

Case Study – Dolydd Gobaith

Introduction

Fferm Goedwig Gymunedol Dyffryn Tanat Valley Community Forest Farm Community Interest Company (CIC) was established in September 2020. Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust (MWT) have supported the group as part of the Green Connections Powys project.

The Project

In 2019, 42 acres of land came up for sale in Penygarnedd. Over a year and a half, funds were raised by the group to buy the land; the sale went through in February 2021. An adjacent area of 10 acres were also bought by neighbours to manage with wildlife in mind. A competition was held to name the land, and 'Dolydd Gobaith', meaning 'Meadows of Hope', won!

The land had been grazed by sheep for years, but part of the land is very steep, so little agricultural improvement was possible there.

Dolydd Gobaith has received funding from a range of organisations including National Lottery Heritage Fund, Powys County Council and Hafren Dyfrdwy. The ultimate aim of the group is to become more self-sufficient and less reliant on grant funding.

MWT have supported the group by offering advice, training and surveys to help the group learn more about the wildlife on the land and how to manage it.



Wildflower meadow with a view over the Tanat Valley © MWT/Lottie Glover

MWT first visited Dolydd Gobaith at the start of the Green Connections project, walking around the site and offering land management advice. The group knew they wanted to plant lots of trees; MWT advised that the best places for this would be in the hedges and edges, leaving the main fields to become wildflower meadows.

MWT staff have also conducted several surveys through the Green Connections project such as a baseline habitat survey and a fungi survey, as well as taking soil samples to assess the value of the site for fungi. The site has passed the 2020 Powys Local Wildlife Site (LWS) criteria for multiple reasons, and was recently adopted as a LWS.

Project Outputs

MWT have provided several training days for Dolydd Gobaith volunteers and the local community such as plant identification, fungi and plant monitoring. MWT also supported a Bumblebee Conservation Trust training day.

Training and Events	Attendees
Bee Identification	10
Plant Identification	12
Fungi Identification	22
Plant Surveys	9
Hedgehog Day	16

MWT ran a joint Hedgehog Day event in May 2022 with Dolydd Gobaith, building hedgehog houses and learning about how to help hedgehogs at home. Llanfyllin Shed also assisted with the event, providing the wood and tools to make the hedgehog homes.



Left image: MWT staff supporting Bumblebee Conservation Trust training day © Denne, Dolydd Gobaith. *Right image:* MWT staff running a Plant Monitoring Day © MWT.

Project Outcomes

As a result of MWTs input, the CIC now run regular volunteer days, especially throughout winter to help with tree planting and habitat management work. They run several seasonal celebration days throughout the year, bringing volunteers and the local community together. In 2023, they will be running regular workshops, covering a range of topics, such as hedge laying and tree ID. To help them become more self-sufficient, they are charging people to attend these workshops to help bring in some income. The local community have been involved from the start and continue to be involved. They want local schools and colleges to use the space for learning. The CIC recently completed building a roundhouse which will be used as an outdoor classroom. The land is now open up to the public, with a small car park and facilities, as well as interpretation signs to help people navigate their way around the site. More information about Dolydd Gobaith can be found on their website <https://dolydd-gobaith.cymru/> and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/dolyddgobaith/>.