



Step it up – Marketing the Wales Coast Path: Writing a promotional website

Time needed for activity You could work on this over several sessions

Location Indoors or outdoors

Context

This activity plan will allow your learners to become marketing experts, working to write a website to promote the Wales Coast Path. You could work on this over several sessions; first discussing what marketing is and what a website is, before moving on to plan and write text for a promotional website.

Natural Resources Wales’ purpose is to pursue sustainable management of natural resources in all of its work. This means looking after air, land, water, wildlife, plants and soil to improve Wales’ well-being, and provide a better future for everyone.

Background - What is the Wales Coast Path?

The Wales Coast Path is an 870-mile-long continuous coastal footpath which stretches along the entire length of the Welsh coastline. The path uses existing rights of way as well permissive rights of way and is marked on Ordnance Survey map products. The path winds its way through towns and villages, across cliff tops and sandy beaches, sometimes darting inland before emerging once again at a sheltered cove. The whole path is accessible to walkers, with some sections suitable for cyclists, families with pushchairs, people with restricted mobility, and horse riders.

Natural Resources Wales works in close partnership with 16 local coastal authorities and 2 national parks on the coordination, Welsh Government grant distribution, monitoring, development and marketing of the Path. It is waymarked with the distinctive yellow and blue ‘dragon-shell’ logo and is managed on the ground by the 16 local authorities and Snowdonia and Pembrokeshire National Park Authorities.

Curriculum for Wales

Science and Technology

- **What matters** – Computation is the foundation for our digital world.

Languages, Literacy and Communication

- **What matters** – Understanding languages is key to understanding the world around us.
- **What matters** – Expressing ourselves through languages is key to communication.

Expressive Arts

- **What matters** – Exploring the expressive arts is essential to developing artistic skills and knowledge and it enables learners to become curious and creative individuals.
- **What matters** – Creating combines skills and knowledge, drawing on the senses, inspiration and imagination.



Digital Competency Framework

Completing this activity provides opportunities to meet the following strands of the Digital Competency Framework.

Citizenship	Interacting and collaborating	Producing	Data and computational thinking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital rights, licensing and ownership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication. Collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sourcing, searching and planning digital content. Creating digital content Evaluating and improving digital content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data and information literacy.

Objectives

Learners will be able to:

- set SMART communication objectives.
- identify and write key messages.
- identify target audiences.
- plan and write a promotional website to communicate their key messages and increase awareness, interest and knowledge about the Wales Coast Path.
- evaluate how effective the promotional website was.

Resources and equipment

- **Resource cards - Step it up - Marketing the Wales Coast Path**
- **PowerPoint Presentation - Step it up - Marketing the Wales Coast Path: Writing a promotional website**
- Access to computers, laptops or tablets
- Access to the internet
- Access to packages such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs
- Access to a mood board

What to do

1. What is marketing?

Working in small groups, ask your learners to discuss and write down:

- What do they understand by the term 'marketing'?
- What does marketing do?
- Why do people use marketing?
- Who uses marketing? Can your learners think of any companies or organisations that market their products?
- When do things get marketed?
- What are the pros and cons of marketing for an organisation?

Marketing is about making sure the right people know about what you have to offer, getting them to come to you and getting them to buy or buy into what you have to offer.



2. The brief

Explain to your learners that they are marketing experts. Their 'client', Natural Resources Wales (NRW), would like their help to plan and write a promotional website for the Wales Coast Path. Their website will be accessed by people from across the world that want to plan a visit to the Wales Coast Path. Working in small groups, ask your learners if there is a certain section of the path they would like to promote? Or will they promote the Wales Coast Path generally? If they are unsure, they can learn more about the different sections of the Wales Coast Path [here](#).

What are the pros and cons of a promotional website? Ask your learners to discuss.

3. Background information

What do your learners know about the client?

Understanding their client's business is critical to ensuring the success of their marketing campaign. Ask your learners what do they know about Natural Resources Wales? What does the organisation do? How many staff does the organisation employ? What are its roles and responsibilities? What is its role in the Wales Coast path? Allow your learners time to carry out some online research and/or show them the 'What we do' video on this [website](#) which explains what Natural Resources Wales does in 2.27 minutes!

What do your learners know about the Wales Coast Path?

