



Dedicated to research, restore and protect
Mynydd Twmbarlwm - Gwent's most iconic landmark

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Mynydd Twmbarlwm - tirnod mwyaf eiconig Gwent

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Trustees and Members Meeting

Monday 14th January 2019
Cross Keys Rugby Club

MINUTES

Attendance

Terry Evans (Chair); Martyn Vaughan; Rob Southall; Norman Liversuch; Alun Booth; Bill Fearnley-Whittingstall

1 APOLOGIES

Sam, Les, Charles, Sue, Simon, Gethin Bowes, Howard Vicary

2. MINUTES of Trustees' Meeting held on Monday 3rd September 2018

Reviewed and Approved by the meeting

Matters Arising:

3. RE-SEEDING and CADW

- i. TE reported on the re-seeding event held on 7th October 2018. Over 40 people turned up in response to appeals put out on facebook and through our emailing list. It was a very sunny and windless day, so it was perfect conditions to scatter the seed. Howard Vicary delivered the seed to the site and volunteers helped carry the sacks of seed to the top, they were split into groups and under the guidance of HV sowed the grass seed around the areas that had been marked out by TE and NL. This was done so quickly and efficiently that it was decided to continue and spread the seed around the wider area within the ditch - the whole of the SAM was covered within 2 1/2 hours. All together it was a very successful event and it got a lot of media coverage through local papers and online social media. *(A report in the form of a Press Release was made available to the meeting).*
- ii. TE said that he visited the site 10 days and 1 month after the event and that there was much evidence of the seed having germinated - but unfortunately a storm had arrived a few days after the re-seeding and that there were areas where the seed had been blown or washed away.
- iii. To date no monies have been received from either Cadw or Llanarth Estates.

TE has recently been in touch with Cadw to chase up their contribution to the cost of the seed (£400) - he was told that proof was needed that the event had taken place. It was pointed out to them that all the necessary evidence had been passed on to Will Davies and so we were promised payment with the next week or so.

NL chased up Llanarth Estates for their contribution (£300) and it appears that the paper work had gone astray, and that we should expect payment very soon.

- iv. The second Drone Survey was funded and ordered directly by Cadw on 29th September 2018 and TE received a copy of all the photos in early December - he has put a selection on the website and presented some prints to the meeting.
- v. TE chased up Amelia and Will at Cadw to move forward the plans for research work on Twmbarlwm. Will has responded with a list of possible archaeological projects and a meeting is scheduled for later in February to discuss them more closely.
- vi. The proposed Long Term Management Plan from Andre Berry has been received by Cadw in draft form but has not yet been passed for us to see.

4. CAMPAIGN TO SAVE CWMCARN FOREST DRIVE

Rob Southall gave us an update on his work with NRW as regards the Forest Drive Campaign.

There was a the Public Meeting held on 14th November that was very well attended by members of the public. Representatives of NRW were joined by CCBC councillors and officers - evidence that they now seem to be working more closely together.

The engineering survey on the forest roads and verges is in progress and NRW intend to start work on them in the Spring. At the meeting they said a Project Manager would be in place by Christmas - at the time of this Trustees Meeting the post was not yet filled.

NRW said that their initial target for re-opening the drive has been put back by the wildfires because apart from the amount of work they had to do fighting the fires there are now large areas of forestry that must be cleared due to health and safety aspects. Spring 2020 is the new target for the re-opening of the drive.

NRW said that due to the public response they would be happy to arrange an event where volunteers could help with replanting saplings that were lost to the wildfires of 2018.

5. TRIG-POINT PROJECT

See point 8.

6. MEMBERSHIP & FINANCE

Martyn stated that the Account shows a closing balance of £7,?????

And Membership stands at ?????

MV has increased the daily spending limits on the bank account due to when we had to pay £700 for the seeds, it inconveniently had to be done in three tranches.

7. TIDY TUMP

Maggie Thomas continues to oversee the monthly Volunteering and Litter pick day.

Six attended the litter pick at the end of November and we didn't have an organised one at the end of December due to the Christmas holidays and the Twmbarlwm Trek.

Next Volunteer day 27th January

8. CCBC / TORFAEN / COMMONERS WORKS

Progress of work and projects agreed with the joint councils and the Commoners' Association.

Les Murphy was unavailable for his usual input on this agenda item, but TE and NL are due to meet him later in the week.

NL presented his report on the meeting that he and TE had with Phil Griffiths Countryside Planning Officer of CCBC on 19th December - as follows:

Caerphilly CBC and Torfaen CBC have received European funding for a joint project called the Adventure Triangle which takes in the mountain ridge running from the A467 Hafodyrynys – Pontypool road to Twmbarlwm. The project seeks to implement proposals identified in the Twmbarlwm and Mynydd Maen Scoping Study prepared for the two councils in 2015 together with works on the Mon Brecon Canal.

This is a separate project from the Tourism Gateway Project from which Cwmcarn Forest is receiving funding. The Gateway Project is currently targeted at 9 key tourism sites within the valleys region and seeks to link them to 'improve and enhance the tourist experience in the valleys'. Two of the gateways are within Caerphilly CBC namely Cwmcarn Forest and Caerphilly Castle. We have no information about the Cwmcarn Gateway project but I suspect it is linked to the reopening of the Forest Drive.

So far as the Society is concerned the main proposals in the Adventure Triangle project are the development of 'physical links and key connections between Caerphilly and Torfaen over Mynydd Maen and Twmbarlwm' and the expansion of the 'tourism offer at Cwmcarn Forest Drive'.

To put it simply the idea is to encourage more people to make use of the mountain ridge for recreation by linking the common and Twmbarlwm to the Cwmcarn Visitor Centre and Forest Drive and to Blaen Bran. Cross common cycling, horse riding and walking routes will link Blaen Bran and Cwmcarn.

On December 18th last year Terry and I met with Phil Griffiths of CCBC, who is responsible for the project, to discuss how the project was to be implemented and also discuss ideas for the Society's involvement (see *list of CTS projects provided with the minutes*).

We were advised that there was a budget of £300,000 which had to be spent by December 2020 and that the project would be lead on the ground by Gethin Bowes, who would be assisted by an apprentice who was to be appointed. Gethin would also be able to call on CCBC's Countryside Ranger Team if needed.

Phil confirmed that initially the focus of the project would be on access.

We discussed our list of projects and Phil indicated that they could all be possibly funded from the budget for the Adventure Triangle project as they fitted in with what the councils were hoping to achieve. However some of our projects would need further work to provide more detail before they could be taken on by the councils. For example; interpretation needs to be devised for the Trig Point; sites for other interpretation panels need to be identified and interpretation devised; walks identified, walk descriptions devised and location of way marks and type of way mark identified; some paths may need to be improved.

What Next?

As indicated in the agenda* we need to identify which of our projects we wish to and are able to take forward. Amongst other things this will involve meetings with Cadw, CCBC both Phil and Gethin and Cwmcarn Forest, the latter to ensure that there is no duplication of projects.

* A list of the possible Adventure Triangle Projects that was presented to Phil Griffiths had been distributed to Trustees in December and is attached to these minutes. Most of the projects on the list had been approved by PG as fitting within the parameters of the funding but we will need to meet with Gethin Bowes to prioritise the projects. Trustees had nothing to add to the list.

9. EVENTS

Monday 3rd December – Annual Tump Quiz

Another successful night with near to 50 people there making up 10 teams. Again we had a keg of Twmbarlwm Ale donated to us by Tudor Brewery but unfortunately the equipment to put the keg on draught was not supplied. However, we sold all the bottles of beer that were given to us to sell and when the keg was returned to the brewery they let us have the bottled beer FOC - we therefore made a bigger profit on that. We took over £300 on the night with entry fees and raffle and after expenses and the sale of beer we made a £240 profit.

10. A.O.B.

MV pointed out some problems with the Twmbarlwm website - some pages displaying dates a few years old and some areas not being updated to suit. TE (the webmaster) said he would look at it straight away.

11. Date of next Trustees' Meeting:

Monday 4th March 2019