



**Cyfarthfa Plan will reveal world importance
of crucible of industrial revolution
and work in harmony with nature**

The Design Commission for Wales has welcomed plans to transform Merthyr Tydfil's Cyfarthfa Castle into an international quality museum set in an expanded 100-hectare public park.

The 20-year Cyfarthfa Plan (launched today) is the result of 12-month's work by a multi-disciplinary team led by the internationally renowned Ian Ritchie Architects and supported by the Design Commission for Wales. The plan was commissioned by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and has already been approved unanimously.

It is estimated that the plan could draw more than half a million visitors each year and "energise the Valleys Regional Park concept", opening new chapters in Welsh tourism, community and cultural development and sustainability and creating an exemplar project to demonstrate the force and effectiveness of the agenda of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

A new company has been formed – The Cyfarthfa Foundation - to take the scheme forward. This is currently seeking charitable status. The plans have also been submitted to the Welsh Government.

Lee Waters MS, Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport and Chair of the Valleys Taskforce, said: "The plans put forward could see Cyfarthfa Castle and Park become a flagship attraction and an important green space for residents and visitors to enjoy for many years to come. We have provided funding to the park as a Valleys Regional Parks Discovery Gateway.

"I thank all those involved for their work on this so far, and I am particularly encouraged that the ethos of this project is that of a 'bottom up, community led, long term approach to regeneration'. This echoes

perfectly the aims of the Valleys Taskforce and Cadw. We will now consider the detail of these proposals.”

Jonathan Shaw, project leader for Ian Ritchie Architects, said: “This is a 20-year strategic plan that will reveal the global importance of Merthyr Tydfil’s industrial past and work in harmony with nature to transform the Cyfarthfa area.

“The project should grow in parallel with the lives of the youngest generations as they grow into adults. We have developed these plans on the back of extensive consultation with schools, young people and community organisations in Merthyr.

“It draws on the unrivalled social, political and industrial history of Merthyr Tydfil and Wales, its position as a southern gateway to the Brecon Beacons, and its pivotal position in the wider Valleys Regional Park,” he added.

Councillor Geraint Thomas, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, said: “This is a visionary report that describes a transformation that will be of huge value to Merthyr Tydfil, to the heads of the valleys area and to Wales as a whole. It celebrates important chapters in our national past, but with its emphasis firmly on the needs of future generations.”

Geraint Talfan Davies, who will chair the new Cyfarthfa Foundation, said: “The Ian Ritchie team have produced an immensely rich and exciting report that opens up a multitude of opportunities to use our past, and Merthyr’s story in particular, as a springboard to address the challenges of the 21st century. This a project of national as well as local importance.”

Carole-Anne Davies, Chief Executive of the Design Commission for Wales, said: “The commission has been closely engaged in the evolution of this plan, and we are delighted that the end result of almost four years of collaboration is not only a set of proposals of quality and ambition, but also a plan based on sound social and environmental values. It will be important to hold fast to those values and standards as the plans are realised.”

Please follow this link to the executive summary of the report

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/6frco843wrt1d3k/IRAL-768-Cyfarthfa%20Plan%20-%20Stage%203%20Report%20-%20Final%20-%20V2%20-%20Executive%20Summary%20-%20201127.pdf?dl=0>