

# Dolau Dyfi Meadows

**Lead organisation:**

Pont Cymru

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**Grant Award:** £467,114

**Location:** Lowland area of the Dyfi catchment, Gwynedd

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 & 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 & 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.

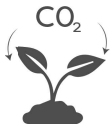
**Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces:** Improvement works have been undertaken on 4 paths totalling 5.87km of enhanced access. To improve accessibility to all users 12 galvanised self-closing gates have been used.

**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 & 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 & sub-group meetings all to inform the project.

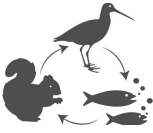




**Carbon Sequestration:** supported by the Peatland Restoration, restoring and connecting lowland peat bog. Habitat Restoration of 639 hectares over the project area being managed and restored. Maintaining neutral, acid and marshy grassland, heath & peat bog in favourable and recovering condition.



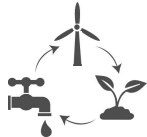
**Climate Change Adaptation:** supported by supported by the Peatland Restoration, restoring and connecting lowland peat bog. Habitat Restoration of 639 hectares over the project area being managed and restored. Maintaining neutral, acid and marshy grassland, heath & peat bog in favourable and recovering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



**Soil, Air & 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 & peat bog in favourable and recovering condition, developing Green Infrastructure, sustainable grazing plans and long term commitment from landowners and famers.



**Health & 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 & 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 & Expertise:** supported by Volunteer and job & 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/](http://www.pontcymru.org/dolau-dyfi/)

 [www.youtube.com/channel/UCGjUzOTxkGgAjsnDloMwz1g](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGjUzOTxkGgAjsnDloMwz1g)