



Developing sustainable tourism for future generations: Recommendations for the Slate Landscape UNESCO World Heritage Site

Parry, Sara; Hanna, Sonya

Published: 01/01/2025

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Cyswllt i'r cyhoeddiad / Link to publication](#)

Dyfyniad o'r fersiwn a gyhoeddwyd / Citation for published version (APA):

Parry, S., & Hanna, S. (2025). *Developing sustainable tourism for future generations: Recommendations for the Slate Landscape UNESCO World Heritage Site*. Bangor University.

Hawliau Cyffredinol / General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal ?

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Developing sustainable tourism for future generations: Recommendations for the Slate Landscape UNESCO World Heritage Site

The designation of the Slate Landscape in North Wales as a UNESCO World Heritage site has affirmed its cultural and historical uniqueness and boosted its touristic appeal. Aiming to identify the needs and perceptions for the future, we examined the younger generation's views of sustainable tourism practices in the region. Our key recommendations reflect GenZ's perceptions during 2023 and may be relevant for consideration by local authorities and other organisations associated with the tourism sector working within the Slate Landscape area.

Key recommendations

- Facilitate co-creation workshops to include young people and key stakeholders from public and private sector with the aim of discussing and developing creative ideas on site promotion, development, and opportunities.
- Promote awareness among generation Z about funding support such as LleCHILLeNI with the aim of developing and initiating project ideas and initiatives.
- Conduct an audit of all projects/initiatives targeting generation Z that encourage their (1) participation in community initiatives through coaching and mentoring, (2) engagement in forums that focus on the socio-economic future of the Slate Landscape, and (3) skills/career development.
- Develop a communication strategy and a forum for young people to drive their community integration and build their awareness of opportunities/initiatives/events to operationalise the opportunities highlighted in the Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan as related to this target group.
- Support the younger generation to co-create and deliver sustainable activities that combine educational tourism with leisure, e.g. guided walks and rock climbing which showcases the area's natural and cultural heritage. Current initiatives being offered by organisations such as Snowdonia-Active lack this co-creation and delivery element.
- Explore the viability of using the slate caverns to host events for/by young people (e.g. festivals, competitive events etc.) linked to the site's UNESCO status.
- Evaluate, develop and measure online and on-site campaigns using social media to promote:
 - sustainable tourism by enhancing visitors' awareness,
 - safe practices when hiking/climbing,
 - attractive and relevant signage around the sites.
- Implement creative practices of place-making and environmental design that interpret and play with people's sensory experiences, to enhance visitor experiences and engage communities with the wider context of the site (e.g., a sensory walking route with map and audio tour).
- Explore IoT (Internet of Things) technologies to monitor engagement with specific areas for example, interactive maps.

Project Summary

The Bangor University study combined expertise in place research, heritage, marketing, and sustainability to:

- (1) Examine the younger generation's perspective of the Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales's status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS).
- (2) Understand their views of sustainable tourism practices in the region.

A mixed methods approach was adopted to engage young people (aged 18-25 years) who are indigenous to the area, combining one focus group and 20 interviews with a netnographic examination of online user engagement behaviour related to the slate landscape area on social media networks (Twitter, Instagram, TikTok and Google).

Results highlight four key themes: *pride in Welsh heritage, bonds of personal significance, uniqueness and attributes of the place, and community perceptions and global recognition*. Exploration of these themes from collected discourse data plus sentiment analysis of extracted social media data enabled the identification of the above key recommendations.

The study demonstrates that the indigenous younger generation are proud of the slate landscape area and display a strong emotional attachment towards the place, its history, and their heritage. The participants were positive and celebratory about the site's UNESCO status; but despite the perceived advantages including global recognition, they had mixed feelings about how the new status could affect sustainable tourism practices and visitor numbers, the local economy and the site's unique communities. Our findings showed that young people are deeply engaged with the slate sites in terms of their historical knowledge and their enjoyment is based on leisure, fitness, and social activities. However, some felt that their voices are not always heard, and they had concerns about the lack of opportunities in a broadly rural and in some deprived places. User-generated content related to the slate landscape is also predominantly positive.

Principal Investigators:

Dr Sara Parry
Dr Sonya Hanna

Co-Investigators:

Professor Thora Tenbrink
Dr Einir Young

Funding Source: Bangor University Impact & Innovation Award, a strategic fund provided by HEFCW through the Research Wales Innovation Fund (RWIF).

External Partners: Gwynedd Council, Snowdonia National Park Authority.

ISBN: 9781842202166



PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY