Queering Adventure: Building Communities Outdoors to Combat Social and Environmental Injustice

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DECLARATION FORM

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Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation Declaration Form

1. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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Date: 7th April 2024

2. This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MA in Outdoor Education.

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3. This dissertation is the result of my own independent work / investigation, except where otherwise stated.

Other sources are acknowledged by explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

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Abstract

Themes of masculinity and heteronormativity are woven through the history of outdoor education and recreation. Whilst there has been more exploration of the experiences of women, the experiences of the LGBTQIA+ community, especially trans and non-binary people, have been largely ignored in research, and there is a significant gap in understanding how the community connects with outdoor spaces. This paper explores how outdoor community groups aimed at the LGBTQIA+ community remove barriers to the outdoors and impact social and environmental justice.

A questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, field notes and a study of social media were used to explore the community's barriers to accessing green and blue spaces and how outdoor activity groups overcome these. The paper uses concepts of queer ecology and eco pedagogies to understand how the outdoors supports the building of communities, intersectional identities, and the protective factor of hope for this marginalised and overlooked group. It adds to existing knowledge around barriers to the queer community accessing outdoor spaces and highlights the unique needs of trans and non-binary people. It reveals how queer communities outside reflect the diversity in nature and how we can support one another to grow and change, placing social and environmental justice hand in hand.

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Glossary

Throughout this paper, the terms 'LGBTQIA+' (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual and others), 'queer' and 'gender and sexual minorities' are used interchangeably. The terms' transgender' (does not identify with the gender assigned at birth), 'non-binary' (does not identify with binary genders; this also falls under the transgender umbrella) and 'cis-gender' (identifies with the gender assigned at birth) are also used throughout. More specific queer identities are referred to, and a glossary can be found in the appendix (See Appendix 1).

1. Introduction

In the past few years, we have seen a rising awareness of social injustice as well as concerns over different ways climate change and access to environmental goods impact different communities. Outdoor education and recreation exist at the point where social problems meet environmental justice issues, where “environmental justice issues are inextricably linked to social ones and vice versa” (Warren *et al.*, 2014, p.94). Access to green and blue spaces is increasingly considered a social justice issue “due to growing recognition of barriers due to underlying socio-spatial inequalities” (David & Edge, 2022, p.1). Professionals in the fields of outdoor learning and environmentalism must consider the way that the outdoors can welcome minority and marginalised groups, where complexities of intersectionality and the needs of different people are addressed so that we can "understand and respond effectively to the complex environmental and social issues we face" (Gough *et al.*, 2017, p. 5). When engaging in green spaces, we create a connection and belonging that "allows us to be engaged with the place as home, as a meaningful and alluring place which not only offers comfort but also demands responsibility" (Henderson, 2001, p.15). This factor of responsibility links with the collective responsibility for social and environmental justice, for creating a world where people have equitable access to both social and environmental goods.

Outdoor Education and recreation have historically been focused and formed around masculinity and heteronormativity (Cook, 1999, 2000; Wood *et al.*, 2018). The literature around inclusion in outdoor education and recreation, which connects people and nature, has been predominantly concerned with feminist perspectives and the exclusion of women from literature and the outdoors. To truly understand the ways that different marginalised groups interact with the environment and how this impacts social and environmental justice, we must increase the range of marginalised voices we hear from, not just white, cis-gender women. This study considers the challenges of inclusion and social justice as a cultural struggle within Outdoor Education and recreation, with a focus on the impact on gender and sexual minorities in the UK.

In this chapter, I will first briefly explore the literature around the experiences of queer people outdoors, and then, I will place the study within the context of current issues that face the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and others (LGBTQIA+) community. Next, I will discuss the concepts of queer ecology and, finally, present my aims and objectives.

The silencing of the LGBTQIA+ community outdoors

In 2008, Barnfield & Humberstone's seminal research 'Speaking out: perspectives of gay and lesbian practitioners in outdoor education in the UK' highlighted that "the experiences of gay and lesbian people in the outdoors continue to be rendered invisible and unspoken" (Barnfield & Humberstone, 2008, p.39) and shone a light on the "heteronormalizing processes" (p.39) in outdoor education and the lack of policies and procedures around inclusion. The paper called for more research into the group, and yet, in the 26 years that have followed, very little literature has been added, and there is still a "'blind' spot" (Barnfield & Humberstone, 2008, p.32) which effectively silences the voices of the LGBTQIA+ community outdoors. The literature that does exist highlights barriers the community faces. These barriers are fear of homophobia (Bren & Prince, 2022; Davis & Edge, 2022; Gillig *et al.*, 2019; Heath, 2022; Litwiller, 2018), fear of transphobia (Brooks, 1981, 1992; Meyer, 2003), gendered sports or activities (Bren & Prince, 2022; Litwiller, 2018; Lundin & Bombaci, 2022), binary gendered toilets (Bren & Prince, 2021; Gillig *et al.*, 2019; Litwiller, 2018) and lack of awareness of queer issues (Bren & Prince, 2022; Davis & Edge, 2022; Lundin & Bombaci, 2022, Heath, 2022). They make recommendations for training to be given to outdoor practitioners.

Queer crisis

Since 2008, in the UK, significant movements towards more legal rights for LGBTQIA+ people have been made, but we have also seen an increase in both homophobic and transphobic hate crimes. In October 2023, the ONS (Office of National Statistics) revealed that hate crimes based on sexual orientation were up 112% in 5 years and against transgender people have risen a staggering 186% in the same period (Home Office, 2023). The queer community is, unsurprisingly,

impacted by disproportionately poor mental health outcomes. In 2018, Stonewall published a report on the health of the LGBTQIA+ community in the UK. Ruth Hunt begins the report by stating that, despite the movements towards LGBTQIA+ equality, "many LGBT people still face significant barriers to leading healthy, happy and fulfilling lives" (Hunt, 2018, p.4). Significant numbers of LGBTQIA+ people (52%) suffer from depression compared to 17% of the general population. Rising to 67% for trans people and 70% for non-binary people (Stonewall, 2018, p.7). As mental health issues have grown in the community, there has also been a growing concern about people's lost connection with nature and how rekindling that connection could begin to heal minds, bodies, and nature itself (Hardman, 2020; Jones, 2020).

Healing minds, bodies and souls

Health and wellbeing are intrinsically connected to nature, and more people than ever accessed the outdoors during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic to support their mental health (Lemmey, 2020). Lemmey's report highlighted a significant rise in nature connection during lockdown and unequal access to nature. Queer people have less access to green spaces than others due to environmental injustice, and a wealth of research highlights that the mental health of the LGBTQIA+ community was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 lockdowns (Abreu *et al.*, 2023; Baumel *et al.*, 2021; Kidd *et al.*, 2021; Kneale & Bécares, 2021; Moore *et al.*, 2021). When this is examined alongside Friedman's (2021) report, which concluded a clear correlation between well-being and time spent in nature during lockdown, disproportionate access to nature is likely to have been a factor.

Supported by theories like Biophilia (Wilson, 1984), that we are nature and that's why nature is good for us, Stress Reduction Theory (Ulrich, 1984), that time in nature reduces inflammation in the body and supports mental health, Attention Restoration Theory (Kaplan, 1995), that nature reduces mental fatigue and Awe (Keltner & Haidt, 2003), time in nature creates connections with both nature and those who you experience it with, we can ask could more time in nature improve the mental health within the community?

Queerness is unnatural?

Where queer theory is focused on the connection of queer people with society, queer ecology is an emerging area in environmentalism that focuses on the queerness of nature and queer people's connection with it. Negative language around their lives and experiences has historically disrupted queer people's connection with nature. For example, queer people have been viewed as "crimes against nature" and the history of this "continues to endanger queer lives and complicate queer environmental desires." (Hogan, 2010, p.231). Another word used to criticise homosexuality and transness is 'unnatural'. However, an understanding of the natural world through the lens of queer ecology is that "the living world shows diversity and nuances at every level – making nature 'unnatural' by this definition." (Kew, 2023) Queer ecologies consider how the inherent queerness of nature could also change our approach to climate change. When we think of the world around us, ecologies exist with diversity and interdependence on each other, not in isolation. They exist by adapting to challenges, growing from disasters and supporting each other to thrive.

Grassroots communities

Despite the lack of research into queer people outdoors, the historical disconnect between queer people and nature and the evidence of the barriers that impact the community, a search on the internet for the words "queer" and "outdoors" reveals many results. On social media platforms like Instagram (Meta, 2024), there appears a growing movement to connect queer people with outdoor spaces through community adventure groups, foraging, climbing, cycling, surfing, hiking and more. As a queer person who finds the outdoors essential for mental health support, I have been acutely aware of the barriers to getting outside that face my community. The rise in transphobia in the UK (GATE, 2022; IPSOS MORI, 2018; ONS, 2023) led me to seek safety within these groups, where people share both love of the outdoors and life experiences. As a firm believer that the outdoors should be for everyone, I am also interested in how LGBTQIA+ people face further intersectional issues and barriers. This is how I discovered this grassroots movement of activity groups aimed

at the queer community and recognised them as a place to understand more about how communities outdoors can impact both social and environmental justice.

By combining theories and ideas from queer ecology and queer theory with the suggestion that being outdoors positively impacts mental health whilst also recognising that queer safe spaces provide "a sense of social inclusion, identity, and community belonging as well as being key platforms for delivering mental health promotion and services" (Souleymanov *et al.*, 2023, p.9), there is an opportunity to connect these ideas and ask: Do community-based outdoor groups increase access for LGBTQIA+ people and make an impact on social and environmental justice?

Aims and Objectives.

This paper aims to advance an understanding of the contribution community-based outdoor groups make towards social and environmental justice for the queer community. To do this, I will first identify the barriers faced by LGBTQIA+ people to access the outdoors, explore whether community-based outdoor groups can remove some of these barriers for leaders and participants and ask if these groups can begin to impact social and environmental injustice. The data collection involves a questionnaire, critical ethnography and netnography. These methods are explained in further detail in the methodology chapter. Following this introduction, a systematic review of the literature demonstrates the research gap and the importance of this study. Then, the methodology is arranged, followed by the results and findings. These results are synthesised and discussed against the literature throughout. Finally, conclusions and recommendations are made.

Responding to complex social and environmental issues

Removing barriers for the LGBTQIA+ community has the potential to improve the lives of individuals who have disproportionately poor mental health outcomes through time in nature. This research will add to our understanding of the specific barriers faced by LGBTQIA+ people when accessing the outdoors and begin to fill a gap in the research and create suggestions on how policies and procedures can be adapted to drive change and justice. It also has the potential to improve this group's

access to green spaces and encourage more environmental activism. This research will shine a light on the barriers that queer people face and make suggestions as to how these can be removed for the health of both the people taking part and the world itself.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This literature review examines the research on LGBTQIA+ history in the outdoors and the importance of access to the outdoors for combating social and environmental injustice. To do this, I will look at research on both gender-marginalised and sexual minority groups in outdoor participation and leadership. I will then explore the recent research into the mental health of queer people, including up-to-date research on the impact of COVID-19. I will explore how community has been a protective factor for queer people throughout modern history, and then I will examine the benefits of the outdoors on mental health. Finally, I will place the research within the theoretical lenses of social and environmental justice, queer theory, and queer ecology to provide a framework through which we can explore the empirical data that I will collect.

Gender and sexual minorities outdoors

Themes of masculinity and heteronormativity are woven throughout the historical literature on outdoor education, where “boys dominated all references to aspects of education in the outdoors” (Cook, 2000, p.67). In the early 20th Century, outdoor education focused on preparing boys for war (Cook 1999, 2000; Wood, 2018) and on heroic notions, survival skills and battling against nature (Birrell, 2018). Papers exploring women's impact on outdoor education and recreation have emerged, including Grey and Mitten's (2018) '*The Palgrave International Handbook of Women and Outdoor Learning*', but the literature demonstrates that there is an erasure of women from 'his'tory, which places straight, white, cisgender men on a pedestal (Gough *et al*., 2017; Grey and Mitten, 2018; Mitten *et al*., 2018) and perpetuates the idea that there is "an atmosphere that generally silences or ignores women's contributions" (Mitten *et al*., 2018, p.323). Similarly, Barnfield and Humberstone (2008) describe what they see as “significant ‘blind’ spots in research to do with sexuality and gay and lesbian experiences of and in outdoor education” (p.32). There is a lack of research into the experiences of queer people outdoors (Aylward & Mitten,2022; Bren & Prince, 2022; Eck 2021; Gillig *et al.*, 2019; Heath, 2022; Lisahunter, 2021; Lundin & Bombaci, 2022) in both outdoor education and recreation which constitutes what is effectively a “maintenance of silence” (Dignan 2002, p.34)

of queer people outside. Even the research into women and girls in the outdoors ignores gender and sexual minorities, further evidencing the heteronormative and heterosexist history of outdoor education. In the UK, only two papers are focussed explicitly on researching the experiences of the community. Looking globally, we must be mindful that, due to the complex laws and societal nuances around the acceptance of gender and sexual minorities in individual countries, the more comprehensive research will not represent the complexity of the issues in the UK.

Barnfield and Humberstone's (2008) seminal paper explored the experiences of sexual minorities working in outdoor education. The researchers interviewed gay and lesbian practitioners and identified common themes within their experiences. They highlighted that the practitioners felt unable to be 'out' when at work due to the heteronormative processes in UK culture and society. It demonstrated how the participants managed their identities in different contexts and the impact this had on their mental health due to the "additional emotional expenses required of them" (p.39). They identified the main barriers for this group as lack of representation and the heteronormative approaches. The paper is limited by only looking at gay and lesbian practitioners, not other sexual identities, and the exclusion of transgender people. More recently, Bren and Prince's (2021) paper 'The experiences of trans and non-binary participants in residential and non-residential outdoor programmes' highlighted the gap in research into transgender and non-binary practitioners and participants' experiences. They underscored that previous study, even when including LGBTQIA+ people, was focused on binary notions of male and female. They sought to explore "whether the current diversity in populations can be embraced by outdoor programmes and achieve the progressive social justice desired" (p.29) by conducting questionnaires and interviews. They highlighted the barriers that trans and non-binary people face when accessing outdoor residential programmes, including a lack of understanding of the issues that face trans people, gendered changing rooms, toilets and sleeping spaces, lack of representation and fear of physical and emotional safety. They suggested that policies and facilities were outdated. More training and guidance were also needed around "sleeping arrangements, appropriate language including pronouns and terminology, managing parents/carers and safeguarding". (p.40) They suggested that some of the issues could be removed by introducing programmes for trans-only participants, led by trans

practitioners. There were limitations to this research, including the fact that the researchers were cis-gender and therefore less aware of the issues that impact trans people and that trans people would be less open with non-trans researchers.

Looking internationally across USA, Australia and Europe, we have papers that we can draw upon. Eck (2020) suggested that the experience of the queer community in the USA fits into a more comprehensive experience of people from minority and marginalised groups, that;

> people who are not white, straight males with full mobility might have a different experience of the outdoors, not because their views of nature are different, but because they feel unwelcome in natural areas. (p.24)

Various barriers to the outdoors are commonly identified. Overall, Heteronormative practices create an environment where queer people do not feel welcome or included (Bren & Prince, 2022; Lisahunter, 2021; Lundin & Bombaci, 2022). Fear of homophobia (Bren & Prince, 2022; Davis & Edge, 2022; Gillig *et al*., 2019; Heath, 2022; Litwiller, 2018) and fear of criminalisation (David & Edge, 2022) are factors in access to green space. There is an apparent discrepancy between expectations put upon queer and non-queer couples; for example, David and Edge (2022) highlighted that romance was viewed differently, with kissing and handholding between people in a heterosexual couple considered an “iconic, cinematic and celebrated scene to witness in greenspace, while queer people engaging in the same activities are often vilified or criminally sanctioned.” (p.7) This aligns with the research in the UK and is backed up by broader research, suggesting that both emotional and physical risk are present for queer people (Bren & Prince, 2022; Davis & Edge, 2022; Gillig *et al*., 2019; Heath, 2022; Litwiller, 2018). Additionally, a lack of representation in leadership prevents queer people from participating in outdoor activities (Davis & Edge, 2022) and pursuing careers in outdoor professions (Lundin & Bombaci, 2022; Heath, 2022). Representation in leadership is low due to several factors, including homophobic and heteronormative structures in the workplace, due to the “existence of dominant culture that perforate social norms in the outdoor industry” (Heath, 2022, p.126) and the harm this has on LGBTQIA+ practitioners. Heath (2022) also argued that queer outdoor practitioners frequently must deal with heterosexist and homophobic clients and this takes an enormous emotional toll. Some practitioners

hid their identities due to fear of being blamed for influencing the sexual and gender identities of young people (Oakleaf, 2013). Lundin & Bombaci (2022), however, had hope that structural change is possible here as where “efforts to make these formative experiences more inclusive for the LGBTQ+ community may foster greater diversity in the future outdoor workforce.” (p.7) Therefore, if policies created green spaces and outdoor activities that are queer-inclusive, more young people would attend and grow into future leadership positions, creating representation in the workforce and, consequently, encouraging more queer youth outdoors. In support of this gradual change in representation, Rogers & Rose (2019) made an interesting observation by suggesting that some of the practitioners in the USA felt that “identifying as lesbian and queer has been supportive for them, despite the field’s predominantly heterosexist culture” (p.47).

Lack of policies, procedures, and training around LGBTQIA+ inclusion is a barrier to accessing public green spaces (Davis & Edge, 2022), outdoor education as a broad field (Lundin & Bombaci, 2022) and outdoor residential trips (Bren & Prince, 2022; Gillig *et al*., 2019). Queer people were not consulted whilst writing in the policies, and this impacted participants and queer practitioners (Heath, 2022). Policies and planning for equality, diversity and inclusion often focus on physical disabilities; “language around “barrier-free” access planning is often limited to a focus on physical elements” (Davis & Edge, 2022, p.8) and do not include other marginalised groups. These barriers create a space which feels, at best, unwelcoming for queer people and, at worst, dangerous. Lundin & Bombaci’s (2022) paper argued that the use of binary gendered pronouns and gendered clothing were additional barriers. They also noted that many outdoor education experiences included travel abroad, and whilst funding could be found, the countries themselves were often dangerous for queer people to travel to due to laws that criminalise homosexuality. They considered a lack of understanding of the issues that impact queer people the most significant barrier to inclusion.

The lack of practitioner understanding of issues that face queer people in spaces that are not queer-specific is consistently highlighted through the literature (Bren & Prince, 2022; Davis & Edge, 2022; Litwiller, 2018; Gillig *et al*., 2019; Heath, 2022; Lundin & Bombaci, 2022). This lack of understanding particularly impacted gender

minorities, including trans and non-binary practitioners and participants, who face further barriers and challenges when outdoors (Bren & Prince, 2022; Litwiller, 2018; Lundin & Bombaci, 2022). Gendered bathrooms, changing rooms, and clothing, lack of representation, tight clothing like swimming costumes and wetsuits, and lack of toilets are specific barriers for this group. Invisible issues that cis-gender practitioners may be unaware of can also impact participation. For example, the practice of chest binding, wearing a binder or using tape to bind the chest to make it flatter, can make it difficult for trans men and non-binary participants to take part. It can carry physical medical risks, including skin injuries, rib injuries, back pain and shortness of breath (Peitzmeier *et al*., 2017). Lack of awareness of this means that it is difficult for practitioners to support participants' health and well-being, both physical and emotional. Even in the trans community, the barriers are different for different individuals. In Bren & Prince's 2022 paper, it was noted that although trans men and women face many barriers to access, they experience fewer obstacles than non-binary participants. They concluded that non-binary participants find "the typical male/female structure in residential outdoor centres to be exclusionary, riddled with complications that erase their gender/genders entirely." (p.38). This demonstrates the complexity of identity within the queer community and the different needs of each person.

Queer-only spaces and groups support individuals in developing a sense of identity and support mental health (Bren & Prince, 2022; Litwiller, 2018; Gillig *et al*., 2019; Lundin & Bombaci, 2022). Summer camps and residentials provide support networks that allow young adults spaces where they value "connecting with other youth who share similar life experiences" (Litwiller, 2018, p.354). Queer youth often avoid recreational activities, especially gendered events, and a queer-specific camp allows them to focus on identity development away from gender segregation and heteronormative processes (Gillig *et al*., 2019; Litwiller, 2018). There is connection between the practitioners, who are all LGBTQIA+ adults, and the representation they give of queer adults who weren't just alive but thriving and this generated "a sense of possibility for their own futures" (Gillig *et al*., 2019, p.372). Throughout the camps, "the energy of staff was predominately focused on supporting these youth through identity processes." (Litwiller, 2018, p.357). Gillig *et al*.'s (2019) research focussed on participants' mental health and considered the idea of hope as a protective factor.

They found that there was a lack of mental health support in schools and colleges for LGBTQIA+ youth and that queer-only spaces removed a variety of barriers for young people. The research concluded that the young people experienced “immediate improvements in identity affirmation and hope and a reduction in depressive symptoms.” (p.382) Queer-only spaces and camps use policies and procedures that specifically target the issues that face trans and non-binary participants, including non-gendered bathrooms and changing spaces, expectations around all participants wearing clothing on their top whilst swimming and having trans practitioners at the sessions (Gillig *et al*., 2019; Litwiller, 2018).

Although the literature is limited, it demonstrates the breadth of issues that impact LGBTQIA+ people when accessing the outdoors. It also supports the idea that queer-only spaces can help the community by increasing access, growing identity, and supporting mental health. A limitation of the research is the lack of discussion around intersectionality and additional marginalisations, such as physical disability, race, heritage, class and neurodivergence. This is important to our study as it will help us to explore the barriers that queer people face further and look at whether addressing the barriers can move us towards more equitable access to the outdoors.

Queer Environmentalism

Research into the experience of queer people outdoors expands beyond outdoor education and recreation and into the realms of environmentalism and eco-activism (Butler, 2017; Demirjyn, 2023; Goldsmith & Bell, 2021; Gough, 2021; Pakin-Albayrakoğlu, 2022). The field of environmentalism consistently ignores the voices of queer people (Butler, 2017; Demirjyn, 2023; Goldsmith & Bell, 2021; Gough, 2021), and research addressing this explores the way that queer people lack access and the barriers that prevent them from taking part. Goldsmith & Bell’s (2021) paper, ‘Queering Environmental Justice: Unequal Environmental Health Burden on the LGBTQ+ Community’, highlights a range of environmental justice issues that prevent access, including lack of money, living in urban environments, mental health and less access to healthcare.

The most common theme was that queer and trans people are often considered ‘unnatural’ and not belonging in green and blue spaces or the environmental field (Butler, 2017; Demirjyn, 2023; Hogan, 2010; Rodrigues, 2016). This is important to our study as it helps us understand the complexity of barriers to the outdoors. Conversely, some papers raise more hope that, moving forward, we can use queer experiences outdoors to move towards “unique, embodied, temporal and spatial (dis)orientations, in a manner that lends itself to inclusivity and participation in historical narratives and new utopian visions” (Russell, 2021, p72). There is positivity within the literature that raising the voices of queer people in the environmental sector will have a positive impact (Demirjyn, 2023; Russell, 2021).

Queer Mental Health

According to minority stress theory, LGBTQIA+ people experience unique stressors and victimisation as sexual and gender minorities (Brooks, 1981, 1992; Jaspal *et al*., 2023; Meyer, 2015). They suffer from ‘distal’ and ‘proximal’ stressors. Distal stressors happen “out of the control of the LGBTQ person, such as experiencing discrimination, victimisation, and microaggressions” (Jaspal *et al*., 2023, p.141) and proximal stressors happen internally due to negative perceptions of LGBTQIA+ people and the resulting internalised homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia (Brooks, 1981, 1992; Meyer, 2015). Understanding minority stress and its impact on mental health is important to our study because it helps us understand the factors that prevent people from going outdoors. The impact of minority stress has been investigated pre-, during and post the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. In 2018, Stonewall, an LGBTQIA+ charity, studied the health of queer people living in the UK. The report demonstrated that “LGBT people are at a higher risk of experiencing common mental health problems than the general population.” (Bachmann & Gooch, 2018, p.6). For example, they found that 46% of trans people had considered taking their own lives, compared to 5% of the general population. The study uncovered “worryingly high rates of poor mental health experienced by LGBT people in Britain today" (Hunt, 2018, p.3). Among these challenges, they found that “discrimination and harassment in day-to-day life, rejection from one's family and friends and being subjected to hate crimes” (Bachmann & Gooch, 2018, p.6) contributed to adverse mental health outcomes. The report concluded that provisions like trans-inclusion

training and support services aimed at the community could help. The Government Equalities Office used Stonewall's research to develop the 'LGBT Action Plan' which highlighted that LGBTQIA+ people had issues accessing healthcare, with trans people, in particular, finding that their "specific needs go unaddressed" (Bachmann & Gooch, 2018, p.4). They were less likely to access healthcare due to misgendering, dysphoria and lack of respect for their gender identities.

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the lives of everyone in the UK in 2020, with the World Health Organisation highlighting concerns about the global impact of the pandemic on mental health, stating that mental health is a "priority to be addressed urgently." (Rourke, 2020) Despite the rhetoric placed around "we're all in this together" (Bowleg, 2020, p.917), the research demonstrates that minority groups health suffered disproportionately compared to the general population (Abreu *et al*., 2023; Anderson & Knee, 2020; Barbot, 2020; Baumel *et al*., 2021; Bowleg, 2020; Gato *et al*., 2021; Kidd *et al*., 2021) and, in the UK, The LGBT Foundations 2020 report demonstrated this impact on the LGBTQIA+ community. The study "uncovered some of the wide-ranging and profound effects the pandemic has had on the lives of LGBT people across the country" (LGBT Foundations, 2020, p.4) and demonstrated that social isolation, homophobia, domestic abuse, substance abuse, eating disorders, hate crimes, and decrease in access to gender-affirming medical impacted further.

Globally, there is further research into the impact that the COVID-19 lockdowns had on the mental health of LGBTQIA+ people. Separation from community had the most profound effect on queer people during this time (Abreu *et al*., 2023; Anderson & Knee, 2020; Baumel *et al*., 2021; Kidd *et al*., 2021; Kneale & Bécares, 2021; Moore *et al*., 2021). Queer social spaces relied heavily on physical places, for example, "celebrating at PRIDE events, visiting gay bars, drag shows, participating in LGBTQ sports clubs, LGBTQ community centers, and school-based queer clubs/events" (Anderson & Knee, 2020, p.119), which were closed in the USA and UK. The closure of these spaces led to further social isolation (Anderson & Knee, 2020; Moore *et al*., 2021) and emerging adults were separated from groups that supported identity development (Scroggs *et al*., 2021). Social distancing also reduced the ability of health and social services to meet the needs of vulnerable people and "created

barriers in accessing informal support networks that often provided a sense of community and identity." (Souleymanov *et al*., 2023, p.2) This limited access to LGBTQIA+-specific support in both the UK and USA (Kidd *et al*., 2021; Kneale & Bécares, 2021; Souleymanov *et al*., 2023), particularly after experiencing discrimination. Queer people are more likely to work in lower-paid jobs due to structural discrimination; this meant they were less likely to be able to work from home during the pandemic, so they had a higher risk of catching COVID-19, which generated anxiety (Moore *et al*., 2021). They were more likely to work in jobs in the service industry, which were lost due to the pandemic, impacting income and, as a result, the mental health impact of lack of security (Moore *et al*., 2021; Schmitz *et al*., 2022). During lockdowns, many hid their identities, and many were "confined in hostile home environments with unsupportive, homophobic family members" (Souleymanov *et al*., 2023, p.6). Being locked down with families that did not affirm gender or sexuality significantly impacted mental health (Gonzales *et al*., 2020; Kneale & Bécares, 2021; Schmitz *et al*., 2022). Queer people were more likely to socially distance than non-queer people as they commonly identified with ideas of collective responsibility and care for others (Holm *et al*., 2020; Schmitz *et al*., 2022). They also found that beliefs around the collective responsibility of socially distancing to protect one another meant they had different views of family members, eroding relationships and impacting loneliness and isolation (Schmitz *et al*., 2022; Souleymanov *et al*., 2023). Additionally, the historical impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic meant queer people were more likely to take the threat of COVID-19 seriously and, therefore, more likely to isolate and socially distance (Schmitz *et al*., 2022). A significant number were immunocompromised due to HIV (Kneale & Bécares, 2021).

Within the queer community, trans and non-binary people were more likely to suffer from mental health problems during and after the pandemic (Kidd *et al*., 2021; Kneale & Bécares, 2021). A significant factor was the lack of access to gender-affirming healthcare (Kidd *et al*., 2021), and the pandemic coincided with increased discrimination due to a rise in transphobia (Kneale & Bécares, 2021). Interestingly, non-binary participants in the studies suffered significantly more than trans men and women (Kidd *et al*., 2021; Kneale & Bécares, 2021; Schmitz *et al*., 2022). The researchers suggested that this could be due to the average age of non-binary

people being lower and more likely to be locked down at home with unsupportive family (Kidd *et al*., 2021; Kneale & Bécares, 2021; Schmitz *et al*., 2022). This is important because when collecting data on queer people's experiences outdoors, we can consider how their gender identity may have impacted them further.

Again, these studies' limitations are lack of intersectionally marginalised groups. Kidd *et al*. (2021), however, found through their longitudinal study that in the case of trans and non-binary people, intersectional factors like race and class did not make a difference. Another limiting factor is that most of the research was completed in the year after the pandemic and does not reflect the long-term mental health impacts. Additionally, most of the studies are not UK-specific.

These factors are complex, just like queer identities, and overall demonstrate that queer people are more likely to suffer from "forms of anxiety, depression, complex trauma, and suicidality, the suffering of which is exacerbated by experiences of social isolation, disconnectedness, and discrimination" (Souleymanov *et al*., 2023, p.3). The barriers for LGBTQIA+ people accessing mental health support are similar to the obstacles that are raised in the literature on LGBTQIA+ people outdoors, as are the suggestions made by the papers of better inclusion policies and procedures, training, and groups that are exclusively for the LGBTQIA+ community. A common theme throughout all the literature on LGBTQIA+ mental health is that community is a protective factor.

Community as a protective factor

Queer history places significant importance on community as a protective factor during large-scale social events (Abreu *et al*., 2023; Blair & Pukall, 2015; Porta *et al*., 2017) due to the "collective resilience and resistance in the face of systemic oppression toward LGBTQ people" (Abreu *et al*., 2023, p.146). During the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the '80s and '90s, queer people were both emotionally supporting one another and physically caring for each other in the face of severe and deadly health outcomes (Abreu *et al*., 2023; Dentato *et al*., 2014; Hagai *et al*., 2020; Hutchison, 2015). Community has been a protective factor after atrocities against the queer community, such as the Orlando Pulse nightclub shooting in 2016, in which 49 queer

people were killed. This event caused enormous emotional distress for the queer people across the world because;

> similar to antiLGBTQ legislation (e.g., banning same-sex marriage, restricting transgender individuals' access to public bathrooms)— hate crimes send a powerful message to many sexual and gender minorities about their safety, worth, and level of equality in society. (Jackson, 2017, p.166)

Community was a protective factor against distress and mental health deterioration (Abreu *et al*., 2023; Jackson, 2017) because it gave spaces to grieve and discuss fears. Jackson (2017) highlighted that those who did not have a local community found one online, which, whilst not as effective, gave some protection in knowing they were not alone.

Community connections and a sense of belonging are protective factors for LGBTQIA+ people when faced with minority stress (Abreu *et al*., 2023; Lytle *et al*., 2014; Meyer, 2015) because "resilience factors such as social support and community connectedness may buffer the adverse effects of social stigma on the mental health" (Kidd *et al*., 2021, p.593). Queer-specific community groups connect younger queer people with older queer people who can develop their queer identity through the representation of healthy, successful adults who are like them and a sense of hope for the future. Hope also protects against mental health issues (Chang *et al*., 2017; O'Keefe and Wingate, 2013; Tucker *et al*., 2013). Jaspal *et al*.'s (2023) paper, 'Minority stressors, protective factors and mental health outcomes in lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the UK,' concluded that identity development and community are significant protective factors for the mental health of LGBTQIA+ people. These communities usually rely on physical spaces, and the groups are exclusively for queer people. This is because "given the (hetero)normative nature of many publicly provided leisure spaces, the queer community often relies on these safe spaces for leisure to negotiate queer identity" (Anderson & Knee, 2020, p.119). This idea of community as a protective factor is important to our study because it allows us to see how community groups outdoors aimed exclusively at queer people, can be a vehicle for increasing access to outdoor spaces.

The Outdoors as a protective factor

Whilst community is a specific protective factor for LGBTQIA+ people against psychological and physical health issues, the outdoors can be considered a protective factor for all people. Throughout history, we have seen an understanding of the vital relationship between nature and our bodies even as long ago as the second century BCE (Baker, 2018), and this relationship continues today in “many forms and for all people across their lifespan.” (Wagenfeld & Marder, 2023, p.39)

The word ‘Biophilia’ was first coined by Erich Fromm as “the passionate love of life and of all that is alive” (Fromm, 1973, p.365), then developed into a hypothesis by Wilson (1984). Biophilia theorises that people love to be in nature because they are nature and that humans have an “innate and emotional affiliation to life, life-like processes and other living organisms” (Jones, 2020, p.38). Biophilia alone, however, cannot be used as evidence that nature is good for our minds because Wilson does not present evidence in a formal sense; instead, he offers the idea as a hypothesis due to the way that “biophilic tendencies”, repeated across almost all societies, “are too consistent to be dismissed as the result of purely historical events working on a mental blank slate.” (Wilson,1984, p.85).

Other theories and research reinforce the biophilia hypothesis. Mandelbrot’s theory of Fractal Geometry and Visual Fluency (Mandelbrot, 1977) explains that we are connected to nature because humans are just as complex and interesting as the more-than-human world. The Preference Matrix (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989) suggests that human interest in scenes depends upon the number of different visual elements and that human preference is for moderate complexity, which nature offers through natural biodiversity.

One of the first scientific studies that provided evidence of the link between nature and health was by Roger Ulrich (1984). He investigated whether a view of nature from a hospital ward whilst recovering from surgery would have a restorative effect and support recovery. The patients were split into two groups; in one ward, there was a blank wall, and in another, a view of nature. The study produced extraordinary results, showing that patients with a view of nature left the hospital sooner, were in

better moods and took fewer painkillers and anti-anxiety drugs (Ulrich, 1984). The research was so convincing that Ulrich advised the NHS to design hospitals around views of nature (Jones, 2020). Ulrich and colleagues (Ulrich, 1984) developed this into Stress Reduction Theory (SRT), demonstrating that nature can reduce stress within the body and aid recovery. Kaplan and Kaplan's (1995) Attention Restoration Theory (ART) further supports this and suggests that being in nature can reduce mental fatigue (Kaplan, 1995; Leavell *et al*., 2019) through effortless attention.

The phenomena of 'awe' in nature can also impact our minds (Allen, S., 2018; Anderson *et al*., 2018; Gleiser, 2021; Piff *et al*., 2015). It was first theorised in 2003 when psychologists Keltner and Haidt presented a framework for defining, studying, and conceptualising awe. They stated that all awe experiences need two things: perceived vastness and a need for accommodation. Finding a sense of Awe in nature, for example, experiencing views like vast landscapes, fractal shapes, the visual effects of campfires, and the sound of songbirds, has a variety of long and short-term impacts on the body. Awe has been demonstrated to reduce depression, social rejection and anxiety (John-Henderson *et al*., 2015; Slavich *et al*., 2010) and to increase optimism and well-being (Kok *et al*., 2013; Oveis *et al*., 2009). Awe also "increased connectedness with other people" (Allen, S., 2018, p.3) and promoted more than-human connections, meaning experiencing awe with others creates emotional connections between them (Allen, S., 2018; Anderson *et al*., 2018; Gleiser, 2021; Piff *et al*., 2015).

Research suggests a connection between time in nature and reduced stress levels (Bratman *et al*., 2019; Hartig *et al*., 2014; Kuo, 2015; Shanahan, 2015; Stigsdotter *et al*., 2010) and can increase the speed of surgery recovery, enhance life quality and lower inflammation (Thompson Coon *et al*., 2011; Pretty *et al*., 2007; Mitchell & Popham, 2008). A meta-analysis by Twohig-Bennett and Jones (2018) demonstrated that exercise reduces cortisol levels in green and blue spaces. Some benefits were found for physical health (Bowler *et al*., 2010; Barton & Pretty, 2010), but most centred on improving mental well-being (Berto, 2014; Chawla *et al*., 2014; Nisbet *et al*., 2011; Pearson & Craig, 2014). Again, the limitation of this research is the lack of diversity, partly due to difficulties recruiting people from marginalised groups. This is important to our study because this understanding that the outdoors is good for

mental health and that queer people suffer disproportionally from mental health helps us to see that increasing access to the outdoors for the community could improve mental health outcomes.

The queer community is a marginalised group who are impacted by both social and environmental injustice, so we can view the issues presented in this paper through this theoretical framework.

Social and Environmental Justice

Social justice theory focuses on social privilege and oppression by examining race, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, culture, age, religion, sexuality and socioeconomic status. It defines privilege as unearned “special rights, advantages, or immunities that are available to a particular person or group of people based on the aforementioned historical, structural, and institutional forces that impede equity” (Warren & Breunig, 2019, p.1). Environmental justice is concerned with the “intersections between environmental exposure, marginalised subpopulations, and health disparities” (Goldsmith & Bell, 2021, p.79). It has the same view of privilege as social justice, but the privileges are of environmental goods, like clean air and access to green space, rather than social goods, like money. Health, including mental health, is identified in both. There is growing evidence that the same groups impacted by social injustice are also affected by environmental injustice, that environmental justice is a social justice issue (Beltrán *et al*., 2016; Davis & Edge, 2022; Jennings *et al*., 2012). Indeed, the two problems are so intertwined that environmental and social justice arguably cannot be separated in a world increasingly impacted by climate change. Social and environmental justice centres intersectionality by seeking to reveal “interlocking systems of oppression [and] multiples axes of inequality” (Berger & Guidroz, 2009, p.1). The intersectional framework is connected with the feminist movement, and in many ways, women’s oppression provides a conceptual model for understanding all other forms of oppression (Jaggar & Rothenberg Stuhl, 1983, p.84). However, it can be applied to outdoor education and environmentalism through social and environmental justice.

Access to greenspaces is increasingly recognised as an environmental justice issue (Davis & Edge, 2022; Greene *et al*., 2018; Yang *et al*., 2022; Sharifi *et al*., 2021). Davis & Edge (2022) highlighted the lack of research into the link between access to green spaces and the queer community. A critical paper, 'Queering Environmental Justice: Unequal Environmental Health Burden on the LGBTQ+ Community' (Goldsmith & Bell, 2021), explored the impact that environmental injustice has on the queer community. It found that higher rates of disease associated with environmental exposures, like respiratory diseases, cardiovascular disease, and cancer, occur more in the queer community compared to the general population. They also highlight the higher rates of smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke and that queer people are disproportionately affected by health issues like HIV and respiratory illnesses, which can be made worse by air pollution. It specifically refers to mental health, saying that environmental stressors contributing to mental health may be particularly harmful for the LGBTQIA+ population, which already faces higher levels of mental health burdens. A range of studies highlight that institutional discrimination impacts housing, employment, and access to healthcare, which in turn prevents queer people from responding to environmental harm (Collins *et al*., 2017a, 2017b; Cumming *et al*., 2016; Kattari *et al*., 2016).

Queer theory and Queer ecology

The literature recommends that research in the field can be viewed through the lens of queer theory (Humberstone, 2000; Rogers & Rose, 2019; Warren, 2015). The term 'queer theory' was first coined by De Lauretis when she used it as the title of a conference at the University of California in 1990 (Duong, 2012). Queerness and queer theory can be considered as a deconstruction of heteronormative structures (Dilley, 1999; Heath, 2022; Heasley & Crane, 2012). Queer theory, however, has historically been significantly removed from nature. It focuses on human connections and social support rather than more than human connections. Gough (2021) argues that queer theory has;

> bracketed, expelled, or distanced the volatile categories of nature and the natural, situating queer desire into an entirely social, and very human, habitat. This now compulsory sort of segregation of queer from nature is hardly appealing to those who seek queer green places, or, in other words, an

> environmentalism allied with gay affirmation, and a gay politics that is also environmentalist. (p.3)

Queer ecology considers how we think about how ecology impacts our view of queerness and how queerness impacts our view of ecology. The overall aim of queer ecology is to “build broad coalitions and engage in intersectional social justice in order to achieve long-term environmental and social sustainability” (Butler 2017, p.273). It does this by challenging the view that queerness is ‘unnatural’. Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands (2016) defines queer ecology as;

> a loose, interdisciplinary constellation of practices that aim, in different ways, to disrupt prevailing heterosexist discursive and institutional articulations of sexuality and nature, and also to reimagine evolutionary process, ecological interactions, and environmental politics in light of queer theory. (p.169)

Queer ecology asks us to challenge what we consider as ‘natural’ and view nature itself through a different lens, undoing the idea that nature is not queer. It is an emerging theory which we can apply to outdoor education and recreation to consider how we reengage queer people with the outdoors, as “nature is an opportunity to build theoretical overlaps and an opportunity for activist coalitions among seemingly disparate groups and communities.” (Hogan, 2010, p.233).

Bringing these theoretical lenses together, we can build a framework to examine the barriers queer people face accessing greenspaces and how the removal of these can have an impact on social and environmental justice. Queer eco-pedagogy (Russell, 2021) is developed by bringing together queer theory and queer ecology with environmental and social justice and forms a movement which seeks to pay “attentiveness to queer experiences in the world around us” (Russell, 2021, p.8) and bring together left-leaning and other radical educational theories to address environmental issues and injustice. Gough (2021), for example, suggests transforming environmental education by raising marginalised people's voices and viewpoints. By combining social and environmental justice with queer ecology and then pulling this into the realm of outdoor and environmental education, “queer pedagogies might move us beyond rigid notions of identity and selfhood altogether and into the unknown” (Russell, 2021, p.10).

In summary, the literature review highlights limited research into the experiences of LGBTQIA+ people outdoors, especially in the UK. It demonstrates that multiple barriers impact queer people when accessing the outdoors, and there is an opportunity to explore what these barriers are and how outdoor programmes aimed at the community could help to remove them. The literature review demonstrated that whilst LGBTQIA+ people are disproportionately impacted by poor mental health due to social and environmental injustice, community and hope have been protective factors against poor mental health outcomes for queer people and access to nature and the outdoors is a protective factor for all. Moving forward in this study, queer eco pedagogies present a framework to explore how queer people can connect with nature and each other in a meaningful way through organised outdoor groups, having an impact on social and environmental injustice.

3. Methodology

The research question is concerned with identifying barriers to the outdoors for the LGBTQIA+ community and exploring whether outdoor community groups aimed at them have an impact on social and environmental justice. Applying a mixed-method approach within the pragmatic paradigm, the study was informed primarily by critical theory (Carspecken, 1996). This allowed me to take the best of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Pragmatism rejects the "notion that social inquiry was able to access the 'truth' about the real world solely by virtue of a single scientific method" (Mertens, 2005, p.26) and allows the researcher to adopt methods that best answer the question. Ontologically, I take the viewpoint that all people exist within societal power struggles and their existence within "interactions of privilege and oppression that can be based on race or ethnicity, socioeconomic class, gender, mental or physical abilities, or sexual[ity]" (Lincoln *et al*., 2011, p.102). My epistemological position is one of constructionism. This position is an alternative epistemology and is adopted in response to the idea that the dominance of objectivism within research is limiting to researchers in the field of social justice because “social injustice exceeds the constraints of any one epistemological framework” (Sabnis & Newman, 2021, p.625). As the research question is concerned with social justice, I ask questions such as: Whose knowledge is this? How and where was this obtained? How was it created? How is it legitimised? Who is this for, and what is its purpose? (Harding, 1991; Olesen, 2011; Sabnis & Newman, 2021).

Positionality was an important consideration. Researchers can be 'insiders', who belong to the group being studied, or 'outsiders' (Gair, 2012). Whether someone is researching as an insider or outsider is an epistemological position because "the researcher's position in relation to his or her participant has a direct impact on the knowledge that is co-created between them" (Hayfield & Huxley, 2015, p.91). In this research, as a queer person, I am an insider and likely to share similar viewpoints to the participants in the study. It has been argued that being an insider gives an advantage (Hayfield & Huxley, 2015; Labaree, 2002; LaSala, 2003; Perry *et al*., 2004) as you are more likely to understand the research questions that need to be answered and create more meaning from the data collected. LGBTQIA+ people are also more likely to take part when the researcher declares that they are part of the

community (Hayfield & Huxley, 2015; Labaree, 2002; LaSala, 2003; Perry *et al*., 2004).

Conversely, there is the ethical consideration that participants can share more with an insider than they are comfortable with (Birch & Miller 2000) and that the researcher can overlook some aspects of the data as they take the information for granted (LaSala, 2003; Perry *et al*., 2004). Reflexivity, therefore, was an essential part of my data collection and analysis. This meant the need to constantly and "carefully self monitor the impact of [my] biases, beliefs, and personal experiences" (Berger, 2015, p.220) on my research.

My strategies demanded close connections and empathy. Understanding my values and exploring marginalisation, injustice, and privileged positions were crucial in my study. I took an exploratory, reflective approach, and the study's data collection and analytic methods were a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, critical ethnography and netnography.

Methodologies

Questionnaire (See Appendix 2)

A questionnaire developed on Google Forms (Google, 2021) gathered quantitative data exploring the barriers to the outdoors for the queer community. Questionnaires are well established in related fields when exploring barriers to participation, such as within physical education literature (Menzel *et al*., 2019; Smith *et al*., 2012; Symons *et al*., 2017), including an important development of a specific questionnaire 'Barriers to Physical Activity and Sport Questionnaire for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning (BPASQ-LGBTQ+ [encompassing all spectrums of sexuality and gender]' (Úbeda-Colomer *et al*., 2020), and also in healthcare (Higgins *et al*., 2016; Higgins *et al*., 2021; Jung *et al*., 2023; Roberts *et al*., 2018; Romanelli & Hudson, 2017).

I used a poster to recruit participants for the questionnaire, which I shared with LGBTQIA+ online groups. The questionnaire was piloted with five participants whose responses were not included in the results; this tested that the questions were relevant and easy to understand. The questionnaire was appropriate and additional

questions and changes were unnecessary. The questionnaire established informed consent to participate and then asked them to identify themselves using a range of self-reported demographic variables. These questions were developed from a questionnaire, 'A new queer London: lgbtq+ communities and spaces beyond covid-19' (The London LGBT Centre, 2022). These variables were age, gender, whether their gender differed from their gender assigned at birth, sexuality, socio-economic background, whether they considered themselves disabled and their race/ethnicity.

