INBETWEEN : PONTYPOOL

SYMPOSIUM & TOUR OF THE TOWN

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IN-BETWEEN: PONTYPOOL SEMINAR

Introduction

This symposium looks at regeneration in Pontypool with a focus on the role arts and culture play. It is part of a larger research project run by Intersections at Newcastle University examining arts and regeneration in small towns – we are also looking at Dumfries in South West Scotland and Hexham in North East England.

We will be looking at Pontypool as a place and as people recognising that regeneration isn't just about the physical structure of a town but also about how it is perceived, what happens there, who lives there, who visits there and why? It is about the identity of a place, its history and – importantly – its future. How do we re-imagine what a town means to us? How do we imagine its future – and how do we make those ideas happen? Can we agree on these things and can we work together on them?

So we are looking at change and how we are involved with it. On Day 1 we will engage with Pontypool as a place and as people. On Day 2 we will reflect on the shared knowledge and experiences of everyone involved in the symposium. All ideas and thoughts will be up for consideration and critique – we'll create an open space for listening and debate.

This event is funded by Intersections, Newcastle University, Arts & Humanities Research Council and Torfaen County Borough Council.

SCHEDULE

DAY 1: Tour of the Town

Wednesday 12th September 2012, 09:30 – 19:00

A tour of Pontypool led by people who know the town well sharing their knowledge with the group in order to stimulate discussion, followed by an evening meal at the Yew Tree.

09:30 -10:00 'Meet and Greet' at Pontypool Indoor Market (next to fruit and veg stall).

10:00 -10:15 Introduction by David Butler, Intersections.

10:15 -10:35 Presentation by Jonathan Banks, Ixia.

10:35 -10:55 Presentation by Mary Mahibir, Pontypool Townscape Community Project Officer.

10:55 -11:05 Presentation by Sharon Hutchinson, Pontypool Market Manager, TCBC.

11:05 -11:15 Wander around Indoor Market

11:15 -11:45 Walking tour of the Outdoor Market & Town Centre, led by Mary Mahibir, and including presentations by Clare Baker, Senior Regeneration Officer, TCBC.

11:45 -11:55 Stop off at the Italian Gardens. Presentation by ArtRegen and Lauren Gregory, Project Officer & Verity Hiscocks, Arts Development Manager, Neighbourhood Services, TCBC.

11:55 -12:15 Walk along the Tramway and Weir, led by Andrew Neville, Team Leader, Environmental Projects, TCBC.

12:15 -12:35 Walk through Park to the Active Living Centre and Pontymoille Basin.

12:35 -13:50 Stop off at Pontymoile Marina for lunch and presentations by Tom Maloney Education and Access Consultant, Fourteen Locks Canal Centre, and Andrew Nevill. LUNCH will be provided by the Marina Tearooms, Pontymoile.

13:50 -14:50 Bus journey to the Folly followed by a 10-minute walk down to the Shell Grotto, with presentations by Andrew Nevill and Peter Sweeting. 15 minute walk through Park to Museum.

14:50 -15:35 Museum Visit with introduction by Peter Sweeting, Pontypool Townscape Community Project Officer.

15:35 -17:30 Vintage Bus Tour around Pontypool's Suburbs stopping off at the American Gardens. 5-minute walk from the American Gardens to the Log Cabin. Presentation by Kevin Weaver, Manager of the Neighbourhood Learning Centre, followed by a group discussion and summing up by David Butler, Intersections.

REFRESHMENTS will be provided at the Log Cabin. A bus will be available to take participants back to Pontypool Market at the end of the day.

19:00 DINNER at the Yew Tree, Penygarn Road, Penygarn, Pontypool, NP4 8JA.

DAY 2: Discussion

Thursday 13th September 2012, 09:30 – 17:00, Jubilee Hall, above Pontypool Indoor Market

A day of discussion using the experience and information from Day 1. The discussion will be catalyzed through presentations from Professor Michael Woods (Aberystwyth University), Alexia Mellor (Pontypool 's Artist-in-Residence) and architect Matthew Jones (Coombs Jones Archietects + makers)

Professor Michael Woods is the Director of Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences at Aberystwyth University. He will discuss the ideas of 'The Creative City' and 'The Creative Class', which have been used to power culture-led urban regeneration in recent decades. He will be critiquing these concepts and asking; what are good models for small towns?
http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/iges/staff/academic-staff/zzp/

Alexia Mellor has just been appointed to undertake a six-month Artist's Residency in Pontypool looking at 'connectivity' – between people, places, history and the future. The residency is funded by the Arts Council of Wales and Torfaen County Bourough Council. Alexia will discuss her artistic practice in relation to Pontypool, opening up questions of how an artist may stimulate new ways of looking at a place.
http://alexiamellor.com/

Matthew Jones is a founding architect and partner for Coombs Jones Architects + Makers. He recently led 'Ruthin: Market town of the Future', a community project to develop a vision for the future of the North Wales town. Matthew is currently engaged in research toward a PhD by Design at the Design Research Unit at the Welsh School of Architecture exploring design-led approaches to market towns in the UK. Matthew will discuss his practice and research in relation to Pontypool.
http://www.coombsjones.com/Philosophy.html
http://www.dru-w.co.uk/aboutUs.html

Lunch & Refreshments will be provided.

