



**Blackpill, Derwen Fawr & Mayals
Residents' Association January 2021**

We hope that you have found this Newsletter interesting and that it keeps you in touch with some of the issues that our neighbours are talking about. If you are not already a member of the Association, perhaps you would consider joining us?

The Association is a non party political organization whose objectives are:-

- (a) to strive for the protection of our local environment and amenities;
- (b) to ensure that amenities and services are adequate for the area;
- (c) to act for local residents in matters of community interest;
- (d) to promote the interests of local residents and the area's amenities.

The Committee now comprises:

Chairman: Brian Miles:	brianmiles46@yahoo.co.uk
Treasurer: Michael Lewis	jlewis304@btinternet.com
Yvonne Cartwright	yvonneac@tiscali.co.uk
Maggie Crawford	maggie.crawford@sky.com
Val Davies	valdavies24@gmail.com
Sue Davies	susangdavies@gmail.com
Alyson Downey	alysond106@gmail.com
Phil Slater	slater425@hotmail.com
Secretary: Bill Anderson	billanderson191@outlook.com
	Tel: 523930

Do Pass this On.....Do Keep in Touch



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January 2021
Keep Well—Stay Safe**



[www.vivianhall.org/clubs and Activities/residents' association](http://www.vivianhall.org/clubs_and_Activities/residents'_association)



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Up dates....

******The much enlarged Skateboard Park at Llwynderw:**
the review carried out by an independent expert found that the proposed location was the best. The report is available on the Mumbles Community Council website under What's On and the section on the Skateboard Park. The main issues seem to be that they already have an anti-social behaviour problem in Underhill Park and the shape of the installation would need to be changed to suit the change of location. No mention in the review of the damage to the Bay foreshore. No information about the start date.

****** Daffodil bulb planting:**

A team came hastily to plant 1,500 bulbs the day before lockdown in November. It was a sunny day and all was achieved in less than two hours. Green shoots are showing already. Thanks to all who came and to the two Parks Department staff who supported us.



****** Children's play area near Ynys Newydd car park.**

CLrs Cheryl Philpott and Mike Day have used their community budget for this climbing frame to add to the slide and other play items.



It has been very popular already and a great draw for all ages. The split level allows several groups to enjoy it at the same time.

A very imaginative addition. Thank you.



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Mayals Road Cycle Path

In spite of the universal opposition expressed at the Zoom meeting arranged by the Residents' Association, the Mayals Road part of the cycleway from Bishopston to join with the Promenade is going ahead as evidenced by the traffic problems along the whole route. The dangers inherent in this scheme are:

- most of the downhill cycle track is dangerous according to local cyclists. This part, called 'hybrid', is popular in Holland where roads are flat, is narrower than the normal minimum standard, is 125mm (5 inches) higher than the road and is immediately next to the carriageway. Any slight swerve by the cyclist will cause them to either steer into a tree or down the kerb into the road; either could be fatal.
- the carriageway has been reduced to the minimum width and any cyclist choosing to use the road could lead to dangerous overtaking.
- the new road width requires the pedestrian refuges to be removed, a safety feature introduced a few years ago, People crossing the road can use the two new Toucan crossings but they are positioned to suit the Cycle Path **not** residents. Anyone crossing at Southerndown or Westport Avenue will have to tackle two Cycle Paths in addition to the normal traffic and won't be able to stand at the roadside while waiting.
- There will be no road parking and residents will have difficulties when leaving their drives. The plan seems to create additional hazards for all users of Mayals Road

The 'Tree Saga' continues. First the plan required 10 to 12 trees to be felled; then, it was found that none were to be removed. Now there are 19, all mature, out of a total of 118 over the whole length. In the long run, this should be a good thing because all are said to be damaged or diseased but tree destruction is a major issue for many people and such big changes do not inspire confidence, more 'making it up as you go along'.

It is tragic that Residents' and other users' views were not sought before the grant application was made to Active Travel as 'best practice' requires. The defects in this Cycle Path are apparent to all users but not the Traffic Department. One wonders if this is a good use of public money.



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Christmas weather

We seem to be setting many weather records in all the wrong ways: too hot, too wet, too many storms. But over the Christmas/New Year period, we were treated to some fantastic sunrises. Lovely!

Clyne Valley Cycle Path

In the Clyne Valley Country Park, the paths to the west of the Clyne Stream are heavily used by mountain bikers. The slopes are steep enough to give an exciting ride and access is easy because of the Cycle Path up the old railway line which has been in place for many years. Consequently, many walkers avoid that area because of the risk of collision with thrill-seeking bikers. In contrast, the area to the east has, until now, been largely free of cyclists and is very popular with walkers and families. It is a precious space, free from danger.

