Evaluation of Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being (ENRaW) Grant:
Final Report

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Authors: Nia Bryer and Heledd Bebb, OB3 Research

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Glossary

Acronym/Key word	Definition
CCT	Cross-Cutting Themes
COP15	The 15th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
eNGO	Environmental non-governmental organisations
ENRaW	Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being in Wales
EU	European Union
EoI	Expression of Interest
GBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
INNS	Invasive Non-Native Species
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning
MS	Member of the Senedd
NFM	Natural Flood Management
NHS	National Health Service
NLCF	National Lottery Community Fund
NLHF	National Lottery Heritage Fund
OECM	Other effective area-based conservation measure
RDP	Rural Development Programme
RPW	Rural Payments Wales
SFS	Sustainable Farming Scheme
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SMNR	Sustainable Management of our Natural Resources
SMS	Sustainable Management Scheme
SPF	Shared Prosperity Fund
SROI	Social Return on Investment
SRG	Single Revenue Grant
ToC	Theory of Change
TWIG	The Woodland Investment Grant
WEFO	Welsh European Funding Office

WFG	Well-being of Future Generations
WEMWBS	Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Survey

1.   Introduction

1.1   OB3 Research, in conjunction with BRO Partnership, were appointed by the Welsh Government to undertake an evaluation of the Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being (ENRaW) grant.

1.2   The ENRaW grant scheme is a single environment grant scheme established in April 2018 to support projects to make improvements in and around residential areas and to deliver benefits for people, businesses, and their communities. The pan-Wales scheme operated on an annual basis, providing funding to projects on a three-year basis from spring 2019 to 2021.

1.3   The aim of the evaluation was to assess if ENRaW funded projects, delivered between April 2019 and March 2023, delivered against scheme aims and objectives. The evaluation was expected to review the effectiveness of the grant scheme as a mechanism for delivering against Welsh Government policies, strategies, and legislative requirements and the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme (RDP). The evaluation was also expected to explore the environmental, social, economic, and cultural outcomes achieved via the collaborative delivery approach.

1.4   It was intended that the evaluation reviewed:

- the administration and delivery of the grant scheme by Welsh Government, including application processes, monitoring requirements and grant management with a view to identifying what worked well and what could be improved in the future

- the direct impact of grants and whether the grants awarded achieved their original aims and objectives, including achievement of targets and outcomes set out in applications and delivery plans

- wider and unexpected benefits and achievements, including any wider multiple benefits over and above direct benefits expected.

1.5   The evaluation was undertaken between October 2021 and October 2023. To date, it has involved the preparation of a Theory of Change (ToC) and Evaluation Framework report (unpublished, January 2022) and an Interim Report (March

2023)[1] which considered the administration and delivery of the grant scheme and provided early findings on the impact of the scheme.

1.6　This final evaluation report considers the impact and achievements of the scheme in greater detail and is presented in seven chapters.

- Chapter one: introduction to the report.

- Chapter two: sets out an outline of the final phase methodology.

- Chapter three: providers an overview of the ENRaW grant scheme.

- Chapter four: considers key policy developments since the interim report was prepared.

- Chapter five: reviews ENRaW grant achievements, including progress against cross cutting objectives.

- Chapter six: considers grant impacts and the sustainability of funded activities.

- Chapter seven: offers our conclusions and recommendations for the future.

1.7　Additional information is set out within annexes.

- Annex A sets out the discussion guides adopted for the final phase fieldwork.

- Annex B presents the survey tool distributed to funded projects during the final phase fieldwork.

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[1] Bryer, N; and Bebb, H; (2023). *Evaluation of Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being (ENRaW) Grant: Interim Report* Cardiff: Welsh Government, GSR report number 22/2023.

## 2.	Methodology

2.1	This chapter sets out the method adopted for undertaking the final phase evaluation.

Method

2.2	The evaluation activities which were undertaken between April and August 2023 involved:

- a final phase inception meeting with Welsh Government officials and the preparation of a refined final phase evaluation plan

- desk-based research, which involved an analysis of recent policy and strategic documents and a review of ENRaW scheme monitoring data. This also involved reviewing project level documentation such as end of funding project reports or the most recent project reports for those projects selected to contribute to the qualitative fieldwork (23 of the total 59 projects funded). The desk-based review also considered all of the . independent evaluation reports (five) which were made available to the team as well as the evidence offered in an end of project film prepared by a sixth project[2]

- preparing a qualitative discussion guide (set out at Annex A) and interviewing two Welsh Government officials involved in management of the ENRaW scheme, one of whom was an official working for Rural Payment Wales (RPW)

- preparing and distributing a bilingual online survey to all ENRaW funded projects (set out at Annex B). The survey was hosted using SNAP survey software and pre-populated with basic information to reduce the questions asked of respondents. A database of all funded projects (59) was made available to the research team. A de-duplication exercise to remove duplicate contacts who were responsible for more than one project reduced this to a sample of 52 individual email addresses. Funded projects were invited to complete the survey in early May 2023 and non-respondents received three automated messages via SNAP software up until June 2023. In addition, all non-respondents were contacted via a personalised email issued by a member of the OB3 research team. In cases where new contact

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[2] DCC - Enraw - Final - Vimeo 1080

details were sourced for non-responding projects (either as a result of the individual approach or via the qualitative work, see below), they were invited to complete the survey for their respective project. A total of 30 survey responses were received, covering 34 funded projects between them. This is a response rate of 58 per cent of all funded projects

- preparing discussion guides for interviewing representatives from funded projects, including project leads, partner organisations and volunteers or community members (set out at Annex A)

- approaching project lead representatives from the case studies interviewed during the interim evaluation phase and reinterviewing, either via Teams or on a face-to-face basis, representatives from all eight case study projects

- approaching all remaining funded projects who had not contributed to the qualitative fieldwork during the interim phase (22 funded projects in all, of which 12 were funded during Window 1 and 10 during Window 3) and completing in-depth qualitative interviews (either via Teams or on a face-to-face basis) with the project lead for 15 of these (7 of which were funded during Window 1, and 8 were funded during Window 3). One project lead was interviewed about two funded projects, as they had secured funding during Window 1 and Window 3, with Window 3 activities being a continuation of the project funded during Window 1

- undertaking further fieldwork with five of these ENRaW projects. This involved interviewing partner organisations, beneficiaries, or community representatives as well as Welsh Government policy officers (where possible) who had been involved with these projects.

2.3   In total, qualitative evidence from a total of 23 projects was secured during the final phase fieldwork, with eight of these being re-interviews and 15 being new interviews.

Profile of survey responses

2.4   29 respondents completed the survey in English, and one completed it in Welsh. Table 2.1 sets out details regarding which ENRaW funding window each survey project was funded. Further detail about each of these funding windows is set out at Chapter 3 of this report. Of those that responded to the survey, 21 had been funded within Window 1, two had been funded via Window 2 and 11 funded via

Window 3. Of these, three projects had been funded via both Windows 1 and 3 whilst one project had been funded via Windows 1 and 2.

2.5   Also shown at Table 2.1, all but one surveyed projects reported that their ENRaW project had either been completed (17) or was close to completion (12). The remaining one project reported it was still underway.

Table 2.1: Profile of survey responses

Funded via	Number of responses	Number of survey respondents reporting that project had been completed
Window 1	21	17
Window 2	2	0
Window 3	11	1
Total	30	17[3]

Source: OB3 Research web survey (30 responses, representing 34 funded projects)

Profile of interviewed projects

2.6   A total of 40 individuals contributed to the qualitative fieldwork from across the 23 projects. Of these:

- 25 were delivery staff employed by the 23 lead organisations

- 13 were representatives from partner organisations, such as local authorities, third sector organisations, community groups, local schools, volunteers, and community members, who had been involved with five of the selected projects

- two were Welsh Government policy officers who had been involved with two of the selected projects.

Methodological considerations

2.7   The following issues need to be considered in relation to the methodology adopted for this final phase of the evaluation.

- The survey response rate (n=30) was slightly higher than for the interim survey (as the survey was directed to funded projects only, and not unsuccessful applicants where a lower response rate would be expected) and represents 58 per cent of all funded projects. In addition to the 30

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[3] One survey project had received funding during Windows 1 and 3.

responses received, one Window 1 project responded to say that they had nothing to add since contributing to the interim evaluation since their project had ended some time ago and a second declined to complete the survey on the basis that they were contributing to a qualitative evaluation interview.

- There is a degree of overlap in the views of survey respondents and interviewed respondents, given that 43 per cent of those interviewed during the final evaluation fieldwork (10 of the 23 interviewed projects) also completed a survey.

- The Welsh Government could only provide monitoring data for Window 1 ENRaW projects, on the basis that Windows 2 and 3 project outputs had not been verified at the time of drafting this report. As a result, this evaluation report cannot report upon all of the outputs achieved across the scheme, meaning that our conclusions on scheme performance is limited to Window 1 project data.

- The number of independent end of project level evaluation reports accessed as part of this scheme level evaluation was limited (six projects) given that 38 projects were complete at the time of drafting our report and were expected by the Welsh Government to prepare an end of project evaluation report. Overall, the project level evaluations reviewed were of good quality, drawing upon robust methodologies which were underpinned by Theories of Change and adopted mixed-method approaches. All evaluations were informed by qualitative evidence gathered from delivery staff, partner organisations and beneficiaries. They also considered project performance against funded targets and what accounted for any strong or weak performance. Whilst we have been able to draw upon specific project level evaluation examples within this report, the limited number has restricted the evidence we have been able to draw upon to inform our conclusions and future recommendations.

3. An overview of the ENRaW grant

3.1 This chapter provides a brief overview of the Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being in Wales (ENRaW) grant scheme, what it has funded, and the key findings of the interim evaluation.

Introduction

3.2 The ENRaW grant scheme was a single environment grant scheme established in April 2018. It was expected to support projects to make improvements in and around residential areas and to deliver benefits for people, businesses, and their communities.

3.3 It was established when three grant schemes were merged into one. These three grant schemes were the Environment Core Grant, Local Authority Single Revenue Grant, and a proportion of the capital funding previously allocated under the Green Infrastructure Capital Grant.[4]

3.4 ENRaW was intended to fund pilot and demonstration projects which promoted cooperation and collaborative action to:

- develop, regenerate, and broaden access to sustainable green infrastructure

- improve the quality of the urban and rural built environment

- develop resilient ecological networks, areas, and nature-based solutions.

3.5 Projects funded via ENRaW were expected to achieve outcomes across the four key areas of social, environmental, economic, and cultural outcomes, as set out at Figure 3.1.

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[4] Capital funding under the Green Infrastructure Capital Grant continued to make a contribution to support projects attracting additional investment into Wales including Welsh EULIFE projects and larger scale Welsh projects submitted to National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Figure 3.1: ENRaW expected outcomes

Social benefits
- Improve access to, and the quality of, local green spaces
- Improve health and well-being in the community
- Involve local community groups, volunteers, and cross sector participation
- Increase social responsibility and sustainable behaviours within the community

Environmental benefits
- Create new, or maintain already existing, woodlands, hedges etc
- Improve the quality of the local environment
- Enhance biodiversity and ecological / ecosystem resilience
- Specific action to reduce carbon emissions

Economic benefits
- Create income or elements of revenue generation
- Attract investment from other sources (not including match funding)
- Create, secure, or protect existing jobs
- Support new qualifications and / or skills to those involved or to benefit in future

Cultural benefits
- Increase community role in shared responsibilities for future longer-term sustainability
- Deliver recreational activities and events to local and wider communities
- Increase knowledge and understanding across communities through training or other engagement
- Tackle local issues such as repairs, restorations etc to protect heritage

3.6   A capital budget of £33.325m and revenue budget of £26.096m over the four-year period spanning 2019/20 and 2022/23 was made available and three competitive funding windows were administered by the Welsh Government to award funding.

3.7   The scheme secured Rural Development Programme (RDP) funding part-way through delivery in 2019, to maximise the resources available, although the first window was funded via Welsh Government funds only.

3.8   The first funding window was administered by the Welsh Government's Programme Management and Delivery Branch in September 2018 using Welsh Government funding only and projects commenced from spring 2019 onwards.

3.9   Window 1 made available three types of grant funding:

- revenue funding to support the development of new strategic, cross-sector delivery co-operations/collaborations (up to £40,000 over a maximum 12-month period)

- capital for small scale infrastructure with a focus on environmental and green infrastructure (providing up to £128,000 max which is 80 per cent of the total project costs of £160,000 over three years) and

- combined revenue and capital funding to support pilot and demonstration projects at the right scale (average project costs of £750,000-£1 million over three years).

3.10   The guidance stated that the grant should support:

- the creation of new co-operative arrangements for delivering activity, environmental infrastructure, or projects

- projects at scale that can draw together several smaller scale or locally led activities across an area or region in a strategic way

- the further development of co-operations, collaborations, or partnerships, including involving new partners outside of the traditional environment sector (e.g., health organisations, tourism, businesses/private sector etc.)

- projects which would achieve multiple benefits spanning economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being

- projects which implemented new processes/methods of delivery or practices (e.g., strengthening the SMNR focus of delivery or the new section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty)

- the development and delivery of new products.

3.11   Windows 2 and 3 funds were operated through RDP under measure 16.2. The application process was two-fold with applicants being required to submit an expression of interest (EoI) and a second full application. Funding across Windows 2 and 3 was restricted to large, combined revenue and capital funded projects, to

satisfy the requirements of RDP 16.2. Funding of between £500,000 and £10 million was made available to successful projects[5].

3.12   Window 2 closed for submissions in November 2019 and EoIs were assessed in December 2019. Window 3 closed in March 2020. It was intended that EoIs would be assessed in April 2020, but this was delayed to June/July 2020 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.13   Windows 2 and 3 ENRaW funding could be used to support:

- pilot projects[6] and the development of new products, practices, processes, and technologies in the agriculture, food, and forestry sectors

- projects which demonstrated at least a minimum of three entities, one of which should be an SME

- projects which involved a range of cross sector organisations including those from health, tourism, private sector, and education

- the delivery of activities such as:

    o   improving and enhancing local environment quality

    o   active sustainable management of natural resources

    o   developing and improving access to sustainable green infrastructure, and

    o   improving ecosystem resilience

    o   opportunities to support green (social) prescribing, nature-based solutions, clear links between natural resources and well-being, volunteering, training and education, and behaviour change.

3.14   The guidance[7] stipulated that funding could not be used to support stand-alone research but that eligible activities included demonstration of new techniques,

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[5] Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014 - 2020: Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being (ENRaW) Scheme Guidance Notes
[6] Defined as test projects which could form part of a large development process and not limited to any particular sector
[7] Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014 - 2020: Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being (ENRaW) Scheme Guidance Notes

running costs of the project (e.g., salary costs); mapping and gap analysis; costs of project and promotion activities.

3.15   Ineligible costs included the purchase of land exceeding 10 per cent of the total project value, purchase of vehicles, work carried out before the project start date and maintenance costs for buildings, plant, or equipment.

Funded projects

3.16   A total of 59 ENRaW projects were delivered across the three funding windows, as set out at Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: ENRaW projects by funding window

Window	No. of projects proceeding
1	36
2	5
3	18
Total	59

Source: Welsh Government (September 2023)

Window 1 funding and expenditure

3.17   The funding awarded to the 36 Window 1 funded projects was as follows.

- £1,087,575 grant funding was allocated to 19 small scale, one-year projects and individual grant amounts ranged from £22,634 to £128,000. Five of these projects received capital and 14 received revenue only funding. In two cases, the budget was extended into 2020/21 whilst the budget was extended to 2021/22 for three of these projects.

- £13,454,633 grant funding was allocated to 17 large scale Window 1 projects and individual grant amounts ranged from £149,587 to £2,413,740. Of these, 10 received both capital and revenue funding, and seven received revenue only funding.

3.18   Expenditure data was also supplied by the Welsh Government in September 2023 for Window 1 funded projects. As shown at Table 3.2, the 14 small-scale Window 1 projects had claimed 89 per cent of their allocated budget. Three small-scale projects accounted for just over half of the overall underspend. In all, 12 of the 14 projects had underspends of more than £1,000 against their allocated budget.

Table 3.2: Expenditure of small-scale Window 1 projects

	Data for small scale W1 projects
Total Welsh Government funding awarded	£1,087,575
Total claimed, as at September 2023	£966,576
Total claimed, as a per cent of funding awarded	89%
Underspend	£120,999

Source: Welsh Government (September 2023)

3.19　As shown at Table 3.3, 12 of the 17 large scale projects had been completed and claimed 91 per cent of the grant funding awarded, meaning that 9 per cent of their £8.4m allocation was not spent. The ongoing large-scale projects funded via Window 1 still have over a quarter of their funding left to be claimed.

Table 3.3: Expenditure of large-scale Window 1 projects

	Data for 12 completed large scale W1 projects	Data for 5 ongoing large scale W1 projects
Total Welsh Government funding awarded	£8,373,147	£5,081,486
Total claimed, as at September 2023	£7,611,842	£3,724,447
Total claimed, as a per cent of funding awarded	91%	73%
Underspend / Remaining to be claimed	£761,305	£1,357,039

Source: Welsh Government (September 2023)

Windows 2 and 3 projects

3.20　All 23 Window 2 and 3 funded projects were expected to be completed by June 2023. 11 projects were awarded an extension until September 2023 to allow them to deliver their objectives and spend their full financial allocation. At the time of drafting this report, the other 12 projects were complete having submitted their final claims to the Welsh Government.

Table 3.4: Status of Windows 2 and 3 projects

	Completed	Ongoing	Total
Window 2 projects	2	3	5
Window 3 projects	10	8	18
Total Windows 2 and 3 projects	12	11	23

Source: Welsh Government (September 2023)

3.21 As shown at Table 3.5, £31.5m of Welsh Government and RDP funding was allocated to Windows 2 and 3 of the ENRaW scheme. Grant funding for £29.6m was allocated to the 23 projects which proceeded. The value of individual grants awarded to the 23 projects varied from £388,330 to £6,190,085, with a mean average of £1,285,782. Across Windows 2 and 3, £24.2m had been claimed as of September 2023, representing 82 per cent of the grant approved, and £5.3m remained unclaimed. £2.1m of this unclaimed amount was accounted for by the 12 completed projects and therefore will not be claimed, whilst it is expected that a proportion of the remaining £3.3m yet to be claimed by ongoing projects will be spent.

Table 3.5: Budget and expenditure of Windows 2 and 3 projects

	W2 projects	W3 projects	W2 and 3 projects
Total Welsh Government and RDF budget	£15,000,000	£16,500,000	£31,500,000
Budget allocated	£14,834,595	£16,868,412	£31,703,007
Project grant approved	£14,401,889	£15,171,105	£29,572,994
Total claimed, as at September 2023	£9,118,791	£10,942,705	£20,061,496
Total claims in progress, as at September 2023	£2,413,613	£1,763,401	£4,177,014
Total claimed to date, as % of grant approved	80%	84%	82%
Total grant remaining unclaimed	£2,869,484	£2,464,999	£5,334,483

3.22 In summary, £44,115,202 of Welsh Government (and RDP funds in the case of Windows 2 and 3) was awarded to ENRaW projects over the three funding periods, and as of September 2023 83 per cent had been claimed (including claims in progress) as shown at Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: ENRaW expenditure against funding awarded

	All ENRaW projects (59)
Total Welsh Government (and RDP for Windows 2 & 3) funding awarded	£44,115,202
Total claimed, as at September 2023	£36,541,375
Total claimed, as a per cent of funding awarded	83%
Underspend	£7,573,826

Source: Welsh Government (September 2023)

Interim evaluation key findings

3.23 The interim evaluation published in 2023 offered a number of key findings in terms of scheme administration and delivery.

- ENRaW had been promoted effectively, with energy and positivity on the part of Welsh Government staff.

- Demand for funding was high, not least because the scheme was designed to support 100 per cent of project costs over a medium-term period of three years, and this was an attractive offer to partnerships.

- Processing a high number of funding applications placed significant demands upon staff resources within Welsh Government.

- Window 1 grant application, assessment and administration arrangements were found to be reasonable and appropriate, and a clear strength of this funding window was the applicant's ability to deal directly with a Welsh Government officer.

- The transfer of the scheme into RDP mechanisms and the need to satisfy RDP funding requirements was disruptive and detrimental to the smooth administration of the scheme; these changes took place prior to the Window 2 and 3 grant application process and coincided with the COVID-19

pandemic; the change in administration process was found to be causing significant stress for projects and impacted negatively on their ability to deliver successful outcomes, not least because of the loss of staff, community, and partner goodwill to their project.

3.24 The interim evaluation also offered a number of key findings in terms of alignment of funded projects with the scheme aims and objectives.

- Projects were of good quality and delivering worthwhile environmental and community work.

- Projects were delivering activities in line with the RDP Focus Areas and Cross Cutting Objectives, as well as the Welsh Government cross-cutting themes, although there was very little evidence in place to demonstrate how they were embracing gender mainstreaming.

- Projects were adopting very good, often creative, methods of using and promoting the Welsh language in a positive way.

- ENRaW's focus on collaborative working encouraged and supported significant cross sector working which was unlikely to have been achieved otherwise.

- There was good evidence that ENRaW had supported the establishment and development of new partnerships as well as enabled others to expand and strengthen, both geographically and in terms of the range of partners involved.

4.   Updated policy context

4.1   The interim evaluation found that ENRaW closely reflected Welsh Government policy and strategies and was an excellent opportunity to support cross-policy projects spanning environmental, community, economic, health and wellbeing across Wales at scale and pace.

4.2   This chapter provides a brief update on relevant policy developments since the interim evaluation report was prepared and reflects upon the final phase evaluation findings of a similar scheme, the Sustainable Management Scheme (SMS).

Sustainable Farming Scheme

4.3   In July 2022 the Welsh Government published an outline of the proposed Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) which is likely to provide funding for collaborative projects, albeit the focus will be upon the farming community. The SFS is intended to provide support at three levels: a universal element available to all farmers, a higher-level payment for greater actions; and additional payments for collaborative actions.

4.4   The proposal sets out that support to farmers will be available to deliver on four key objectives.

- To produce food in a sustainable manner.

- Mitigate and adapt to climate change.

- Maintain and enhance the resilience of ecosystems and the benefits they provide.

- Conserve and enhance the countryside and cultural resources, promoting public access and engagement with them[8].

4.5   The scheme recognises that these objectives must be delivered together and intends to do so by taking a 'land sharing' approach which means that environmental and social outcomes are delivered through the adoption of sustainable farming practices.

4.6   It is expected that the additional payments for collaborative actions will be made available in a coordinated way to multiple farmers or land managers at a landscape, catchment, or national scale so that greater benefits than the sum of

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[8] Welsh Government (2022), Sustainable Farming Scheme Outline Proposals for 2025, p. 9

individuals parts can be delivered. Examples of such collaborative actions include creating interconnected habitats, developing supply chain opportunities, and sharing knowledge and innovation.[9]

4.7   Several proposed actions have been identified within the SFS which provide opportunities for collaborative action including:

- reducing on-farm emissions and maximising carbon sequestration (including the restoration of semi-natural peatland and the creation and management of existing agri-forestry and woodland)

- protecting and enhancing the farm ecosystem (including protecting soils from erosion and degradation and preserving native breeds)

- managing habitats and species (including habitat maintenance and creation, benefiting habitat on improved land, designated sites, lowering the risk of diffuse pollution and natural flood management)

- benefiting people, animals, and places (including maintaining the historic environment, heritage and beauty and enabling people to engage with and access the natural environment)[10].

4.8   The Welsh Government consulted extensively on its proposals and in July 2023 set out its response to the initial feedback received[11]. The feedback suggested that farmers are generally supportive of the scheme principles but would welcome greater flexibility to choose actions which best suit their land and farming approach. It is now expected that engagement with farmers and the wider industry will continue and that the final scheme design, rules, and payment rates will be published in 2024, ready for implementation from 2025 onwards.

COP 15 Global Biodiversity Framework

4.9   The United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP15) held in Canada in December 2022 concluded with an agreement to guide global action on nature through to 2030[12]. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) sets out

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[9] Ibid. p.15
[10] Ibid. p. 9-56
[11] Sustainable Farming Scheme Outline Proposals: Co-design response [HTML] | GOV.WALES
[12] COP15: Nations Adopt Four Goals, 23 Targets for 2030 In Landmark UN Biodiversity Agreement | Convention on Biological Diversity (cbd.int)

measures to halt and reverse nature loss, including putting 30 per cent of the planet and 30 per cent of degraded ecosystems under protection by 2030.

4.10 The GBF consists of four overarching global goals and 23 targets. The four goals set out a vision for biodiversity by 2050.

- Substantially increase the area of natural ecosystems by maintaining, enhancing, or restoring the integrity, connectivity, and resilience of all ecosystems

- Ensure nature's contributions to people are valued, maintained, and enhanced, with those contributions currently in decline being restored.

- Share the monetary and non-monetary benefits of the utilisation of genetic resources

- Ensure all parties (specifically developing countries) have adequate means to implement the GBF resources.

4.11 The global targets for 2030 include:

- effective conservation and management of at least 30 per cent of the world's lands, inland waters, coastal areas, and oceans, with emphasis on areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functioning and services. This has been informally referred to as the '30 by 30' deal

- reduce global food waste by half and significantly reduce over-consumption and waste generation

- reduce by half both excess nutrients and the overall risk posed by pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals

- progressively phase out or reform subsidies that harm biodiversity by at least $500bn per year, whilst scaling up positive incentives for biodiversity conservation

- encourage at least $200bn per year in domestic and international biodiversity-related funding from public and private sources

- increase international financial flows from developed to developing countries by at least $20bn per year by 2025, and to at least $30bn per year by 2030

- require transnational companies and financial institutions to monitor, assess and disclose the impact on biodiversity of their operations, supply chains and portfolios.

