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Cae Bodfach Community Field: Overview and Current Developments

September 2026

There is a welcomed healthy interest in the current and future use of Cae Bodfach Community Field. The Town Council and Councillors have been approached directly and via The Chronicle. Cae Bodfach's future direction requires a balanced, community-led approach fulfilling commitments to recreation, access and wellbeing whilst respecting its significant environmental value. The field's history demonstrates wide community involvement, and its future will depend on continued collaboration between the Town Council, volunteers, local groups and residents.

Cae Bodfach Community Field has been shaped over many years through the combined efforts of Llanfyllin Town Council, local organisations, volunteers and partner groups. Formerly agricultural land owned by the Bodfach Estate and grazed by a local farmer, the site was leased to the Town Council in 2014. Prior to this some environmental work was done along the riverbank and the Wetlands project was established by the Town Council and the Cain River Group in 2009.

Following acquisition, a range of initiatives supported the field's development. Grant funding enabled the creation of the food garden, and local groups planted fruit trees. The Llanfyllin Community Initiative (LCI) secured planning permission for both a pump track and a skatepark, with the pump track subsequently constructed and permission retained for future expansion. A memorial tree for Wendy Evans was planted, and a cider orchard established. A Stakeholders Group was formed to coordinate activities and ensure the needs of different users were balanced. This group operated for several years, overseeing practical improvements such as dog poo boxes, and also tree planting, shallow scrapes, bird and bat boxes and an otter holt across the river. Some of the volunteers involved over the years coalesced to form BRACE which has continued to contribute to the maintenance of Cae Bodfach.

Throughout this period, the Town Council has aimed to balance environmental enhancement with recreational use and there remains a need for activity and usage of the field needs to increase.

Biodiversity remains an important consideration, river monitoring continues. Any improvements must align with the Council's statutory responsibilities and the recreational purpose for which the land was acquired. Consultation undertaken during grant applications reflected a wide range of views, with residents emphasising the importance of both

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natural habitats and accessible green space for families, children and community groups.

Work has continued over the past two years in line with the requirements of the purchase grant conditions. Accessible gates have been installed, and fencing has created a designated dog-free zone. A proposal has been made to accommodate junior football, supported by an offer of goalposts from the junior football team. Accessible path improvements have been partially completed near the Wetlands “bandstand” area, though further work is required to create a fully accessible riverside route.

Work on the natural play area is progressing, with construction expected to begin in November following a successful grant application. Water safety equipment has been installed, and discussions are ongoing to ensure compliance with insurance requirements. Natural erosion continues to affect access to the beach area, and a sturdy handrail has been suggested as a short-term improvement. Clearing the path beyond the beach is also required. While barbecues have been discouraged this year, the possibility of a safe designated area may be considered in future.

Discussions are ongoing in respect of any immediate improvements and maintenance needed.

Three longer-term grant aims remain in progress:

- Increasing activities on the field by encouraging greater use by local groups and the school
- Improving access through a full perambulation route, wider mown paths and maintained short-grass areas alongside wildflower meadow zones
- Expanding volunteering opportunities through coordinated management, insurance arrangements and shared risk assessment procedures

Further suggestions for future development include: mown areas for dog walkers, outdoor play and gym equipment, table tennis, crazy golf, picnic areas, QR-code treasure hunts.

This update provides an overview of the field’s history, current work and future plans. The Town Council has established a Cae Bodfach Working Group which met over the summer and will report back to the Town Council where future additional work and community engagement process will be agreed.

The Town Council normally meets the third Wednesday of the month at 6.45pm in the Public Institute. It is a meeting held in public and people are very welcome to attend.

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