Ask your learners what they know about the Wales Coast Path? Have they ever visited or walked a section? Can they complete some online research to learn more or ask family and friends who may have visited? Our [Activity plan - Nature champions](#) can be adapted and used to help to get your learners completing online research into the history and significance of a section of the Wales Coast Path.

Who's the target audience?

A target audience is the specific group of people your learners want to reach with their marketing materials. They are the people who are most likely to be interested in your learners' content. Our [Resource cards - Step it up - Marketing the Wales Coast Path](#) offer fictional audience groups for your learners to pitch their content to. You could allocate each group an audience to write their promotional website for, let them choose one themselves, or ask them to come up with their own imaginary audience.

4. Opportunities if visiting the Wales Coast Path

If you are visiting the Path with your learners before they begin drafting their promotional website there may be opportunities to carry out some market research and on-site investigations.

- **Ask your learners what are their first impressions?** Positive? Negative? What particularly formulated their opinion? Can they play on positive first impressions to help market the stretch of Wales Coast Path?
- **Ask your learners to create a word cloud** - A **word cloud** is a simple visualisation of data, in which words are shown in varying sizes depending on how often they appear in your data. Capturing and visualising sentiments in word clouds can be useful to remind your learners what the unique selling points of the particular section of Wales Coast Path are. Free, **collaborative tools** allow learners to have live word clouds that members of the public or other groups of learners can input into if appropriate.
- **Can your learners prepare a questionnaire?** - This can be a paper copy that your learners take out with them to site and ask path users to complete or they can create a virtual questionnaire using tools such as Microsoft Forms or Google Forms. This is a great opportunity to gain valuable insight from path users which can help inform their promotional website. Learners could gather information on why users visit. How often they visit. What activities do they undertake whilst on site? What benefits, if any, do they feel they get from spending time on the Wales Coast Path? How far have they travelled to get to the path?



- **Can your learners monitor the number of Wales Coast Path users?** Can your learners create a simple data collection sheet to record the number of users visiting the given stretch of path? What age demographic do they fall into? What time of day do they visit? Are they visiting alone, with friends or with family?
- **Give your learners opportunities to take photos** – Shots of the landscape, posed pictures with other learners or photos of path users enjoying the views, can feature in their final promotional website. Remind your learners to seek permission from path users and fellow learners before getting snappy with it.

5. Planning and sharing ideas for their promotional website

Unique selling points

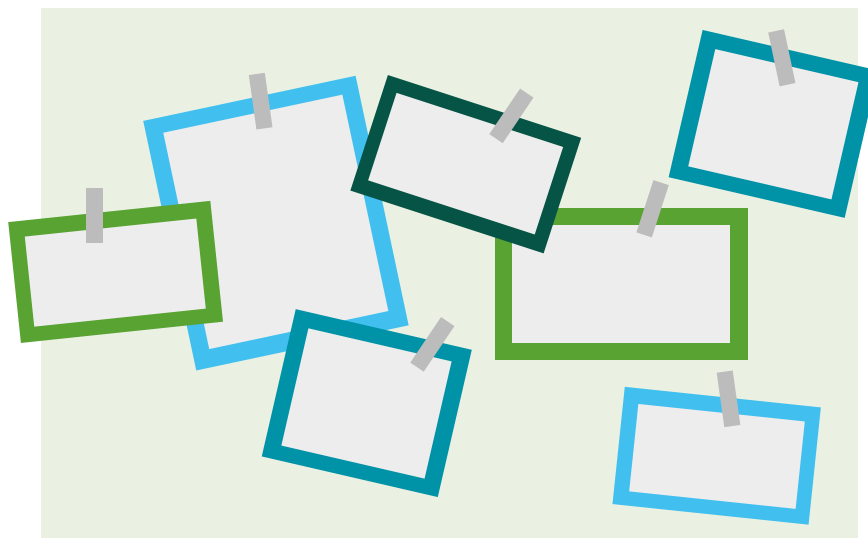
People who work in the marketing industry talk about the Unique Selling Point (USP) – the thing which makes their offer different and/or better than others. Having completed some initial research and maybe having visited the Path, it's time for your learners to discuss and decide what are the unique selling points of the Wales Coast Path that they want to promote? Ask them to note their ideas. Once they've decided what the unique selling points relevant to their target audience are, they need to think of reasons, or 'hooks', to communicate them.

Sharing their initial ideas with the client

Do your learners need to get feedback and approval from the client before pressing ahead with their ideas? For the purposes of this exercise, the 'client' may be the educator or another group of learners. Briefing their client and outlining their ideas as early as possible will ensure your learners are heading in the right direction and will save them time and energy.

Your learners could pitch their ideas to the 'client' in the form of a:

- **Group presentation** – using Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Slides.
- **Two-minute group talk** – explaining their main ideas and thoughts on the direction the promotional website should take using persuasive language.
- **Mood board** – A mood board is a digital or physical, pictorial collage of ideas that are commonly used in fields like graphic and interior design or fashion. More than just a random collection of images, creating a mood board offers learners the opportunity to visually organise their ideas before moving on to work them up further. The learners in the group could create a collaborative group mood board or each create an individual mood board with the 'client' choosing the mood board that best summarises their vision for the promotional website.





SMART objectives

Once your learners have had feedback from the 'client' and have had the direction for their promotional website confirmed, it's time to set some SMART objectives. Setting objectives will ensure your learners have a vision of what they want to achieve, and they will also provide a benchmark for them to evaluate their promotional website against once complete.

S - Specific - We want to create a promotional website to raise awareness of the Wales Coast Path to encourage people from across the world to visit.

M - Measurable - We want to increase the number of visitors to the Wales Coast Path by 1%.

A - Achievable - There's no point trying to increase the number of visitors to the Wales Coast Path by 2 million people if your learners only have three weeks to achieve this. Although it's a great aim, it would be very hard to achieve.

R - Relevant - The whole purpose of their marketing project is to increase awareness and use of the Wales Coast Path. If their plan diverges and ends up raising awareness of a new theme park nearby, then it's not relevant and your learners need to go back to the drawing board.

T - Time bound - Is what they plan to write about in their website feasible in the time they have available? Encourage your learners to set deadlines to complete tasks by. This will help them prioritise their tasks and reduce the risk of them becoming overwhelmed.

Risks/Challenges

Planning and creating a promotional website may not appear to involve much risk, but closer examination shows thinking about risk is integral to communication. Ask your learners to consider:

1. What could go wrong when their promotional website goes live?
2. What is the likelihood and impact of something going wrong?
3. What can they do to minimise the risk?

6. Writing their Wales Coast Path promotional website

A website is an easy way to keep in touch with loyal or prospective Wales Coast Path visitors and need not cost a lot. A website makes it very easy for people to find out more about the Wales Coast Path, plan their visit, and answer potential questions visitors may have.

Ask your learners to design a simple template using programs such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs or they can use free, on-line tools such as **Canva** or adapt an on-line template.

Show your learners a range of promotional websites and ask them to scrutinise them. What are the pros and cons of each website? What lessons learnt can they carry over to their own website?

People browsing websites deciding where to visit are notoriously nit-picky; if they can't find the information they are looking for within seconds they will go elsewhere.

To ensure their website performs well and converts online visits to real-life visits, your learners should ensure their website includes:

Well written, high-quality content

Search engines want to provide the best results possible, so they give top rankings to sites that have well-researched, in-depth, and well-written content.



Effective tone of voice

Just like spoken word, your learners' online writing voice and tone matter. Advise your learners to keep it simple. Use straightforward language with no jargon, slang or acronyms. Remind your learners that they are speaking directly to their chosen audience through their website. They should take their time and search for appropriate words for their audience and use positive language. Learners should adopt an active voice as opposed to a passive voice. For example, 'the dog chased the cat' not 'the dog was chased by the cat'. Writing in the second person will help build a personal relationship with the reader. For example, learners should use 'you' or 'your' or 'we' as opposed to 'the organisation wishes you' or 'I hope'.

Keep it clean and simple

Less is more when it comes to your learners' website. A busy website can look cluttered and become outdated very quickly. A clean design is timeless and won't hurt the readers eyes!

User friendly content

This enables the visitor to get the information they need quickly, and easily. They shouldn't have to scroll through reams of text to find the information they need. Well-structured text, with headings will help users find the information they want.

Don't include too many images

Too many images and their website will be slow to load, and visitors will go elsewhere.

Choosing the right image

When choosing images for their marketing materials ask your learners to consider:

- **Do their images help the user understand the point they are trying to make?** If they are marketing their site as a great place for wildlife, then having a photo of a bird or mammal is pertinent.
- **Does the image speak to their target audience?** For example, if they are appealing to families, a picture of a family out walking will be best.
- **Does this image create emotional appeal?** For example, does it encourage the customer to visit the site and walk along the beach for themselves?
- **What message does this image send?** Is there a message being sent at all? For example, if they are looking to advertise somewhere as being a quiet location, perfect for a spot of yoga they might want to include a photo which doesn't have people picnicking in the background.
- **High-res images are a must** - Competition is fierce, users will expect to see high quality images. Pixelated images won't do! Learners should make sure resources are copyright free or they have permission to use them.

Photos, graphics and videos are freely available on websites such as:

- Pixabay
- Pexels
- Unsplash
- There may be photos on our **Natural Resources Wales website** your learners can use (providing they aren't copyrighted).
- **Visit Wales** offer high quality, downloadable and copyright free photographic images and films to help promote Wales. Images can be searched by place, attraction or by key themes.



Ensuring their webpage isn't going to distress their reader's retinas

Bright colours will hurt their readers' eyes and put them off reading their webpage. Their webpage needs to look professional and shouldn't be a shower of colour. Suggest your learners stick to 3 to 5 colours in their colour palette. They should ideally choose a main colour, a secondary colour, and an accent colour. When deciding colours, a website such as the free to use, **Adobe Colour Wheel** may be of interest to your learners. By moving the wheel learners can see what shades compliment their chosen colour. The menu on the left allows learners to choose the type of relationship they want between colours. Once they have found a colour palette they like, they simply need to make a note of the 'R, G, B' readings (red, green and blue) and adjust the colour readings of the shapes and graphics on their webpage to get the colours they like.

Keywords

Your learners need to ensure that their website is visible and can be found in the first place. A keyword is a word which best describes the content of a website. It's the search term that a website owner would want to rank, so when people search for a given keyword in a search engine, they should find that word on their webpage. Ask your learners to think about the keywords someone searching for information on their site would type into a search engine.

Can your learners complete some keyword research to help them identify what keywords to include in their website and which topics to cover? Keyword research is the process of identifying popular keywords that can drive traffic to a site. For example, Natural Resources Wales - 'natural resources' and 'environment' are keywords scattered throughout our websites because:

- that's what we do, care for and protect Wales' natural resources and natural environment but also
- because these are keywords that people search on. Using effective and suitable key words throughout their content will help your learners' website rank better on web searches.

They might look at what competitors are using on their websites and research the popularity of keywords using **Google Trends**. Google Trends is a useful search trends feature that shows how frequently a given search term is entered into Google's search engine relative to the site's total search volume over a given period of time.

When picking effective keywords for their website, advise your learners:

- To pick keywords that their audience will use. For example, visitors to the site are unlikely to search for a 'deciduous woodland walk Dolgellau' but may well search for a 'woodland walk Dolgellau'.
- Not to pick the same keywords that their competitors are using - you may lose out on potential customers and it will be harder to rank highly on search engine searches.
- To be aware of spelling mistakes - there are some words which are commonly mis-spelt, for example, aquatic not acquatic. If you run an aquatic plants business and people mistype the keyword they might not find you in a search. If it's common for a keyword to be mis-spelt, then it might be best to consider an alternative keyword.
- To use a range of keywords that mean the same thing may be a good idea to ensure, regardless of what the customer searches on, there is a good chance they will find your website.

Their website is branded and includes relevant logos

Who's been involved? It's important to ensure the website is 'on brand' and acknowledges partners. Do any logos need to be included?



Link to a partner's website

Quality links from high-ranking, trusted websites which may also be of interest to the user can provide a vote of confidence about a page. When someone links to another website, they are effectively saying it is a good resource otherwise, they wouldn't link to it. The more high-quality websites that link to your learner's website, the more likely they are to rank well in search results. Perhaps another group of learners would be happy to have reciprocal links to their website?

HTML

Well-written page titles and accurate alt **image tags** can contribute to a higher search engine ranking.

They make it easy for users to get in touch: How do users get in touch if they want to find out more? Contact details should be clear and apparent. Remind your learners that this is a learning exercise, they shouldn't provide real contact information.

Include a call to action

After browsing the website, what do your learners want the reader to do? On behalf of the client, it's up to your learners to let the audience know exactly what they want them to do. 'Book today!', 'Refill here' or 'Visit soon!'

Highlight the website on social media

If another group is planning and preparing a social media campaign, can they give the learners' website a shout out? A mention by those that are respected on social media and/or receiving shares helps to raise awareness of the page and should mean an increase in the number of hits on the website. For example, when the NRW social media accounts give our education resources a shout out or share our posts there is usually an increase in website hits.

