

Heritage & Culture Historic Environment Grants & Fundraising Project Management

LOWRI GOSS  **CONSULTING**

Community Consultation Feasibility Charity Support Research & Evaluation

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**MYNYDD WAUN FAWR
LANDSCAPE VISION PROJECT
PUBLIC CONSULTATION
SUMMARY REPORT**

MARCH 2025



Ymddiriedolaeth Natur
**Maldwyn
Montgomeryshire**
Wildlife Trust

Cronfa
Treftadaeth
Heritage
Fund



Mewn Partneriaeth â
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In Partnership with
Welsh Government

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Project Introduction

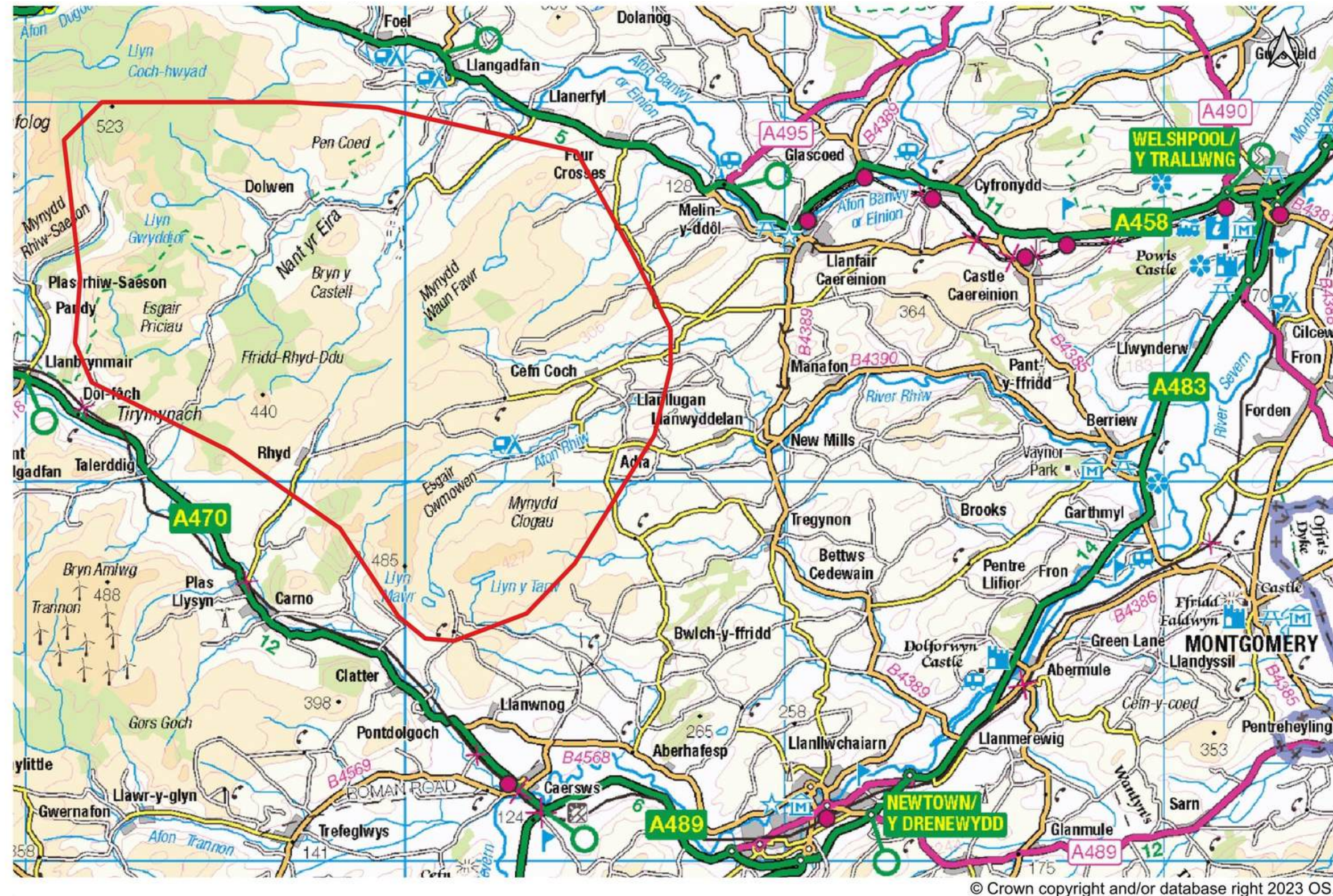
Mynydd Waun Fawr and the surrounding upland area is unknown to most people, with the exception of those who are lucky enough to live and work there. It is a hidden gem with large areas of wildlife-rich habitats. Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust would like to help safeguard and strengthen the future of this special area by working together with landowners and the local community.

A 'landscape vision' is being developed to help guide landowners and managers when carrying out land management or creating new habitats, identifying suitable options and opportunities for ecological restoration and improved connectivity. The Trust wants to support more of the things we all need - viable local economies, beautiful landscapes, abundant wildlife, clean water, carbon storage; and less of the things we don't - flooding, species decline, soil erosion, faltering rural businesses.

A crucial part of producing the strategic vision is engaging with those who know it best. Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust instructed Lowri Goss Consulting to help facilitate a bilingual public consultation exercise in order to connect and collaborate with people who live, work or enjoy spending time in the project area.



Mynydd Waun Fawr Landscape Vision Project Boundary Map



Consultation Approach



After discussion with the Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust team, it was decided to generally follow the consultation guidance provided in the **Restoration Partnership Development Toolkit**. This toolkit is a collaborative project by the University of Cambridge and the University of Edinburgh.

The toolkit has been designed to help restoration practitioners and project leaders better understand the perspectives of the different stakeholders in the landscapes they are working in.

Survey

Although the toolkit provides a Survey Generator App, it was not used due to its inability to create bilingual surveys. Instead, Microsoft Forms was chosen as the preferred tool. Some statements about land management and restoration from the toolkit were selected, along with a few additional custom statements. Respondents were then asked to express their level of agreement with 27 statements using a five-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

The bilingual survey was open online from 12th February to 4th March 2025. It was designed to be able to be completed either online or in person. In-person pop-up consultation events were held:

- 18th February from 10am to 12pm at Caersws Village Hall.
- 18th February from 2pm to 4pm at Llanbrynmair Community Centre.
- 21st February from 12pm to 2pm at Llanfair Caereinion Institute.

Survey & Consultation Promotion

The survey and consultation process was promoted **bilingually** via:

- A bespoke A5 flyer with QR code distributed through local venues and businesses across the Mynydd Waun Fawr project area and surrounding towns and villages and posters on local notice boards within and around the Mynydd Waun Fawr project area.

These locations included: **Llanfair Caereinion:** Einion Stores (notice board), Texaco (flyers), Community Centre (notice board), Spar (flyers) & butchers (flyers). **Llanerfyl:** Service Garage (flyers) & car park (notice board). **Dwyrîw:** Adfa Village Hall (notice board). **Banwy:** Llangadfan Siop Y Pentre (flyers) & Foel (notice board). **Llanbrynmair:** Bus stop/car park (notice board), Wynnstay shop (flyers), Bont (notice board) & Llan (notice board). **Carno:** Village Hall (notice board) & Spar (notice board and flyers). **Caersws:** Bradleys garage (flyers), Premier shop (flyers) & butchers (flyers). **Aberhafesp:** Community centre (notice board). **Tregynon:** Premier shop (flyers) & Community centre (notice board and flyers).

Consultation Approach

- A number of key stakeholders were contacted directly and asked to share with their members and networks.
- All 9 of the town and community councils covering the area were contacted and asked to share within their communities.

Llanerfyl, Dwyriw, Llanfair Caereinion, Carno, Banwy, Llanbrynmair, Caersws, Aberhafesp & Tregynon.

- Posts on the MWT social media accounts and shared on many local social media pages and groups.

These included: Caersws Village, What's on in Llanbrynmair, Carno Message Board, Llanfair Caereinion Town Community, Aberhafesp Community Centre, Bettws & Tregynon & area friends, Tregynon Community Messages, Llanbrynmair Community Centre, Llanfair Caereinion, Llanerfyl and surrounding areas.

- At the 3 public in-person pop-up events in Caersws, Llanbrynmair and Llanfair Caereinion – 18th & 21st February.

Workshops

Following analysis of the survey results, three workshops were held to discuss the survey outcome, share draft online map layers over the area, and give stakeholders an opportunity to input in further detail into the vision.

These workshops were held:

- 4pm to 6pm, Tuesday, 11th March at Llanbrynmair Community Centre.
- 2.30pm to 4.30pm Wednesday, 12th March at Caersws Village Hall.
- 7pm to 9pm Wednesday, 12th March at Llanfair Caereinion Institute.

Key stakeholders, including all town and community councils, were invited to attend the workshops. Survey respondents could also express an interest in attending; all of those who did received an invitation.



Bilingual Consultation



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Mynydd Waun Fawr Landscape Vision

Mynydd Waun Fawr and the surrounding upland area is unknown to most people, with the exception of those who live and work there. It is a hidden gem with large areas of wildlife-rich habitats. Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust wants to help safeguard and strengthen the future of this special area by working together with the local community. A 'landscape vision' is being created to help guide landowners and managers when carrying out land management or creating new habitats, identifying suitable options and opportunities for ecological restoration and improved connectivity. We want to see more of what we need - viable local economies, beautiful landscapes, abundant wildlife, clean water, carbon storage; and less of the things we don't - flooding, species decline, soil erosion, faltering rural businesses.

A critical part of producing this strategic vision is engaging with those who know it best. Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust wants to connect and collaborate with anyone who lives, works or enjoys spending time in the project area.

**How do you want the landscape to look? Would you like to see more wildlife?
What do you think are the most sustainable ways to make a living here?**



Have YOUR say...

We'd welcome your comments, suggestions, and feedback. Please complete our online survey by scanning the QR code below, or chat with a member of our project team at one of our pop-up consultation events. These will be held on **Tuesday, 18th February from 10am to 12pm at Caersws Village Hall** and from **2pm to 4pm at Llanbrynmair Community Centre**, as well as on **Friday, 21st February from 12pm to 2pm at Llanfair Caereinion Institute**.

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Survey



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Mynydd Waun Fawr Landscape Vision - Public Consultation Survey

Mynydd Waun Fawr and the surrounding upland area is unknown to most people, with the exception of those who live and work there, a hidden gem with large areas of wildlife-rich habitats. Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust wants to help safeguard and strengthen the future of this special area by working together with the local community. A 'landscape vision' is being created to help guide land owners and managers when managing land or creating new habitats, identifying suitable options and opportunities for ecological restoration and improved connectivity. We want to see more of what we need - viable local economies, beautiful landscapes, abundant wildlife, clean water, carbon storage; and less of the things we don't - flooding, species decline, soil erosion, faltering rural businesses.

A critical part of the producing this strategic vision is engaging with those who know it best. Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust wants to connect and collaborate with anyone who lives, works or enjoys spending time in the project area.

How do you want the landscape to look? Would you like to see more wildlife? What do you think are the most sustainable ways to make a living here?

This survey should take approximately 5 - 7 minutes to complete. Thank you in advance for your time.



Gweledigaeth Tirwedd Mynydd Waun Fawr - Arolwg Ymgynghori Cyhoeddus

Nid yw Mynydd Waun Fawr a'r ardal ucheldir gyfagos yn gyfarwydd i'r rhan fwyaf o bobl, ac eithrio'r rhai sy'n byw ac yn gweithio yno, trysor cudd gydag ardaloedd eang o gynefinoedd llawn bywyd gwyllt. Mae Ymddiriedolaeth Natur Maldwyn eisiau helpu i ddiogelu a chryfhau dyfodol yr ardal arbennig hon drwy gydweithio â'r gymuned leol. Mae 'gweledigaeth o dirwedd' yn cael ei chreu i helpu arwain perchnogion tir a rheolwyr wrth reoli tir neu greu cynefinoedd newydd, nodi opsiynau addas a chyfluoedd ar gyfer adferiad ecolegol a gwella cysylltedd. Rydym eisiau gweld mwy o'r hyn sydd ei angen arnom - economïau lleol hyfyr, tirweddau prydferth, digonedd o fywyd gwyllt, dŵr glân, storio carbon; a llai o'r hyn nad ydym ei angen - llifogydd, dirywiad rhywogaethau, erydiad pridd, busnesau cefn gwlad yn edwino.

Rhan hanfodol o greu'r weledigaeth strategol hon yw ymgysylltu â'r rhai sy'n gwybod orau. Mae Ymddiriedolaeth Natur Maldwyn eisiau cysylltu a chydweithio ag unrhyw un sy'n byw, gweithio neu'n mwynhau treulio amser yn ardal y prosiect.

Sut ydych chi eisiau i'r dirwedd edrych? Hoffech chi ei weld rhagor o fywyd gwyllt? Pa ffyrdd sydd fwyaf cynaliadwy i wneud bywoliaeth yma yn eich barn chi?

Dylai'r arolwg hwn gymryd tua 5 - 7 munud i'w gwblhau. Diolch ymlaen llaw am eich amser.

Gweledigaeth o Dirwedd Mynydd Waun Fawr

Nid yw Mynydd Waun Fawr a'r ardal ucheldir gyfagos yn gyfarwydd i'r rhan fwyaf o bobl, ac eithrio'r rhai sy'n byw ac yn gweithio yno, trysor cudd gydag ardaloedd eang o gynefinoedd llawn bywyd gwyllt. Mae Ymddiriedolaeth Natur Maldwyn eisiau helpu i ddiogelu a chryfhau dyfodol yr ardal arbennig hon drwy gydweithio â'r gymuned leol. Mae 'gweledigaeth o dirwedd' yn cael ei chreu i helpu arwain perchnogion tir a rheolwyr wrth reoli tir neu greu cynefinoedd newydd, nodi opsiynau addas a chyfluoedd ar gyfer adferiad ecolegol a gwella cysylltedd. Rydym eisiau gweld mwy o'r hyn sydd ei angen arnom - economïau lleol hyfyr, tirweddau prydferth, digonedd o fywyd gwyllt, dŵr glân, storio carbon; a llai o'r hyn nad ydym ei angen - llifogydd, dirywiad rhywogaethau, erydiad pridd, busnesau cefn gwlad yn edwino.

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Dweud EICH dweud...

Byddem wrth ein bodd yn cael eich sylwadau, awgrymiadau ac adborth. Cwblhewch ein harolwg ar-lein drwy sganio'r cod QR isod, neu siaradwch ag aelod o'n tîm prosiect yn un o'n digwyddiadau ymgynghori dros dro. Cynhelir y rhain **ddydd Mawrth, 18 Chwefror rhwng 10am a 12pm yn Neuadd Bentref Caersws** a rhwng **2pm a 4pm yng Nghanolfan Gymunedol Llanbrynmair**, yn ogystal ag ar **ddydd Gwener, 21 Chwefror rhwng 12pm a 2pm yn Sefydliad Llanfair Caereinion**.

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Holiadur



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Survey Responses & Analysis



A total of 145 responses were received for the online survey – 141 in English and 4 in Welsh.

