

EVALUATION OF backbone

Celebrating Diversity Through Adventure



Projects Delivered 2010 - 2013

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Backbone initiatives are centred on our core value of partnership
working based on:

Genuine intention and trust

Mutual respect

Working for the direct benefit of local communities



www.backbone.uk.net

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report is an evaluation of the projects (listed in chapter 4) run by Backbone in the four year period from 2010 to 2013.

1.1 Remit of Evaluation

Backbone has been delivering projects for a period of time and recognised the need to review the success of the projects, evidence the achievements and identify any gaps for further work.

The evaluation's remit is therefore to:

- identify whether Backbone, through the delivery of projects and subsequent outcomes, is meeting its strategic aims and objectives.
- determine what evidence there is to support the success of the projects from data collated and feedback from the participants and key partners.
- determine, where it is evident, if Backbone has met the Scottish National Outcomes.
- determine, where it is evident, if Backbone has met the objectives, aims and outcomes of its key partners.

1.2 Evaluation Process

The evaluation process has been conducted:

- by reviewing and analysing the evidence from the individual project reports.
- from interviews held with participants of the programmes who were asked about their views on any impacts the projects have had on them personally, whether there has been a change in attitude towards the environment and what they have undertaken to support their communities and families to access and benefit from the outdoors.
- from interviews held with key partners and funders who were asked about their views on the quality of the projects, how the projects supported their organisation's aims and any gaps they felt existed and areas for further development.

- by identifying the aims, outcomes and objectives of the key partners and Scottish National Outcomes

6 face to face semi structured interviews were conducted with participants.

4 telephone interviews were held with funders/partners.

14 projects reports were reviewed.

5 strategic documents of the key partners and the Scottish National Outcomes were reviewed.

1.3 Structure of the Report

The report is split into 8 subject chapters, each focussing on a particular theme that the evaluation has identified. They are:

- Giving Back to the Community
- Sustainable Communities
- Respect for the Environment
- Leadership and Personal Development
- Importance of Role Models in Outdoor Education
- Employability
- Health
- Faith and the Environment

These chapters cover the analysis from the project reports and respondents' comments. Where evident that the analysis shows Backbone's work supports the Scottish National Outcomes or aims of their key partners (Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority and The Rank Foundation) it is identified at the end of each chapter.

Chapter 14 details the analysis of statistical data, where it has been compiled, from the projects. The analysis shows the results of the feedback from participants at the start and end of the project. Additionally data identifying age, faith, gender and ethnic profiles of the participants are also analysed.

The final chapter presents gaps identified and resulting recommendations of the evaluation.

Appendix 1 details the case studies from the 6 face to face interviews held with participants of projects.

1.4 Legend

The colour coding below identifies quotes from respondents to the evaluation.

Quotes from Key partners such as Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority

Quotes from participants to Backbone's projects

The following colour coding identifies the specific Scottish National Outcome and aims and outcomes of key partners.

The Scottish National Outcome ¹

Cairngorms National Park Authority long term Outcome ²

Scottish Natural Heritage Outcome ³

Forestry Commission Scotland Objective ⁴

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority Partnership Plan 2012 - 2017 Outcome ⁵

1.5 Acknowledgements

The author would also like to thank the following individuals and organisations who were consulted during the evaluation and gave their time willingly to be interviewed:

Alison Cush, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority

Chris Dunning, The Rank Foundation

Romena Huq, Forestry Commission Scotland

Alison Matheson, Scottish Natural Heritage

Alan Smith, Cairngorms National Park Authority

The author would also like to thank the 6 participants of Backbone's projects who so willingly agreed to be interviewed and share their thoughts and experiences for the case studies.

Madhavi Aparala

Sandie Armstrong

Asma Kassim

Hinna Habib

Kemal Okan

Bongayi Patty

In order to protect the privacy of the participants whose feedback was obtained from the project reports their names have not been used.

Finally thanks to Pammy Johal who supported this evaluation by providing documentation and other details whenever asked and did so promptly and courteously.

¹ The Scottish Government National Outcomes, Available online at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/scotPerforms/outcome>

² Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012 – 2017, Available online at: <http://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/publications/21062012/CNPA.Paper.1827.Cairngorms%20National%20Park%20Partnership%20Plan%202012-2017.pdf>

³ Scottish Natural Heritage May 2013 Funding Priorities, Available at: <http://www.snh.gov.uk/funding/our-grants/what/our-funding-priorities/>

⁴ Forestry Commission Scotland Plans and Strategies, Available online at <http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/managing/plans-and-strategies>

⁵ Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority Partnership Plan 2012 – 2017 Outcome, Available online at: http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/images/stories/Looking%20After/PDF/NP%20Plan/NPPPlan2012_final3.pdf



2. BACKBONE'S MISSION AND AIMS

2.1 Background

Backbone recognised the many barriers marginalised groups, in particular Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women, face in accessing the natural environment due to reasons such as lack of confidence, gender, religious and cultural barriers.

Backbone was set up as a development organisation to introduce the wider benefits of engagement with the natural environment to primarily Black and Minority Ethnic women, disadvantaged and marginalised communities. The purpose is to deliver positive outcomes in health, well-being, social integration, self-confidence, speaking English, educational and family recreation.

2.2 Aims

In proposals for grant funding Backbone states its aims are to:

Entice & Excite people from marginalised communities to engage with nature. Scotland's outdoor environment and wild places are a proven and inspiring training medium. They provide a powerful playground that can be utilised for health, social, recreational and educational development.... ultimately enhancing quality of life and bringing communities of different backgrounds and abilities together.

Backbone defines its ambition as creating a network of Backbone initiatives across Scotland that are centred on their core value of partnership working based on:

- Genuine intention and trust
- Mutual respect
- Working for the direct benefit of local communities

Backbone's aims are detailed below ⁶. The emphasis is on community and personal development with the objective to take the leadership and development skills gained from the training back into the communities for others to benefit.

Use outdoor activities and the natural environment to enhance the quality of life of communities and bring communities from different backgrounds together.

Capacity build community groups through partnership working based on genuine intention with other community and environmental organisations.

Introduce the wider benefits of outdoor activities and engagement with the natural environment to BME and marginalised groups; health, well-being, social integration, self confidence, speaking English, educational and family recreation etc

Provide leadership, community and personal development training, events and advice to BME and marginalised communities through the use of outdoor activities and the natural environment.

Provide training to BME, marginalised groups and the wider community on how to build sustainable communities through engagement and enhanced understanding of the natural environment.

Empower BME and marginalised communities to take control of their lives, work with their communities and others to protect, improve and sustain our natural environment on a local, national and global level.

Provide networking events and training to bring together BME, marginalised groups and wider community organisation.

⁶ These aims are entered in Backbone's Constitution and proposals for funding.



3. METHODOLOGY AND LEARNING MODEL

Backbone's training model is defined as a combination of the appreciation and learning of the environment together with leadership and personal development of the participants. It is an integrated model of leadership training specific to connecting communities with the natural environment and complements the John Muir *Heart, Head, Hand* model.⁷ All of the projects are based on experiential learning where participants 'learn by doing' and are encouraged to care for the environment, promote knowledge and to give something back to their communities.

The experiential learning, which the evaluation identified, encourages participants to reflect on their learning in learning logs.

The Learning Model and Experiential methodology is recognised by the partners and key funders, who have commented on how it supports their own work.

... the CLP which is a fantastic programme. It provides taster sessions, the modules are in line with our work, area of experience and aligned to what they can come out of the programme with. It is a model for champions as future leaders who then go into the communities and take groups out. That is a sustainable model and for us it's key as we do not have the resources to go out and do it all ourselves.

Alison Cush - Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority

The work put into the model was recognised by Scottish Natural Heritage.

Backbone had done the research for CLP—what people would need to be confident in taking other people out. What they do now they do very well.

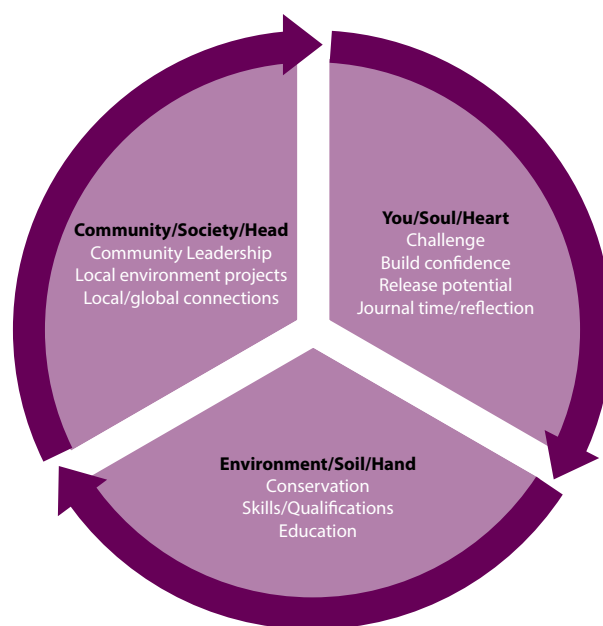
Alison Matheson - Scottish Natural Heritage

The model is also endorsed by Cairngorms National Park Authority.

The CLP is an excellent programme and works well for Cairngorms National Park Authority as a partner organisation. As a partnership the programme meets our aims. The CLP is a great way of people working on our behalf and delivering in the communities; acting as champions for us.

Alan Smith - Cairngorms National Park Authority

Backbone's integrated model of learning



⁷ John Muir Award Information Handbook, Available online at:

<http://www.jmt.org/assets/john%20muir%20award/downloads/award%20info%20handbook%20web%202013.pdf>



4. LIST OF PROJECTS DELIVERED BY BACKBONE TO DATE

Backbone has delivered the following projects and events in Scotland from 2010 to 2014. They are a combination of leadership projects, learning to cycle schemes and other projects to develop role models from marginalised groups to go onto lead and deliver local environmental projects within their communities.

The evaluation is evidenced from the following programmes.

Community Leadership Project (CLP)	Women's Leadership Project (WLP)	Women's Learn to Ride (WLTR)	Other Projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010/2011 • 2011/2012 • 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010 • 2012 • 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2011/2012 • Central 2012 • Fife 2012 • Perth 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Introduction Project (CIP) 2010 • Commonwealth Woodland Project (CWP) 2010 • BME Womens Walking Project 2012 • Working with Difference 2010 • Our Space 2011





5. GEOGRAPHICAL OUTREACH OF BACKBONE'S PROJECTS

The following map shows the cities and towns where participants to Backbone's projects resided at the time of taking part in a project. It shows the geographical outreach for the projects, from Glasgow in the south to Rosemarkie in the north. Most of the participants came from the Glasgow and Edinburgh areas.



The national perspective is confirmed by one of the key partners and funders.

What is really great is that there is a national perspective. The fact that participants come from across Scotland is fantastic. Everyone is to be engaged and so from our perspective at the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority we are very happy with this type of recruitment.

Alison Cush - Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority



6. GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

One of Backbone's core values is to work for the direct benefit of local communities. This was evidenced in the evaluation. Participants to the programmes talked about using what they have learned to benefit their communities.

One example is the Commonwealth Woodland Project 2013. Forestry Commission Scotland identified disadvantaged areas in Glasgow: Castlemilk, Easterhouse & Drumchapel to be involved in the project. The participants who attended used the knowledge and skills obtained in a professional capacity to support their work for the benefit of children, young people and families. One participant's feedback:

The community are enjoying new activities and challenges especially the primary 7s. Children love to team build and take responsibility for their risks and manage them. Young people enjoy participating in outdoor learning activities and are motivated to achieve their best.

