



## People Enjoying Nature



## Year 2 Report



TOGETHER FOR OUR LANDMARK



## Introduction and Background

People Enjoying Nature is an outreach project within the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership. The project aims to give individuals who are dealing with mental health and/or social isolation issues the opportunity to get involved in supported activity sessions in the Pendle Hill landscape. These supported sessions will allow participants to learn new skills and get involved in a range of new activities which may also link in with other PHLP activity and projects. We hope to evaluate the benefits these sessions have on the participants, in terms of general enjoyment; mental health and well-being; social networking and skills gained.

The PHLP are working in partnership with NHS Lancashire Care Foundation Trust East Lancashire Community Prevention and Engagement Team (CPET) on this project (formally Community Restart). CPET is a forward thinking service that is dedicated to improving quality of life, promoting opportunities and improving the outcomes for people across Lancashire. They work in partnership with people who access the service, carers, mental health specialists, employment providers and environmental agencies to provide the opportunities and community connections for individuals to improve their health and well-being. They support individuals who have mental health issues and/or suffer from social isolation both on an individual basis and by setting up and supporting groups and projects in local communities. It was recognised in the development of this project that these connections will enable the service to advertise the PEN project, signpost and register individuals on the sessions, which would be a huge advantage to the project as a whole.

To better plan for the PEN project, we organised and delivered a 12 week pilot programme over summer 2017. This pilot was a great success, and allowed us to trial transport provision, activity content, sites and gather feedback from participants. An evaluation report was produced, which also included lessons learned and tips for the future.

## PEN Project Plans

For years 2, 3 and 4 of the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership there are three separate blocks of activity sessions planned between March and October (each block expected to include one session per week for 6 weeks) and then 4 stand-alone sessions between November and February. In Year 1 we planned to run two separate blocks of activity between June and October, followed by 4 sessions between November and February.

We recognised early on that transport is a large barrier for many people accessing the landscape and so, as in Year 1, we continued to use the services of The Little Green Bus Company as much as possible in providing transport for the sessions.

## Overview of Year 2

We held three activity blocks in year 2, as well as 6 individual sessions between October and end of March. The vast majority of the sessions remained on a Thursday afternoon between 1pm – 4pm (apart from one October session that took place on a Thursday but from 10am – 4pm and one Friday session). This time slot still works well, and some efforts to rearrange sessions that had to be cancelled to different days did not prove as popular with as many participants. Little Green Bus Company provided transport from 2 or 3 pick-up points to the site of each session.

In Year 2 we also trialled a special PEN session for the inpatient ward at Chorley and South Ribble Hospital. Two sessions were planned, but only one was delivered.

Community Restart has had a restructure this year, due to cuts in funding. The service for East Lancashire is now known as the Community Prevention and Engagement Team (CPET). Our link and partnership remains primarily with Nick Alderson, who still holds his role as Rural Development Officer.

Date	Activity	Venue	Facilitator	No. of participants
28 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	Walk up hill from Barley and down to Downham	Barley – Downham	Jayne Ashe	8 ( 3 new)
4 <sup>th</sup> April	Practical path maintenance	On paths going up hill from Barley	Jayne Ashe and Sarah Dornan	13 (6 new)
11 <sup>th</sup> April	Farming Skills Session	Barrowford	Ash Anderson	7 (0 new)
18 <sup>th</sup> April	Pendle Radicals	Clarion House	Faye Wetherall (MPA)	9 (2 new)
25 <sup>th</sup> April	River Studies	Sabden	Ribble Rivers Trust	7 (1 new)
2 <sup>nd</sup> May	Wildflower plug planting	Spring Wood	Jayne Ashe	11 (0 new)
(Original date 30 <sup>th</sup> May) 20 <sup>th</sup> June	Hedgehog session and wildlife	Sabden	Jayne Ashe	8 (0 new)
6 <sup>th</sup> June	Arts session	Martholme Greenway (Simonstone)	Cath Ford	13 (5 new)
13 <sup>th</sup> June	Walk – 4.5 miles	Gisburn	Jayne Ashe	9 (2 new)
21 <sup>st</sup> June (Friday)	Dry stone walling taster session	Thorney Bank Farm, Roughlee	Alan Rhodes	8 (1 new)
27 <sup>th</sup> June	Plant Power!	Clarion House	Jayne Ashe	12 (0 new)
4 <sup>th</sup> July	Balsam Pulling session	Spring Wood	Jayne Ashe	11 (0 new)
8 <sup>th</sup> August	Archaeology Session	Downham	Danielle Knights (UCLan arch intern)	16 (5 new)
15 <sup>th</sup> August	British Bee Count	Clarion House	Sarah Robinson, Alison Cross and Jayne Ashe	14 (4 new)
22 <sup>nd</sup> August	Walk	Higham to Burnley	Jayne Ashe	14 (2 new)
29 <sup>th</sup> August	Arts Session (closed session)	Spring Wood	Atelier Arts	8 (closed session)
5 <sup>th</sup> September	Practical habitat management	Worsaw Hill	Jayne Ashe and Sarah Robinson	12 (1 new)
12 <sup>th</sup> September	Walk over hill	From Barley to Downham	Jayne Ashe	CANCELLED DUE TO BAD WEATHER
10 <sup>th</sup> October (all day)	Hedgelaying training session	Downham	Dave Padley	8 (1 new)
17 <sup>th</sup> October	Foraging Walk	Chatburn	Adrian Rose	12 (0 new)

