

Funding boost for Cwmcarn Forest

This project has received funding from Caerphilly County Borough Council and through the Welsh Government Rural Communities – rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.

The funding, from the Welsh Government Tourist Amenity Investment Support (TAIS) scheme to the tune of £128,000 with an additional £32,000 coming from Caerphilly County Borough Council, will enable the ever-popular visitor attraction to enhance its visitor offer, through developing more family focused activities and enhancing existing facilities.

The funding will allow for a number of improvements at the attraction including:

- Expansion of bike trails – a popular destination for mountain bikers across Wales and beyond, the funding will provide up to an additional 3km of new trail to the existing network;
- Enhancing existing walking trails – upgrades and improvements to the existing footpath network, to include new directional signage throughout the site, including new way-marking and interpretation at key locations and points of interest;
- Creating a new welcome and arrival zone at the entrance to the site – including feature dry-stone walling, new flooring, signage, interpretation and artwork, as well as new planting of natural species of trees and flowers in the welcome zone.

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for tourist attractions, Cllr Sean Morgan said:

“Cwmcarn Forest remains one of the county borough’s premier tourism venues, attracting walkers and mountain bikers from across Wales and even further beyond. This substantial grant funding will hugely benefit the attraction, allowing us to enhance the offering for visitors for many years to come.”

Tourism Minister, Lord Elis-Thomas, said:

“The Tourism Amenity Investment Support scheme is an excellent way for us to assist the tourism sector to make the improvements to the local facilities and amenities. Visitors expect the best quality in all aspects of their visit from the accommodation through to information provision, toilets and parking. This is an opportunity for us to help the industry get the building blocks right. I’m delighted that the funding is enabling a number of improvements to take place at this popular attraction and have been delighted to see exciting plans for development today.”

The project is also key to the development of a Valleys Landscape Park, and is a model which Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services and chair of the Valleys Taskforce, Alun Davies said he is keen to see replicated in other areas.

He said:

“I am determined we unlock the true potential of the South Wales Valleys, and can do so by harnessing the power of our natural landscape. Our proposals for a Valleys Landscape Park aim to do just that, and will help link these fabulous new facilities at Cwmcarn Forest with other attractions in the area and draw in more visitors to this beautiful area.”