

BUSINESS AND IMPROVEMENT

PLAN 2006/09

PART 1 (APRIL 2006)



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.

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Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Business and Improvement Plan 2006/09 Part 1

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1. CORPORATE AIM AND VISION

The Aim, Vision and Strategic Intentions of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority were 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 2 of the Business and Improvement Plan.

2. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

The Authority has set the following fourteen medium term Corporate Objectives for 2006/2009

1. Demonstrate sustainable land management on three NPA-owned sites by March 2007 in order to become exemplars of best practice.
2. To improve the conservation and enhancement of the Park's unique built environment, by raising the awareness of the Physical Regeneration Fund in Brecon, Crickhowell and Talgarth.
3. Integrate sustainable design principles into the development control process through the publication of the sustainable design guide and supplementary planning guidance by March 2007.
4. Improve customer services to Development Control and Visitor Services by implementing action plans by March 2007.
5. Make the Park more accessible and welcoming to a wider range of visitors by implementing the social inclusion strategy by March 2008.
6. Improve the Rights of Way network by implementing Stage 1 of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan by January 2007, and introducing a positive management regime for the use of off road vehicles.
7. Redevelop and launch a new Website to allow greater public access to the National Park and its services by March 2007.
8. Develop the Corporate Governance infrastructure to improve decision making, performance management and business planning by March 2008.
9. Produce socially inclusive Education and Interpretation Strategies by March 2007.
10. Apply Geopark status to raise awareness of the geological heritage for the benefit of the communities in and around the Fforest Fawr Geopark area by implementing the action plan by October 2008.
11. Make the best use of the National Park status to help local Communities adapt to climate and CAP change by developing best practice examples and demonstrations at the NPVC and Mynydd Illtyd by December 2006.
12. To instil the principles of sustainable development throughout the Authority and its work by developing and maintaining appropriate policies in up to date management and development plans.
13. Embedding sound environmental resource management by achieving Green Dragon level 4 by March 2007.

14. To promote sustainable tourism principles by achieving the European Sustainable Tourism Charter by October 2007.

3. SUMMARY OF RISK ASSESSMENT

The Authority carried out its Whole Authority Analysis Assessment as required under the National Assembly's Wales Programme for Improvement in 2002. The Authority also employed risk consultants from Marsh UK Ltd to assess risks to the Authority.

The Assessment was inspected by the Wales Audit Office and a joint action plan was drawn up between the Authority and the Wales Audit Office. Risks are assessed on an annual basis through consultation with stakeholders, members and staff and a revised action plan is drawn up at the beginning of every financial year. The work is then built into the Corporate Work Programme, subject to resources and progress is reported to the Authority through the Corporate Resources Committee.

The most significant risks with potential strategic impact to be managed during 2006/07 are:-

- Reviewing and Improving the Corporate Governance Arrangements to facilitate better decision making to secure improvement in service delivery.
- Capacity building through Management Training
- Reviewing the customer care complaints processes to ensure the customer is at the core of the Authority
- Lack of Strategic Continuity Planning
- Developing a Customer care/Consultation strategy to engage with the customer, stakeholder and community.
- Continue to improve the Development Control Service Delivery.

4. HIGH LEVEL KEY WORK ACTIVITIES

The Authority has put in place the following range of high level key work activities to support the delivery of the above Corporate Improvement Objectives and the additional specific targets set out in the Strategic Grant Letter from the Welsh Assembly Government.

- To improve the ecological conditions of three chosen sites through bracken and gorse control, bog restoration and scrub willow control and demonstrate the wider applicability of these techniques.