Another participant on the same programme has setup a monthly event.

I've started a monthly event called cup of tea in the park and that is proving very popular and has encouraged people who would not really go on a walk to come along, some of these individuals were socially isolated previously and the chat around the kettle/cuppa has add an element to what would be a health walk otherwise.

Other participants referred to the impact of the work they do locally and city wide on their communities.

Through our holiday programme we work local and city wide and giving children and adults new opportunities and challenges.

This feedback indicates how Backbone participants are working towards meeting the Scottish National Outcome:

We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.

For one participant the sole reason for attending Backbone's training programmes is for her to give back to the community. Backbone has supported her in this. She has taken the learning from all of the courses to engage boys and girls to experience the outdoors.

Backbone has helped me. So I can give back to the kids. Why put yourself through the training if you don't put into practice the learning? As soon as I have been on a course I look at how I can give back.

Another participant's increase in confidence has meant her community has benefited as a result.

I'm more confident and it shows in my uni[versity], I take more initiative I even volunteered to be group leader for different assignments which I wouldn't have done before CLP.

The work participants are putting into giving back to their communities supports the following Scottish National Outcomes and key partners' outcomes and objectives.

We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.

Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.

Scottish Natural Heritage outcome 1

More people experiencing, enjoying and valuing nature and landscapes

Forestry Commission Scotland Treasured objective

...as a multi-purpose resource that sustains livelihoods, improves quality of life, and offers involvement and enjoyment.



7. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

As a result of the Commonwealth Woodland Project 2013 a new weekly outdoor club in Easterhouse was set up where young people were taken cycling and taught outdoor activities such as bush craft. A key outcome of this project was the young people's changed attitude to the local woods. Prior to attending the project they would engage in destructive activities but they now view the woodlands as a place to respect, engaging in clearing up litter and learning to build fires responsibly rather than destructively. They have subsequently held community 'cook outs' which demonstrate a new perspective and respect for the woodlands meeting Forestry Commission Scotland's "Accessible" and "Cared for" Objectives.

With local woodlands and national treasures that are well promoted, welcoming and open to all.

Where landscapes and our natural and cultural heritage is respected.

One participant from Hollybrook High School (a special needs school) in Castlemilk gave the following feedback about leading their own class.

We had our last class yesterday, and the last task was to say what was the best thing this year. The majority of pupils said that making fires and the marshmallows were the highlights. The bush craft skills were very popular. It's always good to hear when you are doing something right. Thanks again.

Professionals are committed to enabling children to have the best start in life so they are ready to succeed. Learning skills in the woodlands provides the zest for knowledge and, especially for children with special needs, it shows how the Scottish National Outcome is being met.

Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

One participant of the CLP 2010 programme described what Scotland now means to him.

I now have a relationship with Scotland...it moves me and it's deep felt.

For disadvantaged communities, in particular diasporic groups who can feel disconnected, the sense of Scottish identity is important. Participants who attended the Community Introductions Project 2010 made links between their life in the country they grew up in and their feelings about Scotland. The final report described how participants felt.

Huge connections were made between life "back home (in my homeland)" and the Scottish countryside – a lot of comments stating that it reminded people of life in their native home, how this fed their soul and now they knew where to go in Scotland their new home that made them feel really at home.

The participants' feelings towards Scotland affirmed their Scottish identity illustrating the connection between the project's outcome to the Scottish National Outcome.

We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.

The evaluation has identified that the relationship between professionals and communities enhances the sense of Scottish identity and enables participants to recognise the welfare of the environment.

The first day of my life out of Glasgow. It was marvelous, wonderful and exciting to experience the (Bhundh) bush! The dam, ducks to name a few. I really loved the trip, made friends with rangers (lovely people let me tell you). Met different people from around the world. What a nice day.



One professional who worked on CLP 2012 commented.

Living and working in the West Highland means that there is very limited exposure to working with BME groups and the experience has been rewarding and has given us as a team greater confidence in working with BME groups, an opportunity we look forward to.

Willie Fraser - The National Trust for Scotland

The views of the participants and the professionals reflect the importance of meeting the Scottish National Outcome.

Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

In addition, key partners and funders have pointed out how Backbone helps them to meet their aims, targets and quality of service.

Everything we do at the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority is derived from the National Park Partnership Plan⁸. All of my targets and reporting relate to the outcome Visitor Experience – quality of experience, adult engagement, awareness raising, and learning. I engage in partnership working towards outreach and inclusion and look for improvement of an increase in engagement with disadvantaged groups. That is how it helps me to deliver my targets, by being able to communicate to groups then the groups go back into their communities to continue with the communication.

Alison Cush - Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority

The Forestry Commission endorse Backbone's contribution to meeting their objectives.

From the Forestry Commission's (FC) perspective working with Backbone has met our objectives in the three year central Scotland engagement strategy by targeting individuals and communities who don't traditionally access the woodlands. The indicators of the strategy are: increasing opportunities for equality and diversity groups to use local woodlands; providing better information on woodlands services for equality and diversity groups; break down barriers to woodland use.

Romena Huq- Forestry Commission Scotland

The aim of the project "Our Space" Intergeneration Project: Glasgow Women's Library 2010/11 was to capture the histories of the diaspora journey through narratives by older women in conversation with younger women living in Scotland. Through their narratives the older women made links between the outdoors and heritage of the countries they grew up in for their younger descendants to learn about their lives and to make those inter-generational connections.

One woman's narrative of life as a girl in Pakistan describes how she overcame the constraints of social norms.

We often took the cattle to be bathed in the river. Girls weren't allowed to go for a dip, it was seen as inappropriate. But it was ok for the boys! So sometimes I would sneak out with my cousins and friends to play in the water. We really really enjoyed ourselves. I enjoyed the session today at Clyde Water Valley. The water and scenery looks very nice. It's very cold here but if we were back home [Pakistan] in the hot summer days then I would definitely jump into the water! [laughs]

⁸ Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, the National Park Partnership Plan 2012 – 2017
http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/images/stories/Looking%20After/PDF/NP%20Plan/NPPPlan2012_final3.pdf

Some younger participants realised the older relatives, had greater access to and an appreciation of, the outdoors in contrast to their own situation.

It was good to learn about how my gran spent her time in her childhood. She was so active. I think they appreciated the outdoors more than us here who are born in the UK.

Some participants felt a connection with their older relatives.

I got to know my gran better through this project. She is living on her own and I don't get to see much of her. I didn't realise the amount of hard work she did in her youth. I don't think I could have coped!

The barriers faced by older BME women were highlighted in one project, WLP 2010 where participants described the difficulty accessing the outdoors. Some of the participants who attended the programme identified the following barriers that prevent the BME community engaging with the outdoors, woodland and forests.

Transport, some elderly cannot drive they depend on their children who work and do not have the time to take them out.

The older generation have very little in common with the young generation, who have their own interest and lead a busy life.

The key aims of the BME Women's Walking Project 2011/2012 were to provide opportunities for elderly women who had limited mobility to socialise in an outdoor setting and to learn more about woodlands and the natural environment. The support the older women were given to access the outdoors does go some way to meeting the Scottish National Outcome.

Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it.

In response to how Backbone has met the Forestry Commission aims, they concluded:

...year one women leadership programme increasing access; 16 women who attended the WLP have involved 1200 other people within their community in the outdoor and that is a massive increase, one I could not do on my own.

Romena Huq – Forestry Commission Scotland

Backbone has been engaged in promoting the activities and projects it runs which helps to further support sustainable communities. Backbone projects have received the following media coverage:

- Appearance on BBC Radio 4 Ramblings with Clare Balding
- Appearance on BBC Country File
- Appearance on BBC Radio Scotland's Outdoors Programme
- Invitation to the Queen's Tea Party and a mention on the promotional DVD
- Articles in local and national newspapers



8. RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Many participants felt the personal need to work for the benefit of local communities and the conservation of the environment work hand in hand. Acquiring skills and abilities, an appreciation of the environment and the need to conserve it for future generations has been heightened. One participant of the CLP 2010 programme described this.

I felt the need to take back something to my own community. To enhance their spiritual, cultural and social way of being and also to enhance how they relate with the environment. Nature is a natural and living being, which needs constant care. It gives us so much and we have to give back to it by trying to conserve it. Thinking about all that made me realise that the community can be mobilized for self-determination, justice to nature, conservation and be made aware on the need to protect and conserve it.



Another participant in the same programme described their new found appreciation of a natural resource and the link to global environment.

At the start of the module inland water didn't mean much to me – but now I think we take it all for granted, we here in Scotland can enjoy the recreation and beauty that waters have to offer anytime we like and we don't!!.. yet at the same time back in Pakistan people have died because of either shortage or floods.



This meets Scottish National Outcomes:

We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.

We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.

The feedback from the participants also meet the Forestry Commission Scotland's "Cared For" Objective

where landscapes and our natural and cultural heritage is respected

and Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority Partnership Plan 2012 – 2017 Visitor Experience Outcome.

A high quality, authentic experience for visitors, with many opportunities to appreciate and enjoy the natural and cultural heritage, within an internationally renowned landscape that compares to the best on offer around the world.



9. LEADERSHIP AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

A key area emerging from the evaluation has been the barriers that BME women face, articulated by the women themselves, which prevent them from accessing the natural environment. For example in the WLP 2010 they mentioned, amongst others, the following barriers:

- Language
- Lack of confidence
- Social isolation
- Fear of pickpockets when outdoors
- Family disapproval of women going out into the countryside
- Lack of childcare support
- Funding - transport and costs particularly for larger groups

These barriers result in disadvantages that BME women face and in particular cultural barriers, such as family disapproval, which prevent them from finding out about or accessing the outdoors. The barriers of isolation, childcare, language and lack of confidence are compounded to prevent women being aware or indeed active in the outdoors. This results in the women facing significant inequalities. The following participant of the BME Women's Walking project describes the situation she was in.

I have felt quite isolated. In the last place I stayed I was spat at and received abuse for wearing the niqab.

Backbone's aim to tackle BME women's lack of access to the outdoors but also to develop their confidence and belief in their potential is being proven. The following participant attended the CLP 2013.

The CLP has made me a stronger and more confident person, not only as a leader but as a human being. I have experienced things I never thought I would in my lifetime. And coming out the other side has shown me that I am capable of so much more.

The following participant attended the WLP 2012.

Well-being has increased my self-worth – has opened up a whole new world of possibilities.

One participant's confidence has grown to the extent that she now views access to the outdoors in terms of her human rights.

I just feel it is my right – that is my right. It has been made clear to me when I walk outdoors.

Backbone has had a significant personal change for one participant, who made a life changing decision. She was in an unsafe domestic environment and as a result of attending a WLP programme she felt she was able to leave that behind her.

WLP gave me a safe environment, a safe rope. I made decision to be strong enough to lead a safe life.

The journeys that people have made have also been noted by a key partner.

I did not realise how good CLP was until I was invited to the session at the end of 2013 when the participants were finishing the CLP programme for that year. It was really, really inspiring to hear the journey people had made from not enjoying the outdoors, not knowing where they can go, how to access the outdoors to leading groups into the outdoors. They talked about the skills they now have to lead groups.

