

# **Cynon Valley River Park**

## **Draft Strategy Progress Report: June 2010**

### **Introduction**

Since the completion of the draft strategy for the Cynon Valley River Park in 2007, a wide diversity of organisations have been working to progress the actions.

This report summarises the work that has been undertaken and identifies some of the key priorities for the next few years. The report has been prepared by the Countryside Section of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, with information supplied by local Council members, other Council departments, Assembly sponsored public bodies, voluntary organisations, community groups and interested individuals (see Appendix One).

### **The Vision for the Cynon Valley River Park**

The Cynon Valley River Park Strategy is based on the following vision.

‘We want the value of the floodplain as a natural feature to be recognised, the positive use and management of the floodplain to be encouraged and reflect its value for natural processes, for wildlife, for heritage and for people.’

The key themes are climate change, biodiversity and landscape, the Cynon Trail and community links, health and wellbeing, and heritage and tourism. The focus of the strategy is on partnership working, best practice and new projects, integrating the various themes.

### **UK and Wales policy background**

In the last three years, there have been significant developments in both UK and Welsh policy relevant to the Cynon Valley River Park. Climate Change has become a major policy driver affecting land-use and planning, water management, biodiversity, energy and transport. There has been a widespread recognition of the importance of the landscape scale for addressing these issues and a growth in understanding of the importance of ‘ecosystem services’ provided by the natural environment (from food and fresh air to pollution control and climate regulation).

In South East Wales, the Wales Spatial Plan has developed the concept of the Networked Environment Region, which highlights the Taff and Cynon River corridors. The Valleys Cycle Network, which includes the Cynon Trail, has been proposed by the South East Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA) and has attracted significant funds for implementation. The Valleys Regional Park has also achieved European and other funding to develop the countryside assets of the region. The Heads of the Valleys programme has devoted considerable resources to environmental transformation, developing town centres and tourism, as well as supporting community-based initiatives such as Cleaner Greener Communities in the area. The Environment Agency has published their Severn Basin Management Plan (including the Cynon catchment) setting out how the water environment is to be protected and improved. Funding is

available, including via the Rivers Trust, for works to improve river habitats.  
**EA Total focus campaign**

### **Rhondda Cynon Taf**

In Rhondda Cynon Taf, the Local Development Plan (LDP) process is nearing completion. The deposit draft includes core strategy and area wide policies relevant to the whole of the County and policies for the Northern strategy area, which includes the Cynon Valley. A specific Cynon Valley River Park policy has been included (NSA26). The Plan is currently subject to Examination by the Planning Inspectorate and, if declared sound, will be adopted next year. As part of the work for the LDP, the Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) have been reviewed and published on the Constraints Map. SINC have been identified using criteria agreed for the Mid Valleys area, which includes Caerphilly, Merthyr, Blaenau Gwent as well as Rhondda Cynon Taf. A number of biodiversity projects, of relevance to CVRP, have been pursued in conjunction with others. These include the Heads of the Valleys (HOV)/ RSPB lapwing project, the coal spoil strategy, the HOV woodland strategy and the BTO bird atlas project.

The Tourism Strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf has been completed and the website destinationrct has been established.

A full list of all the projects undertaken in the Cynon Valley River Park area is given in Appendix Two. This section summarises the achievements, to date, under each of the main themes.

### **Climate change**

As mentioned above, policy regarding climate change has moved forward in the last three years and there have been a number of practical projects in the Cynon Valley River Park area. Flooding and sustainable urban drainage issues have featured in many landuse and planning decisions, with the consent for Mountain Ash Hospital reflecting these concerns. Transport priorities increasingly reflect the need to reduce carbon emissions; with works to improve bus stops, the town centre environment for pedestrians and the rail network within the Cynon Valley undertaken. The importance of trees and of soils (especially deep peat soils) for carbon sequestration are influencing projects such as the Heads of the Valleys Woodland Strategy and the management of the Blaencynon Special Area of Conservation (SAC). A number of community and voluntary organisations have been involved in raising awareness of climate change, like the innovative climate change football competition in Fernhill, with practical projects such as biodiesel production at Bryncynon and renewable energy scoping study for a school in Cwmaman.

