



# Stories Workshop Report

September 2024

HEALTH  
AND  
NATURE  
DORSET



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# Introduction

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Health and Nature Dorset (HAND) aims to strengthen joint working on nature-based wellbeing across Dorset (BCP and Dorset council areas) to increase the access to, use of and connection with the natural environment to support and enhance physical and mental wellbeing.

In September 2024, 9 members of HAND came together for an online workshop to discuss how we can make the information we share with individuals, when promoting nature-based wellbeing, more inclusive and accessible to those that face the most challenges engaging with nature and being active outdoors.

The following report sets out a summary of the meeting.

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# **Accessibility and inclusivity information**

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Speaker: Katie Davies (Active Dorset)

**Things to consider when thinking about accessibility and inclusivity**

Long-term health conditions
Disability
Neurodiversity
Culture and ethnicity
Deprivation
Families and age
Gender
LGBTQ+

**Groups that are consistently less likely to be active**

Lower socio-economic groups (SEG)
Women and girls
Older adults
Disabled and long-term health conditions (LTHC)
Ethnic minorities

Additional data from another Sport England research project showed that FEWER women from ethnically diverse backgrounds spent 150 minutes per week outdoors being active than White British women

## Data highlighted from VisitEngland research:

**£14.6 billion** was spent by disabled people and their travelling companions in England's tourism every year

**98%** of disabled people look for accessibility information before choosing to visit somewhere for the first time

**75%** of disabled people have said that they will NOT visit a new place if they cannot find the information they need

## Individuals with long-term health conditions and disabilities:

Need information on travel (how to get there), terrain and obstacles (surfaces, gradients) and on-site facilities

Had a lack of trust in the information provided

Highly valued recommendations from others with the same condition

Think about accessibility facilities rather than access for a particular type of impairment/condition

Would like a detailed access guide within the accessibility information if possible

## Barriers for individuals from a different culture and ethnicity

Concerns about discrimination (particularly in relation to religious-cultural dress)

Lack of awareness

Perceived physical and psychological capability



## Perceived capabilities (physical and psychological)\*

Muslim participants had significantly lower levels of perceived physical capability when compared to Christians or individuals with no religion.

Individuals from more deprived areas had significantly lower levels of psychological capabilities compared to more affluent areas.

White ethnic groups had the highest level of perceived physical capability when compared to Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Asian and Black Caribbean ethnic groups.

White British participants had the highest level of perceived psychological capability whereas Muslims had significantly lower levels

\*Physical capability = whether an individual has the sufficient ability and skill to access green spaces

Psychological capability = whether an individual has the knowledge of how and where to access green spaces

Source: Chalkscapes 2024 report

## Women from Black and South Asian Muslim communities:

Need to see and hear stories from people of similar walks of life

Need to know how others have overcome barriers

Need an emphasis on the social aspects of nature-based activities

Need to know the difference that an activity has made to another's life



Source: Sport England campaign 'This Girl Can'

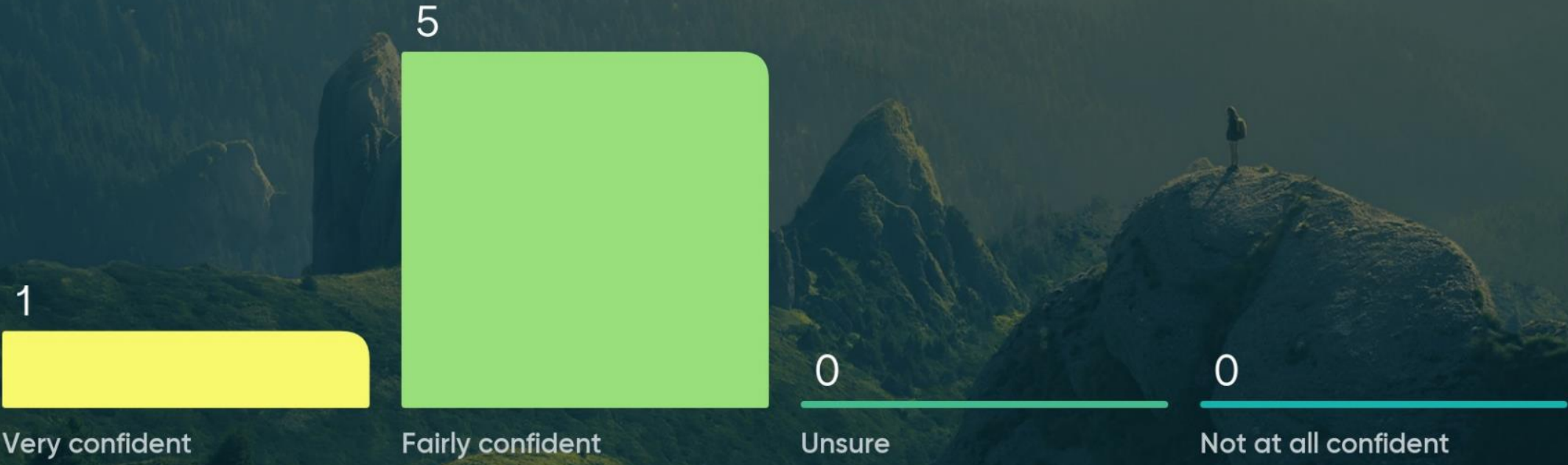


# Poll Results

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Poll led by Katie Davies

# How confident do you feel about providing inclusive and accessible information to promote nature-based wellbeing activities?



# Which communities do you currently support with nature-based wellbeing activities?

10 responses

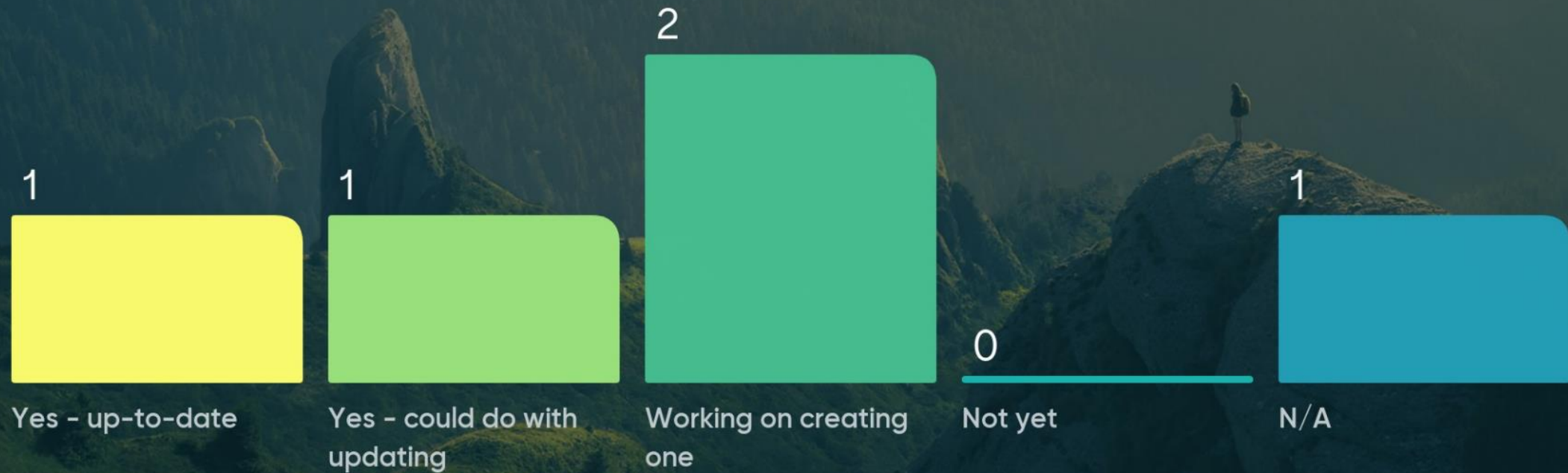
A word cloud of community groups is displayed over a background image of a rugged, green landscape with a person standing on a rock. The words are in various colors and orientations. The largest words are 'mental health' (green) and 'older people' (yellow). Other words include 'retired' (vertical, green), 'women' (teal), 'all' (vertical, yellow), 'isolated rural' (teal), 'disabilities' (teal), and 'volunteers' (teal).

mental health  
older people  
retired  
women  
all  
isolated rural  
disabilities  
volunteers

Isolated individuals that live in a rural setting are another important group to consider when thinking about accessibility and inclusivity!



# For activity providers: Do you currently have an accessibility guide for your activity or service?



# Providing accessible and inclusive information

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Speaker: Katie Davies

VisitEngland aims to make free questionnaires available which will list the key accessibility features at tourism venues that are most important to people with a range of accessibility requirements.

Tourism businesses can use [AccessAble](#) to book and pay for a quality-assured Detailed Access Guide. There are discounts available, but this is on a first-come, first-served basis.

## Information to share

Readability tools are available to support organisations in Dorset to become health literate (enable the public to access, understand, and use information and services related to health and well-being)



[Dorset's Activity Finder](#) is a free search engine that allows the public to browse for activities near them. It's also a platform for individuals to promote their activities/services



# Discussion

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Introduced by Katie Davies

Contributors: Maria Morris and Julie Hammon

## What information do you think activity and service providers should provide to promote nature-based wellbeing opportunities?

Sharing nature-based experiences from people that are in the same community to encourage individuals or those within their own social groups to get involved

Incorporating important factors such as food into nature-based health activities as this can be important for certain religious and cultural groups

## What would you find useful to help better attract and support a more inclusive audience to nature-based wellbeing?

To gain a better understanding of why particular groups are less likely to get involved with nature-based health activities i.e., why men feel less confident getting involved with activities surrounding mental health

How might we gather stories from people that are using nature spaces for health and wellbeing and how can we share/promote these?

“We have plenty of testimonials but individuals, particularly those with mental health issues, don’t want other people to know”

“The preparedness of an individual to share details is tricky but it would be useful to have some form of story to encourage others, even if specifics aren’t given”

# Updates

Speaker: Maria Morris (Your Own True Nature)

- Continuation of wellness walks – looking for new locations i.e., The New Forest
- Started to incorporate food into the wellness walks i.e., healthy brunch afterwards. This adds value to the experience!
- Continuation of cups of calm - helping people to get out in nature
- ‘Oaktober’ – connecting patients with oak tree in hospice grounds
- Use of teams to see how business leaders can keep well and resilient



## Funding

- Sport England have a new '[Movement Fund](#)' which is available for projects that help people to be active (particularly for those that reach key audiences). Active Dorset hope to be a delivery partner for this to help support people with their applications. Further details are to be given soon which will be published via the HAND LinkedIn group and in the next HAND newsletter
- [The Active Dorset website](#) signposts to other funding opportunities
- [Dorset Council](#) and [BCP Council](#) both have a fund finder page
- The Dorset Community Foundation has a list of Dorset-based funders on their [website](#)



# Next Steps



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The HAND Working Group will consider creating a directory of which members do what alongside their contact details to facilitate collaborations within the group. Members could give their consent via the next newsletter to gauge who would be willing to join a shared database.

For any queries about the workshop or for more information about HAND,  
please contact: [hand@dorsetlnp.org.uk](mailto:hand@dorsetlnp.org.uk)  
or see [www.dorsetlnp.org.uk](http://www.dorsetlnp.org.uk)

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