

Opportunities for sustainably managing the Dyfi's natural resources...to benefit people, the economy and the environment

Vol 2 – Opportunity Maps – September 2016



Vol 2 Dyfi vision, aims and opportunity maps

Purpose and status of this document

Vision and aims (including stakeholder's views)

Map No Topic

- Opportunities to connect people to the outdoors, help communities become more sustainable and support health 1 and tourism
- Opportunities to maintain/ increase agricultural productivity, improve resilience and deliver public benefits 2
- **Opportunities to connect and improve the natural environment** 3
- **Opportunities to improve the Historic environment** 4
- **Opportunities to increase carbon storage, biodiversity and flood regulation** 5
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- Opportunities to improve biodiversity, recreation/access and the water environment in the coastal are 8

The Purpose and status of the Document

Wales' natural resources provide our basic needs and give us energy, prosperity and security. They protect us and make us healthier and our lives better. A healthy resilient environment creates the conditions for a thriving and sustainable society. But evidence shows that our natural resources continue to be put under pressure from a variety of sources. We need to think and act differently, to manage our natural resources in Wales in a way which values and enhances them and the many benefits they provide. The Environment (Wales) Act and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act together create a modern legislative framework to bring this about. NRW is at the forefront of this with a new purpose under the Environment (Wales) Act to seek to achieve the sustainable management of natural resources (SMNR) and apply the SMNR principles in exercising all our functions.

To help Wales prepare for this new legislation, in 2014 Natural Resources Wales set up three natural resource management trials; the Rhondda and Tawe in South Wales and **Dyfi** in Mid Wales. Trialling the application of SMNR allowed us to:

- Learn how to apply SMNR and the nine principles at a local scale;
- Explore Wales' emerging natural resources priorities, described in Welsh Government's Natural Resources Policy statement;
- Test engagement, evidence and planning approaches which might be used to develop Area Statements, which are a key element of the natural resources planning framework and a requirement of the Environment Act;
- By sharing our learning, inform the developing Environment Bill and NRW's ways of working.

We deliberately took an open and flexible approach. From the outset, we involved the people who live and work in these places to identify priorities, risks, and opportunities for better management of the area. Generally people responded positively to our approach because they felt part of developing solutions. The trials led us into working with partners on some of the significant issues, which in the past were considered either too challenging or not within our remit. Each trial was based on a river catchment and, to maximise learning, was selected because of its different environmental, economic and societal circumstances. Whilst the scale of Area Statements remains to be decided it is now expected that they will cover a larger area than those of the individual trials. In the Dyfi, we produced this document to outline the priorities for sustainably managing the natural resources in the trial area. This information is based on two years of working with organisations, community groups and residents in the area, extensive evidence gathering and knowledge sharing.

These documents are not Area Statements and are non-statutory (as the work preceded the Environment (Wales) Act). However, they provide a local framework for the Public Service Board, organisations, community groups, local business and people to use and refer to. They can be used by communities and organisations to work better together and deliver outcomes which deliver multiple benefits. They can encourage better working between partners by focussing resources on clearly identified opportunities and can also be used to support both local and landscape scale proposals for funding.

t; ement of the natural resources

Meeting the Challenge – Vision

Having identified the key challenges the Dyfi faces the following vision was produced. We conducted a second workshop in autumn 2015 to agree the vision and key aims for the management of natural resources in the Dyfi.

'The Dyfi will be recognised for its natural beauty, thriving community, strong rural economy, linguistic and cultural identity and diversity of wildlife. Opportunities for tourism, recreation and education are well developed and managed within a robust environment that is able to withstand future change. The community recognises and supports the need to sustainably manage its natural resources for the benefit of people and environment of the Dyfi.

We then produced **6 aims** that will help us meet the challenges described above.

- Helping land based businesses become more resilient
- Connecting & improving the natural environment
- Improving the water environment
- Helping communities become more sustainable:
- Improving opportunities for people to connect with the outdoors
- Building capacity

The figures below show why stakeholders supported these aims and their ideas for achieving them.

