



NFWI-WALES NATURAL HERITAGE PROJECT TO PRESERVE, PROTECT AND PLANT URBAN TREES



Project Report
Booklet
September 2017 -
March 2020





Introduction - Mair Stephens, Chair NFWI-Wales

Throughout our 105-year history, the WI has been aware that the choices we make in life shape the legacy we leave. As WI members you remain convinced that we need to be responsible for our actions and that we all have a personal responsibility towards the planet.

It's from this philosophy that the 'Natural Heritage Project to Preserve, Protect and Plant Urban Trees' was born and I'm very proud to have chaired its Steering Committee. Enabled by a grant of £48,100 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, for the last two years, it's engaged members from all over Wales.

The project grew out of members' worry about the threat of climate change to our natural habitats, and the challenges that future generations are set to inherit: a warmer and more chaotic planet. One of the many concerns the members had was the loss of urban trees.

Trees in town centres and on busy streets – known as 'woodland corridors' – provide much higher levels of benefits to both people and wildlife than if they were out in the distant countryside. This 'urban forest' connects us with nature. Research shows it improves health and wellbeing and community cohesion, as well as encouraging exercise, lowering crime levels and even boosting our economy.

Life is better with trees around us. They remove air pollution, intercept millions of litres of rainfall, capture and store carbon from the atmosphere and help to mitigate excessive warming. But trees are under threat. Natural Resources Wales' report 'Tree Cover in Wales' Towns and Cities' shows that Wales is losing urban trees at a worrying rate. A staggering 73 per cent of urban areas have lost trees since 2010, and between 2009 and 2013, 159 towns had evidence of tree canopy loss: that's a vast majority of Wales' towns. Trees require maintenance which is costly for cash-strapped local authorities and many trees are in danger from disease – they're being cut down for fear of the damage they could do if they fell.

We owe thanks to our expert partners on the Steering Committee: Natural Resources Wales, The Woodland Trust, Open University, Open Air Laboratories and Voluntary Arts Wales. Now, as the project draws to an official close, my thoughts turn to the gifts it will leave behind. For many members, it's made them more confident about playing an active role in their community, whether that's environmentalism or art. It's helped members who worry about climate change feel like they are part of the solution rather than the problem. Instead of just talking about it, they've taken practical, decisive action and have found that deeply rewarding. As WI members always do, they got on board with dedication and passion. And this isn't really the end. We'll keep looking for ways forward. We are so blessed with our natural landscape in Wales that we will always fight to play our part in preserving and enriching it for the generations to come.





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Introduction

Over the past two years, over 200 WIs in Wales have actively participated in the project to achieve a range of positive outcomes for the urban forest. The WIs have been galvanised into action to survey, observe, preserve, protect and engage communities in tree-planting and on-going monitoring and maintenance projects in liaison with organisations such as the Woodland Trust, and spread the word about the value of trees to the wider public. They have assessed the state of our urban trees, promoting active management, providing eyes and ears for public bodies and taken action to safeguard this incredibly valuable natural heritage.

Volunteer Federation Co-ordinators pledged their support on behalf of the federations to co-ordinate the project and provide information and support to WIs and assist members with the project. They have liaised with NFWI-Wales, attended Training Days and some exciting work has been completed by WIs and federations which will be on show throughout this report.

Between them, they have delivered more than 80 activities locally which included training days, planting events, craft, art and photography workshops, walks, talks and 'tree' parties. Links have been established with over 90 community groups.





How did WIs take part?



All WIs had the opportunity to take part and had the freedom to choose how they engaged in the project.

Some exciting work has been completed in the WIs and federations. Members have surveyed over 5,000 trees, observed them through the seasons and recorded their species and what creatures live on them. They have celebrated their beauty through various crafts and art work, learnt about the types of dyes you can get from native and non-native trees, campaigned to save trees from being felled, taken guided walks and written to community councils and local authorities to enquire about their tree plans.

Trees have been yarn bombed, exhibitions held and members have dressed up like trees at local carnivals, they have written poems and plays and even written a piece of music inspired by trees.

The project has built on the strength of local communities and assisted them to develop grassroots initiatives that improve the quality of life for local people and their communities, and to date WI members have planted over 6,000 trees in their communities and have worked with a range of partner organisations such as Rainbows, Brownies and Guides, Scouts, local businesses, wildlife and canal trusts, schools and hospitals, a convent and many more.



Volunteer Federation Co-ordinators

We owe special thanks to all of the Volunteer Federation Co-ordinators. Each Federation Co-ordinator has put many hours into the project, this may have been organising the first training day, travelling to other WI meetings to promote the project, meeting with schools to discuss planting partnerships or attending Federation Training Days in Broneirion.

Federation Co-ordinators each received a variety of resources from NFWI-Wales and project partners including; Project Pack, OPAL Packs, WI Guides, Street Tree Packs, Woodland Trust booklets, NRW Tree Cover in Wales' Towns and Cities and other useful information booklets. Federations also received grants and expenses from the project funding to cover any training days, travel costs for Federation Co-ordinators and other costs relating to the project.



Federation Co-ordinator Training Days

Volunteer Federation Co-ordinators were recruited from every federation in Wales. They worked hard to liaise with NFWI-Wales and the members in their federation to deliver the project. Federation Co-ordinators attended 3 federation training days in Broneirion to learn how to observe, survey, plant and record trees. The first training day introduced the co-ordinators to the project and listened to presentations from all project partners about the resources and databases available to them. Project partners in attendance included; John Briggs (Natural Resources Wales), Clare Morgan (Woodland Trust), Philip Wheeler (Open University) Iwan Edwards (Wildlife Trust) and Gareth Coles (Voluntary Arts Wales).



Federation Co-ordinators were then able to feed back to their WIs about the project and give guidance on how to take part. Federation Co-ordinators also received a handy guide to explain their role in the project and steps to take.

At the second federation training day Tom Jenkins attended from Forest Research Wales to discuss tree diseases and how members can record any diseases onto relevant websites. Russell Horsey also explained tree preservation orders and Clare Morgan did a planting activity with members.

The third Federation Co-ordinator training day saw members each present their federation's involvement in the project. Gareth Coles explained how art and craft can be used to record their involvement in the project and Tom Jenkins also attended to discuss trees in a changing climate.



Co-ordinators were able to discuss the involvement of WIs and tree champions in their federations at the training day by taking part in the 'Show & Tell'. Each Federation Co-ordinator brought along craft items or survey results that members had made as part of the project. Representatives from Powys Radnor brought along an exemplar survey that they had posted out to all federations to record trees.

The Project In Numbers

13

Federations Involved

All 13 Federations in Wales have been involved in the project through various ways.

3

Federation Training Days

3 Federation Training Days were held for Federation Co-ordinators to receive resources and information.

7

Steering Committee Meetings

7 Steering Committee meetings were held with project partners.

210

WIs Involved

210 WIs were involved in the project through a variety of ways.

5

Media Appearances

WIs have appeared in newspaper reports, S4C programmes and Radio Shows on BBC Wales.

5158

Trees Surveyed

5158 trees have been surveyed by members using the 'Garden and Street Tree Survey' and the OPAL Tree Survey.

80

Activities and Workshops

80 activities and workshops were delivered as part of the project. More will be held after the end of the project.

6000

Trees Planted

Approx. 6000 trees have been planted by members as part of the project.

91

Tree Species Identified

Approx. 91 different species of trees have been identified by WI members using the Garden and Street Tree Survey.



