



# Fruit and Bounty Sir Benfro Project (BD000002).

## Evaluation Report

*Summer 2023*

By Corinne Cariad, external project evaluator

Project funding received from Welsh Government Rural Communities  
Rural Development Programme



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# Glossary

Co-operation and Supply Chain Development Scheme (CSCDS)

Cwm Arian Renewable Energy (CARE)

Rural Development Programme (RDP)

## Terms

Cooperation operation - the term used by the CSCDS to refer to a test or pilot project, new products or processes. Essentially, the activity that has been enabled through CSCDS funding and cooperating.

# 1. Executive Summary

Cwm Arian Renewable Energy's Fruit and Bounty project team have exceeded the project outputs as outlined in their Co-operation and Supply Chain Development Scheme application. This is an excellent achievement, especially considering they had less time than originally anticipated to deliver the project.

Many constructive connections were made and participant and attendee numbers at training events, apple juicing service events and large-scale one-off events were high. Feedback from participants was extremely positive with requests for further training and other events demonstrating that they were valued by participants and attendees.

The project team made effective and efficient use of the budget. Their prudent spending and expansive project development allowed for four cooperation operations to be delivered, when only one was planned for in the initial application.

Enterprises were consulted about what support they required and the mentoring programme was popular and well received. In addition, visits and training events held were focused on topics identified by the enterprises. Ein Coed, the Mother Orchard and and scion wood sharing network, has been established with a wealth of trees and members set to ensure a bountiful future for all involved.

Clearly, the Fruit and Bounty project team responded to the needs and requests of the project stakeholders and beneficiaries. They worked in and with communities in their local area. The majority of participants who engaged in training events and enterprise support are relatively new to the area and, or, new to this type of enterprise. This is to be expected as the project provided support for new and growing enterprises.

It has been the evaluators' pleasure to work alongside the project team, observing the project developments, attending project events and meeting with the variety of people the project drew together. The following report details and evaluates the project activities and outcomes.

## 2. Introduction

Cwm Arian Renewable Energy (CARE) received project funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 - Co-operation and Supply Chain Development Scheme (CSCDS), which was funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government. With this funding they launched their Fruit and Bounty project in May 2022 and the project ran until June 2023.

Fruit and Bounty was a pilot project which aimed to research, develop and stimulate cooperative enterprise focusing on orchard fruits in rural Pembrokeshire. As set out in the funding application, the project incorporated development of new practices and products/services, identified gaps in supply chain, education, opportunity and skills, and invested in animation, mentoring, training, feasibility and development of appropriate assets.

CARE commissioned Corinne Cariad to independently monitor and evaluate the Fruit and Bounty project. The [Evaluation Guidance for Co-operation and Supply Chain Development Scheme Projects](#) was used to inform the evaluation structure and the contents.

The purpose of this final evaluation report is to review the activities and outcomes, identify if the project achieved the outcomes and based on this evidence to provide recommendations for the future. In addition two case studies have been carried out. They focus on the Ein Coed work and one of the project participants. They are available in the Appendices.

# 3. Context

## 3.1 Organisational context

Cwm Arian Renewable Energy (CARE), based in North-East Pembrokeshire, began in 2007 as a community group before constituting as a Community Benefit Society in 2011. The constitutional aims of the organisation are; to create a low-carbon economy in their area; invest benefits in the locality; to prevent or relieve poverty; and, to evaluate their work so it can be replicated elsewhere.

CARE has a 700kW wind turbine generating clean energy in their area. The organisation also has an eco-friendly space for arts in the community and runs a number of local projects focusing on landscape restoration, rural enterprise support, community cohesion, renewable energy development and they provide an energy advice service.

## 3.2 Background information to the programme and project

The vision of the Cooperation and Supply Chain Development Scheme (CSCDS) is for businesses, organisations and communities to be working together to increase their resilience by tackling issues such as; rural poverty; financial sustainability; climate change and the Environment; in-work poverty and social exclusion.

Alongside other community organisations working in North Pembrokeshire, CARE identified that the output of several small businesses and community projects had become difficult to sustain due to Covid, were unscalable due to limited funding or lacked business development skills.

They also identified a continued need to engage communities in nature recovery. Demonstrating ecosystem services via examples of alternative food production methods and land use, as well as skills-development, was proposed as an effective way of engaging their community.

CARE's CSCDS application was made in relation to **Measure 16.2 - Support for pilot projects and for the development of new products, practices, processes and technologies**. CARE's Fruit and Bounty project is a 'cooperation operation' in the terms of the CSCDS. Cooperation operation is the term used by the CSCDS to refer to a test or pilot project, new products or processes, essentially the activity that has been enabled through CSCDS funding and cooperating.

In their funding application CARE described the project thus,

**Fruit and Bounty is a pilot project which will research, develop and stimulate cooperative enterprise focusing on orchard fruits in rural Pembrokeshire.**

In more detail, the application proposed the following for the Fruit and Bounty project:

It will stimulate **cooperation between enterprises**

- Aiming to increase the profitability and sustainability of individual small businesses by sharing resources and learning
- Spread the risk to businesses from economic and environmental change and lack of knowledge

It will seek **new practices**

- specifically in **food production and engagement in nature recovery**

It will deliver **knowledge transfer**

- between cooperation partners, and between enterprise and community.

### **3.2.1 CSCDS Focus Areas**

Towards meeting the aims of the CSCDS, CARE identified that the Fruit and Bounty project would contribute most towards the following focus areas;

Focus area 6a

- Supporting rural businesses already delivering some elements of fruit-based food production, and tree care and propagation to **diversify** what they are doing, how they do it and who they sell to locally. With the aim of establishing a **new cooperation** enterprise overall, which **creates sustainable jobs in the food and agriculture industries**.

Focus area 6b

- Promote **social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development** in rural areas by addressing some of the barriers. For example with access to equipment, mentoring and training.



- **Connecting existing small businesses** in and around rural Pembrokeshire; e.g. cooperation partners themselves and also suppliers of the pilot project's food and tree products.
- Involving community members in delivery of the pilot project, for example by providing some spaces for the public on **training and mentoring** sessions for cooperation partners, with a view to **widening the skills base** in the community.

#### Focus area 5b

- **Sharing resources** between cooperation partners; for example by sharing or giving access to existing juicing equipment, kitchen facilities, land for orchards etc.
- Using a **resource-efficient** building as a **hub** for the project

#### Focus area 5c

- Seeking to **use and re-use all 'waste' products** from the enterprise; for example by using apple pulp from juicing as a compost or mulch, re-using grey-water from food production.

However, it should be noted that as this was a pilot project the ideas and project plan specified in the application was subsequently influenced by the project team and adapted to respond to the needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries as the project progressed.

### 3.3 Relevance to Welsh Government Strategies

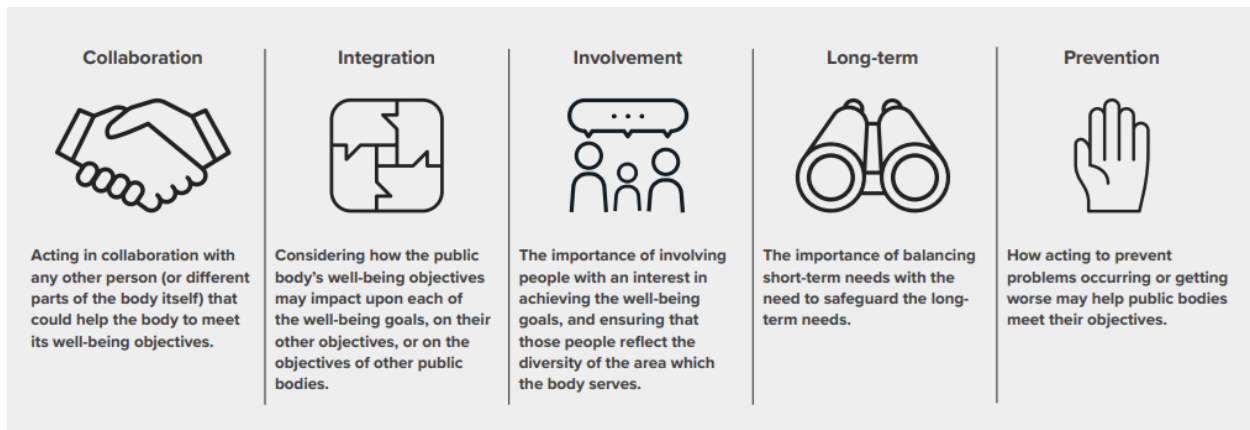
Concerning Welsh Government strategies, the Fruit and Bounty Project has made contributions in support of the following; The Well-being of Future Generations Act; Environment Act & Sustainable Management of Natural Resources; Social Enterprise. These will be considered in more detail here.

### 3.3.1 The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act



*Figure 1: Well-being of Future Generations Act goals (Welsh Government)*

The [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#) sets out the seven Wellbeing Goals (see Figure 1, above) and five Ways of Working (see Figure 2, below) for national government and Public Service Boards (PSB) which are made up of local government, local health boards and other specified public bodies. The [Pembrokeshire PSB](#) includes Fruit and Bounty project stakeholders - Pembrokeshire County Council and PLANED.



*Figure 2: Wellbeing of Future Generations Act ways of working (Welsh Government)*

In May 2022 Pembrokeshire PSB published its updated [Well-being Objectives](#), these are the key areas of focus in its Well-being Plan:

- Support growth, jobs and prosperity and enable the transition to a more sustainable and greener economy
- Work with our communities to reduce inequalities and improve well-being
- Promote and support initiatives to deliver decarbonisation, manage climate adaptation and tackle the nature emergency
- Enable safe, connected, resourceful and diverse communities

CARE's Fruit and Bounty project has delivered towards all of these objectives and operates in keeping with the Well-being of Future Generations Act ways of working (see Figure 2, above). For example; collaborating with other organisations to deliver training; creating training and mentoring opportunities based on the need of enterprises; and, planting orchards with species suitable for a changing climate. The project demonstrates that working with a local organisation can add value to the Pembrokeshire PSB to meet their objectives.

### 3.3.2 Environment Act & Sustainable Management of Natural Resources










Principles of sustainable management of natural resources		
	<b>Adaptive management</b>	manage adaptively by planning, monitoring, reviewing and where appropriate, changing action
	<b>Scale</b>	consider the appropriate spatial scale for action
	<b>Collaboration and engagement</b>	promote and engage in collaboration and cooperation
	<b>Public Participation</b>	make appropriate arrangements for public participation in decision-making
	<b>Evidence</b>	take account of all relevant evidence, and gather evidence in respect of uncertainties
	<b>Multiple benefits</b>	take account of the benefits and intrinsic value of natural resources and ecosystems
	<b>Long term</b>	take account of the short, medium and long term consequences of actions
	<b>Preventative action</b>	take action to prevent significant damage to ecosystems
	<b>Building resilience</b>	take account of the resilience of ecosystems, in particular the following aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) diversity between and within ecosystems;</li> <li>(ii) the connections between and within ecosystems;</li> <li>(iii) the scale of ecosystems;</li> <li>(iv) the condition of ecosystems (including their structure and functioning);</li> <li>(v) the adaptability of ecosystems</li> </ul>

