MOORLANDS FOR THE FUTURE
FINAL REPORT: VISITOR RESPONSIBILITY AND THE MOORLANDS.
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Aim and areas of concern:
To address factors that effect the routes of experience and ways in which visitors use the moorlands; value the moorlands, experience, understand and make sense of sensitive environments, are influenced by communication, the media etc, and how they respond to management action and works in progress and completed.

Outputs and delivery issues for MFF
This work informs MFF concerning the practical value of understanding the visitor in order to inform practice, management and environmental works and their communication in a sensitive environment.
This small pilot project provides a sound basis both of existing patters of influence and visitor responsibility, and an informed platform for a thorough project that is able to build on the piloted data and methods.

Context and project approach
This Project works from an understanding of how individuals encounter places, spaces, landscapes, environments, and how their experience is constructed. It is argued that this process has a significant influence upon the value and responsibility they engage in their visiting. Important is the way in which that experience and regard are influenced through various means of communication, modes, language, etc [formal, informal, educational, entertainment]. Place, environment, is experienced `in the round`, and is not merely a `view`.

The `routes` of experience and knowledge making taken by visitors is a nuanced process richly and diversely sourced. Agencies contribute to this complexity, they cannot determine it.
This insight requires a method approach that attends to the way these complexities work and that necessarily goes beyond linear, one-line and only quantitative survey-type question framing and answers. Environment experience is not linear. Thus, methods are needed that can handle the ways in which individuals [and groups] make sense of places, through building and then scientifically unpacking their narratives of how they encounter places and `make sense`.
[see Crouch D recent works listing appendix II]

Research Methods
The Project used a method developed by David Crouch amongst others in UK [See Appndx II] that seeks to understand and to explain the processes noted above and their policy-relevance through an in depth approach. The method requires small groups as focus groups or multi-interviews, and /or individual and couple-interviews. These take place in strictly selected, reasoned and justified groups. The approach does not claim abstract representativeness but an ability, complementing statistical surveys on narrow data with an ability to reconstruct influences, experiences and their mutual influence. In part this throws light on the power and influence of communications, and relates issues concerning an understanding of management practice.

The work is necessarily time consuming but rich in insight, and requires face to face action, but not wide scale distribution and statistical work, but text and content analysis along chosen themes. Interviews are eg one to one and a half hours in length. Individuals may be identified and reached in different ways.

**Data Capture**

Groups and modes:
Mountain bikers, one 5 person focus group.
Walkers and ramblers, 7 in three small group interviews
Boulderer, one.
Warden, Edale YHA. Interview
Total individuals 14

**Sample questions to generate discussion:**

How did you get into this activity, and what made you interested?
And Why do you continue doing it?
What is it about this activity that you enjoy so much?
what are the best areas to indulge in this type of activity in the Peak District?
Why the Peak District - Have these areas changed over the years with the amount of people visiting them?
What is your awareness of changes in these areas you specially like to visit, and what is your reaction to them?
Do you use a guidebook of other information sources for this activity?

It is said that some members of certain activities become extremely passionate about the activities they participate in and the activity itself becomes one of the most important aspects of their life. Do you see this in yourself?

Has your activity changed significantly over the past 50 years?

- Technologically
- As an industry
- Socially (popularity)

*Due to the nature of this research, differing lines of questioning were used at different times based on the inclination of the user group.*

**Key Insights of Pilot:**

- How visitors respond
- Encouraging responsibility
- Engaging support
- Communication issues

**By Theme:**

Issues on Management and reclamation work
When asked about the management issues with regards to the moorland areas, each group identified mixed issues. The idea of management issues with regards to erosion were surprisingly forthright. The rambling group seemed to feel that the management of erosion on moorland areas were developed with regards to the image of the area. Ramblers believed that erosion management had to be implemented in specific reference to how the users perceive the ‘naturalness’ of the area. The restoration practices already instigated seem to point towards this fact, particularly in the Kinder Scout area, where erosion was perceived to be a potential big problem, forcing a further issue of visual impact pollution. Kinder Scout seemed to be a the benchmark area which other areas in the Peak district should follow. There were a number of other areas of the Peak District which were perceived to be suffering from this ‘visual intrusion’ affecting the general experience of the area. Of course, further research will provide a more extensive conclusion to this thorny issue. In particular, it is suggested that participant observational research using an ethnographic methodology may provide useful and rich data, focusing on accompanying the participants to specific areas of sensitivity where restoration practices have taken place.