Helping land based businesses become more resilient

We want to see resilient land based businesses that can withstand setbacks from economic or natural causes; are economically sound, environmentally responsible and contribute to thriving communities. You said

Greater support to those that manage this land

Sensible incentives for farmers so they feel they are doing what is good for their own land

Sheep farming traditions important and can be continued alongside food growing, tourism etc. Young people more likely to choose a life in farming if more valued

Farmers supported and appropriately advised

Weish Culture valuable as a tool to connect people. Place names, field names, etc

Talk to farmers interested in new things e.g. Future Farmers and support them financially to realign their ideas. Trust that farmers can have good informed input

Support large scale restoration of grasslands/hedgerows etc through Agri-Environment schemes

Too much mature timber still

being lost from the framed landscape - hedgerows, trees

Helping land based businesses become more resilient

Restore PAWS, control rhododendron, restrict grazing under tree cover to allow regeneration [In forests and woodlands]

C.A.P. needs radical overhaul to include payments towards ecosystem services, not just meat production

Preserve indigenous culture and heritage but not at the expense of farming practice change

Well maintained rights of way and permissive paths - support for landowners to keep them open

Pontbren approach

Farmers not encouraged to diversify by present grant system



Connecting & improving the natural environment

We want to see a better managed and more connected natural environment that can provide the range of benefits described above. You said...

(uplands) Too long overgrazed by sheep. Where uneconomic should consider destocking/ rewilding as an option. Move to a more natural, developing ecosystem

Land managers, farmers & gamekeepers believe predator control is key to wild life management and is a bullet that should be bitten. The cosy idea that predators have no effect on wildlife is wrong and has done huge damage to the valley's fauna

Removal of alien conifer plantation from areas where they have destroyed valuable habitats. Increase areas of broadleaf woodland to connect-up existing woodlands & create more flower-rich grassland

Broadleaved woodland creation and management. Management and protection of other key semi-natural habitats

Eradicate rhododendron from all natural / seminatural & modified habitats and encourage garden owners to destroy it! Eradicate invading conifers onto open moorland

Support restoration of PAWS

by NRW, especially in areas

local communities

Protection and buffering of protected sites

Connecting and improving the natural environment

Inappropriate planting of conifers.

Targeted action to improve priority species & habitats, e.g. blanket bog and birds such as marlins & hen harrier

> **Remove C.A.P. Payments for** uneconomic grazing. Revert to upland native forests

Intensive agricultural in uplands.

Plan for sea level rise with managed retreat Protect important habitats -**Priorities peat** land/grassland/hedgerows

Maintain management of sand dunes.

Ensure farming and forestry practice is modified to be more ecological sustainable

> Enrolling public forest lands in to restoration projects particularly to support strategic link - corridors- with other restoration projects

> > Threats from invasive species and man made river developments (weirs/hydro electric)

Plant broadleaves, reduce sheep grazing, map existing woodland assessing health, regeneration & diversity

There is too much emphasis on glamorous reintroductions of exotics & predators . Curlews, lapwing etc. partridge, blackgame & grouse were all present as breeding populations until the 60s/70s. Red squirrel were the norm until the early 60s. Why is there no programme to help them return?

more accessible / visible to **Record** existing woodland and state of existing woodland. **Connect biodiverse** areas

Reduce grazing, increase trees and permanent planting (not just forestry) biodiversity and flood protection

Mixed grazing should be encouraged

Improving the water environment

We want to see a reduction in pollution from land use activities and old mines; less flooding and a fewer barriers to fish migration. You said....

Increase areas of wetland

Improve water quality by addressing upstream diffuse pollution

Flood management

Control Japanese Knotweed & Himalayan Balsam

Fish populations in streams and rivers are at very low levels, especially non-migratory salmonoids

Less intensive farming operations. Riverbanks often grazed / access to the water's If it doesn't reach the bottom of the hill, it wont flood the valley. Create wild areas

More tree planting at appropriate locations

Restoration of floodplain

Scallop dredging too damaging & destructive

> Manage the upland peat and forestry to [prevent] water run off and [improve] Carbon Sequestration.

Maintain existing flood management to a satisfactory level

ironment mprevine

Identify upstream areas that can replace [salt] marsh & mudflats

Allow regeneration with native tree species (removing Sitka Spruce) and reduce drainage. This will provide flood mitigation & biodiversity

> Potential flooding due to the more efficient drainage in uplands and in middle catchment, allied to weather extremes

Saltmarsh creation, **Protection of** lowland peat

Jet skis should be controlled

Encourage better water

retention in uplands &

mid-catchment

Regenerate watercourse banks, restrict grazing of these banks

River restoration projects, particularly in lowland areas where historically straightened

Ditches on Borth Bog area could be managed better to help with flooding issues

Create more freshwater and brackish wetlands as sea level rises

Dumping rubbish at sea should be unacceptable

Helping communities become more sustainable

We want to see healthy, thriving communities using their natural environment, taking more exercise, having with a lower carbon footprint and eating more local food. You said...

Save the town-it is falling apart. Engage the community

Maximising economic benefit from Angling Tourism

Our resources should be used for the benefit of the population. Dyfi Valley must not become an isolated "reservation" where tourists can view a quaint old fashioned peasant culture

Reuse of dilapidated buildings

Support renewables in appropriate areas

Renewable energy must be considered as a must, there must be a "proper" Wales wide energy policy.

Use should be made of the now mostly fenced off native woodlands for firewood etc.

Why are people re-roofing with Spanish slates?

I would like to see the common land in Llancynfelyn managed as an area of willow woodland for fuel biomass. I think there is also opportunity for small scale wind turbines in communities like Llancynfelyn

I'm very supportive of renewable energy including wind farms

> Include people - the discussion - making progress, and listen to

Farm and village scale windmills and water turbines should be the NORM. Every original water mill not used now is a wasted resource

Access to wood fuel processing equipment for start up / new businesses would greatly help

> Reintroduction of system for local people to take firewood from NRW plantations Encourage solar & wood

By definition, culture & heritage is for locals. Schools are hugely important in this context

Welsh culture/language - often incomers dictate environmental agenda - support sustainable agriculture

Need for it to be **Financially viable for** locals to live in the area The present rate of consumption of resources and

deterioration in natural resources is unsustainable and ecosystems are failing already

Locally grown fruit, vegetables and meat is more available at markets, community shop, farmers' markets but not supermarkets (except coop)

Add lots of farm turbines and solar

We need better Public transport links across the valley from N-S

Greater interface

between farmers and

community growing

projects

Greater community access to land for horticultural production

CC development plan says it promotes renewable energy schemes and should DO that

The "Green Diaspora" must listen and learn and not seek to lecture "teaching granny to suck eggs" is counterproductive and must be avoided

Provide a direct, fast, safe to cycle lane along main roads linking major towns e.g. Machynlleth, Aberystwyth, Newtown, Dolgellau etc. Cycle commuters need FAST routes (not SUSTRANS scenic routes which are fine for tourists)

communities

them

sustainable

burning as energy supply rather than wind turbines

> Increase the proportion of local self-reliance in food, timber and economic activities

> > More available information on culture and heritage and changes to the landscape

Improving opportunities for people to connect with the outdoors

We want to see better, more and more diverse outdoor recreation, tourism, education and heritage opportunities for local people and visitors. You said...

Create "soft" transport infrastructure such as cycle tracks

When people are immersed in an experience and are involved and have ownership in the process, they gain better understanding

Rebuilding the uplands should act as a large tourist draw

Tourist information presence back to the Dyfi Valley Area

Promote sustainable tourism.

Protect areas from over-use

for school visits, research projects, visitors, (especially children's) experience of

More natural sites [available]

Well maintained rights of way and permissive paths - support for landowners to keep them open.

Excessive tourism can cause problems in parts of the area

Provide more activities for multiuse off-road facilities (e.g. develop horse riding events etc., biking / horse-riding routes)

Completion of cycle-way between Derwenlas and Glandyfi

I would like to see the Dyfi Valley promoted as an entity - I feel we suffer from being on the edge of **3** Counties

Educational opportunities introducing people to the landscape, their roots and heritage. Encouraging a sense of responsibility

Keep a good footpath & access regime. Some are defunct and unlikely to be much used and might be better closed

Restoration and Re-Wilding' projects supported could bring increased visitors and tourists revenue

Would like to see more research into creating and improved cycle path network and clearing public rights of way, if this can be coordinated with the highways authority

Get providers of outdoor recreation involved in

Improved access trusting people who use the countryside for recreation to act responsibly

Improved access to certain areas e.g. woodlands. More opportunities for educational activities

Improve opportunities for car free leisure, such as dedicated cycle tracks forming a network and clean comfortable buses with well publicised timetables and unobstructed footpaths

Reinstatement & sustainable management of rights of way (existing). Market area's scenic beauty, having reinstated existing rights of way add appropriate provision of new multi-use paths

Reinstate & improve / open bridleways and other rights of way in the area

> uses i.e. Tourism /Conservation/Flood defences

Open access agreement (similar to Scotland) where people using the responsibly

Preserve and promote [place] names, Problems over conflicting more music, drama, art allowed and area for recreation were trusted to act encouraged in the landscape and at historical sites

wildlife/ natural world Wales lags behind Scotland and other parts of the UK in offering fishing shooting, stalking. The Dyfi Valley could rival e.g. Exmoor for world class game

shooting

consultation

Building capacity to implement the vision

We want to see more collaboration between local people, landowners, third sector organisations and statutory organisations. You said....

Invite locals and visitors to get involved in environmental monitoring while enjoying the countryside - utilize science as a medium for raising understanding of this special place

We have to manage what we have in cooperation & agreement, not competition. The natural world cannot be crystallised in aspic. Likewise development cannot run unfettered

A collaborative approach in very important

Involve small local organisations and volunteers.

Promotion of the Dyfi biosphere.

capacity to implement th

Connecting farming community with community/growers

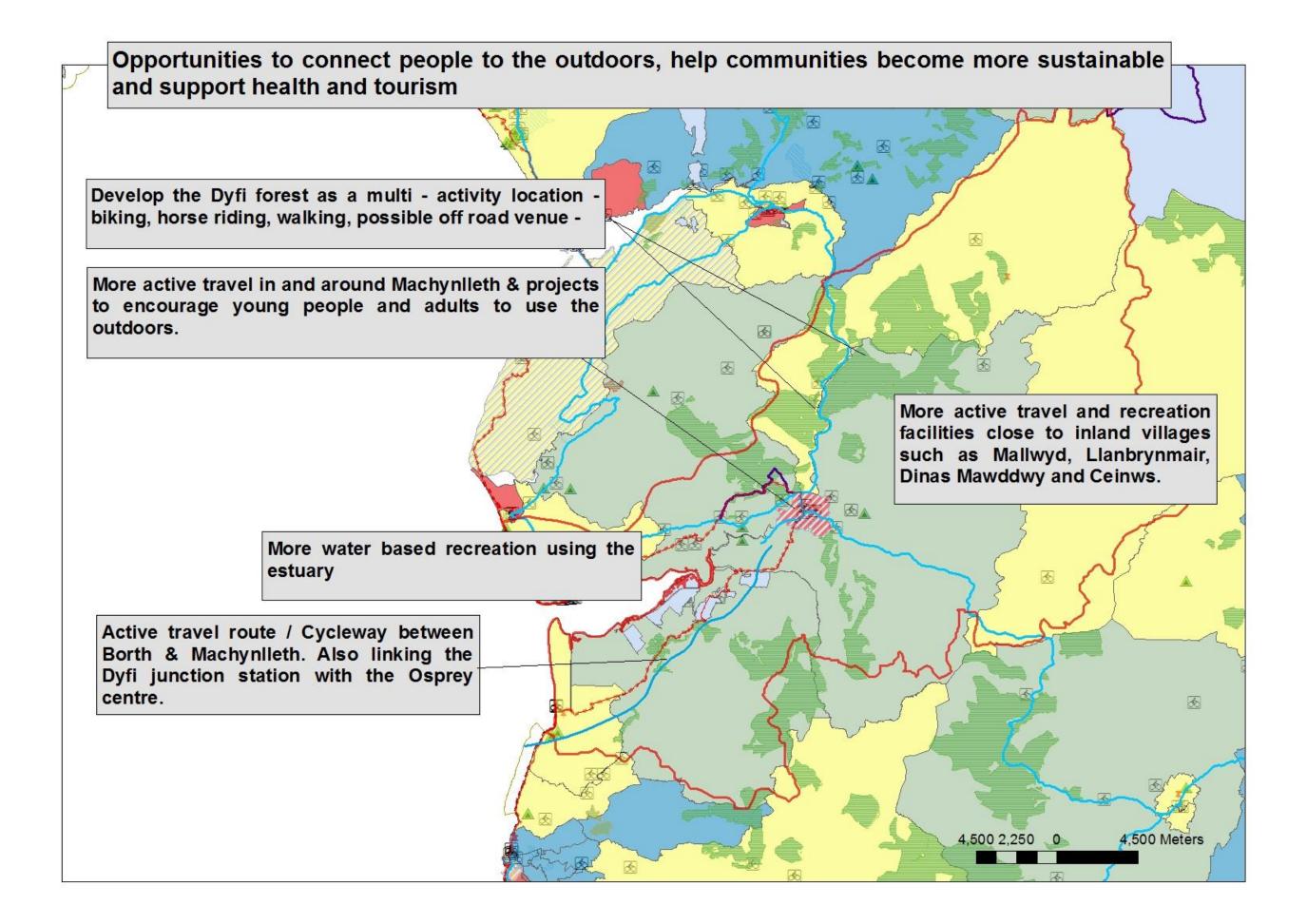
It would be interesting for locals and help them feel more engaged in the landscape if NRW made its planting and harvesting plans publicly available on its website

Better for all responsible organisations to pool resources and ideas and so work for the common good. Non co-operation between organisations will result in bad feelings and becomes political

Co-ordinate (tourism) providers

Encourage community participation

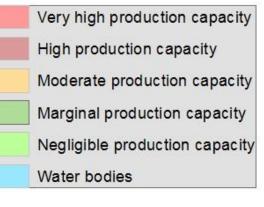
Please note the maps below are strategic in nature. More detailed work would be needed on any specific projects, based on these maps, to consider matters such as conflicts of interest between users, legal requirements and general suitability.