Alison Matheson - Scottish Natural Heritage

Backbone is succeeding in reaching BME women, in particular those who otherwise would not have had the opportunities to experience the natural environment due to cultural barriers. Removing barriers and boosting confidence have been repeated outcomes for participants of Backbone projects impacting on the participants' abilities to lead to positive changes in their lives thereby removing significant inequalities that they experience within society. The women's increase in self-confidence and a new belief in their rights and capabilities reflect Backbone's contribution to achieving the Scottish National Outcome.

We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.

The Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) have confirmed that the women who attended the courses have increased their access and taken the learning further meeting one of their aims.

Breaking barriers I feel this has worked well. The women have accessed the training and I don't know if they would have joined other FCS programmes even if we advertise and email etc. having Backbone spending time on the recruitment was invaluable.

Romana Huq – Forestry Commission Scotland

CLP has certainly encouraged people to go outdoors; people who wouldn't otherwise have had the confidence to do so.

Alison Matheson - Scottish Natural Heritage



10. IMPORTANCE OF ROLE MODELS IN OUTDOOR EDUCATION

10.1 Leadership

A key partner recognised the leadership skills and abilities Pammy Johal, founder and Operations Director, brings to the projects and the resulting outcomes.

Pammy is at the frontline with CLP... Pammy is skilled and she creates that environment (ambience) where people feel they have skills already. Pammy is a 'pebble in the pond', the potential energy to kinetic, creating the ripple effect where learning is shared with others.

Chris Dunning – The Rank Foundation

This energy and passion resonated with one participant who described Pammy as a good role model with the course attendees and the resulting learning they took.

She passes on energy and it motivates you. She simplifies things. You think it is going to be hard and she gives you the confidence to be outdoors. She teaches you the outdoors is for fun rather than just talking about health.

10.2 As a Role Model

Many participants mentioned the "lack of accessible confident and approachable leaders from our communities (role models) who have knowledgeable information and experience." The participants desire role models that reflect the image, cultural and faith awareness of themselves.

Romena Huq from Forestry Commission Scotland recognises the lack of BME role models and professionals working in the environment sector.

On a personal level there is a big gap in the sector; there are not many BME women who are doing what we do.

Backbone addresses this by encouraging and supporting the participants to go back into their communities and use their knowledge and experience to encourage others to access, benefit from and experience the outdoors, thereby becoming role models themselves. One 54 year old participant who attended the WLP 2012 realised her potential to support others in the community.

At first I did not think that hiking and camping in the woods was for me at all but now I know that I can even take a group of women out - my confidence is getting much higher.

Another participant stated the impact Backbone has had on her and her intention to give back to the community.

I owe a lot to Pammy and Backbone. Pammy has made me so much aware to do the best you can and to give back to the community. I'm taking this experience back to the community.

Many participants cited Pammy Johal's role and visibility as the trainer, and instigator as a key component to their personal development and to the success of the projects.

One participant stated:

I don't know of any single BME woman apart from Pammy who camp on their own.



10.3 Strategic role and Networking

Pammy's influence strategically was commented to the extent that the values and aims of Backbone and the partner agency work together.

I work with the Board of Trustees to support them make the decisions about who and what to invest in. They are actively interested and are committed to visiting communities we work with. Pammy is all about that commitment, an open Asian woman who wears her culture as an individual. There is a resonance with the Foundation and Backbone and we work together to achieve our shared aims.

Chris Dunning – The Rank Foundation

Pammy's ability to work with a number of agencies and organisations has also been noted.

Pammy has successfully worked with other organisations; it is unusual to have a relatively comfortable relationship with such a wide variety of funders, especially the larger institutions. She facilitates and works with them as colleagues, she inspires a sense of being authentic, 'I can deliver'. So much of what Pammy does is good facilitative leadership, how to lead others to lead her. She equally evokes a sense of collaboration as a leader and this inspires confidence. It's how we work as human beings and Pammy leaves a piece of herself with everyone.

Chris Dunning – The Rank Foundation

The evaluation has identified that as a result of working with different key partners, where each key partner organisation has its own strategic outcomes and aims, Pammy's role is to ensure that the projects meet all these individual aims and outcomes.

For example, the evaluation has shown that 12 out of the 16 Scottish National outcomes have been supported by Backbone's projects.

Additionally there are:

- 3 Cairngorms National Park Authority long term outcomes
- 4 Scottish Natural Heritage outcomes
- 3 Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority outcomes
- 6 Forestry Commission Scotland objectives

Pammy is an exemplary role model who is delivering on Backbone's key aim to develop role models. It is recognised that she acknowledges the cultural and other barriers BME women and marginalised groups face many of whom often start from a position with limited or no experience in the outdoors. The feedback above demonstrates her ability to succeed at all levels, from outreach, to leading on the courses and instilling her passion, to working strategically with many different partners. Backbone has only 3 directors of which Pammy is the Operations Director with responsibility for the strategic and delivery focus of the organisation. The challenge for the Board is to build on the strengths and address the challenges in a way that do not weaken Backbone's core values and practices. They have acknowledged this and are putting together plans to work with the advisory panel for future delivery of Backbone projects and strategic direction.



11. EMPLOYABILITY

Although not a specific key objective of Backbone, a key theme that emerged nevertheless was that a number of participants have succeeded in obtaining paid employment or volunteer opportunities as a result of attending Backbone projects. For some this has been an increase in their economic activity and for others it offers the potential for future employment. One participant is currently Climate Change Challenge Project Co-ordinator. She has been in this role since June 2014 and applied for the role as a result of attending WLP 2010.

I was interested because of WLP 2010. I applied for the job and got it.

Another participant of the WLP 2013 gained employment in youth work as a direct result of having her confidence and skillset increased by the project.

Other participants have volunteered a huge amount in their community and as a result are now keen to work professionally with young people and recognise this may be possible as this participant who attended WLP 2010 has indicated.

It's like opening a door to new opportunities.

The possibility of obtaining employment in the environment sector has been recognised by a funder.

A couple of women who have gone through the WLP have applied for jobs that the FCS has advertised. One woman said she would not have applied if she had not gone through the WLP. Two years ago she would not have even considered applying to the environment sector. WLP has helped in that respect.

Romena Huq - Forestry Commission Scotland



Backbone's projects offer skills and qualifications for example John Muir Award Leadership Training, Basic Expedition Leadership Award Training, First Aid training, Cycle Ride Leaders Training & MIDAS Minibus training. This helps to enhance people's employment opportunities. The combination of skills, increase in confidence and qualifications have had positive results for participants in their volunteering, and economic activity.

These examples demonstrate how Backbone is fulfilling the following outcomes:

Scottish National Outcome.⁹

We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.

Cairngorms National Park long term outcome 1.

A sustainable economy supporting thriving business and communities

Scottish Natural Heritage outcome 3.

Nature and landscapes making an increased contribution to the Scottish economy

⁹The Scottish Government National Outcomes, Available online at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/scotPerforms/outcome>

12. HEALTH

One of the most prominent and repeated outcomes from the Backbone projects are the health benefits, both physical and mental. The evaluation has identified that participants acknowledged the health benefits as a result of attending the programmes.

One participant from the WLTR 2012 project referred to her physical condition and desire to stop smoking.

"I am much fitter and will pursue personal fitness more systematically as I want to keep on cycling. Cycling has given me a reason to stay off smoking- I now have a reason not to smoke. I have previously stopped and relapsed many times. This time, I do NOT wish to smoke – I have a better use for my lungs."

Another, on the same programme, referred to her emotional health benefits.

Well Being, spending 30 mins plus being physically active in the outdoor and around greenery –I have greater emotional well-being - I respond better to life (and works) stresses; have a reason to smile and have confidence, that comes from achievements in the physical aspects that I can bring to other aspects of my life/work, I have something that I am very proud of – being a cyclist.



A participant on the BME Women's Walking Project 2011/2012 saw the mental health benefits for her peer group.

Women in our community can stop depression by coming out and getting fresh air in places like this.

Many other participants felt emotional benefits from being in the outdoor environment and some participants made the link between the activity undertaken and their physical and emotional well-being.

I think it's actually changed my world, it's given me so much confidence and has made me think that I need to do something about my fitness and wellbeing.

These responses show participants feel they are being supported by Backbone to achieve the Scottish National Outcome.

We live longer, healthier lives.

13. FAITH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The evaluation identified that participants made a strong connection between their religion and the environment.

One participant acknowledged how religion can be a barrier, particularly for women.

Unless you know what's available you don't access it. First thing is telling them so they know what's out there. Barriers of culture and religion that stop them, for example fear of camping.

Some participants felt a strong link between their faith and the outdoors. They now see the natural environment and its protection as an 'extension' of their faith. One participant who attended the CLP 2010 project stated.

Green cleanliness is a religious obligation for me. How much waste did we accumulate on our expedition? Magnify that on a global scale. We have a serious problem to sort out!

Additionally some participants have begun to practice their religion in the outdoors. For one participant her changed outlook has meant that she believes one can practise their faith in the outdoors; integrating the practice of faith in one's life with the environment.

We do ablution outdoors. We can practically implement our faith outdoors. The route to the outdoors has been Backbone. Now I like to pray outside. I go to the hills with a compass. Do ablution in the river.

In chapter 9 women identified some the cultural barriers to accessing the environment. As a way of negotiating cultural barriers to accessing the environment women are adapting their culture and faith to accessing, experiencing and benefiting from the outdoors.



14. DATA ANALYSIS

14.1 Overview

Where data was available it is presented to give an indication of the statistical outcomes achieved by Backbone. Where the data is specified as a range, for example 6 to 8 participants, then the lower number has been taken. If the data given is an approximation for example 40+ again the actual figure of 40 is taken.

- 598 participants attended the Backbone projects listed in chapter 4 from 2010 to 2013, demonstrating Backbone has been successful in the outreach work and engagement activities.
- Where data is recorded 351 participants were female and 22 male. Despite being incomplete, the data does reveal the need for these programmes for women, particularly BME women and it shows how Backbone is successfully engaging with this group.
- The age range of the participants is 0 to 60 years of age and indicates the participation and engagement level across all ages. Babies accompanied mothers on the walking projects hence the age of 0 in years.
- For all of the projects, except WLP 2012, the ethnic category of Pakistani was recorded as the largest participant ethnic group.

14.2 Community Engagement

The evaluation has analysed the data collected to illustrate the impact of the projects on local communities as participants complete programmes and then run projects and events within their communities. Where engagement is in the planning phase this has been excluded within the data analysis as the actual numbers of participants and events are not recorded. The following table gives an overview of the community engagement achieved by participants to the CLP and WLP programmes in the first year of receiving the training.

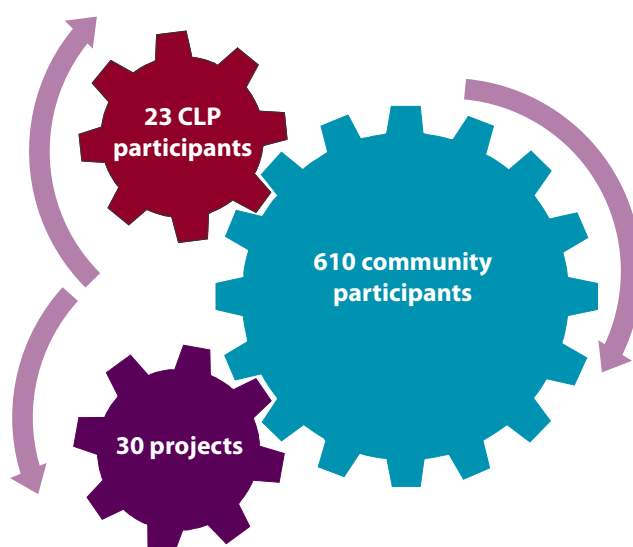
PROGRAMME	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	NUMBER OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS ENGAGED
CLP 2010	23	610
CLP 2012	14	100
CLP 2013	11	159
WLP 2010	11	1200
WLP 2012	10	157
WLP 2013	20	324
TOTAL	89	2550

This demonstrates for every investment in a participant approximately 28 community participants engage and benefit from accessing the natural environment in the first year.