The Biodiversity Deep Dive

4.12   In anticipation of the COP15 agreement, the Welsh Government worked with a group of key experts to undertake a Biodiversity Deep Dive over the summer of 2022. The group was tasked to develop actions which Wales could take to support the recovery of nature, and to achieve the goal of protecting 30 per cent of land, freshwater, and sea for nature by 2030. This goal is one of the targets which form part of the COP15 GBF adopted in December 2022.

4.13   In a written statement on the work of the Biodiversity Deep Dive[13] (October 2022) the Minister for Climate Change Julie James MS announced the collective actions which Wales could take to support nature recovery. In total eight recommendations[14] were offered.

- Transform the protected sites series so that it is better, bigger, and more effectively connected.

- Create a framework to recognise Nature Recovery Exemplar Areas and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) that deliver biodiversity outcomes.

- Unlock the potential of designated landscapes (National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) to deliver more for nature and 30 by 30.

- Continue to reform land and marine management and planning (including spatial) to deliver more for both protected sites and wider land / seascapes.

- Build a strong foundation for future delivery through capacity building, behaviour change, awareness raising and skills development.

- Unlock public and private finance to deliver for nature at far greater scale and pace.

- Develop and adapt monitoring and evidence frameworks to measure progress towards the 30x30 target and guide prioritisation of action.

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[13] Written Statement: Biodiversity Deep Dive (3 October 2022) | GOV.WALES
[14] Biodiversity deep dive: recommendations [HTML] | GOV.WALES

- Embed Nature Recovery in policy and strategy in public bodies in Wales.

Other similar interventions

Sustainable Management Scheme

4.14   The Sustainable Management Scheme (SMS), funded via sub-measure 16.5 of the RDP, was intended to support landscape scale interventions which would deliver benefits to land managers, businesses, and communities. The scheme provided financial support to 50 projects to enhance biodiversity, improve green infrastructure, sustain better land and water management, and facilitate climate change adaption and mitigation at landscape scale.

5.   Progress and achievements

5.1   This chapter considers ENRaW grant achievements and any changes to scheme administration since the interim evaluation. It draws upon scheme monitoring data as well as final phase fieldwork feedback gathered via the survey and qualitative interviews. It then reports upon the achievements across RDP focus areas and cross cutting objectives. Finally, it considers the extent to which funded projects delivered against their Welsh language objectives.

Achievement of ENRaW broader objectives

5.2   On a collective basis, interviewed projects thought that they had made a positive contribution towards ENRaW's three overall objectives[15] as their project objectives were very well aligned with those of the scheme. Examples were provided for each of the three objectives.

- Objective 1 (developing, regenerating, and broadening access to sustainable green infrastructure): for instance, one project reported that they had improved the quality of a 140-acre community parkland site and broadened access to this site.

- Objective 2 (improving the quality of the urban and rural built environment): for example, one project thought that they had made a positive contribution by dealing with littering and vandalism issues in one area, which had led to increased community engagement and enjoyment of the space. Another project reported that they had undertaken improvement work along canal paths and nature resources, which contributed towards improving the quality of the local environment.

- Objective 3 (develop resilient ecological networks, areas, and nature-based solutions: for instance, one project thought that they had made a strong contribution towards this objective as their project had involved establishing a partnership of organisations concerned with nature species to better protect threatened species at key strategic landscapes across Wales. Another project thought that they had helped to achieve this objective by

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[15] Develop, regenerate, and broaden access to sustainable green infrastructure; improve the quality of the urban and rural built environment; and develop resilient ecological networks, areas, and nature-based solutions.

testing new approaches to better control the spread of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS).

5.3 Very small scale, short-term projects which had only involved a development or feasibility stage thought that they had made less of a contribution towards ENRaW objectives yet were confident that these would be achieved in the long term if the full project progressed.

Achievement of project targets, aims and objectives

5.4 All but one survey respondent thought that their project had achieved its aims and objectives either to a large extent (20 of 30) or to some extent (9 of 30). The remaining one respondent did not provide an answer. Feedback from interviewed projects reinforced these survey findings.

5.5 Interviewed projects stressed that they had achieved their aims in terms of partnership development and collaboration. They were also optimistic about the extent to which they had improved communities and increased local asset ownership.

5.6 Again, projects which had only received development funding were the most likely to think that they had not fully achieved their aims and objectives:

> One project which had received Window 1 funding intended to use the funding to support a development phase to apply for follow on grant support but were not aware that the ENRaW funding window had opened. As such, they missed their opportunity and closed the project early, having only claimed just over half of their Window 1 grant funding, and the partnership fell away.

5.7 Most survey respondents thought that their project had achieved, or were likely to achieve, their KPIs. Over half, (17 of 30 projects) reported that they had achieved or exceeded all of their KPIs whilst a further quarter (eight) thought that they had achieved almost all of their KPIs. Four survey respondents thought that they had only partially achieved their KPIs, and one did not answer.

5.8 Interviewed projects offered a similar mixed view about their success in achieving their original KPIs. Six interviewed projects reported that they had delivered less than was originally expected for some of their KPIs e.g., engaged fewer people, delivered fewer community engagement events, delivered less training activities or

planted fewer trees or hedging than intended, mostly due to a shortened funding delivery window. In these cases, specific KPIs had not been achieved due to factors such as a key project partner not engaging or withdrawing from the project, access to land not granted, or KPIs having been too ambitious from the outset. For instance, one project reported that they had created or restored 420 allotments by the end of the project period against an initial target of 800 and that this under-performance was due to reduced delivery timeframe, difficulties accessing local authority and privately owned land and an overambitious target. Another project, which was being delivered across four different communities, had achieved its aims and objectives in two areas but struggled to deliver across the other two areas due to existing local community tensions and factions.

5.9   Five interviewed projects reported that they had far exceeded some of their original KPIs e.g., one project had exceeded the number of volunteers involved; another had engaged 1,700 local people which was significantly higher than expected, another reported that demand for their guided walk programme had been higher than anticipated and another had worked with over 50 partner organisations, far exceeding their original expectation. These projects had not however been able to report upon these additional achievements via the WEFO online portal, as the platform does not allow users to enter outputs which are higher than their target.

Key enablers to successful delivery

5.10   The main factors which were thought to account for the successful delivery of ENRaW projects over their remaining year included the following (many of which were also reported during the interim phase):

- a committed and motivated team of staff, volunteers, and community groups

- strong partnership and collaborative working, particularly where there was previous partnership experience and trust to draw upon

- effective engagement and outreach activities, including mixed use of social media and more traditional methods such as posters and leaflets

- adoption of coproduction and community development approaches

- use of skilled and reliable contractors

- flexibility of the fund to adapt approaches and reprofile budgets.

Key challenges and barriers to successful delivery

5.11   The main barriers faced by ENRaW projects to achieve their aims and objectives, reported during the final evaluation phase, were similar to those captured at the interim phase and included:

- the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions which limited them from engaging people

- ENRaW grant administration issues such as complex tendering requirements, difficulties associated with making claims and delays in receiving payments

- lack of a dedicated, engaged case officer to help resolve any issues

- short term delivery timescales (not helped by delays to projects starting) which had made it difficult to recruit and retain staff, deliver their planned activities, as well as embed sustainability post funding

- inclement weather which had affected activities and capital work

- increased prices of materials and suppliers, and lack of contractors and suppliers affecting capital work in particular

- project partners withdrawing or less engaged than expected

- appetite for engagement amongst some cohorts (e.g., businesses, farmers, or schools) lower than expected

- dependency upon partner organisations to deliver some elements of projects and these partners facing issues such as lack of capacity and staff turnover.

Scheme outputs to date

5.12   Final Window 1 project outputs are set out at Table 5.1. The definitions and limitations of the outputs as well as performance against targets are discussed below.

5.13   It was not possible to access similar aggregated targets and outputs for Window 2 and 3 funded projects as part of this evaluation. Despite projects having reported against their KPIs on a quarterly basis to WEFO, their outputs need to be verified by RPW via an in-person visit before they can be published.

5.14   Some observations about the Window 1 achievements and monitoring data are set out below:

Green spaces

5.15   Window 1 ENRaW projects reported that 7,369 individual green spaces and 19 green/blue corridor areas have been improved, thereby exceeding both of the targets set for these indicators. Green spaces include access to site improvements, school ground improvements, improved signage, walkways and cycle routes, woodlands, vegetation clearance, and local wildlife sites as well as activities such as litter picks and community clean ups. Green/blue corridor improvements are those completed alongside coastal and river corridors and include footpath improvements, dune restoration, grass planting, repairs to damaged bridges, improved signage and interpretation and improved access. Understandably, the scale of the outputs reported vary from one green space or green/blue corridor to another and constitute several hectares or several kilometres of paths/routes to much smaller scale improvements on other sites thereby making it difficult to aggregate meaningful achievements.

5.16   Window 1 ENRaW projects exceeded their target for meadows created or restored. This indicator was consistently defined and reported against, in that some Window 1 projects reported an output of one site regardless of the scale of meadow created or restored (in some cases over 100 hectare), whilst others reported larger number of individual sites, such as number of raised beds created, even though these areas are smaller in scale. However, there would be value in defining this type of indicator by area covered in any future programmes, as this would provide a more meaningful output.

5.17   Wetlands created: the target set by Window 1 projects for this indicator was achieved. Other than one project which accounted for three of these six outputs by restoring three ponds, all other Window 1 projects reported a single output against this indicator. The scale of the wetland area created is not reflected in the data reported and could be useful for future reporting.

5.18   Target species protected: other than one project which accounted for 29 of the 44 outputs reported for this indicator and which possibly overinflated achievements, all other Window 1 projects reported a single output thereby suggesting some consistency when interpreting this indicator.

5.19   People engaged: this output was defined differently by Window 1 projects. Most reported individual beneficiaries (be they local residents, school children, farmers, SMEs[16] etc). Others reported the number of groups involved i.e., a school or event was counted as 'one', and in these cases the total number of beneficiaries engaged by the project were under-reported. On occasion some projects used other definitions e.g., increase in community use. Given that most projects reported against this target as intended, it is safe to say that Window 1 ENRaW projects engaged with at least 99,149 people, three times the original target.

5.20   Volunteering: the scheme definition (number of volunteer hours) adopted for this indicator was not applied consistently across Window 1 funded projects and so it is difficult to offer a view on Window 1 performance against this indicator. Some projects reported the number of volunteering hours or volunteer days secured by the project, whilst others reported the number of volunteer individuals involved. The output of 31,542 reported at Figure 7.1 is not an accurate representation for the output, as it is based on different metrics.

Social prescribing and wellbeing

5.21   The aggregated data for these two indicators are problematic. Window 1 ENRaW projects reported that 192 people engaged in social prescribing activities, which far exceeded the 104 target set out by these projects. Window 1 projects achieved around half of their wellbeing targets, having reported 1,579 against a target set by projects of 3,014.

5.22   However, it is unclear what exact data or measurement is being reported against these targets and it appears in some cases to include individual participants who engaged in social prescribing activities. Projects reporting on the number of participants reporting improved wellbeing via tools such as the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale and Outcomes Star would be identified as appropriate outputs against this indicator.

Tree and hedgerow planting

5.23   Some eight Window 1 projects reported tree planting outputs, amounting to a total of 19,175 trees planted. This is against a target of 7,166 but several projects which have since reported such outputs did not specify them as part of their original

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[16] Small and Medium Enterprises

application. In all but one case, projects reported on the exact number of trees planted thereby reporting consistent and useful data.

5.24   Eight Window 1 projects reported hedgerow planting outputs. Some of these reported the linear metres planted, others reported the number of saplings planted, others reported the number of sites where work was carried out and others reported the number of days spent planting hedgerows. It is therefore impossible to interpret the aggregated total outputs across Window 1 projects in an accurate way against this indicator.

Community food and growing

5.25   Three Window 1 projects reported 29 community food and growing outputs, and the target set (at 24) was exceeded. These included new allotment sites and the creation of allotment plots as well as the planting of orchard sites and establishment of community kitchens.

Table 5.1: Window 1 final outputs achieved against targets

Indicators	Target[17]	Output reported	% achieved
Green spaces			
No. of green/blue corridors improved	17	19	112%
No. of green spaces improved	636	7,369	1,159%
No. of meadows created or restored	100	124	121%
No. of wetlands created	6	6	100%
Target species protected	20	44	220%
People engaged	32,357[18]	99,149	306%
Volunteering	8,572[19]	31,542	368%

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[17] When determining the target set for each indicator, where no specific target was set but the project was expected to achieve at least one output against the indicator, a target of '1' has been assumed

[18] The target set for each project varied from having no output targets to over 10,000 participants. Where no numerical output was set for projects due to the lack of any baseline data, a target of '1' has been assumed as an indication that the project intended to achieve outputs for this indicator. In several cases, the target set for a project is the same as the output reported, suggesting that outputs have been set retrospectively in these cases.

