

ANNUAL REPORT AND

IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2008/2011

PART 1



The National Park Authority is responsible for the preparation of the Business and Improvement Plan, for the assessments set out within it, and the assumptions and estimates on which they are based. The Authority is also responsible for setting in place appropriate performance management and internal control systems from which the information and assessments in the Plan have been derived. The Authority is satisfied that the information and assessments included in the plan are in all material respects accurate and complete and that the plan is realistic and achievable.

Prepared in June 2008

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

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Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

Annual Report and Improvement Plan 2008/11

Part 1

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**1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE**

**Introduction**

Each Local Authority, the three National Parks and Fire Authorities in Wales are required to produce an Improvement Plan annually. The Improvement Plan sets out how the Authority will allocate its resources and work towards achieving its objectives. This is done in two parts. Part 1, published in April, sets out the Authority’s plans for the new financial year. Part 2, published in October, looks back at the previous year’s work targets and achievements and based on this and consultations with its customers outlines the priority areas where further improvement is required in future years.

**Purpose**

The Brecon Beacons National Park was designated in 1957 under the National Park and Access to Countryside Act 1949. The park covers 520 square miles embracing some of the most enchanting parts of South Wales geographically unique in that it contains a wide range of dramatic landscapes, beautiful villages and a variety of distinctive cultures.

We have two statutory purposes and one duty:-

* To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage;
* To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of those areas by the public.

Our duty is to seek to foster the economic and social well being of local communities.

**2. CORPORATE AIM AND VISION**

The Aim, Vision and Strategic Intentions of the Authority are identified in the ‘Future Directions’ document adopted by the National Park Authority on 2 April 2004. The content of the document is subject to periodic review and Future Directions will inform the Authority’s corporate direction and business planning over the next twenty years. Future Directions recognises the importance of the National Park’s designation – locally, nationally and internationally and brings the concept of sustainability to the forefront of our thinking.

**OUR AIM is to achieve widespread understanding and support for the National Park as a protected landscape which will be recognised as a valued local, national and international asset.**

**OUR VISION is that the Park’s landscape is managed sustainably with widespread appreciation of its special qualities and where local communities benefit from its designation.**

Future Directions delivers the intentions of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority under the following heading and sub-headings:-

**Conservation and Enhancement** - The National Park Authority will conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Park in the following ways:

* Landscape
* Biodiversity
* Earth Heritage
* Cultural Heritage

**Promoting Understanding** - The National Park Authority will use its information, interpretation and education services to promote understanding of the Park’s special qualities by:

* Raising Awareness
* Promoting Enjoyment

**Vibrant Sustainable Communities** - The National Park Authority will foster the social and economic well being of the local communities within the Park by promoting:

* Sustainable Economic Activity
* Thriving Healthy Communities
* Sustainable Transport

The delivery of Future Directions will be facilitated through the Authority’s Corporate Improvement Objectives set out in Section 3 of this Business and Improvement Plan.

**The Authority has set the following ten medium-term Corporate Objectives for 2008/2011**

**3. CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES**

1. Work with partners and stakeholders to put the needs of customers at the heart of the organisation by continuing to improve our services to them thus ensuring that the Park is more accessible and welcoming to a wide range of visitors and local people. With particular emphasis on:

* Improve the performance of the planning service including the delivery of a range of affordable housing.
* Our decision making, performance management and business planning.
* Ensuring our staff has the appropriate knowledge, skills and resources to deliver a good service.

1. Make best use of the National Park designation to help mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.
2. Instill the principles of sustainable development and transport throughout the Authority and its work.
3. Recognise the importance and contribution of farming to the landscape and economy of the National Park by working with farmers, graziers and landowners to use NPA-managed sites to demonstrate the social and economic benefits of landscape-scale sustainable conservation management.
4. Working with key stakeholders to develop a conservation strategy and implementation plan for the ecological, cultural and historic environments.
5. Improve countryside access through the implementation of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
6. Ensure that the pipeline reinstatement and enhancement is carried out to a high standard through monitoring and evaluation
7. Working with partners to develop the Fforest Fawr Geopark to improve the visitor experience and benefit the Park’s local communities and businesses.
8. Implement the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism to integrate visitor management and conservation, with a particular focus on sustainable visitor transport.
9. Embed best practice in Communication, Interpretation and education to promote awareness and understanding of the National Park.

