



BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK

# TOURISM TIMES

AUTUMN

2022

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# BRECON BEACONS



**BRECON BEACONS**

OUR NATIONAL PARK

# THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

## TWENTY YEARS OF LOCAL COMMUNITY INVESTMENT!

Is your community in or just on the border of the Brecon Beacons National Park? Do you have a community project idea that you'd love to make happen? Then have a look at the Sustainable Development Fund managed by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority! You can read more on our website here: [beacons-npa.gov.uk](http://beacons-npa.gov.uk)

It would be great to hear from you – even if plans are at a very early stage. If you are new to making grant applications, no need to worry – we are here to help every step of the way!

The Fund has supported hundreds of projects over the past 20 years – improving community quality of life, helping the local economy, and protecting the local environment.

## WE'VE FUNDED:

- **Outdoor activity projects that improve health and wellbeing**
- **Nature conservation work of all kinds**
- **Energy efficiency measures in community buildings – reducing energy use and costs**
- **Local community services such as shops and outdoor spaces**
- **Heritage, conservation and interpretation work**
- **Rural skills training**

This year, we also have an Energy Efficiency programme offering grants of up to £5,000 to install energy saving measures or renewable energy in community facilities. Many groups have already made a start on fitting LED lighting, extra insulation, up to date heating etc. in their buildings. Grants can cover 50% of costs (volunteer time and donations in kind can be included as match):

If you'd like a chat about an idea, please get in touch with Barbara or Ben – drop us a line at [sdf@beacons-npa.gov.uk](mailto:sdf@beacons-npa.gov.uk) or give us a call on 07973 781479



grants of up  
to **£5,000**

# NEWS FROM OUR PARTNERS



## HOME OF THE NHS

When Aneurin Bevan said he was going to Tredegarise the UK, no one quite imagined that he would be creating our most loved institution, the National Health Service. Bevan started life as a miner, went on to become a local councillor and then MP but it was as Minister for Health that he made his career defining impact when he used the Tredegar Medical Aid Society as the blueprint for the NHS. In his home town, Tredegar, visitors can explore the history of Nye and the birth of the NHS through walking trails, car trails, artworks, films and heritage centres.

In the council chamber at Bedwellty House, where Bevan first cut his political teeth, a moving film explores how he overcame his speech impediment. Tredegar Local History Museum and the Tredegar Medical Aid Society Heritage Centre located in The Circle, takes you back to the institution that provided the inspiration behind the creation of the NHS. Also in The Circle are four bronze roundels exploring the life of Bevan and on the hillside above the town are the Memorial Stones where Bevan spoke to his constituents



and the world. The Aneurin Bevan Trail is a walking and car trail taking in sites associated with Bevan and In the Footsteps of Nye is a walk on his favourite hillside and resting place

[www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/visitors/local-trails](http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/visitors/local-trails)

## BEDWELLY HOUSE AND PARK

Once the home of the Homfray Ironmaster dynasty, Bedwellty is a listed Regency villa surrounded by a historic garden, established in 19<sup>th</sup> century. Bedwellty House and Park are intimately linked with the early social history of Industrial Wales. Its relevance continued when the house and park were given to the people of Tredegar on the closure of Tredegar Ironworks and consequently became a centre of the Labour movement in Wales, and Britain at large. Probably the most famous name associated with Bedwellty House and Park is Aneurin Bevan, credited as the founder of the National Health Service.

The park contains a fine arboretum, formal gardens, grotto, kitchen garden, cascade pools and the biggest block of coal in the world! The house has the original council chamber where Bevan started his political career, now showing a film on his remarkable oratory journey, a local history picture gallery and the Orchid Hous tearooms serving hot and cold refreshments and fabulouse afternoon teas.

[www.bedwelltyhouseandpark.co.uk](http://www.bedwelltyhouseandpark.co.uk)

## AUTUMN IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF IS A WALK IN THE PARK!

As the glorious seasonal colours take over and the air turns crisp, why not take the time to explore the walks and trails in Rhondda Cynon Taf?

