



## **Llais y Goedwig Members' Update January 2011**

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Dear Llais y Goedwig members

A warm welcome to new groups and individuals who have recently joined us. My name is Jo Cooper, and I have recently taken up the position of Administrative Assistant to join Chloe Griffiths who is the Network Co-ordinator. I will be working 15 hours a week. As a guide (until March) I will be available in the office on Monday and Friday mornings (9.30-1.30) and all day Tuesday. You can contact me via email on [jo.cooper@llaisygoedwig.org.uk](mailto:jo.cooper@llaisygoedwig.org.uk) or on the office number 0845 456 0342. Please leave a message or send an email on other days and I'll get back to you. Chloe's work days are all day Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.

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### **Annual Conference and AGM: *Funding Sustainable Community Woodlands***

Planning for the Conference and AGM on the 11th and 12th March is now well underway! You should have received a flyer and booking form with this update, and we're looking forward to receiving lots of booking forms in the next few weeks! Do let us know that you're coming as soon as you can as we are expecting a lot of interest and places are limited.

Eleanor Burnham AM (North Wales) will there on the first day and making some opening remarks.

We are planning a busy two days exploring options for generating a sustainable income for your group. We have signed up a varied array of speakers and funders (confirmed topics to be delivered in brackets) including:

- **BIG lottery fund** - (People and Places)
- **Wales Cooperative Centre** – (Social Enterprise)
- **Cadwyn Clwyd** –(Leader/RDP funding)
- **WCVA** - (Demystifying Tendering etc)
- **Forestry Commission Wales** - (Glastir)
- **Focus on Forestry First**
- **Environment Wales**
- **Keep Wales Tidy**

For an up to date list see the website.

The venue this year will be the lovely Brookhouse Mill (<http://www.brookhousemill.co.uk>) set in a beautiful part of the country near Denbigh, and also near the inspirational Woodland Skills Centre that we shall be visiting on the Saturday (<http://www.woodlandskillscentre.co.uk>)

If you are looking for ways to bring in the cash needed to make your ideas fly then you can't afford to miss this event. Numbers are limited and places will be allotted on a "first-come, first-served" basis. You can secure your place by filling in and returning the attached booking form.

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## Case Studies

Under the Forestry Commission project Llais y Goedwig has commissioned five case studies from groups willing to share their experiences for others to learn from. We hope to have the first case studies available at the conference.

Case studies have been commissioned from:

- Blaen Bran Community Woodland
- Coed Marros
- Llangattock
- Ruperra ConservationTrust
- Coed y Bobl

Watch this space for some great, inspirational stories!

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**Wanted: New Directors**

Are you passionate about communities and woodlands in Wales and how they can meet the future demands of society? Are you willing to put your talents to use to help Llais y Goedwig grow?

If you've got a skill you could offer, like marketing, PR, fundraising, writing articles, forestry expertise, public speaking or generating ideas, if you have a few hours to spare a week, the Board wishes to recruit 2-3 new directors.

For more information on what the Board gets up to check the Minutes [http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/about/board\\_meetings/](http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/about/board_meetings/). Let Chloe know if you want to find out more about what is involved and let her have your nomination by the 1<sup>st</sup> March.

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## **Website**

The website has been slowly developing over the past nine months and now contains no less than 55 pages of information about how Llais y Goedwig works, what we have been doing and information we hope will be of use to members. The first phase of development is coming to a close and we have just started on translation of the pages. Please be patient – we will have it all in Welsh soon. In the meantime do check what is already there and let us know what you think.

<http://www.llaisygoedwig.org.uk>

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## **Publications**

Llais y Goedwig has been working on a range of publications derived from previous workshops and the 2010 Summer Roadshow. We hope to have the first seven titles available at the conference and they will also be available as pdf download from the website.