The Authority has implemented a Risk Management Strategy.

**4. SUMMARY OF RISK ASSESSMENT**

Risks are assessed and reviewed on an annual basis through consultation with stakeholders, members and staff and significant risks are added to the Risk Register and Mitigation Action Plan. The Risk Register and Action Plan is a live document constantly being reviewed and updated as and when significant risks are identified or have been addressed and reports go before the Internal Review committee on a quarterly basis.

The most significant risks identified in 2007/08 with potential strategic impact to be managed are shown in the following table along with action taken to date:-

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RISKS 2007/08** | **ACTION TAKEN** |
| Conclude the Corporate Governance Review | The Corporate Governance Review has been completed |
| Preparing continuity Plans for the Authority | A working group have put the infrastructure together for backup and continuity purposes. This work will continue in 2008/09 |
| Investigate appropriate document management system | A working group is investigating this issue and a draft report is soon to be considered by the Authority. |
| Continue with the website developments | Website developed and launched in July 2007. Webmaster appointed and this work is ongoing |
| Review temporary staffing arrangements | This matter has been resolved |
| Review communication with regard to implementation of new processes | Clearer communication has made all Managers aware of their responsibilities for ensuring new processes are implemented consistently across the organisation. |
| Communicate arrangements for provision of archaeological services | A new Corporate Objective has been agreed for 2008/09 and a plan on how to prepare a strategy is being developed. |

The Authority has put in place a number of high level key work targets to support the delivery of the 2008/2011 Corporate Improvement Objectives and the additional specific targets set out in the Strategic Grant Letter from the Welsh Assembly Government.

**5. HIGH LEVEL KEY WORK ACTIVITIES**

The key ones are as follows:-

* Deliver 9 Landscape Management and Access projects
* Implement Pan Wales Database, IIP and Project Management Projects
* Deliver a number of Interpretation projects at our Centres ??
* Implement Stage 1 of the Education Strategy
* Implement Stage 1 of the Information and Interpretation Strategy
* Implement the Sustainable Action Plan and maintain Green Dragon level 4
* Deliver an induction and continuing Development programme for new and existing Members
* Achieve the Wales Charter for Member support and Development
* Write a commence delivering a Communication Strategy for the Organisation
* Implement 2008/09 Sustainable Tourism Strategy Action Points
* Implement 10%of the Asset Management Plan
* Implement 90% of the DC Improvement Plan
* Implement Stage 1 of the draft Upland Erosion Strategy
* Complete the National Park Management Plan
* Deliver the illegal off-roading action plan
* Agree Draft Records Management Policy and implement
* Deliver web systems work programme
* Develop a Visitor Management Plan for the Waterfalls area
* Produce a project plan to deliver a strategy and implementation plan for the ecological, cultural and historic environment
* Implement 10% of the buildings at risk strategy
* Develop and adopt a procurement strategy
* Produce a Business Continuity Plan
* Implement all actions identified in the Statement of Internal Control

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has identified the following efficiency savings to be explored and where possible implemented throughout 2008/09:

**6. PLANS FOR EFFICIENCY SAVINGS IN 2008/09**

* First Class travel will cease
* Lunches for meetings/training events and conferences will cease
* More use of teleconference facilities instead of attending meetings
* Reduce office costs by becoming:

Paper free

Turn off lights where possible

Turn heating down

2nd class postage only and smaller envelopes

Promote car sharing

* Carry out induction in house rather than externally
* Recycle and reuse uniforms
* Introduce electronic timesheets and expenses forms to reduce paper
* Collaborative working by outsourcing:

