



Scottish
Environment
LINK

Still Delivering the Goods

Case Study 7



ONGOING

Out There Award Ramblers Scotland



Photo: Ramblers Scotland

Read the full report, with the 15 case studies here:

<https://www.scotlink.org/publication/still-delivering-the-goods/>



Background

Research, commissioned by Ramblers Scotland in 2017, showed that after 'Scottish weather', young people cited their two biggest barriers to getting out walking as: lack of knowledge and awareness of where to go for a walk, and lack of people to go with. The Out There campaign was launched in 2018, with 'breaking down barriers to walking' as one of its three key objectives and the Out There Award as a key mechanism for delivering that aim.



Project aims

The free Out There Award has been designed to help kick-start 18 to 26-year-old adults' journeys into the outdoors, while helping them meet people, boost their CVs and build confidence along the way. The award is split over three non-consecutive days, each with a different focus: outdoor skills, a challenging walk and volunteering. Each day is designed to help break down the barriers that sadly stop many young adults from enjoying the outdoors, while helping them to form a new network of like-minded people.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, it has been important for young adults to have the skills to enjoy Covid-secure walks and responsibly access the outdoors. The Out There Award is on hold during national lockdown but remains ready to start again as soon as is suitable. Responsible access, wellbeing and meeting others will be more vital than ever.



Project Timescale

Phase 1 of the project started in March 2019, with the delivery of award beginning in June 2019. Phase 2 started in October 2020 and will run until October 2021.



SBS Objectives

The aims from the *2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity*:

1

To protect and restore biodiversity on land and in our seas, and to support healthier ecosystems.

On the volunteer day of the award participants spent a day working with partner organisations who are actively involved in protecting and restoring biodiversity: The Borders Forest Trust, The Mountains and the People, The National Trust for Scotland and NatureScot and had planned to volunteer with Trees for Life and Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.

2

To connect people with the natural world, for their health and wellbeing and to involve them more in decisions about their environment.

During the award, the participants are made aware of the outdoor access code, how to protect biodiversity and the challenges facing biodiversity in Scotland. The award gives participants the basic skills and network of like-minded people to help connect them with the natural world.

3

To maximise the benefits for Scotland of a diverse natural environment and the services it provides, contributing to sustainable economic growth.

The award helps increase awareness of participants about how walking and engaging with their environment supports well-being. Any increase in walking and related outdoor activity helps sustain businesses dependent on visitors/tourists and/or appropriate equipment.



Photos: Ramblers Scotland



Project Summary

With funding from Active Scotland and the players of the People's Postcode Lottery, a project officer for Young Adult Development was employed. A free introductory outdoor skills award – the Out There Award – was designed to give more young people the tools to get walking in Scotland's great outdoors. The project also helps grow and support a network of five young walking groups. This enables the groups to thrive whilst ensuring award participants continue their walking journey.

The project is helping achieve Active Scotland's target of encouraging and supporting people in Scotland to be more active more often, whilst tackling inequality within walking; with 79% female participation and 37% participation by minority ethnic groups in phase one.

Phase two of the pilot project began in October 2020 during the Covid pandemic with part funding from Active Scotland. This has resulted in a change in deliverable outcomes and delivery style. Luckily, due to the adaptability of the award content, the project was able to continue to help young adults get outdoors during this period.

The course completion rate is 97%, indicating that the award is appealing to young adults. This was achieved through targeted social media advertising, local media coverage and the help of feeder organisations such as Young Scot Awardees are now walking regularly with Ramblers groups and demand for the award is growing.



Climate Impacts

Award participants are shown how to access walks by public transport or on foot from where they live. The new Covid version of the Out There Award encourages participants to plan local walks, a viable alternative to having to drive or get public transport to get exercise. The project also helps educate participants about the environmental issues faced by Scotland's great outdoors, providing them with an opportunity to contribute to helping better the situation.



People Information

Direct employment: One job is directly funded by the project: Ramblers Scotland's young adult development project officer.

Wider engagement: The project supports all Scotland's young walking groups and volunteers as well as supporting Out There Award participants through their award and their transition into the young walking groups. The number and diversity of participants is set out below.



Successes and achievements

Phase one of the award was a great success, with 70 young adults having attended in Edinburgh, Stirling, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Inverness and Tayside. The participation was:

- > Total number of award participants **70**
- > Proportion who identify as female **79%**
- > Proportion who completed the award **97%**
- > Number of courses delivered **7**
- > Proportion from a minority ethnic group **37%**

Phase two achievements, to date, include:

- > Secured part funding for phase two of the project even during a pandemic.
- > Adapted the award to a new outdoor two-day version which can be delivered in every level of the Scottish tiered system.
- > Ran four award dates with more planned in the future.
- > Have used the award to start a new Ramblers young walking group in Inverness – allowing more young adults to continue to walk through the pandemic.
- > Have supported our six young walking groups to ensure they can continue to thrive during the pandemic and create more opportunities for Scotland's young adults to get out walking.



Issues and challenges

- > Getting the word out there that the award exists – Feedback from participants indicates that they believe the award would be extremely popular if more people knew about it.
- > Getting sign-ups for award dates – the completion rate of the award is over 97% proving that once people attend the award, they are engaged by the content – however getting people to attend proved more difficult than predicted. Budgeting for Facebook advertising has helped address this ongoing issue.
- > While phase 2 is currently underway, Ramblers Scotland are currently considering how to continue beyond that period – including how, if possible, to 'scale up' the project (this may include an option to 'franchise' the concept to others).



Funding

Phase 1:

50% Active Scotland (£30,000) – 50% Peoples Postcode Lottery (£30,000)

Phase 2:

Currently part funded – £30,000 from Active Scotland – Seeking further funding.



Further information

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/OutThereAward>

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/get-involved/out-there/out-there-award/out-there-award-itinerary.aspx>