



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Sustainable Management Scheme

Working with
nature to secure a
sustainable future



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar
gyfer Datblygu Gwledig
Ewrop yn Buddsoddi mewn Ardaloedd Gwledig
European Agricultural Fund for
Rural Development
Europe Investing in Rural Areas



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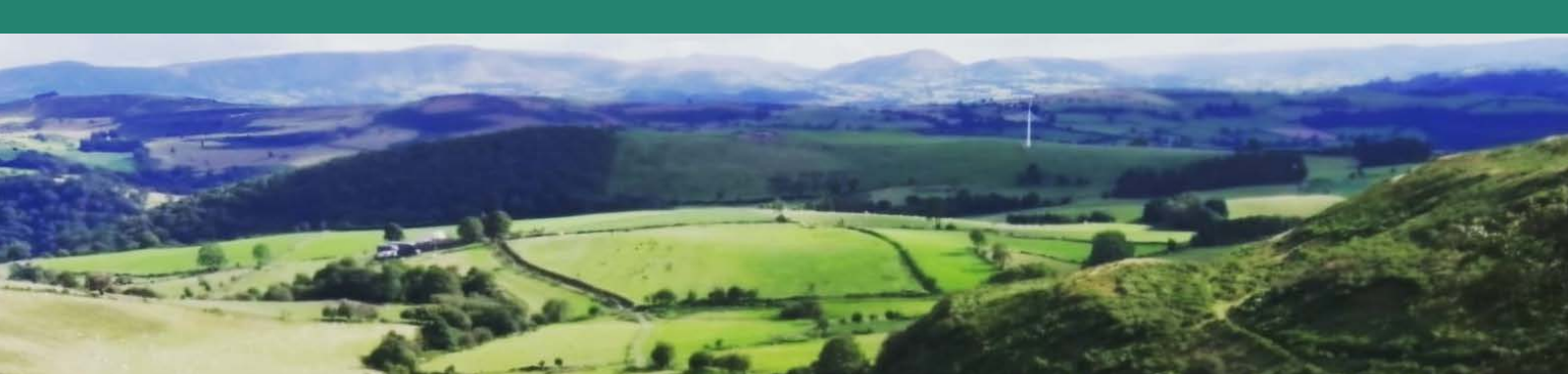
[gov.wales-sustainable-management-of-natural-resources-guide.pdf](#)

[www.legislation.gov.uk](#)

[gov.wales/sustainable-management-scheme-selected-projects-and-map](#)

[businesswales.gov.wales/walesruralnetwork/SMSprojectsmap](#)

[businesswales.gov.wales/walesruralnetwork/projects-list](#)



The Sustainable Management Scheme (SMS)

The Sustainable Management Scheme (SMS) is delivered by the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government. This scheme supports direct action on managing natural resources across Wales delivering against the approach and principles laid down in the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the Well-being of future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The SMS requires a collaborative approach to develop proposals for projects with a maximum of two to three year delivery phase. The purpose of the SMS is to support collaborative landscape scale projects delivering nature-based solutions to improve the resilience of our natural resources and ecosystems in a way that also delivers benefits to farm businesses and the health and well-being of rural communities. SMS projects are undertaking actions to enhance biodiversity, improve green infrastructure, sustain better land and water management and importantly, facilitate climate change adaptation and mitigation at landscape scale.

SMS collaborations include land owners, farmers and graziers who have seen the benefits working together can bring and have been inspired to work with new and traditional methods.

Projects involve partnerships and collaborations at a local level and landscape scale offering nature based solutions to tackle the decline in biodiversity and to improve the resilience of our ecosystems.

Enabling collaboration at the right scale (site, regional, catchment, landscape or ecosystem) and the right locations is vital to tackling issues and maximising benefits.

The SMS is designed to meet RDP Focus Area 4: Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems dependent on agriculture and forestry by:



Restoring and preserving biodiversity, including Natura 2000 areas and high nature value farming, and the state of European landscapes,



Improving water management,



Improving soil management,



Carbon sequestration in agriculture and forestry.

Between now and the end of the delivery period, June 2023, we expect to see and have seen actions contributing to very clear outcomes:

- **Increased carbon sequestration,**
- **Increased biodiversity,**
- **Improved natural flood risk management,**
- **Improved soil health and water quality all through these collaborative landscape scale catchment management projects.**

We also hope to see an increase in tree planting and management of our existing woodlands supporting the commitments to the national forest. All the actions contribute to the wider need for Climate Change Adaptation and to improve our Ecosystem Resilience through the sustainable management of our natural resources.

In addition to these outcomes we are also seeing outcomes for skills development, job creation and the retention of rural skills, heritage and Welsh Language. A number of the projects are now considering and focusing on the health and well-being benefits of the work they are doing, supporting community cohesion and community led local development.



Environment (Wales) Act 2016

Developing sustainability: tackling the climate emergency and the decline in biodiversity through part 1 of the Environment (Wales) Act (2016) and the Natural Resources Policy.

Part 1 of the Environment (Wales) Act (2016) sets out the 'sustainable management of natural resources' – an approach to managing Wales' natural resources and ecosystems to ensure that the benefits they provide for our social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being are available now and for future generations.

Why are we taking this approach?

- **It is international best practice for tackling the decline in biodiversity. It is about taking action across the whole landscape to build on our protected site network and our protected species. It also supports action on the threats to biodiversity.**
- **It is a key element in our response to tackling climate risk, complementing our technological solutions. Healthy and resilient ecosystems help to capture and store carbon and play a vital role in adaptation.**
- **When managed sustainably, natural resources and ecosystems are able to deliver a wide range of social, economic and environmental benefits, contributing towards the well-being goals.**
- **It enables the transformative, systemic change needed to tackle the climate emergency, the decline in biodiversity and enable Wales to develop sustainably.**



Manage adaptively by planning, monitoring, reviewing and, where appropriate, changing action



Consider the appropriate spatial scale for action



Promote and engage in collaboration and co-operation



Make appropriate arrangements for public participation in decision-making



Take account of all relevant evidence and gather evidence in respect of uncertainties



Take account of the benefits and intrinsic value of natural resources and ecosystems



Take account of the short, medium and long term consequences of actions



Take action to prevent significant damage to ecosystems



Take account of the resilience of ecosystems, in particular the following aspects:

- diversity between and within ecosystems
- the connections between and within ecosystems
- the scale of ecosystems
- the condition of ecosystems (including their structure and functioning)
- the adaptability of ecosystems

The Natural Resources Policy

Nature Based Solutions

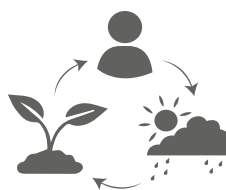
One priority in the Natural Resources Policy (NRP) is to deliver Nature based solutions. SMS projects deliver the prioritised nature-based solutions and takes a place based approach in their delivery.

Nature based solutions are about using nature and natural processes to address our big challenges:

- **The climate emergency and the decline in biodiversity.**
- **Public health issues like air quality and to support our physical and mental health.**
- **They also form a vital part of our national infrastructure, providing multiple benefits and cost effective solutions to issues like flooding and water quality and supply.**
- **Supporting regeneration, inward investment and vibrant local communities.**

The following types of nature based solutions have been prioritised as they provide most impact for Wales:

- **Urban green infrastructure**
- **Natural flood management and catchment based approaches**
- **Upland restoration for a range of benefits**
- **Resilient ecological networks and**
- **The role of forestry and woodland in providing a range of benefits**



Support the development of resilient ecological networks to maintain and enhance the resilience of Wales' ecosystems.



Support climate change adaptation and mitigation, and flood risk management.



Enable collaboration at the right scale (be that site, regional, catchment, landscape or ecosystem).



Soil management for carbon storage and sequestration, water quality and continued productivity.



Communities are best placed to shape and understand local priorities and opportunities and to find practical solutions that bring the widest possible benefits.

Supporting people and places by taking a place based approach

A key part of the approach is not just ‘what’ we do, but how we do it. This priority is about drawing on the experience of people in their places, working with each other to develop new solutions and making sure that everyone benefits directly from our natural resources.

For example, that could be by working with each other across the landscape, nationally or at a more local level.

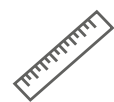
It will mean working differently to:



Build relationships across different sectors, organisations and within communities so that we collaborate in taking action.



Learn with and from each other.



Think about the scale that we need to take action, and join up across those scales.



Take new approaches to show if we are moving in the right direction.

SMS projects working with Area statements

Natural Resources Wales’ area statements will play a key role in taking forward place based approaches to help implement the priorities and opportunities in the Natural Resources Policy. They rely on successful collaboration which means NRW will work closely with partners and stakeholders to develop and implement them.



**Cyfoeth
Naturiol
Cymru
Natural
Resources
Wales**

Each Area Statement will evolve with regular updates adding new material and insight as NRW and its networks continue to engage with more people, gather new evidence and learn from implementing new ideas and opportunities. NRW’s website will be the gateway to access the latest insight into how they manage our natural resources more sustainably at a local level, what’s changing and what’s learnt from our engagement and collaboration so far. This in turn will feedback up to the State of Natural Resources Report (SoNAR).

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It will make the public bodies listed in the Act think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. This will help us to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future.



**LLESIAANT
CENEDLAETHAU'R DYFODOL
WELL-BEING OF
FUTURE GENERATIONS**

To make sure we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place seven well-being goals.

SMS projects are designed around the WFGA. They implement the ways of working and contribute to achieving the Well-being goals:

'Wellbeing goals'



'Five Ways of Working'



1. Integration



2. Prevention



3. Collaboration



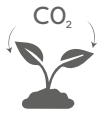
4. Long-term



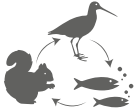
5. Involvement

Project Outcomes

Each project carries out a wide variety of actions and nature based solutions which all support a wide range of different benefits delivering the following outcomes.



Carbon Sequestration: facilitating the removal or capture of atmospheric carbon to slow down the accumulation of greenhouse gases through actions to capture carbon within our ecosystems.



Enhanced Biodiversity: maintaining restoring and enhancing habitats to support a wide range of plant's animal and invertebrates.



Ecosystem Resilience: increasing the resilience of our ecosystems through improving biodiversity, extent, condition, connectivity and adaptability results in a greater provision of ecosystem services.



Climate Change and Adaptation: planning and implementing measures to adapt to the climate emergency.



Reduce Flood Risk: natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding for our communities and landscape.



Rural Skills, Culture and Heritage: supporting the wider adoption of sustainable or historic rural skills as well as increased awareness of a communities' heritage and language and retaining a greater sense of identity.



Community Cohesion: supporting the local community, providing benefits through strengthening bonds within communities, building a sense of place, capacity building and encouraging local development.



Health and Wellbeing: supporting people to connect with nature, building relationships, confidence and reducing stress through accessible green space.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: implementing actions to reduce pollution, restore habitat, nutrient planning, soil husbandry and tree planting.



Development of Skills, Capacity and Expertise: encouraging knowledge transfer and innovation for farm businesses and across the sector, building resilience and enhancing sustainability.

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Cambrian Wildwood

Lead organisation: Wales Wild Land Foundation CIC

Grant Award: £566,024

Location: Machynlleth

Email: admin@cambrianwildwood.org

Located in Bwlch Corog in the Cambrian Mountains, this project focuses on a 140ha area aiming to restore ecologically degraded and unproductive land to improve the wildlife and natural processes, which will benefit an overall area of 3,000ha and its surrounding communities.

The project will restore habitats connecting woodlands and heathlands helping to increase ecosystem resilience and improve the variety of wildlife. It will undertake activities such as blocking drainage grips and increasing woodland cover to help reduce and manage surface water flow, improve water quality, and increase carbon storage in soils and trees.

The project will also improve access to provide opportunities to exercise and enjoy nature. There are also plans for public engagement, opportunities for skill development, an educational programme for primary schools, courses for teenagers and activities on site, including volunteering.



Woodland management and Planting: 1000 native trees planted, with 2000 more planned.

Peatland Restoration: Several metres of drainage grips blocked and peatland re-wetting.

Habitat restoration: Planned reintroduction of Native Species such as Water Vole.

Educational Programmes: Engaged with 9 local primary schools.

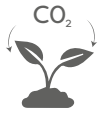
Sustainable Grazing: Low density grazing scheme with cattle and ponies.

Volunteer Programmes: Numerous volunteers involved in habitat restoration activities.

Increased access to outdoor spaces: Public rights of way cleared and opened up.

Volunteer Programmes: Building a volunteer hub using green infrastructure construction methods.

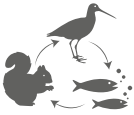
Community Engagement: Nature Arts Drop will distribute activity packs to 600 at risk children and young people.



Carbon Sequestration: supported by the restoration and creation of woodland, restoring peatland and introducing low density grazing methods.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by the restoration and creation of woodland, restoring peatland and introducing low density grazing methods.



Increased Biodiversity: supported by the restoration and creation of woodland, restoring peatland, introducing low density grazing methods and reintroduction of native species.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by the restoration and creation of woodland, restoring peatland, introducing low density grazing methods and reintroduction of native species.



Reduced Flood Risk: supported by the restoration and creation of woodland and restoring peatland to slow the flow.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by restoration and creation of woodland, peatland restoration and introducing low density grazing methods.



Health and Wellbeing: supported by an education programme, volunteer programmes and clearing of public footpaths.



Community Cohesion: supported by an education programme, volunteer programmes, clearing of public footpaths and building a green infrastructure community hub.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by an education programme, volunteer programmes, clearing of public footpaths and building a green infrastructure community hub.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by an education programme, volunteer programmes and building a green infrastructure community hub.

Get Involved: If you would like to be involved in the conservation efforts at Bwlch Corog, you can find more information on their website or the following social media pages, or attend one of their monthly volunteering days once they have resumed.

 www.cambrianwildwood.org

 [coetiranian_cambrianwildwood](https://www.instagram.com/coetiranian_cambrianwildwood)

 [@coetiranian](https://twitter.com/coetiranian)

 [@cambrianwildwood](https://www.facebook.com/cambrianwildwood)

Managing Resources Sustainably in the Black Mountains

Lead organisation: Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

Grant Award: £1,004,155

Location: Black Mountains, Brecon Beacons National Park

Email: Bradley.Welch@beacons-npa.gov.uk

A collaborative project from the Black Mountains Land Use Partnership, engaging local landowners, graziers and regulatory bodies. The project aims to bring about positive social, economic and environmental change through sustainable land management across the Black Mountains Landscape. Project activities will include bracken management, heather regeneration and the protection of peat resources. Planned improvements to livestock access will help with stock management and provide a better visitor experience to the area.

The focus will be on peatland and bracken management in tandem with improving the visitor experience in the area and engaging local communities who will be involved through developing a rural skills programme, engagement with schools and the creation of employment opportunities.

The partnership aims to improve the resilience of ecosystems in the project area, alongside sustainably managing for grazing livestock, to look at the protection of natural capital such as water and soil, wildlife and biodiversity, and the wellbeing and economic health of those who live and work in this iconic area. Phil Stocker, BMLUP Chair, “Achieving a balance that meets the needs of graziers, tourism providers and landowners, while at the same time protecting the landscape for future generations can only be done through collaboration.



The project covers an area of 24,600ha and engages with land owners, graziers, Brecon Beacons National Park and the local community. The outputs from the project have delivered significant outcomes for the sustainable management of our natural resources, such as over 200 people have visited the Black mountains through scheduled educational visits, giving the local communities access to the landscape while learning about their environment, it's management and it's diversity. Jobs have been created to carry out the extensive landscape management such as peatland restoration, heather and bracken management to restore the quality of habitats. Extensive works to control erosion and grip blocking on strategic sites to stabilise peat resources within the National Park. A range of materials will be used for restoration works in eroded peat/mineral soil areas to improve bog condition in erosion scar revegetation trials.

The partnership have developed a successful ambassador programme, positively engaging with local businesses through the ambassador programme helping the partnership to develop a deeper understanding of the communities, the environment and the economies that underpin these types of landscapes. The project has a long term sustainability plan to continue the work this initiative has started enabling future generations to manage, work and enjoy the environment that is the Black Mountains.



Building collaborations and partnerships: Convening over 50 farmers and graziers.

Habitat restoration: Bracken management programme has covered 490 ha so far.

Habitat restoration: Heather habitat and regeneration management.

Peatland Restoration: 66 ha of peatland restored and 105 ha of peat rewetted.

Educational Programmes: Told the story of the black mountains to 2810 school children.

Rural Skills and Heritage: Developing a rural skills programme with 13 qualifications awarded so far.

Community engagement: Implementing a Black Mountains ambassador scheme 50 ambassadors.

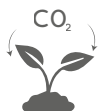
Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: Increased access and an enhanced visitor experience signage and education boards put up across the landscape.

Training and job creation: 3 full time jobs created.

Community engagement: 951 people involved in community engagement.

Peatland Restoration: 32 peatland plots identified through revegetation trials.

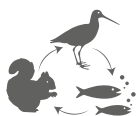
Increased Access to Outdoor Space: 3.2km of access paths restored and opened.



Carbon Sequestration: supported by farmer collaboration and partnership working farmers, restoring peatland, rewetting peat and revegetation trials.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by restoring peatland, rewetting peat and revegetation trials.



Enhanced Biodiversity: supported by a bracken management programme, heather habitat and regeneration management and restoration of access paths.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by a bracken management programme, heather habitat and regeneration management, peat rewetting and revegetation trials.



Reduced Flood Risk: supported by peatland restoration to slow the flow.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by peatland restoration and peat rewetting.



Health and Wellbeing: supported by engaging with schools, a rural skills programme, increased access to nature and restoration of access paths.



Community Cohesion: supported by farmer collaboration and partnership working farmers, engaging with schools, a rural skills programme, the BM ambassador scheme, increased access to nature, job creation, community engagement and restoration of access paths.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by farmer collaboration and partnership working farmers, a rural skills programme, the BM ambassador scheme and job creation.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by farmer collaboration and partnership working farmers, a rural skills programme, the BM ambassador scheme, job creation and revegetation trials.

Get Involved: Brecon Beacons NPA have a long history of working with volunteers, who enjoy a varied mix of activities, from taking part in site surveys to organising ecological data. If you are interested in volunteering with the national park, please phone the Volunteer Development Officer on 01874 624437.

 www.blackmountains.wales

 [blackmountainslup](https://www.instagram.com/blackmountainslup)

 [@BMLUP](https://twitter.com/BMLUP)

 [@blackmountainslup](https://www.facebook.com/blackmountainslup)

Collaborative Sustainable Natural Flood Risk Management on the River Clwyd

Lead organisation: Cadwyn Clwyd Cyfyngedig

Grant Award: £330,000

Location: River Clwyd, Pwllglas, south of Ruthin to Bod Petryal, outskirts of Clocaenog forest

Email: sarah.jones@cadwynclwyd.co.uk

A landscape scale project to reduce peak flows into the river Clwyd and improve biodiversity through natural land based interventions and understanding their wider benefits if applied across the larger catchment. The longer term aim is to better understand the opportunity for collaboration between farmers, landowners and the public in habitat creation, reducing flood flows and improving water to benefit the local area. The project will be aim to help deliver longer term solutions to the flooding issues effecting people and businesses in the area.

The collaborative group of farmers in the area are planting and restoring hedges, creating small woodlands and building leaky dams on hillside streams to hold back floodwater surges in the upper reaches of the rivers Clwyd and Elwy rivers.

Capital works have been carried out with over 3.5 kilometres of hedgerows planted, and 1,400 trees planted in the strategic small woodland areas with individual trees planted at intervals within the new hedgerows. Much of the planting being done by local volunteers as part of the community engagement work.

The project focuses on actions, which stimulate grass-root participation, partnership working and innovation, supporting rural communities and sector groups. Working directly with local communities to assist in the development and implementation of projects, which benefit the area's local economy.

Natural flood risk management:

Reduced peak flows into the river Clwyd.

Habitat restoration: 8000m of new or renovated hedgerows.

Woodland management and Planting:

1400 trees planted in strategic places.

Habitat restoration: Building ponds and wetlands.

Natural flood risk management: Shelter belt creation and buffer strips.

Woodland management and Planting:

Woodland creation.

Soil Quality Management:

Aeration of soil.

Reducing Agricultural Pollution: Work on field boundaries to protect waterways from agricultural pollution.