[19] The target set for each project varied from having no output targets to over 19,000 participants. Where no numerical output was set for projects due to the lack of any baseline data, a target of '1' has been assumed as an indication that the project intended to achieve outputs for this indicator. In several cases, the target set for a project is the same as the output reported, suggesting that outputs have been set retrospectively in these cases.

Social prescribing and wellbeing			
Social prescribing participants	104	192	185%
Reported improved well-being	3,014	1,579	52%
Trees and hedgerows			
Trees planted	7,166	19,175	268%
Hedgerows created or maintained	706	2,037	289%
Community food and growing projects			
No. of projects delivering community food and growing activities	24	29	121%

Source: Welsh Government database accessed September 2023

Changes in scheme administration

5.26   This section briefly considers any additional feedback gathered over the course of the final phase evaluation about the grant administration arrangements in place across the ENRaW scheme. The interim evaluation[20] focused in detail on this topic therefore this section will only outline new feedback.

5.27   It was reported by Welsh Government officials, that RPW had strengthened its monitoring of Window 2 and 3 funded projects over the remaining year of delivery. A dedicated RPW officer has undertaken this role and has focused upon those projects which have struggled in terms of delivery and spend. Quarterly meetings have been held with projects considered to be at a higher risk of under-performing and under-spending. Five interviewed projects who were still ongoing at the time of fieldwork acknowledged that the administration of ENRaW had improved as a result of having a dedicated account manager within RPW to discuss progress and finance issues with since the beginning of 2023, and that this arrangement was much better than having to deal with the RPW online messaging system:

'it's been bliss. [Name of officer] has been 'on it'. They've helped us progress things.'

5.28   It meant that projects did not have to deal with different officers for every query which had led to quicker decision making over the remaining few months of delivery. These projects observed that Welsh Government had been more flexible

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[20] Evaluation of Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being Grant: interim report (summary) | GOV.WALES

in recent months in relation to project funding, and more responsive to requests to vire funds in an effort to ensure that projects spent their allocated budgets.

5.29   Despite this however, there was a strong feeling that this approach had come late in the day and funded projects continued to argue that ENRaW had not been an appropriate funding stream to support complex collaborative projects, which often involved several different workstreams and a wide range of delivery partners. Funded projects continued to highlight detailed examples of procurement and claims issues experienced over the last year of delivery and there was much nervousness that they might fall foul of the final audit requirements now expected of them e.g., a late request from the Welsh Government for photographic evidence of all capital expenditure was proving impossible for one project who would be required to photograph over 1,500 individual way markers put in place over the course of the project.

5.30   Welsh Government officials were not well sighted about the achievements and outcomes of ENRaW projects as their contact with Window 2 and 3 projects focused on contract management and spend issues. There had been little involvement between Welsh Government officials and Window 2 and 3 projects which had been delivered relatively smoothly, and within timescales.

Factors which impact project delivery

5.31   The interim evaluation reported that three main factors had impacted upon project delivery up until June 2022. These were the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; the transfer of scheme administration from the Welsh Government's Programme Manager and Delivery Branch to RPW, and localised individual project level factors. The final phase evaluation found that these three factors still accounted for much of the delivery issues experienced by ENRaW projects which meant that some projects had to refine their ambitions and scale back their original plans.

Achieving innovation through new products, practices, partnerships, processes, and technologies

5.32   The interim evaluation found widespread evidence that ENRaW had funded innovative approaches, new practices, and new partnerships. As was the case during the interim evaluation, interviewed projects identified a wide range of innovative products, practices, processes, and technologies which they had adopted over the course of their delivery. Amongst the examples cited were:

- new products, such as installing green roofs on bus shelters; exploring the use of timber waste by a local carver to create spoons and bowls; and establishing a new online food hub (using the Open Food Network platform) to make it easier for food producers to sell to local people[21]. Users are able to order via the website and collect their food from a local Hub

- new practices, which typically involve changing people's behaviour such as placing of barbeque bins at beaches to prevent littering or being buried in sand; and using citizen science days to educate people about local environment and how to look after it. Also mentioned by projects were new practices such as using natural materials for building such as wool for insulation; and in one case exploring how a local authority could adapt its grass verge management practices. Another project reported using new footfall counters to collect better data on the use of paths. One project tested an innovative practice of controlling the spread of INNS. This has been the first project of its kind in Wales to use sheep to graze Himalayan balsam in order to control its spread. The project learnt that more traditional breeds of sheep, as opposed to commercial breeds, will graze Himalayan balsam to control its spread

- new processes, such as the creation of a website resource hub for partner organisations to access when they need campaign resources such as to deliver a litter campaign; the use of online booking systems such as Eventbrite for volunteering sessions to better manage numbers; and the set-up of community composting sites for residents to bring their food waste so that it can be turned into compost for local growers

- new technology, including using grass cuttings as biomass to create energy; adopting new machinery for food growers; use of robotic lawn mowers; and the development of a software app for residents to recognise wildlife along the canal side. One project has also adapted the Open Food Network portal as a bilingual tool[22] to be used by its members across Wales.

Achieving RDP Focus Area objectives

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[21] Bwyd Dyfi Hub - Open Food Network
[22] Resilient Green Spaces Project Page • Open Food Network

5.33   The final phase evaluation found that just over half of survey projects (16) thought they had made at least some contribution towards at least one of the eight RDP Focus Areas objectives. A third of those surveyed (nine) reported that they had made no contribution towards any of the eight RDP focus areas and just under a fifth (five) did not know whether they had made any contribution to any of the focus areas.

5.34   As shown at Figure 5.1, the two most commonly cited focus areas where survey projects thought they had made the most contribution was to facilitate diversification, and create new enterprises and jobs in rural areas, followed by fostering local development in rural areas. Very few thought that they had made any contribution towards the focus areas of increasing efficiency in water use or reducing nitrous oxide and methane emissions from agriculture. Perhaps this is not surprising given the remit of ENRaW projects, which were focused on the interaction between people and nature, rather than upon technical agricultural and forestry developments.

Figure 5.1: Contribution made by funded projects to RDP focus areas
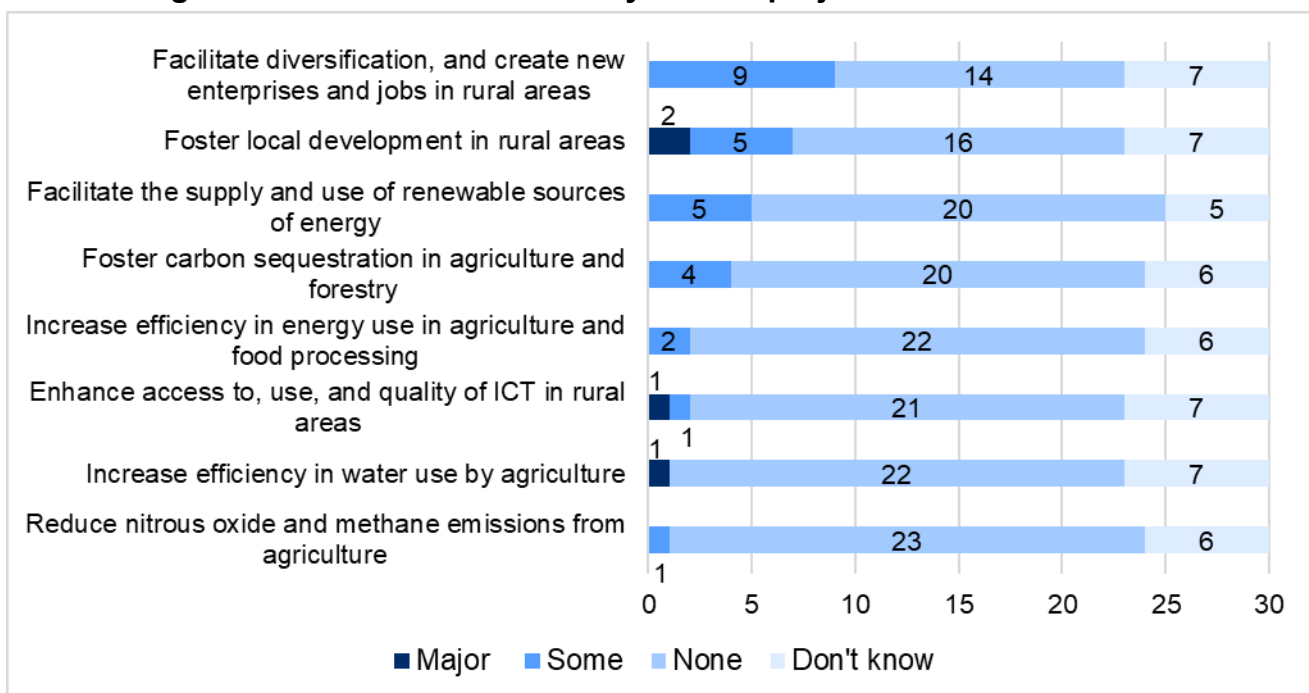
Source: OB3 web survey, 2023 (30 responses)

5.35   The main examples provided by funded projects to evidence how they had contributed towards some of these focus areas were:

- facilitate diversification, and create new enterprises and jobs in rural areas: one project had introduced new pathways to employment in the outdoor

sector for local people including working with young farmers to diversity their skills; another had provided training in agroecological agriculture to increase farming skills; one had focused on developing food production skills, one had introduced new access routes which had led to increased visitor numbers; another reported that they had employed local people had contractors which had benefited the local economy and another reported that the project had created an apprenticeship post at a furniture re-use scheme which was being retained post project funding. One interviewed project said that the project had helped to create 11 new jobs in all whilst another reported to have created 13 new jobs as part of the project

- foster local development in rural areas: one project had developed food hubs and community orchards; another had established community allotments; another had created new fitness classes in green spaces; whilst a fourth had developed visitor centre facilities

- facilitated the supply and use of renewable sources of energy: two projects reported that they had installed solar photovoltaic (PV) panels. One of these projects had also adopted green gas and installed a heat recovery system in a water sports centre

- foster carbon sequestration in agriculture and forestry: five projects reported that they had planted trees which they anticipated will help to sequester carbon once fully grown. One of these also reported that they had managed meadows and the other had undertaken catchment restoration work. One project was adopting agroecological methods to ensure better soil structure, which will help capture carbon

- increase efficiency in water use by agriculture: one project reported that a farm adviser had educated farmers around their water use in terms of how much they needed and how to manage it better. The farmers had since introduced natural flood management (NFM) methodologies to retain water and increase their resilience to drought.

5.36   One project said that lessons learnt in relation to the RDP focus areas from ENRaW should help to shape the SFS. The project had commissioned a study to help demonstrate the effectiveness of wildfire prevention, and how this could be integrated into the SFS.

Achieving cross cutting themes and objectives

5.37   Figure 5.2 shows the contribution survey projects thought they had made towards the three cross cutting objectives of the RDP and the Welsh Governments three cross cutting themes. Broadly, survey projects thought that they were making a positive contribution towards the environmental and sustainability objectives and themes but took a less optimistic view about their contribution towards innovation and ground-breaking solutions for rural areas.

