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The Heritage Officer has acted as the museum's curatorial advisor since 2002 and assisted with obtaining a £13,000 Project Planning Grant from HLF. A further HLF bid for £306,000 to carry out the full refurbishment programme was successful and work began in September 2006. The refurbished museum opened in July 2007 and obtained full registration. The museum will now be well placed to meet the standards for full accreditation when required to do so by CyMAL in 2009.

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The Brynmawr Museum Society was founded in September 2002. The Heritage Officer acts as the society's curatorial advisor. The official opening of the museum took place in June 2003. In June 2004, the museum won a National Building Society *Community Achievement Award*. In November 2005, the museum took over the whole of the Carnegie Library – doubling the gallery space and providing space for meetings, coffee mornings, talks and other activities. The museum adopted an Accreditation Action Plan in 2005 and will make an application for accreditation in 2009.

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The Heritage Officer has acted as the Museum's curatorial advisor since July 2003. The museum moved to larger premises in the Blaina Institute in January 2007. In order to facilitate this refurbishment, works totalling £26,000 were funded and managed by the County Borough. In 2008, the museum will adopt an accreditation action plan and begin working towards application for accreditation in 2010.

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The Heritage Officer has acted as the Archive's curatorial adviser since May 2003. In February 2004, Corus gave the Archive notice to vacate its premises in Ebbw Vale House. In order to secure the collection's future the Heritage Section identified alternative temporary accommodation, secured funding from Corus and project managed the refurbishment of the premises to the necessary standard. The Trust has drawn down grant-aid from Communities First and CyMaL for publicity material and conservation work on the collections totalling over £15,000. The Trust adopted its Accreditation Action Plan in 2005 and will submit an application for accreditation in 2009.

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The Access to Heritage Project aims to make heritage accessible to as wide a range of local people and visitors as possible. It is hoped to fulfil this potential by creating a learning-centred, educational partnership between community organisations and the County Borough. In April 2006, the Heritage Section commissioned the Blaenau Gwent Access to Heritage Report to identify the best means of delivering these outcomes. The report was completed in December 2006 and made several far reaching recommendations. It also set out a clear, two year action plan to deliver the project outcomes. The Access to Heritage Project represented the most important element in the County Borough's second *Heritage Strategy* (see section 4.1 below).

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It is estimated that tourism now contributes some £24m per annum to the local economy. The Heritage Section now works extremely closely with the Tourism Section on many projects and activities and is currently involved in a European Union Interreg IIIB project entitled "Green Mines". Working with partners in Spain, Portugal, Ireland and Flintshire, the project aims to encourage cultural tourism to former mining areas across the Atlantic Zone of Western Europe.

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Since 2005, the Heritage Section has prepared and delivered adult education courses on heritage and archaeology subjects. These courses have proved very popular and have enjoyed great success.

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Since May 2002, the Heritage Section has initiated and facilitated the establishment of Community Archive in Brynmawr, Blaina, Tredegar, Ebbw Vale and Cwm. This is one of the largest and most successful Community Archive networks in the UK and is now regarded as a model of best practise in this field.

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The Heritage Officer acts as the main contact and liaison points with the Nantyglo and Blaina Charter Group, Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum, Friends of St. Iltyd's Church and other local community groups.

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The first *Heritage Strategy* identified the site as having huge potential as a heritage centre and educational resource for local people and an attraction for visitors from further afield. The Heritage Section secured funding totalling £97,000 to commission a conservation plan, condition survey, access plan, audience development plan and business plan to inform any

further HLF bid. Unfortunately, difficulties over the ownership of the site have precluded any further development to date.

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As outlined in section 1 above, the new

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In April 2006, the Heritage Section commissioned the Blaenau Gwent Access to Heritage

- Abertillery and District Community Archive Group
  - Nantyglo and Blaina Community Archive Group
  - Brynmawr and District Community Archive Group
  - Tredegar Community Archive Group
  - Ebbw Vale Community Archive Group
  - Cwm and Waunlwyd Community Archive Group
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We will facilitate the establishment of the Trefil Community Archive group early in 2008.

In line with the Access to Heritage Project, we will seek to ensure that all local Community Archives are posted to the Commanet website by December 2008 and will contribute to the improved promotion of community Archive Groups.

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The Blaenau Gwent Libraries Local Studies Collection is an important archive of documents, publications, slides and photos that reflect the history, archaeology and culture of the County Borough and represents an invaluable educational resource. However, the current catalogue is insufficiently detailed to allow the collection to fulfil its potential.

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As part of the Access to Heritage Project, we will ensure that the collection is made physically and intellectually accessible to as wide range of users as possible by 2011.

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The “Discover Blaenau Gwent” heritage trails were written in the early 1990s and are badly out of date and stands in urgent need of revision. In 2005, the Heritage and Tourism Sections commissioned the research of a series of eight industrial archaeology trails. It is hoped that the Green Mines Project (see section 5.4 below) will allow this material to be published via the web and in paper form.

Since 2005, the Heritage Section has also prepared and delivered adult education courses on heritage and archaeology subjects. These courses have proved very popular and have enjoyed great success.

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Over and above the Access to heritage Project, we will:

- Publish the “Blaenau Gwent Industrial Archaeology Trails” in 2008
- Revise and republish the “Discover Blaenau Gwent” series by 2009
- Prepare and deliver an on-going programme of talks, lectures and courses on suitable heritage topics

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Blaenau Gwent's historic environment is a non-renewable, finite resource. The management of change requires a rigorous planning process based on knowledge of heritage and archaeology assets, planning guidance and statutory protection.

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We will:

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We will work in close partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund to ensure the success and sustainability of local projects and to assist the Fund in addressing its strategic aims priorities and the delivery of its new five-year *Strategic Plan*.

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Participation and involvement in heritage activities increases social cohesion and engenders a strong sense of self-worth within local communities.

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We will:

- Advocate heritage and ensure its inclusion in the development of the new *Blaenau Gwent Community Plan*
- Seek to engage the interest and commitment of local people and communities to the protection and promotion of the heritage of Blaenau Gwent
- Provide assistance, advice and support to local people and organisations engaged in heritage related activities
- Seek to secure funding for five heritage related community projects by 2013

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The Nantyglo Roundhouses and agricultural range are grade II\* listed buildings built in about 1822 by Joseph and Crawshay Bailey, the ironmasters of the Nantyglo Ironworks, as a defended refuge against armed revolt by their workforce.

Properly conserved and consolidated, the complex has great potential as a heritage attraction and educational resource for local people and visitors. The Nantyglo Roundhouses have been identified as one of the Authority's priority projects for Heritage Lottery Fund applications (see 7.1 above).

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We will seek to fulfil this potential by:

- Actively seeking to establishing a partnership that will work towards the conservation and consolidation of the Nantyglo Roundhouses for interpretation and public access.

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- Establish and strengthen working relations with a range of external heritage organisations
- Seek to maximize the opportunities offered by the Heads of the Valleys Initiative
- Seek to maximize the opportunities offered by the *Making the Connections Report* through increased co-operation with neighbouring authorities such as Merthyr Tydfil,