Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
Interpretation Plan

2007-2010

Llangors Lake. *By Jon Dixon.*

"All good interpretation needs at its heart an enthusiasm and love for a place and a desire to share that with others"
James Carter, 2001

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Table of contents

Section 1: Role of the Interpretation Plan 3
Section 2: What is Interpretation? 4
Section 3: Interpretative planning 6
Section 4: Why provide Interpretation? 7
4.1 Strategic framework 7
4.2 Interpretative aims: 9
Section 5: Identifying the audience 10
5.1 Communication theory 10
5.2 Market segmentation 12
Section 6: What stories do we want to communicate? 13
6.1 Interpretative resource 13
6.2 Themes 13
6.3 Thematic hierarchy for the National Park 14
Section 7: Review of existing interpretation 18
7.1 Review of media ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
7.2 SWOT analysis of Interpretation 18
Section 8: Action Plan 22
8.1 Action to use strengths to take advantage of opportunities 22
8.2 Action to over come weaknesses by taking advantages of opportunities 23
8.3 Action to use strengths to avoid threats 24
8.4 Framework for Implementation 25
8.5 Phased programme of Work: 27

Appendix 1: Example of a Local Interpretative Plan 32
Appendix 2: The resource 35
Appendix 3: Principles of good interpretive practice 38
Appendix 4: Media matrix 40
Appendix 5: Review of current Interpretative provision and partnerships 43

Section 1: Role of the Interpretation Plan

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has two levels of Interpretative Plan:

1. An Interpretative Master Plan or Strategy

This document aims to:

- Provide a framework that will guide and co-ordinate the efforts of all those involved in interpreting the National Park ensuring a consistency in quality of provision.

- Encourage partnership working between organisations and communities, ensuring greater co-ordination, better use of limited resources and creating links between those involved in interpreting the National Park so that we can support and learn from one another.

- Improve the quality and effectiveness of Interpretation, thus generating public support for the role of the National Park designation and the work of the Authority and partners.

- Improve the image and identity of the National Park by encouraging all involved in interpretation to present the 'bigger picture' and set individual sites and facilities within the wider context of the Park.

- Ensure that accessibility to interpretation is maximised, both physically and intellectually.

- Raise the profile of interpretation in the National Park, stimulating interest and inspiration and encourage partners to think of unique, innovative and memorable ways of presenting interpretive messages.

- Develop a more sustainable approach to managing the Park and its visitors by raising awareness of the importance of conservation and sustainable tourism and therefore influencing behaviour.

Adapted from Parkin, 1993

2. Local Interpretive Plans

These provide more detail for individual projects or sites e.g. The Centres, Geopark, Waterfalls Area etc. An example of this document can be seen in Appendix 1.

Section 2: What is Interpretation?

Quite simply Interpretation is the process of communicating to people the significance of a place or object, so that they may enjoy it more, understand their heritage and environment better, and develop a positive attitude to conservation (Association of Heritage Interpretation).

There is often confusion between interpretation and information. Although Interpretation does include information, there is an important difference between the two:

INFORMATION: Provides straight facts, figures and dates.

INTERPRETATION: A specific communication method that aims to give visitors new insights, ideas and understanding and reveal the stories and messages about a place or object.

It was the United States National Park Service that first established interpretation as a subject in its own right. Freeman Tilden who was inspired by his love of landscapes like the Grand Caynon and Yosemite National Park wrote the first book on the subject entitled 'Interpreting our Heritage'.

The core principles of interpretative communication, identified by Freeman Tilden, are:

Provoke Essentially what makes interpretation different from information is that is should provoke thought, new ideas, curiosity, interest and even discussion. Your interpretation also needs to provoke people's attention to ensure they read your panel, attend your guided walk or pick up your leaflet

Relate If your messages or story does not relate to the everyday lives of the audience, it will be meaningless. To be effective interpretation must be meaningful i.e. speaking the same language as your audience and be personal, linking it to visitor's own lives.

Reveal It's the revelation that separates interpretation from other communication. Interpretation should reveal a new insight into

what makes a place or object special so your audiences walks away thinking 'Ah, I never knew that, now I understand'.

These principles are in line with modern communication theory. Interpretation is an important tool to enable the National Park Authority to achieve its statutory purposes. It is a way of helping others to appreciate the importance of the National Park. If they appreciate it, people may support our efforts to conserve and protect it.

Figure 1: Interpretation is a communication process that promotes learning and understanding, which can ultimately influence behaviour:

Understanding Appreciation Conservation

Cartoons: Jon Dixon

As with any communication, interpretation is most effective if it is enjoyable. As the majority of audiences will be non-captive, their attention is voluntary and they will switch off if they are bored. If we are to be successful in communicate our messages we need to embed them in fun, enjoyable activities, in which the learning element is subtle e.g. sculpture, guided walks, publications, touch screen computers, interactive panel etc

Section 3: Interpretative planning

Planning is the bedrock of good interpretation and it's a vital tool to ensure a strategic approach is taken to the provision and management of interpretation in the National Park.

"A National Park Authority can fulfil many of its responsibilities to visitors and the community, as well as to the landscape and economy of the area by developing and implementing an effective strategy for interpretation to widen people's appreciation, understanding and sense of belonging" (Journal of the Association for Heritage Interpretation, 2005)

Figure 2: The interpretive planning process:

Adapted from Carter (1997) by Red Kite Environment

Section 4: Why provide Interpretation?

The first step of the interpretive planning process is to consider why you are providing an interpretation service and identifying what you want it to achieve. In order for interpretation to have a legitimate place and hence be supported within the National Park Authority there needs to be a consistency between the NPA strategic objectives and its interpretive objectives (Ham, 2004).

4.1 Strategic framework

Environment Act 1995

The Environment Act 1995 sets outs the National Parks aims as:

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park;

- to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Parks by the public.

If there is a conflict between these two purposes greater weight is given to conservation than to recreational needs, this is known as the 'Sandford Principle'.

