

HAPPY 2014!

New Year, New Project, New Look!

Whilst the Tir Coed Staff are busy preparing for the start of the exciting new VINE Project, we are also pleased to launch the revamped brand for the charity, reflecting the planned work in 2014.

Tir Coed will be 15 years old this Year and this revamp seems a fitting Anniversary Celebration.

Please also visit the refurbished website

www.tircoed.org.uk

and our Tir Coed Facebook page

www.facebook.com/TirCoed.Charity

As part of this updating process, Tir Coed is pleased to announce the development of new Leaflets and Flyers as well as banners and information boards, which should help to increase public knowledge and understanding of the charity.

This is an exciting phase for Tir Coed with VINE activities ready to start in March. Thank you to everyone who has made a contribution to the consultation processes to make VINE as people-led as possible.

There is still plenty of time to put forward your ideas, so please do get in contact about what you would like to see happening in local woodlands.



Croeso -
Welcome to a
new phase for
Tir Coed

2014,
Tir Coed's
15 year
Anniversary
... Celebrate
with us

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Volunteering In the Natural Environment (VINE) Pilot

YJS - Coed Tyllwyd, Llanfarian, July to November 2013

This successful partnership project concluded in early November after 8 sessions, spanning 5 months. The group aged 10 - 19 benefitted hugely from the varied activities, opportunities and freedoms offered within the woodland setting. Skills were developed, friendships forged, interests sparked and confidence boosted. It is true to say that everyone had a really good time.



Thanks to the tutors, the Youth Justice Service Prevention Team and more importantly the young people for making this project happen.

Lead:	Adam Thorogood
Support:	Trina Earl
Sessions:	8
No. volunteer days:	74
No. volunteer hours:	296
Total no. volunteers	25

Accreditation:

Agored Cymru (OCN) Unit	Level	Total Achieved
Introduction to Green Woodwork	1	4

Cynnal Y Cardi Project

Positive Funding Support for VINE

The Cynnal Y Cardi project has been supporting Tir Coed over the last 12 months in preparation for the full VINE project. Part funded through the Rural Development Plan for Wales, financed by the European Union, Welsh Government and Ceredigion County Council, its aims are to improve the quality of life across rural Ceredigion through the development of sustainable rural communities. It fosters wider community cohesion and improved local cooperation by encouraging the development of skills and knowledge, and brings forward stronger, inclusive partnership working. Cynnal y Cardi has played a key role in the promotion and development of both present and future Tir Coed project work by funding the following:

Items	Enabling	Project
Tools	A range of community groups to increase participation & improve or gain skills	VINE
Small Marquee	Wet weather contingency for projects and events, improving overall quality of experience	VINE & Apprenticeship
PPE - steel toe capped boots	Wider participation within the community, removing barriers to participation	VINE
Hall hire & catering	Community consultations / drop in sessions for information sharing & outreach	VINE & Apprenticeship
Publicity	Promotion through a double page spread in Cambrian News and wider, higher quality promotion of projects	VINE launch
Advertising	Promotion of consultation days, community open days & Apprenticeship demonstrations, thus reaching a broader cross-section of the community	VINE & Apprenticeship
Information Leaflets & flyers (see page 4), banners, information boards & donations leaflets	Professional design & printing of quality materials in order to raise the profile of Tir Coed activities, attract and recruit participants, promote projects and ultimately sustain the charity	VINE & Tir Coed
Website development	A complete revamp of the content, style, design, colour and function of the website, including translation into Welsh - which provides access to the wider community	Tir Coed
Laptops x 2	Up to date technology to be used for efficient co-ordination of 3 year project, and continued professional production of resources and materials post CYC funding	
Events	Co-ordination of 2 x large scale & 3 x small scale community events including One Tree Day, Woodland Fair & Working with Wood, which have promoted Tir Coed's work and supported the Apprenticeship project	Apprenticeships & Tir Coed

This funding has, and will, continue to lift Tir Coed's profile considerably throughout Ceredigion, and will therefore ensure that rural communities are more able to access the projects on offer, enabling further development of the skills necessary to make them sustainable.