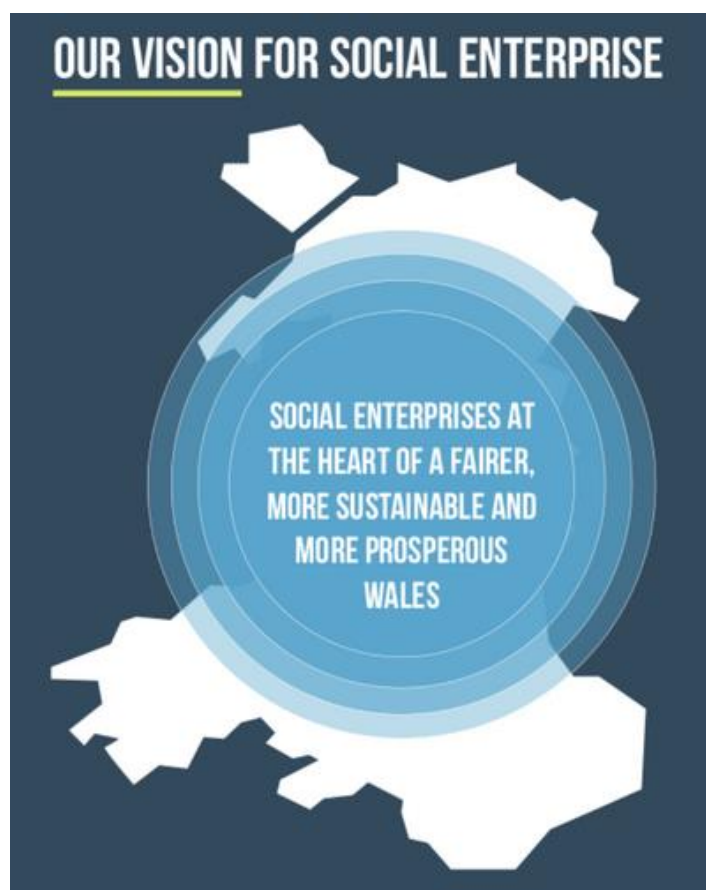
Figure 3: Principles of sustainable management of natural resources (Natural Resources Wales)

The [Environment Act](#) and Natural Resources Wales' (NRW) [Sustainable Management of Natural Resources](#) are closely connected to the Well-being of Future Generations Act. NRW's Sustainable management of natural resources is defined in the Environment Act as: "using natural resources in a way and at a rate that maintains and enhances the

resilience of ecosystems and the benefits they provide. In doing so, meeting the needs of present generations of people without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs, and contributing to the achievement of the well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.”

The actions, co-operation operations and outcomes of CARE's Fruit and Bounty project can be seen to have followed many of NRW's principles as outlined in Figure 3 (above), as is evidenced in this evaluation report.

### 3.3.3 Social Enterprise



*Figure 5: The vision of the 'Transforming Wales Through Social Enterprise' report*

Cwmpas' [Transforming Wales Through Social Enterprise](#) report 'was born out of collective process involving social enterprises and sector support bodies and has the support of Welsh Government'. The report sets out the vision of the sector from 2020-2030 and anticipates a growth in social enterprises in Wales.

CARE is a Community Benefit Society and the stakeholders they've engaged with appear to meet the report's aim to;

...develop ethical alliances within a wider movement of socially responsible businesses and movements aiming to build democratic, sustainable and inclusive economies and tackle our climate emergency.

By using their influence to support new and growing enterprises through their Fruit and Bounty project, CARE can be seen to be supporting the aims of the report and the work of Cwmpas.

### 3.4 Description and implementation of the project

With their co-operation operation CARE aimed, **'to nurture the fruit and bounty production of Pembrokeshire and the surrounding area and to help build a thriving orchard and fruit economy.'**

Fruit and Bounty activities have been animated by the project's two Cooperation Development Officers with additional services provided by external consultants and trainers. They did this through:

- Support for enterprises - advice, visits, training and mentoring
- Mobile apple juicing service
- Training and events
- Creation of a Mother Orchard and scion wood sharing network
- Completion of a resource-efficient community eco-building in Hermon.

Given the nature of the project, project activities were structured around the seasons of orchards and fruiting trees. It is unfortunate that project funding was slower than anticipated. This means that project activities were delivered in a shorter time-frame (May 2022 - June 2023). Therefore, the impact of the project cannot be evaluated to see the changes over the, initially planned, longer time-frame. It should also be noted that building relationships with project stakeholders and beneficiaries could have been adversely impacted by this shorter timescale. However, the project team expertly built relationships quickly and overcame this potential barrier.

It should be noted that the funders have permitted the Fruit and Bounty project an extension for a discrete section of the project to develop training materials (until September 2023). This will allow training development time related to CARE's orchard care and maintenance programme.

### 3.5 Coordination with Social Farms and Gardens

CARE's Fruit & Bounty project and Social Farms & Gardens' (SF&G) – Resilient Green Spaces project (82415) signed a commitment to collaborate at the beginning of the project timeframe. This was to demonstrate their commitment to shared aims, and to the avoidance of duplication/overlapping their activity to enable maximum economic, social and environmental benefit.

The primary ways in which they agreed to avoid duplication of resources were:

1. Different approaches and activities
2. Geographical separation
3. Ongoing communication to add value

Different approaches and activities were laid out in the commitment to collaborate agreement. CARE has focused on supporting existing and new orchard enterprises, whilst SF&G supported community groups.

Regular communication via monthly video calls, emails and physical meetings at events ensured that there was no duplication of activities, and that activities were separated geographically.

This communication was beneficial to both organisations, and has led to the development of a joint partnership project to provide further support for orchard-related groups and activities across Wales, which is currently seeking funding.

# 4. Methodological approach

Following on from the mid term evaluation report, this **final evaluation** report will consider the impact of the project, training and other activities. Recommendations are given throughout this report and collated in Section 7 as a list of recommendations for CARE's ongoing work in this area.

## 4.1 Feedback from training

The evaluator initially met with the Fruit and Bounty project team in July 2022 to establish the evaluation approach and monitoring tools for the project. A common **feedback form** was agreed for training events (see Appendices) and another for apple juicing events (see Appendices). These were reviewed in team meetings with the evaluator and the data considered in the mid-term report. The final data is analysed below in Section 6 - Results of primary research.

The aim of the feedback forms was to identify:

- what participants enjoyed or didn't enjoy
- new skills or knowledge gained
- if the training or event had impacted on how the participant valued local food
- suggestions or comments
- geographical reach of the project

The feedback forms were compliant with GDPR. To enable the evaluation process, an option was included for respondents to give explicit consent for the evaluator to contact them. Little demographic data is being collected, which limits the evaluation of the demographic reach of the project activities (e.g. gender, age, experience, location of training course participants). The evaluator recommends that CARE collect demographic data in future iterations.

## 4.2 Logic Model

A **Logic Model** was developed by the evaluator with detail drawn from the funding application, the project team's initial project planning documents and in discussion with the project team. The Fruit and Bounty Logic Model below (Figure 6, below) was agreed by the project team.



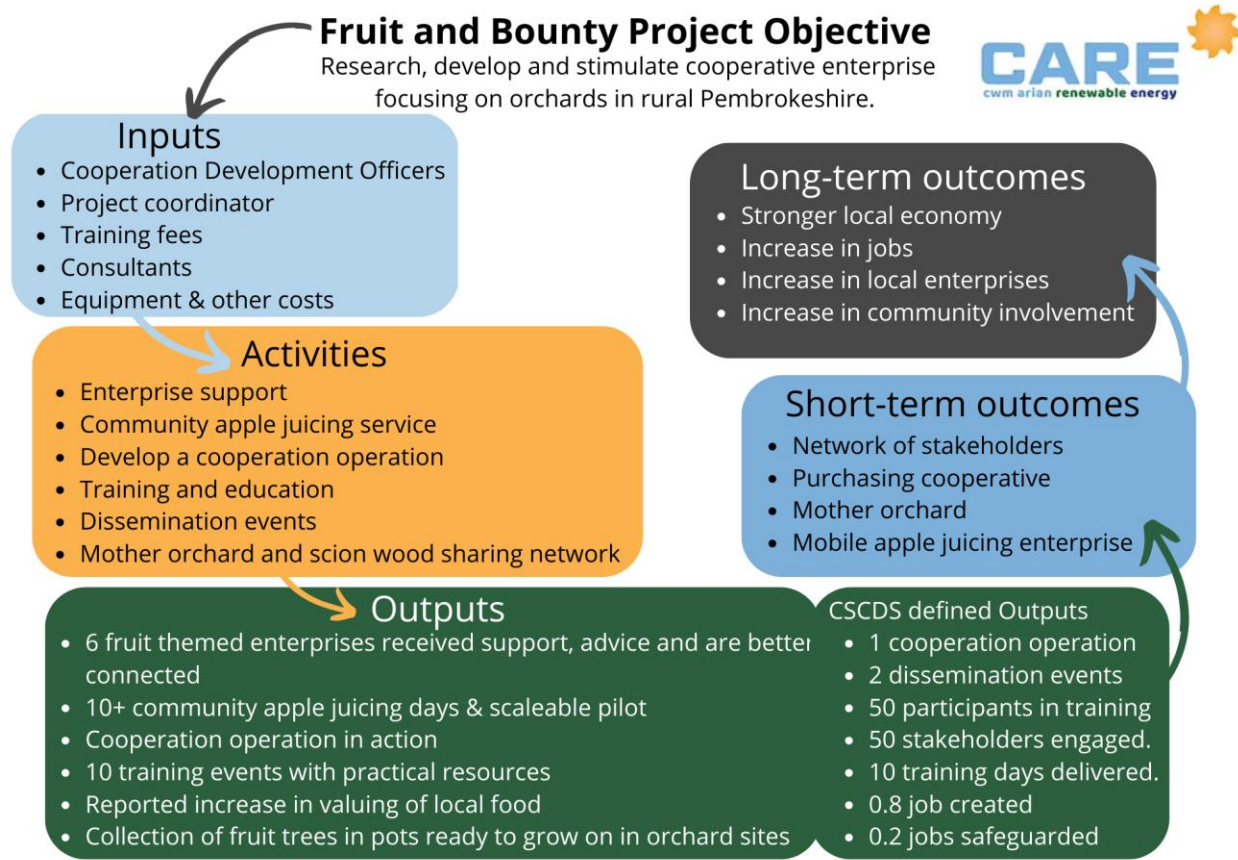


Figure 6: Fruit and Bounty project Logic Model

A Logic Model was chosen as the structure to guide the evaluation process, as recommended in the [Evaluation Guidance for Co-operation and Supply Chain Development Scheme Projects](#). The Logic Model helped provide the structure for the evaluation process.

### 4.3 Common Evaluation Questions

Another recommendation in the Evaluation Guidance document is to identify and respond to [Common Evaluation Questions \(CEQs\)](#) as, 'They help define the focus of evaluations and allow for examination of the progress, impact, and achievements of rural development interventions at various scales including Wales, the UK and other EU Member States.'

In consultation with the project team the following CEQs were selected for the evaluation process:

- P1A - Q1 - To what extent have RDP interventions supported innovation, cooperation and the development of the knowledge base in rural areas?
- P6B - Q.17 - To what extent have RDP interventions supported local development in rural areas?

As can be seen in Tables 1 and 2 below (based on the [CEQ Working Paper](#)), the CEQs are to gather information at a country level for comparison across the EU. The project indicator data provided by the project team to the funders, and analysed here in 'Section 6 - Results of primary research', provide the necessary evidence that the Fruit and Bounty project has satisfied the Judgement Criteria.