The detail for each project is given below.

CLP 2010

As a result of attending CLP 2010, 23 participants created, led and supported 30 projects involving 610 participants, as illustrated by the diagram below.



CLP 2012

14 participants engaged a further 100 community participants including friends and family. There is no definitive data which records the type of activity, the exact number of sessions per activity and the number of participants for each session. The types of activities undertaken include:

- Heath walking for women
- Expeditions led with family and local groups.

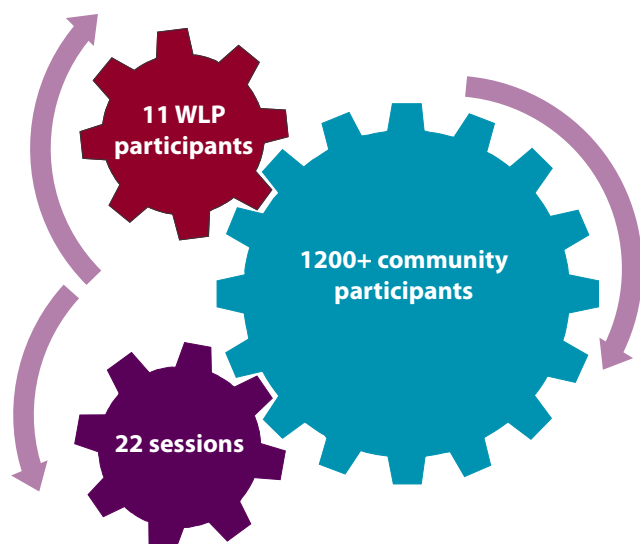
CLP 2013

11 participants engaged a further 159 (approximately) community participants. Some of the data collated gave a range of participants, for example 5 to 8 in a session. Where this occurred the lowest number has been taken. Furthermore although the range was specified per session of an activity there is no data that specifies the exact number of sessions undertaken per activity.

WLP 2010

The 11 women participants delivered 22 engagement sessions with their communities. The majority of community participants included adult women, their children, families and young people.

Over 1200 community participants were engaged, although the exact number has not been recorded.



WLP 2012

The 10 participants engaged a further 157 further community participants in walks and bike riding schemes.

WLP 2013

20 participants have engaged a further 324 community participants in activities such as

- Walks for elderly isolated women aged 75 years
- Cycling groups for children and adults

14.3 Ethnicity and Age profiles of individual projects

The detail for each project is shown below covering age, gender, ethnicity and religion.

CLP 2010

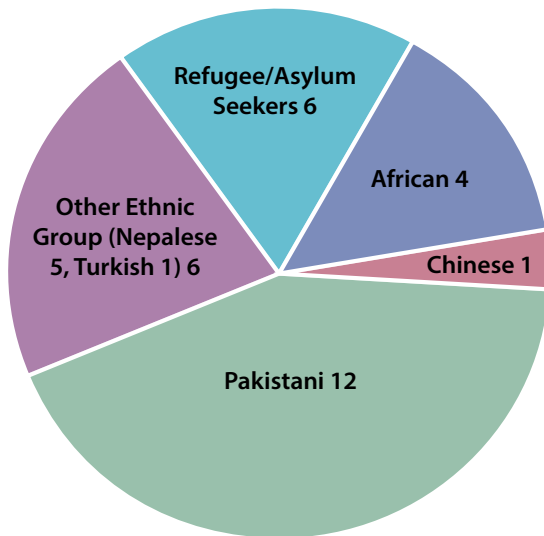
12 males and 11 females participated in this programme. The chart below shows the age range of the participants; most of the participants are in the age ranges 26 - 35 with equal numbers in age ranges 18 – 24, 36 – 45 and 45+.

CLP 2010 Participant Age Profile



The ethnicity mix shows all of the participants are from ethnic minority backgrounds, with the majority of Pakistani descent (British or Scottish). There were 6 refugees and asylum seekers.

CLP 2010 Ethnicity of Participants

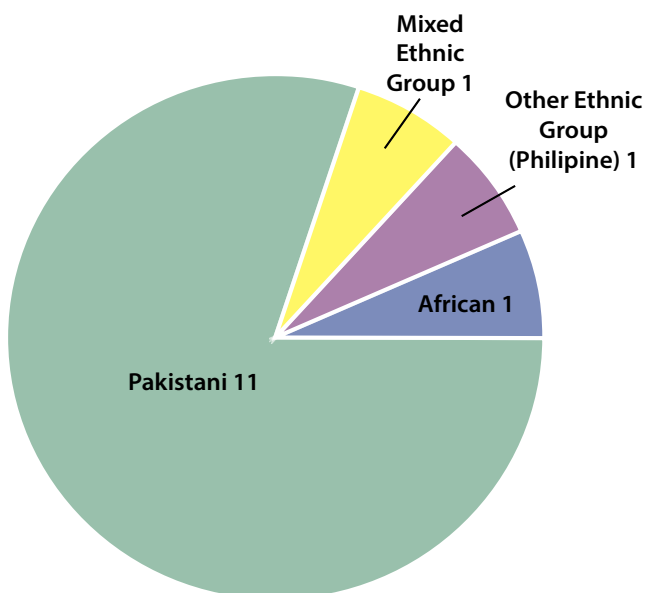


CLP 2012

This programme had an equal number of male and female participants, 7 each, and all were in the age range 19 to 39, a narrower age range than 2010 programme. The number of participants has reduced by almost 40% compared to CLP 2010 programme.

Again all participants were from an ethnic minority background with the majority (11) of Pakistani descent.

CLP 2012 Ethnicity of Participants

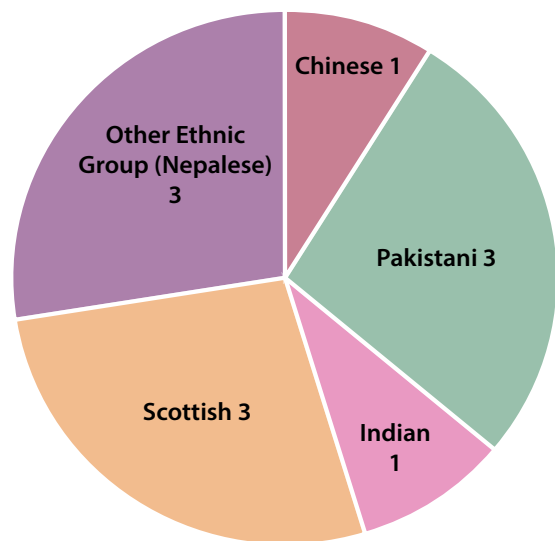


CLP 2013

Of the 11 participants, 3 were male and 8 were female showing a predominance of female participants.

Most were from an ethnic minority background, with 3 participants stating Scottish as their ethnicity. 5 participants were in the age range 18 to 25 and 6 participants were in the age range 37 to 50. Again a fairly even mix of age ranges but this project also shows slightly more participants in the older age range of 37 to 50.

CLP 2013 Ethnicity of Participants



WLP 2010

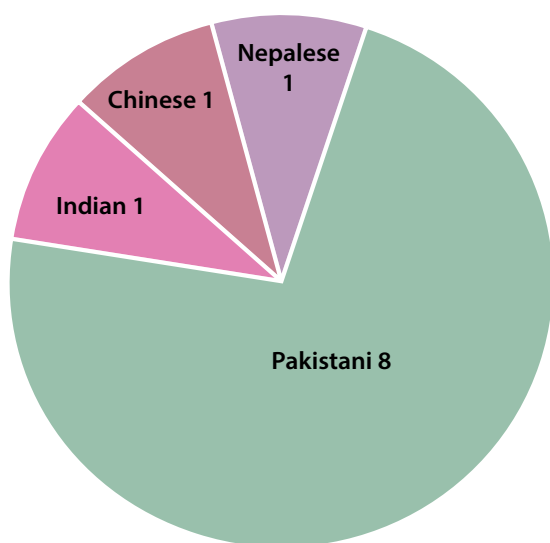
11 women attended the WLP 2010 programme. 6 women were in the age range 16 to 34 and 5 women in the age range 35 to 54; showing that outdoor leadership is also sought by women in their mid-thirties to mid-fifties.

WLP 2010 Participant Age Profile



All of the women were from an ethnic minority background with most women of Pakistani descent. Of the 11 women 8 were Muslim, 1 Hindu, 1 Christian and 1 of 'no religion'.

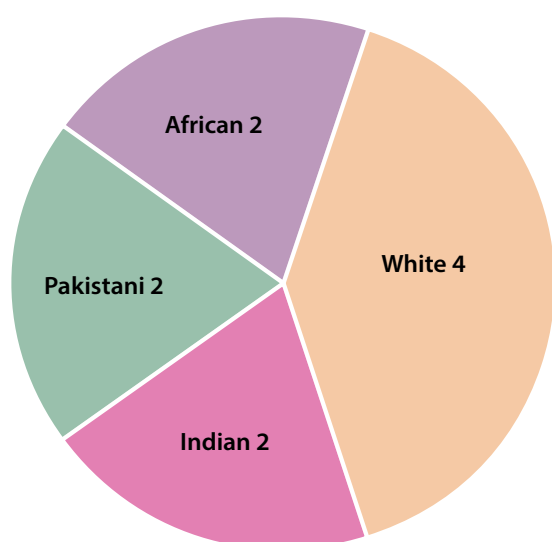
WLP 2010 Ethnicity of Participants



WLP2012

There were 10 women on the WLP 2012 programme in the age range 19 to 57 years. The ethnic profile showed 4 women were white including 2 Eastern European with the other 6 from an ethnic minority background.

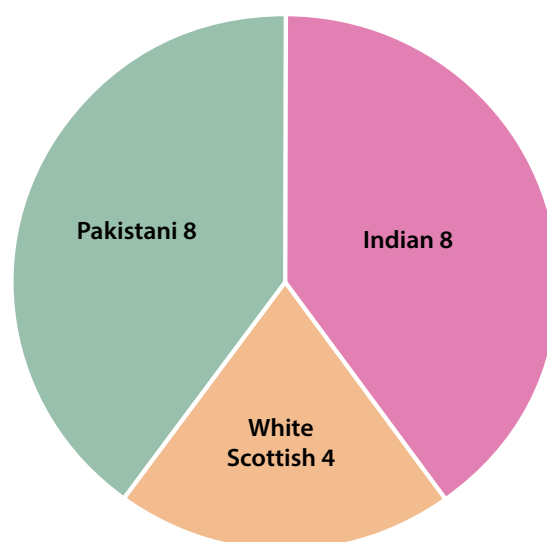
WLP 2012 Ethnicity of Participants



WLP 2013

There were 20 participants on the WLP 2013 programme in the age range 18 to 57 years. 20% of the participants were white. The programmes are becoming more ethnically diverse with white participants as well as ethnic minority participants. Just over half (11 participants) identified their faith as Muslim.

WLP 2013 Ethnicity of Participants

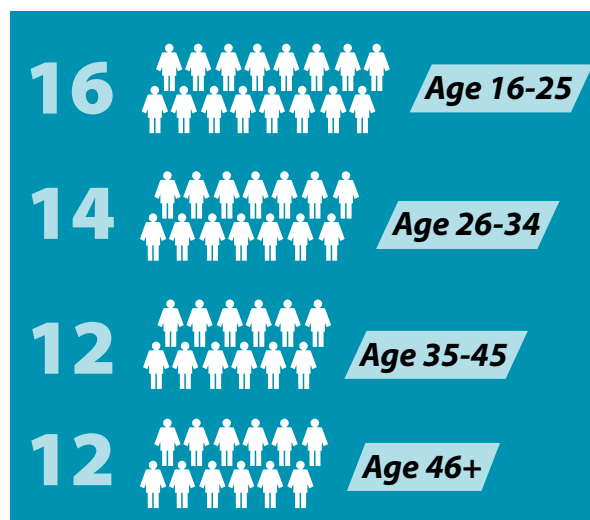


CWP 2013

54 participants attended the programme, of which 2 were from ethnic minorities; the remaining 52 identified themselves as White/Scottish/British.

The age profile of the participants revealed 22% were over 46 years, which shows the appeal the project had for older participants.

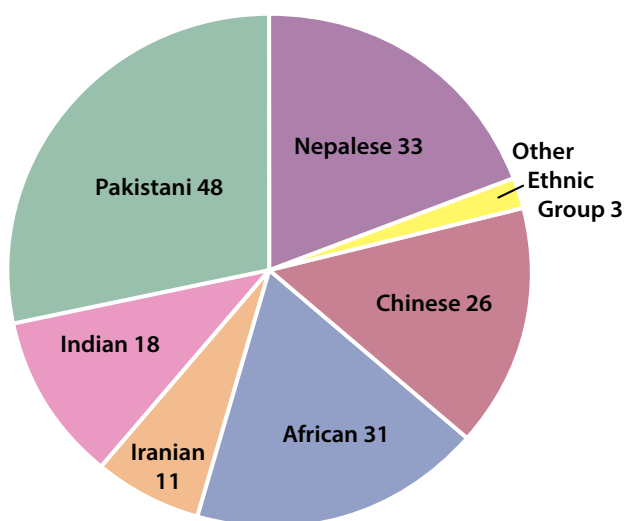
CWP 2013 Participant Age Profile



CIP 2010

This project attracted a large number of participants, whose age range is recorded as 1 to 60+ years. There is no data to ascertain the range of age profiles of the participants between 1 and over 60 years. The ethnic profile shows a diverse range of groups attended the project, demonstrating the successful outreach of this project to diverse communities.

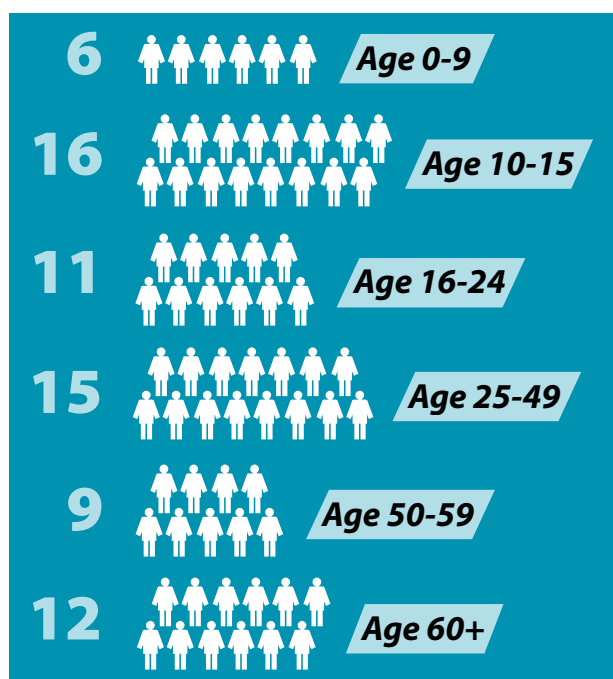
CIP 2010 Ethnicity of Participants



BME Women's Walking Project 2012

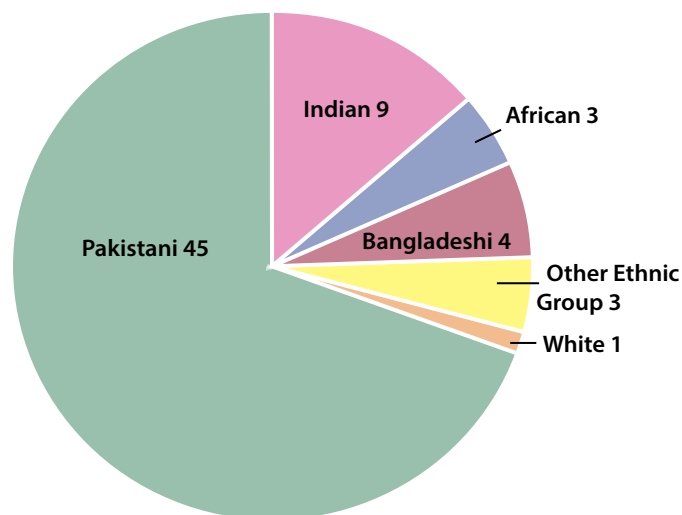
This project reflects the wide range of ages of the participants from 0 to over 60 years of age, in particular the number of women aged 50 years and older. Of the 69 participants 21 were over the age of 50 years representing 30% and those specifically over 60 represented 17%. All of the women lived in Dundee.

BME Women's Walking Project - 2012



Ethnicity was recorded for 65 participants. One participant was white and the remaining 64 were from ethnic minority backgrounds (including other ethnic group), with 45 out of the 65 from Pakistani descent, representing 69%. There were 6 different ethnic groups, including 'other ethnic group'.

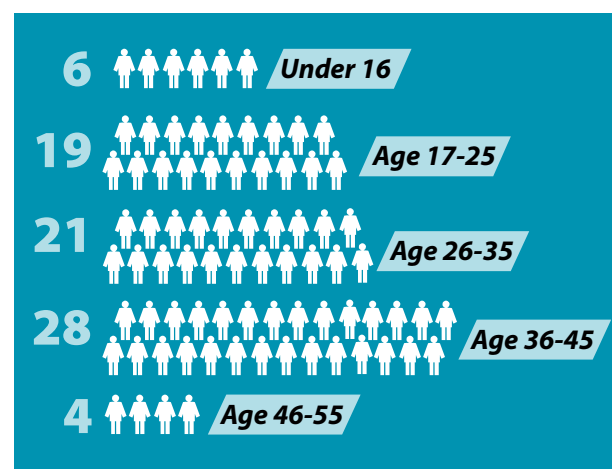
BME Women's Walking Project 2012 Ethnicity



WLTR 2011/12

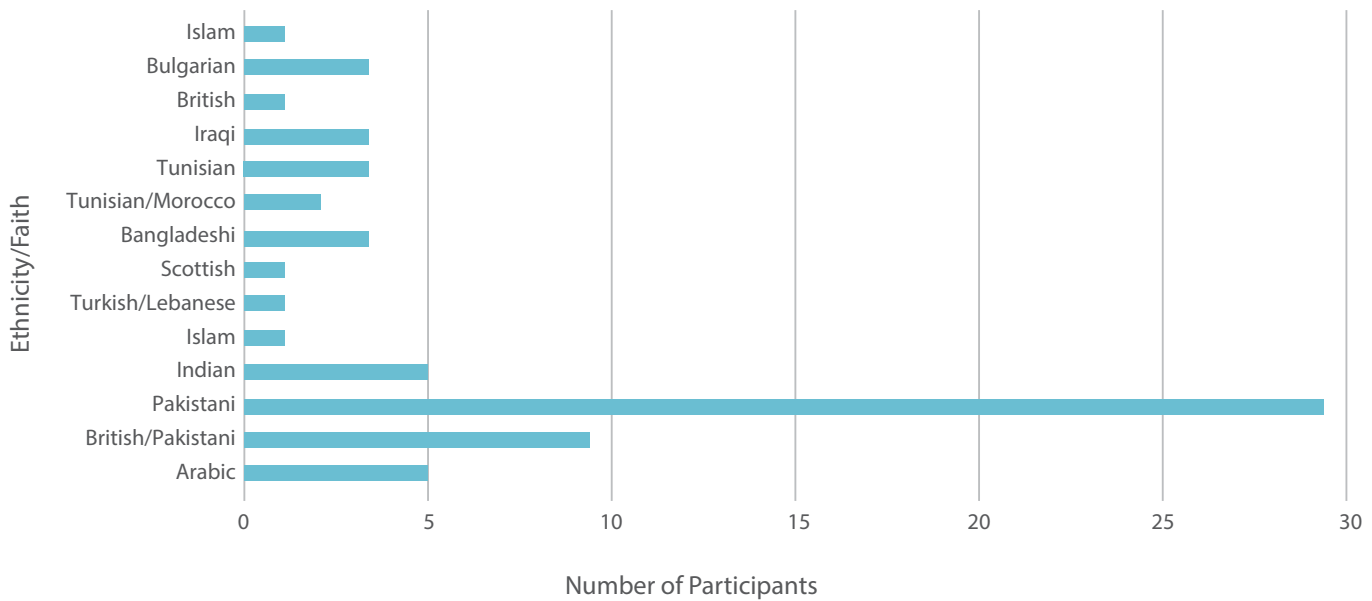
There were 78 participants on the WLTR 2011/12 programme. Ethnic categories were recorded for 66 of the participants. Of these, 44% were of Pakistani origin, the largest group, with another 14% describing themselves as British Pakistani, together making up 58% of the total. The next largest groups were Indian and Arabic, each representing 8%.

WLTR 2011/12 Age Profile



35% of the participants were in the age range 36 to 45, reflecting the success of outreach for women of this age category.

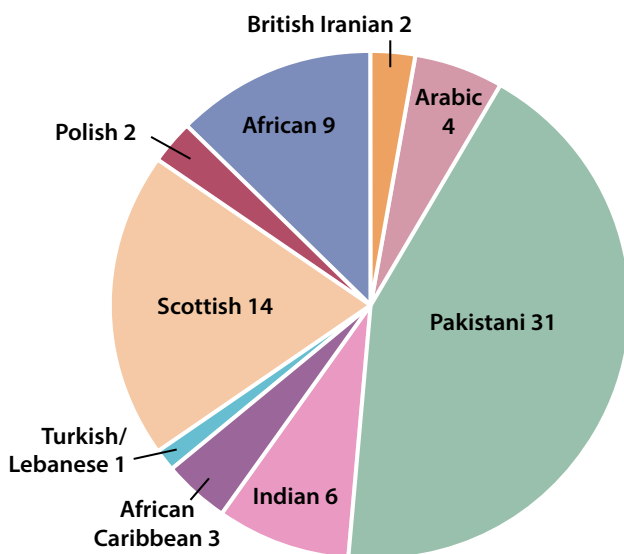
WLTR 2011/12



WLTR Central 2012

Of the 72 participants, 42% were of Pakistani origin which reflects the outreach undertaken by local community groups. Scottish is the next largest group, representing 19% although it is not known if these are white Scottish or other ethnic groups. There are 9 different ethnic groups in this project, reflecting the diversity of the participants.

