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PNP Newsletter Issue No. 59 November 2025

ALL
WELCOME

Project funding and donations The PNP Support Group has received a grant of £1200 from Aberystwyth Town Council that will provide four days of maintenance work in the Parc this autumn and winter. We are very grateful to the Council for their continuing generous support that makes this work possible.

The Support Group is dependent on voluntary donations to cover its day-to-day expenses and anyone wishing to help by making a donation should contact the Treasurer at gyg08pt@gmail.com.

AGM talk The talk at this year's AGM on 26 November in the Octagon, St Paul Methodist Centre will be given by Professor Richard Lucas from the Department of Geography & Earth Sciences at the University, where he leads the Living Wales Project. This project uses satellite data, ground measurements and modelling to map land use and habitat types across the Welsh landscape and the changes that are taking place.

Volunteer Work Days in PNP The final two Volunteer Work Days funded from the 2024/25 Town Council grant were gorse clearance in the Upper Quarry on 18 January and path maintenance on 15 February; scraping mud off the lower section of the Cooper's Corner path and resurfacing it with fresh stones. The work on the path was completed on an extra work day on 1 March and extended to include resurfacing of the steps near the Mathur bench. This extra day was funded from two donations the Support Group had received last year. It was the last of the Group's volunteer sessions to be supervised by Peter Drake.

His role has now been taken over by Andy Bakewell, who supervised the first of the Volunteer Work Days for this autumn/winter season on 22 October, clearing brambles from alongside the main path to promote a good show of bluebells next spring. The work was started by members of the Support Group, who were joined by the Aberystwyth Conservation Volunteers in the afternoon. A second day of bramble clearance has been arranged for volunteers on 19 November, starting at 10:00 in the Beech Glade. In addition, a day of gorse clearance in the Upper Quarry and one of path maintenance are to be arranged for the new year.

During the summer, two suitably trained members of the Support Group, strimmed the vegetation along the path through the Extension, under the supervision of Chris Harris, the County Council reserves officer.

Parc Natur Penglais

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 26 November at 7pm

St Paul Methodist Centre, Queens Road

Including a talk titled

***Living Wales – Planning Future
Landscapes from Space***

by

Professor Richard Lucas (Dept. of Geography
& Earth Sciences, Aberystwyth University)



Changes to the Support Group Committee Two long-time members of the Support Group, Len Kersley and Robert Griffiths, are to step down from the Committee at the coming AGM.

Len was a founder member of the Support Group from when Parc Natur Penglais was established in 1991, initially serving as Secretary and then as Treasurer from 2009/10 until 2023. Throughout this time, he has been instrumental in applying for grants and has been successful in raising over £30,000 to fund new projects; for example, the expansion of the Parc into the Bryn y Mor extension and creating the Lower Quarry Path, as well as general maintenance work in the Parc. He has been a regular volunteer on our Work Days; whether it be clearing brambles and gorse, creating new paths, planting trees, building steps, installing bird and bat boxes or re-surfacing paths. His knowledge and expertise regarding the Parc has been fundamental to guiding the Support Group and PNP would not be the wonderful place it is now, enjoyed by so many people, without his tireless input.

Robert has been a member of the Support Group for about twenty years. Before this, he had been a frequent user of the paths through the Parc and was invited to join the Group after he had attended a volunteer session working on the upkeep of the main path. Like Len, he has been a major contributor to the work of the Group, regularly attending Volunteer Work Days and was Chairman from 2018 to 2023. His particular expertise has been in planning the best routes for new paths, especially the Lower Quarry Path following the fires that burnt most of the vegetation in the area in 2023. He has also put a lot of effort into planning a possible future path involving a bridge over Bryn y Mor Dingle and leading up Constitution Hill.

Penglais Cottage David Leighton has provided this photograph from 1949 showing the old Penglais Cottage (*right of centre*) which used to be situated towards the south end of what is now PNP. The house was built in the early nineteenth century as part of the Penglais Estate. After the estate was broken up it had a chequered history and by the 1960s was being used as a scout hut; it then fell into disrepair and was eventually demolished in 1970. Its site is now marked by a level area of ground, near to where the main path through PNP passes above the upper end of Cae Melyn.



© Crown Copyright: Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales: Aerofilms Collection

Historic mapping indicates the house underwent some changes during its lifetime but no ground images of the building have so far come to light. However, air photos from the mid-twentieth century in the National Monuments Record do reveal some interesting details. The image shown here is an enlarged extract of a photograph in the Aerofilms Collection. The view, looking to the north-east, shows Penglais Cottage at the edge of the woodland to the right of the old quarry. Despite its low resolution, the image suggests a building of some complexity and architectural interest.

Aberystwyth Civic Society The next talk to the Civic Society will be on Thursday 13 November, when Caroline Palmer will speak about 'The Richardeses of Plas Penglais'. The talk will be in the

Salvation Army Hall, Alexandra Road, Aberystwyth, starting at 7:30pm and all are welcome to attend.

Reptile surveys in PNP by Aberystwyth Conservation Volunteers The amphibian and reptile survey conducted by ACV in 2024 in collaboration with Ceredigion County Council as part of the National Reptile Survey has continued this year, organised by Luke Baines with others from ACV. A series of 32 artificial covers (refugia) has been set up around PNP, under which the animals can shelter. These have been inspected on four visits to the site and the numbers of animals recorded. The same species were found as in 2024, with at least four Slow-worms, one Common Lizard and two Common Toads.

PNP nest boxes in 2025 Due to a combination of changes in responsibility for the monitoring of the nest boxes and illness, the boxes were not fully monitored this year. It is hoped to continue with a full survey next year.

Campers in PNP There have been far fewer instances of people camping in the Parc than in 2024. Earlier this year the Council put up a number of notices stating that overnight sleeping is not allowed in PNP.

With thanks to Aberystwyth Town Council for providing printing facilities and to those who delivered the printed copies to local houses. The newsletter was prepared by Steve Cuttle and will be available in English and Welsh on the PNP Facebook page and Greener Aberystwyth Group website.