



Sheffield
The
Outdoor
City



The Outdoor City Economic Strategy

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INTRODUCTION

Sheffield is The Outdoor City; the UK's leading destination for people seeking outdoor adventure, city culture and rural escapes.

The Outdoor City is a reason to live in Sheffield and a reason to play, work, study and raise a family here. It is a magnet for business and an aid to economic growth. It is a reason to holiday in or visit the city. And it is a route to conserve and maintain green space and improve health and wellbeing in the city by driving participation and more widespread engagement in outdoor activities.



Sheffield has a unique outdoor recreation offer due in large part to its natural topography, a distinctive feature that cannot be replicated. It's the only major city in the UK with a National Park within its boundary. Its rolling hills, rivers, deep valleys, reservoirs and world-famous gritstone rock have lent themselves to a wonder of outdoor pursuits that are quite literally on our doorstep.

Until recently Sheffield's "outdoor" offer has been one of the city's most distinctive yet unsung features. But this strategy highlights the gravitas of this message and its global appeal to attract talent, trade and tourism; three ingredients we know as crucial for a vibrant, economically sound city that is home to happy healthy communities.

The economic value of outdoor recreation is only truly starting to be realised, and Sheffield is at the forefront of taking a new approach to understanding how to capture these benefits. There is increasing interest in outdoor recreation¹ at a local, national and international level. According to a recent study by the Sport and Recreation Alliance, *Reconomics*, 3 in 4 UK adults regularly get outdoors². Outdoor activities have enjoyed a 3% rise nationally in the last year³. These trends obviously have positive health benefits for individuals, but they also have wider economic benefits for places and communities.

Whilst there is already a lot to be proud of in terms of outdoor recreation in Sheffield, there is a lot more to do. Making the most of Sheffield's outdoor offer, and ensuring people from across the city can access it, requires a joined up approach from organisations and individuals involved in outdoor recreation in the city. This is why an Outdoor Economy Joint Venture has been established to improve the links and relationships between these organisations and more effectively plan future work.

It consists of key partners across the city involved in outdoor recreation and physical activity, including major landowners. To support this Joint Venture we will set up the 'Outdoor 100', a wider group of businesses, clubs, community groups and individuals with a passion for the outdoors.



This strategy sets out the priorities for the city for the next three years. Our vision for this strategy is:

Sheffield: The Outdoor City will be internationally renowned for its unique people, places and outdoor offer.

The Joint Venture, informed by The Outdoor 100 will agree a set of priorities each year to guide our activity and ensure we are addressing the objectives outlined in this document

By working together as one city; where outdoor enthusiasts, businesses, local authorities, land owners, community groups, education and health organisations talk about Sheffield as The Outdoor City we can challenge outdated perceptions and grow both our offer and reputation nationally and internationally to attract talent, trade and tourism.



BACKGROUND

The City's Unique Offer

Sheffield is already recognised as one of the UK's most distinctive cities with numerous assets that underline the importance of the outdoors for the city's identity:

- Sheffield is acknowledged as one of England's greenest cities and the only major city in the UK to have a National Park within its boundary.
- The city is nationally renowned for mountain biking, and home to the country's only city centre mountain biking facility at Parkwood Springs.
- The city hosts 'Cliffhanger', the UK's biggest outdoor event.
- In 2014, Le Grand Départ of the Tour de France provided a fantastic showcase for Sheffield's unique combination of beautiful rural landscapes, city culture and challenging hill climbs.
- The city was voted the 'best city to live in for countryside lovers' by BBC Countryfile in 2014

Whether it's long, peaceful Sunday walks or high impact mountain biking down an inner-city trail, the essence of Sheffield's unique offer is the proximity between the outdoors and city life. This distinctiveness goes beyond the physical attributes of the city. It is reflected in Sheffield residents and businesses. In terms of their skills, knowledge, know-how and passion for the outdoors, Sheffield people are at the heart of the city's outdoor assets. In 2014, Sheffield Hallam University's Sport Industry Research Centre produced a report titled *'Everything grows outside – including jobs and the economy'*, which looked at the impact of outdoor recreation in Sheffield. The report found that:

- Participation rates in outdoor recreation in Sheffield are higher than the national average across a range of activities, particularly for running, walking and cycling.
- The city is home to a number of global brands and businesses that directly support and promote the outdoor industry such as Go Outdoors and Buffalo Systems.
- Sheffield is the UK's 'climbing capital', with more than an estimated 10,000 Sheffield-based climbers and climbing provision that is more significant than other comparable cities.
- There is a strong heritage and high participation in walking and running, with one of the world's oldest fell races, and a thriving park-run and walking scene.
- Sheffield has a very proud history of leadership in the outdoors, as one of the bases for the Kinder Mass Trespass, which led directly to the national 'Right to Roam'.
- An online survey carried out as part of the research found that the best thing about living in Sheffield is that it is the "best of both worlds" – a combination of urban living and access to the outdoors.

The world is becoming increasingly urbanised, with 80% of the UK population living in cities, and over the last few years the UK Government has focused a lot of attention on the role of cities in driving future growth. In particular, there has been recent interest in Northern cities such as Sheffield and their part in a future 'Northern Powerhouse' of connected cities, working together as one labour market to compete on a global level.