Conversely, mountain bikers were more interested in ‘clearing’ the name of their activity by passionately stating that erosion within the Peak District was not the fault of their sport, and indeed, the focus group uncovered passionate feelings with an attempt to provide enough discussion and information to convince the researcher that mountain bikers are indeed used as a ‘scapegoat’ by other user groups and this may be a reason why specific routes have not been allocated for this activity group. Management of the moorland area was one issue that did not appear. However, it would be worthwhile to state that this may not be an identification that this recreational group do not consider the issue of restoration an important theme. Again, further research must take place to uncover the important thoughts and feelings to this user group with regards to perceptions of restoration practices.

Erosion and management with regards to educational use of the moorland area was focused more around limitation and prevention rather than restoration. It was thought that restoration was perhaps not a appropriate method of management with regards to the moorland area as a ‘class room’ for school groups and private clubs. It is suggested that research in the form of observation and semi-structured interviews are specifically conducted on-site with a variety of educational user-groups.

**The influence of communication: ** Information and Literature sources in the Peak District

The interviews and focus groups concentrated on user-group experience, and the promotional literature produced by the PDNP and MFF did not arise, although it is perceived that this is a further area of research where a qualitative stance could uncover unique and important issues. Promotional literature in the form of the guidebook (a potential facilitator) for the discovery of new areas in the Peak, and consequently new experiences) was uncovered. It seemed that guidebooks acted as a catalyst for uncovering new, undiscovered areas by mountain bikers and ramblers alike, consequently identifying a promotional tool for possibly less popular areas of the Peak district. Further issues could potentially raise issue of geographical dispersion of user-groups, lessening the impact on honey pot areas like kinder scout?

**Key Points of similarities and differences of user groups**
Similarities

- Previous experience seems to effect the movement throughout the Peak District of all groups. As experience grows, so does a need to find 'new' areas which provide a new experience for the user. This seemed to exist within all user groups questioned. Individuals tend to progress from levels of activity, eg from adventure sport activity to its wider role in engaging their experience in the value of the environment.

- Experience with regards to knowledge seems to be important to all groups concerned. The value of knowledge seemed to be a conduit with which to express opinions, especially through personal narratives.

- Pollution with regards to emissions from cars seems to be a similar feature throughout the research. Both mountain bikers, ramblers and educational users of the landscape was a problem which directly affected the experience, albeit in different ways.

- The role of the Peak national park, and the feeling that more could be done with regards to preservation and restoration.

- The importance and use of a variety of experiences in the Peak district moorland areas for the gradual fulfilment and satisfaction of indulging in the user group activities.

Issues

- The impact that different user groups have on the area. Each believed that it was other groups which contributed to the degradation of the landscape, although it was only the mountain bikers who highlighted that they are perceived to be the major contributors, though they disagree with this presumption.

- Personal motivations for visiting the Peak District are based on a complex set of wants and needs, some physical, other meta physical and some influenced by here-say and word of mouth within the social group. With bouldering, the guidebook seems to act as a facilitator to discover new areas and further ones own experience, something that is paramount to the group.

Recommendations for building value from this Pilot

The full development of this work needs include interviews, and focus groups, with Professionals, managers, communicators working in and in relation to MFF and PP. Further groups of visitors, such as mountaineers, casual visitors mainly car bourne but also by bus [non ramblers, incidental visits], and four wheel drivers City dwellers especially less advantaged, to identify particular attitudes and understanding of vulnerable environments for enjoyment. Organised visit groups, including training outward bound groups at Edale YHA Younger groups: YHA general visitors Close analysis of information sources used by visitor groups Testing the reading of information [eg that made by MFF and potential draftings] through survey and interview with visitors and other users.
Findings and Analysis
EXPERIENCE AS A CONDUIT FOR PERCEPTION
As can be seen from the methodology, the opening questions were formulated on the ideas of age and level of experience. Most of the respondents questioned had been participating in their chosen activity for more than 2 years. The range was between 5 years (Chris and Robert: Mountain bikers) to 60 years (John: cyclist and mountain biker). The idea of experience of their chosen activity and perceived experience when in the moorland areas changes over time. Consequently, as the user becomes more familiar with the surroundings, their level of motivation and experience of the landscape changes, evolving into a different state.

“Yeah, we thought we would come here from where we had been, but not for a while”. Robert : Mountain Biker

Robert here is specifically referring to his previous experience on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (D of E). He states that this is one of the reasons why this particular area had been chosen. However, the interesting connotation contained here arrives later in the interview, when Chris states that “Off-roading is where it’s at”. Even though their initial experience of the moorland areas has influenced their chosen area of the Peak, they now intend to further their experience by going to destinations and interacting with them in a different way. They now perceive the destination in a different way based on the way in which they use the moorland area. Another example of this is with M1 as discussed in the focus group session.

“But you can’t knock that… because I only started like that and I didn’t expect to do what I would be doing now”. M1: Mountain Biker

M1 also proposes that the cycling groups as a whole stay away from the bridleways and pathways because they contain “inexperienced” bikers. Clearly, there perception of the moorland areas has change, and how they use the rural landscape. This particular issue has benefits for a closer assessment of statistics relating to moorland user movements and the subsequent issues related to carrying capacities.

This development of experience can also be seen in Andrew (mid 50’s, walker) whose experienced has developed with how he uses the landscape. He states that his particular rambling group started as an activity group for children, yet now they attempt to walk 12 miles a day when they are on an excursion. Andrew’s own experience ranges from 40 years, where he began as a scout group member, and this affected his decisions to use these rural, moorland areas throughout his life: from a young age, up to university level and along to a senior level. Consequently, this element of experience also effects the there perception of how an area has changed over the years when they have been a user. When asked about whether he believes the landscape has changed throughout his life, he replies with passion and conviction. This potentially identifies the importance of appropriate restoration of pathways and fences and consideration of the user group themselves. This management feature would not only take into consideration local and visitor perception to a potential idea, but would also strengthen the relationship between Moors for the future and all user group typologies. Furthering this research could incorporate this particular idea into its paradigm, providing feedback on potential user group, moorland management interaction.

MOTIVATION AND MOORLAND PERCEPTION
The findings from the questions relating to motivation proved to contain a variety of elements, both taking into consideration the physical attributes of the landscape,
combined with a metaphysical representation of the moorland areas. When considering Joe (Multiple user) own motivations for pursuing activities o the moorland areas, there is a constant reference to the ideas of ‘space’ and ‘being part of it’. This is also the perceptions’ of a number of other respondents who believe that it is more than just a physical participation in the landscape. One particular couple refer to a sense of freedom and stating that these moorland areas allow them to develop their own relationship, through the freedom of being on their own and with nobody else around. In some cases similar motivations are identified, one respondent quoting that walking off the beaten track acts as a “mind cleanser”, clearing the users thoughts through appreciation of the landscape and appreciation of its meta-physical properties. This particular response is frequent within many of the respondents, regardless of how each group uses the landscape. Consequently, this intangible but important property could be incorporated into the education development in regards to making users of the moorland area more aware of preservation issues and sustainable moorland conduct.

Accompanying what this report refers as the mate-physical nature of a moorland area, is the motivation of developing oneself in their chosen activity. Through the interviews it is clear to see this specific pattern of furthering ones abilities and ‘betering’ themselves. The mountain biking focus group identifies this particular development in their own chosen activity. Tony, (Matlock cycling club manager) refers to his development of his pursuit in terms of its seriousness. He, as do many of the mountain bikers in the group, refer to skill as being a core component of how they classify themselves and their own motivations for going to different areas of the Peak District moors. Tony specifically refers to how ants to be better at his skills of riding down an rocky pathway on his mountain bike, something which is important fro him to develop an subsequently become successful at. This again identifies the phenomena of user group movement based around the development of experience. It would be worth noting however, that this is not merely one single feature of the mountain biker’s use of the moorland areas. They, like walkers and ramblers, use the moorland for the peaceful nature of the area and the sense of solitude. Both ramblers and mountain bikers also talked about the idea of using the moorland to strengthen bonds in relationships. The rambling group for example, is a social group which thrives on the development of relationships. The mountain biking fraternity ahs much the same motivation, as stated by one member of the focus group.

