

Teifi Gateway Living Landscape



Where people and wildlife prosper together



The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales (WTSWW) is developing a Living Landscape project focussed on the area surrounding Cardigan and the lower reaches of the River Teifi. Bringing people and wildlife together, the scheme aims to reconnect people with the natural capital of the land and sea around this iconic estuary.

This region of Wales is not densely populated, and much of the community earns its living from the sea, from farming the land, or the tourist trade. The landscape remains rich in scarce species and protected sites. WTSWW's own nature reserves of Cardigan Island and Cemaes Head sit astride the estuary, a wildlife-rich gateway between land and sea. Also nearby are the flagship Welsh Wildlife Centre at the Teifi Marshes Nature Reserve, and Pengelli Forest National Nature Reserve.

The Teifi River itself, the iconic core of the landscape, is a highly protected Special Area of Conservation. Local communities associate themselves strongly both with the market town of Cardigan, and with the river itself, which supports many businesses, both directly and indirectly. Cardigan used to be one of the busiest ports in Wales.



 Nature centre  Nature reserves

The area around Cardigan is quite typical of the modern working countryside. The Teifi and its tributaries wind through wooded valleys and gorges, dairy farms, arable crops and scattered villages. Over the last century the decline in non-intensive mixed farming has led to more damaging and specialised agricultural systems, with dairy particularly dominant in some areas causing a decline in farmland biodiversity. Connectivity of habitats such as woodlands, which host some of our most precious species, have been eroded, and agricultural chemicals have caused the loss of farmland species such as scarce arable weeds. The mis-management of our seas has caused catastrophic changes in the marine ecosystem.

WTSWW will work with local stakeholders to gather baseline ecological data and look at opportunity mapping. They recognise that by working in partnership they can contribute to significant gains for both people and wildlife, for example by:

- Re-joining fragmented woodlands and other semi-natural habitats,
- Reconnecting local people with their river, the lifeblood of the local community,
- Helping to re-diversify the landscape to make the ecosystem and the services it provides more robust for the future,
- Creating a landscape where the scarcest species like the dormouse can thrive and spread,
- Raising awareness of and engagement with local wildlife, supporting a more successful eco-tourism industry.



Teifi Gateway Living Landscape



Habitats	Species
Broadleaf woodland	Salmon
Arable weed communities	Lampreys
Rivers and streams	Otter
Reedbeds	Dormouse
Marine	Barbastelle bats

Vision

To forge sustainable links between the natural environment, the landscape of the Cardigan area and its towns and villages. Diversifying and enhancing the natural environment both on land and at sea will protect wildlife for the future, and create social and economic opportunities for the communities which are resilient in the face of climate change.

Environment

WTSWW will work with partners to secure sympathetic management outside its own nature reserves, at sea and across the wider landscape. Taking a landscape scale approach will allow us to look at large scale habitat networks, identifying opportunities to create climate change resilience and improve ecosystem function.

WTSWW will look to support landowners to manage land more sustainably and in the context of the wider landscape - small steps towards a big plan. They will focus on specific measures to support scarce species known to be important in this area, for example woodland bats, dormice, salmon and lampreys.

Social

The communities of the lower Teifi have a strong sense of identity and WTSWW will build on this to re-establish connections with the nature, particularly in the Teifi estuary and in the marine environment. In this way they hope to build on the established sense of place to encourage people to value their wildlife, encourage decision making that enhances rather than damages the natural environment, and engage people in sustainable lifestyles.

Economic

WTSWW hope to work with local stakeholders to help them access existing and new revenue streams that will support them in more sustainable management practices, bringing new income to local businesses. They will look to raise awareness of the importance and financial value of products that are locally produced in a sustainable manner. WTSWW nature reserves and visitor centres contribute to the area becoming an important eco-tourism destination.

Key Partners: Visit Wales, Natural Resources Wales and Biffa Awards.

Join The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales

The Nature Centre, Fountain Road, Tondu, Bridgend, CF32 0EH or Welsh Wildlife Centre, Cilgerran, Cardigan, SA43 2TB.

☎ 01656 724100 ✉ info@welshwildlife.org

www.welshwildlife.org

