The CTS Work Programme for 2013

UPDATE REPORT FOR MEMBERS

Introduction

This report is a summary of the matrix that the Trustees use to monitor the progress of the CTS Work Programme for 2013. It is circulated as a pre-read document for the information of members ahead of the next CTS Members meeting which is due to take place on Monday 8 July 2013. More detail in respect of each area will be provided by Trustees at the meeting.

The Work Programme Summary

a. Scoping Study

CTS Trustees and members were consulted regarding the scoping study of the Twmbarlwm and Mynydd Maen areas, which was carried out by Haire Landscape Consultants at the start of the year. The publication of the recommendations of the study is still awaited.

b. Proposed Welsh Government Minister visit to Twmbarlwm

Our original proposal to invite a Welsh Government Minister to visit Twmbarlwm during 2013, to see the work that is being undertaken by CTS and partners, has been stymied by a number of Cabinet reshuffles that have taken place throughout the first six months of the year. The Trustees are continuing to pursue this proposal.

c. Twmbarlwm Visitor Survey

The survey form was produced by Trustees and presented to the CTS Membership Meeting held in January, before being shared with Haire Landscape Consultants at meetings held in March and April. Whilst only limited use has been made of the form to date, it is anticipated that a more structured approach will be adopted following the publication of the scoping study recommendations.

d. Funding Applications

i). On 19 April 2013, Trustees submitted an application for Welsh Government Funding to improve the quality of the environment on Twmbarlwm, from the “Tidy Towns” initiative. The application for £29,000 was fully supported by CCBC, who have committed to provide an additional £5,000 in funding, if the application is successful. We are awaiting the results of the application process which were due at the end of June.
ii). A recent application to the Monmouthshire Building Society Community Fund (MBSCF) to finance the cost of display equipment, and newsletters and leaflets was unsuccessful. The submission of future applications to the MBSCF is being actively considered.

iii). The Trustees were unsuccessful in their previously reported application to the Police Property Act Fund. The Trustees continue to be alert to the opportunities to secure funding to progress the aims and objectives of the society.

e. **Glastir and the Commoners Association**

The potential for CTS to work with the Commoners Association in support of their Glastir application has not been fully explored to date. Renewed efforts are now being made to progress this opportunity.

f. **The Alamo Fencing Project**

This project has been successfully undertaken by a local farmer and CTS volunteers.

The project was commenced on 12 April, with the installation of a Kissing Gate (donated by CCBC), then completed on 19 April, with the erection of 50 yards of Alamo fencing.

Work was commenced on phase 2 of the project, with the erection of a further 20 yards of fencing on 23 June 2013.

The early indications suggest that the fence has already played a significant role in reducing off-road anti-social behaviour in the area, and further discussions are now taking place regarding additional work in the area.

g. **Member Survey**

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that members are actively involved in the work of the society. This was the reason for attempting to conduct a survey of CTS members to establish their interest in Society events and involvement in projects and initiatives.

A survey form was presented at the January Membership Meeting and copies were circulated to those present and the form was posted on the CTS web-site for on-line completion. Unfortunately, only one form had been completed by members using either hard copy or the on-line form as at 22 March 2013.

The importance of the survey was reinforced at the last CTS Members Meeting on 8 April, where the members present were given the opportunity to complete a form during the meeting. The results of the analysis of the completed forms will be discussed at the forthcoming members meeting.

h. **Newsletter and Leaflets**

The Trustees are committed to producing at least two Newsletters a year as long as it is financially viable to do so. The latest newsletter was published on 1 July 2013, along with a new leaflet which is designed to raise awareness of the work of CTS and encouraging new members to join.
i. **Events**

The Trustees continue to work to identify suitable internal events for members, and outside events where CTS could get involved and publicise the work of the society during 2013. The Litter Pick held in March and the on-going Alamo Fencing Project are examples of successful events.

Unfortunately, recent attempts to hold regular walks on Twmbarlwm every 3rd Sunday, between 11.00am and 1.00pm, have received minimal support from the wider membership.

Future events will be discussed at the forthcoming members meeting.

j. **SW Directories**

A one page slot has been secured within the local SW Directories Community and Business Magazine (published bi-monthly), in which CTS are able to promote and publicise its work. Articles have since appeared in the May and July editions. Trustees will continue to maximise this opportunity.

k. **Website**

The Trustees recognise that the use of social media is an important medium through which CTS can engage with the wider community. Effective management and monitoring of the CTS Web-Site and Facebook account is therefore of increasing importance.

Trustees share the responsibility for monitoring Facebook activity and where appropriate, to ensure that positive comments and photographs are posted, and importantly, that any misinformation is corrected.

The main Twmbarlwm.co.uk website has been updated recently and will soon be operating in its new format.

l. **Landscape Crimes Officer**

Having played a major part in the introduction of a pilot scheme whereby a dedicated “Landscape Crime” police officer (PC Simon James) commenced patrolling Twmbarlwm in March 2012, the retention of this officer beyond 2013 has been a key priority for the Trustees.

It was therefore great news when it was confirmed in April that the position would be made permanent with immediate effect, but in the broader role of “Wildlife Officer”, covering the whole of the Caerphilly Local Policing Unit area. The Trustees and the wider CTS membership have developed a very close working relationship with PC James over the past 16 months, which has ensured that despite the recent introduction of a much wider remit, his work on Twmbarlwm continues to be a priority.