



WaterSource

News Update



Autumn 2021

Working together to safeguard drinking water today and for our future generations

Back in person at Royal Welsh Winter Fair



It was lovely to be back at the Royal Welsh Winter Fair meeting with colleagues and stakeholders.

Dave Ashford met up with Nicola Mills from Natural Resources Wales and Gwion Aeron from EID Cymru.

Nigel Elgar got the chance to catch up with Richard Roderick from the Beacons Water Group and John Owen, Agricultural Research Centre project manager with Coleg Sir Gar.

Rob Thomas and Alwyn Roberts, our Partnership Coordinators were on hand promoting our WaterSource message and our upcoming activities.





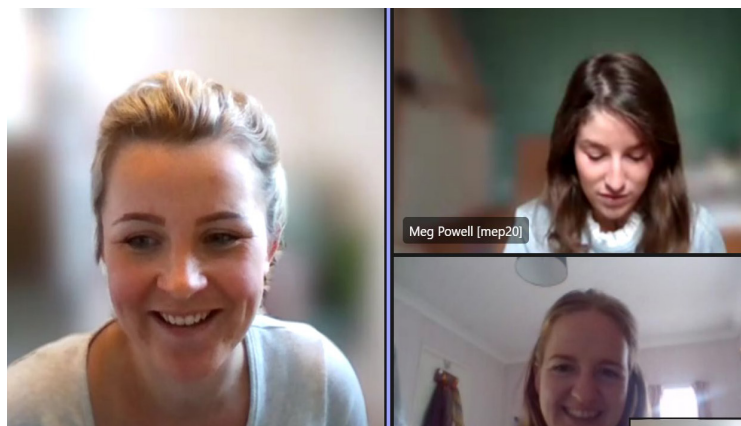
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"I truly believe that this relationship will help ensure a sustainable water supply as well as food security in Wales for generations to come."

Megan Powell
Wales YFC

WaterSource & YFC placement

As part of our philosophy of working in partnership with others, we recently offered two successful applicants the chance to spend a week working alongside the drinking water Catchment Team.

Megan Powell and Laura Evans were the first young farmers chosen to take part in the experience. Megan Powell worked alongside Alwyn Roberts, our Partnership Coordinator in the north, looking at sheep scab in Wales as part of her project on animal health. In particular, she looked at how best to treat the condition without affecting water quality.

Laura meanwhile was paired with Spatial Risk Analyst Jamie Phillips looking at risk mapping. This is the study of the way water flows across a given area of land, and how farmers can work with that landscape to reduce risks to water.

You can hear more about their experiences by listening to our WaterSource podcast, which you can click on [here](#).

Farmers lead the way with carbon sequestration trial

Beacons Water Group members have been continuing to trial innovative and new techniques on their farms. This time it's the turn of Keri Davies.

He recently took to Facebook to report progress on a process for measuring how much carbon his farm is storing in the soils. The trial, which took part in the run up to COP 26, is all part of the EIP project being undertaken by the group looking at how their farms can be carbon neutral. They'll be analysing soil organic matter and carbon sequestration potential across the farms. The thinking is this is the way agriculture can look to reverse climate change.

GPS will allow the farmer to take measurements down to the millimetre, so in 5 years' time Keri can go back to the same spot and see how much carbon has been captured.

The trial has been welcomed for using technology to improve farm efficiency at the same time as protecting water, improving biodiversity and leading by example.





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Brecon Beacons Mega Catchment Partners Day, August 2021

Around 25 partners involved with the Brecon Beacons Mega Catchment - including Natural Resources Wales, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, Hybu Cig Cymru, the Beacons Water Group and our Taf Fechan Community and Landscape Project met up for the first time in 18 months at the end of the summer.

The meeting was hosted by the Roderick family, on their farm overlooking the River Usk and Llangorse lake.

The event was not only an opportunity for a welcome return to face to face contact, but also served as a reminder of the everyday issues facing people living and working in the Beacons, and the importance of agriculture to the area.



Beacons Water Group Study Tour 2021

Farmer cooperation and use of their shared knowledge will be essential for future landscape scale land management and long-term success. This was one of the lessons learned by members of the Beacons Water Group from their recent study tour supported by Farming Connect.

The group visited the [Morley Agriculture Foundation](#) and [Wensum Cluster Farm Group](#) in Norfolk and the [Allerton Project](#) in Leicestershire.

"It was a really interesting tour and highlighted just how important and valuable it is to work with the farming community," said Nigel Elgar, Welsh Water Project Manager with the Brecon Beacons Mega Catchment.

"Their knowledge and understanding of their landscapes, plants, animals, soil and so on is invaluable in helping plan and execute land management projects which protect water supplies and water quality.



"All the people we met on this tour are fully engaged in working in partnership with others to manage the land they work in the best way possible, and it was encouraging to see this.

"The Beacons Water Group is also committed to piloting projects on their farms that will improve farm efficiency and resilience and provide clear benefits for water quality. And I think they found plenty of inspiration on this tour."



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Taf Fechan Landscape & Community Project funding period ends - but partnership is set to continue

The start-up funding for the Taf Fechan Landscape & Community Project came to an end earlier this autumn. But those involved in the partnership have agreed to continue their work into the future.

The TFL&CP is a partnership between Welsh Water, Pontsticill Community Group and Keep Wales Tidy, with initial funding provided by Rural Action Cwm Taf via the European Union fund for Rural development and the

Welsh Government.

Focusing on the environment around Pontsticill, the project aims to protect water supplies and enhance shared enjoyment of the area. It's main areas of work centred on:

- Supporting the local Community
- Exploring Private Water, Waste, and Oil systems
- Scoping a Catchment Ambassador Scheme
- Exploring Woodland Management opportunities
- Working with the community to tackle anti-social behaviour



WaterSource & Agrisgôp

Agrisgôp is an action-learning programme run by Farming Connect which brings together like minded individuals from farm and forestry businesses to problem solve common issues together at a local level. We have worked with groups in select priority catchments to raise awareness of water quality challenges and help us develop catchment-based solutions.

faced by the Welsh Water, and were given an demonstration of water sampling. The group enjoyed the visit, feeding back that it helped bring the issues to life and started them thinking about possible win-win solutions.



Plas Uchaf & Dolwen:

This group was first established two years ago to raise awareness of nutrient and pesticides issues affecting the nearby reservoirs, but meetings have been disrupted and held virtually due to the pandemic.



Llys Y Fran & Rosebush:

The autumn has seen two meetings held of this group. In the first, members were encouraged by Lilwen Joynson (Agrisgôp Facilitator) to think about the what makes successful partnership working, and what a positive outcome looks like.

The second saw the group visit Llys y Fran Reservoir. Members heard about water quality challenges

It was encouraging that the farmers attending with Geraint Hughes (Agrisgôp Facilitator) and Guto Owen (Farming Connect Development Officer) were keen to explore future collaboration opportunities with us. This will enable them to better understand the risks from agricultural activities to drinking water quality in the catchment, and discuss the development of an action plan to address the challenges.



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