Federation Case Studies

Gwent Federation

Tree Co-ordinators in Gwent Federation have engaged with the project through a range of activities. They distributed a pack to all 56 WIs to take part in the project and recruited tree champions. Early on in the project, tree champions held a practical recording afternoon at Caldicot Castle and also later met again at Cwmbran Boating lake to identify, measure and record trees onto the OPAL website and Treezilla. The group used their project packs and OPAL Tree Survey guides to identify different tree species around the castle and lake.

Tree Champions also had the opportunity to take part in craft and many attended a leaf brooch making workshop at the Gwent Federation Offices.

Gwent Federation also held a tree themed art day using scraper boards and the theme for the Gwent 2020 Calendar was "Trees". They used photographs taken by WI members to compile the calendar.

During 2019, Gwent Tree Champions gained agreement to plant 5 fruit trees in a walled garden of the new critical care hospital at Llanfrechfa, near Cwmbran.

Tree Champions worked with Caldicot School and arranged to plant 50 trees on their site, close to where the champions held their first tree recording practical session, and WI members were involved in planting.



Anglesey Federation

Tree Champions in Anglesey Federation have not been short of opportunities to get involved. Federation Co-ordinators have been heavily involved in all aspects of the project including; organising training days, providing guidance resources and holding tree themed craft exhibitions.

Tree Champions attended a Training Day in Spring 2018 to launch the project. Forty members attended along with the Tree Preservation Officer for Anglesey County Council and guest speaker Iwan Edwards from North Wales Wildlife Trust.

Later on in the project, there was a shift to craft and drawing to record trees. A drawing and painting workshop was held with a tutor which proved so popular that another workshop was held shortly after.

There hasn't been a conventional way to get involved in the project, one tree champion explained the types of dyes that can be used from native and non-native trees and brought along examples to a workshop in Llanfairpwll.

Measuring and recording tree data was a large part of this project, Federation Co-ordinator Yvonne, made a step-by-step guide of how to use the OPAL and Treezilla websites. This guide was later put out to all members in Wales who may need additional guidance for data uploading. Many members were new to using data upload websites but it was a chance for them to learn new skills by following guidance provided.

Some Tree Champions who did not have resources to upload data onto online platforms took photographs from their windows or drew trees through the months in a way to record seasonal changes. Project Co-ordinator, Yvonne and her husband also made a Powerpoint Presentation with over 80 pages of information and photographs for the project. This was also made available to all WI members for use.



Anglesey Federation

Anglesey Federation also received some media coverage. Trearddur Bay WI featured in the North Wales Chronicle. To celebrate the WIs growing membership, Tree Champions planted a rowan tree at the side garden of Trearddur Bay Village Hall.

Tree Champions have also planted trees elsewhere in Anglesey; 300 trees were planted in Amlwch, Carreglefn WI planted a native tree in a local playground and Menai Straits WI planted a tree to celebrate the WIs 10th Anniversary. A tree champion planted an additional 300 trees on her land. WIs have been able to follow advice from the Woodland Trust for planting exercises.

To celebrate the project, Anglesey Federation held a craft exhibition at Llangefni Town Hall. The exhibition was opened by Albert Owen, former MP for Anglesey and Mrs Margaret Thomas, Mayor of Llangefni was also in attendance. Every WI had their own way of taking part in the project and this was represented at the exhibition. WIs were able to put their own spin on their exhibitions to represent their involvement. The exhibition was open to the general public so it was an opportunity to display information and craft produced as part of the project. This helped to promote the project in the wider community and to spread the importance of the natural heritage.

Whilst most WIs had lots of craft items to display that were made at their WI meetings dedicated to the project, some also wrote reports on tree diseases and how Tree Champions can help to stop the spread. Some Tree Champions brought photographs and survey guides that they have used to identify tree species. Other Tree Champions brought tree inspired poetry and literature which encouraged members to take part in the project using other skills which may not be so physically demanding.

North Wales
CHRONICLE

News
12th November
Island WI group branches out to plant tree at Trearddur Bay village hall
By Dale Spridgen

Members of the Trearddur Bay WI are pictured with the chairman of Anglesey Federation of Women's Institutes Yvonne Tatum and Eric Roberts and Paul Norris from the Trearddur Bay Village Hall committee.

ANGLESEY WI members are branching out in more ways than one.

As part of the Natural Heritage Tree Project to preserve protect and plant urban trees members of Trearddur Bay WI planted a rowan.

The tree, which is already growing, has been planted in the side garden area of the Trearddur Bay Village Hall where the group meets on the first

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Powys Montgomery Federation

The project was launched in Powys Montgomery Federation with over 60 members attending a day event on Bees and Trees. Tree Champions took part in a woodland visit, identifying trees and the magnificent red cedars at Leighton. Tree Champions also took part in a tree quiz and leaf identification.

A total of 13 WIs were involved in the project in Powys Montgomery and planted a variety of 23 trees.

Tree Champions have also been in touch with local community groups and authorities. They have contacted landowners for the permission to plant the trees. Tree Champions consulted with Newtown and Welshpool Town Councils as well as other councils and local community centres or village halls.

Tree Champions also highlighted the importance of the Brimmon Oak on the side of the Newtown Bypass. The Oak was under threat by the build of the new bypass but it was saved and the route of the bypass adjusted. The Ancient Oak is thought to be over 500 years old.





Clwyd Flint Federation

The Federation Co-ordinator for Clwyd Flint has been very active in the project and provided lots of opportunities for members to take part. Tree Champions worked together to plant over 850 trees in the federation! The Tree Co-ordinator for Clwyd Flint has grown trees from seed and was able to supply approximately 40 trees to WI members, including some Young English Oak, Wych Elm and Norweigan Maple.



Members also assisted Flintshire County Council to plant a new hedge and liquidambar trees in March 2019. Other planting programmes and workshops took place in Broughton and Saltney and also on Bagillt Foreshore and Bettisfield Colliery.

Over ten WIs have been involved in the project from Clwyd Flint Federation, 36 members attended the Tree Party in November 2018 and members took part in leaf identification quiz and enjoyed tree themed refreshments and snacks.



Later on in the project, two more workshops were held for the project and Tree Champions have been active in the community. Federation Co-ordinator, Joan gave a presentation at Clwyd Flint's Annual Meeting about the tree project to recruit new interest.

Federation Co-ordinator, Joan was also at the Denbigh and Flint Show to represent the project. She gave out young tree seedlings to children visiting the WI tent. Later in 2019 a wellbeing walk was organised as part of the project and Tree Champions were able to take home Welsh Heritage trees for WI homes. Members were then encouraged to use any pruned shoots for grafting. Luckily, members were shown by John Purchase how to use grafting techniques on trees at a previous meeting in the Spring.

Clwyd Flint Tree Champions have also been active within the local community and creating connections. The Flintshire County Tree Officer had been involved in two training days and was also the speaker at the 2018 Tree Party. A planting event in Mold was also co-ordinated through North Wales Wildlife Trust and the Trust also contributed to the federation's Orchard Training Day in March 2019 in collaboration with the Woodland Trust, with a focus on Welsh Heritage fruit trees and grafting techniques. Tree Champions were also working with the local Friends of Bagillt Foreshore for the planting events in Autumn 2019. There has also been contact and support from the Community Council, County Councillor and MP to try to secure a 1.3 acre field for a community orchard.

Tree Champions and the Federation Co-ordinator for Clwyd Flint have created a long-lasting effect of the tree project and provided some excellent connections in the local community!

Pembrokeshire Federation

Pembrokeshire Federation have galvanised members into surveying trees in their communities and the importance of preserving trees.



Pembrokeshire Tree Champions launched the project at a summer workshop. Ten WIs were represented with a total of 46 members attending to learn about tree identification using the OPAL survey packs, bark rubbing and using craft and art to record trees.

Tree Champions also used bunting and canvas for a display at the Annual Council Meeting. The focus was on the importance of trees.



Tree Champions have been engaging with their local community and authority to spread the word about the project. They met with the Tree Officer from Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.



Tree Champions worked with the tree officer to identify two potential sites for them to plant community orchards. Local WIs were also involved in this.

Milford Haven and Haverfordwest Town Councils had been contacted by Tree Champions and a meeting was arranged with a Town Councillor from Haverfordwest and a representative from a local charity. The charity plan to plant memorial trees on land owned by the Town Council and so WI members will also be working together to help this project.

Whilst members have been involved in engaging with the local community, other members have been recording and uploading information onto OPAL. Other members have been involved with a local golf course and care home for tree planting.

Over the next few months, Tree Champions will work with Withybush Hospital in Haverfordwest to develop a wellbeing garden.

Glamorgan Federation

In May 2018, Federation Co-ordinators organised a Training Day for Tree Champions in Glamorgan Federation to launch the project. Lizzie Stonhold from Coastlines Cymru attended to show members how they can use craft and drawing methods to record their trees and to take part in the project. Vicki Worsley, Volunteer for Woodland Trust also attended and quizzed members on tree species. Over 25 WIs were represented from Glamorgan Federation at the training day.

WIs later went on to contact their local councils and authorities to update them on the project. Bryncoch WI in particular have been in contact with community groups and a local school. Both Federation Co-ordinators reported to their councils in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea about the project.



In Spring 2020, Glamorgan Federation was still involved in planting trees. Three planting projects were held in Swansea - Clydach Community Garden, Seaview Green Space Group and Vetch Community Garden. Tree Champions were also working with a local primary school in Blaengwrach to plant 4 cherry trees in a school field.

A Tree Champion from Coychurch WI has also been involved in planting and recording trees in her garden.



Clwyd Denbigh Federation

Ysbyty Ifan WI in Clwyd Denbigh has been very active with the project and connecting with local community groups. Ysbyty Ifan WI worked with the National Trust to plant a 6 foot oak tree with local school children and members of the community.



Federation Co-ordinators in Clwyd Denbigh have organised walks dedicated to identifying and recording trees at Bodnant Gardens and Eglwys Bach. They have also been involved in guided walks in Pwllglas with Iwan Edwards from S4C to discuss different species of trees. Tree Champions have been using their OPAL Survey packs on these walks to identify and record trees.



Ysbyty Ifan also appeared on Heno, a television show on S4C to discuss their involvement with the project. They also showed the tree which they had nominated for the Woodland Trust Tree of the Year for which they received £500 for nominating a tree.



Later in summer 2019, members met in Conwy Valley Maze for a guided walk. Guided walks in Clwyd Denbigh were popular amongst members and also enabled co-ordinators to include a different way of getting members involved in the project.

Llay WI has also planted trees as part of the project, they worked with the Parish Church of St. Martin of Tours, Llay to plant a tree in the churchyard. Two of the oldest members in the WI were involved.



Clwyd Denbigh Federation

Llanelwy WI have been very active with the project and connecting with local community groups. Fourteen members in the WI were involved over the course of the project.

In January 2019, a Tree Champion volunteered to co-ordinate the project for the WI and then arranged to meet with other co-ordinators and presidents to decide on a way forward. This was an important step for the project because it would later provide opportunities for members to be involved from different WIs and for WIs to share ideas on their involvement.

Tree Champion Maureen organised action days and meetings to discuss the project and gave members the OPAL Survey packs to record trees. An action day was held later to aid members with recording trees and speakers were also invited. Tree champions organised biscuit and cake sales to raise funds to buy trees for members gardens.

Tree Champions later met with former MP Chris Ruane in March 2019 to discuss the project and the WIs' involvement. They explained the WIs involvement with the project, climate change and the "Show the Love Campaign" and they urged Mr Ruane to lobby to reduce Britain's CO2 emissions sooner than 2050.

Tree Champions later met with a local Brownie group and gave a talk on trees, the Brownies also acted out a play based on the poem that Maureen had written for the project.



Tree Champions bought 8 trees from the Woodland Trust which were planted in members gardens. Tree Champion Maureen had also wrote to the Council to update them on the project and to apply for a tree planting session with the Brownies. Maureen had also been involved with the local Parish Church in St Asaph. There was a display of the WIs involvement with the project at a welcome event held by the Church in June 2019.

In November 2019, Llanelwy WI worked with Afon Elwy Environmental Group to plant 28 trees along the banks of the Elwy River. The WI also committed to helping the group with their community projects in 2020.

Powys Brecknock Federation

A total of 20 meetings have been dedicated to the tree project. There has been a lot of craft and tree planting in Powys Brecknock to get members involved.

Llangynidr WI has been very busy adopting and monitoring trees over the course of the project. They hold regular meetings to discuss how they can get involved in the project. Tree Champions have been involved in craft afternoons to make leaves and have also met with a representative of the local Canal Trust to identify possible planting sites along the Brecon and Monmouthshire Canal. They later erected signs to display the logos of NFWI-Wales and Woodland Trust's next to the planted trees. This story later hit national press in the Daily Mail in November 2019. The WI planted 15 rowans and hazel trees, from the Woodland Trust.

Bwlch and Cathedine WI held regular meetings, and with 7 Tree Champions involved they have held craft afternoons, tree measuring and recording sessions and tree planting activities. Federation Co-ordinators for Powys Brecknock have also been visiting other WI groups to talk about the project. Bwlch and Cathedine have planted approximately 30 trees and members have also been in contact with Powys County Council and the local Community Council to update them on their involvement in the project.

Federation Co-ordinators also organised an exhibition of craft made by members and displayed information from the Tree Project. There had been a summer trip for members to visit an arboretum to look at trees, and the theme of trees was incorporated into the County Show Competitions using 'Bees and Trees'.



Ceredigion Federation



Ceredigion Federation were one of the first federations to organise their training day for Tree Champions to be involved in the project. A total of 32 tree champions from WIs all over the Federation attended the training day with speakers Dafydd Fryer, Urban Forest Architect at Natural Resources Wales and Gareth Coles, Director of Voluntary Arts Wales. All 43 WIs in the Federation were given the project pack and OPAL Tree Survey pack and invited to events held later in the year.

Tree Champions instantly recognised the importance of recording and surveying trees and some members returned to the Woodland Jubilee to record trees which were originally planted by WI members.

In June 2018, over 50 members attended a guided walk at Pencefn Drysgol Tregaron. Over the last year, the family has planted over 50 thousand trees on the farm and members enjoyed a guided tour with a Forestry Consultant.

Tree Champions have invited tree experts to speak on the theme of trees at meetings for the federation. Tree Champions also set up a craft club to knit 43 birds to represent the 43 WIs in Ceredigion.

Members have also been involved with photography. The photography challenge was to photograph trees through the seasons for the 2021 calendar.



WI members in Penparcau worked with Ysgol Plascrug to plant 100 trees. Members from Tregaron WI worked in partnership with Ysgol Henry Richards to plant 300 trees to create a wildlife area at the bottom of the field. Some WIs have been planting trees as part of their anniversary celebrations.

In the Summer 2019, 43 members attended the Llanilar guided walk. Members listened to a guide talk about the history of Llanilar and a second speaker attended from the Woodland Trust.

Sir Gâr/Carmarthenshire Federation



Sir Gâr/Carmarthenshire Federation held over 16 training days and workshops for the project. 18 WIs were involved in the project through planting and observing trees, attending walks, contacting local community groups or crafting tree themed items.

WIs have been kept up-to-date with federation newsletters from Federation Co-ordinators. Newsletters were sent out 3 or 4 times per year to report on events, meetings, workshops and walks that had been organised in the federation. WIs were also invited to report on their success and advertise any up-coming events.

WIs in Sir Gâr/Carmarthenshire Federation have been involved in planting trees, members planted 1,341 trees in total, the largest contribution to the whole project in Wales. This surpassed their target of 1,200 - planting 1 tree for every member in the federation. Llanboidy, Llansaint, Five Roads, Glandwr, Llansteffan and Trapp WI have all organised planting workshops. Federation Co-ordinators encouraged Tree Champions to plant specimen trees. A mixture of Oak, Chestnut, Plum and Cherry trees have been planted by members. Tree Champions planted 8 oak trees around Carmarthen town.

Federation Co-ordinators were also on hand to help WIs with data uploading and most WIs have adopted and monitored trees. Tree Champions were also able to attend a workshop dedicated to data uploading guidance and discussions for the project and how WIs had been getting involved in March 2019. Volunteer Federation Co-ordinators worked hard to ensure that WIs were well equipped to enter data onto Treezilla and OPAL databases.



Federation Co-ordinators encouraged WIs to be involved through adopting and monitoring trees but also explained to Tree Champions that this could be through photographing trees. Llanboidy WI in particular were one WI who held a tree themed photographic exercise and also Llannon and Llansaint WIs were involved in taking photographs of trees. This idea was later made into a country-wide photographic competition of trees - "Never Seen It From that Angle Before". The federation received 100 entries from federations all over Wales.

Sir Gâr/Carmarthenshire Federation



Tree Champions in Sir Gâr/Carmarthenshire Federation were keen to spread the word about the project in the local community. Tree Champions enjoyed a planting afternoon in QE High School to plant a Royal Burgundy Cherry tree to celebrate the WI and the schools close working relationship.

Connections with schools and children groups have not been short in Sir Gâr/Carmarthenshire. In November 2018, Glandwr WI were involved in planting a 45 metre fruiting hedge from the Woodland Trust with the help of local schoolchildren and Community Guides, Brownies and Rainbows. Many WIs have planted trees to celebrate anniversaries of their WIs and some had also planted in their gardens.



The Town Mayor for Carmarthen approached the WI in response to the Tree Project and sought to work with the WI to plant more trees in and around Carmarthen town. In March 2019 Anne Halborg and Julie Jolliffe met with the current and ex Mayors from Carmarthen town to plant a sessile oak in Carmarthen park and a horse chestnut in the Cemetery. This was reported on in the Carmarthen Journal. Federation Co-ordinators had also connected with the MP for Llanelli, Nia Griffith.

Members of St Clears WI also planted 30 trees including a flowering hedge at a town playing field. Members also appeared on BBC Radio Wales for an interview with Country Focus in January 2019.

Federation Co-ordinators, Whitland WI and Nuns of Holy Cross Abbey worked together to plant 426 whips provided from the Woodland Trust in March 2019. The group planted a large wildlife pack. Llansaint WI also planted 30 whips from the Woodland Trust for their anniversary. Salem WI had also planted a specimen tree in Llandeilo Churchyard.



In addition to the photography competition, the federation also held a crafted leaf competition. Federation Co-ordinators wanted to provide a variety of different ways for members to be involved in the project.

Members used photography as a means to record trees and photograph them through the seasons. At the Data Input Workshop in March 2019, Federation Co-ordinators had prepared small craft packs that Tree Champions could purchase to make tree inspired Dorset buttons. Tree Champions could follow the pattern that Tree Champions had used in Powys Radnor. Members crafted items such as birds and wildlife.

Gwynedd Caernarfon Federation



Tree Champions were invited to two meetings to celebrate the beginning of the project at Pwllheli and Penmaenmawr. Federation Co-ordinators invited two members to represent each WI in Gwynedd Caernarfon. Speakers included Biodiversity Officer Lea Connolly and Kirsten Manley from Woodland Trust. Later in the project, walks were held in Llanberis to visit an ancient woodland and the group were guided by Bob Griffiths, Countryside Warden for Gwynedd Council and Lea Connolly. Tree Champions looked at the types of trees and wildlife and discussed efforts to protect the site. Both Lea and Bob attended a second walk in Tremadog.

A total of 12 WIs have been involved in applying for free tree packs from the Woodland Trust. Connections have also been made with two primary schools for planting events in 2020. In total, over 500 trees have been planted.

Members have also been keen to promote the project through craft. The theme of the annual craft show in 2019 was trees and there were many entries in the handicraft sections based on tree designs. Arfon WI had knitted birds which will be on display in Caernarfon Library in Spring 2020.



Federation Co-ordinators have worked hard to ensure that the project is spread all over the federation. Meetings were held and Federation Co-ordinators visited other WIs to promote the project. Federation Co-ordinators recognised the importance of trying to get members involved through various ways - not just tree planting! They ensured that tree champions understood the importance of preserving and protecting trees in Gwynedd Caernarfon.



Powys Radnor Federation



Powys Radnor Federation launched the Tree Project in March 2018 with a Training Workshop at Crossgates Community Centre. Speakers Sam Milner from Natural Resources Wales, Clare Morgan from Woodland Trust and Elizabeth Stonhold from the Drawn Together Project all attended to give their expertise on how members can get involved. Members enjoyed looking at how to get involved with craft and discussed their ideas for the project.

A second Training Day was later held in March 2019 for members to share ideas. Members enjoyed a tree themed quiz and also discussed how their WIs had been engaging with the project and what their future plans were.

Tree Champions have been involved in a survey of tree species in members' gardens. Tree champions were also concerned about urban trees in their local communities and have been in contact with local MPs and authorities.

Craft talent was not short in Powys Radnor as Melanie Ensor from Nantmel WI made a rucksack inspired by a tree that was planted to celebrate the NFWI 90th Anniversary at Llandegely Church.

The front of the Rucksack was constructed using a patchwork paper piecing method and the tree was appliquéd on, this was all quilted to put the brick detail onto the church, sky and hill details. The fabric for the back of the bag is recycled denim from a skirt.



Members were also involved in crafting 'Inchies' to add onto a painted tree (seen at top of the page). Members met at workshops to craft 'Inchies' and the 'Inchie Tree' was then made into a greetings card.

Tree Champion Rene Morris from Stowe & Stanage WI created a tree badge pattern for tree champions to follow. Members were involved in creating their tree badges at a craft workshop. The badge pattern is available for all tree champions to use. Alongside this, tree champions were also involved in creating tree themed wall hangings to represent the project.

Gwynedd Meirionnydd Federation



Federation Co-ordinators in Gwynedd Meirionnydd have worked tirelessly to spread the word about protecting and preserving urban trees in Meirionnydd. Although a lot of areas that cover the federation are rural, they ensured that they worked hard to create an impact in the towns and other urban areas.

Both Federation Co-ordinators recognised the importance of planting trees and engaging with the local community to spread the word.

Over the course of the project, the Federation Co-ordinators had organised 5 workshops dedicated to the project and Llanuwchllyn WI in particular have been very active.