Advisory note series:

AN1: Community woodland groups: An introduction

AN2: Getting to know your community

AN3: Getting to know your woods

AN4: Writing a management plan

AN5: An introduction to climate change

AN6: Woodland crime

AN7: Defining objectives

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**Forestry Commission Wales Firewood Tender 2011**

Forestry Commission Wales (FCW) are about to issue its second annual tender for small lots of firewood across Wales. The aim in the first round was to enable small-scale wood fuel suppliers and community groups to collect remnant timber (left over from felling) for use as wood fuel (firewood etc.). FCW will produce a report of the first round but we already know that few community groups responded. Llais y Goedwig, along with Woodfuel Wales, Woodland for Business Partnership and CONFOR, are working with FCW on the second tender to improve accessibility and awareness of this opportunity. If you would like to tender for a firewood contract, and especially if you were put off in the first round, please visit our website where we are polling members for views on responding to FCW tenders. If you want to find out more about tendering to FCW please visit: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/wham>.

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## Sale of **England's** forests

As we're sure you are all aware the Government has announced its intention to sell off 2,500 sq km of public land managed by Forestry Commission England to raise between £150 and £250 million. This has generated a ground swell of opposition and a lot of debate on the value of public ownership of forest. It is interesting to note that most of the concerns expressed are about possible impacts on biodiversity, especially sites which are ancient forest (particularly Forest of Dean and New Forest) or could be restored to native species (PAWS sites), forests with high recreational use (Thefford, Grizedale etc) and generally on public access. Support for community use of the forest as a local economic asset is much less vocal and there is less opposition to the sale of large blocks of commercial conifer such as Kielder. Caroline Spelman has said it is "time for the government to step back" from forest management, while ensuring "that public access is maintained and biodiversity protected". 'The government stepping back' could mean many things e.g. management agreements with local value addition on sales of forest products helping to defray operational expenses etc. It is only full-market value leases which are currently on offer. At a time when it is increasingly hard to raise funds are communities and charities to raise the cash to buy the leases? Even if we have to raise capital by selling the silver – would we even expect to get a good price by swamping the market at a time of economic recession?

What does this mean for Wales? After all we have firm assurances from Elin Jones the Assembly Minister for Rural Affairs that there are no plans at present for sale of any of the WAG forest land. However there are still compelling reasons why we in Wales should take an interest in what is happening just across the border:

1) Anyone who has walked in an English forest<sup>1</sup> can consider themselves a stakeholder in their future so should feel free to respond to the consultation on ownership options for English forests.

2) Whatever happens in England may end up being applied here – after all we have an election coming up. So we should do what we can to make sure what happens in England is what we would want to see happening here.

If you want to take actions here are some suggestions:

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<sup>1</sup> If you haven't then the Forest of Dean and Delamere, both on the border are well worth visiting.

1) Respond to the public consultation – let the government know what you think.

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-pfeconsultation>

2) Sign a petition:

38 Degrees – civil society petition (> 300,000 signature on 30 January)

<http://www.38degrees.org.uk/page/s/save-our-forests#petition>

Woodland Trust – mostly about safeguarding ancient, native woodlands

<http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/campaigning/save-ancient-forests/Pages/fc-disposals-act-now.aspx>

3) Ask your AM candidates for the coming elections what position they take on sale of public forest – let them know we care and are watching!

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### **2011 is International year of forests-**

This year is the UN Year of Forests with the theme of 'Forests for People'. This is being supported by the Forestry Commission and they have adopted this as their theme for 2011 – i.e. expect to see this on the FCW stand at the Royal Welsh etc. Llais y Goedwig is in the process of registering with the UN so we can use the logo and have our events recognised as contributing to this theme. We are hoping to show some of the winners of the forest film festival at the Conference in March. Maybe there are some ways your group could also contribute to the International year of forests?

<http://www.un.org/en/events/iyof2011/>

<http://www.jhfestival.org/forestfestival/index.htm>

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### **Joint 2011 event in south Wales**

Llais y Goedwig has been invited to be a partner in a regional networking/training event at Pen Y Gele near Swansea in the summer. More details to follow soon!