### **Biodiversity and landscape**

The importance of landscape scale for biodiversity conservation and adaptation to climate change is reflected in the RSPB Futurescapes report published earlier this year. Two regional ecological connectivity studies have been published and further work is underway with regard to ecological connectivity in the Heads of the Valleys area. The Council has started a

strategic review of Tree Preservation Orders in the Cynon Valley and has undertaken a number of landscape management projects, including hedgelaying, new planting and conifer removal. Coed Cymru has progressed five Woodland Grant schemes plus one new Better Woodlands for Wales scheme in the area. The Council is also investigating areas of Council owned land in the Cynon Valley River Park that would benefit from conservation grazing. Preparatory work has been undertaken at a couple of sites, the Dare Valley pilot has been used as a best practice demonstration project and support has been provided for regional funding bids. Management of Key Countryside sites, including the off road sections of the Cynon Trail, includes biodiversity considerations. The statutory agencies have been active in promoting biodiversity and landscape, from the protection and management of the Blaencynon SAC in the north (CCW) to the renovation of Carnetown ponds in the south (EA/RCT). The involvement of community and voluntary organisations in biodiversity conservation has been one of the major successes during the last three years. The Cwmaman Biodiversity Audit, supported by Science Shops Wales and local naturalists has led to the formation of the Aman Valley Conservation Association. The Glamorgan Bird Club, the Valleys Bat Group, the RSPB and the Wildlife Trust have all been active in the area. The Keep Wales Tidy 'Tidy Towns' project, Groundwork and BTCV have all assisted local community groups to take forward environmental projects, often in conjunction with Communities First organisations. Many local school children have benefited from the outdoor classrooms that have been developed, from the environmental education service at Dare Valley and the opportunities arising from the outdoor elements of the new Foundation phase curriculum and the Forest School initiative.

### **The Cynon Trail and community links**

Substantial sections of the main Cynon Trail community route have been completed and this is now signposted as NCN478, part of the National Cycle network. An interim leaflet has been produced to illustrate the route and identify suggested links between the completed sections. Work has been undertaken on some community connections to the main route and investigations are progressing to fill the gaps. The use of the Cynon Trail and the community links continues to increase. Cycle hire schemes, introduction to cycling and cycle training, mountain biking, walking and running groups use the new facilities and help to build skills and confidence. The former Safe Routes to School scheme, now the Safe Routes in Communities is being used to upgrade routes and involve school-children in active travel. Sustrans volunteer rangers have adopted sections of the trail.

### **Health and wellbeing**

A wealth of evidence has emerged over the last three years that outdoor activity is good for you, as well as fun. Both physical and mental health benefit from contact with the natural world and with green space. The Let's Walk Cymru scheme has several new walking groups in the area and Mentro Allan has been successfully introducing people to walking, cycling, gardening and volunteering. The new Outdoor Activity Centre at Dare Valley is providing opportunities for adventure activities for adults and young people and Cwm Cycling in Aberdare provides for cyclists with disabilities. Communities First

partnerships have been enthusiastic in progressing local projects to promote health and well being, to involve their communities and tackle antisocial behaviour. Hirwaun Community Council has a new local warden scheme. Town centre enhancement schemes are contributing to the health of the local economy, and the completion of the Mountain Ash Riverside Park represents a major investment in a quality new open space involving local people working with artists and designers. Artwork will also be included in the fabric of the new hospital.

### **Heritage and tourism**

Major funding from the Heads of the Valleys programme for Tourism has enhanced the visitor facilities at Dare Valley Country Park. A number of Blue Plaques, commemorating people and places have been installed, a heritage walk published for Aberdare and facilities improved at Cynon Valley Museum and Aberdare Library. Walk leaflets have been produced in Cwmaman, Dare Valley and Hirwaun. On-line services for tourists have been improved with new websites for on-line booking and short breaks. Tourism signposting is currently being upgraded through out the Cynon Valley. Funding has been obtained for audio trails (at least one in the Cynon Valley), for a driving trail from Hirwaun and a circular walk in Robertstown.