In Spring 2019, Llanuwchllyn WI worked with Ysgol OM Edwards for a community tree planting project. After locating a suitable planting site and a successful application to the Woodland Trust, the group received 105 trees in a colourful harvest tree pack. The trees were planted to border a footpath near the railway station and all of the trees are fruit and berry providers to encourage wildlife. The trees will be monitored by the schoolchildren and Eco Committee.

Federation Co-ordinators from Llanuwchllyn WI also organised a tree walk with Gwynedd Council in Barmouth. Tree Champions in their local WIs have been adopting and monitoring trees.

Later in the project, Federation Co-ordinators came across threats to local trees. Federation Co-ordinators have been fighting against the removal of 275 trees around Bala Lake. They ensured that if the trees are felled then they would want to be part of the replanting process.

The community connection had also continued onto Bala High Street as Federation Co-ordinators have been engaging with traders to ask them to display the Woodland Trust “We Love Street Trees” sign. They also discussed the project with the traders and explained the importance of trees on the high street.



NFWI-Wales Tree Project in the Community



Over the course of the project, WIs have been busy contacting their local authorities and engaging with groups in their communities. A main aim of the project was to engage with the local community to highlight the importance of preserving, protecting and planting urban trees. Some WIs wrote to local authorities whilst others held planting events with community groups.

Who have the Federations engaged with?

Ceredigion Federation

- Ysgol Plascrug
- Ysgol Henry Richards
- Woodland Trust
- Russell Horsey - Urban Forester
- Phil Morgan - Forestry Consultant
- Voluntary Arts Wales
- Dafydd Fryer - Urban Forest Architect
- Andy Peters - Forestry Consultant

Carmarthenshire Federation

- Brownies, Guides Rainbows
- QE High School
- Carmarthen Town Council
- Holy Cross Abbey
- Brecon Carreg
- BBC Radio Wales
- Local school in Laugharne
- Nia Griffith MP
- Woodland Trust
- Community Centre
- Patchwork & Quilter Group
- Local Committee & Sports Association - Llansteffan (Rugby & Cricket)
- Ysgol Gyfun Emlyn
- County Council
- Mayor and Former Mayor of Carmarthen Town

Powys Radnor Federation

- Natural Resources Wales
- Woodland Trust
- Voluntary Arts Wales
- Community Council
- County Council
- Local Garden Centre
- Local Play Group
- Coastlines Cymru

Powys Brecknock

- Canal Trust
- Community Council
- Powys County Council
- Woodland Trust
- Appearance in Daily Mail

Pembrokeshire Federation

- Tree Officer from Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority
- Milford & Haverfordwest Town Councils
- Sandy Bears - Local Charity

Gwynedd Merionnydd Federation

- Natural Resources Wales
- Woodland Trust
- Russell Horsey - Urban Forester
- Bala High Street Traders
- Ysgol OM Edwards

Gwent Federation

- New Critical Care Hospital Gwent
- Caldicott School

Powys Montgomery Federation

- Newtown and Welshpool Town Councils
- Community Councils
- Community Centre
- Village Hall
- Local AMs

Clwyd Flint Federation

- Flintshire County Tree Officer
- North Wales Wildlife Trust
- Woodland Trust
- Friends of Begillt Foreshore
- John Purchase - Wepre Park
- Community Council
- County Councillor
- Local MP
- North East Wales Orchard Recovery Project

Clwyd Denbigh Federation

- National Trust
- S4C
- Local Brownie Group
- Afon Elwy Environmental Group
- North Wales Wildlife Trust
- Woodland Trust
- MP for Vale of Clwyd
- Parish Church of St Martin of Tours Llay

Gwynedd Caernarfon Federation

- Woodland Trust
- Bob Griffith - Gwynedd Council
- Lea Connolly- Gwynedd Council

Anglesey Federation

- North Wales Chronicle
- Albert Owen
- Town Mayor
- North Wales Wildlife Trust
- Anglesey County Council
- Llangefni Primary School
- Llanfairpwll Community School Treborth Gardens
- Local Art and Drawing Tutors
- Priory & Dovecote an Penmon
- Cadnant Gardens
- Swtan Cottage
- Anglesey Forum of Arts

Glamorgan Federation

- Blaengwrach Community School
- Neath Port Talbot Council
- Swansea Council
- Swansea Community Green Spaces Project
- Blaenhonddan School

Project Partners



We have received an incredible amount of support from our Project Partners. They have been present at our Steering Committee meetings and have also supported the project and WI members at every step of the way. The Steering Committee meetings were opportunities for the NFWI-Wales team to report back to the Steering Committee on the project and to update on any new member involvement. It was also a chance for NFWI-Wales to ask for advice on issues related to the project and to share members' concerns and questions. Steering Committee meetings were held every few months and two Federation Co-ordinators were also part of the Committee.



Representatives were at the first Volunteer Federation Training Day to share their knowledge and wisdom with Federation Co-ordinators and to also share resources and tools available for the project. Members were able to use resources from OPAL and Treezilla to record their trees and list tree species that they found as part of the project. Members were interested in how Treezilla would enable them to find out the monetary value of trees they recorded. They were also able to gain information from NRW and the Woodland Trust about the value of urban trees and the types of tree packs they could order as community groups from the Woodland Trust. Members learnt how they could record their project involvement using craft and art from examples demonstrated by Voluntary Arts Wales.



Project Partners were also available to advise local WIs on trees. Members have been lucky to receive many successful applications for free tree packs from the Woodland Trust and to record trees using the Treezilla and OPAL websites. Federations received copies of the Natural Resources Wales 'Tree Cover in Wales' Towns and cities' for additional information and statistics. Some Federation Co-ordinators used the copies for discussions at their meetings or for creating posters. All federations received a Woodland Trust Street Tree Pack.



We are very grateful for all of the help and advice that we received from the project partners!



Project Partners

“WI members across Wales have truly engaged with this project to make a real difference for trees in Wales. Over 6,000 trees have been planted and, using newly-acquired skills, nearly the same number of trees have been surveyed. Although the project has ended, all of us involved must strive to provide opportunities for members to continue on their 'tree journey' for example by watching them grow and checking their health” .

Dr David Slawson (OPAL Director, Imperial College London).

“It has been a pleasure to support this valuable project. The enthusiasm of NFWI staff and volunteer coordinators has been amazing, the creativeness on the theme of trees has been inspirational and the data gathered will help inform future developments, truly citizen science in action. We hope participants feel empowered to carry on the good work and keep contributing so we can all work together to tackle climate and nature emergencies. Thank you to the NLHF for their funding support”.

John Briggs, Specialist Advisor Landscapes and Clare Southard, Specialist Advisor Strategic Funding Natural Resources Wales/Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru

"It was a pleasure to be involved in the Steering Group of the NFWI-Wales urban tree natural heritage project. In particular, the vast array of creative activities undertaken during the project, from visual arts and crafts to poetry and music, was a wonderful demonstration of the inspiring power of the subject matter, and the enthusiastic response of the members."