The questionnaire established the participants' current relationship with green and natural spaces and then offered a range of barriers for queer people accessing the outdoors. These barriers were fear of homophobia (Bren & Prince, 2022; Davis & Edge, 2022; Gillig *et al*., 2019; Heath, 2022; Litwiller, 2018), fear of transphobia (Brooks, 1981, 1992; Meyer, 2013), gendered sports or activities (Bren & Prince, 2022; Litwiller, 2018; Lundin & Bombaci, 2022), binary gendered toilets (Bren & Prince, 2021; Gillig *et al*., 2019; Litwiller, 2018), lack of awareness of queer issues (Bren & Prince, 2022; Davis & Edge, 2022; Lundin & Bombaci, 2022; Heath, 2022) and lack of experience. The participants were asked to rate whether these were barriers for them, graded from 1 to 5, 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. Likert scoring was previously used in related studies (Gillig *et al*., 2019; Weinhardt *et al*., 2021). It also included open-ended questions. The advantage of open-ended questions is that answers are more likely to "reflect the full richness and complexity of the views held by the respondent." (Denscombe, 2021, p.222) These questions allowed the participants to explain further barriers, contributing to understanding. Finally, the questionnaire asked whether the participant would want to attend groups specifically aimed at the community and why.

Limitations of questionnaires are often poor completion rates, lack of depth and the reliability of responses (Biggam, 2021, p.304). The completion rate of the questionnaire was 76 responses. The self-reported variables revealed a wide range of LGBTQIA+ identities participated. The ethnic diversity, however, was low, with only two responses (2.6%) from non-white participants. The 2021 UK census data (ONS, 2022) shows that 87.9% of the UK population identify as white. This discrepancy should be addressed as an issue in future studies. I also noted that 23 (31%) respondents identified as non-binary. The 2021 Census (ONS, 2023a) tells us

that in the UK only 0.1% identify as non-binary, so this group was overrepresented. Sharing in a broader range of online groups could improve the diversity of the respondents.

Semi-structured interviews

Participants

I interviewed leaders from three queer outdoor groups to explore the reasons they have set up their groups, the barriers they seek to overcome, and their impact on their community. These are anonymised.

G1: An adventure group in the Lake District, UK, aimed at bringing queer people together for walking, climbing, adventure weekends and more. (See Appendix 4)

G2: A hiking group in Bristol, UK. It aims to bring together queer people for walking and adventure weekends. (See Appendix 5).

G3: An outdoor adventure and swimming group for the trans community in Sheffield, UK. (See Appendix 6)

Data collection

Semi-structured interviews have been used by other researchers exploring LGBTQIA+ participation in the outdoors (Bren & Prince, 2022; Souleymanov *et al*., 2023; Weinhardt, 2021); they were appropriate because they ensured the interview question was answered, but also allowed for the questions to "change from one interview to the next as a result of the information given in previous interviews" (Denscombe, 2021, p.231). This allowed me to explore both barriers to the outdoors and how each group increased access.

I began each interview by establishing informed consent and developing a relaxed atmosphere. Each interview followed a set of questions, which I then expanded upon with exploratory questions. I asked each interviewee to tell me about their group and why they started it to understand the aims of the group and identify barriers (Bren & Prince, 2022; Davis & Edge, 2022; Gillig *et al*., 2019; Heath, 2022; Litwiller, 2018). I

asked about intersectional issues facing their participants and about the demographic variables within the group; these questions established whether I was researching the impact on an intersectional demographic, a gap in previous research (Gillig *et al*., 2019; Litwiller, 2018). I asked how the leaders support their communities and about the feedback they get from the participants. These questions were to directly answer the question of the impact on social and environmental justice. The exploratory questions expanded upon their answers and encouraged them to consider what they did and why. The questions functioned well, and themes emerged. The answers given directly answered the research question. Semi-structured interviews helped develop clear themes, allowing the participants to tell their stories and be heard.

Online interviews have increased in academic research (Deakin & Wakefield, 2013; Lo Iacono *et al*., 2016; Panter-Brick, 2022). I used Zoom (Barbu, 2014) to conduct each interview, allowing me to record the interviews and transcribe them later using otter.ai (Crumley, 2018). Whilst the use of online interviews is shown to increase the ability to access interviewees from a wider geographic area within tighter financial budgets and time constraints (Deakin & Wakefield, 2013; Lo Iacono *et al*., 2016), it also raises questions about "new challenges in terms of ensuring data quality, interpreting non-verbal cues and ensuring high ethical standards." (Bueno-Roldan & Röder, 2022, p.2961). By recording the interviews, I could re-watch the videos to interpret non-verbal cues, and ensure correct transcription.

Critical Ethnography

Participants

I completed field notes, participant observations and photographs on two walks with the following groups.

W1: An adventure group organising hikes for queer people in the Peak District, UK. (See Appendix 7)

W2: An adventure group organising longer hikes, climbing and adventure activities in the Peak District, UK. (See Appendix 8)

Data collection – participant observations and field notes

Ethnography requires the researcher to spend significant time immersing themselves within the culture they study. They observe the community to find out "how the members of the group/culture being studied understand things, the meanings they attach to happenings and the way they perceive their realities" (Denscombe, 2021, p.120). Critical ethnography differs from traditional ethnography, which is usually concerned with what is, whereas critical ethnography is concerned with what should be (Cohen *et al*., 2018, p.294; Thomas 1993, p.4). It grew as an ethical responsibility to marginalised groups and communities. It has a political intent, an agenda and an ethical responsibility to promote social justice. It attends to the socio-political and sociohistorical contexts directly, and considers power relations that are connected to these (Carspecken, 1993; Fitzpatrick & May, 2022; Madison, 2019). Critical ethnography, therefore, was relevant to this study as the method focuses on social and environmental justice issues. Ethnography has been used previously by researchers exploring queer experiences (Compton *et al*., 2018; Fuentes-Miguel *et al*., 2022; Hang, 2005; King, 1999).

I used Geertz's notion of "deep hanging out" (1998) within outdoor activity groups designed exclusively for the LGBTQIA+ community. These groups were selected as they focus on developing communities. I gained consent from the walk leaders and asked the entire group for informed consent at the start of each walk. My own queer identity enabled me to have in-depth conversations with participants about their experiences. I made field notes using otter.ai through dictation; I dictated at intervals throughout the walks and a dictation recording everything from the walk immediately afterwards. This allowed me to record exact quotes and themes of discussions from group participants and an overall description of the event.

Data collection – photographs

I took photographs to create visual data that helped build a picture alongside the field notes. I also used photographs taken by the participants to engage “participants as co-researchers" (Fitzpatrick & May, 2022, p.98); the benefit was seeing the

experience through the participant's eyes. Photographs were a valuable aspect of my data collection.

The method was, as expected, controversial and exploratory. A limitation of critical ethnography is the time required to complete and analyse the research (Biggam, 2021, p.304). This factor was significant, so I limited to two walks and three interviews. This made the study manageable but limited the diversity. Reflexivity was critical throughout the data collection to ensure that my own experiences and beliefs, whilst allowing me to be an 'insider' in the research, did not impact the gathering of data or cause harm to the group. My role was not just to be reflexive but also to become a better activist to better the lives of the participants in this study (Carspecken, 2005; Cohen *et al*., 2018; Thomas, 1993). Overall, the critical ethnographic approach allowed me to raise and celebrate the voices of a minority community, in line with queer eco pedagogies, rather than just report on what I saw.

Netnography

Participants

I studied the Instagram (Meta, 2024) accounts of three outdoor adventure community groups 2020–2023.

I1: An outdoor adventure group aimed at the queer community; this is the Instagram feed for W2. (See Appendix 9)

I2: An outdoor hiking group aimed at the queer community; this is the Instagram feed for W2. (See Appendix 10)

I3: A surf club aimed at the queer community. (See Appendix 11)

Data Collection

I analysed the Instagram accounts of I1 and I2, the two groups whose walk I attended which are focussed on mostly green spaces, and the posts of I3 as they are based around blue spaces. Whilst the use of Instagram in research is relatively new, it has been used by Stanley (2020) to explore the emergence of “unlikely hikers” and diversity in outdoor community groups. The use of Instagram posts enhanced my

critical ethnography by giving me an understanding of how the groups developed and their aims.

Ethics

Ethical considerations were made throughout the design and implementation of the methodology. I complied with all ethical requirements outlined by UWTSD, and ethical approval was given prior to starting data collection (See Appendix 10). At every step, informed consent was gained from the participants, and they all took part voluntarily. All data has been anonymised, and everything shared kept confidential. Potential for harm was carefully considered throughout the design and implementation of the data collection; I was prepared to signpost to mental health support and LGBTQIA+ charities. An unexpected ethical issue that arose was the impact on my own mental health as the importance of the research emerged. I put in place mental health support for myself.

Having decided to use social media posts, it was essential to consider the ethical issues in the design. Stevens *et al*. (2015) analysed the unique ethical issues when using data shared in the public domain. They concluded that data shared in public domain Instagram (Meta, 2024) accounts could be ethically used in an ethnographic study, but private accounts cannot. For this reason, all accounts used in this study are public and anonymised.

Data Analysis

SPSS (IBM Corp., 2020)

Once the data was gathered, I uploaded the quantitative data to SPSS. SPSS is a widely used program for analysing data gathered in social science research; it allowed me to "obtain statistics ranging from simple descriptive numbers to complex analyses of multivariate matrices along with plotting the data" (Bala, 2016, p.254). The program allowed me to demonstrate trends and identify how different barriers to the outdoors impacted different members of the community.

NVivo (Lumivero, 2020)

The qualitative data was uploaded to NVivo to perform Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) (Braun & Clarke, 2022) through the lens of social and environmental justice. NVivo allowed me to identify themes in the data and explore the experiences of the study participants. RTA respects that the researcher takes an active role in knowledge development and that researchers will generate different themes from the data depending on their positionality and ontological approach (Braun & Clarke, 2019). For this reason, the method allowed me to explore the data through the lens of social and environmental justice to impact social change. The reflexive element of RTA fits well with my approach to constantly consider my methods and approaches as an 'insider' in the research.

Coding Matrix

Methods	
Questionnaire	Q
Interview	In
Participant Observation	PO
Photographs	Ph
Netnography	N
Participants	
Interview particpants	G
Walking groups	W
Instagram account	I
Themes	
Barrier	B
Theme	T

Table 1. Coding matrix

Research Timeline

	Date	Method	Who?	Where?	Appendix
Questionnaire	Feb 2023	Questionnaire	76 participants	Googe Forms	2 & 3
Critical Ethnography	6th Aug 2023	Participant observation Field notes	W1 Approx. 30 participants	Peak District, UK	7
	14th Sept 2023	Interview	G1 1 participant	Zoom	4
	17th Sept 2023	Participant observation Field notes	W2 Approx. 30 participants	Peak District, UK	8
	20th Sept 2023	Interview	G2 1 participant	Zoom	5
	29th Sept 2023	Interview	G3 1 participant	Zoom	6
Netnography	Dec 2023	Netnography	I1, I2, I3 3 participants	Instagram	9, 10 & 11

Table 2. Research Timeline.

5. Results and Findings

This write-up is highly structured. First, the results from the questionnaire are described to identify the barriers faced by LGBTQIA+ people accessing the outdoors. Next, the questionnaire, interviews, field notes and netnography findings are reported as themes. The results and findings from the empirical study are discussed against the literature review and analysed through the theoretical lens of queer eco pedagogy.

Results

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was completed by 76 LGBTQIA+ people. Once cleaned, 100% of the responses were fully answered and usable for data analysis.

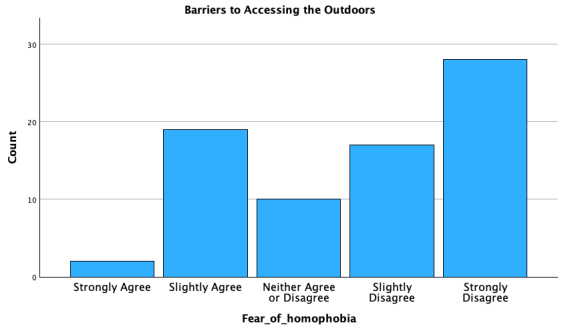


Figure 1. Fear of Homophobia.

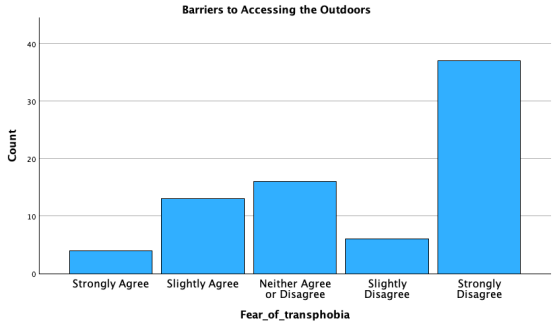


Figure 2. Fear of Transphobia.

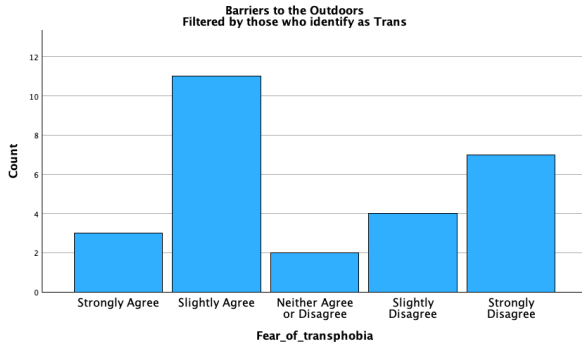


Figure 3. Fear of Transphobia (trans only.)

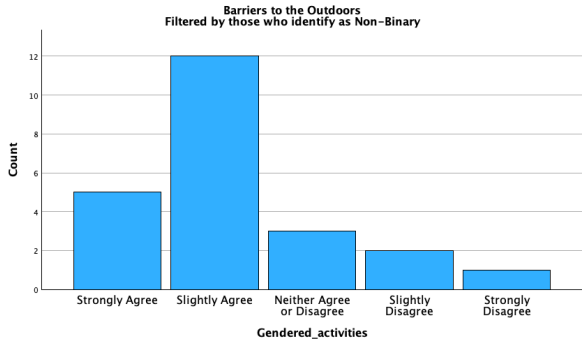


Figure 4. Gendered Activities (non-binary only).

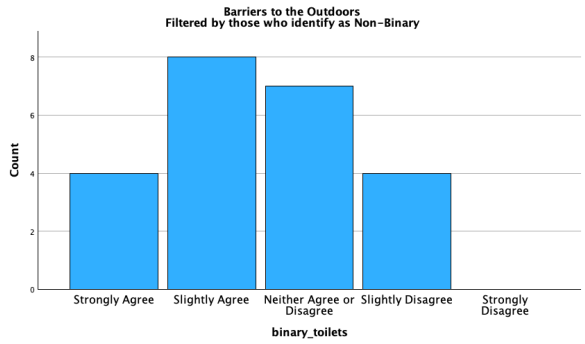


Figure 5. Binary Toilets (non-binary only).

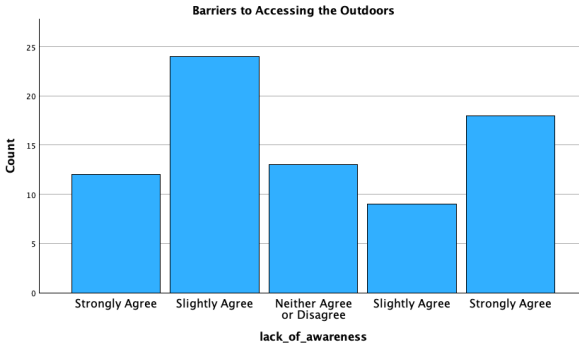


Figure 6. Lack of awareness.

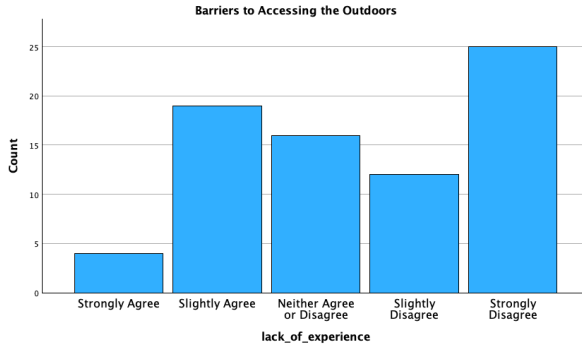


Figure 7. Lack of experience.

26% of all respondents agreed that fear of homophobia (Fig.1) and 17% agreed that fear of transphobia (Fig.2) were barriers; this rose to 52% when filtered for only transgender respondents (Fig.3). 74% of non-binary people said that gendered activities (Fig.4), and 52% said that binary toilets (Fig.5) were barriers. Lack of awareness of issues that affect queer people impacted 47% (Fig.6), and 30% said that lack of experience was a barrier (Fig.7). Trans and non-binary people face the most barriers.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	37	48.7	48.7	48.7
No	17	22.4	22.4	71.1
Maybe	22	28.9	28.9	100
Total	76	100	100	

Table 3. Would you like to attend an outdoor group that is specifically for the LGBTQIA+ community?

The results from the questionnaire showed that 76.6% (Table 3) would join or consider joining a group aimed at the LGBTQIA+ community.

Themes

The questionnaire results, alongside the qualitative data from the open-ended questions, interviews, field notes and the netnography of the social media are reported as themes. Seven themes are broken down into three sections as they answer different aspects of the research objectives (See Appendix 12). First, further barriers are identified in the analysis and how the theme community removes barriers for leaders and participants. The remaining themes highlight how the groups further impact social and environmental justice (Table 4.). Diagram 1 demonstrates how the data answers the research objectives.

Research objectives	Barriers	Themes
The barriers faced by the LGBTQIA+ community	Fear of homophobia and transphobia Binary gendered toilets or changing rooms Lack of understanding Heteronormativity Trans Issues Transport	
How community-based outdoor groups remove some of the barriers		1: Community removes barriers
How the groups address social and environmental justice		2. Activism 3. Environmentalism 4. Mental Health 5. Hope 6. Intersectionality 7. Environmentalism

Table 4. How themes address research objectives.

Findings

Queer eco pedagogy asks us to raise the voices of queer people and their experiences by viewing the barriers to the outdoors through their eyes. Having done this through the questionnaire, we can explore how community-based outdoor groups remove some of these barriers and work towards reconnecting queer people with nature and tackling social and environmental justice.

Community

Community is a protective factor for queer people as a way of building collective resilience against minority stress and discrimination (Abreu *et al.*, 2023; Blair & Pukall, 2015; Porta *et al.*, 2017). Group leaders stated that building communities outdoors were a significant factor in starting the groups. R, a non-binary group leader, described what they offer as “an opportunity for people to socialise, meet other queer people, and at the same time benefit from being outdoors.” (In, G1) Participants in the groups felt the groups gave them a wider community to which they automatically belonged. This feeling was described by a group participant;

> I have quite a close group of queer friends who are, I'd call them my chosen family. And then, when you attend those groups, it seems to have […] the exact same feel to it. We were talking about the same things. And the same issues and the same random things without really knowing much intimate detail about each other's lives. (In, W2)

Community removed a variety of barriers that have been identified for LGBTQIA+ people outdoors.

Fear of homophobia and transphobia

Emotional and physical risks impact queer people in green spaces (Bren & Prince, 2022; Davis & Edge, 2022; Gillig *et al.*, 2019; Heath, 2022; Litwiller, 2018), and the questionnaire results highlight that although homophobia is a barrier for the group, it is not the most significant. Over half of trans people, however, said that transphobia is a barrier for them.

The open-ended questions revealed multiple responses that used the word “safer” when asked if they would attend a queer-only group, demonstrating protection, especially for trans people. One respondent stated, “If I know a space is specifically for the queer community, a lot of my worries about transphobia and having to explain myself to people go away.” (Q) Group leaders identified “safety in numbers” (PO, W2) as a protective factor.

Some trans people, however, said that they would not attend these groups due to the rise of transphobia within the community itself, with one transgender questionnaire respondent expressing that “people are more likely to understand you and your family. But the transphobia within parts of the LGBTQ community doesn’t even guarantee that” (Q). In all methods of research, there was a feeling that the word queer meant trans-inclusive. Participants felt that as the groups were run by non-binary people, they “would be safe for them to attend, that there wouldn't be any trans-exclusionary people” (Q).

Binary gendered toilets or changing rooms

The literature revealed that gendered toilets and changing rooms were significant barriers for trans and non-binary people outdoors (Bren & Prince, 2021; Gillig *et al*., 2019; Litwiller, 2018) and this is reflected in the questionnaire results. Group leaders are making efforts to remove the barrier of gendered toilets and changing rooms. At weekend residential events, the group’s leaders “just completely took those signs away” (In, G1) to make the toilets gender-neutral. When binary-gendered toilets were faced at events, the large numbers of trans and non-binary people meant they would use whichever toilet was available. There was also support for trans people using binary toilets. A trans man on a walk used the men’s toilet for the first time, saying that he felt safe as there were other trans men there.

Lack of understanding

Lack of understanding of queer issues was a barrier identified in research (Bren & Prince, 2022; Davis & Edge, 2022; Gillig *et al*., 2019; Heath, 2022; Lundin & Bombaci, 2022), and the questionnaire results revealed that over half of queer people are impacted by this.

The questionnaire respondents said the queer-only space appealed to them because the leaders and participants “are likely to understand my life experiences and have more in common with me.” (Q) N, a cisgender woman group leader, said, “queer people have quite specific needs” (In, G2), and leaders of the groups know the needs of their community. As seen in the way that binary toilets are approached, group leaders actively put measures in place to protect more vulnerable members. For example, a non-binary participant said that being asked to share pronouns at the start of the walk alongside their name “really helps me to feel seen, and I'm used to being frustrated about them not asking” (In, W1).

People use the group to talk about queer issues with other queer people or to avoid talking about queer issues at all. A trans-only group brought in a code of conduct to help the participants feel safe; the group's leader said, “This involves things like not asking people questions about their transitions or medical history or anything unless they brought it up themselves” (In, G3).

People in the groups also support each other in understanding queer issues that do not affect them personally, bringing a sense of growth and community support. For example, a cis-gender man was struggling with not using ‘guys’ as a gender-neutral group term. He was gently educated by the other people in the group, who gave him space to make mistakes.

Heteronormativity

Heteronormative processes create an environment where queer people do not feel welcome or included in outdoor spaces (Bren & Prince, 2022; Lisahunter, 2021; Lundin & Bombaci, 2022). These heteronormative processes are not limited to the practice of leaders but also within the assumptions of other participants. LGBTQIA+ people are exhausted by having to come out constantly. One questionnaire respondent said that the “prospect of joining any sort of non-lgbtqi+ social group, outdoors, or otherwise, seems like too much faff. Having to start ‘coming out’ from scratch again seems like too much effort” (Q) and another spoke about constantly having to correct people’s assumptions about their partner’s gender. They said, “As soon as you mention ‘fiancée’ they ask “what does he do?” It’s the same conversation with everyone you meet. Having to explain EVERY time; I’m gay.” (Q)

The questionnaire participants saw queer-only outdoor groups as an opportunity to relax and not be asked awkward questions about their gender or sexuality. One respondent said, “LGBTQIA+ specific groups feel safer and easier to integrate in; it is exhausting to have to explain or defend your identity” (Q). The walk participants shared that because everyone was queer, no heteronormative or cisnormative assumptions were made, and they felt they could talk about their sexuality and gender if they wanted to, but it wasn’t a compulsory conversation. That people understood.

Trans issues

Davis & Edge, 2022, suggested that the lack of representation of queer people outdoors was a barrier, and the trans community agreed, saying they do not see people like themselves. R said that “being visibly queer puts barriers in that weren’t there before when you could pass as a straight person walking down the street” (In, G1). To misgender someone is to “relate to a person or use language (either intentionally or unintentionally) in a way that does not align with their affirmed gender” (Ervin *et al*., 2023, p.346) and is a concern for trans and non-binary people accessing outdoor spaces. In the questionnaire, a non-binary person who worked outdoors stated “I get referred to as lady by parents, and I don’t like it, but without an ongoing relationship, I don’t have a proportionate way of challenging it” (Q). Another said they avoid outdoor spaces because their “child identifies as non-binary and is very upset by being misgendered, so if this has happened at places, we are often more reluctant to go back” (Q).

Dysphoria is a barrier for some. A trans man responding to the questionnaire said that as he had no access to “top surgery and hormones due to NHS waiting lists […] it's hard to exercise, especially outside or in front of other people as it massively heightens my gender dysphoria” (Q). A trans woman said that clothing was a barrier; she said, “I also feel like a lot of athletic and outdoor clothing either looks very masculine on me or emphasises features that I don't like” (Q).

The groups have a high number of trans and non-binary participants, especially when the leader of the group is visibly queer or uses gender-neutral pronouns. A

group led by a cis-gender queer woman had around 40% trans and non-binary participants, and groups led by non-binary leaders were around 66% trans and non-binary. This suggests a need for trans and non-binary people to have queer-only spaces.

Trans issues and dysphoria are discussed, and support is given. A group of trans-non-binary people on a walk, for example, were discussing swimwear for surfing and wild swimming and the dysphoria they feel when accessing these activities. They discussed swim-safe binders, with one person offering to send a chest binder to another. The receiver said;

> What a support to have got from today. Not just to be able to meet and talk to these people but to be able to have actual support and an item that will support me with a trans struggle. (In, W1)

One questionnaire respondent said, “my dysphoria is actively treated by walking in nature, so I might spend more time outdoors than I would do if I were cisgender” (Q). Demonstrating the positive impact of being outdoors.

People use the groups to explore parts of their identity around people they do not know well but who would understand. For example, it is common for trans people to choose a new name to match their identity when they socially transition, and the field notes revealed an exciting theme: people were using the groups to try out new names. A transmasculine, non-binary participant said that when they shared names and pronouns at a previous event, they had “at the very last second decided to use their new name when they introduced themselves” (PO, W2). When they were sharing this information, another person overheard and said, “I did that today too” (PO, W2), and, as the conversation unravelled, it turned out that there were three or four more who had used new names that day.

Some trans people also benefit from having a group that is just for them rather than the wider queer community, as it removes the need to constantly come out as trans. F, a trans-masculine, non-binary group leader said they were sometimes “put off going into even queer outdoors groups in case I have to out myself as trans. Whereas in a trans group, everyone already knows and it doesn't matter.” (In, G3)

Transport

Lack of money and access to transport is a concern for LGBTQIA+ people attempting to access outdoor spaces, as they often live in urban areas and have less access to money or cars. People shared in the questionnaire that “I'm poor, so I don't have money to get there” (Q) and another, “I don't have a car, so I'm limited to places easily accessible on public transport and walking/biking.” (Q) The interviews, field notes and netnography revealed that leaders arrange walks around train stations or help others to arrange lift shares to the walks.

Building a community outdoors addresses the barriers identified and particularly supports trans and non-binary people. Queer people leading the groups for queer people meant that they understood the issues, recognising that queer people do not have, but deserve, equal access to the outdoors and using their voices and experiences to remove these barriers.

Access to greenspace is an environmental justice issue (Davis & Edge, 2022; Greene *et al.*, 2018; Yang *et al.*, 2022; Sharifi *et al.*, 2021), and environmental justice is a social justice issue; removing barriers addresses both. Whilst viewing the data collected through the lens of queer eco pedagogy, other themes emerged demonstrating work towards both social and environmental justice for queer people, but also other marginalised groups.

Activism

Queer people are more likely to align with collective responsibility (Holm *et al.*, 2020; Schmitz *et al.*, 2022; Sparks *et al.*, 2021) and have left learning views. Walking as a queer group is activism itself, and participants in the groups felt that “walking in queer groups felt like a radical act against the heteronormative ideal of who accesses [green spaces].” (PO, W2) For many people attending, the word queer doesn’t just mean LGBTQIA+; it means something different, more specific. F said, “For me being queer is a way of life, an outlook almost” (In, W2).

Some attendees are concerned with animal rights, a walk was organised as part of a right-to-roam protest (Queer Out Here, 2023a), and participants spoke about

involvement with activism against the police protest bill. On one walk, the group were led around a blocked road sign, leading to “discussions about general anarchy and how queers like to break the rules” (PO, W1). The leaders understand that systems of oppression are connected and use social media to participate in activism. One group stated;

> We strongly believe that all systems of oppression reinforce one another, that means that none can be fought in isolation. The fight for queer and trans liberation is inherently connected with the fight for Palestinian lives and dignity as they are both opposed by the forces of capitalism and colonialism. (Peak Queer Adventures, 2023a)

One group states, “It doesn’t matter who you are; the ocean is for everyone” (Queer Surf Club, 2020a), reflecting how all of the groups also want to improve access to the outdoors for other marginalised groups.

Environmentalism

Whilst queer theory is historically disconnected from nature (Gough, 2021), queer ecology demonstrates how nature itself is queer and that queer people belong there (Butler, 2017). Some participants are interested in flora identification and foraging for berries and fungi, others have an interest in ecology, for example, one had detailed knowledge about “mycorrhizal connections in the ground […] about UK rain forest trees […] and how they are all connected to each other in the woods.” (PO, W2) Many participants work in environmentalism, jobs like ecology or working for wildlife charities, studying sustainable food or materials, and working with children outdoors.

The group leaders also recognise that access to outdoor spaces promotes environmentalism and that connecting people with local environments makes people “want to take care of it themselves” (In, G1). An Instagram post stated;

> We believe every individual, every identity, deserves equal access to blue spaces because the more of us that can enjoy them and can access them safely and respectfully, there’s more of us who will love them and more of us who want to protect blue spaces. (Queer Surf Club, 2023a)

Mental health

Queer people are impacted by disproportionately poor mental health outcomes (Brooks, 1981, 1992; Jaspal *et al.*, 2023; Meyer, 2013; Meyer & Frost, 2013), particularly during and after the COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 when separated from the rest of the queer community (Abreu *et al.*, 2023; Anderson & Knee, 2020; Baumel *et al.*, 2021; Kidd *et al*, 2021; Kneale & Bécares, 2021; Moore *et al*, 2021). We know that mental health is positively impacted by access to the outdoors (Barton & Pretty, 2010; Bratman *et al.*, 2019; Coon *et al.*, 2011; Hartig *et al.*, 2014); therefore, the removal of barriers improves mental health outcomes, impacting on social justice. A group shared on social media, “Being in nature is healing. So walking with other queer people feels like a radical act of self-love and community resistance.” (Queer Out Here, 2023b)

Queer people use community as a protective factor for mental health when faced with large-scale events (Abreu *et al.*, 2023; Blair & Pukall, 2015; Porta *et al.*, 2017), and the leaders offered walks to support collective community grief. After an atrocity against the queer community, an advert for a walk stated;

> Our community has always been built on creating our own joy and carving out places that we can exist. Whether it be in the clubs and bars where we dance together or out on the hills where we can breathe; either way feeling safe in the presence of family. On Saturday we walk for Daniel, Derrick, Kelly, Raymond and Ashley. (Queer Out Here, 2022)

A group participant felt that walking in nature with other queer people would be “a really healing experience. Being able to talk about things like trauma, with other queer people” (PO, W2). At the same time, the organisers also recognise that queer people need a break from the struggles they face due to minority stress and that the outdoors can offer this. A group leader described that;

> I think there's just big parts of the queer experience just like being able to live your normal life and getting by and fighting for your rights and, and all of those quite serious, heavy things. And I think what's really needed is spaces where people don't have to think about those things. And they can just go off and do a nice activity. (In, G2)

The leaders and participants chose to be outside because they know it supports mental health, N said, “People are so right about endorphins and nature of being outside and how much better it makes you feel” (In, G2) and F said that they “get a lot of dopamine from being outside” (In, W2). Some describe being in nature as “meditative” (PO, W2), and for one walking participant, “walking gives him time to process his life” (PO, W1), and others, “walking is a really good trauma therapy for them” (PO, W2). The group organisers often advertise the posts with mental health in mind, for example, as a “restorative ramble” (Queer Out Here, 2023c) or declaring that “when the world feels a bit too much, being on a walk together is a way to rest”. (Queer Out Here, 2023b)

Hope

The literature review revealed that hope is a protective factor for queer people (Chang *et al.*, 2017; O’Keefe & Wingate, 2013; Tucker *et al.*, 2013). The groups are often used for identity formation, an important factor in developing hope, such as using new names, but also to learn from other queer people. For example, non-binary walk participants were discussing internalised transphobia and fear of using the word trans for themselves. A younger non-binary person was listening to the conversation and said, “I'm not binary, but I didn't feel like I'm trans, but the way you've just been talking about it, it's made me realise, actually, I am trans” (PO, W2). The groups are cross-generational, and this is important because during the walks “younger queer people had older queer people to look up to.”

Chosen family also impacted on the sense of hope in the groups. One participant said they a felt connection with a place as they had walked there when they were a child with their birth family. They were no longer in contact with them and commented that it was nice to walk there but with a chosen family made up of people who accepted them.

Intersectionality

Limitations of previous papers have been the lack of intersectionality in the data collection (Gillig *et al.*, 2019; Litwiller, 2018), and this research suggests that intersecting marginalisation, being part of more than one marginalised group, makes access to the outdoors harder.

Additional barriers identified through the questionnaire were physical disabilities, fatphobia, being a single parent, fear of violence against women, mental health and racism. Some identified that the intersection of their marginalisation created the barrier as people would give “funny looks” (Q). One respondent talked about being in a gay, mixed-heritage relationship;

> We used to walk outdoors quite a lot but drifted into not doing so. It wasn't something we discussed much but we gave up in part due to the funny looks. To be greeted in a country pub or cafe, as a fairly obviously gay, mixed-race couple, in rural Wales, by the occasional raised eyebrow or quizzical looks gradually became a bit tedious. (Q)

Queer people are often aware of issues facing other marginalised groups. R described that “as queer people, you know what it's like to be marginalised” (In, G1) so it was important to “make sure this can work for all these other people as well.” (In, G1) There is a feeling of collective responsibility. The social media of one group states that “the fact we’re queer is one part of our identity and creating inclusive surfing means advocating for other underrepresented identities.” (Queer Surf Club, 2020b)

Group leaders identified they have low numbers of attendees with physical disabilities and from minority ethnic groups. They actively address this by organising sessions described, for example, as a “queer and/or disabled inclusive ramble” Queer Out Here, 2023d) with a photograph of a group member in an off-road wheelchair. They also provide access information for non-specialist events; social media posts would include information such as descriptions of how many styles, the width of footpaths, and gates. R, F and the leader of a walk all described how they take advice and feedback from disabled community members to improve their offer.

Queer white people were not always aware of the specific barriers of Black People and People of Colour (BPoC) group members. One person, for example, said;

> I was talking to somebody non-white on the […] hike who was saying that they said they have tried to get some Persian attendees, people they know, to

> come. They were like, I can't come because if anyone found my name on the list or found out I was a member, it wouldn't be good. (In, W2)

The leaders do recognise this and are reaching out to collaborate with other groups who are for queer people of colour in the local area. This reflects the need for queer group to be run by queer people, trans groups to be run by trans people, and queer BPoC groups to be run by queer BPoC people.

Neurodivergence

Neurodivergence commonly acts as an additional barrier to the outdoors. A non-binary questionnaire participant explained that “Autistic needs [are a barrier.] I'd love to feel confident to just go and hang upside down from trees but it feels "frowned upon" by other adults.” (Q) Others responded that their neurodivergence impacted travelling, and some found being outdoors overwhelming, with one person saying, “My mental health is so bad I can't go out most days; I'm neurodivergent, so I get overwhelmed with unexpected sensory input.” (Q) Another said that being autistic “creates its own struggles in joining/feeling comfortable in clubs and forming/maintaining friendships to do activities with” (Q), putting them off joining groups.

F, who runs a trans group, said that two-thirds of attendees are neurodivergent, and all other group leaders said that they had a significant number of neurodivergent participants. There is an overlap between neurodivergent and queer identities (Glenn, 2022), and, therefore, the groups were also impacting social and environmental justice for neurodivergent people.

At events, there were many discussions about how neurodivergence impacted many of the participants lives and how the groups helped. One person said they had trouble reading signs and maps because of their dyslexia and that “walking in a safe group meant they could just follow and not have to read a map” (PO, W2). A questionnaire respondent said, “I find being outside helps with my adhd” (Q), and F suggested autistic people might like the groups because it is “organised for them […] you go and there's people there telling you where to go, where to start.” (In, G3) However, they also said that the number of neurodivergent people has put

neurotypical people off “because it feels very awkward […] I think it brings a lot of awkward people together.” (In, G3)

Due to queer people's tendency to believe in collective responsibility, activism for other marginalised groups and the environment was also an outcome of these groups, impacting more widely on social and environmental justice. The groups also supported intersectional marginalisation, recognising that some people had further barriers and actively tried to lift these. This particularly increased access for neurodivergent people, who comprise large numbers of the community. The groups also supported mental health and gave a sense of hope to younger queer people or those early in their queer journey.

Lessons can be learned from these intentional outdoor communities on how we can support queer people to have more equitable access to the outdoors; these lessons can also be applied to other marginalised groups to combat social and environmental injustice for all.

5. Conclusion

This paper reveals the hidden barriers that face the LGBTQIA+ community when accessing the outdoors and the ways that queer people themselves create intentional communities in green and blue spaces. These communities increase access and provide further support that impacts positively on social and environmental justice for both the queer community and other marginalised groups. It contributes to understanding additional barriers that impact the LGBTQIA+ community when accessing the outdoors and raises voices that have been largely ignored throughout the history of outdoor education and recreation. It also contributes to understanding minority stress and the impact this has had on the LGBTQIA+ community, particularly during and since the COVID-19 pandemic, and the ways that minority groups use nature to improve their mental health. The high number of trans and non-binary participants in this study means that this paper contributes to the research on how outdoor activities aimed directly at this group positively impact their life experiences.

This literature review and empirical research suggest that fear of transphobia, heteronormative practices outdoors and lack of knowledge about queer issues is a significant barrier for LGBTQIA+ people accessing the outdoors. Queer eco pedagogy gives us a framework in which to raise the voices of those with lived experience of the barriers and use these to foster and heal relationships between queer people and nature.

Participants from the questionnaire, interviews with group leaders and a range of participants of queer outdoor activity groups described community-centric themes that lifted barriers for them and further themes to illustrate how the groups impacted social and environmental justice for this group and others. Queer people have always relied on chosen family and community to support their growth, on connections with people who are like themselves and understand their unique challenges. Connection with each other and nature is, arguably, vital for the removal of these barriers. Nature is full of connections. Mycorrhizal connections under the woodland floor connect ‘mother’ trees to younger trees in woodlands to give support, transferring nutrients, knowledge and protection (Henriksson *et al.*, 2023). The

connections especially support new life in transition, metamorphosising from one part of life, one identity, to another, with support from an elder who has already been through that change. Queer people often go through substantial identity changes and this empirical research suggests that outdoor community groups mimic nature and create a support network allowing them to undo and reform their identities.

The research revealed that trans and non-binary people within the queer community are further disproportionately impacted by barriers to the outdoors and are more likely to use the outdoor community groups. A fuller understanding of the challenges faced by trans practitioners in outdoor spaces is needed to understand the impacts and how they can be supported in the field. It also highlighted the numbers of queer, neurodivergent people who are supported within these groups, and whilst theoretical frameworks exist to explore queer ecology and neuroqueerness (Glenn, 2022), more research is needed to understand the links between these and potentially explore how these come together in neuroqueer ecology.

The initial research question focussed on the way that community groups impacted on social and environmental justice for participants and the wider queer community. During analysis, however, it became clear that community building by the marginalised group, for the marginalised group, had the most significant impact. Queer outdoor leaders had the skills and experience to support the community by combining their experience of the outdoors with their lived experience of the issues faced by this group. The implications are that marginalised groups still need outdoor spaces exclusively for them to enable access to the outdoors. Their experience, however, could be used to make recommendations to broader outdoor organisations trying to increase access, remove barriers and impact social and environmental justice. This research suggests that to remove barriers for queer people outside, advice should be sought from the community itself when creating policies and procedures and more representation is needed in practitioner roles.

While the recruitment goal was met, more participants from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities would offer a more robust variety of experiences. This could be achieved by further ethnographic study of queer outdoor groups aimed at these intersectionally marginalised groups. Additionally, the semi-structured

interviews included only three group leaders. Again, this met the recruitment goal, but due to the wide range of different identities within the queer community, this limited understanding of the ways that these groups impact different identities in different ways.

This study demonstrates not only the power of community-based outdoor learning and recreation as a tool for combating social justice but also opens up questions around the concept of ‘queerness’ and how the diversity found within queer communities reflects the diversity of nature itself. In a time of political and societal conflict, we can reflect on the queerness of nature to remind ourselves that enforcing one way of living on others is a minority approach. These lessons from the queerness of nature, the idea of biophilia and that we are nature means that we are inherently queer, ask us how we can embrace this more than human connection, learn from both queer nature and queer communities and how they support one another to adapt and change and use this to adapt to the challenges of climate change and ultimately places advances in both social and environmental justice hand in hand.

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Appendix 1
LGBTQIA+ Glossary

This glossary is quoted directly from;
Ervin, J. *et al.* (2023) 'Gender identity and sexual orientation: a glossary', *Journal of epidemiology and community health (1979)*, 77(5), pp. 344–348.

Gender

Gender is a complex and multidimensional social construct, shaped by the values, norms and attitudes of a given society or era. Gender conveys the psychological, behavioural, social and cultural aspects of identifying as male, female or other non-binary representations. Importantly, gender is a key SDOH [social determinant of health].

Sex

Historically dichotomous and assigned at birth, sex is typically classified as male or female based on external genitalia. Other biological indicators of sex include chromosomal, hormonal and internal anatomical characteristics. However, sex is not always dichotomous. Intersex is the term used to define the 1.7% of the population whose sexual characteristics do not align with binary conceptualisations of sex.

Gender identity

Gender identity is a person's deeply felt, inherent sense of oneself as being female, male, neither, both or fluid. Gender identity is internally experienced and thus is not necessarily visible to others. It does not automatically correspond to the sex assigned to a person at birth, and it can develop and change over one's lifetime.

Gender expression

Gender expression denotes the way a person outwardly communicates or publicly presents their gender. This includes behaviours (body language and voice), physical expressions (clothing, hair, makeup) and social expressions (name and pronoun choice). Examples of gender expression include feminine, masculine and androgynous. For some people gender expression remains constant, whereas for others it may change circumstantially, or over time. Importantly, one's gender expression may not necessarily align with their inherent gender identity.

Gender identity terms

Transgender

Trans or transgender is an umbrella term referring to people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from the sex assigned to them at birth.[21] Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Transgender includes (but is not limited to) people who may identify as trans woman (assigned male at birth) or trans man (assigned female at birth), and trans people may use a variety of terms to describe themselves including genderqueer, non-binary, trans masc and trans femme. Transsexual is another (more outdated) term that is used by some

communities but may be offensive in other groups. Transgender is now the more common and widely accepted term among trans groups. In some cultures, other terms are used to describe transgender individuals. For example, brotherboys and sistergirls in Australian Indigenous culture, kathoey in Southeast Asian societies, hijra in South Asian cultures and two-spirit people in North American Indigenous communities.

Cisgender/cis

Describes people whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth. The term non-trans is also used.

Non-binary/genderqueer

Umbrella terms used to describe people whose gender identity falls outside the traditional binary narrative and gender norms of male and female. Note that enby or NB is an increasingly common abbreviated way of saying non-binary. Importantly, while some non-binary or genderqueer people may identify as transgender, not all do. Inclusive of a diverse range of alternative gender identities, non-binary communities include those people who may redefine their gender as per the terms below, or decline to subscribe to gender altogether.

Agender/neutrois/gender-neutral/genderless

People who identify as neither male nor female.

Bigender

People who identify as both male and female.

Polygender

People who experience multiple gender identities simultaneously, or over time.

Pangender/omnigender

People who experience and identify with all genders.

Gender-fluid

People who identify with moving and fluctuating between genders.

Third gender

People who identify with embodying a third gender.

Gender expansive

People who do not identify with traditional gender identities but are otherwise not confined to one gender narrative or experience.

Gender non-conforming

Term used to describe individuals who do not conform to the conventional gender norms and stereotypes expected of them based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being gender non-conforming is not the same as being non-binary or transgender, although some people identify with one or more of these terms. For example, a cisgender man might wear nail polish as a non-conforming expression of his gender.

Gender affirmation/transition

The process through which a person begins bringing their outer appearance and lived experience into alignment with their self-identified gender. Importantly, gender affirmation can be inaccurately conflated with gender affirmation surgery or medical transition. However, these are only possible components of gender affirmation/transition. Consequently, social, medical and/or legal affirmation can be considered to be more nuanced terminology.

Gender dysphoria

Gender dysphoria is a medical term that describes the diagnosis of clinically significant distress caused by incongruity between a person's sex assigned at birth and the gender with which they identify. In the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), gender dysphoria is listed as a clinical mental disorder. Importantly, not all transgender and gender diverse people experience dysphoria, nor may they meet criteria for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria. It is noteworthy that in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) code, gender distress is classified as Gender Incongruence in Conditions related to Sexual Health.

Gender euphoria

This term is used to describe the positive psychological state experienced when one's gender expression aligns with their gender identity. Described by communities as the comfort, confidence, certainty, satisfaction and joy in response to affirmation (personal and/or by others) of one's body or one's gender.

Gender pronouns

Personal gender pronouns reflect a person's gender identity and denote the way in which an individual would like to be referred to. People can have multiple sets of pronouns for themselves. In English, these might be she/her/hers, he/him/his or gender-neutral pronouns such as they/them/theirs or ze/zir/hir.

Misgender

To misgender someone is to relate to a person or use language (either intentionally or unintentionally) in a way that does not align with their affirmed gender. A common example of misgendering is using an incorrect gender pronoun to refer to someone. Misgendering can negatively impact a person's confidence and well-being.

Dead name

Term used to describe the former name a person no longer uses (because it does not align with their current gender identity or lived experience). Using someone's dead name may cause the person distress.

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation is a multidimensional concept that describes an individual's sexual, emotional and/or romantic attraction, including fantasy, sexual arousal, sexual behaviour and identity. It is distinct from a person's gender identity or expression. Moreover, the terms that people use to describe their sexual orientation identity may not match other aspects of sexual orientation such as behaviours, fantasies and romantic attractions. As an example of the distinction between behaviour and identity, men who have sex with men may identify as straight (or gay or other sexual orientation identities). Importantly, sexual orientation can be fluid for some people. Additionally, while sexual attraction and/or identity may remain consistent for some people over their lives, for others it can change over time. Sexual orientation terminology includes (noting that people may identify as more than one of these terms):

Heterosexual/'straight'

Attracted to people of the opposite gender.