### **Future priorities**

The achievements to date have reinforced the value of the original concept and the value of partnership working across sectors and themes. One of the priorities to arise from the consultation was to spread this message more widely. The Valleys Regional Park is co-ordinating a seminar to learn from the Cynon Valley River Park experience. As the funding available for both public sector and third sector reduces, the importance of meeting multiple objectives with less resources will become ever more relevant.

The consultation identified specific issues that need to be addressed in the next few years. The completion of the Cynon Trail is an obvious priority but the remaining gaps will provide a greater challenge as they involve land acquisition, major development and technical difficulties. The construction of the Heads of the Valleys Cyclepath is programmed, providing new links in the Hirwaun area. Improving links to communities from the main Trail will continue to be important.

Bringing more land, especially floodplain, into biodiversity management is another continuing priority. The new Agri-environment scheme Glastir will replace Tir Gofal for farmers and Better Woodlands for Wales provides management grants for woodlands. Considering how best to manage publicly owned land, especially in the context of declining resources and the pressures of climate change, will be a challenge.

The last three years have seen strong development of community involvement in regeneration and significant efforts to engage all sections of the community. While there have been many success stories, it is widely recognised that the thorny issue of antisocial behaviour by a small minority can undermine community confidence. This is a long-term problem, which needs to be

addressed by all partners. Innovation, experiment and sharing of best practice should be encouraged.

Development pressures are unlikely to decrease and the new Local Development Plan will provide a robust framework for considering proposals in the Cynon Valley River Park area. It is important that, where development does occur, all the relevant issues are addressed and the maximum benefit is achieved for local communities and for nature conservation.

### **Conclusions**

Over the last three years there has been significant progress in developing the partnership approach to project work and in applying best practice in the Cynon Valley River Park. This has helped make good use of the funding that has been obtained, from various sources, to progress all the themes identified in the draft strategy. There is still much to do and the response to the consultation suggests that there is enthusiasm for continuing with this approach.

## Appendix One: the consultation process

In April 2010, a brief update report listing some of the achievements in the Cynon Valley River Park was sent to organisations and individuals that had been involved in the earlier work on the project and others who might be interested. There was a consultation meeting at Dare Valley Country Park on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2010. The update report was revised using information supplied prior to, at and following the meeting, and circulated again. The report will be finalised once any additions or amendments have been included. The list of consultees and a brief note of the meeting follows.

Ade Williams  
Amanda Orrell CF Cwmaman  
Alan Rosney Glamorgan Bird Club  
Ashley Charlwood  
Bethan Smith, Groundwork  
Lissa Bridge, CF  
Antony Brown, (Communities First)  
Bryncynon CF  
Christine Harrison, CV Ramblers  
Aman Valley Conservation  
Association  
Daerwynno  
David James CV Ramblers  
Jill Davies, (CF)  
Gary Foreman CF Penywaun  
Mark Evans  
Steve Harris, Science Shops Wales  
Christine Jobber CF  
Dr. John Edington  
Darren Jones (Communities First)  
Julian Devereux Groundwork  
merthyrct.  
Richard Lawrence, CF  
Leonie Richardson, Science Shops  
Wales  
[lokeefe@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lokeefe@hotmail.co.uk)  
Martin Bevan  
Nicky Shelswell Science Shops  
Wales  
Dave O'Mahony  
Phil Barrett, Interlink rct  
Debbie Ponting CF  
Andrew Roberts Cf  
Simon James, Interlinkrct  
Victoria Snook CF  
Stephanie Bond, Briars Bridleways  
Steve j Curry  
Suzanne Lockwood, CF Fernhill  
Leanna Thomas, CF