	<b>Focus Area</b> - Fostering innovation, cooperation, and the development of the knowledge base in rural areas
<b>Focus Area related Common Evaluation Question</b>	To what extent have RDP interventions supported innovation, cooperation and the development of the knowledge base in rural areas?
<b>Judgement Criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● RDP projects have been innovative and based on developed knowledge</li> <li>● Operational groups have been created</li> <li>● Variety* of partners involved in (European Innovation Partnership) EIP operational groups</li> <li>● Innovative actions have been implemented and disseminated by the EIP operational groups</li> </ul>
<b>Common Rural Development Indicators</b>	% of expenditure under Articles 14,15 and 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 in relation to the total expenditure for the RDP (FA 1A - Target indicator)
<b>Additional Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● % of innovative projects out of all RDP supported projects</li> <li>● Number and types of partners involved in cooperation projects</li> <li>● Number of supported innovative actions implemented and disseminated by EIP operational groups</li> </ul>

*\*Variety is defined by the representation of different socio-economic sectors (private, public, civil, agriculture, food industry, forestry, etc.) and organizations such as academia, banks, NGO, etc*

*Table 1: Common Evaluation Question Guidance for Focus Area P1A - Q1*

	<b>Focus Area - Fostering local development in rural areas</b>
<b>Focus Area related Common Evaluation Question</b>	To what extent have RDP interventions supported local development in rural areas?
<b>Judgement Criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Services and local infrastructure in rural areas has improved</li> <li>● Access to services and local infrastructure has increased in rural areas</li> <li>● Rural people have participated in local actions</li> <li>● Rural people have benefited from local actions</li> <li>● Employment opportunities have been created via local development strategies</li> <li>● Rural territory and population covered by LAGs has increased</li> </ul>
<b>Common Rural Development Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● % of rural population covered by local development strategies (FA 6B – Result indicator)</li> <li>● Jobs created in supported projects (Leader) (FA 6B – Result indicator)</li> <li>● % of rural population benefiting from improved services/ infrastructures (FA 6B – Result indicator)</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Number of projects/initiatives supported by the Local Development Strategy</li> <li>● % of RDP expenditure in Leader measures with respect to total RDP expenditure</li> </ul>

*\*Variety is defined by the representation of different socio-economic sectors (private, public, civil, agriculture, food industry, forestry, etc.) and organizations such as academia, banks, NGO, etc*

*Table 2: Common Evaluation Question Guidance for Focus Area P6B - Q.17*

**4.4 Case studies**

To gain deeper understanding of how and why the project has had an impact in-depth interviews by the external evaluator have been carried out, leading to two **case studies** (see Appendices). The case studies focused on people and organisations who have engaged deeply, or on numerous occasions, to provide rich data covering multiple aspects of the project. Consideration was also given to case studies of different types of site so that the case studies will be of interest to a wide range of people.

## 4.5 Interviews

**End of project interviews** were conducted with key people involved with the project, for example the Cooperation Development Officers, consultants, participants of peer mentoring and training, members of the Mother Orchard and scion wood sharing network. These interviews gave deeper insight into what respondents thought had been important with the project; the behaviour and attitudes of participants; and allowed for more flexibility and depth of questioning than the feedback surveys provided.

# 5. Financial and Indicator information

## 5.1 Finances

The budget was regularly monitored by the project team and reported to the CARE board of directors bi-monthly (sometimes monthly) and to the funders. The organisation had sufficient cash-flow to meet project costs and funding was claimed retrospectively.

The funds have been well managed and all funds have been suitably allocated. As this was a pilot project, projected costs from the initial application can be expected to have changed. The project team made effective use of consultants to carry out specific aspects of the project and over-delivered on the majority of the project indicators.

## 5.2 Indicators

The project team kept records up to date and have recorded all feedback in detail. As can be seen in the summary of progress against indicators in Table 3 they have met all project indicators and exceeded the majority of them.

This is a fantastic achievement which is a credit to their experience in this field and the significant work they have done to make connections with stakeholders. As well as to creating training, events and activities which met the project plan and also appealed to participants.

Indicator	Target	Progress	% achieved
Cooperation Operation	1	4	400%
Dissemination events	2	12	600%
Participants in training	50	453	906%
Stakeholders engaged	50	58	116%
Training days	10	20.3	203%
Jobs created	1	1	100%
Jobs safeguarded	0.2	0.2	100%

*Table 3: Summary of Progress Against Indicators*

## 6. Results of primary research

In addition to the indicator data collected and documented in Table 3 (above) further primary research has been conducted.

### 6.1 Training Events

The project team facilitated the delivery of 32 training events (of varying duration), which totals 20.3 training days (with each day defined as 8 hours of training). They trained 453 people in various skills relating to the project. Vastly exceeding their target of 10 training days and 50 participants in training.

Training topics included agroforestry, fruit tree pruning, fruit tree grafting, site visits to successful orchard businesses, viticulture and biofertiliser production and use.

In addition, training videos were created by the project (one on [grafting](#) and one on [pruning](#)) which can now be found online, and a "Mother Orchard Training and Resource Pack" for use alongside the Mother Orchards planted at Scolton Manor country park.

The following feedback gives a feel for these training events, which were well-received.

#### 6.1.1 Feedback from training

Feedback forms from **training events** have had a very high response rate with 115 of 161 participants completing feedback forms. At most training events all participants completed feedback forms however two training events had a 50% response rate. This was due to the feedback forms being emailed afterwards rather than issued at the training event. The project team found they got far better response rates when they got feedback at the time rather than afterwards.

The project team took note of feedback about improving throughout the project.

They incorporated various suggestions raised in the training sessions which followed.



*Pruning training day.*

Most notable were requests for additional training, handouts and to go more in depth and to return to growing sites for follow-up learning and "to see the whole cycle" (in relation to pruning and growing fruit trees). These requests will be addressed to some degree by the project extension to create additional training materials. It also reinforces that this is an area of interest for many participants and CARE could explore how to deliver more training in the future.

Many positive comments were received about the venues and being able to visit interesting sites. However some participants raised concerns of distracting background noise at some venues and being too cold. Given the outdoor nature of much of this work some of these issues are difficult to remedy. However, if running training in future and where possible, CARE could seek venues with a quiet, warm and dry space which could be used for some of an all-day event (e.g. for breaks, lunch and non-practical 'chalk and talk' sections of the day).

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive with **all respondents agreeing** that,

- they had enjoyed the training event (*Note: 1 person did not respond*)
- it had helped them build their skills, knowledge or networks (*Note: 2 people did not respond*)
- they had gained new skills or knowledge (*Note: 1 person did not respond*)
- they might use whatever they gained at the training event in future

*(Note: At one event all nine respondents circled the 'sad face' in reply to questions about enjoying the event and building skills. However all their written feedback indicated that they had enjoyed the event and benefitted in numerous ways so it is assumed that they all misunderstood the feedback form. The feedback form could be redesigned for future iterations to reduce any confusion.)*

The main exception being that in response to the question, 'Has this event helped you to value the importance of locally produced food and goods?', eight respondents replied that it hadn't. They gave further explanation - that they are, "Not local to the area" or they already valued local food highly. However most participants confirmed that the event had helped them value the importance of locally produced food and goods, with explanations given in additional comments (see examples below).

The additional comments given by participants are glowing and indicate that the training events are meeting the participants expectations and supporting them in their

enterprises and future activities. Below are some examples to illustrate how the project is supporting participants, in their own words.

### **What new skills or knowledge did you gain?**

"Lots! How to set up a vineyard, how to set up a brewery and logistics of making and selling wine"

"Better understanding of rootstocks and tree management generally"

"Orchard management, finances and marketing"

"The importance of varieties, blending tannins and sweetness to create different flavours and complexities"

"Trees for coppicing, quick growing fire wood, principles of systems of agroforestry"

"Learnt new technique for grafting"

"How to graft an apple tree! - How to choose the right rootstock. How to care for, maintain and train the tree as it grows."

"Pruning skills along with an understanding of the science behind the method."

"About winter and summer pruning encouraging vigour and heal and seal"

### **How might you use whatever you gained today in future?**

"Developing an agroforestry system on our land"

"I'll definitely be using the skills I gained in future, working with clients' trees."

"Making cider and thinking about selling commercially in future"

"In my current role, with our woodland and animals"



*Rootstock production training.*



*Fruit tree grafting workshop.*



"In our OPD application and future smallholding for growing and other areas of wood. Carbon capture, soil health, grey water filtering"

"I will now pollard!"

"Yes, I am going to attempt to bud graft from my Victoria plum tree and potentially from some of my apple and cherry trees in the future."

"More knowledge in dealing with plant disease."

"Apply this to our orchard"

**How has this event helped you to value the importance of locally produced food and goods?**

"The nutrients soil can give apples. The community of inspiring and inspired people"

"It's inspiring to see the work that Transition Haverfordwest have been doing"

"Value of what works well in your local land"

"Picking local varieties of apple suited to our area"

"Some ideas for plants for food that I hadn't known or grown in the past"

"Definitely. Also appreciated the chance to get a tour around the OPD smallholding and learn more about ways to care for the environment."

**Anything you would improve?**

"So much to take in, maybe a 2 day training event. Maybe different trainings for people with different knowledge and expertise. More hands on for everyone - working in small groups for a group this size."

"A hand out with notes - it's quite technical."

"Maybe include a short video"

"Identify sessions on level of people as base or more in-depth requirement. This would better support peoples' learning curve."

"I also got a bit cold, despite wearing many layers!"

"Lift sharing - it turned out 3 of us travelled a round trip of a out 35 miles from within 3 miles of each other!"

"I can't think of anything that would improve the workshop other than possibly a simple handout of the most important points."

"Return in the summer to see development and prune at next stage"

"A follow-up lesson"



*Bud grafting specialist enterprise training.*

### **6.1.2 Training event observations**

The evaluator booked onto and attended various training events and made the following observations:

- Events were advertised directly to project stakeholders and then via CARE's website, Facebook page, newsletter and Whatsapp groups.

- The booking process was straightforward and easy to do for those who are used to booking events via websites.
- Online promotion and booking could potentially have been a barrier for people who don't use or have online access. However, there is no data about this either way.
- Course tutors were evidently experts in their field and responded to questions as they arose with detailed answers or advice about where to seek further information.
- Some training events were very information heavy with little or no written resources and this impacted participants with some asking for time to write notes during the session, for information to be repeated and for subject specific language, names or references to be spelled out.
- Practical, hands-on training was very well-received and the sessions attended were well paced with sufficient time and resources for all participants to engage.

## 6.2 Dissemination activities

The **dissemination activities** (actions undertaken to raise awareness of, and promote, the project) were effective in attracting people to attend training and events. This is evidenced by the high uptake of places on training courses and footfall at the apple juicing days, Dydd Afal autumn event and the sell-out Gwyl y Gwanwyn spring event.

The **demographic reach** of training and events was discussed with the project team. This data was not formally collected however the project team were able to elaborate on some demographics. The majority of mentees and participants on training courses were new or relatively new entrant farmers, land owners and managers. They were also mainly incomers to the area, rather than long-term residents. A suggestion was made that they are attracted to the training as they don't have established networks or knowledge and are keen to develop these. Whereas more established members of the community and experienced farmers, land owners and managers are less likely to seek training as they already have strong networks and depth of knowledge.

The Apple Juicing Service, work on small farms and Ein Coed attracted a broader demographic. Indicating the project did have a broad demographic reach for relevant activities.

