

# FORESTRY DASHBOARD

October 2021 – September 2022



**682**

OF BUSINESSES REGISTERED WITH FARMING CONNECT ARE FROM THE FORESTRY SECTOR



## Venture



**0**

OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE FORESTRY

with



**8**

SEEKERS

## Strategic Awareness Events

Key topics included:



Health and safety in forestry



Meeting the new fuel quality requirements for BSL suppliers and Woodsure accreditation



\*Strategic Awareness Event themes are often cross-sectoral that tend to attract farmers from all sectors.

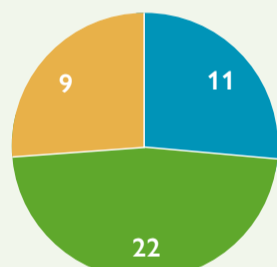
## Training

There have been **6** application windows between October 2021 and September

2022 with **1,064** instances of training delivered during this period.

Of this number, **42** instances were from the Forestry sector.

### Individuals trained by category



Total per category

■ Business ■ Land ■ Livestock

## E-learning

Some of the e-learning courses completed within this period relating to the Forestry sector:

TREE IDENTIFICATION



TREE HEALTH, PESTS AND DISEASES



BENEFITS OF TREES ON UPLAND FARMS



For more information on e-learning, please visit the [website](#).

## Knowledge Exchange Hub

The following technical articles have been produced by the KE Hub:

- FARMING'S FUNGI FOCUS: CONSIDERING BELOWGROUND TO BENEFIT ABOVEGROUND
- MYCORRHIZA MANIPULATION: NATURE VS NURTURE
- WOODLAND MACHINERY SOIL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS
- FARM BUSINESS DIVERSIFICATION – A RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE
- LAND USE CHANGE FOR CARBON SEQUESTRATION: ASSESSING THE INFLUENCE OF CARBON TRADING
- BATTLING BRACKEN: CONTROL AND ALLEVIATION STRATEGIES
- ECOSYSTEM FUNCTION AND RESILIENCE: WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT FOR AGRICULTURE?

## Demonstration Network

### Plas yn lâl focus site

In April 2022, Rural Affairs Minister, Lesley Griffiths, visited Plas yn lâl to see how they are benefiting from Farming Connect. The aim of the project at Plas yn lâl was to improve overall woodland management that would contribute a sustainable timber supply towards the farm's energy needs. This was done by preparing and implementing a Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF) woodland management plan, combining results of both ground and drone surveys.

Huw Beech said: "I'm incredibly proud of the work we're doing here at Plas yn lâl farm which will benefit the business as well as the environment.

"Farming Connect is playing an important role in what we're aiming to achieve and I want to thank them for their continued support.

"I was really pleased to welcome Lesley Griffiths to the farm, explain the work taking place and to discuss the benefits of being part of the Farming Connect demonstration network, which enabled us to run a project looking into Continuous Cover Forestry."

Huw Beech is currently awaiting for his felling license to be approved by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) before implementing the CCF thinning work.

### Moelgolomen focus site

The aim of the project is to deliver a holistic approach encompassing several environmental aspects to identify and plan a matrix of proposed interventions on-farm to improve the environmental and economic performance of the farm business whilst delivering sustainable land management options and contributing to mitigate climate change.

Where Woodland Trust have mapped future hedge planting potential, Farming Connect technical officers will work on an assessment of current hedgerows and advice on future management during autumn 2022. The management plan will be a mix of field and desktop/map surveys to assess their current state and identify areas of improvement. A diverse range of species and species characteristics more resilient to climate change and extreme weather e.g. droughts as well as nitrogen fixing species will be explored.

Securing robust, fit for purpose hedgerows can provide both economic and environmental benefits for the farm. Objectives will be identified during the planning stage and options and prescriptions designed accordingly.

The plan will also identify a work programme that can access possible funding streams.



### EIP event – Tree establishment and management on challenging sites

An open event was held at Nannerth Fawr on 6 July 2022 to allow farmers the opportunity to discover more on the topic of tree establishment and management on challenging sites. The aim of the EIP project was to compare different approaches to controlling bracken that avoid expensive and environmentally concerning aerial herbicide treatments. Following an introduction to the farm and background to the EIP establishing trees in dense bracken project, Dr Peter Jackson took attendees on a farm walk. The farm walk took attendees to see recent strimming experiments, main site cultivated strips, woodland plantation created by the farmer in 2014 and to look at the new larger mixed planting site. This gave attendees an opportunity to discuss topics including weed control, tree protection, carbon and post-establishment management.

Findings of the project so far show that the mortality rate between species varied significantly, with just 5% of losses for birch and rowan saplings and around 10% for Sitka spruce. For oak, losses climbed to an average of 25%, even over 30% at one site.

The project also found that none of the treatments had a significant impact on mortality compared to sites where the bracken was not controlled.

## Moelogan Fawr demonstration site

Llion and Siân Jones have embraced the opportunity through Glastir Woodland Creation scheme, for establishment of a 10ha of broadleaf woodland at Moelogan Fawr.

Basic principles for woodland establishment at Moelogan Fawr:

The decision to plant was made with the knowledge that establishment of new woodlands is an integral component in the farm landscape and one which will provide focus on sound and profitable financial foundation to the whole business. It's important to look at opportunities including woodland and green infrastructure that will deliver nature-based solutions to improve environmental and business resilience. 10ha have been planted for establishment of broadleaf woodland at Moelogan Fawr with the objective of providing shelter, reduce overland flow issues in extreme weather conditions, contribute to creating resilience to climate change and sequestering carbon.

The aim of this project is to demonstrate the importance and need of creating the right conditions and planting the right tree in the right place for the right reason by monitoring and evaluating tree growth.

Project outputs show successful establishment rates where approved grant funding has instigated cost-effective methodologies and demonstrated best practice which contribute greatly to achieving the objectives for establishing new woodland at Moelogan Fawr.

Objectives for new planting are:

- To increase woodland cover and biodiversity habitat
- Utilise marginal land for alternative use, maximising the multifunctionality of trees
- Provision of wood fuel resource for the future
- To diversify production on the farm
- Increase carbon sequestration on the farm – site has been registered for woodland carbon code.
- Provision of shelter for livestock and crops
- Enhance the farm landscape in the region.



Figure 1. Moelogan Fawr farm.

Key message – whilst the planting and establishment of new woodland is extremely important there needs to be clear focus on planning an ongoing programme of care and maintenance post planting which is integral to creating conditions for successful establishment.

### Future plans at Moelogan Fawr – opportunities for more planting – hedgerows/shelterbelts.

- There is clear vision for additional opportunities to plant trees. However, existing alternative habitat e.g. deep peat, ground nesting birds and water vole habitat prohibit any planting on the hill. The need for shelter is very apparent in extreme weather conditions to prioritise future health and welfare of livestock. Future plans will need consultation and possibly an environmental impact assessment to decide whether further planting is allowed.
- Woodland Carbon Code: The area planted has been registered with the Woodland Carbon Code and calculations made to determine the carbon that will be sequestered in the planted area over the next 100 years. 2022 is the fifth year of establishment and calculated figures will be validated through site survey results by the Soil Association. Once validated, the carbon units will be available for use either to put on to the carbon market for sale or to be used to offset carbon on the farm.
- Surveying of peatland soils – investigate an opportunity to survey peatland soils for carbon sequestration.

## Surgeries



10 SURGERIES HELD



Key topics included:



Feedback from beneficiaries of Woodland and Marketing and diversification surgeries during this period:

*"We are considering diversifying our business into selling kindling. Both surgeries gave us plenty of ideas that we hadn't thought of and gave us a general steer. It was very helpful."*

## Discussion Groups



5 MEETINGS HAVE FOCUSED ON FORESTRY ISSUES

with

19 ATTENDEES

### Agroforestry on Radnorshire farms – Dolygarn Group

With the new proposals for the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) recently published, agroforestry is being discussed now more than ever. This meeting was arranged to give the group some clarity on what agroforestry was, how it can be implemented on their farms and how it is linked in the Welsh Government's recent SFS proposal. Geraint Jones is the Farming Connect Technical Officer for forestry and joined the group for an evening meeting.

Agroforestry is the combination for trees and livestock/crops on the same piece of land using careful land management. During the meeting, there were lots of questions about the 10% woodland cover proposal. Some of the members were concerned as they believed they may only have about 2% tree cover currently, others had way over the 10%. Geraint discussed agroforestry, shelter belts and planting to protect watercourses. The group were open and receptive to different ways of planting and incorporating trees into their farming systems in a way that could provide an advantage to the environment and their business without losing productive ground. The meeting also focused on the use of trees in strategic places to create shade for grass and livestock (especially topical this year).

Welsh Government currently has a number of grants open or opening in the near future to support woodland creation and Natalie Chappelle – Radnoshire developemnt officer and Geraint encouraged businesses to look into these. There is also support available through Farming Connect with surgeries and the Advisory Service if businesses want more bespoke advice.