Lisa M Voyle  
Yvonne Hearn, Cefn pennar  
Susan Wing, NHS  
Lee W. Ackerman  
Mark D. Adams  
Christopher J. Ashman  
Colin M. Atyeo  
Jonathan Barrett  
David C. Batten  
Michael J Bessell  
Daniel N. Bond  
Christopher D. Bradshaw  
Cyril J. Chivers  
Claire Williams, lhb, nhs.  
Jane Cook  
Chris.J Wilson  
Alan Davies  
Lee Davies  
Strinda Davies  
Paul Dukes  
Chris Edwards  
Raymond Edwards  
Emma Elliott  
Gillian Evans  
Andrew Griffiths  
Nicola Gulley  
John Harrison  
Anne Hayes  
Julian Hodson-Walker  
Brian Houston  
Stacey Humber  
Derek James  
Gwyn James  
Huw Jenkins  
Rhian Jones  
Ian Lester  
Clive Lewis  
Nicola Lewis  
Ceri Lloyd



# Cynon Valley River Park

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May, Dare Valley Country Park, 4-6pm

## Brief note of the meeting

### Attendance

Gayle Wootton	Valleys Regional Park
David James	Cynon Valley Ramblers
Becky Davies	Environment Agency Wales Biodiversity
Ben Williams	Keep Wales Tidy
Leonie Richardson	Science Shops Wales
Richard Phipps	Groundwork
Alan Rosney	Glamorgan Bird Club
Tony Rees	Rivers Trust
Debbie Ponting	Abercwmboi CF
Dave Sewell	Sustrans volunteer
Joan Higgins	Hirwaun Community Council
Councillor Glyn Roberts	
Councillor Ann Crimmings	
Councillor Robert Bevan	
Councillor P Jarman	
Councillor B Arnold	
Councillor W J Daniel	
Councillor Idris Jones	
Stacey Humber	RCT Rights of Way
Anne Hayes	RCT Cultural Services
Owen Jones	RCT Local Development Plan
Clive Williams	RCT Countryside Manager
Richard Wistow	RCT Ecologist
Liz Dean	RCT Environment Planner
Karen Collins	RCT Regeneration
Kevin Oates	RCT Countryside Ranger
Gwyn James	RCT Arboriculturalist
Jill Davies	Darren Las Communities First
Russell De'arth	Heads of the Valleys
Scott Hand	Countryside Council for Wales

## Apologies

Nicola Lewis  
Mike Bessell  
Pam Barnes  
Derek James  
Lee Ackerman  
Chris Rees  
Jonathan Barrett  
Gareth Henson  
Souren Zenali  
Martin Bevan  
Mark Evans  
Vinnny Mott  
Stephanie Davies  
Eleanor Rothwell  
Gwyn Smith  
Georgina Harper  
Martin Sullivan

Councillor Forey  
Councillor Bradwick  
Councillor Jane Ward  
Roger Dutton  
Emma Elliot  
Phil Barrett  
Rhian Jones  
Julian Hodgson-Walker  
Bethan Smith  
Andrew Osborne  
Vicky Snook  
Geri Thomas  
Andrew Griffiths  
Luan Oestrich  
Michelle Lenton Johnson  
Gary Evans  
Stan Woods  
Gary Foreman

## A brief note of the meeting

Clive Williams, Countryside Manager, gave an introduction to the Cynon Valley River Park project, recalled the initial meetings held in 2006/7, the funding that had been obtained and the progress that has been made since that time.

Richard Wistow, Ecologist, provided 'A trip down the River Cynon' illustrating some of the projects that have been completed and highlighting the reasons why integration of the landscape, wildlife, public access and community involvement are so important in the Cynon Valley.

Liz Dean, Environment Planner, with help from participants annotated a large 'map' of the Cynon Valley with details of projects that have been undertaken and some suggested priorities for the next few years.

Clive Williams closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their input and promising a more detailed report of the progress to date, including comments from the meeting and information sent in by others who couldn't attend. This would be circulated in early June.

