

# ***Introducing the New Countryside Recreation Website***

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## **Background**

E-mail and the web have become essential tools for businesses and other organisations to carry out their day to day activities. As an information network, CRN had long ago seen the advantages of creating a website, and in the 1990s worked with Bristol University and the Economic and Social Research Council to set up a CRN website. Since that original site was created technology has moved on and last year it was decided to update and redesign the CRN website. The new site address is: [www.CountrysideRecreation.org.uk](http://www.CountrysideRecreation.org.uk)

## **The Design Brief**

Our aim was to make the new site more 'user friendly' and thus to encourage greater use of the web for CRN's core functions: networking, dissemination of information and promoting good practice.

For those of you who are reading this 'on-line' or via a printed PDF file – great – we would appreciate your comments. For the rest of you, please read on, or log on, to find out more about our new website and how it might help you.

## **Site Layout and Content**

Our 'Home page' directs you to eight different sections of the website:

- About CRN
- Sponsors
- Current events
- Publications
- Journal
- Research Directory
- Links
- Contacts

## **About CRN**

As the title suggests, this provides information about CRN – what we do and how we do it.

## **Sponsors**

CRN would not exist without our core sponsors (a range of over 20 government departments, agencies and other bodies from the UK and Republic of Ireland with an interest in the countryside and/or recreation). This page lists the sponsors and provides information about them; what they do, how to contact them and direct links to their own websites.

## **Current CRN events**

One of the key activities of CRN is disseminating information through workshops and conferences and the site will be used to provide details of up and coming CRN events. Initially the site will just contain information about the events, but we intend to incorporate a booking form facility to allow on-line registration. For those not able to attend the events, CRN publishes and sells the proceedings, details of which are available on the publications page of the site.

## **Publications**

This provides information about the range of publications produced by CRN; workshop and conference proceedings, research directories and copies of past UK Day Visit Surveys. You can print off an order form for CRN publications.

## **On-line journal**

You can now access 'Countryside Recreation' on-line. At the same time that we publish the hard copy an electronic copy will be posted on the website. We also plan to archive all previous copies of Countryside Recreation on the website as PDF files.

This section of the site also offers an on-line facility to add your name to our distribution list of the hard copy of the journal or to tell us about any changes to your existing details.

### **Research directory**

The compilation of an annual directory of research commissioned by our sponsors has always been a core part of CRN's business and that of its predecessor, the Countryside Recreation Research Advisory Group. We have always been mindful of the limitations of hard copy and the opportunities of electronic media in terms of facilitating key-word searches etc.

The research directory is a central part of the new website. You can now search the directory by organisation, title or using key words. Over the next few months we will be converting previous hard copy directories into electronic files for storage in the directory. The new format will also allow us to update the directory on a more frequent basis (rather than annually). Over time, we hope that the web-based research directory will become a useful tool for anyone working in countryside recreation; from those completing a PhD to those tasked with the production of management plans.

### **Links**

A separate links page also highlights other organisations of interest to those working in countryside recreation and related areas. CRN is keen to make this page useful, so the page includes a form to nominate websites to be included in the list. We are happy for our site address to be included in a reciprocal link.

### **Contacts**

This part of the site provides contact details for the CRN office; address, telephone, fax and e-mail.

### **Future Developments**

A key part of CRN's work will be to keep the website up to date. Nevertheless, we are also planning to extend the site further with a discussion board area and a mechanism for on-line feedback.

As for the future, the options are open. We have ensured that integral to the design is the ability to expand and develop to cater for future CRN needs, so that the website becomes a rich resource with a wealth of information for visitors to use.

We plan to develop a discussion board area – to allow visitors to the site to swap ideas and information on countryside recreation and related matters. We are also in the process of developing an option for on-line feedback form.

### **Do not despair!**

For those of you yet to experience the joys of 'logging on' or who have no access to the web; do not despair – we have no plans to do away with the hard copy of 'Countryside Recreation'.

*For further information visit the CRN website at: [www.CountrysideRecreation.org.uk](http://www.CountrysideRecreation.org.uk). For further information contact: Emma Barratt, Network Manager, Countryside Recreation Network, Department of City and Regional Planning, Cardiff University, Glamorgan Building, King Edward VII Avenue, Cardiff, CF10 3WA. Tel: 029 2087 4970 or e-mail: [crn@cf.ac.uk](mailto:crn@cf.ac.uk)*

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