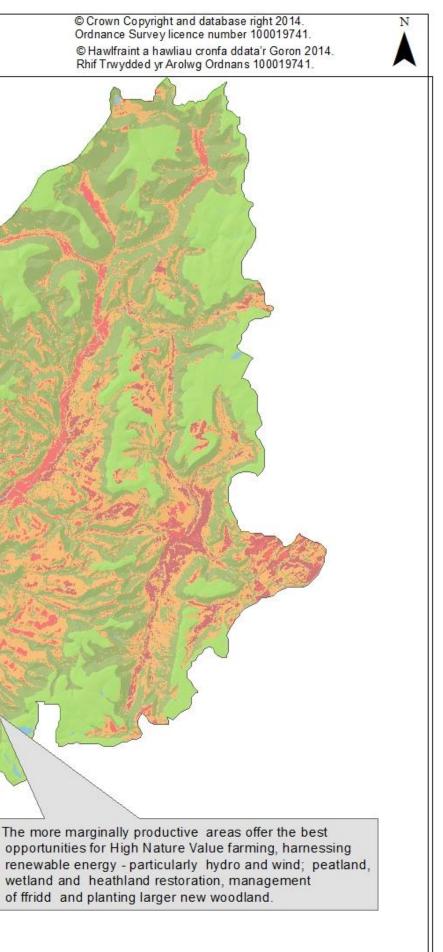


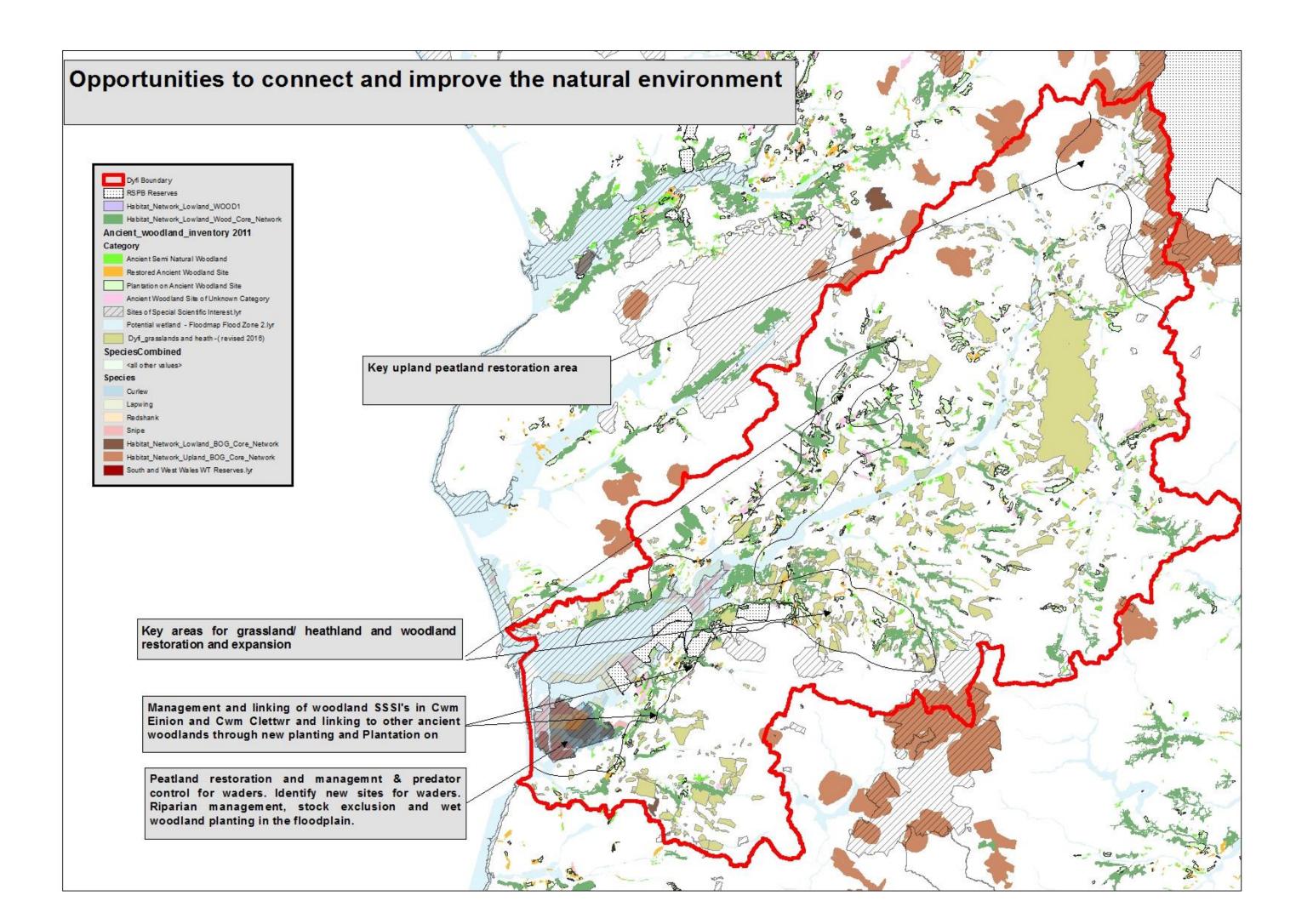
Opportunities to maintain/ increase agricultural productivity, improve resilience and deliver public benefits

