**Big Lottery - Create Your Space/ Roots to Shoots Year 1 report**

After a year of setting up with some peripheral work on our area projects, we now have a solid platform to launch into the second-year delivery on several projects highlighted below and on the project record cards attached. We now have dedicated office base with a compliment of 10 staff, (1 full-time, 9 part-time) 5 or which are funded directly through Create Your Space.

All the Create your Space staff as well as some of the BHT trustees have benefited from the network visits and events with the other successful CYS applicants which have been co-ordinated by Bro-Cymru/Severnwye. It has been extremely useful exchanging ideas, identifying the similarities of some of the projects, environmentally, geographically and historically and how we can learn form each other as we all try to progress over the next six years. In addition, it was good to recognise the individual specialisms within each of the projects so that familiarisation will again create a platform for peer to peer support as each area project develops and those specialisms may be required. (e.g. community engagement, woodland management, sustainable development, social enterprise) Although the frequency of these events will change to perhaps twice a year we view the chance to keep in contact and exchange ideas as very necessary and important.

We have also re-established our CYS/RTS steering group with terms of reference and broad representation - our first meeting held in April 2018 with the intention for these to be held quarterly.

In terms of promoting our CYS/RTS projects five open events have been held over the year on the Brymbo steelwork site along with more structured community consultation meetings on projects in their specific areas and presentations to statutory bodies and community groups raising awareness of Big Lottery CYS programme funding and individual projects. Our volunteer base continues to operate on a Tuesday and Sunday morning as well as providing valuable and informative support at our events and open days. Through a dedicated volunteer co-ordinator, we are now providing more proactive communication, co-ordination, health & safety and vocational training to improve our all all-round effectiveness.

Apart from email communications we are also using other digital platforms to advertise and promote BHT to a much wider audience such as ‘facebook’ and ‘twitter which is proving to be a constant way of receiving feedback both positive and sometime negative but gives us that opportunity to respond and engage in a wider network.

With increased visitors to the site and the surrounding area we want to explore ways that we get them more engaged in the industrial heritage of the area and those points of historical significance so as we move into our second year we are exploring ‘ibeacons’ with visits planned to locations such as Point of Ayr colliery where these are already in use.

Brymbo Heritage Trust with its open, historical grass roots approach is maintaining a strong and positive approach to its networking and partnership building which is continuing with the emergence of new relationships developing with public, private and community-based organisations.

Area Projects (see full project record report cards in appendix???)

**A1 Blackie and Reddie**

* Three community consultation meetings have been held Emergence of small community group (previously Tan-y-Fron Community Association) who may be interested in maintaining the area subject to Wrexham County Borough Council, principle landowner’s approval and conditions
* Organisational structure and legal set up requirements for the group discussed but need to be explored further.
* Meeting held with WCBC tree officer who has agreed to help write a woodland management plan to help advise and guide future work
* No capital spends in year 1 – now moved over to years 2-4

**A2 Brymbo Heritage - Ecology Area**

* Any work has been in line with NRW licence which has been in place since June 2017 and shortly to be reviewed and re-submitted
* In conjunction with Enfys – Wild Life Trust Pond surveys undertaken during April and May 2018 to ascertain Greater Crested Newts and other species population with report due in July 2018
* On-site BHT ecology officer now designated working closely with Enfys to act as main contact point, monitoring and recording any activity (weekly check sheets, activity logs) and identifying any areas of concern which require Enfys intervention or where necessary cessation of works.
* Ecology management plan required to help BHT co-ordinate seasonal site works and activities in a controlled manner that meets the requirements of the NRW licence agreement but more importantly helps us to plan and prioritise the site work and costs.

**A2a Brymbo Heritage – Brymbo Mineral Railway**

* Meetings held with Narrow Gauge Railway group to establish working relationship and on-site requirements
* Narrow Gauge Railway will identify with the Brymbo Mineral Railway and work undertaken to identify historical connections with Brymbo
* Potential trackways have been marked along the lines of the former Brymbo Steelworks standard gauge railway which was a key prominent feature of the works
* Heritage Railways consultant brought in to look at trackways and make recommendations int terms of drainage, topography, cuttings, points, H&S etc)
* Recognition that by introducing BMR to site will present an additional attraction and one that will allow access for all regardless of abilities across the whole of the proposed BHT site
* The inclusion of ‘ballast’ trackways will create new safe hibernation habitats for protected species such as the Greater Crested Newt
* The BMR concept is now firmly included in site design work (including Ecology Management Plan) which will include access/entry stations, halts and platforms at key features across the site (e.g. Agents House, Solar far on Wonderbank)

