

Nearly Wild Exploration Case Study

Project Title:	Strengthening the Nature Based Business Economy in Powys		
Delivered by:	Nearly Wild		
Start date:	26 th September 2019	End Date:	31 st March 2021
LEADER Theme:	Theme 2 - Facilitating Pre-Commercial Development, Business Partnerships and Short Supply Chains		

Total Expenditure:	£43,433.08
RDP Funding:	£31,401.23
Match funding:	£12,032.25

1. Introduction

The project aimed to pilot a methodology for identifying and supporting nature-based businesses in Powys, with the ultimate aim of helping to strengthen the nature-based business economy in the area. The approach involved defining more clearly what a ‘nature-based’ business is, finding the businesses in Powys that might identify with this definition, understanding what it means to them to operate their business in this way, learning more about their supply chains and markets, and from this, finding out what is needed in order to support this element of the Powys economy.

2. Challenge

The first challenge was to find businesses in Powys that could potentially be nature-based businesses, and then to seek their engagement with the project.

A second challenge was the definition of ‘nature-based business’, as it quickly became clear that a single definition was too limiting.

And as for everyone in 2020, the Covid pandemic required us to think very differently about how to carry out our work. We could no longer attend events and had to make most of our contact with businesses happen remotely.

3. Solution

Mapping the businesses was achieved through an extensive Web search, combined with local knowledge and asking the businesses we talked to suggest others that might be relevant. We developed our thinking on the broad types of businesses that might be ‘nature-based’ or ‘nature-friendly’ as a way to target our search; as we refined this through the course of the project, we could then add to our mapping. However, this was only a first step, and it was only through talking to the

businesses that we could find out whether they could truly be considered as a nature-based/nature-friendly business, whether this was how they saw themselves and what this meant for them.

We opened our thinking beyond a simple definition to encompass a broader concept, expressed in more than just a single sentence or two. We also developed a simple tool for considering the multiple different elements that can help to identify a nature-based/nature friendly business or enterprise.

The conversations with business took place on the phone or by Zoom instead of face-to-face. These worked well as an informal, yet structured, conversation rather than a formalised interview or questionnaire-based discussion. Online get-togethers replaced face to face meetings, which were a useful start to relationship-building.

4. Benefit

The widened concept of businesses that benefit nature or are 'nature-friendly' provided a more applicable structure, which could then include the many different types of business that defined themselves as trading in a way that is beneficial for nature. It also enabled us to include different business structures, such as social enterprises or charities that trade.

The online get-togethers were appreciated by the businesses that took part to find out what other like-minded businesses there are in their local area, as well as a chance to start to think about the opportunity for collaboration for mutual benefit.

5. Result

The mapping exercise demonstrated just how many businesses there are in Powys which see themselves as trading in a way which benefits nature. We believe that it shows the potential for Powys to act as an exemplar for business that could lead the way for the current prominent agenda for 'green recovery'.

These businesses have shown how micro-enterprise can be robust and resilient, providing for livelihoods for individuals across a very rural area, in a way which brings additional benefit to the local community and environment.

The project has helped to articulate more clearly than ever before what it means to be a nature-based/nature-friendly/nature-benefiting business. This is not only helpful for the businesses themselves, e.g. to support their marketing, but also for the other businesses and organisations which wish to buy in services or products that benefit nature.



6. Project Outputs/Outcomes

Output (Case Level Indicator)	Achieved
No. of feasibility studies	0
No. of networks established	0
No. of jobs safeguarded	0
No. Of pilot activities undertaken / supported	1
No. of community hubs created	0
No. of stakeholders engaged	29
No. of participants supported (awareness raising events only)	30
No. of jobs created	0.8
No. of communities benefitting	0
No. of businesses benefitting	20

7. Project Contact Details

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8. Partners/Match Funders Logos



Date Case Study Completed:	29 th July 2021
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