Gareth Coles, Voluntary Arts Director

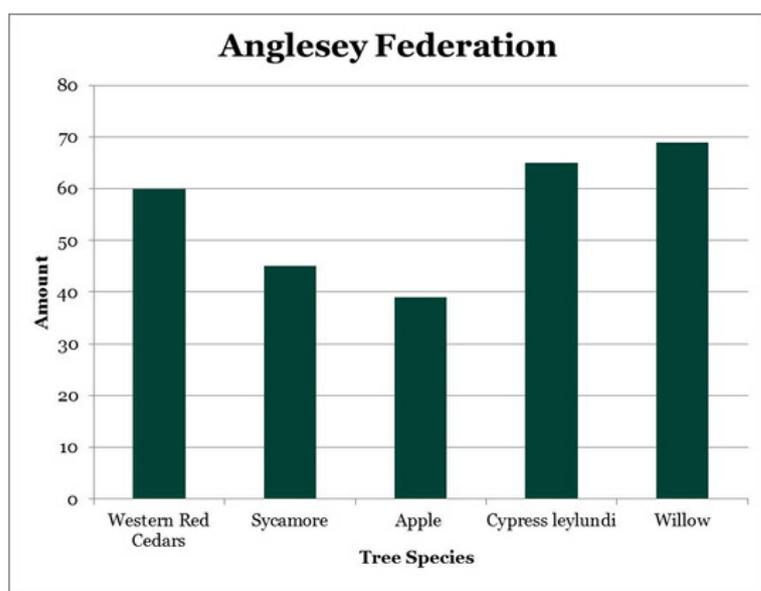
Garden and Street Tree Survey

In Autumn 2019, WI members received their Garden and Street Tree Surveys. Members used their surveys to record what trees they have in their gardens and streets and they could complete the survey as an individual member or as a WI. The survey was very successful and saw most federations taking part. The aim of the survey was to highlight the amount of different species of trees in members' gardens and streets and to draw attention to the urban element of the project. Members were able to continue to record more details of these trees using the OPAL and Treezilla websites.

The Survey results included:

- 4876 trees
- 59 WIs involved
- 118 surveys completed
- Approx. 91 different tree species recorded

The survey results have been analysed and split into federations. The 5 most recorded tree species have been input into a graph so the results can be compared against other federations who took part.



Most popular species - Willow

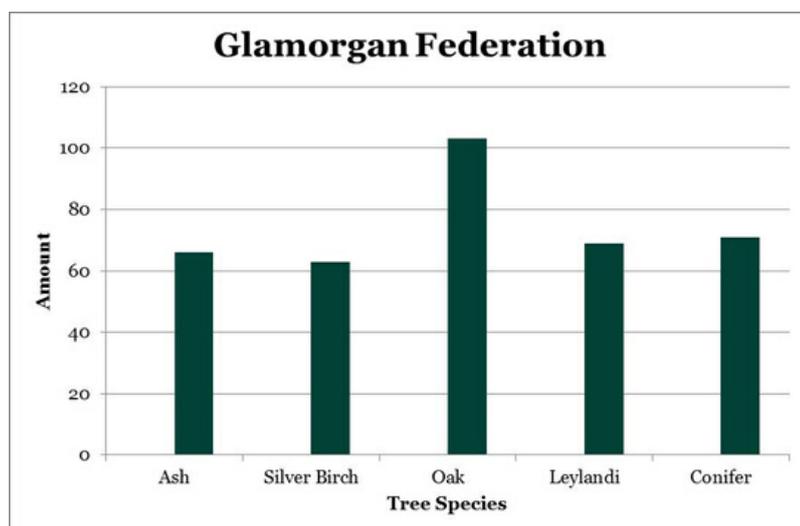
Species with low recordings (does not appear on graph) - Sweet Chestnut, Scots Pine, Olive, Laurel, Silver Birch, Juniper.

Fact - Llanfair PG WI recorded 60 Western Red Cedars alone!

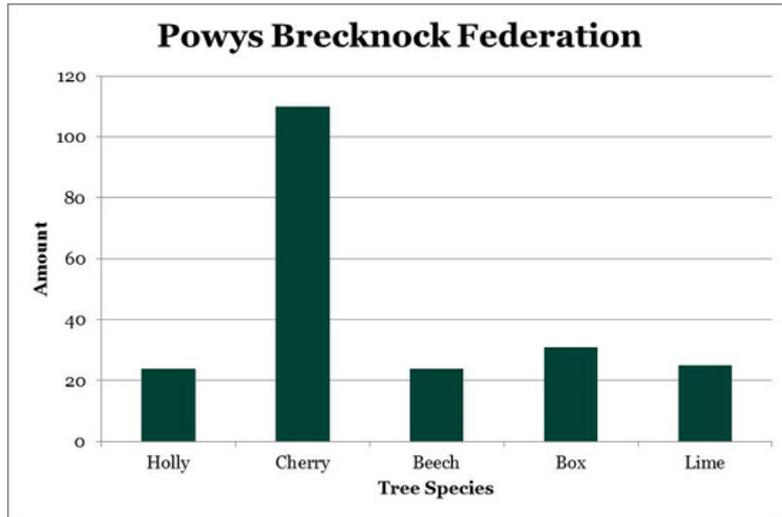
Most popular species - Oak

Species with low recordings (does not appear on graph) - Quince tree, Sweet Chestnut, Elder.

Fact - Pen-y-fai WI recorded 51 different tree species. They also recorded a tree planted in Pen-y-fai Village Green in 1990 to celebrate a federation birthday.



Garden and Street Tree Survey



Most popular species - Cherry

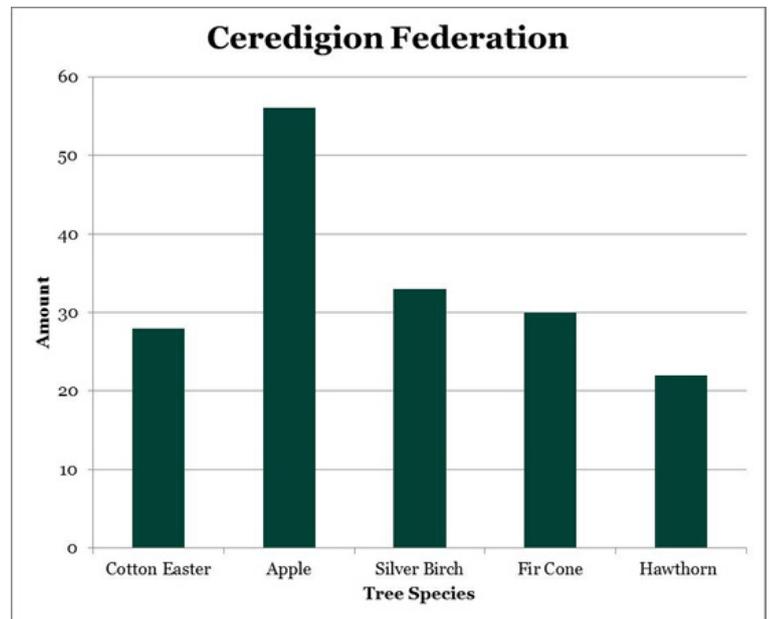
Species with low recordings (does not appear on graph) - Norweigan Maple, Sorbus, Horse Chestnut, Alder.

Fact - 100 Cherry trees were recorded by Merthyr Cynog WI alone.

Most popular species - Apple

Species with low recordings (does not appear on graph) - Plum, Horse Chestnut, Cedar and Elm.

