



Cyfoeth
Naturiol
Cymru
Natural
Resources
Wales

Trials case study

Stakeholder engagement

We involved local people, partners and businesses throughout the trials to test ideas, gather evidence, and agree priorities.

Rhondda



We met and worked with a wide range of people in the Rhondda, including: organisations, local businesses, community groups, students, volunteers and residents.

Our engagement varied in scale, from speaking to residents and community groups at local events, to organising large scale engagement workshops.

The approach was met with great energy and enthusiasm from people who were keen to share their knowledge and ideas. We did not set agendas which encouraged open dialogue.

We worked closely with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council throughout the trial and shared learning, co-organised community events, and attended the Local Service Board meetings. Support from Cynefin's place based coordinator was also vital when we engaged with local communities.

The workshops were vital to find out the main things people wanted for their community and their aspirations for the area. We also invited local businesses to speak. For example, a local bike store owner spoke to share his perspective of his hometown, and his vision for a family friendly bike park in the lower Rhondda valley, which he hopes will benefit the local community.



We learnt there is great enthusiasm for collaborative working and co-production, and a wide variety of stakeholders encourages innovative thinking and helps better understand root causes of issues.

Dyfi

In the Dyfi we organised open public meetings, drop in sessions, meetings with landowners through existing contacts, and meetings with interested organisations.

We created visual products such as a video about the Dyfi trial which allowed us to set the scene at meetings. We also used maps, particularly opportunity maps, to demonstrate what the work might look like.



The face to face approach showed that we are visible and accessible and feedback was instant and can be responded to on the spot. Using several engagement methods worked well, though some groups were harder to reach such as young people and landowners.

Engagement needs to be more than a partnership of the willing. Gaining the views of difficult to reach groups and those with high influence is essential for balanced priorities.

The farmers and farmers groups that were engaged in the trial gave clear messages around maintaining income preserving culture and need for long term incentive agreements. This 'bottom up' input from the Dyfi farmers themselves was much more valuable than anything that their representatives could provide.



The scale of engagement was limited by the time available. Engagement requires time and effort to do right and needs to have a clear purpose around a place. It also takes time to build relationships with key interest groups – such as landowners.

Tawe

In the Tawe we worked with Swansea Environmental Forum to inform, inspire and involve people in decisions about their natural resources. Working with them enabled us to reach audiences that we wouldn't have otherwise engaged with.

The project involved an online and face to face public survey and evening community events. We organised a conference with workshops focussed creating an action plan to improve the area. We used electronic voting as part of the Our Bay project which would also be worth mentioning as this worked well as a technique to get consensus at an event. And an interactive website based around a striking image of the catchment asking people to leave comments about key issues and opportunities,

In total 269 people actively contributed to the consultation whilst 1,150 people viewed the smart nature website.

Some of the techniques were more successful than others. Success may have been impacted by the lead in times for some elements of the work and the resources available. This is particularly true for the website and the community consultation events. However what the project has shown is that a mixed approach to consulting and engaging stakeholders can be beneficial – making it more likely that a wider range of stakeholders are involved.



Smart Nature: Beacons to Bay

Visit the new interactive website:
www.smartnature.net

Explore the Tawe Corridor and Swansea Bay to discover how we all benefit from natural resources in so many ways.

Tell us how you feel about the natural environment in your area - your concerns and ideas for improving how it is managed for people, the environment and the economy.

Smart Nature is a partnership project of Swansea Environmental Forum and Natural Resources Wales

Swansea Environmental Forum
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