

## **"Canolfan Croeso Welcome Centre" - an update**

When Pembrokeshire National Parks decided to sell Newport Visitor Centre, Newport Town Council responded by submitting a comprehensive application for a Community Asset Transfer. As a result NTC in April this year succeeded in getting an offer from PCNPA to lease the building for 30 years at £1 per year rent. This was fantastic news, but just the beginning!

Next we had to agree the terms of the lease between NTC and PCNPA. As many of you understand, this involves extensive negotiation on the details of terms and conditions in the agreement. All eventualities have to be covered. Thanks to a lot of hard work on both sides and the helpfulness of PCNPA we are finally arriving at the stage where we shall be able to sign on the dotted line.

Once that's done we need to remove an internal wall to fit in the Library and the Visitor Centre. For this we needed to draw up detailed internal layout plans, get a structural engineer report, permission from National Parks, prepare a brief for competitive tenders from builders, and then choose the best bid.

We shall be starting that work as soon as the handover happens. We shall also be putting up units and shelves and decorating ready for the Library and Visitor Centre.

In the middle of all this we suddenly realised that the Public Service Broadband system would be removed by PCNPA and then, in order for the PCC to link to the Library in its new premises, it would need to be reinstalled at great cost and importantly delay. Thankfully both authorities have agreed that the system will be left in place and the transfer process is ongoing.

Simultaneously Newport Town Council applied for an Enhancing Pembrokeshire Grant to cover some of the costs of this process. Getting together all the documentation and information requested took weeks to complete. We hope to hear whether we have succeeded fairly soon. Until then nothing can start.

At the moment we are negotiating the terms of a sublease (drafted by our solicitor) between NTC and the Library group as our tenants in the building. This will then need to be submitted to PCNPA for its approval. We would like to see the Library moving in by the end of November.

Once the Library has been installed, the next stage will be to bring together the volunteers who want to be part of the exciting project of making our own Newport visitor centre.

It has been a very intense process which has entailed a lot of persistence and hard work. Newport Town Council is determined to make Canolfan Croeso Welcome Centre a centre that Newport can be proud of. Thanks to all of you who have expressed support.

Thank you  
Jano Williams (Cllr)