

**Cymdeithas Twristiaeth y Bala a Phenllyn
Bala & Penllyn Tourism Association**

Minutes of meeting held at Cywain Thursday 18th March 2010

Present:

Mel Williams
Megan Pugh
Olwen Davies
Stella Welch
Sioned Llewelyn
David Mitchell
Llew ap Gwent
Ray Hind
Robert DeHoxar
Representative White Water Rafting
Wendy Pryce Jones

Apologies:

Jack Reeves
Keith Robinson
Mary Gareth
Sarah Lind
David Llewellyn
Lou Roberts

Llew ap Gwent kindly came to talk to the group about the role of the newly formed Partneriaeth Penllyn Partnership. This body of twelve, has been formed by Gwynedd Council, and hopes to be a, “voice for the area of Penllyn”. There are three main aims:

Delivering local services efficiently
Uniting the villages within Penllyn for common aims.
Making Bala a focal point for local services.

Although being responsible for public footpaths, toilets and children’s play areas might appear of small significance, greater things are hoped to follow.

Llew can be contacted at gwent636@btinternet.com and would welcome issues and thoughts relating to current responsibilities.

Chairman’s Report was presented by Mel.

Treasurer’s Report was presented by Ray.

Mel proposed making Bala a, “Walkers Welcome Town”. An initial collection of 200 signatures is required for the first hurdle to be leaped.

Megan Pugh informed the group about the Spring Fair taking place over the Easter weekend at the Cywain. Flowers were discussed and Katrina will talk with Barry at Siop De to co-ordinate planting with Bala Tourism Association and Bala Business Association. A grant may be available from Snowdonia National Park (see Chairman’s report). The Tourism Information Centre will once again be supported by Bala Tourism Association by planting of annuals in the front flower bed.

Mel and Ray had attended a Mid Wales forum that was looking at the benefit of local tourism groups working together, sharing ideas and best practice. The excellent leaflet produced by Tywyn could be used as a blue print for Bala.

Sioned mentioned that the Cinema doesn't say which film is currently being shown. Katrina said that the Cinema doesn't have a sign outside saying, "Cinema".

David Mitchell has had conflicting information being given to guests about his 4X4 Land Rover experience within the Bala area. In order to clarify some points of concern David explained that the Land Rovers are only taken onto private land, that has been paid for, with full agreement from the landowners. At no time are the Land Rovers taken onto public land.

The meeting was brought to a close.

Next meeting Thursday 22nd April at 7pm, Tourist Information Centre.

Chairman's Report March 2010

The 25th February saw the first meeting of the e Mid Wales Networking Group held in the Bwyty Mawddach. This pilot scheme is being run by TPMW in conjunction with Eddy Webb at In-Synch Business Services and all Meirionnydd Tourism Associations. At the first meeting it was discussed how we could all work together for the greater good of Meirionnydd. Presently a maximum of 2 people from each group are involved.

We have some draft objectives:

Increase collaboration

- Attract more people into Meirionnydd by working together
- Raise the quality of the tourism product
- Investigate group purchasing and distribution
- Share best practise
- Increase product knowledge
- Become self sustaining

Here are the draft actions from the last meeting which we will be developing at the meeting on the 18th March:

- Start using a forum
- Schedule regular meetings with reasons to meet
- Create a central page
- eMarketing IT session
- Print and distribution discussion
- Social media marketing

8th March – A public meeting was held at the Canolfan Cywain Centre to discuss its future. The meeting was well attended, 60+ people. After a general discussion and questions and answers we discovered that after the initial grant from the EU Cywain has received no funding although it was promised for 2009, 10 and 11. It is a community scheme and the directors wish it to remain that way at least for the time being. It would appear that the Manager's hours have had to be cut considerably because of funding issues. Cywain costs £15,000 a year just to run without wages. The good news is that there is no debt. The people attending the meeting were divided into 4 groups: Publicity, admin, catering and maintenance and

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gardens. These groups are made up of volunteers who have pledged to help try keeping Cywain going. If you would like to join in and volunteer in any way at all please get in touch with Alison at Cywain: alison@cywain.co.uk or 01678 520920.

16th March – Bala & Penllyn Business Group – As chair of the Tourism Association I was invited to attend the Business Group meeting to discuss ways in which we could work as a partnership. It was agreed that the Penllyn Trails series of leaflets were excellent and that the brochure was still valid. It would appear that the leaflets have now all gone. The publications were produced by the Bala & Penllyn Tourism Association and we need to find out who has the original artwork in order to reproduce the leaflets.

I also discovered that a Welsh Language Group was set up under Antur Penllyn some years ago and potentially there may be some members of that group who would help us with translation of the web site. Gwyn Sion Ifan offered to look into this for us.

The flowers for the town were discussed. Last year's display brightened up Bala no end and therefore all agreed it was an excellent idea to have flowers again this year. Gwyn offered to look into what arrangements have been made for this. Since the meeting I have read the minutes of the Town Council in the 'Cyfnod' and there is money available from the Snowdonia National Park for flowers. I explained that I had written to the TIC asking if they wished us to put flowers in the border outside again this year.

I asked Gwenlli Davis (Town Council) if the Town Council could facilitate a meeting of all Community Groups in order that we can share ideas and corroborate on the way forward.

I said that as a Group we were looking at benefits of belonging to the Bala and Penllyn Tourism Association and asked if there was any way we could work together on this. See the benefits we presently offer below:

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

On the 24th March I have been asked as Chair of the Tourism Association to give a presentation on our role within the tourism industry to a group of young people Gyrfa Cymru – ‘Brolio Tref Y Bala!’
‘Twristiaeth, Hamdden A Manwerthu’ Careers Wales – Tourism, Leisure & Commerce.

On Thursday 25th March, once again the Chair & Secretary have been invited to meet with the recently formed ‘Partneriaeth Penlly Partnership’. I will feed back in the future.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Melanie Williams

Treasurer’s Report

The bank balance is £3,449, since the last meeting we have received membership and web fees from those members who have renewed their membership. The majority of this is allocated to the website. Renewal for 2010 is now due.

Marketing/Website Report

Phase II of the VisitBala website development is nearly completed – this will add a capability so that members will be able to update their own entry. There will also be a section for members’ information.

Recent improvements include:

- Video gallery
- Pictures gallery now has “pictures from the past” and will have a capability for the general public to provide pictures
- Changes to menu structure adding a heritage menu item
- Improvements to “things to do” pages including adding images.

There are still improvements that can be made to the content on the website and any volunteers would be appreciated, e.g. local information.

Members are requested to provide a link from their websites to Visit Bala, a logo has been provided by E-mail for this purpose.

Gwynedd Council have agreed to distribute the VisitBala flyer at the Outdoor Show and through the TIC’s and requests for information.