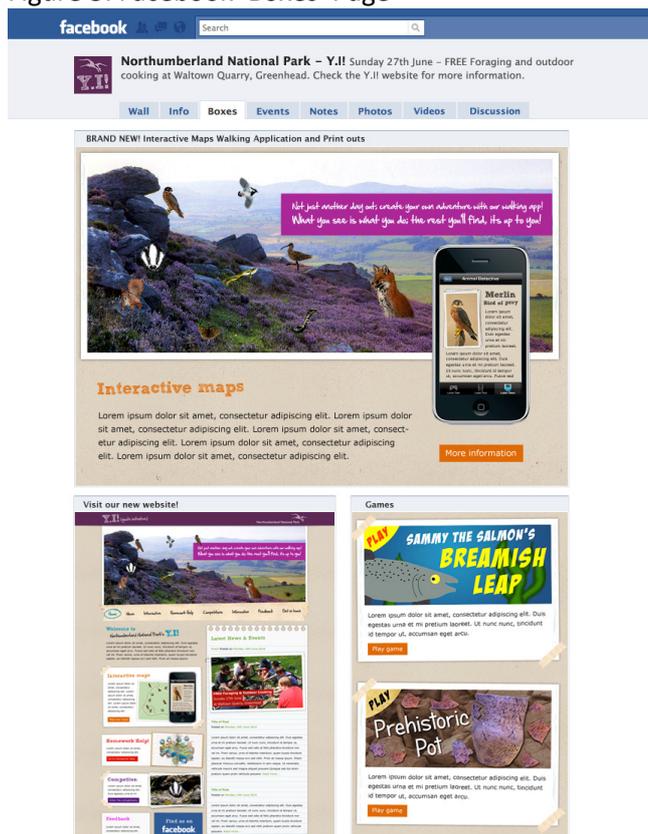
4.18   It will be necessary to promote the Facebook Page aggressively. One advert on the NNPA young people's web pages will not be enough. The audience needs constant reminders to 'join us on Facebook' and 'update information on your Facebook page'. Collaboration with youth clubs and schools will be an important aspect of making initial contact with young

people, as will encouraging those engaged in the proposed programme of activities to become 'champions using the Facebook Page and the NNPA website youth pages.

Engaging Young People in Developing 'The Sill'

4.19   Consultation with young people 11-18 in the study area and with youth group organisers suggests that the most effective way to involve young people in guiding development at The Sill would be to work through the existing youth groups in the area.   To achieve this:

- NNPA should establish contact with existing youth organisations (see Appendix for contact details) and arrange a programme of consultation on concept and design proposals which should be managed by the respective youth group leaders

Engaging Young People in Activities and Events

4.20   In addition to the web presence, the following activities are recommended for engaging young people (aged 11-18) with The Sill during development and operation:

- NNPA should establish an area of its website with information on events and activities for young people as proposed above and in the design proposals submitted with this report. These should be promoted vigorously through schools, local youth groups and search engines
- NNPA should work with local youth organisations to deliver a programme of activities in the study area using Once Brewed and Walltown Quarry as bases; these might include:
    o   Make a map event (designing and drawing a map
    o   Drama event based on managing different landscape interests
    o   Events/activities that place unusual activities or objects in the landscape (following the design ethos used in the web presence proposals)
- NNPA should develop trails and activity areas on land adjacent to the Once Brewed Centre and encourage young people to use them
- NNPA should improve the facilities available at Walltown Quarry to make it more attractive to youth groups and young people, including an education room or sheltered space, a series of trails and activity areas (as proposed for Once Brewed)
- NNPA should organise an annual arts and music event for young people at Walltown Quarry organised and promoted through local youth organisations
- NNPA should develop and promote volunteering opportunities for young people to help manage the young people's pages of the website as part of its Junior Ranger programme

4.21   Delivery of all of the proposed engagement activity should be through existing youth organisations. This is a strong message, which has emerged during the project from other organisations, which have tried to engage young people. Trying to motivate young people to decide to take part in a programme of activities would not be efficient. There are other advantages to working through existing groups, including:

- It is possible to use these organisations' existing, blanket child protection agreements, rather than establishing a new system
- Youth workers at the groups are already engaged with members and will know which events and activities to promote to which individuals for greatest benefit

4.22   The chief barriers to delivering a programme through existing youth groups is cost , including transport and any additional staff that need to be brought in to cover on-going activity

whilst key staff members are engaged in the event or activity. The groups will be much more willing to participate if these costs are met

4.23   During the project, a good working relationship was developed with Hexham Youth Initiative and with Greenhead Youth Club – the two organisations, which responded positively to the offer of organising consultation and pilot projects.   It is proposed that these organisations, plus others – including West Northumberland Youth Partnership – are engaged as partners for this purpose. In addition, their websites could promote the new NNPA web presence.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Focus Group Topic Guide
Appendix 2: Pilot Project Evaluation Sheets
Appendix 3: Design Proposals
Appendix 4: Youth Group Contacts

Appendix 1: Focus Group Topic Guide
Background

1. Introduce facilitators and explain that the purpose of the session is to explore participants' visits to the countryside. Stress that there are no right or wrong answers; we are here to find out what participants think.

2. Explain that the session will be recorded. The recording will be used to make a written record of what has been said and will then be destroyed.

3. Ask participants to introduce themselves

(1,2,3: 5 mins)

4. What do you do in your leisure time? *(10 mins)*
(Desired outcome: understanding the kinds of activities participants like doing, see prompts)
Active, passive?
Intellectual, frivolous?
Indoor, outdoor
Structured, informal?
Type of activity – e.g. playing sport, visiting museums, chilling with friends, partying, etc ?

5. Thinking about the things you do on day trips, what are the aspects you like most and why? *(10 mins)*
(Desired outcome: understanding the aspects of a trip that had the greatest impression, that they would like to replicate on future trips)
Experiences?
Activities?
Being with friends?
Learning things?
Planned, unplanned?

6. Thinking of the last time you planned a day trip, how did the decision come about? *(10 mins)*
(Desired outcome: understanding the decision-making process and identifying triggers)
Who made the suggestion?
How was the destination selected?
How were the activities selected?

7. Again thinking about the last day trip you made, where did you find information in advance of the trip? *(5 mins)*
(Desired outcome; understanding information sources used for trip planning, what participants think of them and to identify any ways in which participants would like to obtain information in the future)
Places?
Networks?
People?
Reliability?
Identify gaps and explore these

8. And what sources of information did you use on the trip itself? *(5 mins)*
(Desired outcome; understanding information sources used for trip planning, what participants think of them and to identify any ways participants would like to obtain information in the future)
Signage?
Information centres?
Printed/electronic?
Mobile?
Reliability?
Identify gaps and explore these

Show examples of information (either website pages or leaflets on a 'storyboard')

7. What is your impression of these designs? *(5 mins)*
(Desired outcome: what styles appeal to participants)
Interesting/boring?
Official?
Welcoming?
Clear?

8. Are there things that you would like to do in the countryside, but currently don't or can't?
(10 mins)
(Desired outcome: to identify specific activities that could be offered to participants in the study area – open question)
Activities?
Barriers?
Probe activities for children amongst explorer families
Probe activities with friends, adrenaline and iconic activities amongst young explorers

Show card describing possible activities

9. Would you be interested in these activities? *(10 mins)*
(Desired outcome: to test participants' response to specific pilot activity ideas
Suggest activity ideas – outdoor activity session, design a cycle ride, nature detective, treasure hunt, geo-caching, literature event, music event, outdoor cooking event, etc.
What attracts?
What detracts?

10. How do you share your experiences with friends and family when you get home and are there additional ways in which you would like to do this? *(10 mins)*
(Desired outcome: understanding what social networks and other means participants use to share their experiences and whether or not they would be interested in doing this through an NNPA/Sill based method)
Facebook, Twitter, etc?
Text, images, video clips?
Who and why?

11. Thank the participants.

12. Explain that the answers will be analysed and used to:
▪ Help design several pilot events in the Northumberland National Park/Hadrian's Wall area to test people's understanding of different aspects of the landscape
▪ Help the Northumberland National Park Authority to decide how to develop a new visitor centre for the area at Once Brewed

13. Ask the participants if they would be interested in further participation in the project, by"
▪ Taking part is some outdoor activities in the study area
▪ Helping to design some electronic media – for example young people's website pages
▪ Taking part in further discussions to help develop The Sill at Once Brewed
(Desired outcome: promote participation in pilot activities, media design p[rpject and advisory group)

14. Ask if participants have any questions for us

(11,12,13,14: 10 mins+)

Appendix 2: Pilot Project Evaluation Sheets

Appendix 3: Design Proposals

Appendix 4: Youth Group Contacts