## **Appendix Two: List of projects and issues**

### **UK/Wales**

Climate change: Climate Change Act, Assembly has published planning guidance for climate change

Flooding: Flood and Water Management Act 2010, **EAW guidance on surface water management**

Landscape scale approaches to wildlife: RSPB Futurescapes

New European Funding

Water Framework Directive process

Tidy Towns project established (Assembly, RCT and KWT) supporting voluntary groups through out the Cynon floodplain undertaking a variety of projects, including litter and flytipping

EAW national otter survey awaiting the survey results

### **SE Wales**

EAW Water for Life and Livelihoods Severn Basin Management Plan

HoV investment: environmental transformation, tourism, town centres etc.

The Valleys Regional Park has been established with support from the Assembly, agencies and the local authorities. It has gained additional funding from Europe for countryside and tourism activities across the region. The VRP is promoting the branding 'Heart and Soul' for the area.

#### **EA leading Total Focus Campaign**

Wales Spatial Plan: Capital Region, Ecological connectivity studies for SE Wales have been completed. The report for the Wales Spatial Plan Networked Environment Region has identified the Cynon / Taff River Corridor as an important component of the ecological network. Further work is currently being undertaken by CCW/Assembly

Valleys Cycle Network

Coal Spoil Strategy

BTO Atlas 2007-2011 need more surveyors for Cynon Valley

RSPB Lapwing survey

Cross border consultation is underway with regarding to developing long distance bridlepaths.

Annual Valleys Walking Festival has expanded the area of coverage and secured additional funding.

### **Rhondda Cynon Taf**

LDP

SINC review completed as part of the LDP process.

Blue Plaques

A recreation cycling group has been set up to promote cycling across the County Borough, including the hire centres. Cycle training will be offered.

Accessible natural green space initiative completed for RCT.

Mentor Allan project established and currently working in the Upper Cynon area, providing opportunities for low income groups, older people and those with mental health problems to enjoy physical activity out of doors.

Active Living Partnership is developing community outreach from various Leisure Centres, including Michael Sobel's, to bring opportunities for physical activity closer to home.

Cwm Cycling provides cycling opportunities for people with disabilities.  
Walking development officer's focus for action in 2010 is the Upper Cynon Valley.

Groundwork has a substantial workforce available under the Future Jobs programme. Practical countryside projects, and the associated training, for local communities are their primary focus.

Potential for canoeing on the Taff and tributaries is currently being investigated.

Tourism Strategy for RCT has been completed.

Destinationrct website has been launched.

Groundwork Loops and Links project has been completed and the Valleys Regional Park has adopted the name.

### **Cynon Valley**

Cynon Valley Bus Boarders - improved bus stop facilities to comply with DDA

Cynon Cycle Route Phases 1 - 4

Cynon Valley Rail Stations: Access Improvements

An interim leaflet for the Cynon Trail has been produced, showing the completed sections and suggested routes between them.

Completed off road Cynon Trail sections are in positive management

Regular maintenance of Cynon Trail by countryside rangers, some use of contractors, integrating biodiversity, landscape and access requirements.

Sustrans rangers provide regular monitoring, assist with signage and biodiversity monitoring.

Cynon Valley River Park policy in the deposit draft of the Local Development Plan

Japanese knotweed treatment on Council owned land

Rivers Trust funding for fish habitat improvement works

Tree Preservation Order review

Extensive consultation with horse riding groups in the Cynon Valley and route improvements.

Step in step out horse passes on Cynon Trail

*Issue: barriers don't keep out small motorbikes*

Blue Plaques unveiled including:-

Navigation House, Abercynon

Market Hall, Aberdare

Gadlys Ironworks (Cynon valley museum & Gallery), Aberdare

Tramroad Bridge, Robertstown

Hen Dy Cwrdd Chapel, Trecynon (short detour from river) and

Hirwaun Ironworks

Grant aid funding to develop the Audio Trails potential for use in Cynon Valley River Park.