Statements

Following analysis of all survey responses by MWT, this report will focus on the results of a selection of responses, with some respondent comments to demonstrate feelings. The graphs show the combined English and Welsh responses. For all response graphs and comments, please see separate report.

None of the questions received complete agreement or disagreement from the collective. There was a lack of consensus on 46% of the questions (13 questions), while the remaining 46% (13 questions) showed varying degrees of agreement.



Respondents

The distribution of respondents closely aligns with the target audience, with 90% identifying as landowners, land managers, or residents. Of the remaining 10%, 4% were visitors who enjoy the area, and 6% comprised Community Council representatives, Natural Resources Wales staff, ecologists, or residents outside the project area.

Approximately a quarter of respondents fondly recalled experiencing more wildlife in the landscape during their youth.

Q1. Are you a land owner, land manager, or an interested resident?



Responses where there was agreement

Overall, there was a strong desire to help wildlife and tackle climate change, while ensuring that any restoration work in the Mynydd Waun Fawr area was supported by local people and did not jeopardise local culture and identity.

The question that received the highest level of consensus was:

- **Question 4:** "Restoration in this landscape must not compromise the ability of local people to live and work here," with 91% of respondents agreeing.

The other three questions which received strong agreement were:

- **Question 3:** "The support of local people is vital to the long-term success of restoring this landscape," with 87% agreeing.
- **Question 17:** "I would like to see more wildlife in this landscape," with 84% agreeing.
- **Question 18:** "We should do all we can in this landscape to ensure Curlew do not go extinct," with 88% agreeing.

While the response to **Question 4** is not surprising, it is encouraging to see such strong support. It's heartening to recognise that the involvement of local people is viewed as crucial to landscape restoration. Additionally, it's great to hear that there is a strong desire to see more wildlife and to save the Curlew.

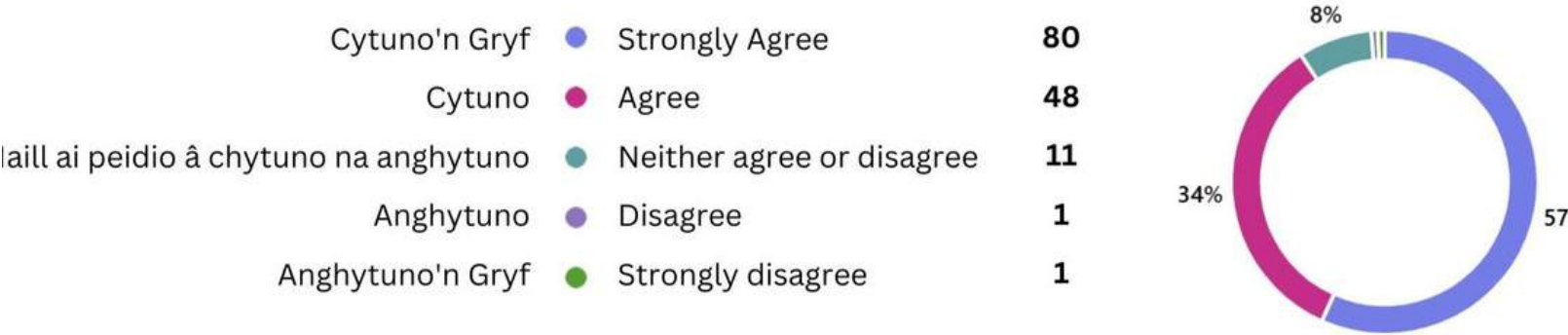
"This is a beautiful, tranquil landscape which is great for our mental health - the sort of place which is fast disappearing from our countryside as various industrial areas are forced upon us in the name of progress. The area needs to be maintained, and maybe improved in order for wildlife to survive and increase biodiversity to enhance its beautiful tranquillity."

"As someone who's lucky enough to have been brought up here, and farmed my whole life within this area, I feel very strongly about looking after it, for wildlife and us. I feel very grateful I've grown up surrounded by wildlife and nature. It's so important our future generations have this but also we don't lose our culture and livelihoods."

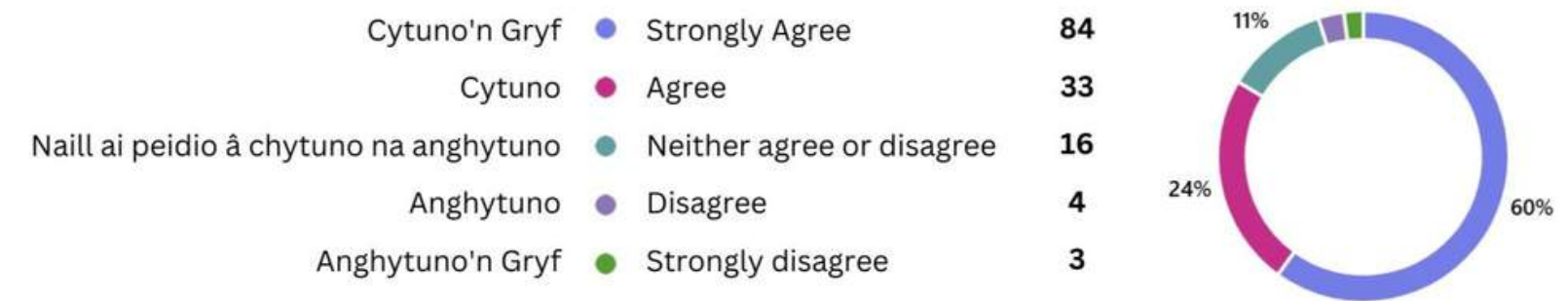
Farmers in this area already play a massive part in helping preserve nature. On a daily basis, we are out caring for our livestock and see hares, foxes, rabbits, red kites, kestrels, hen harriers, barn owls, curlews in the spring and my favourite, the cuckoo, just to name a few."

Responses where there was agreement

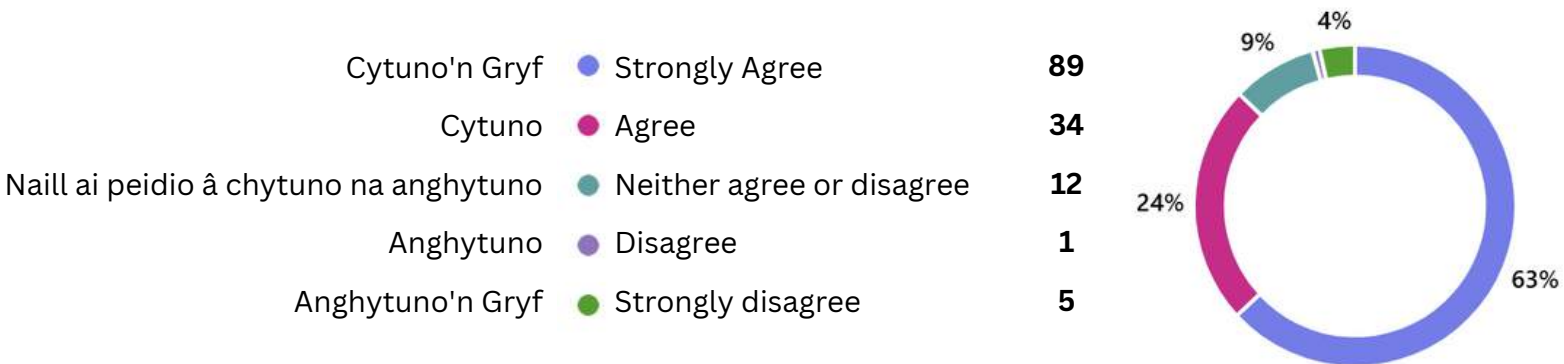
Q4. Restoration in this landscape must not compromise the ability of local people to live and work here



Q17. I would like to see more wildlife in this landscape



Q3. The support of local people is vital to the long term success of restoring this landscape



Q18. We should do all we can in this landscape to ensure Curlew do not go extinct



Responses where there was broad agreement

Broad agreement was expressed for the following questions:

- **Question 2:** "It is important that we restore this landscape for generations to come," with 82% agreeing.
- **Question 7:** "Land managers in this landscape should be paid for providing benefits from their land including carbon capture and storage, biodiversity protection, and flood control," with 82% agreeing.
- **Question 10:** "Access to locally relevant maps identifying the most appropriate restoration opportunities would be useful to me," with 79% agreeing.
- **Question 13:** "Protecting and restoring peat in this area should be a high priority," with 78% agreeing.
- **Question 19:** "Nature in this landscape needs to be restored," with 79% agreeing.
- **Question 26:** "Farms in this landscape can be part of the solution for tackling biodiversity loss," with 78% agreeing.
- **Question 27:** "Farms in this landscape can be part of the solution for tackling climate change," with 76% agreeing.