Natural flood risk management:

Soft engineering work on areas of river bank erosion.

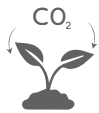
Reducing Agricultural Pollution:

Managing stock access to water courses.

Natural flood risk management:

Leaky dams and woody debris dams.

Volunteer Programmes: Involving community volunteers in the nature based solutions.



Carbon Sequestration: supported by hedgerow renovation, tree planting, shelter belt and buffer strip creation and woodland creation.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by woodland creation.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by peat sensitive planting.



Increased Biodiversity: supported by hedgerow renovation, wetland creation and woodland creation.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by hedgerow renovation, wetland creation, shelter belt and buffer strip creation and woodland creation.



Reduced Flood Risk: supported by reduced peak flows, wetland creation, soft engineering works, stock access management and leaky dams.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by hedgerow renovation, tree planting, woodland creation, soil aeration, work on field boundaries and stock access management.



Health and Wellbeing: supported by volunteer programmes.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by volunteer programmes and traditional methods.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by volunteer programmes.

Get Involved: Cadwyn Clwyd and the North East Wales Local Action Groups (LAGs) are keen to work with other partners from elsewhere in Wales, the UK or wider EU. They are open to discussing possible cooperation projects with other LAGs.

Fferm Ifan Ecosystem Service Improvement Scheme

Lead organisation: Fferm Ifan

Grant Award: £696,352

Location: Upper Conwy catchment

Email: ffermifan@gmail.com

A collaborative farmer led project taking landscape scale action on land management to improve ecosystem resilience and the services they provide. Fferm Ifan is a cooperation of 11 tenant farmers based on the Ysbyty Ifan estate. Fferm Ifan farmers seek to improve and manage natural resources in a more sustainable and efficient way. The project covers approximately 2,456 Ha and includes new targeted land management actions which will also deliver socio-economic benefits to the 11 farms and to the wider rural community Fferm Ifan live within. The farmers have grazing rights to the Migneint, one of the largest areas of blanket bog in Wales, which is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area.

As part of the work the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) are providing guidance on catchment sensitive planting. They will be planting more farmland trees and hedgerows along streams to help protect riverside habitats, reduce soil erosion and alleviate flood risk downstream. Ditch blocking on the Migneint will continue and help raise the water table, store carbon and will also reduce flood risk in the Conwy Valley.

The farmers are also taking part in grazing trials to encourage more biodiversity and wildlife in the peatland. As part of the grazing trials, cattle have been introduced to the Migneint for the first time in living memory and there are plans in place to restore habitat to encourage more lapwings and curlews to breed successfully in the area.

The group is also working closely with a number of partners including the National Trust, Snowdonia National Park Authority, RSPB, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Bangor University and Natural Resources Wales in order to share ideas and learn from the expertise and experience of the partners.





An exciting element of the project will be looking into developing new markets for the non-food products of sustainable land management – clean, slow water, carbon storage and thriving biodiversity. The main aim of the group is to work together to ensure that the future generations of these traditional farming families can continue to thrive within this Welsh-speaking upland community.

Habitat Restoration: Identifying and Restoring upland habitat to encourage and sustain lapwing and curlew populations on the Migneint with bird surveys and monitoring ongoing.

Peatland Restoration: Restoration of the Migneint Blanket Bog through 10,000m of peatland ditches blocked and 100 ha of land to be re-wetted.

Reducing Agricultural Pollution: Fencing off water courses to keep stock out, improving water quality to the river Conwy. Soil testing of approximately 240 improved grassland fields surrounding the Migneint to ensure efficient planning for nutrient, soil and water management.

Natural flood Risk Management: Grip blocking and re-wetting, 5.3 ha of new trees planted, 800m of streamside corridors and 10,000m of hedgerows.

Sustainable Grazing: Reintroduction of cattle for low level sustainable grazing to increase biodiversity and improve peatland habitat.

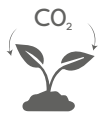
Woodland Management and Planting: Creating new woodland, providing 5.3 ha of new tree cover targeted through catchment sensitive planting.

Rural Skills and Heritage: Training courses on traditional and new farming methods with 22 training days already completed.

Building Collaborations and Partnerships: Working with organisations to provide guidance and education working with the National Trust, Snowdonia National Park Authority, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, RSPB, CEH, and NRW to share ideas and learn from the expertise and experience of the partners.

Training and Job Creation: Training on how to effectively monitor the peatland vegetation by the farmers, enabling results to be recorded.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI): Development of Payments for Ecosystem Services to define, measure and assess ecosystem services and determine market value. Carbon footprint measurement, measuring and looking at the groups' carbon footprint compared to similar farms across Wales.



Carbon Sequestration: supported by restoration of blanket bog, catchment sensitive planting and planting of farmland trees and riparian hedgerows.



Enhanced Biodiversity: supported by the reintroduction of cattle and restoration of habitats.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by the restoration of habitats, fencing along rivers, catchment sensitive planting and the planting of farmland trees and hedgerows.



Reduced Flood Risk: supported by restoration of blanket bog, grip blocking and re-wetting and planting of farmland trees and riparian hedgerows.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by restoration of blanket bog, fencing along rivers, grip blocking and rewetting and planting of farmland trees and hedgerows.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by an education programme, volunteer programmes, clearing of public footpaths and building a green infrastructure community hub.



Community Cohesion: supported by job creation, engagement activities with local schools and the general public and development of engagement tools.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by training courses on farming methods and working with organisations to provide guidance and education.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by restoration of blanket bog, planting of farmland trees and riparian hedgerows.

Get Involved: If you would like to see what the Fferm Ifan farmers have achieved please see the website.

Realising the Natural Capital of Welsh Peatlands

Lead organisation: Snowdonia National Park Authority

Grant Award: £924,956

Location: Pan Wales

Email: rhys.owen@eryri.llyw.cymru Marian.Pye@eryri.llyw.cymru

A project, taking collaborative action with stakeholders, including communities, to transform and improve peatlands across Wales. Improvements include ecological stability and long-term sustainable management of peatlands. It is hoped to deliver the project on spatial (e.g. catchments) and sectoral (e.g. protected sites) scales, as well as developing the expertise and capacity of partners to deliver peatland restoration.

This project will help deliver the 2020 target to bring peatlands into sustainable management. Coordinated action will deliver multiple environmental benefits through collaboration with existing mechanisms together with capital works covering the current 'difficult to do' sectors of peatland restoration, leading to longer term sustainable management supported through Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES). Other critical activities will lead to more coordinated and coherent approaches covering external funding, training, education, PES procurement, monitoring and research activities relevant to Welsh peatlands.

On behalf of the Welsh Peatland Action Group, the project is led by Snowdonia National Park Authority, in partnership with Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, IUCN UK Peatland Programme, Montgomeryshire

Wildlife Trust, the National Trust, Natural Resources. Wales, and Swansea University. The crux of this project is to secure sustainable management of our peatland resource across Wales, thereby maintaining or setting habitats on the path to good favourable condition; to identify the benefits of building resilience to these ecosystems and deliver a range of critical ecosystem services.

The project provides a strong opportunity to extend on progress with erosion restoration, focussing on re-vegetation, hydrological manipulation to prevent persistent drainage along erosion features, bracken control and visitor management.

This pan Wales project, focus on tackling some of the most 'difficult-to-do' areas of peatland restoration, including:

- **Sustainable management of lowland peatlands**
- **Sustainable management of *Molinia* dominated upland peatlands**
- **Peat soil erosion**
- **Peatland drainage**
- **Sustainable management of heather dominated blanket mire**
- **Afforested peat**
- **Peat heavily modified by agriculture**



Working with Snowdonia Society volunteers - Dan Struthers Photography copyright

Snowdonia National Park holds around 30% of Wales' peatlands, with over 25,000 hectares of peat, and an estimated 17 million tonnes of carbon. The vast majority of these habitats are a globally rare type of peatland: 'blanket bogs' (upland peatlands 'blanketing' the hillsides).

Some 3500 hectares of these peatland habitats are found between the Carneddau peaks in the north of Snowdonia, with large blanket bogs on the slopes of Llwytmor and Foel-Grach. Historically, these peatlands have been heavily grazed which, when combined with the natural drainage off the mountains, has led to significant erosion and loss of carbon. Large peat 'haggs' – bare, cliff like formations that expose the underlying peat soil – have formed on the blanket bogs, draining the peat and triggering a huge release of greenhouse gases.

Nowadays, the mountain landscapes of the Carneddau are grazed at much lower levels, with protections in place for delicate montane habitats and, of course, the iconic Carneddau ponies.

To reverse the effects of erosion work will be undertaken to re-vegetate vulnerable areas, slow the flow of water and restore the peatland. The work will greatly reduce the greenhouse gas losses as well as improving water storage in the surrounding peatland.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation

(KTandI): Development of a Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) strategy and a research platform for peatlands that enables better coordination of research efforts.

Peatland Restoration: Identified over 40 peatland sites across Wales and prepared and validated Peatland Code projects available for investment and restoration.

Training and Job Creation: Created jobs and implemented a best practice training programme for peatland practitioners.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation

(KTandI): Development of the Peatland Code.

Building Collaborations and Partnerships:

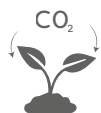
Peatland action group established and successful partnership with IUCN.

Habitat Restoration: Peatland restoration action focussing on the core 'difficult-to-do' areas of lowland peatlands.

Educational Programme: Engagement activities have been delivered with school pupils, students and the general public.

Community Engagement: Development of engagement and interpretation tools.

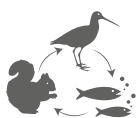
Training and Job Creation: Development of training and delivery of a standards charter for peatland restoration.



Carbon Sequestration: supported by upland and lowland peatland restoration and identification of peatland sites to be brought into favourable condition, locking in carbon and reducing loss.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by developing a PES strategy, preparing 10 Peatland Code projects, establishing the peatland action group, lowland peatland restoration and identification of peatland sites to ensure resilience.



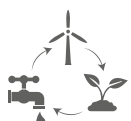
Enhanced Biodiversity: supported by establishing the peatland action group to share best practice, upland and lowland peatland restoration and identification of peatland sites across Wales.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by developing a PES strategy, preparing 10 Peatland Code projects, establishing the peatland action group, lowland peatland restoration and identification of peatland sites to ensure resilience.



Reduced Flood Risk: supported by identifying locations where peatlands could play a role in sustainable flood risk management schemes. Through the PES strategy, upland and lowland peatland restoration and identification of peatland sites across Wales.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by developing a PES strategy, preparing 10 Peatland Code projects for investment developing the Peatland Code, establishing the peatland action group, upland and lowland peatland restoration and identification of peatland sites.



Health and Wellbeing: supported by engagement activities with local schools and the general public. Engaging people with nature through open access peatland sites.



Community Cohesion: supported by job creation, engagement activities with local schools and the general public and development of engagement tools.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by developing a PES strategy and job creation. Sharing best practice and innovation through the peatland action groups.

Get Involved: The Snowdonia National Park Authority have many volunteering opportunities and will provide any training and equipment required for the role.

 www.snowdonia.gov.wales/looking-after/projects/peatland-restoration-in-snowdonia

 @eryrisnowdonia

 @Visitsnowdonia

Powys Moorland Partnership

Lead organisation: Ireland Moor Conservation Ltd

Grant Award: £600,000

Location: Powys

Email: will@irelandmoor.com

A large landscape scale project to encourage moorland restoration through bottom-up collaborative action driven by communities living and working on and around the moors. It seeks to realise multiple benefits including public health, skills sharing and education. Key stakeholders including landowners, farmers, and communities have created a vibrant moorland environment to boost biodiversity, delivering economic and social benefits. The project aim was to create an exciting strategic initiative in Powys and realise the full potential of nearly 20,000 acres of moorland stretching from the Llan Valley in the South to Beguildy common in the North. This area is enjoyed by local communities as well as tourists.

The project was built around four main aims; to promote moorland biodiversity, to better manage heather habitats, to balance moorland recreation with natural resources and wildlife and to engage with local communities.

The decline in the moorland biodiversity was due to a combination of factors and through a series of moorland management practices and new conversations with the surrounding community, the aim was to reverse that decline through a collaborative approach.



The project put a management plan in place to restore the health of the landscape. Red grouse are a key indicator species on the heather moorland and are in fact the only wild indigenous bird to live there 12 months of the year. Not only can the condition of the moorland be restored to improve the breeding opportunity for ground nesting birds, brown hares and multiple invertebrates, but it also aimed to deliver ecosystem services including carbon sequestration, water retention and flood risk alleviation.

Typically the vegetation on these moorlands comprises a mosaic of dwarf shrubs such as ling, bilberry, crowberry, and bell heather interspersed with bracken, common sedge and gorse. In the wetter areas cross-leaved heath, purple moor-grass, bog asphodel, cotton grass and the insectivorous sundew can be found with an under storey of mosses, often including carpets of sphagnum species.

The Powys moors are used extensively by walkers, horse riders, dog walkers, motorbike riders, 4X4 vehicles and the project are running a programme of talks to educate each group so that their recreation is not at the expense of the wildlife or damaging the landscape. By implementing innovative tools to better explain Open Access to encourage people to use the land responsibly particularly during the spring bird breeding season.

A key principle of the project is to achieve a workable and long-term balance between nature and people, through a collaboration of all interested parties, engaging with and generating participation from multiple local stakeholders so that everything from bird life to tourism has an opportunity to thrive.

The Powys Moorland Partnership aligns to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) seeking to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Bird recording, arts and music, wellbeing workshops, citizen science, and traditional skills of the uplands are some of the activities that the project attracts to help people understand some of the challenges that our landscapes face. Working with mental health charity MIND, the project is taking groups out onto the various moorlands to help improve the wellbeing of people who don't normally get out into this beautiful landscape.

As the project comes to a close PMP have been reflecting on their project and how the collaboration and the landscape can be supported for the future ensuring long term sustainability.

Building Collaborations and Partnerships:

Facilitating the Powys Moorland partnership bringing landowners and graziers together to achieve multiple goals.

Habitat Restoration: Upland heath restoration and bracken management programme, helping to restore major areas of the 24,600 ha sites.

Training and Job Creation: 2 full time wardens employed to manage the diversity on the moor.

Natural Flood Risk Management:

Pond and Swale creation for ground nesting birds on the hills.

Training and Job Creation: Provision of training courses to support sustainable management of the uplands.

Sustainable Grazing: Native Carneddau pony grazing across the hill to improve biodiversity.

Educational Programmes: Connecting local school children with moorland keepers, graziers, storytellers and historians.

Community Engagement: Working with mental health charity MIND, taking groups for walks around the moorlands.

Community Engagement: Implementing tools to better explain Open Access, to encourage responsible use of the land.

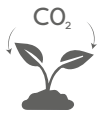
Habitat Restoration: Creating a mosaic of heather habitats, ffridd, ponds and swales to improve resilience across the moor.

Habitat Restoration: Sensitive rotational cutting and burning to help regenerate heather, reduce bracken growth and reduce fire risk.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI):

Started a wader protection scheme and seasonal bird counts to survey biodiversity, monitor success and share best practice.

Community Engagement: Running recreational activities and a programme of talks to educate various groups of land users.



Carbon Sequestration: supported by upland heath restoration, a bracken management programme, pond and swale creation and sustainable pony grazing.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by upland heath restoration, a bracken management programme, pond and swale creation and sustainable pony grazing.



Enhanced Biodiversity: supported by upland heath restoration, a bracken management programme, pond and swale creation, sustainable pony grazing, creating a mosaic of heather, rotational cutting and burning and a wader protection scheme to monitor the diversity.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by upland heath restoration, a bracken management programme, pond and swale creation, sustainable pony grazing, creating a mosaic of heather, rotational cutting and burning and a wader protection scheme.



Reduced Flood Risk: supported by natural flood risk management, pond and swale creation and slowing the flow.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by upland heath restoration, sustainable grazing and pond and swale creation.



Health and Wellbeing: supported by training courses, educational programmes, collaboration with mental health charities, implementing tools to explain open access, running recreational activities and a programme to educate groups of land users.



Community Cohesion: supported by upland heath restoration, employing wardens, training courses, seasonal bird counts, educational programmes, collaboration with mental health charities, implementing tools to explain open access, running recreational activities and a programme to educate groups of land users.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by upland heath restoration, employing wardens, training courses, engaging with local stakeholders, educational programmes and running recreational activities.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by employing wardens, training courses, engaging with local stakeholders, educational programmes, implementing tools to explain open access and running a programme to educate groups of land users.

Get Involved: If you would like to get involved with the Powys Moorland Partnership or have some ideas to contribute, please contact Catherine on urmyc.sdnalroomsywop@tcatnoc

 www.powysmoorlands.cymru/

 [powysmoorlandpartnership](https://www.instagram.com/powysmoorlandpartnership)

 [@WelshUplands](https://twitter.com/WelshUplands)

 [@powysmoorlands](https://www.facebook.com/powysmoorlands)

Golygfa Gwydyr: People and Forest

Lead organisation: Golygfa Gwydyr

Grant Award: £232,478

Location: Conwy

Email: rogerd@golygfagwydyr.org

Golygfa Gwydyr is a social enterprise based in Llanrwst, North Wales. They are a non-profit, community led organisation. Within the context of local community and place, their aim is to enhance social, environmental and economic resilience and to provide opportunities for personal growth and vibrant community relations.

This project has restored, developed and managed a 3 hectare arboretum and sustainably manage an 11 hectare mono-culture conifer plantation (Caerdroia) plot delivering multiple benefits for the environment and the local community. This project is a community focused project which is hoping to build on the skills, development and capacity building started and achieved under the Welsh Government's Nature Fund. At its heart is the management and usage of land resources to improve bio diversity, create resilience of our ecosystems while improving recreation facilities, access, and build communities with enhanced wellbeing and sense of place.

The need of the project stems from the wide floodplain of the Conwy Valley it mostly accommodates increased flows, but in times of very high rainfall, run-off from the north-east of Gwydyr Forest it can accumulate on the Afon Conwy flood plain between the river and B5106 road contributing to increased instances of flooding in this area of the Conwy Valley.



The project will use innovative solutions to slow down the flow of water from the forest by attenuation by natural flood risk management measures such as woody debris dams. Success will be indicated by reducing the quantity of water reaching the valley floor over a given period of time. The project will aim to use natural forest resources, felled trees and brash, and design and create areas for water retention.

The aim of this SMS project is to increase the biodiversity within the site by managing the woodland with a greater focus on amenity and biodiversity as opposed to the production of timber. This will create a valuable community/tourism facility delivering resources for wellbeing and economic return for the community.

The predicted community, health and wellbeing outcomes of the project are; to increase individual and community participation in projects by addressing barriers to participation, to promote and develop skills within the community, to support social inclusion, to provide opportunities for advancing individual and community wellbeing, to provide opportunities for volunteering and training, to further the principals of Social Forestry in Wales.

Citizen Science will also be utilised to encourage local schools and community groups to take part in monitoring flows and rainfall to determine efficiency of the NFRM measures and to provide evidence for future projects.

Woodland Management and Planting:

Restoring and managing land across 2 sites to improve biodiversity.

Volunteer Programmes: Volunteer programme with green woodworking activities and accredited training courses.

Training and Job Creation: Running a job club and providing training courses to improve skills and support the local community.

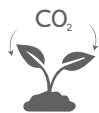
Protection from Invasive Species: Removal of invasive species within the Conwy catchment.

Community Engagement: Running recreational programmes and utilising citizen science to monitor flows and rainfall.

Natural Flood Risk Management: Natural flood risk management including woody debris dams.

Woodland Management and Planting: Community woodland management and wood-fuel service.





Carbon Sequestration: supported by woodland restoration, natural flood risk management and community woodland management.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by woodland restoration, citizen science to monitor rainfall, natural flood risk management and community woodland management.



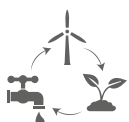
Enhanced Biodiversity: supported by woodland restoration, removal of invasive species, natural flood risk management and community woodland management.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by woodland restoration, removal of invasive species, natural flood risk management and community woodland management.



Reduced Flood Risk: supported by woodland restoration, nature based solutions, citizen science to monitor rainfall and natural flood risk management.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by woodland restoration, removal of invasive species, citizen science to monitor rainfall, natural flood risk management, community woodland management and a wood-fuel service.



Health and Wellbeing: supported by volunteer programmes, training courses, citizen science, recreational programmes and a job club.



Community Cohesion: supported by woodland restoration, volunteer programmes, training courses, citizen science, recreational programmes and a job club.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by woodland restoration, volunteer programmes, training courses, citizen science, recreational programmes, community woodland management and a wood-fuel service.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by volunteer programmes, training courses, citizen science, a job club, community woodland management and a wood-fuel service.

Get Involved: The project is based in rural Conwy and will be open to all Conwy residents. People will be needed to help manage these sites and develop projects to get people together and out in the woods. Please refer to the volunteering section of their website if you wish to help.

Tir a Môr Llŷn – Land and Sea

Lead organisation: Cyngor Gwynedd Council

Grant Award: £700,000

Location: Llŷn Peninsula

Email: arweljones@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

This collaborative project led by the Llŷn Landscape Partnership brings together statutory, environmental, economic and social groups. The project is centred on addressing the challenges impacting on the natural resources in the area that communities within the Llŷn Peninsula rely on.

The landscape of the Llŷn Peninsula is recognised as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This designated exceptional landscape with its distinctive character and natural beauty is of significant importance and is to be safeguarded in the national interest. Despite this, the coastal belt has become progressively pressured over the decades in the face of several changes, including agricultural improvement, abandonment of grazing on common land, visitor pressure and environmental factors including climate change.

The Tir a Môr Llyn project has counteracted some of these threats and has developed and delivered targeted actions to maintain and expand an extensive continuous strip of diverse habitat around the coastline. This will provide an invaluable resource that will help to safeguard the marine and terrestrial environments as well as developing a significant economic and social resource when aligned with the development of the Wales Coast Path.

The partnership has developed a collaborative and cooperative approach on a local level, allowing all involved to engage, develop and implement practical work plans. Time will be spent on engaging the wider community through holding local events and engaging local schools to raise awareness of the benefits of the work.



The Project will also be exploring the concept of ‘payment for outcomes’ with the help of three National Trust tenant farmers. The aim is to create a model and encourage the wider community to pilot and run the new approach.

This project trials different interventions such as herbal leys and hay meadows, making the case for undertaking further strategic action to protect, restore and connect this vulnerable habitat in partnership with landowners and graziers in the future.

The Payment for outcomes’ model, with the help of three National Trust farms, aim to create a model and encourage further farms to pilot and run the new approach, it is hoped this will result in implementing a whole farm result based agri-environmental scheme that rewards farmers for delivering environmental outcomes and benefits.

Empowering farmers to develop, implement and self-monitor their actions to deliver economic, environmental and social objectives on their farms to sustain their business. Implementing multi-agency delivery models to improve water quality on river catchments that bring wider benefits to the marine and coastal environment.

The project really aims to disseminate lessons learned from the project to a wide variety of stakeholders, using traditional and digital methods.



Habitat Restoration: Maintain and expand a continuous strip of diverse habitat along the Llŷn Peninsula, creating connectivity corridors linked to the Wales coastal path.

Protection from Invasive Species: Develop good practice in catchment management and invasive species control.

Community Engagement: Holding local events and engaging local schools with beach cleans by the local community.

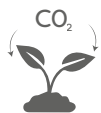
Coastal Zone Management: Developing resilience and connectivity along the coastline by working closely with farmers and landowners and implementing diverse habitat restoration.

Sustainable Grazing: Managing land effectively by sustainable grazing with cattle and ponies wherever possible.

Building collaborations and partnerships: Developing a stronger working relationship between farmers and specialists to improve soil, air and water quality.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI): Developing and implementing the first Welsh Payment for Outcomes farming trial, working with farmers to develop, implement and self-monitor their actions to deliver economic, environmental and social objectives on their farms.

Educational Programmes: Developing new educational resources with project partners to share a greater understanding of the connectivity between the terrestrial and marine environments.



Carbon Sequestration: supported by maintenance of diverse habitat, developing connectivity corridors along the coastline, sustainable grazing and developing relations between farmers and specialists to improve soil, air and water quality.



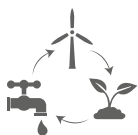
Climate Change Adaptation: supported by maintenance of diverse habitat, developing connectivity corridors along the coastline, sustainable grazing, development of a Payments for Outcomes farming trial and developing educational resources to increase understanding of the interconnectedness of terrestrial and marine environments.



Enhanced Biodiversity: supported by maintenance of diverse habitat, invasive species control, developing connectivity corridors along the coastline, sustainable grazing and creating educational resources to increase understanding of the interconnectedness of terrestrial and marine environments.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by maintenance of diverse habitat, invasive species control, engaging local schools with beach cleans, developing connectivity corridors along the coastline and creating educational resources to increase understanding of the interconnectedness of terrestrial and marine environments.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by maintenance of diverse habitat, beach cleans and developing relations between farmers and specialists to improve soil, air and water quality.



Health and Wellbeing: supported by maintenance of diverse habitat along the Wales coastal path and creating educational resources to increase understanding of the interconnections of terrestrial and marine environments.



Community Cohesion: supported by maintenance of diverse habitat, holding local events, engaging local schools with beach cleans, developing relations between farmers and specialists and creating educational resources.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by engaging local schools with beach cleans, working with farmers and landowners to develop connectivity corridors along the coastline and encouraging historic farming techniques.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by invasive species control, engaging local schools with beach cleans, development of a Payments for Outcomes farming trial and creating educational resources to increase understanding of the interconnectedness of terrestrial and marine environments.

Get Involved: If you would like to learn more or get involved in the work being done by the Llŷn Landscape Partnership, you can find more information at:

 www.ahne-llyn-aonb.org/Tir-a-M-r-Ll-n-Project

Our River Wellbeing: Nature Based Solutions in the Dee Catchment

Lead organisation: North Wales Wildlife Trust

Grant Award: £700,000

Location: River Dee catchment in North Wales

Email: helen.carter-emsell@northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk

As part of North Wales Wildlife Trusts Living Landscape strategy, the Our River Wellbeing Project was created to embody the NWWT's approach to the movement of people working together for wildlife with the project focusing on the health and wellbeing of Volunteer River Guardians while tackling invasive non-native species (INNS) for the sustainable management of the Dee Catchment.



The project focuses on the control, removal, and the prevention of the spread of INNS within this large catchment. The River Dee catchment is 110km long containing the Rivers Dee, Alyn, Alwen, Clywedog, Ceiriog, Wych and Tryweryn and Lakes Bala, Brenig, Celyn and the Alwen Reservoir. There is a significant amount of designated areas throughout the catchment, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a RAMSAR site, three National Nature Reserves,

three Special Areas of Conservation and thirty three Sites of Special Scientific Interest. The area is also renowned for its landmarks, as well as its excellent fishing and canoeing hotspots, all of which bring in visitors from all over the world.

INNS have been recognised as one of the top threats to biodiversity they can:

- Compete with native species for space, light, water, and food
- Increase our environments vulnerability to further invasions
- Reduce our ability to access and enjoy water bodies for sport and recreation
- Negatively impact tourism and the local economy
- Slow down the flow of rivers and increase flood risk and damage infrastructure.



The project collaborate with several action groups and have developed a River Guardian Network; a group of dedicated volunteers who meet regularly carrying out a wide variety of activities, including vital survey work along the River Dee and its tributaries collecting data to allow for strategic interventions to be most effective. Large scale INNS removal is implemented by the project clearing significant areas of invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed.



© NWWT

Volunteers through the project funding are given the opportunity to access accredited and unaccredited training. The project regularly runs volunteer sessions in traditional skills such as coppicing, scything, tool use and health and safety alongside surveying monitoring and data capture skills to improve career prospects and helping to build capability and skills in the community.



Alongside this large scale INNS management there are opportunities for members of the local communities as part of the volunteer network to take part in sessions in mindfulness, bush craft and outdoor activities to boost their wellbeing through nature connection.



Volunteer Programmes: The Volunteer River Guardians initiative brings over 50 individuals together to carry out INNS removal and surveys, with sessions run weekly around health and wellbeing, traditional skills such as coppicing, hazel hurdle making, tool use and care, and fire lighting.

Building Collaborations and Partnerships: Meetings with more than 15 other organisations to share knowledge of the work NWWT are doing in the project, to collaborate and work together/deliver joint sessions and events, to recruit volunteers and share ideas/ways of working.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI): Over 300 stakeholders engaged with the project, sharing best practice and success.

Training and Job Creation: 238 training days have been delivered by the project with more scheduled.

Educational Programmes: 30 individuals gaining a qualification through the project.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: 200 days of activities and enabling people to enjoy nature and to utilise natural resources for health.

Protection from Invasive Species: Large scale interventions across the catchment, river guardians carry out surveys for INNS along the River Dee and its tributaries this data allows for strategic effective targeted INNS removal and prevention in over 30 sites.

Woodland Management and Planting: Approximately 100 trees have been planted.

Protection from Invasive Species: 5 Biosecurity Panels introduced to inform the public on INNS and how to protect our ecosystems from them.

Habitat Restoration: Where INNS has been controlled monitoring has shown species recovery, native species such as Meadowsweet, Buttercup, Daisy, Dandelion, are all now able to colonise those areas creating a more resilient ecosystem.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported through Protection from Invasive Species, largescale interventions across the catchment, strategic effective targeted INNS removal and prevention in over 30 sites.



Enhanced Biodiversity: supported by Habitat Restoration where INNS has been controlled monitoring has shown native species recovery, such as Meadowsweet, Buttercup, Daisy, Dandelion, are all now able to colonise those areas creating a more resilient ecosystem.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by Habitat Restoration where INNS has been controlled monitoring has shown native species recovery, Approximately 100 trees have been planted and strategic effective targeted INNS removal and prevention in over 30 sites.



Health and Wellbeing: supported through Volunteer Programmes bringing over 50 individuals together to carry out INNS removal and surveys, and sessions run weekly around health and wellbeing, traditional skills such as coppicing, hazel hurdle making, tool use and care, and fire lighting.



Community Cohesion: supported by Building Collaborations and Partnerships with more than 15 organisations to share knowledge of the work NWWT are doing in the project, to collaborate and work together, delivering joint sessions and events, to recruit volunteers and share ideas/ways of working throughout the wider community.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported through Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI) over 300 stakeholders engaged with the project, sharing best practice and success. 238 training days delivered by the project with more to come. Educational Programmes with 30 individuals gaining a work place qualification through the project.



Health and Wellbeing: supported through Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces, 200 days of activities and enabling people to enjoy nature and to utilise natural resources for health.

Get Involved: If you would like to learn more or get involved in the work being done by the River Wellbeing, you can find more information at: www.northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk

 www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5NKC_MUBPU&t=22s

 @North Wales Wildlife Trust

Building Resilience in Catchments (BRICs)

Lead organisation: PLANED

Grant Award: £609,549

Location: Pembrokeshire

Email: paul.renfro@pembrokeshirecoastalforum.org.uk

A project, led by PLANED, delivering landscape scale collaborative action, working in partnership with Natural Resources Wales and Dwr Cymru to bring together farmers, industry, supply chain, environmental organisations and local communities in order to implement “Building Resilience into Catchments” (BRICs).

BRICs is a research project that is taking an innovative approach to managing natural resources in the area, benefiting both communities and businesses in the locality. It will also contribute to sustainable economic development in the area by allowing businesses to grow whilst reducing the overall level of nutrients entering the Milford Haven and Cleddau Catchment.

PLANED will be working with farms above the Llys Y Fran reservoir, Pelcomb Bridge and Winterton Marsh looking at the catchment as a whole enabling the project to identify where optimum strategic measures can be implemented to improve soil health and water quality. Targeted measures include nutrient soil mapping, innovative methods and interventions, precision farming and integrated constructed wetlands all aiming to build resilient ecosystems by reducing agricultural pollution.

The project offer expert advice, guidance and support to farmers including nutrient focused advisory plans and help to secure funding for targeted nutrient soil mapping, precision farming and where applicable constructing farm wetlands.



The project works closely with partners Dwr Cymru who are actively involved in contributing to the work. Dwr Cymru's match funding to the project is to monitor and share water quality data from the Pelcomb Brook and Llys y fran sub-catchments helping to inform the project.

The project are looking at the possibility for future investment opportunities in Pembrokeshire by developing a framework for creating an enterprise capable of running a nutrient based trading scheme that is able to potentially pay land managers for undertaking actions that benefit the natural environment beyond regulatory requirements to secure sustainable economic development and future investment opportunities in the area.

The measures will also enable farmers to be prepared for extreme weather events and flood risks mitigating climate change alongside allowing for green growth and opportunities for habitat connectivity improving biodiversity.

The Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum will showcase the benefits from the actions undertaken on the pilot farms looking at economic benefit and future investment opportunities for the farmers in the area. The value of a cleaner Milford Haven Waterway to future industrial investors could pave the way for a nutrient trading scheme, paying farmers and land managers to create cleaner water, allowing future commercial development and reversing environmental decline.

Ged Davies, BRICs Co-ordinator at PLANED said "With all the uncertainties facing farming and the pressures on the environment, this project could not have been better timed. The project will assist with improving farm resilience to climate change, improving farm performance economically and environmentally."

Paul Renfro from Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum said "It is important that beyond the on the ground improvements to water quality that will be made during this project that a framework or process is established allowing for a new income for landowners, jobs and growth in Pembrokeshire, while benefiting the environment".

The partners aim to make best practice common practice showing how working together can benefit farm businesses and communities helping deliver long term sustainability for the area.



Reducing Agricultural Pollution: Over 20 farms involved receiving farm resilience plans with 880ha of land soil sampled and conductivity scanning carried out. A pilot constructed wetland is now complete in Llys y Fran with a feasibility study ongoing, supporting research into its effectiveness.

Training and Job Creation: Over 60 participants across the catchment attending awareness and training events on soil health and water quality and safe storage and disposal of slurry.

Building collaborations and partnerships: Multiple stakeholder events to inform farm businesses in the area and steering group set up.

Training and Job Creation: Three jobs created.

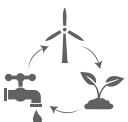
Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI): Develop a framework for creating an enterprise capable of running a nutrient based trading scheme that is able to potentially pay land managers for undertaking actions that benefit the natural environment beyond regulatory requirements to secure sustainable economic development and future investment opportunities in the area.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by targeted nutrient soil mapping, precision farming and where applicable constructing farm wetlands.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by implementing targeted measures include nutrient soil mapping, innovative methods and interventions, precision farming and integrated constructed wetlands.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by implementing targeted measures include nutrient soil mapping, innovative methods and interventions, precision farming and integrated constructed wetlands.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by the actions undertaken on the pilot farms looking at economic benefit and future investment opportunities for the farmers in the area through a nutrient trading scheme; paying farmers and land managers to create cleaner water, allowing future commercial development and reversing environmental decline.



Get Involved: If you would like to learn more or get involved in the work being done by BRICS, you can find more information at:

 www.planed.org.uk/projects/brics/

 @PLANED.Pembs/

 @PLANED_Pembs/

Biodiversity Means Business

Lead organisation: North Wales Wildlife Trust

Grant Award: £388,438

Location: Rural Wards of Holt and Marchwiel

Email: acljones@wildlifetrustswales.org

The focus of this project is centred on the large (550ha) rurally located Wrexham Industrial Estate. NWWT's vision is to make the landscape within and around the industrial estate more habitable to wildlife, more accessible for people, and more attractive to businesses whilst also improving the health and wellbeing of employees and nearby communities. They are achieving this by working with local businesses, partners, workers and the local community so it is inclusive and benefits all.

The project will prioritise on the ground improvement activities and develop a strategic plan for the landscape to help sustain and deliver improvement and benefits into the future. A focus on green infrastructure including planting wildflowers, restoring public footpaths, planting native trees, planting hedgerows and demonstrating soft engineering techniques will help with surface water retention and improve wildlife corridors as well as creating a nicer place to work for employees working in the area.

Engaging with the surrounding local communities and offering volunteering opportunities is part of the projects long term approach. This aims to help create a sense of ownership of the landscape by those working, living and enjoying the leisure opportunities of the area.



The project activities include opening up public nature reserves, installing picnic areas, planting orchards, erecting signage, reducing litter, eye-catching sculptures, colourful wildflower verges and roundabouts, improving access and trails, plus enthusing people about the estate.

The project also offers corporate support to businesses who wish to support environmental improvements in alternative ways on their grounds. The project offers 'Natural Partnerships' to help businesses to realise the benefits of incorporating green spaces into their surroundings. Working with new multiple businesses and local companies across the estate, to develop long-term management plans to implement nature based solutions to enhance habitats and amenity space. Contributing to tackling wider social and environmental issues, supporting staff wellbeing and productivity, lowering costs and bringing the economy, society and environment together.

The project are looking to run a series of events to introduce the wilder side of the Wrexham Industrial Estate and are actively managing two areas of the industrial estate that have public access, opening up footpaths for visitors and workers to discover and exercise.

The project is successfully delivering nature based solutions to help promote biodiversity and social well-being and engagement across this unusual site.



Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: Developing Green Infrastructure and visitor access established at multiple sites all having way-marked paths, benches, 10 picnic tables, bird feeding stations, bug hotels and signage. With 3.5 km of access paths created or restored.

Habitat restoration: Orchard planting, hedge laying, with 600m of wildflower verges and 8 roundabouts created, meadows managed through seeding and cutting and 2500 reed plants planted on banks of a meander on the River Dee all to support the 1000 species found in the area.

Building collaborations and partnerships: Up to 200 stakeholders engaged; members of the local communities, businesses, farmers and landholders, community groups and environmental and conservation organisations receiving advice, guidance and information through the project.

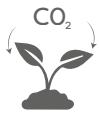
Volunteer Programmes: 125 volunteers are registered to carry out litter-picking, hedgerow restoration, tree planting, landscaping, restoring access areas and creating habitats while supporting the health and wellbeing of the local community.

Woodland Management and Planting: 9ha of woodland created and supported through planting of 600 native trees, coppicing and glade creation, placement of nest boxes, orchard creation and woodlands enhanced for wildlife, mapping of veteran trees and instalment of TPOs where appropriate.

Sustainable Grazing: Low intensity grazing at strategic sites with native breeds aimed at reducing the height of the grass sward to enable wildflowers to grow throughout the spring and summer months.

Training and Job Creation: Welsh language awareness training and river safety courses run with 3 jobs safeguarded, with the wider aim of attracting economic growth to the industrial estate.

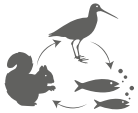
Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI): Undertaking an evaluation based on Social Return on Investment (SROI) principles, a framework for measuring and accounting for this much broader concept of value; it seeks to reduce inequality and environmental degradation and improve wellbeing by incorporating social, environmental and economic costs and benefits.



Carbon Sequestration: supported by orchard planting, hedgerow laying and restoration, wildflower and tree planting, meadow management, habitat creation, woodland creation and support, coppicing, glade creation, mapping of veteran trees and sustainable grazing.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by orchard planting, hedgerow laying and restoration, tree planting, meadow management, habitat creation, woodland creation and support, coppicing, glade creation and sustainable grazing.



Enhanced Biodiversity: supported by bird feeding stations and nest boxes, bug hotels, orchard planting, hedgerow creation and restoration, wildflower, reed and tree planting, litter picking, habitat creation, woodland creation and support, glade creation and sustainable grazing.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by bird feeding stations and nest boxes, bug hotels, orchard planting, hedgerow creation and restoration, wildflower, reed and tree planting, litter picking, habitat creation, woodland creation and support, glade creation and sustainable grazing.



Health and Wellbeing: supported by creation and restoration of access paths, conservation volunteering opportunities, landscaping and undertaking an evaluation based on Social Return on Investment.



Community Cohesion: supported by creation and restoration of access paths, stakeholder engagement, providing advice and guidance to local communities, conservation volunteering opportunities, Welsh language awareness training, safeguarding of jobs and undertaking an evaluation based on Social Return on Investment.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by Welsh language awareness training, conservation volunteering opportunities, hedgerow laying and restoration, wildflower and tree planting, meadow management, landscaping, coppicing and glade creation.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by stakeholder engagement, providing advice and guidance to local communities, Welsh language awareness training, running river safety courses and undertaking an evaluation based on Social Return on Investment. Working with new multiple businesses and local companies across the estate.

Get Involved: If you would like to learn more or get involved in the work being done by North Wales Wildlife Trust NWWT you can find more information at:

Cynllun Dalgylch Yr Afon Eden Catchment Project

Lead organisation: Snowdonia National Park Authority SNPA

Grant Award: £815,444

Location: Eden Valley, Gwynedd

Email: Rhys.Owen@eryri-npa.gov.uk

A farmer led project centred on improving ecosystem resilience of the Afon Eden and its tributaries at catchment scale, improving water quality and restoring habitats.

A group of 19 farm businesses and landowners in this area of special conservation collaborated on the project and with the help and support of SNPA they undertook a range of measures to tackle agricultural pollution and to improve ecosystem resilience across the landscape. Through implementing nature based solutions and a host of on-farm capital works all aimed at improving the water quality of the river catchment with a focus on the management of the endangered freshwater pearl mussel which is found in the area.

Collaborative working allowed for strategic interventions to be implemented at scale such as planting and managing native deciduous trees, restoring natural habitats and looking at erosion prevention aimed at improving biodiversity across the catchment. Replacing aging infrastructure, restoring coniferous 'shelter belts' to native woodland, and improving riparian habitats along the Afon Eden and its tributaries have been all been carried out.

Another key element the project was to develop the existing local tree nursery at Plas Tan-y-Bwlch in order to be able



to provide quality native trees of local provenance to landowners as part of this project, and to others throughout the National Park.

The project looked at further issues within the wider catchment and worked in partnership with the relevant authorities to address them. This led to the construction of a new bridge over the Afon Eden in place of an existing ford that had regular vehicle crossings, this infrastructure reduced the impact and water quality of the Eden.

The project also looked at ways to improve the design of the commercial plantations in the area and surrounding habitats and planned their removal in peatland areas and where appropriate allowing natural regeneration and planting with native trees.

Plans were made for looking at the feasibility of creating a multi-user path linking the community of Trawsfynydd with the nationally renowned mountain bike centre at Coed-y-Brenin to improve the visitor experience and recognise the outdoor recreation and tourism that the area offers.

The project have raised awareness amongst the local and wider community, providing ample opportunities for volunteering and learning; engaging the local community. The project has also offered work experience and internships allowing individuals to develop their skills for a career in the sector whilst contributing positively to the objectives of the project.



Habitat Restoration: Historic traditional boundaries, with over 7km of hedgerows planted and 3.5km of linear dry-stone walling completed.

Training and Job Creation: Landowners and project staff undertook various training courses, including emergency first aid, project management, horticulture, brush cutter, wood chipper, chainsaw and pesticide use.

Habitat restoration: Significant conifer clearance has been completed in afforested peatland areas. Unwanted conifer regeneration, in an approximate area of over 120ha has been cleared; with native natural regeneration encouraged.

Natural Flood Risk Management: Approximately 1-1.5km of artificial drainage grip blocking has been completed.

Training and Job Creation: Full-time Project Officer post created with 3 people for work placement, 2 of whom have gone on to fill other roles in SNPA, transferring their skills and knowledge.

Volunteer Programmes: Volunteer days with the Snowdonia Society held through the SMS Eden's on-farm works scheme, during which volunteers planted 800 native trees.

Increased access to outdoor spaces: For walkers, infrastructure and open access improved; bridges and footpaths upgraded with signage and education boards linking to the existing cycle and footpaths.

Reducing Agricultural Pollution: Implementing sustainable infrastructure such as the low-level crossing constructed, improving a heavily used ford used by vehicles therefore reducing the pollution risk and disturbance to the river ecosystem and the construction of a settlement pond to intercept any sedimentation and associated pollutants before they reached the Eden.

Woodland Management and Planting: Development of Snowdonia's tree nursery, allowing trees to be home grown and resilient to their environment, new polytunnels, equipment and training of staff in horticulture.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI): Several feasibility studies carried out and Forest Resource Plans have all been completed and shared with relevant stakeholders.

Woodland Management and Planting: 113ha of woodland management, 15ha of new tree planting as well as a further 19ha of natural woodland regeneration.

Habitat Restoration: 0.6km of sensitive river restoration work completed, utilising innovative methods including boulder replacement, work gravel seeding and large woody material introduction.

Volunteer Programmes: Training and volunteer days held in order to engage new interest in sustainable land management and natural resources.

Building Collaborations and Partnerships: Engaged with 120 stakeholders through a range of stakeholder engagement activities.

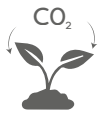
Community Engagement: Through contracted work the project has supported 89 different businesses, 90% of which were locally based. In this way it has contributed over £600,000 to the local economy and the local community.

Sustainable Grazing: Introduced cattle to graze dense Molinia dominated areas, with infrastructure implemented to support the habitats while cattle graze.

Educational Programmes: Through a Moorland Indicators of Climate Change Initiative (MICCI), 3 schools have been involved in various engagement activities, including environmental monitoring fieldwork and sustainable craft activities.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI): The project has hosted site visits for students from University College London and has had representatives at local agricultural shows, in order to raise awareness of the work being conducted. Additionally it has held a project open day where stakeholders were updated on the progress achieved and site visits were conducted across the catchment.

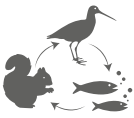
Building collaborations and partnerships: Partnership of 19 local farm businesses and landowners, SNPA, NRW and eNGO's coming together to work collaboratively to achieve multiple goals and benefits.



Carbon Sequestration: supported by hedgerow planting, conifer clearance on peatland, grip blocking, tree planting, habitat and river restoration, woodland management and regeneration at catchment scale.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by sustainable grazing, conifer clearance on peatland, grip blocking, tree planting, habitat and river restoration, woodland management and regeneration at catchment scale, development of tree nursery, horticulture training.



Enhanced Biodiversity: supported by hedgerow planting, conifer clearance on peatland, tree planting, infrastructure, habitat restoration, river restoration, woodland management and regeneration, sustainable grazing all at catchment scale.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by hedgerow planting, conifer clearance on peatland, tree planting, infrastructure, habitat restoration, river bank restoration, woodland management and regeneration, sustainable grazing all at catchment scale.



Reduced Flood Risk: supported by drainage grip blocking, peatland restoration, creation of a low level crossing and settlement pond and river restoration work.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by hedgerow planting, conifer clearance on peatland, tree planting, infrastructure, habitat restoration, river bank restoration, woodland management and regeneration, sustainable grazing all at catchment scale.



Health and Wellbeing: improvement of open access and outdoor recreation, cycle routes and footpaths and school engagement activities supported by training courses on first aid and safe use of equipment. Volunteer days and training and community engagement activities.



Community Cohesion: supported by training courses, creation of full time and work placement roles. Volunteer days, feasibility studies conducted and shared with stakeholders. Butterfly conservation training days, stakeholder engagement activities, contracting work with local businesses, school engagement activities and a project open day.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by hedge laying, dry-stone walling, training courses and woodland management. Volunteer days focused on native tree planting, development of Snowdonia's tree nursery, conservation training days, contracting work with local businesses, utilising sustainable grazing techniques and school engagement activities and education.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by training courses, creation of full time and work placement roles. Volunteer training, feasibility studies conducted and shared with stakeholders, site visits from UCL and a project open days.

Get Involved: If you would like to learn more or get involved in the work being done by Snowdonia National Park you can find more information at:

 www.snowdonia.gov.wales/home

 @eryrisnowdonia

 @visitsnowdonia

Dunes to Dunes: Sustainable Management of Bridgend Coastal Landscape

Lead organisation: Bridgend County Borough Council

Grant Award: £312,541

Location: Kenfig National Nature Reserve, Bridgend

Email: Mark.Blackmore@bridgend.gov.uk

This project area spans the dune landscapes of the Kenfig Burrows and Merthyr Mawr Warren dune systems in South Wales and are designated a National Nature Reserve (NNR) and a Special area of conservation (SAC). Once a massive dune system these two important ecosystems are now separated by the Porthcawl Coastline, two golf courses and settled farmland.

The Dunes 2 Dunes project aims to form a collaboration of NNR managers, local landowners, golf clubs and farmers to sustainably manage the coastal landscape, improving ecosystems, increasing biodiversity and connectivity to explore the benefits of this for people, local businesses and communities.

Significant habitat restoration and management alongside sustainable grazing have contributed to the resilience of the dunes ecosystem and their long term sustainability. Extensive scrub clearance, large scale drystone wall restoration, hedge-laying and coppicing, have all contributed to some outstanding results. A significant increase in biodiversity has been recorded through species counts. A record year for the fen orchid survey with 3000+ fen orchid, an increase from a few 100 in the baseline studies; showing resilience, better connectivity and dune stability just in this short amount of time.



The project will also work collaboratively with local businesses such as golf clubs supporting them with their ongoing sustainable performance with the ambition to achieve the GEO Certified Eco label

The project have implemented education work with local schools and work placements with students studying targeted countryside management at Kenfig National Nature Reserve and the adjoining coastal areas. As part of their work experience placements, they take a break from their studies in the Biology Department of Swansea University to learn about the practical ways Bridgend County Borough Council manages its National Nature Reserves and enhancing the ecology of the coastal zone.

The project also aims to maximise the health and well-being opportunities of the area through improving green infrastructure. Accessible well maintained walking routes, focusing on promoting and developing the coastal path and encouraging visitors to the quality green spaces. Educating the public through signage on the impact they can have on this environment and how they can help keep this incredible place safe.



Habitat Restoration: Winter habitat management at Kenfig NNR, with the creation of a significant new dune scrapes and extensive scrub clearance.

Volunteer Programmes: 87 people attending volunteer training courses, with 191 people cumulatively having participated so far.

Training and Job Creation: 135 training days held, including mini digger use to invertebrate ID and monitoring.

Building collaborations and Partnerships: 20 different organisations have engaged with over 60 people from local landowners and farmers to eNGO's through partnership events.

Building collaborations and partnerships: Through the support of the project the two golf clubs on this landscape have achieved the prestigious GEO Certification.

Woodland Management and Planting: Improving the boundaries on Sker farm, planting a 250m stretch of over a 1000 trees with a 15 year commitment to grow them into a traditional hedgerow.

Training and Job Creation: Hosted 12 work experience university students, providing practical countryside management training undertaking scrub clearance, dry-stone walling, hedge-laying and coppicing.

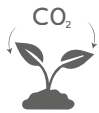
Rural Skills and Heritage: Over 60m of traditional dry stone walling completed by local contractors contributing to the local economy.

Educational Programmes: Engagement with local schools, with educational material produced and visits to see the coastal landscape and the local farms.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: Focus on promoting and developing the coastal path with upgraded educational signage, bins and infrastructure.

Sustainable Grazing: Summer grazing with cattle and managed sheep grazing in the winter.

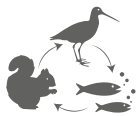
Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI): Online material reaching over 14k people with hundreds of project video views and shares.



Carbon Sequestration: supported by tree and hedgerow planting.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by partnership events and attainment of GEO certification.



Enhanced Biodiversity: supported by habitat management at Kenfig NNR, with the creation of a significant new dune scrapes and extensive scub clearance, hedgerow planting and sustainable grazing.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by habitat management at Kenfig NNR, with the creation of a significant new dune scrapes and extensive scub clearance, hedgerow planting and sustainable grazing.



Health and Wellbeing: supported by coastal path development.



Community Cohesion: supported by training courses, partnership events, attainment of GEO certification, hosting students for work experience, hiring local contractors for dry stone walling, engaging with schools, coastal path development and sharing online material.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by training courses, hosting students for work experience and hiring local contractors for dry stone walling.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by training courses, partnership events, hosting students for work experience, engaging with schools, coastal path development and sharing online material.

Get Involved: If you would like to learn more or get involved in the work being done by Dunes to Dunes you can find more information at:

 www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pik6G10Ab4c

 @dunes2dunes

Dolau Dyfi Meadows

Lead organisation: Pont Cymru

Grant Award: £467,114

Location: Lowland area of the Dyfi catchment, Gwynedd

Email: julia.korn@pontcymru.org

The Dolau Dyfi Projects stretches across the Dyfi Biosphere area from the sea at Aberdyfi to the foothills of the Cambrian Mountains and includes parts of Ceredigion, Powys, Gwynedd and Snowdonia National Park authority (SNPA). This collaborative project is focused on joining up natural resources with health and well-being benefits in the Dyfi area.

The collaboration includes Local Authorities, landowners, farmers, SNPA, RSPB, Montgomery Wildlife Trust, and Keep Wales Tidy, Dyfi Biosphere Outdoor Health Project and aims to grow as the project develops with input from the public and surrounding communities.

The project focusses on the management of grasslands, peatland, and ffridd in the area. Lowland semi-natural grassland has suffered dramatic losses in the UK and only fragments of lowland meadows, heathland and bogs remain. The Dyfi area

has significant areas of these habitats and the project will undertake work to reverse the decline locally and so improve and restore habitat that local people and visitors can enjoy creating new opportunities to engage with nature.

The project aims to help tackle local challenges by restoring targeted areas of the landscape while connecting people with nature. Investment will be made in 35 areas to improve ecosystem resilience. Works include managing scrub, bracken and gorse, late hay cutting, INNS removal, fencing and other infrastructure to enable sustainable grazing plans to be implemented. Practical help will be offered to local land managers to monitor and evaluate the impact of the work undertaken and a Dolau Dyfi Meadows Group will be established to support land owners to manage the natural resources in the area in the long term.





Further activities include establishing a local volunteer network, setting up art projects and a “walking to health” programme to benefit health and wellbeing. The project will agree a programme of work to improve access routes and opportunities in the project area. Materials and social media promotion will be commissioned to encourage locals and visitors to utilise the outdoors for health benefit and the project will create and promote safe spaces and enjoyable places to visit.

Using the Ivy-leaved Bell Flower as a poignant symbol of wildflowers that are special in the area, the Dolau Dyfi will undertake work with local groups, organisations and individuals to develop ideas for improved access and arts activities as the project progresses.

Working with the Dyfi Biosphere Outdoor Health project being delivered by Ecodyfi, Coed Lleol and others to provide opportunities for people to join led walks and other activities to improve health and well-being. This will be linked to the new social prescribing scheme being developed in the area and a number of those involved will be supported to take part through referral from their GP or other health provider.

User friendly walking guides will be produced to help people access the existing coastal and mountain paths, with easy guides showing distance covered, walking time and challenge level, helping people access recreation safely in the area.

The project will offer supervised volunteering opportunities including practical habitat restoration, footpath management, arts and other activities looking to improving well-being and skill development. Plans to host art workshops and volunteer events centred on creating material that is relevant to the farming, nature and wild flower theme of the project providing various opportunities for people to get involved, building on community cohesion.



Peatland Restoration: Restore and reconnect lowland peat bog. 15 ha of non-SSSI lowland peatland restored.

Habitat management: 639 hectares over the project area managed and restored. Maintaining flowering habitat; neutral, acid and marshy grassland, heath and peat bog in favourable and recovering condition.

Volunteer Programme: Practical conservation management work by 20 volunteers.

Developing Green Infrastructure: Restored attractive flowering landscape with breeding farmland birds adjacent to public access opportunities.

Habitat Restoration: A programme of work tackling gorse bracken and rank vegetation clearance completed on various sites by landowners and contractors. Work undertaken on 10 sites with owners/managers for the sites signing a 5-year management agreement which will help secure the favourable management beyond the end of the project date.

Community engagement: Facebook used to promote activities and engagement, The Dolau Dyfi film has been completed, and a “film premiere” was held on the Dolau Dyfi Facebook page to support engagement activities and educational programmes.

Community engagement: 8 health walks, 3 volunteer maintenance walks, 1 history walk, 2 volunteer/community training activities carried out to date with more to come.

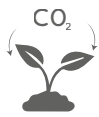
Educational Programmes: Virtual “Arty Party” at 3 different schools with children signing up to the workshops through their schools. Materials were collected by parents for children to join educational nature activity sessions with 65 children signed up to the online workshops.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: Improvement works have been undertaken on 4 paths totalling 5.87km of enhanced access. To improve accessibility to all users 12 galvanised self-closing gates have been used.

Rural Skills and Heritage: Two teams of forestry ponies with bracken rollers worked on difficult sites, rolling 8ha of bracken.

Sustainable grazing: Plans on various sites to maintain and enhance restored habitat.

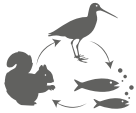
Building collaborations and Partnerships: Working collaboratively, joint initiatives with RSPB who are working in kind on the project and input from organisations in the area such as the Dyfi Biosphere group, Tourism groups and sub-group meetings all to inform the project.



Carbon Sequestration: supported by the Peatland Restoration, restoring and connecting lowland peat bog. Habitat Restoration of 639 hectares over the project area being managed and restored. Maintaining neutral, acid and marshy grassland, heath and peat bog in favourable and recovering condition.



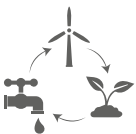
Climate Change Adaptation: supported by supported by the Peatland Restoration, restoring and connecting lowland peat bog. Habitat Restoration of 639 hectares over the project area being managed and restored. Maintaining neutral, acid and marshy grassland, heath and peat bog in favourable and recovering condition.



Enhanced Biodiversity: supported by Developing Green Infrastructure, Peatland and Habitat Restoration, sustainable grazing plans and long term commitment from landowners and famers.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by the Peatland Restoration, restoring and connecting lowland peat bog. Habitat Restoration of 639 hectares over the project area being managed and restored. Maintaining neutral, acid and marshy grassland, heath and peat bog in favourable and recovering condition, developing Green Infrastructure, sustainable grazing plans and long term commitment from landowners and famers.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by the Peatland Restoration, restoring and connecting lowland peat bog. Habitat Restoration of 639 hectares over the project area being managed and restored. Maintaining neutral, acid and marshy grassland, heath and peat bog in favourable and recovering condition, developing Green Infrastructure, sustainable grazing plans and long term commitment from landowners and famers.



Health and Wellbeing: supported by the Volunteer Programme with 20 volunteers, developing Green Infrastructure Managing areas for public access opportunities, though Community engagement, supervised health walks, and educational programmes with 65 children signed up and increasing Access to Outdoor Spaces.



Community Cohesion: supported by the Volunteer Programme with 20 volunteers, developing Green Infrastructure, Managing areas for public access opportunities, though Community engagement, supervised health walks, and educational programmes with 65 children signed up and increasing Access to Outdoor Spaces. Working collaboratively across all the sectors engaging the local community through steering groups.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by the habitat management and the long term commitment of the local farming community, through promoting forestry ponies and other landscape skills.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by Volunteer and job and training programmes covering practical conservation management work. Working collaboratively with stakeholders sharing best practise and innovation.

Get Involved: If you would like to learn more or get involved in the work being done by Dolau Dyfi Meadows you can find more information at: www.pontcymru.org/dolau-dyfi/

 www.youtube.com/channel/UCGjUzOTxkGgAjsnDloMwz1g

 [@twitter.com/pontcymru](https://twitter.com/pontcymru)  [@eryrisnowdonia](https://www.facebook.com/eryrisnowdonia)

South East Wales Resilient Uplands

Lead organisation: Torfaen County Borough Council

Grant Award: £399,000

Location: Torfaen, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent

Email: alvin.nicholas@torfaen.gov.uk

The South East Wales Resilient Uplands (SEWRU), project covers an area of some 200sq km on land which is over 200m in altitude within Torfaen, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent.

The upland landscape across Torfaen, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent faces a number of challenges from landscape crime, loss of habitats and key species to poor infrastructure and fragmented communities. Building on previous wide scale community engagement the project will take forward new collaborative action to improve the uplands, support farm enterprise, improve visitor experiences and create more resilient communities.

The project's collaborative approach is led by Torfaen Council with Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Councils, Gwent Wildlife Trust, Natural Resources Wales, Police, Fire and Rescue Services and the Brecon Beacons National Park all supporting and working with the commons associations, action groups, farming unions and the local communities.

SEWRU's focus is delivering the priority actions from the Landscape Institute award winning Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP) for South-east Wales Uplands which was produced in 2015.

- To deliver land management to improve soils, water quality and regulation, grazing, biodiversity, and carbon storage.
- Strengthen relationships between stakeholders and commoners to support upland communities.
- Build capacity through volunteering, training and community engagement.
- Increase farm competitiveness and viability through diversification and development of innovative business opportunities.
- Tackle the underlying causes of upland degradation caused by poor land management and anti-social problems such as fly-tipping, arson and illegal off-roading.
- Provide opportunities for quiet recreation and enhance the area's tourism offer.



To date the project has identified and begun peatland restoration pilots, identified tree planting opportunities, produced common land management plans, installed physical barriers to reduce landscape crime and managed important upland heathland to reduce fire risk and facilitate sustainable grazing. SEWRU is also currently working with Gwent Police and others to produce upland-focussed landscape crime management plans.

As a SEWRU project partner, Gwent Wildlife Trust have delivered a number of activities during 2020 to promote the uplands as a place to visit for tourism and recreation whilst also promoting the sustainable use of the area. Running a photography competition called *Hill Life Through a Lens* and holding a series of free guided walks and training courses throughout the project, aimed to highlight the wonderful wildlife of the uplands and practical skills needed to manage it.



Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI): Developed and Produced a SE Wales wildfire plan for uplands to tackle wildfires and mitigate risk.

Building collaborations and partnerships: 2 new networks created through producing and implementing two upland landscape crime management plans for each common with Gwent Police and other partners.

Building collaborations and partnerships: Developed and managed a Commons Watch Scheme to deter fly tipping and rural crime equipping ten key commoners with body cameras, dash cameras and trail cameras to tackle landscape crime.

Training and job creation: Provided 40 days of training; dry stone walling courses undertaken in partnership with Gwent Wildlife Trust. Training for farmers through the Hill Farming Training Scheme to deliver ecological land management advice.

Community engagement: A comprehensive programme of walks and activity developed and an uplands photography competition promoted.

Training and job creation: Project manager supported by an ecological specialist and a monitoring scientist all appointed to manage the project, carry out peat bog restoration and to capture ongoing evidence.

Building collaborations and partnerships: Created SE Wales Resilient Uplands Steering Group and round table group to help inform the project share best practise.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI): Feasibility study completed on barriers to IT use. SEWRU and Gwent Police are investigating how we can deliver IT training to farmers and potentially equip hill farmers with smartphones if required, to enable better communication around landscape crime.

Community engagement: Drone surveys and fly through videos commissioned to facilitate peatland feasibility studies and monitoring and used to create publicity and promotional videos to inform the public.

Habitat restoration: More than 120ha of heather and bracken managed, the project provided a flail mower for scrub management to reduce fire risk and to facilitate sustainable grazing to improve biodiversity, as well as pond and wetland restoration.

Educational programmes: SEWRU is working across four areas to tackle landscape crime and illegal off-roading; Enforcement, Engineering, Engagement and Enabling using this framework agencies can enforce and tackle illegal activity and engage and educate the public on how to enjoy the access to recreation in a way that doesn't have a detrimental effect on the landscape.

Developing Green Infrastructure: 5km of commons boundaries have been repaired and boulders, boom barriers, bunds, new gates, ditches and signage in various key locations throughout the SE Wales commons have been installed in pilot areas to tackle landscape crime.

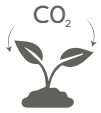
Educational programmes: Establishing a landscape crime-focussed website to assist the public and other stakeholders, improve communication and publicise current work and a project promotional video to highlight the issues and the work being undertaken to tackle them.

Peatland restoration: Three peatland restoration feasibility studies completed covering four sites with 10ha restored over two sites.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: Several open days and guided walks looking at a wide range of habitats and species connecting people and nature and to showcase the uplands, raising awareness both locally and nationally of the area as a valuable and rewarding resource in which to work, play, visit and live.

Volunteer programmes: Volunteer opportunities through project partner Gwent Wildlife Trust.

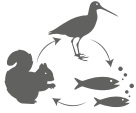
Woodland Management and Planting: 1,800 native trees were planted and removed circa 1,000 feral conifers trees have from peatland habitat to help with re-wetting. Woodland opportunity mapping exercise done identifying over a hundred hectares where tree planting could be possible.



Carbon Sequestration: supported by habitat and peatland restoration, woodland management and planting and sustainable grazing.



Climate Change Adaptation: supported by habitat and peatland restoration, woodland management and planting and sustainable grazing.



Enhanced Biodiversity: supported by habitat and peatland restoration, woodland management and planting and sustainable grazing, Training and job creation and Developing Green Infrastructure.



Ecosystem Resilience: supported by habitat and peatland restoration, woodland management and planting and sustainable grazing, Training and job creation and Developing Green Infrastructure.



Reduced Flood Risk: supported by habitat and peatland restoration, woodland management and planting and sustainable grazing.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by habitat and peatland restoration, woodland management and planting and sustainable grazing, Training and job creation and Developing Green Infrastructure.



Health and Wellbeing: supported by Educational programmes, Community engagement, Volunteer programmes and Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces.



Community Cohesion: supported by Educational programmes, Community engagement, Volunteer programmes and Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces, Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI).



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by Educational programmes, Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI), Community engagement and Training and job creation.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by Educational programmes, Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KTandI), Community engagement, Building collaborations and partnerships and Training and job creation.

Get Involved: If you would like to learn more or get involved in the work being done by South East Wales Resilient Uplands you can find more information at: www.gwentwildlife.org/South-East-Wales-Resilient-Uplands-Project

 www.youtube.com/channel/UCGjUzOTxkGgAjsnDloMwz1g

 [@gwentwildlife](https://twitter.com/gwentwildlife)

 [@gwentwildlife](https://www.facebook.com/gwentwildlife)

 [@gwentwildlifetrust](https://www.instagram.com/gwentwildlifetrust)

Contact: info@gwentwildlife.org

Connecting Communities with Nature: Halkyn Mountain

Lead organisation: Flintshire County Council

Grant Award: £285,000

Location: Halkyn Mountain, Flintshire

Email: tom.woodall@flintshire.gov.uk

The Halkyn Mountain project is set on a 2,000 acre common, designated for its wide range of habitats shared between five communities. The common and its natural resources are central to the future prosperity of these communities. The Project's collaborative approach is led by Flintshire County Council with Natural Resources Wales, North Wales Wildlife Trust, the Fire and Rescue Service all supporting and working with landowners.

The project improved the economic value of the common and invigorated farm businesses. The common has been grazed for centuries but has experienced a continual decline of the practice over the years. A key priority of the project is to improve the quality of the common by re-engaging graziers, and helping to encourage a younger generation into the grazing tradition.

The aim is to manage key habitats and species to be in favourable condition. Gorse and bracken will be cleared to enable grassland and heathland to re-establish, providing additional grazing and therefore reducing overgrazing that occurs on parts of the common. Explore the potential to develop a marketable product in the form of Halkyn compost from the vegetation management, to supply local communities and thus reduce the need for peat base composts and improving the economic viability of the Common.



The project also supports sustainable grazing practices of the commoners by encouraging the activation of underused grazing rights and the installation of cattle grids to encourage graziers to stock parts of the mountain that were previously avoided for fear of animals wandering off along roads away from the common cattle grids to enable access in key areas.

The project has encouraged local people and visitors to use and enjoy the common in appropriate and responsible ways by improved interpretation and awareness raising activities will enable walkers and riders to follow less sensitive routes. This will reduce potential disturbance to grazing stock and provide an opportunity to tackle recreational pressures. The Common is a popular local amenity site frequently used for traditional recreational activities such as walking, cycling and horse riding. The varied and challenging landscape could lend itself to more contemporary forms of exercise, for example green gyms and outdoor boot camps. By addressing the challenges facing the Common the project aims to create a good quality, well managed common land opening up recreational opportunities for the surrounding communities, develop skills to help enrich their lives, leading to more resilient and healthier communities.

Sustainable Grazing: Delivery of 5 cattle grids to target cattle grazing on parts of the hill to improve biodiversity.

Training and job creation: Project Officer employed for duration of the project.

Habitat restoration: 20ha gorse cut. 39ha scrub cut.

Habitat Restoration: 74ha bracken crushed. 5ha heathland enhanced.

Building collaborations and partnerships: Supporting commoners has led to 10 grazing right activated leading to larger areas being managed sustainably.

Building collaborations and partnerships: 3 Police and Fire coordination exercises held per annum.

Community engagement: 6 community action days per annum (including volunteering activity, litter picks, bowl turning event and a Wildlife Photography workshop held in conjunction with RSPB.

Community engagement: 19 recreation and exercise events and 15 Public engagement activities carried out.

Protection from invasive species: Cotoneaster and Himalayan Balsam control was carried out in the area to prevent the spread of seed further; surveying and monitoring will continue.

Community engagement: Orienteering course and a guided walk on the mountain for members of the Friends of Hilbre taking in some of the key points of interest.



Health and Wellbeing: supported by volunteer programmes, training courses, citizen science, recreational programmes and a job club.



Community Cohesion: supported by volunteer programmes, training courses, and recreational programmes. Project collaborators include Local Authorities, Natural Resources Wales, North Wales Wildlife Trust, the Fire and Rescue Services and landowners.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by woodland restoration, volunteer programmes, training courses, citizen science, recreational programmes, community woodland and bracken management.



Development of Skills Capacity and Expertise: supported by volunteer programmes, training courses, citizen science, a job club, community woodland management and a wood-fuel service.



Collaboration: North Wales Police and North Wales Fire Service will implement a range of measures to tackle key issues problems of misuse such as arson, illegal 4x4 activities and dog attacks on livestock on the Common.



Education Programmes: schools participated around national curriculum themes based on the environment. Using the common to promote health and wellbeing to encourage outdoor exercise on the common.



Rural Skills and Heritage: embracing low impact tourism development, based on a quality product has the potential to bring economic benefit to local communities and safeguard and sustain local services.



Community Cohesion: engaging effectively with a wide cross-section of the community and communicate and educate on the significance of the activities being undertaken and the relevance to the Common.



Rural Skills and Heritage: use the common as an education resource, to allow residents to gain skills and to benefit from the free resources of Halkyn in a sustainable way.

Get Involved: Come and explore Halkyn Mountain and enjoy fabulous views over the Dee Estuary and the Clwydian Range. For further information, please contact the Halkyn Mountain Ranger: 01352 703900.



Free guided walks available via Explore Halkyn webpage.

www.halkynmountain.co.uk/explore-halkyn website: www.halkynmountain.co.uk

Farming the Gwent Levels Sustainably

Lead organisation: RSPB Wales

Grant Award: £554,953

Location: South East Wales Wetlands

Email: Fiona.Walker@rspb.org.uk

A project taking collaborative action with stakeholders including farmers and other partners such as Gwent Wildlife Trust and Bumblebee Conservation Trust (BBCT) to develop the understanding, knowledge, skills and experience need to deliver the sustainable management of natural resources within the Gwent Levels.

Participating farmers and project partners have taken action to improve the natural resources in the area, particularly water and soil management. Outcomes include habitat improvement and creation, offering significant potential to improve soil condition, and establishing habitat strips for pollinators, which will also act as buffers alongside water courses. Taking advantage of the flat geographical nature of its area the project seeks to maximise opportunities for traffic free cycling, as well as existing access and recreation facilities on farms, and creation of new facilities.

The overarching aim of the Sustaining the Gwent Levels (SGL) SMS project:

- Establish best practice sustainable land management and in doing so identify land use/management that will reverse damage to ecosystems and then continue to maintain them in a healthy state.
- Influence and establish mechanisms to facilitate sustainable land management at the landscape scale to secure healthy ecosystems.



These objectives were achieved through:

- Capital works and vegetation management such as ditch management, orchard restoration, pollarding, establishment of herbal leys, construction, and erection of nesting boxes.
- Preparation of an advisory booklet for farmers on key management actions for Sustainable Land Management on the Levels.
- Facilitating access to externally funded advisory services including Nutrient.
- Management Plans (funded by Farming Connect) and Water Quality Assessments (funded by NRW).
- Commissioning feasibility studies which included Impact of underdrainage on hydrology, Opportunities for Payment for Ecosystems Services, Costings for wetland landscape restoration and maintenance in the Gwent Levels, and the impact of environmentally sustainable farming practice on profitability and financial viability.
- Ecological modelling and monitoring.
- External communications.



Training and job creation: One new full-time member of staff employed for the duration of this project and facilitated three (PES) workshops completed with a minimum of 60 attendees.

Community engagement: Engaging stakeholders including 10 farming families, NRW, Farming Reps and NGOs, and diverse local communities; 60 individuals, 30 farmers, policy and decision makers through advocacy visits and demonstration days.

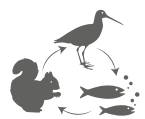
Woodland management and planting: 150 Tree Sparrow nest boxes have been erected on the Caldicot Levels. 8 Barn Owl boxes have been built and erected. 10 Kestrel boxes have been built. 24 Little Owl built. 259 nest boxes sited in suitable habitats.

Community engagement: Organised community litter pick in Parc Taff Bargoed around the lake in conjunction with Keep Wales Tidy, Councillors and staff of local Assembly Member. Project also participated in Commons Clean up event arranged by Gelligaer and Merthyr Commons Ranger and attended by many local and governmental agencies.

Community engagement: 26 volunteers involved (25 landowners engaged) with making nest boxes and monitoring, including a workshop with young people.



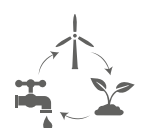
Community engagement: engaging stakeholders, farmers and families, NRW, Farming Reps and NGOs, individuals, policy and decision makers through advocacy visits and demonstration days.



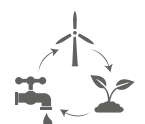
Habitat restoration: positive management of SSSI features, including ditch work, willow pollarding and orchard management and assessments for water, nutrient and pollinator habitat improvements and positive action to secure water quality, nutrient management improvements and provision of pollinator habitat carried out on multiple farms.



Developing Green Infrastructure: a study to develop bespoke local PES schemes, and an investigation into the impacts of underdrainage on the landscape of the Gwent Levels undertaken, and an Ecosystem Services Assessment of the project area completed.



Soil Quality Management: Nutrient Management Planning three farms benefited from free nutrient management planning service through farming connect. These farms were given written reports addressing savings on time and cost as well as contributing to water quality targets.



Educational Programmes: Water Quality Assessments – some farms involved in the project are dairies and the farm infrastructure of these operations were scrutinised by NRW's water quality assessment project. Two farms have received recommendations which will help them with any new water quality regulations.



Educational Programmes: shrill carder bee monitoring shows the extent of this monitoring, including, photographs of sites surveyed, a map of sites visited, and an explanatory document. The monitoring was carried out with advice from Sinead Lynch from Bumblebee Conservation.



Woodland management and planting: establishing and re-establishing orchards across the Levels by using local variety fruit trees to establish new orchards. Purchasing local variety fruit trees to help re-establish orchards that have fallen into decline, using contractors to clear orchards that have become overgrown with scrub and are as a consequence, unproductive and finally, donating fruit trees and giving advice to orchard owners.

Get Involved: If you would like to get involved with work on the Gwent Levels, contact the Living Levels Partnership www.livinglevels.org.uk/whats-on

 RSPB Cymru www.rspb.org.uk/about-the-rspb/at-home-and-abroad/wales/
Celebrating the Gwent Levels www.livinglevels.org.uk

 RSPB@natures_voice

 [@rspb_love_nature](https://www.instagram.com/rspb_love_nature)

Wye Ithon and Severn Ecosystems (WISE)

Lead organisation: Wye and Usk Foundation

Grant Award: £530,215

Location: Llandrindod Wells to Knighton

Email: simon@wyeuskfoundation.org

This collaborative project worked with an established catchment partnership, including landowners and local communities to improve the natural resources in four smaller and three larger catchments covering a large landscape travelling down a stretch of the Wye catchment. Action was taken to improve soil quality in agricultural land create woodland to maximise the potential for reducing flood risk, habitat improvement for better biodiversity and water quality and improved infrastructure on farmyards to reduce pollution.

The project involved the rural communities and agricultural businesses in the area to help them understand and take action to ensure long term improvement of ecosystems. Also to understand the services these ecosystem provide that are vital for helping address the impacts of climate change and flooding, and in turn provide opportunities for improved health and wellbeing. The project has also explored the potential for private investment to deliver benefits for water quality and carbon storage. Activities undertaken by the project are supported by a comprehensive monitoring programme during the active project phase and after completion.



The project is in partnership with Severn Rivers Trust and has tackled nutrient management, soil health, water quantity and biodiversity. As well as delivering environmental value, effective land management can also improve water quality in rivers, reduce flood risk, improve soil quality, enhance biodiversity, and improve carbon sequestration.

Catchment Advisors from both rivers' trusts will be working with farmers to find practical ways in which they can change agricultural practices to benefit both their business and the aquatic environment, such as:

- Hedgerow and tree planting
- Leaky dam installation
- Improving soil quality
- Attenuation ponds/green swales
- Clean and dirty water separation
- Soil testing including organic matter levels
- Soil structure assessment and infiltration tests
- Risk mapping.

The project has developed a scheme that pays farmers to mitigate against flooding, thereby reducing the need for costly "hard" defences further downstream. "Natural flood management" involves working with hydrological and morphological processes, features and characteristics to manage the sources and pathways of flood water. These techniques are often simple, small scale and cost-effective for both the environment and farm business.

Water Quality. The project is also working with Tesco's suppliers within the project area on nutrient management, providing advice and grant funding to reduce the risk of diffuse and point source pollution and to improve soil health. This will have benefits to other users of the Wye catchment and the project will develop catchment scale markets for phosphate and hopefully flood and drought management. This is how our environment will be managed in the future and developing these markets will allow for the external costs of pollution (such as fishing days lost to algal blooms) to be monetised and reduced, improving the state of the whole of the Ithon and main stem of the Wye.

Building Collaborations and Partnerships:

8 NFM farm visits including farm scale opportunity mapping, soil testing, compaction assessments and infiltration tests completed.

Two evening sessions delivered to 37 attendees promoting woodland planting was delivered alongside Farming Connect.

Project has visited at least 275 farms covering 41,000 hectares of agricultural land in mid Wales.

Community Engagement: Project has engaged with 1255 stakeholders.

Woodland Management and Planting:

35ha of Woodland supported, 1.8ha new woodland planting. Total 15,701 trees planted.

Woodland Management and Planting:

1428m hedgerows planted and 3.6ha new riparian woodland planted.



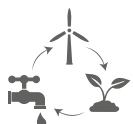
Ecosystem Resilience: provided a tailor-made farm report and opportunity maps developed for the use of the farmer, which highlight existing benefits the farm is contributing to the environment and wider society as well as additional opportunities.



Reduce Flood Risk: local flood risk maps will be produced identifying natural flood management opportunities.



Increased Biodiversity: supported by hedgerow renovation, wetland creation and woodland creation.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: supported by hedgerow renovation, tree planting, woodland creation, and soil testing and assessment.



Rural Skills and Heritage: supported by volunteer programmes and traditional methods.



Health and Wellbeing: providing information that are vital for helping address the impacts of climate change and flooding, and in turn providing opportunities.



Ecosystem Resilience: the project involved the rural communities and agricultural businesses in the area to help them understand and take action to ensure long term improvement of ecosystems and understand the services these ecosystems.

Get Involved: Volunteering for many of the above activities is a very satisfying way of enjoying the outdoors and getting to know the rivers. If you are interested in voluntary work, please complete the following form to register with the Foundation. www.wyeuskfoundation.org/forms/volunteerregistration

Contact admin@wyeuskfoundation.org +44 (0) 1874 711714



www.wyeuskfoundation.org/the-wye-ithon-severn-ecosystems-wise-project

Integrated Welsh Woodlands: Nature Based Solutions

Lead organisation: Coed Cymru Cyf

Grant Award: £413,194

Location: Pan Wales

Email: garethd@coedcymru.org.uk

A landscape scale project supporting priority regions across Wales to maintain and create woodland and to restore, maintain and create hedgerows, which provide a wide range of benefits and comprise more than half the woodland cover in Wales. The project is supporting the implementation of woodland creation and management projects that are integrated with farming in Wales. The project activities include:

- Continue to support the Stump up for Trees Project.
- Develop a woodland creation in accordance with UKFS.
- Support the harvesting and management of smaller dispersed parcels of woodland on farms and conversion to broadleaved, including creating a framework agreement for contractors.
- Support dispersed woodland creation projects delivering non-timber outcomes with coordination, access to plants and ground preparation in the same way that larger schemes would access.
- Enable small woodlands owners generally to access the same market opportunities and manage their woodland projects to the same standards and quality of management (including forestry H&S etc) as large forestry schemes & NRW/WGWE.