Change is about to happen and your Residents' Association has written to the Traffic Department to express our opposition. The Council has applied for and received a Grant from the Welsh Government to resurface the bridleway which runs all through this area making it suitable for road bicycles which travel at speeds similar to cars but without the same stopping ability. This scheme, sprung upon local people without discussion, is funded by Active Travel, an initiative to encourage commuters to choose cycling or walking rather than driving. The Guidance on how to implement Active Travel projects, best practice, requires extensive discussion with local interests and residents at all stages and we assert this has been ignored. No discussion was held and the Traffic Department completely ignore best practice. Regrettably, the RA's invitation to attend a meeting to explain the plan was ignored. Similarly, our suggested consideration of an alternative route using more of the existing Path, which would have left this whole area untouched has received no response.

Bringing ROAD traffic through a COUNTRY Park is tragic.

Christmas Tree

The tree was erected and decorated early in December by a small group who could maintain social distancing. Slightly shorter than last year, it took a big effort to stand it in the pot and we still haven't found a way to position the star on top! Thanks to all who helped and to the Hall who paid half. I am sure it brightened Blackpill.

Another group has planted a tree on Sketty Green, small now but it will grow, with luck. A great start.



Neighbourhood Policing

There are five Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) who cover our area.

Three cover the Sketty area to the bottom of Derwen Fawr Road. They are:
PCSO Nadia Curry. tel 07805 301583
PCSO Mark Parker. tel 07583 106460
PCSO Fred Lerwell. tel 07805 106460
Two PCSOs cover the area from Blackpill to Mumbles. They are:
PCSO Angela Clarke tel 07805 301617
PCSO Lucy Lewis tel 07870 916163





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The Kate Craven Orchard.

In addition to being highly active as the Secretary of the Residents' Association, Kate was first Secretary of the Clyne Valley Community Project (CVCP) and one of the founders. In the heart of the valley there is a 2½ acre patch of open ground which had been used to raise pigs but was now full of bracken. This could threaten the whole valley if it caught fire since the access for firefighters is poor.

Kate's plan was to plant fruit trees. Their blossom would attract insects and improve the ecosystem of the valley and, in time, they would conquer the bracken as they grew above it. CVCP volunteers cut the bracken each year to reduce its strength.

In 2014, she gained a grant for 140 trees and three patches of wild-flowers. The flowers were sown by volunteers and, the following spring, nothing grew! A mystery. However, the saplings were planted by CVCP volunteers and most of them are flowering well in the Spring. Some died and a few replacement saplings were planted in November 2020. CVCP continues to cut the bracken which is now considerably reduced.

If you walk up the Cycle Path on the old railway line, the Orchard is to be found along a small path on the right, about 20 yards beyond the end of the lake. There is a small circular disc attached to a waymark post. You can walk up this path and the orchard opens before you. In a few more years, it will be more mature and impressive but now it is a tranquil space and well rewards a visit.

The Orchard was named by CVCP to honour Kate who died a year ago and had brought so much energy and commitment to establishing the Valley as a precious local resource.



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2021 Annual Subscriptions and Covid.

A big Thank You to all who paid your subscriptions for 2020. We have had 81 payments and there are a further 4 Standing Orders still to pay. The price remains at £5 per household.

Payment for 2021 will be due on April 1st.

It is too early to consider whether we will be able to hold an AGM. Right now, the skies are darker than ever. Perhaps the effect of the vaccine will slow the infection rate and we might be allowed to creep out of our holes in the summer.

Some will be finding these restrictions harder to bear than others. Now, more than ever, please keep in touch with neighbours: a friendly voice can make a huge difference. But keep taking precautions: remember that this disease is highly infectious and elderly folk are vulnerable.

Vivian Hall update.

The Lottery Grant Application was finally lodged on November 14th and their target is to reply to all applicants within three months, Feb 14th! If it is refused, feedback will be given and the application can be resubmitted.

It would be ideal if the grant could be approved now. The Hall is seldom used at present because of Covid and the work could be carried out with no disruption to Users. Meanwhile, three revenue grants have been received, Government support for businesses. The Hall is being cleaned and heated but rental income is tiny and these grants cover that gap for the time being.

No-one can predict when we will return to normal but, in the absence of a plan, we are keeping our fingers crossed.