Homosexual

Attracted to people of the same gender. It is noteworthy that while some sexually diverse individuals still use this term, others find it offensive because it was previously associated with a mental illness diagnosis.

Lesbian

Individuals who identify as women/femme/enby who are attracted to people who identify as women/femmes.

Gay

Historically, individuals who identify as men/masc/enby who are attracted to people who identify as men/masc. However, the term gay is also used in relation to any person who is attracted to those who identify as the same gender.

Bisexual/multisexual

Attracted to more than one gender, that is, people of same gender and people of other genders.

Pansexual

May be attracted to any person regardless of sex or gender.

Abrosexual

Someone whose sexuality is changing or fluid.

Questioning

Someone who is unsure who or which gender (if any) they are attracted to. Context is twofold: (1) an important ‘gateway label’ to the queer community for those who may not be ready to own a particular identity or label and (2) someone who investigates their sexual orientation in the context of flexibility.

Asexual/ace

Someone who experiences little-to-no sexual attraction. However, asexual people may feel other types of attraction (eg, romantic attraction), and being asexual is not synonymous with a lack of libido.

Aromatic/aro

Someone who does not experience romantic attraction. Aromantic people may not identify as asexual.

Demisexual

Someone who feels sexual attraction only to someone with whom they have an emotional connection. In contrast to asexual people, demisexual people may feel sexual attraction, but only after they have formed an emotional bond.

Allosexual

People who experience sexual attraction and do not identify with asexuality. The term allosexual was developed to decentre the idea that sexual attraction is normative or ‘natural’ and that conversely, asexuality is abnormal.

Heterosexism/heteronormativity

Heterosexism is the term used to describe the construction of heterosexuality as socially and culturally normative, as well as the discrimination that non-heterosexual people may experience due to the normative positioning of heterosexuality. Heteronormativity is the social setting or cultural bias that normalises heterosexuality in favour of opposite-sex/gender relationships, to that of other relationships.

Allonormativity/compulsory sexuality

Allonormativity is the cultural bias that all people experience sexual and romantic attraction. A related concept, compulsory sexuality, reinforces the idea that allosexuality is a characteristic of all sexual identities and that all people should seek sexual relationships.

LGBTQIA+

This acronym denotes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender diverse, queer (and questioning), intersex, asexual and other (LGBTQIA+). Other common variations of this acronym include LGBTI and LGBTIQ.

Queer

A broad umbrella term used to describe people whose sexual orientation and/or gender identity and/or gender expression falls outside the dominant societal norms (eg, heterosexual and cisgender). Historically a derogatory term, queer is now more positively embraced to encapsulate the full range of LGBTQIA+ gender identities and alternative sexual orientations, and is increasingly used as a self-identifying term.

Sexual and gender minority

Sexual and gender minority (or SGM) is a term proposed as an alternative to existing acronyms (eg, LGBTIQA+) as a more inclusive umbrella term encompassing all populations and individuals whose sexual identity, orientation or practices, gender identity/expression and/or reproductive development varies from traditional, societal, cultural or physiological norms. Alternatively, gender and sexually diverse is a similarly broad and inclusive term used in some regions.

Appendix 2
Questionnaire



Barriers and Participation in the Outdoors for the LGBTQ+ community

Dear participant,

This questionnaire is part of a study that aims to identify barriers for LGBTQ+ people accessing the outdoors and explore whether community-based outdoor programmes can remove barriers and increase participation.

By completing this form you agree to participate in this survey.

The information provided by you in this questionnaire will be used for research purposes. It will not be used in a manner that would allow identification of your individual responses.

Anonymised research data will be archived,

Yours,

Lizzie Wild (they/them), University of Wales Trinity St David (Carmarthen)

2006875@student.uwtsd.ac.uk

* Indicates required question

About you

To help me better understand who you are, I am going to ask you a few questions. Please only answer those questions that you feel comfortable answering and all answers will be anonymised. I am aware that not all identities will be available in the drop-down boxes, so please feel free to express your identity in the open option.

1. Name

2. How old are you? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Under 18
- ◯ 18-24
- ◯ 25-34
- ◯ 35-44
- ◯ 45-54
- ◯ 55-64
- ◯ 65+
- ◯ Prefer not to say

3. Which of these options best describes your gender? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Woman
- ◯ Non Binary
- ◯ Man
- ◯ Unsure
- ◯ Prefer not to say
- ◯ Other: _____

4. Does your gender identity differ from that you were assigned at birth? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure
- ◯ Prefer not to say

5. Do you identify as intersex? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Prefer not to say

6. Which of the following options best describes your sexual orientation? *

- Bi/Pan
- Gay/Lesbian
- Straight
- Asexual
- Unsure
- Other...

7. Which of these options best describes your race/ethnicity?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Arab
- ◯ Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi
- ◯ Asian or Asian British Indian
- ◯ Asian or Asian British Pakistani
- ◯ Black or Black British African
- ◯ Black or Black British Caribbean
- ◯ Chinese
- ◯ Mixed White and Asian
- ◯ Mixed White and Black African
- ◯ Mixed White and Black Caribbean
- ◯ Other Asian background
- ◯ Other Black background
- ◯ Other Ethnic background
- ◯ Other Mixed background
- ◯ White British
- ◯ Other White background
- ◯ Prefer not to say
- ◯ Other: _____

8. How would you describe your socioeconomic background? (Please answer this based on your circumstances as a child, e.g., family income, housing, and employment.) *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Middle Class
- ◯ Working Class
- ◯ Upper Class
- ◯ Unsure
- ◯ Prefer not to say
- ◯ Other: _____

9. Do you consider yourself disabled? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

Current time in the Outdoors

The following questions are about free time you have spent outside in green and natural spaces. This includes any visits to...
- green spaces in towns and cities (e.g. parks, canals)
- the countryside (e.g. farmland, woodland, hills and rivers).
- the coast (e.g. beaches, cliffs) and activities in the open sea DO include
- visits of any duration (including short trips to the park, dog walking, etc), organised outdoor groups or activities However, DO NOT include...
- time in your garden
- time outside as part of your job -time outside the UK

10. In the last 12 months, how often, on average have you spent free time outside in green and natural spaces? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Every day
- ◯ More than twice a week but not every day
- ◯ Twice a week
- ◯ Once a week
- ◯ Once or twice a month
- ◯ Once every 2-3 months
- ◯ Less often
- ◯ Never

11. Which of the following type(s) of green and natural spaces have you visited during the last month?
Select all types of place visited

Check all that apply.

- [ ] Urban green space (such as a park, field or playground)
- [ ] Grounds of a historic property or country park
- [ ] Allotment or community garden
- [ ] Woodland or forest
- [ ] River, lake or canal
- [ ] Hill, mountain or moorland
- [ ] Beach / other coastline / sea
- [ ] Nature / wildlife reserve
- [ ] Fields / farmland / countryside
- [ ] Other: _____

12. Thinking of the last two weeks, would you have liked to spend more free time outside in green and natural spaces? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

13. The next question will ask you what the barriers are to accessing the outdoors more often than you currently do. The barriers chosen here have been identified through previous research projects and afterward, you will have the chance to add additional barriers that apply to you. *

Now, thinking about accessing green and natural spaces, as well as outdoor groups and activities, which of the following creates a barrier for you to spending more time outdoors?

1.Strongly agree 2.Agree 3.Neither agree nor disagree 4.Disagree 5.Strongly disagree

Check all that apply.

	disagree strongly	disagree a little	neither agree or disagree	agree a little	agree strongly
fear of homophobia	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
fear of transphobia	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
gendering of outdoor sports or activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
binary gendered toilets or changing rooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
lack of awareness of lgbtqia+ issues by organisers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
lack of previous experience	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. Are there any other barriers, that you feel are connected to your LGBTQIA+ identity, that prevents you from spending more time outdoors or joining outdoor activities and groups?

    For this question, you can be as specific as you like and can include examples.

15. Are there any further intersectional barriers that prevent you from spending more time outdoors or joining outdoor activities and groups?

    For this question, you can be as specific as you like and can include examples.

Organised groups

This section seeks to understand the participation of LGBTQIA+ people in outdoor community groups

16. Do you attend, or have you attended in the past 12 months, any outdoor community groups which ARE NOT specifically for the LGBTQIA+ community?

    Mark only one oval.

    - ◯ Yes
    - ◯ No

17. Do you attend, or have you attended in the past 12 months, any outdoor community groups which ARE specifically for the LGBTQIA+ community?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

18. Are you more likely to attend an outdoor community group that is aimed specifically at the LGBTQIA+ community?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Maybe

19. If you answered yes or maybe to the previous question, would you be able to explain why?

Thank you

Thank you so much for taking the time to complete our questionnaire. Your answers will really help me to understand the barriers that face the LGBTQIA+ community when accessing the outdoors.

The second part of this research is interviews with LBTQIA+ leaders working in outdoor community groups. If you fit this criteria and would like to help my research further then I would love to hear from you. You can email me on muddypuddleclub@gmail.com

If you have found any of the issues raised in this survey at all difficult and you need some support, I would like to signpost you to the following organisations.
Galop www.galop.org.uk
Switchboard www.switchboard.lgbt
LGBT Foundation www.lgbt.foundation

Appendix 3
Questionnaire results

How old are you?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-24	7	9.2	9.2	9.2
25-34	28	36.8	36.8	46.1
35-44	25	32.9	32.9	78.9
45-54	7	9.2	9.2	88.2
55-64	7	9.2	9.2	97.4
65+	2	2.6	2.6	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

Which of these options best describes your gender?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Woman	40	52.6	52.6	52.6
Man	12	15.8	15.8	68.4
Non-Binary	23	30.3	30.3	98.7
Prefer not to say	1	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

Does your gender identity differ from your assigned gender at birth?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	27	35.5	35.5	35.5
No	44	57.9	57.9	93.4
3.00	4	5.3	5.3	98.7
4.00	1	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

Do you identify as intersex?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	73	96.1	96.1	96.1
Unsure	2	2.6	2.6	98.7
Prefer not to say	1	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

Which of the following options best describes your sexuality?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gay/Lesbian	35	46.1	46.1	46.1
Bi/Pansexual	24	31.6	31.6	77.6
Straight	2	2.6	2.6	80.3
Queer	8	10.5	10.5	90.8
Asexual	6	7.9	7.9	98.7
Prefer not to say	1	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

Which of the options best describes your race/ethnicity?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
White British	64	84.2	84.2	84.2
White other	10	13.2	13.2	97.4
Mixed White/Carribean	2	2.6	2.6	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

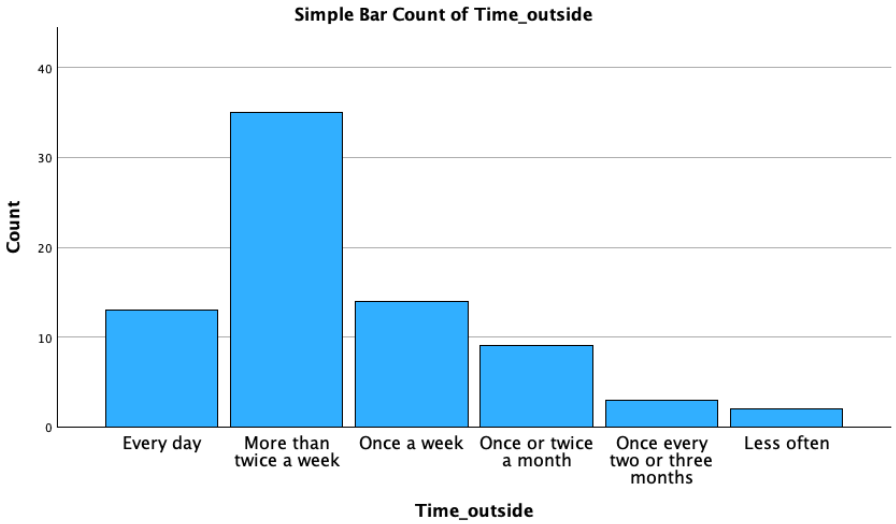
How would you best describe your socioeconomic background?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Working Class	30	39.5	39.5	39.5
Middle Class	41	53.9	53.9	93.4
Upper Class	1	1.3	1.3	94.7
Unsure	2	2.6	2.6	97.4
Prefer not to say	2	2.6	2.6	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

Do you consider yourself disabled?

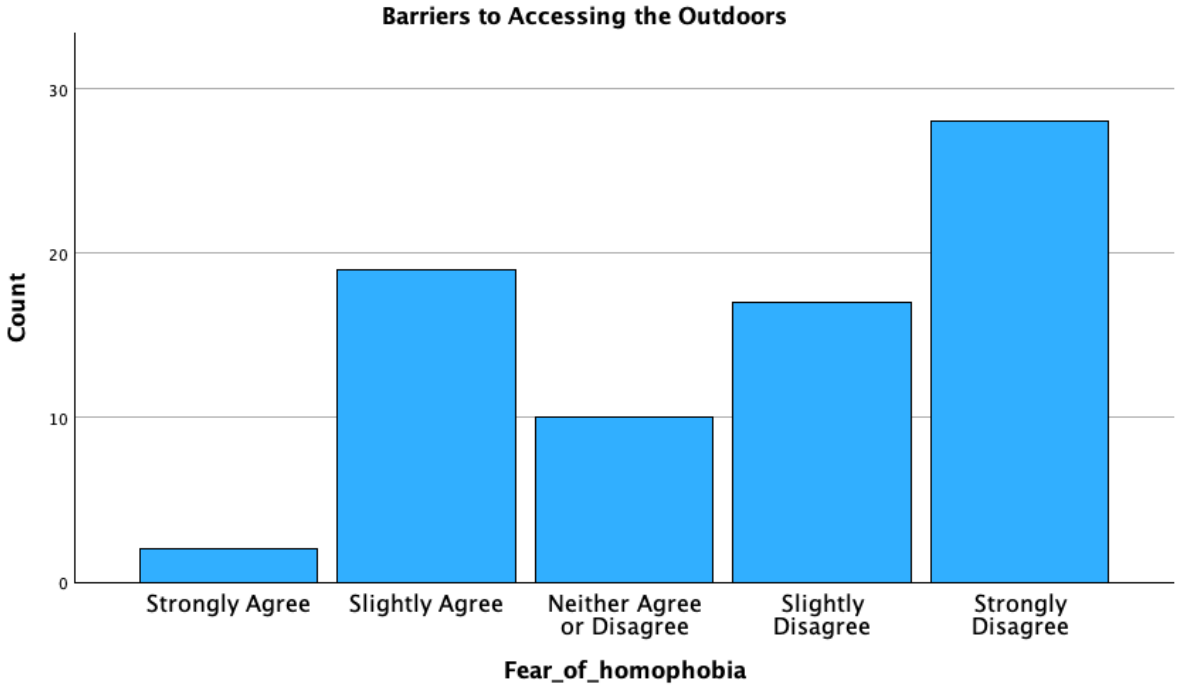
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	23	30.3	30.3	30.3
No	46	60.5	60.5	90.8
Unsure	7	9.2	9.2	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

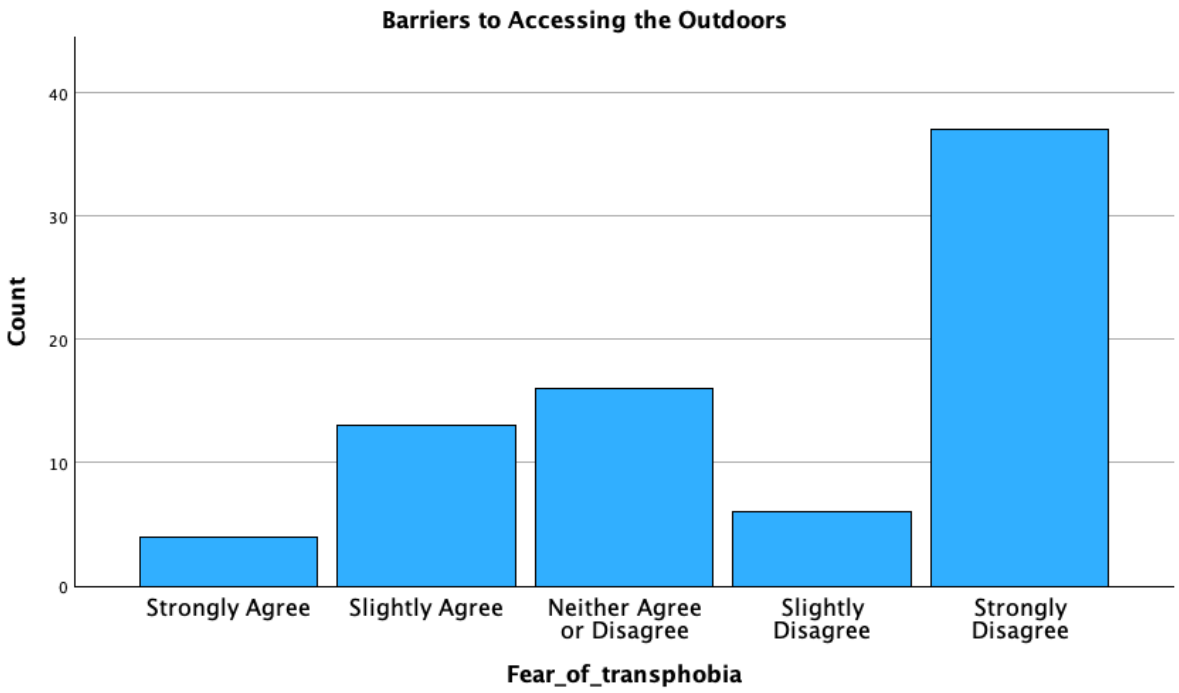
How much time have you spent in green and natural spaces in the past 12 months?

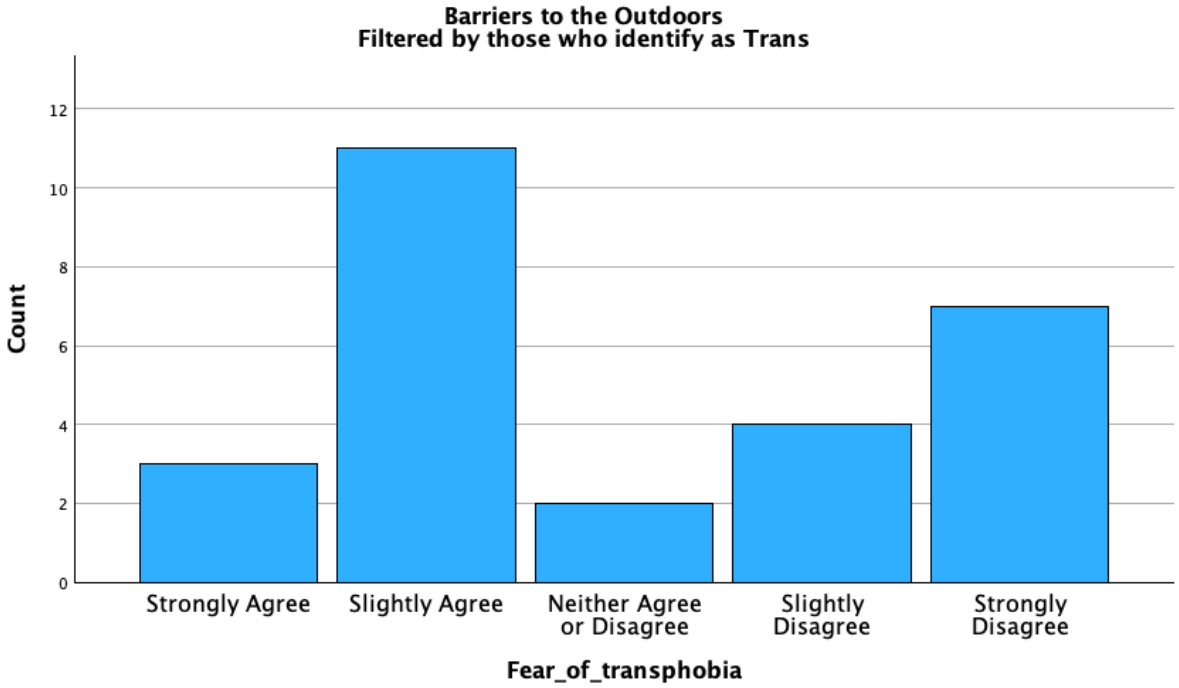


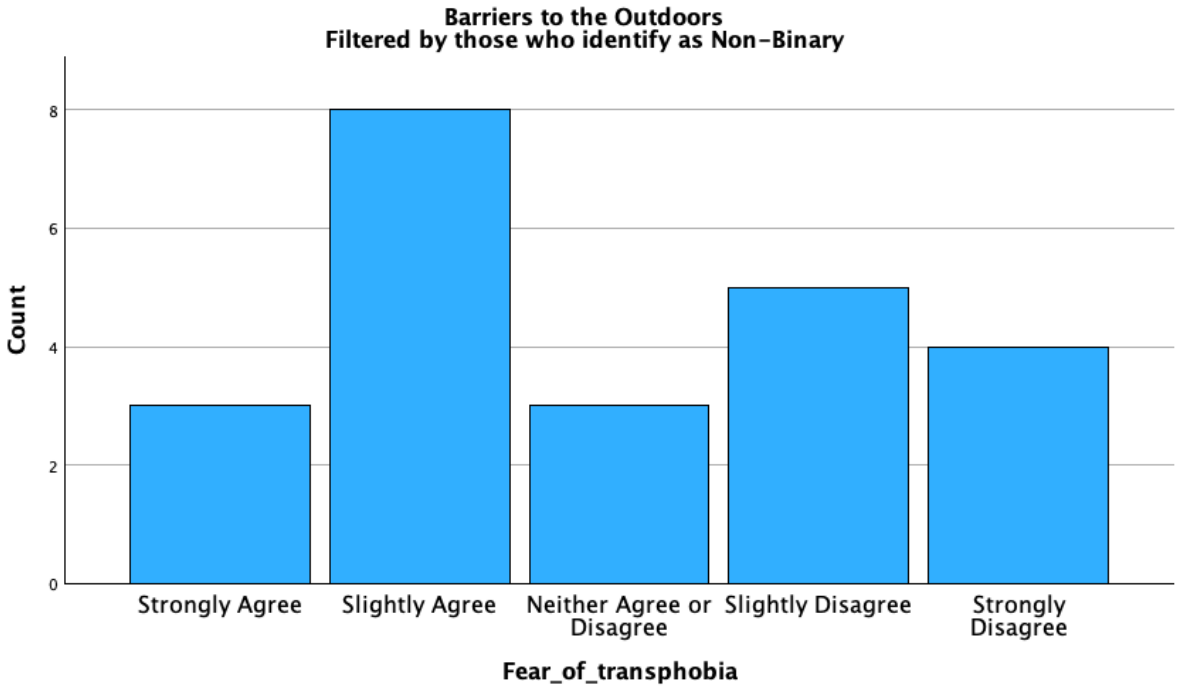
Would you like to spend more time outdoors?

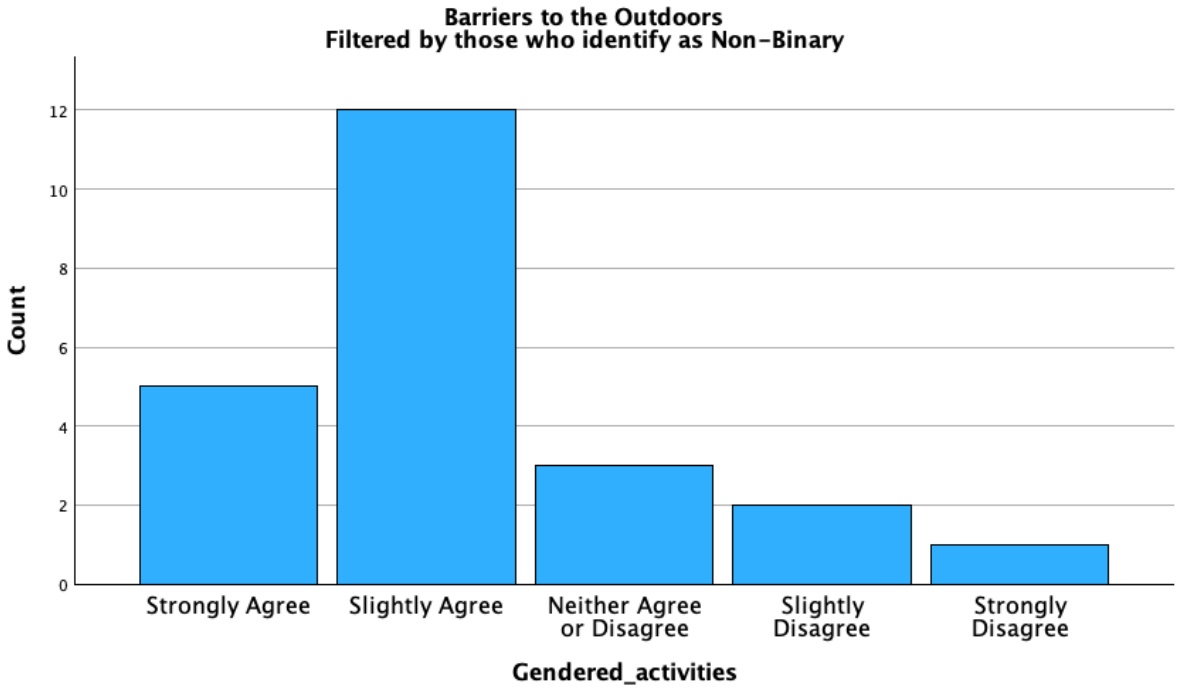
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	69	90.8	90.8	90.8
No	6	7.9	7.9	98.7
Unsure	1	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

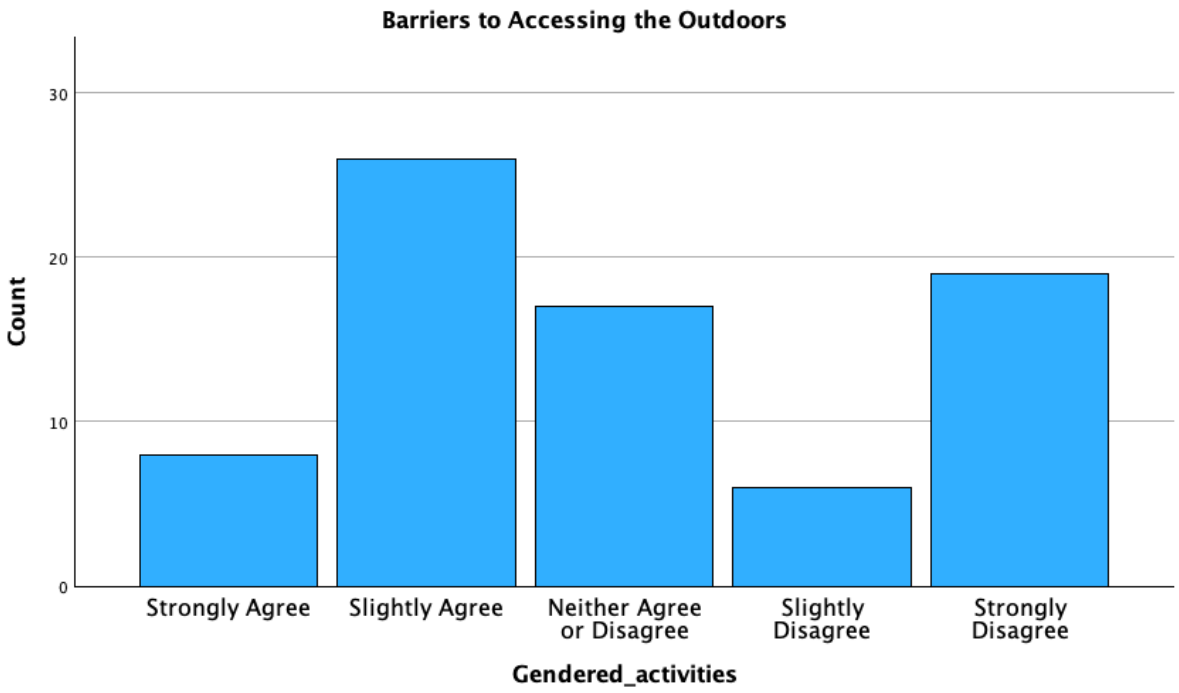


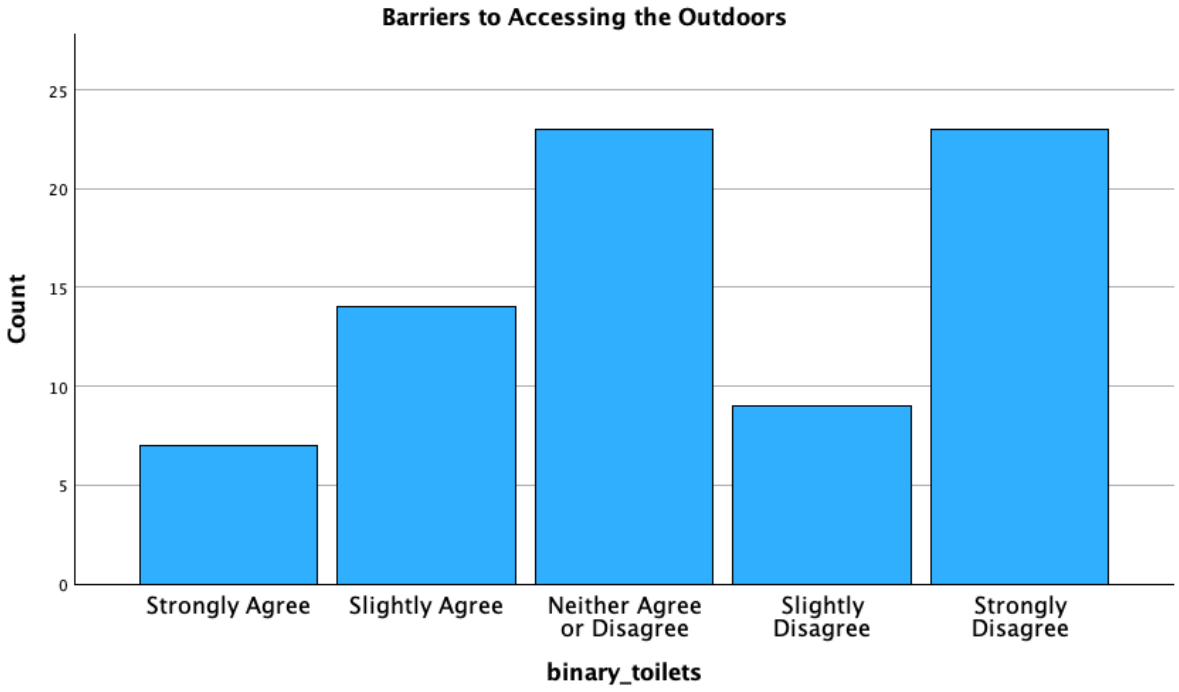

Barriers to Accessing the Outdoors
Count
40
30
20
10
0
Strongly Agree
Slightly Agree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Slightly Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Fear_of_transphobia

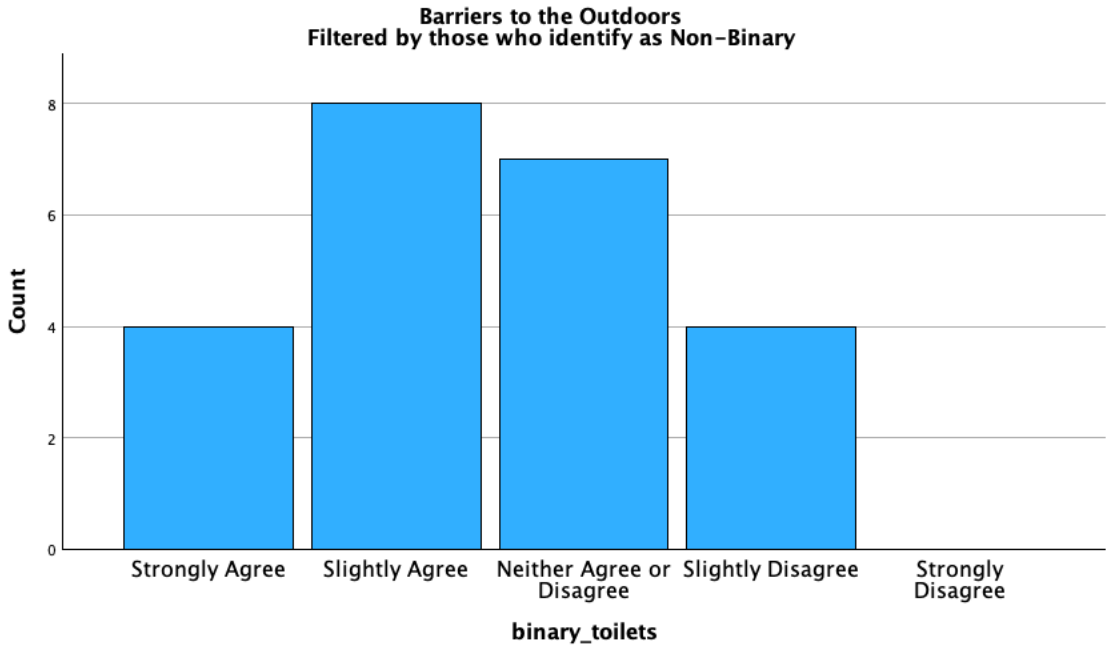

Barriers to the Outdoors
Filtered by those who identify as Trans
Count
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
Strongly Agree
Slightly Agree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Slightly Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Fear_of_transphobia

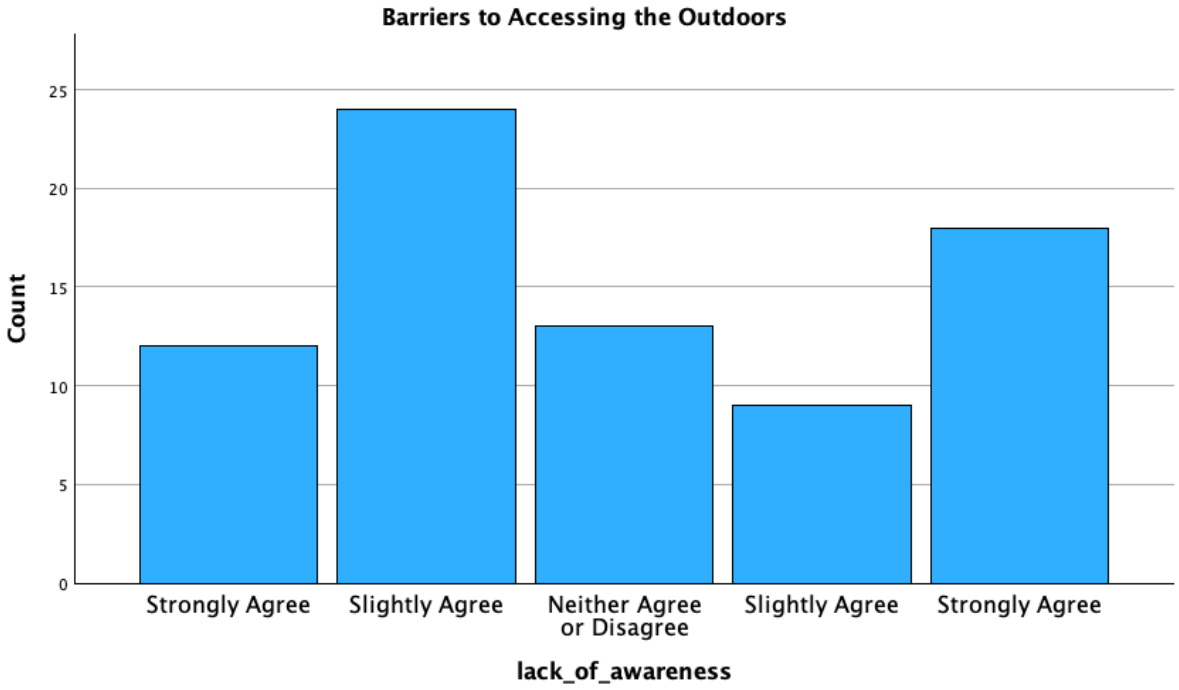

Barriers to the Outdoors
Filtered by those who identify as Non-Binary
Count
0
2
4
6
8
Strongly Agree
Slightly Agree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Slightly Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Fear_of_transphobia

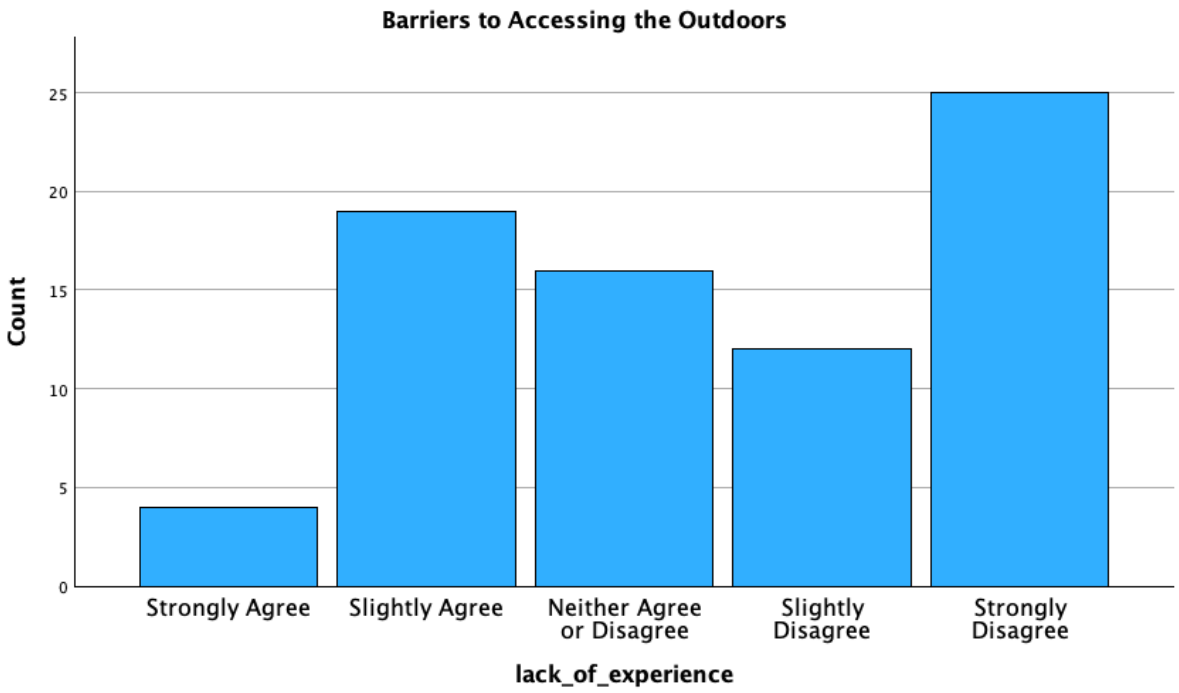

Barriers to the Outdoors
Filtered by those who identify as Non-Binary
Count
0
2
4
6
8
10
12
Strongly Agree
Slightly Agree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Slightly Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Gendered_activities


Barriers to Accessing the Outdoors
Count
30
20
10
0
Strongly Agree
Slightly Agree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Slightly Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Gendered_activities


Barriers to Accessing the Outdoors
Count
25
20
15
10
5
0
Strongly Agree
Slightly Agree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Slightly Disagree
Strongly Disagree
binary_toilets


Barriers to the Outdoors
Filtered by those who identify as Non-Binary
Count
8
6
4
2
0
Strongly Agree
Slightly Agree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Slightly Disagree
Strongly Disagree
binary_toilets


Barriers to Accessing the Outdoors
Count
25
20
15
10
5
0
Strongly Agree
Slightly Agree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Slightly Agree
Strongly Agree
lack_of_awareness



Do you attend any outdoor groups that are not specific for the LGBTQIA+ community?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	38	50.0	50.0	50.0
No	38	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

Do you attend any outdoor groups that are not specific for the LGBTQIA+ community?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	18	23.7	23.7	23.7
No	58	76.3	76.3	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

Would you like to attend an outdoor group that is specifically for the LGBTQIA+ community?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	37	48.7	48.7	48.7
No	17	22.4	22.4	71.1
Maybe	22	28.9	28.9	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

Responses to open ended questions

Are there any other barriers, that you feel are connected to your LGBTQIA+ identity, that prevents you from spending more time outdoors or joining outdoor activities and groups? For this question, you can be as specific as you like and can include examples.
The types of activities I like to engage in... And the framing of the.... "Queering nature and the countryside" is such a big desire for me and my friends... I think we just see the world entirely differently to cishet people - so it's not even about homophobia or transpjobia necessarily... More just the framing of things! And what gets prioritised within spaces. I've also noticed that before I moved to the countryside I was nervous about places to stop and eat with my girlfriend due to homophobia. Also now that I've moved to the countryside I worry about local people perceptions and comments about my ex who is a transwoman.
Lacking things in common with other people at many groups, mainly cis females.
I am not welcomed in singe of the places I go but I am the white mother of Black children as well as being a lesbian, so it's hard to trek what triggers the hostility. Also, being middle class and confident cushions me from a lot
No current access to top surgery and hormones due to NHS waiting lists (I've been out for 7 years(means it's hard to exercise, especially outside or in front of other people as it massively heightens my gender dysphoria
No this isn’t a barrier. When I was younger I did receive transphobic abuse when swimming due to wearing swimming shorts and looking androgynous.

Location
Family targeted activities...not recognising my family as a 'real' family
Hetero-normativity. As soon as you mention 'fiancée' they ask "what does he do?" It's the same conversation with everyone you meet. Having to explain EVERY time; I'm gay. And then having to answer the same very personal questions that my heterosexual friends don't get asked!!
I would not join a straight outdoor group. Don't fancy making numerous coming outs and be exposed to people judgement as part of pursuing an interest.
Having to explain why I am bringing my baby up non binary
Feel I have to explain or out myself sometimes if with partner
None for the local urban park
NA
None
I lack of understanding from group organisers what constitutes homophobia.
Not really.
No but my sexuality is a hidden one
as a trans women any competitive gendered sport doesn't feel like an option for me as I obviously don't want to play as a man, but I probably wouldn't be accepted in women's sport and even if I were I worry that people would perceive me as having an unfair advantage or ulterior motives. I know there are explicitly trans inclusive sports teams but none near where I live. I also feel like a lot of athletic and outdoor clothing either looks very masculine on me or emphasises features that I don't like.
Being in the countryside feels very vulnerable if someone decided to cause trouble I'd be stuck unable to escape so either put up with comments misgendering etc or risk a lot of escalation
Living in the south wales valleys and participating in a more male dominated hobby of caving i often see posts from "friends" which are homophobic and racist. Yet never towards me, almost forgetting the lesbian in the midst. They are always fine with me. I also find that every club i join you have to come out again. Sometimes that is intimidating.
No

No
No, I've never had issues even when in groups of visibly queer people
Travel - living in a city centre makes it more difficult to access wider green spaces without a car. Time - I work and live in urban centres so making the time to access greener spaces is a commitment I don't prioritise. Weather - I spend more time in green spaces in the summer, but during the winter daylight is limited and the cold drives me indoors.
No
I don't know if this is covered in another later part of questionnaire but in some ways my queerness has been the opposite of a barrier to accessing the outdoors, as I've been very lucky to have joined queer specific groups. I also feel my dysphoria is actively treated by walking in nature, so I might spend more time outdoors than I would do if I was cisgender, honestly. But I'm lucky in being white, able bodied, had an active childhood in the countryside (now live in the city), and I don't think I read as super queer to the average cishet person.
Disability in changing rooms, have to get ready in disabled toilet
Gendered group activities, e.g women only, when unsure of gender identity, or having to 'come out' as non-binary when joining a group
No
No
I am lucky in that I have not felt many barriers to the sports I take part in, and am to some degree out to a lot of the people i do sports with. However this is acceptable as i am with uni groups. of groups of other ages i would be less keen to out myself
I do find in some work in other people's settings I get referred to as a lady by parents, and I don't like it, but without an ongoing relationship i don't have a proportionate way of challenging it. In a camping organisation I grew up which was a more liberating space gender expression wise than school I overheard gender diversity phobic comments after I' d performed in drag, from people who were only OK with comedy straight cis man drag.
No. My barriers are more about my disabilities. But, I am aware of barriers faced by others and when I see these in place/occurring, I tend to take note and may not go back there.
No gender neutral options, I'm uncomfortable in swimming pools,
I'm not a huge group activity person but for things where I'm inexperienced, like winter camping, it's hard not knowing there's a Q/T friendly class or group.
I don't feel there are any barriers due to my LGBT status. Only down to income.

I live in the countryside of Wales and very much enjoy solitary time in nature. However, since retirement, 6 years ago, and having been fully out as gay since 1979, the prospect of joining any sort of non-lgbtqi+ social group, outdoors, or otherwise, seems like too much faff. Having to start 'coming out' from scratch again seems like too much effort.
Not really
once when it was raining, someone walked past me and my partner on a footpath and commented about my footwear "that's a big pair of wellies," but my partner misheard them as "that's a big pair of nellies" and experienced their comment as homophobic violence
None
no
I wouldn't naturally be drawn to outdoor team sport activities, but it does put me off thinking about potential homophobia. I also sometimes worry when in rural locations walking my dog with my wife that we could be vulnerable due to some restrictive/bigoted attitudes found in small villages.
I have to be honest, I have been lucky not to face homophobia from family, friends and work colleagues. I work in the outdoors and have done so for over 12 years and the instances of marginalisation or inequality I have felt I feel have all been related to my gender rather than my sexuality. There have been some comments which have caused offence but I don't think intentional and I have challenged them where I can. One that sticks in my mind which I didn't challenge and wish I had was in a work meeting where we discussed the new camp leader qualification and everyone started making jokes about having to be camp and then some really transphobic comments followed. I was shocked because this was during my current work for a charity which has EDI at its heart but unfortunately not everybody is aware of the damage their throw away comments can have and are not all as switched on to equality issues as they should be.
No
No
N/A
No, I think I've been very fortunate in the people I've met, and haven't struggled. I often do male dominated sports but have on the whole had pleasant experiences

I enjoy taking part in woodland management and woodland skills sessions but find that they can often be full of white cis het men who take up a lot of space. The bushcraft community is particularly uncomfortable for me as the men are often sexist, homophobic and generally make me feel uncomfortable or unsafe to be around. This definitely prevents me from learning new skills.