**A3a Brymbo Pool**

* Peripheral and positive discussions have taken place with the Brymbo Angling Club who lease the pool from Brymbo Community Council
* We have made several attempts to arrange a meeting with Brymbo Community Council to establish a dialogue for project development but also to look at ways that we can complement projects both in terms resources and funding.
* No capital spends in year 1 – move to years 2-4

**A3b Bronwen’s Green**

* We have not moved forward with this project yet as again the principle landowners are Brymbo Community Council, so we need to establish a dialogue with the Bronwen’s Green representatives from the community council. We have contacted them and they have said they will arrange a meeting shortly so hopefully over the next 3-6 months we will be able to establish a programme of meetings, joint developments and proposed site works.
* No capital spends in year 1 – move to years 2-4

**A4 Lodge Valley Park Gateways**

* Several community engagement meetings have been held with good attendances with several subjects discussed 1, existing small community centre – potential community asset transfer, lodge assets, sunken bridge clearance and possible uses and designs, lodge historical photo night, family fun day, tall trees clearance.
* Meetings held with WCBC to discuss the ‘tall trees’ and the tree preservation order that exists for them
* Three gateways into the lodge valley park from Lodge have been identified and discussed recognising the buildings which once stood on them and possibility of utilising the community centre which is underused and at risk of closure.
* Lots of positivity from Lodge community and lots of engagement to look forward to but any project or site works is subject to land ownership and transfer which is still pending.
* No capital spends in year 1 – move to years 2-4

**A5 Lodge Valley park Sunken Bridge**

* The sunken bridge project has been included in discussions above in A4 but members of Lodge community and residents from surrounding areas have attended site visits to help put some interpretation on the bridge and come up with some designs
* Bramble bashing sessions have also taken place clearing the curved area on one side of the bridge to reveal an embankment
* Surveyor and public safety report also commissioned which shows no major structural problems, but safe guided access highlighted as a safety necessity
* No capital spends in year 1 – moved to years 2-4

**A6 Lodge Valley Park – Perimeter Fence and Single tarmac path**

* Land transfer issues still pending with signed agreements expected by the end of the 2018 year
* Ecology Management plan expected July 2018 will also inform seasonal site development and maintenance
* Education/Learning/Volunteer model to be finalised re: Skilled, Semi-skilled, Unskilled work to help deliver project maximising educational development and engagement whilst maximising on funds available
* No capital spends in year 1 – move to years 2-4

**A7 Miller Road Space**

* Appointed part-time play worker to start engagement work in community and with ley stakeholder organisations
* Play worker to undertake ‘play sufficiency’ survey for area working with schools and other services
* Two Saturday morning play sessions organised which included family consultation to get ideas for the development of Miller road space
* In conjunction with Wrexham County Borough Council research and develop summer play scheme provision complimenting other session delivery in the area.
* No capital spends in year 1 – move to years 2-4

**A8 Moss Valley**

* Re-engaged with Big Wheel project group and key contacts
* Site visit with group to initial preferred location
* Wider consultation undertaken to consider initial site and identify alternatives with 4 sites finally identified
* Wrexham County Borough Council are principal landowners of 4 locations contact and consultations established to try and establish feasibility of each site before next community consultation.
* Friends of Moss Valley community group already active and engaged in litter picks and site maintenance.
* In conjunction with Friends of Moss Valley and WCBC quotes obtained and contractor identified for pathway improvements with work scheduled for June /July 2018
* No capital spends in year 1 – carried over to Years 2- 4

**A9 Ocknall’s Bridge**

* Some peripheral site visits undertaken to get clarity on what needs to be done which will include pathways, some tree clearance on bridge slopes, fencing particularly which may for safety which may require road closure - structural survey will also be required on bridge itself
* Ocknalls Bridge is within land transfer agreement which is still pending
* No capital spends in year 1 – expected in years 2-4

**A10 Wonderbank – Solar Farm Project**

* Application successfully made to Cadwyn Clwyd for feasibility study to be completed which includes connection costs, available land mass and roof space - maximising the size and yield, land issues and clearance, security, end users including the prospect of share opportunities (public, commercial and residential proposed developments opposite BHT) advisements on battery storage possibilities.
* Total project value £56,855 with Cadwyn Clywd providing 70% (£39,798.82) and BHT of 30% (£17,056.78) funded through CYS Technical Fees.
* Out of the above other ‘renewable’ opportunities have been identified including “Power from the Deep” with Cadwyn Clwyd funding a feasibility study to research and investigate the possibility of utilising a bore hole on site which was used in the 1970’s to pump water up from disused mine workings which may offer potential for ground source heating.
* With the proposed developments mentioned above BHT providing District Heating is also being explored in conjunction with Wrexham County Borough Council either as the sole deliverer or in terms of land lease to another provider.
* Through the above and continuous networking BHT is being recognised for its potential as a ‘renewable energy community hub’ with SP Energy due to visit in late June 2018 to explore opportunities.
* The feasibility reports highlighted above are expected back in the Autumn of 2018 and will provide conclusions and recommendations from experts in their respective fields to help BHT move forward with its ‘Coal to Sun story’
* No capital spends in year 1 – expected in years 2-4.