White on Brown Tourism Signage Strategy for the Cynon Valley is at the sign implementation stage. Tourism related signage strategy in place for the area to improve access to tourism facilities. [www.thevalleys.co.uk](http://www.thevalleys.co.uk) website launched with online bookings to be incorporated in 2010. Short-breaks developed and available on line through [www.valleystourism.co.uk](http://www.valleystourism.co.uk)

*X farms in Tir Gofal on Cynon Floodplain*

*Outdoor classrooms have been developed for local schools in LIST.*

## **Local**

### **To Hirwaun**

Footpath improvements in Rhigos parish

Marsh fritillary management at Blaencynon SAC (CCW/BC/KWT)

CCW has been closely involved in forward planning and development control in relation to the protection of SSSI and SAC in the Cynon floodplain.

Village Warden for Hirwaun joint project RCT and the Community Council

Hirwaun Village Green

Hirwaun ironworks Blue Plaque and circular walk:

Community Council keen to pursue Ironworks project (private land, looking for funding), Heritage Interpretation of the Ironworks.

Lets Walk Cymru groups in Rhigos, Penderyn and Hirwaun

Hirwaun weir: a possible fish habitat project

Plans for the Heads of the Valleys Cycle route have been produced by Sustrans, funding has been obtained and discussions are underway with regard to implementation.

A series of driving trails is being created and one in particular will cover Cynon valley and terminate at Hirwaun.

Negotiations regarding a submitted planning application at Hirwaun Industrial estate and the biodiversity management of the Hirwaun peat bog SINC as mitigation.

### **Hirwaun to Aberdare**

Lets Walk Cymru group in Penywaun

Hedging in Penywaun (2 sites)

Works undertaken to prepare Council owned land at Penywaun for potential grazing project

Cynon Trail improvements Trecynon-Robertstown

Penywaun CF projects including litter clean ups (9 tons)

### **Aberdare**

Comin Trecynon Safe Routes in Communities (SRIC)

YGG Aberdar SRIC

St Johns Aberdare SRIC

Safe Routes in Communities scheme in Aberaman, based around the two schools and Cardiff Road

Aberdare Park Trees

Town centre bollards highlighting dare valley country park

Town centre improvement grants to commercial properties esp. for original architectural features

Cynon Trail improvements: Robertstown to Ynys Field, Aberdare Canal towpath link, Tir Founder Field Link, Aberdare canal Railway underpass link, Aberaman Cycle Link

Aberaman proposed wetland scheme and access links

*Issue: re antisocial behaviour/ crime*

Mentor Allan: led weekly cycle rides, confidence building/learn to ride

Cycle hire facilities have been developed in Michael Sobels Sports Centre and have been included in the Cynon Trail interim leaflet.

Cwm Cycling, at Micheal Sobel's has adapted bikes for hire  
 Aberdare Bypass strategic landscape improvements  
 Circular walk along the old tramroad from Robertstown Bridge.  
*As previously explained it would be entirely beneficial if funding could be found to provide a tar macadam surface to the right of way which links Cwmbach, Upper Abernant and Llwydcoed as well as installing a bridle way running parallel with the right of way.*  
 Aberdare Library new meeting room  
 The Aberdare Town Centre Strategy, public realm works include Library Square, the link to Dare Valley Country Park and the Cynon Trail.  
 Convergence funding bids have been submitted.  
 Dare Valley replacement bridge planned  
 Consultants study of replacement school proposals  
 Cynon Valley Museum and Gallery: provision of a 2nd gallery  
 Heritage trail Aberdare, leaflet and download  
 Lewis Street Car Park Aberaman  
 Aberdare Duke Street Car Park  
 Mentro Allan walking group - every Thursday 12.30 from Aberdare bus station - local routes and some "out of town" also. Beginners mountain bike group meets every Tuesday 10am in Aberaman industrial estate to explore routes in local area. Sobell's cycling group meets weekly, monthly Wednesday ride starting from various locations in Cynon.  
 Bat walk May 2010: from Falcon Inn, excellent turn out with about 33 members of the public with approx a third of those being children or teenagers and three members of the Valleys Bat Group. We recorded 17 bat passes, max 3 together and three species identified, Common Pip, Soprano Pip and Daubenton's Bat. At Tir Founder Fields recorded approx 10 Soprano Pips, 2 Common Pips and 5 Noctules. *The area could do with more intensive monitoring of the site for bats*  
 Monitoring and review of crasula in Aberdare Canal  
 Hedge laying has been undertaken at Aberdare Canal

### **Dare Valley/ Cwm Dare**

Visitor accommodation at Dare Valley has been upgraded and the camping and caravan site extended (funded by the HoV programme).  
 The visitor centre at Dare Valley has been upgraded with a new exhibition that focuses on heritage and wildlife.  
 Outdoor Education Centre  
 Accommodation upgrade including campsite  
 New signage including upgrading of the brown and white signs for DVCP.  
 Fit trail  
 New playground opened in Dare Valley Country Park  
 New hedge planted at Dare Valley Country Park with horse route  
 Surfaced Greenway  
 Walks leaflet  
 Cycle hire facilities have been developed in Dare Valley CP and have been included in the Cynon Trail interim leaflet.  
 Lets Walk Cymru group in Cwmdare  
 Planned equestrian long distance trail Garw Valley, Bridgend to DVCP  
 Grazing management, byelaws checked

Cwmdare SRIC  
Woodland Grant Scheme - Dare Valley Park  
Woodland Grant Scheme - Nant Troedrhiw-Ilech (now Better Woodlands for Wales)  
Atkins flood study on the R Dare completed  
Wildlife events held at Dare Valley Country Park  
Identification of a possible old orchard (BAP habitat) at DVCP.

### **Cwm aman**

Cwmaman – Biodiversity Audit , Handbook: Doing a Local Community Biodiversity Audit: a handbook for community groups in Wales. Report\*: Interpretation Materials, Report\*: Cwmaman Community Biodiversity Audit 2007; Technical Report  
Aman Valley Conservation Association set up  
Cwmaman – Environmental Statement for Sculpture Trail, Report\*: Guidelines and advice towards an Environmental Statement for the development of the Alun Lewis Nature Park, Cwmaman, Rhondda Cynon Taff. (with Science Shops Wales)  
Cwmaman, Aman Valley Conservation Association (AVCA) – Renewables Feasibility Study, Report\*: Cwmaman: Initial assessment of the potential for local community-based renewable energy projects. (with Science Shops Wales)  
Cwmaman, AVCA – Japanese Knotweed Debate (Information provision) Powerpoint Presentation: The Great Japanese Knotweed Debate (with Science Shops Wales).  
Cwmaman, AVCA – Public Access, Report\*: Establishing Public Access to the Cwmaman Iron Furnace, CADW Scheduled Ancient Monument GM266 (RCT) (with Science Shops Wales).  
Cwmaman, AVCA – Industrial Ecology, Report\*: Development of Sustainable Enterprise (with Science Shops Wales).  
Cwmaman, Glynhafod Junior School – Energy Audit, Report\*: Renewable Energy Feasibility Study, Micaul Solar Ltd (with Science Shops Wales)  
Woodland management project  
Alexandra Terrace Cwmaman MAJOR clean up (5days in collaboration with RCT/KWT) – won TWA award 2009/10 for this.  
Continued to keep River Aman clean after the major cleanup in it over the last 2 years (two TWA awards for this 2008/9)  
Cycle Hire at Cwm Aman Institute

CF projects including walking group, St Joseph's Environment and Heritage Centre completed and received awards, Sculpture Park, food projects, and a leaflet of walks and cyclerroutes.