Figure 5.2: Contribution towards cross cutting objectives and themes
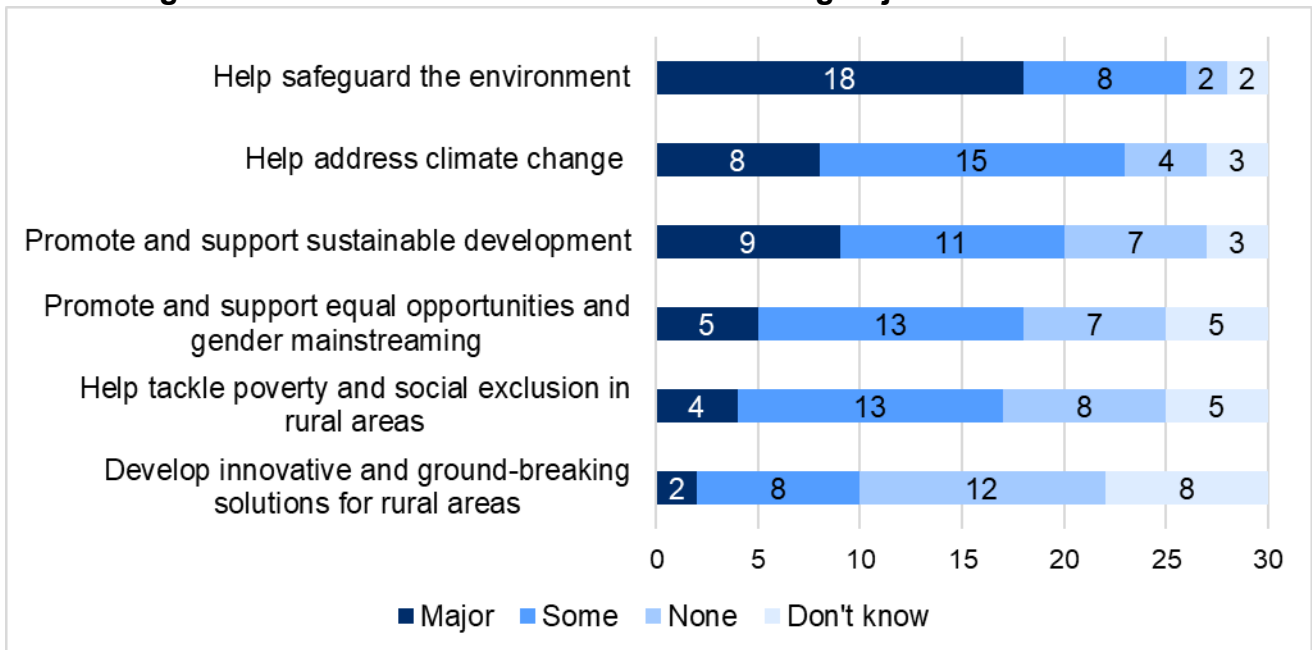
Source: OB3 web survey, 2023 (30 responses)

5.38   In terms of the three cross cutting objectives of the RDP (namely Innovation, Environment, and Climate change adaptation and mitigation) the final stage fieldwork reinforced much of the evidence gathered at the interim stage in that funded projects were found to have:

- been innovative in the way that they worked. Examples of innovative products and approaches have already been set out within this chapter

- environmental considerations at their core, in that they have safeguarded and enhanced natural environments such as green spaces, meadows, woodlands, and river paths for the benefit of wildlife, nature and local communities. Examples of how projects helped to safeguard the environment are set out in detail at chapter seven of this report and range from actions to collect and safeguard seeds from rare and common species

to the asset transfer of an area of wetland from private to community ownership to ensure ongoing protection

- taken extensive positive action which will help address climate change be that through raising awareness and educating local communities, changing behaviours of local residents, farmers and land owners, and increasing the resilience of habitats and species by planting trees, undertaking catchment restoration, delivering meadow pollinator activities, and adopting new grassland management approaches. A few projects have planted substantial numbers of new trees which will help sequester carbon and provide shaded canopy to reduce temperature whilst others have taken action to reduce waste or water use, including introducing agroecological methods for growing food. Projects have regularly used volunteers to help achieve positive changes, such as in the case of one project which is dependent upon a network of volunteer Tree Guardians to help tree watering during periods of dry weather.

5.39 In terms of the Welsh Government's cross cutting themes (namely Equal Opportunities and Gender Mainstreaming, Sustainable Development and Tackling Poverty) the final phase fieldwork found that funded projects:

- ensured that their activities could be accessed by all. Engagement with marginalised communities was an exceptionally strong feature of interviewed projects' approaches. Survey and interviewed projects stressed they had worked with a diverse cross-section of people, including those from disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds to get involved in outdoor activities. One project reported that they had worked with charities such as The Wallich to support homeless people and the Welsh Refugee Council to reach a wider audience. Another interviewed project had involved disadvantaged groups such as refugees, homeless people, and those with alcohol dependency issues with their plant growing project, with a celebratory BBQ event to bring people together. Another had worked with young offenders and people with autism. As was the case during the interim fieldwork, very little evidence was available to illustrate how projects had embraced gender mainstreaming within their work other than one project which reported that they had promoted sustainable construction opportunities to women

- had sustainable development at their heart and had overarching objectives aligned with this goal. Varied examples were provided by interviewed and surveyed projects including those who had developed community capacity to manage local woodlands on an ongoing basis as well as those who had engaged and trained volunteers to sustain project activities thereafter. Other specific examples were provided such as the project that invested in battery powered tools rather than traditional petrol ones in an effort to embrace sustainability

- reported that in terms of tackling poverty, they had improved local green spaces, which were free to use, for their community members. For instance, one survey project spoke of having made a 'deprived area look and feel safer and cleaner' and another reported to have provided access to 'local green, accessible on foot or by bike for everyone'. Projects also frequently reported that they had engaged volunteers, and by offering accreditation to this cohort, had helped individuals to become better prepared to find work and tackle social exclusion. Others had been involved in the delivery of food growing projects which was valuable to deprived communities, and one project had focused on introducing a furniture re-use scheme for the benefit of those on low incomes. Several projects also referenced their work around health and wellbeing, as a means of tackling poverty and social exclusion. Projects emphasised the importance of activities being provided free of charge and one project had established a log store to help address fuel poverty, as the project was able to access a free supply of wood.

5.40 It proved difficult for very small development projects funded during Window 1, which had no element of delivery, to demonstrate how they had achieved these cross-cutting themes and objectives although it was hoped that they would be achieved in the future.

Use of the Welsh language

5.41 The interim evaluation found that projects consistently adopted bilingualism across their communication, promotional activities, and signage. The interim evaluation also found numerous examples of good practice in terms of using Welsh and supporting the socioeconomic infrastructure of Welsh-speaking communities.

5.42 During the final evaluation fieldwork, most survey respondents thought that their project had made a positive contribution to supporting the use of the Welsh

language. As shown at Figure 5.3, most survey respondents thought that their project had either made either a major (four) or some (19) contribution towards supporting the use of the Welsh language, although a minority (five) did not think they had made any such contribution.

Figure 5.3: Contribution made by projects to supporting the use of Welsh language
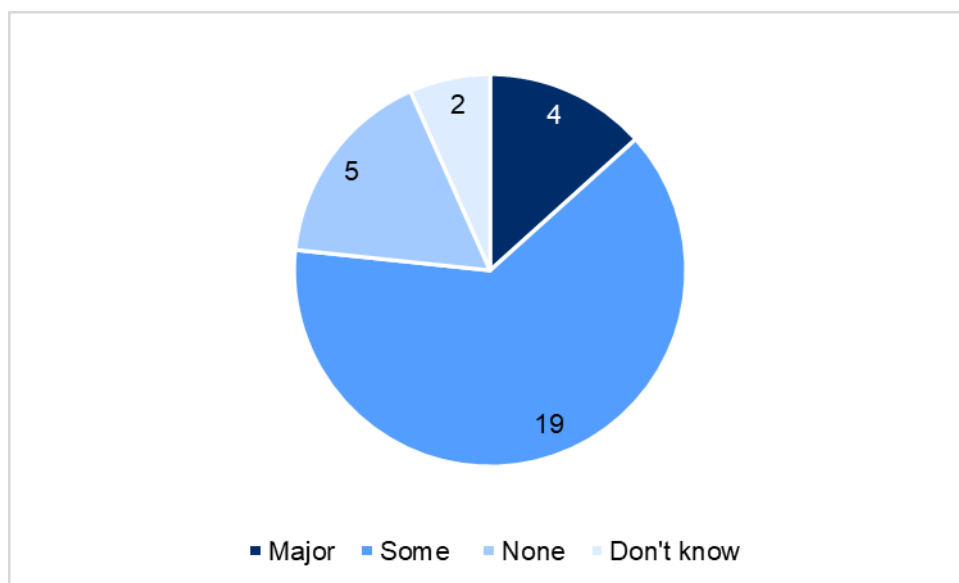
5.43   Ways in which projects had supported the use of the Welsh language were similar to those cited during the interim phase. Survey and interviewed projects commonly reported that they had produced:

- bilingual publications, marketing materials and promotional messages, including bilingual social media

- bilingual signage and interpretation panels e.g., bilingual signs on street litter bins; and use of bilingual names for species and places

- any learning or educational resources in both languages.

5.44   Four interviewed projects cited good practice examples in terms of Welsh language use, including:

- facilitating Welsh language events. One project had arranged for Welsh speakers and Welsh learners to pair up as part of a litter pick activity, to allow learners to practice their Welsh; and another project had delivered a Welsh language gardening course

- one project recalled that they had made regular use of Welsh terms for species and plants, to improve awareness amongst participants and volunteers

- one project reported that they had developed an online bilingual platform (via the Open Food Network platform) for buying and selling local produce.

5.45   One survey project also reported that they had hosted free adult Welsh classes for local residents at their site:

> One project provided opportunities for Welsh learners to develop their outdoor sector skills through the medium of Welsh. The organisation was shortlisted for the Welsh Sports Association Best Use of the Welsh language in 2023 and won the Welsh Charity Awards Best use of the Welsh language a few years previously.

6. Benefits and outcomes achieved

6.1   This chapter considers the benefits generated and outcomes achieved by ENRaW projects. It also sets out the feedback gathered on the value for money achieved and funded projects' perceptions of what would have happened in the absence of ENRaW support. Finally, it considers the findings of the evaluation around project and partnership sustainability post ENRaW funding.

Working in partnership

6.2   Interviewed projects took a strong view that they were able to achieve much more by working in partnership with other organisations than had they been delivering alone. Interviewed projects thought that they were achieving a broader range of outcomes by working in partnership than they would have done on their own. Across those projects where there was a strong sense of partnership working, the collaboration was considered to have been crucial to the success of the project. These interviewed projects said that it had been important for partners to share expertise and experience, as well as provide an inroad to effectively engage communities. In some cases, partnership membership had been widened over time e.g., one project was now working with Transport for Wales to develop walking routes from train stations, and another had extended its partnership to include Natural Resources Wales as part of a follow-on project to ENRaW.

6.3   At the time of the final fieldwork, there was also a view that project achievements were more visible to local residents and communities and as a result, interviewed projects observed that they often received positive community feedback about improved local spaces, such as local spaces being more pleasant and people enjoying using them more.

6.4   Of those surveyed:

- just under half (14) thought that the ENRaW funding had helped them establish a new partnership

- four-fifths (12) thought that ENRaW had helped them expand the number of members within an existing partnership

- just under half (14) thought that ENRaW had helped them expand the range of members within an existing partnership

- two-thirds (20) thought that ENRaW had helped them strengthen an existing partnership.

6.5   A tenth (three) did not think that the ENRaW funding had helped them to achieve any of the changes above.

Achieving cross-sector outcomes

6.6   Interviewed projects overwhelmingly thought that they were delivering outcomes which cut across different policy areas, be that in terms of environment, social and health outcomes. The exception to this were three projects which had been developmental in nature, in that they were small-scale, short-term Window 1 projects tasked to deliver very specific activities such as the development of a feasibility report or a business plan. When asked about the benefits generated, surveyed projects were more likely to highlight the community and social, and environmental benefits of their actions and less likely to identify cultural and economic benefits, as shown at Figure 6.1. Feedback gathered via the qualitative fieldwork during the final phase supported this.

Figure 6.1: Benefits generated by surveyed projects
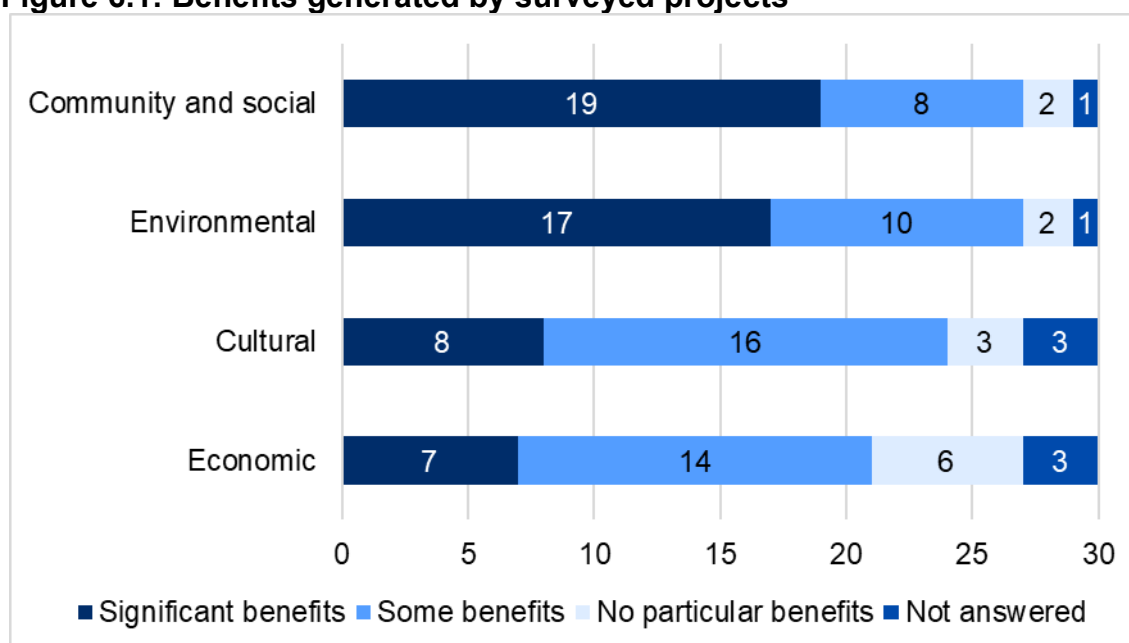
Source: OB3 web survey, 2023 (30 responses)

Community and social benefits

6.7   As set out above at Figure 6.1, most survey projects thought that they had contributed in some way towards the social and community benefits listed at Figure 6.2. Survey projects thought that they had made the greatest contribution to increasing community engagement, followed by increasing opportunities to connect

with nature. Amongst the other types of benefits achieved, survey projects reported that they had increased community resilience, community pride and engagement of specific protected groups such as disabled people, those from LGBTQ+ and ethnic minority communities.