At the same time, factors such as quality of life and health considerations are increasingly influencing people and businesses' location decisions. We compete on a global stage in an age

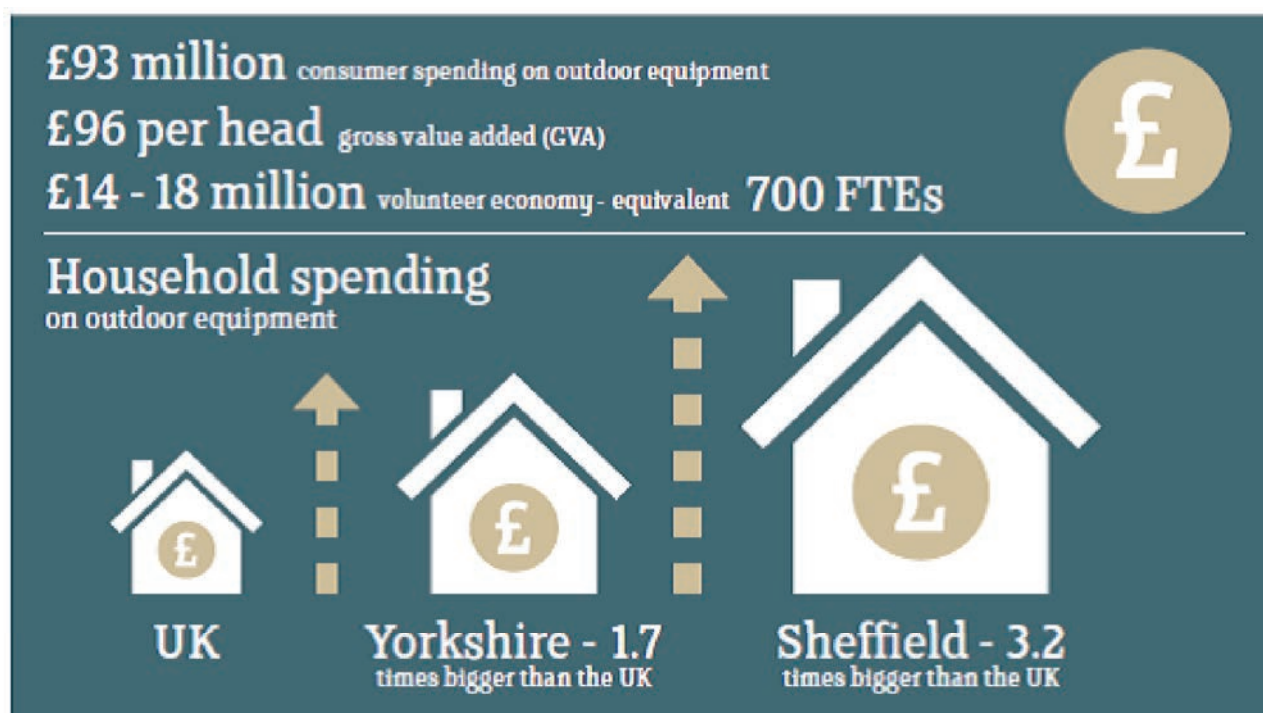
A Distinction That Can Drive Economic Growth

Increasing interest in the outdoors, and the pursuit of wider outdoor activities is on the rise in the UK. According to a recent study by the Sport and Recreation Alliance, *Reconomics*, 55% of the UK's adult population visit the natural environment at least once a week and total visitor spend was £21 billion in 2012/13. The growing interest in the pursuit of UK outdoor activities can be attributed to a combination of factors such as an increased concern about health and fitness, a more active ageing population and outdoor pursuits becoming more mainstream and fashionable. This can have a significant economic impact through Trade, Talent Attraction, Driving Tourism and Community Participation.

Trade

The Sheffield Hallam Economic Impact Study found that Sheffield's consumer spending on outdoor equipment is over 3 times the national average. As well as this generating significant health and social benefits, this has obvious economic impacts with consumer spending on the outdoors in Sheffield estimated to be around £93 million. The outdoor-related Gross Value Added (GVA) in Sheffield is estimated to be £53 million, and the sector provides employment for 1597 FTEs. In addition to this, the estimated economic value of outdoor-related volunteering is a further £14-18 million GVA equivalent, if this work could be paid in the market. This is an important figure as the volunteer economy is an indicator for the health of the industry in general: a strong volunteer economy like that in Sheffield suggests a 'tipping' point where volunteering converts to paid employment.

A strong outdoor community, and the customer base this represents helps to attract new businesses, investors and entrepreneurs because Sheffield can attract and retain the talent their businesses need to thrive. These people are shaping Sheffield's economy. Just as they are attracted to Sheffield, by being here, creating product, jobs, and growth – they've become part of Sheffield's offer to others.



The trade benefits of outdoor recreation in Sheffield (Sheffield Hallam University)

As well as generating growth and jobs, Sheffield outdoor businesses act as ambassadors for the city, in terms of their trade links and networks and the events they help to organise and promote. This economic value is not as easily quantifiable but is extremely important.

Talent Attraction

The purpose of cities has changed over time – whereas once they were built on trade of natural resources and industry, nowadays they are built on people⁴. Investment decisions are made by people and are based on where people want to be. In order for a city to be successful, it has to be able to attract people and investment. Increasing social and geographical mobility means that talented people can choose to work almost anywhere in the world. Sheffield's outdoors is a massive potential driver behind why someone might choose Sheffield – it offers something attractive and distinctive.

Sheffield's outdoor offering as a talent attractor is perhaps its most significant long-term benefit. As part of Sheffield Hallam University's Economic Impact Study, a bespoke online survey was designed to assess the importance of Sheffield's 'great outdoors' to local residents. Overall 58% of 995 respondents who had moved to Sheffield indicated that the 'great outdoors' had influenced their decision to move to Sheffield by either a 'significant' or 'some' extent. Over three quarters of respondents (78%) who were 'born and bred' in Sheffield (691 people) indicated that Sheffield's 'great outdoors' had influenced their decision to remain in the city.



Whilst this survey has given a snapshot of the importance of Sheffield's outdoor offer for talent attraction, its true impact is difficult to measure. What is clear is that more could be made of Sheffield's assets to attract students, companies, investors and people seeking 'the best of both'. The issue seems to be that misconceptions of Sheffield can lead to the city being overlooked by students and companies looking to relocate. What is currently perhaps the city's finest, yet undersold asset, needs to become synonymous with the city in order to attract new talent and investment.

Driving Tourism

Sheffield has a unique location within the Peak District National Park and this is coupled with extensive linked pockets of green spaces throughout the city.

The opportunities that outdoor recreation presents for the visitor economy are significant. Of all overnight trips taken by people in the UK in 2012, 37% related to trips involving outdoor recreation – equating to a figure of £10 billion⁵.

The city already attracts 1.2 million overnight visitors each year but research suggests that currently, visitors to the Peak District keep within the confines of a rural holiday experience. Therefore, there is the substantial potential for Sheffield to position itself as the destination for those wanting the best of both worlds: the vibrancy of a city cultural offer uniquely coupled with unparalleled access to the outdoors.

One way to drive this new approach is through the city's events programme which already includes a number of events focusing specifically on outdoor recreation. Le Tour de France Grande Départ in 2014 offers an excellent example of the economic potential and profile an event can bring to a city. As well as generating significant spend in Sheffield's economy directly, the post-event survey showed that 75% of the Sheffield spectators would recommend the area to family and friends and that 60% of the visitors said they would return to the city for a short break or holiday.



Community Participation

Sheffield's communities; people who play in the parks, walk their dogs in the woods, BMX on the Bole Hills or just sit in quiet enjoyment of the beauty on their doorstep. It is well established that widening and increasing participation in Sheffield communities brings great health and social benefits, which is why the city has developed a 'whole-city' physical activity strategy under the banner *Move More*, with the strong ambition for Sheffield to become the most active city in the UK by 2020. Outdoor recreation has a particular role to play in terms of reducing health inequalities: walking and running in particular do not require a lot of expensive equipment or access to specialist facilities. The health benefits of increased outdoor participation are both physical and mental and it will be vital to understand the role of the outdoors in engaging traditionally inactive groups to ensure they can enjoy these benefits. There is also a rise in the appeal of 'lifestyle sports' as an alternative to traditional sports, particularly for younger people⁶. With this in mind, it will be important that the work of The Outdoor City Economic Strategy contributes to the wider ambition of the city to make it easier for everyone living, working and visiting Sheffield to be active everyday.

Outdoor recreation also generates economic benefits by creating healthier and more productive workforces. The opportunity to widen participation also provides Sheffield with a foundation for future economic potential. More outdoor recreation activity in the city generates more economic activity in terms of demand for trips out, outdoor equipment and inspires the next generation of elite outdoor ambassadors.

THE STRATEGY

How We Developed The Strategy

This strategy is the product of consultation that has taken place over the last year. This has included:

- One to one meetings with key organisations, including landowners and major institutions in the city and nationally (see appendix 2).
- Three consultation events with a wide range of stakeholders including outdoor recreation clubs, community groups and businesses.
- Sessions with groups such as Sheffield's Green Infrastructure Consortium, the Walking Forum and Peak District Local Access Forum.
- Sessions with the newly established Sheffield Outdoor Joint Venture, a partnership set up between the key partners in outdoor recreation in the city in order to develop and deliver this strategy. More details of the Joint Venture, including its membership, can be found on page 17.
- A six-week public consultation period, which received over 160 responses.

The Purpose Of The Strategy

This strategy is a statement of our ambition and provides a framework to guide the city's activities for the next three years. This document is not intended to be a detailed action plan and is intentionally concise. Separate action plans will be agreed by the Joint Venture annually.

The Outdoor City Economic Strategy is designed to complement existing work and address a perceived gap in harnessing the economic potential of Sheffield's outdoor offer. It is about creating a 'whole city' approach. The strategy will not duplicate work or other strategies. There are a number of strategies and projects already in place that this strategy aligns with and complements:

- The Peak District National Park Landscape Strategy 2009 and Peak District Local Development Core Strategy 2011
- The Peak District National Park: Active in the Outdoors – A Recreation Strategy and Action Plan for the Peak District National Park – 2010-2020
- Sheffield's Green and Open Space Strategy 2010-2030
- South Yorkshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2011, VALUE (Valuing Attractive Landscapes in the Urban Economy) and VALUE Added ⁷
- Peak District National Park Management Plan 2012-2017
- Sheffield Moors Masterplan 2013 - 2028
- Wider Peak District Cycling Strategy 2014
- Sheffield Waterways Strategy 2014 - 2024
- The *Move More* Plan: A framework for increasing physical activity in Sheffield 2015 - 2020
- The South Yorkshire Cycle Action Plan 2015
- Sheffield City Council Trees and Woodlands Strategy 2016 (forthcoming)

Our Vision

Sheffield: The Outdoor City will be internationally renowned for its unique people, places and outdoor offer

Our Mission

To grow the brand 'The Outdoor City' by investing in places that appeal and attract, aligned with supporting infrastructure that enables residents, businesses and visitors to have easy access to high quality outdoor recreation experiences.



Our Four Strategic Aims

From our mission we have identified four strategic aims, outlined in the diagram on the following page, which together will strengthen the economic value of Sheffield's outdoors and help to meet our vision. These aims are interdependent: they complement and crossover with each other and our ambitions for one area cannot be achieved without addressing the other three. To address these aims, the Joint Venture will develop an action plan each year. The emerging priorities for the first year's action plan are outlined on page 18.



The Outdoor City Economic Strategy Framework

Grow The Outdoor City Brand: Raise the profile of Sheffield's authentic outdoor and urban recreation offer to attract visitors and investment

In the past Sheffield has perhaps been too modest about its existing offer of outdoor experiences. Despite being one of the finest unique selling points that the city has, it has remained something that people familiar with the city most value but others are unaware of. We want to re-profile the image of Sheffield to include the outdoors. The profile of the city as The Outdoor City and the city's actual outdoor offer are mutually reinforcing – investment in quality assets help to support the profile of The Outdoor City and that profile then helps to support further investment in quality assets.

This applies at a local, regional, national and even international level. Better awareness of Sheffield's outdoor recreation opportunities at a local and regional level raises participation levels. At a national and international level it begins to increase overnight visitors and investment decisions.