Are there any further intersectional barriers that prevent you from spending more time outdoors or joining outdoor activities and groups? For this question, you can be as specific as you like and can include examples.
Autistic needs... I'd love to feel confident to just go and hang upside down from trees but it feels "frowned upon" by other adults.
From the city there is limited access to outdoor spaces or activities without associated costs
See above
My disability makes spending time outdoors hard sometimes especially as my medical team won't other me help
I'd love to spend more time outdoors but I am a single parent and getting both my kids out of house is quite a mission in my own. If I had another adult or didn't have them I would spend longer outside I think
I feel quite affected by the increase in media reporting of violence against women.
Lack of money. Needing support to go places
No
I don't think so. But I identify as a cos homosexual male and seem to present as a cis heterosexual male. So I am in a lucky few
Autism
Having children and not having any support
I've had skin cancer so lack of suitable shade in the summer

I am disabled and require assistance and I get very frustrated by assumptions made about my family. Often people will assume my wife is my sister or someone I pay to help me. Also my child identifies as non-binary and is very upset by being misgendered so if this has happen at places we are often more reluctant to go back
Disability I don’t drive and public transport is not reliable here. I can’t afford to
I live in a village with my parents because Im on a low income and can't afford to live somewhere less remote, and I don't drive, partly because of my autism. There is no public transport to the village so getting into town to do sporting activities is difficult. Although I live in the countryside, the country within walking distance of me is fairly unappealing, not being able to drive makes it hard to access nicer or more interesting places I want to go to
Mental health - anxiety. Don't have much money to get to places or get the clothes to keep warm and dry while out
No
Work life balance and cost of living meaning more time has to be spent trying to bring money in, rather than taking time for my well being, even at the detriment of mental health.
Not feeling comfortable in cis-male dominated sports
No
No
Just lack of time and money due to class
No
No
My disability, cant walk far, mobility issues
Money- not being able to afford group activities, or having to work on weekends when activities happen.
No
No
I find being outside helps with my adhd
No.

I'm a wheelchair user
I'm poor so don't have money to get there, my mental health is so bad I can't go out most days, I'm neurodivergent so get overwhelmed with unexpectedly sensory input
Yes, really a lot of it is time and disability issues keeping me from getting outdoors more often.
No
Until 5 years ago, when we separated, my partner of 17 years was East African Asian, (Gujarati roots). Early on, we used to walk outdoors quite a lot but drifted into not doing so. It wasn't something we discussed much but we gave up in part due to the funny looks. To be greeted in a country pub or cafe, as a fairly obviously gay, mixed-race couple, in rural Wales, by the occasional raised eyebrow or quizzical looks gradually became a bit tedious.
travel can be an issue, especially for some activities. i don't have a car so i'm limited to places easily accessible on public transport and walking/biking. I'm also autistic and this creates its own struggles in joining/feeling comfortable in clubs and forming/maintaining friendships to do activities with
Not really
I am morbidly obese and fatphobia is frequent fear (e.g. fear of getting wedged in gates on footpaths)
no
Sometimes I feel physically vulnerable if outside at night time. This can stop me from walking my dog after sunset in green spaces due to it feeling risky.
I feel more strongly that women are often considered to be inferior when it comes to outdoor skills than men, with no grounding in fact or the individual person's skillset. I am regularly stopped if I am map reading (by cis men) and asked if I am OK and need help. Especially when I am leading a Lowland Leader or other navigation group. We are reading the map, that's the point, it doesn't mean we are in distress!! In terms of my gay identity I do feel I have been largely accepted in the outdoors for that, people just expect me to be (their version of) masculine at all times and show surprise if I ever wear make up, etc.
No
No
Energy levels
N/A

See above
If you answered yes or maybe to the previous question, would you be able to explain why?
I've been to other lgbt groups and used to run one and think they're very good and accessible and goof to meet people like myself
Kinda similar to previous response around the entirely different way of viewing the world. Also what gets prioritised within a space or activity... I loved mixed tag rugby when I lived in London for instance because people weren't divided by gender...
Would hopefully find people with common ground
LGBTQIA+ specific groups feel safer and easier to integrate in; it is exhausting to have to explain or defend your identity, and the risk of that feels lower in a group aimed at LGBTQIA+ people
I am lucky that where I live the LGBT+ community is varied in its ethnic make-up. If I were out of London I would probably avoid such groups because of racism
It would depend on the purpose and how chilled out it was and not a crusade, just a lovely time with other lqbtqia+ people
More understanding, less likely to be deadnamed or misgendered makes it a safer and more comfortable environment for me
It feels better to be around your community. I set up a queer families forest school as I wanted this in mine and my children’s lives. It feels different to all the straight forest school things we have done
Feels safer. More likely to meet my tribe.
Community
If it was geared towards older kids I would consider this, the only ones I am aware of are aimed at those with younger children
Nice to meet like minded people with similar life experiences
As with above answer it takes away pressure of either lying or being expose to judgement or innapropriate line of questioning. I'm not particularly private, but just old enough not to want to be bothered with nonsense ;)
It is difficult going to things and having to explain my existence
Would attend Pride events
Half dating potential, the other half is hopefully gaining more friends that are in the LGBTQIA+ community I can relate to and share trauma with
Safety in numbers

To be around Kin folk feel supported especially other queer parents
To feel more comfortable,
Because there’s likely to be people I have rapport with there.
You would know people are more likely to understand you and your family. But the transphobia within parts of the LGBTQ community doesn’t even guarantee that
If I know a space is specifically for the queer community, a lot of my worries about transphobia and having to explain myself to people go away
I would feel less likely to experience transphobia or just misunderstandings or awkward questions. I would also see it as an opportunity to meet and befriend lgbtqia+ people.
Feel comfortable in a group more than on my own or just one or two people, like to meet other people, can car share to reduce costs
I don't tend to take part in group activities, however places that feel safer are more likely.
Safer space, more free to be myself
Would feel more comfortable expressing my true self around people that I know are unlikely to react negatively
Might be nice to meet people
I feel safe amongst a group of similar people and friends. Knowing I won't get misgendered (or that the possibility is far less likely) makes me feel safer.
I would feel like I was with like minded people
More likely to have things in common with a queer group, in lots of regards, and feel more able to be my whole self. And one of the reasons to join a group is to make friends, and queer friends tend to just get me more.
My disability re mobility keeps me from participating in certain sports.
Might feel more comfortable if it is made explicit that I'm welcome
I feel more welcome.
It would depend on the activity and make up of the group ie if it were predominantly fit younger men. I'd prefer something aimed at older people ie 40+, mixed in terms of queerness and in terms of fitness.
It depends on what the group is doing and which activities are being planned

I'd sooner hang out with other queers given a choice, I find large groups of straight people a bit weird. Their assumptions are all wrong all the time.
I prefer groups that are inclusive. Groups for minorities are far more inclusive than groups run by bitter old women... bit over, but my experience is that "traditional " groups tend to only like "their kind" and are not often open to diversity. I'm openly "odd" ace, AutiHD, and am often faced with disdain.
It's one less thing to worry about and groups for marginalised people are usually more understanding with other things
I would feel comfortable that being nonbinary would be more accepted and wouldn5 be questioned
I said no, but I'm going to explain why: b/c just because it's LG friendly does not mean it's B&T friendly, and just b/c it's T friendly does not mean it's nonbinary friendly. There's a gay campground I'd love to go to but am afraid to go alone because I don't have the expected anatomy.
No interest
Because, with age, I have reached a point where I prefer to be with 'my own kind' in social settings.
I'd feel safer, I'd feel i'm more likely to get along with other members, i'd enjoy the opportuntity to make more lgbtqia+ friends
Because I feel like I would be able to express myself in more of a way that I wouldn't be judged or misgendered (by mistake or on purpose.)
I require regular affirmation of my queerness
Not enough choice atm.
I would feel more comfortable joining a group of LGBTQIA+ people as they are likely to understand my life experiences and have more in common with me. It feels safer.
In the non-LGBTQIA groups that I attend, I stay in the closet about being non-binary. If there were groups directed specifically to LGBTQIA groups, I wouldn’t feel pressure and discomfort surrounding my pronouns and identity.
I would love to meet other people in both communities!

If I were to join an outdoor group, I would probably only do so if they were run by LGBT+ people as I would feel there would be less judgement and I would be with others that can relate to the same issues as myself.
Not many available in my area (Norfolk), less in the bushcraft community
It would mean I would he able to relax and focus on enjoying myself and learning rather than worrying that people might be homophobic/transphobic/sexist. I could be my genuine self without masking.

Appendix 4
Ethnography Interview with G1

G1
Interview transcript
Zoom (Barbu, 2014), transcribed by Otter.ai (Crumley, 2018)

Thu, Sep 14, 2023 11:16AM • 43:39

SUMMARY KEYWORDS
queer, people, group, interesting, walk, outdoors, barrier, absolutely, non binary, talk, cumbria, activities, lake district, mini buses, point, toilets, diverse, tend, part, vegans

SPEAKERS
Lizzie Wild, G1

Lizzie Wild 11:17
So the first thing really is just tell me a bit about the group that you lead. What do you do? What is it called?

G1 11:22
The group's called [redacted]. So kind of what it says on the tin, I guess. We're based in the Lake District, and we plan sort of monthly outings for queer people and allies to take up space in the outdoors. We started about two years ago now kind of out of a selfish need of wanting to make friends. A small group of us sort of had the idea of like, let's make this happen sort of thing. I think a lot of the reason for that was being in Cumbria. It's quite a rural area where you feel like you're the only gay in the village a lot of the time. So it was like, surely we're not the only queer people here. Let's try and find some. And it's worked quite well. We tend to have about I'd say, between five and 15 people consistently at the meetings, depending on the activity. So yeah, it's just an opportunity for people to socialise, meet other queer people, and at the same time benefit from being outdoors. Yeah, yeah. What sort of activities do you do with the group? We do a lot of hikes, and outdoor swims, climbing, as running as well? A bit of everything. And then as an aside to that we try and do stuff that isn't as active a lot of the time as well. Because we're aware like, we've got few members who have disabilities who can't walk very far. And yeah, can't do certain activities. So creating another social space where everyone can be involved, like craft nights and things like that.

Lizzie Wild 13:13
That's really interesting. You said a little bit about why you set up the group already. So that was kind of my next question. So you've said that you felt like the only queer in the village, you know, there must be more people around here. So it's quite a rural area?

G1 13:46
Yeah I read an article that cumbria is one of the least diverse areas of the country. It seems to be I mean, there's pockets in different areas, but a lot of it seems to be

people coming here to retire. Enjoy the greenery. Yeah. And yeah, there's kind of a bit of a generation gap as well, I think in Cumbria overall. Especially in the Lake District parts, as opposed to like in Carlisle, for example. Yeah. So yeah, there seems to be like little hubs, but then in between that, not a lot. With it being so rural and spread out. Like for me to get to somewhere, like Carlisle to go something, It's like an hour and a half. So that's a barrier itself.

Lizzie Wild 14:36
So do you think that transport is a bit of a barrier of people to get outside as well?

G1 14:41
Yeah.

Lizzie Wild 14:41
What are the rail networks like? Can you get into the lakes by rail or anything like that?

G1

Yeah, so get into like, Kendall or Windermere even, by train seems to be quite easy. Then the buses aren's very good from there. I think the bus is kind of the worst thing. They only come every hour, you can't get to different places you want to get to. So yeah, it's difficult. people get the train up and then from there we'll sort lifts out because that's the easiest way to do it. And then we are just a few people in one car.

Lizzie Wild
So would transport be something that would help your group?

G1 15:33
Yeah, yes, access to funds for mini buses. I know that there are some community health schemes but I've not actually looked into those for [redacted]. So yeah, it might be an option.

Lizzie Wild 15:57
Yeah, that's really interesting. So when you before you set the group up, if you went for a walk in the lakes, what sort of people would you see out there?

G1
I'd say lots of retired Groups of people. Whether that be like locals or people coming for holidays, there's so much tourism here. It's like yeah, it's actually quite diverse in the hills themselves. The people that come and visit. they probably can't afford to live here. That's a massive barrier. Yeah. If you try and live in the National Park, it's so much more expensive. So yeah, I don't know. I think I couldn't I probably couldn't put like a list of people that come and go walking in because it's quite a variety of different people.

Lizzie Wild
But did you see people like yourself out walking?

17:24

G1
I don't know. Because I only came out as non-binary a year and a half ago. So I'm thinking back to like a few years ago when I was just like, a sporty Female in the outdoors.But then since, yeah, realising my identity. I don't see any non binary people. Like I used to work as an outdoor instructor. No one's non binary that I met in that job. But yeah, I guess we're kind of stereotyping as well. Aren't we? Guessing peoples identities from how they look. But it is about being visibly queer. But being visibly queer puts barriers in that weren't there before when you could pass as a straight person walking down the street.

Lizzie Wild 18:26
Do you find, so I am thinking about other people that attend your group, are they coming from a certain part of the queer community? So if you look at the LGBTQIA community as a whole, which letter does most of the people belong to?

G1
that's interesting, actually, because we never sort of specified that the group is for any particular letter. It tends to be a lot of AFAB people. That's the majority of our group. And I know that other groups sort of in and around Kendall, are predominantly gay men. I don't know whether it's because those that started the group were AFAB people and whether it's just grown from that because it's kind of our social circles expanding. But yeah, even when we then went on to Instagram, and started sort of promoting the page, and kind of got more of the same people which I guess is your target audience it's kind of reflective of who's starting it. I think there's probably only a few who are non binary and yeah, most queer women, I'd say, yeah. And then yeah, a few gay men who come along. Yeah. there's like a difference of ages as well, because we've noticed like the kind of regular people who tend to come along are quite young, like below the age of 30. Definitely mostly 20 to 25. But then we have had slightly older people like 40s 50s. Come along, still enjoy, like the activity and meeting new people. But I think having such a young age group puts those people off. One of the trans women that did come along, was slightly older and we were like, how do we make this still a safe and comfortable space for everyone? And it's quite difficult to accommodate everyone.

Lizzie Wild 21:27
Yeah, that's really interesting. So you mentioned a few of the barriers that queer people have so you talked about transport to get outside, you know, like people can't afford to live in the Lake District. So they're travelling in and then that's expensive as well, because the network's are not there. And you've talked about how you've removed some of the barriers by picking people up from train stations to get them further into the lakes. Is there anything else people talk about in the group generally, about the barriers they had to go into outdoors before your group kind of came along?

G1
I think, particularly in the Lake District, I know within a climbing community, particularly, It's quite male and ego driven a lot of the time. I know that's been a barrier for people. It's having the confidence to go into those spaces. That is echoed for queer people and like being visibly queer can be quite dangerous when you know that you're going into a sport that is very male centred. So yeah, that's definitely one.

What else? We had our YHA weekend a couple of weeks ago. All of the toilets and changing rooms in the hostel were gendered. We just completely took those signs away. So that has been a barrier at some points. It's not one that we face regularly as we are mostly just outdoors. Yeah, you're not normally near the toilet so the toilets aren't an issue. And then when you've come to the toilets, you've taken them away. I like to think that we try and cover all the bases, remove as many of those barriers as we can. I think we're being an outdoors group as well peoples health is often a barrier for them. We're doing whatever we can to make the walks more accessible. I mean, shorter routes or things like that.

Lizzie Wild 25:29
Yeah, absolutely. That's exactly what my next question was actually was basically about these intersectional issues that come in for marginalised groups. So obviously, we're looking specifically at a queer group, but within a queer group. Is that something that comes up a lot within your group?

G1
Yes, definitely. And yeah, we find people with neurodiversity a lot of the time is the one that comes up. I think the nature of the group being adventure outdoorsy, we've not had that many physically disabled people approach us, I think, because yeah, it's just one of those activities, like hiking specifically. And then we have got a few people who have had long COVID For example. Things like that. Were having shorter routes for people that can't walk as far. Yeah, we've managed to sort of sort those. it's an interesting one because I really believe the outdoors is for everyone. But I can't cater to everyone all the time. We'd love for loads of disabled queer people to be able to get into the outdoors. But, to be honest, I don't think I could facilitate that myself down to my skill set. So we've got to sort of prioritise that. There's an initiative here called miles without styles. I'm gonna make that happen. It's interesting, isn't it? I think, as queer people, you know what it's like to be marginalised. And so then you go, right, I need to make sure this can work for all these other people as well.

Lizzie Wild
Is neurodivergence something that comes up frequently?

G1 29:21
Yeah. And it's, I feel like there's a lot of the group who have gotten to that point where, yeah, they now know what neurodivergence is and have seen themselves in others and they're exploring that and then getting diagnosed. There's a lot of the group who have gone through that recently. Yeah, it's a massive thing.

Lizzie Wild 29:41
Do you find that people come and they come once and that's it. Or do they come constantly every single time or?

G1
Yes, it's a mixture. We have had people come once and then never again. And just yeah, come out for one walk or whatever. We have had quite a few people come along for a certain amount of time. We had a couple that were here, just living in Kendel for a few months. whilst they were here, then living the way again and then

we tend to have our regulars. They live quite locally, and are keen for stuff whenever they're free, so they'll come to lots. We've got an Instagram page, sorry, a WhatsApp group. Which is really good for people who want, that if they can't come to everything, they can still be part of the group. We let people like, just, I don't know, let's say they are going to go to the climbing wall, they just put a post in there, and whoever wants to come along comes along. Not necessarily planned things, but where you could just go and socialise with a few people. Doing activity that you enjoy.

Lizzie Wild
Have people kind of become friends as well outside of the group?

G1 31:29
yeah, definitely. And we've had an [redacted] couple! I think it's in quite strange because the group, I'm sure my partner would agree with me, I'm sure sure she won't mind me saying this. But the people who kind of originally started with were all people she had dated over lockdown. It's a queer friendship group. That's kind of grown. Yeah. It's really nice, isn't it?

Lizzie Wild
What sort of things do people talk about?

G1 32:52
It can be as boring as what do you do for a job? Or like we're planning for world domination? Yeah, I don't know. So much. There's quite a lot of chat about the outdoors. Because people who come tend to live it and do it in their own time, they talk about things like wanting to do their ML [mountain leader] stuff? There's a lot of chat about that. I guess queer culture in general. Yeah. Barbie, everyone talks about the barbie movie at the moment. people like to talk and post about their own little adventures they have been on as well. So sort of a mixture between like queer culture, other adventurous activities. And issues they generally face being queer. Yeah, I think yeah, that's kind of when you're in those groups is like, yeah, a shared frustration with the world, I guess. And yeah, a lot of that is discussed. Coming out, queer struggles.

Lizzie Wild 34:58
what sort of like feedback do you get?

G1
35:01
I don't have any like formal way that people can give us feedback. We did for like, the funded weekend that we had. So it's kind of Yeah, one of the only occasion that we have had written feedback from people. I think the best feedback that we get is people wanting to be added to the WhatsApp group and come along more often. And that way, we know they are enjoying themselves and want to be more of a part of it. But yeah, other than that, we don't get anything.

Lizzie Wild 35:47
Do you get comments on Instagram posts and that kind of thing?

35:53
We don't get that many comments, there's been a few. And when people have come along they'll repost it and share it between their friends. That's feedback in itself.
It's hard because we do it voluntarily. Alongside a full time job. The time definitely, as well as things like skills. Funding. Yeah. Yeah, quite difficult.
Yeah, I think even when we find those people, people who are queer and also have the outdoor skills, then Yeah, I am a strong believer that people should be paid for the skills that they can offer. Absolutely. And a lot of the time, they're asked to give their time for free because it's a disadvantaged group. So where's the money coming from?

Lizzie Wild 37:50
Is there anything else you notice about the group?

G1
Yes, a few people have jobs in environmentalism that sort of thing. A few work for the Wildlife Trust. And do that as their day job. We're aware of it as leaders as well. When we're putting stuff together trying to make it sure they are sustainable and environmentally friendly as possible. Particularly like leading walks that are in the Lake District fells. We tried to allow people to connect with it. So that they want to take care of it themselves, and promote ways that they can do that. Yeah, no, there are quite a few conservationist people. Interestingly, for our weekend, we were like, we'll just do vegan food. Yeah, just from the start, because we expected that there was going to be lots of vegan people but actually there was only one. really that's interesting. Yeah, but a lot of them are veggies. Yeah. So more vegetarians rather than vegans within the group.

Lizzie Wild
So the thing you just said about people connecting with the Lakes and getting people to connect with a space like that. Tell me more about that?

G1
Yeah, I think it was like through my mountain leader and stuff that was always a question that the assessment would ask like, how how do you teach young people to look after it? We learnt that spending time in the mountains connects you with them and then you want to look after them. Yeah, I think people that live kind of in the National Park and around it. They're aware of those sorts of issues and they love the area so they want to protect it. So yeah, we tend to do like a few litter picks and stuff every year, usually after summer. Yeah, kind of try and protect the space. We've done it as part of the group. I think it was a BMC thing where they were giving away free litter pickers and bags. So yeah, we just applied for those and then we only managed to do it like a couple of months ago. Our first one but yeah, now we've got the stuff it's like something that we can do regularly. yeah, absolutely positive. Yeah, that's really interesting.

Lizzie Wild
Cool. I think that's all my questions. I'll try and come up at some point and but obviously I'm a Hampshire so it's miles away. Thank you. It's been really lovely and It's so interesting.

Appendix 5
Ethnography Interview with G2

G2
Interview transcript
Zoom (Barbu, 2014), transcribed by Otter.ai (Crumley, 2018)

Wed, Sep 20, 2023 5:31PM • 50:24

SUMMARY KEYWORDS
walks, people, group, queer, bristol, gendered, lgbtq, cis, trans, weekend, organisation, bit, leaders, outdoors, booked, put, conversations, hiking, funding, nice

SPEAKERS
Lizzie Wild, G2

Lizzie Wild 01:53
Can you tell me about your group?

G2 04:33
Well, the clue is in the title, I think. So, we're a hiking group for LGBTQ plus people in and around Bristol. There's no sort of, I don't have any geographical restrictions. Anyone could come along. And we meet up. At the moment, it's about twice. We usually do two weekend walks a month that are anywhere from two to six hours long. And then we've started to do residentials as well. So we had our first weekend. away in August. We've got the next one in October. I'm going to start looking at maybe getting abroad next year, which is exciting. And we did some kind of evening summer walks over the summer as well, which was really nice that we're all kind of city based. I started the group in January this year. Not really expecting anything. But it sort of snowballed in a really wonderful way. Now we've got I think we've got about 1300 followers on Instagram about five or 600 in the Facebook group. And then there's a WhatsApp group as well. It's got, I don't know, one or 200 people in it. And I've now got some support with leading on the walks. So I've got a team of I think six or seven people who regularly help out leading and backstopping walks and then tomorrow is actually our first AGM slash committee meeting. So we can do some more official things so we can get a bank account and start getting funding all those fun things.

Lizzie Wild 06:37
So what made you start the group?

G2 06:48
I've been asked that question loads. I really feel like I should have. I don't know, a more heartfelt reason than I do. But honestly, I just wanted some people to go on walks with. Yeah, I mean, that was why I started it. I was just I, am a regular hiker, but a few friends have moved out of Bristol recently and I sort of running out of people to go on walks with and I don't mind doing on my own, but I much prefer doing it with other people. And I guess as someone who came out fairly late in life, I do have a you know, I do have quite a few queer friends in Bristol, but also I wanted

to make more in the community as well. So it just seemed like a nice thing to start. And actually when I was like, I actually looked for one already because I assumed there would be one in Bristol and there wasn't Yeah, that was it really. And then it got got a lot of followers very quickly.

Lizzie Wild 07:57
Yeah, so So for you. It's kind of like wanting to build your own community and meet more queer people that are into hiking. Would that be like a summary of it?

G2 08:05
Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Lizzie Wild 08:07
Is there a reason why you didn't start a group that was just for hiking rather than for queer hiking?

G2 08:10
Well, there's there's quite a number of hiking groups already in Bristol. so the Ramblers have already have groups in and around Bristol and there's also Bristol hiker girls which is massive on Facebook that that do regular walks and I followed them for ages and never actually gone on one of the walk. Not for any particular reason, but I just I guess I wasn't 100% certain that the people going on kind of my people if that makes sense. I just wanted to make sure I was meeting like minded people, I guess. And I've always found in the queer community, most people who are on the same page sort of politically and kind of you know Yeah, so that was why. Queer people have quite specific needs and even with my group I find it difficult sometimes to anticipate those needs because I am a cis woman and often mistaken, to be straight. So I sort of definitely don't have the same experience as a lot of our more visibly queer members. So it's something that I'm very conscious of, and there's a few things that have sort of, I'm becoming more aware of, I guess, you know, like, kind of, I guess, especially our trans members who, going anywhere, it's just more scary for them. Particularly in places that we go to in the countryside that aren't as welcoming as Bristol is but we're very lucky to live in a city that is on the whole quite welcoming of queer people. So yeah, I mean, I do get a bit of impostor syndrome. So I just don't know if I am best placed to be doing that but I, you know, sort of trying and my partner's trans so they are like the voice of trans people.

Lizzie Wild 11:11
In terms of like, who attends the group, what sort of people attend the group?

G2 11:23
Yeah. Yeah. Quite a few trans and non binary people. I'd say large, probably slight majority for cis women. We don't get many cis men. so mostly Yeah. As say, maybe like 60% cis women 40% Trans and non binary people. Mostly AFAB people

Lizzie Wild 11:59
Why do you think it is that mostly AFAB people are attending these groups?

G2 12:05

There's probably something around it feeling like a very safe space for those people to come along and possibly that the absence of cis men has in turn bred more of an absence of cis men if that makes sense. So yeah, maybe it's that maybe it's I also think there's probably I haven't actually looked but I wouldn't be surprised if there's already like a gay mens walking club.

Lizzie Wild 13:33
What sort of age people do get coming from the group?

G2 14:07
probably I'd say between 18 and 40. Probably most people are sitting within the 25 to 35 bit of that. I'd really like to welcome older queer people and I've been thinking about ways to do that because we did have an older woman come on one of the walks once and I think she just felt really out of place because everyone there was a lot younger than her. Yeah, I think I probably am the oldest person on some walks, except when my partner comes.

Lizzie Wild 15:49
So another thing I was wondering is do you have many intersectional marginalised groups within the people that attend so do you have any disabled people attending, for example?

G2 16:03
We don't have. Well, no, we have a number of neurodiverse people. We don't have many physically disabled people. As far as I'm aware, we have I've had quite a few messages from people who've got disabilities or long term fatigue conditions who have asked for shorter walks, which is something that I'm trying to accommodate now is quite difficult with the resources that we have. So I know there's a number of people interested. one of our leaders as well has a long term fatigue condition as well. So there's definitely some crossover there. We we definitely are overwhelmingly white. We don't have a lot of intersectionality in that way, which is a shame and I'm actually recently joined [redacted] are like a organisation in Bristol who support volunteer organisations in Bristol, basically they are a charity for not for profits and charities and they've just set up a LGBTQ plus partnership, okay, and we have a steering group and it's like lots of different organisations across Bristol's so there's us there's like a swimming group, there's [redacted] and then there's you know, more charities who do more support work like support, LGBTQ plus homeless people. And pretty much the number one thing when we were sort of going through the kinds of things we want help with was how do we attract more and a more diverse membership? Yeah. So yeah, we're very white. Yeah, I think there's a Bristol there's a Bristol based people of colour queer group that just meet up for socials. I do kind of want to reach out to them and say like, do you want to do something together but all of our leaders are white and I just I guess I don't know. How. Yeah,

Lizzie Wild 19:56
You mentioned neuro divergence there as well. Is it quite a high proportion of people that come to the group that are neurodivergent?

G2 20:13
I don't have any official statistics, but my inclination is yes.

Lizzie Wild 20:17
And so just thinking about, when people have come to attend the group, do they give you much feedback at all on the walks?

G2 20:51
a little bit, I did a feedback form for the weekend we just did, which was really useful, but most people did that thing where they were just really nice about it, which was lovely. But there were a few helpful constructive things. And then a couple of people have reached out after walks to make suggestions on things, which has also been helpful and also things that I had thought about but had maybe become a bit complacent about and now we've kind of put structures in place to make sure I see them, for example, being a bit clearer about start times, like meet times and start times. And that will be taking photos and videos for social media, that kind of thing. And kind of doing more of an intro before we set off on the walk to remind people of how long it is and how long it's gonna take etc, etc. There was one walk, where it was just sort of a bit of a perfect storm of things going wrong. And it was after that, that walk that a couple of people reached out for feedback and there were all kinds of things that I knew anyway, but it was just good to have them validated. So I know, that my efforts are going in the right places or would be in the future.

Lizzie Wild 22:17
Yeah, that's really, really good. And in terms of like positive feedback, as well. What sorts of things do people say about the group?

G2 22:26
It's a bit overwhelming, actually, because people have been so lovely about it and and like it gets me a bit emotional when I think about it because like, it's I think it's actually genuinely bringing quite a lot of joy to people's lives and people have just said that. It's really it like sort of forces them out to do a walk where they wouldn't normally like we went on one of the weekend was pissing it down and

Lizzie Wild 22:49
I saw your pictures!

G2 22:55
just having more access to get to places because lots of people in the group don't drive so just having a network of people who do and can help them get there and maybe more conscious of public transport options, etc. Yeah, I think just just lots of people have made new friends. A couple of people I think a couple of relationships have started. There's quite a lot of quite a lot of people that come to the hiking group also go to the climbing group. And so I think people see each other quite often if they're in any of the groups or go to more than one of them. And yeah, just I think most of the feedback has just been that it's really nice to have someone else organising that and them needing that and taking the thought out of it, I think, yeah.

Lizzie Wild 23:51
Yeah, generally I think that's lovely. What you said about it, just bringing people joy. To hear that you're getting that really positive feedback, as well. Really nice. Have you done walks around the train stops?

G2 25:26
There's a few that we've done that have bus and train stops. But a lot of people are quite reliant on rideshares. And they still haven't really figured out a great mechanism for that, it's kind of getting there. But yeah, people have definitely still missed out because they couldn't find a ride. Which is a shame.I think someone said to me on the weekend actually that they made the first walk they went on their measure of when they could get there by public transport and then got a lift home afterwards. And it was more just that that safety aspect of it. You don't know people Yeah, and that was a bit you know, scary when you don't know anyone. Even with the lovely photographs. You have it still new people, isn't it? Yeah, definitely. Some of the things you've said already kind of answered this question, but I was really thinking about like, obviously, the group is still relatively new, but obviously expanded quite a lot quite quickly.

Lizzie Wild
And you've said about kind of forming a committee and trying to access funding, is that really the biggest barrier you're facing to kind of getting the group you know, more active at the moment?

G2 26:36
I wouldn't say it's, well kind of so walking is fortunately a very cheap activity. You don't need much to be able to do it. But I do feel quite strongly that I want every member to be able to afford a decent pair of walking boots and waterproof and those those things aren't cheap and then the the travel costs as well are probably the other thing. And then for kind of running the group we need money for so I've got Yeah, maybe six or seven people who regularly helped me lead and to do that you need usually a subscription to OS maps or some sort of navigational app to help you do that. That's like, you know, 25 pounds a year. I also would love to be able to pay people for their time and by people I mean me at the moment. Yeah, it's like it probably takes up a good not including going on walks probably a good three to four hours of my time a week. doing like all the admin and whatnot. So and I have a full time job. So just Yeah, ideally, I'd be able to cut down my hours a little bit in my current job and be able to pay himself to do this. I hadn't actually thought about it until I met up with someone from a group called [redacted]. Yeah. I had a really interesting coffee chat with them and she's now able to pay yourself to do a lot of work for them. And they do a lot of work with, like brands, for example, to have more inclusive sizing and I'd really love to do stuff like that for us, because it's really obviously it's really gendered in the outdoors stores are extremely gendered and don't really cater for people who don't want to buy a women's or a man's jacket or whatever it is and things don't fit the way they want them to.

Lizzie Wild 28:46
Yeah, [redacted]. I'm just going to say this on here because obviously, not everyone will know what we're talking about. But that idea of not everybody fits outdoor clothing as well and it perpetuates that idea is that outdoors is only for certain people in this look a certain way and be a certain way. There's a couple of Muslim hikers as well that are trying to get things hijabs that are made in outdoor technical material as well made and be available at not ridiculous prices.

G2 29:18
Yeah, definitely. I did a bit of so my my day job is to work for a digital UX agency, you know, was just doing an internal talk about better design for queer people. So I did a bit of research on outdoors, websites and stuff and they're just so like, all the imagery they use is just really white, middle class, straight people basically like it's really thin people. It's like no inclusive at all. So yeah, basically I got into this because I'd love to be able to work with brands in a similar way to try and improve that for people. And then yeah, I guess the other things I'd like funding for are to be able to train leaders to go on navigation courses, first aid, things like that. And to be able to widen that pool of leaders as well to people who don't have free time to give but could do it if it was like a paid opportunity, for example. And yeah, I think already said transport costs are quite big one and then the other thing is subsidising trips away. Yeah, cuz, yeah, lots of people can't afford it and also, possibly wouldn't go on their own because they're a bit nervous to do that sort of thing without a group of queer people with them. Yeah. We did get a bit of funding for the next one from YHA.

Lizzie Wild 31:11
With your weekend away, did you face anything at the venue you were using that was a barrier to queer people?

G2 32:04
Not hugely, it was a small privately owned Hostel in Wales. I don't think we even met the owner at all. But I think the only thing was the bathrooms were all gendered. So we just stuck signs over the top, you know, call them all gender. But we could only do that because we have the whole hostel to ourselves. Athe next one, we haven't booked out that whole hostel and it's a YHA one and they did ask me when I booked it what the gender split was. And I asked them why they were asking because my assumption was that the bathrooms will be gendered and they said, that's not the case. All of the bathrooms are gender neutral. I think it was because their dorms are gendered. If you're booking in as like an individual person. So if you're booking out like a whole room or something, then it's not an issue but if you are booking as an individual pretended But I was still a bit confused, because we have booked whole rooms out. So when they asked I just said, Oh, if that's what it's about, you know, well Don't worry. You don't have to do anything for us. We'll figure it out ourselves. i guess we have asked the question so the non binary people don't have to. I ask the question, so it's not awkward when we get there? Yeah, you're creating a safety barrier and you're creating like a safety bubble around them. Say that you're taking away that that concern for them. So that's really cool.

Is there anything else you wanted to share about the group or about what you're doing?

G2 35:19
When you asked me why I started it. I feel like now we're what are we nine months in? Like I can just the importance of it is quite overwhelming at times. I think there's just big parts of the queer experience just like being able to live your normal life and getting by and fighting for your rights and, and all of those quite serious, heavy things. And I think what's really needed is spaces where people don't have to think about those things. And they can just go off and do a nice activity. And that's it and it's now there's lots of queer groups, I think that focus a lot on on those very

important things that are quite serious, but they're also quite draining and exhausting. These spaces, just being able to be outside is so important. And I think we've got saturated with that message during COVID about you know, going for a little mental health walk and oh my god, that it is so valuable. And I you know, and people are so right about endorphins and nature of being outside and how much better it makes you feel, but it really does. It really does.

Lizzie Wild 36:51
Do you find that people talk about trans issues and queer issues when they're walking anyway?

G2 37:28
A little bit. Yeah. But not kind of. I guess most of the conversations I've had and heard about have been relatively light hearted, like, I don't know if that's just because people are still getting to know each other. Although I've also found that most people have been very open and vulnerable and honest with each other. It's not it doesn't feel like it's just a bunch of people talking about the weather, you know, there's real conversations happening and like real bonding happening. And it and it also could be that I haven't been part of those conversations because I'm cis, so they just aren't having them with me. Yeah. People definitely share things about their experiences of being queer for sure. But I would say on the whole what I've overheard or noticed is that they've generally been mostly light hearted or people will joke about the bad things and stuff but they won't. No one's going to kind of haven't seen anyone get upset or anything like that. I suppose. But that doesn't mean they're not happening. I just I yeah, I'm not hearing them. One of our leaders is a student. Yeah, have had conversations with them about things like being asexual. So they've been quite open with conversations around that. And there's definitely some non binary people in the group who are quite vocal about their experiences. And, yeah, it's nice. It's really nice that people feel able to do that with, you know, often relative

Lizzie Wild 40:27
Do you ask for names and pronouns at the start of each walk?

G2 42:50
I don't so one of the feedback points from the weekend away was that people would like name pronoun badges. But you know, just stickers that we can put on first night so people can get to know a little bit easier, which I thought was a really good idea and I'm going to do the next one. And then on the actual walks, I haven't been doing it I like I introduced myself and the backstop with our names and pronouns, but I haven't been doing it and was mostly because it would take ages. We have like 30 people and it would take a long time. Yeah, I've been thinking about starting to. so I do two types of walks. I do like an open walk, which is where we get to 25/30 people and then I do one that you have to book on to, which is usually longer and harder, and it's limited to about 15 people, just so we can kind of keep the pace. So maybe I'll just start doing it on those ones to see if it works. Also, I we did do one that we did in partnership with another organisation that put on this wonderful walk for us and they did it on that one. And it was good. Yeah, I think I will start trying it because it was just sort of one of those things that I've been weighing up and can't decide, but I think it can't, certainly can't hurt anything. It's just the time and I usually just do a kind

of Hands up for people who are there on their own or have come for the first time and then sort of tell everyone to be nice. Yeah.

Lizzie Wild 45:42
There's so many ideas. i wonder if it might be worth connecting with other queer hiking groups?

G2 46:00
I just, I just put in an enquiry for this really awesome space I found in Worcestershire for next summer, like a weekend away and I was thinking of inviting kind of the other queer hiking group. Yeah, I think it'd be really, really good. But yeah, so it'd be good to have a network of us. Definitely.

Lizzie Wild 46:46
Brilliant, I think I think that's pretty much it but I think there was one more thing that we just touched on, which was the use of the word queer in the title. It's been suggested that it makes the group identifiable as trans inclusive. Do you feel the same about that?

G2 47:02
That was my feeling behind using it. I just I just didn't want anyone to be like a plus, you know, and it's also just, I just feel like it's more all encompassing. I feel like I don't know if it Yeah, I feel like in Bristol, people know what that means. And they know that it's an inclusive term. I don't know how widespread that is, but I just wanted it to just be really obvious what we were as well. I'm just making sure that like we have the trans flag emoji on the page or things like that. And I did do a sort of rules thing right at the start just being explicit that transphobia was not tolerated.

Lizzie Wild 48:54
Thank you so much. I'll come over at some point because you're not far at all, and it's just finding the right time to pop over. So I'll come over and join you.

G2 49:21
Yeah, that'd be lush.

Appendix 6
Ethnography Interview with G3

G3
Interview transcript
Zoom (Barbu, 2014), transcribed by Otter.ai (Crumley, 2018)

Fri, Sep 29, 2023 6:30PM • 1:06:20

SUMMARY KEYWORDS
people, group, trans, queer, committee, attend, sessions, kayaking, queer community, outdoors, barriers, feel, gic, non binary, cis, talk, divergence, lgbt, changing, question

SPEAKERS
G3, Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary, Lizzie Wild

Lizzie Wild 00:42
So, the first thing is, can you tell me a little bit about the group that you help run?

G3 02:36
So the group is called [redacted] based in Sheffield, has been a group since 2014. And has been doing sessions on various things since 2015. For trans and non binary people, and anyone questioning their gender identity and it's for 18 years and older. Predominantly started, so I've been told, by someone who is trans he worked at the GIC in Sheffield and wanted to set up a trans swimming group and got help with somebody else who works at the GIC to apply for funding and help set it up. So then it was born. And we do we mainly weekly set swimming sessions, and then a local pool and then we do maybe three over activities a month, across the year. So sometimes hikes or bouldering or tennis or lots of things

Lizzie Wild 03:46
Amazing. It's really, really cool. it's really interesting knowing that there's been a trans group that's been running for this long. So you're saying that it started because someone who actually worked in the GIC kind of saw a need for it. And then wanted to start the group up. I'm assuming it was because some of the people that were coming to the GIC needed a group like that?

G3
Yeah, I think one of her friends who was also trans and also started the group had started another group in Sheffield that only lasted a couple of years. called T boys, for trans men. That was a little group so I don't know if because there was already a little group spouting off. They wanted to do something that sort of isn't just exclusive to trans men. We want to make something that's suitable for like, as many trans people as possible. So I don't know if that Springboarded it. It's really interesting because, so most of the groups I've been working with are queer groups, so they're inclusive of all queer people. And it's really interesting talking to you because obviously, it's a trans exclusive group. Is there a need for trans only groups? I've definitely noticed a rise in trans groups for sure. Just since I started coming to trans [redacted] in like maybe late 2016 2017 And you just see other organisation or if not, just

groups, just like I've seen swimming sessions pop up for trans people in a lot of cities and an outdoor swim group in Brighton. I think more people are out and then, younger people who might be getting involved with clubs and stuff anyway. So it's nice to see, but definitely, definitely, we've been getting more people at sessions and stuff. Yeah, it's amazing. I'm kind of changing this question slightly, because my question is really about why did you start the group but obviously, it wasn't your group to start. you've joined in the group and you felt a need to to help with running it. So from your point of view, on a personal point of view, what's your interest in actually running these groups? It was really important to me when I started as a member who was attending and it was really important for me to be able to have the space. I knew that they were looking, they being the people who ran it, were looking for more people and I had been on organising committees and stuff before over the years. And had been involved in a sort of, maybe activism groups and people that are doing stuff. But I hadn't been on something that was like a little bit more casual and less sort of like fight the power more just like let's create this nice space.

Lizzie Wild 07:32
Yeah.

G3 07:35
So yeah, I wanted to be involved in the thing that I like to attend. absolutely. Is it important for you that it's a trans exclusive group rather than inclusive of all people? I think it holds a space. I think it attracts certain people who maybe wouldn't come if it was a queer space, like, especially if it's something like swimming, or where like, your body might be on show and I think even in the broader LGBT and queer community, like you still experience constantly sometimes of people not understanding or questioning and I think for some people, they do want just a space where they don't have to think about it as much. I mean, to be honest, sometimes we have other trans people who were not acting how they should do Then when we have when we have sort of like outdoors sessions, we open it up to friends and family. So it isn't like cisgender people don't come sometimes. Yeah. And that's nice, but it feels quite powerful, I think, to be doing it as trans people for trans people in a way. Like it feels like we're doing this for us and it's working and yeah, yeah, I think you said something there about, about the your body being on show and how important it is for trans people to be around other trans people. I mean, at one point, and I think this was mainly through chance, one of the lifeguards was trans but not anymore. I think she's left but yeah, a lot of that some people I think wouldn't even come come to the sessions, where they be like swimming, for example, if it wasn't going to be only trans people there. especially sometimes like older people. I think having the trans only space is quite important.

Lizzie Wild
Actually, my next question is what sorts of people come to the groups in outdoor spaces. But yeah, what sorts of people would come to your group?

G3
Get a lot of, it's changed over the years, and interestingly, I think we get fewer like, I think we get more people who may identify as trans men or non binary, than people who identify as trans women. We used to get a lot more trans women come in the past. And I don't know if that was partly because they knew some of the people who

used to be on committee. So it's sort of like a now we have fewer on the committee. So I don't know if that's affected a change. We've had a lot of young people University sort of age sort of like early 20s come in, especially in the past three years. Since getting Instagram actually we had a massive uptake of younger people. Because before we just use Facebook and a mailing list. The vast majority of people who come up are white. We get quite a lot of people who don't live in Sheffield. We'll have people travelling to the group and the surrounding areas. When we go on walks there sometimes seems to be older people. By older I mean, maybe like late 40s 50s. No, not that diverse. We get some people with different disabilities come. I think it's a lot of able bodied people but not exclusively, and I can think of some regulars who aren't. Is it mostly binary trans people, mostly non binary trans people? You know, I don't know. I guess we don't like ask people. At a guess I'd say there's a lot of non binary people, but I don't know if that's just I think that a lot of people identify as non binary rather than like trans female trans male, I don't know, but that's just my perception. of it. Yeah, I think it's interesting. I know personally, you go non binary, but I don't know if that's because I'm non binary. I have non binary friends.

Lizzie Wild 13:56
What do you feel the barriers are for queer people generally to getting outdoors?

G3 14:14
There's sort of money barriers for a lot of people. A lot of people don't drive. I get the impression a lot of people don't have high incomes. A lot of the activities we do like kayaking or something where you'd have to be hiring. And a lot of the people we get beginners to the activities we're doing so like, if we're doing kayaking on the lake, they have to be able to one get there, even by public transport sometimes have the confidence to do it without a group have the money to hire the kayak for a session and be with people they want to try that in especially if you have an instructor and they might not know them. You might be worried about what they're gonna think about you. I mean, when we book our sessions, and if we book instructors for things like archery or like, we don't tell them we're a trans group unless it's sort of like relevant. we generally avoid telling them that and then but I think people maybe just feel a strength in numbers to try stuff you've not usually tried before. And an instructor is probably not going to ask weird questions if there's 12 of you. Compared to if there's just like, a couple.
And it also intersectional marginalisation so you know, as we were talking about a minute ago, not many people who are disabled come to these groups, especially physically disabled people.

Lizzie Wild 16:49
I saw on your Instagram the other day, someone put a post up, so tell me a bit about the decision to allow cis essential carers at your sessions.

G3 17:30
Again, so yeah, we'd had open sessions or outdoorsy sessions, we're always open to friends and family as well. So that was that's our that's always been in there now. So swimming sessions were always not open to friends and family. We tried. We did try it for a bit for maybe a year or so quite a few years ago. I can't remember why we stopped. We stopped it and then there had been talk in the past year of that, really, we should be letting people bring carers and that is stopping people from going. I

had heard firsthand of people who were stopped from going so we discussed it as a group and it was interesting within the committee the struggles of like people having bad experience in the past with cis people attending and being questioned about their medical history. So the committee was quite reluctant. Whilst also, Well, we do also want people to be able to attend. So, I knew it was something we should be doing and I tried to put this forward in a really careful way. So we sort of trialled it for a period and did every other session was essential, companion inclusive and also brought in a code of conduct to help people feel safe. And this involves things like not asking people questions about their transitions or medical history or anything unless they brought it up themselves and confidentiality within the group and things like that. So we brought that in for everyone so that if anyone books on any of our activities you have to agree to it. And then last committee meeting I'd like pulled some data off of the booking site we used and made some graphs and charts and stuff to show that actually hadn't affected attendance in a negative way like some people thought it might put people off attendance. But actually, it hasn't put people off attending and actually not many people have used it the essential companion ticket but they have been used. So that's good. And that was enough to persuade the sort of remaining committee that actually isn't affecting it negatively. And we can do it and we should be doing it. So I was really pleased when we got that through finally because it's taken a long time.

Lizzie Wild 20:16
Do you find that the use of the companion ticket is for physical disabilities, or is it more for Neuro divergence?

G3
I guess more often neuro divergence, the people I know that have used it's for Neuro divergence reasons. like not being able to take public transport by themselves. Or they can't attend the session with people that don't know by themselves and things like that. But I don't know if that was partly because the pool that we are at, and have been since we started, I guess like a lot of pools, It's not hugely well set up, I don't think, for different physical disabilities. We might go to a different pool that has a ramp and or hoist and things like that. There's a lot there, but that's only because our usual one is shutting for two months.