- To streamline grant application procedures wherever possible, advertise the existence of the Physical Regeneration Fund scheme and to prioritise applications against the Buildings at Risk Register
- To draft and publish a Sustainable Development Design Guide ('the Guide') and to adopt Supplementary Planning Guidance based on the Guide. All Planning Officers to score planning applications using the sustainability checklist in the Guide and to make recommendations to the planning committee accordingly.
- Analyse customer service success and failure and regularly review the results of visitor satisfaction surveys and questionnaires, identifying trends and implementing any necessary changes. Produce a 'Customer Service Charter'.
- Ensure up to date Social Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan; provide awareness training on social inclusion/exclusion for members and staff. Implement the Social Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan; monitor and evaluate outcomes against outputs.
- Identify actions for rights of way improvements that can be carried out within existing resource constraints; seek funding for improvements currently un-resourced; research feasibility of commercial sponsorship of routes; Production of a hierarchy of trails for vehicular use and target improvements within the Area Action Plans.
- Appoint a web-master; establish an internal review group to draw up and implement a detailed web site project plan; major PR launch of new web site and establish continual monitoring of the site.
- Prepare and implement and Action Plan and timetable to develop the Corporate Governance Infrastructure; through regular meetings and monitoring, engage all staff and members in delivery of the Corporate Business Plan; Full participation in the Pan Wales Performance Management System software project; Establish a working group to devise an integrated document management handling system; Complete an overview of the terms of reference for all Brecon Beacons National Park Staff.
- To develop outreach resources for the Mosaic Project; extend the geographical spread of education services to the south of the Park; Research the feasibility of a joint web-based facility for the three Welsh National Parks to enhance accessibility; Widen Access to the Events Programme.
- To devise and Action Plan to achieve Green Dragon Level Four.
- To establish a sustainable tourism steering group to provide direction for appointed tourism consultant ensuring six trade members from the Strategic Tourism Partnership are appointed to the group; develop draft strategy and organise public consultation; submit application for the European Sustainable Tourism Charter.

5. PLANS FOR EFFICIENCY SAVINGS IN 2006/07

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has identified the following efficiency savings to be implemented throughout 2006/07:

- Back Office Services - in particular printing, stationery and postage - to identify more economical methods of purchase and delivery through joint procurement with other Unitary Authorities based within the National Park boundary.
- Travel and Transport - a working group has been established to consider cost effective methods of delivery of internal transport measures including the use of pool cars, encouraging car share schemes and effective delivery of estate warden service through increasing working hours to reduce overall use of vehicle fleet.
- Corporate and Democratic savings - through reducing the numbers of meetings and members attendance ensure a more effective and efficient delivery of Corporate and Democratic services.
- Overall staff savings through shared posts and more flexible ways of working.
- Increase review of Insurance premium renewals to eighteen months instead of the standard twelve months to attract potential savings through more favourable market rates.
- Overall increase of car parking charges for 06/07 on National Park owned sites.
- Promote and encourage more partnership working opportunities to attract external funding for joint projects within the National Park.
- More effective retail merchandising at National Park Visitor Centre outlets increasing range and profit margins.

6. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2006/07

KEY CORE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

No.	Performance Indicator	04/05 Outcome	05/06 Target	06/07 Target
CFH/002	Level of general financial reserves both earmarked and unallocated as a percentage of the annual budget requirement.	No Target set	No Target set	4% of net Budget
CHR/001	a) The percentage of employees who leave the employment of the local authority, whether on a voluntary or involuntary basis.	22.1%	10%	10%
CHR/002	The number of working days/ shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence.	15.6days 5.98%	7.44days 3%	7.44days 3%
CHR/003	The number of ill-health retirements as a percentage of the local authority's workforce.	0%	0%	0%
PLA/001	a) The stage of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) process that the authority has most recently completed.	N/A	Receipt of Inspector s Report March 2006	Publish UDP Dec 2006
	b) The stage of the Local Development Plan (LDP) process that the authority has most recently completed.	N/A	Inquiry complete d Oct 2005. Inspector s report March 2006	Commenc e LDP process Feb 2006 first draft due 31 Sep 07.
	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	N/A	Dates not yet agreed with inspector ate	N/A
PLA/002	The percentage of planning applications determined during the year that were approved.	87%	79.4%	Upper Quartile
PLA/003	a) The number of appeals that were determined during the year, and b) The percentage of these determined appeals that upheld the authority's decision, in relation to: i) Planning application decisions ii) Enforcement notices	N/A N/A N/A	0 100% 100%	0 100% 100%
PLA/004	a) The percentage of major planning applications determined during the year within 13 weeks, b) The percentage of minor planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks, c) The percentage of householder planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks, d) The percentage of all other planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks.	N/A N/A N/A N/A	50% 60% 80% 80%	50% 80% 80% 80%
PLA/005	The percentage of enforcement complaints resolved during the year within 12 weeks of receipt.	N/A	75%	75%
TH9	The percentage of total lengths of footpaths and other rights of way which are easy to use by members of the public.	73.68%	75%	75%