Thank you to all those who contributed to the production of the seminar, including:

Clare Baker - Senior Regeneration Officer, TCBC / David Butler - Co-Director,Intersections / Kate Fitzgerald - TCBC Senior Regeneration Officer TCBC / Matthew Ford - Centre Manager, Cold Barn Farm / Lauren Gregory- Project Officer, Neighbourhood Services, TCBC / Donna Harper - Area Catering Manager, TCBC / Verity Hiscocks - Arts Development Manager, Neighbourhood Services, TCBC / Barbara Howe - Youth Service Manager, TCBC / Sharon Hutchinson - Market Manager, TCBC / Jayne Israel - Programme Support Officer, Neighbourhood Services, TCBC / Carla Teresa Kavanagh -Technical Support & Administration Assistant, Neighbourhood Services, TCBC / Alison Langford - Enforcement Officer, Neighbourhood Services, TCBC / Chris Langford / Tom Maloney - Education and Access Consultant, Fourteen Locks Canal Centre / Neil McNally - Artist & Lecturer, University of Wales Newport / Andrew Nevill - Environmental Team Leader, TCBC / Sarah Pace - Co-Director, Addo / Susan Phillips - Owner, Marina Tearooms, Pontymoile / Hywel Pontin - Director, Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre / Edith Price, Sue Johnson, Joy Price, Mary James, & Denise Nicholls from ArtRegen/ Terry Smith / Peter Sweeting & Mary Mahibir, Pontypool Townscape Community Project Officers, Pontypool Museum / Kay Warren - Store Holder, Pontypool Market / Kevin Weaver - Manager, Neighbourhood Learning Centre / Debbie Wildgust - Curator & Sue Allford, Pontypool Museum

ABOUT In-Between: Pontypool Partners

Intersections

Intersections is a research project at Newcastle University looking at how art practice links with public debates such as regeneration, sustainability and the cultural economy. We are interested in the 'public domain': this could be public space, people, civil society, cultural identities etc – it always involves partnerships with people and organisations outside the university and with other disciplines outside the visual arts. As well as the Inbetween project we are part of a group that has been awarded an AHRC grant to look at the cultural economy in rural Northumberland – Northumbrian Exchanges. This is a collaboration between four research areas in the University: Intersections, the International Centre for Music Studies, the Centre for the Rural Economy, and the Creative Economy Unit at the Business School.
www.intersectionspublicart.org.uk

Pontypool Regeneration Team

Pontypool Regeneration Team is part of Torfaen County Borough Council, which is the governing body for Torfaen, one of the Principal Areas of Wales. The Team is responsible for promoting and supporting the viability, vitality and attractiveness of Pontypool Town Centre. It does this through: long-term planning to ensure that the town can meet the changing needs of all its users; working with businesses and local communities to address specific issues affecting the town; and improving the town through a variety of economic, social and environmental projects. The team works closely with other sections of TCBC's Regeneration Service and a wide range of other partners within the town, such as the Environment Team, Neighbourhood Services and Pontypool Community Council, to deliver projects.
www.torfaen.gov.uk

ARTREGEN

ARTREGEN is a voluntary organisation set up in 1988 by Soroptimist International of Cwmbran and District and the Women's Institutes of Cwmavon and Pontnewynydd to help in the regeneration of Pontypool through the Arts. The Soroptimist club still provides the core membership but the Women's Institutes have since closed and not all members are attached to another organisation. ArtRegen are supported by Torfaen C.B.C. and Pontypool Community Council and other organisations but is run by unpaid volunteers. The organisation has commissioned a number of permanent public art works in Pontypool but also works to encourage the development and access to music and literature, which have always played an important part in the culture of Wales. Towards this aim, ArtRegen have held concerts and lectures (including an evening on Rorke's Drift since some of the soldiers came from the Pontypool area including a V.C.) to raise funds for other major projects and to encourage local participation from schools, choirs, and other voluntary groups.
www.artregen.artsociety.net

Addo

Addo is a not-for-profit arts organisation founded by Sarah Pace and Tracy Simpson that develops and commissions art projects in the public realm on behalf of public and private sector clients and in collaboration with voluntary organisations, artists and other creative practitioners. 'Addo' means 'to give, bring, place, inspire, cause, add, join' in Latin and 'to promise' in Welsh, reflecting the ethos of the company's core aim to work collaboratively and openly to develop and deliver creative activity that contributes to the forwarding of contemporary practice and critical discourse in the field of art in the public realm.
www.addocreative.com

MAPS

Key

Bus Route .....