**7. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS /MEASURES**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Performance Indicator** | **06/07 Outcome** | **07/08 Target** | **08/09 Target** |
| [CFH/002](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\audrey\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\OLK6\BIP%20Ebrill%202006%207%2003%2006%20(2).doc#CFH002#CFH002) | The level of general financial reserves both earmarked and unallocated – to be expressed as a percentage of the annual budget requirement. | 10.38% \* due to pipeline money | 3% | 4% |
| [CHR/001](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\audrey\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\OLK6\BIP%20Ebrill%202006%207%2003%2006%20(2).doc#CHR001#CHR001) | The percentage of employees who leave the employment of the local authority, whether on a voluntary or involuntary basis. | 11.78% | 10% | 10% |
| [CHR/002](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\audrey\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\OLK6\BIP%20Ebrill%202006%207%2003%2006%20(2).doc#CHR002#CHR002) | The number of working days/ shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence. | 6.24 days | 7.44days | 7.44days |
| [CHR/003](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\audrey\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\OLK6\BIP%20Ebrill%202006%207%2003%2006%20(2).doc#CHR003#CHR003) | The number of ill-health retirements as a percentage of the local authority’s workforce. | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| [PLA/001](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\audrey\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\OLK6\BIP%20Ebrill%202006%207%2003%2006%20(2).doc#PLA001#PLA001) | 1. The stage of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) process that the authority has most recently completed.   bi) The stage of the Local Development Plan (LDP) process that the authority has most recently completed.  bii) The number of months that the stage of the Local Development Plan (LDP) process that the authority has most recently completed was either ahead (+) or behind (-) the agreed date for that stage in the Delivery Agreement | Authority approved UDP March 07  Stakeholder meetings begin Oct 07  N/A | N/A  Commence LDP process 1 Sep 2007  N/A | N/A  Commence LDP process 1 Sep 2007  N/A |
| PLA/002 | The percentage of planning applications determined during the year that were approved. | 83% | Upper Quartile | Upper Quartile |
| [PLA/003](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\audrey\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\OLK6\BIP%20Ebrill%202006%207%2003%2006%20(2).doc#PLA003#PLA003) | 1. The number of appeals that were determined during the year, and 2. The percentage of these determined appeals that upheld the authority’s decision, in relation to:    1. Planning application decisions    2. Enforcement notices | 17  83%  40% | 0  100%  100% | 0  100%  100% |
| [PLA/004](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\audrey\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\OLK6\BIP%20Ebrill%202006%207%2003%2006%20(2).doc#PLA004#PLA004) | * + 1. The percentage of major planning applications determined during the year within 13 weeks,     2. The percentage of minor planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks,     3. The percentage of householder planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks,     4. The percentage of all other planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks. | 31.25%  31.5%  40%  22% | 40%  40%  50%  40% | 40%  40%  60%  40% |
| PLA/005 | The percentage of enforcement complaints resolved during the year within 12 weeks of receipt. | 19% | 50% | 50% |
| TH9 | The percentage of total lengths of footpaths and other rights of way which are easy to use by members of the public. | 75% | 40% | 62.8% |