There are lots of places to choose from. Dare Valley Country Park in Aberdare has hundreds of acres to explore. From mountain-top hikes to gentle lakeside trails that can be accessed by wheelchairs and pushchairs. Bring your bike and have a spin on Gravity Family Bike Park – there's

a balance bike course for little ones plus adventure playground and free parking.

Feed the ducks and geese on the lake at Aberdare Park or stroll through historic Bronwydd Park in Porth, which is filled with trees and shrubs of all colours.

Barry Sidings Country Park is the perfect place to enjoy the great outdoors with lakes and playgrounds. Choose from a circular walk or go high up into the mountains and forestry. Barry Sidings Café serves an amazing range of meals and hot drinks, including pumpkin spice latte, hot chocolate and more.

Find out more places to explore at [www.visitrct.wales](http://www.visitrct.wales)





## NEW ONLINE AMBASSADOR COURSE

[www.ambassador.wales/ambassador-courses/brecon-beacons-ambassador-course](http://www.ambassador.wales/ambassador-courses/brecon-beacons-ambassador-course)

The bronze online Ambassador course was launched on 12<sup>th</sup> April, at the start of October 93 people had completed and passed the bronze award. This comprises:

- INTRODUCTION TO THE BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK
- BRECON BEACONS SENSE OF PLACE
- PEOPLE OF THE PAST

The silver Ambassador award will be launched in late October with the following units:

- GEOPARK
- DARK SKIES
- ECOLOGY

Some new Ambassadors have attended our training courses such as: **NATURE OF THE BRECON BEACONS**, a fabulous presentation by Kevin Walker, followed by a walk with Alan Bowring our Geopark Officer.

### WELSH BREAKFAST IDEAS AND DEMONSTRATION

led by Nerys Howell who cooked up some easy Welsh inspired dishes, such as:

- PATAGONIA BEANS
- LAYER BREAKFAST BURGERS

For some interesting Welsh recipes take a look at the website:

[www.howelfood.co.uk/cookbook](http://www.howelfood.co.uk/cookbook)

Coming up on November 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### WELSH CHEESE AND WINE MASTERCLASS

with Nerys Howell and Deiniol ap Dafydd.



CYMRU.  
CYRCHFAN BWYD  
WALES.  
A FOOD DESTINATION



Cheese and wine masterclass

Wednesday 23 November 10.30am-1.20pm  
Henderson Hall, Penpentre, Talybont-on-Usk, LD3 7YQ  
FREE event - spaces are limited therefore booking is essential

#### Cheese and wine can be a match made in heaven – or Wales, if you know where to look

TV chef Nerys Howell and Deiniol ap Dafydd from Blas ar Fwyd have created a 'Wales National Parks' cheese board and have chosen a selection of Welsh wines and other drinks to complement the cheese. At the masterclass they will share stories of taste, processes and traditions and tips of how to best pair unique cheeses with Welsh drinks.

#### What makes Welsh wine so unique, indeed how do you define 'Welsh wine'?

Come and find out how to taste wine like a professional and how to pair wine and other drinks and cheese styles with confidence.

Wine and cheese have gone hand in hand for centuries, but with today's ever-increasing options for both wines and cheeses, the pairing decisions can be staggering. So, to take a lot of the guesswork out of pairing here is a handy guide to give you a starting point.

#### Booking is essential

To book a place please contact Carol Williams at [carol.williams@beacons-mpa.gov.uk](mailto:carol.williams@beacons-mpa.gov.uk)

# NUTCRACKER *Ballet*

Tickets are now on sale for The Nutcracker Ballet at Theatr Brycheiniog, Brecon, December 16th to 18th 2022

Brecon Festival Ballet is delighted to return to Theatr Brycheiniog this Christmas 2022, with five performances of The Nutcracker from Friday December 16th to Sunday December 18th, including two matinées. Our inaugural season in 2019, which was supported generously by grant providers including the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund, was the first ever full-scale production of this famous classical ballet to be created in Wales, with a live orchestra. Every performance was a sell-out to enthusiastic audiences, requiring us to open the Dress Rehearsal too, which was also a sell-out.

Following the lockdowns due to the COVID pandemic in 2020, and a COVID-safe production of "Christmas Treats from the Nutcracker" in 2021 (also supported generously by the Sustainable Development Fund), Brecon Festival Ballet is excited to return with its full-scale production again, accompanied by the Welsh Chamber Orchestra playing live. Brecon Festival Ballet continues its mission of bringing high quality classical ballet to audiences in rural mid-Wales, with a large cast of over 80 onstage performers, including professional ballet dancers, most of whom are based in Wales, some of whom grew up and trained first in Brecon, ballet students, and members of the local community in the acting roles. Rehearsals are now underway and members of the community in the non-dancing roles are excited already.

We are also very grateful to our local artists and craftspeople for their time in the creation of costumes, props and scenery.

This year's performances include staff from the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority in leading non-dancing roles! Choir auditions for the famous "Snowflakes Chorus" in Act 1 take place on Sunday October 23<sup>rd</sup>; contact [lesley@breconfestivalballet.com](mailto:lesley@breconfestivalballet.com) if you would like to audition for the choir.

Brecon Festival Ballet is a registered charity, originally established to present a brand-new production of Tchaikovsky's famous ballet, The Nutcracker at Theatr Brycheiniog at Christmas. Not only was this the first time a full-scale professional version of the world's most popular ballet had been produced in Wales but it was also the first time that Theatr Brycheiniog had presented a full-length ballet with a live orchestra.

The Nutcracker is performed to packed houses all over the globe each Christmas because it is part of people's Christmas celebrations; and this is now possible for you too in Brecon. The ballet is a winning combination of Tchaikovsky's beautiful music featuring famous and familiar tunes, and a magical story involving a Christmas party, a journey through the Christmas Wood and a feast of iconic dances in the Kingdom of Sweets, ruled over by the Sugar Plum Fairy.

Our production was created by Artistic Director Katy Sinnadurai BEM, a ballet dancer and choreographer based in Brecon. All principal roles and the corps de ballet are performed by professional ballet dancers, supplemented by vocational students, with children's and character roles taken by local dance students and actors auditioned from the community. The Snowflakes chorus is sung by a local choir, and the production accompanied by the Welsh Chamber Orchestra.

This extremely ambitious project is made possible by grants and a fund-raising campaign to help cover the costs of this exciting production. The inaugural year's performances played to sell-out audiences, and such was its success that Brecon Festival Ballet is now booked at Theatr Brycheiniog for future years to present Brecon's very own regular Christmas ballet. In 2020 Katy Sinnadurai was awarded a British Empire Medal in the Queen's New Year's Honours List for services to Dance education, training, and performance.

The company also has ambitions to stage and create other ballets in future years.

For further information, see [www.breconfestivalballet.com](http://www.breconfestivalballet.com).

To book your tickets for this year's production, see [www.brycheiniog.co.uk/en/whats-on](http://www.brycheiniog.co.uk/en/whats-on), scroll down and click through to page 3.



# BRECON BEACONS DARK SKY FESTIVAL

BY THE BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Over 800 visitors attended our first in-person dark sky festival at the end of September at the Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Centre.

They were able to go on a bat walk with Grace Dooley, from Just Mammals along Brecon Prom, glide down the Monmouthshire & Brecon canal on paddle boards, star gazing at dusk with Martin Williams from Outdoor Adventures and sit back to listen to Daniel Morden with his Starry Telling.

Norman Lowe delighted an audience by revealing the beauty of moths and the important part they play in biodiversity.

Children were entertained by the National Park education team by making bat hats, badges and a quiz which took them around the grounds hunting for clues.

Nick Busby explained why we are made of stardust, he also brought with him, his collection of meteorites some of the specimens being 4.7 billion years old.



There were plenty of opportunities to enjoy our new Planetarium with the Usk Astronomical Society who ran eight shows in the Planetarium.

Cardiff Astronomical Society brought their solar scope telescopes for visitors to look through and see the flares coming out from the sun.

Saturday evening saw over 150 visitors come to enjoy star gazing, some brought their own binoculars and telescopes and some were helped by the Cardiff & Usk Astronomical societies who brought telescopes and binoculars which enabled all to see planets and stars up close.

If you would like to offer an activity for next years' Dark sky Festival, please contact Carol Williams.

# PROMOTING YOUR BUSINESS

There are several tourism associations who are very well placed to help you to promote your business which are highlighted in this article.

There is also a Welcome Guide where businesses can advertise with no joining fee, but simply an advertising fee.

The choice is yours!

## MID WALES TOURISM

MWT is a business-led, **not-for profit** organisation, committed to delivering activities which support the growth and development of a strong and sustainable tourism industry. As well as providing direct support to individual businesses, community tourism groups and associations via membership, we also deliver marketing and promotional campaigns to promote the destination to our target markets.

By joining MWT Cymru you'll become part of the largest tourism membership and marketing organisations in Mid, South & West Wales and have access to a whole host of exclusive membership benefits and marketing opportunities to help attract more visitors.

Membership is open to any business, individual, community group, tourism association or group interested or involved in any way with the visitor economy in Mid, West and South Wales and its surrounding areas. Associate membership is also available to businesses in North Wales.

Join us and get maximum exposure across our platforms, including the highly successful destination websites, **Show Me Wales** and **Visit Mid Wales**. Across our channels we generate over 2 million unique users and thousands of referrals to our members' own websites each year.

## ABERGAVENNY AND DISTRICT TOURISM ASSOCIATION

Abergavenny and District Tourist Association (ADTA) is the town's oldest tourism marketing organisation. By joining us you'll be joining a group of business

owners committed to promoting Abergavenny as a tourist destination. We believe that by bringing tourists into Abergavenny and the surrounding area we'll benefit all the businesses in our town.

We encourage other businesses such as shops, restaurants, cafes and pubs to join us as well as accommodation and activity providers. Membership is open to all in the wider Abergavenny area as well as in the town itself.

### Benefits of joining ADTA

For a very reasonable annual membership fee you'll have the chance to network with other local tourism providers and businesses at our meetings, be featured in our annual visitor guide which is widely distributed in the area and get your business promoted via our social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

You'll also get a listing on the website which receives thousands of hits per month. So don't delay, give us a call and we'll be happy to let you know about membership costs. We look forward to hearing from you!

### How to join ADTA

Joining is easy, just give us a call on 01873 853271 or use the contact form on this website to get in touch and we'll sign you up.

## CRICKHOWELL AND BLACK MOUNTAINS TOURISM GROUP

Promote your business on [www.visitcrickhowell.wales](http://www.visitcrickhowell.wales) by joining Crickhowell and Black Mountains Tourism Group (CBMT) - a grouping of local businesses and organisations working to promote sustainable tourism in order to attract more visitors, promote events and showcase our beautiful area and what it has to offer hence increasing and growing independent businesses.

The geographical area covered by CBMT is broadly that set out by the five councils of Crickhowell, The Vale of Grwyney, Llangattock, Llangynidr and Cwmdu although members from outside these immediate areas are welcome.



### The Objectives of CBMT are:

- To increase the number of visitors to the area
- To increase the amount of time and money that visitors spend in the area
- To extend the visitor season by promotion of events and special offers outside 'high season'

These objectives are achieved and expanded upon by co-operation between members and joint promotional activities. CBMT works closely with other local tourism associations and groups within the National Park and with Visit Wales, Local Councils and the Welsh Assembly Government.

CRiC runs the visitor information centre in Crickhowell and together with CBMT has worked to compile and produce the Crickhowell and Black Mountains Visitor Guides, adventure quizzes for families, business listings on [visitcrickhowell.wales](http://visitcrickhowell.wales), online calendar in support of local events. CBMT and CRiC also organise and promote the Crickhowell Walking Festival and the Crickhowell and area Open Studios weekend.

[www.visitcrickhowell.wales](http://www.visitcrickhowell.wales)

## BRECON BEACONS TOURISM

If you are a member of a local tourism group then you may be entitled to a 10% discount off the BBT membership fee.

Join the BBT Members Scheme today, and you will enjoy a range of benefits immediately.

Membership fees vary depending on your business type.

**Details of current membership fees are listed here.**

**Work harder... together to provide a distinctive experience for our visitors**

**Care more... for our visitors and the landscape that attracts them**

**Aim further... in our aspirations for a sustainable destination**

**Share more... of our knowledge and expertise for the benefit of all**

We also have our own **Code of Practice** which we expect our members to abide to.

