

The Rhondda Tunnel Society:

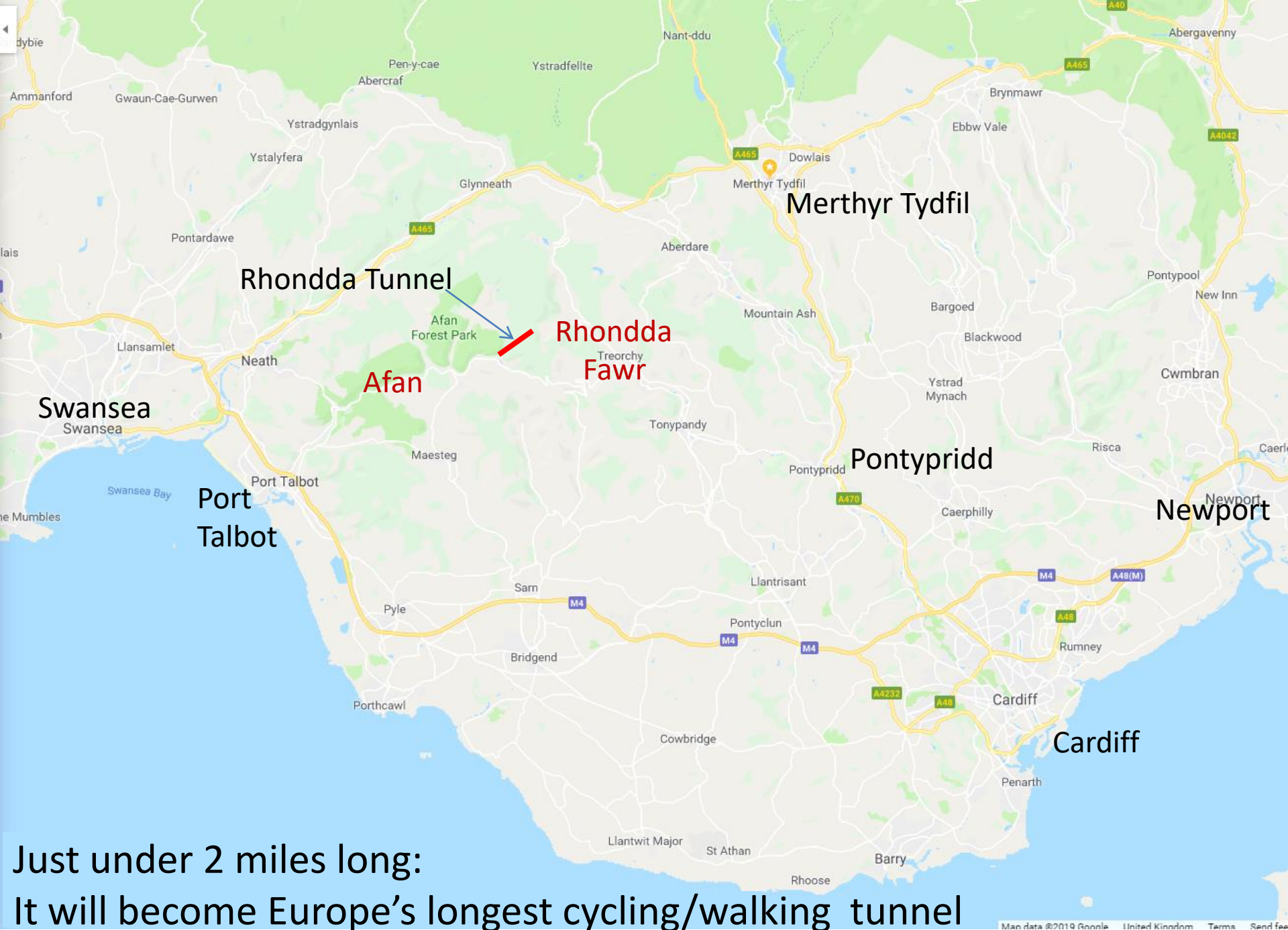
Progress but Unfinished Business

Tony Moon

Project Secretary – Rhondda Tunnel Society



Short Video – Rhondda Tunnel



Just under 2 miles long:
It will become Europe's longest cycling/walking tunnel





Currently:

About 800 members paying £10 p.a.

Over 4000 Facebook followers.

