

Press Release: Embargoed until: Tuesday, 14 September 2004: 12.30pm



*****PRESS RELEASE*****

ADVENTUROUS LAUNCH FOR NEW ALL PARTY GROUP

A new All Party Group was launched today, ensuring that adventure and outdoor recreation climbs even higher up the Parliamentary agenda.

There was huge strength of interest in Julian Brazier's Private Members Bill to promote volunteering by tackling the increasingly litigious society in which we live. The new All Party Group will focus on adventure and risk in society with a view to maintaining the momentum Julian's Bill achieved.

Politicians from all sides of both Houses have expressed an interest in joining the group, which is to be jointly chaired by Julian Brazier, Derek Wyatt and Lembit Opik.

Mountaineer Sir Chris Bonington, attending the launch event said: "Outdoor recreation is unique in the range and scope of opportunities it provides and is a great source of adventure; people of all ages would benefit from more adventure and more challenge to enhance their lives. Such challenges do not come without some degree of risk, but this is what actually makes life fun, exciting and ultimately rewarding rather than bland and mundane".

Julian Brazier MP said: "The letters and messages we have received from adventure training and sporting organisations all over the country make it clear that this issue will not go away. The compensation culture is threatening the opportunities for young people to experience risk-taking and excitement in a responsible environment".

Ian Lewis, Chair of Campaign for Adventure, a primary sponsor to the All Party Group, said: "We strongly support the new All Party Parliamentary Group on Adventure. The UK's increasing tendency to protect people from danger, avoiding even healthy risks, is being carried too far. It is stifling creativity and enterprise. This is leading to an increasingly restrictive, even pessimistic, approach to life, particularly in education and recreation where the emphasis on risk-avoidance is often out of all proportion to the possible benefits. Unfortunately, this tendency is compounded by a culture which attempts to avoid personal responsibility, blame those who are trying to help, and seeking compensation for even genuine accidents. The result is that courage is sacrificed to caution, with many teachers, youth workers and community volunteers being reluctant, fearful or even advised by unions not to engage in any projects involving risk, adventure or uncertainty.

"The Campaign hopes the Parliamentary Group will also investigate positive aspects of healthy risk-taking, hopefully leading to a reduction in vandalism, self-mutilation, substance abuse, suicide and violence – all (mis-)adventures practised by far too many young people".

SkillsActive and the CCPR sponsored Julian Brazier's Bill through its primary stages and wish the new All Party Adventure Group every success in maintaining the high profile of issues which negatively impact upon the Outdoor and Adventure Sector.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1. All Party Adventure and Recreation Group was launched in Committee Room 17 of the House of Commons on Tuesday 14 September 2004.
2. Julian Brazier MP (Conservative), Derek Wyatt MP (Labour) and Lembit Opik MP (Liberal Democrat) will jointly chair the group
3. The main sponsors of the group include Campaign for Adventure, Rank Foundation, Go Outdoors, SkillsActive and lifecollege.org
4. SkillsActive is the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for Sport and Recreation, Health and Fitness, Playwork, The Outdoors and the Caravan industries.
5. SkillsActive's mission statement is: "To ensure best quality, best business and best value within the Sector to achieve its economic and social potential."
6. SSCs are employer-led organisations that aim to tackle the skills and productivity needs of their sector throughout the UK. SSCs provide employers with the opportunity to provide leadership to meet their sector's skills and business needs. In return they receive substantial public investment and greater dialogue with government departments across the UK.

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Campaign for Adventure
Risk and Enterprise in Society