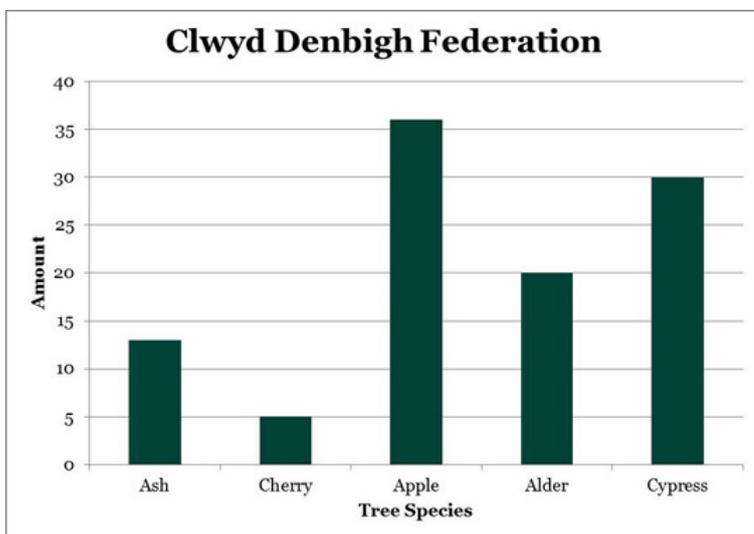
Fact - 395 trees recorded in total by Aberporth and Wig & District WIs.



Most popular species - Apple

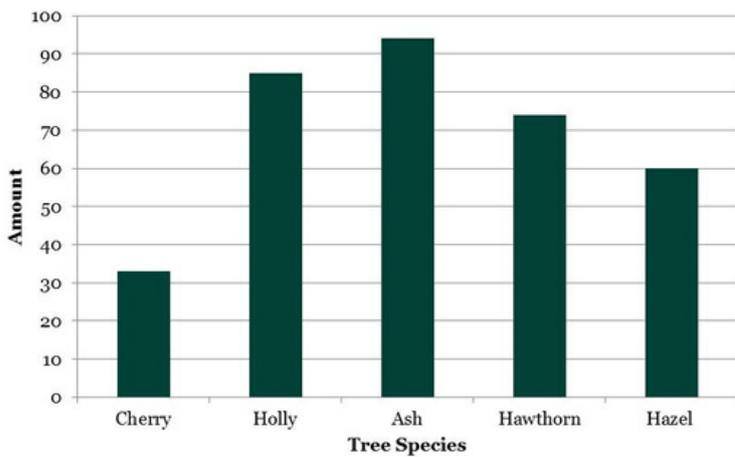
Species with low recordings (does not appear on graph) - Silver Birch, Willow, Quince, Eucalyptus and Laburnum.

Fact - Llanelwy WI have recorded 111 trees for the garden and street trees survey but have also recorded many more using the OPAL Tree Survey Guides.



Garden and Street Tree Survey

Clwyd Flint Federation



Most popular species - Ash

Species with low recordings (does not appear on graph) - Mallus, Bottle Brush, Monkey Puzzle, Cypress Monterey and Laurel.

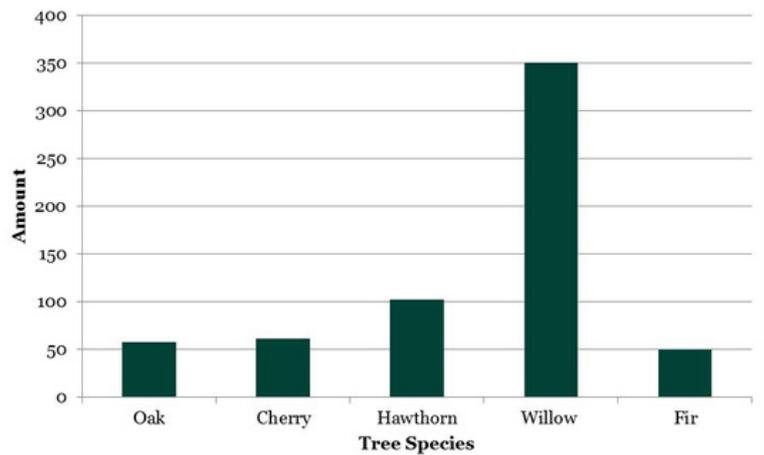
Fact - 32 Garden and Street Tree surveys were completed in Clwyd Flint!

Most popular species - Willow

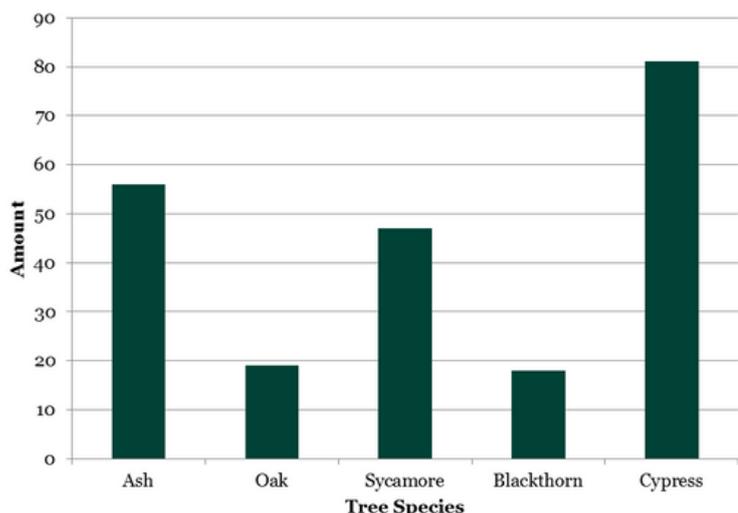
Species with low recordings (does not appear on graph) - Juniper, Mahonia, Spruce, Blackthorn and Walnut.

Fact - Gwent recorded a total of 1230 trees using the survey - the highest total from all Federations!

Gwent Federation



Pembrokeshire Federation



Most popular species - Cypress

Species with low recordings (does not appear on graph) - Alder, Sorbus, Yew, Spruce, Japanese Maple and Apple.

Fact - Dinas Cross WI noted that some Horse Chestnut trees were suffering from Ash Dieback.

Project Outcomes

When the project was launched, there were clear objectives outlined to achieve at every step in the project. These objectives can be categorised under three titles; Heritage, Community and People. Every objective and task achieved as a result of the project had effects on people or members involved in the project, communities which have experienced the results of the project or working in partnership with members and the long-lasting effect on the heritage.

Examples of how these objectives were achieved are described below:

Heritage:

- Members learnt about the different species of trees
- Members learnt how to measure/survey trees
- Members identified suitable spaces to plant trees
- Trees were mapped in communities
- Members used the Treezilla website to record trees
- Members fed back to relevant bodies – NRW, Treezilla, Local Authorities, Biodiversity Centres – about their involvement in the project
- Members used new IT skills to upload information to online databases
- Tree management was developed – Members worked with schools, councillors, community and local authorities
- Federations lobbied local authorities and other bodies to ensure care for trees and future planting
- Members also identified tree diseases

People:

- Members learnt new skills and used new tools – Tree Champions have been able to share the resources and new skills in workshops
- Members have understood the importance of trees and have linked to other WI climate change work – engaging members on a wider scale to continue to understand importance of trees and to mitigate effects of climate change
- Project Partners have been able to share skills, resources and knowledge with members and Federation Co-ordinators – WI members and Federation Co-ordinators have learnt how to plant and care for trees
- Members have also learnt new craft skills – WIs have shared patterns of dorset buttons inspired by trees

Community:

- Connections with local communities have improved with shared projects and planting workshops. Long-term effects have meant that communities have better links and more trees planted
- Communities will be able to call on their connections from the project in the future for other work
- Some WIs have connected with local community groups and plan to meet again in future to re-visit work they have done as part of the project or support community group initiatives

Project Outcomes

Heritage



Sharing Ideas and Actions

Members have contacted their local authorities, councils and MPs to lobby on environmental issues. The project has been promoted across Wales and further.



