

## **Project updates for the LAG meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

### **Theme 1 – Cultural and Natural Heritage – Tourism**

#### **Our View Social Media Campaign**

Deserie met with the group in November at West Usk Lighthouse. The meeting offered the opportunity to meet some of the volunteers and to participate in the first workshop for some time.

The workshop is the first of the changing direction of the group. The social media video making moving into training for still photography for incorporation into social media outlets.

The group were given an update by Nicola Edwards on how the videos were featured on VisitMonmouthshire.com and were being shared on social media. It's likely that still photography will be of even greater use for destination marketing purposes. An online gallery has been developed which means that destination marketers can easily view and download images uploaded by ambassadors.

A series of workshops are now being developed to progress the group and will include a closer liaison with the Ambassador programme.

#### **Mountain Bike Guides Training**

Courses for 2018 have been undertaken to include Mountain Bike Guides and Cycling Club volunteers and all of the funds have now been allocated and spend is almost complete.



#### **The Visitor Information Project**

The study is complete; the report identifies best practice visitor information provision in the UK and overseas, and contains a number of recommendations for developing a more sustainable service. Proposed recommendations from the report will be implemented at Chepstow TIC over the coming months.

The report can be found on our [website](#).

Since the last LAG update the project has moved forward and discount vouchers have been developed with businesses in Chepstow – these are given to coach visitors as part of the meet and greet service. Sue Ward (project officer) is currently working with the tourism forum in Caerleon to develop similar offers and incentives for businesses there.

In progress is the implementation of some of the recommendations of the visitor information review at Chepstow TIC – a coffee / tea lounge (providing free coffee and tea to drivers) and piloting an iPad (locked onto VisitMonmouthshire.com) inside a security cradle to provide inspiration / an alternative information source during busy times.

Welcome folders have been produced for coach operators to provide inspiration for group visits to Monmouthshire and Newport. Newport CC has also received approval of an EOI RTEF application to work with businesses to develop incentives to encourage more visits from outside of Wales, following the abolition of bridge tolls, which links with this RDP project. A full application is due to be submitted to Welsh Government by 1 February.

In addition, there are current discussions with Mon CC Highways department regarding design and installation of signage required to achieve Coach Friendly status for Chepstow.

#### **WEBSITE.**

There are ongoing improvements to the website and to the information for businesses who welcome groups.

#### **Abergavenny.**

Unfortunately the project has not progressed into Abergavenny because of the fundamental changes at Tithe Barn i.e. loss of café, lease to Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, limited access to tapestry and exhibition and loss of manager to organise group visits and tours of St Mary's. The drastically reduced footfall and change of purpose of the building have made it impossible to welcome coaches and groups there unfortunately.

Despite the challenges, Sue has been working with businesses in Abergavenny to develop offers, which are promoted on the [www.visitmonmouthshire.com](http://www.visitmonmouthshire.com) website, the coach buddy website and the coach drivers' forum as well as at Chepstow TIC.

#### **Living Levels Accommodation Study/Pilot**

The consultants are completing their contact with accommodation providers in the area. They have also met with the Planning Officers at Monmouthshire and Newport to discuss development in and/or near the Gwent Levels.



The draft report has been submitted to the working group and a meeting (31 Jan) will allow for edits and ideas to improve the report.

The meeting will bring key parties back together to develop offer guidance for completion of the final report and to look at recommendations and development of a pilot project.

note that a place has been identified in the Monmouthshire area to take forward a pilot plan. (No other information available as yet).

### **St Mary's Priory Project**

Chris Jones and Peter Cole, appointed to support St Mary's Priory with a business plan, have noted the completion of the plan that has been signed off and is available to view on the [website](#).

Notified in the last update was the development of a training course for volunteers. This is being undertaken by Chris Jones and Owen Wilce and will be directly for Heritage based groups. Fifty-four responses to the survey indicated the type of training requirements and this will be facilitated shortly.

The training sessions have been identified with, predominantly Social Media and Story Telling coming to the fore.

Other options for development.

As Owen Wilce and the Be Group (funded under Vale of Usk continues to develop the training sessions we await some discussion as to any potential projects which may arise. see update).

Some discussion is taking place to see if there is an integrated option for support for the Tithe Barn/Priory Centre and Canolfan Cymraeg.

The Made in Monmouthshire event at St Marys Courtyard on the 1<sup>st</sup> December was a success, following from recommendations of the study undertaken. Further events are planned quarterly.



### **Tintern Abbey Trail**

A walking trail from Tintern Abbey to the village and surrounding area with iBeacon interpretation (free download from Tintern Abbey shop or prior to visit) is being developed by Wye Valley AONB and CADW. It is hoped that Tintern village will further benefit from the large numbers that visit the Abbey.

The project has been on hold but has now moved forward. The intended work is delayed however both CADW and ANOB are not in agreement on the way forward and have met to discuss development of the APP and pilot trail.

The outcome of this was an emerging theme around using artwork of the Abbey and landscape, putting people in the locations paintings were drawn and into the paintings themselves to tell an interactive story. ANOB are now in a position to work in more detail on this project and hope to have started research into interpretative locations and set to develop the app.

A new timetable has been submitted and it is likely therefore that the project will need to be extended. This means an expected launch of April 2019 (at the earliest) with an extension to August 2019. There will be no change to costs merely an extension to complete the work in a satisfactory manner.



## **Theme 2**

### **Venison Study (Completed Project)**

The study is now complete and available to view on the [website](#). It has been translated into Welsh and the project closed. In terms of recommendations the

AONB were not successful in gaining further funding to take forward the recommendations. Having failed in the major bid AONB note that there was a small amount of funding through Natural England which allows them to deliver a couple of training days aimed at butchers and restaurateurs. They are working with the Deer Initiative and hope to deliver these in the next few months. Beyond that, there is a need to seek additional funding to take recommendations forward. Any thoughts?

### **Co-Working Study (Completed Project)**

The final report has been received and is available to view on the RDP website. Further developments include Cardiff University approaching MonCC to work with Monmouthshire on the Cardiff Capital Region projects. The University is offering to extend its support to Monmouthshire to undertake a mapping exercise for co-working facilities. A meeting has been requested to explore options.

There is no update on Cardiff University, however MonCC continues to pick up the issue of co-working space and is considering areas for development.

Co-working space has opened in Abergavenny but was not developed through this project.



### **Future Economies Study**

The economic data has now been collated and analysed and the Economic Baseline and Strategic Direction reports have been produced by Mon CC. However, as the reports were collated to inform the future Local Development Plan, which is still in the consultation stage, Mon CC is not yet in a position to publish the reports, however the data is being used to inform future strategic direction. It is hoped that the report can be released publicly in the next couple of months. Cath Fallon (Head of Enterprise) wishes to pass on her thanks to the LAG for their consideration and patience.

### **Theme 3**

#### **Creative Communities toolkit**

Currently on hold pending agreement of a proposal for delivery over the final six months of the project.



### **Be. Community Leadership Programme**

In November and December Social Media sessions were delivered with Promo Cymru based on consistent need being identified by community volunteers. Thirty eight volunteers attended, all providing extremely positive feedback on the impact of the training. One new volunteer project evidenced a social media reach of 20,000 people and a video was viewed 4950 times, this is identified as a direct result of skills and knowledge gained from the training.

Volunteers attended Risk Assessment training during November, giving them the skills to carry out safe assessments in their volunteer setting. Chapter 8 Road Closure Training for Volunteers was delivered by Raglan Training. This provided an opportunity to gain the qualification which is required for streets to be closed for Playing Out sessions, parades, carnivals etc.

Following on from the success of the event in Abergavenny last summer, on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> January between 4:30pm-8pm we will be hosting another Be. Community Network Event at Monmouth Comprehensive School in partnership with Monmouth Town Council & GAVO colleagues. We aim to bring 200 community members together with 30 organisations that can support them. It gives us the opportunity to promote the opportunities through the Be. Community programme to a wide audience.

We are aiming to run a two day mental health first aid accredited course for volunteers supporting children and young people on 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> March.

A fuller report covering the Winter 2018/19 period is available to download from the [www.monmouthshire.biz](http://www.monmouthshire.biz) website. This includes video evaluations from volunteers who have benefitted from the programme and the opportunity to book your place at the event later this month in Monmouth.



### **Rural Transport Study**

The final report is available on the RDP website. The application made through the Community Transport Association to fund two members of staff was unsuccessful. Other initiatives are being considered with CCRC, Transport for Wales and the GovTech SBRI challenge.



#### **Theme 4**

##### **Fully Charged (Electric Vehicle Charging Points)**

This one year pilot project is now complete and a final report is available to download from the website. Overall it has proved very successful although the research has highlighted mixed usage across the 20 installations. The host venues have been offered the opportunity to retain their chargers at no cost and they have all provided feedback which has been useful when compiling the final report.



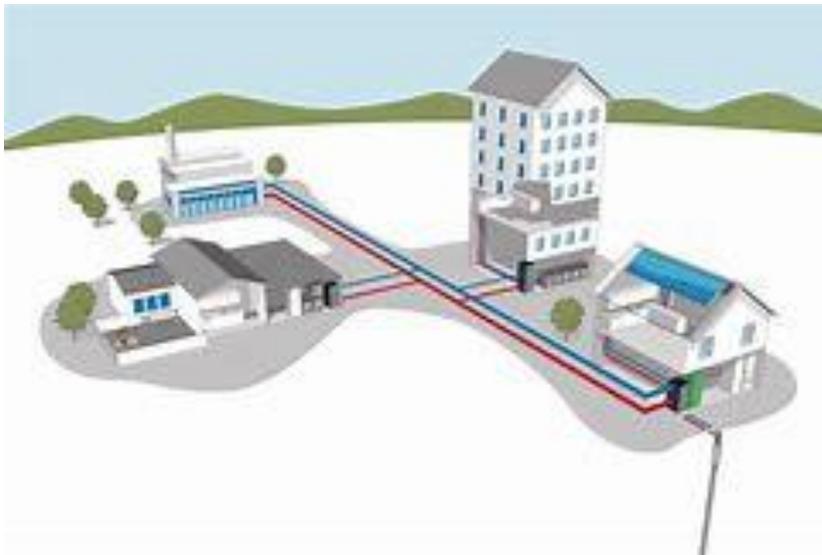
##### **Village Hall Energy Make Over**

A qualified contractor will shortly be installing LED lighting at all five halls. Efforts are still being made to secure capital funds to implement the full range of energy efficiency measures. An application was submitted before Christmas to the new Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being Grant. We should be notified of the outcome in February/March 2019.



### **Master Planning for Heat Networks**

This application has recently been approved by the LAG. The funding is required to undertake an energy mapping and modelling study of The Vale of Usk area to identify potentially useful heating, cooling and power demand loads and potentially useful heat supply opportunities for the purposes of district energy scheme development. A brief will shortly be written in order to procure suitably qualified consultancy.



### **Theme 5.**

#### **Llanover digital halls project**

Capital works are almost complete through the successful RCDF application. The LEADER project is underway. LEADER is supporting the monthly Broadband subscription for the halls along with room hire and stationery items. Workshops are being prepared for the next 3 months for the halls. The next meeting of the steering

group is Wednesday evening 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019. Any relevant information will be fed back to the LAG

### **Communication First**

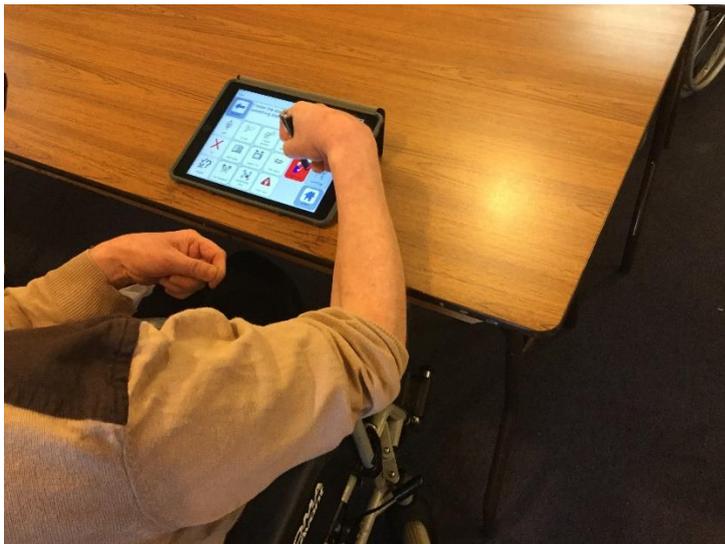
There has been a few difficulties setting up the weekly session mentioned in the last update due to changes within day services. However, it is hoped to start meeting in the evenings within a social setting in January.

