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**NATIONAL
TRUST *for*
SCOTLAND**

ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

What is Engaging Communities?

- Skills
- Resources
- Knowledge
- Support
- Relationships



ENGAGEMENT

Providing access and enjoyment for everyone

- We will be a leading provider of inspiring heritage visitor experiences in Scotland to more than 6 million people per year by 2032
- We will be a learning organisation by championing skills to support traditional conservation and innovation
- We will enable growth and diversity of people to access our properties to improve health and wellbeing

NTS Audience data and Underrepresented groups in society:

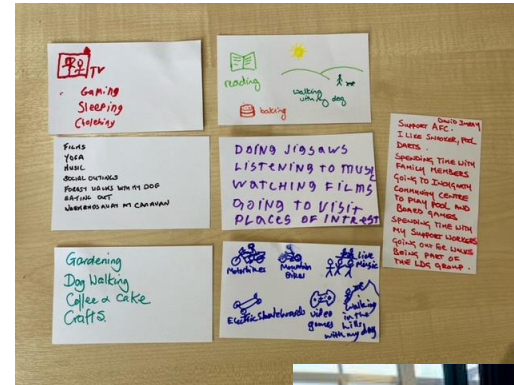
- People with a health condition
- Young people
- Disabled people
- Low socioeconomic status
- Global majority
- LGBTQ+

What does this mean for a heritage and nature conservation charity?

What is Engaging Communities?

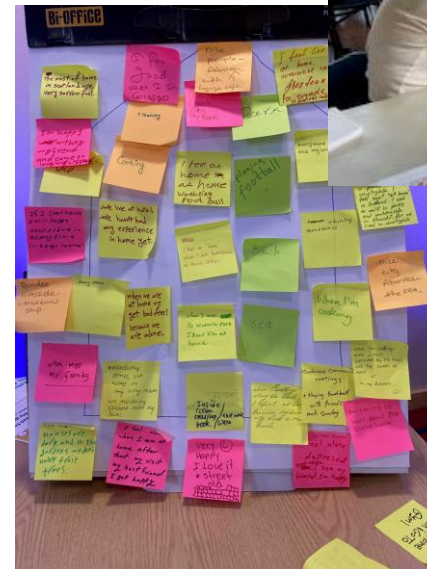
1. Consultation with community groups

- Identifying groups/organisations
- Semi-structured interview with group leader
- Focus group with attendees



2. Piloting Activities

- Mitigating barriers (internal and external)
- Working with property team to support visits
- Gathering feedback



Fyvie - economic, social and environmental context

- Aging population with high levels of social isolation
- High level of self-sufficiency and stoic attitudes to mental health and wellbeing
- Generally low household incomes
- Travel becomes a barrier which increases with age and low income
- Reduction in amenities e.g. shops, GP, bank, post office

Perception of Fyvie Castle/NTS

- Lacking in stories that aren't to do with the noble families that lived there - unrelatable
- Love the gardens and outdoor spaces although it lacks interpretation
- Historical sites can be very overwhelming for those with sensory needs, and they feel a pressure to be a "model-visitor"
- Less likely to visit the castle more than once if it's on your doorstep

Areas of focus

Access & Inclusion

Skills development

Wellbeing



Fyvie Castle: Wellbeing Walks

Aim: NTS will be able to articulate the specific impact of engagement with its Fyvie Castle on wellbeing

- Paths for All
- Locally advertised
- Pilot phase: September 2024
- Total group participants to date: 12
- Total filled out Wellbeing Survey as part of pilot: 7 (2 excluded from analysis as incomplete)
- Total filled out NTS Participant survey: 10



Warwick-Edinburgh Short Mental Wellbeing Scale

	Participant 1	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5	Participant 7
Change from baseline	5.05	4.3	10.89	0	2.57
Meaningful positive change?	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Meaningful negative change	no	no	no	no	no

- Mean scores improved by 17% - from 26.27 (Moderate) to 30.83 (High) out of a possible 35 - Significant positive increase
- Small sample size so standard deviation is high (5.7 and 5.12 respectively) compared to UK average 3.9

What was the most enjoyable part?

1. Meeting and talking with new people and friends
2. Walking in the fresh air
3. Cuppa after

What could have been better?

Variety of walks - Fyvie is round lake little other option. Brisker walking

“Reassuring to know there are community wellbeing groups in this rural area”

“Really enjoyed the group... Has got me motivated to be more active.”

“Beautiful scenery. Friendly folk”

9/10 participants said they felt more connected to nature/historic places

- Regularly walking around Fyvie Castle's grounds does positively increase mental wellbeing on an individual basis
- Social contact combined with spending time in nature was the main driver for this increase
- The project also built capacity within the NTS North East team



Roddy, NTS NE Ranger, participating in Paths for All training

What could wellbeing look like for NTS?



Torricon (H&I) wellbeing walk



Crafty Collective at the Tenement House (Glasgow)

Until the end of the year...

- Continue the walks at Fyvie (weather permitting!)

Meanwhile...

- Completion of external evaluation of the Engaging Communities project, pulling together wellbeing strands from across pilot properties

Next year...

- At Fyvie: Grow the walk and train more volunteers from the community – how could it be part of the community connectors model?
- Within NTS: Creative Minds project (funding dependent)
- Sector-wide: Wellbeing economy becoming the business of heritage and conservation organisations – what can we learn from each other?



The National Trust for Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC007410