## 6.3 Events

### 6.3.1 Dydd Afal and the Apple Juicing Service

The evaluator attended the **Dydd Afal event** at Ffrwythau Pencoed in Llechryd in early October. It was notable that this event did attract more established members of the community - from the locality and farmers. In interviews with these attendees, some said,

- they were attracted because they wanted to see the fruit trees as they considered planting an orchard novel for the area
- they had similar land nearby and wanted to learn from the site
- they attended because they had established good relationships with their neighbours (who were hosting the event) and came for the social aspect
- they came to share their fruit, see people they knew and meet other like-minded people.

Other attendees - newer to the area, not farmers or from further away - gave similar responses and they had also come for the apple juicing service being offered on the day.

The celebratory nature of the Dydd Afal event could be built on as it helped to promote the project activities to a wider audience and may potentially engage a broader range of participants for other project activities.



*Apple juicing at a primary school in Fishguard.*

A report of the **Apple Juicing Service** has been completed (link in Appendix) which reviews the reach of the service and volumes of apples and juice processed. The service visited 16 locations across Pembrokeshire and attracted people from an even wider area. The majority of attendees heard about the event they attended through word of mouth or social media. This data gives some indication of how people may have heard about other project activities such as the training events (this data wasn't collected for training events).

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive from those who completed feedback forms. Many appreciated the opportunity to press apples they had picked and found the service well organised, educational and fun.

Comments about improvements were constructive and suggest there is appetite for the service to return to the locations in future seasons.

It should be noted that it is not known what percentage of people attending completed feedback forms. However 184 feedback forms were collected, an average of 11.5 per event, which is a reasonable response rate from which to draw conclusions.

The Apple Juicing Service team met to review the service and they identified best practice for future seasons (see Appendices). For example, new equipment, creating and printing info packs, creating volunteer role descriptions. CARE plan to continue offering their Apple Juicing Service and preparations began in June for the autumn 2023 season.



*Apple juicing service in action.*

### 6.3.2 Gwyl y Gwanwyn

The evaluator attended the **Gwyl y Gwanwyn** event which was held at various venues in Hermon in late April. This event was a collaboration between CARE's Fruit and Bounty and Heath and Hedgerow project teams. When planning, the project teams wanted to, 'pool resources and celebrate the crossovers between these related areas'. The joint event focused on soil, compost, biochar, fruit trees and fruit production.

Gwyl y Gwanwyn had a festival feel with stallholders offering activities, information on local organisations as well as stalls selling related products, food and drink. This included a stall by one of the fruit and bounty project participants selling locally grafted fruit trees. CARE had organised a variety of workshops with expert speakers from the local area as well as further afield.

There were 14 workshops plus other activities, some indoors, some outdoors, some presentation-style, some practical, some panel discussion. Some workshops were suitable for all ages, some for children, some for adults. Some were for beginners and others were for those with some prior knowledge and experience.

The event sold out very quickly, and additional tickets released also sold out, indicating high demand and a programme which was of interest. The project teams were supported by 30 event volunteers, another indicator of interest and support.

Feedback received from CARE staff, workshop speakers and stallholders was that the event was well organised on the whole, the programme was interesting and there was a mix of ages. Recommendations were mostly about practicalities such as improved signage, issues with queuing for food and a suggestion of fewer workshops on at a time so there's less choice (and less to miss) and instead to hold the event and workshops over a longer time period.

#### 6.4 Mentoring programme

The **mentoring programme** drew initial interest from 19 enterprises with 7 enterprises going on to receive mentoring. The topics for mentoring were chosen as a result of the initial stakeholder surveys, which identified particularly strong demand for viticulture, table fruit and tree nurseries from local existing or planned enterprises. The three mentors were selected for their experience in viticulture, table fruit and tree nurseries respectively. The mentoring programme consisted of group visits, site visits by the mentor, training and one-to-one support via phone or video calls between each mentor and mentee.

Each mentor and mentee relationship was slightly different, with some mentees making more use of this opportunity than others. The case study of Ffrwythau Pencoed (available on the



*Site visit to Tom the Appleman near Oswestry - Tom mentored several businesses.*

[CARE website](#)<sup>1</sup> and in the Appendices) and their table fruit enterprise goes into more detail about the benefits of mentoring for them. Talking about the benefits to their enterprise, they said,

It's very specialist knowledge I've had access to - it's unusual to find someone growing table fruit for market. Billy's a rare character, he does it all. It's given me more confidence and I'm in a better place than before.

The mentoring programme was defined in agreements between CARE, mentors and mentees to clarify expectations and commitments with the project team enabling all involved. Mentees and mentors appreciated this, with one mentee saying they felt more comfortable asking for advice knowing the mentor was being paid for their time and having a formal agreement facilitated by CARE.



*Mentoring site visit to Tyn y Berllan tree nursery.*

In person visits, at the mentor or mentees venue, allowed for longer and deeper conversations. Meeting on site also allowed for site specific issues to be raised and addressed.

One mentee went on to say they would be interested in passing on their knowledge and experience in a similar way in the future, if CARE were to continue offering the mentoring programme.

The mentoring programme was very beneficial for mentees who took advantage of all the support offered. There is interest from mentors and mentees to develop and continue this process. The initial interest (from 19 enterprises) suggests there could be demand for an ongoing mentoring scheme.

## 6.5 Mother Orchard and scion wood sharing network

The **Mother Orchard and scion wood sharing network** has been established under the name [Ein Coed](#). This enables everyone in Pembrokeshire to exchange and then grow cuttings of fruit and nut trees that grow well here, for free, including by accessing

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cwmarian.org.uk/\\_files/ugd/2e19a6\\_ba7965a19cb24fa990ec3d27b1fd73cf.pdf](https://www.cwmarian.org.uk/_files/ugd/2e19a6_ba7965a19cb24fa990ec3d27b1fd73cf.pdf)

cuttings from a selection of specially-planted "Mother Orchards" which host carefully-selected varieties that grow well in West Wales.