- In pursuing these purposes, NPAs also have a duty to foster the social and economic wellbeing of their local communities.

The National Park Management Plan 2000 –2005

Required by the 1995 Environment Act, The National Park Authority has produced a management plan which aims to coordinate the efforts of those working within the National Park states that the aim of interpretation and information is to:

"To promote among Park residents and visitors an understanding of the special qualities of the National Park and of the role of the NPA in conserving them"

It sets out four objectives:

- Communicate effectively to Park residents and visitors about the Park's National status and the NPA's role and work.
- Encourage the public to understand and value the Park's natural beauty, special qualities, history, culture and way of life.
- Provide information and advice to those wishing to enjoy the Park safely, appropriately and cost effectively, for the benefit of users and local businesses.
- Evaluate success and efficiency of information and interpretation in the Park

Future Directions

Future Directions informs the Authorities future direction and business planning. It outlines the following Aim, Vision and strategic intentions:

Our aim: 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: That the Park's landscape is managed sustainable with widespread appreciation of its special qualities and where local communities benefit from its designation.

Interpretation can contribute to the following National Park strategic intentions:

Conservation and enhancement Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park	
✓	Highlighting the contribution that earth heritage has made and can contribute to the landscape, economy and environment.
✓	Supporting the maintenance and development of locally distinctive cultural activities and the Welsh Language.
✓	Highlighting the contribution that historic landscapes, local distinctiveness and vernacular buildings make to the local economy and environment

Promoting understanding Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of those areas by the public.	
✓	Using a full range of communication methods to reach the widest audiences
✓	Explaining why the conservation and enhancement of the Park's special qualities is important for the sake of future generations.
✓	Increasing public confidence as to where people may walk, cycle and ride.
✓	Provide facilities, information and interpretation at key points to enhance people's experience of the Park.

Vibrant sustainable communities Foster the economic and social well being of the local community	
✓	Provide advice, assistance and resources to sustainable community initiatives
✓	Encourage the use of public transport

4.2 Interpretative aims:

Future interpretation in the Brecon Beacons National Park will:

Adhere to Good Practice
Interpretation will be developed in line with accepted principles and standards of good practice.

Raise awareness and understanding
That people are within a National Park and its special qualities. Helping people understand more about the places they visit and the impact they can have on the heritage assets of the National Park.

Aid appreciation
Help communities and visitors develop a wider feeling of ownership and stewardship for their environment, a sense of place.

Influence behaviour
Encourage people to act in a more 'sustainable' manner that will conserve and enhance the special qualities for future generations.

Support Communities
To involve, enable and support local communities in defining and presenting their cultural heritage stories.

Promote Tourism
Encourage visitors to explore a wider range of sites, thus encouraging longer stays and higher spending to benefit the local economy.

Enhance visitor experience
Interpretation will enhance the quality and enjoyment of a visit to the National Park.

Help orientate visitors
Provide orientation and link and network sites and facilities both physically and thematically.

Promote Safety
Provide safety information that gives visitors and communities the confidence to explore the National Park safely.

Adapted from Morecambe Bay Partnership Interpretation and marketing Strategy, 2002

Section 5: Identifying the audience

In our enthusiasm to tell visitors about the National Park we often forget to consider who they are and what they may be interested in. Not all visitors to the National Park are the same and understanding their needs, interests and aspirations is as important for effective interpretation as it is marketing.

> Good interpretation addresses the needs of visitors and increases their enjoyment while conveying messages consistent with the goals of your organisation
>
> (Sam Ham, 2004)

5.1 Communication theory

For Interpretation to work well it needs to follow the four principles of all good communication:

Principle 1: Get attention

We can't get our message across unless our audience takes an interest in it so the first thing we need to do is catch peoples attention (Carter, 2001).

- Attention grabbing headlines, like a newspaper headline, on panels can be effective at grabbing the attention of passers by
- Holding peoples attention can be achieved by creating anticipation and surprise during guided walks or videos etc.
- Using a variety of interpretative media can widen the appeal of your story/message.

Principle 2: Be enjoyable

When the majority of people visit the National Park they are not there for an interpretative experience but because they perceive it to be an enjoyable day out or a chance to take part in recreational activities (Veverka, 1998).

When we consider that visitors remember about:
10% of what they hear,
30% of what they read,
50% of what they see,
90% of what they do (Lewis, 1988)

It demonstrates that if we want to effectively communicate our conservation messages we must embed them in fun, enjoyable activities, in which the learning element is subtle.

Principle 3: Giving our messages a structure - See section 6.2 ‘thematic interpretation.

Principle 4: Relate to our audience
We can also improve the delivery of our messages and their retention if we ensure that our interpretation RELATES to our audience.

5.2 Market segmentation

The 'All Parks' visitor survey (1994) together with surveys of current and non-visitors undertaken for the Parkin report (2003) have helped to define the existing and potential audience for interpretation in the National Park.

Figure 3: Market Segmentation of National Park audiences

Section 6: What stories do we want to communicate?

6.1 Interpretative resource

As set out in the strategic overview section a National Park Authority has a responsibility to achieve widespread understanding and support for the National Park as a protected landscape. In order to achieve this we need to identify what there is in the National Park to tell people about. A list of potential topics of interpretation (the interpretative resource) can be viewed in Appendix 2.

6.2 Themes

Research has shown than as well as effective communication should be enjoyable, relevant, organised and if we want it to be interpretative, it must convey a message, or theme. A theme is a belief and beliefs are the building blocks of attitude and behaviour and if we want to influence visitor's attitudes and behaviour in the National Park we need strong and compelling themes (Ham, 2004).

Themes are a useful tool as they:

- help interpreters select and organize ideas and make decision about content.
- They make sure that you have thought about what you want visitors to understand rather than just giving them unconnected facts.
- Visitors remember themes are forget facts therefore interpretation with a theme is more memorable than one without.

