

# Cynhadledd yr Wyddfa

## Snowdon Seminar

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Adroddiad ar y digwyddiad a gafodd ei alw ynghyd gan Bartneriaeth yr Wyddfa, i drafod cyfleoedd, materion, a'r camau nesaf

Report of the event convened by the Snowdon Partnership –  
Partneriaeth yr Wyddfa, to discuss opportunities, issues, and next steps



**9<sup>fed</sup> Tachwedd, 2015. Llanberis**  
**9<sup>th</sup> November, 2015. Llanberis**

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*9th November, 2015. Llanberis*

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## 1. Introduction

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The Seminar brought together the local community and stakeholders interested in the future of Snowdon to discuss how to capitalise on opportunities and manage the challenges and issues appropriately. Around half of the 100 participants present at the seminar had already attended drop-in sessions in October, with the remainder taking part for the first time.

The seminar allowed people to reflect on the Partnership and to explore ideas about the Partnership's aims and remit which were raised at the drop-in sessions by local people, landowners/occupiers, user groups and other interested people.

This report provides an overview of the event and observations and contributions of participants. A full record of the points made at this event, at the three October drop-in sessions, along with comments from stakeholders via e-mail, Twitter, letter and other means can be viewed on the Partnership website:

[www.snowdonpartnership.co.uk](http://www.snowdonpartnership.co.uk)

This material will be reviewed in detail and will form the basis of the Partnership's next steps. A proposal the way forward will be circulated to all stakeholders involved in the process thus far (via email/post) for further comment. The Partnership will then consider feedback and comments before reaching a consensus on the way forward. In addition to producing a proposal for the way forward, the Partnership will search the evidence already gathered to try to identify 'quick wins' for its work.

A second seminar will be convened in 12 month's time. This will be an opportunity to reflect on actions, new opportunities and ways to address outstanding issues. The forum will be one means of continuing to build engagement between stakeholders and the Partnership.

## **2. The Purposes of the Seminar**

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The purposes of the seminar were to:

1. Introduce the Partnership, its aims and aspirations.
2. Explore the testimony of participants at the drop-in events to highlight issues and challenges the Partnership should consider.
3. Agree the ways in which the local community, land owner / occupiers and stakeholders would like to be involved in the Partnership's work.
4. Agree next steps.

### 3. The Seminar Programme

Time	Session ( <i>aim</i> )	Purpose / Detail
18.30	<b>Arrivals &amp; refreshments</b>	<b>Refreshments and informal chatting / networking</b> (The panels displayed at drop-in events were set up to view, along with several partners' displays)
19.00	<b>Welcome &amp; introductions</b>	Catrin Ellis Jones, facilitator welcomed participants and described the purpose of the session and working style.  <b>Helen Pye, Snowdonia National Park Authority (SNPA)</b> welcomed participants on behalf of the Partnership and introduced the current members of the Partnership.
19.20	<b>Introducing the Snowdon Partnership and it's aims</b>	<b>Emyr Williams, Chief Executive, SNPA</b>  Described the draft purpose of the Partnership, the context and drivers motivating Partners to come together and begin their collaborative efforts. The geographic area of the Partnership's focus was outlined to participants, along with the long-term commitment to positive action. As the Partnership matures it aspires to develop proactive responses to the changing socio-economic and environmental conditions affecting the Snowdon area, and look at how we might adapt to and /or mitigate for these changing times (e.g. the growing size and frequency of events located here, behaviours of people, climatic conditions and so on).
19.30	<b>Summary description of the issues raised at the drop-ins</b>	Over-view of the issues highlighted at the drop-ins, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Habitats, invasive species and related topics,</b></li> <li>• <b>Planning issues and enabling appropriate development</b></li> <li>• <b>Events and the behaviours of people involved</b></li> <li>• <b>Traffic, parking &amp; public transport</b></li> <li>• <b>Access, footpaths / bridleways &amp; waymarking</b></li> <li>• <b>Language, heritage, educating visitors</b></li> </ul> It was noted that several of the opportunities and issues raised were interrelated. Under each theme a spectrum of issues and solutions were raised, from ones that can be addressed relatively easily, with relatively quick, simple and cost-effective measures that can be undertaken, to issues that reflect social, political and environmental changes that have emerged over time and which will need to be considered carefully if sustainable solutions are to be found.
19.45	<b>Reflections at tables</b>	Reflection and group discussion at tables focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose and membership of the Partnership</li> <li>• Overarching reactions to the range of issues raised at drop-in events.</li> </ul>
20.15	<b>Local involvement in the Partnership?</b>	A plenary session describing some opportunities suggested by drop-in participants, for future involvement in the partnership's work.  A proposal to trial "visitor giving" locally was also outlined. Participants were asked to consider whether The Snowdon Partnership would be a good vehicle to manage this scheme, and the types of initiatives the resulting funds could contribute to?