22:07
In the back of my mind I'm kind of thinking if that ends up working and they do have space for us. Maybe it would be suitable for long term change. We'll see. We'll see. Because we could be doing a lot more to to make it more accessible.

Lizzie Wild 22:25
Absolutely. Is there a lot of neuro divergence within the group generally?

G3
Yeah, yeah, I think we get a lot of overlap in numbers. I think loads of people with neurodiversity come to the groups and it's like that old birds of a feather flock together and why? What is it about neuro divergence that makes people want to join a group rather than like maybe non-neurodivergent people who are happy doing it by themselves or like, can be in a mixed group. And again, we don't ask people obviously if they are neurodivergent, but just what you pick up off conversations and

what people choose to tell you and stuff. I'd say maybe two thirds of the people who come are neurodivergent. That might be why people like go into a group because it's like, organised for them and like, they don't have to do any of the organising and you go and there's people there telling you where to go, where to start. And that might appeal to like people who like a bit of structure.

Lizzie Wild
What, what sorts of things do people talk about, when they're attending the outdoor groups?

G3 24:56
Most people predictably, talk about transition, and hormones, and medical services and things and talk about that. People talk about nature. We've got some people who come fairly regularly quite like like, mushrooms, fungi and stuff. Young people, queer people neurodivergence, it's stuff like that. I guess some people often are meeting people for the first time, so a lot of the talk might also be a bit more what do you do? What do you do for a living?

25:52
Some people don't talk much. If there's a dog on a walk, people talk about a dog. We like it when someone brings a dog because it's something to focus on. Some people just talk about the activity at hand, rather than like make extra conversation. Yes, it's a good mix. Like some people get really in depth into the meaning of life. And other people are just talking about the weather. Yeah, we get a lot of people who probably don't talk much and I think maybe that's a neurodivergence thing. Or a socially anxious thing. I've had people say they've come to some sessions and it's put them off go into other sessions because it feels very awkward. And it's not a huge amount we can do about it because I think it brings a lot of o
. Yeah, that's really cool. I love it.

Lizzie Wild
So thinking about the group, what sort of feedback do you get from people and that doesn't need to be a formal feedback but I also what sorts of things do people say?

G3 27:54
Some people say that they don't actually speak to many trans people that they know of, outside of this group, and it's really nice. They can have their sort of like Trans and Queer time. There was a trans woman saying she doesn't meet many trans men. So it's been really nice to have that space to meet them. We've heard feedback about people wanting to do more stuff So people often give us feedback of things they want to do. Yeah, let's do this. Let's do that. We can but we've got a limited amount of time and we can run a very small committee at the moment and

Lizzie Wild 28:49
That's good feedback right, they want more?

G3 28:51
Yeah, I think they forget that the committee have to attend and therefore we can't just attend like five things a week.

Lizzie Wild 29:08
Yeah, that's my next question really was, what are the sort of barriers to like making it bigger or doing more and that I guess that is one of them is like, there's only four of you.

G3 29:19
interestingly I don't think money is a barrier for us making it bigger. Because we could get more money. When we go for our National Lottery funding, well we often, this time we've ended up using all the money, but often we have money left over and I feel like if we wanted to do bigger events and like hire minibuses and stuff, we've done in the past, we could do that more. We would get given the money for it, but it's just it's really difficult to get people to run the groups. I think because we only really want trans people on the committee and to have people who can be reliable, who will turn up for the meetings. Obviously trans people have a lot of stuff going on in life and surgeries and mental health and just other stuff. I know you get it with a lot of committees, but I think when you've got like a heavily neuro diverse and trans committee, you get a lot of like, no shows or a lot of barriers. We're currently thinking of different ways to have people involved that don't involve a committee like a lesser role that would still be in order to run things. If we had three times as many people and in the past sometimes we have had a bigger committee and it has been easier. It's so much work.
So now we've got to the point where you've got the money to do it, but actually, the barriers in place are to do with people not being able to give the time to run the group. That's a barrier. It's more mental health. Time. And because there is so much stress and trauma on trans people anyway, I think it's, if you're then asking people to step up and volunteer for free to do this extra work and be an admin or attend this stuff or do X Y Z it can be quite a lot to ask of like people or expect people to be able to keep up for a full year. In 2015, maybe also 2018 We did a big camping trip, but that required quite a lot of committee to be able to go and sort stuff out, and a lot of planning in advance. If we had more people we'd be able to do bigger stuff like that, which people do want. We can't plan it if we don't know we've got people who can go and help. So it's difficult. So it's time and it's Yeah, mental health capacity, working capacity, cost of living, you know, all that sort of thing that's sort of getting in the way there.

Lizzie Wild
I did a questionnaire asking the queer community about the barriers that they have to going outdoors or joining outdoor groups and sports groups. One of the things that came up was toilets and changing rooms.
So is that something that comes up for your group at all?

G3
Yeah, I mean, it comes up. The vast majority of places we're going to have gendered toilets and changing rooms and won't have a non gendered option. Like there's a particular place near Sheffield where you can do like, kayaking or the water assault course so like lots of watery based stuff. And we've been there quite a few times. And yeah, there might be people who've put off by it. They've not told us they're put off by it, but we always try and check with the venue. I think in a way it's kind of good that we are a group though because then people can go in together. Even being in public changing rooms for like, the kayak in the paddle board and and like there's

been members of the public in there as well. We are never by ourselves and so we were looking out for each other. Yeah, it sounds like that community aspect of it that the power and the numbers of you attend to especially all being trans, and not just being a queer group with cis people as well. It's just links back to different previous questions. It's just reminded me that I think the most important part of the reason why it's important for it to be a trans group is I found myself like sometimes put off g into even queer outdoors groups in case I have to out myself as trans. Whereas in a trans group, everyone already knows and it doesn't matter. I feel like, say if you're going to use a changing room in a queer outdoors group, I think, you know, they might find out and yeah, they're queer people, so they're probably going to be fine, but I don't necessarily want everyone to know. Whereas if we're in the trans group is sort of like, well, by attending, like, I clearly want to do the activity more than I care about people knowing and we're all in the same boat because all of us have that sort of shared experience. Yeah, that's really key.

Lizzie Wild 38:15
Thank you for adding that little additional piece of information. Thank you.

Appendix 7
Ethnography W1

Hike
Bamford and Ladybower, Peak district, UK
6th August 2023

Prior to walk:

Information available on Instagram (Meta, 2024)



Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures] (2023). *On Sunday 6 August.* [Instagram] Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/Cu8-BjbNmpY/?img_index=1 (Accessed 27th July 2023)

Permission gained from group leaders prior to walk and from whole group during introductions at the start of the walk.

Field notes, made using Otter.ai (Crumley, 2018)

Sun, Aug 06, 2023 10:55AM • 0:12

SUMMARY KEYWORDS
pronouns, majority, binary, sharing, trans

SPEAKERS
Lizzie Wild

Lizzie Wild 00:05

introduction sharing pronouns. majority of people using non-binary pronouns. Some trans binary people.

Sun, Aug 06, 2023 10:57AM • 0:06

SUMMARY KEYWORDS
lots, mullets

00:02
lots of mullets



Walking up the hill at the start of the walk 11.30am



Paused to look at farming protest installation 12.10pm

Sun, Aug 06, 2023 12:41PM • 6:29

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

talking, people, queer, group, binders, accessibility issues, outdoor gear, wearing, generational, issues, colour, conversations, trans, surf club, clothing, experiences, outdoor, patriarchy, specifically, dungarees

SPEAKERS

Lizzie Wild

Lizzie Wild 00:03

They were talking on their way up. They were talking about the Barbie movie quite a lot. And talking about patriarchy, and the queer opmion and non binary characters. They were also talking about the use of the word guys as a gender neutral term on whether it was appropriate or not. And again, talking about patriarchy, influence on that. Talking about work and respecting pronouns depending on where you are in the chain. And then they were talking about schools and coming out and parents and acceptance, and the cross generational issues, they were saying about how the younger people in the group had better experiences and more likely to come out at school. And the older people in the group were saying that, no one was out at school and the impact that that had on them. And then talking about these walking groups, being around queer people, and just feeling free and able to talk about these issues. Being able to talk about the experiences not having to worry or hide. There was a discussion about wearing binders and swimwear. They were talking about a AFAB experiences and about Blue spaces and how getting changed on the beach was an issue for trans people and wearing tight clothing like wetsuits and that sort of thing was a barrier to doing swimming and surfing and that kind of thing. They were talking about a queer only surf club, a camp. And how that was really amazing because it was just full of people that you didn't feel like you needed to hide your body around and it was much more accepting and people were really open and won't mis-gender you based on your body and your swimsuit and that kind of thing. That community aspect. They were talking about each others dungarees. They said they will have to try and buy binders that do not always fit and you can't send back and sharing binders. One of them offered another person a binder that they managed to get the didn't fit them and they offered it for free and they were going to post it. Talking about access to spaces like this and being out with people and they were saying about how they feel like they could talk about whatever they wanted. And they could talk about being gay and they talk about being trans but they don't have to. So it's not like compulsory conversation. Whereas if you go into a straight group, then you might end up talking about it and having questions asked and having to explain yourself, whereas here it's like you can take it or leave it and people understand. I was hearing about people's experiences of being queer in groups not aimed at queer people. Then I was talking to the group leaders about how the group has grown. They were saying they had about 10 people and now it's consistently around about 30 people that come and about 40% of them are new each time. We were talking about the walk they did a few weeks ago which was specifically aimed at disabled queer people and how they have a lot of neurodiverse people as well as people with

accessibility issues coming to that and that was specifically for them. Then we were talking about the lack of racial diversity. There's 30 People here and it's probably about 90% White people. So the diversity is quite low, which considering you've got quite big cities around. They were talking about how one of the people attending the group goes to another group that is specifically for queer people of colour. They were talking about doing a mash up between them and doing a outdoor session for that group. So to try and increase the number of queer people of colour outside as well but they needed a more specific group for that. We were talking about the generational stuff as well, like the big mix of ages that they thought doesn't seem important on the face of it because everyone is mixed in together and no one cares, but it is important when you get into more in depth conversations about queer experiences and queer issues and how younger queer people had older queer people to look up to. They said that people don't seem to come wanting to talk about queer issues and think they're just having a nice day out but actually, if you listen to everyone's conversations, they are all talking about queer issues. They were telling me about the accessibility issues as well. Like starting from the train line. They are restricted by that because you need people to be able to get there cheaply. A lot of people don't have cars, they can't afford cars and the transport increases access for the group as well. Some talking about veganism. looking around right now, people are eating, most people have brought home cooked food in Tupperware, or some people have put sandwiches from the shop that they've gotten on the way. A lot of home cooked food. people wearing a mix of outdoor gear. It's a mixture between fairly very outdoorsy kind of clothing come in outdoor gear with outdoor backpacks and a lot of people just turned up with every day clothes.

Sun, Aug 06, 2023 12:49PM • 1:19

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

queer, people, bisexual, neuro diversity, chosen, pronouns, overlapping, talking, live, correct, yorkshire, rural, gay, spaces

SPEAKERS

Lizzie Wild

Lizzie Wild 00:00

They were saying how they feel that they feel like they live in a bubble, and they sometimes forget that in non-queer spaces, people are against using correct pronouns and having that chosen family makes them very lucky. Another person was saying that they don't have that at all because they live in rural Yorkshire and they don't have a chosen family. They just live around right-wing people. They're always the odd one. And they were saying that people are surprised when they find out that they are bisexual and not gay. Because they look queer people assume they must be gay rather than bisexual. whereas the other was saying that actually everyone's bisexual in their group of friends as well and that in that group there is lots of neurodiverse people as well. I noticed quite a few people talking about neurodiversity overlapping with queer spaces. There's probably a lot of neurodiverse people in this group as well.









Photos taken 1.30pm
Top of ridge. Trans and progress pride flags being carried on backs of leaders backpacks. Group wearing a range of every day and outdoor clothing. Paused for a long time on ridge. Notices other groups there including families, in background of photo 3 is a group of walkers including a person wearing hijab.

Sun, Aug 06, 2023 3:12PM • 7:27

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

walk, intersectional, group, sheffield, sustainable, trans, activism, talking, wheelchair, styles, advertised, suitable, route, reasonable, precious metals, wheelchair user, steep incline, accessibility issues, intersectionality, support

SPEAKERS

Lizzie Wild, Participant. Self ID, non binary

Lizzie Wild 00:02
They were saying their job is in sustainable wind power, and doing ecology reports for creating sustainable power. Another person I was talking to, on the way down, a trans guy from San Francisco. He was talking about how he was living in Sheffield to do research on how metals can be used in a more sustainable way to create technology. He was saying that loads of technology uses precious metals, and it's not sustainable. It's bad for the environment. So he was doing some research in Sheffield on what materials can be mined that are much more sustainable, that have the same properties as the precious metals that are currently being used for phones and that kind of thing. So it's people with jobs who are actually working in climate activism. He was saying that he found out about this group from going to a radical Trans Pride event in Sheffield. It was about activism. He saw a poster there for the [redacted] group. And that's how he ended up coming on this walk. Another guy was saying that he's been coming for a little while. This isn't the first time he's come and he said a friend at work told him about the group and said he would enjoy it. He was talking about was talking about the intersectional sessions they do as he is

neurodivergent and black. Both the people I was listening to are not white. So they were both interested in the intersectionality of the group and talking about accessibility and how the group leaders make space for feedback on it. They went on an urban walk, which was advertised as an accessible walk and the feedback they got on that one was that they walked too fast. They'd advertised it as an accessible walk, but then the pace was too quick so the next time they slowed it down. He was talking about how he'd noticed that on their website, which I've noticed as well, they have pictures of the route when it's advertised as accessible. When they advertise the regular routes, they practice the route first, and then they write down - Are there any styles that you can't get over If you're in a wheelchair or have accessibility issues, and then they tell you before you go on the walk, so that steep incline at the start of this walk was mentioned and the rocky downward track and then in the fact there was two styles on the walk, which would make it not suitable for some people. So even if you can't attend one thing, you can attend another and the guy was saying that he. liked he liked the way that they talked about accessibility, and he was saying that one thing he finds really interesting on walks, being intersectional himself, he was saying that it's interesting that different people have different needs. Even if you think you know the needs of a certain demographic of people within your group, you don't and only the person themselves does. Every single disabled person has different needs. So the best way to approach it is if someone comes to you and says, 'Hey, I'm in a wheelchair is this group for me?' And they say, okay, but the question might be, 'can you get out of the wheelchair to get over style?' Because some people can. But some people can't. This walk wouldn't have been suitable for a wheelchair user anyway, but some might be or someone might have been blind, for example, but they could actually do a walk like this as long as they brought their dog. Is this walk suitable for dogs the whole way or is there any fields which has got cows in them? And that sort of thing. That was really interesting conversation talking about the intersectional issues and how you think you know what the problems are for each person, but the only only that person knows what they can and can't do. So the more information you give them, the better it is for that person. And there was a lot of talks about the overlap of neurodiversity in the group, as well. And that feeling of comfort and safety. There was then a further talk in a group about said about intersectional diversity and reasonable adaptions and autism. Another talked about dyslexia and the need for time to process instructions and directions. How walking in a safe group meant they could just follow and not have to read a map. You were talking to S who is non binary and also dysexic, like you. How did it make you feel being able to talk to somebody who had the similar intersectional issues?

Participant. Self ID, non binary 06:40
amazing, really good. I mean, I feel so privileged. And I suppose I feel... I think it's amazing that they said they're posting me a binder. I just think that is, I mean, wow, what a support really to have got from today. Not just to be able to meet and talk to these people. But to be able to have actual support and an item that will support me with a trans struggle.

Sun, Aug 06, 2023 3:20PM • 1:59

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

vegan, lots, dog, breeding dogs, people, scarce, talking, similar, rescued, welcoming, vegetarian, converting, put, radical, activism

SPEAKERS
Lizzie Wild, Participant. Self ID, non binary

Lizzie Wild 00:07
As someone coming into it for the first time, what was it like for you?

Participant. Self ID, non binary 00:19
welcoming. A bit nerve wracking because I want to get along with them because they are my age and they're very similar to me and the opportunity to meet lots of people who are similar to me is scarce.

Lizzie Wild 00:52
They were talking about dogs at the beginning. It was a real talking point. One of them was talking about their old dog. They were talking about how their dogs a rescue dog. They were saying that it was pregnant lots of times. Yeah, they got it and they rescued breeding dogs. And they had retired. They were put in a cage with lots of other dogs so S had rescued the dog. This same person was talking about being vegan with another person, vegetarian, but basically vegan and their family being vegan and talking about radical activism and slowly converting people to being vegan. The group was talking a lot about vegan activism although not many of them were actually vegan, a lot were vegetarian.

Sun, Aug 06, 2023 3:23PM • 9:14

SUMMARY KEYWORDS
queer, people, identity formation, walking, group, talking, friends, exploring, sperm, parenting, met, chosen, realised, solo, consequences, parent, child, person, donor, afresh

SPEAKERS
Lizzie Wild

Lizzie Wild 00:00
There was a conversation about how the outdoors is good for mental health. He was saying that he was talking about going outside for walks and how post COVID, Since moving up north, from the South he's been walking a lot more. And finding that walking gives him time to process his life and outside space and using his walk to Tesco to do his shopping, urban walks, just to give him time to himself time to think about his day and what's been going on his life and work through issues and how that makes a big difference to him. He talked about the reasons why the outdoors is good for you. And he was talking about it from his point of view, saying that, you know, it's really increased his, physical health because it's walking more, but also his mental health is a lot better because you have time to process stuff. He was talking about how a group like this just gives him more queer friends that aren;t his chosen family, and he can talk to his chosen family about certain things. The other guy was

saying the same thing, that your chosen family around you, that you don't always talk about your issues, because maybe they're too hard to talk about your very close friends. So maybe you're going through like a gender journey or discovery about yourself. But then you don't actually want to tell them your secrets yet. Maybe you're trying to work something out for yourself and you're not ready to go, Hey, I'm trans. And you want to talk to other trans people about it before actually officially saying to your friends about it. They both were agreeing with each other that a group like that allows them to be around new queer people, and maybe they'd see them again, but maybe they wouldn't. And he said it was almost like there are no consequences or no comeuppance of talking about something maybe that's new that you're exploring because these people don't know you. The guy from San Francisco was saying that when he changed his name, he would use his new name in new queer groups. That it felt safe introducing yourself as this new name, because they wouldn't dead name you because they didn't have a clue what your dead name was. That no one cares if it was chosen or whatever. That's your name. You can start afresh if you go on your own. There was a lot of people there who came on their own to the group. Not because they didn't have chosen family they could go with, but because they wanted to go meet new people on their own, and it was partly to do with identity formation. That they weren't just meeting other queer people but they're also queer people that love walking, Sometimes their other queer friends don't enjoy walking, or surfing or whatever it is they want to do. So they can go on their own to these events. They know that people will be friendly to them there, but they also have the same interests as them. So that's that identity formation happening in those groups because you can go in and go hey, this is me. There was also people who had just come out. One woman, she was telling me that she came out when she was like a teenager, as a lesbian, and then met this guy so she'd been out for a while and dated lots of different AFAB people. Then she met a guy and thought about having kids with him, and then realised she doesn't really like men and that she was only doing it to have children. And she was talking about how now they've just broken up. So she kind of put all her life into the sky as they were gonna settle down together and then she had like a massive queer crisis. That's why she was at the group today, she didn't know anyone there and doesn't have any queer family and friends. She said that she has no chosen family and was at the group trying to build that. She was re finding herself and identity and she was talking about how she's obviously quite a butch queer person and how it was nice being around non binary people today, because that was helping with identity formation for her and just exploring who she was. Someone else was sharing a very similar story and she said it was really nice to talk about someone who had been through the same thing and gone through the same sort of identity crisis. She was talking a lot about wanting to still have a child and exploring how to do that. What she's found since she and her ex had broken up and talking to queer people is every single queer person she talks to turns around and goes, just have them on your own be a solo parent. She was talking about like the radical idea of solo parenting, and how queer people are not averse to that at all. Lots of them have been through that same kind of thought process. She was saying, basically, she feels ready to have a baby, but she now doesn't have a partner and even she had a partner it's unlikely they would have sperm as she's gay. And to get to a point of being ready to have a baby with a partner will take years and so she doesn't really want to put that off any longer. So she's considering she knows someone that will. She has a friend who's already offered sperm. So if she has a known donor already. She was telling me that she is basically thinking about using a

known donor that's a friend who was offered sperm and having a baby on her own and was worried about it. And they were just talking about that about parenting as a queer person, and the benefits of solo parenting and the negative, like the financial sides and she was basically just saying that she needs to kind of get her get herself reset up as a person and find her community again. she was saying things like this walking group are exactly the kind of queer space you could take a baby. it's the kind of queer space that doesn't need to go away when you have a child so it's accessible to parents as well. She was using this group to rebuild community. She didn't know anyone there and talking about this was safe like she could decide if she didn't want anyone to know about this. She could just never come to this group again. So talking about it was in a really safe place to have this conversation. There's no consequences. There's no come back. She said she had talked to her friends about it, but not maybe as in depth.

Sun, Aug 06, 2023 3:33PM • 7:35

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

walk, queer, toilets, clothing, barrier, learning, binary genders, pronouns, language, leaders, peaks, talking, countryside, group, issue, trainers, gender politics, access, trans, wet

SPEAKERS

Participant. Self ID, non binary, Lizzie Wild

Lizzie Wild 00:00

Some people talked about the weather and how the weather being dry after it had been wet for a while. Some of them had tried to bring their friends along with them, but their friends were less outdoorsy. That's one of the reasons why there was lots of people there on their own today who were new, because their friends didn't want to come because it was been so wet this weekend before the walk. They were worried it was going to rain again, and how a couple of them said that they didn't have the right clothing and they were a bit nervous about going even if they wanted to do this walk. Quite a few of them said It was a good introduction to this sort of walking as they hadn't done much in the peaks even though they live really close. They know that they can get to the peaks really quickly, but they've never had a group to safely join to do it. So it was like a safety walking with other people like them so they could access it. They actually said they literally can access something they've never been able to access before. Because the safety of being with people like them having same issues. They talked about toilets a lot and a few people mentioned that the toilets were non gendered. But there was only one. That was an issue. There was no toilets halfway round, obviously but it is the countryside. We can't fix everything. But the toilets were not gendered. And I don't think that leaders even intended it that way. However, it was a lucky little bonus. Some people said they didn't have access to the right clothes. If it had been really wet, they wouldn't have been able to come necessarily, because they didn't have that. Actually, it was it was less that they didn't have access to the right clothing. But because they hadn't done a walk in the Peak District before. They didn't know how mountainous or windy or cold it would have been up on the hills because they just didn't know as they've just not done this sort of walking. They've only done countryside lowland walking or like urban walking

before. so they were worried about it being too cold and then not having the right clothing. The barrier was having the perceived idea you need a certain clothing in order to do this walk when actually you could have done this with trainers and a regular coat. There wasn't a bit that you needed proper, sturdy boots for and one person mentioned they only had trainers on their feet were getting really hot because they didn't have proper walking boots on and that they just didn't have any and they couldn't afford them. So money was a barrier that came up a few times about correct clothing. And having not having the money for it. Toilets came up as a barrier. Changing spaces and toilets was a big thing that was discussed. They weren't talking about this walk but about but joining other non-queer groups. Quite a few people said that the fact that the leaders, I think everyone I spoke to actually, said the fact that the leaders were queer, visibly queer, and were non binary, made them sure that from a gender politics point of view would be safe for them to attend that there wouldn't be any trans exclusionary people there because the leaders were trans. Yeah, there's no way there's going to be an issue with being that. There was a younger person who was finding words like a AMAB and a AFAB with difficult in their mouth. They were tending to assume binary genders and they were clearly in some sort of process of learning and no one was unkind about it at all. They could see that he was new to this language. He was clearly queer, but was new to using trans language. But nobody was upset about it. He looked like he felt a bit uncomfortable because he knew he was not quite getting it right. But then when he was no one was being scared of correcting him. He was talking about the use of the word guys and people were discussing that and he was really open to having that discussion. He was learning and growing and everyone was giving him that space to make mistakes as long as he listened. I asked some of them, what do you like about the group they said that people get things wrong. And it doesn't happen very often. But when it does, it's okay. And there's lots of people who are learning about themselves. because everyone's learning about themselves because even when they're not getting it quite right, they're always coming from a place of good intention and once they get it wrong once, they never get it wrong again. When people were talking about each other, I noticed that they would never say that guy or that woman they would always say that person. So everyone was using that language. One person said to me that they use they pronouns for everybody unless they knew their pronouns.

Participant. Self ID, non binary 05:54
When they said name round I though oh I wish they'd do pronouns, then they were like name and pronouns, and I was just like, yes. I don't know why I thought they wouldn't ask for pronouns. Of course, they would. Saying my pronouns really helps me to feel seen and I'm used to being frustrated about them not asking.

Sun, Aug 06, 2023 3:47PM • 2:02

SUMMARY KEYWORDS
polyamory, partners, upset, hard, bad, louis, ethnography

SPEAKERS
Lizzie Wild

Lizzie Wild 00:00
One person said something about how [redacted] did a show about polyamory and came to the conclusion from their ethnography that polyamory was really really bad because, it was so hard and everyone got upset. He was saying that he is polyamorous. He liked his partners to have other partners because he says he's got a really low energy for socialising. He said that he likes his partners to have other partners so you can talk to them for a little bit and then they have someone else to also talk to.

Notes made on phone
32 people
Mostly from Manchester and Sheffield (this was shared during the introductions)

1 person walking barefoot
Mixture of people wearing dungarees or traditional outdoor walking clothing

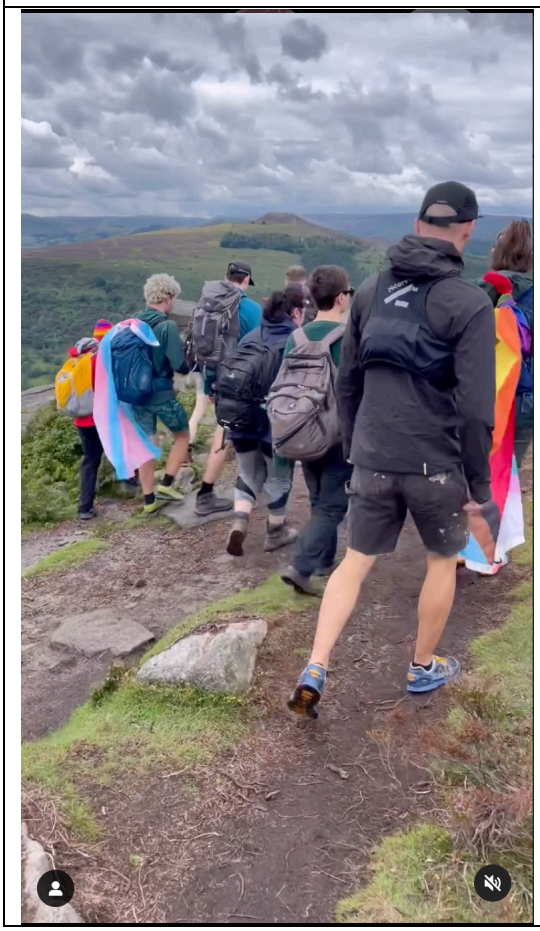
Lots of people had pin badges of either different LGBT flags or political statements on them.

Shorter untraditional hairstyles were common in the group.

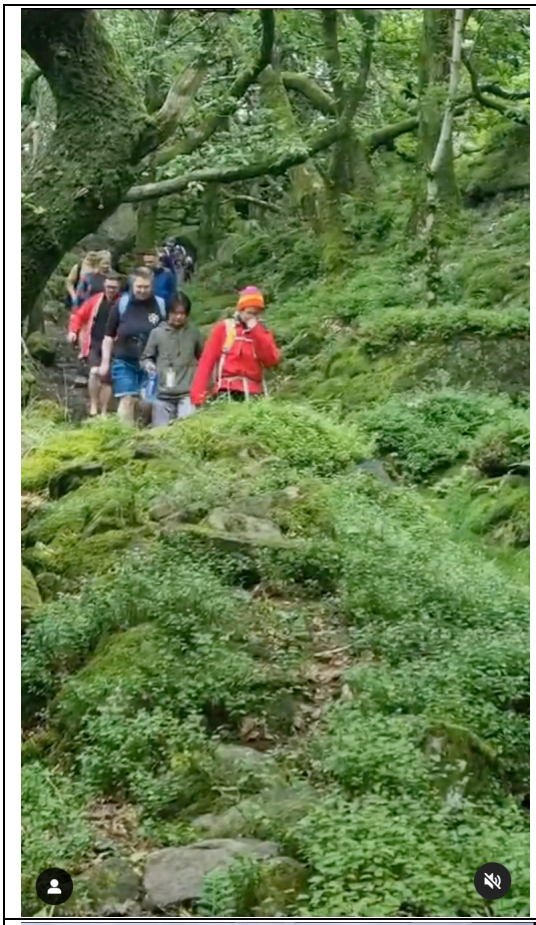
People talked about dogs quite a lot

There was a barrier with no entry on the route and there was no other footpath up the hill. The leader, supported by the rest of the group, chose to just go around the barrier and use the road anyway, going through the barrier at the top of the road at the end. The road was around a mile long with a steep incline. After going through this barrier the group talk turned to discussions about general anarchy and how queers like to break the rules. They were then talking about the police y that has recently come to force and friends of theirs who have been arrested at protests. Some were sharing stories of protests they had been to.

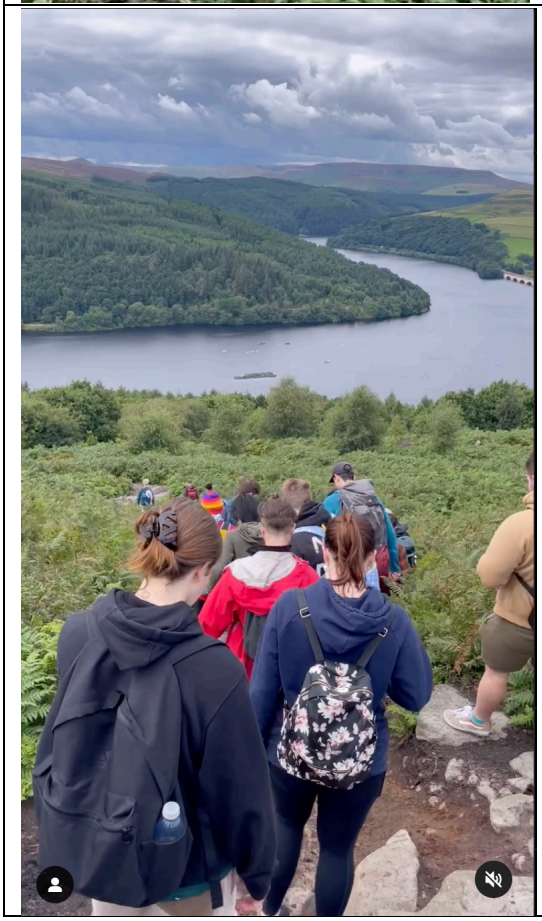
Photos posted by W1 on Instagram after the hike
Queer Out Here [@queeroutthereadventures]. (2023). *Bamford was awesome.* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CvnXw3itqnd/ (Accessed 1st September 2023)



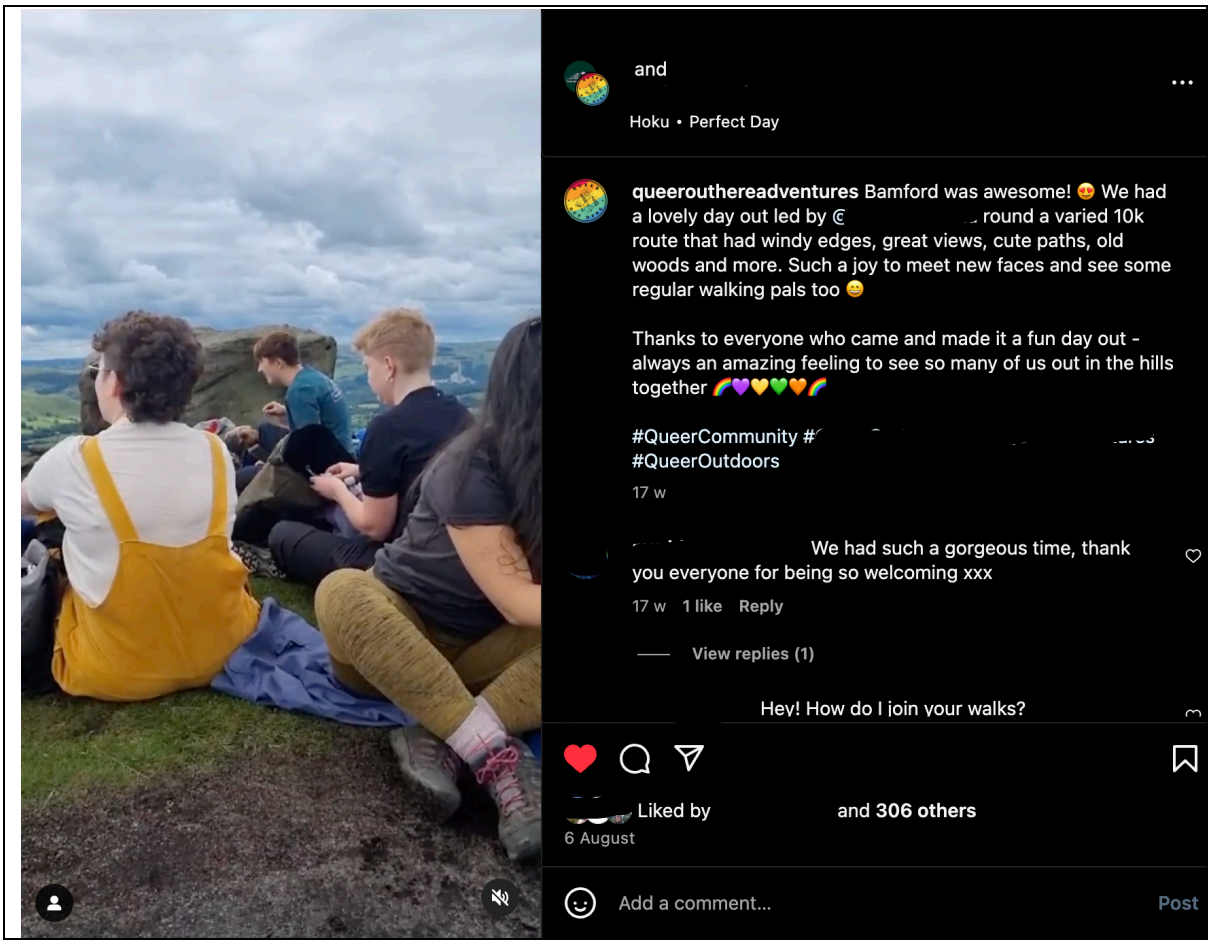











and
Hoku • Perfect Day
queerouthereadventures Bamford was awesome! 😍 We had a lovely day out led by € round a varied 10k route that had windy edges, great views, cute paths, old woods and more. Such a joy to meet new faces and see some regular walking pals too 😄
Thanks to everyone who came and made it a fun day out - always an amazing feeling to see so many of us out in the hills together 🌈💜💛💚🧡🌈
#QueerCommunity #
#QueerOutdoors
17 w
We had such a gorgeous time, thank you everyone for being so welcoming xxx
17 w 1 like Reply
View replies (1)
Hey! How do I join your walks?
Liked by and 306 others
6 August
Add a comment...
Post

Appendix 8
Ethnography W2

W2
Grindleford station to Sheffield, Peak district, UK
17th September 2023

Prior to walk:
Information available on Instagram



Peak Queer Adventures [@peakqueeradventures]. (2023). *Join us for a chance to grab some late summer sun.* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/Cwzip6Asn94/?img_index=1 (Accessed 10th September 2023)

Permission gained from group leaders prior to walk and from whole group during introductions at the start of the walk.

Field notes, made using Otter.ai (Crumley, 2018)

Sun, Sep 17, 2023 10:58AM • 0:13

SUMMARY KEYWORDS
sustainability, master, leader, talking

SPEAKERS
Lizzie Wild

Lizzie Wild 00:05

The leader talking about sustainability and doing a master's in sustainability

Sun, Sep 17, 2023 11:23AM • 0:53

SUMMARY KEYWORDS
trauma therapy, talking, people, intensely, commune, sustainability, ecologist, interests, good, environment, meditation, living

SPEAKERS
Lizzie Wild

Lizzie Wild 00:00
They were just talking about their jobs and working in sustainability and as an ecologist and talking about the environment and nature connection, and the way that walking is a really good trauma therapy for them and they also do meditation. One of them was talking about living in a Buddhist commune. But living with other people so intensely can be really, really hard. They said it's nice to mix with other people and go out without his partner as they have different interests and join groups like this.



Sun, Sep 17, 2023 11:32AM • 0:13

SUMMARY KEYWORDS
transition, transphobia, socially, issues, medically, binary, recognizes, trans

SPEAKERS
Lizzie Wild

Lizzie Wild 00:00
Talking about trans issues and transphobia and how non-binary people wear different clothing to try and socially transition as they don't always medically

transition or even change their names. How nice it is to be in a group that recognizes these differences.

Sun, Sep 17, 2023 1:06PM • 1:47

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

trans, people, overlap, education, working, kids, introspective, autistic, non binary, provision, outdoors, evident, lockdown, issues, group, impact, headteacher, outdoor, dyslexic, transitioning

00:00
They were talking about queer experiences and growing up gay, trans issues and COVID and the way that that has had an impact on coming out and finding groups. They were talking about social distancing and how community groups like this, how people find community after COVID and how being outdoors feels safer. They talked about their health and impact that lockdown had on people. They were discussing transitioning and trans issues and turning introspective when they were stuck at home and not working. It allowed them to think about themself and who they are and find things out about themselves. They said they knew lots of people who came out as trans during covid. The also said about working in sustainability. There was a trans, non binary person who works in alternative education outdoors. They were talking about the fact that most of the kids in the outdoor provision are neurodiverse. That there's an overlap between neurodiversity and trans people, which is evident in that group. This is also evident in this group as well and I have heard a lot of people talking about neurodivergence. I've spoken to 10 people today and about 8 them have told me that they are autistic, adhd or dyslexic when they tell me about themselves. I would say there's a clear overlap. This person was working in an outdoor education as well working with young people who have been excluded from schools and have a last chance in education and the majority are autistic and half of them were trans. They told me how the provision also happens to have a trans headteacher and how that gives the kids representation in that group outside as well.

Sun, Sep 17, 2023 6:23PM • 44:47

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

queer, trans, people, talking, walk, group, sheffield, lockdown, non binary, person, binary, transphobia, experiences, peaks, tree, work, toilet, transition, gorge, dungarees

SPEAKERS

Lizzie Wild

Lizzie Wild 00:11
The walk from was from Grindleford station which is about 10 miles into the Peak District. You get there by train from Sheffield. that train from Sheffield station takes about 15 minutes so it's really accessible and it costs only £2 on the train. Most of the people on the walk came from Sheffield and there was about 30 people on the walk. They didn't do a round of names at the beginning with pronouns which made it

a bit trickier to work out what who was there, because I was basing it on what people look like rather than what they told me their pronouns were which helps me know whether they're trans. As the walk went on, I started getting to know people and probably around about two thirds of the group were trans either binary or non binary. The rest of them were mostly gay men and a couple of queer women. So mostly AFAB people. We walked from Grindleford station back to a park on the edge of Sheffield, which was around about a four hour walk with two breaks in it. About eight miles to that side of Sheffield. Most people came from Sheffield and a couple of people came from Mancheste. The travel on the train from Manchester takes quite a lot of time to get there. There's about an hour but it does actually go all the way through. And I think everyone everyone else came from Sheffield or nearby. We walked through padley gorge which is a gorge on the edge of the peaks. And then over some of the hills back to Sheffield and that ended up as an urban walk. At the point we came out of the peak district national park we came to a cafe where we stopped for a bit and used the toilets and some people bought icecreams and then the last mile of the walk was an urban walk through Sheffield. At the ending park there was a queer picnic meetup which was partly organised by peak queer adventures who ran this walk and along with some other queer groups and bringing everybody together. A couple of people joined partway along the walk just for the last mile. so they were people that weren't able to access the peaks but were able to access the last part of the walk because it was on a wide pavement and fully accessible. people were wearing mostly outdoor clothing, some people were wearing branded things from the group itself. like peak queer adventures T shirts and that kind of thing. Most people were wearing walking boots, some people are wearing trainers more like sportswear and then one barefoot person but that was the same person as on the last group so not a different person. The conversation started off with they just generally talking about small talk at the beginning. like who are you? Where do you come from that kind of thing. Talking about their jobs. I was welcomed with a group leader to start with. He told me he had just started his masters in sustainable food. He was talking about working in sustainability. And he was a student sustainable food masters he'd like to quit his job to do it. We were talking a little bit about the Welsh environment act and how that is focused on the sustainable use of natural resources in Wales and actually, he's only a couple of weeks into his master's and already learning about the Welsh environmental policies. Then that was a bit of a theme. There was also an ecologist on the walk as well. And another person that worked in environmental sciences, and later on I was talking to a couple of outdoor education leaders as well. So there was quite a few people in the group that worked in jobs in sustainability and nature connected things. There was also a guy at the beginning, who I was talking to. It was his first time on the walk, and he was saying they used to live in Scotland. He used to live in a Buddhist commune. He was talking about like how nature and walking in nature is like really meditative. When he lived in the budhist community he learnt all about meditation and power of meditation and he said how walking was something that actually creates a really similar headspace. He was saying that he had wanted to come on the walks for a while but this was his first time and he wanted to come on the walks because he felt like walking in nature with queer people would be like a really healing experience. Being able to talk about things like trauma, with other queer people would be really helpful to him from his experience. Then he was also talking about being queer and growing up as a queer person. He's a cis-gender gay man. He was talking about how he finds the world with this identity. He was looking for a group nearby to kind of

come and do walking with. He doesn't come with his partner and it's a space for himself to take time on his own as his partner stayed at home. That was really nice and he we were also talking about some ecology stuff as well. He was telling me about about the trees and about mycorrhizal connections in the ground which was quite fun because he was kind of teaching me stuff that I already knew, which I quite enjoyed. He was talking about the different types of trees we're talking about UK rain forest trees as there was a couple at the start of the walk and he had a really good basic understanding of ecology and of the trees and how they are all connected to each other in the woods. He just had an interest in nature, basically and in Buddhism and he is a Buddhist and meditating in nature was like really strong. He also said he's actually a walk leader. Not for peak queer adventures, but for outdoor lads who are a group for men, and it's inclusive, inclusive of trans men. He's done 35 Group walks with them, he's led the walks. He was saying how important the group was but he found that he wanted to go to a more inclusive group because in that group, it was mostly just gay men. He wanted to go to a group where he was learning about other different people and about their life experiences as well. He felt like he kind of had got enough from these people that were just like him. That even it was inclusive of trans men, not many trans men went on the walks. He wanted to branch out. He wanted to meet more people with different life experiences. He wanted to meet more trans people and non binary people and learn more about queer people's experiences that weren't like his own. So that was one of the reasons he was attending the group as well. Then we came across this tree. there was a tree in the ground an old oak tree stump. You could tell it was oak because it had leaves growing at the bottom, which one of the people pointed out and it was full of coins. we stopped there for a while and took a photo. It mixed the group up a bit. Then i spoke with a woman that was an ecologist. She was talking about how the coins were really cool, but actually the trees growth has been stunted by other coins being pushed into it. The tree was actually trying to regrow from the base but it wasn't able to because it had all these coins pushed into it. Lots of people were talking about the impact that people had on that. There's a photo of the group with the tree that will be on the Instagram page, I'm sure. Some people said they remembered the tree and that they had been there before and remember this tree and there was a few people talking about how they grew up in Sheffield and they used to go walking in the padley gorge when they were kids and as an adult they don't really do it because they find it hard to find people to go walking with. They were remembering this tree that was there when they were a kid. They had a connection with it. One person said 'I remember coming here my family and I didn't remember the gorge but I remember this tree and being here has brought back lots of memories' Then at that point the people that are from Sheffield started talking about going into the peaks when they were children and all go into Padley gorge and remember going to the station but don't remember the gorge itself, but they all felt a real connection with that place and how nice it was to go back there as an adult. Then some people were talking a little bit at that point about how they don't have their family in their life anymore, even though they live nearby. Some people were talking about their coming out stories and now they don't have these families around them anymore because of homophobia or transphobia and that kind of thing. So then after that, I was talking to a non binary AMAB person who was probably in their maybe 50s or 60s. They were very bright, they had they had purple leggings with daisies all over them and short dungarees and like a bright hat on and their hair was purple dyed from grey and they had a stubbly beard. Their clothes were quite feminine. They had 'pride' embroidered

across their dungarees and they also had a couple of flags, like pride flag sewn onto their dungarees. They started talking to me about their pride flags on them. They were talking about how the asexual flag is really boring looking. How it's kind of a rubbish flag to have really because being asexual doesn't mean you're boring and the flags are really boring.It's like Shades of Grey and purple on it. They were talking about that flag and about the other ace communities that they're in. Then they were telling me about being non binary as an amab person and trying to dress feminine but not dress too feminine because they don't want to be misgendered as a woman, either. They hadn't come out that long ago and they were kind of exploring how far they can push the femininity without being misgendered as a trans woman. They said the group was a great place to do this and explore their identity as everyone was supportive and they also didn't know them very well. They also talked about their asexuality and how that community is quite small. At that point there was a couple of other people who came over and started talking about being ace as well. There was actually turns out there was quite a lot of non binary ace people in the group. And they were saying that there's quite an overlap between non binary and and asexual identity. It's quite common apparently, especially with agender non binary people. Then the conversation moved onto walking and this person was telling me that they love walking long distance paths but since they have started transitioning to being non binary, they have found they can't walk on their own anymore because they're AMAB and trans feminine. They dont feel safe doing long distance walks on their own anymore. So they're looking for queer people to go on walks with more. They haven't lived here very long. They moved down from Glasgow a few weeks ago. They were looking for a community and found peek queer adventures and decided they were really keen to come to all their walks and, like really find that part of their life within their new identity. To meet other people like themselves, at the same time as being able to do a hobby that they've loved their whole life. That they had found a way to keep doing a hobby they love and though they would have to give up on but have found a way not to have to give it up. And so yeah, we're talking about long distance walking a little bit. One of the reasons they moved was because they didn't feel safe in the community they lived in anymore since transitioning. So they were out as a gay man like forever and it's never been an issue really. Then as soon as they started transitioning to non binary they found that they didn't feel safe to live in the community they were in anymore so that's why they moved to a city to feel a bit safer, basically. They felt that the group was going to be a really, really meaningful space and they said they were looking for their community. They were looking for their people. They mentioned chosen family and how they'd had to leave the chosen family behind and how actually some of their chosen family up in up in Scotland had also been not really accepting of their transition, as well. People were't always talking about these serious things, there was also just a lot of people joking around and being silly. Then it was near lunchtime, and I started talking to an artist. A trans masculine person who was non binary, but mostly uses he and him pronouns. They were talking to me about their work. They did a master's so they became a teacher then they did a master's in something to do with education, but they were looking specifically at neuro diversity. When they were doing that they came across all this research into the link between neurodiversity and trans people. So it's like a new framework, way of looking at things. It's called neuro queer. So it's a bit like queer theory, but this idea of neuro queer people, because you get something called Autigender, which is someone who is autistic and also trans. Their gender is completely linked with their autism. Then he was talking

about something called neuro queer, which was where you link the neuro divergence with queer identity. This guy was autistic, and has an autism and ADHD diagnosis and is also a trans masculine, non binary person. And he was telling me that he's now working in a a pupil referral unit. So that's a place where you know, like, when kids can't access school for whatever reason, they go there for alternative education. Usually considered places for people who are neurodivergent or who have trauma in their past maybe they come from care backgrounds, as school is just not working for them. This particular one that he's working in in Sheffield is an outdoors pupil referral unit. It uses gardening and it uses a forest school in order to get children back engaged with learning. He was telling me it's mostly working with 13 to 16 year olds. He said, half of them are trans. 95% of them have an autism diagnosis, and half of them are trans. And there's a huge overlap between these trans autistic kids who aren't able to access mainstream education and one of the reasons he's working there is because being a trans autistic young adult and having the background experience allows him to work with the kids from a lived experience viewpoint. He said, the head teacher, the school is also trans and how helpful that is to the children to have as examples. So that's an example of an outdoor provision which isn't actually set up to work with trans kids are set up to work with kids who are who are at risk of being permanently excluded from school, and it's turned into this because so many trans kids within that group of people, it's become like a trans inclusion space outdoors. That then that led on to talking about when he came out and he is saying he came out during lockdown. He was talking about COVID And the way that COVID has impacted on his identity and self reflection, and the way that being at home for a long time, and he said he he was living with queer people. queer people often live together in groups. He would have been about 24/25 at the time, and living in this amazing trans community. He was being self reflective. They also were all neurodivergent so he was saying it was like this really interesting, like group of people where they were all neurodivergent they were all queer and all out as trans by the end of lockdown. How lockdown completely changed their lives in a really positive way and becoming who they are and who they who they are as people and like learning about themselves. Other people were listening to this conversation as we had sat down at lunchtime and then a few people came over and two or three more people came over and said, Oh, I came out as trans during lockdown, as well. It's having that time to reflect on yourself and see who you are and explore that away from society. A lot of the people especially the non binary people were talking about forming their identities during lockdown, and another person had said he was three months into T (testosterone) when lockdown happened. He did his transition on T during lockdown, sort of like went into lockdown presenting as a woman and then came out a lockdown as a guy. There was a huge conversation about people's identities forming and also a lot of people said they also realised they were neurodivergent during lockdown and during the same transition. They learnt this from talking to other trans people or they started recognising these things in themselves and again, a huge overlap between neurodivergence and trans identities and the way that lockdown made people just kind of find themselves. Then they were talking about queer walking groups and that going to outdoor groups after lockdown was safer and allowed them to meet other queer people and build communities. Lots of people then wanted groups like this because you couldn't go to indoor spaces. So lots and we're talking about attending these groups in the peaks because they were outdoors, and they love the outdoors anyway, combined with the fact you were actually allowed to meet outside meet indoors and they wanted to get out and about

in queer spaces to live their lives with their new identities. So then we started talking about names. Names has been something that came up in this group and the last one. There were so many trans people there. People were talking about names quite a lot. It was obviously a conversation that has filtered through the group and about chosen names and dead names and whether to change them legally or whether to continue with their dead names legally on their paperwork. There was lots of conversations of people sharing their experiences of changing their names, especially non binary people because it's less of an urgent need for many of them. We were talking about that and then I then started talking to this person who I met last time [redacted], and he kind of joined in this conversation. He caught me up actually, we started talking about it. I had noticed on the last walk that people had used their chosen name for the first time or one of the first times at the group. Because they didn't know anybody. So they did introduce themselves with a new name because no one knew them as their previous name. So it was a good opportunity to do it. Then this time, [redacted], who was on the group last time told me that that's what he'd done on the last walk. So i knew about one person that did this last time as they told me, but It turns out there was a whole other person who had done the name thing because he'd done it on that walk. He did it for a different reasons. The reason he'd done it was because he'd been going to this peak queer adventurers group for ages but with their legal name. They still use it at work. Partly just as easier. They're not dysphoric over it, but they liked the name [redacted] more. Everyone in the group knew them by their old nam. Then when last time we went on the walk, it was a [redacted] crossover with [redacted]. When they did the name round and [redacted] at the very last second decided to use their new name when they introduced themselves by that name. Apparently the group just happened to be a lot of new people and there was only one other person they knew there at the time. Whereas normally they knew a few people on the walk. So they decided to try out their new name in the group. So they did introduce themselves as [redacted] during the name round. Obviously no one, except the one person they knew, had no idea. So that's the name we all used for them and then they got comfortable with it for the day. So they had the chance to try it out and see if it felt right and decided yep, that's the name I want to use. They are non binary and actually use both names. They use their legal name still in professional life, but in the queer groups now use [redacted] as their name. And then someone overheard us talking about that. They said 'ha, I did that today too' It turns out that there was like three or four more people on this group who had come purposely to a new group to try out their new names. It was just nice to know that people use these experiences because they don't necessarily know each other and they're not particularly close. They're looking for the community, Sure, but they haven't necessarily built it in this group yet. so when they come in and they feel safe to use a new name. [redacted] said, the thing is in a queer group like that you are very unlikely to be misgendered. That if you are just completely by accident, they will always correct themselves immediately and never do it again, because everyone's queer and it's an inclusive group. Then we talked about nature a bit more and the way that you could get into the peaks easily because it's so close to Sheffield, and how you could go to this cafe that we hadn't quite gotten to yet and how you could just walk straight into the peaks and how cool it was. To live in a place that was so accessible. A lot of them were talking about how they would never do it on their own and they would always want to go with people they knew and enjoying the fact that this group was big, and everyone was together and everyone had this shared interest and they shared commonalities

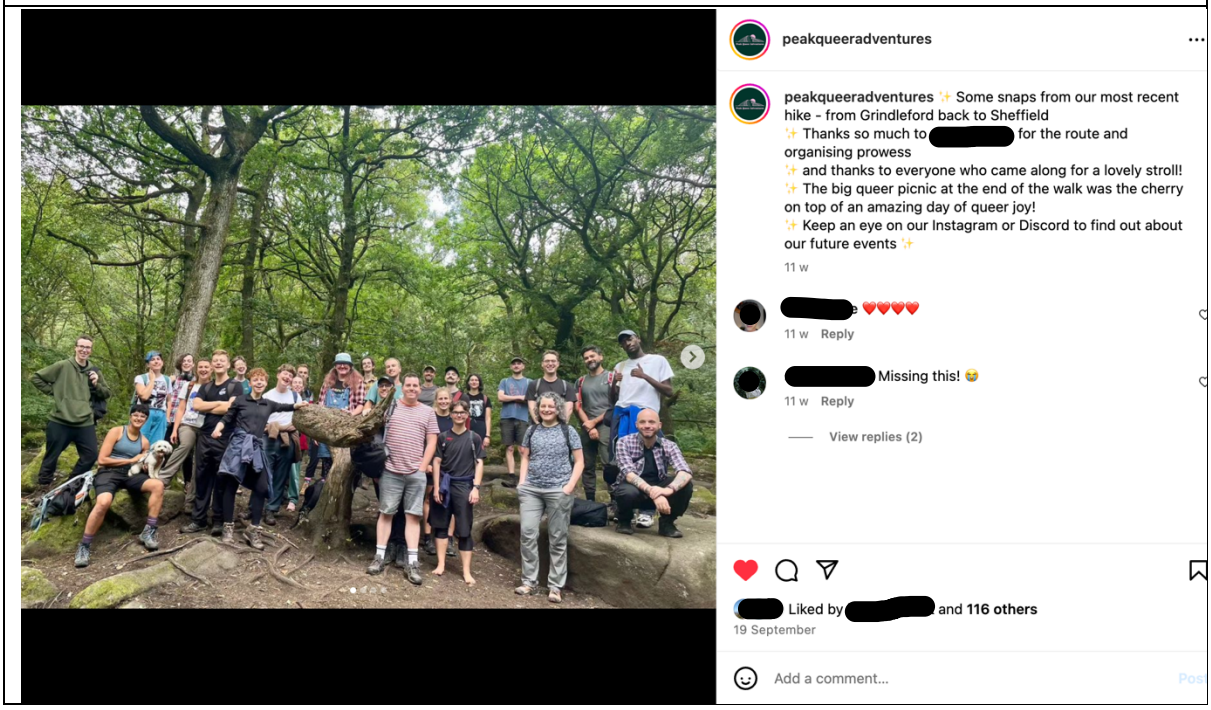
and values. Then we got to the cafe and there was people wanted to go to the toilet because obviously we're walking for hours at this point and so we were went to the toilets and they were gendered toilets. There was a men's toilet on the left and women's toilet on the right and a disabled toilet in the middle but there was quite a few disabled people because the cafe is accessible. Not in our group but another group. So disabled toilet was a no go. So it was a bit awkward when people realised the toilets were gendered and each person walked towards a toilet tentatively. They were commenting about how everyone was thinking 'Which one should I use?' 'which one's the right one for me?' Because it was so many queer people together it just became it became one line and everyone was just using whichever toilet had a free toilet in it rather than queuing up into separate lines. It was lots of queer people kind of supporting each other like in that uncomfortable experience. There was a trans man I had talked to earlier in the day who had recently come out, he was one of the people using a new name for the first time and his first tme at the group. He told me It was the first time he went in the men's toilet. And I said, Well, what made you go in the men's toilet this time? And he said it was because of all the queer people being there. He said that because there was lots of trans guys there he felt safe. He felt able to use the men's toilet. Tt's just that safety in numbers. The talk moved to foraging and plants. Some one was foraging blackberries. Then they were talking about the yew trees nearby and how you can kill yourself with one seed and then someone ate the berry, not the seed obviously, but the flesh of the yew. People were sharing knowledge about foraging and what is safe and what isn't. There was a lot of interest in foraging and fungi. I was talking to this person who runs a group in Sheffield called [redacted]. It's a more exclusive group for trans people, not for the wider queer community. It's just for trans people, that does include both binary trans and non-binary people. He's going to do an interview for me as a leader of an outdoor queer group. This person is trans masculine non binary, have been through medical transition. They use he/him/they/them pronouns. We were talking about the [redacted] group. He was saying that sometimes the name of his group puts non binary people off as they often feel like they're not trans enough. And like not being trans stuff means I'm not included in this group. He said it's really importnat to be clear that all non binary people technically fit under the trans umbrella even if they don't identify as trans. It fitted into a conversation I was having earlier with two other trans non binary people about the use of the word trans and how they found it hard to identify with the word after their transition, like Oh, I'm not trans enough to use the word trans. That it gives them impostor syndrome. They all said they feel like because they haven't always had medical transitions that they feel like they aren't trans enough to use the word for themselves. They feel like they haven't been through enough to use the word and that they often internally fight with this. They've said that these community walking groups help them to talk to and connect with other non binary and trans people and that helped them to like overcome this. To understand the internalised transphobia towards themselves and be able to use the word trans in a positive way and be like, I'm trans, that's a great thing, rather than oh my god, I'm too scared to use word trans. I feel like I'm like, I'm not worthy of this word, because I'm not trans enough. I haven't transitioned. I have not been on testosterone. I've not had top surgery, etc, etc. These groups would help them to understand that non binary is trans and actually there was a young non binary person, they were listening to the conversation and they said, 'Oh, I've been really you know, finding that tricky like, I'm not binary, but I didn't feel like I'm trans but the way you've just been talking about it, it's made me realise actually, I am trans and

like, whoa, kind of having a bit of a head fuck about it, I guess'. It was a safe place around other non binary trans people talking about the way that people misunderstand the word trans. They think it means medical transition. When it doesn't. It means transitioning away from your assigned gender. And talking about the use of that word. It came up a few times, people were talking about it and about being in a comfortable space around queer people and able to explore that and go oh, why am I uncomfortable with this? the person from transactive was basically saying it's really hard for them as a non binary person who looks like a trans man. So people assume they're a trans guy when they are non binary and then they may say bad things about non binary people. He said that because although it's an inclusive trans group some binary trans people are also against non binary people using the trem trans. But then there's an education there and how that can happen. They were also talking about the reason for having trans only groups rather than a group for all queer people. They were talking about transphobia even within the queer communities and how these safe spaces for trans people were still needed. He also said the thing about inclusive groups is the diversity within them because you can all learn from each other's life experiences. And that's really wonderful. So you're not actually in a tiny bubble. There's people that are just like you. You're within a big queer bubble of people who have all these different experiences, all these intersectional problems and all these things going wrong for them and you can learn about other people's journeys. But with a group just for trans people, is it too small? They talked about groups just for non-binary people and if there was value. That It's the trans, the trans non binary people who were actually the ones that are finding they're still those barriers there for them to get outside. Particularly non binary people because they are visibly trans, visibly queer a lot of the time, whereas a lot of trans binary people are not visibly queer. They talked about how transphobia is like epidemic and how there's loads of violence against trans people and they still need these safe spaces to be able to access things that other people can access, especially things like swimming where there's so much danger involved by kind of kind of personal like, perceived threat, or like revealing your body parts to people that you don't want them to know what your body parts are. In a trans group that's just the issue is completely taken away because no one cares about your body to match your gender. Exactly. So and actually queer spaces that shouldn't be true. As we were walking into the city, a big group of people were talking about transphobia and trans exclusion, radical feminism, and how in queer groups there is more inclusion. I asked a few people what the word queer in the title of the group meant them. The general feeling was the the word queer meant trans inclusive in a way that LGBT did not, that it was safe. Some people also said that a group with queer in the title is more likely to have people similar to them and have similar viewpoints. The word radical was used a few times, that the word queer was a radical term and that walking in queer groups felt like a radical act against the heteronormative ideal of who accesses the peaks.

Photo from big queer picnic at the end of the walk



Instagram post after the walk
Peak Queer Adventures [@peakqueeradventures]. (2023). *Some snaps from our most recent hike - from Grindleford back to Sheffield* [Instagram]. Available at: Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CxYQKHSsbIw/?img_index=1 (Accessed 20th September 2023)



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Interview with participant after the walk

Interview transcript
Zoom (Barbu, 2014), transcribed by Otter.ai (Crumley, 2018)

Fri, Sep 29, 2023 7:08pm

Lizzie Wild 38:15
I want to ask you some questions about peak queer adventures if that's all right. Obviously peak queer adventures has the word queer in their title. As a trans person, are you more likely to attend a group that has queer in the title rather than LGBT, for example?

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary 38:49
Yeah, I think I am because I also identify as queer. So I think like, oh, well, there's probably people with a similar sort outlook. Like, for me being queer is, a way of life, an outlook almost. So if I think like, Oh, it's queer people, I think right? Probably won't agree on everything, but it's probably not going to be, right wing people. They're probably going to have similar views to me, which is quite important and feeling comfortable. Personally, I'd also go LGBT thing, but I associate queer with like a higher proportion of trans and non binary people

Lizzie Wild 40:21
yeah, I've never thought about this too much before. But yeah, I think that's it. Queer feels more welcoming. So, just thinking about peak queer adventures, in your experience, were cis people talking about trans issues?

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary 42:53
I feel like maybe cis people don't want to talk about those kinds of issues in case they like get it wrong. Especially if they're around trans people. Maybe they're like, oh, I don't want to like get thrown into the state when this people hey, we probably know a lot more. Yeah, we do today.

Lizzie Wild 43:45
What made you interested in joining the group and walking with them?

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary 44:10
It stemmed from [redacted] because a lot of the stuff we do at [redacted] I think is like quite beginners level. I like to try and keep fit and do different sports and activities and try different things. And I kind of wanted a little bit more of a challenge and in my head peak queer adventures was like a step up when they advertise themselves. I've heard from people who don't attend specifically for that reason, because they see it as too advanced and not suitable for beginners. Not very accessible in that sense. But for me, personally, I was like, I do actually want to go on a much longer hike. I've only been on a couple of things, and i have met people who for them the outdoors and sports is like what they do a lot of the time, rather than just occasionally. I've been having a bit of a turning 30 a crisis. I'm 31 now but a couple of years ago, turned into a crisis where I was like, Well, what do I do? I want to spend more time outdoors and I want to meet more people who are like interested in doing that rather than just like going out. I want a queer community but outside. Yeah, just get a lot of dopamine from being outside.

Lizzie Wild 45:58
Yeah, absolutely. So for you, it's doing something that's actually more adventurous.

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary 46:07

Yeah, because if there's anything I want to do and that's also LGBT, I'd rather do that. If it was like, a cis or straight group, I'd maybe attend but I won't go out of my way to attend like and maybe attend if some of my friends wanted to go along. Wheras, I've been to PQA stuff by myself without really knowing anyone.

Lizzie Wild 46:33
Have you ever done queer out here at all?

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary 46:35
I've heard of them. But no. I have done some stuff with a group in Brighton before, but that's mainly because my brother lives in Brighton and I used to go down for Brighton Trans Pride and but I've actively sought attending their events because one, it's another trans group and good for networking and two because they do really interesting stuff like they do stuff that we can't do in Sheffield, or can't do as easily, stuff on the sea or like volleyball

Lizzie Wild 48:15
Yeah, that's cool.

TA 48:17
Yeah, I variety

Lizzie Wild 48:19
There are actually very few queer outdoor groups outside of the peaks. It's a bit of a hub.

TA
Does it not happen? You know, like I can't even think what cities are around like the Lake District for example.

Lizzie Wild
There's one [redacted]. And then Bristol. You'd think Bristol would have an active group but they didn't until literally a few months ago.

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary 49:51
Oh wow.

Lizzie Wild 49:52
They had climbing groups but not outdoor groups. Most of the groups were formed after covid. But also weirdly queer people actually, were more likely to socially distance the non queer people.

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary 53:49
Not surprised

Lizzie Wild 53:50
why do you think that is?

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary 53:51

I just noticed with my queer friends and not queer friends, the queer friends taking it a lot more seriously. I'm not sure I don't know if that is an element of the neuro divergence as well.

Lizzie Wild 54:07
interesting. And generational trauma memory from aids i expect, yeah, and the way it's kind of again, it's like that, like if queer people are sort of raising each other. And even if they're not always together as a community, and maybe even that they're separate. They kind of take examples from each other and passed on. I have a question. Are the majority group has spoken to been very white? how diverse is the group generally?

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary

incredibly white. Yeah. It's interesting. I was talking to somebody non white on the PQA hike who was saying that they said they have tried to get some Persian attendees, people they know, to come. They were like, I can't come because if anyone found my name on the list or found out I was a member, it wouldn't be good. But then that makes me think well, how can you like create a group where you can be a member and come but be safer for you? There's more that could probably be done. Yeah, absolutely. PQA are doing a walk soon. That's like a style less.

Lizzie Wild

Yeah, that'd be miles without styles. Yes it is! That's it. I didn't know about that until a couple of weeks ago. All national parks have it. So like so near me is the New Forest. Thank you. How many walks have you been on with [redacted]? I'd only been on one walk and then, the week before last I went on the camping trip they did. There's lots of people who come for the first time. Even on the camping trip?

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary 58:58
Yeah

Lizzie Wild 58:59
Oh, wow. That's cool.

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary 59:03
I was like thinking, Oh, maybe I won't go on the camping trip. Because it's, obviously you are there overnight, so if you end up like not gelling with people. It's quite a risk But yeah, there was quite a few of people who'd only come for that. Actually I think it attracted people from further away because it was a longer session. People might not come for like, two hours but would come for the afternoon, evening and morning.

Lizzie Wild 59:38
That's pretty interesting. Yeah, I think it's um, I expected the groups when I was attending to be a lot more people that were attending every week like building a community within the group. There is that there is an element of that but it does seem a lot of people don't feel the need to but that they kind of feel like they fit in the community even though they didn't know anyone there.

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary

It;'s a wider chosen family without being close. Yeah, that's a good way of putting it. Yeah, I'm thinking about transactive and trying to think, although we might get people who have been coming for years they might not. Well, maybe not years, but the year so they might not be super paly, with people who have also been come in for like a year. Some people keep themselves to themselves or keep just to one or two people. So sometimes it feels a bit disjointed, but in my opinion, it kind of shows that people find it valuable regardless because like yeah, it feels nice being around these people, even if we're not like super, super close like there's value in it. Yeah, yeah. And yeah, I guess it's probably I don't know about you, but I have quite a close group of queer friends who are, I'd call them my chosen family. And then, when you attend those groups, it seems to have that has the exact same feel to it. We were talking about the same things. And the same issues and the same random things without really knowing much intimate detail about each other's lives.

Lizzie Wild

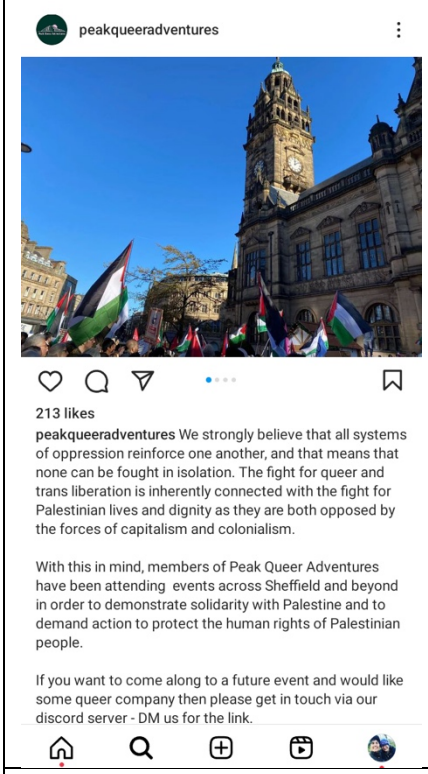
That's probably it I think. Thank you for doing this. It's been really lovely. I'll come up at some point.

Participant, self ID trans masc non-binary 1:02:45
Yeah, sounds good.

Lizzie Wild 1:02:52
Thank you.

Appendix 9
Netnography I1

Instagram (Meta, 2024) posts Accessed 29th December 2023

	
Peak Queer Adventures [@peakqueeradventures]. (2023). *We strongly believe that all systems of oppression reinforce one another, and that means that none can be fought in isolation* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/Cz_efMkNxko/?img_index=1 (Accessed 29th December 2023)	Peak Queer Adventures [@peakqueeradventures]. (2023). *Throwback to our hike up Mam Tor a few weeks ago featuring our amazing handmade banner* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CwkoQmNsjTu/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)



Peak Queer Adventures [@peakqueeradventures]. (2023). *A huge thank you* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CurecL5sg17/?img_index=1 (Accessed 29th December 2023)



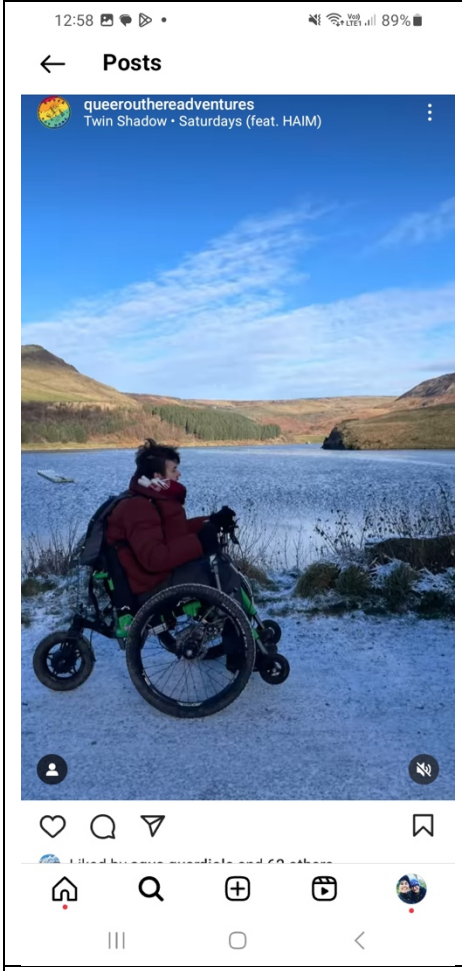
Peak Queer Adventures [@peakqueeradventures]. (2023). *Another weekend, another walk!* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CuaBGaEMTvX/?img_index=1(Accessed 29th December 2023)

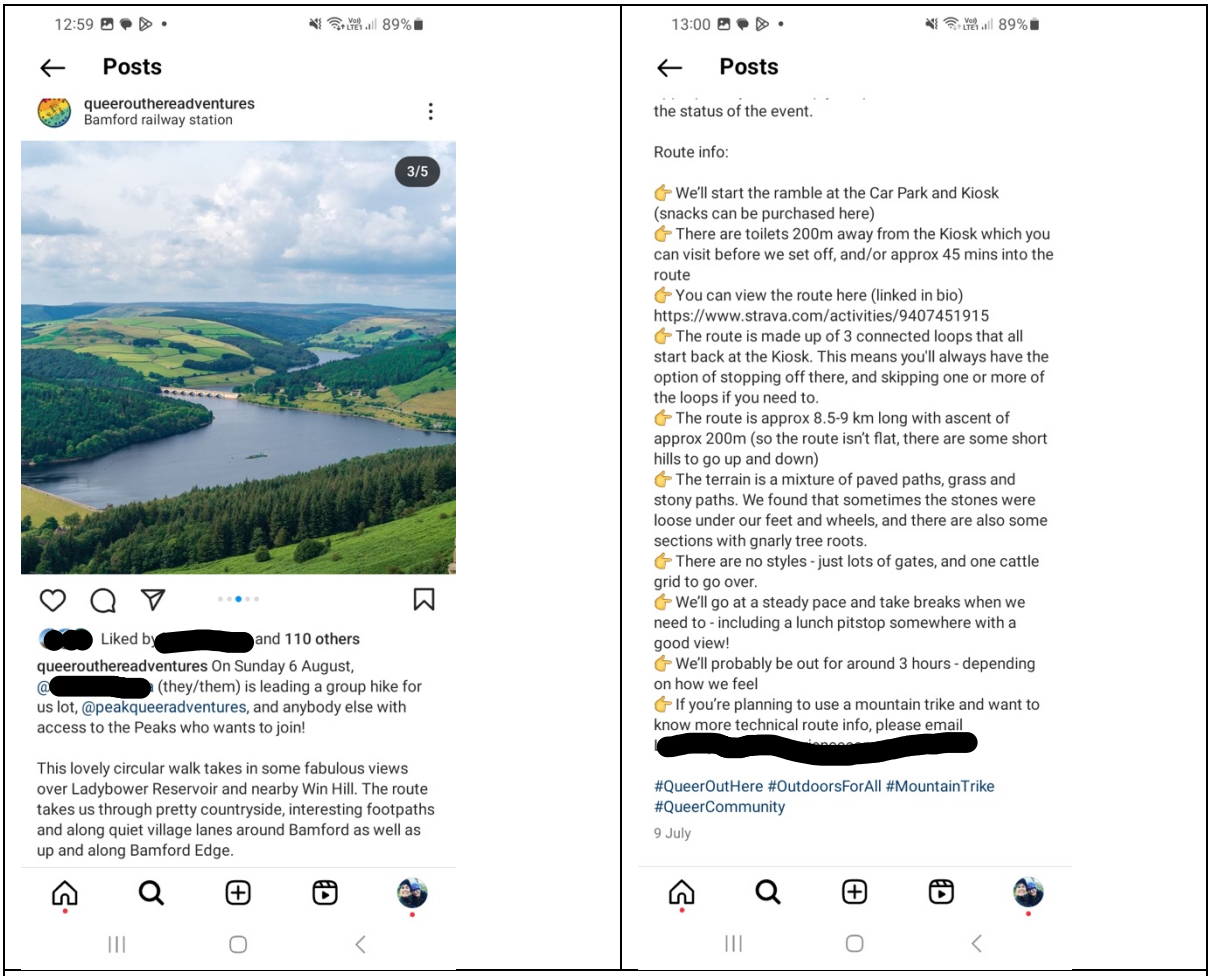




Peak Queer Adventures [@peakqueeradventures]. (2023). *Last weekend* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CuHDaRAsYgS/?img_index=1 (Accessed 29th December 2023)	Peak Queer Adventures [@peakqueeradventures]. (2023). *Another queer crag takeover* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CtMXbJAMUZD/?img_index=1 (Accessed 29th December 2023)
	
Peak Queer Adventures [@peakqueeradventures]. (2023). *Peak Queer Adventures go indoor climbing* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CsGsSlotayR/?img_index=1 (Accessed 29th December 2023)	Peak Queer Adventures [@peakqueeradventures]. (2023). *Thank you so much to everyone who joined us for our Edale hike!* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/Cr_V8s3sbYw/?img_index=1(Accessed 29th December 2023)

Appendix 10
Netnography I2

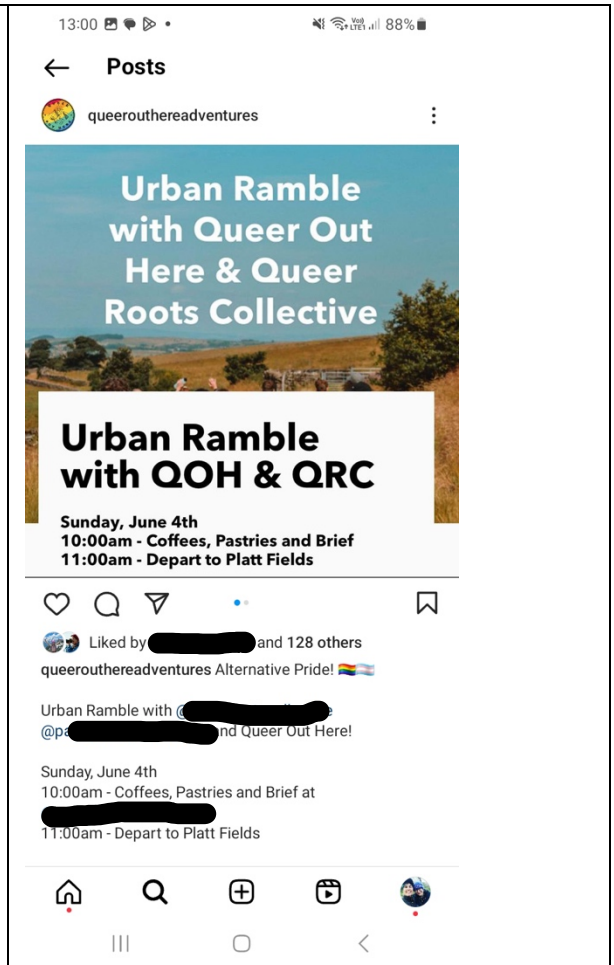
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<td>Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2023). FREEZING but wonderful ramble round Dovestone [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/reel/C0XBOuUtH3v/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)</td>
<td>Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2023). As promised [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CzokBc_NLAw/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)</td>
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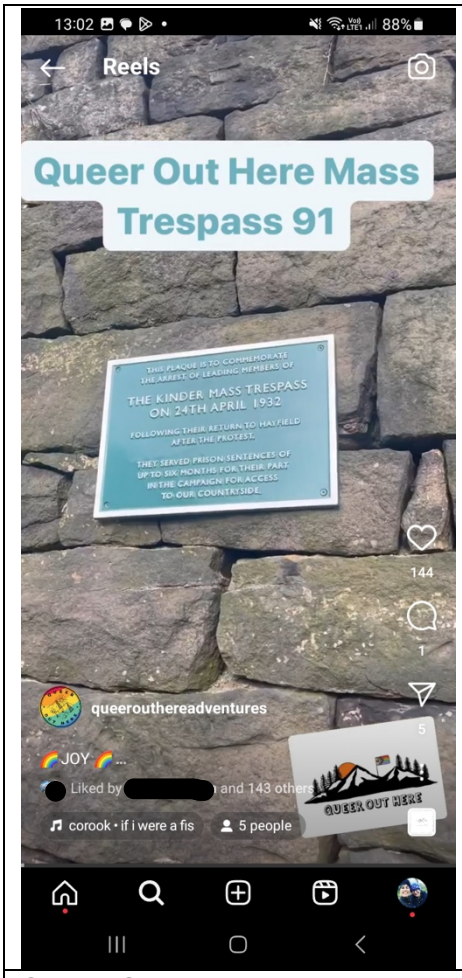
Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2023). *On Sunday 6 August* Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/Cu8-BjbNmpY/?img_index=3 (Accessed 29th December 2023)



Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2023). *On 16 July* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CuRJGvJNkUl/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)



Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2023). *Alternative Pride!* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CsgthkHtWdr/?img_index=1 (Accessed 29th December 2023)

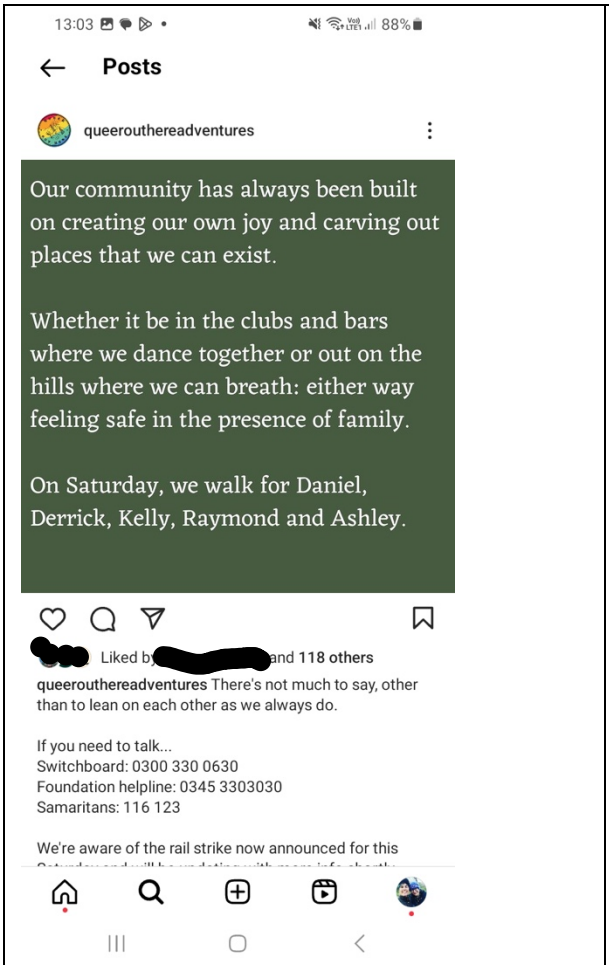
	
Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2023). *JOY* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CrX0AvHglnY/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)	Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2023). *Next weekend marks the 91st anniversary of the Kinder Mass Trespass* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CrEHX3yN3xd/?img_index=1 (Accessed 29th December 2023)



Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2023). *Next weekend marks the 91st anniversary of the Kinder Mass Trespass* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CrEHX3yN3xd/?img_index=1 (Accessed 29th December 2023)



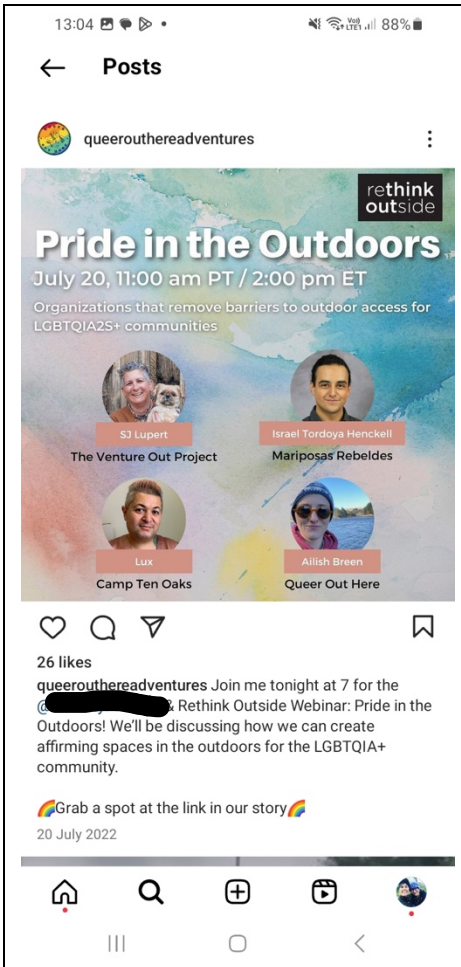
Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2023). *If you went down to the woods today* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CoAuRcgtnJS/?img_index=1 (Accessed 29th December 2023)



Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2022). *There's not much to say, other than to lean on each other as we always do* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/ClQxLnqqepW/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)



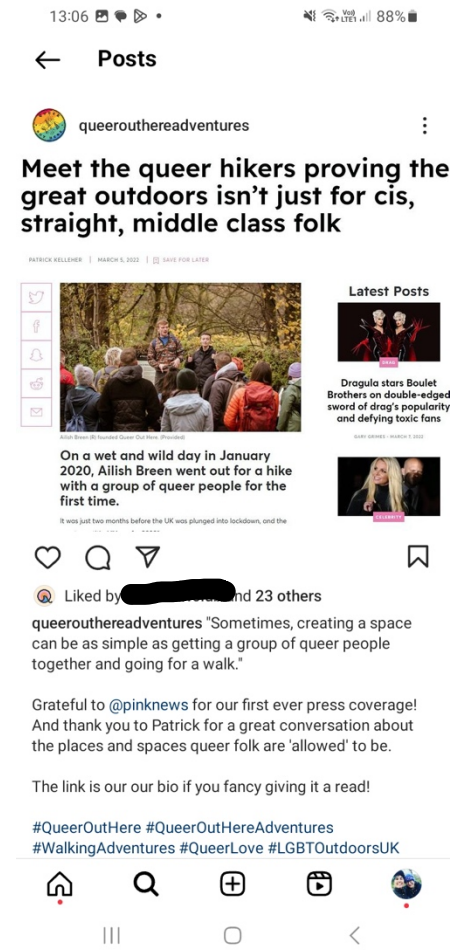
Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2022). *A fun Sunday spent with community just hots different!* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cg_fUT0AKtz/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)



Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2022). *Join me tonight at 7* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CgPZd3zt9GS/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)

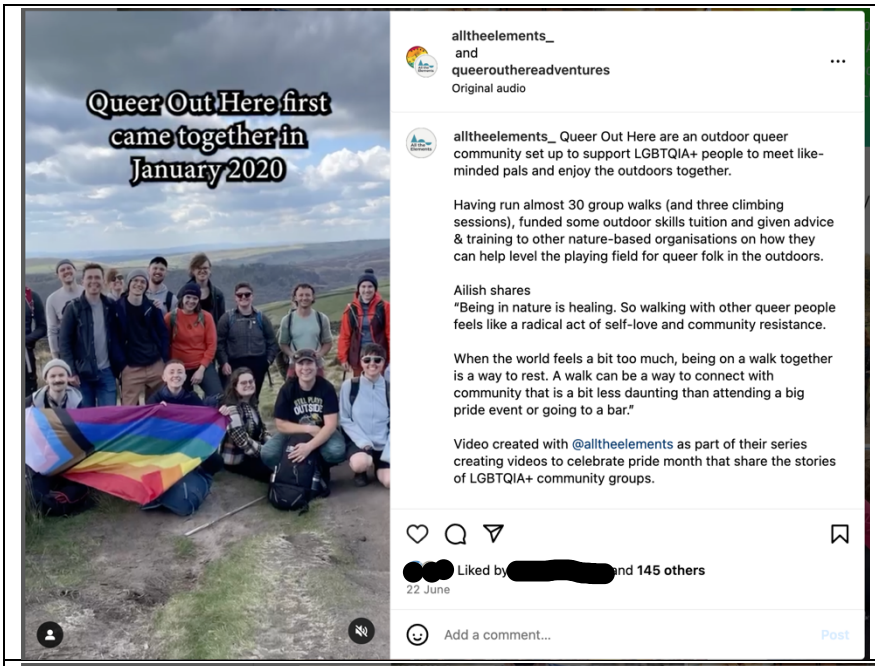


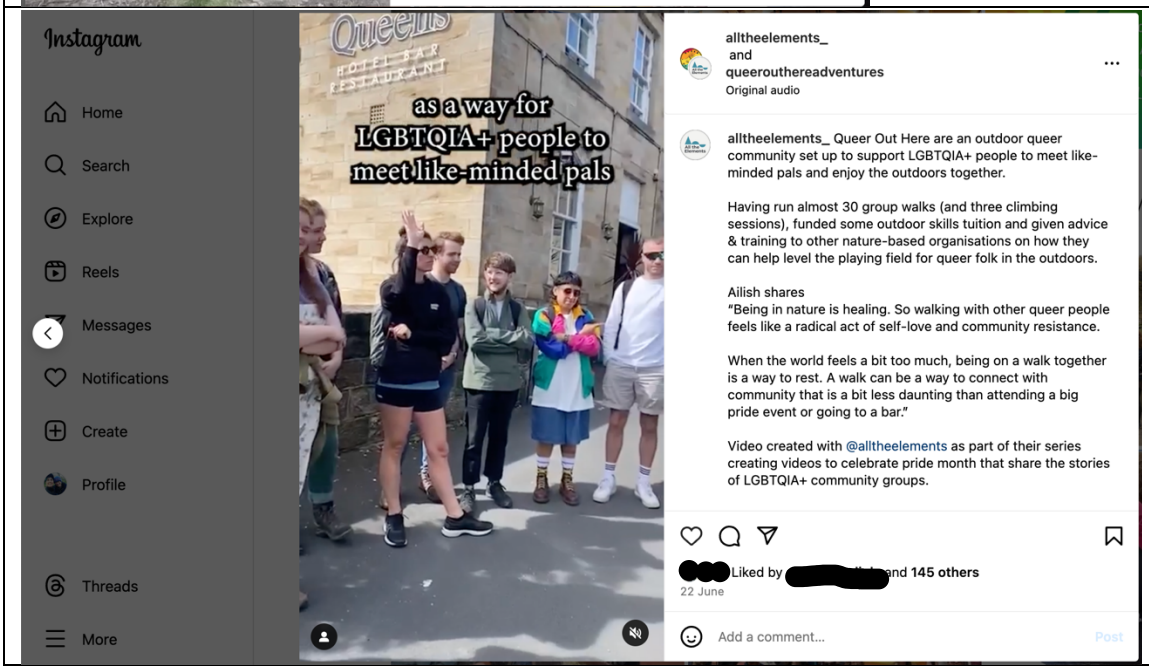
Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2022). *Happy Trans Pride everyone* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CfzMMcBN_Lw/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)

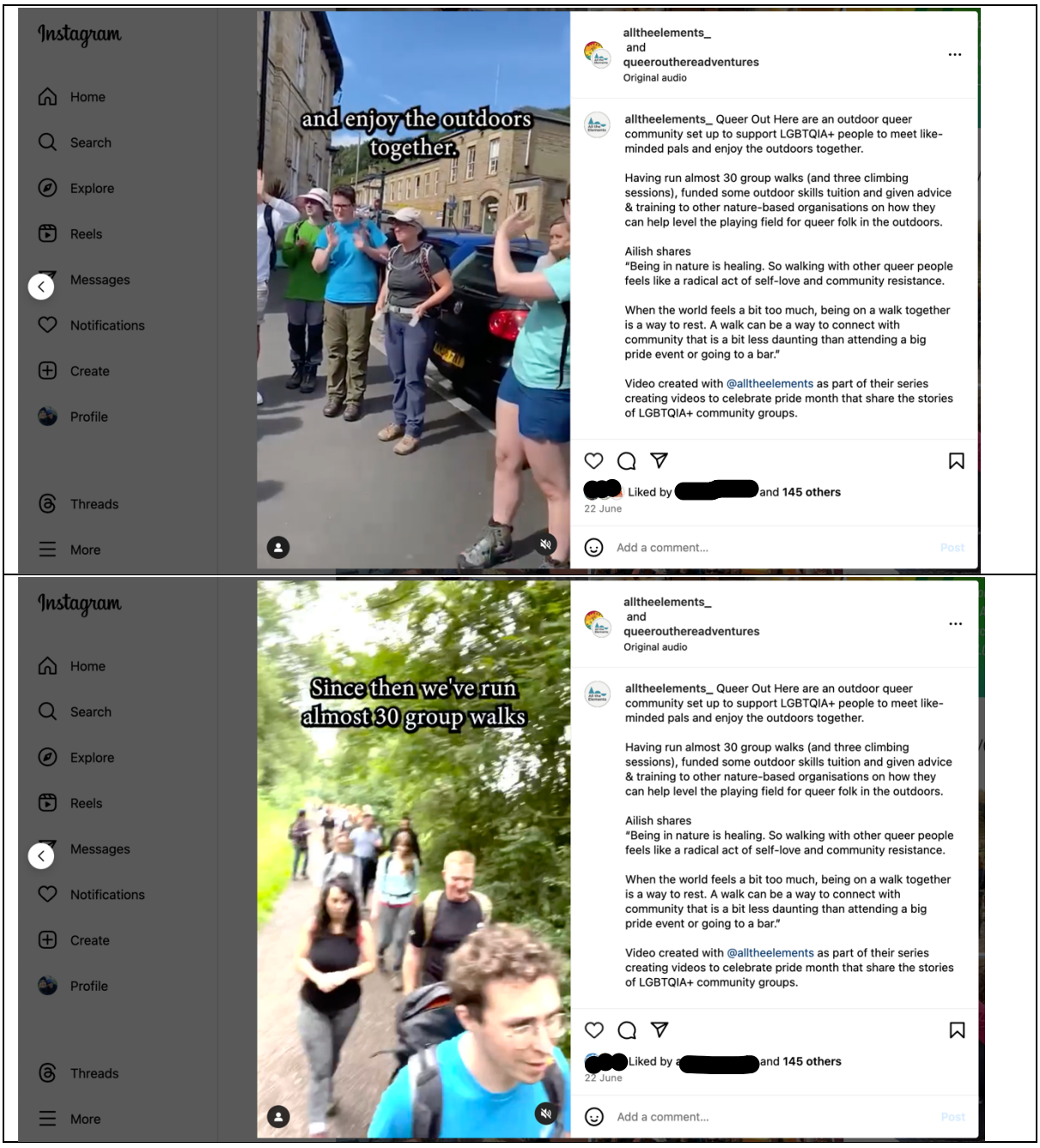


Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2022). *Sometimes creating a space can be as simple as getting a group of queer people and going for a walk* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CaziFuhKgsF/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)

Queer Out Here [@queerouthereadventures]. (2023). *Queer Out Here are an outdoor community* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/reel/CtzNkH0gQ-5/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)


Queer Out Here first came together in January 2020
alltheelements_
and
queerouthereadventures
Original audio
alltheelements_ Queer Out Here are an outdoor queer community set up to support LGBTQIA+ people to meet like-minded pals and enjoy the outdoors together.
Having run almost 30 group walks (and three climbing sessions), funded some outdoor skills tuition and given advice & training to other nature-based organisations on how they can help level the playing field for queer folk in the outdoors.
Ailish shares
"Being in nature is healing. So walking with other queer people feels like a radical act of self-love and community resistance.
When the world feels a bit too much, being on a walk together is a way to rest. A walk can be a way to connect with community that is a bit less daunting than attending a big pride event or going to a bar."
Video created with @alltheelements as part of their series creating videos to celebrate pride month that share the stories of LGBTQIA+ community groups.
[redacted] and 145 others
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queerouthereadventures
Original audio
alltheelements_ Queer Out Here are an outdoor queer community set up to support LGBTQIA+ people to meet like-minded pals and enjoy the outdoors together.
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[redacted] Liked by [redacted] and 145 others
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alltheelements_ Queer Out Here are an outdoor queer community set up to support LGBTQIA+ people to meet like-minded pals and enjoy the outdoors together.
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Video created with @alltheelements as part of their series creating videos to celebrate pride month that share the stories of LGBTQIA+ community groups.
[redacted] Liked by [redacted] and 145 others
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Video created with @alltheelements as part of their series creating videos to celebrate pride month that share the stories of LGBTQIA+ community groups.
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Appendix 11
Netnography I3

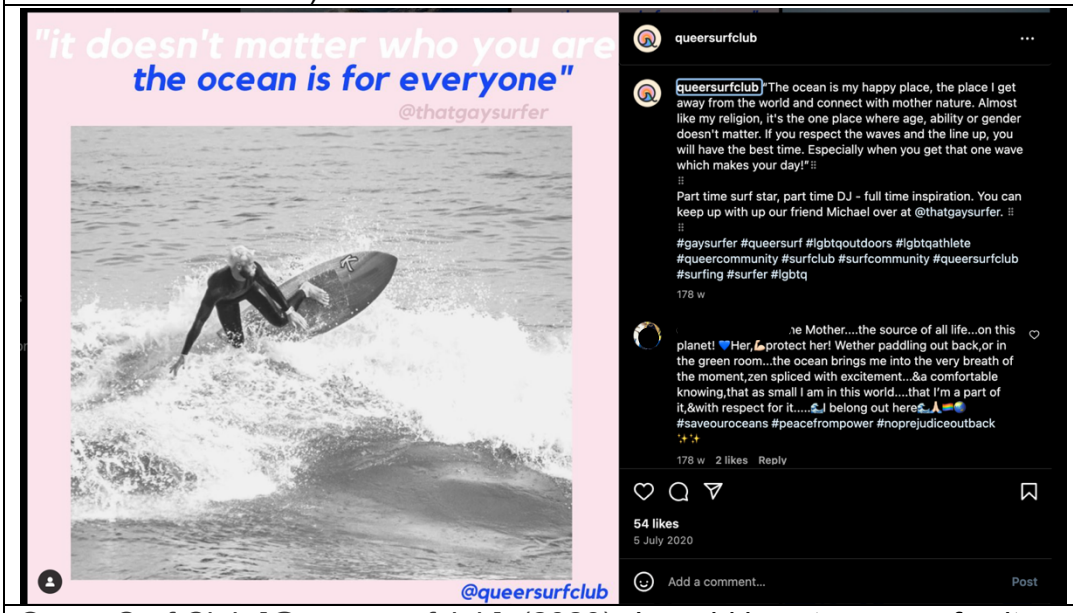
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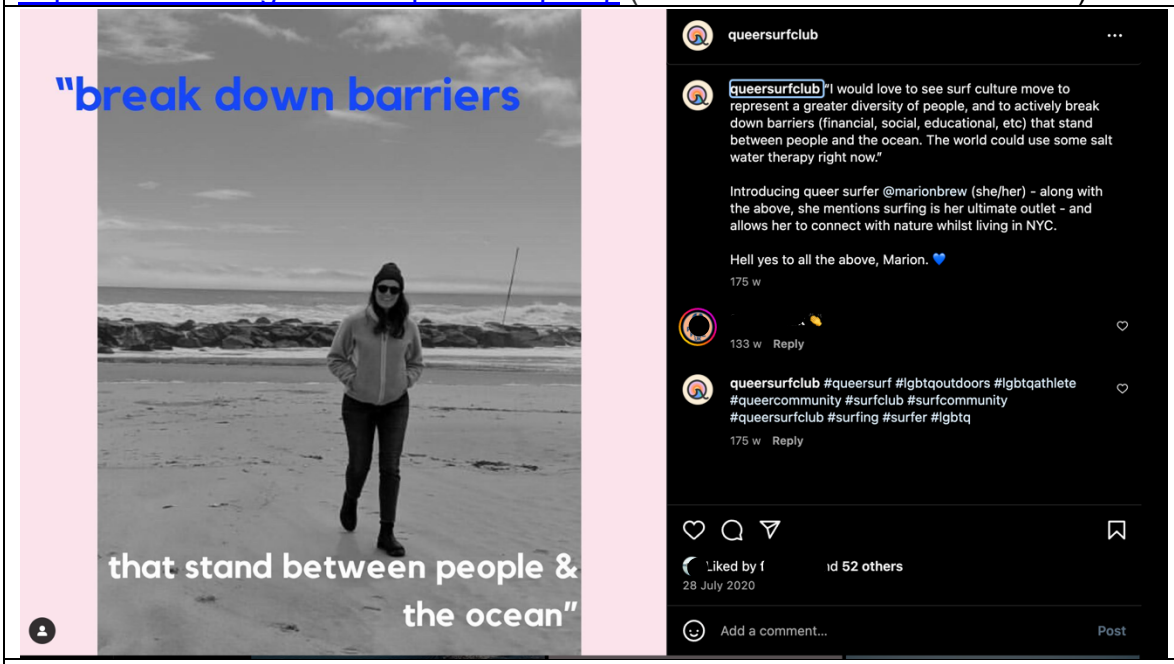
Queer Surf Club [@queersurfclub]. (2023). *Queer surf club are teaming up* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CtPZ_C9LLIV/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)



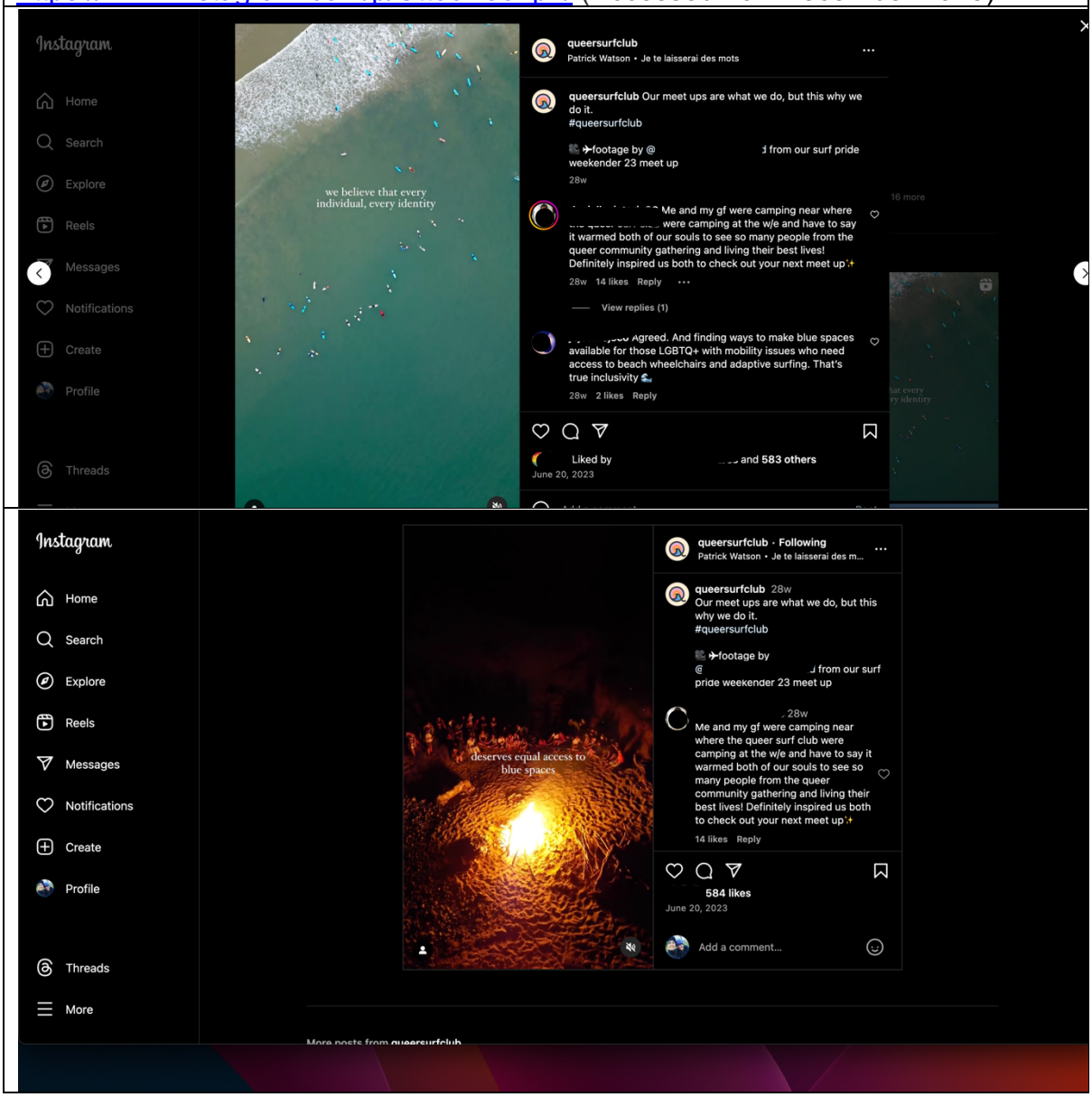
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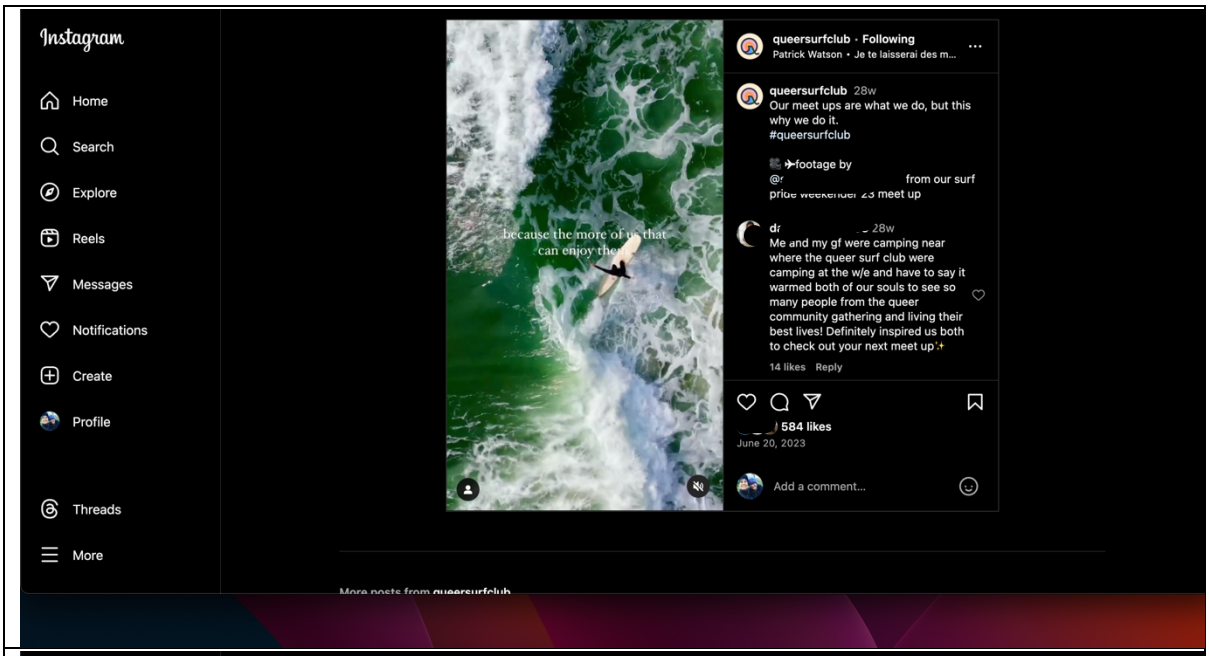


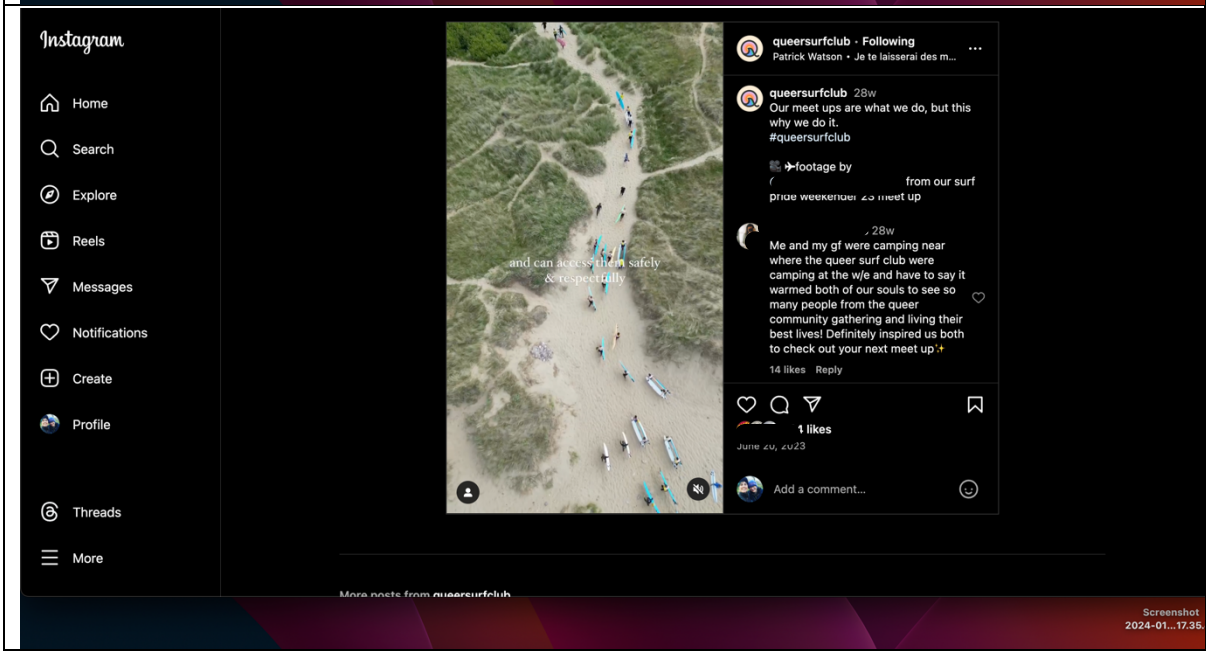
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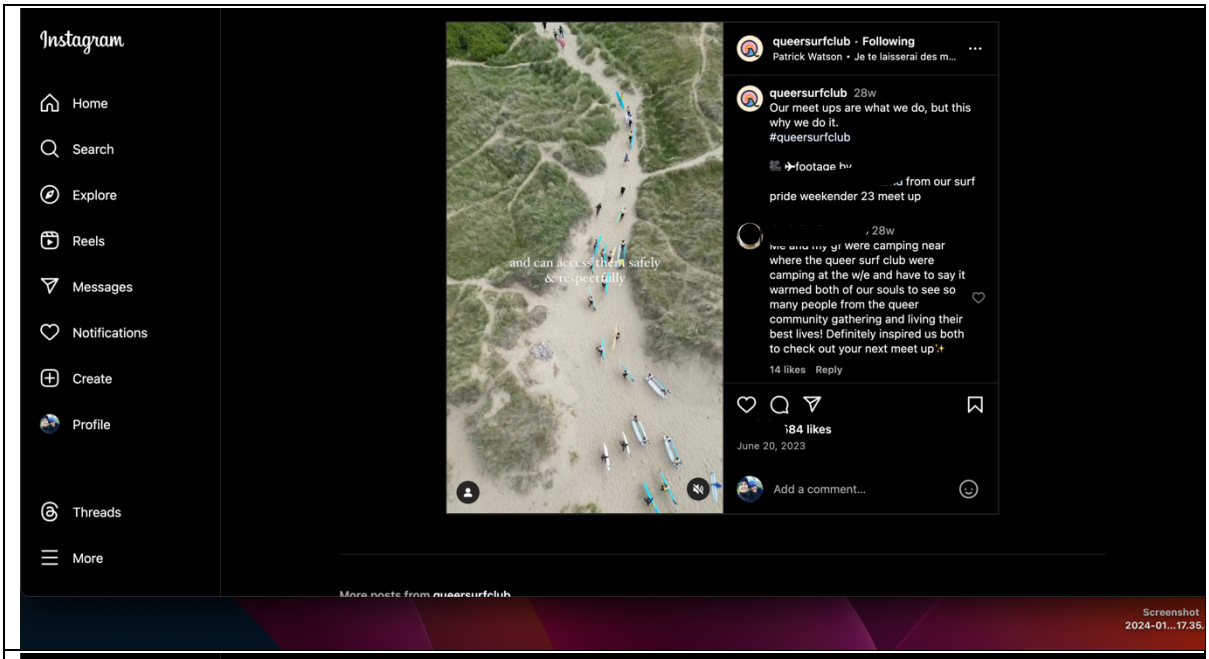


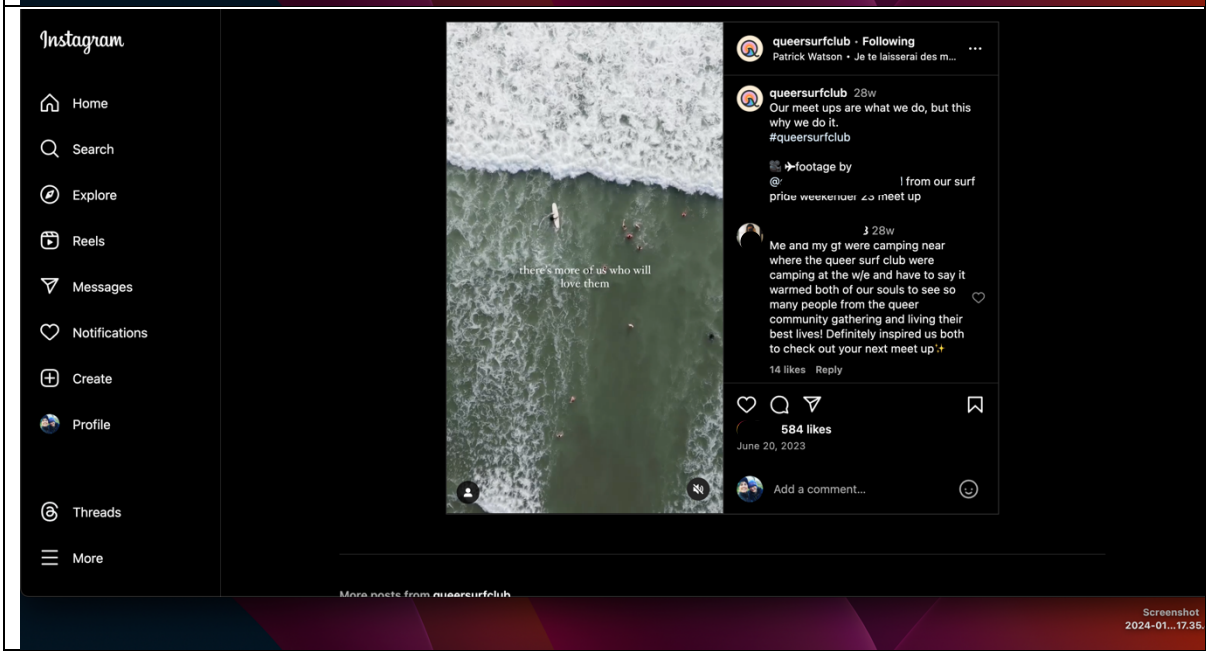
Queer Surf Club [@queersurfclub]. (2023). *Our meet ups are what we do, but this is why we do it* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/Ctt5cH3o4p4/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)

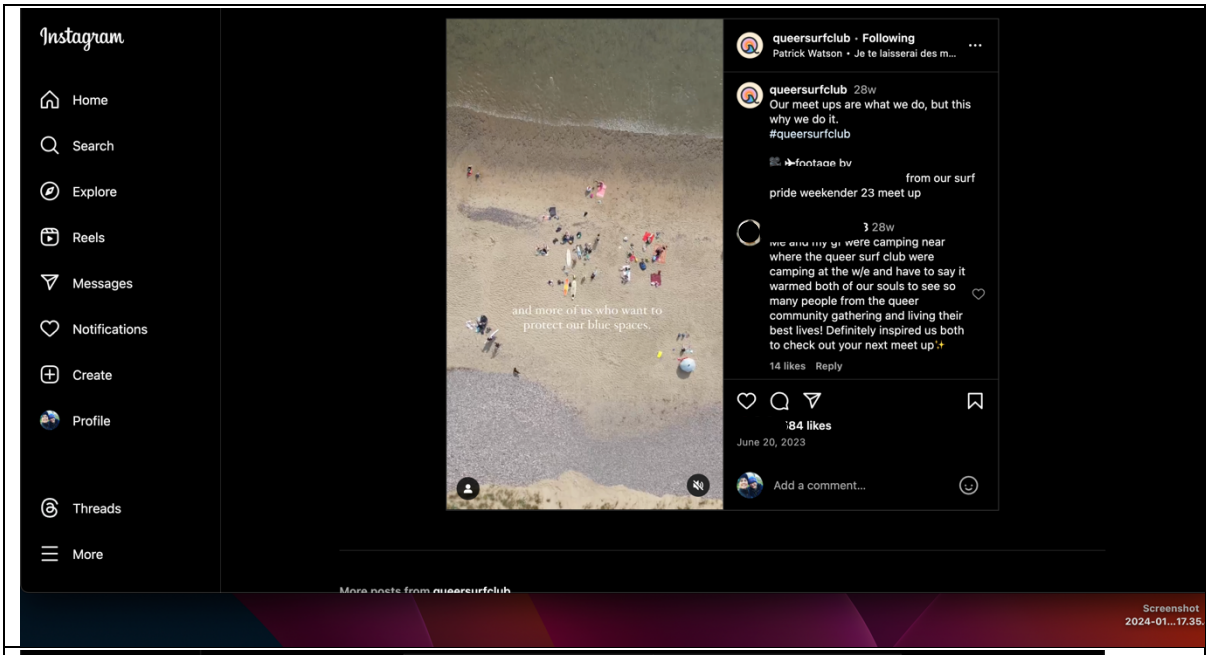


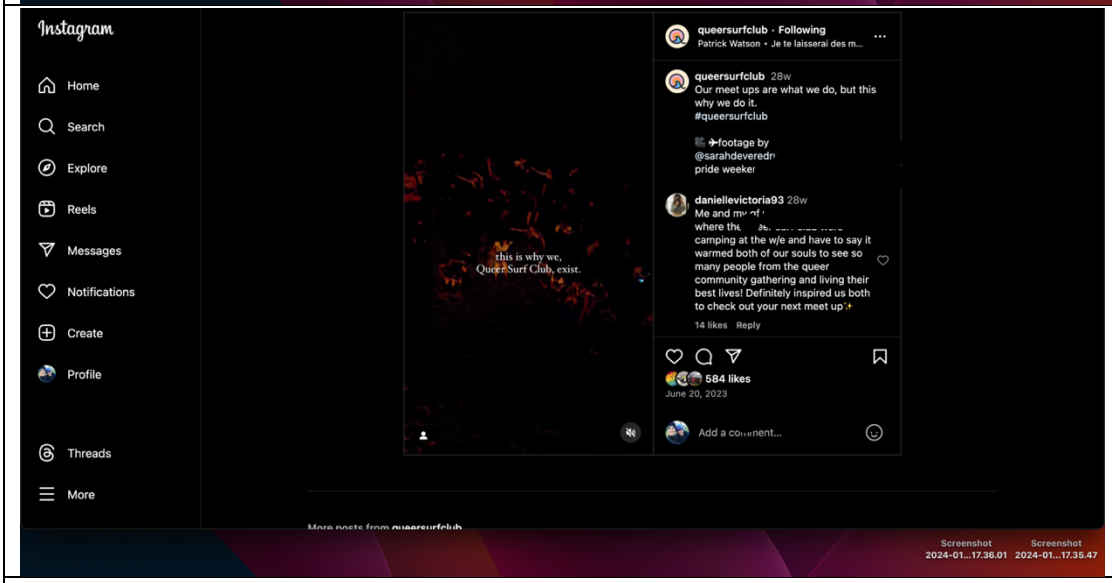

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can enjoy the
queersurfclub · Following
Patrick Watson • Je te laisserai des m...
queersurfclub 28w
Our meet ups are what we do, but this why we do it.
#queersurfclub
✈footage by
from our surf
meet up
28w
Me and my gf were camping near where the queer surf club were camping at the w/e and have to say it warmed both of our souls to see so many people from the queer community gathering and living their best lives! Definitely inspired us both to check out your next meet up!✨
14 likes Reply
584 likes
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Patrick Watson • Je te laisserai des m...
queersurfclub 28w
Our meet ups are what we do, but this why we do it.
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from our surf
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queersurfclub 28w
Our meet ups are what we do, but this why we do it.
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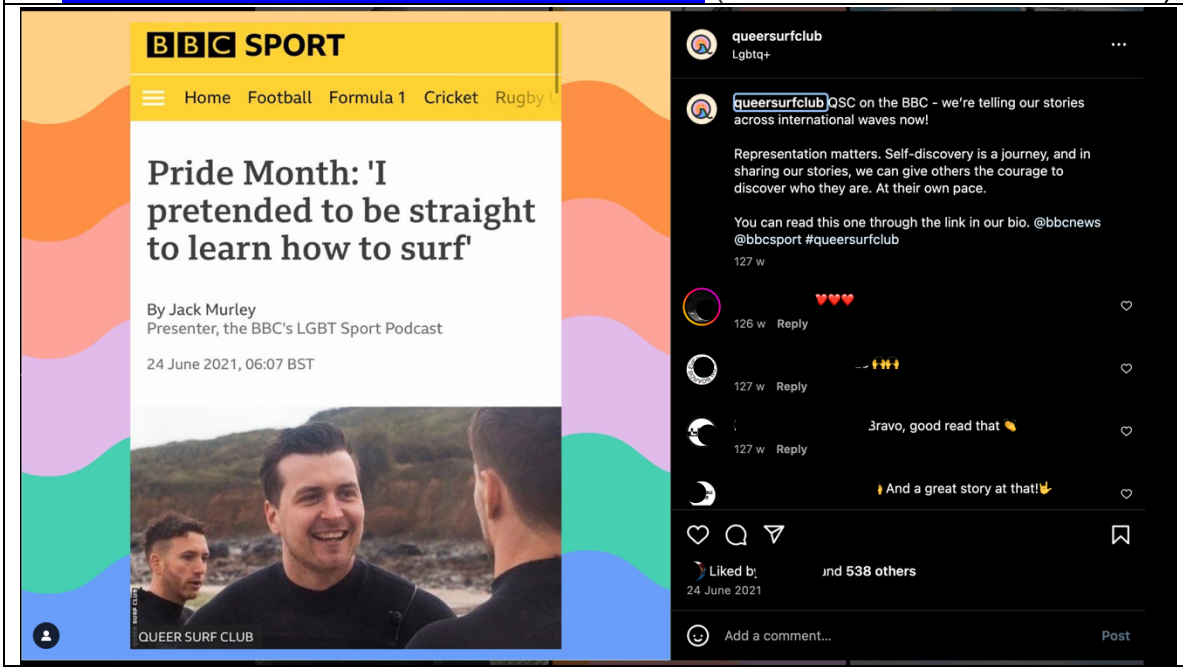




Queer Surf Club [@queersurfclub]. (2020). *October marks black history month* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CF7zPnGHfNi/



Queer Surf Club [@queersurfclub]. (2021). *QSC on the BBC* [Instagram]. Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/CQhLWU-Helh/ (Accessed 29th December 2023)



Appendix 12
Themes

Coding Matrix

Methods	
Questionnaire	Q
Interview	In
Participant Observation	PO
Photographs	Ph
Netnography	N
Participants	
Interview particpants	G
Walking groups	W
Instagram account	I
Themes	
Barrier	B
Theme	T

Table 3. Coding matrix

Barriers

B	Barriers
B1	Heteronormativity
B2	Space dominated by cisgender, straight men
B3	Trans issues; misgendering, dysphoria
B4	Transport
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Removing Barriers

T1	Community
B1T1	Community: Heteronormativity
B2T1	Community: Fear of homophobia or transphobia
B3T1	Community: Binary gendered toilets or changing rooms
B4T1	Community: Lack of awareness from group leaders/misgendering
B5T1	Community: Lack of representation
B6T1	Community: Dysphoria and Trans issues
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Impact on social and environmental justice

T2	Activism
T3	Environmentalism
T4	Mental health
T5	Hope
T6	Intersectionality
T7	Neurodivergence

Barriers to the outdoors

B1 Heteronormativity

Quote	Method	Participant
not recognising my family as a 'real' family	Q	
Hetero-normativity. As soon as you mention 'fiancée' they ask "what does he do?" It's the same conversation with everyone you meet. Having to explain EVERY time; I'm gay. And then having to answer the same very personal questions that my heterosexual friends don't get asked!!	Q	
I would not join a straight outdoor group. Don't fancy making numerous coming outs and be exposed to people judgement as part of pursuing an interest.	Q	
Feel I have to explain or out myself sometimes if with partner	Q	
I also find that every club i join you have to come out again. Sometimes that is intimidating.	Q	
having to 'come out' as non-binary when joining a group	Q	
I live in the countryside of Wales and very much enjoy solitary time in nature. However, since retirement, 6 years ago, and having been fully out as gay since 1979, the prospect of joining any sort of non-lgbtqi+ social group, outdoors, or otherwise, seems like too much faff. Having to start 'coming out' from scratch again seems like too much effort.	Q	
Until 5 years ago, when we separated, my partner of 17 years was East African Asian, (Gujarati roots). Early on, we used to walk outdoors quite a lot but drifted into not doing so. It wasn't something we discussed much but we gave up	Q	

in part due to the funny looks. To be greeted in a country pub or cafe, as a fairly obviously gay, mixed-race couple, in rural Wales, by the occasional raised eyebrow or quizzical looks gradually became a bit tedious.		
It is difficult going to things and having to explain my existence	Q	

B2 Space dominated by cisgender, straight men

Quote	Method	Participant
Living in the south wales valleys and participating in a more male dominated hobby of caving i often see posts from "friends" which are homophobic and racist. Yet never towards me, almost forgetting the lesbian in the midst.	Q	
I enjoy taking part in woodland management and woodland skills sessions but find that they can often be full of white cis het men who take up a lot of space. The bushcraft community is particularly uncomfortable for me as the men are often sexist, homophobic and generally make me feel uncomfortable or unsafe to be around. This definitely prevents me from learning new skills.	Q	
Not feeling comfortable in cis-male dominated sports	Q	
I feel more strongly that women are often considered to be inferior when it comes to outdoor skills than men, with no grounding in fact or the individual person's skillset. I am regularly stopped if I am map reading (by cis men) and asked if I am OK and need help. Especially when I am leading a Lowland Leader or other navigation group.	Q	
I know within a climbing community, particularly, It's quite male and ego driven a lot of the time. I know that's been a barrier for people. It's having the confidence to go into those spaces. That is echoed for queer people and like being visibly queer can be quite dangerous when you know that you're going into a sport that is very male centred.	In	G1

B3 Trans issues; misgendering, dysphoria

Quote	Method	Participant
No current access to top surgery and hormones due to NHS waiting lists (I've been out for 7 years(means it's hard to exercise, especially outside or in front of other people as it massively heightens my gender dysphoria	Q	
I also feel like a lot of athletic and outdoor clothing either looks very masculine on me or emphasises features that I don't like.	Q	
Being in the countryside feels very vulnerable if someone decided to cause trouble I'd be stuck unable to escape so either put up with comments misgendering etc or risk a lot of escalation	Q	

I do find in some work in other people's settings I get referred to as a lady by parents, and I don't like it, but without an ongoing relationship i don't have a proportionate way of challenging it	Q	
No gender neutral options, I'm uncomfortable in swimming pools,	Q	
Also my child identifies as non-binary and is very upset by being misgendered so if this has happen at places we are often more reluctant to go back	Q	
I live in a village with my parents because Im on a low income and can't afford to live somewhere less remote, and I don't drive, partly because of my autism. There is no public transport to the village so getting into town to do sporting activities is difficult. Although I live in the countryside, the country within walking distance of me is fairly unappealing, not being able to drive makes it hard to access nicer or more interesting places I want to go to	Q	
it is about being visibly queer. But being visibly queer puts barriers in that weren't there before when you could pass as a straight person walking down the street.	In	G1
especially our trans members who, going anywhere, it's just more scary for them. Particularly in places that we go to in the countryside that aren't as welcoming	In	G2
there is so much stress and trauma on trans people anyway	In	G3
The vast majority of places we're going to have gendered toilets and changing rooms and won't have a non gendered option	In	G3
talking about a AFAB experiences and about Blue spaces and how getting changed on the beach was an issue for trans people and wearing tight clothing like wetsuits and that sort of thing was a barrier to doing swimming and surfing and that kind of thing	PO	W1
It's the trans, the trans non binary people who were actually the ones that are finding they're still those barriers there for them to get outside. Particularly non binary people because they are visibly trans, visibly queer a lot of the time, whereas a lot of trans binary people are not visibly queer.	PO	W2
transphobia is like epidemic and how there's loads of violence against trans people and they still need these safe spaces to be able to access things that other people can access, especially things like swimming where there's so much danger involved by kind of kind of personal like, perceived threat, or like revealing your body parts to people that you don't want them to know what your body parts are.	PO	W2

B4 Transport

Quote	Method	Participant

Travel - living in a city centre makes it more difficult to access wider green spaces without a car.	Q	
Disability I don’t drive and public transport is not reliable here. I can’t afford to	Q	
travel can be an issue, especially for some activities. i don't have a car so i'm limited to places easily accessible on public transport and walking/biking.	Q	
A lot of people don't drive	In	G3

B5 Intersectional issues

Quote	Method	Participant
I am the white mother of Black children as well as being a lesbian, so it's hard to trek what triggers the hostility.	Q	
Autistic needs... I'd love to feel confident to just go and hang upside down from trees but it feels "frowned upon" by other adults.	Q	
My disability makes spending time outdoors hard sometimes especially as my medical team won't other me help	Q	
I’d love to spend more time outdoors but I am a single parent and getting both my kids out of house is quite a mission in my own. If I had another adult or didn’t have them I would spend longer outside I think	Q	
I feel quite affected by the increase in media reporting of violence against women.	Q	
Autism	Q	
Having children and not having any support	Q	
I am disabled and require assistance and I get very frustrated by assumptions made about my family. Often people will assume my wife is my sister or someone I pay to help me.	Q	
I live in a village with my parents because Im on a low income and can't afford to live somewhere less remote, and I don't drive, partly because of my autism. There is no public transport to the village so getting into town to do sporting activities is difficult. Although I live in the countryside, the country within walking distance of me is fairly unappealing, not being able to drive makes it hard to access nicer or more interesting places I want to go to	Q	
Mental health - anxiety. Don't have much money to get to places or get the clothes to keep warm and dry while out	Q	
My disability, cant walk far, mobility issues	Q	
I'm a wheelchair user	Q	
I'm poor so don't have money to get there, my mental health is so bad I can't go out most days, I'm neurodivergent so get overwhelmed with unexpectedly sensory input	Q	

disability issues keeping me from getting outdoors more often.	Q	
Until 5 years ago, when we separated, my partner of 17 years was East African Asian, (Gujarati roots). Early on, we used to walk outdoors quite a lot but drifted into not doing so. It wasn't something we discussed much but we gave up in part due to the funny looks. To be greeted in a country pub or cafe, as a fairly obviously gay, mixed-race couple, in rural Wales, by the occasional raised eyebrow or quizzical looks gradually became a bit tedious.	Q	
I'm also autistic and this creates its own struggles in joining/feeling comfortable in clubs and forming/maintaining friendships to do activities with	Q	
I am morbidly obese and fatphobia is frequent fear (e.g. fear of getting wedged in gates on footpaths)	Q	

Removing barriers

T1 Community

Quote	Method	Participant
good to meet people like myself. It feels better to be around your community	Q	
Feels safer. More likely to meet my tribe.	Q	
Community	Q	
More likely to have things in common with a queer group, in lots of regards, and feel more able to be my whole self. And one of the reasons to join a group is to make friends, and queer friends tend to just get me more.	Q	
I require regular affirmation of my queerness	Q	
A small group of us sort of had the idea of like, let's make this happen sort of thing. I think a lot of the reason for that was being in Cumbria. It's quite a rural area where you feel like you're the only gay in the village a lot of the time. So it was like, surely we're not the only queer people here. Let's try and find some.	In	G1
it's just an opportunity for people to socialise, meet other queer people, and at the same time benefit from being outdoors	In	G1
It's a queer friendship group. That's kind of grown.	In	G1
I guess as someone who came out fairly late in life, I do have a you know, I do have quite a few queer friends in Bristol, but also I wanted to make more in the community as well.	In	G2
people can't afford it and also, possibly wouldn't go on their own because they're a bit nervous to do that sort of thing without a group of queer people with them	In	G2
some people get really in depth into the meaning of life. And other people are just talking about the weather	In	G3

He was talking about how a group like this just gives him more queer friends that aren;t his chosen family, and he can talk to his chosen family about certain things. The other guy was saying the same thing, that your chosen family around you, that you don't always talk about your issues, because maybe they're too hard to talk about your very close friends. So maybe you're going through like a gender journey or discovery about yourself. But then you don't actually want to tell them your secrets yet. Maybe you're trying to work something out for yourself and you're not ready	PO	W1
That they weren't just meeting other queer people but they're also queer people that love walking, Sometimes their other queer friends don't enjoy walking, or surfing or whatever it is they want to do. So they can go on their own to these events. They know that people will be friendly to them there, but they also have the same interests as them	PO	W1
She said that she has no chosen family and was at the group trying to build that.	PO	W1
They know that they can get to the peaks really quickly, but they've never had a group to safely join to do it. So it was like a safety walking with other people like them so they could access it. They actually said they literally can access something they've never been able to access before. Because the safety of being with people like them having same issues	PO	W1
queer experiences and growing up gay, trans issues and COVID and the way that that has had an impact on coming out and finding groups	PO	W2
find community after COVID and how being outdoors feels safer	PO	W2
They felt that the group was going to be a really, really meaningful space and they said they were looking for their community. They were looking for their people. They mentioned chosen family and how they'd had to leave the chosen family behind and how actually some of their chosen family up in up in Scotland had also been not really accepting of their transition, as well.	PO	W2
hey were talking about queer walking groups and that going to outdoor groups after lockdown was safer and allowed them to meet other queer people and build communities. Lots of people then wanted groups like this because you couldn't go to indoor spaces. So lots and we're talking about attending these groups in the peaks because they were outdoors, and they love the outdoors anyway, combined with the fact you were actually allowed to meet outside meet indoors and they wanted to get out and about in queer spaces to live their lives with their new identities.	PO	W2
A lot of them were talking about how they would never do it on their own and they would always want to go with people	PO	W2

they knew and enjoying the fact that this group was big, and everyone was together and everyone had this shared interest and they shared commonalities and values.		
group with queer in the title is more likely to have people similar to them and have similar viewpoints	PO	W2
The word radical was used a few times, that the word queer was a radical term and that walking in queer groups felt like a radical act against the heteronormative ideal of who accesses the peaks.	PO	W2
I want to spend more time outdoors and I want to meet more people who are like interested in doing that rather than just like going out. I want a queer community but outside.	In	W2
It;'s a wider chosen family without being close	In	W2
t feels nice being around these people, even if we're not like super, super close like there's value in it	In	W2
I have quite a close group of queer friends who are, I'd call them my chosen family. And then, when you attend those groups, it seems to have that has the exact same feel to it. We were talking about the same things. And the same issues and the same random things without really knowing much intimate detail about each other's lives.	In	W2
Sometimes, creating a space can be as simple as getting a group of queer people together and going for a walk,	N	I2
can be a way to connect with community that is a bit less daunting than attending a big pride event or going to a bar	N	I2

B1T1 Heteronormativity

Quote	Method	Participant
LGBTQIA+ specific groups feel safer and easier to integrate in; it is exhausting to have to explain or defend your identity, and the risk of that feels lower in a group aimed at LGBTQIA+ people	Q	
it takes away pressure of either lying or being expose to judgement or inappropriate line of questioning. I'm not particularly private, but just old enough not to want to be bothered with nonsense ;)	Q	
I would feel less likely to experience transphobia or just misunderstandings or awkward questions. I would also see it as an opportunity to meet and befriend lgbtqia+ people.	Q	
I'd sooner hang out with other queers given a choice, I find large groups of straight people a bit weird. Their assumptions are all wrong all the time.	Q	
Because, with age, I have reached a point where I prefer to be with 'my own kind' in social settings	Q	
I would feel more comfortable joining a group of LGBTQIA+ people as they are likely to understand my life experiences and have more in common with me. It feels safer.	Q	

talking about these walking groups, being around queer people, and just feeling free and able to talk about these issues. Being able to talk about the experiences not having to worry or hide	PO	W1
they were saying about how they feel like they could talk about whatever they wanted. And they could talk about being gay and they talk about being trans but they don't have to. So it's not like compulsory conversation. Whereas if you go into a straight group, then you might end up talking about it and having questions asked and having to explain yourself, whereas here it's like you can take it or leave it and people understand.	PO	W1
the word radical was used a few times, that the word queer was a radical term and that walking in queer groups felt like a radical act against the heteronormative ideal of who accesses the peaks.	PO	W2
Talking about trans issues and transphobia and how non-binary people wear different clothing to try and socially transition as they don't always medically transition or even change their names. How nice it is to be in a group that recognizes these differences	PO	W2
for me being queer is, a way of life, an outlook almost	In	W2

B2T1 Fear of homophobia or transphobia

Quote	Method	Participant
Feels safer. More likely to meet my tribe.	Q	
Safety in numbers	Q	
You would know people are more likely to understand you and your family. But the transphobia within parts of the LGBTQ community doesn’t even guarantee that	Q	
If I know a space is specifically for the queer community, a lot of my worries about transphobia and having to explain myself to people go away	Q	
I would feel less likely to experience transphobia or just misunderstandings or awkward questions. I would also see it as an opportunity to meet and befriend lgbtqia+ people.	Q	
Safer space, more free to be myself	Q	
I feel safe amongst a group of similar people and friends. Knowing I won't get misgendered (or that the possibility is far less likely) makes me feel safer.	Q	
I'd feel safer, I'd feel i'm more likely to get along with other members, i'd enjoy the opportuntity to make more lgbtqia+ friends	Q	
Because I feel like I would be able to express myself in more of a way that I wouldn't be judged or misgendered (by mistake or on purpose.	Q	

I would feel more comfortable joining a group of LGBTQIA+ people as they are likely to understand my life experiences and have more in common with me. It feels safer.	Q	
In the non-LGBTQIA groups that I attend, I stay in the closet about being non-binary. If there were groups directed specifically to LGBTQIA groups, I wouldn't feel pressure and discomfort surrounding my pronouns and identity.	Q	
It would mean I would he able to relax and focus on enjoying myself and learning rather than worrying that people might be homophobic/transphobic/sexist. I could be my genuine self without masking.	Q	
There's probably something around it feeling like a very safe space for those people to come along	In	G2
I think people maybe just feel a strength in numbers to try stuff you've not usually tried before. And an instructor is probably not going to ask weird questions if there's 12 of you. Compared to if there's just like, a couple.	In	G3
the fact that the leaders were queer, visibly queer, and were non binary, made them sure that from a gender politics point of view would be safe for them to attend that there wouldn't be any trans exclusionary people there because the leaders were trans.	PO	W1
hey hadn't come out that long ago and they were kind of exploring how far they can push the femininity without being misgendered as a trans woman. They said the group was a great place to do this and explore their identity as everyone was supportive and they also didn't know them very well.	PO	W2
they love walking long distance paths but since they have started transitioning to being non binary, they have found they can't walk on their own anymore because they're AMAB and trans feminine. They dont feel safe doing long distance walks on their own anymore. So they're looking for queer people to go on walks with more.	PO	W2
The general feeling was the the word queer meant trans inclusive in a way that LGBT did not, that it was safe.	PO	W2

B3T1 Binary gendered toilets or changing rooms

Quote	Method	Participant
our YHA weekend a couple of weeks ago. All of the toilets and changing rooms in the hostel were gendered. We just completely took those signs away.	In	G1
the bathrooms were all gendered. So we just stuck signs over the top, you know, call them all gender.	In	G2
a few people mentioned that the toilets were non gendered	PO	W1
t was a bit awkward when people realised the toilets were gendered and each person walked towards a toilet tentatively. They were commenting about how everyone was thinking 'Which one should I use?' 'which one's the	PO	W2

right one for me?' Because it was so many queer people together it just became it became one line and everyone was just using whichever toilet had a free toilet in it rather than queuing up into separate lines. It was lots of queer people kind of supporting each other like in that uncomfortable experience.		
He told me It was the first time he went in the men's toilet. And I said, Well, what made you go in the men's toilet this time? And he said it was because of all the queer people being there. He said that because there was lots of trans guys there he felt safe. He felt able to use the men's toilet. Tt's just that safety in numbers.	PO	W2

B4T1 Lack of awareness from group leaders/misgendering

Quote	Method	Participant
Would hopefully find people with common ground	Q	
Nice to meet like minded people with similar life experiences	Q	
hopefully gaining more friends that are in the LGBTQIA+ community I can relate to and share trauma with	Q	
To be around Kin folk feel supported especially other queer parents	Q	
You would know people are more likely to understand you and your family. But the transphobia within parts of the LGBTQ community doesn’t even guarantee that	Q	
Would feel more comfortable expressing my true self around people that I know are unlikely to react negatively	Q	
I would feel comfortable that being nonbinary would be more accepted and wouldn5 be questioned	Q	
Because, with age, I have reached a point where I prefer to be with 'my own kind' in social settings	Q	
I would feel more comfortable joining a group of LGBTQIA+ people as they are likely to understand my life experiences and have more in common with me. It feels safer.	Q	
If I were to join an outdoor group, I would probably only do so if they were run by LGBT+ people as I would feel there would be less judgement and I would be with others that can relate to the same issues as myself.	Q	
One of the trans women that did come along, was slightly older and we were like, how do we make this still a safe and comfortable space for everyone?	In	G1
we try and cover all the bases, remove as many of those barriers as we can.	In	G1
issues they generally face being queer	In	G1
a shared frustration with the world, I guess. And yeah, a lot of that is discussed. Coming out, queer struggles.	In	G1
Queer people have quite specific needs	In	G2

most of the feedback has just been that it's really nice to have someone else organising that and them needing that and taking the thought out of it	In	G2
the bathrooms were all gendered. So we just stuck signs over the top, you know, call them all gender.	In	G2
All of the bathrooms are gender neutral	In	G2
we have asked the question so the non binary people don't have to. I ask the question, so it's not awkward when we get there	In	G2
you're creating a safety barrier and you're creating like a safety bubble around them. you're taking away that that concern for them.	In	G2
We brought in a code of conduct to help people feel safe. And this involves things like not asking people questions about their transitions or medical history or anything unless they brought it up themselves and confidentiality within the group and things like that	In	G3
talking about schools and coming out and parents and acceptance, and the cross generational issues, they were saying about how the younger people in the group had better experiences and more likely to come out at school. And the older people in the group were saying that, no one was out at school and the impact that that had on them.	PO	W1
He was new to this language. He was clearly queer, but was new to using trans language. But nobody was upset about it. He looked like he felt a bit uncomfortable because he knew he was not quite getting it right. But then when he was no one was being scared of correcting him. He was talking about the use of the word guys and people were discussing that and he was really open to having that discussion. He was learning and growing and everyone was giving him that space to make mistakes as long as he listened	PO	W1
I noticed that they would never say that guy or that woman they would always say that person. So everyone was using that language. One person said to me that they use they pronouns for everybody unless they knew their pronouns.	PO	W1
Saying my pronouns really helps me to feel seen and I'm used to being frustrated about them not asking.	In	W1

B5T1 Lack of representation

Quote	Method	Participant
I only came out as non-binary a year and a half ago. So I'm thinking back to like a few years ago when I was just like, a sporty Female in the outdoors.But then since, yeah, realising my identity. I don't see any non binary people.	In	G1
It tends to be a lot of AFAB people. That's the majority of our group. And I know that other groups sort of in and around Kendall, are predominantly gay men. I don't know	In	G1

whether it's because those that started the group were AFAB people and whether it's just grown from that because it's kind of our social circles expanding. But yeah, even when we then went on to Instagram, and started sort of promoting the page, and kind of got more of the same people which I guess is your target audience it's kind of reflective of who's starting it.		
my day job is to work for a digital UX agency, you know, was just doing an internal talk about better design for queer people. So I did a bit of research on outdoors, websites and stuff and they're just so like, all the imagery they use is just really white, middle class, straight people basically like it's really thin people. It's like no inclusive at all	In	G2
Group wearing trans and pride inclusion flags on backpacks whilst they walk	Ph	W1

B6T1 Dysphoria and Trans Issues

Quote	Method	Participant
in some ways my queerness has been the opposite of a barrier to accessing the outdoors, as I've been very lucky to have joined queer specific groups. I also feel my dysphoria is actively treated by walking in nature, so I might spend more time outdoors than I would do if I was cisgender,	Q	
More understanding, less likely to be deadnamed or misgendered makes it a safer and more comfortable environment for me	Q	
If I know a space is specifically for the queer community, a lot of my worries about transphobia and having to explain myself to people go away	Q	
I would feel less likely to experience transphobia or just misunderstandings or awkward questions. I would also see it as an opportunity to meet and befriend lgbtqia+ people.	Q	
I feel safe amongst a group of similar people and friends. Knowing I won't get misgendered (or that the possibility is far less likely) makes me feel safer.	Q	
I would feel comfortable that being nonbinary would be more accepted and wouldnt be questioned	Q	
just because it's LGB friendly does not mean it's B&T friendly, and just b/c it's T friendly does not mean it's nonbinary friendly. There's a gay campground I'd love to go to but am afraid to go alone b/c I don't have the expected anatomy.	Q	
Because I feel like I would be able to express myself in more of a way that I wouldn't be judged or misgendered (by mistake or on purpose.	Q	
In the non-LGBTQIA groups that I attend, I stay in the closet about being non-binary. If there were groups directed specifically to LGBTQIA groups, I wouldn’t feel pressure and discomfort surrounding my pronouns and identity.	Q	

a shared frustration with the world, I guess. And yeah, a lot of that is discussed. Coming out, queer struggles.	In	G1
We don't get many cis men. so mostly Yeah. As say, maybe like 60% cis women 40% Trans and non binary people. Mostly AFAB people	In	G2
o a lot of work with, like brands, for example, to have more inclusive sizing and I'd really love to do stuff like that for us, because it's really obviously it's really gendered in the outdoors stores are extremely gendered and don't really cater for people who don't want to buy a women's or a man's jacket or whatever it is and things don't fit the way they want them to.	In	G2
there's definitely some non binary people in the group who are quite vocal about their experiences	In	G2
especially if it's something like swimming, or where like, your body might be on show and I think even in the broader LGBT and queer community, like you still experience constantly sometimes of people not understanding or questioning and I think for some people, they do want just a space where they don't have to think about it as much	In	G3
it feels quite powerful, I think, to be doing it as trans people for trans people	In	G3
there's a lot of non binary people, but I don't know if that's just I think that a lot of people identify as non binary rather than like trans female trans male	In	G3
Most people predictably, talk about transition, and hormones, and medical services and things	In	G3
That community aspect of it that the power and the numbers of you attend to especially all being trans, and not just being a queer group with cis people as well	In	G3
I think the most important part of the reason why it's important for it to be a trans group is I found myself like sometimes put off going into even queer outdoors groups in case I have to out myself as trans. Whereas in a trans group, everyone already knows and it doesn't matter.	In	G3
if you're going to use a changing room in a queer outdoors group, I think, you know, they might find out and yeah, they're queer people, so they're probably going to be fine, but I don't necessarily want everyone to know. Whereas if we're in the trans group is sort of like, well, by attending, like, I clearly want to do the activity more than I care about people knowing and we're all in the same boat because all of us have that sort of shared experience.	In	G3
talking about the use of the word guys as a gender neutral term on whether it was appropriate or no	PO	W1
queer only surf club, a camp. And how that was really amazing because it was just full of people that you didn't feel like you needed to hide your body around and it was much more accepting and people were really open and	PO	W1

won't mis-gender you based on your body and your swimsuit and that kind of thing. That community aspect		
They said they will have to try and buy binders that do not always fit and you can't send back and sharing binders. One of them offered another person a binder that they managed to get the didn't fit them and they offered it for free and they were going to post it	PO	W1
What a support really to have got from today. Not just to be able to meet and talk to these people. But to be able to have actual support and an item that will support me with a trans struggle.	In	W1
You're not ready to go, Hey, I'm trans. And you want to talk to other trans people about it before actually officially saying to your friends about it.	PO	W1
was almost like there are no consequences or no comeuppance of talking about something maybe that's new that you're exploring because these people don't know you	PO	W1
when he changed his name, he would use his new name in new queer groups. That it felt safe introducing yourself as this new name, because they wouldn't dead name you because they didn't have a clue what your dead name was. That no one cares if it was chosen or whatever. That's your name. You can start afresh if you go on your own	PO	W1
they wanted to go meet new people on their own, and it was partly to do with identity formation	PO	W1
around about two thirds of the group were trans either binary or non binary.	PO	W2
That they had found a way to keep doing a hobby they love and though they would have to give up on but have found a way not to have to give it up.	PO	W2
Names has been something that came up in this group and the last one. There were so many trans people there. People were talking about names quite a lot. It was obviously a conversation that has filtered through the group and about chosen names and dead names and whether to change them legally or whether to continue with their dead names legally on their paperwork. There was lots of conversations of people sharing their experiences of changing their names, especially non binary people because it's less of an urgent need for many of them	PO	W2
I had noticed on the last walk that people had used their chosen name for the first time or one of the first times at the group. Because they didn't know anybody. So they did introduce themselves with a new name because no one knew them as their previous name. So it was a good opportunity to do it.	PO	W2
i knew about one person that did this last time as they told me, but It turns out there was a whole other person who had done the name thing because he'd done it on that walk.	PO	W2

at the very last second decided to use their new name when they introduced themselves by that name.	PO	W2
So that's the name we all used for them and then they got comfortable with it for the day. So they had the chance to try it out and see if it felt right and decided yep, that's the name I want to use.	PO	W2
then someone overheard us talking about that. They said 'ha, I did that today too' It turns out that there was like three or four more people on this group who had come purposely to a new group to try out their new names.	PO	W2
said, the thing is in a queer group like that you are very unlikely to be misgendered. That if you are just completely by accident, they will always correct themselves immediately and never do it again, because everyone's queer and it's an inclusive group	PO	W2
they were talking about transphobia even within the queer communities and how these safe spaces for trans people were still needed.	PO	W2
transphobia is like epidemic and how there's loads of violence against trans people and they still need these safe spaces to be able to access things that other people can access, especially things like swimming where there's so much danger involved by kind of kind of personal like, perceived threat, or like revealing your body parts to people that you don't want them to know what your body parts are.	PO	W2
a big group of people were talking about transphobia and trans exclusion, radical feminism, and how in queer groups there is more inclusion. I asked a few people what the word queer in the title of the group meant them.	PO	W2
The general feeling was the the word queer meant trans inclusive in a way that LGBT did not, that it was safe.	PO	W2
I associate queer with like a higher proportion of trans and non binary people	I	W2
Hiking is trans joy	N	I3

B7T1 Transport

Quote	Method	Participant
Feel comfortable in a group more than on my own or just one or two people, like to meet other people, can car share to reduce costs	Q	
people get the train up and then from there we'll sort lifts out because that's the easiest way to do it. And then we are just a few people in one car.	In	G1
Lots of people in the group don't drive so just having a network of people who do and can help them get there	In	G2
starting from the train line. They are restricted by that because you need people to be able to get there cheaply. A	PO	W1

lot of people don't have cars, they can't afford cars and the transport increases access for the group as well		
The walk from was from Grindleford station which is about 10 miles into the Peak District. You get there by train from Sheffield. that train from Sheffield station takes about 15 minutes so it's really accessible and it costs only £2 on the train.	PO	W2

Impact on social and environmental justice

T2 Activism

Quote	Method	Participant
I really believe the outdoors is for everyone	In	G1
I think, as queer people, you know what it's like to be marginalised. And so then you go, right, I need to make sure this can work for all these other people as well.	In	G1
I've always found in the queer community, most people who are on the same page sort of politically	In	G2
He was saying that he found out about this group from going to a radical Trans Pride event in Sheffield. It was about activism	PO	W1
person was talking about being vegan with another person, vegetarian, but basically vegan and their family being vegan and talking about radical activism and slowly converting people to being vegan. The group was talking a lot about vegan activism although not many of them were actually vegan, a lot were vegetarian	PO	W1
The leader, supported by the rest of the group, chose to just go around the barrier and use the road anyway, going through the barrier at the top of the road at the end.	PO	W1
discussions about general anarchy and how queers like to break the rules. They were then talking about the police protest bill that has recently come to force and friends of theirs who have been arrested at protests. Some were sharing stories of protests they had been to.	PO	W1
He wanted to meet more trans people and non binary people and learn more about queer people's experiences that weren't like his own	PO	W2
he word radical was used a few times, that the word queer was a radical term and that walking in queer groups felt like a radical act against the heteronormative ideal of who accesses the peaks.	PO	W2
We probably won't agree on everything, but it's probably not going to be, right wing people. They're probably going to have similar views to me	I	W2
We strongly believe that all systems of oppression reinforce one another, that means that none can be fought in	N	I1

isolation. The fight for queer and trans liberation is inherently connected with the fight for Palestinian lives and dignity as they are both opposed by the forces of capitalism and colonialism.		
Advert for a protest walk for the right to roam. The adverts show the walk ends at a protest event	N	I2
Meet the queer hikers proving the great outdoors isn't just for cis, straight, middle class folk	N	I2
It doesn't matter who you are the ocean is for everyone	N	I3
I would love to see surf culture move to represent a greater diversity of people, and to actively break down barriers (financial, social, educational etc) that stand between people and the ocean. The world could use some salt water therapy right now.	N	I3
We believe every individual, every identity deserves equal access to blue spaces because the more of us that can enjoy them and can access them safely and respectfully there's more of us who will love them and more of us who want to protect blue spaces.	N	I3

T3 Environmentalism

Quote	Method	Participant
a few people have jobs in environmentalism	In	G1
When we're putting stuff together trying to make it sure they are sustainable and environmentally friendly as possible	In	G1
Particularly like leading walks that are in the Lake District fells. We tried to allow people to connect with it. So that they want to take care of it themselves, and promote ways that they can do that	In	G1
We learnt that spending time in the mountains connects you with them and then you want to look after them	In	G1
They're aware of those sorts of issues and they love the area so they want to protect it. So yeah, we tend to do like a few litter picks and stuff every year, usually after summer. Yeah, kind of try and protect the space. We've done it as part of the group	In	G1
We've got some people who come fairly regularly quite like like, mushrooms, fungi and stuff	In	G3
They were saying their job is in sustainable wind power, and doing ecology reports for creating sustainable power.	PO	W1
e was talking about how he was living in Sheffield to do research on how metals can be used in a more sustainable way to create technology. He was saying that loads of technology uses precious metals, and it's not sustainable. It's bad for the environment. So he was doing some research in Sheffield on what materials can be mined that are much more sustainable, that have the same properties as the precious metals that are currently being used for	PO	W1

phones and that kind of thing. So it's people with jobs who are actually working in climate activism		
about their jobs and working in sustainability and as an ecologist	PO	W2
The also said about working in sustainability. There was a trans, non binary person who works in alternative education outdoors.	PO	W2
I was welcomed with a group leader to start with. He told me he had just started his masters in sustainable food. He was talking about working in sustainability	PO	W2
There was also an ecologist on the walk as well. And another person that worked in environmental sciences, and later on I was talking to a couple of outdoor education leaders as well. So there was quite a few people in the group that worked in jobs in sustainability and nature connected things.	PO	W2
We were also talking about some ecology stuff as well. He was telling me about about the trees and about mycorrhizal connections in the ground which was quite fun because he was kind of teaching me stuff that I already knew, which I quite enjoyed. He was talking about the different types of trees we're talking about UK rain forest trees as there was a couple at the start of the walk and he had a really good basic understadning of ecology and of the trees and how they are all connected to each other in the woods. He just had an interest in nature	PO	W2
Some people said they remembered the tree and that they had been there before and remember this tree and there was a few people talking about how they grew up in Sheffield and they used to go walking in the padley gorge when they were kids and as an adult they don't really do it because they find it hard to find people to go walking with. They were remembering this tree that was there when they were a kid. They had a connection with it.	PO	W2
One person said 'I remember coming here my family and I didn't remember the gorge but I remember this tree and being here has brought back lots of memories'	PO	W2
he talk moved to foraging and plants. Some one was foraging blackberries. Then they were talking about the yew trees nearby and how you can kill yourself with one seed and then someone ate the berry, not the seed obviously, but the flesh of the yew. People were sharing knowledge about foraging and what is safe and what isn't. There was a lot of interest in foraging and fungi.	PO	W2
We believe every individual, every identity deserves equal access to blue spaces because the more of us that can enjoy them and can access them safely and respectfully there’s more of us who will love them and more of us who want to protect blue spaces.	N	I3

T4 Mental Health

Quote	Method	Participant
hopefully gaining more friends that are in the LGBTQIA+ community I can relate to and share trauma with	Q	
it's just an opportunity for people to socialise, meet other queer people, and at the same time benefit from being outdoors	In	G1
a shared frustration with the world, I guess. And yeah, a lot of that is discussed. Coming out, queer struggles.	In	G1
the importance of it is quite overwhelming at times. I think there's just big parts of the queer experience just like being able to live your normal life and getting by and fighting for your rights and, and all of those quite serious, heavy things. And I think what's really needed is spaces where people don't have to think about those things. And they can just go off and do a nice activity	In	G2
Just being able to be outside is so important. And I think we've got saturated with that message during COVID about you know, going for a little mental health walk and oh my god, that it is so valuable.	In	G2
people are so right about endorphins and nature of being outside and how much better it makes you feel, but it really does. It really does.	In	G2
People definitely share things about their experiences of being queer for sure	In	G2
talking about these walking groups, being around queer people, and just feeling free and able to talk about these issues. Being able to talk about the experiences not having to worry or hide	PO	W1
He was saying that he was talking about going outside for walks and how post COVID, Since moving up north, from the South he's been walking a lot more. And finding that walking gives him time to process his life and outside space	PO	W1
his mental health is a lot better because you have time to process stuff.	PO	W1
talking about the environment and nature connection, and the way that walking is a really good trauma therapy for them	PO	W2
He was talking about like how nature and walking in nature is like really meditative. When he lived in the budhist community he learnt all about meditation and power of meditation and he said how walking was something that actually creates a really similar headspace	PO	W2
he felt like walking in nature with queer people would be like a really healing experience. Being able to talk about things like trauma, with other queer people would be really helpful to him from his experience.	PO	W2

Other people were listening to this conversation as we had sat down at lunchtime and then a few people came over and two or three more people came over and said, Oh, I came out as trans during lockdown, as well. It's having that time to reflect on yourself and see who you are and explore that away from society. A lot of the people especially the non binary people were talking about forming their identities during lockdown, and another person had said he was three months into T (testosterone) when lockdown happened. He did his transition on T during lockdown, sort of like went into lockdown presenting as a woman and then came out a lockdown as a guy.	PO	W2
get a lot of dopamine from being outside.	In	W2
Walk advertised as being a 'restorative ramble' with the hashtag 'queerwellbeing'	N	I2
'Our community has always been built on creating our own joy and carving out places that we can exist. Whether it be in the clubs and bars where we dance together or out on the hills where we can breathe; either way feeling safe in the presence of familu. On Saturday we walk for Daniel, Derrick, Kelly, Raymond and Ashley.' Followed by the description 'There's not much to say, other than to lean on each other as we always do.'	N	I2
Release your stress	N	I2
Being in nature is healing. So walking with other queer people feels like a radical act of self-love and community resistance	N	I2
When the world feels a bit too much, being on a walk together is a way to rest.	N	I2

T5 Hope

Quote	Method	Participant
Some people say that they don't actually speak to many trans people that they know of, outside of this group, and it's really nice. They can have their sort of like Trans and Queer time.	In	G3
the generational stuff as well, like the big mix of ages that they thought doesn't seem important on the face of it because everyone is mixed in together and no one cares, but it is important when you get into more in depth conversations about queer experiences and queer issues and how younger queer people had older queer people to look up to.	PO	W1
it was really nice to talk about someone who had been through the same thing and gone through the same sort of identity crisis	PO	W1
there's lots of people who are learning about themselves. because everyone's learning about themselves because even when they're not getting it quite right, they're always	PO	W1

coming from a place of good intention and once they get it wrong once, they never get it wrong again		
he found that he wanted to go to a more inclusive group because in that group, it was mostly just gay men. He wanted to go to a group where he was learning about other different people and about their life experiences as well	PO	W2
some people were talking a little bit at that point about how they don't have their family in their life anymore, even though they live nearby. Some people were talking about their coming out stories and now they don't have these families around them anymore because of homophobia or transphobia and that kind of thing	PO	W2
He said it's really important to be clear that all non binary people technically fit under the trans umbrella even if they don't identify as trans. It fitted into a conversation I was having earlier with two other trans non binary people about the use of the word trans and how they found it hard to identify with the word after their transition, like Oh, I'm not trans enough to use the word trans. That it gives them impostor syndrome. They all said they feel like because they haven't always had medical transitions that they feel like they aren't trans enough to use the word for themselves. They feel like they haven't been through enough to use the word and that they often internally fight with this. They've said that these community walking groups help them to talk to and connect with other non binary and trans people and that helped them to like overcome this.	PO	W2
I'm trans, that's a great thing, rather than oh my god, I'm too scared to use word trans. I feel like I'm like, I'm not worthy of this word, because I'm not trans enough. I haven't transitioned. I have not been on testosterone. I've not had top surgery, etc, etc. These groups would help them to understand that non binary is trans	PO	W2
here was a young non binary person, they were listening to the conversation and they said, 'Oh, I've been really you know, finding that tricky like, I'm not binary, but I didn't feel like I'm trans but the way you've just been talking about it, it's made me realise actually, I am trans and like, whoa, kind of having a bit of a head fuck about it, I guess'.	PO	W2
people were talking about it and about being in a comfortable space around queer people and able to explore that and go oh, why am I uncomfortable with this?	PO	W2
You're within a big queer bubble of people who have all these different experiences, all these intersectional problems and all these things going wrong for them and you can learn about other people's journeys	PO	W2

T6 Intersectionality

Quote	Method	Participant
prefer groups that are inclusive. Groups for minorities are far more inclusive than groups run by bitter old women... bit over, but my experience is that "traditional " groups tend to only like "their kind" and are not often open to diversity. I'm openly "odd" ace, AutiHD, and am often faced with disdain	Q	
It's one less thing to worry about and groups for marginalised people are usually more understanding with other things	Q	
It would mean I would he able to relax and focus on enjoying myself and learning rather than worrying that people might be homophobic/transphobic/sexist. I could be my genuine self without masking.	Q	
we're aware like, we've got few members who have disabilities who can't walk very far. And yeah, can't do certain activities. So creating another social space where everyone can be involved,	In	G1
We're doing whatever we can to make the walks more accessible. I mean, shorter routes or things like that.	In	G1
I think the nature of the group being adventure outdoorsy, we've not had that many physically disabled people approach us, I think, because yeah, it's just one of those activities, like hiking specifically. And then we have got a few people who have had long COVID For example. Things like that. Were having shorter routes for people that can't walk as far	In	G1
I think, as queer people, you know what it's like to be marginalised. And so then you go, right, I need to make sure this can work for all these other people as well.	In	G1
We we definitely are overwhelmingly white. We don't have a lot of intersectionality in that way	In	G2
The vast majority of people who come up are white	In	G3
not many people who are disabled come to these groups, especially physically disabled people.	In	G3
We might go to a different pool that has a ramp and or hoist and things like that. There's a lot there, but that's only because our usual one is shutting for two months.In the back of my mind I'm kind of thinking if that ends up working and they do have space for us. Maybe it would be suitable for long term change. We'll see. We'll see. Because we could be doing a lot more to to make it more accessible.	In	G3
Trans and progress pride flags being carried on backs of leaders backpacks. Group wearing a range of every day and outdoor clothing. Paused for a long time on ridge. Notices other groups there including families, in background of photo 3 is a group of walkers including a person wearing hijab.	Ph	W1
they did a few weeks ago which was specifically aimed at disabled queer people	PO	W1

lack of racial diversity. There's 30 People here and it's probably about 90% White people. So the diversity is quite low, which considering you've got quite big cities around. They were talking about how one of the people attending the group goes to another group that is specifically for queer people of colour. They were talking about doing a mash up between them and doing a outdoor session for that group	PO	W1
talking about the intersectional sessions they do as he is neurodivergent and black. Both the people I was listening to are not white. So they were both interested in the intersectionality of the group and talking about accessibility and how the group leaders make space for feedback on it	PO	W1
They went on an urban walk, which was advertised as an accessible walk and the feedback they got on that one was that they walked too fast. They'd advertised it as an accessible walk, but then the pace was too quick so the next time they slowed it down.	PO	W1
When they advertise the regular routes, they practice the route first, and then they write down - Are there any styles that you can't get over If you're in a wheelchair or have accessibility issues, and then they tell you before you go on the walk, so that steep incline at the start of this walk was mentioned and the rocky downward track and then in the fact there was two styles on the walk, which would make it not suitable for some people.	PO	W1
Even if you think you know the needs of a certain demographic of people within your group, you don't and only the person themselves does. Every single disabled person has different needs. So the best way to approach it is if someone comes to you and says, 'Hey, I'm in a wheelchair is this group for me?' And they say, okay, but the question might be, 'can you get out of the wheelchair to get over style?' Because some people can. But some people can't.	PO	W1
someone might have been blind, for example, but they could actually do a walk like this as long as they brought their dog. Is this walk suitable for dogs the whole way or is there any fields which has got cows in them? And that sort of thing	PO	W1
to try and increase the number of queer people of colour outside as well but they needed a more specific group for that	PO	W1
A couple of people joined partway along the walk just for the last mile. so they were people that weren't able to access the peaks but were able to access the last part of the walk because it was on a wide pavement and fully accessible.	PO	W2
You're within a big queer bubble of people who have all these different experiences, all these intersectional	PO	W2

problems and all these things going wrong for them and you can learn about other people's journeys		
I was talking to somebody non white on the […] hike who was saying that they said they have tried to get some Persian attendees, people they know, to come. They were like, I can't come because if anyone found my name on the list or found out I was a member, it wouldn't be good	In	W2
Photograph of group member in an off road wheelchair in the snow on an acccesibe group walk	N	I2
Group walk advertised as ‘queer and/or disabled inclusive ramble	N	I2
Advert for a group that is not advertised as inclusive still includes a detailed description of how many styles, width of footpaths, and gates. It states ‘We found sometimes the stones were loose under our feet and wheels’	N	I2
‘Inclusive ramble for queer and disabled people’ with a graphic under showing people of different races and with different physical disabilities holding pride flags	N	I2
Advert including a person in a wheelchair	N	I3
Comment on a post ‘finding ways to make blue spaces available for those LGBTQ+ with mobility issues who need to access to beach wheelchairs and adaptive surfing. That’s true inclusivity.’	N	I3
[We are an] intersectional community. The fact we’re queer is one part of our identity and creating inclusive surfing means advocating for other under represented identities.	N	I3

T7 Neurodivergence

Quote	Method	Participant
I find being outside helps with my adhd	Q	
we find people with neurodiversity a lot of the time is the one that comes up	In	G1
they now know what neurodivergence is and have seen themselves in others and they're exploring that and then getting diagnosed. There's a lot of the group who have gone through that recently. Yeah, it's a massive thing.	In	G1
we have a number of neurodiverse people	In	G2
Do you find that the use of the companion ticket is for physical disabilities, or is it more for Neuro divergence? I guess more often neuro divergence, the people I know that have used it's for Neuro divergence reasons. like not being able to take public transport by themselves. Or they can't attend the session with people that don't know by themselves and things like that.	In	G3
think loads of people with neurodiversity come to the group	In	G3

I'd say maybe two thirds of the people who come are neurodivergent. That might be why people like go into a group because it's like, organised for them and like, they don't have to do any of the organising and you go and there's people there telling you where to go, where to start. And that might appeal to like people who like a bit of structure.	In	G3
I've had people say they've come to some sessions and it's put them off go into other sessions because it feels very awkward. And it's not a huge amount we can do about it because I think it brings a lot of awkward people together.	In	G3
they have a lot of neurodiverse people as well as people with accessibility issues coming to that and that was specifically for them	PO	W1
I noticed quite a few people talking about neurodiversity overlapping with queer spaces. There's probably a lot of neurodiverse people in this group as well.	PO	W1
there was a lot of talks about the overlap of neurodiversity in the group, as well. And that feeling of comfort and safety.	PO	W1
intersectional diversity and reasonable adaptions and autism. Another talked about dyslexia and the need for time to process instructions and directions. How walking in a safe group meant they could just follow and not have to read a map	PO	W1
most of the kids in the outdoor provision are neurodiverse. That there's an overlap between neurodiversity and trans people, which is evident in that group	PO	W2
I have heard a lot of people talking about neurodivergence. I've spoken to 10 people today and about 8 them have told me that they are autistic, adhd or dyslexic when they tell me about themselves. I would say there's a clear overlap.	PO	W2
they did a master's so they became a teacher then they did a master's in something to do with education, but they were looking specifically at neuro diversity. When they were doing that they came across all this research into the link between neurodiversity and trans people. So it's like a new framework, way of looking at things. It's called neuro queer. So it's a bit like queer theory, but this idea of neuro queer people, because you get something called Autigender, which is someone who is autistic and also trans. Their gender is completely linked with their autism. Then he was talking about something called neuro queer, which was where you link the neuro divergence with queer identity. This guy was autistic, and has an autism and ADHD diagnosis and is also a trans masculine, non binary person	PO	W2
a huge overlap between neurodivergence and trans identities	PO	W2

Appendix 13
Ethical Approval

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the "principal researcher".

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity.
Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

Delete the Guidance Notes at the end of the form BEFORE submitting your application

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:		Lizzie Indigo Rae Wild			
2	Tick all boxes which apply:		Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
3	Undergraduate Student	☐	Taught Postgraduate Student	☒	Postgraduate Research Student	☐

4	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	Institute of Management and Health
5	Campus:	Carmarthen
6	E-mail address:	muddypuddleclub@gmail.com
7	Contact Telephone Number:	07709125186
	For students:	
8	Student Number:	2006875
9	Programme of Study:	MA Outdoor Education
10	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Andy Williams

SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

1	Has the research activity received approval in principle? (please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual)		**YES**	☐	**NO**	☒
					Date	
2	If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known): ***Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval***	Research Degrees Committee		☐		
3		Institute Research Committee		☐		
4		Other (write in)		☐		

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

	Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines.	
1	**UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice**	☒
2	**UWTSD Research Data Management Policy**	☒
3		☐

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

1	Does the research activity involve collaborators outside of the University?		**YES**	☐	**NO**	☒
2	If Yes, please provide the name of the external organisation and name and contact details for the main contact person and confirmation this person has consented to their personal data being shared.as part of this collaboration.					
3	Institution					
4	Contact person name					
5	Contact person e-mail address					
6	Has this individual consented to sharing their details on this form?		**YES**	☐	**NO**	☐
7	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?		**YES**	☐	**NO**	☐
8	Is your research externally funded		**YES**	☐	**NO**	☐
9	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Voluntary	**YES**	☐	**NO**	☐
10		Employed	**YES**	☐	**NO**	☐
11	Is the research being undertaken within an existing UWTSD Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP)	If YES then the permission question below does not need to be answered.	**YES**	☐	**NO**	☐

12	Permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation	(If YES attach copy) If NO the application cannot continue	**YES**	☐	**NO**	☐

Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

13	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	**YES**	☐	**NO**	☐
14	If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation				

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	Queering the outdoors: Finding 'brave spaces' through community based outdoor learning and Forest School.		
2	Proposed start date of your research (not your course start date):	December 2022	Proposed end date:	June 2023
3	**Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words)** **Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the three points below:** • *Purpose of Research Activity* • *Proposed Research Question* • *Aims of Research Activity* • *Objectives of Research Activity* Demonstrate, briefly, how **<u>Existing Research</u>** has informed the proposed activity and explain • *What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge* • *How it addresses an area of importance.*			
4	**Purpose of Research Activity** This research aims to advance an understanding of the barriers to the outdoors that the Queer community face and consider whether outdoor education can remove them. (this box should expand as you type)			
5	**Research Question** Do community based outdoor learning programmes increase access to the outdoors for queer people and, subsequently, address social and environmental justice? (this box should expand as you type)			
6	**Aims of Research Activity** The research aims to advance an understanding of the contribution of Forest School and community based outdoor learning programmes to social and environmental justice for the Queer community.			

	(this box should expand as you type)
7	**Objectives of Research Activity** 1. Identify the barriers faced by lgbtqia+ people to accessing the outdoors. 2. Explore whether community based outdoor learning programmes and Forest School can remove some of these barriers for leaders and participants. 3. Explore how Forest School and community based outdoor programmes address social and environmental justice. (this box should expand as you type)
8	**Proposed methods (maximum 600 words)** Provide a brief summary of all the methods that **may** be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed.
9	Questionnaire Online questionnaire to be completed by members of the queer community who would like to increase their participation in outdoor activities and learning. The questionnaire will use both closed and open ended questions. Critical ethnography Photographs Notes Observations Interviews These will be completed by immersion of the researcher in outdoor groups which are aimed at the LGBTQ+ community and in Forest School and democratic learning groups which are led by LGBTQ+ leaders. (this box should expand as you type)

10	**Location of research activity** Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
11	Online The Garden, Bristol Various locations frequented by LGBTQ+ outdoor walking and wild swimming groups, sessions led by Queer Outdoors (this box should expand as you type)
12	**Research activity outside of the UK** If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those usual in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues raised by the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural and/or legal sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants.
13	*(this box should expand as you type)*

14	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents **NOT** publicly available?	**NO**	☒
		YES	☐
15	If Yes, please provide details here of how you will gain access to specific documentation that is not in the public domain and that this is in accordance with prevailing data protection law of the country in question and England and Wales. *(this box should expand as you type)*		

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

1	**Will the research activity include:**	**YES**	**NO**
2	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
3	Use of interviews?	☒	☐
4	Use of diaries?	☒	☐
5	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☒	☐
6	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
7	Use of video or audio recording?	☒	☐
8	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
9	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
10	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒

11	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒
12	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
13	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
14	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
15	Other primary data collection methods, please explain in this box For example, 'focus groups'. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) in this box and tick the accompany box.	☐	☒
16	Details of any other primary data collection method: (this box should expand as you type)		

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION G: Intended Participants

	Who are the intended participants:	**YES**	**NO**
2	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
3	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
4	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
5	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☒	☐
6	Prisoners?	☐	☒
7	Young offenders?	☐	☒
8	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
9	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
10	Others (please identify specifically any group who may be unable to give consent) please indicate here and tick the appropriate box.	☐	☒
11	Other – please indicate here: (this box should expand as you type)		

12	**Participant numbers and source** Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
13	How many participants are expected?	Questionnaire – online – shared via social media. 20 participants

		Critical ethnography – information sheet shared with diversity in the outdoors online group to identify participants for the study. 10 participants *(this box should expand as you type)*
14	Who will the participants be?	Members of the LGBTQ+ community – both those who work in the outdoors or leading groups and participants of these groups. *(this box should expand as you type)*
15	How will you identify the participants?	Questionnaire will identify their suitability for the research. *(this box should expand as you type)*

16	**Information for participants:**	**YES**	**NO**	**N/A**
17	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
18	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
19	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
20	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☐	☐	☒
21	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☒	☐	☐
22	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
23	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
24	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
25	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☒	☐	☐
26	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
27	*(this box should expand as you type)*			

28	**Information for participants:**	**YES**	**NO**	**N/A**
29	Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐
30	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☒	☐
31	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
32	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
33	If YES to any question, please provide full details			
34	*(this box should expand as you type)*			

SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

1	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them. If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaborator) you may append that to this form.		
2	Full risk assessment completed and appended?	Yes	☐
		No	☒
3	**Risks to participants** For example: emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information		
4	Risk to Participant: Physical risk from participating in Forest School sessions *(this box should expand as you type)*	*How will you mitigate the Risk to Participant* *(this box should expand as you type)*	
5	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities		
	Disclosure of sexual harassment or abuse. Helplines will be offered at the end of the questionnaire or offered during the sessions. *(this box should expand as you type)*		
6	**Risks to investigator** For example: personal safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest		
	Risk to Investigator: Emotional risk *(this box should expand as you type)*	*How will you mitigate the Risk to Investigator:* Supervision in place. *(this box should expand as you type)*	
7	**University/institutional risks** For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection		
	Risk to University: Reputational risk *(this box should expand as you type)*	*How will you mitigate the Risk to University:* Due diligence *(this box should expand as you type)*	

8	**Disclosure and Barring Service**

9	If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants.	**YES**	**NO**	**N/A**
10	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☒	☐	☐

SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

1	**Feedback** What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
	Feedback given at the end of the study. *(this box should expand as you type)*
2	**Informed consent** Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.
	Participants will be fully informed of the purpose and outline of the research project. Before interviews consent will be given verbally and recorded. Questionnaire will have a consent page *(this box should expand as you type)*
3	**Confidentiality / Anonymity** Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.
	All data will be anonymised. *(this box should expand as you type)*

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

In completing this section refer to the University's Research Data Management Policy and the extensive resources on the University's Research Data Management web pages (http://uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/).

1	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 "GDPR" and the Data Protection Act 2018 "DPA")?	**YES**	**NO**
	"Personal data" *means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'). An identifiable*	X	☐

	natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person.		
2	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
	Participant may identify and reveal personal data during interview. This will be anonymised on transcription. All kept in line with GDPR, I am a registered data controller. *(this box should expand as you type)*		
3	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	**YES**	**NO**
	"Special category data" *means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects' –* *(a) racial or ethnic origin,* *(b) political opinions,* *(c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature,* *(d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992),* *(e) physical or mental health or condition,* *(f) sexual life,* *(g) genetics,* *(h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),*	X	☐
4	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
	Gender and sexual identity, needs to be collected to ensure participant is part of the target demographic. *(this box should expand as you type)*		

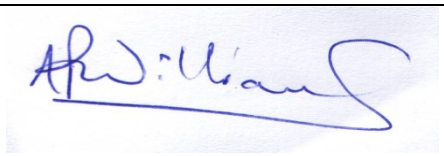
5	Will the research activity involve storing personal data and/or special category data on one of the following:	**YES**	**NO**
6	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☐	☒
7	University computers?	☐	☒
8	Private company computers?	☐	☒
9	Home or other personal computers?	☐	☒
10	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☒	☐
11	"Cloud" storage or websites?	☐	☒
12	Other – specify:	☐	☐
13	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation:		
	All data will be anonymised, interview recordings will be destroyed after transcription. Recordings will be saved on laptop with 2 step authentication until transcribed. All kept in line with GDPR, I am a registered data controller. *(this box should expand as you type)*		
14	**All Data Storage**		
15	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	**YES**	**NO**

16	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☒	☐
17	Sharing of data with others at the University?	☐	☒
18	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
19	Export of data outside the European Union or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	☒
20	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	☒
21	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
22	Use of data management system?	☐	☒
23	Data archiving?	☐	☒
24	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and DPA (and/or any international equivalent):		
	Transfer of recorded interviews to laptop. No personal information will be included and two step authentication used. All kept in line with GDPR, I am a registered data controller. *(this box should expand as you type)*		
25	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Researcher *(this box should expand as you type)*		
26	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		
	Researcher *(this box should expand as you type)*		
27	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. Will data be archived – if so how and if not why not.		
	Two step authentication on laptop. Will be archived. *(this box should expand as you type)*		
28	Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/). If so please explain. (*Most relevant to academic staff)*		
	No *(this box should expand as you type)*		
29	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	**YES**	☒
		NO	☐
30	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	**YES**	☒
		NO	☐

SECTION K: Declaration

31	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants**.** In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
	Signature of applicant:	L.Wild	**Date:** **09/01/23**

For STUDENT Submissions:

32	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Dr A Williams	**Date:** **10 Jan 2023**
33	Signature:		

For STAFF Submissions:

34	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		**Date:**
35	Signature:		

Checklist: Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

☒	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
☒	I have completed **ALL RELEVANT** sections of the form in full.
☒	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle
☒	I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation (**where appropriate**)
☒	I have attached a full risk assessment (and have NOT completed Section H of this form) (where appropriate) *ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE* ***ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT***
☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.
☒	I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DoS/Supervisor, module tutor or Academic Director.
☒	I have deleted the guidance notes before submitting the PG2 for consideration

RESEARCH STUDENTS AND STAFF ONLY All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk , with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name. You will be informed of the outcome of your claim by email; therefore **it is important that you check your University and personal email accounts regularly.**
STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

This form is available electronically from the Academic Office web pages:
https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/

Application Process

All staff research projects and all research students must submit the Ethical Approval Form to the **University Research Ethics Committee** via the Academic Office (pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk). Staff research directly in relation to personal study for taught undergraduate or Masters programmes should be submitted via the Institute procedures explained below.

Taught masters and taught undergraduate research Ethical Approval Forms are considered **within Institutes.** Institutes will provide details of the specific processes for this. Where the Ethical issues within any single ethical application are of particular concern the Institute will refer these to the University Research Ethics Committee. Any student activity that involves the collection of primary data needs to undergo Ethical approval, this includes assignment work as well as dissertations.

Notes for guidance in completion of this form

Section A: About You
Please complete all relevant sections

Section B: Approval for research activity
Research proposals must be approved in principle before applying for Ethical Approval. The proposal approval only becomes final when the ethical approval is received.

The process for proposal approval varies according the individual and programme of study:

- Research students, by application on form PG1 to the Research Degrees Committee
- Taught students by review of research proposal within Institutes (Institutes provide specific details of these processes)
- Staff, by agreement by the Academic Director/Assistant Dean

Section C: External Ethical Guidance materials
Many discipline areas are required to operate with the discipline specific codes of research ethics (for example health, psychology, education etc.), any such codes must be listed and you must tick to confirm that you have consulted with these.

Section D: External Collaborative Research Activity
Provide details of the external collaborative partners, where appropriate you might want to submit a copy of the external collaboration agreement with the Ethical

Approval Form. If the partner requires the research to be subject to its own internal Ethical approval process then please provide details of that process and a copy of any final (or interim) approvals received from the organisation.

Section E: Details of Research Activity
Remember that the individuals reviewing this Ethical Approval Form may not have seen your research proposal, and also may not be experts in the specific area of your research. The information provided should therefore be jargon free and clearly stated.

Indicative Title: please use the same title as used on the research proposal.

Purpose: the Ethical approval process will want to ensure that the methods you propose are adequate and appropriate to address the research aims and objectives. Excessive additional data collection can be seen as unethical.

Proposed Methods: the Ethical approval process seeks to ensure that you understand the methods that are intended, and that the implementation of those methods will be appropriate and without unnecessary impact on respondents. This section must explain how the methods described will lead to the collection of necessary and sufficient data, but not excessive data. Please be specific.

Location: this needs to mention geographical location and also local situation (for example, within Local Authority Offices in Cardiff, using a private room but close to other individuals). If you are collecting data within an organisational setting then you need to explain the permissions that you have obtained to do this.

Research Activity outside of the UK: please complete this section in detail, and note any guidance you have received. Also describe your own familiarity (or not) with the location that you will be utilising.

Section F: Scope of Research Activity
Please tick ALL of the research activities that might be undertaken. If any additional types of activity are intended then please add an extra box and describe these.

If you have answered no to all questions in F then sections G and I do not need to be completed. . Signatures are still required in section K.

Section G: Intended Participants
Please tick all categories that might apply.

Numbers & Source: if you are using a series of different methods or research activities please list numbers for each stage/phase. Be clear about how you will find respondents. Will you use intermediaries, and if so how? How will you ensure compliance with your sampling strategy?

Information for participants: all participants should be appropriately informed about the research, what is expected of them and what will happen to the information that they provide. The Ethical review process does not ask to see this documentation, but requires this to be reviewed and approved by the Director of Studies in the case of

research students, the supervisor/module tutor in relation to students on taught programmes and the Academic Director/Assistant Dean in relation to staff research.

Section H: Anticipate Risks

All research carries some level of risk. The answers you provide to questions in this section will be reviewed to ensure that you have an appropriate understanding of the type of risks involved and how you can mitigate against these risks. If you have completed a full risk assessment, as required for example for laboratory work, field work, clinical tests, diving operations, or by a collaborative partner, you may append that to this form. In that case, please tick the box indicating this has been provided. You will not then be required to complete Section H.

Risk to participants Think very carefully about how your actions/questions/discussions might affect the people you are involving as participants. You might identify the risk as small but it would still be a risk. Many types of question have the potential to make respondents less content with their life / job; you need to recognise and try to ameliorate any such effects
If these are business owners, time with you may reduce profit.
In some locations physical risk is very real to both participants and yourself, please consider this.

Risk to you, the researcher Think about where you will meet people, if there are any dangers involved in the location. If you are meeting people as individuals think about using a public place. In general do not visit people in their own homes or remote locations. If you are talking to individuals about certain issues think about how their responses might affect you emotionally. What about the risk of collecting insufficient data?

Risk to the University When undertaking your research, you are acting as a member of the University (student or staff). Professionalism is important, so it is important to be well organised and well prepared. Punctuality, clarity etc. are all part of this. What will you do to ensure this? You must ensure you do not harm the good name of the University in any way and do nothing to undermine the reputation of the research it conducts and sponsors. Upholding high standards of conduct and integrity are vital in this regard. You must also conduct the research in such a way to minimise the potential for claims of negligence made against the University, its researchers and any collaborating individual or organisation. In this respect you should always comply with ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards as required by statutory and regulatory authorities, as well as the university's Research Integrity and Ethics Code of Practice. Research misconduct in this respect can take many forms, including:

- fabrication: making up results or other outputs (eg, artefacts) and presenting them as if they were real
- falsification: manipulating research processes or changing or omitting data without good cause
- plagiarism: using other people's material without giving proper credit
- failure to meet ethical, legal and professional obligations: for example failure to declare competing interests; misrepresentation of involvement or authorship; misrepresentation of interests; breach of confidentiality; lack of informed consent; misuse of personal data; and abuse of research subjects or material
- improper dealing with allegations of misconduct: failing to address possible infringements such as attempts to cover up misconduct and reprisals against whistle-blowers

Adverse Outcomes. Think carefully about the possibilities, and cover here

Section I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

Feedback to participants: outline your approach. Will interview transcripts be shared with respondents to check accuracy? Will summaries of questionnaire analysis be made available to respondents in some way? Will an overview report be provided? How and when?

Informed consent: Draft letter / e-mail / or heading (or footer) section of questionnaire must be approved by DoS/supervisor (if research student), supervisor/module tutor if taught student, or Academic Director / Assistant Dean if a member of staff.
Confidentiality/Anonymity. Explain clearly how you will ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

Section J: Data Protection and Storage
Before completing this section it is necessary to read the University's Research Data Management information. The questions that follow are designed to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act as well as established research protocols.

Many research activities will involve electronic transfer of data and use of data management systems in the summarisation and analysis of data. You will need to explain these in relation to compliance with the Data Protection Act.

Think carefully about who will have access to your data, this will include supervisors and examiners. Also that a thesis will be made available via the University library and the British Library system. If you are seeking an access bar for a period of time after completion then mention it here. If you will provide a copy of your findings, or intend to give a presentation, to a facilitating/ supporting/accessing organisation then explain that in this section. But also think about the general principle of data sharing, as explained in the Research Data Management information.

In terms of storage of data please ensure security, and also mitigate against loss of data.

Section K: Declaration
Ensure the appropriate countersignatures have been provided
Look carefully at the checklist and ensure that you comply with and tick all that are relevant to your research.