TOUR OF THE TOWN

Situated on the Afon Lwyd ('grey river'), along the eastern edge of the South Wales coalfields, Pontypool (Pontypwl) is one of the major towns in Torfaen County Borough, South Wales.

The town developed with the introduction of iron and steel production, coal mining and the growth of the railways and owes much of its position to the Hanbury family, who bought land there in 1588 for iron-making and pioneered the production of Japanning, a type of lacquer ware. Just as the Industrial Revolution brought wealth and people to the area, deindustrialisation has resulted in a severe decline in the economic and social prosperity of the town and its suburbs. Today, Pontypool serves a catchment population of around 36,000 in mid and north Torfaen, which includes some of the most deprived communities in Wales, who are faced with low income, economic inactivity and poor attainment in education and training. The town centre suffers from a poor state of environmental quality and high retail vacancy rates, which reflect the economic inactivity that is proving a problem for the town.

TCBC hopes that Pontypool can enhance its assets, develop a diversity of services and facilities for its catchment area, as well as become a destination in its own right for visitors from outside the Borough. With this in mind, TCBC and the Department for the Economy and Transport commissioned *PONTYPOOL – THE WAY UP: Pontypool Town Centre Regeneration Strategy, The next 5 years* (LDA Design, 2009), which sets out a vision for Pontypool as a town that "will promote innovation, enterprise and enjoyment in both business and leisure to become the creative heart of Torfaen and a focal point for creativity in the South Wales Valleys."

This Tour of the Town aims to give an overview of the social, cultural, environmental, and physical context and evolution of Pontypool; to highlight the many assets of the town, and to provide an opportunity to discuss the concerns and opportunities facing Pontypool and the potential for culture-led regeneration in the area.

1 *Pontypool Indoor Market*

Pontypool has long been a Market town with a market first established in the late 17th century, followed by the purpose-built market house and assembly room in 1730 - the Corn Market in George Street, which is now the oldest building in the town centre. The present Indoor Market dates from 1891 and was designed by Robert Williams. It houses 42 stalls and is currently undergoing major refurbishment works.

2 *The Link*

In the late 20th and early 21st century, the construction of major new routes in place of former railways combined with redevelopment projects resulted in the loss of some local road connections and the creation of new barriers between places. Most notably, the building of the A4043 and the later Tesco supermarket development over Upper Bridge Street more or less cut off a significant route between the nearby settlement area of Trosnant and the town centre. Trosnant is the site of one of Pontypool's first 18th century japanning works, a fact that is commemorated in a mural at 'The Link', a through-route that was designed and built alongside the Tesco development with a view to improving linkages with the town centre and its suburbs and enhancing Tesco's role as an integral part of the town.

3 *Pontypool Outdoor Market*

An Outdoor Market is held every Wednesday between 9am – 4pm and creates a real buzz of activity in the town centre.

4 *Crane Street*

A busy scene c1917 looking down from just above the Three Cranes Hotel, shows Simpsons on the right founded in late 1890s and Manchester House further down, later to become Top Fowlers. Fowlers was the Harrods of Pontypool in its day, selling all kinds of millinery, clothes and soft furnishings and was greatly missed when it closed in the late 1960s.

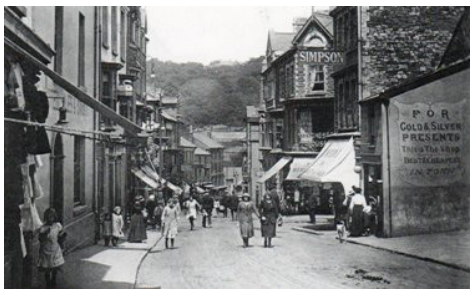


Image: Looking Down Crane Street, © Pontypool Museum

5 *Sandbrook and Dawe*

Straight across from the market was another iconic store and manufacturer: - 'Sandbrook and Dawe', founded in 1816, until its closure for town improvements in the 1980s.

