

# **Bala & Penllyn Tourism Association**

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2010**

Held at Canolfan Cywain Centre 7pm

### **Present**

Melanie Williams- Chairman	Lindsay Hind
Ray Hind –Treasurer	Gwenlli Davies
Sarah Lind-Vice Chair	Alison Price
Katrina Le Saux-Secretary	Lou Robertson
Gwawr Price-TPMW	Olwen Davies
Wendy Price-Jones	Stella Welch
Edith Roberts	Megan Pugh
Peter Field	
Lowri Rees	
Sioned Llewelyn	
Helen and Ron Hotson	
Carys Davies	

### **Apologies**

David Llewelyn, David Mitchell, Elfyn Llwyd, Gwyneth Jones, Barbara Emsley, Mary and Mike Gareth, Keith Robinson, Toby and Stephanie Hickish, Alun Price, Dorothy Evans, Jack Reeves, Steven Jones.

### **Minutes of AGM March 2009**

Minutes were approved and signed. Proposed-Sarah Lind, Seconded-Lindsay Hind.

An extraordinary meeting to be held at the end of the AGM was proposed by Melanie Williams in order to approve the codicil added to the constitution.

### **Financial Report**

Presented by Ray Hind, copies have already been e-mailed to all members.

### **Website Report**

Gwawr Price suggested that there it maybe possible for VisitBala.org to qualify for an award through Gwynedd Business Awards.

Alison Price thought that there might be funding for translating the website into Welsh through the Welsh language Board.

Sioned Llewelyn suggested adding some categories that may prove useful when visitors are looking for things to do in the Bala area:

Ten things to do for families on a rainy day or

Places to visit in good weather or

Activities within an hours drive.

Gwawr Price thought this information should be sent to TPMW so they could publish it on their website and it could be used by Liz Tomlinson to attract journalists to the area.

Gwawr suggested there should be a, “live feed” from Bala website into Mid Wales Events.

Gwawr Price informed Bala and Penllyn Tourism Association that there would be a meeting 25<sup>th</sup> February at Llanillhyd, Mawddach, to share best practice amongst all Tourism groups in the Merionydd area.

### **Chairman's Report**

Presented by Melanie Williams, copy attached.

### **Any Other Business**

Sioned Llewelyn asked that the logo for Bala and Penllyn Tourism Association, wherever it appears, should be bi-lingual with the Welsh placed to the left and the English placed to the right. This was supported by the majority of members present by a show of hands.

Sioned then proposed this motion and it was seconded by Stella Welch.

When the postcard is re-printed this will reflect the new motion passed.

### **Questionnaires**

Gwawr Price explained that further funding from TPMW would be dependent on the completion of at least 100 questionnaires by Easter 2010.

Sarah Lind will collect as many as possible when Bala Adventure and Watersports Centre hosts a Sport Relief day 21<sup>st</sup> March.

The questionnaires need to be completed out on the streets of Bala in order to get a fair representation of visitors to the town and lake.

Volunteers to contact members of the committee please.

A sub-committee of Katrina Le Saux, Stella Welch and Rhys Davies has been formed to develop a suggested design and format for a town map. Katrina Le Saux showed the meeting an example of a map from a town in Kent. The suggestion is that Bala's map will be in a notice board display in the town and down by the lake. It may also be used by visitors as a brochure.

Gwawr Price suggested that funding may be available from, "Single Investment Funds", Wales.

Gwawr Price gave out leaflets advertising a course being run by TPMW and Medrwn, "Croesco Cynnes Cymreig/ A Warm Welsh Welcome".

All accommodation providers should have received letters about this course through the post.

Katrina Le Saux had produced a list of possible talks for 2010's calendar, suggested courses and a fund raising event.

These will be sent out with the minutes.

Members at the meeting were keen to attend a First Aid Course, to be arranged by Sarah Lind.

Comments and feedback on all suggestions, plus any additions, are warmly invited from all members.

Benefits of belonging to the Tourism group were discussed.

Sarah Lind is offering discounts for members and their guests when booking an activity through Bala Adventure and Watersports Centre. A popular trip for visitors is one way down the lake on their new yacht, cost £15.00 (before discount). When booking type in **B&B2010** to qualify for the reduced rate.

Stephanie and Toby Hickish offer all members free entry to their garden, "Caerau Uchaf". Any other members offering a benefit for all please contact a member of the committee.

### **Election of Officers**

Chairman: Melanie Williams was re-elected.

Proposed by Lindsay Hind

Seconded by Megan Pugh

Treasurer: Ray Hind was re-elected.

