

BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK



**PERSPECTIVES
on
PARTICIPATORY PLANNING**

Belfast - 4th December 2007

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**Local Development Frameworks
and
Statements of Community Involvement**



The Brecon Beacons National Park Experience

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What I am going to talk about:



Context
– National Parks
– Planning in Wales

Delivery Agreement
• Project timetable
• Community Involvement Scheme
• SA/SEA/HRA with our 2 Statutory Plans

Commentary
What's hot, what's not

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Context -Why do we exist?



- **National Park Act 1949**
– A landscape designation
- **Brecon Beacons 1957**
– A committee of 4 County Councils
- **Environment Act 1995**
- **BBNPA became an independent local Authority in 1996**

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OUR 1st PURPOSE



To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park

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OUR 2nd PURPOSE



- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public

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BUT! Section 62 Environment Act:



- If it appears that there is a conflict between those purposes
- greater weight shall be attach to the purpose to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage

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OUR DUTY



- To foster the economic and social well-being of the local community

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Economic Activity



Encourage high and stable levels of economic activity in the local economy, compatible with the National Park designation

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Thriving Healthy Communities



Encourage vibrant local communities with:

- pride of place,
- distinctive character,
- access to affordable housing and
- an appropriate level of modern facilities

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Sustainable Transport



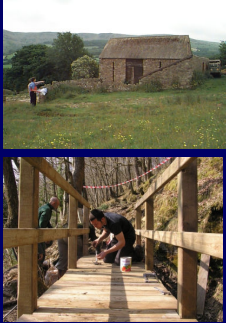
Encourage the provision of a sustainable transport network that enhances accessibility for local communities and visitors, whilst reducing wherever possible the reliance on private motor vehicles



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Statutory responsibilities



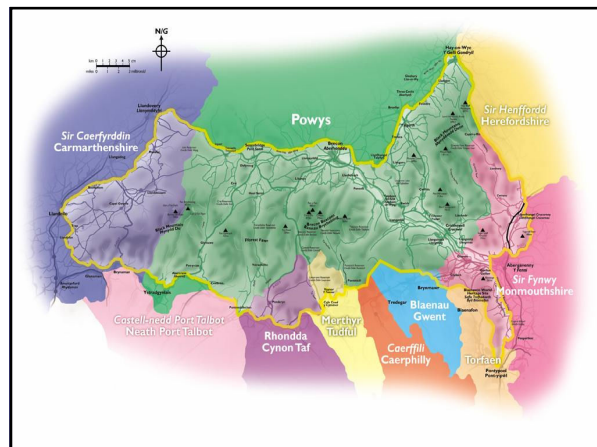
- Local Planning Authority [LDP]
- National Park Management Plan
- Access Authority (CROW Act 2000)
- Delegated R0W responsibility

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The National Park Authority consists of 24 members



- Powys 8
- Carmarthenshire 2
- Monmouthshire 2
- Merthyr Tydfil 1
- Blaenau Gwent 1
- Torfaen 1
- Rhondda Cynon Taf 1
- Assembly nominees 8

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The National Park Management Plan

A 5 year statutory plan for the geographic area of the Park. Although written by the NPA it is **not specific to the authority**. Intended to be "owned" by all public bodies working within the park area.

- In addition to the above, an SA/SEA and HRA will be undertaken as an iterative processes throughout plan preparation.
- To reduce duplication these assessments will also be used to inform the Local Development Plan.

A strategic over-arching document, it co-ordinates and integrates other plans, strategies and actions in the National Park, including the Local Development Plan. It is **treated as the National Park Community Strategy**.

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Planning Authorities in Wales



- 22 Unitary Authorities +
- 3 National Park Authorities
- 25 non overlapping Local Development Plans [frameworks]

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Local Development Plan Delivery Agreement

1. Project Management Timetable •How long, staff resources, budgets. •Agree timetable •Review against milestones. •Monitor thereafter.	An attempt to gain greater consensus.
2. Community Involvement Scheme • Create conditions for early involvement. • Encourage commitment to open debate. • Seek engagement of those not normally heard.	To reduce conflict traditionally associated with DP process. Crucially have to demonstrate that efforts to engage have been made at all stages. SOUNDNESS!

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TESTS FOR SOUNDNESS

Procedural:

P1 The plan has been prepared in accordance with the Delivery Agreement including the Community Involvement Scheme.

Consultation fatigue, covering of backs.

P2 The plan and its policies have been subjected to Sustainability Appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Trying to avoid duplication with NPMP

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TESTS FOR SOUNDNESS continued

Consistency

C1 It is a land use plan which has regard to other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area or to adjoining areas.

C2 It has regard to national policy.

C3 It has regard to the Wales Spatial Plan.

C4 It has regard to community strategy/ies (via the National Park Management Plan in the case of BBNPA).

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TESTS FOR SOUNDNESS continued

Coherence and Effectiveness

CE1 It sets out a coherent strategy from which its policies and allocations logically flow and, where cross boundary issues are relevant, it is compatible with the development plans prepared by neighbouring authorities.

CE2 The strategy, policies and allocations are realistic and appropriate having considered the relevant alternatives and are founded on a robust and credible evidence base;

Arguments over appropriate level of detail

CE3 There are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring.

CE4 The plan is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances

More on this later!

The conclusions reached by the Inspector will be binding. Therefore, unless WAG intervenes, the Council must accept the changes required by the Inspector and adopt the LDP as amended.

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So what do I really think?

- Is it fit for purpose?:
 - We have designed a system to fight old battles
 - Maginot, 1949, Airport expansion, Leeds, Newbury & Swampy
 - It is too slow and susceptible to hijack
 - Experts thrive on detail. More inclusive and fast? Too many agendas.
 - We are assuming a future that is unlikely to unfold:
 - Continued economic growth, abundant cheap oil, more retail therapy, just in time delivery, a knowledge economy, litigious virtue.
 - We need techniques to be able to understand and cope with:
 - Effects of new population pressures due to climate change, energy power down, zero carbon living, return to more local production and use, dramatic rise in sea levels, more intense weather events, taking calculated risk.
 - Rear view mirror, scenario planning, what if? Rehearse the future.

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Thank you



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