

# THE WICKED PROJECT

QUARTERLY REPORT, JULY – SEPT. '07



TIR COED



## **1. Overview of Tir Coed Activities:**

1. The Tir Coed team has been meeting on a monthly basis, under the guidance of John Wildig, Company Secretary, to discuss progress and issues arising.

2. Confirmation of WICKED project funding from the Countryside Council for Wales was finally received during July. CCW funding allocated per financial year is as follows:

2007/08 - £20,000

2008/09 - £20,000

2009/10 - £18,500

The only drawback is that the CCW pays its grant quarterly in arrears, so the actual amounts Tir Coed will be able to claim within each year of the WICKED project is as follows:

Year 1 - £11,250

Year 2 - £18,750

Year 3 - £23,500

Final Claim - The remaining £5,000 cannot be claimed before 1<sup>st</sup> of April, 2010.

Payments in arrears mean that during year 1, the WICKED Project will be £4,350 in deficit. Thankfully, Tir Coed have some reserves which will help to bridge this deficit, as well as £2,000 donated by the Dulverton Trust towards the WICKED project.

3. Chris, the Tir Coed Admin Officer, has been compiling a database of smaller Charitable Trusts that Tir Coed can apply to for core funding. In view of the above deficit, applications will be submitted as soon as possible.

4. Chris has been preparing financial updates for our team meetings.

At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter there is an underspend to the budget which we are currently addressing by arranging extra activities, in particular for Young Carers as part of the Acorn Initiative.

There are 2 main reasons for this underspend:

- a. To date, Pembrokeshire Young Carers have not been able to participate in any activities due to staff posts not being funded. However, we are pleased to hear that this situation has now been resolved and we look forward to engaging with them in the near future.
- b. The cost of materials for both the Acorn & Working Your Woods Initiatives in all counties has been considerably less than budgeted. Many of the woodland venues have either freely donated or charged well below market value for timber.

5. John Wildig attended a CCW Grants Seminar on behalf of Tir Coed.

6. John Good attended a seminar "Charity Reporting – latest Charity Commission developments" organised by the WCVA.

7. Gwyneth attended the Open College Network (OCN) internal moderation training. This explained the processes and documentation that will have to be implemented if Tir Coed is to assess & internally modify OCN accreditation for young people.

8. The two Project Officers also met with the OCN Quality Reviewer, as part of registering Tir Coed with the Open College Network. The Project Officers now need to focus on:

- a. Identifying appropriate OCN units that could be delivered during the 2<sup>nd</sup> term of the Tree Wise Initiative in each county;
- b. Compiling a common framework for each Tree Wise Project Leader to follow (which should enable accreditation to be delivered in an uniform and transparent manner).

**2. Activities in the Second Quarter Listed Under each WICKED project initiative:**  
(Including achievement against targets and feedback)

**a) The ACORN Initiative**

(Respite activities for Young Carers)

Activities under this initiative have been running throughout the summer period. Tir Coed attempted to run an activity with Pembrokeshire Young Carers during this quarter, but unfortunately, not enough young carers signed up and the activity had to be cancelled. Pembrokeshire Young Carers have eventually found the funding that they were short of, but there are now potential problems with their insurance cover not covering 'high risk' activities, this needs to be addressed before they can participate in any WICKED activities.

**Powys Young Carers:**

**Arts in the Woods** - 3 sessions held at Leighton Woods, near Welshpool.

Saturdays, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>.

The activity was led by Patrick Harrison and Naomi Ridge, both members of the Montgomery cluster group of the Forest Education Initiative.

Participants were made up of young carers from the Newtown & Welshpool areas.

The young carers chose a space to set up base camp, this involved clearing the area, as well as making a fire-pit and shelter. In addition, a saw-horse was built to assist in the creation of large-scale objects/sculptures made out of natural materials gathered from the wood.

Objects/sculptures made included:

- ❖ A web-inspired sculpture (including a huge spider);
- ❖ A hanging Xylophone;
- ❖ A large portrait of a stick man;
- ❖ Various forms of shelters;
- ❖ A fairy castle;
- ❖ A wall of woven wood.

Although 8 young people attended the 1<sup>st</sup> session, one of these (who was considerably older than the rest of the group) did not attend further sessions.

The average age of the 7 remaining young people was 11 years.

TARGET	TARGET ACHIEVED	COMMENTS
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants produce at least one hand-crafted item	Yes, all 7 participants produced a hand-crafted item.	
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	Yes - Video footage of young people describing what they have made, and method used.	

90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	Yes, average attendance rate of 90% of participants = 100%	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	Yes, all participants named at least one tree species.	
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	Yes, all participants named at least one type of woodland fauna.	
Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	86% knew one way that woodlands benefit the environment.	6 out of the 7 participants.
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	Yes, 71% of young people felt happier	5 – happier 2 – the same
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	Yes, 100% wanted to pursue more woodland activities	

Feedback:

Likes – *“All of it,”*  
*“helping x and y to make their den,”*  
*“making my wall,”*  
*“tying string,”*  
*“making my own space with Patrick, which was a spiral web with a big spider,”*  
*“cooking on the camp fire.”*

Dislikes - *“Nothing” (x 6),*  
*“Getting covered in melted marshmallows.”*

Feedback from Trainers:

*“There were enormous changes in the children’s confidence in their artistic ideas & their ability to take the idea through to reality.*  
*The playing of the xylophones brought forward some unexpected talent.*  
*They all helped to light fires & cook, carry equipment & use tools with more confidence.*  
*They became freer & wilder, which for this group was really good.”*

Feedback from Support Worker:

*“100% became more confident in their own ability to overcome problems & hurdles & to work out ways of doing things their own way. The YP were*

*really pleased that their Art was going to be left in the woods. They were proud of what they had done & were happy with the thought that they had left their mark.”*

**2-day Woodland Survival**, August 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

This activity was delivered in partnership with Forestry Commission Wales Officers. It was held in an area of the Hafren Forest which has recently been developed as a wilderness site by Leigh Denyer, Forestry Commission Wales Education Ranger. The activity was led by Trainers from the Staylitttle Outdoor Activity Centre. Leigh Denyer also kindly attended the activity to lead the young people in campcraft skills.

This activity was attended by 12 junior members (under 14 years) of the Powys Young Carers, accompanied by an Activities Worker of Powys Carers Service.

This was the first time that the Staylitttle Outdoor Centre had run an overnight activity in the woods.

The woodland survival was advertised as a “respite activity”; however, feedback from the young people and Activities Worker clearly highlights the fact that activities were too challenging and the style of leadership (particularly that of the female leader) was too regimented and strict for this particular group.

This information has been fed back to the Manager of the Staylitttle Centre, who has agreed that there will be more consultation with the user-group during the planning stages of any future overnight programmes.

The young people canoed across a part of the Clywedog Lake to reach the wilderness site.

Learning outcomes included:

- ❖ Shelter building/lashings;
- ❖ Cooking on Trangia stoves;
- ❖ Communication skills;
- ❖ Risk assessment.

All the young people built and slept in shelters, made out of wood from the forest.

Some of the group made journey sticks, while others made wooden mallets.