WLTR Central 2012 - Ethnicity

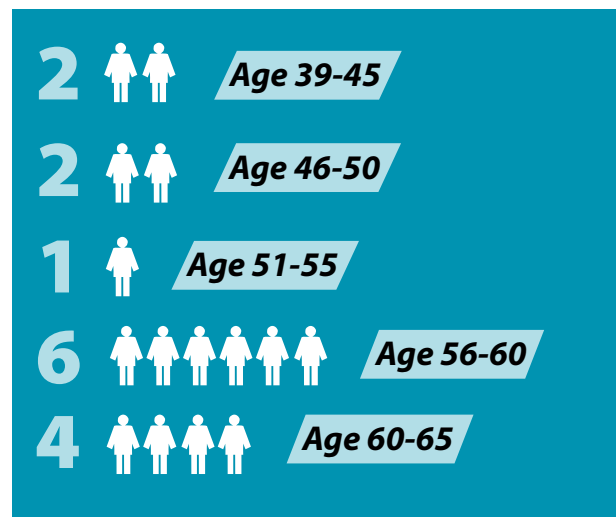


The age ranges of the participants were recorded as 15 to 42 years of age. No further breakdown was available.

WLTR 2013

This project has been very successful in engaging older participants to attend the course with 66% aged 56 and over.

WLTR 2013 Age Profile



14.4 Project Evaluation Feedback

Analysis has been undertaken of participants' feedback from the projects. Participants were asked the following questions at both the

onset of the programme and at the end. This evaluation was conducted for CLP 2012, CLP 2013 and WLP 2012.

Question 1	How confident are you in using the natural environment in your community work?
Question 2	What is your knowledge on what is available in the outdoor environment in Scotland?
Question 3	How easy is it for your groups to access the outdoor environment?
Question 4	To what extent are you aware of environmental organisations in Scotland?
Question 5	To what extent do you work with environmental organisations in Scotland?
Question 6	How confident are you in approaching environmental agencies/organisations to support your community work
Question 7	Do you feel you have the technical skills to take your groups out safely in the outdoor environment?
Question 8	What is your understanding of the natural environment in Scotland?
Question 9	What is your understanding of how to access the natural environment in Scotland?
Question 10	What is your understanding of how to protect & sustain Scotland's natural environment?
Question 11	To what extent are you aware of how to use the Scotland's natural environment in your community work?
Question 12	How confident are you in designing and facilitating outdoor experiences for your groups?
Question 13	Do you feel you are a confident and competent leader of outdoor group experiences?
Question 14	To what extent do you use the outdoor environment to bring different communities together?
Question 15	How confident are you in developing a local community environmental project?

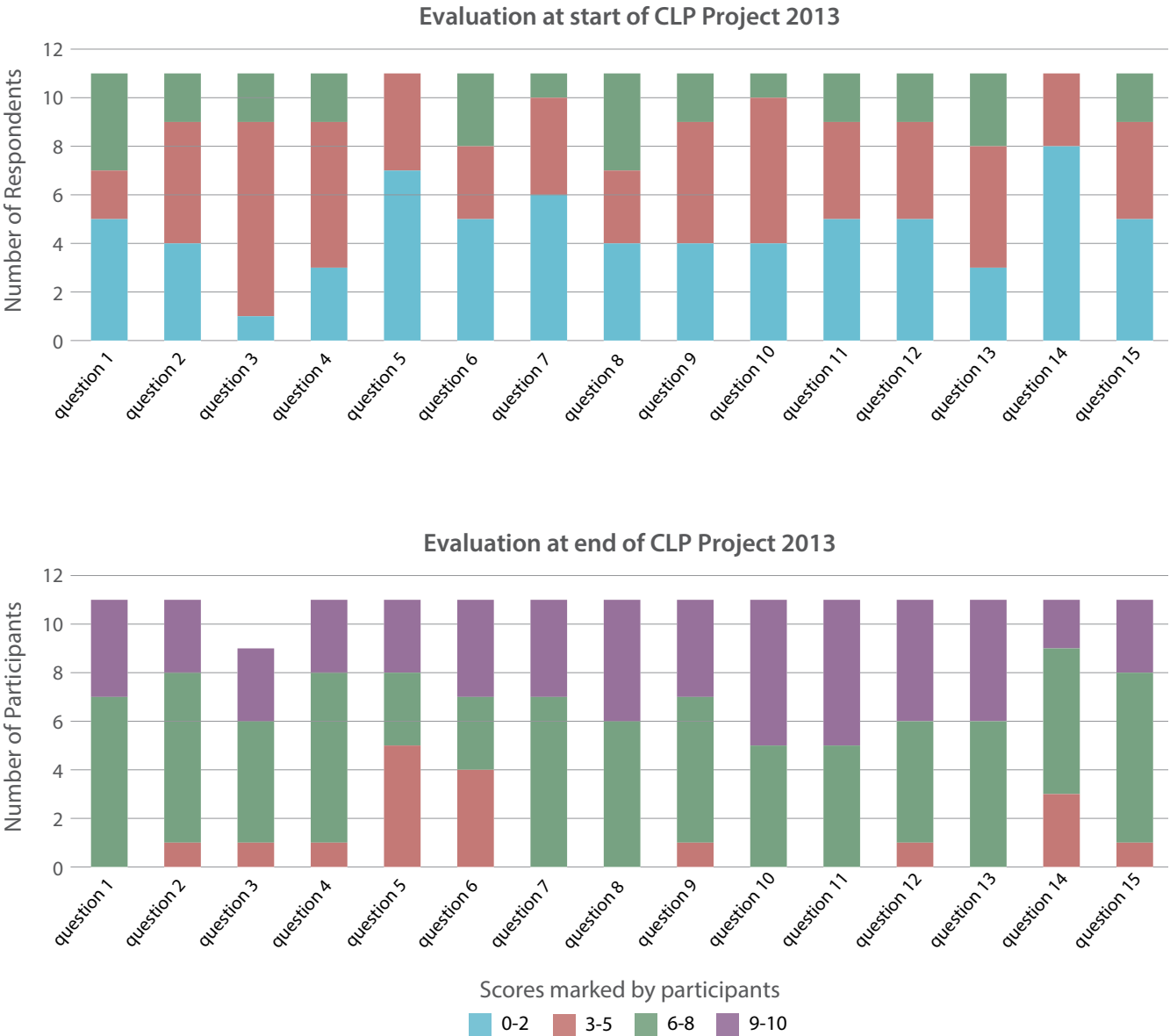
The graphs show the results of evaluation from the respondents.



For all of the questions the respondents scored a higher rating at the end of the programme in comparison to the beginning. At the beginning of the programme Question 5 (To what extent do you work with environmental organisations in Scotland?) and Question 15 (How confident are you in developing a local community environmental project?) were most frequently rated the lowest scoring, reflecting the group's lack of access to agencies that work with the environment and their confidence in leading groups in the local communities. Question 13 (Do you feel you are a confident and competent leader of outdoor group experiences?) had the most number of respondents rating it a maximum of 5. This reflects that participants' confidence in leading other groups was not very high at all.

At the end of the programme the respondents rated all of the questions much higher than at the beginning, showing an increase in confidence and awareness of the environment directly due to the CLP 2012 project. Question 10 (What is your understanding of how to protect & sustain Scotland's natural environment?) had the biggest positive change, where all respondents' understanding had increased. Question 1 (How confident are you in using the natural environment in your community work?), question 2 (What is your knowledge on what is available in the outdoor environment in Scotland?), question 8 (What is your understanding of the natural environment in Scotland?) and question 10 (What is your understanding of how to protect & sustain Scotland's natural environment?) scored the highest ratings, indicating a newfound awareness of the environment and its conservation.

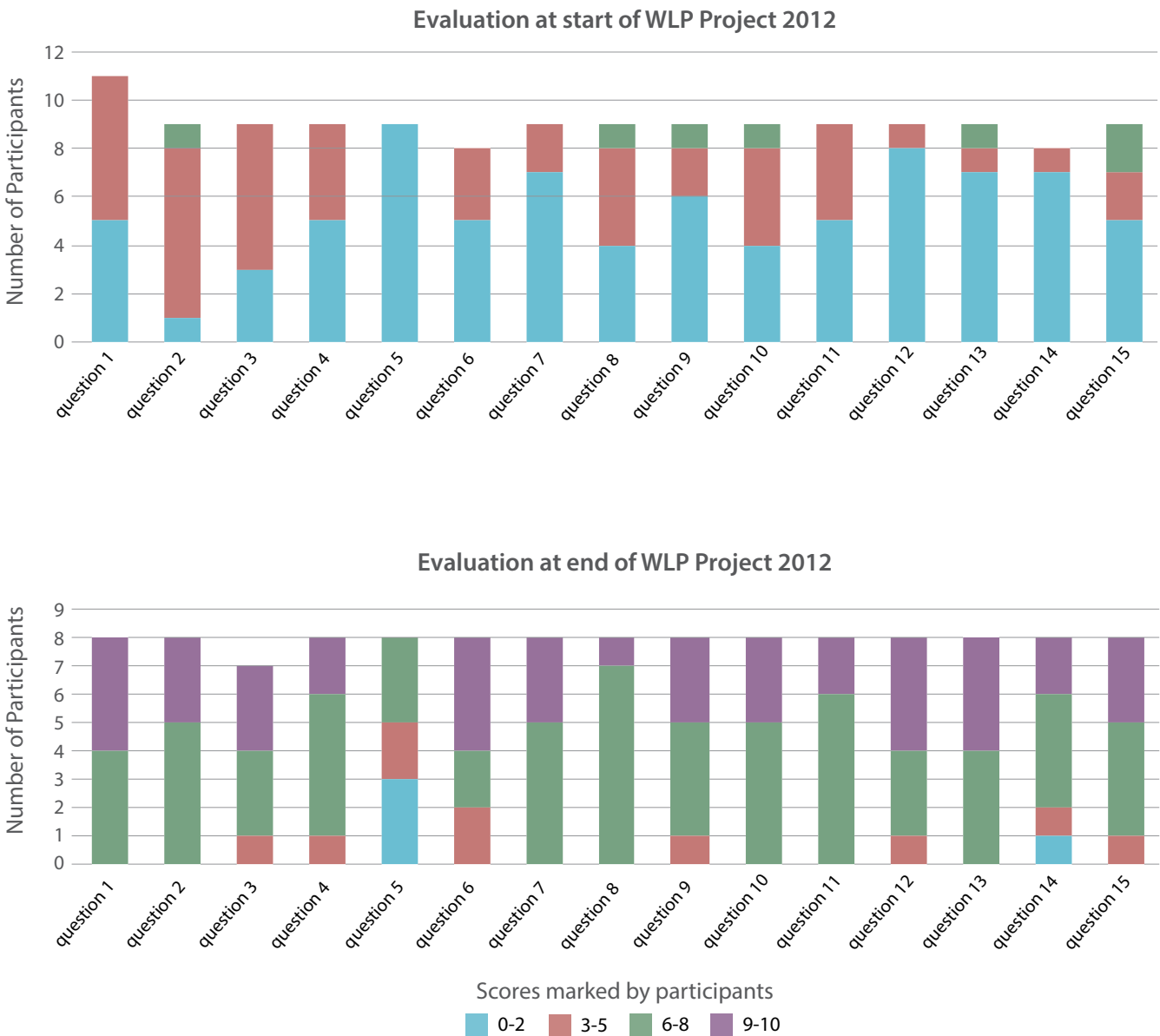
The graphs show the results of evaluation from the respondents.



For all of the questions the respondents scored a higher rating at the end of the programme in comparison to the beginning. At the beginning of the programme Question 5 (To what extent do you work with environmental organisations in Scotland?) and Question 14 (To what extent do you use the outdoor environment to bring different communities together?) were most frequently rated the lowest scoring, reflecting the group's lack of access to agencies that work with the environment and the environment's contribution to community cohesion. Question 5 (To what extent do you work with environmental organisations in Scotland?) was not rated higher than 5 by any respondent, again reflecting the participants' lack of involvement with environmental organisations in Scotland.

At the end of the programme the respondents rated all of the questions much higher than at the beginning reflecting an increase in confidence and awareness of the environment. Question 10 (What is your understanding of how to protect & sustain Scotland's natural environment?) had the most change as all respondents' understanding had increased. Question 10 (What is your understanding of how to protect & sustain Scotland's natural environment?) and question 11 (To what extent are you aware of how to use the Scotland's natural environment in your community work?) had the highest ratings more frequently. This shows how the project fuelled the participants' desire to support local communities in benefiting from access to the natural environment.

The graphs show the results of evaluation from the respondents.



At the start of the programme all of the questions were rated very low scores with two thirds of the questions receiving no rating higher than 5. This indicates how little awareness, access, knowledge or confidence the participants had towards the environment.

At the end of the programme Question 5 (To what extent do you work with environmental

organisations in Scotland?) and Question 11 (To what extent are you aware of how to use the Scotland’s natural environment in your community work?) had the most positive change in rating. Participants’ involvement in the programme caused a new-found contact with environmental organisations and an awareness of what the benefits are for local communities.

15. AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The evaluation uncovered gaps in the current delivery and below are recommendations for addressing those gaps.

Some of the project reports identified how participants are taking their learning back into the community for others to benefit from the natural environment. There is detail of what participants undertake after they have completed the programme. A number of funders and partners requested more detailed monitoring and regular communication with participants after completion of a programme to appreciate how they are progressing and determine sustainability of outcomes. Backbone and the partners will need to agree the form of communication between the participants and the partners and whether the contact is most effective if funders have direct communication with participants or with Backbone as an intermediary.

We really need to see evidence if future funding is required. There needs to be protocols regarding keeping in touch and reporting back.

Alan Smith - Cairngorms National Park Authority

This view is also supported by the Forestry Commission Scotland.

What has been lacking is that the Forestry Commission Scotland does not know what the women have gone on to do after their training. We don't know if they have set up their own groups or have gone on to lead walk/expeditions etc. It is only if I have had personal contacts I may find out this information; this is not always possible for us to do due to time constraints. Our vision was that participants from the WLP and CLP become informal ambassadors for us – to work with FCS staff and to encourage other people to volunteer in their communities to volunteer and engage with us as an organisation.

Romena Huq - Forestry Commission Scotland

The evaluation has found that the quality of the programmes are high, however this related comment identifies the gap.

The only criticism I have is that Backbone are not very good at getting the message across about how good they are and how good the projects are. We have tried to help a bit but I am sure that more can be done. Even as a grant funder it was not until I had met the people who had taken part that I realised how good CLP was and the impact it has had on their lives, and the effect on their friends and family at home.

Alison Matheson – Scottish Natural Heritage

Recommendation 1:

The funders and Backbone to determine the options for ensuring that participants who have been invested in are able to communicate their progress to the funder after completion of the programme.

The evaluation has identified how the projects meet the Scottish National Outcomes and objectives of key partners. This was not evidenced in the project reports. Alan Smith also requested that the collation of all feedback and outcomes need to relate the Cairngorms National Park Authority's aims and objectives and the Scottish National Outcomes. The mapping of project outcomes to key objectives and outcomes need to be undertaken on a regular basis.

Recommendation 2:

The reports, for individual projects, are to include a section for the mapping of project outcomes to the Scottish National Outcomes and the funder or key partner's aims and objectives.



The reviews of the reports highlighted that data collation and representation is inconsistent and sometimes missing. This meant that definite results could not be concluded. Ethnicity, faith and age data needs to be consistent with the guidelines as defined by the Scottish Government on collecting equality data.¹⁰

Recommendation 3:
Collect and record data that is consistent with Scottish Government's guidelines on collecting equality information.

There was evidence of how Backbone is ensuring participants are giving back to the community but due to missing data the full impact could not be determined. In order to accurately evidence how Backbone is providing value for money and demonstrate the full impact on local communities, data needs to be collected periodically and recorded in a consistent manner. The Forestry Commission expressed that a key requirement is the sustainability of communities; how participants are taking the learning back into the community. In reference to year one of the WLP where 16 women involved 1200 other people in the communities, the FCS believe:

This type of evidence is powerful to justify investment, this information was not available that easily in the following years.

Romena Huq – Forestry Commission Scotland

Recommendation 4:
Periodically collect data that details the statistical outcomes of individuals who have benefited from the cascading of learning within communities. Agree with funder how often, the actual data to be presented, and the resourcing of it.

Pammy Johal's role in many areas from outreach and engagement to networking with all of the key partners has been highlighted by key partners as well as the participants. One funder has questioned how Backbone is to become sustainable in the future when others lead and determine future strategy. Although Backbone's board are working towards determining future strategy and resourcing required for delivery of projects, there is still much risk centred on one person's ability to do all of the operational and strategic tasks.

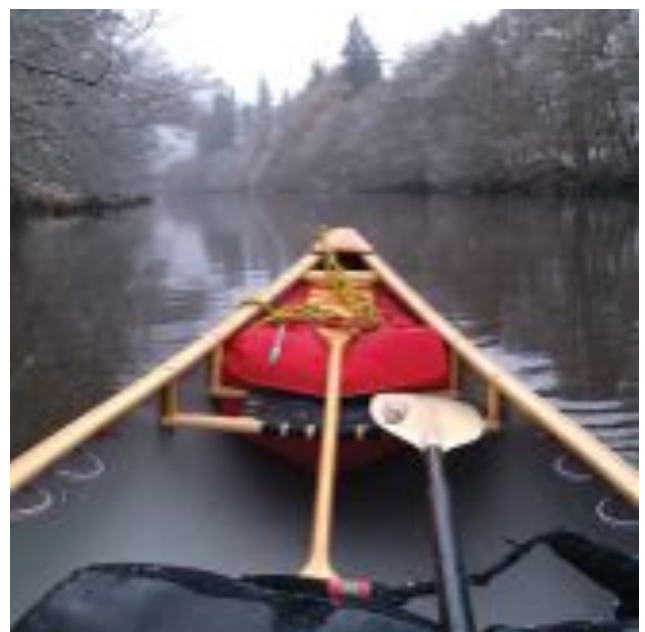
She knows she is not the focus of the activity and learning, success will only be evident when she is not required and others shine.

Chris Dunning – The Rank Foundation

This was endorsed by the Forestry Commission:

I don't know whether Backbone is at that stage to hand over to the leaders to run the CIC and whether Pammy Johal can step back.

Recommendation 5:
For Backbone's board to determine strategy, engagement and action plans for the alumni of Backbone to drive, direct and lead Backbone in the future.



¹⁰ The Scottish Government – Collecting Equality Information Available online at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality/Equalities/EqualFramework/GatherEvidence/CollectEqualInfo>

Participants have voiced how important it is to them to have someone who is accessible and can guide them in the right direction to help progress once they have completed the programme.

Pammy's passion for Backbone has been a force for change for one participant. She appreciated the energy and support she received during her training but suggested that support is still required even after the training is complete for people to be successful in their attempts to give back to the community.

Having someone like Pammy to give support, backing and energy she provides. Someone like Pammy is great. She is only a phone call away. It is important to have that contact even after you have finished the project. I want to have my camping groups and still need a helping hand.

Recommendation 6:

For Backbone to consider how it can resource and allocate time and expertise to support participants who have completed the projects but require further support to ensure their support for local communities is sustainable.

Although there has been national outreach for the projects, the analysis shows that over half of the participants are from the Glasgow and Edinburgh regions. As the model has proved to meet the outcomes of funders, further consideration should be given by Backbone to widen participation, engagement and outreach to other regions of Scotland, particularly in the North.

Recommendation 7:

For Backbone to determine a strategy for further projects in parts of Scotland outside of Glasgow and Edinburgh for marginalised communities.



The Forestry Commission feel that they would like greater visibility of the FCS branding towards participants who are participating in the projects funded by the FCS. They believe this would facilitate a greater relationship with them and the participants. As the projects are run in the evenings and weekends Backbone have requested FCS staff attend at these times but due to resource constraints for FCS this is not possible.

As I only meet women at the recruitment stage and the participants exposure is the Backbone brand. The participants don't connect with FC as being part of the programme. Participants don't care about who has funded the programme only who are delivering and supporting them. For FCS this is important. We want the leaders to know and feel that they are getting the training from Backbone but FC are investing in them and would like to have a relationship or commitment built in from the start. I know a lot of training sessions were done in the evenings and weekends and Backbone have said we should be more visible but it is not always possible for one person to attend the sessions due to time and financial constraints of weekend working.

Romena Huq – Forestry Commission Scotland

Recommendation 8:

For Backbone and the Forestry Commission to determine a solution to increase the visibility of the FCS branding to participants on projects funded by them.

APPENDIX 1 CASE STUDIES

The following case studies have been derived from the 6 participants interviewed for the evaluation.

KEMAL OKAN

Kemal Okan attended the CLP 2010/2011.

Kemal has since worked as a Youth Development Officer for 18 months with emphasis on character building for young people through sports. He has taken on a project to introduce people to the outdoors, a project funded by the Forestry Commission, and has taken 12 people over an 8 month period. Backbone has enabled him to run the projects.

Attending the project has given Kemal opportunities to influence and disseminate his learning. Scottish National Heritage has invited him to speak about how he engages BME communities with the outdoors. He is also speaking about the outdoors from a faith and spiritual perspective to the Glasgow Interfaith Group who have invited him to speak about what Islam has to say about the environment.

Kemal has a very spiritual perspective on the environment and the link between his spirituality, his faith and the environment. He is passionate about communicating this knowledge to his groups in his work.

I feel quite passionate about the environment and nature and imparting knowledge about how to take care of it, especially when taking groups outdoors. Also from a spiritual perspective, the meaning of nature from a faith perspective and how it relates to the environment.

Kemal talked about the experience and confidence the Backbone project has given him. The John Muir award has "shown him the ropes and the confidence." As well the positive impact he has felt, Kemal highlighted the impact on family and friends. He has taken family on camps and persuaded friends to join CLP. He has told a lot of women about WLP by explaining what he has gained from attending the projects.

Kemal's insight comes from his passion and his experience in his community work where he

recognises the barriers and how to address the barriers to make BME women feel safe in the outdoors.

Giving them the opportunity to do it [camping] in groups. Convince parents it's OK.

CLP has helped Kemal to develop his leadership skills. He does not believe he is a natural leader but Backbone has supported the emergence of his leadership skills and abilities and so training is key.

I have been able to transcend my limitations – physically and mentally.

Kemal believes there are not many Muslim community groups that are taking groups to the outdoors as he is doing and feels Backbone is "pioneering".