Training and Job Creation: SMS Project officer appointed to develop the project outputs in conjunction with the Stump up for Trees initiative, by attracting wider sources of funding into smaller scale community-oriented schemes.

Woodland Management and Planting: Managed 907Ha of woodland and mapped farm boundaries more than 8,800 hectares for landowners who have had active engagement under the project.

Developing Green Infrastructure: Project provides different types of connectivity at a wider landscape level, including the demonstration of tree planting facilitated by the project towards wider habitat connectivity.

Building Collaborations and Partnerships: Project has engaged with 10 networks across the industry and at least 75 stakeholders have been involved in the projects.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KT&I): At least 50 small to medium landowning/farming enterprises have been actively assisted by the project to gain permissions or receive advice and guidance to implement tree planting or woodland management works and EOI's submitted for capital works.

Woodland Management and Planting: Developed a woodland creation plan template and a mapping and approval process that can link to external verification to provide robust process in accordance with UKFS.

Community Led Local Development: 4 Cooperation Operations Supported.

Community Engagement: Project worked with 7 networks.

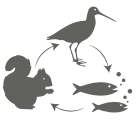
Community Engagement: At least 300 stakeholders have been involved in the projects, plus all consultees of any tree planting plans and felling licences prepared.

Community Engagement: At least 275 landowning/farming enterprises have been engaged in the project.

Rural Skills and Heritage: Supported the delivery of the Barrog SMS project to create hedges and shelter for soil and water and to incorporate carbon monitoring into the project, to support creation of pilot 'hedgerow carbon code' scheme. Phase 1 completed with over 5,000 metres of hedgerow created and restored.

Woodland Management and Planting: Over 28 woodland creation projects supported; delivering non-timber outcomes with coordination, access to plants and ground preparation in the same way that larger schemes would access.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KT&I): as part of the project evaluation project provide connectivity maps showing the impact of the project against, for example, the woodland habitat connectivity layers.



Woodland Management and Planting: supporting relevant woodland creation and management projects the Integrated Woodlands project has been able to determine farmers attitudes to tree planting and woodland management on their farms, establish the actual costs and risks involved.

Get Involved: Coed Cymru 01686 650 777

 website: Coed Cymru – Welsh Woodland Organisation

 twitter.com/CoedCymru  www.facebook.com/coedcymru/

Delivering Payments for Ecosystems Services: Pumlumon

Lead organisation: Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust

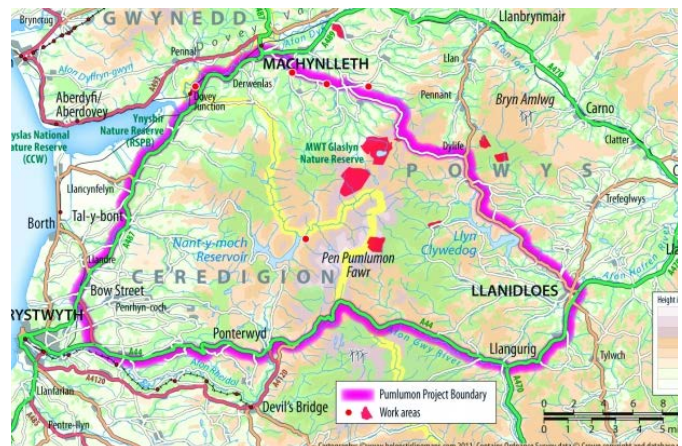
Grant Award: £269,319

Location: Cambrian Mountains

Email: clive@montwt.co.uk

A collaborative project bringing together local communities, land managers, statutory agencies and businesses to reconnect them socially and economically with the natural environment of their area. By building in a process of collaborative learning with other Payments for Ecosystems Services (PES) projects and organisations around Wales and beyond, it is hoped this project will deliver significant additional value. The step to securing tangible PES agreements is one that many pioneering schemes and projects are yet to make; by pooling knowledge and sharing learning from this project with other PES pioneers, this project can make a real contribution to progress on PES more widely. Building on previous work this project will explore and research new approaches to establishing PES agreements as a long-term and self-sustaining support mechanism for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR).

The Pumlumon Project is a radical rethink of how the landscapes of upland Britain could work. Across 40,000 hectares of the Cambrian Mountains; pioneering an upland economy built around wildlife, ecology, and long-term sustainability. Named after Pumlumon mountain (centre), the project area is the size of Birmingham and includes the sources of the rivers Severn, Wye, and Rheidol. Project success means the effects of flooding on huge numbers of farms,



homes, and businesses, transform the local economy, safeguard vast stores of carbon, and bring back vanished wildlife.

The Pumlumon PES SMS project was designed to take the next steps in realising PES agreements based on what we understood to be the key barriers to progress, with a particular focus on buyer identification/engagement and building relationships between buyers, intermediaries, landholders and other stakeholders.

The project aims were to:

- Establish a live PES agreement (or agreements) within the PP area.
- Carry out research to produce learning that can inform and support the development, establishment, and rollout of PES models within the Pumlumon Project area, across Wales (and beyond).

It has always been a technical project pulling together new ecological thinking, the economics of supply chains and policy development in the Welsh Government. The idea, however, is simple: the richer our natural environment, the more services it can provide us – and the more it's in our interest to invest in the natural world.

Clive Falkner (MWT)

Community Engagement: Glaslyn & Bugeilyn Audio Trail. An entertaining and informative tour of an outstanding landscape in the north Cambrians, taking in the superb viewpoint of Foel Fadian and the two very different lakes of Glaslyn and Bugeilyn.

Educational Programmes: The project established a Collaborative Learning Group to facilitate information exchange, support and sharing of learning among projects working to develop PES approaches to support SMNR. 53 organisations/individuals were engaged in the Group over the course of the project.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KT&I): 114 stakeholders engaged via the online Webinars and Workshops. Over 70 organisations reached.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KT&I): Ecosystem Service assessments and Supply Chain research were carried out – a detailed technical assessment of the extent of key ecosystems and ecosystem services within the project area. This included mapping, numerical estimation and valuation. It also included the evidenced construction of potential supply chains to link a range of ecosystem services with potential buyers.

Building Collaborations & Partnerships: Project have engaged 23 different potential ecosystem 'buyer' organisations .

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): Project disseminated learnings to Welsh Government, Aberystwyth University and Wildlife Trusts in a wide range of ways, including sharing findings, recording lectures, workshops, and informal briefings.

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): Written reports containing detailed information about activities, approach, and findings such as evidence from the project's experience of developing a Peatland Code accredited project; in the context of wider evidence about the Peatland Code as a mechanism to support SMNR.

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): 3 feasibility studies were completed that build on learning and relationship building carried out throughout the project.



Community Engagement: the project engaged over 40 stakeholders from the Pumlumon area. This included: landowners and farmers, tenant farmers, residents, an academic, representatives of local organisations and representatives of campaign groups.

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): a significant and wide amount of evidence and learning have been produced by this project relating to the challenge of establishing PES agreements as a contribution to delivering SMNR.

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): understanding of the opportunities and issues involved in realising PES agreements within the Pumlumon area and more widely. Insights that are specific to the current time and to specific contexts; as well as those relating to issues and frameworks that need developing more generally to enable delivery of specific PES schemes; and to the processes that are needed to continue the practical development of an infrastructure and context that could allow PES to contribute at scale to SMNR in Wales.

Building Collaborations & Partnerships: established and developed a wide range of networks and relationships relevant to making progress with PES, including community stakeholders, the farming community, and relevant organisations such as summit to Sea organisation, Wales System Forum, Ecosystem Knowledge Network and Flora and Fauna International.

Get Involved:



www.montwt.co.uk/projects/pumlumon-project

Email: info@montwt.co.uk

Pennal 2050

Lead organisation: Partneriaeth Pennal Ltd

Grant Award: £848,283

Location: Dyfi Catchment Area, Pennal

Email: pennalpartners@aol.com

The project – Pennal 2050 – is an ambitious long term strategic plan to build a resilient and sustainable environment and rural community based on a landscape scale collaborative community partnership of more than 40 partner landowners, community groups, environmental organisations, farming unions and local businesses including the tourism, leisure, health, farming and recreation sectors and Natural Resources Wales.

The project is centred on addressing a number of local challenges, including better coastal and upland catchment flood management and alleviation. The project also improved water/river quality, enhanced biodiversity and habitats, improved access provision, increased employment, tourism, and health opportunities and strengthened economic and social resilience.



Working together as a community and drawing on local expertise and involving across the community the project aims to tackle the key threats in the Dyfi catchment area. This farmer-led community initiative to bring together people and nature in the long-term to:

- Improve biodiversity by improving and linking habitats
- Tackle the effects of climate change
- Encourage rural resilience and economic activity
- Engage residents to take positive steps to improve their surroundings for their own health and well-being and that of future generations by volunteering and joining in community activities. Our junior Eco-guardians at school are planting trees, learning how big data can make maps for modelling change and finding out what species live in our area.

The key strands of the project are:

- **Eco-Steps** – includes planting hedges, trees to provide wildlife corridors. We are assessing and monitoring our natural resource capital – our green assets
- **Clear Waters** – includes reducing soil and water erosion to improve water quality
- **Slo-Flo** – includes using the management of natural resources to reduce the amount of water running into the village during intense rain events and the threat of flooding
- **Moor Healthy** – includes better management of our uplands by reducing bracken and using cattle as well as sheep to graze the hilltops to encourage wildlife such as hen harriers to breed.

PENNAL 2050 WINS TOP AWARD

A community project in the Machynlleth area has been recognised as the best of its kind in Wales. PENNAL 2050 was chosen as winner in the Landscapes, Nature and Forestry section at the “Celebration of Rural Wales” event in Builth Wells, held by Rural Wales Network to mark 20 years of European funding. The environmental project, supported by the Sustainable Management Scheme, has allowed local people to plan actions to meet challenges on a landscape level. Collaboration, expertise, ideas, technology, and science best practices have been shared on a journey to improve the area for current and future generations.

Partneriaeth Pennal, a group of 40 innovative farming partners, is the lead organisation in Pennal 2050 – a five-year collaborative project stretching from Dyfi Bridge almost to Aberdyfi – which has the support of Natural Resources Wales, Snowdonia National Park and Gwynedd County Council as well as local organisations such as Pennal Community Council, New Dovey Fishery Association, local schools and businesses. The project is working with several ground-breaking international University-led projects which include research on remote sensing, tree canopy rainfall absorption and mapping for endangered species.

Training and Job Creation: An agri-environmental consultant and project management consultant appointed to work on monitoring land/water work and been liaising with NRW, Gwynedd County Council and Glastir.

Community Engagement: A community walk was held accompanied by an ecologist who helped walkers identify insects and birds – over 80 people attended and more than £1000 was raised for the local school.

Community Engagement: Ysgol Pennal pupils helped plant trees; In total over 120 volunteers have taken part in Pennal 2050 events during Year 1 of the scheme.

Woodland Management and Planting: Planting totals are: 1,440 junipers and 375 native species trees such as Silver Birch, Rowan, Wild Cherry, sessile Oak, Field Maple and Goat Willow.

Woodland Management and Planting: R526.5 metres hedging trees such as Elder, Crab Apple, Hawthorn, Hornbeam, and Dog Rose.

Community Engagement Community walks which attracted over 100 people including many children and resulted in great interest in the project and further contributions to the project.

Community Engagement: Benches have been purchased for the Wales Coast Path link routes made from recycled silage bags.

Educational Programmes: 60 schoolchildren took the opportunity offered by the project to visit a local dairy farm and learn about how cows are looked after, milked and the product turned into Welsh butter and cheeses which were sampled by the schoolchildren.

Woodland Management and Planting: 35 leaky debris slow-flow structures completed, 20 on NRW land to complement 15 on agricultural land. 20 culverts/grips installed on NRW forestry land to disperse water to adjoining land rather than watercourses and a forestry workers parking area has been upgraded to 1 car park for the public.

Educational Programmes: Ecological surveys completed; 8 river/pond (2 x 4 points, Spring and Autumn), birds 4 locations and 1 moth survey. Project has organised a bird recorder locally, living in Pennal centre, to maintain records for and contributed at 3 locations to the GWCT big farm (bird) survey.

Educational Programmes: underwater drone observatory completed as part of the project will promote STEM in school and links with environment and information gathered used as part of the Citizen Science or species reporting.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation: ecologist working on the ground to monitor birds and insects on two key routes around Pennal through collaboration with Summit to Sea project. The data will inform our evidence base.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation: project has funded a weather station at a local school and IT expert from Bangor will work with students on STEM lesson linked to the project.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation: the project showcased its work to two academics – one professor from University of Northumbria and another from NW India who are working on a project with the Indian Regional Government in Uttarakhand to develop sustainable communities.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation: remote sensing project – monitoring of any shifts in woody debris via remote sensors placed in situ by Exeter University staff continues. This project's learning will support communities further afield too including those threatened by climate change and earthquakes eg Nepal.



Community Engagement: canopy absorption of rainfall and IT projects – Bangor University. Local volunteers have been trained to replace the batteries in the info LO-RAN hubs so that data can continue to be collected from rain gauges and flow velocity meters in the catchment.

Get Involved:

pennalpartners@aol.com



www.visitpennal.wales/en/the-project/

Uwch Gwyrfai Common Community

Lead organisation: Snowdonia National Park Authority

Grant Award: £418,010

Location: Caernarfon, Gwynedd

Email: dion.roberts@eryri.llyw.cymru

This project managed by Snowdonia national park association and in the varied area of the Uwch Gwyrfai Common stretching approximately 1000ha's from an area of 'urban' fringe to the remote summit of Mynydd Mawr. The area incorporates a variety of habitats, with large areas of heath along with acid grassland, a lake, flushes, and some mire as well as abandoned slate quarries and sites of archaeological interest.

This innovative project sought to transform the Uwch Gwyrfai Common by reconnecting it with local communities. Its aims were to enable graziers to work better together to graze the common and to improve both biodiversity and benefit the local rural economy. Practical activities focused on restoring traditional stone walls, path and access maintenance, sustainable grazing

plans, heath management and reducing the fire risk in the area through creating fire breaks and controlling scrub, all alongside a range of community initiatives.

Community engagement formed an important part of the project, and the local school, Ysgol Rhosgadfan was involved in the creation of a new mosaic mural on the school wall. The pupils worked with local artist, Ann Smith on a design that celebrated some of the area's special qualities. One of the project's aims was to encourage people to go out to explore and learn more about their local area, and to this end maintenance work was undertaken on the Ffynnon Dŵr Oer path and the Rhosgadfan tram path, as well as hosting guided walks in the company of ecologists and historians.



The project brought together local community groups, school children and community councils together so they could identify what needs to happen and where. The project improved and increased access and recreational use of the common, created educational opportunities and volunteering opportunities for health & wellbeing, enjoyment and physical activity all contributing to community cohesion and creating a sense of place.

Dion Roberts, SNPA Project Officer said:
“Working with the Uwch Gwyrfai Common community over the past two years has been a real pleasure. The project has been a great success and has achieved so much within the area by working collaboratively with landowners, individuals and local initiatives and businesses. Although the Covid-19

pandemic hit half-way through the project, we were lucky that it did not have too much of an impact on the project’s momentum. It’s so nice to hear such positive feedback about the footpath work, with more people exploring their square mile”.

John Griffith, Secretary of the Uwch Gwyrfai Grazing Society said:

“After years of consultation and committees we are now able to enjoy the fruit of our labour, and we are grateful to everyone who has been on the journey with us. We are confident that the restored common will be of great benefit to the community, that the graziers are also part of. The mural at Ysgol Rhosgadfan is also a very fitting tribute to Griffith Davies, who saved the common for local folk.”

Habitat Restoration: Over 2km of paths restored and created across the common. 1533 metres stone walls managed.

Peatland Restoration: 2 woody debris dams installed in peaty areas as identified by experts (catchment at Gors Goch) and peaty dams installed to block ditches. 100 hectares of peat rich soil managed.

Training and Job Creation: Worked with Glynllifon to host Habitat Management Training for agricultural students – 19 students trained over 7 training days.

Habitat Restoration: Habitat connectivity increased by planting woodlands – 6 hectares achieved. 1315 metres of hedgerows planted and double fenced.

Habitat Restoration: 36 hectares of heath managed (20ha of Mynydd Mawr) and protected against encroachment of conifers.

Habitat Restoration: 6 shelter belts created.

Community Engagement: Installation of picnic areas with interpretation boards created for educational and civic amenity.

Sustainable Grazing: Pasture for the grazing society, a joint project was established between the National Park Authority and the Uwch Gwyrfai Grazing Society.

Community Engagement: 4 community events held, and 7 guided walks carried out.

Community Engagement: Over 500 stakeholders engaged.

Rural Skills and Heritage: A 12ft x 8ft mosaic, showing the interesting features of the common, was created with the collaboration of local school pupils at Ysgol Rhosgadfan.

Peatland Restoration: restoring the natural hydrological regime of peatlands restores function, on a catchment scale has created an important element of sustainable flood risk management.

Soil Quality Management: carbon rich soil safeguarded by removing the conifer regeneration.

Habitat Restoration: birds of prey vantage points have been greatly improved by removing trees which improves local biodiversity.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: improved connectivity created by planting new woodland or managing existing woodland.

Developing Green Infrastructure: investment and movement of stock cattle protected by installation of cattle grid in the village of Y Fron.



Rural Skills and Heritage: dry stone walls introduced to restore historical boundaries at strategic points on the common.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: footpaths greatly improved as many were uneven and overgrown; this work has enabled greater access for walkers and horse riders.

Sustainable Grazing: grazing management numbers greatly improved through effective engagement with graziers, which led to producing cattle management plans and a grazing strategy.



Community Engagement: cultural and community engagement addressed and improved by providing public engagement events such as lectures on dark sky and a live owl exhibition.



Community Engagement: guided walks were undertaken with local naturalist, author and lecturer specialising in local natural history.

Educational Programmes: engagement with local schools was a project aim and set out to inform the pupils on how to understand the local habitat and appreciate the area as a local natural resource.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: health and wellbeing have been provided by improved access routes and associated recreational facilities will have a long-term impact.



Community Engagement: the legacy of the project will be the increasing use of the common by local schools, groups, and residents.

Get Involved: Eryri National Park



website: www.nowdonia.gov.wales/

Email: parc@eryri.llyw.cymru

Telephone: 01766 770274

Dyffryn Tywi: Tirwedd Hanes Ein Bro: Tywi Valley Historic Landscape

Lead organisation: National Botanic Garden of Wales

Grant Award: £698,000

Location: Tywi Valley, Carmarthenshire

Email: rob.thomas@gardenofwales.org.uk

This landscape scale collaborative project aims to join up and integrate the management of an area of the Tywi Valley between Carmarthen and Llandeilo to benefit wildlife, heritage, and communities through a strengthened network of landowners, land managers, and experts.

The project has enabled landowners and managers to access specialist information and advice to help to deliver improved ecosystem services alongside enhanced historic landscape management. Action has been taken to improve the historic parkland at the National Botanic Garden of Wales and make it a publicly accessible exemplar of the sustainable management of natural resources. The Gardens and the surround area are a great destination for a wide variety of outdoor recreational activities including walking, running, cycling, tree climbing and den building, archaeology, horticulture volunteering, ecological surveying, and farm visiting.

Several exemplar landscape restoration interventions across partner network sites have been implemented, supported by the appointment of two apprentices, who in collaboration with Coleg Sir Gar, undertook an NVQ Level 3 in Conservation Management.



Along with the environmental benefits project work has provided, activities undertaken have also created better access for residents and visitors to local green spaces and enabled a greater appreciation and understanding of the heritage of the local landscape.

A variety of land management training courses were provided, some of which accredited by external organisations, such as LANTRA and City & Guilds.



Building Collaborations and Partnerships: Project network created and engaged with 15 partners, 12 signing a Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate consistent understanding of the project and effective delivery

Building Collaborations and Partnerships: Coleg Sir Gar enlisted to provide Dyffryn Tywi Apprenticeship structure.

Habitat Restoration: Key focus areas based on Network Partner consultation for priority actions to benefit both natural and cultural landscape within the project area – Meadows, Hedgerows, Parkland and invasive non-native species control.

Habitat Restoration: Clearance of ash die-back trees from parkland. Hedgerow creation and re-instatement and maintenance of historic hedgerows.

Habitat Restoration: Meadow seed collected from Waun Las National Nature Reserve at Network Partner NBGW and spread at Network Partner sites Dinefwr Park (National Trust) and Bishop's Palace Grounds (Tywi Gateway Trust). Green hay spread at NBGW for meadow creation in area of Regency Parkland restoration.

Training and Job Creation: Project Officers, Project Administrator, Education and Woodland Officer all appointed for project.

Training and Job Creation: 55.5 training days delivered to 280 participants over a variety of courses, covering a range of landscape management topics.

Training and Job Creation: 2 project apprentices recruited to undertake NVQ Level 3 apprenticeship in Conservation Management.

Community Engagement: Meadow seed to Cwrt Henry school (within project area), meadows lesson plan being developed for key stage 2.

Community Engagement: Dyffryn Tywi Meadow interpretation board erected at Dinefwr Park in publicly accessible location to coincide with Christmas activity at the park.

Woodland Management & Planting: 900 trees planted across partner sites and veteran trees managed.

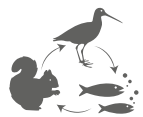
Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): Website developed to serve as a resource for the local community to promote events and project activities, share learning and case studies from Network Partner sites.

Rural Skills Heritage: Provided a range of traditional craft courses and workshop opportunities, such as scything, dry stone walling and hedge laying.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: Parkland railings completed, 13 benches set up, bat roost completed, and signage added. Clearance of dangerous overhanging trees and purchase of cleft chestnut fencing to improve public access.



Carbon Sequestration – Supported by restoration of meadows and rich grassland species, allowing a more quickly established opportunity for carbon capture, as well as the reinstatement and maintenance of hedgerows and tree planting.



Enhanced Biodiversity – Supported by interventions and equipment funded by the project, contributing to improvements biodiversity of the area, through the delivery of exemplar landscape management interventions.



Ecosystem Resilience – Supported by the restoration of meadows and rich grassland species and invasive non-native species control, enabling greater resilience of the local ecosystem.



Reduce Flood Risk – Supported by the reinstatement and maintenance of hedgerows and meadows, and tree planting.



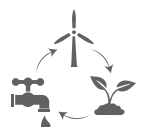
Rural Skills, Culture and Heritage – Supported by providing educational courses to the public, including a range of traditional craft courses and workshop opportunities, such as scything, dry stone walling and hedge laying.



Community Cohesion – Supported by engagement with local schools and general public. Providing educational courses to the public, to develop skills that improve the wellbeing of its community. The support of local events.



Health and Wellbeing – Providing educational courses to the public, to develop skills that improve the wellbeing of its community. Guided walks, showcasing project works and better access to outdoor spaces.



Soil, Air and Water Quality – Supported by the reinstatement and maintenance of hedgerows and meadows, and tree planting.



Development of Skills, Capacity and Expertise – Supported by range of works carried out, courses offered and training undertaken during the project, by individuals both within the project and externally.

Get Involved:

 www.facebook.com/DyffrynTywiSMS/

Contact: info@dyffryntywi.org

Telephone: 01558 667157

Growing Better Connections: Biodiversity in our Communities

Lead organisation: Cwm Arian Renewable Energy (Care) Ltd

Grant Award: £213,975

Location: Clydau, Crydmych, Cilgerran & St Dogmaels community wards

Email: holly@cwmarian.org.uk

The Growing Better Connections project is a community-led land management initiative based in North Pembrokeshire to help improve community resilience to the impacts of climate change, instil a sense of place, and improve nature, business, community cohesion and well-being through natural solutions.

The overall targets are to support woodland and other ecosystems, establish stakeholder networks, and provide practical training, underpinned by a range of broader aims, including stimulating enterprise networks, supporting landowners and local groups to action, collect data to defend ecosystems and engaging people in activities valuing creative, educational and wellbeing outcomes.

Improving the natural resources in the area and involving local people is central. The project operated in the wards of Clydau, Crydmych, Cilgerran and St Dogmaels and focused on defending and protecting existing areas of rich biodiversity, improving and enlarging habitats and increasing connectivity between these areas with activities including tree and hedgerow planting, fencing, drainage works and green infrastructure assessments.



The project created opportunities for participation in citizen science, wider learning and skill development. The project has invested in community activities, including planting orchards and opening up green spaces. In this way, the project has not only contribute significantly to halting the decline in biodiversity in this part of Wales, but implemented sustainable change through community engagement and ownership.

A pivotal part of the project was the engagement with landowners, farmers, and community groups, to enhance and manage biodiversity locally, to ensure the full range of project aims and objectives were achieved. Engagement with these groups has allowed the project to facilitate knowledge and skill sharing via hands-on workshops, farm projects and educational materials, showcasing practical examples of innovative and sustainable farming, with a mixture of holistic and conventional methods.

Following the success of the Growing Better Connections project, several aspects will continue to run after the project deadline has passed, ensuring its legacy and purpose continue, including two projects born out of it, the Catchment Level Environment Action Network (CLEAN) rivers project and Feeding Our Community.



Building Collaborations & Partnerships:

The creation of the Catchment Level Environment Action Network (CLEAN) project and steering group consisting of representatives from Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, West Wales River Trust, Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership, Newport Area Environment Group and Community Councillors.

Community Engagement: Coordinated 68 community connection activities. Supported/collaborated 9 Community groups/schools.

Increase Access to Outdoor Spaces:

Designed 5 publicly accessible food growing spaces.

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I):

19 training days and several workshops delivered. Content created sharing innovative and conventional farming approaches adopted by local farmers. Website and social media pages created to share information.

Volunteer Programmes: Joined forces with a local project which supports local volunteers and community facilities to give away garden plants and encourage growing and information sharing in the community.

Reducing Agricultural Pollution: 600 water samples taken from the Afon Nyfer river.

Woodland Management & Planting:

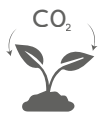
35.5 acres of woodland planted/managed. Planted and gapped-up 3.36km of new hedges.

Habitat Restoration: Helped implement biodiversity management on 121.2 acres of meadowland, field margin and heathland.

Protection from Invasive Species:

Volunteers gathered information of wildlife and Invasive Non-Native Species.

Educational Programmes: Creation of CLEAN rivers and Feeding Our Community projects.



Carbon Sequestration – Supported by hedgerow renovation, tree planting, woodland management, work on field boundaries and heathland/meadowland management.



Enhanced Biodiversity – supported by helping implement biodiversity management on 121.2 acres of meadowland, field margin and heathland. Engagement with landowners, farmers and community groups to enhance and manage biodiversity locally.



Ecosystem Resilience – Supported by hedgerow renovation, tree planting, woodland management, work on field boundaries and heathland/meadowland management.



Climate Change and Adaptation – Supported by hedgerow renovation, tree planting, woodland management, work on field boundaries and heathland/meadowland management.



Reduce Flood Risk – Supported by hedgerow renovation, tree planting, woodland management, work on field boundaries and heathland/meadowland management.



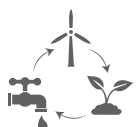
Rural Skills, Culture and Heritage – Supported by collaboration with volunteer programs and farmers, providing opportunities to learn traditional methods of land management.



Community Cohesion – Supported by collaboration with volunteer programs and farmers and providing opportunities to learn traditional methods of land management. Creating a website and social media pages to create a community and share information, events and resources.



Health and Wellbeing – Supported by community engagement and collaboration with volunteer programs and farmers and providing opportunities to learn traditional methods of land management and crafting. Providing access to green spaces and guided/unguided walks.



Soil, Air and Water Quality – Supported water sampling of the Afon Nyfer, hedgerow renovation, tree planting, woodland management, work on field boundaries and heathland/meadowland management.



Development of Skills, Capacity and Expertise – Supported by practical action, training events, skill sharing, citizen science and collaboration with volunteer programs and farmers and providing opportunities to learn traditional methods of sustainable land management, food production and crafting.

Get Involved: If you would like to learn more about the Growing Better Connections project, you can find more information at www.cwmarian.org.uk/gbc

 www.facebook.com/CAREnewable

Email: admin@cwmarian.org.uk

The Three Parishes - for the Common Good

Lead organisation: Llanwrthwl Commoners and Graziers Association

Grant Award: £695,300

Location: The project will be based on and around the commons of Llanwrthwl, Llysdinam and Llanfihangel Bryn Pabuan close to Newbridge-on-Wye and Rhayader (Powys)

Email: frondorddu@talktalk.net

The commoners of Llanwrthwl, Llysdinam and Llanfihangel Bryn-Pabuan have come together to actively manage their local commons, creating a more sustainable resilient landscape supporting improved biodiversity. A large part of the project involves community participation to provide public benefit on and around their upland commons. This will include managing the heathland, the flora-rich rhos pasture, ffridd and woodland within the project area.



Commoners and volunteer groups will also create and enhance existing pools and wetlands, tackle bracken using different techniques and graze sustainably with cattle and ponies.

Improving the resilience of ecosystems is at the heart of the project, which has worked towards a stable, sustainable, and biodiverse state of the upland ecosystem on our commons and farms. To tackle the issue of bracken monoculture and the inherent decline in biodiversity this leads to – such ground-nesting birds (i.e. Curlew, Lapwing) – the project has undertaken bracken control measures and trialled the reintroduction of cattle. The absence of cattle will potentially also have the added benefit of enabling the production of a rich spring flora the in-bye fields traditionally used for over-wintering.



The project has increased outward bound opportunities and tourism by improving signage, interpretation, access to green spaces. Support has been provided for educational visits, such as the Forest School at Coed y Wern, on Llysdimam Estate, Newbridge-on-Wye, funding to provide transport and supervision for two local schools, to visit a unique, upland landscape setting of ancient oak woodland.

Collaboration and delivery of citizen science events with the National Trust and RSPB has provided expertise in delivery, monitoring, evaluation, and knowledge transfer and innovation.



Habitat Community Engagement: Undertaking breeding bird surveys on four upland commons in Radnorshire and north Breconshire, compiling year-round observations of birds for this habitat, and engaging in bird conservation work.

Community Engagement: 42 breeding bird surveys undertaken, 6,179 observations of birds judged to be different individuals on day of recording, 58 species considered to be using our mid-Wales moorlands as a resource during their breeding cycle.

Community Engagement: The findings of the 4 years of breeding bird survey and general observations to date underline the high conservation importance of upland commons for British birds, some of which would not survive in Britain in the absence of extensive areas of this habitat.

Community Engagement: We are supporting the Forest School at Coed y Wern on Llysdimam Estate, Newbridge-on-Wye, with funding to provide transport and supervision to two local schools. undertaken 22 sessions involving 4 schools and usually there are approximately 10 children in attendance at each session.

Training and Job Creation: Dry stone walling course delivered free-of-charge to public, led by LANTRA approved trainer, and carried out on a section of 200 year old wall, across 3 consecutive weekends, with a view to creating future employment skills locally.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: Improved public access is being developed in a farm woodland on the Rhayader side of Carn Gafallt common. A marked path, interpretation boards and simple picnic tables created.

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): Carried out 49 'constant search' breeding bird surveys to date, averaging 4 miles, 67 different bird species have been observed, with 7,349 observations of birds judged to be different individuals.

Developing Green Infrastructure: Completed 8512 metres of fencing at 16 sites, covering boundaries, stone wall and ditch protection.

Developing Green Infrastructure: 261 hectares of bracken management via spraying. Upfront consultation with National Trust, national Resources Wales and Dwr Cymru was undertaken to ensure that impact occurred.

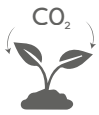
Developing Green Infrastructure: Coppicing Bwla Wood. The wood area is approximately 2 hectares in total, with the coppicing area around 0.2 hectares.

Community Engagement: Creation of Facebook page to share information and communicate with the wider community about project delivery and events.

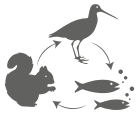
Developing Green Infrastructure: Scrapes and ponds: upfront consultation and permissions with National Trust and National Resources Wales were undertaken to prevent impact.

Community Engagement: Held an SMS Roadshow. Attendance figures - 45 day 1 & 32 day 2.

Building Collaborations and Partnerships: Jointly organised and delivered a citizen science event 'A Big Farmland Bird Count Event in Mid Wales', with fellow SMS project 'Restoring Rhos Pastures'.



Carbon Sequestration – Supported by the restoration of upland land-management to produce balanced habitat, leading to significant implications for carbon storage.



Enhanced Biodiversity – Supported by practical land-management interventions, such as bracken/grassland management to reduce monoculture and increase varied habitats and bird species in decline.



Ecosystem Resilience – Supported by the promotion of diversity within and between ecosystems via management of upland habitats, restoring the balance between ‘grazing’ and ‘natural succession towards woodland’.



Reduce Flood Risk – Supported by a holistic land-management approach, which offers benefits for water retention to help reduce flood risk.



Rural Skills, Culture and Heritage – Supported by the delivery of practical training courses, seminars, and creation and distribution of informative materials.



Community Cohesion – Supported by job creation, activities, events, training and engagement with local graziers, community, and schools.



Health and Wellbeing – Supported by developing a green infrastructure and improving public access to outdoor spaces, also helping reduce potential for conflicts of interest.



Development of Skills, Capacity and Expertise – Supported by the provision of training and educational activities.

Get Involved: If you would like to find out more about the work being carried out by the project, please visit our Facebook page at

 www.facebook.com/3ParishesForTheCommonGood

Email: Irahjones@yahoo.co.uk

Woodlands for Water

Lead organisation: North Wales Wildlife Trust

Grant Award: £682,614

Location: Alyn and Wheeler Rivers from their source to where the River Wheeler joins the River Clwyd and on the River Alyn to Mold.

Email: adrian.jones@northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk

The project area encompasses the River Wheeler and upper River Alyn catchments and surrounding land, supporting a range of important habitats including ancient woodland, unimproved grassland, heathland and wetlands. It includes one SAC (Alyn Valley Woods), eleven SSSIs, part of the Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB and areas of common land.

The project aims to better link people with wildlife-rich and promote opportunities and benefits which are low-impact and contribute to the local economy. The project will identify opportunities to include the development of walking routes, provision of new access and green infrastructure, better management of existing paths and targeted interpretation. The project area has a rich tapestry of ancient woodlands, wildflower meadows and slow-flowing rivers.

To directly tackle climate change, flood risk & water quality, while connecting people, Woodlands for Water has undertaken a wide range of interventions to create, connect and enhance habitats within the catchments of the Afon Alun and Afon Chwiler, with a particular focus on woodlands and improving water quality & resource management within the two catchments.



Several volunteer opportunities, educational and community engagement events have successfully been held, involving the participation of local communities and schools. Practical action has been implemented to improve access and opportunities for further improvement identified and mapped.

To help ensure the full range of project objectives were achieved, the project created several employment opportunities, helped safeguard existing jobs, and delivered training to project officers, stakeholders, and volunteers.

The project collaborated with many partner organisations, including the Welsh Dee Trust, Natural Resources Wales, the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as well as Flintshire and Denbighshire County Councils.

The scheme promotes sustainable land management approaches and has worked with farmers and land managers within the river catchments, particularly those looking to improve sustainability on the farm and strengthen the resilience of ecosystems in the face of climate change, as well as pests and diseases.

Natural Flood Risk Management: A total of 11 farms had watercourses fenced off and/or improved by pollarding of over-mature riparian trees, new tree planting and natural flood risk measures including willow spiling.

Habitat Restoration: 5760m of new hedgerow planting and/or restoration by mechanical wildlife hedge laying, as well as protection with new stock excluding fencing on 14 farms. 3.3ha of grassland restored to hay meadows across 8 sites.

Training and Job Creation: 1 NWWT Project Officer and 1 WDT Water Wise Farming Project Officer recruited. 1 Senior Project Officer's post retained, 1 Project Manager and 4 core staff will have jobs supported.

Community Engagement: 6 mindfulness walks provided for 6 primary schools. 1 mindfulness walk provided for participants on ancient tree recording day.

Reducing Agricultural Pollution: 27 technical farm visits made. 11 farms undertook interventions identified by farmyard assessments, which could eliminate a source of pollution.

Woodland Management & Planting: 9ha of woodland creation across 14 farms, including areas of no-fence tree planting on upland slopes/streams, ffridd, watercourses and public footpaths.

Woodland Management & Planting: Scoping carried out on 26 farms. 9ha of woodland management facilitated across 8 sites and secured sustainable forest management on 16ha of public forest estate.

Woodland Management & Planting: 24 parkland tree cages erected on 3 farms (5 trees/cage, total 120 trees). One ancient sessile oak protected from browsing pressure with galvanised fence, and a further 4 ancient trees received targeted conservation measures.

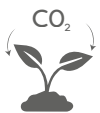
Developing Green Infrastructure: Opportunity mapping completed across 91 sites. Access improvement identified and mapping across 17 sites.

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): 55 stakeholders and volunteers took part in training courses. Irregular Silvicultural Network report commissioned and Memorandum of Understanding with NWWT and NRW created to enable training and research into continuous cover forestry management at Coed Moel Famau.

Volunteer Programmes: NWWT's network of volunteers built on. Over 100 volunteer days held. Volunteers included students from Llysfasi College, 40 asylum seekers through Asylum Link and corporate workdays.

Educational Programmes: 16 days tree planting carried out by 6 schools along the Offa's Dyke Path, Tremeirchion. 6 primary schools participated in Coed Clawdd Offa school art project. Training opportunities for students from 2 institutions.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: Improvements to public rights of way across 10 sites, including 14 new way markers, 14 kissing gates, 4 footpath/bridleway improvements/resurfacing, and the development and promotion of walking routes.



Carbon Sequestration – Supported by the reinstatement and maintenance of hedgerows and woodland creation and management.



Enhanced Biodiversity – Supported by the identification and elimination of potential sources of watercourse pollution, reinstatement and maintenance of hedgerows and woodland creation and management.



Ecosystem Resilience – Supported by farming, woodland, forestry and riverside management, providing nature-based solutions.



Climate Change and Adaptation – Supported by the reinstatement and maintenance of hedgerows and woodland creation and management. Supported by riverside management.



Reduce Flood Risk – Supported by riverside management interventions such as fencing-off water courses, natural flood risk measures, such as new tree planting and willow spiling.



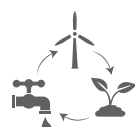
Rural Skills, Culture and Heritage – Supported by engagement, projects, workshops, training, education, job creation and events with local farms, communities, volunteer groups, schools, and institutions.



Community Cohesion – Supported by engagement, projects, workshops, training, education, job creation and events with local farms, communities, volunteer groups, schools, and institutions.



Health and Wellbeing – Supported by developing green infrastructure, access to outdoor spaces and the provision of guided walks.



Soil, Air and Water Quality – Supported by the reinstatement and maintenance of hedgerows and woodland creation and management. Supported by farming and riverside assessments and interventions.



Development of Skills, Capacity and Expertise – Supported by engagement, projects, workshops, training, education, job creation and events with local farms, communities, volunteer groups, schools, and institutions.

Get Involved: If you would like to learn more about the Woodlands for Water project, you can find more information at www.northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk/what-we-do-landing-page/wildlife-conservation/living-landscapes/alun-and-chwiler-living-landscape-0

 www.facebook.com/northwaleswildlifetrust

 www.twitter.com/North_Wales_WT

 www.instagram.com/northwaleswildlifetrust/

 www.youtube.com/channel/UCdOmzdRI2Tme2MOOfGshQoQ

Sustaining the Caerphilly Landscape

Lead organisation: Caerphilly County Borough Council

Grant Award: £295,987

Location: Caerphilly

Email: EADONK@caerphilly.gov.uk

The Sustaining the Caerphilly Landscape (SCL) project has been taken forward collaboratively through the Caerphilly Landscape Partnership (CLP), led by the Caerphilly County Borough council, in collaboration with Caerphilly woodlands trust, comprising of multiple stakeholders, including Bevan Health Board and many others.

The focus of this project is on a large expanse of land south of Caerphilly, bordering Cardiff and Newport. It contains a wide range of grassland and woodland habitats, historic areas, and common land. Many of the areas have been designated statutorily as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Landscape Areas, Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation, and a large part defined as either 'Special Landscape Area' or 'Visually Important Local Landscape' in the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan.

The SCL project area is intensively used for leisure and recreation, due to the combination of attractive and varied landscapes, extensive public access, and the adjacent densely populated urban areas. Residents within the Rhymney Valley, which passes through the area, and those living in the northern suburbs of Cardiff and Newport also have direct access onto to this landscape.



With over 67km of public footpaths and 24km of bridleways within the area, the project has looked to improve the health & wellbeing of the surrounding communities with green prescribing and connecting people and nature, while improving the access and tourism opportunities for the area.

Local community groups and stakeholders are key to the success of the project and were engaged during the preparation of the SCL masterplan. All the areas identified in the master plan led to the implementation of improvements, this has created a more interesting, engaging and safer place to visit to learn about the importance of the area and the part it plays in contributing to reducing the areas carbon footprint.

A Community Ranger was enlisted to assist all partners co-ordinate and deliver the Caerphilly Landscape Partnership action plan. The masterplan has set out an ambitious set of proposals to facilitate a sustainable and collaborative approach to landscape management and public access.

The project has undertaken several interventions to improve public access, including the mapping, grading, publishing, and signage of trails. The project has partnered with NHS, and through a specialist, delivered workshops, activities, and guided walks to local residents. Practical work has been carried out to create and maintain public route access. The project has delivered several walks, covering topics and hosting activities such as wildlife talks, foraging and photography.

The project has engaged with local communities via the publication of a newsletter, and social media sites, such as Facebook and twitter, providing updates on project work and promoting the wider Rural Development Programme, working closely with Wales Rural Network.



Building Collaborations and Partnerships: Worked with 'Cwm' to identify a local supply chain for the design, procurement and production of way marker finger posts. Caerphilly based timber merchant to supply timber sourced from Ruperra Conservation Trust, for reinstatement across the Caerphilly Landscape along 47 km of newly mapped and graded footpaths. Graded & colour coded to a range of fitness levels.

Building Collaborations and Partnerships: The project has partnered with South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, to help with the fight against wildfires on common land, through the cutting of firebreaks and widening paths.

Training and Job Creation:

Project Ranger employed to coordinate the project's delivery. NHS exercise specialist employed.

Training and Job Creation: The SCL project, via Aneurin Bevan Health Board is scheduled to train people in the area to become walks leaders, to ensure other people will be able to get out and about safely. These new walk leaders will facilitate further walks in the SCL area after the project has completed. The project has engaged with and supported 47 community members to access the countryside area, learn about its natural resources and discuss the numerous species that share the environment with people and farmers.

Sustainable Grazing: Through our work with Rudry Commoners Association, the project ranger and Commoners have proposed to re-instate grazing within the common environment to reduce bracken and increase acidic grassland cover, which is threatened within the common environment on Rudry Common.

Community Engagement: Produced a quarterly newsletter which is primarily aimed at the Local Action Group as a more interesting and engaging way of updating on our project activity. project regularly publish updates on Facebook and Twitter promoting the wider RDP working closely with WRN.

Community Engagement: The NHS exercise specialist has delivered a series of workshops and activities with residents of Lansbury Park and Graig y Rhacca running a series of walks within the project area, promoting the landscape as part of a social-prescribing pilot through the project. A total of 14 residents are participating in this element of the project.

Community Engagement: NHS Exercise Specialist working with local residents, leading guided walks across the landscape area – knowledge of the area and confidence in being able to navigate the route ways across landscape useful. A series of initial walks have been completed and are adapted to the individuals ability and confidence. GP referrals will follow on from this initial work trialling social prescribing as part of the project.

Community Engagement: The project has completed several community engagement events, such as foraging walks on Rudry and Caerphilly Common, fungi walks, and an outdoor explore day, to capture photos that are being developed into a community wall hanging mural, by a local Bargoed artist. The project has also delivered bat and moth community walks, where locals from Caerphilly, Machen, Bedwas and Draethen joined local ecologists to learn about the local wildlife.

Community Engagement: Community engagement has taken place at local agricultural shows. At the events, our community ranger engaged with people to discuss the range or rights of ways that are accessible throughout the lower Rhymney valley.

Developing Green Infrastructure: 3062 meters of overgrown and new permissive footpath and bridleways for easy, safer circular routes has been opened. Supporting of the creation of good quality urban green infrastructure, by undertaking enhancement to woodland areas in close proximity to residential areas.

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): Project Ranger has identified 32 Red List species, some previously unrecorded for Wales, many unrecorded for Caerphilly. The rich array of species across the project area, that showcases its value as an ecological and recreational resource for Wales has been mapped, recorded and shared with SEWBRc – the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre, and with project partners.

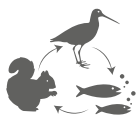
Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): The Masterplan and Action Plan will both inform the detailed delivery of the SCL project via SMS and provide a longer-term policy document, which will help inform land use and developments across the landscape area. A series of consultation workshops have been held over the last two months which will inform the content of the Masterplan and Action Plan.

Volunteer Programmes: The project has supported volunteering group, 'Friends of Riverside Park' and local countryside ranger based at Trethomas Allotments, allowing the provision of a secure shed and materials, to help the volunteers clear their site and enable the group to continue to enhance the local green space.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: The project has completed the audit and recording of 9 new and 1 existing routes with associated gpx files, to create the interpretive and access boards for the 10 routes.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: Map boards designed, to be placed in 6 places in the SCL area and will be graded for healthy walks from 1km to 12km.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: 3062 meters of overgrown and new permissive footpath and bridleways for easy, safer circular routes has been opened.



Enhanced Biodiversity: Supported by the identification, recording, knowledge sharing and education of biodiversity within the project area.



Climate Change and Adaption: Supported by the education of the importance of the area and the part it plays in contributing to reducing the areas carbon footprint, and the interventions contributing towards developing a green infrastructure and increasing access to outdoor spaces.



Community Cohesion: Supported by the wide range of engagement events delivered and by the support and work carried out to enhance the project area.



Health and Wellbeing: Supported by the employment of NHS exercise specialist, improvement to access, the delivery of guided walks, signage creation and recording & sharing of routes within the project area.



Development of Skills, Capacity and Expertise: Supported by the engagement of local community and completion of practical interventions, the employment of NHS specialist & Project Ranger, and delivery of educational activities, workshops, walks and talks.

Get Involved:

 www.facebook.com/SustainingCaerphillysLandscape

 www.instagram.com/caerphillys_landscape/

Contact: Jonesc35@caerphilly.gov.uk

Telephone: 01443 838632

Landscape Solutions

Lead organisation: Denbighshire County Council (Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)

Grant Award: £561,391

Location: Clwydian Range and Dee Valley

Email: Rachel.jones@denbighshire.gov.uk

The collaborative approach to this project brings together 10 organisations with a common goal to tackle issues impacting on the rural communities across their landscape. The shared aim is to unlock the potential of approximately 40 sites across the landscape to improve habitats and soil condition, reverse the loss of species, improve nutrient recycling, and increase the amount of carbon store potential.

The sites vary from upland locations to coastal dune habitats providing important flood control functions. Activities will tackle encroachment of scrub across recreational areas, opening up key viewing points and providing solutions to sustaining access. Improving green areas on the edge of urban communities and organising educational and community events around stocking and

gathering animals aims to raise awareness of the benefits and opportunities the landscape provides.

The project has helped rejuvenate traditional land management skills alongside the development of new skills and potential business opportunities, drawing on the breadth of experience across the range of collaborators and through the engagement of young people in the area.

A wide range of interventions were implemented by the project, providing training, volunteer and job opportunities to help facilitate effective completion. PONT Cymru contracted to carry out vegetation surveys on all project sites, to serve as baseline data, identifying key habitats and key species, informing



recommended beneficial grazing regimes. Drone photos taken and used with surveys to evidence site change over the years, informing the creation of 40 grazing plans. The removal of scrub from project sites has enabled the safe introduction of graziers, allowing sustainable plans to be implemented and an increase in biodiversity. The project consulted the relevant authorities and project partners, such as Pont Cymru, NRW, AONB, CADW & local councils for all works.

The team actively posted regular social media post to keep people in touch and informed about project activities going on within their local area. Several community engagement events were held regarding proposed works and completed projects. Schools and colleges regularly made site visits to learn about the natural environment, conservation grazing, sustainable land management and carry out practical work, such as stock checking duties and ragwort removal. The project distributed school wool, wet felting packs and created accompanying tutorials, to many schools across Northeast Wales, targeting schools local to, or have visited sites.



Building Collaborations and Partnerships: Connections made with Llysfasi agricultural college, students regularly visited project sites to learn about conservation grazing and perform stock checking duties. Sustainable beef production, part of the course, linked in well with Moel Famau 'House for a Grouse' site, where Belted Galloway Cattle have been grazing.

Habitat Restoration: A total of 61 volunteer days clearing conifer regen and scrub from the heathland at Moel Famau, to create areas for heather regeneration, 5 Belted Galloways introduced, and handling pen installed.

Habitat Restoration: 4 new Natterjack Toad breeding ponds created. 5 ponds cleaned out, as part of ongoing pond management programme.

Training and Job Creation: The project facilitated and attended several courses, such as a 2 day Brushcutter course attended by project staff; a 2 day Conservation Grazing in Practise course attended by project staff, accredited by LANTRA; Small Wildflower Meadow Management completed for AONB staff; a 1 day 'Understanding Livestock Grazing and Working with Farmers' course ran by project, attended by AONB and partners; and 2 day Livestock Checker Training Sessions held with PONT, 5 attendees each day.

Training and Job Creation: The project tried to give local communities and volunteers the opportunity to carry out site works and surveys where possible, employing contractors for the remainder.

Sustainable Grazing: Project introduced several animals to control scrub, including 7 Belted Galloway heifers to previously disused section of Prestatyn Wetlands; 3 Caerneddau Ponies to Moel Findeg, to graze woody shoots to help heather and flowering plants flourish; a flock of Soay Sheep to 2ha of limestone grassland meadow at the SSSI Butterfly Glades, Loggerheads; and 4 additional Welsh Mountain ponies to Ffrwd Quarry.

Sustainable Grazing: Over 5000m of stock fencing installed at Old Pulford Brook SSSI, Gors Maen Llwyd, Moel Famau and Mynydd Hiraethog SSSI, alone. CADW consulted over Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM), 'Grouse Markers' attached to make the fence line more visible to low flying grouse and prevent collisions and works also prevented overgrazing of a peat bog.

Sustainable Grazing: 3 days clearing gorse and birch scrub at Pen y Cloddia Nature Area to increase the heathland diversity and potential grazing and help protect the ramparts of the Iron Age hillfort, authorised by CADW.

Sustainable Grazing: 1.2Ha of gorse cleared on Prestatyn Hillside, due to risk of sheep entanglement. Boundary fence installed and 1050m of pipe laid, to provide water for Livestock. Consultations made to ensure SSSI or public footpath networks not negatively impacted.

Community Engagement: Project has arranged many campaigns and community engagement events, helping and guiding partners to educate the public on different topics, such as dogs and owner responsibilities and keeping other site users and livestock safe.

Community Engagement: Project staff applied for Sustainable Development funding, for a group of ladies within the agricultural industry, creating opportunities to participate in activities, heritage skills, and wool processing. 5 ladies attended shearing taster session and several training events followed this project, 10 per craft session.

Community Engagement: Several community drop-in Sessions held to discuss planned activities. 2 events held regarding Prestatyn Hillside, engaging 40 groups over both days. 1 day regarding Bettisfield held, engaging around 20 groups of people.

Developing Green Infrastructure: Steps installed on Prestatyn hillside, to prevent path widening and soil erosion on surrounding area of footpath, within SSSI. 2 kissing gates installed at Waun y Llyn, sustainably constructed using oak and 5ft additional wheelchair accessible gates.

Developing Green Infrastructure: Oak kissing gate installed at Glascoed, resolving conflict of field gate on permissive path being left open. Vital access to green areas for neighbouring urban areas maintained, and grazier confident to return.

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): The team actively posted regular social media post to keep people in touch and informed about project activities going on within their local area.

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): 6 Interpretation panels designed for Key project sites; Presatyn Hillside, Moel Famau, Graig Fawr, Bettisfield and Presthaven. The panels highlight the importance of the work carried out by the project, special features of these key sites, and what plants or insects they might expect to see.

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): Commissioned a local media production company to produce a project film to encapsulate the project and demonstrate the benefits it has provided.

Volunteer Programmes: A series of volunteer's events carried out at Moel Findeg, cutting back Gorse and other scrub species to encourage heather and bilberry growth.

150 volunteer hours of dry stone walling delivered and 18 meters of wall was rebuilt at Coed Nercwys.

Volunteer Programmes: 64 individual volunteers days undertook on Moel Findeg, removing Birch scrub from the heathland to prevent the site becoming dominated by birch.

Educational Programmes: 45 students from Hawarden High School carried out ragwort removal from Presthaven Dunes. This was a fantastic opportunity to enable local school children play a part in improving the conservation grazing potential of the site.

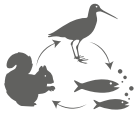
Educational Programmes: Project distributed wet felting packs, to schools across Northeast Wales. A tutorial was created, primarily aimed at KS2 children, but also to connect groups and communities to the project and promote the value of wool and conservation grazing produce.

Educational Programmes: Nearly 300 pupils from 8 Flintshire primary schools visited sites during the months May and June 2022, to see livestock and learn about conservation grazing, the importance of the natural environment, and role livestock can play in sustainable land management.

Rural Skills Heritage: 20 volunteers attended traditional hedge laying skills training.

Rural Skills Heritage: 6 people attended scything training, delivered by the project at Coed Nercwys.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: 2 large paddocks created for community at Bettisfield, a former colliery site, used for landfill, capped, neglected, and misused. Approximately 1000m of fencing erected, automatic IBC drip feeders installed, and sections of bramble and gorse felled, to create space for flowering plants.



Enhanced Biodiversity: Supported by the implementation of sustainable grazing plans and introduction of livestock, a bracken management programme, heather habitat regeneration and management, pond creation and restoration of access paths.



Ecosystem Resilience: Supported by habitat creation and livestock management.



Rural Skills, Culture and Heritage: Supported by the educational opportunities, training and knowledge transfer and innovation.



Community Cohesion: Supported by the provision of training and volunteering opportunities, along with the hosting of community events and activities related to the project.



Health and Wellbeing: Supported by works carried out to increase access to green spaces and develop a green infrastructure.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: Supported by the range of practical interventions delivered by the project.



Development of Skills, Capacity and Expertise: Supported by the wide range of training delivered and undertaken by project staff and communities, consultation and knowledge sharing with experts, authorities, and communities.

Get Involved:

-  www.facebook.com/ClwydDeeAONB/
-  website: www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/projects/landscape-solutions-project/
-  twitter.com/clwyd_dee_aonb  www.instagram.com/clwyd_dee_aonb/

Contact: loggerheads.countrypark@denbighshire.gov.uk

Common Collaboration

Lead organisation: Gelligaer & Merthyr Commoners Association

Grant Award: £255,987

Location: Gelligaer and Merthyr Commons

Email: commoners@gmx.co.uk

This collaborative project seeks to improve the Gelligaer and Merthyr Common, a Cadw designated Historic Landscape. This unique area holds great value for both the Commoners and the surrounding rural communities. The Common stretches across the borders of two local authorities: Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC) and Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC). Covering approximately 3,000 hectares, the Common is situated to the north of Gelligaer, between the towns of Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney. More than 70 Commoners have rights to graze their livestock on the Common, many of whom utilise this right and graze sheep, cattle, and ponies.

The Common is an important area for recreation, providing access to nature and the countryside for local communities to enjoy responsibly, supporting their health and wellbeing. Its membership includes Natural Resources Wales, Cadw, the Police, Merthyr Tydfil and Caerphilly County Borough Councils, the Gelligaer and Merthyr Commoners Association, residents and specific interest groups such as walkers, cyclists and the South East Wales Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club.



The project, its partners and local communities have delivered a wide range of interventions, to restore the Common's landscape and create resilient ecosystems within it, by adopting a Sustainable Management of Natural Resources approach. The project has worked to address habitat damage caused by social factors, such as illegal off-road vehicles, fly-tipping and roadside littering, fly-grazing and reduced land management. Interventions to further restore and create habitat include tree planting and targeted bracken & gorse control programmes, including works to maintain & create firebreaks.

The project has also worked with Cadw to restore two Scheduled Ancient Monuments. To compliment these practical interventions, the project has taken steps to improve access to green spaces and manage the supporting access networks.

A number of educational and training opportunities have been provided, to support and demonstrate project work, via community engagement events and social media platforms. Volunteer and employment opportunities were offered, to help maximise the fulfilment of project aims.



Building Collaborations and Partnerships: 52 joint patrols with local police forces on the Common to increase presence and deter off-roaders from illegally accessing and damaging the Common. 11 collections of evidence to support prosecution of fly-tips, enabling 4 prosecutions.

Building Collaborations and Partnerships: A joint agency clean-up event was organised and was attended by members of SW Fire & Rescue Service, NRW, Keep Wales Tidy, Rural Action Cwm Taf, Taf Bargoed River Restoration SMS project, Fly Tipping Action Wales & local businesses.

Habitat Restoration: 76m² off-road damage repaired.

Woodland Management and Planting: Planting totals are: 1,440 junipers and 375 native species trees such as Silver Birch, Rowan, Wild Cherry, sessile Oak, Field Maple and Goat Willow.

Habitat Restoration: 89 tonnes general waste removed, 616 bags of plastic bottles & cans recycled, 293 tyres removed, and 10 buckets of glass bottles recycled.

Habitat Restoration: 17ha targeted bracken and gorse control programme completed.

Training and Job Creation: Consultant delivered a series of Common Champion training courses, consisting of 3 standalone sessions for members of the public, 2 twilight sessions for local teachers, and a half day session for professionals (Police, Fire Service, Local Authority, WG, Cadw). 1 Friends of the common/Community group established.

Training and Job Creation: A locally based company were awarded our social media and website management contract. Tantrwm Media have also been awarded the contract to create a series of short films about the project and common.

Training and Job Creation: Project Ranger appointed. Consultant appointed to undertake monitoring and evaluation for this project, creating a framework which allows project staff to easily capture and record monitoring data.

Community Engagement: 41 stakeholders engaged, and 1 cooperation operation supported.

Community Engagement: 672 Social media posts made, with 1202 social media followers across all accounts.

Community Engagement: 9 guided walks and 3 project presentations delivered.

Community Engagement: 12 schools and 366 pupils engaged.

Woodland Management & Planting: 3.59ha of woodland supported with 5800 trees planted - all British grown deciduous trees and as locally sourced seed stock as possible 642m of firebreaks created, 1583m maintained.

Developing Green Infrastructure: 6km managed access to countryside.

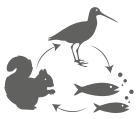
Knowledge Transfer & Innovation (KT&I): Information regarding project work, shared via several methods, including social media.

Volunteer Programmes: 588 volunteers attended events, with 1331 volunteer hours recorded over the project duration.

Educational Programmes: 5 education films created, that demonstrate the works undertaken on the Common by the Commoners and the Project.

Rural Skills Heritage: 2 day dry stone wall training delivered, upskilling participants in how to build and repair dry stone walls. These skills were utilised over the following weeks to repair boundary walls across the Common.

Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: 3 car parks improved, including creating clear boundaries to the car parks, improved surfaces, and new signage inviting visitors to stop and enjoy the area responsibly.



Enhanced Biodiversity: Supported by interventions to prevent and repair habitat damage, as well as tree planting and targeted bracken & gorse control programmes.



Ecosystem Resilience: Supported by waste removal, habitat damage repair, tree planting, and bracken & gorse management.



Rural Skills, Culture and Heritage: Supported by the delivery of traditional skills training and educational events.



Community Cohesion: Supported by the delivery of a range of community engagement events, education, and job & volunteering opportunities.



Health and Wellbeing: Supported by guided walks and work undertaken to improve access networks, and restoration & protection of habitat surrounding areas.



Soil, Air and Water Quality: Supported by waste removal, habitat restoration and planting.



Development of Skills, Capacity and Expertise: Supported by the delivery of community events, training, and volunteer & job opportunities offered.

Get Involved:

 www.facebook.com/GMCommon

 website: www.gmcommon.org/our-work/

 twitter.com/GMCommon

Contact: enquiries@gmcommon.org