Themes are the one thing you want the visitor to remember long after their visit is over, and therefore, all the interpretation should be working to ensure reinforcement of the main thematic ideas. Themes are the moral of the story, the take home message that you want your visitors to remember.

The National Park themes have been derived from the interpretative resource (section 6.1), organisation and interpretive objectives, what audiences may be interested in or have questions about, the Parkin report and a staff workshop held in July 2006. Themes are not generally articulated beyond the planning stage.

6.3 Thematic hierarchy for the National Park

It is important for a visitor to the Brecon Beacons National Park to understand…

Theme 1:

The unique shape of the hills and mountains is due to different types of rock under the surface combined with the effects of powerful natural forces over millions of years.

Sub Themes:	Example Interpretive Topics:
1. Landscapes are continually changing and contain fascinating clues about their past.	Climate change and sea level fluctuations Tectonic evolution Waterfalls and fault lines Visible wave marks on the sandstone
2. Ice played an important role in sculpting the unique shape of the mountains, valleys and lakes.	Ice age, Formation of U shaped valleys, terminal moraines, peri-glacial features, Glacial cwms, Llangors lake, debris deposition.
3. Some rocks dissolve in water forming spectacular underground cave systems.	Disappearing rivers, Caves , Karst landscapes (sink holes, limestone pavements, swallow holes)
4. Running water in the many rivers and tributaries continue to shape the landscape.	Water falls, Rivers erosion & seasonal fluctuations, Human uses & actions e.g. reservoirs.

Theme 2:

In the past, present and in the future the Brecon Beacons National Park is a living, working landscape where human activity shapes the land.

Sub Themes:	Example Interpretive Topics:
1. Since the Stone Age this landscape has continued to provide humans with food and shelter and energy.	Forest clearance by Neolithic settlers, Formation of moorland, Development of settlements and communities, Farming the valleys, patchwork fields, Farming the uplands, common land, traditional and modern farming practices, charcoal from woodlands, water wheels. coal mining etc.
2. The Brecon Beacons National Park is rich in natural resources and the extraction of these raw materials has re-shaped the landscape we see today.	Timber & charcoal, Limestone, kilns and quarries, Iron Ore extraction & iron forges, Blast furnaces, Coalmining, Gunpowder, Silica sands for fire bricks Rottenstone. Sand & Gravel, Water.
3. Natural landforms have been utilised by our ancestors throughout history.	Hill forts, Roman roads and forts, Castles, Caves, Megalithic monuments, burial chambers and stone circles. Transport routes: Canals, tramroads, railways and roads, trade routes, locations of towns & villages.
4. The Brecon Beacons National Park is a place where people live and work and play.	Agriculture, Forestry, Reservoirs, Military, Recreation, Towns and Villages, Local food, stakeholders.
5. The Brecon Beacons National Park require sustainable management to ensure their special qualities remain for future generations.	Effects of acid rain and climate change, Gas pipelines, future energy, Role of NPA & stakeholders, transport. Importance of agriculture and forestry, conservation management

Theme 3:

This landscape has a rich cultural heritage of language, customs, traditions and religion to explore.

Sub Themes:	Example Interpretive Topics:
1. The dramatic landscape continues to influence and inspire people's emotions and religion.	The Silures Celtic tribe Early Christainity – St David and St Iiitud Father Ignatius – Charismatic religious movement Rise of the Welsh Non-conformist movement Henry Vaughan (Poet & Doctor) Adelina Patti, William Williams Pantycelen CATWG, Present day photographers, artists, writers, film makers. (see resource list for further topics)
2. The landscape has many clues to teach us about the cultural heritage of our ancestors.	Megalithic monuments, Burial chambers, Stone circles, Sheepfolds, Hafods, Churches, chapels and monasteries, Archaeological sites, Offa's dyke, crannog, mining & industrial heritage, field boundaries, trade routes, highways and byways
3. Place names demonstrate the intimate relationship the Welsh language has with this landscape.	Interpreting Welsh place names & regional variations
4. The Brecon Beacons National Park has vibrant local communities proud of their unique heritage, customs, crafts and events.	Brecon Jazz, Food festivals, Hay Festival, Community events, Arts and Crafts, Agricultural shows. Lady of the Lake and the Physicians of Myddfai, Local Eisteddfodau, Local crafts (Breconshire hedgelaying style, drystone walling), stone masons.

Theme 4:

Geological activity and human use of the land has created rich and varied habitats that support a diverse range of plants and animals.

Sub Themes:	Example Interpretive Topics:
1. The Brecon Beacons National Park contains local, national and international assets.	SSSI, Geopark, SAC, Nature reserves, rare species
2. Plants and animals require specific conditions in which to live.	Habitat concept, interdependence between species, adaptions.
3. Some habitats and species require monitoring and human intervention to ensure their survival.	Grazing, role of rare breeds & genetic diversity (Ponies, cattle, sheep), Heather management & Grouse moors, Drystone wall restoration, `Bog maintenance (Waun Figlan Felen), canals, traditional management techniques. Bat monitoring, Dormice boxes etc.
4. The plants and animals that live in the Brecon Beacons National Park are facing many threats.	Development, changes in agricultural practices, pollution, Climate change, Habitat loss, fragmentation, invasive species.

Section 7: Review of existing interpretation

7.1 Audit of existing media

7.2 SWOT analysis of Interpretation

In 2003 the Parkin report identified a number of key Issues affecting Interpretation in the National Park, the majority of which have been addressed and are now considered strengths of the service; however a number of weaknesses remain:

Figure 4: SWOT analysis

Strengths
1) Full time Interpretation Officer recruited April 2004 with the remit to coordinate Interpretation for the National Park Authority. 2) Interpretation Strategy to aid coordination of interpretation with the National Park. 3) Interpretative themes decided on by National Park staff. 4) Liaison and partnership working with external bodies and communities. 5) New National Park Britain's Breathing spaces branding provides an identity which all can sign up to. 6) Community interpretation and walking toolkits to empower communities to produce high quality interpretation together with the production of a planning guidance note to give advice on interpretation to Community Councils. 7) Advice has been given to improve the effectiveness and quality of National Park publications and events. 8) Informal Interpretative training has been delivered to some wardens and guided walks leaders to improve the effectiveness of the guided walks programme. 9) A more inclusive approach to the Guided walk programme. 10) The NPA is an active member on Dehongli Cymru /Interpret Wales steering group helping to raise the profile and quality of interpretation in Wales.

11) Improvement in visitor orientation with the National Park with gateway boards located at strategic points.

12) Compliance with Welsh Language and Disability Discrimination Act.

13) Modern and coordinated exhibition at CYNCP, Llandovery and Brecon TIC.

14) New thematic walks cards.

15) Face to face interpretation provided by Centre staff.

Weaknesses

1) There is no resource allocation for the on-going maintenance of interpretation materials once produced and installed.

2) Traditionally interpretation has been reactive leaving limited time for proactive, creative and innovative Interpretation projects.

3) There has been a tendency to take a traditional approach to Interpretation with emphasis on panels

4) Limited use of sustainable materials, use of local artists and crafts people to develop green, innovative and locally distinctive interpretation.

5) There is a minimal budget within the core funding to deliver interpretation (£1,000 in 07/08).

6) Interpretation at the NPVC and Abergavenny TIC is out of date in need of significant investment.

7) Lack of Interpretative training as part of mainstream staff development to key delivers of interpretation across the Authority.

8) Lack of thematic interpretation at large events and launches.

9) Lack of time and resources for project evaluation and monitoring

Opportunities
1) Promote the Interpretation strategy and use of the NP themes within the NPA. 2) Encourage partner organisations to use the NP themes. 3) Promote good practice in Interpretation both within the NPA and National Park. 4) Britain Breathing Spaces branding 5) Community toolkit. 6) Increasing the involvement of local schools in developing interpretative media. 7) Increase partnership interpretative events, guided walks and publications. 8) Develop and promote interpretative training opportunities for staff and volunteers to raise awareness of the interpretative planning process and the merits of alternative media. 9) Work towards a pro-active approach to interpretation enabling time for project planning and evaluation. 10) Promote by example the use of sustainable materials and local skills. 11) Continue to raise the profile of interpretation within the NP and Wales 12) Local interpretative plans for NPA owned sites and centres 13) Develop socially inclusive interpretation 14) Investigate new funding streams 15) New technology

Threats
1) Lack of secure annual interpretation budget to allow for forward planning, match-fund of grant applications and maintenance of existing interpretative material. 2) Lack of adoption of Interpretation Strategy and themes within NPA. 3) Lack of adoption of NP themes amongst partner organisations. 4) Increasing competition within the leisure industry. 5) Raising costs of manufacturing and design of static interpretation.

Section 8: Action Plan

8.1 Action to use strengths to take advantage of opportunities

Figure 6: Actions to address the SWOT analysis

SO strategies Use strengths to take advantage of opportunities		
Strengths	**Opportunities**	**Action**
1 & 2	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12	Maintain the post of a full time Interpretation Officer & ensure adoption of Interpretation Strategy as they are key strengths for maximising all identified opportunities to improve the service.
3	1	Build on the staff involvement in the development of the Interpretative themes to increase ownership of the message.
4 & 5	2,4,7,11	Continue, and extend, liaison and partnership working to encourage the communication of National Park themes, branding, partnership opportunities and the profile of Interpretation.
6	5	Promote the use of the community toolkit to empower communities to produce high quality, effective interpretation projects.
7, 8 & 15	1, 8, 11	Combine promotion of the interpretative themes with staff/volunteer training to improve the effectiveness and quality of National Park publications, events, guided walks and counter services.
9	13	Support and promote a more socially inclusive approach to all interpretation in the NP.
10	3, 8 ,11	Continue funding and support for Dehongli Cymru /Interpret Wales
11	11	Promote visitor orientation and information as an important component of the visitor experience.
12	13, 15	Continue to develop innovative ways to enhance physical and intellectual access to all audiences.
13	12	Develop local Interpretative plans for remaining NPA Centres to aid the development aka Brecon, CYNCP and Llandovery exhibitions
14	3, 9	Continue to develop themed NPA publications and promote good practice.

8.2 Action to over come weaknesses by taking advantages of opportunities

WO Strategies Over come weaknesses by taking advantages of opportunities		
Weaknesses	**Opportunities**	**Action**
1 & 3	8	Promote and develop Interpretative training opportunities to encourage a more innovative approach to interpretation. Ensure the same care and attention that is given to the design and implementation of any interpretation should be given to its subsequent maintenance and management.
2	9	Facilitate adoption of this document by the NPA to assist with a pro-active, coordinated approach to interpretation.
4	10	Support NPA Green Dragon Award by maximising the use of sustainable materials and local skills for interpretative projects.
5	11, 14	Publicise internally and externally the important role of interpretation in the NP to maximise funding opportunities and develop further partnership projects
6	12	Prioritise local Interpretative plans for National Park owned Centres.
7	8	Promote interpretative training opportunities as a main stream part of staff development.
8	1, 3, 8	Facilitate adoption of this document, promote good practice and staff training to increase the thematic interpretation at large events and launches.
9	3, 8, 9	Promotion of the strategy, good practice & staff training to ensure a pro-active approach to interpretation with adequate time and resources allocated for project evaluation and monitoring.

8.3 Action to use strengths to avoid threats

ST Strategies Use strengths of avoid threats		
Strengths	**Threats**	**Action**
4	1	The continued use of innovative of partnership working is currently realising numerous interpretative projects although a secure annual budget is required to deliver this strategy.
1,2,3,7, 8	2	The Interpretation Officer post, the adoption of the strategy, continued training and advise should ensure the adoption this strategy and the NP themes within the NPA
1,4,6	3	Continue the NPA's current good relationships with external partners organisations together with the community toolkit should ensure that the NP themes are adopted by partner organisations.

8.4 Framework for Implementation

The following framework will guide the choice of media in future interpretative projects in the National Park:

> "Interpretation is an important part of the total visitor experience and influences the experiences visitors have of a place. To be effective it needs to be offered in a variety of ways through a carefully structured hierarchy of provision (Parkin 2003)"

1. Pre-visit support
These projects will raise awareness of the National Park and provide information to aid the choosing, planning and travelling to a destination, examples include the website, map and guide etc

2. On-site visitor information and interpretation
To ensure that interpretation is sympathetic to its environment and contains the most suitable information for the audiences the following classification of sites has been devised:

Figure 7: Categories of interpretative sites

Level 1 Key gateway /decision making points	**Level 2 Popular locations**	**Level 3 Features of interest**	**Level 4 Remote sites**
Excellent Access	→		Poor Access
Good car parking			Not accessible by car
High visitor numbers			Low visitors numbers
Close to tourist routes			Remote
Large population nearby			Remote
Public transport links			No public transport
High visitor expectation			Low visitor expectation
Visible interpretation			Low Key interpretation
High maintenance			Low Maintenance

Level 1: Key Gateway/decision making points
These major gateways are key orientation points and suitable for raising visitor awareness of the National Park, what there is to see, how to get the places that interest and facilities. These sites are generally not suitable for interpretation but should contain information that is highly assessable and easily understood by a wide range of audiences. Content may include:

- Map of whole National Park.
- Brief introduction to the National Park, what it is, special features.
- Reference to where visitors can get more information.
- Notice board for National Park information

Level 2: Popular locations e.g. carparks or viewpoints
These sites are popular with visitors and are readily accessible. Information and maps are likely to be useful to orientate visitors in the locality highlighting local features of interest. Basic interpretation may be suitable in these locations although it will need to be easily understood by a wide range of audiences with reference to more in depth information for those who are interested. Content may include:

- Detailed map showing local facilities, routes, attractions and facilities.
- Brief introduction to the area creating a sense of place.
- Notice board for local information
- Specific messages about countryside management relevant to the area e.g. Open Access information, Waterfalls safety advice, Countryside Code.

Level 3: Features of special interest
These sites may not have good physical access or be tourist attractions in their own right but they are important sites at which to raise awareness of specific National Park themes. These sites lend themselves well to the majority of interpretative media – refer to media matrix.

Level 4: Remote sites
These are remote sites, with poor physical access with low visitor numbers. Interpretation must be low impact, sensitively planned and preferable not permanent. Suitable media includes leaflets, audio tours and guided walks and not panels.

3. Supporting interpretive provision
This category covers merchandise, publications, furniture, catering, events etc all of which are valuable interpretative tools to deliver the National Park themes.

8.5 Phased programme of Work:

The following programme of work has been divided into short term which largely consists of pre-existing projects to which we have a commitment and medium and long term projects which will be dependant on funding opportunities.

Short term (1-2 years) projects:

Project Proposal	Description	Pre-visit	On Site	Supporting	Notes
Write Local Interpretive Plans	Research and write site specific interpretive plan for NPVC, CYNPC & Abergavenny TIC in conjunction with centre staff to focus develop further interpretation.		✓		Staff time required
Trail the VIEW Toolkit	This toolkit was developed by CCW & FC as a tool to evaluate key visitor sites to appraise investment, information and interpretation requirements.		✓		Staff, possibly volunteer time required
Pilot new interpretative media	Research opportunities to use new technology as an interpretative media to enhance physical and intellectual access. e.g. virtual walks, MP3 /4 downloads		✓		Potential for partnerships project requiring external funding
Promote Community toolkit	Trail and promote of the Community Interpretation and walking toolkit. Current commitments: SNPS study day & AHI 'Vital Spark' conference			✓	Staff time required
Enhance Website	Develop interpretative pages for the National Park website	✓		✓	Staff time required

Deliver NPVC Tearoom Interpretation	Project to promote local produce, the need to reduce food miles and links with the landscape and themed play area for children.			✓	Project cost £6500. CCW funding secured
Collaborate on Brecon Gateway Project	Led by British Waterways, in partnership with Brecon Beacons National Park, Powys County Council and Theatr Brycheiniog, the 80K project aims to enhance the visitor experience of the heritage along the canal in Brecon	✓	✓		Project in progress. Staff time required
Implement Phase 2 Cwmporth Carpark	Project to improve visitor information, orientation and interpretation. Phase 1 due to be delivered in May, Phase 2 will involve replacing the caving boards and promotion of local features of interest.	✓	✓		Total project cost: £6626. Adwyio funding secured Deadline July 2007
Deliver 50th Anniversary projects	Complete production of 50th Anniversary DVD and manage temporary exhibition tour			✓	Exhibition complete Final draft of DVD to be viewed end of April 07
Focus on gateway interpretation	Develop opportunities to improve Visitor orientation at gateways into the National Park.	✓			Potential for partnership projects.
Deliver Geopark exhibitions	Current proposed projects include Brecon Museum, Garwnant & Pontneddfechan	✓		✓	Subject to external funding
Develop themed posters	To promote the NP themes			✓	Funding required
Improve use of sustainable materials for interpretation	Trail the use of sustainable materials and local skills for interpretative projects where possible.			✓	Need to be built in to project briefs
Improve maintenance programme	As identified in the SWOT. Investigate a annual maintenance programme together with an annual maintenance budget			✓	Staff time and funding required.

Evaluate and monitor existing interpretation.	As identified in the SWOT analysis.			✓	Staff time required
Develop and support training	As identified in the SWOT analysis, develop and support opportunities for interpretative training for internal staff.			✓	Staff time and funding required.
Investigate new funding streams	As identified in the SWOT analysis			✓	Staff time required
Promote the role of interpretation in NP and Wales.	Publicise internally and externally the important role of interpretation in the NP to maximise funding opportunities and develop further partnership projects.			✓	Staff time required and continued funding of Interpret Wales/ Dehongli Cymru.

Medium to Long term (2-5 years) projects:

Project Proposal	Description	Pre-visit	On Site	Supporting	Notes
Local Interpretive Plans	Research and write site specific/ local Interpretation plans for NPA owned sites and honeypot sites.			✓	Staff time required.
Develop project plans following VIEW toolkit	Develop projects and secure funding to implement the findings from this research to improve the visitor experience to NPA owned site.	✓	✓		Staff time and funding required.
Communication of themes	Identify key sites and projects to communicate National Park themes		✓		Staff time required.
Continue to develop and support training	Secure budget to deliver professional Interpretative training for BBNPA staff			✓	Staff time and funding required
Develop viewpoint interpretation	Project examples: interpretative seating at viewing points		✓		Staff time and funding required
Promote innovative Interpretation	Develop opportunities for utilising performance, theatre and arts in interpretation		✓	✓	Potential for partnership projects.
Trail interpretation of conservation work	Working with the Area team to provide temporary interpretation about practical conservation work.		✓		Staff time and moderate funding required
Improve the 'burger van'	Secure funding to improve the interpretation facilities and sustainability of the NP exhibition trailer			✓	Staff time and funding required

Widen target audiences	Research and develop interpretative provision specifically for children, activity visitors and special interest visitors			✓	Staff time and funding required
Improve effectiveness of events & guided walks	Work towards and fully themed NP events and guided walks programme demonstrating good practice.			✓	Staff time required.
Increase involvement of young people in developing interpretative media.	Investigate new ways to involve local schools and young people in developing interpretative media.			✓	Potential for partnership projects.
Develop more socially inclusive projects.	Support and promote a more socially inclusive approach to all interpretation in the NP.			✓	Potential for partnership projects.
Continue website development	Continue to develop interpretative content on the Website.			✓	Staff time and funding required.
Continue to promote the role of interpretation in NP and Wales.	Continue to publicise internally and externally the important role of interpretation in the NP to maximise funding opportunities and develop further partnership projects.			✓	Staff time required and continued funding of Interpret Wales/ Dehongli Cymru.
Expand Interpretation team	Investigate funding opportunities to appoint additional dedicated interpretative staff to implement particular projects.			✓	Staff time and funding required.
Review this document	In consultation with staff and external partners			✓	Staff time required.

Appendix 1: Example of a Local Interpretative Plan

Brecon Riverside Walk

Interpretation Project Plan

Project: Orientation and Interpretation panel for the new riverside walk S0043286
Background: Rotary club contribution to the new riverside walk
Key Players: BBNPA: Su Meekins & Paul Sinnadurai,
Brecon Rotary Club: Peter Jenkins
Wildlife Trust: Charles Morgan
Powys County Council & Brecon Town Council

1 Aims of the project:

To raise awareness and understanding of the wildlife in the surrounding area
To promote the new path, orientate visitors within the local area and encourage them to safely explore the area themselves.
Foster a local interest in the management of the river bank alongside the walkway and its conservation e.g. report wildlife sightings, keep dogs on leads etc

2 The audience:

The primary audience is local people using the path as a short cut across Brecon or walking their dog. However, Brecon is also a popular tourist venue so the panel must appeal to visitors and be understood by families with children and overseas visitors. Although a flight of steps at the Western end may make the path difficult to access for visitors with mobility impairments or special needs, access can be obtained via a level path at the Eastern end.

3 The resource and themes:

Designation of rivers	The river Usk is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the tributaries Honddu & Tarell are also a SSSI. The River Usk and its tributaries are designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) because of the species that are found there and are therefore all internationally important.
Wildlife found in and along the river	Fish: Trout , Bullhead and Lampreys Mammals: Otter: Research Otter gate. Cubs have been seen under the bridge so it's a breeding site. Bats: Usk valley has important roosting sites for the Lesser Horseshoe Bat. Most likely to see Daubentons and Pipestrelles foraging over the water. Birds: Sand martins are found at Island fields. Possibility of seeing, Grey and Yellow wagtails. Insects: Dragon and damsel flies may be seen.
Management issues	Brecon Beacons National Park would like to see long, tall, tussocky vegetation along the side of the walkway to give cover to the otters. Would also like a bylaw to ensure that dogs are kept on leads.

	BBNPA would like public to report sightings to Biological Information Service (BIS). Refer to BBNPA and Willdife Trust's website for guided walks to learn more about the wildlife in the area + BBNPA new wildlife walk publication.
Alien species	Japanese Knotweed & Himalayan Balsam – reports to Biological Information Service (BIS)
Map of local area	See Chris Green or BBNPA Planning department for + aerial photos

Infrastructure	Research plans for signage - Contact PCC
	Car parks, toilets etc To be include on the orientation map
	Other interpretation Su to research

Theme: The clean water, vegetation cover and variety of habitats makes the River Usk an ideal home for many rare and threatened plants and animal species.

Interpretative objectives:

Learning objectives Having read the sign the majority of visitors will:	**Emotional objectives** Having read the sign the majority of visitors will be	**Behavioural objectives** Having read the sign:
Know that the River Usk is a very special habitat for a variety of rare and threatened wildlife.	Feel pleased that the river Usk is such a highly valued habitat for plants and animals.	The majority of visitors will keep their dos on a lead
Know how their change their behaviour to reduce the risk of discouraging wildlife	Believe it is important to change their behaviour to protect the wildlife that lives in the river.	The majority of visitors will take their dog faeces home with them
	Have increasing confidence as to where they may walk and cycle.	The majority of visitors will not throw rubbish
		Some visitors will Seek more information about wildlife.
		Some visitors will report wildlife sightings to the Biological Information Service.

4 Implementation & operation

Budget Rotary Club £1,000
Powys C.C £2,000
Total Budget £3,000

BBNPA to research subject matter and manage the project

Timescale	What	Who	By When
	Research subject matter	Su	Allow 4 weeks: 30th June
	Source photos	Su	Allow 1 weeks: 8th July
	Text written	Contractor	Allow 2 weeks: 22nd July
	Text translated	Contractor	Allow 2 weeks: 5th August
	Design	Contractor	Allow 2 weeks: 9th August
	Manufacture	Contractor	Allow 6 weeks: 30th September
	Installation	Either BBNPA or PCC	Need to discuss with Wardens

5 Evaluation: Proposed work

None at present

Appendix 2: The resource

The Physical resource in the National Park

Landscape	Buildings (Churches, chapels, pubs, shops and historic buildings)
Mountains and hills (Geology, glaciers etc) Towns and villages Water: Reservoirs, rivers, lakes, cwms, waterfalls, Forestry Commons Farms: dry stone walls, field patterns, hedgerows Geological features (Caves, rocks, cwms etc)	Castles: Carreg Cennen, Crickhowell, Brecon, Abergavenney, Llandovery Churches & Chapels: St.Mary's in Abergavenny, Partrishow Church, Brecon's Cathedral Church. Priories and Abbeys: Llanthony Priory and Llanthony Abbey Historic Houses & gardens (Tretower Court, Craig y Nos Castle & estate) Vernacular architecture
Habitats	**Archaeological sites**
Karst limestone landscape and caves Heather moorland Limestone pavements Cliffs and quarry faces	Burial chambers Iron Age hill forts (eg. Carn Goch) Romans: forts (eg. Y Gaer near Brecon), roads (eg. Sarn Helen) marker posts (eg. Maen Madoc), standing stones (eg. Maen Llia) and stone circles. Ancient settlement patterns?
Industrial sites	**Information**
Lime kilns (Herberts quarry) Tramways (Brynore) Inclines (Llanfoist) Quarries and mines (Herberts quarry, Trefil, Llangattock escarpment) Gunpowder works Blast furnaces (World Heritage Site)	Information Centres TIC VIA's Visitor Centres
Visitor Attractions	**Existing routes**
NPVC Craig y Nos Country Park Dan yr Ogof Caves Garwnant Forest Centre Big Pit & Blaenavon World Heritage Site Carreg Cennen Castle Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal Brecon mountain railway Museums Brecon Cathedral Historic houses and gardens Nature reserves Castles Farms accessible through the Tir Gofal	Taff trail cycle and walking path Beacons way Offa's dyke path Wye Valley walk Usk Valley walk Cycling: NP Mountain biking routes, National cycle network Three rivers ride Rights of way network Iron mountain trail Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal Brecon Mountain Railway Drovers routes

The Human resource in the National Park

Existing Interpretative partnerships	Potential interpretative partners
British Waterways – Herian & individual projects CCW - Interpret Wales Forestry Commission Wales - various National Trust - various Powys -Individual Projects Blaenau Gwent - Herian Monmouthshire - Herian Carmarthenshire – Llandovery TIC Torfaen - World Heritage Site The Beacons Trust – guided walks programme Community councils Newport Council – Herian Cadw	Welsh Water Merthyr Tydfil Museums (esp. Brecon and Abergavenny) Neath & Port Talbot – Geopark? GGAT & Clwyd + Powys Archaeological Trust.
National Park Authority staff	**Others**
Area Managers, Centres Managers, Information Assistants, Education Officers, Wardens, Graphic Designer, Community section, Tourism section, ecologist.	Volunteers, Friends groups, special interest groups, historical societies, conservation and amenity groups, Community Councils, community groups and individuals

The Cultural Resource in the National Park

Palaeolithic hunters and early Neolithic settlers and farmers	Evidence of their settlement and lifestyle still visible in the landscape
Bronze Age Beaker Folk and Iron Age Celtic settlers from Europe	Artefacts and evidence of settlements and defences give an insight into their way of life living in tune with the land and the seasons
The Silures Celtic tribe and the arrival of the Romans	A time of change and a new regime
Defending the border lands	Offa's Dyke and the English/Welsh divide
The Normans, Marcher Lords and division of land	The 'Englishry' on the fertile lowlands and the 'Welshry' in the uplands
Norman Barons and Lords	Bernard de Neufmarshé, William de Braose, William de Lacy
Welsh Princes and uprisings	Owain Glyndor and the surrender of Castell Carreg Cennen
Celtic Christian missionaries	St. Illtud, St. David and their influence on communities, everyday life and religion
Father Ignatious	Charismatic religious leader who founded the monastery at Llanthony Abbey, Capel-y-ffin
The Welsh language	Strong in the west, less so in the east. Interpreting the landscape and human influence through place names and their meaning
Local traditions, legends and local 'Welshness'	Keeping 'one eye on the border'! The lady of the lake and the Physicians of Myddfai
Famous people	William Williams Pantycelyn: hymn writer and leader of Welsh Methodist revival, Hywel Harris charismatic preacher and founder of the Brecknockshire Agricultural Society, Henry Vaughan poet and doctor, Adelina Patti internationally famous Victorian opera singer
Agriculture through the ages and farming practices:	Sheep, cattle and Welsh Mountain Ponies. Traditional skills and recent agricultural diversification

Place names and their meaning	Interpreting the Welsh language
The birth of industrial South Wales	Role of the National Park area as a supply of raw materials.

Geraldis Cambrensis (wrote journey through Wales), George Borrow, Eric Gill, Brut Brothers (Stone Masons)

(Parkin report 2003)

Appendix 3: Principles of good interpretive practice

(Ref: Carter, J. Masters. D (2002) Morecambe Bay Partnership Interpretation & marketing Strategy)

1. Interpretation is about communicating ideas, not facts. Each item of interpretation should be planned around a single or limited number of agreed themes, and should seek to enlighten its audience about the wider concepts that can be illustrated with the facts presented.

2. Interpretation should encourage people to visit other places than the immediate site concerned. This implies a holistic approach to the subject of any interpretation, for example linking landscape features to human activity, and referring visitors to sites and sources where they can get further information. This not only adds to the interest and significance of a particular site, but also encourages visitors to explore the region.

