



1st March 2020 - 31st August 2021

We're half way through this project and enthusiastic to share what's been achieved and where we're heading. Our mission is to provide opportunities for the people and landscape of North East Pembrokeshire to thrive, through practical action, training, events, skill sharing, citizen science and more! Here's what's been happening...

32.25 acres of woodland planted/supported

87 people trained over 11 training days (e.g. grassland management, habitat ID, outdoor 1st aid, tree grafting, tree seed propagation, woodland enterprise)

500m of new public footpath created

12 individual land holdings surveyed (e.g. given advice & guidance about sustainable land management, signposting to other services, and in some cases 'landscape connections interventions' carried out)

Over 5000m² of land managed for INNS control

825 people engaged (as landowners or community groups supported, and as project collaborators such as ecological experts) in the project through 24 'community connection activities' (which include the training days above)

300 river samples taken with the help of 20 volunteers

6 community groups or cooperatives supported or collaborated with (e.g. Cilgerran Fruit & Nuts, Growing Heart, Frenni Fawr Research Group, Frenni Fach Graziers Group)

Been given hundreds of hours by partners and volunteers

120 acres of grassland/heath supported

1 km of hedgerow planted/managed

3 new community networks established (GBC steering group, CLEAN Afon Nyfer steering group, Hermon Community Woodland group)

Received £4,116 in match funding

Spent £105,000 of the projected project budget of £242,575

And here is a peek into what people have told us about their experience of GBC so far...

"Yes!
I feel enthused
and positive!"

"Amazing
teaching in outdoor
classroom!"

"I have
learnt more about how
our ecosystems are affected
by EVERYTHING we do!"

"I feel
inspired & happy
knowing many others
in the local area have a
similar vision."

"Amazing
— my head is brimming
with new knowledge!"

"Brilliant
knowledge of specialists
- lots of great things to apply
at home."

"I have
learnt lots about inspiring
people in my local community
coming together to help the
natural world."

"Loved
the practical session
and learnt sooo much about
coppicing, so much interesting
information!!"

"I'll look
at what I have with a clearer eye
- feel better equipped."

"Fabulous
hosts, friendly
people, brilliant experts &
a chance to put knowledge
into practice."

"Amazing,
fascinating woodland.
Right on our doorstep, never
knew about it."

"Thank
you for a fantastic,
inspiring day - connecting
like-minded people for
positive change."

"What
now and what
next?"



The last 18 months running GBC has given us a wealth of experience and feedback that has led to other projects being delivered and developed by CARE. It is clearer than ever that our region is full of motivated people, eager to contribute to a landscape that supports good, tasty food and sustainable local economies; rivers that run clear and ecosystems brimming with colour and life.



The 2 new initiatives below aim to protect and make the most of the rich resources we have for a future where meaningful and fulfilling local jobs are available.



Resilient Enterprises Programme (REP) – this is a 12 month research & development project. CARE is supporting people to develop new skills, through volunteering and training, towards a network of sustainable social enterprises and local employment. We will research the feasibility of developing such a network. This will generate a sustained income for CARE to continue our positive community action and also leave a legacy of social resilience via skills training and job creation, and environmental regeneration via enterprises which aim to protect and enhance nature and increase resource efficiency.



Fruit & Bounty and Heath & Hedgerow – these are 2 separate but thematically linked projects which REP is researching at present and for which we await further funding. The projects will research and develop cooperative enterprises based on products and services that will use nature’s harvest, including that which is often deemed to be ‘waste’, in such a way that encourages sustainable land management. Specifically, this is likely to include fruit processing, sustainable management of orchards, heathland and hedgerows, and delivery of training.



We’ve had extremely positive feedback from everyone involved so far in the Growing Better Connections project. We wish to say **a big thank you** to the wholehearted participants and volunteers, our inspiring landscape, the CARE team, and all our partners.