Or if your learners are covering all angles, they should link their website to their social media activity, updating social media platforms with links, highlighting new content on their website. The more tweets or Facebook likes your learners' social media presence gets, the higher their website will rank in the search engines.

Further information on how to run a social media campaign is included in our **Activity plan - Campaigning for nature**.

Their website is interesting and relevant

Ask your learners to imagine that they are the reader and they know nothing about the Wales Coast Path. They should ask themselves "Would I be interested in reading this?". If yes - great! If no, perhaps they need to look at redrafting some sections.

Include information about things that readers want to know about

Ask your learners about what sort of information they could include.

- Suggestions of walks that can be completed in a day or in a week.
- Information about wildlife sightings and how certain species are faring along the path.
- Details about new services or facilities for example, a stretch of path which has received some remedial work or a new water refill station.
- Make it personal - people like reading about people. Are there any new members of staff or is there a new volunteer working on site?
- Details of forthcoming events.
- Information on 'What to see in spring at xxxx?' to tempt them to come back and visit.
- Educating their subscribers about conservation work along the path - what's being done and why?
- Can subscribers help by sharing sightings of a certain species of wildlife or complete a citizen science survey the next time they visit?



7. Identifying success

How will your learners know if their promotional website has made an impact and if they've met the client's brief? To monitor the success of their website, it is essential that some measures of success are identified and monitored. Did they achieve their objective? If yes, great. If no – why not?

- Increased hits on a webpage following the sharing of their promotional website would be a measurement of success.
- Has the aim of the campaign been to make users aware of a special offer a café along the Wales Coast Path are offering via their promotional website? Monitoring sales would be a way of gauging what impact, if any, learners' marketing efforts have had.
- If your learners did a 'before' questionnaire to gain users thoughts on a particular stretch of path, how about doing an 'after' questionnaire? Has their promotional website changed users' perceptions?
- Has the Path Warden's phone been ringing off the hook with families wanting to book on to the rockpooling event he's running next month? Your learners clear and professional looking website which had his contact details displayed has done it's job!
- Has the group successfully increased the number of subscribers to their website? The more people that have subscribed, the greater the reach their website is receiving and the more successful their campaign has been.

Lessons learnt

Once they have written and possibly 'published' their website, ask your learners to work together to note any lessons learnt. Noting these lessons means that if they were to run another marketing project in the future, they will have captured their project's successes and weaknesses and can take steps to ensure things go more smoothly next time.

Suggested key questions

- What are your promotional poster's unique selling points and goals?
- Who is your target audience?
- What kind of content will your Wales Coast Path promotional website include?
- How will you know if your Wales Coast Path promotional website has had an impact?

Adapting for different needs/abilities

More support

- Break down each stage and check understanding before moving on.
- Provide your learners with a template to draft their website.
- Ask your learners only to write a home page for the website.

More challenge

- Learners work through the designing of their promotional website independently.
- Can your learners write multiple pages for the website?



Follow up activity/extension

- Run a social media campaign to interact with potential visitors, post information and encourage people to visit the Wales Coast Path. Our **Activity plan - Campaigning for nature** can be used as a guide.
- Perhaps your learners are regular visitors to the Wales Coast Path? Would they like to be influencers? They could try their hand at vlogging for the Wales Coast Path and share seasonal changes using our **Activity plan - Create an enviro-vlog**.
- Can your learners promote what the Wales Coast Path has to offer in the form of a promotional leaflet? Our **Activity plan - Step it up - Marketing the Wales Coast Path: Designing a promotional leaflet** explains how to do this step by step.
- What are your learners' graphic design skills like? Can they plan, design and create a promotional poster using our **Activity plan - Step it up - Marketing the Wales Coast Path: Designing a promotional poster**.
- Could your learners write a newsletter to keep visitors informed of events and news along the Wales Coast Path using our **Activity plan - Step it up - Marketing the Wales Coast Path: Writing a promotional newsletter**.

Other resources

From information about the background and history of the trail, to information on things to see and do, the **Wales Coast Path website** has a wealth of information available to help your learners.

Looking for more learning resources, information and data?

Please contact: education@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk or go to <https://naturalresources.wales/learning>

Alternative format; large print or another language, please contact: enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk 0300 065 3000

