

Bala and Penllyn Tourism Association  
 October 14<sup>th</sup> 2010 19.30hrs  
 Pls-yn-Dre

Present	Apologies	Action
Carol Keys-Shaw David Mitchell Chris LeeSmith Justin Wrightson Megan Pugh Ray Hind Jack Reeves Mel Williams Katrina Le Saux Stella Welch	Gwyneth Jones Peter Tooth Sarah Lind Gwenlli Davies Wendy Pryce-Jones Stephanie Hickish Nora Jones Sian Jones Shaun Banfield Steven Jones	

Previous Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed by all present Mw

Mel suggested that Bala Tourism Association might consider joining Mid Wales Tourism costing £70.00 +VAT. If we then signed up to the 'Overnighter' scheme through 'Guestlink' it could have the benefit of attracting a payment for the group of 5% should a booking be made through the Bala tourism portal. (Please let Mel know your views on this). MW

Ray Hind and Mel are members of the Meirionnydd Cluster group which has considered advertising in the, "Bedroom Browsers" to promote the area with the cost being split.

Chris asked how much money is spent in advertising the Visit Bala website and if it would be better to spend the money on improving the Google rating. Ray said that at present the Visit Bala website has links which do not attract a fee.

Mel thought that the more links there were the better and encouraged our members to add the link to their emails and also their websites if they haven't already done so.

Stella wondered if it would be beneficial to pay to be advertised in both Mid and North Wales Tourism Associations.

Ray said that at the moment Visit Bala is advertised in: Snowdonia Mountains and Coasts, Mid Wales Tourism and is also linked to the other websites in the Meirionnydd Cluster, i.e., Discover Dolgellau, Blaenau, Tywyn etc.,

Mel talked about the next stage required for Bala being accepted as a, “Walkers Welcome” town. The petition of 200 signatures is nearly completed. There is support for this venture from; Penllyn Patnership, Town Council, Gwynedd Council footpath officer, Bala Business support group, Walking for Health, Lake Wardens Guided Walks.

Ray explained Walkers Welcome Status and Stella read out the conditions of becoming a member.

John wondered if the existence of The Bala Challenge Walk would help the application and/or bring in extra walkers for the event.

Mel is now setting up a sub-committee for Bala becoming a Walkers Welcome Town.

David Mitchell suggested that Bala would benefit from an organised day/weekend of self-promotion, in which activities, businesses, accommodation providers came together to inform, public, journalists, travel and leisure industry etc, of what Bala has to offer. The event should include, taster sessions, in order for people to sample as much as possible in a limited time frame. The Leisure Centre was mooted as a possible venue, but also the Cywain may be considered.

The group felt that many activities were going unnoticed by the Media. The Bala Triathlon attracted 800 entrants in September but no local press coverage had been noted.

Chris wondered if discount vouchers for shops could be given out at the Triathlon to encourage visitor spending in the town.

Julian Hunter, organiser, is very supportive of any local businesses having stalls at the Leisure Centre on the day of the event.

Chris said that it was through the Winter months that the visitor numbers, and consequently spending, diminished, so could an event target this quiet time.

Megan pointed out that the lake rises in the autumn/winter and this could restrict any water sport activities.

David Mitchell felt that all members need to be asked if they would support publicity weekend as this would require a lot of manpower and organising.

**Please e-mail Mel Williams if you are in favour.**

Carol Keys-Shaw showed the group the magazine, “Chester and North Wales Tribune” which is currently unavailable in Bala.

This month’s issue features Coed y Brenin and Llandegla Mountain Biking. The magazine has good distribution throughout Chester and North Wales and is free. Consideration needs to be given to writing articles, “advertorials” promoting Bala. Once again if you would like to volunteer to be part of this that would be great.

The magazine needs to be contacted for copies to be available for distribution in Bala.

KLS

Megan explained that Bala used to help its promotion by having a, "cheque book" printed that contained discount vouchers redeemable through shops, activities and accommodation providers.

Ray said that, Carpet Right have, "madness days" when they discount heavily for a specific weekend. Perhaps Bala should consider a weekend, in the low season, and offer substantial discounts across the board.

Members are to remember that their own specific discounts and offers may be advertised at any time on the Visit Bala website.

Ray suggested that all members should be e-mailed to ask what ideas of promotion they would be willing to support. Please let Mel know.

Stella suggested that the Visit Bala postcard could be used as a discount voucher.

Late night shopping in Bala is Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

Discussion was given to this year's stall. A Lucky Dip was suggested, Guess the Weight of the Christmas Cake again (but this time a guess is 50p or £1 rather than 20p) and Guess how many Sweets in the Jar.

All other suggestions are most welcome and people are required who would be willing to take part in running any of these events.

The evening last year was great fun and excellent in raising the profile of the Tourism Association.

Chris asked about the progress of the path around the lake.

Megan said that there was a highways meeting planned for Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September after which more news would be available.

The meeting was brought to a close at 21.25hrs

**Date of next Meeting:** 25<sup>th</sup> November 7.30pm at Plas yn Dre.