Data Recording

Members have recorded trees and uploaded data to relevant project partner websites.
Positive impact on environment.

Members of the public have visited exhibitions held by WIs and planting events - WIs have taught school children how to plant trees.

Sharing Skills

Community



Community Engagement

WIs have been able to create long-lasting links in their communities. Some WIs have worked with schools for planting events - spreading the word about the importance of trees.



Tree Planting

Over 6,000 trees have been planted as part of the project - importance of future care and monitoring of trees understood.

Sharing Knowledge

WI members shared their resources and information with local community groups on the value of trees and different species - worked with Brownie and Guide groups for tree planting activities.

People



Active management

Members have organised their own workshops and training days. They have also been involved in a number of tree themed guided walks promoting health and well being.



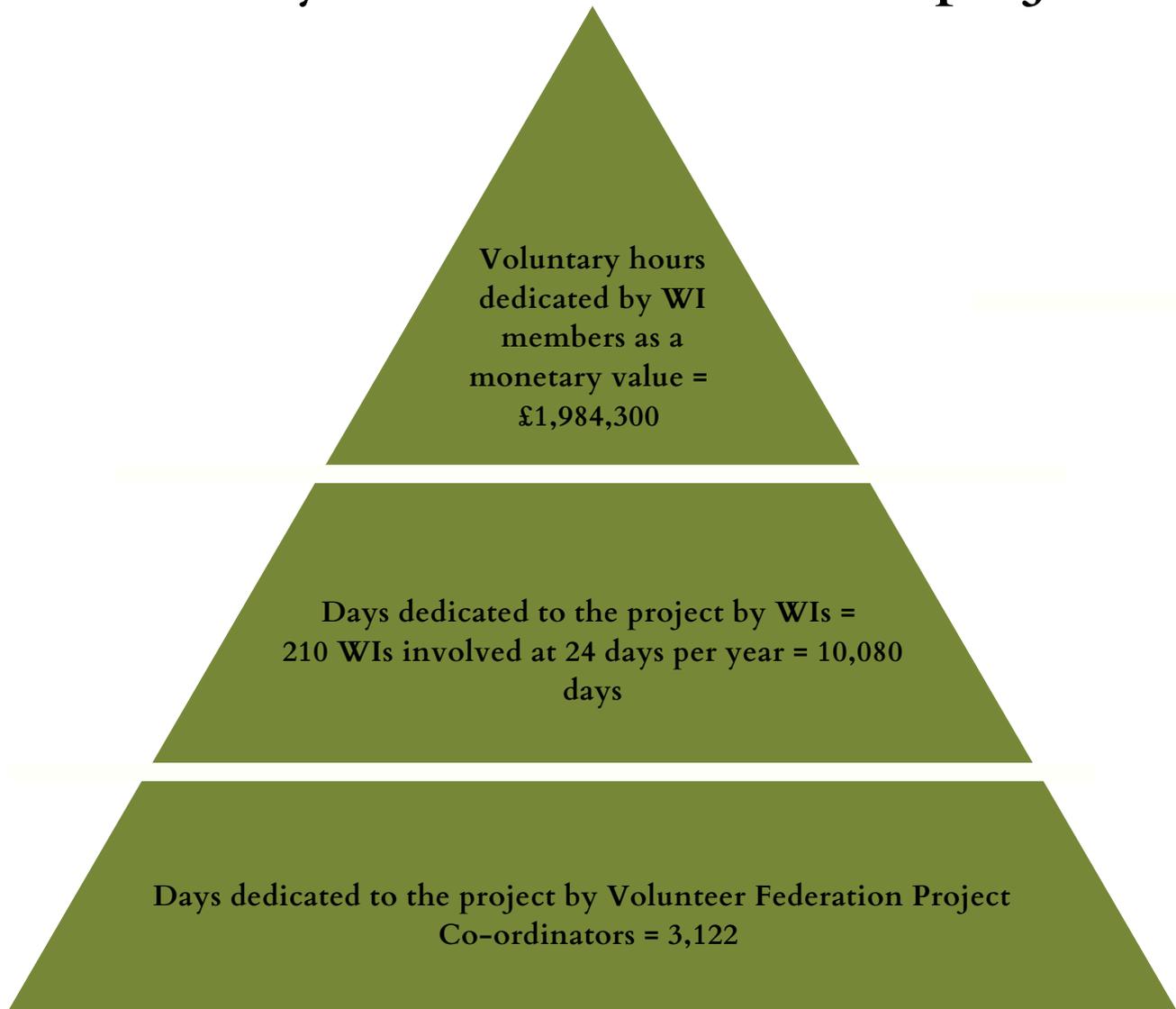
Development of Skills

Members have learnt new skills through the project; IT skills through data uploading and craft skills through workshops.

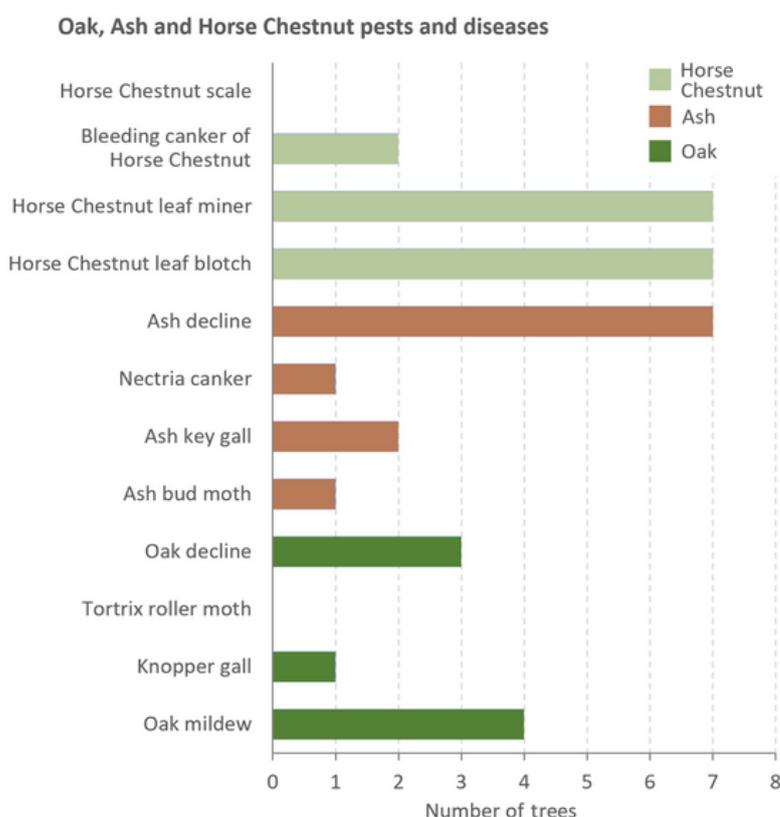
Meeting other like-minded members

Tree Champions, members and Federation Co-ordinators have worked together to grow the project - building new friendships with like-minded members.

Voluntary Contributions to the project



Trees Recorded on the OPAL Database



Out of 14 of the 62 sites surveyed by the WI citizen scientists, they had at least one of the 12 OPAL tree pests and diseases present.

Of these 14 sites:

- 2 sites had 1 pest/disease
- 6 sites had 2 pests/diseases
- 5 sites had 3 pests/diseases
- 1 site had 4 pests/diseases
- A total of 35 diseased trees were spotted by WI citizen scientists. These are broken down in this chart: