



THE
OUTWARD
BOUND TRUST

OUTWARD

RE

BOUND

Emerging from the pandemic 2022-2024

THE CONTEXT

WITHIN WHICH THIS PLAN SITS

There are three factors shaping our planning in 2022.

ONE

The Covid pandemic and the current turmoil in Europe have combined to cause the biggest global upheaval since 1945. Young people have been, and will be, badly impacted. Very significant educational, emotional, social and financial problems will challenge the wellbeing and resilience of a generation of young people.

TWO

The Outward Bound Trust has also been adversely affected. Over the last two years 40,000 young people have missed out on their Outward Bound opportunity. Many staff have left, we have taken on debt and every aspect of our work and teamwork has been disrupted. Our pre-pandemic plans no longer seem as relevant.

THREE

The next two years are likely to see substantial changes to the leadership at The Trust. The Board of Trustees is in the process of being refreshed as some experienced Trustees retire and are replaced. A new Chief Executive is due to be appointed in 2023, the first since 2006.





These factors all present significant opportunity for the charity.

The need for what Outward Bound does for young people has never been greater. We are relevant, topical and the demand for our services is huge.

As we pull away from the disruption of the pandemic, catch our breath and rebuild, there is a natural moment when we can take stock and make some internal changes and improvements so that we re-emerge even stronger than before.

And we can welcome new perspectives and ideas into the organisation. We have spent two years radically adapting the work we undertake. We know this is an organisation that can mix the traditional with the innovative.

OUR MISSION

To inspire young people to believe they can achieve more than they ever thought possible.

OUR CORE VALUES

- **A belief that we all have undiscovered potential.** We aim to create moments when everyone can see and believe in themselves as never before and to translate such moments into lessons for everyday life.
- **A belief in the power and intensity of learning through adventure** - as a means of bringing out the best in people.
- **A deep appreciation of the balance between risk, reward and responsibility.** We want people to have intense experiences with real consequences and powerful, positive and memorable outcomes.
- **A spirit of respect and compassion.** We aim to stretch people both physically and mentally. In doing so we act with care, concern and generosity towards people and the natural environment.

We are confident these values lie at the “beating heart” of Outward Bound. We have embodied these values for decades and we confidently live these daily as the charity delivers its mission.

But there is now a fifth value we want to embrace. There is more work to do before this is lived as those we have previously articulated. We are on a journey toward realising this fifth value.

- **A belief that everyone has the right to feel valued, welcomed and encouraged to be themselves.** At the heart of this is a recognition that everyone benefits from a variety of experiences, ideas and perspectives. A strong organisation is diverse and inclusive.

PLAN SUMMARY

OUTWARD RE BOUND

Outward Rebound sets out the direction of travel for The Outward Bound Trust over the next two years. It is a guiding framework to take The Trust out of the Covid era and lay the groundwork for the next exciting phase in its evolution. For the next couple of years, we will use it as a key point of reference when we make decisions, develop our courses and account to the public.

This plan identifies four priorities. This is where we will concentrate our efforts. We have identified targets to meet by the end of 2024 which will reflect our progress against these priorities.

PRIORITY ONE:

To return to the pre pandemic scale of operation running high-quality traditional Outward Bound courses from our existing residential centres.

PRIORITY TWO:

To run a limited number of experiments to test how best we can have a positive impact on a greater number of young people - with a particular emphasis on reaching those young people who might never ordinarily come to one of our residential centres.

PRIORITY THREE:

To take steps to modernise the charity and make it fit for purpose in the post Covid era.

PRIORITY FOUR:

To return to financial sustainability after a loss-making period during the pandemic.

PRIORITY ONE:

Outward Bound is needed as never before. Our first priority is to return to the pre pandemic scale of operation running high-quality learning through adventure Outward Bound courses at our existing residential centres.

Success will look like this:

- 25,000 young people attending residential courses each year across all our residential centres.
- Developing the role of the Heads of Learning and Adventure and by doing so ensure we keep adventure at the heart of the Outward Bound experience.
- The production of a Social Impact Report in 22/23 detailing the impact we have on the lives of young people and that also identifies ways in which this might be further enhanced.
- Greater emphasis on learning outcomes involving wellbeing and nature connectedness.
- Comprehensive piloting of how the use of technology on courses can improve the transfer of learning from Outward Bound back to everyday life.



PRIORITY TWO:

We are the leading outdoor education charity in the UK. We must grow in size, and we have to diversify in order to respond at scale to the needs of young people. In the next two years we will run a limited number of experiments/pilot programmes to test how best we can have a positive impact on a greater number of young people - with a particular emphasis on reaching those young people who might never ordinarily come to one of our residential centres.

Finding a sustainable model for growth has proved very challenging for Outward Bound. During the height of the pandemic, we ran a successful programme that saw instructors working in a non-residential capacity in schools right across the UK. We are also aware that activity centre closures in our sector might provide previously unforeseen opportunities to run more residential programmes in centres we do not own. Over the next two years we will actively explore both options.

Success will look like this:

- The piloting of at least one non-residential outreach programme focusing on young people currently unlikely to attend a residential Outward Bound programme.

Success might also involve:

- Entering a partnership with a like-minded organisation which enables us to expand our residential work using centres we do not own. This might include revisiting our pre-pandemic plans regarding Opportunity Outward Bound, an outreach programme experiment we wanted to launch prior to the pandemic.

PRIORITY THREE:

The Outward Bound Trust is eighty years young. We have thrived because we have always been able to adapt. Now we will take further steps to modernise the charity and make it fit for purpose in the post Covid era.

There are several varied but specific elements to our current modernising agenda. Over the next two years success will look like this:

- Continued investment in the development of our centres. Specifically, during the lifetime of this plan, this will focus on the building of a “Learning Village” at our Loch Eil centre, bringing the review facilities at that centre up to the standard of our other centres.
- The investment of £1m annually in essential maintenance and development projects across our centres.
- The full implementation of the digital transformation project providing The Trust with robust IT systems and processes whilst upskilling staff to ensure the successful migration to these new systems.
- We will build on what we have learned about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) over the last five years. We will seek to further embed, develop and broaden existing programmes to diversify our workforce and continue to consider the diversity of our participants. This will include the creation of a more diverse Board of Trustees, activity that secures the recruitment and retention of more staff from underrepresented backgrounds and other initiatives to promote an inclusive culture.
- Further progress to becoming a carbon Net Zero organisation. We will produce a clear “road map” detailing the stages involved in this journey and by 2024 we will reduce our annual emissions by at least a further 130 tonnes of CO2 equivalent compared to 2020-21. (Putting this in context – 2008 OBT emissions were 1449 tonnes of CO2, by 2019 we had reduced annual emissions to 819 tonnes; this new target represents a further 16% reduction).

PRIORITY FOUR:

To return to financial sustainability after the loss-making period during the pandemic.

To achieve this, we will:

- Maintain our excellent track record in fundraising, raising over £5m net annually across all fundraising streams.
- Maintain our excellent track record at engaging with customers and beneficiaries who use Outward Bound's services with annual course fee income over £14m in 23/24 (approximately £3.5m bursary; £10.5m customer revenue).
- Ensure operating efficiencies are realised, especially those created by the digital transformation project.
- Invest in the further development of a powerful and emotive brand for Outward Bound that will attract and engage supporters as well as purchasers and beneficiaries of Outward Bound's services.
- Develop new ways of attracting and retaining high-quality staff, with particular emphasis on instructors.
- Implement smooth succession plans as senior trustees and staff depart and new appointments arrive at The Trust.



BEING THE VERY BEST WE CAN BE

BEING THE VERY BEST FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

There is no shortage of ambition in this 2022-2024 plan for the charity. We also know that there is a high level of mutual dependency among all the different teams that make up The Outward Bound Trust. Collaboration and excellent cross-Trust working did so much to see us through the worst of the pandemic. If we work together effectively, we can deliver amazing results for young people.

Some years ago, we had developed a specific organisational culture at Outward Bound and described it as Our Ways of Working Together. During the lifetime of this plan, we will review, update and restore this positive culture and recognise and celebrate those who go the extra mile to embed this within the charity.

WORKING TOGETHER ACROSS THE TRUST

This, we believe, is the way that we should work together within The Trust. This is the culture that we want all employees – from the CEO to the rawest new recruit – to play their part in developing:

1. WE ARE PROUD TO WORK FOR THE OUTWARD BOUND TRUST

It is our responsibility to come to work each day determined to make it even better.

2. WE ARE A SMALL ORGANISATION WITH SOME VERY TALENTED AND DEEPLY COMMITTED STAFF

Although line management responsibilities and areas of ultimate responsibility are clear, we aim to be as non-hierarchical as possible. Constructive advice, comment or guidance from anyone to anyone is more than welcome.

3. WE TRUST ONE ANOTHER TO DO THE JOBS WE HAVE BEEN RECRUITED, TRAINED AND DEVELOPED TO DO

Each of us taking personal responsibility lies at the heart of a great team performance. No-one should need or want to be micro-managed.

4. EVERYONE CAN BE A LEADER

Everyone can influence what we do and what is happening. Giving and receiving support and challenging feedback, clarifying purpose, active listening and providing constructive suggestions are all examples of how any one of us can exert influence at any time.

5. WE SHOULD ALL LOOK FOR WAYS TO PRAISE EACH OTHER

For the many things that we do well. In doing so we also earn the right to confront behaviour or performance which is unacceptable or which saps energy from the organisation.

6. THE MORE EFFECTIVELY WE COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER, THE BETTER THINGS WILL BE.



**THE
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For further information email us at enquiries@outwardbound.org.uk
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