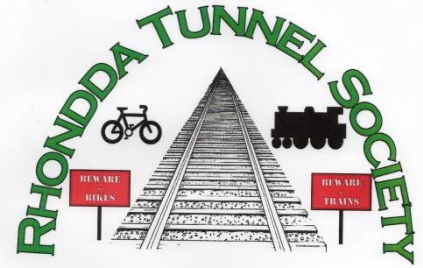
Project is widely known throughout Wales due to extensive publicity

Huge political support.

but

We are unsure of future sources of funding

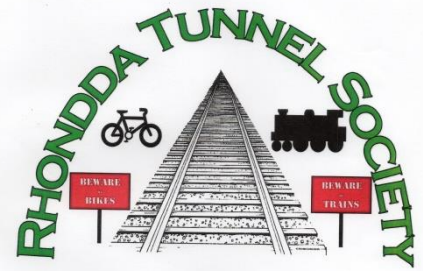
Present ownership of the tunnel is a roadblock



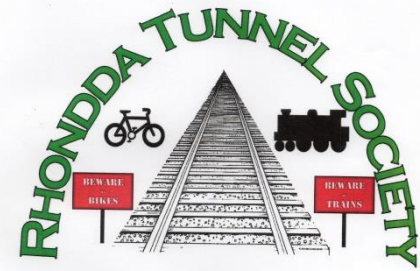
How have we got here?

By a very fortunate accident ...

...The headstone was lost when the approach was filled in



...a rather depressed man who had recently become redundant noticed it hidden under a bramble bush.



It was the same person who had written “Please Open Me” some 45 years before

Steve Mackey,
Chair of RTS



It was repaired and re-sited at Treherbert Station

The Rhondda Tunnel Society grew from public demand



Hopes of rapid progress were soon dashed,

But tunnel inspections were promising.

...and no bats

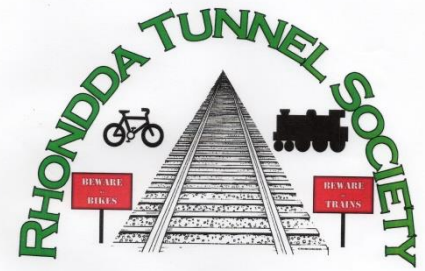
In 2016, we approached the Institute of Civil Engineers to ask for help

Two retired members volunteered.

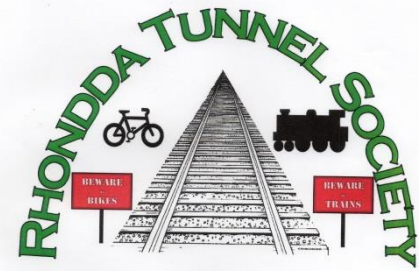
Also an ex-mining engineer

A technical subcommittee
was formed

This gave the Society
great credibility



To raise our profile and generate funds,
We opened a charity shop in Treorchy in 2016



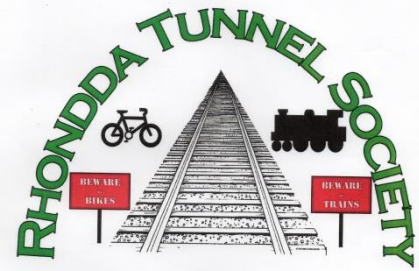
Note: The charity shop is not a gold mine for funds.

It pays its way, gives us an office free of charge and is a key point of contact with the public

But staffing it needs
a dedicated team



Opened by:
Leanne Wood AM



With the technical expertise on-board,

We had a series of meetings with the Welsh Govt. & local authorities

A grant of £10k came from the Welsh Govt.

but they needed more information on the condition of the tunnel

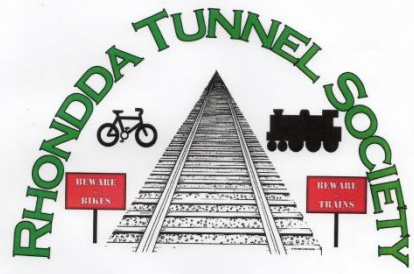
A lot of work went into developing an application for funding
for a detailed examination



Cronfa Gymunedol Fferm Wynt
PEN Y CYMOEDD
Wind Farm Community Fund CIC

We were granted £90k

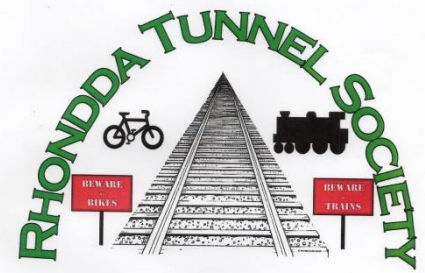
... and the detailed examination followed.