This demonstrates broad agreement that restoration is needed, with appropriate funding mechanisms for land managers being an essential part of ensuring this happens. Additionally, maps are considered beneficial for the process.

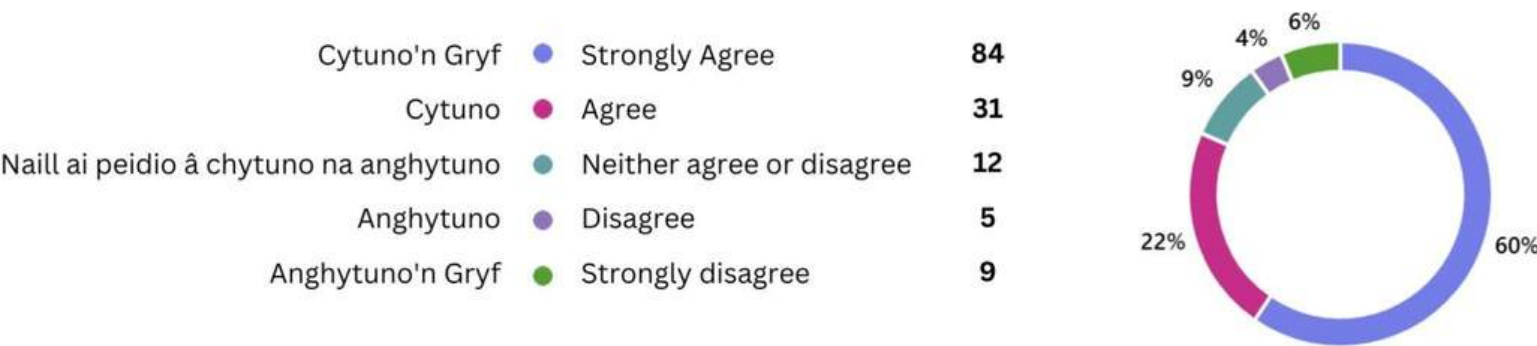
Over three-quarters of respondents felt that peat restoration is a high priority and that farms can play a crucial role in tackling the biodiversity and climate crisis.

"Public rights of way should be maintained in good condition. Archaeological sites especially the spiritual monuments around Carreg Wen and Esgair Cwmowen, should be respected. The area has potential to be a dark skies area."

"These wild uplands need to be protected from industrialisation. Restoration of peat for carbon storage and enhancing the essential habitats for curlews and other endangered birds, as well as plants needs to come about sensitively, managed by experienced wildlife experts and educated landowners. Maintaining the open tranquil landscapes are essential for the mental and emotional well-being of the country."

Responses where there was broad agreement

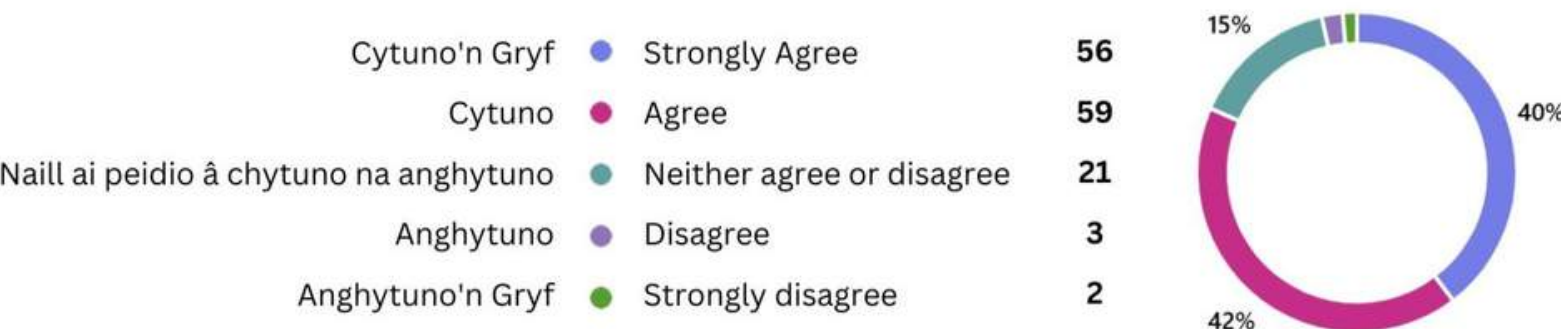
Q2. It is important that we restore this landscape for generations to come.



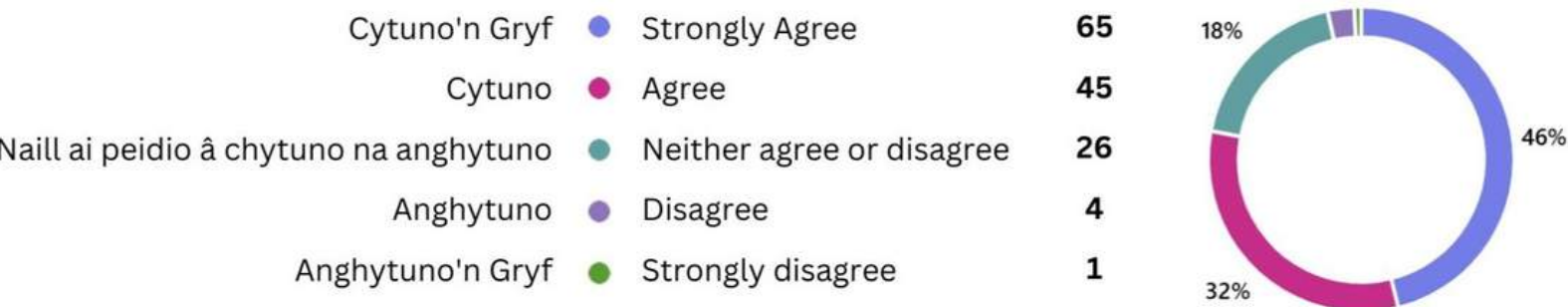
Q10. Access to locally relevant maps identifying the most appropriate restoration opportunities would be useful to me.



Q7. Land managers in this landscape should be paid for providing benefits from their land including carbon capture and storage, biodiversity protection, and flood control.

