

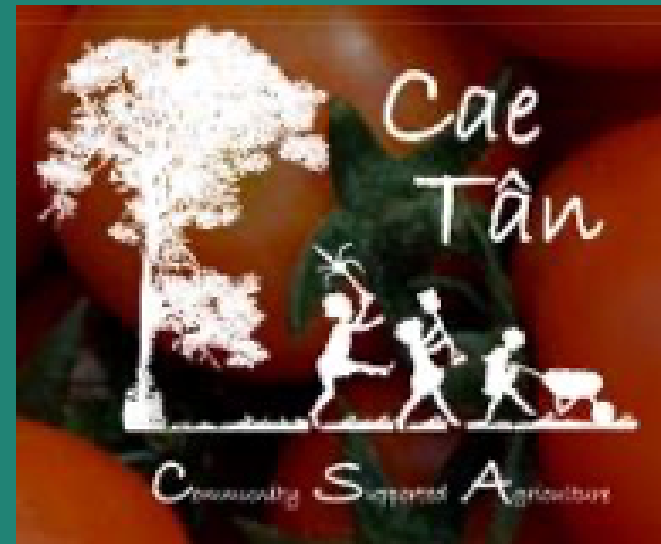


Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# *What is a community food initiative?*

Community Food Initiatives foster communities where everyone has access to an equitable, inclusive, and thriving local food systems.

Here is an example...



# Case Study

Community Food Initiatives

# Project Background and Objectives:

Formed in 2015, Cae Tân CSA is a community supported agriculture (CSA) project based on the Gower Peninsula. Over the 8 years Cae Tân has now been running, engagement and interest has continued to grow.

The Cae Tân project was one of the flagship community projects that Gower Power Co-op CIC supported and has since attracted positive media attention for its wellbeing, community, environmental and sustainability focus.

The ethos of Cae Tân is to bring back the traditional values of farming on the land and they embrace seasonality and localness of produce. The dominance of supermarkets has made local farming in the Gower unsustainable, due to the demand for fast growing, high volume vegetables that conform to a standard size, which has resulted in farming processes which deliver this uniform produce on a large scale being highly mechanised and very expensive to achieve.

Cae Tân, and other CSA's, hold climate, environment and soil quality at the heart of their projects and believe many more people hold these values. This is demonstrated by increased member numbers and that demand for the local produce continues to grow.

Cae Tân grows organic, local and chemical-free produce, supplying approximately 130 households each week, all year round. The produce boxes are collected from a local food hub.

The success of Cae Tân has enabled the employment of 4 full time growers. There are approximately 30 regular volunteers and continued training for new growers each season.



*"As a newcomer to the area I was looking for organic veg and delighted to find Cae Tân on my doorstep"*  
(Participant Quote)

# Project Challenges and Key Learnings:



[Website](#)

[Cae Tan 2016 - Youtube](#)

[How to Establish a  
CSA - YouTube](#)

The project team highlight that their first challenge has been finding appropriate land, and then dealing with the necessary planning permissions to proceed effectively to develop it.

Secondly financing the set up is very difficult without some kind of funding support in the form of a “tapered fund” which can bring income to the growers whilst they are getting established.

They state “You need to be bold & push forward with this kind of project. The odds seem against you financially & sometimes politically, but we are proving that in both these cases we can thrive. We are generating a good income & through our positive work we are inspiring more & more support for CSA”.

The main learning and positive is that the community really feel empowered to take control of their food systems, while aiding sustainability and increasing the biodiversity in Welsh food systems.

There is a great demand for the educational side of Cae Tân, benefiting the local schools, and the new trainee growers.

The positive impact seen by those attending Cae Tân goes far beyond growing vegetables; the social, physical and mental wellbeing of all the volunteers, staff, and trainees is something which is often overlooked but is an equally essential output.



# Future Plans:

Cae Tân would like to develop a two year funded trainee programme & support many more CSA's to thrive.

They want to get better at what they do on the ground, including establishing an agroforestry system at one of their sites, so that they can be growing fruit for their members.

Cae Tân applied for funding over the first 3 years to pay wages, that has now tapered, as the project becomes financially self sufficient. However, there is still a need to continue to raise funds to cover the educational side of the project, such as the interaction with the local schools and to cover trainee costs.

## Participant Quotes:

"Volunteering at CaeTân has been a wonderful experience for me, especially as a newcomer to Swansea. I've made some great friends and have learned so much about the local area and food growing. I really enjoy simply being at the farm and taking in the natural beauty surrounding it".

"Being involved with Cae Tân gives me an opportunity to use the knowledge and expertise I possess to support my community and contribute to it's sustainability. Also, as my experience is in commercial horticulture and landscape design, it enables me to continue to learn about food production techniques and the possibility of increasing local productive capacity which I believe will be crucial, both now and in the future, to building local resilience and collaboration and cooperation between individuals".





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*With thanks to Cae Tân for participating in this  
case study*