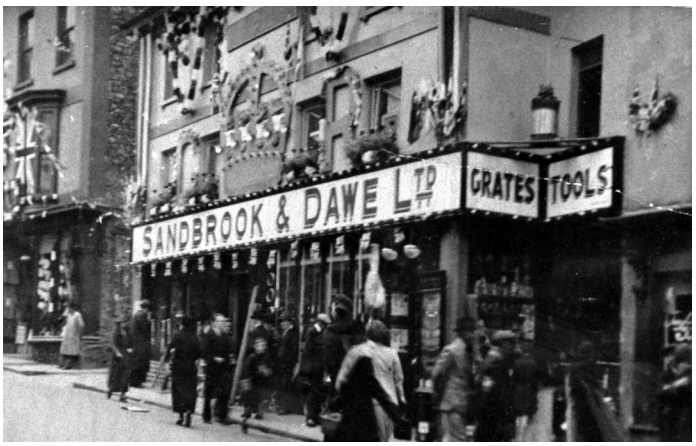


Image: Sandbrook and Dawe, © Pontypool Museum

6 *Lion House*

Going down to the Cross, we pass what was Middle Fowlers in 'Lion House' (the whole building believed at one time to have been the Lion Hotel). This entrance, now to the British Red Cross, is beside what was also Fowlers – Phillips Opticians and all the cellars were used to store wrapping and bulk materials for the store. It is thought that the cellars form an underground tunnel running from top Fowlers (now Mayberry pharmacy) to bottom Fowlers. (now The British Red Cross)

Image: Lion House and Cellars, © Pontypool Museum

7 *Stead and Simpsons*

On reaching the corner we pass 'Stead and Simpsons' shoe shop once a grocery store known as Peglers. Looking up George St we can view it as it once was in 1930s. The public had complained of the congestion since the 1900s, the middle row of buildings finally being demolished in the 1960s.

8 *George Street Regeneration Works*

These works are part of a £10m regeneration scheme around Pontypool that aims to address concerns voiced through the many public consultations held over the past 4 years. TCBC appointed Broadbent Consultants to develop a series of public artworks as part of the physical works in this area. The artworks have been informed by a series of workshops with schools, community groups and organisations and are due to be completed by the end of November 2012.

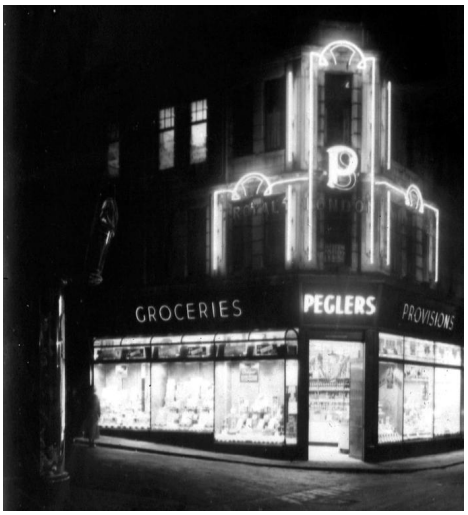


Image: Peglers, © Pontypool Museum

9 *Nat West Bank*

Moving along the street, we come to the National Westminster Bank - once a mid Victorian club (the Pontypool Club) from 1850-60, converted into a bank in c1905, and externally almost unaltered since. This building has important townscape value as the visual stop at the north end of the street.

Image: Nat West Bank on Osborne Road, 1930s , © Pontypool Museum

10 *The White Heart Hotel*

Up past our right, George Street continues with The White Heart Hotel now being refurbished, with some of its original features, such as this fireplace, being retained (partially funded through the Townscape Heritage Initiative).

Image: Inside The White Heart Hotel, © Pontypool Museum

11 *Pontypool Townscape Heritage Initiative*

This is a conservation-led grants programme focused on renovating run down premises in the town centre and promoting economic regeneration and community development to encourage businesses and people back into the town and up-skill and engage local people. The scheme includes a programme of artworks and community engagement projects, such as the commissioning of students from the University of Wales Newport to produce 'art hoardings' for use during the renovation work; a Town Heritage Trail that may offer opportunities for engaging local artist makers and/or digital technologies, such as smart phone applications; and a digital project called Gener8 that involves collecting people's stories and impressions of the town and the changes that the regeneration activities may bring over the next five years.

12 *The Old Post Office and Griffin Press*

Turning left to Osborne Road, we see what was once the Post Office and further up the streetscape, still much as it was when first built, the Griffin Press at its far end, owned by the Hughes family of the Free Press.

Image: The Old Post Office and the Griffin Press © Pontypool Museum

13 *HSBC – The Old Boot Shop*

Returning back towards the Cross, onward to Commercial Road, is HSBC, formerly the Midland bank and before that, a boot shop.

14 *The Corn Market and Bottom Fowlers*

The former Corn Market is possibly the oldest building in Pontypool, later becoming Hughes stationers, and the former Bottom Fowlers store, again part of Lion House, on our right.

15 *Barclays Bank*

Barclays Bank opened in 1875 and was then known as the London and Provincial Bank. Formerly in Crane Street, it was decided that it would be better situated in the town centre when Lloyds Bank opened.

16 *Credit Union and the Cooperative*

Walking on to the Town Hall, we pass the Credit Union with its own complete documented history, alongside other premises that have housed many different businesses over the years, notably the Cooperative was once a very large store in the centre of the street.

17 *Glantorfaen House*

Opposite, we can see Glantorfaen House built in 1857, owned by Mr Bythway, once a lawyer and clerk of the Council. You can see the original dining room furniture from the house at Pontypool museum.