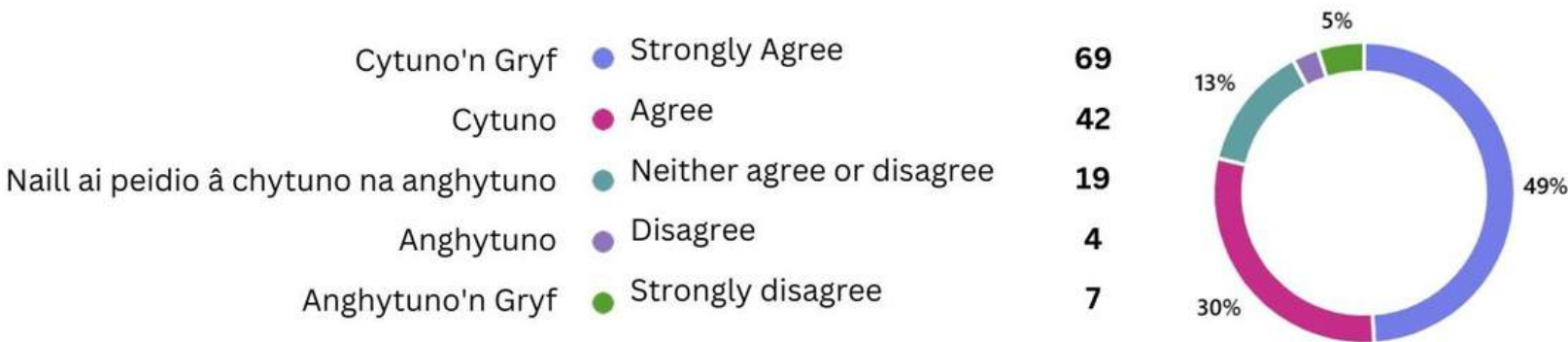


Q13. Protecting and restoring peat in this area should be a high priority.



Responses where there was broad agreement

Q19. Nature in this landscape needs to be restored.



Q27. Farms in this landscape can be part of the solution for tackling climate change.



Q26. Farms in this landscape can be part of the solution for tackling biodiversity loss.



Responses where there was slight agreement

Two questions received slight agreement:

- **Question 15:** "In principle, I would support more energy generation projects in this landscape which don't negatively impact the local community, nature, and climate," with 61% agreeing, 20% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 19% disagreeing.
- **Question 24:** "Natural regeneration of trees is more desirable in this landscape than tree planting" with 64% agreeing, 27% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 9% disagreeing.

This demonstrates a possible need for further dialogue to understand support and concerns and find common ground regarding what constitutes “acceptable” energy projects.

The preference for natural tree regeneration over planting suggests a strong belief in allowing nature to take the lead in restoring habitats. This approach may resonate with those who value low-intervention methods, though the neutral and opposed responses highlight the importance of clarifying the benefits and limitations of both approaches.

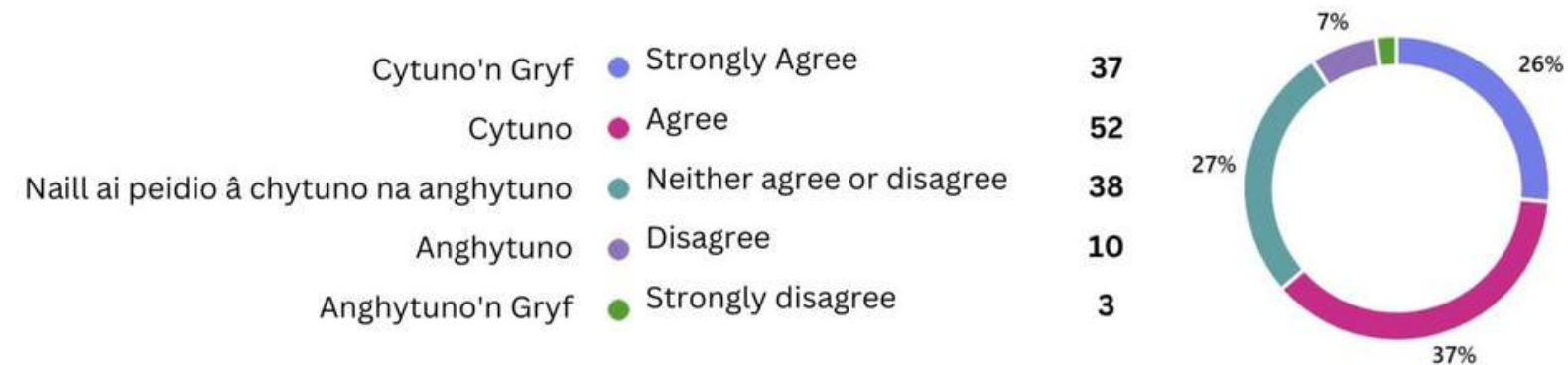
“I agree with forestry and tree planting, but not blanket conifers; Broad-leaved trees only.”

“The majority of my positive answers (agree or strongly agree) relate to land afforested in the 70s/80s which in a period of just a few years after planting removed much of the biodiversity that was present when I grew up in the area. Our mountain had 1,000 ewes on it as far back as the 1920s. By the mid 1970s there were still lots of fish in the streams and curlews, lapwings etc. By the mid 80s, after tree planting, these were diminished or gone. Our Tir Gofal and Glastir agreements required grazing to be a fraction of previous levels - with no reference to historical practice that had maintained appropriate habitat. Afforestation introduced sancturies for foxes, crows, badgers etc. that repeated scientific studies have shown to be responsible for most nest failures - something MWT should be honest about. With regard to renewable energy, this has to be embraced however unpalatable it is to people like me who love open landscapes. Those who object should stand by their principles by disconnecting from the National Grid and returning to washing their clothes in streams and using mangles.”

Q15. In principle, I would support more energy generation projects in this landscape which don't negatively impact on the local community, nature and climate.



Q24. Natural regeneration of trees is more desirable in this landscape than tree planting.



Responses where there was lack of agreement - Land Management

Responses to the following land management questions highlight a lack of agreement among participants:

- **Question 21:** “Traditional land uses already make significant contributions to protecting nature within this landscape,” with 48% agreeing, 28% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 23% disagreeing.
- **Question 11:** “We need to be prepared to let go of some traditional land uses to think creatively and imaginatively about the future of this landscape,” with 50% agreeing, 19% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 31% disagreeing.
- **Question 12:** “Livestock grazing should play a major role in nature restoration in this landscape,” with 56% agreeing, 36% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 8% disagreeing.
- **Question 28:** “Sheep numbers should be reduced in this landscape to reduce ecological stress on the land,” with 43% agreeing, 28% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 29% disagreeing.
- **Question 25:** “Plantation forests are an important part of this landscape,” with 14% agreeing, 34% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 52% disagreeing.
- **Question 8:** “The scope for nature-based businesses in this landscape will be increased by restoration,” with 57% agreeing, 28% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 14% disagreeing.

- **Question 9:** “There is potential to develop tourism opportunities in this landscape,” with 54% agreeing, 26% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 20% disagreeing.

Responses to the land management questions reveal diverse and often conflicting opinions. Nearly half of respondents believe that traditional land uses contribute to nature protection, though a significant portion disagrees, reflecting mixed views on their effectiveness.

Half of the participants support moving away from some traditional practices to reimagine the landscape, yet a notable percentage opposes this idea. Livestock grazing is viewed positively for restoration purposes, with the majority supporting its role, though many express uncertainty, and opinions remain divided on reducing sheep numbers to alleviate ecological stress.

A majority reject the importance of plantation forests, indicating concerns about their ecological drawbacks. Optimism surrounds restoration efforts, with many believing they can enable nature-based businesses and tourism opportunities.

These findings highlight the importance of inclusive dialogue, evidence-based decisions, and policies that balance ecological sustainability, cultural heritage, and economic opportunities.

Responses where there was lack of agreement - Land Management

“Mae’n bwysig cydnabod yr ymdrechion y mae perchnogion tir lleol eisoes yn eu gwneud i greu dyfodol mwy cynaliadwy. Mae llawer ohonynt wedi bod yn rheoli eu tir mewn ffordd sy’n cefnogi bioamrywiaeth, yn lleihau erydiad pridd ac yn gwella storio carbon ers blynnyddoedd. Maent yn wynebu heriau economaidd ac amgylcheddol sylweddol, ac ni fyddai’n deg na chynaliadwy i danseilio eu bywoliaeth drwy newidiadau gorfodol neu fesurau sy’n methu ystyried eu hanghenion.”