20.25	<b>Reflections at tables</b>	Small group discussions
20.45	<b>Plenary feedback</b>	Plenary feedback to share a flavour of table discussions
20.50	<b>Next steps</b>	<p><b>Gwynedd Watkin, Farmers Union Wales (FUW) and Catherine Williams, Snowdonia Active</b> outlined the Partnership's next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at the outputs from the drop-ins &amp; seminar to start to develop a plan that addresses both the issues that you have suggested relatively straightforward answers to, but also other priority issues, that are maybe more challenging or where the solutions may require actions at a different level, e.g. national policy, identifying behaviours that cause problems and thinking about how to change them.</li> <li>• Convening another forum event in 12 months.</li> </ul>
21.00	<b>Thanks &amp; Close</b>	Participants were invited to stay a little longer for further informal discussions

## 4. Overview of Discussions at the Seminar

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After initial introductions, the seminar began with a wide-ranging discussion. A concern highlighted by some landowners was that the Partnership was planning to tell them how to manage their land. The Partners sought to address these concerns by:

- Confirming that the Partnership is being established to help address common issues, including those which affect landowners, many of which result from visitor pressures on the area.
- Re-iterating that there are already schemes in place relating to land-management i.e. Glastir, land management prescriptions are therefore outside the Partnership's role.
- Re-iterating that the consultation was in no way related to the recent Green Paper on Countryside Access: "Improving Opportunities to Access the Outdoors for Responsible Recreation", produced by the Welsh Government.

### 4.1. The Partnership's Purpose – and the Seminar's Response

Seminar participants were asked to reflect on the Partnership's existing purpose statement:

"The Partnership's purpose is to work together with the local community, landowner/occupiers and stakeholders to identify issues and challenges of the Snowdon area. The Partnership will implement proactive, practical solutions"

A number of people at the Seminar felt that the Partnership's purpose was overly negative and that it should focus on positive opportunities as well as solving issues through practical action, promote joined-up working and avoid duplication of effort.

**The Partnership have edited the purpose as follows:**

"The Partnership's purpose is to work together with the local community, landowner/occupiers and stakeholders to identify issues, challenges and opportunities of the Snowdon area. The Partnership will implement proactive, practical solutions"

A wide range of suggestions regarding the membership of the Partnership were made including inviting the participation of local community representatives / Community Councillors, representatives of user groups such as the BMC, BHS and BCU, tourism industry representatives, Wildlife Trusts and CADW.

**The Partnership will review its membership along with the aims and interactions of the core Partnership and a wider forum.**



## 4.2. Ideas and issues raised at the seminar and drop-in sessions

A full write-up of ideas and issues can be downloaded from the Partnership's website [www.snowdonpartnership.co.uk](http://www.snowdonpartnership.co.uk). Hard copies can be requested from Helen Pye c/o Snowdonia National Park Authority.

Below is a flavour of the topics raised and discussed by stakeholders:

- Several participants expressed their concern over increasing visitor numbers, and resulting potential impact on the wider resilience of the area.
- By contrast, others suggested the increased attention given to Snowdon should be celebrated and encouraged. Benefits were cited in relation to greater visitor numbers, including contribution to the local economy, and supporting jobs and infrastructure that increases access to cultural and leisure services.
- Landowner / occupiers noted that only a small minority of those enjoying access to the mountain cause problems such as not shutting gates, not sticking to paths, not controlling dogs appropriately; as numbers on the mountains increase, however, the impact of the small minority is intensified.
- There was a strong feeling that some who access the mountain do not understand that much of the land is privately owned and managed, and therefore do not show appropriate respect.
- It was also noted how the types of activities enjoyed on the mountain have become more diverse, with a view expressed that more organised events means more people who have a more superficial relationship with the mountain .
- A number of participants pointed out that the effectiveness and “useability” of the Glastir agri-environment scheme and other mechanisms could be improved.
- Exploration of the ideas and issues that emerged from the drop-in sessions was welcomed, and doing this together would help people with different priorities to find common ground and work together. Examples of good practice demonstrated in other parts of the UK and Europe from which the Snowdon Partnership could learn were discussed.
- A number of people felt that this process would be a great opportunity to set out the vision for the mountain in 5, 10, 20, even 50 years time.
- Some participants named their priorities for the Partnership's attention as:
  - action to reduce erosion & maintain footpaths;
  - encourage greater respect for privately owned land, for example through using strategically placed signage;
  - improving joined-up public transport;
  - enable landowners to ease parking pressures through temporary parking in fields;
  - encouraging mountain users to prepare appropriately for more enjoyable, and safer mountain experiences;
  - enhancing mountain-based learning opportunities for younger people, particularly local young people;

- improving communications with organisers and participants of large-scale events.

#### **4.3. Maintaining and enhancing the Forum's involvement in the Partnership's work**

The majority of attendees present were positive about the need for wider input to inform and guide the Partnership's work and approach.

Suggestions about mechanisms to enable people to input ideas, report issues, highlight opportunities etc. included:

- Web-forum / e-mail / online-form where people could input at any time i.e. without having to wait for organised events.
- Convening specialist groups to discuss particular themes – e.g. how to encourage tourism and greater visitor-spending; visitor-giving; educational opportunities; access.
- Future drop-ins should also include weekend events.
- Forum events should enable people to talk to /with people expressing a range of views. In order to enable this more time and a more spacious venue would be appropriate.

## 5. Next Steps

This is what the Snowdon Partnership will do next:

