

Ogwen User's Forum

3rd April 2014

Present:

Edward Jones	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Andy Harbach	Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue
Malcolm Creasey	British Mountain Guides
Dewi Davies	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Mair Huws	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Guto Roberts	Partnership Officer
Jenny Crouch	Natural Resources Wales
Dewi Roberts	National Trust
Emyr Williams	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Paula Roberts	Bangor University
Hywel Roberts	Natural Resources Wales
Arwel Johnston	Tenant
Edwina Johnston	Tenant
Aneurin Philips	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Jamie Holding	Ogwen Cottage
Chris Radford	Ogwen Cottage

1. Apologies:

Bedwyr ap Gwynn; Martin Doyle; Carys Dafydd was unable to attend due to a bereavement – the Forum expressed their condolences.

2. Notes from the last meeting:

Were accepted for their accuracy

Matters arising:

- No 3 – The opening/closing of the centre have been formalised -
The cleaner closes at 7.00p.m
During the week the centre is opened by the Partnership Officer with SNPA being responsible on the weekend
- No 7 - Dewi Roberts is dealing with the matter of repairing the bike gate.
- Page 6 – Corporate decision whether access to the Internet would be possible/
appropriate.
 - Parking on the pavement on the A5
 - School children sign
 - T.R.A were considering installing bollards

- Consultation on yellow lines

3. Report by Guto Roberts – Partnership Officer

Guto gave an update of recent activities at Ogwen which included:

- Educational and school groups
- Blog
- Community Science Week was looking for the 100 most important geological sites.
- Capital Work – 2014/15 budgets has not been confirmed.
- He is now sharing office space with Bedwyr ap Gwyn

On behalf of Bedwyr ap Gwynn he gave a brief report on Menter Iaith Conwy's COPA scheme

- Since its inception 125 individuals trained in north Wales – 75% towards Welsh language medium training.
- School activities
- Snowboarding in the winter!
- Mynyddoedd Pawb (Everybody's Mountains) – conference to be held in the Autumn
- Influencing outdoor centres to use Welsh place names...

4. Report by Edward Jones – Property Manager SNPA

- Pay and display– initially there were problems with the banking software. The machine now works with cards. During the last quarter – 15% paid by card
Monitoring will be from the office.
- The building - has almost completed the evidence needed to obtain an excellent level under the BREEAM environmental assessment method.
- Tender for renting office space – the successful applicant was Menter Iaith Conwy. It was felt that the COPA venture was appropriate for the site.
- Water supply – the pumps had failed – new pumps due to arrive on April 4.
He asked if anyone knew of a firm which could supply a water bowser (a portable water tank) within 24 hours in case something happened again to the pumps.
- Ice monitoring – the temperature at the far end of the Cwm is being measured with the monitor placed, 5cm and 15cm under the surface of the soil. This is on the BMC website – but not bilingually.
The system has proved successful to date but has not been extensively tested due to the lack of ice this year.

- Regarding BREEAM - Jenny Crouch said that light levels were being monitored before the assessor came back to assess for the final time. That should happen in the next few weeks.

5. Communities and Nature Project – Jenny Crouch

Jenny Crouch said that she had been working with volunteers at Ogwen and that 270 questionnaires have been completed – but they need to be added onto the system. Therefore she could not report on the results as yet. Cardiff School of Business will be analysing the information

Jenny shared an example from Cwm Ystradlyn.

Regarding the feedback to date – majority of the responders' are happy; some want more indoor and outdoor seating, rubbish bin; more local food; More parking spaces needed; local knowledge, mirrors, cafe, and information on how hard the route to Cwm Idwal is.

The view was expressed that in order to obtain a better cross section – the work could be continued over the summer period - to date the volunteers have been questioning people on a Friday.

Paula Roberts said that they could work in partnership with the University to do further consultation.

It was agreed that it is important that the report is discussed in order to see whether the needs of the customer are being met.

6. Ogwen Cottage – Jamie Holding

Jamie Holding said that it has been a privilege to take so many young people up Cwm Idwal over the last 25 years.

Birmingham Council has to make significant cuts. Well subsidised serviced has to now run at a neutral cost. The service is non statutory.

A report to the Council Cabinet was presented on 17th Feb – options approved the removal from the market of 4 day centres and all overnight sites.

Many heartfelt responses to the review were received but at the end of the day all comes down to money. Business will cease on 31st July 2014.

Voluntary or compulsory redundancies by early August, currently the centre is served by a small core staff with additional freelance staff as needed.

Expression of Interest was being sought regarding the future of the building.

De said that the centre had been valued at £450k

Council yet to advise strategy as to how negotiations can progress with interested parties

He went on to say that from a personal perspective he wished that Ogwen Cottage could continue to offer opportunities for young people but that it would be very difficult to provide a strong enough business case.

Aneurin Phillips said that the closing of the centre was a great loss and that they had been important partners and the closure meant 50 years of history was being lost.

Malcolm Creasey added that 2 other centres have been taken over in the past year 1 was a management buyout. He went on to say that integration with the wider community was crucial to the future of any venture.

7. Any other business

Jermone – reiterated the importance of having a back up to the water system

Child Slow – Iolo Tegid would organise a further consultation if they intent to move forward.

Date of the next meeting – It was suggested that the meetings were held after the autumn half term and then before the Easter holidays – rather than every 6 months.