

SPOTLIGHT

This issue, the spotlight is on introduction to outdoor retail

By Jo Barnett

Outdoor and Social organised a three-day outdoor learning event, at Newfold Farm, Edale, in the Peak District from March 12th-14th. It was an outdoor trade event providing workshops and practical sessions designed to increase knowledge and confidence in outdoor products and skills through experience, ultimately helping guide the outdoor consumer to be safer in their activities.

Delivered under the guidance of brands, experts and professionals it was completely free of charge to all retail staff and aimed to help all retailers and their staff deliver better information to the consumer. Retail staff had the opportunity to test out kit in real conditions, including a camp out at the site, cooking for themselves on a variety of stoves, and navigating their way up onto Mam Tor.

During the day brands explained how their equipment worked and the best ways to fit, use and care for it, then retail staff had the opportunity to get hands on experience. These sessions covered ten practical elements which were signed off as participants completed them. These were footwear, clothing layering, pack systems, tents, sleep systems, cooking, hydration, navigation, lighting and product after care.



There was also a requirement to complete Opening Up The Outdoors Allyship online course and a new e-learning module for AdventureSmart, developed with Skern Skills & Training.

The event was planned with environmental impact in mind and the camp, food and event equipment were all locally sourced. Furthermore, Edale, whilst in the heart of the Peak District hills, has a regular train service and even with over 150 attendees there were only 3 bin bags of waste at the end.

Adam Renshaw, the Founder of Outdoor and Social presented on the event at the Outdoor Industries Association annual conference later in March. He said how the development of this model 'brought the outdoor industry community closer and connected the dots between brands and retailers working towards long term staff retention'.

The planning has now started for 2025, and the IOL is supporting further development of accreditation for those entering and/or developing a career in Outdoor Retail.



“The best training I’ve ever had!”
Lucy, Go Outdoors Ltd

“A wonderful blend of outdoor training and culture for outdoor retail teams”
Peter, Ellis Brigham Mountain Sports

“Truly this is the best way to understand outdoor products”
James, Millets