21 <sup>st</sup> November	Sculpture Trail Walk	Barley	Jayne Ashe	5 (0 new)
5 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas wreath making and celebration session	Clarion House, Roughlee	Jayne Ashe and Alison Cross	12 (7 new)
30 <sup>th</sup> January	Arts Session	Pendleton Village Hall	Atelier Arts	9 (1 new)
5 <sup>th</sup> March	Downham Traditional Boundaries Walk	Downham	Jayne Ashe	10 (5 new)

Table 1. Dates, activity content, venues, facilitator and numbers of participants for each PEN session in Year 2

Total number of individuals engaged with so far (yrs1 and 2): 104

Total number of attendances in Yr 2: 236

## Session Content

Content in year 2 included similar sessions that were delivered in year 1 – with a particular focus on the sessions that were enjoyed by participants in year 1. Some of the participants enjoy the walking elements of the sessions, so I specifically planned at least one walking session in each activity block. Other sessions also included walking elements.

Where possible some sessions linked into other PHLP projects, such as Pendle Radicals, Access for All, Wild About Pendle Hill and Community Archaeology.

## Different PEN sessions

This year, through Nick's connections at LCFT, we trialled a session for patients on wards at Chorley and South Ribble Hospital. We planned in two sessions (extra to the normal PEN sessions) for a small group of patients, who would be accompanied by the sufficient number of staff. Different transport (other Little Green Bus) was booked because of the differing journey (from hospital to site). Planning and communication with ward managers wasn't extensive before the sessions, and due to issues with staff and staff shortages we only delivered 1 PEN session for 5 participants. The session was overall a success, and I think beneficial for the participants, however our team and our external facilitator (archaeology intern from UCLan) raised concerns after the session about the conduct of some of the accompanying staff. I was happy to deliver the 2<sup>nd</sup> session, however the original session was postponed because of bad weather, and another wasn't rearranged.

Although I think off-site PEN sessions are a great benefit to participants currently staying within the hospital, I think at the moment there isn't the link or support there to deliver them successfully.

One of the sessions delivered within the PEN block of activity was delivered specifically for a closed group of participants – a group from Jane's Place (Safenet), This session was a great success, and moving into year 3 I will focus more time into planning sessions for other closed groups. However, I would deliver these as extras to the usual PEN schedule, rather than taking up existing PEN sessions.

## Feedback

I struggle to obtain any formal feedback, and sometimes I feel that asking participants to fill in forms or even verbally answer a series of questions can be quite negative, and participants are actually less likely to provide me with detailed answers.

Instead I engage as much as possible in discussions around the sessions, session activity and the effects of the sessions on individuals. Feedback from these discussions is usually very positive, and interestingly some points raised are extra to the aims of the project.

For example, lots of participants told me how they have learnt a lot from the sessions about nature, landscape and heritage – and how they enjoy passing this information onto their family and friends. Some participants also really enjoy the walking elements of the sessions, which is why I will continue to look to balance specific walking sessions and including short walks in other sessions.

Based on the feedback from last year, we have also improved our communication between myself and Nick, and the bus journeys seem to be running even more smoothly.

## Links with Renaisi

We were contacted in October by Amanda Norrlander, who is a senior project officer with Renaisi. Renaisi have been tasked by DEFRA to look at the effects of nature and outdoors on mental health and wellbeing in a small number of boroughs around the country – Pendle being one of them.

We delivered an extra PEN session in November, with a smaller group than normal, so that Amanda could join us and ask some of the participants some questions for her research. We did a short walk, and the participants were happy to chat to Amanda and answer her questions.

We also delivered an extra session in March, and was joined by Elliot from Close Up Research, who had been contracted to produce a film for the Renaisi research.

The report should be available at the end of March 2020.

## Evaluation

I have evaluated key areas of the PEN sessions below:

- Partnership with East Lancashire Community Prevention and Engagement team:
  - The partnership between ourselves and Nick Alderson at CPET continues to work effectively and efficiently. As the project progresses it becomes more evident that the partnership is very important and without it this project would definitely not be as successful or as beneficial to its participants as it is.
- Provision of transport:
  - After a few issues with a few of the trips in year 1, the vast majority of the bus journeys went very smoothly. The pick-up place in Burnley has changed, making it easier for the bus to wait, and the bus has not left any of the pick-up points early. We will continue to use Little Green Bus.
  - Going forward into Year 3 The Little Green Bus have asked if we could potentially alter the times of the sessions from 1 – 4pm to 12pm – 3pm, because that is a lot easier for their drivers. We have agreed that this should cause no issues and are happy to see how it goes within the first block of activity.
- Session activity:
  - The activities within the sessions were engaging and enjoyable for the participants, particularly the hands on activities and walks. Linking in sessions with other Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership projects gave participants more information about the whole scheme and generated many interesting discussions. The creative sessions, led by external artists, were more successful and more engaging than some of the creative sessions in Year 1.
  - Continuing to host some sessions at different public locations, and linking some of them in with national themed weeks or national campaigns, give participants the opportunity to revisit sites and get involved in different activity.



- Number of participants:
  - The number of participants at each session ranged from 5 to 16, with most between 8 and 14 – which is similar to last year. Most sessions were attended by a good number of participants, with many coming to multiple sessions. Overall attendances were higher than Year 1, however we delivered more sessions.
- Time of sessions:
  - Sessions still seem to work well on a Thursday afternoon, and for many that has become a routine. Where possible, all future sessions will be delivered on Thursdays, however at the request of the Little Green Bus they will be run from 12pm to 3pm, unless this starts to have an effect on participants and attendance. It may be a better time for participants who have childcare, and may have school pickups.
- Participants
  - I am still focusing on increasing the diversity within participants on PEN. The number of males attending sessions is still higher than the number of females (quite considerably), however we have seen more females attend the sessions over the past year. We will continue to encourage more females to get involved in PEN. We have also seen an increase of those who don't access the outdoors regularly, or don't currently (may have done in the past). The PEN sessions are giving those participants the confidence to get back outdoors more regularly.
- Contingency plans
  - Contingency plans are mainly put in place in case of severe weather. However, due to the nature of the PEN project it is also important for the focus to be on sessions outdoors in the landscape and most of the participants decide on what they want to do based on the weather forecast, whether the session is moved indoors or not. Throughout Year 2, I had to rearrange one session, which was done successfully, however I did cancel one other session, which wasn't rearranged because participants didn't want to change the day.
- Connecting participants with the wider Pendle Hill LP and landscape
  - A few PEN participants have been involved in a Community Archaeology training session, another project with the Landscape Partnership.
  - Other PEN participants have returned to employment or been involved in volunteering opportunities in other local projects, such as at allotment sites or litter picking with the Canal and River's Trust.
  - Some volunteers have shown an interest in wider volunteering within the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership, however transport can be a barrier to some and so sometimes volunteering opportunities closer to home (in more urban areas) are better.

## Future Plans

- Focus more on delivering extra PEN sessions for pre-formed groups, which can also be classed as Get Into Volunteering sessions (part of the Volunteering and Learning project).
- Continue to look at ways to increase the diversity of those attending PEN sessions.
- Continue the efficient communication between PHLP and CPET.
- Ensure that participants are aware of session details and content before the session, and for those who may have mobility issues, ensure they know which sessions they would be able to enjoy (e.g. some sessions may need to be altered slightly whereas others (6 mile walk) may not be appropriate).
- Alter times of sessions from 1pm – 4pm to 12pm – 3pm. Review this at the end of the first block of activity and if successfully continue with this, but if not review with The Little Green Bus company.