**KEY LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

| **No.** | **Performance Indicator** | **06/07 Outcome** | **07/08 Target** | **08/09**  **Target** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Chief Executive** |  |  |  |
| BBHR 1 | The percentage of employees from ethnic communities | 1.96% | 2.27% | N/A |
| BBHR 2 | Lead times for recruitment | 5 wks | 5 wks | N/A |
| BBDS 1 | a. Number of training sessions made available to individual Members during the year.  b. % of Members attending session. | 6  sessions  61.46% | 8  Sessions  75% | 8  Sessions  100% |
| BBDS 2 | Member Development Strategy approved | N/A | N/A | 31-May-08 |
| BBDS 3 | Finalise electronic version of Members' Handbook | N/A | N/A | 20/06/2008 |
| BBDS4 | All new members to complete Stage 1 induction | N/A | N/A | 100%  31/08/2008 |
| BBDS5 | All new members to complete Stage 2 induction | N/A | N/A | 100%  30/09/2008 |
| BBDS6 | Deliver one of three Stage 3 modules | N/A | N/A | 31/10/2008 |
| BBDS7 | Deliver two of three Stage 3 modules | N/A | N/A | 31/12/2008 |
| BBDS8 | Deliver three of three Stage 3 modules | N/A | N/A | 31/03/2009 |
| BBDS9 | All members able to access and use email and Members' Portal | N/A | N/A | 100%  31/03/2009 |
| BBDS10 | Role Descriptions for key members embedded into the organisation | N/A | N/A | 30/04/2008 |
| BBDS11 | Framework and procedures for personal support and development interviews embedded into the organisation | N/A | N/A | 31/12/2008 |
| BBDS12 | Carry out training needs analysis to be fed into Member Development Strategy for 2009/10 | N/A | N/A | 31/01/2009 |
| BBDS13 | Establish lead member and Member Development Working Group | N/A | N/A | 30/06/2008 |
| BBDS14 | Members' mentoring scheme to be embedded into the organisation | N/A | N/A | 31/03/2009 |
| BB COM1 | 1:1 match funding attracted on £250,000 SDF | 2:58:1 | 1:1 | 1:1 |
| BB COM2 | Training on social inclusion for Members and Staff | 2 | 1 | N/A |
| BB COM3 | 10 community led events to be held | 14 | 10 | N/A |
| BB COM4 | Achieve and maintain Green Dragon Award | Level 4 | Level 5 | Maintain Level 4 Sep 08 |
| BB COM5 | 10 crossing park boundaries visits | N/A | N/A | Mar 09 |
| BBCOM6 | REAP installations equiv 6.5 carbon neutral homes pa | N/A | N/A | 1.625 |
| BB  CPR 1 | Number of press release linked to three key areas of Future Directions. | 42 | 30 | N/A |
| BB  CPR 2 | Number of press releases/statements taken up by the media. | 68 | 40 | N/A |
| BB  CPR 3 | Number of Updates produced for staff, members and volunteers | 2 | 12 | N/A |
| BB  CPR 4 | Number of clipsheets circulated to members and staff. | 10 | 12 | N/A |
| BB  CPR 5 | Number of Park Updates produced for Communities, WAG, Councils and Partner organisations. | 2 | 12 | N/A |
| BB  CPR 6 | To compile and access an annual staff communications survey. | 0 | 1 | N/A |
| BB  CPR 7 | Number of visits on website | 346,585 | 250,000 | N/A |
|  | **Business Unit** |  |  |  |
| BBF1 | Percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days. | 91% | 100% | N/A |
| BBF2 | Percentage of budget monitoring reports for CMT sent out by agreed deadlines. | 100% | 100% | N/A |
| BB F3 | Statement of accounts | N/A | N/A | 30/06/2008 |
| BB F4 | Production of estimates (Revised 08/09) | N/A | N/A | 15/11/2008 |
| BB F5 | Production of estimates (Original (09/10) | N/A | N/A | 30/01/2009 |
| BBL1 | Reply to all internal written correspondence within 15 working days. | 80% | 95% | N/A |
| BB ADM 1 | Percentage of letters replied to or acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt. | 71% | 100% | 100% |
| BB ADM 2 | Percentage of letters acknowledged that receive a full reply in 20 working days. | 99% | 100% | 100% |
| BB ADM 3 | Percentage of letters received that are written in Welsh and receive a reply in Welsh. | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| BB QM 1 | Percentage of complaints that received a full response within 20 working days of receipt. | 100% | 85% | 85% |
| BB QM 2 | Percentage of complaints that were replied to or acknowledged within 5 working days | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| BB QM 3 | Achieve IIP reaccreditation | N/A | N/A | 27.2.09 |
