

Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council Cyngor Tref Nant-y-glo a Blaenau

Mr S. Bartlett. C. H. Ed, Town Clerk / Treasurer.
Council Offices, Integrated Children's Centre, High Street. Blaina. NP13 3BN.
Swyddfa r Cyngor, Y-Stryd Fawr. Blaenau. NP13 3BN. Tel 01495 - 292817
e mail steven_bartlett@btconnect.com

Mr V. Maher MA
Inspector
Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan
C/o General Offices
Steelworks Road
Ebbw Vale
NP23 6DN

14th May 2012

Dear Mr Maher

Re: Local Development Plan

Please find below the considered response of Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council.

Q 1. "Is the Council giving unfair priority to development in centre's such as Ebbw Vale, at the expense of Blaina and other centre's?"

The Town Council considers that Blaina being located in the Ebbw Fach Valley midway between the market town of Brynmawr and the larger town of Abertillery with Ebbw Vale being only a short journey of 8 miles away will always be at a disadvantage, however Blaina is not only not receiving a fairness of priority but is not appearing to receive commercial regeneration at all, it is as if Blaina is being allowed to shut down.

The High Street of Blaina was once a thriving shopping centre able to boast of having the largest co-operative stores in this area. However, the decline of the traditional industries of iron and coal has in turn led to a shedding of jobs by other employers.

To stem the commercial decline of local shopping centre's across Wales, Unitary Authorities, ours being Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, have commissioned regeneration programmes by way of the European Objective One programme or direct from the Welsh Assembly unfortunately Blaenau Gwent CBC has not seen fit to include Blaina in any such programme.

An extensive programme of regeneration is taking place in Ebbw Vale particularly at the works site. Regeneration is also taking place in the immediate neighbouring towns of Abertillery and Brynmawr. Please see Appendix 1) Ebbw Vale Town Centre Regeneration.

Abertillery, two miles south of Blaina has benefitted greatly from the activities of a Unitary Authority led programme and have recently announced a £13million regeneration programme. Please see Appendix 2) Abertillery Town Centre Regeneration.

Brynmawr, two miles north of Blaina is to benefit by the LDP proposal to designate Brynmawr as a district shopping centre by justification of a link walkway to the Nantyglo Lakeside Retail Park. (LDP pages 10 & 11) Appendix 3

It is noted that Blaina is being reclassified as a local town. A study of the LDP does not reveal any meaningful definition of a local town other than (page 27 para 6.10. LDP), which makes great play of the Salem Chapel project, whilst the assistance provided by the Unitary Authority for the recent refurbishment of Salem Chapel is much appreciated, it must be pointed out that Salem Chapel is owned by Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council and the development is being driven forward by the Nantyglo and Blaina Charter Group, a registered charity on which the town council has four representatives and provides the secretariat.

The plan for Blaina consists of the Blaina Ward Regeneration Action Plan dated October 2011, To be implemented by the Blaina Action Plan implementation Group which to date has held two meetings 14th February 2012 and 24th April 2012.
Please see Appendix 4 & 4A

It is considered that the Blaenau Gwent LDP and its predecessor the Unitary Development Plan 2002 are unjust towards Blaina in that, Blaina is the only recognised shopping centre in which a proposed change of use retail to dwelling on the ground floor of commercial premises is to be permitted.



S. Bartlett
Town Clerk.



What would you like to do?

Pay for it

Report it

Request it

Say It

Find It

Browse by Service:

Home

Regeneration

Regeneration Projects

Ebbw Vale

Ebbw Vale



£12.2m funding for Ebbw Vale town centre

Major funding of £12.2m has been secured to revitalise Ebbw Vale town centre and create an attractive hub for visitors and local people.

The funding approvals from the Welsh European Funding Office and the Welsh Assembly Government will help boost the local economy, safeguard jobs and create employment opportunities in the retail and business sector.

The town centre regeneration scheme is backed by the European Regional Development Fund, Targeted Match Fund and the Heads of the Valleys programme through the Welsh Assembly Government. In addition, over £1m of funding will be provided by Blaenau Gwent Council and private sources.