This will not be a one-off marketing campaign. The Outdoor City brand needs to fully align with the city's identity which is no small task. But the economic prize is significant: re-profiling the image of the city to include its outdoor distinctiveness could drive tourism, investment and talent attraction.

Underpinning this brand development will be new ways of showcasing Sheffield's outdoors, including through the new 'The Outdoor City' website designed for Sheffielders and visitors. Events, elite and participatory, will also help to drive participation and tourism by showcasing the city as an outdoors destination for recreation. We need to strategically select the kind of events we want to attract, and invest in the events we believe will raise the profile of The Outdoor City.

Places that appeal and attract: Offer a broad range of quality experiences at outdoor attractions based around Sheffield's outdoor assets.

At the heart of the city's offer are its outdoor destinations based on its natural landscapes. Places such as Burbage, Parkwood, Wharncliffe Woods. These places are already renowned, sometimes internationally, for the outdoor recreation opportunities they offer and attract high numbers of visitors. As well as these, there are the 'hidden gems' of the city that might not be widely known about but are quietly enjoyed by those who have discovered them.

It is Sheffield's destinations that will drive participation and new visitors. Therefore we must ensure that Sheffield has a breadth and depth of quality outdoor recreation experiences that appeal to both the Sheffield population and visitors: from those who want to get involved in high energy pursuits to those who want to quietly enjoy the nature, culture and heritage of the outdoors. Furthermore, these destinations must have the capacity to cope with new visitors without compromising the experience they offer.



Sheffield has a diverse and rich mix of places and experiences, but more could be done to enhance the existing opportunities, create new ones, and protect the identity and nature of others. Some areas are at or are nearing capacity with their existing activities. For others, location and topography could lend itself to an outdoor recreation activity that requires new investment.

Improved provision across the city will create opportunities for outdoor businesses, which are already significant in number. As somewhere that can offer both city infrastructure and access to quality outdoor experiences, outdoor businesses will continue to cluster in the city adding to Sheffield's distinctiveness.

As a city, we need to generate investment ideas for attractions as well as make informed decisions on investment opportunities (both public or private) for Sheffield's outdoor places. At a time where public spending is restricted, we need to evolve the approach to securing other sources

of investment to ensure a sustainable future for the city's outdoor places. This will involve prioritisation, looking at new models for investment as well as how sites can generate income to be self-sustaining.

Our aim is to look to create "recreation zones" to enable us to take a more strategic approach to investment in outdoor recreation. This will allow the city to be more proactive in its approach to investment, helping us to put in place essential elements such as trail-heads, way markers and facilities as well as investment needed to protect the environment from increased footfall.

Quality Infrastructure: Sheffield has the supporting infrastructure to ensure superb access to its outdoor assets.

Behind our vision sits an aspiration for Sheffield's outdoor experiences and places to be supported by excellent infrastructure and facilities, whether that is the state of the natural environment, easy-to-use public transport, cycling routes, equipment hire and accommodation. It is these things that create the quality experience of The Outdoor City for both Sheffielders and visitors

Offering world class climbing and mountain biking experiences sets Sheffield apart from other cities. To capitalise on the city element of our offer, we need to make sure that the 'city' and the 'outdoor' elements are well connected so that people are able to enjoy both as part of one coherent package, for example with cycling and walking paths. They also include other infrastructure such as way-marking, public transport provision and day-to-day land management. These sorts of infrastructure improvements benefit Sheffield people as well as visitors.



In order to address peoples' perceptions of Sheffield, we also need to think how the city promotes itself as The Outdoor City within the city centre. You should not have to be in the countryside to know that you are in The Outdoor City – our outdoor space should fully integrate with the urban fabric of the city through the use of public space. The city's valleys and green space already do this but global cities have innovative ways of profiling the outdoor offer on their doorstep right from within the city centre.

Some infrastructure, such as accommodation, is a business opportunity that will arise as a result of new investment and an increased profile for the city's outdoor places. However, these opportunities may still require facilitation by organisations that are part of the Joint Venture, and we are committed to making our interactions with commercial enterprises as simple and straightforward as possible.

Drive Up Participation: Across the city, Sheffield has the highest participation rates of all core cities

For Sheffield to be regarded as The Outdoor City its people need to be confident to venture into the outdoors. Sheffield's outdoor recreation participation rates are higher than the national average so we know that many are already active. A survey undertaken by Sheffield Hallam University also found that the city attracts people to Sheffield because of its outdoor offer, but we cannot be complacent if we want the city's outdoors to become a fundamental part of its identity. We know that participation rates vary for outdoor recreation with those from more disadvantaged backgrounds, women, BME communities and people with disabilities having lower participation rates than the average. As we have developed our approach, the people we have spoken to have made it clear that this is an important issue for the city to address.

The informality, flexibility and breadth of experiences mean that the outdoor recreation sector could prove a valuable tool in promoting physical activity. In particular, activities such as walking are less associated with organised sport and can be incorporated into other interests such as bird watching, photography, history and culture. A recent report by Sport England and the Outdoor Industries Association has provided a comprehensive account of the reasons why people take part in outdoor recreation, and importantly, the reasons why they do not⁷. This understanding of the barriers some people face will inform all elements of our work in the future.

'Activating' sites, groups and individuals, introduces people to facilities by curating the experience for them, giving them the confidence to use them again. The way this is done depends on who you are trying to engage with but will involve engaging with community groups, local organisations, club structures and businesses. For example, new run routes can be explored by an existing or new run group linked to a local community, health centre or workplace; local school children can be introduced to a mountain biking facility, a bouldering centre, or taken on a trip to the Peak District. This approach needs to be built into all new outdoor projects and extended to existing ones to ensure that Sheffielders get the benefits of the city's outdoor offer. This also provides the opportunity to instill in people a sense of responsibility towards the outdoors in terms of the impact, both positive and negative, that we can have on the places we visit.