There were expressions of interest from nine potential Mother Orchard hosts, which was more than expected. With the time and budget available it was possible to establish new Mother Orchards at five sites and an additional existing site was included. The hosts were selected to ensure a good spread of different climate conditions at sites across North and West Pembrokeshire.



Volunteers help plant mother orchard.

The selection of trees was considered by local experts and sourced from specialist and local tree nurseries, with planting taking place between January and April. A small number of trees have failed and they will be replaced by the suppliers next planting season.

The main point of contact for network members is a dedicated Facebook group. Promotion of the network has drawn over 260 members, many of whom participated in scion wood sharing. As the season for taking and grafting scions has passed activity in the group has reduced significantly, as is to be expected. The project team maintained a light-touch approach to administering the Facebook group and this will be continued by CARE.



Example of mother orchard placard.

More detailed evaluation of the outcomes, learning and future plans can be found in the Ein Coed case study (available on the [CARE website](https://www.cwmarian.org.uk/)<sup>2</sup> and in the Appendices).

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.cwmarian.org.uk/\\_files/ugd/2e19a6\\_46e354197a1c49df8f834cddc8e1618b.pdf](https://www.cwmarian.org.uk/_files/ugd/2e19a6_46e354197a1c49df8f834cddc8e1618b.pdf)



## 6.6 Small Farms study

In their work with numerous small farms, small holdings and enterprises, the project team identified that many face challenges which stem from their small-scale. They also identified an interest in working collaboratively and cooperatively. However, due to the nature of their work, those interested had little or no time available to develop their interest further.

The project team commissioned a study into this topic, which is available in the Appendices. The study concluded that the following areas be explored further:

- Joint selling solutions
- Equipment sharing solutions
- Practical collaborations
- Potential models and structures for a small farms cooperative enterprise

This work is ongoing and being taken forward by CARE.

## 6.7 Y Stiwdio

The community eco-building Y Stiwdio in the village of Hermon was finalised, with investments from the grant used to finalise the interior and exterior. This is a resource efficient building, which demonstrates many aspects of sustainable building.

The building was officially opened in December 2022.



*Y Stiwdio eco-building.*

# 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

## 7.1 Conclusions

CARE's Fruit and Bounty project met all the indicators, exceeding many of the initial targets, and the events and initiatives generated by the project team proved to be very popular. This indicates a well managed project which met the needs of the participants and stakeholders.

There is interest and suggestions from participants for the training events, Apple Juicing Service and annual events - Dydd Afal and Gwyl y Gwanwyn - to continue in future years. This exemplifies how participants valued these events and their commitment to continue participating. Establishing an ongoing legacy from this project - in the form of enterprise or funded project - is important for all involved. The improvements to Y Stiwdio will offer ongoing benefits for participants and stakeholders.

Farmers, small-holders and enterprises have been supported in numerous ways and speak glowingly of the benefits to them and businesses. Some took advantage of everything the project offered, others dipped in to whatever was best for them.

The development of the four cooperation operations - joint purchasing, the Apple Juicing Service, Ein Coed and the Small Farms study - established through the Fruit and Bounty project is a credit to the project team. They made excellent uses of the resources available to them and the funding provided by Welsh Government Rural Communities Rural Development Programme.

## 7.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are for CARE's consideration and it is not expected they will all be acted upon. These recommendations may be helpful in considering future iterations of this work.

- Consider an off-line booking option for those who don't use, or have access to, the internet or computers. There may be a cross-over with under-represented groups.
- Training event feedback form - review the smiley face options and consider how to amend to reduce confusion as some people circled the 'sad face' however their written feedback was glowing.

- Collect demographic data (e.g. gender, age, new entrant, established, location) to reflect on the reach of the project e.g. on booking or feedback forms.
- Collect data about how participants heard about training events to review the effectiveness of publicity and promotion e.g. on booking or feedback forms.
- Consider why some people did not complete feedback forms and how this could be improved in future. Potentially consider alternative methods for capturing feedback e.g. there may be barriers for some people so could ask for verbal feedback or someone else completing the form on their behalf.
- Consider if there could be barriers for more established farmers, landowners and managers being involved. It is recommended that connection is made via established links to enquire what, if anything, is a barrier, e.g. dissemination, event booking system, training event subject matter, delivery of training events in Welsh.
- Consider if there are alternative ways of disseminating information to reach into communities not already connected with, e.g. established networks like the NFU and YFC, Farming Connect.
- Explore potential ways of continuing to deliver training events, e.g. apply for funding, explore commercial viability of running training events.
- Consider venues for training events. For all day events, warm, dry and quiet areas for delivering 'chalk and talk' sessions and for breaks and lunch are valued by participants.
- Larger, social and celebratory events attract a wider audience, consider how to build on successes from this year e.g. at some of the Apple Juicing Service locations and the Dydd Afal and Gwyl y Gwanwyn events.
- When planning events consider accessibility and inclusivity. E.g. for Gwyl y Gwanwyn consider; short grass to improve access to the field for people with reduced mobility and wheelchair users; microphones for workshop presenters to improve the sound quality for people who are d/Deaf or hard of hearing.
- Collect data on numbers of people attending Apple Juicing Service events and celebratory events like Dydd Afal.

- For training events, some participants would like to have a handout of the essential information and resources.
- For training events, some trainers would benefit from support with structuring their training to avoid information overload and to create handouts.
- There is interest from mentors and mentees to continue with a mentoring scheme.

# List of Appendices

This list relates to the Appendices which are available separately.

Appendix 1: Apple juicing feedback form

Appendix 2: Training feedback form

Appendix 3: Training event feedback amalgamated

Appendix 4: Apple Juicing Service Report

Appendix 5: Notes from review meeting of Care's travelling community apple juicing service 2022

Appendix : Ein Coed Case Study

Appendix 7: Ffrwythau Pencoed Case Study

Appendix 8: Report of Investigation into Potential Small Farms Enterprise