This regeneration project includes:

- **Northern Gateway Public Realm Enhancements** which have recently been completed. This scheme along Market Street and James Street includes new paving, lighting, guard rails and a new clock.
- Church Street Regeneration
- Physical Regeneration Grants
- Cross Valley Community Links
- Former Steelworks, Town Centre/Church Street
- **Public Realm Enhancements** rear of Bethcar Street and improved bus interchange and taxi rank
- Bank Square, Bethcar Street
- Screening of service yard rear of Bethcar Street

Through this regeneration programme, the town will undergo a transformation with improvements to Church Street to include new paving, lighting, CCTV and artworks. Working with partners including United Welsh Housing Association, Promo Cymru, EVAD and Private Sector Investors the commercial/community properties in this area will be improved.

Physical Regeneration Grants are available for the improvement of commercial and community buildings. This scheme will also see improvements to the pedestrian links at Christ Church Hill, Station Road/Steel Works Road and Queen Square Hill/The Rookery.

These links will form important pedestrian gateways to and from The Works and will give local residents access to the new rail link, hospital, learning campus, genealogy centre and the proposed theatre and leisure centre. This will also give residents and people working on the redeveloped site access to a vibrant town centre.

An improved public open space incorporating a landmark art feature at Bank Square is planned. There will also be a new iconic Bus Interchange and Taxi Rank on Bethcar Street, which will help improve access to the town while reducing the dependency on cars.

[Top ▲](#)

Print friendly
version

Feedback
on this page



Municipal Offices, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale, NP23 6XB Tel: 01495 311556 E-mail: info@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk



What would you like to do?
Pay for it
Report it
Request it
Say It
Find It

Abertillery

£13million revamp for Abertillery Town Centre

Abertillery Town Centre is to receive a £13million funding boost for further regeneration works.

The Welsh Government has confirmed that Blaenau Gwent Council has been successful in a bid for funding to help boost the economic development of the town centre and provide a better environment for the local community and businesses as well as attracting visitors and potential investors to the town.

Welsh Government Business Minister, Jane Hutt AM, and Deputy Minister for Regeneration, Jocelyn Davies AM, announced a £10m Welsh Government funding package, which includes support from the European Regional Development Fund, Targeted Match Fund and Heads of the Valleys programme. The remainder of the funding will come from the Council and private sector resources.

Key town centre streets will receive a makeover including Church Street, High Street, Somerset Street and work will continue on Foundry Square.

Tillery Street will undergo a transformation and works to improve derelict and prominent buildings in the town will get underway, including Abertillery Miners' Institute. The town centre car park will also be refurbished and CCTV equipment installed. A new traffic scheme will improve the flow of vehicles around the town.

Funding will also be available for existing and new businesses to create or safeguard jobs, as well as for improvements to the appearance of commercial properties.

Councillor Don Wilcox, the Council's Executive Member for Regeneration said:

"This is great news. We have worked closely and positively with Welsh Government Ministers and officials to ensure the best possible outcome for the people of Abertillery.

"I would like to thank our regeneration officers who moved quickly to reprofile projects within the Abertillery Regeneration bid to ensure that Targeted Match Funding could be achieved and that we are able to move forward to the next stage in this exciting town centre regeneration project."

FORMER TRINITY CHAPEL, ABERTILLERY – PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT

The former Trinity Chapel building on Church Street in Abertillery town centre was acquired by BGCBC in July 2010. This is a key building in the town, with a prime position on Church Street.

The Council have recently commissioned Quarterbridge, specialist market development management consultants, to carry out a feasibility study and proposals for conversion of the building into an indoor market facility with other complimentary uses. BGCBC architects, in conjunction with Quarterbridge, have produced the designs for the refurbishment of the interior and exterior of the building to significantly enhance this key building in the heart of the Town.

Public consultation on the building design and proposed market venture took place in April 2011 and feedback from the local community to date has been very positive in relation to the proposals. A steering group consisting of local business and community representation has been set up to help inform the feasibility work for the project. Further public and business consultations will also be undertaken.

EU and Heads of the Valley Programme funding is helping to support the delivery of this project. Refurbishment works are due to commence in January 2012 and the building is planned to be operational by Summer/Autumn 2012.

Browse by Service:

Home

Regeneration

Regeneration Projects

Abertillery



[Top ▲](#)

[Print friendly version](#)

[Feedback on this page](#)



Municipal Offices, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale, NP23 6XB Tel: 01495 311556 E-mail: info@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

RETAILING BACKGROUND PAPER

- 4.13 The Tredegar Townscape Initiative, prepared by Capita Symonds, is split into two distinct parts. Part 1 contains a Conservation Area Appraisal which outlines and defines the unique heritage and special interest of the area. Part 2 is a design guide which will help secure designs that are sustainable and respect and enhance their townscape setting.
- 4.14 In terms of retailing, a conservation area has been designated in the southern part of Tredegar Town Centre covering Castle Street, The Circle and part of Morgan Street. The aim of the Tredegar Townscape Initiative – Conservation Area Appraisal & Design Guide is to ensure the vitality of the town centre whilst also retaining and enhancing its historic and architectural character.

The Brynmawr Urban Design Strategy and Masterplan (2001)

- 4.15 In 2001, the decline of Brynmawr was identified as a concern by the Welsh Assembly Government and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. In response, Macgregor Smith in association with DTZ were commissioned to produce an Urban Design Strategy and Masterplan for the town. The strategy set out a framework to shape the future regeneration of Brynmawr, which was based on addressing the following retailing issues:
- To retain existing employment and commercial activities within the town;
 - To create a high quality environment meeting the requirements of the town's existing and future generations;
 - To provide a general quality of environment which helps to improve the overall image of the area to potential investors and visitors;
 - To facilitate and support new investment in the town which strengthens and diversifies the town's economic base; and
 - To provide accessibility for all to and within the town, and make the town a safe and attractive living and working environment.
- 4.16 In response to the above issues, the following retailing objectives for the strategy were developed:
- To engender the revitalisation of the town centre;
 - To create a unique and attractive destination for visitors and local residents, with a distinctive sense of place;
 - To review traffic management and parking issues to ensure optimum efficiency of traffic movement and use of the car park areas;
 - To provide improved public amenity facilities for the local community, in particular for young people; and
 - To identify opportunities for future economic development within the town.
- ✕ 4.17 The strategy identified that it was important to create effective linkages between the town centre, the Lakeside housing development and the Asda store and adjacent retail units which are now developed and known as Lakeside Retail Park.

Brynmawr Town Centre Visioning Report for Link Sites (October 2008)

- 4.18 In response to the Brynmawr Urban Design Strategy and Masterplan, Macgregor Smith in association with DTZ, prepared a Brynmawr Town Centre Visioning Report for Link Sites.
- X 4.19 The report identified the key link site between the existing town centre and the Lakeside development as the NMC factory and the Bus Depot. The redevelopment of the site is fundamental to the successful regeneration of Brynmawr District Town Centre. The site is located mid way between Lakeside Retail Park and Brynmawr District Town Centre. The site is a triangular piece of land covering 2.95 ha. The site contains large-scale factory buildings from its former use.
- 4.20 The Report has identified that *“the redevelopment of the site will help to ensure that the town centre benefits from the presence of the Asda superstore and Lakeside Retail Park development.”* The Report has assessed the development potential of the site and has identified the following elements:
 - **Residential** – maximum of 60 houses including 10% affordable housing; and
 - **Commercial / Leisure/ Community Facility opportunity** to act as an active link between Brynmawr District Town Centre and Lakeside Retail Park.
- 4.21 The residential element to the redevelopment of the site will sustain and increase the residential population which in turn will help regenerate the town centre by increasing footfall.
- 4.22 The leisure offer of Brynmawr is currently considered to be limited and the potential exists to develop a commercial / leisure / community facility, which would help to increase facilities for the community and attract more visitors to the town.
- 4.23 The Local Development Plan reflects the findings of this report and allocates the site for mixed-use development.

Abertillery Regeneration Strategy (November 2006)

- 4.24 Powell Dobson Urbanists were appointed in September 2005 to prepare a regeneration strategy for Abertillery town centre.
- 4.25 The Abertillery Regeneration Strategy identifies a vision, strategy and objectives for Abertillery town centre. To deliver the strategy and the sustainable regeneration of Abertillery, a number of projects have been identified.
- 4.26 The projects have been organised into 4 key project groups:
 - Redefining the town centre boundary and offer;
 - Public Realm Enhancements;
 - Traffic Management Enhancements; and
 - Improving Strategic Links.



Dynged Eiddoried Eira
Blaenau Gwent
County Borough Council

APPENDIX 11

Enlarge Screen Text Here: A A A

What would you like to do?

Pay for it

Report it

Request it

Say It

Find It

Blaina

BLAINA ACTION PLAN

BGCBC has worked with local partners to develop the Blaina Regeneration Action Plan that will be used in efforts to secure funding and direct future regeneration activity within the town.

An Implementation Group has been established to progress the implementation of projects contained within the Blaina Action Plan which was approved by BGCBC Executive Committee in December 2011.

The Group consists of representatives from organisations that have been identified as either the lead or a key partner to take forward projects listed in the Action Plan.

The Group first met in February 2012 and will meet at least quarterly to drive forward delivery of the Action Plan.

For more information on the specific projects please contact Jane Lee, BGCBC on 01495 355534 or email jane.lee@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk.

Print friendly version

Feedback on this page

Browse by Service:

Home

Regeneration

Regeneration Projects

Blaina

Click on the Blaina Action Plan PDF below to download and print the document.

Related Documents

Blaina Action Plan - 287.29kb



Municipal Offices, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale, NP23 6XB Tel: 01495 311556 E-mail: info@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

**NOTES OF THE BLAINA ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GROUP
HELD ON TUESDAY 14TH FEBRUARY 2012 AT THE
COMMUNITIES FIRST OFFICES, BLAINA**

PRESENT

Caroline Matthews	BGCBC Regeneration
PCSO Craig Whistance	Gwent Police
Insp Gavin Clifton	Gwent Police
Lesley Lewis	MIMICs
Yvonne Lewis	BGCBC
R Pagett	Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council
Lydia King	WAFTRA
Karin Lamb	BGCBC Regeneration
Garth Collier	BGCBC
Alyson Tippings	BGCBC Leisure
Lindsay Sims	BGCBC Environmental Services
Ceri Jones	Blaina Communities First

1. APOLOGIES

Owain Roberts	BGCBC Private Sector Housing
Dave Watkins	BGCBC Leisure
Mark Price	BGCBC Regeneration

2. INTRODUCTION

JL thanked all for attending and briefly outlined the background to the preparation of the plan.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

A draft terms of reference for the group. It was agreed that the frequency of the meetings should be bi-monthly.

**JL to amend
ToR and
recirculate**

4. PROJECT MATRIX UPDATE

The individual projects in the action plan were discussed and the project matrix will be updated according. The main actions resulting from these discussions are set out below:

**JL to update
matrix**

- **Chamber of Trade** – to discuss hanging baskets throughout the town in 2012, making Blaina a Fairtrade town, advertising town centre facilities to users of Ebbw Fach Trail. Insp G Clifton agreed to

**KL to
progress**

attend a Chamber of Trade meeting

- **Gwent Police** – consideration to be given to the purchase of ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) cameras for Blaina. These help Gwent Police identify criminals and their location from the vehicle registration. The purchase of Bluetooth unit for Blaina was suggested. This can help with publicity for the town as messages can be sent to mobile phones on events in the town, promotions, civic messages etc. Cost approx £500 per unit, each unit approx 350 metre coverage.

5. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The task & finish groups set up and lead partners will have the responsibility of identifying and securing the necessary funding to take forward the projects.

Members of the group are encouraged to share funding opportunities with others in case other projects would be eligible.

6. PUBLICITY OPPORTUNITIES

The plan is to be uploaded to the BGCBC website.

JL to arrange

A press release will be drafted to publicise the establishment of the Implementation Group.

JL to draft

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday 24th April, 10am, Communities First Offices, Blaina

**BLAINA ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GROUP TO BE
HELD ON TUESDAY 24TH APRIL 2012, 10AM AT BLAINA
COMMUNITIES FIRST OFFICES**

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the last meeting held in 14th Feb 2012
3. Matters Arising
4. Project Updates
 - Chamber of Trade
 - Kings Head
 - Street Art
 - Highway Issues
 - Ebbw Fach Trail
5. Funding Opportunities
6. Publicity Opportunities
7. AOB
8. Dates of future meetings

**NOTES OF THE BLAINA ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GROUP
HELD ON TUESDAY 24TH APRIL 2012 AT THE
COMMUNITIES FIRST OFFICES, BLAINA**

PRESENT

Lesley Lewis	MIMICs
Cllr Yvonne Lewis	BGCBC
R Pagett	Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council
Lydia King	WAFTRA
Cllr Garth Collier	BGCBC
Alyson Tippings	BGCBC Leisure
Jane Lee	BGCBC Regeneration
Ceri Jones	Blaina Communities First
Alun Lewis	Cwmcelyn TRA

1. APOLOGIES

Owain Roberts	BGCBC Private Sector Housing
Cllr Des Hillman	BGCBC
Mark Price	BGCBC Regeneration
Karin Lamb	BGCBC Regeneration
Lindsay Sims	BGCBC Environmental Services
Caroline Matthews	BGCBC Regeneration
Chloe Williams	Tai Calon

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Minutes of meeting held 14th Feb were agreed

3. MATTERS ARISING

Alun Lewis requested a copy of the terms of reference **JL to send**

ANPR cameras and Bluetooth – more detail to be provided to the next meeting **JL to prepare**

4. PROJECT UPDATES

Chamber of Trade

- Hanging baskets throughout the town in 2012 – all agreed that this would be worthwhile and should include planters on roundabout at northern end of town. Funding to be secured. Town Council to be contacted. **JL to write to Town Council**
- Arrangements for watering the hanging baskets to be **AL and KL to**

progressed. AL to investigate watering and KL to ask if traders would be willing to water baskets near their shop **progress**

- o Making Blaina a Fairtrade town – AT to send info to the Chamber of Trade **AT to send Fairtrade info**

Kings Head

Both Kings Head and No 136 in the ownership of United Welsh Housing Association. Security will erected on site on shortly. Press release to be issued shortly **JL to arrange a press release**

Street Art

It was agreed that the owners of the vacant businesses should be contacted to ask if they would give permission for artwork to be placed on their shopfronts. **KL to progress**

A request was made for a vacant shop to be considered as a showcase for local artists. Funding would need to be identified. A suggestion was made that this could be incorporated into an existing shop if surplus space. **JL to progress with KL**

Highway Issues

A representative from Highways has been asked to attend a Chamber of Trade meeting. GC to ask Chamber of Trade if this could be an open meeting **GC to discuss with Chamber of Trade**

Ebbw Fach Trail

Interpretation has been installed at Westside and Cwmcelyn. Leaflet in production and website up and running. Info regarding the Blaina Action Plan to be incorporated into EFT website. **JL to submit info to EFT web editor**

The EFT should run alongside the allotments in Westside but this link has not been completed due to an ongoing problem with a smallholder. It was agreed that a letter from this group is sent to Environmental Health. AL to request that the EFT group do the same. **JL to write to Env. Health AL to raise at EFT group**

In The Pink Walk arranged for 9th Sept.

5. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

JL informed the group that Tidy Towns funding is available and that two applications for funding will be made. One for community garden area opposite St Peters Church and one **JL to submit**

for the creation of an area off Hope Street for a market/events area.

6. PUBLICITY OPPORTUNITIES

Press release to be issued on Kings Head redevelopment

7. AOB

AT informed groups that there is a RHS (Royal Horticultural Society) award titled 'It's Your Neighbourhood' which supports local projects. More information can be found on the RHS website <http://www.rhs.org.uk/Gardening/Community-gardening/It-s-Your-Neighbourhood>

Tourism Ambassador Training – This was offered to traders but no takers. It was agreed that this should be offered to Charter group, EFT members and BHAG.

AT to write to groups

Phoenix Fund – Funding available for running domestic abuse awareness. CJ has more info

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting has been scheduled for **Tuesday 26th June, 10am**, Communities First Offices, Blaina