Figure 6.2: Contribution made by surveyed projects to social and community benefits
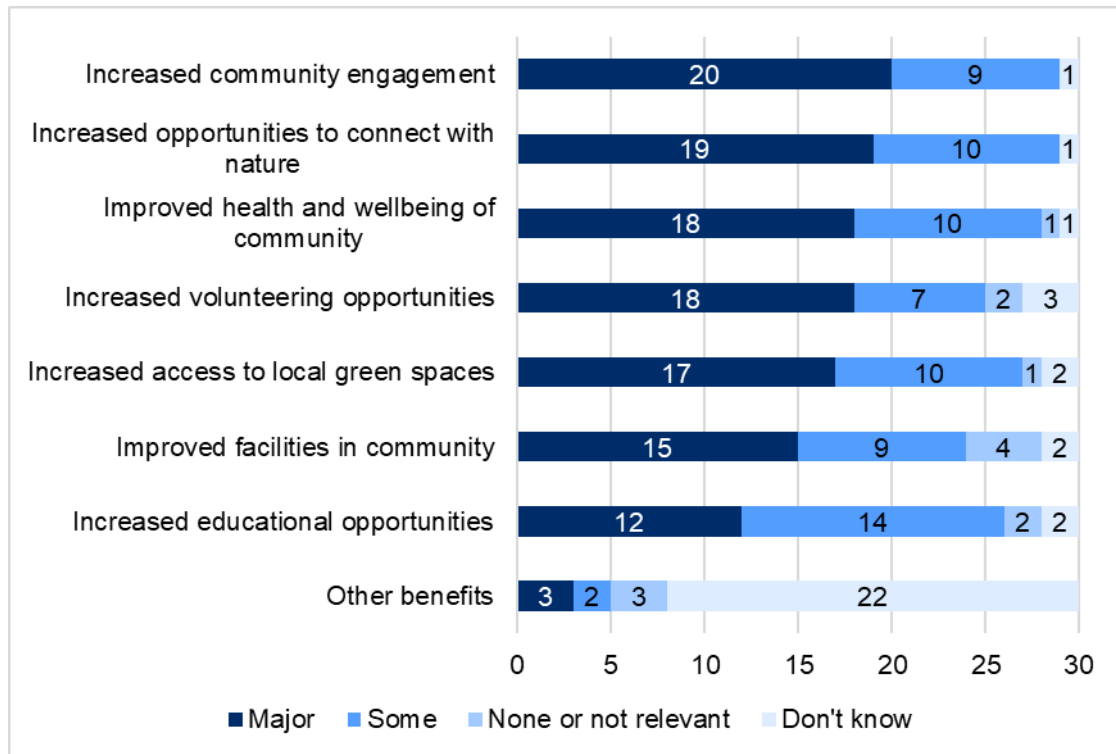
Source: OB3 web survey, 2023 (30 responses)

6.8   Survey projects reported that most social and community benefits are likely to be sustained either to a full or some extent post ENRaW funding. Outcomes relating to improvements made (such as improved access to local green spaces, improved facilities, and opportunities to connect with nature) appear to be the most likely to be sustained on an ongoing basis whilst outcomes which are dependent on ongoing resources and capacity, such as those relating to volunteering and educational opportunities, are the least likely to be sustained in the future.

6.9   Interviewed projects provided numerous examples of the social and community benefits achieved, including:

- that local communities and residents were able to access and enjoy better quality green spaces as a result of their intervention, which in turn was thought to lead to improved physical and mental wellbeing. One such project reported that they had improved the quality, and access to, local

park spaces, which was now being used for a wider range of purposes such as community events and art-based activities. Similarly, another project reported that they had made improvements to local parks, including making improvements to pathways which were now being used more frequently. A third project had improved the accessibility of local green spaces by introducing accessible pathways and gates, which in turn had extended the availability of circular walks in the area. Another project reported that they had cleared land and reduced fly-tipping on local green spaces whilst a fifth project reported that their intervention had the potential to reduce the instances of wild fires within local green spaces

Improving access to, and information about, green spaces

One project used its ENRaW funding to establish a new one-mile track and trail within a country park to accommodate cyclists, walkers, and pushchairs, as well as some equestrians and those with mobility issues. In addition, new interpretation panels to inform users about the local ecology were installed as well as new signage and visitor infrastructure benches. An independent evaluation reported that 'more visitors appear to be accessing this part of the park' although no monitoring data was gathered to evidence this increase. The evaluation also reported upon the positive feedback which staff at the country park had received about the improvements. Primary research undertaken by the independent evaluator (via a site survey) found that users reported an increase in understanding of the natural environment following the introduction of interpretation panels (albeit the sample surveyed was small). Ongoing maintenance of the new track is being undertaken by the local authority, thereby ensuring longer-term sustainability of this project.

- that they had made at least some improvements to community facilities, be that via the introduction of community growing sites, agro-ecological spaces or orchards and allotments. Others reported that they had improved pathways and walking routes within communities, with decisions about which improvements to make having been co-designed with community representatives and project volunteers

- that they had delivered activities which provided hands-on opportunities for communities and volunteers to connect with nature, be that via ground

maintenance work, tree planting, growing food, or events such as guided walks and talks from experts. It was also the case that projects which had taken action to improve the quality and access to local green spaces argued that they had made it easier for local people to connect with nature

- a wide range of health and wellbeing benefits for participants and volunteers who had been engaged, as was previously reported in the interim evaluation, including improved physical health, reduced isolation, improved mental health and improved diets and access to fresh produce. Interviewed projects tended to argue that these were achieved as a biproduct of their intervention i.e., improvements to local green spaces meant that residents could make greater use of their local areas, thereby leading to improved health as a result of being outside and exercising. Interviewed projects also regularly reported that more community events were being held in these improved green spaces, thereby helping to address issues such as loneliness and isolation. Only one interviewed project had formally assessed the health and wellbeing progress made by their volunteers (and in this case had used the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing survey (WEMWBS) amongst volunteers to evidence a positive improvement amongst those engaged

Green spaces being used to improve health and wellbeing

One project established a new collaboration with a health trust to develop eco-therapy facilities at one of its hospital sites in order to improve the health and wellbeing of patients, staff, and members of the community. The project involved developing wildlife areas and building a roundhouse on a derelict and overgrown area at a hospital site, drawing upon the volunteer input of the local community, patients, and disadvantaged groups. This led to further activities such as green wood working courses, and the construction of benches and green bins. Feedback from the health trust suggests that the site has been 'totally transformed' and that 'feedback from patients, relatives and the community has been fantastic', particularly since it's so easy to access from the hospital itself. Feedback gathered by health professionals shows that the site has brought about positive health benefits for patients. The Trust intends to

> **Effective monitoring of health and wellbeing improvements**
>
> One project final evaluation report reported that the wellbeing of volunteers was measured via questionnaires that incorporated elements of the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing survey (WEMWBS). Initial analysis of the data showed the mean WEMWBS scores across all questionnaires increased over time. The greatest increase took place between the baseline and midpoint position, with a smaller positive increase thereafter.

- good evidence that they had increased community engagement and interviewed projects were fairly confident that this engagement would continue post funding. For instance, one project reported that over 60 community groups had engaged with their ENRaW project whilst another reported that they had engaged with over 7,000 people. Another reported that their community food growing project was being managed by local community groups including a Syrian refugee group. Others reported that they had increased the number of community groups and litter champions to take responsibility for improved local green spaces after the lifetime of the project

> **Varied levels of community engagement within a project, and factors accounting for this**
>
> The level of community engagement did vary from one community to another within one project, which was intended to be delivered across four different communities across Wales. The project was delivered effectively in two communities but struggled to get underway in the remaining two. An independent interim evaluation of the project reported that delivery was proving more challenging and complex in two communities due to the lack of community cohesion and rivalries between different housing estates within the areas selected, which hindered progress. In one such area, the interim evaluation reported that

progress was impeded by the local steering group who were 'largely unresponsive to the project officer's communications' and that lessons needed to be learnt to 'prevent individuals from dominating decision-making'.

Project activities are likely to be sustained in the two areas which did deliver effectively, with one partner organisation in the process of securing funding to retain the project officer role. In this area the project has developed a community log store to help local people fuel their homes, constructed a skills centre housed in a roundhouse building, built a potting shed and polytunnel, and provided a range learning and volunteering opportunities to local people.

- providing volunteering opportunities to local residents and groups via their ENRaW activities, and that these opportunities were often taken up by disadvantaged and under-represented cohorts. Projects regularly reported that they had worked with existing community groups and charities to source volunteers. For instance, one project reported that they engaged volunteers with special needs via a charity organisation. The ENRaW project delivered training to these groups and equipped them with equipment and knowledge to sustain their environmental maintenance work. The large scale of volunteer input accounted for the success of some projects e.g., in one case it was reported that local volunteers had planted 80 per cent of the planting within one project and a project interviewee argued that the local community would be more likely to maintain the sites and be more aware of the positive impact upon their environment, having been involved in their establishment. Another project reported that they had recruited and trained 10 volunteer biosecurity champions to work with schools and community groups, using equipment supplied by the project, to share their knowledge of biosecurity. In one area, a biosecurity citizen's army of local residents from a deprived area of a city have worked with their champion to become more aware of biosecurity issues

> **Using volunteers – improves ownership and secures better value for money**
>
> One project evaluation report reported that 2,076 volunteers had been recruited to help grow and plant a total of 50,000 trees across the city, far exceeding the initial target of 50 people. The project only used contractors where necessary, in order to create a greater sense of community ownership for the trees. The evaluation report notes that a wide range of people engaged with the project as volunteers. The report concludes that the use of volunteers provided considerable value for money savings, estimated to be between £8,000 and £15,600 in value.
>
> The long-term ambition of the partnership to increase the tree cover across the city from 18.9 per cent to 25 per cent by 2030, and the evaluation found that the project had achieved excellent geographic spread across all wards, having engaged effectively with non-local authority landowners and managers. The evaluation also concluded that the planted trees were still in good condition at the time of site visits, with only a few suffering damage or disease.

- increased educational opportunities. A common way which projects increased educational opportunities within their area was to work with schools, and several interviewed projects noted that they had delivered outreach activities, arranged talks for school children or prepared and distributed resources to schools. Demand for educational resources was high e.g., one project reported that they received 400 requests during the first day of promoting educational packs on hedgehogs for instance. Projects also frequently reported that they had facilitated contact between schools and any improved green spaces, to help raise awareness and understanding of local nature and environments. Other projects had focused on training volunteers, such as in the appropriate use of equipment, whilst one project had trained 20 people with the skills and knowledge to identify and monitor beaver activities within their local area.

Engagement with schools

Feedback gathered from teachers and pupils who had been involved with one ENRaW project helps to illustrate the social and community benefits of having been involved. The project supported a school to establish a sustainable garden on their premises. One school teacher observed:

'The project helped us enormously with our outdoor classroom project. We decided to create a sustainable garden we can look after and harvest ourselves on a disused area. It is also an outdoor area for our classroom. They project helped us set it up. We wanted to enhance biodiversity in the garden so have a beautiful native hedge which the project helped us to do – they always involved the children'.

One participating pupil noted that the sustainable garden 'is better than being in class all the time. It is a nice place for students to be. We want to continue with the sustainable garden every year so we will be planting and harvesting our own fruit and veg and using it at lunchtime at school. It will be an ongoing thing every year'.

The school has plans to sustain and build their garden further. One teacher said that their 'next step is to link the garden with the community – so that the garden provides for the school, and the school provides for the garden. This was echoed by a participating pupil who noted that 'We have three hives of bees here and they are in full production. We will soon be selling the honey. The bees can thrive in their natural habitat. We have raised beds and a hut to sell produce and honey. We also use the honey in our food tech lessons.'

Crafting skills based in nature

One participant got involved in wood spoon carving sessions delivered by one ENRaW project. She was recently retired and had moved to live in the area during the COVID-19 pandemic, so was keen to get to know her community and make new friends. She became involved as the idea of learning something new appealed to her and she had always

been interested in wood carving. The sessions were delivered as outdoor sessions over a six-week period in a local park area. The participant learnt about different types of wood and wood carving skills. She enjoyed the experience and took comfort from 'knowing I had that place to go to on a Friday afternoon, and I didn't have to talk about anything if I didn't want to'. She hopes to continue carving wooden spoons as a hobby, although has not invested in the equipment yet.