Volunteering In the Natural Environment (VINE)

New Leaflets and Flyers





WOODLANDS FOR SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENRICHMENT

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES AND IN WOODLANDS NEAR YOU SINCE 1999

Tir Coed is a Charity that has engaged hundreds of people in environmental voluntary activities with great success. Tir Coed utilises the woodland resource as a tool to develop the personal, social and vocational skills of those involved. Tir Coed works in public access woodlands so that projects improve the woodland and facilities for the wider community, as well as the participant's self-esteem.

SOCIAL:

- Better access to nature
- Coordinated activities for communities
- Reducing anti-social behaviour
- Creating employment and apprenticeship opportunities
- Creating work opportunities for highly skilled woodsmen, crafts people and artists
- Supporting a sustainable future

ECONOMIC:

- Offering training and apprenticeships in rural skills
- Keeping people employed in rural areas
- Helping re-skill those who have become unemployed
- Improving the timber stock of the future
- Reducing the need to import timber
- Tourism benefits of well managed woods and facilities

ENVIRONMENTAL:

- Teaching sustainable management principles to the next generations
- Regenerating PAWS (Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites)
- Increased bio-diversity, tree species, flora and fauna
- Reducing Wales' carbon footprint, through low impact woodland management



For more information or how to donate please go to:
www.tircoed.org.uk
facebook.com/TirCoed.Charity



If you would like copies of the Tir Coed promotional material please contact Director@tircoed.org.uk with your order.

The Apprenticeship Project - Woodland Management Apprenticeships

Update

The Apprentices are now fully settled into their respective placements and are busy getting involved in a whole range of tasks.

At Coedwig Gymunedol Long Wood Community Woodland, Kevin continues to work



alongside Tony Eames and Osian Denman, extracting and processing the timber for use in the new visitor

centre build. The weather has proved to be particularly challenging over the last few months and has caused several delays with wind-blown trees creating various hazards. This has highlighted yet another important part of the general woodland management of the site, focusing on the safety of the workers and the general public. Prioritising of work has needed to be flexible, with immediate attention paid to ensuring that access routes and work sites are completely safe. Kevin has been given formal training in 'Forestry First Aid' and Chainsaw, Maintenance & Felling for small trees, whilst informal training has helped Kevin to develop knowledge of

carrying out site surveys. Kevin is in the process of building up further chainsaw experience before applying to do the final assessment.

"From measuring standing timber to producing a saleable product and everything in-between, there's no shortage of variety at Long Wood Community Woodland. Hard work and very rewarding." Kevin



Aaron has been equally busy at the WiseWoods Wales base at Coed Tyllwyd. The team have had a hectic schedule of designing, building and installing play structures for a Ray Ceredigion contract. The trees have been felled from the site for this, so Aaron has had experience of felling, manual extraction including winch work, timber preparation - peeling using draw knives and finishing using power tools. He has become a useful member of the team, digging lots of holes for fence posts! Aaron too, has undertaken chainsaw training, and is being given lots of opportunities and support to build his experience. He has also helped fell dangerous trees on site, some of which will be used for firewood and others for timber as part of WWW present contracts.

"I'm really enjoying all the experiences from coppicing to contract work. I'm particularly happy with the opportunities to improve my chainsaw work. It's all going well." Aaron



THE PRINCE'S
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FUND

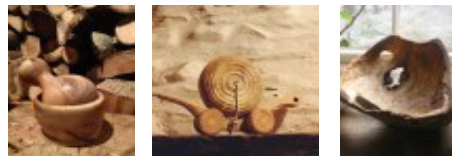
Harvesting The Knowledge Project

Volunteers get the opportunity to Kick-start their Careers

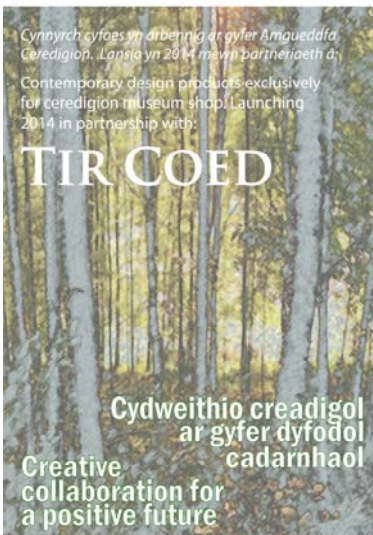


12 Graduate participants of Tir Coed projects were invited to apply for the 'Harvesting the Knowledge' Project, run in partnership with Ceredigion Museum. Each applicant was asked to send a portfolio of their work and a covering letter stating why they would want to take part in this project.

As you can see from the beautiful pictures people have been busy since leaving Tir Coed! 5 crafts-people will now have 15 supported sessions with expert woodsman and crafts-person, Bob Shaw. They will each work on developing a product inspired by the collections contained within the museum, and will then be able to sell them in the Museum Shop and possibly other outlets. The participants will work closely with the museum to market and promote their work, which will hopefully kick-start their craft careers.



amgueddfa
ceredigion
museum



"Being involved with the Tir Coed VINE pilot scheme in the winter of 2012 taught me a lot about what I wanted to do with my life. It also inspired me greatly and gave me the confidence to decide that I was capable of achieving my goals. Since then I have been working on teaching myself woodturning, and building up my knowledge and skills in woodland craft/carpentry. The skills I learnt on the course helped me get some part-time work building bespoke timber-frame compost toilets. This work has developed my carpentry skills further and has made it possible for me to slowly build up my own tools and equipment. Over the last 12 months, I have been steadily working towards my goal of being fully equipped, and working for myself making and selling my woodturnings."



James, one of the successful project participants

Final Project Report

The final audit for this project was completed at the end of December 2013, bringing to a close the successful Communities And Nature (CAN) initiative.

In total 87 participants were engaged in project work, across 8 different Wildlife Trust (WTSWW) Reserves, to help improve visitor facilities and thereby attract and increase visitor numbers to the sites. Works included Bird Hides, Benches, Picnic Benches, Boardwalks and Visitor Shelters, as well as Welcome Signs and Entrance Archways; which were constructed at 4 Reserves, to raise their profile and improve visibility to passers-by.

A range of methods was used for attracting interest in, and engagement with the project work; all practical work was undertaken in accessible spaces, taster sessions were in public places, open events at local youth centres and the YMCA, organised walks and tours, fairs and open days, all enabled people to see the works in progress. Each site hosted a larger event to engage with the public further to promote future access to the Reserve's new facilities.

As a result of installing, collecting and monitoring visitor data at all 8 Reserves throughout the Project, analysis shows that visitor numbers definitely increased post site works.

The benefits across the board have been impressive. The image of each of the Reserves has improved in the public's eyes, but so too has the reputation of the young people who participated in their local communities. The positive impacts of participating for these volunteers, however, stretched further than the immediate reaction of the local community.

A large proportion of participants referred to the programme joined because they had been previously disengaged from education or employment. Complicated home lives and housing concerns, drug and alcohol abuse, mental health conditions and learning disabilities were just some of the issues and challenges that participants faced on a daily basis. Poor literacy and a lack of basic skills meant that many had also not achieved any formal qualifications. However, the evidence shows that as a result of actively participating individuals increased motivation, confidence and communication skills alongside practical, social and vocational developments, and this has improved lifestyle, concentration and focus. This, in turn, has given greater chances of employability, and for some, has given a real sense of direction.

The site works on the Reserves were obviously the main focus of the CAN initiative, but alongside these, participants were given opportunities to have some of their work acknowledged. The Millennium Volunteers Programme awarded certificates to individuals, aged 25 and under, who achieved 50, 100 and 200 hours volunteering. The total volunteer time, throughout the duration of the project, reached a staggering 5,528 hours.

Some participants were also able to complete Agored Cymru units in areas such as 'Construction of a Basic Wooden Shelter' or 'Construct and Install Ancillary Structures'. These were an optional extra, for individuals keen to gain accreditation, and were funded separately, but definitely provided an enhanced experience for some volunteers.

For many of these young people this was the first time they had received any formal recognition, or positive acknowledgement of their work, and this proved to be a real boost to their self-confidence, as well as providing evidence that they could show potential employers in future.

"I gained a lot in my confidence through talking to people and learning new things"

"I learnt new skills that mean I am going to be able to do an apprenticeship"

"I've met new friends... and am more used to working with others"

The CAN Project Manager, Becky Hulme, successfully completed the 3 1/2 year Project, and as such has left Tir Coed to further her career.





