



CAERPHILLY LOCAL ACCESS FORUM – 24TH FEBRUARY 2023

SUBJECT: GRANT PROGRAMMES AND IMPLEMENTATION

REPORT BY: MR. PHIL GRIFFITHS
SECRETARY CAERPHILLY LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

LOCATION: VARIOUS



1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Local Access Forum (LAF) of the ongoing programme of grant assisted projects and opportunities for funding associated with access improvements.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Provides an update on secured and possible income streams available to improve and promote access within the County borough. Further to this an update is given on some of the more significant access improvements being undertaken by Countryside and Landscape Services.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The LAF is asked to note the contents of the report

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To update the LAF on grant programmes and their implementation

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Welsh Government reinstated the Access Improvement Grant three years ago, having withdrawn it a number of years previous to that. The latest round of funding has been allocated on a three year programme, up to March 2025. Previous to this round the funding was awarded on an annual basis and the transition to a three year programme is welcome. Unlike previous awards the current funding has a number of stipulations attached to the allocation, including the need for Local Authorities to have an active Local Access Forum. It should be noted that this funding can include wider

proposals than the statutory rights of way network which is also welcome. The funding allocated to CCBC amounts to some £208,000 over the programme period.

- 5.2 As part of the Gwent Green Grid Partnership, which has been previously reported, the Partnership has submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the Heritage Lottery Fund under their National Nature Fund programme. This is primarily aimed at biodiversity enhancement at key sites although the promotion of access to and understanding of is a major component. Monmouthshire CC are leading on this with the support of the Partnership. It is anticipated that a decision will be made in March by the funding body as to whether a formal application is requested.
- 5.3 The access improvement works on Mynydd Maen being undertaken as part of the Adventure Triangle project, near completion. These works have improved access across this upland area and created better links to nearby facilities and features including the Cwmcarn Facility and Twmbarlwm. These are of benefit to both residents and visitors, widening the appeal of the area. The works straddle both CCBC and TCBC and have, in part been designed and undertaken with local contractors and interest groups. The land owners of the area have been supportive. The Twmbarlwm Society are keen to attract new members to assist with their on going research and management of the site..
- 5.4 A covid memorial woodland is being established at Ynys Hywel Farm, Cwmfelinfach with the support of Welsh Government funding. An initial phase of tree planting took place last year, supported by community group and volunteer planting. This year the supporting hard works of path creation is programmed which will result in a comprehensive network throughout the project area, linking with both the National Cycle network and wider country park. These works have been tendered.
- 5.5 The route for the annual Caerphilly Challenge event has been determined with the event being focussed on the Caerphilly Basin this year. The date of the walk, which will again make provision for some shorter led walks in addition to the self led long distance event, is in May . The Aneurin Bevan Health Board, along with a range of volunteers will support this event. Bookings are available on line.
- 5.6 The Chair has requested that the membership be made aware of a Sustrans initiative to supply and install wooden benches along cycleways and that any interest be passed to the Secretary. These benches are free but supply and resources are likely to be limited.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 N/A

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 N/A

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 N/A

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 N/A

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 Consultation with the Chair of Caerphilly Local Access Forum.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

Author:

Phil Griffiths, Secretary to Caerphilly LAF and Manager of Green Space Strategy and Cemeteries CCBC.

Consultees:

M. Benjamin, LAF Chair
R. Tranter, CCBC, Head of Legal Services
S. Harris, CCBC, Head of Financial Services
Cllr. C.Morgan, Cabinet Member
M. Williams, CCBC, Director for Economy and Environment
R. Hartshorn, CCBC, Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services
C. Harry, CCBC, Chief Executive