BBT prides itself on knowing our members and helping you wherever we can. **Read the latest Testimonials from our members to find out how we can help you.**

Joining BBT couldn't be easier. Simply download and complete the application form and business listing and email to [info@breconbeaconstourism.co.uk](mailto:info@breconbeaconstourism.co.uk)

[breconbeaconstourism.org/join/](http://breconbeaconstourism.org/join/)

## BRECON BEACONS WELCOME GUIDE

[www.thebreconbeacons.wales](http://www.thebreconbeacons.wales)

Touchdown Design has taken over sole responsibility for creating and distributing the Brecon Beacons Welcome Guide. Previously produced in partnership with the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority. We are looking forward to making 2023 a bumper year for businesses. The Welcome guide goes hand in hand with the website, all advertisers have embedded links and all for one price.

Whether you are a previous advertiser or a new advertiser, you will be most welcome to place an advert in the 2023 Welcome guide.

[www.thebreconbeacons.wales/advertising-form](http://www.thebreconbeacons.wales/advertising-form)

[www.thebreconbeacons.wales/advertising-tariff](http://www.thebreconbeacons.wales/advertising-tariff)

If you require more information please contact Alan 07805 836222 or Neil 07973 711523 or email

[info@thebreconbeacons.wales](mailto:info@thebreconbeacons.wales)

# DROVING IN THE BRECON BEACONS

Mark Davis led an extremely interesting talk and walk about the Drovers from the Brecon Beacons for tourism businesses in early October at Craig-y-nos Country park.

Mark attended the Ambassador Welsh Culture course some years ago, one of the activities on the course was to research a part of our Welsh culture and present this to the group. Mark decided to research the Drovers and from this became passionate about finding more about this unexplored part of our culture.

Below is just a small part of mark's presentation, more can be found here:

<https://atlanticculturescape.eu/droving-in-the-brecon-beacons-national-park/>

Droving is the ancient process of driving cattle to market by foot. Droving livestock (cattle, sheep, pigs, turkeys and geese) from the Welsh hills to the English markets is a process that has gone on for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. The Normans were responsible for establishing important meat and cattle markets, the most famous of these being Smithfield in London a market established over 800 years ago. Indeed, Smithfield was such an important and lucrative destination for Welsh farmers and drovers that even today Welsh farmers still use the term "Smithfield" to mean a cattle market. Welsh livestock reared on coarse mountain grass were hardy and strong. They endured the long journey well and fattened up readily on lush English pastures, so were ideal for droving and made good prices at market. Some drovers became very wealthy.

The picture shows tourism businesses on a droving route.



from the Welsh hills  
to the English markets

# CRICKHOWELL RESOURCE AND INFORMATION CENTRE

As well as being a visitor attraction, art gallery and café CRiC supports local businesses by equipping visitors with information on what to do, where to eat or shop, and also offers office services and accessible meeting facilities for small businesses and local organisations. The meeting room can be used for meetings and training and configured according to the nature of the meeting, comfortably seating 16 conference/board meeting style or upto 30 theatre style.

CRiC is delighted to inform tourism businesses, groups and organisations that thanks to a grant from Arwain's Community Venue Fund the conference room has recently been equipped with a state of the art digital screen and video conferencing facilities. The enhanced features will facilitate effective hybrid zoom training, courses, classes and meetings.

Centre Manager Jan Morgan commented "we are delighted to offer new equipment in support of many who have had to adapt to new ways of working and make increased use of digital technology as a way of fully engaging with participants."

In addition to photocopying, scanning and other office services available from CRiC the centre supports many Welsh and local suppliers and artists to give a real taste of Wales. The autumn exhibition in the oriel cric gallery which continues until early November is both inspiring and tempting and the growing selection of maps, guides and local interest books are immensely popular.

To inquire about CRiC's meeting facilities and availability or any of CRiC's other services please contact Jan on 01873 813666 or [jan@visitcrickhowell.wales](mailto:jan@visitcrickhowell.wales)



inspiring and  
tempting

## CONTACTS

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