TARGET	TARGET ACHIEVED	COMMENTS
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants produce at least one hand-crafted item	Yes, all 12 participants produced a hand-crafted item.	
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	No video camera was available for this activity. Photographs were taken during this activity.	
90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	Yes, average attendance rate of 90% of participants = 100%	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental</b>		

<b>awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	Yes, 92% of participants named at least one tree species.	11 out of 12
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	Yes, 92% of participants named at least one type of woodland fauna.	11 out of 12
Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	58% knew one way that woodlands benefit the environment.	7 out of the 12 participants.
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	No, only 17% of young people felt happier	2 – happier 3 – the same 7 – less happy
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	No, only 33% wanted to pursue more woodland activities	4 – yes 3 – maybe 5 – no

### Feedback:

#### Likes –

*“Marshmallow toasting & mallet making”*  
*“Canoeing,”*  
*“Building a shelter,”*  
*“BBQ”*  
*“I like my mallet and marshmallows”*

#### Dislikes –

*“The insects, the meals, the bedtime”,*  
*“Finding a slug in my bed, packing, unpacking, midges eating me”*  
*“The blind walk”*  
*“Sleep”*  
*“Nothing”*  
*“I didn’t like the fact that we had to make our own house and sleep in it”*  
*“I didn’t like the gnats and midges”*  
*“Walking in the dark in the woods”*  
*“Carrying stuff”*

#### What did you make –

*“A shelter for the night (with no help),”*  
*“Roasted marshmallows,”*  
*“Breakfast”*  
*“I made a mud paradise cocktail, and a diary stick”*  
*“I made a mallet”*

Feedback from Activities Worker –

*“Young people scared of the water managed to canoe”*

*Young people scared of the dark managed the woods at night!”*

*Young people scared of sleeping in shelters – slept for some of the night!”*

*“The group were quite challenged by this exercise. I think there should have been more fun and less challenge. I think some young people may have been put off the great outdoors!”*

**4-day Green Woodcraft**, August 13, 14, 21 & 22<sup>nd</sup>.

This activity was held at Cefn Wood and led by the Mid Wales Forest School group. The group was made up of young carers, 14 years and upwards, from a wide area of Powys.

The object of the activity was to encourage the young people to work as a team. Using materials from the woodland and traditional green woodworking techniques the group constructed a stile and a bridge to gain access to the river meadow.

Participants learnt about:

- ❖ the properties of natural materials,
- ❖ the use of tools, including draw-knife, shave horse, froe, side-axe, chisel, mallet, brace & bit,
- ❖ using a chalk-line and level to establish accuracy for joinery,
- ❖ using cleft timber

6 young people took part in these workshops.

2 were unable to attend the 1<sup>st</sup> session.

TARGET	TARGET ACHIEVED	COMMENTS
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants produce at least one hand-crafted item	Yes, all 6 participants contributed to building the stile & bridge.	
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	Photographic evidence only was gathered.	
90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	No, 75% of participants had attendance rate of 75%	4 attended 3 sessions out of 4, 2 attended 2 sessions out of 4.
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	Yes, all participants named at least one tree species.	
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	Yes, all participants named at least one type of woodland fauna.	
Participants know at least one way	83% knew one way that	5 out of the 6

that woodlands benefit the environment	woodlands benefit the environment.	participants.
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	No, only 33% of young people felt happier. The 3 who scored the same had given themselves the highest score at the start of the activity, so there was no room for improvement.	2 – happier 3 – the same 1 – less happy
At least 60% of young people show an interest in pursuing similar healthy activities again	83% were interested in pursuing more woodland activities	4 – yes 2 - maybe

### Feedback:

Likes –

*“Walking in the water and fishing”*  
*“Being there”*  
*“Making a boat from rushes”*  
*“Feeding the fire”*  
*“Everything”*

Dislikes –

*“Draw knife”*  
*“Nothing”(x 2)*  
*“Coal flavoured Popcorn”*

What did you make –

*“Fishing rod, boat and slats”*  
*“A style, a bridge, all components thereof.”*

Feedback from Support Worker:

*“Two young people who had been (to the woods) before really enjoyed it and hope to meet the Forest School Leaders again. One showed a real aptitude for working with wood, and one has plans to make a wooden construction on land by his home.”*

*“X’s confidence in his ability to make things from wood was greatly improved. He had assumed he could only do it because it was easy. Watching others struggling made him realise the skill lay with him!”*

*“One YP who has a learning disability gained confidence in his capabilities to select the right wood & keep the fire burning – was definitely in charge of fire duties!! Both he & another YP were able to relax & enjoy playing the musical*

*instruments & gained the confidence to allow their natural musical styles to shine through.”*

*“The activity of bridge building didn’t appeal to the whole group & although everybody was involved to a certain extent, I feel that this fragmented the group & prevented them achieving a sense of group involvement.”*

Feedback from Trainer:

*“After the first two days, motivation to complete the task improved. Genuine interest in future activities at Cefn Wood was shown by participants. Keen to arrange future activities having recognised individual interests and skills.”*

## **2-day Woodland Survival** – September 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.

This activity was led by Mark Handford of Outlook Expeditions and took place in the Myherin Forest in north-east Ceredigion, by permission of the Forestry Commission Wales.

Day 1 was spent building a shelter where the young people would sleep overnight. They worked in teams to build shelters; some teams used tarps as an outer protection from the elements, while other teams preferred to use fir branches and fern leaves as a natural weatherproof layer – everyone stayed dry overnight!!

The young people took charge of digging the toilet pit and even built a screen around the toilet area.

Others prepared the evening meal – Pasta & Quorn Bolognese - around the campfire.

Day 2 – After striking camp, the young people were split into 2 teams and built a river crossing. A long walk through the woods was also undertaken during the day. The midges were a problem again, but, other than this, everyone involved thoroughly enjoyed themselves and the feedback on leadership was very positive.

6 young carers, ranging from 15 to 19 years of age, took part; they were accompanied by 2 female members of staff and 1 male Support Worker.

<b>TARGET</b>	<b>TARGET ACHIEVED</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	Yes, video camera footage was taken. Photographs were also taken during this activity.	
90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	Yes, average attendance rate of 90% of participants = 100%	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		

Participants can name at least one tree species	Yes, 100% of participants named at least one tree species.	
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	Yes, 83% of participants named at least one type of woodland fauna.	5 out of the 6 participants
Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	83% knew one way that woodlands benefit the environment.	5 out of the 6 participants.
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	No – 50% However, 2 participants had given themselves the highest score at the start of the activity, so there was no room for improvement.	3 - happier 2 – the same 1 – less happy
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	Yes, 83% wanted to pursue more woodland activities	5 – yes 1 - no

#### Feedback:

Likes -  
 “All”  
 “Making a shelter” (x 3)  
 “Sleeping in the shelter”  
 “Making epic shelters”  
 “Building the bridge”

Dislikes -  
 “None” (x 2)  
 “Making a bridge”  
 “Water (river)”  
 “Being cold & wet, but that didn’t happen much”  
 “Dismantling epic shelters”

What did you make –  
 “A Shelter made of moss & wood”  
 “A Bridge out of wood”  
 “It looked like Bilbo Baggins house”  
 “I thought the woodland activity was good fun an experience and wicked”  
 “Fire”

Feedback from Support Workers:

*“Spending time together as a group the young people gain confidence to express ideas and opinions. ‘X’ who came on his own soon became one of the group and took an active role in the bridge building session.”*

*“I feel we all felt a huge sense of achievement from having managed to survive!! And that every member of the group will carry that with them as self confidence.”*

*“The instructors naturally instilled confidence & I feel that their communication was pitched just right for the YP, a good balance of respect, fun & discipline.”*

Feedback from Trainer:

*“I can confidently say that there was a positive change in the participation, confidence and group “bonding” in the whole of this group. ‘A, B, C & D’ had some very good input on both days and probably had the most positive outcome in relation to the rest of the group who were slightly more confident characters learning about the forest and things that make its environment, as well as sharing life experiences and the skills they bring to a group as a whole; leading to the ability to adjust, blend, teach and share within a group in a confident manner.”*

## **Ceredigion Young Carers:**

Following on from the previous WICKED quarterly report, feedback has since been gathered for the Forest School sessions, as follows:

Forest School sessions at the Forestry Commission Visitors’ Centre, Bwlch Nant yr Arian. These sessions were delivered in partnership with Forestry Commission Wales. Sessions were led by Leigh Denyer (Forestry Commission Education Ranger), supported by Judith Bray (a qualified Forest School leader).

May 30<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>

As previously reported, attendance was very low; however, the 2 Young Carers that had signed up for the sessions were very enthusiastic and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

<b>TARGET</b>	<b>TARGET ACHIEVED</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants produce at least one hand-crafted item	Yes, participants made at least one hand-crafted item.	
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	Photographic evidence only was gathered.	
90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	The 2 participants attended all sessions.	
<b>At least 60% of young people show</b>		

<b>improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	Yes, all participants named at least one tree species.	
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	Yes, all participants named at least one type of woodland fauna.	
Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	Yes, all participants knew one way that woodlands benefit the environment.	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	No, both participants felt the same.	
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	Yes, both wanted to pursue more woodland activities	

#### Feedback:

Likes –                    *“Making dreamcatchers”*  
                                  *“Making the den”*

Dislikes –                *“The bugs”*  
                                  *“Nothing”*

What did you make –  
                                  *“Deamcatchers”*  
                                  *“A den”*  
                                  *“Necklaces”*  
                                  *“Sound maps”*  
                                  *“A whistle”*

#### **4-day construction project** – July 31<sup>st</sup>, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>.

This project was delivered in partnership with the National Trust, at their Llannerchaeron estate.

