

Adders are Amazing! Gwiberod Gwych!

# 22. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

During the course of Adders are Amazing! we appreciated that many people are worried or unsure about adders, and this is largely fed by misleading or sensational press articles. Presentations to local groups can help to counter this. If you notice negativity about adders in your community, for example from concerned dog walkers or parents, business concerns over tourism conflicts; then pro-actively approaching local groups e.g. local council, gardening club, WI, U3A, to offer a presentation and/or workshop may help to relieve this. Before you give a talk or workshop always try to understand the nature of the group, and structure your materials accordingly. We also recommend that you should always be prepared to discuss any adder-related concerns in a constructive manner. Most people, are reassured when they find out the truth about adders, but it is always better to let them come up with solutions themselves as a community, as these are more likely to be sustainable.

## MATERIALS:

- Village hall/ function room with tables and chairs
- Participants! Advertise and promote.
- Large sheets of paper, such as wallpaper lining paper
- Pens / pencils / felt tips
- Large marker pens
- Flip chart (optional)
- Overhead projector and laptop (most groups have access to these)

## MAKE IT!

- 1** Line tables with paper and ask participants to write down their concerns, ideas and any adder-related stories they have. Collate these and give a presentation about adders, addressing their views and concerns. Follow up ideas with any relevant land owners and local volunteers.
- 2** Take models of snakes, cuddly ones, sloughs, skeletons – anything to give a hands-on experience and make participants aware of how small adders really are! Be enthusiastic, positive and non-dismissive. People are far more likely to change their attitudes if they feel understood.