(It is important to recognise the efforts that local land owners are already making to create a more sustainable future. Many of them have been managing their land in a way that supports biodiversity, reduces soil erosion and improves carbon storage for years. They face significant economic and environmental challenges, and it would not be fair or sustainable to undermine their livelihood through forced changes or measures that fail to consider their needs.)

“We Regularly ride our Mountainbikes around here and very rarely see anybody else. The track to the boathouse is brilliant but the rest can be difficult because of the rough terrain. There is a compromise between nature and the economy but the better leisure facilities will attract more people who are then prepared to protect the nature. Lets have the bridleways marked and cleared.”

“Sheep farming should be reduced, but a more diverse farming style (seasonal vegetables, wildlife, fields for crops and not livestock etc.) should be highly encouraged/enforced and taught to younger generations. The restoration of wildlife and biodiversity offers chances for a healthier community and a more diverse landscape is beneficial to everyone, farmers included.”

“It’s important to recognise that landowners in this area have been effectively managing the land for generations, balancing economic sustainability with environmental stewardship. There is no major issue here that requires drastic intervention—local farmers and land managers already play a crucial role in preserving biodiversity, maintaining clean water, and preventing soil erosion. While conservation efforts are valuable, they must respect the knowledge and experience of those who work the land daily. Many of the perceived problems, such as species decline or rural business struggles, are often overstated or caused by external factors beyond the control of local landowners. Any strategy moving forward should prioritise collaboration rather than imposing unnecessary changes that could threaten livelihoods and the rural economy.”

Responses where there was lack of agreement - Land Management

Q21. Traditional land uses already make significant contributions to protecting nature within this landscape.



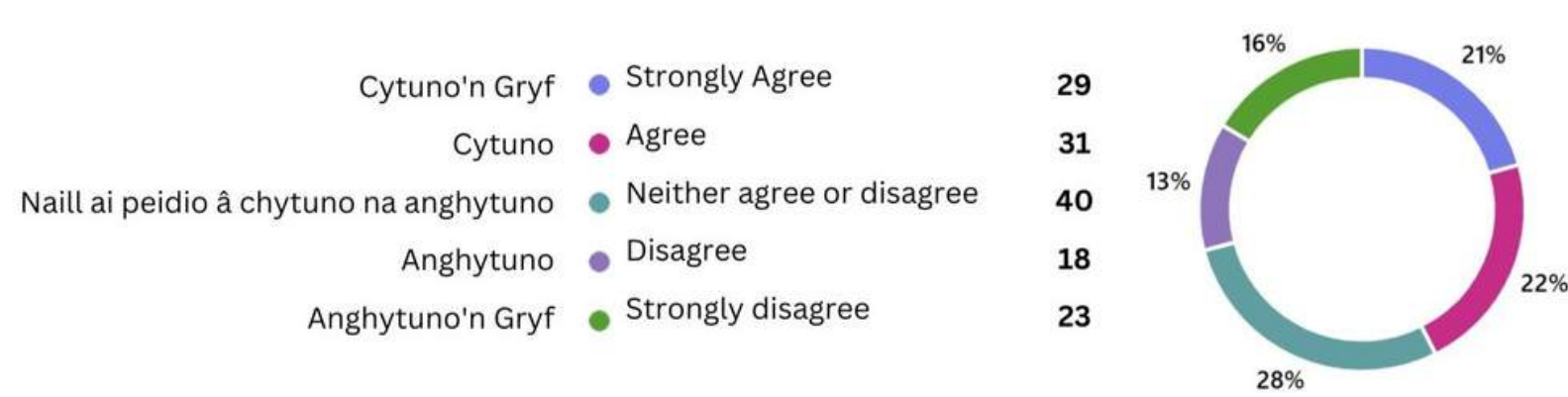
Q12. Livestock grazing should play a major role in nature restoration in this landscape.



Q11. We need to be prepared to let go of some traditional land uses to be able to think creatively and imaginatively about the future of this landscape.

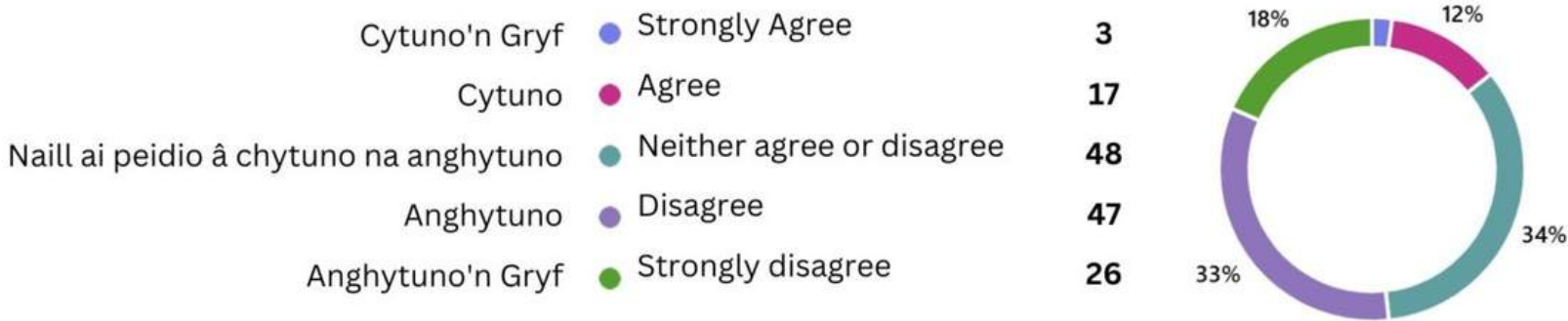


Q28. Sheep numbers should be reduced in this landscape to reduce ecological stress on the land.



Responses where there was lack of agreement - Land Management

Q25. Plantation forests are an important part of this landscape.



Q9. There is potential to develop tourism opportunities in this landscape.



Q8. The scope for nature-based businesses in this landscape will be increased by restoration.



Responses where there was lack of agreement - Wind Generation

Responses to the following wind generation question highlights a lack of agreement among participants:

- **Question 14:** “Restoration in this landscape is not compatible with the development of wind energy,” with 42% agreeing, 22% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 36% disagreeing.

Opinions on whether restoration and wind energy development can coexist in the landscape are divided. While 42% of respondents agree that restoration and wind energy are incompatible, 36% disagree, and 22% remain neutral or uncertain. These mixed views highlight differing perceptions of the potential trade-offs, such as ecological disruption caused by wind turbines, versus the long-term climate benefits of renewable energy.

The level of uncertainty suggests a lack of clarity among some respondents, emphasising the need for more thorough explanation of the environmental costs and impacts of wind energy generation and transmission by a trusted third party.

To see Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust’s statement on wind farms in Montgomeryshire **click here**.

“Wind farms cause ecological damage and destruction of habitat and wildlife.”

“Small wind farms, not massive ones, would be more acceptable, not sited on valuable peat areas.”

“I feel very strongly about the amount of wind farms in the area, not only are they an eyesore but also a 'white elephant'. These destroy the wildlife inhabitants.”

“I strongly support the development of energy production in this area. Our communities are totally starved of investment, schools are crumbling, social care for our elderly is at a critical level. Money from the energy companies is the only source. Please see the effect on the community of Carno: support for students in Higher Education, a superb community centre and a new school made possible by contribution from Wind.”

Responses where there was lack of agreement - Wind Generation

Q14. Restoration in this landscape is not compatible with the development of wind energy.