Proposed by Megan Pugh

Seconded by Peter Field

Vice Chairman: Sarah Lind was re-elected

Proposed by Megan Pugh

Seconded by Lou Robertson

Secretary: Katrina Le Saux was re-elected

Proposed by Lindsay Hind

Seconded by Lou Robertson

Codicil to the Constitution was then passed by all members present.

The meeting ended at 20.45hrs.

A special thanks to Alison Price for use of the Cywain Centre.

## Bala & Penllyn Tourism Association Chairman's Report January 2009 – 4 February 2010

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Firstly I should like to thank members of the Bala & Penllyn Tourism Association for their support over the last 12 months. My especial thanks must go to Ray Hind for being Treasurer and the mainstay in our marketing plan for Bala. Katrina for being a super efficient secretary and Sarah for back up as Deputy Chair when I've not been too well.

The beginning of the year saw much activity in preparation for the marketing plan. This culminated in an enthusiastic meeting at Canolfan Cywain Centre on the 8<sup>th</sup> April – bringing together those interested in tourism in the area. Wine and refreshments were donated by Somerfield and Spar and members of the Tourism Association also brought contributions. A raffle was held to fund the evening and prizes were given by Plas yn Dre, Bryn Tegid Country House, Bala Adventure & Watersports, Abercelyn Country House, Bryniau Golau B&B, Col Jones Picture Framing and Cysgod y Coed B&B. A relaxed and happy discussion ensued bringing to fruition the Associations dream to market Bala & Penllyn with an exciting new web site and brochures. Local people offered their knowledge and skills which will give ownership to Bala & Penllyn making it a hub for information not just a site for our tourists. Guest speaker Elfyn Llwyd MP spoke with great enthusiasm for the marketing plan and as a resident of Bala & Penllyn is now a member of our Association.



**Photo**Left to right:

*Ray Hind, Abercelyn Country House & Cottages, Guided Walks and Kyaking, Sarah Lind Bala Watersports & Bodiwan B&B, Dee Reynolds - Regional Strategy Director Tourism Partnership Mid Wales, Elfyn Llwyd MP, Melanie Williams – Cysgod y Coed B&B/Artist, Gwawr Price (Medrw) TPMW, Katrina LeSaux – Bryniau Golau Bed & Breakfast*

Following this meeting we gained new members and as a sub committee of the larger group we have been chasing new sponsors to help fund our marketing strategy.

Magnox North (Trawsfynydd) has now very generously agreed to give us a grant for the creation of the Welsh language template for the Bala & Penllyn Web site. Existing partners Tourism Partnership Mid Wales have given a further grant and Bryniau Golau B&B have become partners. In addition to this Cysgod y Coed B&B, Bala Adventure and Watersports, Abercelyn B&B, Plas yn Dre Restaurant, Bala and Penllyn Rotary Club and the National White Water Centre have all sponsored pages of the web site.

Ray and I have been working very hard on the web site. Ray has been working tirelessly on gathering and uploading information. I should like to thank Ray on behalf of the group for initially completing masses of paperwork to enable us to begin the project and then for working with Richard Thoroughgood at Future Studios to create our brilliant website. [www.VisitBala.org](http://www.VisitBala.org)

Back in July we received IQM Training at Plas yn Dre through TPMW. We were given advice on the way forward to developing our group and the area

The secretary and I were invited to join meetings of the Town Council and other local bodies to plan for the Eisteddfod. Much preparation ensued including decorating the town with flags and flowers, grass cutting and generally tidying up. After this successful partnership working it has been decided to have meetings annually to prepare for the season ensuring our tourists find Bala a great place to stay.

Members of the Tourism Association also became very involved in the Meirionnydd Breakfast which was launched at the Eisteddfod and is still running in many food outlets across Meirionnydd.

Katrina organised cake stalls in order to buy flowers for our TIC. Katrina, Ray, Lindsey and Stella worked extremely hard on the planting. Sincere thanks to all of our members who made cakes. This was a great success not only for the flowers but also in raising awareness of the Tourism group in the area. Another event is planned for the Triathlon this year.

Katrina, Stella and I made a big effort to clean up the town notice boards as a temporary measure until the Town Council replaces them.

In the Autumn, Guest Speaker, Eluned Davies, director of Cwmni Caban, spoke about the 12 information points that are to be placed throughout the Gwynedd area. They will be in the format of an interactive screen which will have internet linkage to Gwynedd Council site. Each information point will have its own home page highlighting the local history, culture and areas of special interest. The idea is to inform through, "sound bites", so, for example, visitors will be able to learn of the diversity of wildlife found in the Penllyn area and where this might be found. They will learn of local folklore and legends which will help connect to the area they are visiting and enhance a sense of place. Local businesses and restaurants will be included to increase visitor awareness of what is available in the designated area. No accommodation providers will be listed but there will be a link to [www.VisitBala.org](http://www.VisitBala.org). The area of Penllyn is highlighted as one of the twelve areas to have an information point, where exactly has yet to be decided.

Correspondence has been undertaken with Gwynedd Council, Elfyn Llwyd MP and Cllr. Dylan Edwards regarding our concern as a Tourism Group regarding the closure of the TIC in Bala. We have been informed that no decision has been taken on this issue as yet.

Back in October I met with Cyngor Tref Y Bala Town Council and gave them a presentation on the new Bala & Penllyn Web site. They were very impressed and said that in principle they were in full support of the scheme. They were interested in having a static page with Council member's information and possibly the provision of uploading minutes. They would come back to us in the very near future. They congratulated us on our great achievement and are extremely impressed with the web site.

In October Visit Wales and Tourism Partnership Mid Wales teamed up to bring businesses in Mid Wales a full day of useful information to assist our business development in 2010. There were workshops on 'E Marketing and the new Guestlink Cymru', 'realigning your businesses and 'How to Use marketing techniques to promote your businesses. Many of our members attended.

An advert promoting the new Visit Bala webiste has been placed in the Snowdonia Mountains & Coast brochure. This should benefit all members. We have also made a number of press releases over the course of the year.

As part of the marketing plan a banner has been produced for publicising Bala and Penllyn and the web site at various events throughout the UK. To complement this A6 postcards have been made for distribution to TICs, accommodation providers, shops, restaurants etc., These cards are free of charge to visitors.

We held our very first fund raising event at Christmas at the Late Night Shopping evening. Members provided tombola items and my special thanks go to Stephanie Hickish and Katrina LeSaux for their role in organising this. My thanks also to Mick (my husband) for making a tombola stand. Thanks also to Stella Welch for the idea of sharing a stall and selling 'Bag Y Bala' on the night. As Chair I went around the town centre handing out the cards promoting the web site and encouraging new members to join.

It was noted during the past year that we are sadly lacking an up to date town map for Bala. Therefore Katrina, Stella and Rhys Llwyd (Architect) are going to be working closely on producing a town map over the next few months.

Many members have been busy with the questionnaires but I must report that in order to make informed choices on developing the area and the group we must persist in getting more questionnaires completed. This will involve getting out onto the High Street very soon and I am desperately looking for some volunteers to join me.

I look forward to the coming season in the knowledge that we have a strong Tourism Group willing to work for the good of Bala and Penllyn. Many thanks to you all.

Mel Williams

**Why become a member of Bala & Penllyn Tourism Association? (Let us know if you can offer any further benefits)**

- Aelodaeth £40.00 yn cynnwys rhestru manylion ar y wefan
- Cynorthwyo a hybu y Bala a Phenllyn fel cyrchfan twristiaeth
- Partneriaeth Gymunedol gweithio gyda'n gilydd
- Y wybodaeth ddiweddaraf am gyfleoedd marchnata a gofal cwsmeriaid yng Ngwynedd
- Cyllid uwch ar gyfer eich busnes
- Cyfleoedd Hyfforddiant
- Siaradwyr Gwadd
- Codi arian ar gyfer prosiectau lleol
- Mynediad am ddim i Ardd Caerau Uchaf, Sarnau
- Gostyngiad gan 'Bala Adventure & Watersports Centre' - defnyddiwch côd B&B2010
  
- Membership £40.00 to include web site entry
- Support & promote Bala & Penllyn as a tourism destination
- Community partnership working together
- Keep up to date with opportunities in Gwynedd for marketing and customer care
- Increased revenue for your business
- Training opportunities
- Visiting speakers
- Raise funds for local projects
- Free entry into Caerau Uchaf Gardens, Sarnau
- Discounts at Bala Adventure & Watersports Centre – use code B&B2010

## Bala & Penllyn Tourism Association AGM - 4 February 2010

### Treasurer's Report (accounts prepared 31 January 2010)

The projected net asset (after future liabilities/income) is £1,650, of which the major part is allocated to the development of the website as this was provided in a grant from Magnavox for this purpose. The sum of £326 is allocated to the TIC flower bed.