The high and moderately productive agricultural areas offer the best opportunities for maintaining and increasing agricultural production due the nature of their soils, elevation, slope etc. These more intensively managed areas are the most productive but also produce more diffuse pollution (phosphorous and sediment). These areas should be targeted for farm soil and nutrient planning, shelterbelt and tree plantin and other agri- environment measures.

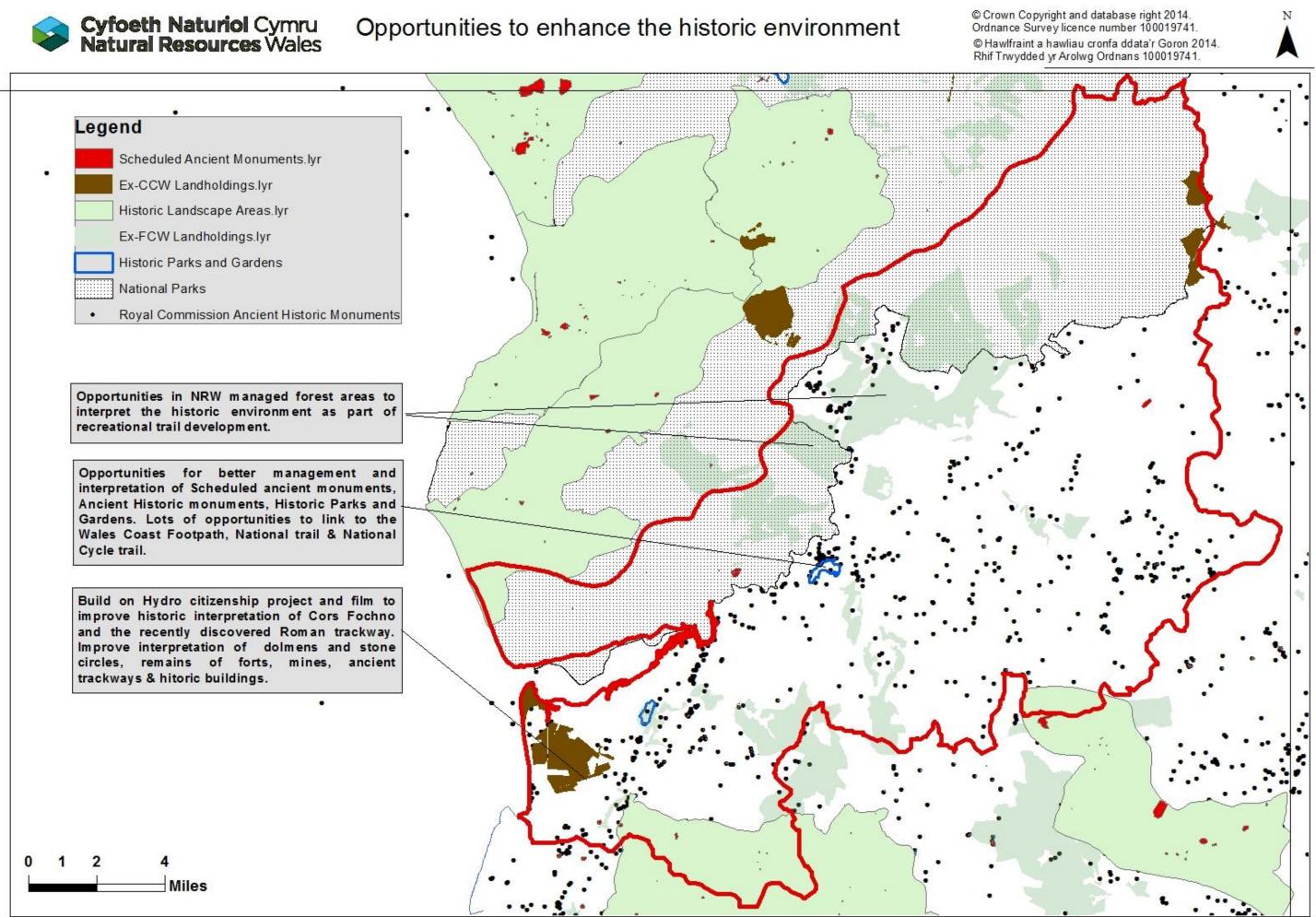


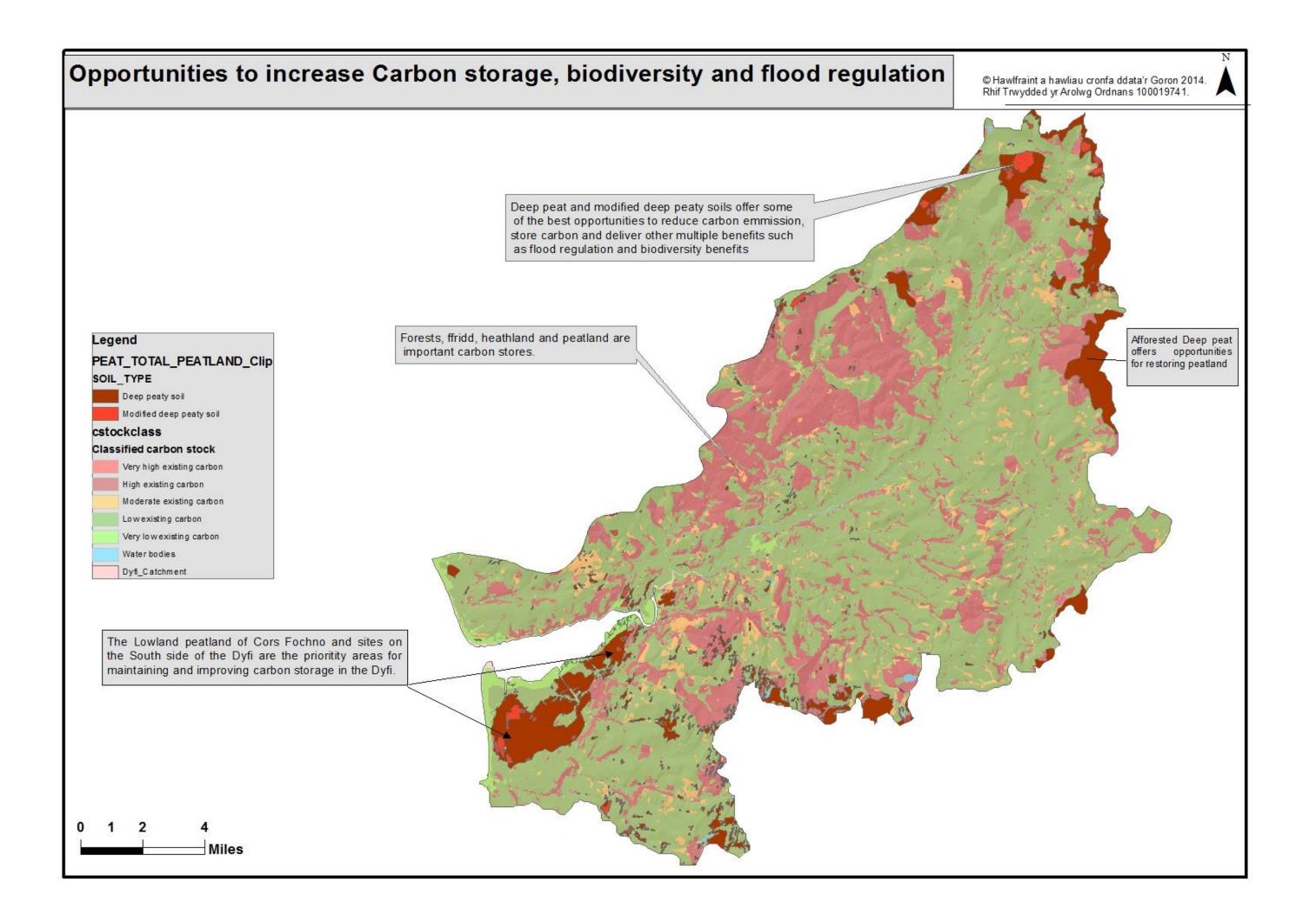
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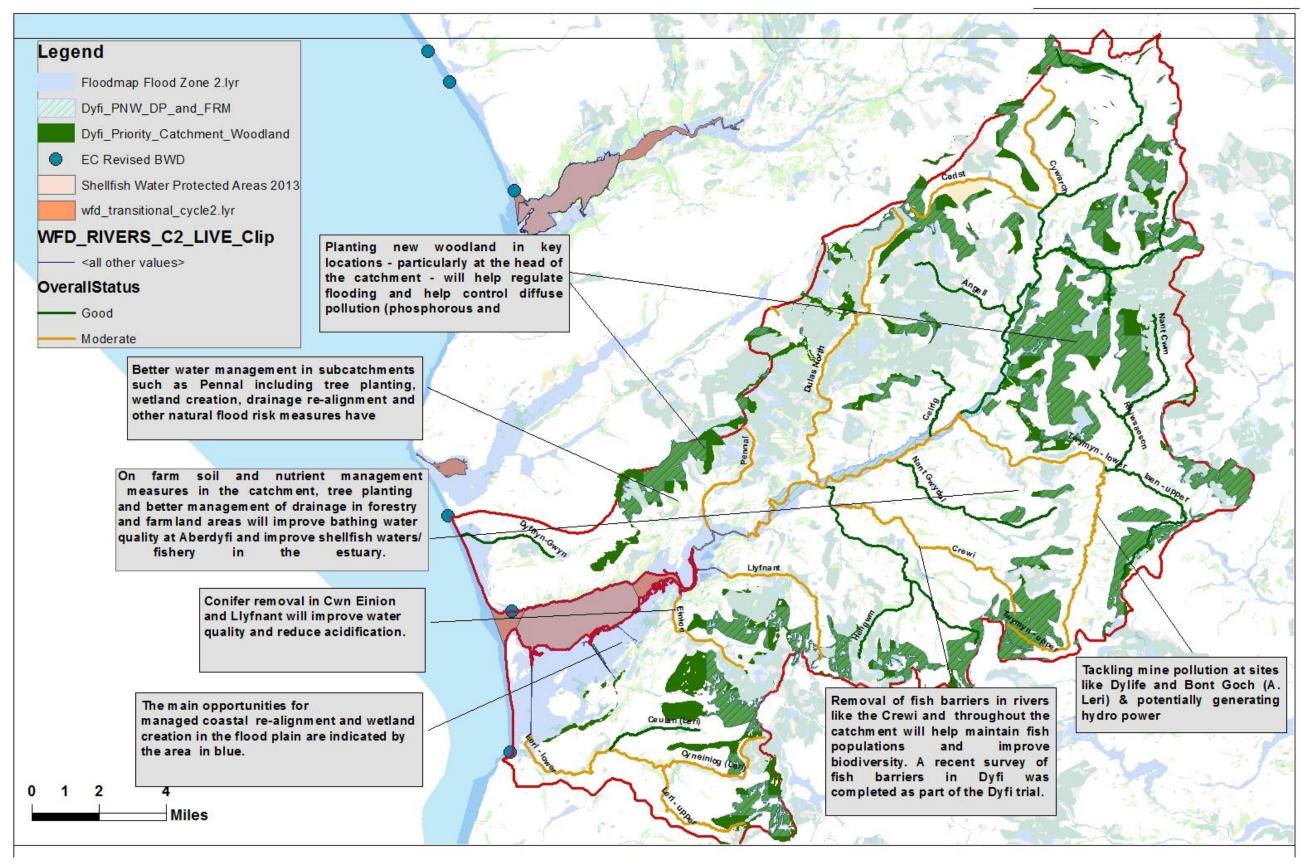






Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru Natural Resources Wales

Opportunities increase woodland cover and deliver multiple benefits



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Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru Natural Resources Wales

Opportunities to improve the water environment and deliver multiple benefits - detail view

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