The Outdoor City Economic Strategy will be connected into the citywide physical activity strategy *Move More* and will adopt the philosophy and the approach outlined in that programme to reduce inequality in participation and thereby return the greatest health, social and economic benefit for the city. Given the mental health benefits of visiting the outdoors, the strategy will also link into this agenda.

This theme of the strategy has particular support from Sheffield's outdoor sector – our outdoor champions, businesses and clubs, whose expertise and passion for outdoor recreation means they are already engaging with people to show them Sheffield's outdoors but they have an appetite to do more. Making better links between our outdoor sector and physical activity and wellbeing strategies has the potential to really drive participation and the health and economic benefits that come with it.

The Values Behind This Strategy

This strategy is underpinned by a set of values that cut across all its themes and point to the culture we want to create with our new approach to outdoor recreation in Sheffield:

1. Partnership

Outdoor recreation opportunities nearly always cut across geographical and organisational boundaries. For this strategy to work, partnership must be central to everything we do, whether that is large land-holding organisations or the clubs, businesses and individuals who are passionate about the outdoors. The role of the strategy is to support these partners and facilitate further partnership working, so that when it comes to delivering for the outdoor economy, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

2. Sustainability

At the heart of this strategy is a commitment to sustainability, both in terms of the environment and the economy. Part of the rationale behind this strategy is a desire to secure more sustainable funding sources for our outdoor spaces. Any investments that arise as a result of this strategy will need to evidence the long-term economic sustainability of the project, whether they are pilots designed to prove a concept, require pump priming or will be self-sustainable. Environmental implications will also need to be considered, ensuring that any investment enhances the environment and does not exacerbate environmental issues such as air pollution, path erosion and wildlife disturbance. This value links to widening participation because decisions that we take now about engagement and inclusion will be crucial to securing the long-term stewardship of the outdoors.

3. Conservation

This strategy allows us to see Sheffield's outdoor economy as a whole system, rather than site by site. Whilst part of the strategy will be concerned with encouraging investment into outdoor sites across the city, we recognise that for some sites this will not be appropriate. Our priority is to conserve the character of a site and its sense of place – any new infrastructure and investment will be designed to improve the experience rather than compromise the very reason the site was attractive in the first place.



4. Widening Participation

Running through all of our priorities in this document is a commitment to not just increase participation but widen it. This applies across different socio-economic groups, people with different ethnic backgrounds, people with disabilities and any other groups who may face physical, cultural or financial barriers to taking part in outdoor recreation. The social, health and economic benefits of ensuring that people participate in outdoor recreation from across the city make it a value at the heart of many, if not all of the organisations that are part of the Joint Venture. It is also something that many of the organisations, businesses and individuals we spoke to as part of the consultation also felt strongly about. In bringing together these partners, it is hoped that this strategy can provide the connections and economic case to ensure the city can become an exemplar in involving people in the outdoors.

Outcomes

This strategy contributes towards Sheffield’s wider economic ambitions for the city. Driving this strategy is the ambition to reprofile the image of the city which in turn brings with it a wide range of economic outcomes. We know that our outdoors credentials are a strong ‘lifestyle’ motivator for inward investors and attracts and retains talent within the city. We also know that Sheffield has an above average spend on outdoor pursuits and that our natural topography and high participation rates means we are ripe for businesses servicing climbers, walkers, runners and cyclists.

The outcomes we will use to assess the success of this strategy are not always going to be straightforward and the contribution that the outdoor economy makes to these outcomes may sometimes be difficult to quantify. However, it is important to measure progress and so the following outcomes and indicators have been identified, with baseline indicators established where possible in the first year.

Driver	Outcome	Indicative Measures
Profile	The national and international profile for Sheffield improves	Social Media monitoring tools, The Outdoor City website visits. The Outdoor City integrated into city marketing and investment.
Trade	The size and value of the outdoor sector increases. Increased quality in outdoor assets. Increased investment in outdoor spaces.	Jobs Number of outdoor businesses GVA Number of volunteers Increase in investment from outdoor sector businesses
Talent	Talent attraction and retention: people and businesses choose to locate in Sheffield.	Investment data The Outdoor City integrated into investment offer and university marketing
Tourism	Sheffield’s outdoor offer attracts more visitors to the city.	Increasing day visitors Increasing overnight tourism spend Increasing number of hotel stays Attracting more outdoor conferences and events Increasing the room rate
Community Participation	Increase in Sheffield people involved in outdoor recreation across a range of outdoor activities and amongst all social groups Contribute to the <i>Move More</i> vision for Sheffield to become the most active city in the UK by 2020	National participation measures

How This Strategy Will Be Delivered

One of the values underpinning this strategy is partnership working, as we recognise that the success of this strategy depends upon a wide variety of stakeholders. The delivery of this strategy will be overseen by the Sheffield Outdoor Joint Venture which meets bi-monthly. This consists of key partners across the city involved in outdoor recreation, including major landowners. The membership is as follows:

- Sheffield City Council
- Forestry Commission
- National Trust
- Yorkshire Water
- Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust
- Peak District National Park
- Sport England
- Sheffield Hallam University
- The University of Sheffield Urban Institute
- Outdoor Industries Association
- Sport and Recreation Alliance
- Move More

In addition we will establish The Outdoor 100, made up of clubs, businesses, community groups, organisations and individuals who are passionate about the outdoors. This group will meet to review progress and identify any new developments taking place or new ideas in the city that we should incorporate into the strategy.

For specific projects associated with the strategy, small project groups will be set up including representatives from The Outdoor 100 to manage delivery.



WHAT WE WANT TO DO

This document has so far outlined the strategic aims for The Outdoor City Economic Strategy and is designed to be a flexible document to evolve and respond to new opportunities and challenges in the future. The ambitions contained in this document have been translated into priority actions and ideas that the city wants to see happen. These will form a separate action plan and be refreshed each year, but below is an outline of the ten key actions for focus in the first year.