Supported by:



THE PRINCE'S
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FUND



Open Days

Two VINE community consultation days were held in December, one at Victoria Hall, Lampeter and the other in Llanfarian Community Hall. This was an opportunity for local people to come and tell us what they would like to get involved with, as well as meeting local organisations and charities who would refer people onto the VINE project. The days were a great success with over 30 people dropping in to speak with Tir Coed staff. Tasty nibbles were provided by the COASTAL project, and paid for by Cynnal y Cardi. Ideas that were fed into the consultation included, drama activity days and performances with Lampeter Youth Theatre, girls' group woodland activities, scouts camping weekends, a green wood craft course for children in care, clearing footpaths & installing styles and support worker training.

Farewell Anna



Anna Crane-Jones, Tir Coed's Finance Manager for the last 3 years, has left Tir Coed to have her third child. Having decided that three children and three jobs is a bit too much to handle, even for a super woman, she has sadly had to drop the Tir Coed workload. Anna will, however, carry on working 1 day a week for WiseWoods Wales, which means we will gladly see her in the office occasionally. Anna has been a conscientious and

friendly colleague who has often put in a lot of extra hours! We want to wish Anna all the best with her pregnancy and new addition to the family!

Welcome Eluned!

Tir Coed is pleased to welcome our new Finance Manager, Eluned Lewis, who took up post on the 6th December.

Eluned is really pleased to be part of Tir Coed, an established organisation, who have the interests of the community and promoting uses and benefits of woodlands at its heart.

Eluned is a Ceredigion born and bread girl, and having graduated from Aberystwyth University in 2001 with a BA Honours in Geography, she has been lucky to find work in the locality in the field of community regeneration, and has worked for a

number of projects for different organisations. Having had a short career break to start a family, her new role with Tir Coed as Finance Manager draws on the previous project finance management work which she has thoroughly enjoyed.





Update



WiseWoods continues to forge ahead with its transition from funded project to self-supporting business. All the core staff are now completely familiar with the use of all of the machines and we are now carrying out our first major service and overhaul of the tractor, winch and sawmill. The hand tools are also showing battle scars from the pre-Christmas campaign so we are taking a few days to get things back in order. We are working hard behind the scenes with negotiations progressing well with the Management Agreement with Natural Resources Wales and with the planned expansion of the board and recruitment of a funded Admin Assistant. Interviews were held for the Admin Assistant in December but sadly none of the interviewees were suitable. Hopefully this post will be filled early in the New Year and the Admin Assistant can help us with securing new contracts for after March this year.

WiseWoods is showing good results for the continuing success of its previous volunteers.

- ♦ **Tony Vallance** was previously a WiseWoods Woodland Management Apprentice funded by the Princes Countryside Fund. He now has a full-time paid post with WiseWoods as Activities Leader.
- ♦ **Mark Atkinson** was previously a WiseWoods volunteer funded by the Shaw Trust. He now has a full-time paid post with WiseWoods as Activities Leader.
- ♦ **Lawrence Holloway** was previously a WiseWoods volunteer. He is now working as a self-employed forestry contractor in the local area. He had no prior experience of forestry before working for WiseWoods.
- ♦ **Gethyn Jones** was a very long term volunteer who narrowly missed out on becoming a Princes Countryside Fund apprentice for WiseWoods. He is now pursuing a career in forestry in Rhode Island. He also had no prior experience of forestry before working for WiseWoods.





Update



Our playground contracts with Ray Ceredigion are progressing well. We have finished a wooden castle in Cellan, a fitness trail playground at New Quay football club and installed a wooden play equipment shed in Llandysul. We are now working on designs for play features in Blaenplwyf, Bow Street and a wooden pirate ship at Capel Bangor School.



WiseWoods are currently in negotiations with Natural Resources Wales, discussing the possibility of constructing a bird hide at Nant yr Arian using the Larch timber recently felled on the site.



We are also hoping to encourage our current volunteers to develop a micro firewood business with the Noble Fir at our base in Coed Tyllwyd, which will hopefully run alongside the main WWW business.

We are looking forward to the new Tir Coed VINE projects which are due to start up very soon, also at Coed Tyllwyd, and hope that there will be a good synergy between the two organisations.

Hopefully Tir Coed volunteers will be able to carry out some of the much needed, but commercially less profitable, forest management and path maintenance at the

site.

WiseWoods are now very confident in our products and our skills. We know what we can do well and are becoming increasingly efficient in our processes and production planning. WiseWoods is also beginning to build a deserved reputation for good design, high quality and for meeting tight deadlines.

Let's just hope that with the onset of spring, comes a bit more dry weather!