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### **Policy engagement**

The last six months have been a very busy time in terms of Llais y Goedwig involvement in Welsh policy development. The next six months to a year are shaping up to be even busier and this is an exciting (and challenging) time in the development of community woodlands in Wales. Here are a few of things Llais y Goedwig has done on behalf of community woodlands and an indication of what is coming up. Check the <http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/what-we-do/engage-with-policy/> page for what we are currently up to.

### ***Glastir Woodland Management (GWM) stakeholder group***

Since community woodland groups were clients for Better Woodlands for Wales (BWW) grant scheme we asked for and were granted a seat on the stakeholder group which

represents the interests of potential applicants to the replacement GWM. This is intended to be a woodland payments scheme (not grants – the intention is that they will be purchasing services) that will be a component of the Glastir Agri-environment scheme. Llais y Goedwig members through the Pathfinder project were already involved in the development of BWW and we are keen to see that this is carried forward into Glastir Woodland Management. We'll keep you posted.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/farmingandcountryside/ruraldevelopment/axis2/glastir/?lang=en>

### **WCVA**

Together with FCW, LlyG has had a meeting with WCVA to look at a number of issues related to access to grant funding and also ways we could work together. If you have any issues you would like raised with WCVA and you think LlyG could help then please contact Chloe.

### ***A Living Wales – A new framework for our environment, our countryside and seas***

The WAG are working towards implementation of the 'ecosystem services' approach to countryside management. In a nutshell this means "taking a truly integrated approach to the management of our environment which reflects the complexity of the way in which environmental systems interact, the value of the services they provide to society, the pressures posed by our changing climate, and the limits of natural capacity". LlyG responded to the public consultation on these proposals (see <http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/what-we-do/engage-with-policy/>) making the point that local communities should lie at the heart of integrated countryside management. Work is far from complete on the Living Wales framework and the final proposal is not due for at least six months. During this time LlyG has requested further opportunities for consultation – watch the Living Wales page on the website.

### ***Measuring National Well-being***

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) (based in Newport) is developing new measures of national well-being. The aim is that these new measures will cover the quality of life of people in the UK, environmental and sustainability issues, as well as the economic performance of the country. The ONS are presently consulting (until 15th April) to ask what matters most in people lives and what is important for measuring the nation's well-being. The quality of the environment and the ability to make local decisions are proposed as components of the measure – so if these are important to you then do respond to the consultation.

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/about/consultations/measuring-national-well-being/index.html>

### ***Civil Society, Communities and woodlands: Emerging opportunities. 15<sup>th</sup> Feb, Warrington***

Llais y Goedwig is sponsoring this UK-wide meeting of people involved with community woodlands on behalf of Wales and Roger Davies and Jenny Wong will be making presentations on progress with community woodlands and LlyG to this meeting. The goal of this meeting is to:

1. Identify what supports the goal of communities becoming more involved in woodlands.

2. Identify the barriers and opportunities with this in the current policy and economic climate.
3. Explore what our evidence and experience show us about the factors which influence what works and how.
4. Decide what needs to happen next.
5. Identify the key messages for decision makers.

A report of the findings of the meeting will be in the next Update and also on the website.

***Enabling citizen choices about land use and the natural environment. 16<sup>th</sup> Feb, London*** ([http://www.naturalcapitalinitiative.org.uk/50-participatory\\_ecosystem\\_approaches/](http://www.naturalcapitalinitiative.org.uk/50-participatory_ecosystem_approaches/))

This is a UK-wide meeting organised by the Natural Capital Initiative which is a UK environmental think-tank. Roger Davies will be representing LlyG and Welsh community woodlands at this meeting.

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## **Funding**

The Llais y Goedwig website has information on various funds available from charitable trusts to European and statutory funds and links to bodies with more information. There's also information on topics such as writing a management plan that are not only useful in themselves but can be key in securing funding. Do make use of this great resource- and let us know if you think there's anything else you'd like to see on there.

<http://www.llaisygoedwig.org.uk>