

Newsletter

Beaufort Hill Ponds & Woodland Preservation Society

What exactly is the Beaufort Hill Ponds & Woodland Preservation Society ??



The Society was formed in March 2005 in response to the threatened loss of the Beaufort Ponds, which are presently owned by the Corus Steel Company. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council owns the site, a reclaimed former industrial area, just south of the the Heads of the Valleys road. Negotiations to take over the ownership of the adjacent ponds from Corus are almost completed. The society is a newly formed company, limited by guarantee, and was incorporated on February 28th 2006. It is managed by a board of directors, currently consisting of fifteen directors who represent a cross section of the community

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Plans for the development of the Woodland — Extracts taken from a Forestry Commission Document.

The Society, with the Local Authority, is now planning to create a new community woodland in the wild open space around us, and to make it an integral part of a chain of woodlands across the whole area.

The £16 million Forestry Commission Wales community woodland project funded by the European Union (Objective One) and Welsh Assembly Government, will pay for the borough's latest green initiative.

A grant of almost £100,000 from Cydcoed-Woods for All, will cover the cost of all work to be undertaken on our site.

After Corus pulled out of the area, which had become a natural wildlife haven, the plan had been to do away with the lakes – a favourite place for local people to visit.

“The ponds have always had an attraction for local people, and now we want to make the site even more attractive to even more people,” said society chairman Rex Herbert. “By up-grading the paths and improving access we hope to attract visitors from further away, as well as making the area available all year round.”

New site gateways – designed through an artist in residence and made by a local metal-worker working with local schools – are aimed at making the new woodland more welcoming. Signage and interpretation will explain some of the heritage of the area – the ponds are linked with the early days of the industrial revolution and fed water down to the Nantyglo Ironworks. An all-ability circular path round the ponds will make it easier for disabled people to enjoy the site and the planting of hundreds of trees will be carried out by local people, helped by tree specialists.



Local Schools visit the Woodland



On Tuesday October 2nd, Garnlydan Primary, Pen-Y-Cwm and Beaufort Hill Primary schools visited the site. They were shown the site by the B.G.C.B.C Biodiversity officer Ms. Melanie Stewart and ecologist Ms. Deborah Beeson. They explained the significance of the site as a wildlife haven and engaged the children in a number of themed on site activities.

They were accompanied by the artistic metal worker Mr Suraj Guha.

The schools are going to design embellishments which will be incorporated into the three entrance gates using three different themes. Garnlydan School will focus on 'AIR' Pen-y-Cwm 'LAND' and Beaufort Hill 'WATER'.

Mr Phill Brookman, Headteacher at Beaufort Hill Primary School, stated " We are very pleased to be involved in

this project, which I'm sure will benefit both children and the wider community."

All involved in this project would like to thank Mr Vaughan Lewis, Coed Cymru Woodland Officer, for his help and support in this development.

Society Directors - below is a list of our Company Directors

Contact :- Graham Hughes (Company secretary)

' Craig-y-Don ', 10 Chandlers Road

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Tel :- 01495 306110

Rex Herbert MBE - Chairman

Graham Hughes - Company Secretary

Rosemary Moreton - Secretary

Gill Jones - Treasurer

Roy Lynch - Membership Secretary

Jeff Williams - Website Editor

Lindsay James

Margaret Penny

Christine Powell - Morris

Derek Dibble

George Henry

Des Markey

Eric Smith

David White

Gordon Williams



Society Website

We have recently constructed a website, which we think will be of interest to everybody.

Please take a look at the photographs in our Gallery, leave a comment in our Guestbook or Email an Enquiry.

The website is regularly updated with news of the development of the Woodland site.

The Website name is - **www.beauforthillwoodlands.btik.com**.

As it is a relatively new website, you may not be able to find us yet on all the Search Engines, although you can via the main ones, i.e. **GOOGLE** and **YAHOO**. One way of finding our website, is by accessing **www.communitykit.co.uk** and follow the instructions to view via the Locator Map.