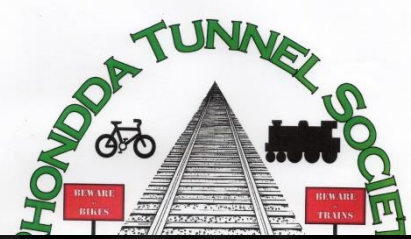
Detailed Examination – Spring 2018 by Balfour Beatty



Much press, radio and TV coverage followed:



Steve Mackey with Roy Noble recently

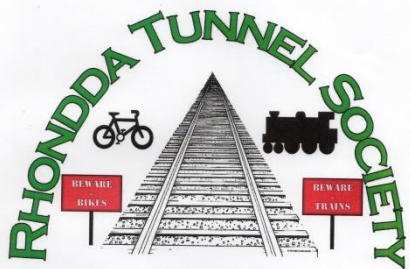


Photos from Rhondda Tunnel Society's post in The Rhondda Tunnel Society.



Tag photo

Options



Hidden Wales

with Will Millard

BBC | cymru
wales

BBC
FOUR

EPISODE ONE

26th November, 8pm on BBC Four
29th November, 8pm on BBC One Wales

#hiddenwales

lazerbeam  folkfilms

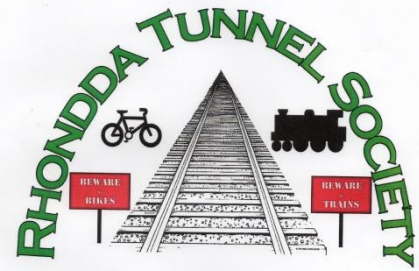
Western Mail

Saturday, May 26, 2018

WEEK END

Tunnel of love

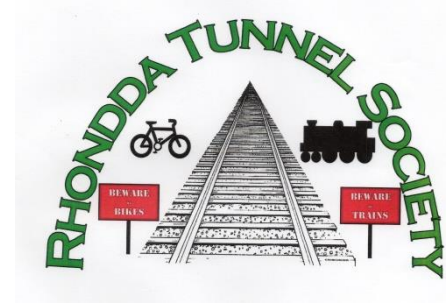
The story of this young
boy's dream to re-open
the Rhondda Tunnel



Story of Steve Mackey's
Exploits as a 10-year old.

Western Mail

How do we communicate with our members and supporters?



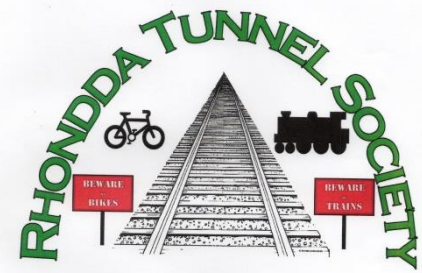
1. Make sure that the Facebook page has new posts every day
Also Twitter.

Beware of Facebookers who love to have a pop at the Government,
Local councils and “the establishment”.

As a charity with a mission, Facebook comments need to be policed

2. Refresh the website – every few weeks
3. Magazine - “Tunnel Vision” on sale in the shop and at events
4. Recently introduced – Tunnel Tote – a weekly draw
5. Talks to local societies - cycling groups, history societies, etc.

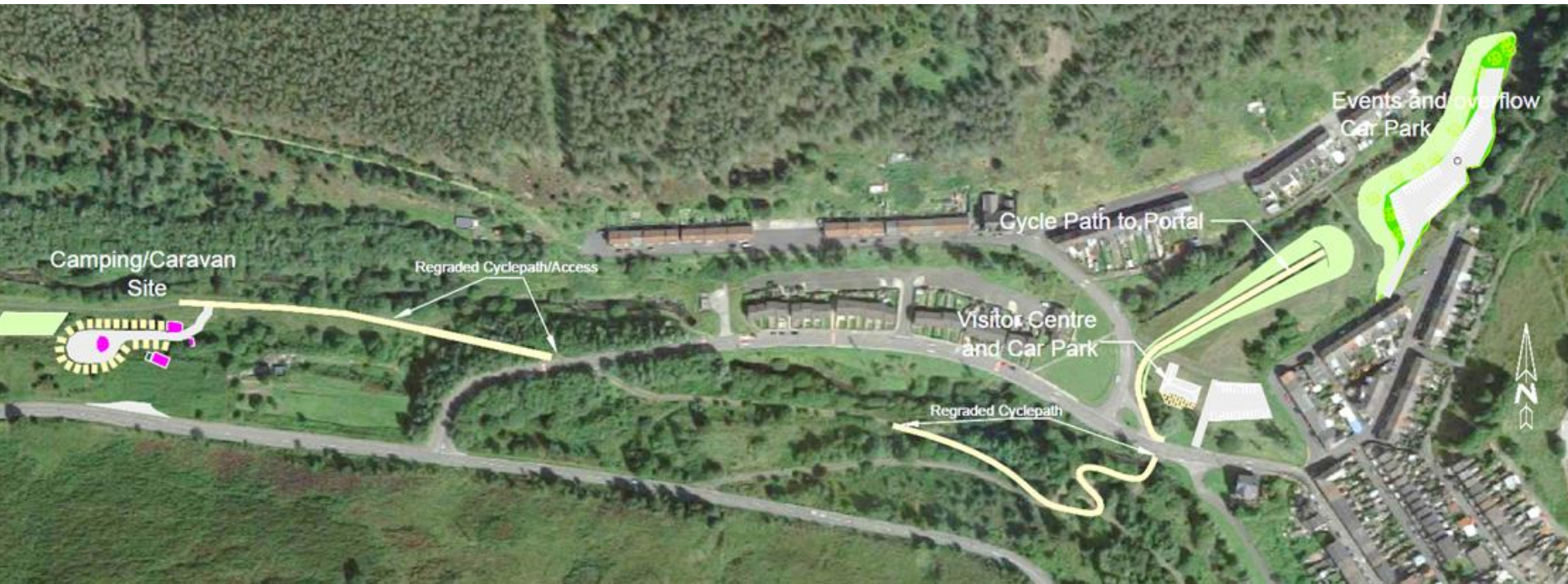
How do we involve the local communities?



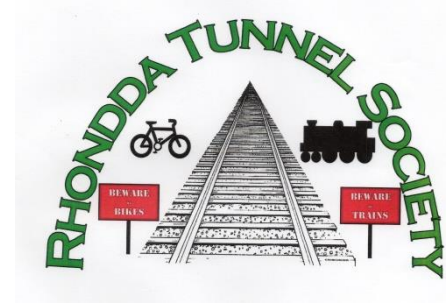
We produced a leaflet outlining our suggestions

We invited everyone in the two villages
near the tunnel entrances to meetings

Most were supportive
but a few people did not want their quiet villages to change.

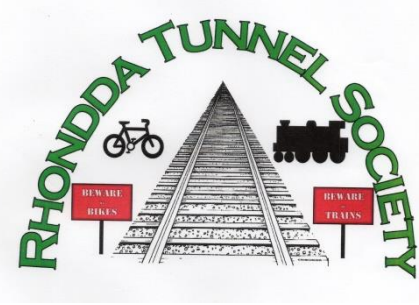


Getting well-known?



1. Get some recognised professionals on board –
 - Retired professionals are nearly as good and are a lot cheaper!
2. Find or create an interesting story
3. Find someone with a talent for talking to the press, TV & Radio
4. Lobby Assembly Members,
Members of Parliament,
Local Councillors
and govt. or council officials about your project.
5. Look for sources of funding (Wind farm funds, Lottery, Coalfield Regen., etc.)
6. Many MPs organise funding fairs. Talk to funders there.

Risk Aversion – Or Reasons for Doing Nothing



Two Types of Risk:

Financial Risk

Antidote: a sound business plan with good costings and projections, preferably showing the success of similar projects elsewhere

Physical Risk

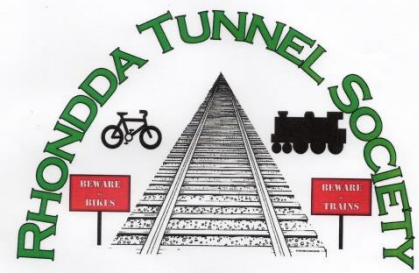
The Dickensian image: Tunnels are dark, dangerous places full of foul stagnant air and crime-ridden dens of iniquity

Antidote: the opinion of acknowledged experts and evidence of experience elsewhere

Politicians tend to be all in favour of imaginative projects;

Government ministers & Senior Councillors tend to make the right noises

Civil Servants and Council Officials tend to be risk-averse.



So where is the Rhondda Tunnel Project right now?

Last year the Welsh Govt. gave £125k for its development, managed by RCT Council.

Currently no decision on funding this year, but we have a meeting with Welsh Govt. officials this month.

Current Ownership is a big problem

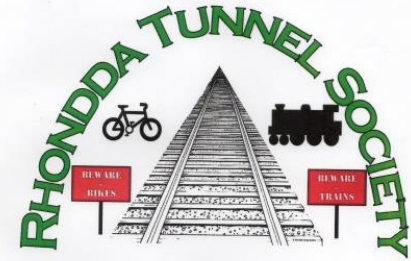
Lobbying and questions in the Senedd on ownership

We expect to have to raise lots of money in the future that will be “match-funded” – funders will give £1 for every £1 that we raise through voluntary effort.

The Home Of Europe's Longest Cycle Tunnel

Visit Wales
Croeso Cymru

Blaencwm



Our Vision

