

Ogwen Users Forum Notes

10 November 2016 4.30 p.m.

Present

Iwan Jones (chair)	Snowdonia National Park Authority (SNPA)
Alan Pritchard	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Gwyn Thomas	Blaen y Nant
Guto Roberts	Cwm Idwal Partnership
Carys Dafydd	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Arwel Johnston	Tenant
Edwina Johnston	Tenant
Dewi Davies	National Trust
Jon Cawley	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Gareth Dwyer	Capel Curig Community Council
Howard Hughes	Translator

Apologies

Edward Jones; Dewi Roberts; Jeroen Verbeek; Saskia Wardeinier; Mal Creasy; Mark Roberts; Naomi Jones; Godfrey Northam; Rob Spencer; Mair Huws

1. The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and as some members were attending for the first time – he asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Notes from the last meeting.

a. Accuracy of the notes

- It was noted that Verbeek is the surname of Jeroen YHA and not Wardeinier.
- Dewi Davies said that the shepherds had each received a fleece coat and not a t-shirt

b. Matters arising –

- a. Public transport - it was agreed that the bus service has made no difference to the traffic situation. Guto Roberts said that no information about the service has been displayed at the bus stop
- b. Carys was asked to contact Iolo Tegid and ask him for a few convenient dates in order to meet representatives from the Forum, which are Guto Roberts; Dewi Davies and Arwel Johnston.
- c. There was a general discussion about the parking situation. Gareth Dwyer said that Alison Cousins has been coming here on weekends and she has a number of pictures of cars parked on the pavement. Carys agreed to get the pictures from her in order to forward them on to Iolo Tegid.

Gwyn Thomas asked what was happening in relation to the idea of creating a footpath on this side of the wall – which would be safer than having to step out into the road to avoid the cars. Guto Roberts said that the Trust has no money to carry out the work. Alan Pritchard added that he thought that the pavement should be reclaimed rather than looking for another solution.

Gwyn Thomas replied that he did not want to see one of his grandchildren involved in an accident - and it didn't appear that anyone was taking responsibility for the situation.

Guto Roberts referred to his appearance with Gwyn Thomas on TV talking about the parking problems. Following a request by BBC Cymru for a response from the Welsh Government this is the statement that was provided:

“We have commissioned a local safety study covering this stretch of road. This study is currently underway and is actively considering speed data. We have also made sure that the online petition is being considered as part of the safety study. Once we have received the study we will consider our next steps.”

Guto has also started an on-line petition and 213 people have signed it so far.

Arwel Johnston asked what had happened to the 20 parking spaces lost as a result of the construction of the new building - he said that he had been assured by advisers that parking spaces would not be lost.

Not everyone agreed that 20 parking spaces had been lost.

3. An update on recent activities in Ogwen – Guto Roberts

In addition to issues relating to traffic, he read an update from Dewi Roberts

- A ‘spec’ has been completed for the footpath from Llyn Bochlwyd towards Bwlch Tryfan .. Looking for funding to do the work over the next few years.
- By working in Partnership with the RSPB - 4 meadows have been fenced off in order to create areas / habitats / food for the Twite. There is a lot of work yet to be done in order to adapt the fields to create the right habitat.
- Tŷ Tal y Fraich has been completed in the hope of letting it out to visitors in the Spring. There’s a lot of work to do on the track before the visitors arrive
- The helicopter has been used this Summer to transport material for footbridges on a footpath in Dyffryn Mymbyr, to lift stones for walls at Tyn y Maes and for footpath work in the Valley.

Guto said that the Discover Ogwen Valley scheme has come to an end and a successful evening was held to show the film at Neuadd Ogwen.

4. The current situation on site

In the absence of Edward Jones, his report was read by the chair

Over the last year the problem of blocked toilets has become a regular occurrence.

We have discovered that a drop in pressure in the water supply is contributing to the

problem. Since the Grey Water Harvesting system isn't operational this increases the demand for water from the supply, and exacerbates the situation.

The new building was designed not to include a water tank in the building - this means that pressure cannot be increased on the water supply coming from the lake.

The Head of Property will meet with designers next week to discuss options on how to increase pressure on the supply within the building, and also how the Grey Water Harvesting system can be revived.

He will also review options regarding the origin of the water supply and will conduct metal screening tests in the stream that comes from Llyn Idwal, which is the old supply.

Arwel Johnson added that the water pipe is now 40 years old. He said that the new building has been designed for a mains water system - and that problems arise as no mains supply is available.

Dewi Davies said that they have water tanks behind Ogwen Cottage.

5. Interpretation on the site – in the absence of Naomi Jones the Chair reported that

- the company has been looking at the 3D model and is awaiting their response regarding improvements that could be made to it.
- an application made to use a TV to show films in the building - but there was a problem with too much reflection on the screen.
- Guto Roberts said that the problem with watching films when the sun is shining is on-going and that they are still considering matters. He said that he had seen some kind of tent used at the Burren Perfumery Museum in a National Park in Ireland and that it is very effective. Carys Dafydd said that she would mention it to Naomi.

6. Update on the Ogwen Cottage – Dewi Davies

- Ogwen Cottage has had a successful year working in partnership with the Outward Bound during the School term.
- Preparations are underway for the opening of the cafe - the entrance will be within the gable of the building with the opening scheduled to take place at Easter.
- The Rangers Hut proved successful - the way of working was that one of the rangers stayed in the hut, whilst the other ranger went up the Valley. By working on a rota basis someone was available at all times. The feedback has been very good - 200 people said that they enjoyed talking to the rangers. When the cafe is open there will be even more contact with the rangers.
- It is proposed to open up the gap in order to create more space to display interesting interpretation material – and introduce changes slowly in order to see what works – experiment as we go along.

Jonathan Cawley asked what the implications of the developments were on the Ogwen Centre – Dewi replied that it was important not to duplicate services in both locations.

- The point was made that there are more vehicles in the area since the National Trust team moved to work at the Ogwen Cottage and that their vehicles are parked on the pavement. – Dewi Davies replied that the parking wasn't working well - and that the Trust Staff would only be parking on the pavement for a short period.

7. Update on the Heritage Lottery fund application - Carneddau - Jon Cawley.

- Good news – the application for a lottery grant was successful
- The main aim of the plan will be to protect and better manage the Carneddau
- A partnership will be created to bring different bodies to work together. The success of the work will depend on the cooperation and goodwill of landowners – they are not obliged to become part of the scheme
- The work will include better access; managing various habitats; raising awareness of the special cultural heritage that exists

- A Board has been established and the first meeting will be held next week. Details of the application will be developed over the next two years with work starting in year 3.
- Two posts will be created for the first two years i.e. a Project Officer and an Administrative Officer
- Jon Cawley will continue as Director

8. Any other business

- Gwyn Thomas said that he wanted to raise the issue of unruly dogs again – as it seems that nothing is being done about the situation. Guto Roberts said that a ban could be achieved during the nesting season if the bird survey shows that the Twite nests there - this is the only way that dogs can be banned from the Nature Reserve.

Arwel Johnson added that the situation is getting worse - more people are bringing their dogs here. Dewi Davies said that two seasonal wardens work from the Ogwen Cottage over the summer and that they can keep an eye out to see whether dogs are being kept under control.

Arwel Johnson said that no one worked at the Ogwen Centre on weekends and that did not help matters.

Gwyn Thomas suggested that it would be an idea to resurrect an old poster showing a sheep that had been mauled - and it should be put to facebook and twitter.

- Jonathan Cawley suggested that the Cwm Idwal Partnership should discuss the matter and come up with recommendations that could be implemented.

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and the meeting came to an end at 6.00 p.m.