“I tell you what I like doing. Is having a nice leisurely ride and stopping for a cup of tea and a chat at friends houses along the way” (M5)

This use of the landscape shows a new approach to how local users negotiate the use of this area. The group continues by divulging information on the banter that goes on in the club, even when mountain biking in the moorland area. Traveling to these areas furthers that idea of developing in-group relationships and shows how playful this negotiation is between the moorland landscape and the user groups who rely on its preservation and access.

“Its like that with mountain biking also… Its good fun and you always have a laugh! A lot of good people” (M1)

Interaction with the landscape is coupled with an emphasis on developing friendships and relationships, regardless of the activity being pursued. However, one of the images respondents generated of the moorland area was a perceived sense of solitude. Traveling on your own is one motivation to access the moorland landscape. These areas generate a particular sense of solitude where users can be on their own. Geoff
makes this proposal when discussing his on experiences of the moorland areas.

“ That’s me. When I am on my own I like to just go into there… to really go in and be on my own…just wandering”.

This sense of solitude is crucial to the development of some users moorland experience, and further provides evidence for successful management to take these experiences and perceptions into considerations. This highlights the argument that development of moorland destinations throughout the Peak District should take into consideration this imagined ‘semi-wilderness’. This semi-wilderness also highlights the importance of education in the moorland landscape. The same respondent who appreciated the sense of loneliness and solitude also became lost one 2 occasions described in the interview. Education about the potential seriousness of becoming lost should also be marketed and managed effectively.

PERCEPTION OF LANDSCAPE: POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES

Management within a national park encompasses many features, which incorporate a variety of management strategies. It could be suggested that none causes more controversy than the policies relating to the preservation of the landscape. From the issues already discussed in this report, the importance of solitude and semi-wilderness may facilitate a need to minimize preservation strategies, which change the original landscape and consequently affect this sense of solitude.

However, the data collected here would suggest that many users of the landscape understand the significance of footpath restoration. One example that was frequently referred to by the users was kinder edge. The restoration of the path around this particular area was perceived to be a positive development. One user specifically describe this:

“I have been quite impressed by the path lane that is going up on top of Kinder Scout… it hasn’t turned it into an urban landscape” (Andrew)

This view is mirrored with a number of the other respondents within the rambling group, and identifies the inclusion of knowledge into moorland walking. It further highlights the importance for sensitive management based on the image of the area (generated by users) and the inclusion of user group opinion into management strategies when preserving / restoring the moorland. The same respondent states that preservation should be developed in a “more natural” way. However, user groups can also provide interesting and creative solutions to how to implement this. This is one feature, which this research could develop further in the future.

The discussion of erosion within the moorland areas brought interesting and unsurprising patterns of powerful discussion and argument. Most respondents perceived footpath erosion to still be a major issue, regardless of the restoration taking place. There was a certain image of inconsistency with regards to which areas need restoration and the time that it takes to implement such a scheme. Grindslow North and Bleaklow were 2 destinations which received due concern. From the initial gathering of data presented and analysed here, it would seem that the inclusion of user group perception and delegation would be an advantage in not only developing restoration plans, but to also highlight key areas of concern in the moorland area. Quantitative, more statistical information could help with this in identify the level of concern for a particular moorland area.

CONFLICITION AND RESISTANCE BETWEEN USER GROUPS

One aim of this report is not only to focus on issues of perception, but to also look at
potential confliction between each user group of the landscape. Each respondent had something to say with regards to conflict. The main conflict areas highlighted are:
1: Walkers and ramblers in regard to mountain bikers.
2: Mountain Bikers in regards to walkers
3: Walkers and ramblers in regards to farmers
3: General user groups in regards to 4 wheel drive vehicles.

There report proposes that there will always be issues of conflict within an area like the Peak National Park and in particular the moorland areas. One focus group member from the mountain bike user stated that this reason was due to an exceeded level of carry capacity. This also seems to one particular area where there is a discrepancy in the information provided. Many walkers and ramblers questioned perceived that mountain impacted greatly on the outlaying landscape with erosion of footpaths being the main problem. The mountain bike user group however argued that walker cause more erosion due to the sheer numbers, another issue related to carrying capacity. Consideration of visitor levels is paramount in the Peak District, but the data collected for this research suggests that further knowledge should be apportioned to each particular user groups, including agricultural groups which use the moors, like farmers and the respective union. Further knowledge on this subject may provide clarity between each user group and help develop a process of ‘moorland conflict resolution’. One further objective for this research in the future is to analyse the extent of the resistances between user groups to help provide answers.

EDUCATIONAL USERS GROUPS AND THE MOORLAND AREAS.
One further issue which this preliminary report wants to initialize is the importance of educational organisations like outdoor pursuits centres and their significance to the moorland debate. An interview which was conducted with Joeseph Hardy of the Edale Youth Hostel attempted to uncover some of the issues which could be used for further research.

The outdoor centre plays an important role in the construction of images of the moorland area. From the interview with Mr. Hardy, one significant issue uncovered was that this outdoor centre is now running a qualification for potential instructors to take groups out onto the moorland areas. This award, named the walking group leader award deals with the safe use of the moorland areas when organizing groups for children. This is a significant issue which needs to be looked at in further depth. This report suggests that one important aspect of this award (initially named the Moorland Leader Award) is that it provides potential instructors with a qualification who will use the moorland areas AND THE AREAS OF THE peak District. This report suggests that a close relationship should be developed between the Moors for the Future Partnership and organisation which run qualifications such as the Edale Youth Hostel. These instructors receiving qualifications will need to work closely with regards to the MFF to develop access and preservation issues and management principles with regards to the use of different areas (in terms of climbing, walking). Another principle which is significant to this debate is the issue of perception. It is suggested that instructors generate perceptions of how to use the moorland areas, and these should be projected onto the potentially younger groups of individuals that they teach. These younger groups may provide the new generation of users for the moorland areas, and consequently due care should be taken into consideration regarding the development of how an image should be projected. Therefore, it is important for organisations like the MFF to create substantial links between outdoor centres who use the moorland areas for teaching groups.
**Conclusion**
The report presented above has identified some key areas through qualitative data collection. These issues encompass a variety of different user groups who participate within their chosen activity in the moorland areas and use the same space for participation. Identified issues are that of the Previous experience of users and how this effects their perception of moorland areas and how they should be managed. The issue of positive and negative impacts has also been discussed and highlights key issues which need to be considered for effective planning and management of the moors. Knowledge are experiential issues have been discussed and analysed, and are important to the successful preservation and restoration of the moorland areas. The issue of conflict has also been highlighted as a sensitive issue which needs careful management. Many of the respondents, regardless of their particular user group considered and highlighted the same issues in interviews and focus groups. This potentially identifies issues surrounding the incorporation of conflict resolution between users of the moorland areas. Finally, this report has identified the importance of educational organisations using the moorland as a conduit for developing perceptions and codes of conduct for future generations of moorland users, regardless of typology.

**Appendices:**
I. A full transcription of the interviews and focus groups is available held at the University of Derby, UK

II. Recent examples of relevant work by Professor Crouch:
The Media and the Tourist Imagination Routledge 2005 [edited]
Visual Culture and Tourism Berg 2003 [edited]
Leisure/tourism geographies Routledge 1999

The performance of ecology in Fennell D. and Dowling D eds Eco-Tourism policy and planning CABI 2003
Papers in Tourism Concern 2000 [on People of the Hills]
The Tourist Encounter Tourist Studies 2001
Countryside Agency: Public Participation in countryside decision making 1996
People of the Hills, with photographer Richard Grassick, Amber Films, Side Gallery 1999 [first stage]
Producer and Advisor on nationwide TV programmes on environment and its use