**Llanwonno strategic ? area links to Cwmaman**

Woodland Grant Scheme - Cwm Neol (Cwmaman)  
Cwmaman Monk St Aberdare Cycle Route

### **Aberdare to Mountain Ash**

Tir Founder fields: good willow tit population

Cynon Trail construction; Pavement widening Mountain Ash to Cwmbach,  
*Error in white line at junction.*

*Issue: hazard when the route ends and rejoin carriageway*

Management Pwll Waun Cynon

Knotweed control on land adjacent to Pwll Waun Cynon Wildlife Trust Reserve  
Abercwmboi CF projects including community garden, links to Aberaman  
wetlands, links to Forestry, Loops and Links, walking group,  
Craig yr Dyffryn woodland management (WGS)

*Issue: litter a problem at boulders on Land Rec site, possible site for camera?*

LDP Phurnacite plant reuse will replace pavement Cynon Trail eventually.

Himalayan Balsam invasive weed but can be pulled

Cefn Pennar and District Welfare Assoc.: Charity for public benefit, Japanese  
knotweed in old allotments, community garden with Bryncynon Strategy,  
Rathbone Training and RCT Homes, training for young people.

Fernhill Communities First environmental projects incl. Climate Change  
Football competition

Mountain Ash Hospital: sustainable urban drainage, 6 artwork commissions  
within the development, promote use of cycle trail for journey to work and  
rehabilitation

### **Mountain Ash**

Darren Las SRIC

Mountain Ash Relief Road

Mountain Ash Oxford Street Enhancements

Mountain Ash Commercial Street Enhancements

Riverside Park: award winning design involved local schools working with artist

*Issue re motorbike access and need for more barriers*

Performances planned in the new arena space

Missing gap in Cynon Trail under the Town Hall bridge is being designed

Weir possible for habitat improvements

Darran Las CF Environmental projects: close involvement with Riverside Park,  
redeveloped the recreation ground for Youth Groups opening Oct 2010,  
walking group and running group

Miskin CF

Better Woodlands for Wales - Dyffryn Woods

### **Mountain Ash to Abercynon**

Cynon Trail construction: Mountain Ash Town Hall to Pontcynon Industrial  
Estate

*Any possibility of fishing projects for young people on the river in the  
Penrhiwceiber area*

Penrhiwceiber (station) link, hedge laying and station access improvements  
from Cynon Trail;

Penrhiwceiber NRA bidding for funding for river bridge improvements in 2010

Miskin Penrhiwceiber SRIC

Works undertaken to prepare Council owned land at Lletty Turner bends for  
potential grazing project.

Bryncynon Strategy: lots of projects including walking group, food projects, biodiesel, John Muir awards

### **Abercynon**

Bryncynon Strategy has successfully developed the Green Valley Centre at Abercynon.

Gardening for Wildlife Training course was held at Green Valley in 2009 (with RCT)

Bryncynon Fuel Factory – Biodiesel Installation Plant, Report\*: Bryncynon Strategy Community Biodiesel Report. (Science Shops Wales)

Bryncynon Green Valley – Phase 1 Habitat Survey, Report\*: Bryncynon community site ecological scoping assessment. (Science Shops Wales)

Bryncynon Green Valley – River Corridor Survey (Led by Ben Williams Keep Wales Tidy)

Wild Fishing Wales funded project at Abercynon: Green Valley Project, being undertaken by Bryncynon Strategy Ltd (social enterprise), funded by EAW: Improving access to the river for anglers and other recreation users through provision of access ramp, boardwalk, angling platform. The angling facility will improve access for all, with a wide river buffer zone for wildlife, including plans for bird and bat boxes, control of invasive weeds and maybe build an otter holt with volunteers.

Geology classic example of river capture

Abercynon locks

Carnetown ponds

Pontypridd to Merthyr Rail Frequency Enhancements, single railway station at Abercynon, Abercynon Park and Ride

Cycle hire facilities have been developed in Abercynon Leisure Centre and have been included in the Cynon Trail interim leaflet.

### **Out of area**

Roman Fort Llanwonno

Coed y cwm group clean up of paths

First Steps woodland grant - Gelli Wrgan (north of Ynysbwl)

\*Project reports can all be found at:

<http://www.scienceshops.wales.org.uk/SSWWorkProjectReports.html>