Kemal described Pammy as a "good motivator" and how she has imparted her experience, passion and knowledge to him and how he uses this in his work.

I have taken a lot of her training on board. When someone says they can't do it – they can, it's just a way of changing their thinking. I was on the ropes and I got to the second level. I couldn't take another step. I transcended the barrier and completed. The next year it was like a walk in the park.

Kemal describes the green space as "therapeutic". He can see the benefits it brings to the people he takes on the outdoor trips, in the experiences they share together and the benefits to health.

I get a sense of fulfilment when I see people enjoying these experiences because you can see the traces of their experiences in their faces. They've always taken something positive from it.

SANDIE ARMSTRONG

Sandie Armstrong attended Commonwealth Woodland Project 2012, WLP 2013, and CLP 2014.

Sandie decided to attend the training because it was something she really wanted to do but felt she had never had the opportunity.

Sandie feels the training has helped her at a very fundamental personal level.

I have learned how important it is to eat breakfast, lunch and dinner. I now make sure I have breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Sandie believes that as a result of the personal gains she has made she now has the skills and abilities to pass that knowledge on.

It's given me the confidence to do the activities with the kids. The knowledge has given me the confidence. It's let me give back to the kids.

She feels she has learned more about the outdoors, become aware of the different places to visit and how to access them especially as she does not drive.

Sandie's focus and priority for attending the Backbone projects has been to pass on skills, learning and experiences to her local community in Easterhouse Glasgow. She described the impact on one young person on an expedition to Loch Winnock.

Afterwards he said, "I don't know if I liked it but I did." I let him have that space. He was totally blown by the whole experience and asked when he could come back.

Sandie runs a parents group where they go for walks. All of the participants are on low incomes so Sandie educates them on finance and other related subjects as well as the environment. For example financial considerations are just as important health considerations so Sandie works with the parents group to look at cost efficient ways of travelling by buying a family rail.

Sandie has also received the Local Cycle Ride Leaders training from Backbone and now every Tuesday runs a Bike Club. She also runs a girls walk group.

In all the projects she runs, Sandie teaches the young people about looking after the environment. She has undertaken litter picking with young people.

Sandie gained the following skills and qualifications on the Commonwealth Woodland Project:

- Bushcraft
- Outdoor First Aid Certificate
- Cycle Ride Leaders

A central tenet of Sandie's approach to give back to the community is to support the community to become sustainable. For example she has run projects with young men and passed on knowledge and skills. They in turn will do the same for other young people. She runs a cycle leaders project and the participants of that will then teach other young people in the community. As funding is so low she organises as many projects as she can with the limited resources she has and delivers projects herself as she believes without her it would not happen.

I didn't get any funding but I put together a programme for the summer.

Sandie is a catalyst with the young people, bringing about positive changes in their lives. Backbone has helped her to give back to the community. She has taken the learning from all of the courses to take boys and girls to experience the outdoors.

Backbone has helped me. So I can give back to the kids. Why put yourself through the training if you don't put into practice the learning. As soon as I have been on a course I look at how I can give back.

The list below shows the projects run by Sandie and numbers of participants attending:

- Discovery Girls Group - 15
- Discovery Boys Group - 12
- Outdoor Group - 4
- Discovery Walking Group - 14
- Parents Outdoors Group - 5 plus children
- Bike Club - 10 to 12

ASMA KASSIM

Asma Kassim attended the WLP 2010.

Asma initially did not go outdoors but after the WLP programme she began getting used to the outdoors. She feels it has enabled her to change her mindset.

I feel the environment is for us. We usually think it's cold, we're too busy, We don't take out the time to see nature. When I got involved in WLP I realised you get a lot of energy from nature, from the environment.

She is passionate about giving back to the community and has arranged for children to participate in the Forest School Sessions. She has also arranged for families to participate in the John Muir Award. This was the first occasion where the John Muir Award for children under 5 years of age happened. Asma worked in partnership with rangers from Holyrood Park and applied for funding for outdoor activities such as walks and forest school sessions. Informally she has taken friends to climb hills.

I am passionate about giving back to the community. Always anything good I learn, I take back to the community.

Asma referred to the barriers that people face in order to access the outdoors such as lack of role models.

In our community they are used to seeing Scottish and English people riding bikes. They think it is not for them. When they see the role models from their own community then they can relate it is for themselves.

Asma also talked about the impact Backbone's projects have had on her and her family.

We usually think young children are not capable of doing expedition. We got stuck in the belief frame that I have a child so I can't do it. We think he is 4 years old and he can't do it. But reality is that he can. The motivation and enjoyment the child has motivates you. I take my son out for a bike ride, hill climbing and it helps me to manage his time away from electronic gadgets.

Asma is currently Climate Change Challenge Project Co-ordinator. She has been in this role since June 2014 and applied for the role as a result of attending WLP 2010.

I had developed my interest nature and outdoor environment because of WLP 2010. I applied for the job and got it.

Asma is currently working in partnership with Botanic Gardens and Grove Gardens on a project to grow food in allotments or gardens. She has also set up the Bike Riding project which involves training 6 people to become trainers who then train trainers and the trainers will train the community. Asma is also involved in raising awareness on energy efficiency. Workshops are to be held on how to reduce waste, recycle and shop and cook to reduce costs.

If I had not done WLP 2010 then I would not have gone outdoors. I would have had barriers. I have a qualification now. I have the confidence of doing any job. I don't need to think twice.

BONGAYI PATTY

Bongayi Patty attended the WLP 2012 and the WLTR 2012. She is now a qualified Cycle Ride Leader, Basic Expedition Leader & Outdoor First Aider.

If I hadn't had the opportunity I wouldn't have done it [explore the outdoors].

Bongayi is passionate about the outdoors. Backbone has made her explore the outdoors more and she is grateful for the opportunity.

Bongayi referred to the increased confidence and practical skills she has learned as a result of attending the projects.

It has given me confidence to approach other people and tell other people about Backbone projects. It has given me the tools to prepare because I went through the whole process myself.

Furthermore, there has been a positive impact on her and her family and familial relationships.

My family were the first people to have a positive impact. We went camping and exploring places. It is a big, big step to break that. A big thing for my husband and for me a big thing for him to be part of it and to be involved and the family.

Bongayi articulated an understanding of why it is important for people of ethnic minorities to feel the external natural environment is accessible to them and the support required. She has a passion for others to experience and share the outdoors and also to have the skills to be prepared.

For people from my background to use outdoors more it is important to have support. People don't realise the outdoors is for us and Scotland is for us. People in villages are not minority people – so we feel it is not for us. Backbone has made us see that. The environment is for all of us.

Although she grew up in Zimbabwe and describes how “we grew up in the outdoors” Bongayi did not know about environmental conservation. She learned the importance of conserving the environment as a result of Backbone's projects.

It [the project] made me realise the preservation of the environment. Probably more than in Zimbabwe where we would just cut trees.

Bongayi emphasised the need for projects such as Backbone which reach out to isolated BME women who may be experiencing low self-esteem and language barriers and support them in becoming active in the outdoors and accessing the natural environment in Scotland.

I don't know any other organisation that is doing anything specifically for BME, especially women. I don't know of any other organisation that makes it unique to me and the support you get I feel it is very good because it is broken into segments and there is a plan – by this time I need to do this.

Bongayi made a link between understanding the barriers that BME women face to access the outdoors, the health benefits and employment opportunities for women who have the specialist knowledge and the relevant skills to deliver outcomes. She talked about her passion for supporting local communities and the outdoors.

If there were opportunities for employment for me with my nursing background, the importance of looking after health and with Backbone projects this would help active lifestyle, through walking and cycling, it would be really good.

Since attending Backbone projects Bongayi has:

- Run three camping groups
- Undertaking a cycling session on International Women's Day
- Taught local primary school children to cycle

HINNA HABIB

Hinna Habib attended the WLP 2009, CLP 2010 and WLTR – Central 2012

Hinna felt that attending the Backbone projects had a huge impact on her and her attitude to the environment.

I was restricted to what I thought of the outdoor environment. My mind broadened. It made a huge impact.

Hinna is very involved with her local community. She described the biggest challenge as getting the young people out into the environment but once there they enjoy the experience very much. She recognises incentives she can provide to entice people to the environment.

They were never aware. They would just stay at home. They need someone to take them out. If there is not much awareness of what's out there then there is hesitation on how to get there, and how to go about it.

Hinna has run the John Muir Award and she volunteers with the Green Team. She is on a path to progress her volunteering experience to impact the local community. Her ambition is to set up a Bike Project. She has developed skills such as administration, risk assessment, health and safety, group management, first aid, and understanding group dynamics. She is also networking with other organisations to support the projects she would like to deliver.

Hinna described how she mobilises the community especially BME women.

The more you take them out the more confident they get. This is what holds BME women back. Pammy did this for us.

Hinna's experience has grown to the extent that she now runs the John Muir Award herself. She trains the participants, undertakes the administration, and applies for funding. Her goal is community sustainability as the community runs more projects for itself.

As a result of attending the Backbone projects and her voluntary experience Hinna would like to work with young people in a professional capacity.

The more independent work I do, the more experience I get and then give back to the community.

Hinna has taken groups to Calderwood Country Park, Pentland Hills. She has run the John Muir Award with approximately 20 participants and the Bike Project (more than 20 participants) for two years. All her involvement with the community has been via the Blackhall Mosque and working with Imam Sohail. She believes she has the trust of the local community and this is one of the reasons why she has been successful in running the projects. She also believes Pammy's role has been vital.

I like the outdoors and to get the youth more engaged with the environment and enjoy it more, in a way that the outdoors appeal to the, the next generation. I want to take it back to the community. It's like planting seeds.

MADHAVI APARALA

Madhavi Aparala attended the CLP 2014, WPL 2013 and the WLTR 2013.

Madhavi first learnt about Backbone when attending a Mela (Fair) and picking up a leaflet about learning to cycle. This was the first time she had come across any type of publication advertising a learning to ride a bike scheme.

Upon arriving in this country Madhavi was isolated in her home. She was never aware of any opportunities. After attending the programmes her confidence has increased.

It gave me so much confidence and independence... Now I am more confident, I approach more organisations.

Madhavi emphasised the skills she has learned, for example all the planning and preparation required to take a group out such as booking transport, navigational skills, checking the weather, determining what to wear and the responsibility that is required when taking others out. She can distinguish between the different styles of leadership. She is now volunteering at Score Scotland and Telagu Association of Scotland.

A further impact for Madhavi has been her response and relationship with the external environment both before and after attending the programmes.

I never used to think much about the environment. Now I look at trees. I feel the freshness. This project has made me think about the environment – it has made me appreciate the environment. Looking at the colours of greenery, the sky, brightness.

Madhavi now encourages other Asian women to become more active. She has set up a weekly group taking women for a walk. She has had to encourage women and when the women do attend they enjoy it immensely. As well as this, Madhavi also undertakes more outdoor activities with her husband and children. She has taken her husband on a 10 Km walk and

takes her three children aged 12, 9 and 6 years of age on bike rides. Her influences are now international - even her family in India have started walking!

There have been personal health benefits too, both physical and mental.

Whenever I am walking I feel fit. I have become more fit – people say I look fitter. I look younger. I used to sit for many hours. Whenever I go for a walk I feel fresh.

Madhavi believes the project has made a difference. She would like to develop her skills further and has ambitions of working in any employment related to the outdoors, especially taking groups to experience the natural environment and become more active.





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