The young carers worked as a team to construct Wattle fences as a screen around an area of the estate’s lake, as well as screening off an oil tank from the public’s view. Safe working practice was taught and maintained throughout. Using bill hooks, pruning saws and loppers full attention was paid to all participants with regard to the use of potentially dangerous tools.

The following work was carried out by the young people:

- ❖ Hazel rods were cut using hand saws,
- ❖ Rods were trimmed using bill hooks,
- ❖ Stakes were cut to length and pointed,
- ❖ Rods were woven between the stakes.

7 young people, ranging from 9 – 17 years of age, took part.

2 sisters were unable to attend the 1<sup>st</sup> session as they had friends visiting, other than this, there was a 100% attendance record.

The 17 year old participant doubled up as an extra support worker, which was an experience that she seemed to enjoy.

As well as the construction activity on offer, the young people enjoyed the freedom of being able to play within the vast, but safe, environment of the estate.

TARGET	TARGET ACHIEVED	COMMENTS
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants produce at least one hand-crafted item	Yes, all 7 participants contributed as a team.	
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	Photographic evidence only was gathered.	
90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	71% of participants have 100% attendance rate. 29% have 75% attendance rate.	5 participants attended all 4 sessions, 2 participants attended 3 sessions
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	Yes, all participants named at least one tree species.	
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	Yes, all participants named at least one type of woodland fauna.	
Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	86% knew one way that woodlands benefit the environment.	6 out of the 7 participants.
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	Yes, 60% of young people felt happier	4 – happier 3 – the same
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	Yes, 86% wanted to pursue more woodland	6 – yes 1 - maybe

Feedback:

## Likes –

*“Everything was good”*  
*“Weaving a fence around the boiler”*  
*“Making spears”*

## Dislikes –

*“Nothing – everything was brilliant”*  
*“Having to use the “man killer” to bang posts in the ground”*  
*“I liked everything”*

## What did you make –

*“Loads of fences with wood”*  
*“Used sharp tools”*  
*“A gate”*  
*“I built a tee-pee out of leaves and wood”*

## Feedback from Trainers –

*“All participants used tools carefully and skills improved rapidly during the four sessions. All were focused & attentive & seemed to enjoy their time with us.”*  
*“By allowing the young carers to use tools in the construction and collecting of the Hazel to the fences, there was a noticeable rise in their self confidence in being able to explore their own abilities, there was also a noticeable increase in their interest in the countryside and the surroundings they were working in.”*

**2-day Woodland Survival** – August 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>.

This activity was led by Mark Handford of Outlook Expeditions and took place in the Myherin Forest in north-east Ceredigion, by permission of the Forestry Commission Wales.

Day 1 was spent building a shelter where the young people would sleep overnight. They worked in teams to build 3 shelters; some teams used tarps as an outer protection from the elements, while other teams preferred to use fir branches and fern leaves as a natural weatherproof layer – everyone stayed dry overnight!!

The young people took charge of digging the toilet pit, while others prepared the evening meal – Pasta & Quorn Bolognese - around the campfire.

Ghost stories were shared around the campfire to end the evening!!

Day 2 – After striking camp, the young people were split into 2 teams and built a river crossing. A long walk through the woods was also undertaken during the day. The

midges were a problem again, but, other than this, everyone involved thoroughly enjoyed themselves and the feedback on leadership was very positive.

8 young carers, ranging from 11 to 17 years of age, took part; they were accompanied by 2 members of staff.

TARGET	TARGET ACHIEVED	COMMENTS
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	Yes, video camera footage was taken. Photographs were also taken during this activity.	
90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	Yes, average attendance rate of 90% of participants = 100%	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	Yes, 100% of participants named at least one tree species.	
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	Yes, 87% of participants named at least one type of woodland fauna.	7 out of the 8 participants
Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	75% knew one way that woodlands benefit the environment.	6 out of the 8 participants.
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	No, 6 participants stayed the same – but they had all given themselves the highest score at the start of the activity, so there was no room for improvement.	6 – the same 2 – less happy
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	Yes, 75% wanted to pursue more woodland activities	6 – yes 1 – maybe 1 – no

Feedback:

Likes –  
*“Making bashers”*  
*“Sleeping in the woods”*  
*“Cooking on the fire”*

*“Making things out of wood is fun”  
“Sleeping but everything”*

Dislikes –  
*“The mosquitos”  
“Making the bridge”  
“Midges”  
“Leaving”  
“Ghost stories”  
“Nothing”  
“Packing up”*

What did you make –  
*“My group built a strong bridge and me and my friend made a natural  
basher,”  
“Shelters, toilet, fire, bridge”  
“Ramps”  
“Bacon sanies”  
“Tent & bridge & food & friends”*

Feedback from Ceredigion Young Carers:

*“What a great success the survival was, the young carers who attended really enjoyed the experience so much so that they asked “next time we go, can we go for longer”? We would all like to thank you for arranging such an exciting and challenging activity and the provisions you supplied.  
Would you please pass on our special thanks to Mark (the Leader) for all his hard work, passing on some of his many skills to the young people? (They thought he was COOL)! Especially when he was telling ghost stories around the campfire! They got a lot from this experience, including working as a team, building individual’s confidence, self-esteem and staff had seen an improvement in behaviour. As you will see from the evaluation form’s they got a lot out of it on a personal level. The only negative thing throughout the whole experience was the midges! They drove everyone mad at times even though you had supplied us with insect repellent!  
Once again many thanks and we look forward to the next activity.”*

Feedback from Leader:

*“The young carers groups definitely put the most in to their 2 days and they also got the most out of it, even though they had to work hard and also cook etc, because they were doing it for themselves they had the full sense of achievement in what they had done, whether it was building a weather proof shelter with out using plastic sheet or starting a fire with a bow drill.”*

## **Carmarthenshire Young Carers:**

**3-day Arts in the Woods** - A 2-day musical instrument making workshop on July 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> led by Dave Hoyle and Jamie Miller and a 1-day rap and sound recording workshop on August 8<sup>th</sup> led by the poet, Martin Daws. Both workshops were held at Woodhouse Wood near St. Clears.

The group of 8 from Carmarthenshire Young Carers were all aged between 12 and 16 years. Over the first 2 days they made 1 set of marimbas between the group and a drum each. The young people used planes, saws rasps etc. to make the drum cases, fine motor skills were required to rope the skins and crank the frames. The group, many of whom were unfamiliar with hand tools, were quite slow in getting started on the first day, but soon caught up on the second day when they realised the tight time-frame in which to finish off their drums. The group worked well together, sharing tools and instructor time. The Young people were impressed with their finished drums.

Trainer feedback:

*“The entire group was a joy to work with. The students were very mature and respectful .. and every one of them gave fully to the group dynamic.”* (Dave Hoyle)

*“A fantastic workshop with really positive outcomes.”* (Jamie Miller)

On the third day, the group brought their drums back to the woods and composed ‘rap’ lyrics and a rhythm track which express what they thought about their own lives and the natural environment. The young people then worked as a group to record and mix the music and lyrics into an original piece of rap music. Martin’s own self-confidence rubbed off on the group, who soon relaxed into the activity.

Trainer feedback:

*“A good session in an excellent location with a good group of participants. Thank you Tir Coed”* (Martin Daws).

Support Worker feedback:

*“ All young people were really involved in the activity throughout the whole day. An enjoyable day with a great end product.”*

Of the 8 participants, 4 young people attended all sessions, 2 young people missed one day, 1 young person only attended for 1 day.

<b>TARGET</b>	<b>TARGET ACHIEVED</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants produce at least one hand-crafted item	Yes, 7 participants produced a hand-crafted item. (one participant only attended the rap workshop)	
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	No video camera available for this workshop.	
90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	No, 50% of participants had a 100% attendance	Missing 1 day out of 3 brings

	rate	attendance down to 66.6%
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	Yes, all participants that completed the part 2 self-assessment named at least one tree species.	2 participants were not there on the final day, so did not complete their forms
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	Yes, all participants that completed the part 2 self-assessment named at least one type of woodland fauna.	As above
Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	83% of participants that completed the part 2 self-assessment knew one way that woodlands benefit the environment.	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	No, only 33% of young people that completed the part 2 self-assessment felt happier	2 – happier 4 – the same
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	Yes, 100% of young people that completed the part 2 self-assessment wanted to pursue more woodland activities	5 – yes 2 – maybe

Feedback:

Likes – *“Finishing the drum”.  
Everything.”  
Makeing and playing the miramba”*

Dislikes - *“NOTHING”  
“Putting the skin on the drum”.*

What did you make? –  
*“ I made an awesome wooden drum”*

**2-day Woodland Survival** – This activity was led by Andrew Price of Dryad Bushcraft on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> August at Penllegare Valley Woods, Gorseinon.

The group of 9 young carers were all aged between 8 and 12 years. Although this group was very keen to go, the instructor was not fully aware of quite how small these young people would be. Andrew had intended for the young people to carry their own kit and food for approximately 3 miles along rough tracks to the camping site, However, despite their best efforts, the young people were unable to carry all of this equipment, so this job fell largely on the shoulders of the Support Staff, who were overloaded, some suffering from back ache as a consequence. By the time the group had reached the campsite, motivation levels were very low. In addition to this problem, some of the children did not like the food provided by the instructor and therefore went hungry for most of the first day. Some young people also had trouble sleeping. Despite these set backs, once the hammocks were up, and all of the young people made their own shelters, learning knot work, they then moved on to fire lighting using friction methods. On the second day the group was very tired, but Andrew did manage to show the young people some animal tracking techniques. A Lottery photographer attended on the first day and took some wonderful shots.



Support Worker feedback:

*“ The young people did enjoy the experience on the whole despite the various problems.”*

TARGET	TARGET ACHIEVED	COMMENTS
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants produce at least one hand-crafted item	Yes, all 9 participants made their own shelters.	
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	No video camera available for this workshop.	
90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	Yes, 100% attendance rate	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	No, only 2 participants named at least one tree species (22%)	Some participants were too tired on the second day to complete feedback forms
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	No, only 3 participants named at least one type of woodland fauna (33.3%).	As above

Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	No, only 1 participant knew one way that woodlands benefit the environment.	As above
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	No, only 22% of young people felt happier	2 – happier 2 – less happy 5 – the same
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	No, only 33% of young people wanted to pursue more woodland activities	3 – yes 1 – maybe 1 – no

Feedback:

Likes – *“Sleeping and playing”*.  
*“Staying in the hammock”*  
*“Hide and seek”*  
*“All of it.”*

Dislikes - *“Going in the mud”*  
*“Walking”*  
*“Sauseges”*  
*“Everything”*  
*“Notinck”*

What did you make? –  
*“Shelters and a fair”*

**2-day Woodland Survival** – This activity was for young people from Carmarthenshire Young Carers again, but this time for 12 – 18 year olds. Andrew Price and Nicola Bowskill of Dryad Bushcraft led the activity, which took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> August at Penllegare Valley Woods, Gorseinon.

Since the last survival activity, Carmarthenshire Young Carers had been liasing with Dryad Bushcraft to try and sort out the problems that had occurred previously. As a result, much of the equipment was taken down the woodland track to a location near the campsite by vehicle, the food menu was also specified. There were 7 young carers in the group. Again they erected their hammocks and were given a fir-lighting demonstration, which one of the young people in particular took on with skill. Later in the day Andrew took the group for a guided walk, pointing out woodland herbs and their medicinal and culinary uses. After a few ghost stories, the group settled down to a good night’s sleep. On the second day, the group were instructed in safe use of a knife and then made a wooden peg each. Later in the day the young people worked as a team to make a very attractive shelter, which they took a great pride in.

Support Worker feedback:

*“ All young people really enjoyed these sessions and have commented that they’d like to do it again. Andrew and Nicola worked very well with the young people.”*

Trainer feedback:

*“There was a vast change in confidence levels (over the duration of the activity) and it was apparent that they all felt more at home in the woods, some even expressed an interest in staying out for another night.” (Andrew Price)*

<b>TARGET</b>	<b>TARGET ACHIEVED</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants produce at least one hand-crafted item	Yes, all 7 participants made a wooden peg and a shelter.	
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	Yes - Video footage of young people describing what they have done and what they feel about the activity.	
90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	Yes, 100% attendance rate	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	Yes, all participants named at least one tree species	
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	Yes, all participants named at least one type of woodland fauna (	
Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	Yes, all participants knew one way that woodlands benefit the environment.	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	No, only 14.2% of young people felt happier	1 – happier 1 – less happy 5 – the same
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	yes, 85.7% of young people wanted to pursue more woodland activities	6 – yes 1 – maybe

Feedback:

Likes – “Firemaking”.  
 “Building a shelter”  
 “EVERYTHING”  
 “Falling out of the hammock”

Dislikes - “Sleeping”  
 “Walking”  
 “NOTHING”

What did you make –  
 “a tent peg with 3 different techniques.”

**2-day forest School Sessions** – This introduction to Forest Schools was designed for 8 – 12 year olds and led by Forest School Leader and Assistant, Jo Steadman and Carl John. The sessions were held at a Forest School site on the grounds of the National Botanical Gardens of Wales, Llanarthne.

7 young carers took part in the sessions. On the first day, Jo played a very simple but effective game with the group, where they search for a number of pre-hidden objects in the woods. All participants, including the Support Workers greatly enjoyed this activity. Then it was time to make wind chimes and picture frames using some basic hand tools. The day was finished with a tree ID game. On the second day, the group make musical instruments and beads and built a den. The sessions were based around a central fire, Jo was very clear about safe behaviour around the fire. The young people cooked marshmallows and popcorn.

Support Worker feedback:

*“The young people commented that they really enjoyed these 2 days and that they’d enjoy it again.”*

Trainer feedback:

*“A very nice group of young people whose active participation certainly increased (over the duration of the sessions).” (Carl John)*

TARGET	TARGET ACHIEVED	COMMENTS
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants produce at least one hand-crafted item	Yes, all 8 participants made either a wooden chime, picture frame and beads or musical instruments.	
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	Yes - Video footage of young people describing what they have done and what they feel about the activity.	

90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	Yes, average attendance rate of 87.5%	All those that attended on the first day (6) came back on the second day
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	Yes, 6 out of 7 participants named at least one tree species (85.7%)	
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	Yes, 6 out of 7 participants named at least one type of woodland fauna (85.7%)	
Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	Yes, 5 out of 7 participants knew one way that woodlands benefit the environment (71.4%).	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	Yes, 71.4% of young people felt happier	5 – happier 0 – less happy 2 – the same
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	Yes, 71.4% of young people wanted to pursue more woodland activities	5 – yes 2 – maybe

Feedback:

Likes – “The wind chime”.  
“Making chimes”  
“everything”  
“Doing activities!”

Dislikes - “The rain”  
“The popcorn which was burnt”  
“nothing”  
“Bursting for the toilet”

## **b) The WORKING YOUR WOODS initiative**

(for 16 – 19 year olds not in education, employment or training)

Even though the Working your Woods taster sessions (stage 1) began in June, the previous quarterly report did not detail all of the sessions, due to some of them being ongoing and a lack of staff time. Therefore, much of the Working your Woods taster sessions are covered in this report. Some participants, with support from Tir Coed, have gone on to volunteer programmes with various organisations. Tir Coed has also made progress towards work placements from some of the young people involved.

### **Powys**

Due to a lack of referrals, the start date of Working Your Woods within Powys was moved on to the end of June. No referrals were received from Careers Wales, therefore Gwyneth contacted secondary schools directly for suitable referrals.

2 young people from Llandrindod high school were referred, along with another 2 boys from Builth High School.

Although the number of participants was low, their enthusiasm throughout the taster sessions fully compensated for this.

One of the participants had informed the Project Officer that he was awaiting a call-up to an Army Recruitment Camp and therefore he may not be able to attend for the whole of the initiative. Unfortunately, the call-up came sooner than he had expected and he was therefore only able to attend the first two taster sessions.

### **2-day Green Woodwork:**

This was held at Cefn Wood under the leadership of Naomi Ridge. The participants were given an introduction to woodland management techniques while they were collecting materials. There was discussion on the sustainable use of wood and the importance of managing woodland for biodiversity. Following this they all made mallets and then worked in pairs to produce a Hazel stool, this involved instruction in the safe use of hand tools. Each participant took a stool home with him.



### **Feedback:**

Likes - *“Making the mallets and stools as well as the walks through the wood”*  
*“I found the staff very polite and I learned more about trees”*  
*“The creativity”*

Dislikes - *“Not enough time to spend here as I have enjoyed myself to the top and cant wait till next time.”*  
*“Nothing”*

#### **4-day Community Construction:**

This activity was delivered in partnership with The Woodland Trust, involving 2 of their sites.

Under the instruction of Ralph Collard, a board walk was built over a wet section of a footpath in Coed Dolifor, in the Elan Valley. The walk way was approx 60ft long x 2ft 6" wide & included stepped sections.

The 1<sup>st</sup> part of Day 1 was spent carrying tools and materials to the access point to the woods, which was an uphill walk across a large field. This highlighted to them the amount of preparation time that some jobs involve!

The trainees learnt how to set out and construct various sections of the structure, including the use of different hand tools. At the end of the 3 days they could remember the measurements & techniques used in the construction and were far more confident to carry on with the task in hand.



The 4<sup>th</sup> day was spent at Llawr y Glyn woodland, near Trefeglwys. The aim was to build a rustic seat at the top end of the woods, allowing the public to enjoy spectacular views across the valley. However, the Taxi driver misread the road directions and, consequently, the trainees were over an hour late arriving at the woods. Time was therefore very limited, but the trainees learnt how to make a large mortice & tennon joint in green wood. There were also discussions on SSSI's and they were all keen to learn more about habitat & species, flower & fauna, etc.

#### Feedback:

Likes - *"All of this has been a really good experience and I will try and take it further"*  
*"We made a step and bench made of a oak tree which we cut down and it has been really good"*

Dislikes - *"Nothing but not being able to finish the bench"*  
*"Trying to make a bench out of oak"*

#### **2-day Woodland Survival:**

This activity was led by Mark Handford of Outlook Expeditions and took place in the Myherin Forest in north-east Ceredigion, by permission of the Forestry Commission Wales.

All the boys turned up with their fishing rods (obviously planned!!). They worked really hard to build a shelter each and then hoped to catch some fish for their supper. Unfortunately, due to the remnants of the historic lead mining industry within the area, there are no fish within the river in question. However, to compensate for this disappointment, the Leader took the boys through some hunting & trapping techniques. On the second day the boys successfully attempted a river crossing.

#### Feedback:

- Likes - *“Everything I enjoyed building my shelter and sleeping in it”  
“Making the bashers and snare spring trap, tracking & making the way across the river”*
- Dislikes - *“Not having enough time to stay” (x 3)  
“The dark”*
- Trainer – *“The small group of 3 had a fantastic time and thoroughly got stuck in to the whole wild camp experience, superb is all I can say, the shelters they built were 1<sup>st</sup> class using only natural materials and using roots to make lashings, they even brought fishing rods with them! Which was cheating slightly.”*

## **2-day Woodland Management:**

We were fortunate to secure the expertise of Chris Hughes, Mid Wales & the Marches Assessment Centre, to deliver this aspect of the taster sessions. The boys benefited from 2 very informative and action-packed days, which was of particular relevance to 2 of the boys who had expressed a strong interest in a career as woodland contractors. Both classroom-based and practical sessions were undertaken. The trainees learnt about risk management and safety guidelines.

Tools used included:

- ❖ A Pole saw to brash and high prune a 65 year old Oak;
- ❖ Hand Saws to fell trees up to 8 inches in diameter;
- ❖ A Weeding Hook to remove bracken & brambles from among young trees;
- ❖ A Hand Winch to assist directional felling of larger trees.

In addition, there were demonstrations in the felling and extraction of trees using chainsaw and tractor & winch, as well as demonstrations of timber processing using a Firewood Processor and a Mobile Bandsaw. This highlighted to the trainees the importance of adding value to both high and low value produce in order to generate revenue to pay for the work.

## Feedback:

- Likes - *“Winching the trees down and learning the techniques of tree surgery”  
“Cutting down trees & using the winch”  
“Learning to fell a tree”*

- Dislikes - *“There wasn’t enough time and lunch was too long”*

Trainer feedback –

*“The trainee who showed the least commitment on day one participated better on day two by carrying out tasks set willingly, even though his interests were elsewhere. Behaviour by all was excellent and contribution to both discussion and practical work was good. The trainee with the highest motivation would be able to work immediately, but needs to be aware of the need for workers able to do a very wide range of tasks to be employable in the current economy”*

## 2-day Wood Manufacturing:

This was led by Nigel Phillips of Coed Cymru at the Tregynon workshop.

Initially, the trainees were given a quick tour of the premises which included a talk on the activities and role of Coed Cymru.

Following this the trainees got down to work - two of the trainees made planters, while the third trainee made a chicken hut for his chickens.

The trainees were involved in:

- ❖ Measuring/marking out;
- ❖ The assembly of components;
- ❖ Drilling – using power tools;
- ❖ Gluing & screwing with power screw drivers;
- ❖ The use of clamps;
- ❖ Finishing/sanding;
- ❖ Safety procedures.

### Feedback:

Likes – “Everything it was good because it was practical”  
“Making a chicken box”

Dislikes - “Nothing, never had enough time but all in all it was great”



Since the introductory sessions have come to an end, all 3 trainees have gone on to take part in a Skillbuild programme. This 13-week programme, run through Careers Wales and Powys Training, involves a work placement for 30 hours per week, as well as one day per week brushing up on numeracy & literacy skills, as appropriate. The trainees are paid £50 per week provided they complete their 30-hour placement.

Trainee 1 – this trainee is the most highly motivated of all. His attendance rate for the taster sessions was 100% and he was always full of enthusiasm for the activities. At times his enthusiasm would get the better of him and he would tend to rush into a task rather than stop to think of the best approach.

*“x saw the need to step back & not rush in & has gained understanding of the benefits of this, but still finds it hard to implement. His ability to work as part of a team has increased & he became less individualistic in his approach – leads well.”* (Dafydd Morris-Jones, Support Worker)

Trainee 2 – this trainee is the complete opposite to trainee 1. He is less effervescent and has less experience of working with wood; however, he is good at listening to instructions and translating them into careful, well thought out, work. Consequently, trainees 1 and 2 complement each other well as a team.

His attendance rate was 92%, missing only one out of the 12 taster sessions.

*“Y’s confidence in his abilities & ability to grasp & master new concepts grew. His ability to keep other team members in check was useful.”* (Support Worker).

Both trainees 1 and 2 are carrying out their work placements on the Skillbuild programme with the same woodland contractor, learning how to manage trees. Tir Coed has funded their protective clothing, while Powys Training will be funding a Basic Chainsaw training course for each of them. The Project Officer is also hoping to access further subsidised training for the 2 trainees via the Countryside Council for Wales-funded “Countryside Skills Training” programme.

Trainee 3 – this trainee had very little confidence when he first joined the project, but his self-confidence grew as the weeks progressed. His attendance rate was 92%; he missed 1 session due to another appointment.

He found some of the woodland management tasks rather challenging and was better suited to the more intimate work. He particularly enjoyed making, and was very proud of, his chicken hut.

Trainee 3 is currently carrying out a work placement with a welding company, based at Rhayadr.

The Project Officer is delighted to hear that the mother of Trainee 1 visited the Big lottery Fund stand at the Royal Welsh showground to thank them for funding The Wicked Project, as it has given her son such a great experience and opportunity.

<b>TARGET</b>	<b>TARGET ACHIEVED</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants produce at least one hand-crafted item	Yes, all 3 participants produced at least 3 hand-crafted items.	
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	Yes - Video footage of young people describing what they have made, and method used.	
90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	Yes, average attendance rate of <b>all</b> participants was 94.5%	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	Yes, all participants could name at least one	

	tree species.	
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	Yes, all participants could name at least one type of woodland fauna.	
Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	100% knew one way that woodlands benefit the environment.	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	66% felt happier (2 out of 3 participants).	The 3 <sup>rd</sup> participant had scored himself a top 5 at the start of the sessions, so there was no room for improvement
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	Yes, all expressed an interest in pursuing more woodland activities	
<b>Increased skills leading to improved employment opportunities for young people:</b>		
At least 60% of participants receiving accreditation	All 3 participants have expressed an interest in accreditation. 2 will receive accredited training during their work placement	Progress with this target to be updated in next report
At least 60% of participants showing a positive attitude towards career development	Yes, average attendance rate of <b>all</b> participants was 94.5%	

## Ceredigion:

A full report of the Working Your Woods taster sessions was included in The Wicked Project March-June Quarterly Report.

Below is an update on the progress of the 8 trainees:

Trainee 1 – is under 15 years old and excluded from school. He was offered a place on the Ceredigion Tree Wise project, but has opted to take part in a wider curricular project run by Carmarthenshire County Council which runs for 5 days per week during school term.

Trainee 2 – is following a course in Catering at Llanelli College.

Trainee 3 – has not opted for any volunteer or employment opportunities.

Trainee 4 – is following and City & Guilds Level 2 course in Furniture Making at Ceredigion College in Cardigan.

Trainee 5 – remains in school.

Trainee 6 - is currently volunteering at the Coppicewood College at Cilgeran; the College offers a Diploma course in Green Woodwork, starting in October. His attendance at the volunteer days has been sporadic. But I believe that he has recently realised that he must show more commitment to volunteer days if he is to gain a place on the Diploma course this autumn. His skills on the pole lathe have been praised by staff of the College.

Trainee 7 – is attending weekly volunteer days, run by the Countryside Council for Wales at their Cors Caron reserve. He is also interested in enrolling for the 6-month Diploma course in Green Woodwork run by The Coppicewood College.

Trainee 8 - has not opted for any volunteer or employment opportunities.

### **Carmarthenshire:**

As detailed in the last quarterly report, Working your Woods in Carmarthenshire was not very successful, with low referrals and sporadic attendance. However, the final workshop in this county, Community Construction did have some worthwhile outcomes.

### **4-day Community Construction Workshop:**

As this workshop was all ready to go, but with no participants remaining from the start of the programme, it was decided to go-ahead with the workshop with 3 15 year olds from Cross Hands Special Unit. The 3 boys made a bench out of green wood with trainer Jamie Miller. All participants were familiar with the County Council owned site, Mynydd Mawr Woodland Park, having previously worked on countryside management tasks with the warden, Dewi Wagstaff; this helped as the group were used to working together. The participants responded well to being introduced to green woodworking tools and to the shave horse, a couple of the boys in particular spent a lot of time and gained great enjoyment from making pegs using a rounding plane. In preparation for making the bench, Jamie took the boys through making mallets and a saw horse. We were fortunate to have Dewi on-hand to help out, as well as a staff member from the Unit. Lucie Soper, a youth worker who was contracted in by Tir Coed, supported the sessions.

Following on from this workshop Becky met up with the participants, Unit staff and a Carmarthen Journal photographer at the Park, the boys took much delight in proudly posing on their bench for the photo. The report appeared in the Carmarthen Journal on 1<sup>st</sup> August, we were very pleased to get front-page coverage in the Gwendraeth Valley edition (shown below). Later in the day, Becky visited Cross Hands Unit to discuss the possibility of developing volunteering opportunities with their young people. However, despite staff enthusiasm to work with Tir Coed in the future, the Unit is undergoing big changes at the present time. The Unit is moving to the Llanelli area over the summer due to the present building being unsuitable and a new person was being recruited to head the Unit. Becky will stay in contact with staff members and attempt to engage the pupils in the near future.

# Creative kids' big project

VISITORS to Mynydd Mawr Woodland Park can now sit back and enjoy the natural environment, thanks to pupils from Cross Hands special unit.

The youngsters have spent several days building an oak bench for the community. The workshop was set up by Tir Coed as part of the Big Lottery-funded Wicked project, which sets up woodland-related training and activities for young people in the Dyfed-Powys area.

Unit staff member Paul Emms said: "The boys have loved coming to the park, they really benefit from this type of outdoor, hands-on activity.

"These are the sort of young people who find it difficult to sit in a class all day and take in information. The best way for these pupils to learn is by doing and creating — and there's no better venue for it than this council-owned park."

The bench was made entirely out of locally grown green wood.

All joints were held together with wooden pegs, no nails required.

Tir Coed project officer Becky Hulme said: Charity.

"These types of traditional skills are just the ticket for these young people, enabling them to acquire new skills and to improve their employability."

More information about Tir Coed can be found at [www.tircoed.org.uk](http://www.tircoed.org.uk)



**SITTING BACK:** Pupils Matthew Ireson, James Fuentes and Wayne Williams from the Cross Hands special unit have made a bench and placed it at Tumble wood. Pictured with them are staff members Paul Emms and Tony James, and Becky Hulme from Tir Coed Woodlands

## Young People Feedback:

Likes - *"Making the oak bench"*

Dislikes - *"Working out in the rein"*

TARGET	TARGET ACHIEVED	COMMENTS
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants produce at least one hand-crafted item	Yes, all 3 participants made a mallet and took part in producing a saw horse & wooden bench	
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	Yes - Video footage of young people describing what they have made, and method used.	
90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	Yes, average attendance rate of <b>all</b> participants was 91.6%	3 participants had 100% attendance rate 1 participant missed a session (75% attendance) due to unruly

		behaviour on the way back to the Unit
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	None of the participants completed final self-assessment forms.	
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	As above	
Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	As above	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	None of the participants completed final self-assessment forms.	
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	As above	
<b>Increased skills leading to improved employment opportunities for young people:</b>		
At least 60% of participants receiving accreditation	None of the participants completed final self-assessment forms.	Progress with this target to be updated in next report
At least 60% of participants showing a positive attitude towards career development	Yes, average attendance rate of <b>all</b> participants was 91.6%	
At least 25% of participants progress to further training or employment	None of the participants completed final self-assessment forms.	Progress with this target to be updated in next report

## **Pembrokeshire:**

7 young people took part in the Working Your Woods initiative within Pembrokeshire. Careers Wales were very supportive and found 3 referrals for the scheme, 2 young people were referred via a training organisation and another through Mount Community association; 1 participant self-referred.

The attendance rate was very satisfactory for all 12 of the introductory sessions.

Unfortunately, due to low numbers of Personal Advisors, Careers Wales could not offer Tir Coed Support Workers, so 3 individuals were recruited to support Working Your

Woods in Pembrokeshire. Dave Hoyle, a teacher at the West Wales Steiner School and outdoor enthusiast supported all 12 sessions, he was assisted by Sian Cornelius, a Forest School practitioner and survival tutor and Jo Griffiths a Woodcraft Folk/Gwerin Y Coed Leader.

The introductory sessions were as follows:

1. **2-day Woodland Survival** – this was led by Andrew Price of Dryad Bushcraft and took place in Canaston Woods, a Forestry Commission Wales managed woodland in mid Pembrokeshire. 5 Working your Woods trainees participated, as the 2 girls who had signed up did not want to spend the night in the woods. Unfortunately, due to the dry weather, the FC permission stated that no fires were allowed. As well as putting up their hammocks and digging their toilet pit, the group made shelters on Day 1. Many in the group enjoyed the shelter-building in particular, however, the group did not bond well in the first instance, and tended to divide into 2 factions – the instructor made a point to say that he felt that a fire could have negated some of this rivalry and helped to pull the group together. Day 2 was spent foraging for food as well as carving spoons using knives. However, some individuals (who considered themselves ‘experts’ in knifework) objected to the clear rules given by Andrew on knife use and care. Therefore this activity was cut short. In retrospect, this activity should have been scheduled towards the end of the 12 sessions, as a treat for good behaviour and achievement. Any unruly individuals would have been identified by this point, and in addition, the group would have had more of an opportunity to form relationships and to come to an understanding about personal differences.



#### Feedback:

Likes - *“Building the shelter because I hadn’t done something like that to that scale*

Dislikes - *“The cold weather at the dead of night”  
“Wen Andy was being a control freak and taking the tools off everyone so we cudn’t do anything.”*

2. **2-day Green Woodwork** – This ran at Nant-y-Cwm Community Woodland, Llanycefn, Pembrokeshire and was led by community group member, Stefan Proszynski. All 7 trainees attended this workshop, 5 for both sessions and 2 for 1 day. The group bonded much better, the introduction of both female participants changed the group dynamic, and so although the boys were on their best behaviour, concentration levels were not always high. All participants made either a 3-legged stool or table and appeared to be proud of their achievements. The abilities of individuals were highlighted in this workshop, one participant in particular, who has behavioural difficulties, showed that he had an amazing ability to concentrate on the task in hand, it was only when there was a lull in activities that his concentration levels slipped. Some participants also made bows and arrows, which were tested on a makeshift archery range.

Young People Feedback:

Likes -        *“Making table – chillin out”*  
                  *“Cutting the wood”*  
                  *“WHAT I made”*

Dislikes -     *“N/A”*  
                  *“Nufin!”*  
                  *“How short the course was.”*

3.     **2-day Woodland Management** – this workshop was also held at Nant-y-Cwm Community woodland, 6 trainees attended, 3 for both days and 3 for 1 day. Piers Ciapara, another Community group member, led this workshop. The workshop began with a guided tour around the site to explain different management systems and wildlife habitats; participants used a measuring wheel to measure the length of the perimeter. The workshop then focused on the creation of footpath steps using retaining boards and wooden stakes, safety rules concerning tool use were covered. The steps were completed on the second day. Although participants showed an interest in the guided walk, concentration levels dipped thereafter, resulting in a planned demonstration of hand winching techniques being cancelled, as the Trainer was concerned that lack of concentration might result in injury. One participant in particular remained focused; the completion of the steps was largely due to his efforts. Participants became easily bored with the task in hand and quickly became more interested in tending the fire and making tea than working. Despite the lack of involvement from the rest of the group, they all were surprised to find that it was time to leave when the taxi arrived, and said that they had enjoyed their time at the woods.

Feedback:

Likes -        *“Going for a walk”*  
                  *“Puttin the steps in”*  
                  *“The end result”*  
                  *“nufin!”*

Dislikes -     *“Flies”*  
                  *“Nothin”*  
                  *“Everything”*

4.     **4-day Community Construction** – was held at Green Links Community Woodland, next to Pembroke School. Adam Edwards, a Green Links staff member, led the workshop. All 7 participants were involved in making a large viewing platform, 2 for all of the 4 days, 3 for 3 days, 1 for 2 days and 1 for only 1 day. When the group arrived at the woods, some initial preparation work had been done, the post holes had been dug and some of the posts had been placed, but the rest of the platform was constructed by the group. Although some issues had arisen between some participants (which probably accounted for the low attendance of these individuals) the rest of the group worked very well together, each taking turns to work on different tasks and problem-solving as a unit. The end result was quite remarkable, the platform is now available for group use,

Green Links are even considering running yoga classes from the platform. On the last day, the group had a much-deserved barbeque on their finished creation. A couple of weeks later, Becky took some of the participants back to this site for an interview and photograph with a Western Telegraph reporter. The article appeared on page 28 of the July 25<sup>th</sup> edition. One positive outcome of this workshop, is that Dave Hoyle, the Working your Woods Support Worker has since been employed by Green Links as a part-time woodland trainer for their own projects.

Feedback:

Likes -        *“Working in the woods”*  
                  *“The end result”*  
                  *“Building the platform”*

Dislikes -     *“The endes”*  
                  *“Some people not working”*  
                  *“Nothing”*

5.     **2-day Wood Manufacturing & Processing** – this workshop was held at the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park woodland workshop, Cilrhedyn near Fishguard and involved 4 Cilrhedyn staff members. 6 young people attended this workshop, 1 for 1 day and 5 for both days. On the first day the young people made planters out of green wood. Although all participants made a planter to take home with them, many had completed their planter very early in the day; some of the young people became bored and then caused some disruption to staff working in the nearby office, which was soon put under control. On the second day, Cilrhedyn staff reassessed their approach and decided to take the young people through a ‘normal’ day at the workshop. Whilst 2 boys feed timber through a processing machine, others used routers to make their own signs and one young man made a very impressive field gate. The staff worked on either a 1 to 1 or 1 to 2 basis and this A variety of tools were used, the confidence of the young people in using these tools was evident by this stage in the programme.



Feedback:

Likes -        *“All of it”*  
                  *“Making things out of wood”*  
                  *“Making signs”*

Dislikes -     *“All the slave labour”*  
                  *“Non of it”*  
                  *“Nothing”*

Since the introductory sessions have come to an end, some participants have progressed to stages 1 and 2 of the programme. A brief summary of each participant follows:

1. This participant was referred onto the programme by Careers Wales, her reason for wanting to join up being “having something to do”. Xxx appeared to have very low confidence levels when she joined the introductory sessions, holding her head down and communicating little with the rest of the group. The Support worker commented: *“ xxx’s confidence in the use of tools was quite low at the beginning of the course. She has learnt that through applying herself with more enthusiasm drive and focus, she has been able to overcome her reservations and fear of practical tasks. During the construction of the viewing platform, xxx excelled in her commitment and application to physically demanding tasks, encouraging her team mates in the process given the right environment and guidance xxx blooms with self confidence and pride for her work.”* Xxx only had a 50% attendance rate, however, this was largely due to a personality clash with another participant. This participant expressed some interest in volunteering, Becky contacted her regarding a local volunteering project, but she declined the offer of an introduction. xxx expressed a strong desire to join the Fire Service. Becky contacted Pembroke Dock Fire Service to see if there were any opportunities for xxx. Unfortunately xxx is too old to join the Young Firefighters club, but hopefully she will take the opportunity to apply for work with them when the opportunity arises in the Spring. Xxx’s Careers Wales Personal Advisor emailed Becky:

*“I am really pleased that I referred xxx to you and I would like to thank you for the wonderful work you have done with her on Tir Coed and assisting her in finding options and possibly a career for her afterwards.”*

2. This participant was referred onto the programme via the training organisation Future Works. He had spent a year after school trying out courses and work experience without much satisfaction. Xxx had a 100% attendance record. He was frequently praised by trainers and support staff for his ability and aptitude. The Support Worker wrote: *“ xxx began the course as a very quiet, seemingly unconfident but likeable young man. Progressively he has shown us all leadership qualities, an exemplary attitude to work and commitment to given tasks, exceptional workmanship and unquestionable reliability. For any possible work placements, I would not hesitate in recommending him.”* Becky did introduce xxx to a local volunteering project, however, the task were uninspiring, so xxx has not returned. xxx has just begun a Foundation Construction Award in Carpentry and Joinery. There is an option to go on a work placement as part of this course. After many phone calls and dead ends, Becky did manage to find a work placement for xxx with a local joinery business. However xxx declined the offer, as he had undertaken work experience with this company in the past and was only expected to perform menial tasks. Xxx is intending to complete his NVQ accredited college course without a work placement.
3. This participant was also referred via Future Works. This was another very able individual and although he only had a 50% attendance rate, xxx *“has applied fully in every aspect of the course. He has taken every opportunity to learn new skills... and has developed greatly in his improvisational skills, solving construction problems and designing his own woodwork pieces”*. (Dave Hoyle) This participant was also introduced to the same volunteering project as participant 2. xxx has just begun training with the Army Apprentices. We wish him the best of luck.
4. This participant was another referral from Careers Wales. Although xxx had a very nonchalant attitude, right through the duration of the introductory sessions, she still managed to notch up a 71% attendance rate. Xxx seemed to gain satisfaction from her achievement whilst on the sessions. *“She has continued to apply more focus into her work and enjoyed the results of her efforts”* (Dave Hoyle). Xxx was the only

participant who did not want to go onto woodland-related work or volunteering, she is keen to get onto a chef apprenticeship course, and is waiting re-housing so that she is within travelling distance of the course.

5. This participant was quite challenging at the beginning of the programme. He was referred onto Working your Woods by the Mount Community Association, with which he has been involved. His school expressed what a difficult pupil he had been in their experience. During the woodland survival, xxx appeared unable to concentrate whilst using a knife, his capacity to focus on the safe use of tools increase dramatically throughout the duration of the sessions, especially during the construction of the viewing platform, for which he was a major contributor. . Xxx had a 92% attendance rate, showing his commitment. The Support Worker wrote: “*xxx is a wonderful character, with so much potential for becoming a great team player. Given the right environment and guidance, xxx would be a great asset for a project offering a work placement.*” Xxx started a college course in September, but found it unsuitable and has since dropped out. Becky is currently looking into the possibility of finding xxx a work placement
6. This participant was another referred via Careers Wales. Xxx appeared to have very low self-confidence at the start of the course and did not apply himself well. However, xxx made great progress and managed to focus well, the Support Worker wrote: “*Over the duration of the project, xxx has increasingly presented himself as a confident, eager to learn and caring young man, a successful course for xxx in many ways.*” This participant had a 75% attendance rate, largely due to a series of appointments. On the last workshop day at Cilrhedyn, xxx expressed an interest in a work placement. Becky liased with the Woodland Centre, which was very open to the suggestion of a work placement with them, a method of transportation was also organised. Becky attended a Careers Wales meeting, where all agreed that a work placement with Cilrhedyn was one of the best options for xxx. The Work placement was organised between Careers Wales and a training organisation, PRP, which run a ‘Skillbuild’ programme. Unfortunately, the latest feedback we have is that xxx failed to attend 2 interviews and his start date with PRP; his Careers Wales Advisor is at a loose end as to where to go next. Becky will attempt to follow this up in the near future.
7. This participant was self-referred onto the programme. Despite being 20 years old and having been expelled from other similar schemes in the past for inappropriate behaviour, it was decided to accept xxx onto the programme, as he was very keen to take part. Xxx suffers from ADHD and has not had much success at school or in other courses he has begun. Initially xxx’s behaviour was challenging, both for Support Workers and some other members of the group. However, once xxx had got to know the rest of the group and the boundaries presented by the Support Workers, his behaviour became less problematic, and he only had to be challenged on occasion. Xxx had a 92% attendance rate, only missing 1 of the 12 days. Although xxx found it difficult at times to focus on the task in hand, he soon showed that he has an amazing ability to focus on a given task for a limited period of time. The Support Worker commented: “*xxx has shown everyone his obvious talent to focus intently on a task that he is interested in.*” Following the introductory sessions, Becky introduced xxx to the Coppice Wood College near Cilgerran and their weekly volunteering programme. Since this introduction, xxx has only missed 1 volunteering day, he has signed up with Tir Coed as a ‘Millennium Volunteer’ (a WCVA funded project) and to date has completed over 60 hours of volunteering, he is well on his way to his 100 hours Millennium Volunteer Award. Xxx is due to begin a 6-month OCN accredited course with the Coppice Wood College in October. Bruce Slark, Coppice Wood Chair emailed

Becky to say: “Just a short note to let you know that we are all really pleased with xxx's progress, since we last spoke he has not missed a Wednesday. He has started to join in with the group and is obviously enjoying himself. He is also showing initiative in his work which is really encouraging. We are confident that he would make an excellent student for the 6 month course.”

<b>TARGET</b>	<b>TARGET ACHIEVED</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem:</b>		
Participants produce at least one hand-crafted item	Yes, all 7 participants produced at least 3 hand-crafted items.	
Participants are able to express their views about the woodland, the activity & themselves on a video recording.	Yes - Video footage of young people describing what they have made, and method used.	
90% of activity participants have at least an 80% attendance rate.	No, average attendance rate of <b>all</b> participants was 75.7%	
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in environmental awareness:</b>		
Participants can name at least one tree species	Yes, all participants could name at least one tree species.	Verbal exercise, recorded by Support Worker
Participants know that woodlands support wildlife – can name at least one type of fauna	Yes, all participants could name at least one type of woodland fauna.	Verbal exercise, recorded by Support Worker
Participants know at least one way that woodlands benefit the environment	100% knew one way that woodlands benefit the environment.	Verbal exercise, recorded by Support Worker
<b>At least 60% of young people show improvement in health and well-being:</b>		
At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity	Both parts of the self-assessment form were only returned for 1 participant who score himself less at the end of the course than at the beginning	
At least 60% of young people intend to pursue similar healthy activities again	Yes, 85.7% expressed an interest in pursuing more woodland activities	
<b>Increased skills leading to improved employment opportunities for</b>		

<b>young people:</b>		
At least 60% of participants receiving accreditation	4 out of the 7 participants have expressed an interest in accreditation. 2 have begun accredited woodland-related course	Progress with this target to be updated in next report
At least 60% of participants showing a positive attitude towards career development	Yes, average attendance rate of <b>all</b> participants was 75.7%	

#### Lessons Learnt:

- Schedule the Woodland Survival towards the end of the programme next year, when the group have formed relationships. Use as a ‘carrot’ to encourage suitable behaviour and achievement.
- Concentrate more on the Green Woodwork and less on the Woodland Management
- Using the same site for more than one workshop crates a bond between participants and the woodland site.
- Participants need to be prepared for the Wood Manufacturing Workshop, which, as it is held in a conventional workshop setting, is in contrast to the more laid back atmosphere of the workshops held in woodland settings. It must be ensured that the young people have enough tasks to keep them busy and focused, which will limit the opportunities for disruption to others. An opportunity to take a walk during the afternoon could be considered. Dividing the group into smaller units to undertake separate tasks can also avoid disruption.
- The Project Officers need to impress upon the Support Worker how important it is to return completed self-assessment forms.

#### **c) The Tree Wise initiative**

(For young people, 14 – 16 years who are, or are in danger of being, excluded from school)

Following on from the Tree Wise Leader training sessions, Tree Wise Projects in Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire have begun during September. Details of these projects will be included in the next quarterly Report.

### **3. Problems to highlight re Big Lottery Fund Targets:**

#### **a) Target number of young people**

The Project Officers are aware that Tir Coed is falling short of its target for the number of young people involved with the WICKED project (600 over 3 years). The main reason for this shortfall is that there are fewer Young Carers attending the Acorn Initiative activities than was anticipated.

While developing the project the Project Officers consulted with the Young Carers Organisations within the 4 project counties and were given the number of young people who were members of the Organisations. It was then estimated that around 12 Young Carers would be involved in each activity.

However, the Project Officers were not aware that many of the Young Carers members only wish to access the mentoring service offered by the Organisations and do not wish to take part in structured activities.

Therefore, the average number of young people attending Acorn Initiative activities is 6 – 8 per group, which is almost half the estimated number.

#### **b) Milestones**

As a consequence of the above, it is very difficult to achieve the Milestone, as detailed on the WICKED Outcomes table –

*“90% of activity/programme participants have at least an 80% attendance rate”.*

For example, if a group of 6 young people is attending a 3-day activity, and 1 of these young people doesn't attend for 1 day, we are unable to reach our Milestone.

This shortfall has been discussed by the Tir Coed Board of Directors. The Project Officers would like to propose that the Milestone percentage should be adjusted to read –

*“70% of activity/programme participants have at least a 70% attendance rate.”*

#### **c) Measuring Targets**

Project Officers feel that they have not found the best method of measuring the Target:

*“At least 60% of young people feel happier than when they began the Project activity”.*

Currently, young people complete self-assessment forms, in which they are asked to score themselves from 1 to 5 on how happy they feel at the beginning of the activity; this exercise is repeated at the end of the same activity.

Often the young people are excited about taking part in the activity and therefore give themselves the maximum score of 5 at the start; needless to say, this does not allow for any improvement in their “happiness” score at the end of the activity.

The Project Officers are seeking further advice on ways of measuring this target more effectively.

End of report.