



‘UK Outdoors’ Project

Transformation Group position statement 14 August 2019

The Association for Heads of Outdoor Education Centres (AHOEC), British Activity Providers Association (BAPA), Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL), and the Outdoor Council (OC) are supportive of and committed to exploring the development of a new combined organisation to represent the interests of the outdoor learning and adventure activities sector across the UK. The interim working title for the project’s Transformation Group, representative of the organisations outlined above, will be ‘UK Outdoors’.

These organisations recognise that positive collaboration and join up within the UK outdoor sector is desirable in order to maximise the future credibility and impact of outdoor learning in our society and on decision makers within government. The creation of ‘UK Outdoors’ would pull together significant expertise to create a consistent and powerful voice. ‘UK Outdoors’ would become a ‘go to’ organisation for the latest research, standards, guidance, campaigns, good practice and leadership, for the providers and users of organised activity in the outdoors and in wider settings.

In order to work in a more impactful and effective way, AHOEC, BAPA, IOL & OC, support the move to align our smaller organisations and enable a potential transition to one strong, well-recognised, respected and understood outdoor learning brand. We believe this would benefit our members, partners and those organisations and individuals we seek to work with, as well as simplifying our sector for organisations with an interest in funding developments in the outdoors.

We believe that UK Outdoors could provide:

- A genuine UK-wide organisation for all in the sector
- One recognisable body for funding into our sector
- A bigger and more robust lobbying voice
- One central body for inspection and accreditation
- One home for:
 - development of standards and guidance
 - curation of research and support for projects
 - workforce development
- Membership benefits of all organisations and individual members, for one fee
- Enhanced value and quality of service for members
- More effective administration and communication
- Events and conferences providing:
 - regional networking, CPD and support for all members without replication
 - national sharing of best practice, influence and shaping of strategy
 - a clearer view into the sector for outside individuals and bodies

AHOEC, BAPA, IOL & OC recognise that each offers unique benefits and a valuable service for existing members. There is a commitment from all our organisations that these benefits would be retained under UK Outdoors.

UK Outdoors welcomes any financial contribution from organisations within the outdoor learning sector to assist us with moving this project forwards. Please email: info@ukoutdoors.org.uk to discuss.