

To: National Park Authority, 30 September 2022

From: Benjamin Geeson-Brown, Sustainable Communities Officer

Approval of Addition to Volunteer Policy

Decision Required	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Agenda Item	12
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Recommendation

Agree to sign off additions to the volunteer policy which now incorporate youth volunteers (Youth Wardens and Youth Committee)

Consultation

Stephen Organ – BBNPA Volunteer Development Officer
Marc Ronan – BBNPA Monitoring Officer and Solicitor Advocate
Helen Roderick – BBNPA Stakeholder Manager
Stephanie Davies – BBNPA Democratic Services Manager

Key Messages

At present there is no mention of Youth Volunteers in the current Volunteer Policy (last updated 26.11.21).

This will allow us to write in our new present and up and coming Youth Schemes into Authority policy.

In doing so, it will increase members awareness of the Youth schemes and hopefully increase support of them.

Background

The National Park's involvement with young people has long been neglected. Our Education team mostly work with groups at primary school age, with little to no structured contact or involvement with young people at a secondary school age. There has been historic engagement with young people, but this has not occurred since 2016 (a work experience project with the Prince's Trust). Following direction from senior management, a Youth Action Plan was written. This document set out a scheme of work for the next 2 years involving young people. In writing the Action Plan, research and meetings with other National Parks, both in Wales, England and Scotland has shown that we are far behind what we offer young people compared to other National Parks. Pembrokeshire and Snowdonia National Parks have a Youth Wardens scheme, as well as dedicated officers who's specific role is solely around youth engagement.

The first Youth Wardens session is due to take place on Sunday, 25 September 2022, and we currently have 12 young people signed up. The Youth Wardens scheme will give tangible work experience for young people who have an interest in conservation and rural skills. There is great support for this scheme across the current Warden staff, and it is clear that they will be a positive addition to the current adult volunteers we have within the park.

The Youth Council will hopefully begin early in 2023 and a paper on the youth Council will be written to explain the format before being taken to Members for comment.

Consultation with young people via a number of youth days, outreach at open days, work experience and conversations has clearly shown a need and desire for specific Youth programmes within the national park.

Once these additions to the current volunteer policy are agreed, it will show that the proposed Youth Schemes will be backed by members; and will allow the Authority's work with young people to increase.

Relation to Authority Priorities

This links to Future Beacons, BBNPA new management plan. Specifically, around resilient Communities as well as Green Skills and Rural Opportunities

It is directly linked to BBNPA Youth Action Plan 2022-24.

Outside of the authority it has direct links to Wales Audit report from Welsh Government, Future Generations Act, Local Health Board Health and Wellbeing plans.

Impact Analysis

Financial - Financial implications will be minimal. As the Youth schemes progress and a need for finances become apparent, the necessary funding bids, or decisions for core funding to be used will be requested at an officer level.

Legal - Consultation with Marc Ronan, BBNPA Solicitor Advocate has taken place and no legal issues or concerns have been identified.

Diversity - Age – an acceptance of this policy will increase our remit to work with younger people (under 18s).

Human Resources – no implications have been identified.

Sustainability – The adoption of this policy change will have positive sustainable impacts.

Conclusion and Next Steps

It is requested that members accept the additions to the current volunteer policy. No changes have been made to the previous volunteer policy. This request is just an addition to what was agreed back in November 2022 to incorporate and include youth Volunteers. Once agreed, the proposed Youth Schemes will be backed by policy and will allow the Authority's work with young people to increase. This is a much needed and vital part of the work that we do as an Authority.