Key Findings of ‘Developing collaborative land management actions in Breconshire’
Feasibility Study

1. Introduction

This feasibility study has been commissioned by the Green Connections Powys project (the project). The project operates across the county of Powys and is collaboration between Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust, Radnorshire Wildlife Trust (RWT) and the Brecknock Office of the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales.

2. Background

Following on from a previously commissioned feasibility study, ‘Exploring Collaborative Habitat Land Management in Powys’. MAES Services were commissioned to build on the results of this study and provide one-to-one facilitation for small landowners and land management contractors within Breconshire, with the aim of creating sustainable relationships between services and service providers to bring about better habitat management.

3. Key Findings

a. Signposting of grants – A recurring topic of conversation with landowners is the lack of awareness of what funding is available for land-based projects/work.

Recommendation: Project staff should encourage all land holders they engage with to subscribe to Welsh Government Gwlad newsletter and explore the possibility of creating a land owner mailing list and newsletter where grants and advice can be easily shared.

b. Applying for funding – Several individuals expressed the need for support in applying for WG Agri environment funding schemes due to them having no knowledge of systems such as Rural Payments Wales.

Recommendation: Explore the creation the of a ‘Contractors & Consultants directory’ where individuals and groups could be signposted to an agent or facilitator who could apply for a grant on their behalf.

c. Machinery hire, loaning of equipment and machine rings - During conversations, the hire, loaning and the idea of a machine ring were discussed.

Recommendation: Explore in partnership with other likeminded organisations, whether a suite of machinery that aligns to the needs of smaller landowners could be centrally held with a commercial operator for hiring and leasing, modelled on the Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water weed wiper scheme.
d. **Establishment of a South Brecknock Wildlife Landowner Group** – Individuals located in the south Brecknock area expressed an interest in the creation of a southern group although no one identified themselves as a lead point of contact.

**Recommendation:** Further work and facilitation is required in the creation of a South Brecknock group. This should be explored when staff resources allow, although this group may naturally occur as membership of the North Brecknock group increases.

e. **Land Engagement officers/further facilitation** – A strong theme raised during engagement with landowners was the desire to have a single point of contact for a longer period who could undertake an initial survey of a holding, produce a management plan which incorporates themes such as nature, access, heritage etc and identify funding sources.

**Recommendation:** Explore the idea of funding an engagement officer (potentially in partnership with an organisation) that takes a holistic approach to land management which incorporates work nature recovery, health & wellbeing, heritage etc.

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