| BB QM 4 | Pan Wales database-set up security | N/A | N/A | Oct 08 |
| BB QM 5 | Pan Wales database- complete system build | N/A | N/A | Oct 08 |
| BB QM 6 | Pan Wales database – train data in putters | N/A | N/A | Oct 08 |
| BB QM 7 | Pan Wales database – input data | N/A | N/A | Oct 08 |
| BB QM 8 | Pan Wales database – establish and create reports | N/A | N/A | Sep 08 |
| BBQM 9 | Pan Wales database – user training | N/A | N/A | Oct 08 |
| BB QM 10 | Pan Wales database – First report to CMT | N/A | N/A | Dec 08 |
| BB QM 11 | Pan Wales database – First report and demo to Members | N/A | N/A | Jan 09 |
| BB QM 12 | Business Improvement Plan completed by 30 Oct and without any audit qualification. | Completed by 30th  Oct 06 | Complete by 30th Oct 07 | N/A |
| BB CD1 | The number of complaints to an Ombudsman classified as Maladministration. | 0% | 0% | N/A |
|  | **Countryside** |  |  |  |
| BB  ED6 | Number of groups dealt with in welsh  (target now relates to individuals) | N/A | 400 | 400 |
| BB ED N1 | Total Education Participants | 4039 | 5250 | 5250 |
| BB ED N2 | Average contact time | 146 schools | 2.5 hrs | 2.5 hrs |
| BB ED N3 | Education Website Hits | 2379 | 60,000 | 60,000 |
| BB ED N4 | Education Website Visits | 2003 | 28,000 | 28,000 |
| BB  INFO 1 | Increase income at National Park Information Centre’s | 6% to £40,693 | 5% | 5% |
| BB INFO 2 | Percentage of guided walk participants found walk enjoyable, well organized and interesting/relevant | N/A | N/A | 95% |
| BB INFO 3 | Percentage of guided walk participants remembered a story/theme from a guided walk straight after event | N/A | N/A | 90% |
| BB INFO 4 | Percentage of guided walk participants remembered a story/theme from a guided walk 4-6 wks after event | N/A | N/A | 50% |
| BBCYNCP 1 | Increase income at Craig y Nos | 12% to £28,495 | 5% | 5% |
| BBCYNCP2 | Customer satisfaction for customer service at CYNCP | N/A | N/A | 100% |
| BB  NPVC 1 | Increase income at National Park Visitor Centre | 16% to £121,879 | 8% | 8% |
| BB  NPVC 2 | Percentage of visitors highly satisfied with visit to tea rooms good or above | 94% | 90% | 90% |
| BB  NPVC 3 | Increase operating surplus at tea rooms | 60% | 10%\* | 10%\* |
| BB  NPVC 4 | Percentage of Welsh foods sold | 87% | 85% | 85% |
| BBNPVC 5 | Increase private use of conference room facility at National Park Visitor Centre | N/A | N/A | 50 |
| BB NPVC6 | Customer satisfaction for customer service at National Park Visitor Centre | N/A | N/A | 100% |
| BB  RTT1 | Number of Tourism Businesses significantly engaged with by the NPA | 562 | 500 | 500 |
| BB RTT2 | Produce and distribute a Visitor Guide | N/A | N/A | 31/03/2009 |
| BB RTT3 | Organise Tourism in Action Conference 2009 | N/A | N/A | 31/03/2009 |
| BB RTT4 | Organise Green Dragon Programme with new businesses | N/A | N/A | 8  30/09/2008 |
| BB RTT5 | Recruit Visitor Transport Initiative Officer | N/A | N/A | 31/07/2008 |
| BB RTT6 | Develop 2008-9 Working Plan for NPA internal Geopark team and agree with Management Group | N/A | N/A | 31/01/2009 |
| BB RTT7 |  | N/A | N/A | 31/03/2009 |
| BB RTT8 | Geopark team and agree with Management Group | N/A | N/A | 31/03/2009 |
| BB RTT9 | Implement Beacons Bus 2008, >8500 passenger journeys plus annual report | N/A | N/A | 31/03/2009 |
| BB RTT10 | Maintain and develop Partnership structures, 4 Tourism Partnership meetings | N/A | N/A | 30/09/2008 |
| BB Access 1 | Replace Beacons Way markers | N/A | N/A | 90% |
| BB Access 2 | Develop and implement a plan to mitigate the impacts of illegal offroading-   * 3 strategic meetings p.a with Dyfed Powys police * Establish operational plan with police * Develop press campaign for summer 2008 |  |  | Jul/Nov/Mar  May 08  May 08 |

**Demanding targets in 2006/07 mean we cannot keep increasing income at the same rate so the target of 10% is on top of what was achieved in 06/07.**

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Further details or information can be obtained from the Authority’s website [www.breconbeacons.org](http://www.breconbeacons.org) or by contacting our head office at:

**8. CONTACT DETAILS**

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