18 *Millennium Mural*

Commissioned by ArtRegen, to commemorate the Millennium, the mural looks at Pontypool's past, present and future. It was designed and constructed by 13-14 year olds with a professional artist.

[Image: Glantorfaen House © Pontypool Museum]

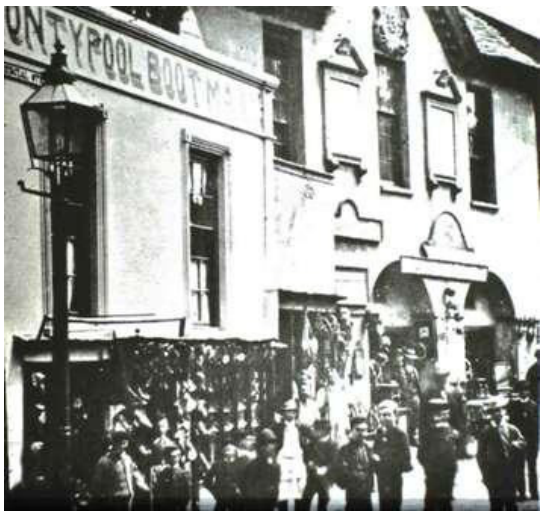
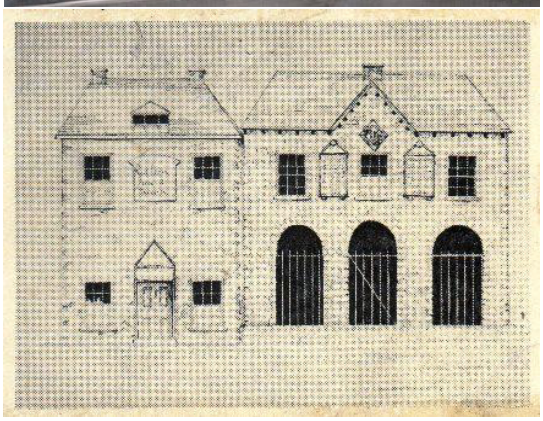


Image: The Old Boot Shop © Pontypool Museum



Images: The Corn Market and Bottom Fowlers © Pontypool Museum

Image: The Cooperative © Pontypool Museum

19 *Town Hall*

Passing the Library, built in 1908, we arrive at the highly elaborate wrought iron Park Gates, viewed from the Italian Gardens.
We can also see the Town Hall, built in 1896 by Capel Hanbury Leigh to commemorate the birth of his son and heir.

Image: The Library © Pontypool Museum

20 *St James' Church*

Beside the Town Hall, St James Church built in 1821 was established for the English speaking community of Pontypool, when St Cadocs, Trevethin was Welsh speaking.

Image: Inside St. James' Church © Pontypool Museum

21 *Pontypool Park*

Covering 64 hectares, the Park was laid out in 1703 as the private estate of the Hanburys, squires of Pontypool, who were the local ironmasters and closely associated with Japanware. Their house, now St Albans school was first built in the 1690s with alterations ongoing up to the present day. The Parkland originally included avenues of sweet chestnuts and beech following the contours of the valleys up towards the Folly Tower, many of which are still visible. During the 18th and 19th century new plantings of chestnuts, oak, beech, and yew were added, obscuring the formal avenues and creating the wooded areas along the river and main path to Pontymoile but retaining the open character of the park. However, following its sale to the Public Authorities in 1920, conifer plantations were introduced during the 1950s and 60s and, along with the original plantings, were left unmanaged. This altered the landscape to a predominantly mature wooded park with some open meadowland. Various monuments and facilities have been introduced during its years of public ownership, including a bandstand in 1931, a grandstand in 1945, a dry ski slope and leisure centre in 1975, bowling green, tennis courts, netball courts, and a rugby pitch in 1925, which is now home to Pontypool RFC's 8,800-capacity stadium. The Park has hosted many outdoor events, notably the National Eisteddfod of Wales in 1924, which is commemorated by a Gorsedd stone circle, and more recently, Opera Concerts, Jazz Festivals, and an annual firework display. The Park has footpaths leading into the Brecon Beacons National Park and to the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal, as well as a national cycle route. Grant aid from the Heritage Lottery Fund and CADW has been obtained to restore specific historical areas and features of the Park, including the icehouses, Italian Gardens, Pontymoile Park Gates.

Images: Park Gates and Gardens © Pontypool Museum

In 2011/12, TCBC and Tidy Towns also jointly funded a £120k project to restore the Nant-y-Gollen Ponds

and introduce natural planting to the area, which were originally one large millpond that powered a forge further downstream. The 400-year-old sweet chestnuts surrounding the ponds were planted as a source of charcoal for iron making. During the 1920's Johnny Weismuller, the original Tarzan used the ponds for a swimming event and in later years it is reputed that the ponds were the home for the local water polo team. The ponds were re-designed in the early 1990s and two ponds were created with the intention that they should be used as model boating lakes but soon ran into disrepair.