A focus on research

Research formed an important component within two of the projects who contributed towards the final phase evaluation and one project for which a final evaluation report was made available.

In one case an academic paper was presented to the International Digital Preservation Convergence to disseminate the research findings about the flow of information within local food networks.

In another project, 64 grassland species have been collected and added to the National Seed Bank of Wales, to ensure the conservation of Welsh habitats.

In the third project, research was undertaken to identify which heritage varieties of trees were previously planted in the area, to ensure that local culture is preserved.

Environmental benefits

6.10 Whilst 27 (of 30) survey projects thought that they had achieved at least some environmental benefits, the nature and scale of these benefits varied from one project to another. As shown at Figure 6.3, the most common environmental benefit identified by survey projects were those relating to increased biodiversity and habitat restoration, with 23 and 22 of those surveyed of the opinion that they had contributed to these outcomes respectively. Fewer projects thought they had made a major contribution to other prompted environmental benefits, although the number having at least some impact on outcomes such as reducing carbon emissions and reducing littering were noteworthy. None of the survey projects thought that they

had made a major impact upon reducing air and noise pollution, although seven thought they had made some contribution towards this.

6.11   Amongst the 'other' environmental benefits identified by survey projects were: improved awareness and education amongst community members, including young people, of environmental issues (cited by five survey respondents); improved understanding and strategic environmental planning (two responses); improved water quality (one response); creation of new habitats (one response); improved soil management (one response); and less waste (one response).

Figure 6.3: Contribution made by surveyed projects to environmental benefits
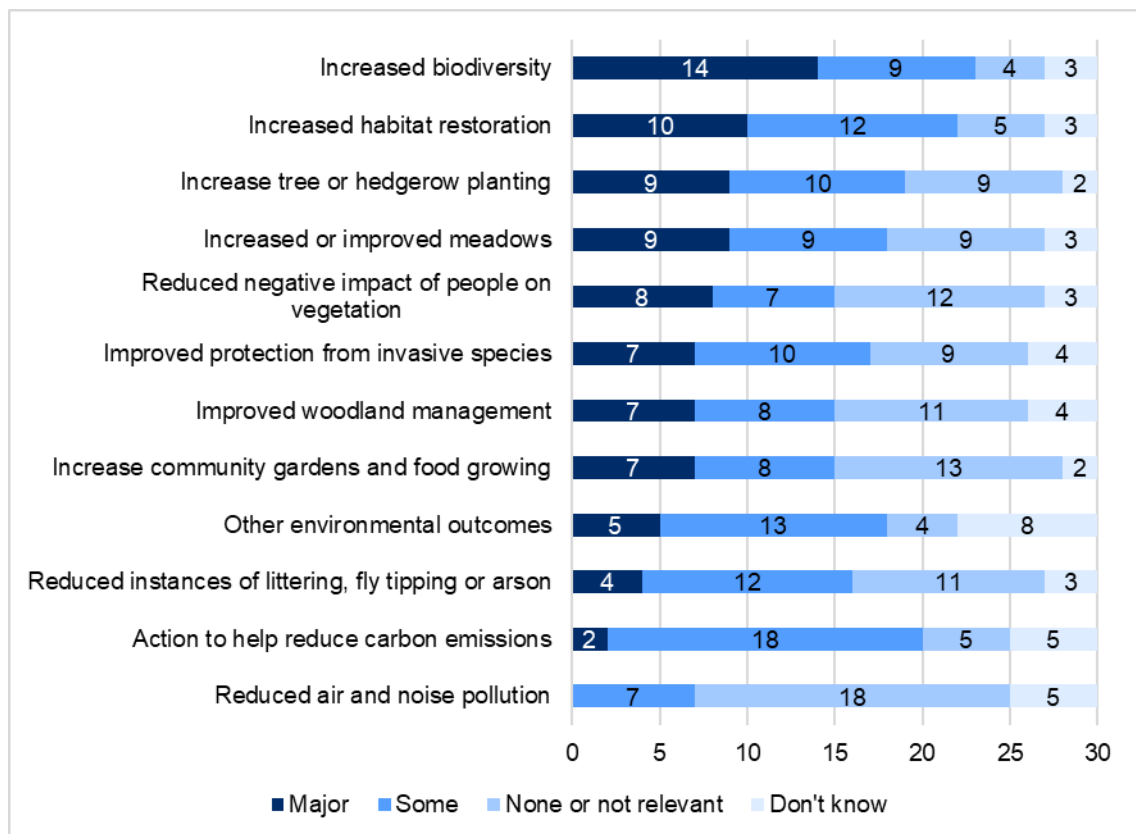
Source: OB3 web survey, 2023 (30 responses)

6.12   The vast majority of survey projects who had achieved environmental benefits were confident that they would either be fully or partially sustained. Two projects reported that a specific environmental benefit (reduced instances of littering and action to help reduce carbon emissions) would be unlikely to be sustained post funding. Projects were most confident that reduced negative impact of people on vegetation and reduction air and noise pollution would be fully sustained whilst all projects reporting increased biodiversity (23) and increased habitat restoration (22) thought that they would be either fully or partially sustained.

6.13 In most projects, the environmental improvements achieved tended to focus on two or three key changes. None of the interviewed projects had achieved all of the environmental changes set out at Figure 6.3. Examples of the environmental benefits gathered via the final phase fieldwork included:

- increased biodiversity: projects which had introduced diverse and native plants, including those which had planted new orchards and created new growing spaces, which attracted pollinators, thought that they would help increase biodiversity within their communities. One such project had taken a large plot of disused land previously been covered in brambles and transformed the space into a green landscape containing a pond, food growing spaces and a wild meadow. One project also reported that they record levels of biodiversity found on their allotments and orchards in order to demonstrate the change achieved

- increased habitat restoration: projects which had undertaken a significant amount of new planting and transformed or created new green spaces were confident that their actions had helped to restore habitats. One such project reported that they had created many new habitats across a city landscape, by planting new trees and other plants. Another project had created over 200 new habitat boxes as well as sown over 40kg of wildflower seeds in an effort to restore habitats

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Transformation of derelict spaces

One project delivered two major green infrastructure projects within adjoining deprived towns to create a green and blue corridor between both sites. It transformed a former bottle dump area into a community fishery course and purchased 30 acres of wetland to secure its future conservation. The project planted thousands of trees to increase the tree canopy within an area which previously had one of the lowest tree canopies in Wales. It also introduced wildflower meadows, community growing spaces and sustainable drainage solutions across the area. As part of its improvements to the wetland area, the project created viewing points so that people can observe the wildlife without disturbing it. The cumulative effect of project activities will support future climate change

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adaptation and it has transformed derelict urban areas into attractive and useful green infrastructure facilities for local communities.

- increased tree or hedgerow planting: most interviewed projects had planted trees or hedgerows, be that at a small or large scale e.g., one project had planted nearly 4,000 trees; and were confident that their actions would bring about environmental benefits such as improved wildlife corridors. Tree planting in one project was anticipated to strengthen riverbanks. The impact of such planting on sequestering carbon however will take time to come to fruition, as projects planted small, sapling trees

- improved protection from Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS): three projects had done specific work around INNS. One project reported good evidence that they had tackled invasive species and a final project evaluation report states that the project surveyed 60 hectares and treated 1,700 sites for INNS such as Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam, and Giant Hogweed. In addition, the project developed training resources and delivered training to the public to enhance their understanding of invasive species, how to spot them and what action to take. Another project had focused on INNS, and project interviewee thought that they were taking on board lessons learnt from pilot activities to eradicate and control the spread of INNS, which in turn would help to improve biodiversity and habitats

- reduced instances of littering, fly tipping or arson: three of the interviewed projects had focused on littering, fly tipping and arson issues. In these cases, projects thought that their actions had helped improve the quality of local environments and had the potential to reduce wildfires, thereby reducing any negative impact upon the environment

- reduction in carbon emissions: one project had taken direct action by developing and promoting active travel, which was thought to help reduce carbon emissions, although no specific monitoring data had been collected to support this.

Sustainability of new community food growing sites

One project final evaluation report reported that they had established a number of new community food growing sites as part of the project,

equipping them with polytunnels, water collection systems and tools. Project staff were unable to spend as much time as anticipated establishing these new sites and training volunteers to manage them, due to the need to spend more time than anticipated on ENRaW scheme administrative tasks. As a result, the project does not leave the legacy it expected in terms of growing sites being well managed by community volunteers.

Cultural benefits

6.14   Four-fifths of survey projects (24 of 30) thought that they had generated cultural benefits, with increased community events and activities, increased knowledge of sustainable behaviours and increased community responsibility for long-term sustainability being the most cited. Just under half (14) of those surveyed had been involved in projects which had led to improvements or restoration of heritage assets. The main 'other' benefit cited by survey projects related to the Welsh language (and these benefits have already been discussed at chapter 5 of this report).

Figure 6.4: Contribution made by surveyed projects to cultural benefits
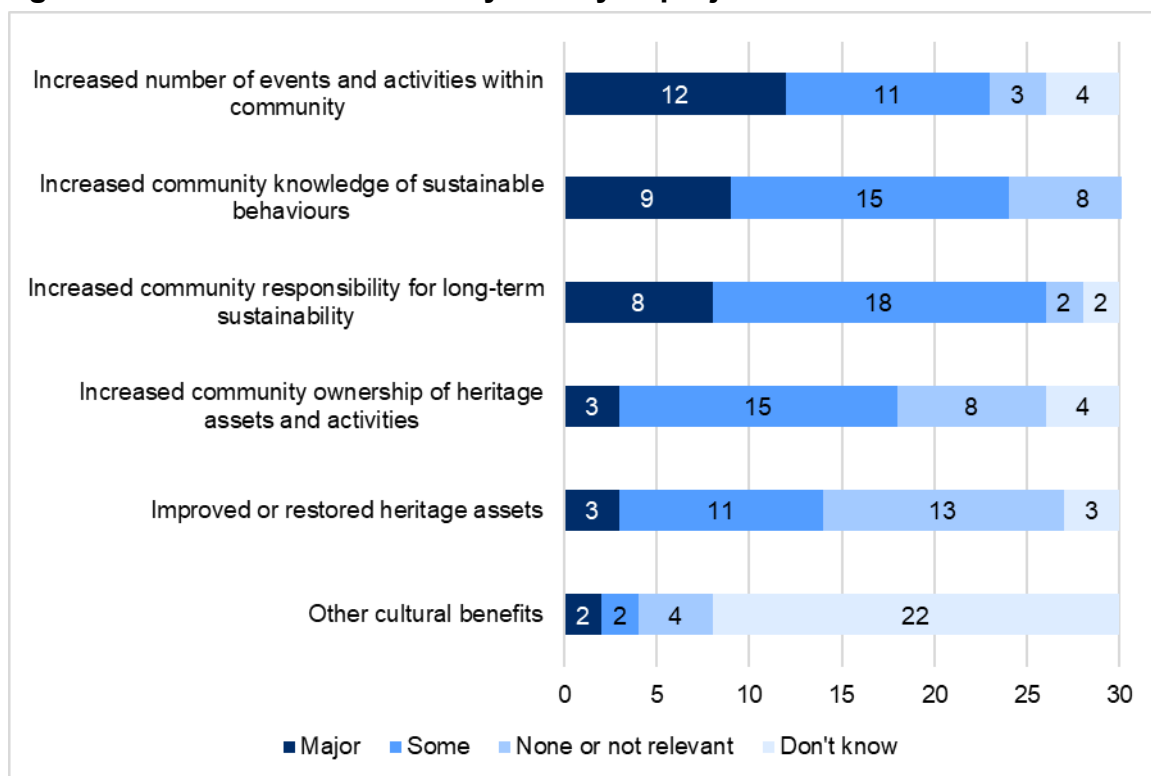
Source: OB3 web survey, 2023 (30 responses)

6.15 Survey projects were broadly optimistic about the possibility of sustaining the range of cultural benefits post funding, at least to some extent, although some care should be adopted given the low number of responses for specific options. Events and activities within the community was the cultural benefit least likely to be sustained post funding, suggesting that this benefit requires ongoing funding and resource to continue.

6.16 The feedback from projects interviewed during the final phase evaluation suggests that they routinely generated cultural benefits for their communities. Examples of the cultural benefits generated included:

- increased events and activities such as a wide range of community events, activities involving schools, and activities which engage with existing community groups

- increased community knowledge of sustainable behaviours: this was achieved by projects in the main through educational and awareness raising activities and formed an important outcome for those projects focused on addressing littering, fly-tipping, and arson. One project reported that their repair workshops had helped to enhance knowledge of sustainable behaviours whilst another believed that their activities had reduced anti-social behaviours across the community

- increased community responsibility for long-term sustainability. One project set out to create meadow areas of wildflowers and flower grasses, which offer better habitats for pollinators such as bees and butterflies. The project has shared best practice in pollinator management and secured the commitment of local authorities and local communities to continue managing their land in a sustainable way. A key success factor to this approach was community engagement to understand residents' fears about 'untidy' green spaces and helping them understand the rationale behind the approach

- increased community ownership of heritage assets and activities, as well as improved or restored heritage assets were only identified by a handful of interviewed projects (five). In these cases, projects had repaired or restored local heritage assets. For instance, one project reported that they had planted heritage varieties of fruit trees to preserve local culture and run a

Veteran Tree identification course to teach people about the importance and heritage of old trees within the city. Another project had provided information on the history of Welsh legends and beavers during their project talks.