1) The Outdoor City Branding

Over the next three years, we will establish The Outdoor City brand, proactively asserting it as a fundamental part of the city's identity. We need to showcase Sheffield as a city that people choose to live, do business in, visit, train and compete in. This work will be supported by a strategic marketing plan, building brand recognition and galvanising support through a number of means:

- Promoting the brand with a toolkit that Joint Venture partners and other organisations can use
- Identifying and utilising outdoor ambassadors for the city
- Advertising with relevant tourism and sector specific outlets.
- Market testing of packages specifically aimed at tourists wanting the 'best of both worlds'.

The Outdoor City website will form one of the main platforms for people to access information about what's going on in the city and it will be an ongoing project to ensure the site stays updated and relevant.

2)The Outdoor City Events Programme

Events raise profile, drive tourism and inspire participation. The city already hosts a number of events (the Yorkshire Half Marathon, Sky Ride, Great Yorkshire Run) with direct links to the outdoors, however these events are stand-alone activities rather than being integrated into The Outdoor City brand and being used to raise the city's profile. We are changing this with the launch of what is anticipated to be city's first The Outdoor City Weekender, bringing together a range of separate outdoor events under the banner of The Outdoor City.



We will review the city's events and identify the events where The Outdoor City would be best showcased. We will also identify the events that we would seek to attract or develop ourselves. The recreational zoning exercise will mean we have a better knowledge of the types of activities that could take place on our sites, allowing us to be both proactive and reactive to event opportunities as they come up.

This approach lends itself well to establishing a diverse, self-owned and self-grown events programme together with providing the opportunity to bid for one-off high profile events. The time frame for this strategy is three years but within the major events field a longer term approach will be needed as bid times for major events can take many years to come to fruition.

Whilst the Council has a major role to play in the city's events offer, it is the city's outdoor enthusiasts, volunteers, businesses and entrepreneurs that are at the heart of some of Sheffield's most renowned outdoor recreation events. Therefore, we need to ensure that these are incorporated into the programme and linked into The Outdoor City website.

3)Creating Outdoor Recreation Zones

We want to create outdoor experiences in the city supported by quality facilities. We are seeking to develop a recreational zoning approach across the city to look at our outdoor assets and better understand the potential they may have for recreation. These sites are often owned by more than one partner. The value of the Joint Venture is in bringing these partners together to look at the city offer as a whole to identify if there are any bigger opportunities the city is missing. Some of these will be quick wins whilst others will be longer-term projects.

Our initial assessment has produced a long-list of sites which can be found within the appendix and in the coming years they will be further explored and consulted upon. These sites have been chosen because of their natural assets and their importance with outdoor recreation communities. However, there are issues in terms of capacity and sustainability that affect the ability of the sites to reach their outdoor recreation potential.

Part of this approach will also involve the Joint Venture undertaking a city-scale review of future funding models for our outdoor places, to secure appropriate long-term and sustainable investment across the city.



4) Improving Infrastructure In The Outdoor City

Infrastructure not only connects people to outdoor sites across the city; it is also one of the best ways we can build outdoor activity into people's everyday lives. Our research and consultation has identified a number of infrastructure issues that affect the way our outdoor assets are used in the city:

'Green Routes' between key destination sites

If we view the walking and cycling connections in Sheffield as a web, attention needs to be given to 'radial routes' that connect the various spokes that run from city to countryside. These will be the routes that connect people's homes to outdoor destinations, but also that connect destinations to each other. This is dependent on a good quality public rights of way network and from a cycling perspective, links to the Cycling Strategy highlighted in Action 5.



Way-marking

The Outdoor City needs to be ultra-friendly and easy to use for walkers, runners and cyclists. There is much that could be done to make cycling, walking and running routes clear including introducing branded signage and way-marking that matches the quality of that used in European cities.

Public transport

When walking and cycling are not an option, public transport is the most sustainable method for travel and access to our recreational zones. The Outdoor City marketing campaign needs to make sure public transport options are made clear to people, but we also need to identify where there are gaps in provision, and where transport does not meet the requirements of people taking part in outdoor recreation - for example, where it does not have space for additional 'kit'.

We will work collaboratively and pro-actively with partners leading on these areas to find solutions to these barriers and ensure they support the ambitions within this strategy. For some this will involve identifying sources of funding and for others it presents a private sector opportunity that the Joint Venture can facilitate.



5) Activity-led projects For Sheffield's Recreational Pursuits

Sheffield Hallam University's study into outdoor recreation in Sheffield found that walking, running, climbing and cycling were particularly synonymous with Sheffield, with higher than average participation rates and distinctive activities that made the most of Sheffield's topography (downhill mountain biking and fell running for example). We will establish and work on projects to strengthen this core offer.

There are other activities with a strong support in Sheffield such as orienteering, canoeing, kayaking and horseriding for example. This strategy, underpinned by The Outdoor City brand, is keen to support a wider range of activity-led projects. For example:

Walking and running routes

We aspire to deliver a network of new running and walking routes across 25 sites in the city. We have secured funding to deliver routes across 14 ensuring a geographical spread that makes running accessible to the widest possible audience; linking the city's parks, woodlands and urban areas. The first 11 routes form year one of the first phase of Sheffield's wider ambition to deliver a larger programme of run routes across 25 sites.

The linked and intersecting routes offer runners variety and options that enable progression from short easy routes suitable for beginners, to medium routes for the occasional runners and onto more challenging routes for more seasoned or adventurous runners.

Sheffield Cycling Strategy

In 2014 Sheffield City Council, on the back of the Get Britain Cycling Inquiry, undertook their own cycling inquiry. The result of this was 19 recommendations, that at the time were viewed as key to achieving the ambitious targets also agreed as part of the inquiry. Those targets are to get 10% of all journeys in Sheffield to be by bike by 2025 and 25% by 2050. The recommendations centre around 3 key themes – strong leadership, getting the right infrastructure in place, and a behavioural change programme to get people cycling.

In order to achieve the targets set out in the inquiry, we will deliver a Cycling Strategy for Sheffield in 2016, building on the South Yorkshire Cycling Action Plan. This will establish an ambitious vision for both recreational and commuter cycling across the city, including the development of a single, continuous cycle network. The development of the cycle network will sit within a wider transport strategy. This new network will be built to an improved standard in order to make cycling safer and achieve 10% of cycling for all trips in the next decade. To support the infrastructure we will continue to:

- Implement and develop behaviour change programmes of free cycle training, maintenance courses, and free loans, adapting them to meet demand
- Develop supporting schemes such as public bike hire including electric bikes, improved secure bike storage at key destinations, expansion of public bike pumps, a programme of led rides, and mass participation events for recreation and sport, one stop shops for cycling and a cargo bike hire scheme and integrate cycling with public transport
- Support the city's bike shops

Other elements of The Outdoor City Strategy will support the delivery of the Cycling Strategy. For example, The Outdoor City website can act as promotional platform for initiatives associated with the Cycle Strategy.

Climbing Capital

Sheffield offers world class climbing opportunities and a higher than average number of climbing businesses. We want to showcase Sheffield's status as the 'climbing capital of the UK' as a core part of The Outdoor City brand. We will do this by working with the climbing sector to identify opportunities for events, tourism, business engagement and youth participation.

6) Pilot Innovative Solutions To Measuring Participation

Outdoor recreation can bring a range of benefits, whether that is health, social or economic. However, measuring participation and the impact of strategies to raise participation can be difficult given the informal nature of some of the activity. Sheffield's new approach in joining together participation with improved facilities need to be complemented by cutting edge research taking place within the city to pilot new approaches to measuring participation.

Sheffield is a growing hub for wellbeing and health research: with the National Centre for Sports and Exercise Medicine; the Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre (AWRC) based at the Olympic Legacy Park (OLP), the Centre for Sports Engineering Research, the Outdoor Recreation Research Group and the *Move More* campaign. All these factors make Sheffield the perfect development and proving ground for a fit for purpose activity monitoring system.

There are a number of exciting technological options which not only provide opportunities to capture activity levels but also to encourage and stimulate increased activity – through challenges, incentives, rewards and gamification.

We will undertake a critical assessment of a range of monitoring tools and techniques, with the goal of developing a scale-able solution that can be used across the city. We will collaborate with a range of partners, including *Move More's* evaluation workstream.



7) World Class Academic Knowledge Base

Sheffield has a wealth of leading academic experts within the city providing a range of exceptional opportunities to advise, inform, monitor and evaluate Sheffield's outdoor offer.

Universities are important beneficiaries of the great places, attractive countryside and thriving outdoors scene in Sheffield. It is well known that access to the Peak District is a major attractor of world leading academics and excellent students coming to Sheffield. Not only does our great outdoors bring people here to work, live and play - those that come also tend to want to stay. The University of Sheffield has a strong, global track record in this area. The team at the Urban Institute⁸ has led research in this area, delivering ground-breaking evidence for over a decade. This includes the £10m project, 'Creating a Setting for Investment', on the economic impacts of environmental quality⁹ and the £7m VALUE project, 'Valuing attractive landscapes in the urban economy', on the competitiveness benefits of green infrastructure

Sheffield has a clear vision as part of the National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine (NCSEM - a London 2012 Olympic Games legacy programme) to create a culture of physical activity in the city. The aim is to undertake a 'whole-systems' approach combining policy, environmental, community and individual level interventions and programmes of work. This will make significant contributions to both the evidence base for 'what works, why, for whom and in what context?' and the economic-case for the role of physical activity in achieving good population health and treating long-term conditions and chronic disease. Physical activity opportunities are promoted through the 'Move More' initiative which aims to make Sheffield the country's most active city by 2020.

The 2015 Budget announced £14m of funding to develop the Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre (AWRC) in Sheffield, which is being delivered by Legacy Park Ltd in partnership with Sheffield Hallam University. The AWRC is set to become the most advanced research and development centre for physical activity in the world, forming the centrepiece of the Sheffield's Olympic Legacy Park (OLP). Specific to outdoor recreation, Sheffield Hallam University is set to launch their specialist Outdoor Recreation Research Group 'ORRG'. ORRG aims to carry out world-leading research through its team of leading sports scientists, sports engineers, economists, social scientists, and experts on adventure tourism, access, the environment and ecosystems.



8) To Roll Out A Participation Plan Across The City For Sheffield's Outdoors

Sport England and the Outdoor Industries Association's recent study 'Getting Active Outdoors' is a new piece of research that examines the drivers and barriers to participating in outdoor recreation.

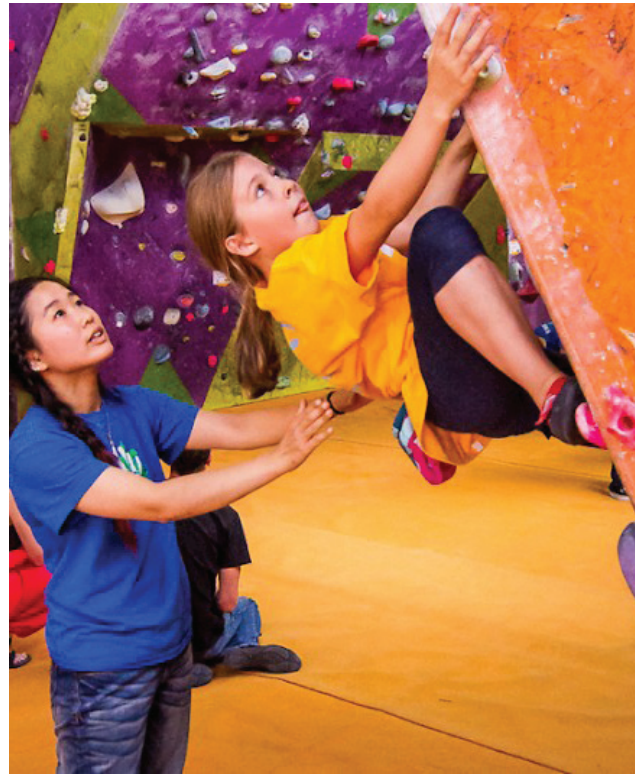
We want to take the learning from this valuable report and apply it to Sheffield, developing and delivering a plan across the city to ensure that everyone in Sheffield can get involved in the outdoors, particularly those who have lower than average participation rates. The work will contribute to *Move More*, the city-wide public health programme for Sheffield. Its ambition is for Sheffield to be the most active city in the UK by 2020. The principles behind *Move More* are to reduce inequalities in participation, connect people with physical activity and make physical activity an easy choice.