22 *ArtRegen and the Italian Gardens, Fountain, Hospital Memorial, and Arbour*

Image:1950s fountain © Pontypool Museum

The Italian Gardens were constructed around 1849/50 and are based on the Isola Bella Gardens in Lake Maggiore where Capel Hanbury Leigh went for his second honeymoon. Plants from this area were brought back to Pontypool, as was the custom at that time. Mrs Tenison, the daughter of John Hanbury gave the gardens to the people of Pontypool to commemorate her coming of age in 1920. The white wall along Hanbury Road, which had hidden the gardens from public view, was removed and a new entrance to the Park was built which subsequently became the memorial for those who fell in the 1st World War. Planting in this area focuses on specimens considered fashionable from 1900 onwards.

TCBC are in the process of renovating the Italian Gardens, which are a critical space at the interface between the Park and the town centre. The renovation of the fountain fed by the spring in St James Field is a recently completed part of the renovation project, supported by CADW. ArtRegen worked with TCBC and Pontypool Museum to commission a new design in stone by artist Jane Turner to replace the original fountain centrepiece dating from the 1840s and a later 1950s dragon centrepiece, which disappeared in the 1990s. ArtRegen have commissioned various other works within the Park, including a sculpted seat commemorating the now demolished Pontypool & Dirstrict Hospital, the re-siting of an 18th century arbour from a former farm in Trevethin into the Park, and "Opera in the Park" with the WNO.

23 *Tramway, Tunnel, and Weir*

Other features to note are the tramway, tunnel, and riverside walk taking in the weir towards Pontymoile. The Afon Lwyd river, meaning 'grey river', has reputedly the 2nd highest rise and fall in Europe. The weir and sluice gate mechanism were installed in the river to ensure that a forceful stream of water was constantly available to turn the water wheels, which powered the forges nearby. It can be seen that the weir was originally constructed of hardwearing cobbles, which over time have been undermined and slipped. The original slab still remains in the river. The tramway was part of a wider, local system that included tinplate works and forges. The tunnel was originally constructed around 1825 to link the Pontymoile tinworks to the Park and Osborne forges and probably supplied them with their iron. The tram road continued to run alongside the river, now a footpath and further downstream there is evidence of a weir and sluice gates that would have been used to control water into the forges. The tunnel is now blocked up but it is rumoured that it originally exited close to the Town Bridge and it came back into use as an air raid shelter during WWII. TCBC are working with Pontypool Park Friends to improve the link between the Park and the Italian Gardens as a critical route between the park and town. It is also hoped that with the installation of a fish leap at Pontymoile weir the river will once again be a valuable habitat for trout and other fish. This will provide a pleasant riverside walk and the opportunity to interpret the old tramway, tunnel and biodiversity value of the river corridor.

Hydro technology is still of interest to TCBC today, who supported the construction and development of a micro hydropower project located in Blaenavon, on Afon Llwyd. The project was financed by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Valleys Regional Park and Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and is part of the Forgotten Landscape Project. Opportunities for harnessing hydropower from the Weir at Pontypool have also been proposed.

24 *Pontymoile Basin*

Image: Pontymoile in 1915 © Fourteen Locks Canal Centre

The Pontymoile entrance was the original entrance to Pontypool Park house and had a small lodge adjacent to the river, which was demolished in the late 1950's. The gates themselves are Grade II* listed by CADW and are affectionately known as the Sally gates after 'Sally', the Duchess of Marlborough apparently gifted them to the Hanbury family for helping with the execution of her late husband's will in the mid-nineteenth century. The gates have been restored with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, CADW and TCBC.

The canal at Pontymoile is known locally as the 'Basin' or the 'Junction'. Of these two names, the latter is the most revealing because Pontymoile marks the point at which two canals joined in 1812. The Monmouthshire Canal was authorised by Act of Parliament in 1792, followed closely by The Brecknock & Abergavenny Canal in 1793. At the time of their construction they transformed transportation. Previously, the main ways of moving bulky or heavy goods was by packhorse and by horse and cart. Canal transportation changed everything - two men working a boat that was pulled by a single horse replaced about two hundred horses. Of the two canals, the Brecknock and Abergavenny Canal took the longest time to complete. The junction at Pontymoile is so significant because it allowed the cheaper and more efficient transportation of goods, especially iron. Notably 'iron' from Blaenavon Ironworks could now be taken by tram road to the canal at Llanfoist where it could begin its journey to Newport. Rope marks cut into the canal bridge at Pontymoile as the horses pulled their boats are an ever-present reminder of this journey. Today the 'Basin' is a place of leisure - a place to go boating, cycling, fishing and walking.