Monmouth People First took part in an event organised by SCOPE who were keen to find out about the project and the software being used. The information will be used on a communication website they are currently working on.

There's ongoing discussions with The University of Wales about the possibility of using 'Talking Mats' in the training of Learning Disability nurses, and to hopefully organise opportunities for beneficiaries to take part in training at the university. The project will be part of a training module focused on communication at the university in March.

A meeting with All Wales People First later this month will focus on using a tailor made Talking Mat aimed at finding out the barriers to people with communication difficulties taking part in People First groups.

A brief report covering the first year of the project is available on the website.



### **IoT and Independent Living**

The project was approved by internet voting. A visit was made to Digital Catapult London to explore opportunities with LPWAN deployment. The project is hoping to gain momentum during the first quarter of 2019.

### **Robotics in the Community**

In conjunction with Mon CC Staff, Sheffield Robotics brought their Cyberselves Roadshow to Monmouth Comprehensive School and Newport Riverfront on Tuesday December 11<sup>th</sup> 2018.

The programme introduced pupils and the general public to the latest social robots and Sheffield Robotics' new robotic telepresence system. The purpose of the visit

was to help people familiarise themselves with robots, Artificial Intelligence (AI) to ease their fears and anxieties about robotics and the future of technology in the workplace. Children at school now will very probably be working alongside robots when they are older and encountering robots and AI throughout their daily lives. Most pupils at MSC in Year 9 got to meet the robots and try out the telepresence technology. Additionally, Year 6 from nearby Osbaston Primary School came along so that they would also be able to take advantage of the opportunity to meet the latest social robots such as Pepper, Nao and MiRo. The Newport event included a closed session for young people with autism.

The organisers hope that engaging and interacting with such robots has helped to inspire some of the children to pursue a career in technology and engineering and at least feel more comfortable and optimistic about working alongside robots and advanced AI in their future careers.

The information gleaned from this and the questionnaire currently being completed will help formulate the study being prepared by Richard Waterstone.



## **Cooperation**

### **BEES**

The BEES project continues well with a successful network of help and advice between the cluster groups. The project commences its monthly meeting this October with guest speakers being nominated from the groups. Earlier in the year hygiene training was undertaken and proved a really useful tool.

The Education element for VoU is now being offered to Gwent Bee Keeper's as the original contractor was unable to fulfil the visits to schools within Monmouthshire and rural wards within Newport. The project has attracted new members and is offering taster sessions and training to those interested in the project. A celebration of the BEES project was held on July 17<sup>th</sup> in the Incredible Edible garden at Usk. It was open to the public and was attended by locally based groups and those from the partner areas. The project carries on establishing networks, skill sharing and providing education.

We are currently looking at the process of sustainability as we look towards the end of the project in 2019.

Given the time of year most of the work has been through regular monthly meetings with ideas being shared and developed. The education resource pack is being discussed between the three LAG areas with a view to VoU delivering on this element. A successful workshop on hive hygiene and bee keeping skills given by Adam Parker, Bee Inspector is being repeated in the three LAG areas, this is open to all bee keepers not only those involved with the project.



### **Food hubs International Cooperation Project**

The funding application has been submitted to the Belgian LAG and we await the outcomes of the funding application for the food hub. It is likely that funding (if successful) will move forward the recommendations. The date for response is late January 2019.

### **AgriUrban (Urbact II Project)**

The new Abergavenny Food Forum had its first meeting in July and second in December 2019. They continue to move forward with the recommendations of the Agri-Urban Action Plan. This will relate directly to the development of the Food Hub Projects. Information on this has been passed to the Abergavenny Food Forum

(formerly the Agri Urban ULG). They have requested to be part of any interview and appointment of a post holder – if successful.

A final visit under the Agri Urban programme will be attended by Pamela Mason and Deserie Mansfield in October with a programme of events developed to support the food hub development, education and business development in the food sector.

The study visit will include:

- **Gallecs and its strategic location (natural viewpoint).** Territorial context: links between the rural and urban areas.
  - Vegetables supply to public canteens.
  - Local producers, members of the Agroecological Association of Gallecs presentation.
- Gallecs agro-shop and workshop: the cooperative of local producers.**
- The creation of the association and the SAT.
  - The brand.
  - Gallecs produce and Future project: “espai de tas.