Connections Projects

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| C1 | Waypoints & interpretation scheme design fee |
| C2 | Schools programme activities & materials |
| C3 | Capacity building & volunteer development |
| C4 | Participant training |
| C5 | Social Enterprise dev |
| C6 | Biodiversity understand activities & materials |
| C7 | Technical support - design, survey & legal fees (moved to capital 23 Jan 2017) |
| C8 | Technical support - feasibility studies |
| C9 | Activities - CYS Open Fund (small grants) |
| C10 | Lodge history research - activities & materials |

**What have we Learned**

In this first year our networking and visits to the other 5 successful CYS applicants have been hugely beneficial, not just in terms of networking but more importantly because we have been able to identify with similar projects and similar goals. There is wealth of expertise within the CYS organisations which individually we are calling upon and asking each other for advice.

The land transfer which we were expecting to be almost complete by now are taking longer for reasons outside of our control, so we are having to look at the transfer of pockets of land and buildings which correspond to individual project necessity and timelines. However, any impact will be mainly isolated to structural capital works with work expecting to continue fencing, path and trackway restoration, land clearance, improvements and re-planting, general improvements to increase visitor experience and movements around the site.

Our ecological licence agreement with NRW has also prevented us from moving ahead with some projects and this has been a learning curve for the BHT trustees, staff and volunteers. In an effort to be more proactive in organising and co-ordinating site work we have asked Enfys to produce an Ecology Management Plan for the site and the lodge valley park which will help with any ecology land transfer issues, planning permissions and seasonal work schedules – Management Plan expected July 2018.

Not originally included in the CYS application the engagement with the Narrow-Gauge railway group (which will resurrect and become Brymbo Mineral Railway) and their eagerness to contribute to the Brymbo Heritage area experience offers enormous potential to engage more visitors but also gives greater flexibility to transport them around the site – catering for all ages and abilities. In terms of pathways and trackways this will be an inclusion in the way we deliver that aspect of the project on site as the narrow-gauge railway plans to operate along the same routes as the standard gauge railway which was a prominent feature throughout the history of the Brymbo steelworks. It is envisaged that the narrow-gauge railway will meander through the Brymbo Heritage site from the Brymbo Enterprise Centre up to the Wonder Bank Solar farm with stops and station halts at key locations including the fossil forest, agents house, blast colliery, ecology area and coke shute.

Several of the projects involve working with other landowner’s other which include Wrexham County Borough Council and Brymbo Community Council and their engagement and agreement will be required to implement and complete projects such as the Blackie and Reddie, Brymbo Pool and Bronwen’s Green, The Big Wheel and Moss Valley. An excellent relationship already exists with Wrexham County Borough Council and in most cases its just a question of linking with the responsible officers, going through the right processes, getting agreements and maintaining communication. It has proved a bit more difficult to establish a clear dialogue with Brymbo Community council for the Brymbo Pool and Bronwen’s green projects, this is something that will be prioritised for the start of the second year to get agreement for project works but also o look where we can maximise jointly our resources and finance available.

Although we are promoting CYS regularly and still benefitting from our open days/events/ presentations (e.g. Brymbo rocks, Group visits) and our use of digital platforms (e.g. face-book) we do need to utilise our marketing and promotions budget to improve the portability and visual impact of our information with a view to holding surgeries at key project locations to raise awareness and get greater engagement – ideas, interpretation, volunteers.

One of our key achievements this year has been the networking and partnership building with key organisations who can help us deliver a range of projects across a huge site. Without these partnerships which include organisations such as Cadwyn Clwyd, Remarc – Cymru, Dulas, British Geological Survey, Enfys, Widlife Trust, Natural Resources Wales, Tidy Wales, Public Health Wales, Oldbell, Wrexham County Borough Council, naming just a few we would not be able to deliver effectively. One of our key mantra’s moving forward will be the continuation of our openness and willingness to be engaging at all levels within the private, public and community sectors,