Responses where there was lack of agreement - Visual Aesthetic

Responses to the following visual aesthetic questions highlight a lack of agreement among participants:

- **Question 6:** "It is important to me that this landscape looks neat and tidy," with 32% agreeing, 26% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 42% disagreeing.
- **Question 20:** "We need to be prepared for this landscape to change if we want to make positive changes for nature here," with 57% agreeing, 25% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 18% disagreeing..
- **Question 23:** "I prefer this landscape to have open views rather than extensive tree cover" with 41% agreeing, 43% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 16% disagreeing.

The responses to the visual aesthetic questions reveal differing opinions. While many participants are open to landscape changes to benefit nature, opinions on neatness, open views, and tree coverage are more divided. Preferences for a natural or untamed aesthetic contrast with those favoring a tidy appearance, and there is ambivalence about balancing open views with tree cover. These findings underscore the need for flexible approaches that address ecological goals while considering varied aesthetic values in the Mynydd Waun Fawr area.

"Leave the natural landscape as natural as possible!"

"These wild uplands need to be protected from industrialisation. Restoration of peat for carbon storage and enhancing the essential habitats for curlews and other endangered birds, as well as plants needs to come about sensitively, managed by experienced wildlife trust and educated landowners. Maintaining the open tranquil landscapes are essential for the mental and emotional well-being of the country."

"Any changes to the landscape must only be undertaken with agreement of landowners."

"The landscape should be left to nature, trees, plants and wildlife along with carefully managed rotation of grazing animals, not to create a theme park which may be visually pleasant, but a desert in itself."

Responses where there was lack of agreement - Visual Aesthetic

Q6. It is important to me that this landscape looks neat and tidy.



Q23. I prefer this landscape to have open views rather than extensive tree cover.



Q20. We need to be prepared for this landscape to change if we want to make positive changes for nature here.



Workshop Attendance

Over a span of two days, three workshops were organised at different venues and scheduled at various times, including an evening session, to maximise accessibility for a wide range of attendees. Although many individuals had registered for each session, some informed organisers on the day that they could no longer attend, while others simply did not show up. As a result, attendance was lower than hoped.

The exact figures were as follows:

Llanbrynmair Community Centre: 2 participants supported by 4 staff

Caersws Village Hall: 7 participants and 1 volunteer supported by 3 staff

Llanfair Caereinion Institute: 11 participants supported by 5 staff

At the beginning of each workshop the Chatham House Rules concept was explained and attendees were asked to adhere to them. It was also made clear that no attendee would be directly quoted and the feedback would remain anonymous.

The following pages document an overview of the key points and insights gathered from the three workshops. Summarising these discussions have identified common themes, areas of agreement, and differing perspectives that arose.



Workshops - Key Points & Insights



- Meaningful engagement with landowners is fundamental to the success of any initiatives in the Mynydd Waun Fawr area. Their cooperation and active involvement are essential, as they hold the knowledge, rights, and responsibility over the land. Establishing clear communication, fostering trust, and aligning the goals of conservation or restoration projects with the priorities of landowners can create a foundation for long-term success. Ensuring their perspectives and needs are considered helps build collaborative solutions that benefit both the land and the community.
- The preservation of landscape views is essential, as they hold not only aesthetic value but also cultural, emotional, and environmental significance. Protecting these vistas ensures that future generations can experience their beauty, tranquility, and sense of place, fostering a lasting connection to wildlife and nature. Prioritising thoughtful management and conservation efforts could help safeguard these landscapes against threats, preserving their integrity and legacy for years to come.
- There is significant support for protecting curlews and their habitats, with some suggesting they could be considered a "poster species" for conservation efforts in the area. There was a feeling that land use change in the wider landscape had effectively turned the MWF area into a honeypot for predators, further threatening species like the curlew.
- Opinions on the role of badgers in the decline of curlews are divided. While some blame badgers for reducing curlew populations, others point out that badger culls have not yielded evidence of improved chick survival rates. This highlights the complexity of addressing curlew conservation, where factors such as habitat management, predator control, and broader ecosystem interactions must be carefully balanced to ensure effective protection. Further research and community engagement may help guide more targeted conservation strategies.
- Discussions about tourism in the Mynydd Waun Fawr project area revealed contrasting viewpoints. Some participants strongly believed that increased tourism could have a negative impact, disrupting the solitude and tranquility that make the area unique. They expressed concerns about potential overcrowding and changes to the wildlife and natural character of the landscape. On the other hand, others saw value in promoting green tourism initiatives, emphasising the potential economic benefits and opportunities to raise awareness about conservation efforts. They suggested that eco-friendly tourism could be a way to balance wildlife and environmental protection with sustainable development, bringing benefits to local communities while maintaining the area's natural appeal. These contrasting opinions highlight the need for a thoughtful approach to tourism planning, ensuring any initiatives respect the character of the landscape while addressing community concerns.

Workshops - Key Points & Insights



- Concerns were raised that locals on motorbikes, rather than visitors, are contributing to problems in the area, suggesting that some issues affecting the landscape or community may stem from local activity rather than external tourism. Addressing this would require engaging with the local community to better understand the root causes and exploring measures to reduce any negative impacts while promoting responsible use of the area.
- Opinions on existing and proposed wind turbine developments in the Mynydd Waun Fawr area are highly polarising. Some view wind turbines as beneficial for generating renewable energy, addressing climate change and providing financial investment in the area, while others see them as disruptive to wildlife and the landscape, citing concerns such as visual impact, ecological disturbance, and effects on local communities. This divide highlights the need for consideration of both the environmental and social implications of wind energy projects, as well as open dialogue to address differing perspectives.
- Encouraging children and young people to visit and connect with their local landscape is vital, as they represent the future stewards of the Mynydd Waun Fawr area. By fostering a sense of wonder and curiosity about wildlife and nature, it could help "rewild" their imagination, inspiring creativity, empathy, and a deeper understanding of their surroundings.
- Introducing hands-on activities such as nature walks, wildlife observation, and community restoration projects could create lasting connections to the land. Educational programs and storytelling can further ignite people's interest by highlighting the beauty, history, and importance of preserving the Mynydd Waun Fawr landscapes. Empowering people of all ages in this way would not only nurture their personal development but also help build a generation that values and protects the environment for years to come.
- Global influences and shifts in farming practices over the past 150 years have significantly transformed the Mynydd Waun Fawr area. Historically, farming was highly labour-intensive, which supported a much larger population—an estimated 50 times more people lived in the area compared to today. However, advances in agricultural technology and changing economic landscapes have reduced the need for manual labour, leading to a steep decline in the local population. This change has likely impacted community dynamics, land use, and the character of the landscape itself, creating a different set of challenges and opportunities for the area's future. Balancing modern needs with historical heritage remains a critical consideration in shaping the area's ongoing development.