This action strongly links to Sheffield's work on measuring participation – the knowledge gained from analysis of participation data can inform our approach to participation in the future. The technology used to measure some elements of participation can also act as a tool to drive involvement, by making activities fun and engaging.

9) Youth Participation

Youth participation is vital to the health of Sheffield's people and its outdoor economy. Inspiring young people to get involved in outdoor recreation not only generates health and wellbeing benefits, it also creates the future business owners, event organisers, volunteers and outdoor champions that Sheffield needs to continue to be The Outdoor City. Consultation with the outdoor sector has revealed a real enthusiasm to link young people into outdoor recreation opportunities.

Schools will play a key role in helping us to engage with young people and we are keen to pilot projects that help us to extend the number of schools that offer frequent and good quality outdoor experiences for their pupils. We also recognise the importance of play as part of young people's interactions with the outdoors, both in terms of its immediate health benefits but also in fostering a positive and long lasting connection with outdoor recreation. We will work with The Outdoor 100 and the Joint Venture to develop projects and mechanisms to progress this priority.



10) Developing Sheffield's Signature Sector

There is a unique opportunity for Sheffield to become the premier location for outdoor businesses. These businesses prefer to locate close to the outdoors but like many businesses, benefit from the infrastructure and agglomeration that comes with locating in cities. In this sense, outdoor businesses could become the 'signature sector' for Sheffield – a distinctive and important part of the local economy that other cities cannot replicate.

With more strategic investment and a higher profile for the outdoors in Sheffield, new business opportunities will naturally present themselves but there is also a role for the Joint Venture in supporting and facilitating business development. We can do this by:

- Ensuring that existing businesses are accessing business support services available
- Facilitating a forum for outdoor businesses to meet and network
- For new businesses, develop a bespoke package of support for outdoor businesses looking to locate to Sheffield

Businesses also have a part to play in supporting The Outdoor City and its outdoor spaces. Go Outdoors' support of the Lady Cannings mountain bike trail is a great example of this. We need to make sure businesses are linked into these sorts of opportunities so they can contribute their resources, enthusiasm and knowledge to the outdoor recreation offer in Sheffield.



Appendix 1: Glossary

Core Cities – the ten major UK cities outside of London. These are Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham, Newcastle and Sheffield.

Outdoor recreation - We define outdoor recreation as encompassing all sport and physical recreation that takes place in the natural environment whether on land, water or air.

Appendix 2: Groups that have participated

Accelerate	Peak District National Park Authority
Accessible Derbyshire	Russell's Bicycle Shed
Biketrack	Santa Cruz Sydicate
British Cycling	Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust
British Mountaineering Council	Sheffield Ramblers
British Triathlon	Sheffrec Cycling Club
Canal & River Trust	Snowsport England
Cotic	South Yorkshire Forest Partnership
Centre for Sports Engineering Research (SHU)	South Yorkshire Sport
Climbing Works	Sport England
Cycle Sheffield	Sport & Recreation Alliannce
England Athetics	Sports Industry Research Centre
Forestry Commission	Sustrans
The Foundry	Sweet Peaks
Friends of Parkwood	The University of Sheffield Urban Institute
Heason Events	Tim Fish Design
John Horscroft	Visit England
Kier	Yorkshire Water
Links School Partnership	
Living Adventure	
Move More	
Outdoor Industries Association	
Peak District Local Access Forum	

Appendix 3: Long list of sites identified as part of recreational zoning work

Bradfield/Damflask/Agden	Sheaf Valley
Burbage/Blackamore	Shirebrook Valley/ Birley Spa
Canal and River Don	Stanage and North Lees
Ecclesall Woods	Strines and Boots Folly
Ewden/Bolsterstone	Wharnccliffe/Greno
Gleadless Valley Woods	Wincobank
Hollow Meadows	Wyming Brook
Lady Cannings/Ringinglow	
Langsett Reservoir	
Loxley Valley	
Parkwood Springs North	
Porter Valley	
Redmires Dams	
Rivelin Valley and Dams	

Appendix 4: Footnotes

1. We define outdoor recreation as encompassing all sport and physical recreation that takes place in the natural environment whether on land, water or in the air.
2. Sport and Recreation Alliance (2014), *Reconomics*
3. Sport England and Outdoor Industries Association (2015), *Getting Active Outdoors*
4. KPMG, (2014), Magnet Cities
5. Sport and Recreation Alliance (2014), *Reconomics*
6. Sport England and Outdoor Industries Association (2015), *Getting Active Outdoors*
7. South Yorkshire Forest Partnership is an environmental organisation which grew out of the Community Forest's initiative. It works on regeneration projects to promote sustainable development including two funded by the EU which have invested in Sheffield; VALUE* (Valuing Attractive Landscapes in the Urban Economy) and VALUE Added*.
<http://www.value-landscapes.eu/>
<http://www.value-and.com/>
<http://www.southyorkshireforest.co.uk/>
8. <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/urbaninstitute>
9. <http://www.environment-investment.com>