

The Llais y Goedwig Skillshare Event

15th October 2011, Coppicewood College, Cilgerran



Most of the attendees from the day at the entrance to Cwm Plysog Woods, which form the site for Coppicewood College

On an unseasonably hot October Saturday 26 people with involvement or interest in Welsh community woodlands from as far away as Holywell and Cwmbran descended on Coppicewood College in Cilgerran for a day of exchanging ideas, learning new skills and being inspired by what can be achieved when a local community works together.

A tour of the Coppicewood College showcased the usefulness and beauty of well-managed coppice and it was great to see the evolution of the woods since Coppicewood have been working them over the last six years. In a parallel session we discovered that making maps is something for everyone- and had the chance to see the different options available in mapping woodland, and have a go at making a basic map of the surroundings, as well as a taster of some of the more techy ways of recording spatial data.

Lunch at the nearby Welsh Wildlife Centre in Cilgerran was followed by introductions and updates from member groups about their work and upcoming projects. We learnt about the latest developments at Blaen Bran community woodland, a group who have recently become a social enterprise in order to produce firewood for the local community. The group

were one of the first to complete a case study as part of the upcoming series by Llais y Goedwig-

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

<http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/what-we-do/case-studies>

There was also an introduction to the newly formed Brynmorian partnership for sustainable woodland management, who have started up following their training and involvement at Coppicewood College. <http://www.brynmorian.co.uk>

Stephen Powell then gave us an introduction to the work at Llwyn Ffranc Farm, a newly formed group with 50 acres of woodland who have big plans in mushroom and lavender growing, as well as woodland management. They would like one day to be running courses similar to Coppicewood College in South East Wales, and are planning a restaurant called the Forager, with produce from the farm. <http://www.communityforestfarm.co.uk>

Many thanks to the Wildlife Centre for the lovely food, and the use of their room for the showings of the Forest Film Festival Shorts from the celebration of the UN International Year of Forests on the Friday evening.

Following a quick introduction to some back exercises useful for those in physical or not so physical jobs the afternoon sessions (tool use and risk assessment) kicked off and everyone had a go swinging a slasher and snedding with a billhook though it was apparent that attending one of the College's courses would be needed to become an expert! Coppicewood College run both short courses of 1-4 days, and their longer 6 month part time Woodland Skills course, which several attendees had already had the benefit of having graduated from.

<http://coppicewoodcollege.co.uk/courses/short-courses/>

<http://coppicewoodcollege.co.uk/courses/woodland-skills-6-months/>

After a final cup of tea from the Kelly kettles everyone departed home, with all agreed the day had been useful and informative, and keen to know when the next one would be!

Here are just a couple of quotes from the great feedback we got;

"Enjoyed everything- meeting people, mapping, practical workshop and the cawl!"

"Meeting people and sharing knowledge was one of the most valuable parts of the day."

Thanks to everyone who contributed in any way to this event (including attending it) and we look forward to seeing you all at the next event!

Llais y Goedwig

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Attendees:

Name		Organisation
Barbara	Barnes	Coppicewood College
Nick	Barnes	Coppicewood College
Ian	Bowler	Brynmorian/ Coppicewood College
Roddy	Campbell	Coppicewood College
Jo	Cooper	Llais y Goedwig/ Coed Lleol
Grace	Crabb	Centre for Alternative Technology
Bryn	Dafys	Brynmorian/ Coppicewood College
Ben	Graham	Beacon Stoves
Jamie	Graham	Beacon Stoves
David	Higginson	Blaen Bran
Philip	James	Ymddiriedolaeth Penllegare Trust
Jane	Jamieson	Blaen Bran
Kirsten	Manley	Dyfi Woodlands
Susan	Martin	Coppicewood College
Marit	Parker	
Stephen	Powell	Llwyn Ffranc
Jane	Rigby	Dyfi FEI, Forest School
Lee	Sanger	
Fay	Sharpley	Pobl y Fforest
Bruce	Slark	Coppicewood College
Lou	Smith	Centre for Alternative Technology
Adam	Thorogood	Dyfi Woodlands / Llais y Goedwig
Dai	Williams	Transition Town Holywell
Jenny	Wong	Coetir Mynedd
Jamie		Centre for Alternative Technology