Workshops - Key Points & Insights



- Historically, barley and oats were cultivated at altitudes as high as 400 meters in the Mynydd Waun Fawr area at a time when the population size was 50x the current number of inhabitants. This was put forward as a reminder that the landscape we see now is not how it has always been, that land use has changed and that it can be helpful to look back to examine farming practices from a time when wildlife was more abundant.
- Areas that are currently overgrazed have the potential to recover rapidly when given the chance. With even small adjustments to land management practices, significant improvements can be made, benefiting the overall ecosystem. Such changes could include rotational grazing, reducing grazing intensity, or introducing periods of rest for the land. These measures would not only allow vegetation to regenerate but also create better conditions for wildlife to thrive, demonstrating how relatively minor interventions can lead to meaningful and positive environmental outcomes.
- For a food policy to be effective, it must align seamlessly with broader government policy. This coordination would ensure that objectives like sustainable agriculture, food security, public health, and economic development are supported at all levels. When food policies are developed in isolation or conflict with government strategies, it can lead to inefficiencies, mismanagement, or unintended consequences.
- In regions like the Mynydd Waun Fawr area, promoting green skills jobs could help address environmental challenges while boosting local economies. For example, suggested initiatives were rewilding projects, habitat restoration, or supporting green tourism activities. Building up green skills jobs not only benefits the environment but also fosters a skilled workforce capable of driving long-term, sustainable development.
- The Summit to Sea programme faced significant criticism and was widely unpopular, particularly among local communities. Concerns were raised about its approach, which some felt lacked sufficient engagement with stakeholders, including landowners and residents. This has understandably left people feeling apprehensive about the aims of similar projects like this one in Mynydd Waun Fawr, as they may fear a repeat of past issues.
- For this work to have a lasting impact, it absolutely needs to influence policy and decision-making at higher levels. Without integration into broader frameworks and strategic plans, its potential to drive meaningful, large-scale change may remain limited. By shaping policies, this initiative can ensure that its principles and outcomes are recognised, supported, and implemented beyond the immediate project area.

Workshops - Key Points & Insights



- The lack of collaboration among wind farm developers, with each working in isolation, poses challenges for the area. This fragmented approach can lead to inefficiencies, such as overlapping projects, missed opportunities for shared infrastructure, and a failure to address broader environmental or community concerns comprehensively.
- A reported increase in birds of prey, urban foxes being dumped in the area, and growing number of badgers is perceived to have created challenges for ground-nesting birds like lapwings and curlews, which are particularly vulnerable to predation. The inability to control badger populations since the 1980s, coupled with issues from other species like mink and grey squirrels, is believed to have compounded the pressure on these birds.
- The uniform approach of agricultural schemes set by the Welsh Government presents challenges, as it doesn't account for the diverse needs of Wales' varied landscapes and regions. Different areas have unique ecological, cultural, and agricultural characteristics, meaning that a one-size-fits-all policy may not effectively support farmers or address local issues.
- The fact that 90% of farming families in the Mynydd Waun Fawr area are Welsh speakers, with a deep connection to their heritage, is a crucial element that any project must respect and integrate into its planning. The Welsh language and cultural traditions are not only integral to their identity but also influence their approach to farming and land management.
- Some of the survey questions required specific technological or ecological knowledge, making them unclear for some respondents and limiting their ability to provide informed opinions. The term "traditional land use" was seen as too vague, with interpretations ranging from pre-industrial practices to more recent methods, leading to confusion. The question about increasing wildlife lacked clarity, leaving participants uncertain if it referred to existing species, reintroduced species, or new ones. The word "culture" was ambiguous, with respondents unsure if it referred to societal traditions, local heritage, or something else. The term "restore" was considered too vague, making it difficult for participants to understand and answer questions meaningfully.

Conclusion



Achieving balance is key to the success of any landscape project in the Mynydd Waun Fawr area. This means carefully integrating wildlife and environmental goals, farming needs, cultural heritage, and community priorities. Striking the right harmony ensures that the natural beauty and biodiversity of the landscape can thrive, while also supporting the livelihoods and traditions of those who have lived and worked there for generations.

A balanced approach involves collaboration and mutual respect among all stakeholders, from landowners and farmers to conservationists and policymakers. It's about finding solutions that respect the past, address current challenges, and look toward a sustainable future. By embracing this equilibrium, projects can foster shared ownership and long-term success for both people and nature of Mynydd Waun Fawr.



Lessons Learnt



- Although the questions taken from the toolkit were designed to stimulate discussion, many participants found them frustrating and confusing due to a lack of clarity. This feedback suggests that the phrasing or structure of the questions were too ambiguous or open to interpretation, hindering productive conversations. To improve future discussions, it would be beneficial to refine the questions by making them more precise and ensuring they are accessible to a wide range of participants, regardless of their background or familiarity with the topic.
- Clarifying the term “restore” in future surveys—perhaps by specifying what kind of restoration is meant (e.g., ecological, cultural, or aesthetic)—could help ensure more accurate and informed responses.
- To avoid confusion over the term “culture” in the future, it would be helpful to provide context or specify the intended meaning of "culture" within the question.
- To address the concerns over technological or ecological knowledge being needed for some questions, future surveys could include a brief explanation or context about, for example, how livestock grazing relates to restoration efforts, helping respondents make more informed assessments.
- The lack of clarity about how far back "traditional land use" goes or which specific practices are being referenced can make the term ambiguous. Providing context or defining the time frame and practices intended could help ensure a shared understanding and more meaningful discussions around land use and its implications.
- To avoid confusion about what was meant by wanting to see more wildlife in the area, it may be helpful to specify whether the emphasis is on conserving and expanding current populations, reintroducing native species, and/or experimenting with new introductions. Clear context ensures better engagement and more informed responses.
- To address the concerns of landowners, it's vital to ensure transparency and consistent engagement with them from the outset. Openly sharing the goals, potential impacts, and benefits of any project, while actively listening to landowners' perspectives, can help alleviate their apprehension. Building trust through collaboration and respecting landowners' rights and knowledge is key to fostering a productive relationship and ensuring the success of any initiative in the Mynydd Waun Fawr area.

Lessons Learnt



- Lobbying policy and decision makers to tailor agri-schemes to reflect the distinct nature of each region could lead to more sustainable outcomes. A more flexible, region-specific approach would empower farmers to implement practices that are most effective and relevant to their local environment, fostering stronger relationships between communities and policymakers.
- Despite significant efforts to publicise the consultation process through a variety of methods and locations (see Consultation Approach pages earlier in this report for full details), some participants felt that additional outreach could have improved its reach and inclusivity. For example, advertising in The County Times newspaper was mentioned as a missed opportunity to connect with a wider audience.
- If the community consultation process had started earlier, project staff would have had more time to address the evolving circumstances. This could have allowed for the introduction of additional in-person or online engagement activities, potentially reducing anxiety within the local community and fostering higher levels of participation.
- The two week delay in printing the bilingual flyers and launching the public promotion of the consultation process and pop-up events—despite the surveys being ready and live—meant that notice of the first round of public events was shorter than intended. Some participants feedback that they needed more than three weeks’ notice to be able to attend. This highlights the importance of ensuring that promotional materials and outreach efforts align with the overall timeline, allowing sufficient lead time for the community to engage fully. Learning from this experience, future initiatives could prioritise earlier production and dissemination of materials to maximise awareness and participation. Such adjustments can help make consultations more inclusive and effective.

Next Steps

The next steps could focus on building on the insights from the workshop discussions while engaging all stakeholders effectively. Here's a potential outline:



1. Engage with Stakeholders:

- Communicate the findings from the overall consultation process to all stakeholders, including landowners, local communities, and policymakers.
- Continue dialogues to address concerns, clarify objectives, and build trust.

2. Develop the Landscape Vision:

- Use the feedback to refine and shape the "landscape vision" into a practical and strategic guide.
- Ensure it incorporates wildlife and ecological restoration priorities, viable economic opportunities, and the cultural heritage of the area.

3. Create an Action Plan:

- Outline specific, achievable steps for implementing the vision, including timelines and responsibilities.
- Highlight funding opportunities and partnerships that could support projects in the area.

4. Influence Policy:

- Present the findings and vision to decision-makers to ensure alignment with regional and national policies.
- Advocate for flexible, region-specific agri-schemes and support for community-led initiatives.

5. Communicate and Educate:

- Launch an inclusive awareness campaign to keep the community informed and engaged.
- Provide resources and training to landowners and managers to help them implement changes effectively.

6. Monitor and Adapt:

- Establish a system to track progress and outcomes of implemented projects.
- Stay open to ongoing feedback and make adjustments as needed to ensure the vision's success.



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