The income for the year was £8,245 which comprised £5,016 in grants from the Tourism Partnership Mid-Wales and Magnavox, and £1,000 from our website partner (Bryniau Golau) and a further £1,000 from website page sponsors (Cysgoed-y-Coed, Bala Adventure & Watersports, Whitewater Centre, Plas-yn-Dre Restaurant, Bala & Penllyn Rotary Club). Membership and web fees raised £1,070. Fund raising at Late Night Shopping raised £160, while the two Cake Stalls raised £474. Note that the Committee have contributed £1,400 of the Website partner/sponsor funds raised, as well as significant amount of their time.

The outgoing expenditure for the year was £5,262 of which £4,294 was the website and £968 for promotion and publicity, e.g. publicity cards and advertising on Snowdonia Mountains and Coast brochure and Wrexham triathlon Club.

To conclude, membership is now 40 and the Association's finances are in a sound position.

#### Balance Sheet for 2009 (As of 31 January 2010)

Start date	04-Mar-09
Finish date	31-Jan-10
Opening balance (Bank)	£ 568.21
<b>Income</b>	
Grants	£5,016.00
Partners	£1,000.00
Sponsors	£1,000.00
Members fees	£1,070.00
Fund Raising (LNS)	£ 159.80
Total Income	£8,245.80
<b>Outgoing</b>	
Website	£4,294.45
Promotion & Publicity	£ 967.56
Total Outgoing	£5,262.01
<b>Income less Outgoing</b>	<b>£2,983.79</b>
Current Balance (Bank)	£3,552.00
Current Liabilities	£3,011.50
Outstanding income	£ 731.00
Projected balance	£1,271.50
<b>Other funds held (Cash)</b>	
Flower-bed	£ 326.33
Petty-cash	£ 52.74
<b>Net Assets (Projected)</b>	<b>£1,650.57</b>

Note that the previous accounts are up to 30 January 2009 and there was no change in the bank balance between 30 January and 4 March.

Balance sheet prepared by: Ray Hind, Treasurer, 31 January 2010

## **Marketing/Website Report**

Phase I of the VisitBala website development is complete. The website has been professionally developed by Future Studios Ltd with Committee members writing and loading the content, which has been a major activity. We have received significant financial assistance from Tourism Partnership Mid-Wales for this Phase.

We are pleased with the new website and have received many favourable comments, including: Tourism Partnership Mid-Wales and Gwynedd Council while one member has suggested that we nominate the site for an award.

Some further improvements are planned including:

- A video gallery with rafting, high-ropes and canyoning videos.
- Adding brochures in PDF format to the website.
- Improvements/additional pages, e.g. villages of Penllyn, more community information
- Images will be added to some pages.
- Additional images in the gallery.
- A map of Bala.

Phase II of the website development, is now under way and this will add a capability so that members will be able to update their own entry. Again Tourism Partnership Mid-Wales are providing significant financial assistance for this Phase.

Phase III of the website development, which will include a Welsh language capability to the website. The cost of replicating the website is around £2,500 the grant from Magnavox has provided £1,200, thus we need to raise £1,300, excluding translation and checking costs which we hope to avoid or reduce by using volunteers.

In order to publicise the website, the following have been carried out:

- Snowdonia Mountains and Coast brochure entry and website link
- Wrexham Tri-Club website link
- Requests to other tourism organisations for reciprocal links
- Visit Bala flyers in the form of a postcard that is available to members and through the TIC.

We would also like to reprint brochures (e.g. walking) and develop a new brochure for Bala & Penllyn. A longer term aim is to qualify for the Walker's Welcome Towns and Villages scheme.

There are many ways in which members can help, these include:

- Provide a link from their websites to Visit Bala
- Provide a link in their E-mail signature to VisitBala
- Volunteers to improve/provide new content for the website, e.g. local information, villages of Penllyn.
- Also good local images including the villages of Penllyn would improve the website.
- Volunteers to develop brochures or write "aditorials" (publicity articles) for magazines also in Welsh.

- Volunteers for the Welsh version of the website - this may include translation or applying for grants for translation, loading content and checking.
- Recruitment - we need more members, so please encourage other businesses to join.

Finally I would like to thank everyone who has helped make the website possible, including:

- Tourism Partnership Mid-Wales and Magnavox
- Website partner: Bryniau Golau
- Website page sponsors: Cysgoed-y-Coed, Bala Adventure & Watersports, Whitewater Centre, Plas-yn-Dre Restaurant, Bala & Penllyn Rotary Club
- Committee members and others who have helped, including Stella for her review and comments.

Ray Hind

31 January 2010