

ACTIVE DEVON

MORE MOVEMENT CONFERENCE 25/11/19

Report for Devon Countryside Access Forum

Tim Felton and Sue Pudduck attended the Active Devon (AD) 'More Movement' Conference on 25/11/19 at Rockbeare Manor, East Devon.

The purpose of AD is to support and inspire movement in Devon.

"Active Devon is a community-focused, non-profit organisation dedicated to inspiring and supporting Devon to be active. We believe movement is central to living healthier, happier and more connected lives whatever your age, ability or background."

The purpose of the conference was to promote (i) the work undertaken by AD; (ii) stimulate networking and participation by attendees; with (iii) a special emphasis placed upon introducing healthy movement in the work place. To this end we were encouraged to move, wriggle and stretch throughout the day! Opportunities to experience riding an electric bike were available.

AD is of direct relevance to the work of DCAF because part of its work is to promote movement in the natural environment not just on the sports pitch, in the gym or in urban areas. So, for example one of its programmes is entitled from 'Couch to Coast'

Join us for a series of short free walks this autumn around Westward Ho! We'll be helping people gradually build fitness, stamina and confidence to go from sitting on the sofa, to doing a 5km walk on the South West Coast Path. The walks are designed to suit the ability of someone taking their first footsteps into increasing their activity and leading a healthier lifestyle, and each walk will include a refreshment stop. This programme forms part of Active Devon's 'Connecting Actively to Nature' (CAN) project and is funded for people aged 55+.

Other current campaigns to increase activity levels, thus improving mental and physical well-being, include "Lets Walk" (February 20) and working with workplaces to change the culture around sedentary behaviour. The conference show-cased this by providing activity opportunities throughout the day.

Participants were able to select workshops to attend and listen to the CEO of Sport England Tim Hollingsworth. Unfortunately, because of the election purdah in place, his talk was severely restricted to avoid mention of any imminent policy initiatives.

Tim attended workshops on **Changing Behaviours** and **Social Prescribing** (referrals by GP's to local non-clinical services). The second was of particular relevance because it included referrals to CAN activities such as 'Coast to Couch'; Forest Walks; and Wild Swimming. These particular users and this form of access to the countryside is one which DCAF may well want to keep in mind during appropriate discussions.

Sue attended a workshop on **People at the Heart of Design**. One of the key messages was about the importance of consulting with and learning from your audience. It is also recognised that to change activity behaviour, it has to be normal, easy, attractive and routine for the participant. This workshop covered the COM-B model (the provision of capability, opportunity, motivation, provides the culture for successful behaviour change) which is now being used in behaviour change.

Sue also attended **The Digital Revolution** workshop. As 45.1 million people in the UK now use the Internet every day and 9/10 adults are regular Internet users, it is recognised as a powerful tool for launching and running campaigns and reaching out to a far wider audience. It also allows for a far more empirical evaluation of results.

Companies such as Amazon have made harvesting information from their customers an art form. Several delegates from leisure centres and gyms spoke of their experience in beginning to use digital technology to target particular audiences, but most people in this workshop had not previously considered the benefits of using technology to support and encourage exercise participation. In some ways, it seems a contradiction. However, the opportunities appear extensive including supporting individuals, tracking and recording activity, and directing motivational messages at individuals.

Apps, that for instance, can help people access the outdoors are being introduced and a good introduction to how digital information can be used to creatively encourage activity can be found at <https://www.sportengland.org/news-and-features/news/2018/may/01/openactive-accelerator-selects-startups-to-revolutionise-sports-listings/>

Active Devon produce a newsletter and it was suggested it would be worthwhile for DCAF to sign up to this so that it can be kept abreast of developments relating to its activities.

Tim and Sue thought the conference was very well run with interesting and informative workshops. The conference set out to challenge and improve the way in which inactive people are encouraged to change their behaviours. The emphasis is now being placed by both exercise and health professionals on targeting those who are least active. The delegates came from wide a range of different professional and community backgrounds which meant that a variety of strategies and innovative ideas could be shared.

Active Devon is energetically pursuing activities which serve communities well.

Funding will now follow the objective of getting everybody active (inside and outdoors), rather than purely sporting excellence.

Websites

Further information can be found at <https://www.activedevon.org/about/>

A video of the conference can be found at <https://www.activedevon.org/highlights-from-active-devons-more-movement-conference-2019/>