3. Each item of site-based interpretation should clearly and specifically relate to features, objects, or events in the immediate surroundings:

    - For fixed media such as panels, it should be possible to clearly see the subject of the interpretation from the location of the panel.
    - For media designed to be used on the move, the interpretation should refer to specific features which can be seen.

4. Interpretation should encourage visitors to notice and explore the things around them:
    - It should draw attention to specific features which can be seen, touched, heard, smelt or tasted; and
    - It should specifically ask the reader to look at, touch, listen to, smell or taste these things.

5. Interpretation should relate to the audience by using personal language (e.g. addressing the audience as 'you'), the use of metaphor and analogy, or by making links or comparisons between its subject and peoples' everyday lives or common experiences.

6. Fixed interpretation should use materials sympathetic to their surroundings, and be located so they do not impinge on the character of the site in question.

7. Responsibilities and budgets for maintaining the interpretation should be built into relevant annual work programmes.

8. All interpretation should be easily accessible:

    - Text should be clearly printed and legible; should include headings and/or

sub-headings; should make use of a text hierarchy; should have a readability level appropriate to the audience; and should be divided into paragraphs of up to 50 words.

- Text should be written in a personal language, avoiding jargon and 'government speak'. Sentences should be short and simple, with technical terms explained.

- Panels and displays should be fixed at an appropriate height and with enough space to view them comfortably.

9. Effective use should be made of pictures and graphics:

- They should be clear and easily understood; should be visually stimulating; should have a clear relationship to the text; and should complement the text, or what can be seen, rather than simply duplicate it.

Appendix 4: Media matrix

The advantages and disadvantages of different interpretative media

Creative on-site 2D and 3D 'furniture' and installations

Seating, specially designed waymarking, sculpture

Advantages

- can focus attention on specific features
- available 24/7
- can be creative and attractive
- can provoke interest
- can enhance the appearance of the site
- can use local, natural materials
- can involve community and craftspeople in production

Disadvantages

- may require planning permission
- vulnerable to damage by weather, vandalism, animals
- can intrude on landscape
- can cause erosion around sign or exhibit
- inflexible
- immobile
- difficult to present complex issues
- require regular maintenance

Personal or face to face Interpretation

Guided walks, events and activities, story telling, costumed interpreters, street theatre and other performance

Advantages

- very effective – research shows that personal interpretation is the most effective kind of interpretation
- very flexible – as it's designed specifically for your site
- inclusive - can attract a wide audience with people from different ages and social groups
- can tell a complex story well
- can be creative
- responsive to different audiences and their needs on the day
- can generate income
- can attract good publicity
- social experience
- can be fun and exciting
- can involve multiple skills from different partner groups as co-organisers
- can have extended life through websites, photographs, video, reports, post event exhibitions and press coverage

Disadvantages

- outdoor events are weather dependent
- some events only reach a small audience
- heavy in administration
- needs good marketing
- needs good forward planning
- requires initial financial outlay
- needs a range of skills in creation and marketing
- audience size can be limited for some events
- can be dominated by an individual
- can be a one-off experience
- if repeated, needs assessment and development

Printed and graphic interpretation

Leaflets, publications, trail guides, panels and exhibitions

Advantages

All types of printed and graphic interpretation:

- can be unobtrusive in an area
- have good initial impact
- encourage the use of a variety of senses
- can be creative
- people can use them on their own and at their own pace
- some can be used in bad weather

Leaflets, publications and trail guides:

- can be used on and off site
- can earn revenue
- can be cheap to produce per unit
- have souvenir value - can be taken home
- can alter language to suit audience
- are portable and pocket-sized
- do not intrude on landscape
- can involve partner organisations such as shops, pubs and B&Bs as distribution outlets
- can include more information than a panel
- can help orientation and navigation

Outdoor panels:

- available 24/7
- focus attention on specific features
- can reach a large audience
- easy for people to use
- do not need supervision
- can help orientate visitors
- low maintenance

Indoor panels:

- indoor panels/exhibitions can be secure
- easier to be interactive than outdoor panels

Disadvantages

All types of printed and graphic interpretation:

- need good design and writing
- can require high initial financial outlay
- may be ignored and left unread
- are inflexible and dated once produced

Leaflets, publications and trail guides:

- require effective distribution
- revenue collection can be difficult with numerous small outlets
- can be potential litter
- have to compete for attention with numerous other publications
- may need re-printing regularly

Outdoor panels:

- may require planning permission
- expensive to produce and install
- need regular maintenance and upkeep
- vulnerable to damage by weather, vandalism, animals
- can intrude on landscape
- can cause erosion around sign
- inflexible
- static
- are widely used and may therefore become ignored

Indoor panels:

- need space/building
- only available when building open
- immobile
- if high tech, prone to breaking

Electronic interpretation

Websites, audio guides, podcasts, interactive screens, CD Roms

Advantages

- appeals to a wide audience including younger people
- not intrusive in the landscape
- opportunities for creative and exciting use of design, sound and/or images
- can be multi-layered
- opportunities for creative characterisation
- can be multilingual
- can be used as story-telling
- material that can be downloaded from the internet is accessible from some people's home or own equipment
- information is easily updated
- can be innovative and interactive

Disadvantages

- relatively expensive start up costs
- some people unconfident using ICT
- users need access to specialist equipment – a computer, mobile phone, audio equipment, MP3 etc
- possible safety issues associated with use
- can isolate users from each other and from the site features
- important operational issues such as hire, storage and charging of equipment
- technology is developing rapidly so systems vulnerable to dating quickly
- equipment can develop faults easily
- vulnerable to damage and theft
- can be expensive to operate
- require regular maintenance e.g. charging batteries for mobile devices

Appendix 5: Review of current Interpretative provision and partnerships

Please go to K:\documents\allstaff\Interpretation for the latest review