KEY LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

No.	Performance Indicator	04/05 Outcome	05/06 Target	06/07 Target
	Chief Executive			
BBHR 1	The percentage of employees from ethnic communities	2.27%	2.27%	2.27%
BBHR 2	Lead times for recruitment	5 wks	6 wks	5 wks
BBDS 3	a. Number of training sessions made available to individual Members during the year. b. Number of Members attending session.	N/A	6 Sessions	6 Sessions
BBDS 4	Achieve level 4 of the Green Dragon award	N/A	Level 3	Level 4
BB CPR 1	Number of press release linked to three key areas of Future Directions.	35	30	30
BB CPR 2	Number of press releases/statements taken up by the media.	50	30	40
BB CPR 3	Number of Updates produced for staff, members and volunteers	N/A	12	12
BB CPR 4	Number of clipsheets circulated to members and staff.	15	12	12
BB CPR 5	Number of Park Updates produced for Communities, WAG, Councils and Partner organisations.	N/A	12	12
BB CPR 6	To compile and access an annual staff communications survey.	N/A	1	1
BB CPR 7	Number of hits on website	3,316,934	250,000	250,000
	Business Unit			
BBF1	Percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days.	90%	100%	100%
BBF2	Percentage of budget monitoring reports for CMT sent out by agreed deadlines.	N/A	100%	100%
BBL1	Reply to all internal written correspondence within 15 working days.	100%	85%	85%
BBIT1	Priority A calls completed on time (4 working hours)	98.6%	95%	95%
BBIT2	Priority B calls completed on time (1 working day)	96.8%	95%	95%
BBIT3	Priority C calls completed on time (1 working week)	94.7%	95%	95%
BB ADM 1	Percentage of letters replied to or acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.	58%	100%	100%
BB ADM 2	Percentage of letters acknowledged that receive a full reply in 20 working days.	96%	100%	100%
BB ADM 3	Percentage of letters received that are written in Welsh and receive a reply in Welsh.	100%	100%	100%
BB ADM 4	Percentage of complaints that received a full response within 20 working days of receipt.	60%	85%	85%
BB ADM 5	Percentage of complaints that were replied to or acknowledged within 5 working days	58%	100%	100%
BB CD1	The number of complaints to an Ombudsman classified as Maladministration.	0%	0%	0%
BB CD2	Business Improvement Plan completed by 30 Oct and without any audit qualification.	Completed by 30th June	Complete by 30 th June	Complete by 30 th Oct 06
	Countryside			
BB ED1	Number of individuals on non-residential outreach staff-led activities 3800	3868	4500	3800
BB ED2	Percentage of schools in and on the periphery of the Park worked with 75	32%	50%	75%
BB	Number of individuals on non-residential centre-	2753	3000	3000

ED3	based staff-led activities e.g. CYNCP & NPVC 3000			
BB ED4	Number of student days on residential staff-led activities 3000	2912	3000	3000
BB ED5	Percentage of evaluations recording "Good" or above	100%	80%	95%
BB ED6	Number of groups dealt with in welsh	7	7	16
BB INFO 1	Increase income at National Park Information Centres by 5% to £40,000	-8.5%	Increase by 5%	5% TO £40,000
BBCYNCP 1	Increase income at Craig y Nos by 9% to £27,700	-19.9%	Increase by 5%	9% TO £27,700
BB NPVC 1	Increase income at National Park Visitor Centre by 10% to £116,800	-19%	Increase by 10%	10% TO £116,800
BB NPVC 2	Percentage of visitors highly satisfied with visit to tea rooms good or above	99%	85%	90%
BB NPVC 3	Increase operating surplus at tea rooms by 79% to £27,410	1248%	Increase by 5%	79% TO £27,410
BB NPVC 4	Percentage of Welsh foods sold	82%	75%	80%
BB RTT1	Number of Tourism Businesses significantly engaged with by the NPA	225	25	450
	Conservation and Community			
BB COM1	Amount of money levered in from public/private/voluntary sector and the public ratio as a result of SDF, including in kind contributions	N/A	N/A	1:1
BB COM 2	Training on social inclusion for Members and Staff	N/A	N/A	2
BB COM 3	10 community led events to be held by March 07	N/A	N/A	10

7. CONTACT DETAILS

Further details or information can be obtained from the Authority's website www.breconbeacons.org or by contacting our head office at:

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