

Case Study – North Brecknock Landowners Group

Introduction

As part of the Green Connections project the Brecknock office of the WTSWW, arranged a meeting of landowners to see if there was any interest in forming landowners group. The meeting was held at a 42-acre farm in Llysdinam and was attended by 12 people representing 7 landowners. The guests were treated to tea and cake in the orchard and were given a tour of the farm.

The Project

At that initial meeting it was agreed that a group should be formed and two people volunteered to administer the group, a smallholder and an ecologist. The two volunteers organised the first group meeting at a small holding in Llysdinam to set out the aims and objectives of the group. They also composed an introductory email and GDPR statement which was sent to all members. The agreed purpose of the group is to offer its members a friendly and informal way of sharing ideas, expertise and experiences related to land management for wildlife on a whole variety of scales from gardens to large farms. The emphasis of the group was friendly face to face encounters, visiting each other's properties once a month.

At the first official group meeting it was mutually agreed that members would take turns hosting the monthly meetings. The administrators agreed to arrange group visits to places of mutual interest, to seek out opportunities for relevant training from the Wildlife Trusts and other sources and to invite guests with specialist knowledge. The group also considered sharing equipment, offering land for grazing, grazing animals including sheep, cattle and horses and space for food growing to other members.



Annual Knawel growing in the middle of a track.

Andrew Shaw from the Rare British Plant Nursery showing the group Annual Knawel, a rare species in Brecon and Radnorshire that has only been seen recently at a couple of locations. It is in steep decline nationally.

Project Outputs

A landowner's group was developed, and 20 landowners joined. Each of these landowners includes family members, spouses, partners, parents, and children who are also welcomed to the group, especially as they represent the future caretakers of the natural world. Regular updates are sent to group members and several group members have already booked dates to host the monthly meeting.

The North Brecknock Landowners Group was also able to do a presentation at the Green Connections Landowners Roadshow in Beulah through which they were able to recruit 2 more members.



Field grasshopper found by a member's young son.

Project Outcomes

- One landowner group formed.
- 40+ people, including children, and 20 properties committed to wildlife friendly land management.
- Sustainable relationships created between landowners and contractors.
- The formation of the Landowners group has resulted in a much wider engagement with the Wildlife Trust.
- Going forward a supportive community helping each other create, improve and manage good quality habitat to support local wildlife, with on-going support from the Wildlife Trust.



The Landowners Group tour the 42-acre farm in Llysdinam.



The farm pond, surviving the drought.