25 26 *The Folly & The Shell Grotto*

In the 19th Century, the Hanbury's built the Shell Grotto as a lavishly decorated summerhouse of 19th-century origin and in around 1770, they erected a 1000ft Folly, which was rebuilt in 1994, following its demolition by the War Office in 1940. Both landmarks are opened to the public during the summer months.

27 *Pontypool Museum*

Image: St Albans School © Pontypool Museum

Pontypool Museum is part of Pontypool Park House, built in the 1690s and situated at the north entrance to the park. The present day Georgian stable block of the former Hanbury home was built during major alterations in the 1830s by Capel Hanbury Leigh and housed 7 carriages and 19 horses, staying in use until 1915. It has been the home of Torfaen Museum Trust since 1978.

28 *New Inn*

In common with other industrial towns, the character of modern Pontypool was defined in a relatively short time in the late 19th century by the development of extensive residential suburbs. The topography and transport routes served to divide these areas, each of which has a strong individual identity, notwithstanding shared characteristics arising from common models of building and materials, and a distinctive style. New Inn is a suburb of Pontypool with a population of around 6,349, which grew

from a small number of houses built during the late 19th and early 20th Centuries along The Highway, which was then the main route between Newport (to the south) and Pontypool. The development of a large marshalling yard and building of Pontypool Road Station further allowed the village to expand. New Inn is generally considered one of the more affluent areas of Pontypool and this is reflected in the style of housing and amenities. Public consultation reveals that residents prefer to use the town centre, preferring instead to visit Cwmbran about five miles away, which offers a successful, privately-operated, covered Mall with minimal empty shop units, free parking, and a flat townscape, rather tan Pontypool town centre. Cwmbran is a new town that was established in 1949 to provide new employment opportunities in the south-eastern part of the South Wales Coalfield.

29 ***Crumlin to Pontypool Cycle Track***

With funding from the Welsh Government, TCBC are working with Sustrans to develop the Crumlin to Pontypool section of an east/west cross-county cycle and walking route linking neighbouring counties via existing and new routes. The track is currently signposted to go past the town so there are plans to introduce a route into the town. The project has so far included creative workshops with West Mon School Pupil Referral Unit and it is hoped that an artist can continue this engagement work and develop artworks along the route.

This Community Links project is part of the Pontypool Settlement Area programme which has received in excess of £10m from the Welsh European Funding Office and Welsh Government to improve facilities in the programme area, including Pontypool Indoor market, Pontypool town centre, Trevethin village centre and the Corn Bin in Garndiffaith.

30 ***Griffithstown***

Griffithstown is an ecclesiastical parish, formed in May, 1898, from Llanfrechfa Upper and Panteg, and includes Sebastopol but under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1894, became a separate civil parish. It is named after the ex-station master of Pontypool Road train station (now Pontypool & New Inn), Henry Griffiths. The area is a mix of Victorian and Edwardian buildings alongside 1960s and 1970s housing estates and the western part of the parish is generally considered to be desirable and affluent with property prices being some of the highest in the borough. The residents of Griffithstown typically commute to work in larger towns such as Cwmbran or Newport.

31 ***Gateway to Pontypool – Dreamboats, 2001***

The five stainless steel boats are intended to celebrate the steel industry and remind passers-by of the contribution of water transport to the development of wealth and employment in the town's history. Shaped like paper boats they are also intended to recall memories of childhood and leisure spent on the Afon Llwyd.

32 ***Tranch/Wainfelin***

In the early 19th century, the area to the south-west of Pontypool town centre was largely agricultural, with a pattern of small fields and scattered dwellings. The main route north from Pontypool, now Wainfelin Road, once came this way. Vernacular cottages at Tranch and buildings at the Wainfelin Road/ Merchant's Hill junction are reminders of the area's past rural traditions. The area retained this open and rural character until the end of the 19th century when development began to take place along Wainfelin Road. The public-housing programme after WWII initiated much larger scale development. Wainfelin is now a suburb of Pontypool with a population of around 2,422.

33 ***St John's Church***

St John's Church in Wainfelin has been transformed to provide flexible accommodation for a variety of community activities. The Victorian Church Building is much larger than the present congregation needs and so a partnership with the Wainfelin Regeneration Project (WARP) has provided self-contained spaces suitable for IT training and other activities, plus a large meeting hall within the main part of the building, leaving the east end as a space for worship.

34 *Pontnewynydd*

Pontnewynydd is a predominantly working class suburb of Pontypool. The Pontnewynydd Iron Works once employed many people in the area before closing in 1961, along with a number of other local works when the Llanwern Steelworks opened in Newport. The section of the Monmouthshire Canal from Pontymoile to Pontnewynydd was drained in the 1850s and the canal bed used to lay a railway line, which was eventually extended to Blaenavon. The railway closed in 1962. The parkland at Pontnewynydd hosted the Pontnewynydd Bath Festivals for a number of years.

35 *Trevethin*

Trevethin is a modern suburb of Pontypool built around a small village in the 1960s and 70s. It is on the southern most point of the Brecon Beacons National Park. Trevethin has been awarded Communities First status and has a strong partnership board and community facilities, such as Cold Barn Farm Youth Centre and the LIFE Station.

36 *Cold Barn Farm*

Cold Barn Farm is an example of collaborative partnership working between Communities First and the TCBC Youth Service. Both Cold Barn Farm and Youth Staff support young people from the surrounding communities, working in partnership to promote opportunities for young people. Communities First is the Welsh Government's flagship programme to improve the living conditions and prospects for people in the most disadvantaged communities across Wales. Launched in 2001, there are now over 150 Communities First partnerships in the most deprived areas throughout Wales working in partnership with Public, Third, and Private sector organisations to achieve common goals.

37 *Trevethin Neighbourhood Centre Development*

Bron Afon Community Housing, Communities First and TCBC are developing this environmental regeneration project, with funding from the European Regional Development Fund, the Welsh Government's targeted match fund and the Heads of the Valleys programme. The project encompasses seven small retail units known as Trevethin Shops that serve: Trevethin and St Cadocs; the LIFE Station; the Communities First Office; Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyn; Community Garden; Community Hall; bus stop and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA); a police station; Council Offices; and a Workingman's Hall. Despite being vibrant and busy, the area is tired, dated and in need of repair and so the aim of the project is to develop a distinct 'sense of place' and destination, encourage private sector investment and sustained economic growth, develop pedestrian links between the shops and the LIFE Station, and develop opportunities and access to employment services and facilities for local people.

38 *Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw*

In 2005 it was announced that the district's local school, Trevethin Community School, was to close. Pupils were moved to Abersychan comprehensive school and West Monmouth School and the school buildings were demolished to make way for a new £12.1 million school, Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw. Jointly funded by the Welsh Government, Torfaen, Newport, Monmouth, and Blaenau Gwent local authorities, the new building will increase the Welsh medium school's capacity to 1,100 pupils.

39 *The Life Station*

Torfaen Adult and Community Learning opened the doors of the LIFE station in 2010 with the aim of improving the health and education of the local community. The £2.73 million centre, funded by the Welsh Government through the Physical Regeneration Fund, Heads of the Valleys fund and TCBC, provides residents of Trevethin, St Cadocs, Penygarn and the wider community with services from health professionals, education and the voluntary sector. Facilities include a crèche, IT training room, community café, an allotment where residents can grow their own food, and a "learning kitchen" where they can learn about cooking healthy meals. It is a sustainable construction that incorporates rainwater harvesting, bio-fuel (wood pellet) heating and solar thermal hot water heating.

40 *St Cadoc's Church Footpath*

TCBC have recently renovated St Cadoc's Church Footpath, which provides an important community link between Penygarn and Trevethin and a lovely walk through a changing landscape of woodland, copse, and pasture. TCBC are considering commissioning an artist to tell the story of the link between St Cadoc's and the town and the biodiversity of the area.

41 *American Gardens*

Formerly named The Coppice Fawr, the American Gardens were created by the Hanbury family in the mid-19th Century when wealthy Victorian landowners throughout Britain were introducing exotic plants to add a sense of drama to the natural landscape. Capel Hanbury Leigh provided alternative employment through this garden project when confronted with the need to layoff workers from his ironworks during a period of local depression. A 100m long ornamental pond forms the centrepiece to the gardens, alongside which runs a carriage drive that originally led from the Pontypool Park House, towards the Folly. The planting consists of mature conifers and, now rare, Rhododendron varieties distributed throughout an area of deciduous woodland, at the heart of which sits a 'fairytale' style woodman's lodge. Although initially created as a private pleasure ground and then used later as a beat for shoots, the gardens have always been visited by local people, as far back as the 1890s when Louisa Hanbury, wife of John Capel Hanbury, used to give tea parties by the pond. After WWII the gardens started to become neglected and overgrown and are currently subject to a restoration project.

42 *St Cadocs, Penygarn and the Neighbourhood Learning Centre*

St Cadocs and Penygarn are suburbs of Pontypool with Communities First Status that are all but merged with Trevethin. St Cadocs covers a relatively small area and Penygarn is divided into housing estate areas and Old Penygarn, one of the richest places in Pontypool with only 15–20 houses. Penygarn is semi-rural and is close to the American Gardens in Pontypool Park. It is also home to the Neighbourhood Learning Centre or 'Log Cabin'. Opened in 2009 and run by the Woodlands Field Group, the centre has won numerous awards including the Queen's Award for outstanding voluntary service to local communities.

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