> **Creative writing and nature course**
>
> One interviewed participant had attended a 10-week creative writing course held by one ENRaW project. He had attended a similar creative writing course facilitated by the same tutor in the past, having been referred to it by Mind following the loss of his partner, and had got to know about the ENRaW funded course through this tutor. He considered the course to have been excellent, adding that studying and writing poetry was proving beneficial to his mental health and wellbeing. The focus of the course on nature had also helped him to appreciate the natural environment around him, and to use it as a stimulus for writing. He also benefited from meeting other participants on this course and has arranged multiple trips with them to attend other creative writing courses, including residential ones across the UK.

Economic benefits

6.17   As stated earlier, three-quarters (21) of survey projects thought that they had generated economic benefits, although the proportions citing that they had made a 'major' contribution to prompted benefits were lower compared to social and environmental benefits. The most frequently cited environmental benefits were the acquisition of new skills and qualifications, followed by increasing visitor numbers to their local area and attracting investment from other sources, as shown at Figure 6.5. The other types of economic benefits identified by surveyed projects included increased spending by visitors/users (three); development of local supply chains (two), increased footfall to towns and sites (one), and reduced demand for other services such as health services (one).

Figure 6.5: Contribution made by surveyed projects to economic benefits
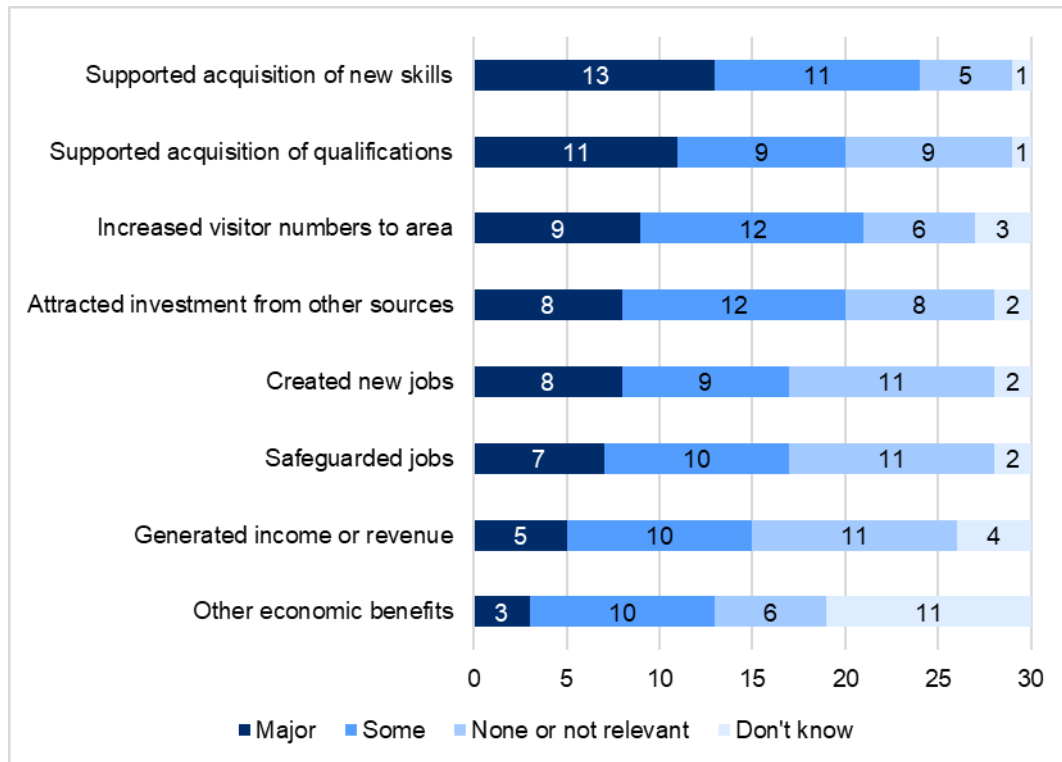
Source: OB3 web survey, 2023 (30 responses)

6.18 The economic benefits most likely to be sustained post funding were thought to be around visitor numbers and investment from other sources, although generally surveyed projects were less confident about sustaining economic benefits compared to other types of benefits. Relatively few were confident about being able to sustain the jobs which had been safeguarded or created as a result of the project, suggesting that these were mostly project funded posts.

6.19 Whilst the feedback from interviewed projects reiterated the views of those surveyed in that the economic benefits were perhaps less obvious than the others benefits, they nonetheless provided good examples of how project activities had generated positive economic benefits. Projects interviewed during the final phase evaluation reported that they had:

- upskilled local people. In the main, projects provided informal outdoor and land-based upskilling opportunities to local people and volunteers although two projects reported that they had provided accredited training, including in one case apprenticeship opportunities. In the case of one of these projects, it was reported that the project had supported 27 people to gain accreditation through Agored Cymru. Interviewed projects provided anecdotal examples of volunteers gaining employment after their

involvement with the project, although this data has not been captured in a way which allows for it to be aggregated across the ENRaW scheme. In one case, attending a crafting in nature course had helped one participant progress into employment

Upskilling for work

One ENRaW project used part of its funding to recruit four trainee rangers to enable them to develop the green skills, and gain qualifications, necessary to help secure employment in this field. The trainees joined with no, or very little, experience in countryside management. They gained experience of brush cutting, wood chipping and chainsaw work and two of the trainees successfully completed a HNC course. Three of the trainees have seen been offered and taken up various countryside services posts.

- employed people from their local communities via the ENRaW grant funding and in some cases, the numbers of people employed were substantial e.g., one project reported that they had supported 11 new jobs as a direct result of the project funding. Three of the interviewed projects (which had ended at the time of interview) reported that they had been able to retain most of their project staff since the funding had come to an end

- used local contractors to deliver activities such as environmental survey work, tackling INNS, and tree surgeon work, as well as purchasing as much equipment locally as possible so that grant funding was being retained locally as much as possible

- either supported or helped establish businesses and social enterprises (e.g., a working woodland social enterprise). One project had established an online platform for local producers to sell their goods as well as established a new community enterprise, thereby achieving good economic benefits

- made places more desirable areas to live or visit, largely due to green landscape improvements. Projects reported that they had made places more desirable to visit as a result of activities such as community events, local markets, and walking activities. In one case, a local accommodation provider reported that the project work had been beneficial to their

business. It was also accepted that further economic gains would be achieved in the future, as project products and attractions become better known.

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Wellbeing in nature support for businesses

One ENRaW project set out to deliver wellbeing in nature support to employees based at local businesses. The support was intended to be delivered via staff group sessions and the project held business networking events to promote and recruit potential employers. The response however was disappointing and only two businesses participated. Businesses were reluctant to release staff during working hours to attend sessions (partly due to other immediate pressures such as dealing with the on-going impact of the pandemic and increased operating costs), and project representatives believed that a more individualised approach to supporting employees with their individual needs might have been more appropriate.

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Value for money

6.20 Providing a rigorous assessment of ENRaW's value for money is not possible at this stage of the evaluation, as the lack of monitoring data for Windows 2 and 3 projects means that we cannot provide any commentary on the scheme's overall outputs and achievements. Whilst it's possible to offer a view on the value for money achieved by Window 1 projects, it is important to consider that Window 1 projects only account for a third of all funding approved via the scheme.

6.21 It is worthwhile reflecting upon the feedback gathered from interviewed projects about the extent to which they delivered value for money or not. Feedback from interviewed projects mostly described how their activities and associated spend had been implemented largely as planned, although some cost savings were made due to delays (particularly as a direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in fewer staff being appointed).

6.22 A third of interviewed projects spoke of underspend at the end of their project. Shortened delivery periods was the main reason provided for this with projects describing how they had not been able to maximise expenditure as much as they

would have liked: 'our value for money could have been better had we had a longer period to deliver and see things through.' One project required another planting season to accomplish the project in full. Another project had only spent 55 per cent of their planned expenditure, and decided not to pursue some of their original outputs as they were no longer achievable. Other projects mentioned their inability to spend all the capital funding, often as a result of the delivery period for their project being shortened: 'there was significant underspend on the capital side. It's a shame that this money will have to be given back.'

6.23 Where projects did have some underspend, the ability to carry this forward into the next financial year or the flexibility provided by Welsh Government to vire budgets around was appreciated, although this process was described as being 'not as easy as the Lottery funds are.'

6.24 Interviewed projects generally felt that their projects had been cost efficient and described how all spend was used on items, activities or contractual support that was essential for the project. Several projects, particularly those being delivered by charities or third sector organisations, felt that it was in their nature to not waste money and that they always tried to be 'clever' with their budgets, to ensure the funding stretched as far as possible.

6.25 Projects described how they procured external services and resources to secure high quality but competitive support. They also felt that looking for cheaper ways to deliver their projects did not necessarily bring any long-term benefits, as lower quality items would mean they were less durable. One project described how they had used volunteers to plant trees rather than contractors, resulting in an anticipated saving of £10-15k. This did not account for the mental health and social benefits achieved by using volunteers, or the greater buy-in also achieved by this approach.

6.26 Longer term or wider value for money benefits secured as a result of ENRaW funding were highlighted in a number of ways. For one small-scale funded project, the 'seed' funding had provided them with the additional capacity needed to leverage in greater amounts of funding for future development and had also helped to build stronger cross-partner working with environmental non-governmental organisations (eNGOs) across Wales.

6.27 Another project stated that they had undertaken a social return on investment (SROI) exercise on a similar project to that funded via ENRaW in the past, which

had resulted in a 9:1 return on outlay. The project anticipated substantial benefits over the longer term that could not be quantified financially at this point in time but was likely to result in cost savings to the NHS via the improved health of the local community and the project's ability to get people back into work sooner.

6.28   One large-scale project described how ENRaW funding had allowed them to take a whole system approach to a local food network, which allowed them to deliver something that was greater than the sum of its parts. Another interviewed project described how leveraging ENRaW funding had enabled them to work at a much larger scale than would otherwise have been the case.

In the absence of funding

6.29   The feedback gathered via the final phase fieldwork reinforced the findings gathered during the interim phase, which strongly suggested that in the absence of the ENRaW funding many projects would not have existed at all. Half of those surveyed during the final phase fieldwork (15 of 30) reported that their project would not have progressed at all. A further 13 respondents reported that the project would have been delayed, but some or all of it would have been undertaken in the future. One survey project reported that their project would have gone ahead anyway within similar timeframes and the remaining one did not know.

6.30   Of those survey projects which reported that elements or all of their activities would have progressed, seven noted that they would have applied for other sources of grant funding to deliver the activities. These included sources such as Local Places for Nature, the NHLF Nature Network funding, and national funding bodies. Three respondents noted that they would have utilised their internal core funding to deliver a much smaller project and would have scaled back activities such as community engagement or aspects of capital works as a result.

6.31   In the absence of funding, a third of interviewed projects stated that their projects would not have happened at all. Projects described how new ways of working would not have been implemented, the impetus of partnership working would not have been achieved and existing projects would have disintegrated.

6.32   Larger funded projects who were interviewed were of the opinion that no one partner would have taken the work on board on their own, and that there would have been a lost opportunity to do things differently or change the way things are

done. Many smaller organisations were also grateful for the 100 per cent nature of ENRaW funding, as they had little match funding to provide.

6.33   A further third of all interviewed projects thought that their projects would have happened, but on a much smaller scale. For example, projects described how trees would have been planted but not on the same scale. Others described how particular elements of their projects would never have come to fruition. For example, a wetland would not have been purchased, or contractors not appointed. Projects also described how they generally would have been more heavily dependent on community or volunteer-led activity.

6.34   Four interviewed projects stated that they would have been dependent on sourcing funding from elsewhere, with National Lottery funding most frequently cited as the potential other funding source.

6.35   One small-scale project felt that they would have achieved the work funded by ENRaW, with funding sourced instead from partner internal budgets. However, in this case it was argued that the pre-development work would have taken much longer in the absence of a dedicated funded project manager, which might have meant missing out on a NHLF funded project.

Sustainability post ENRaW funding

6.36   There continues to be good evidence from the final phase fieldwork that ENRaW funded projects and partnerships are being sustained post funding or are likely to be sustained post funding in the case of ongoing projects. Of those surveyed, a quarter (seven) stated that all elements of the project are being, or will be, sustained whilst three-quarters (22) reported that elements of the project are being, or will be, sustained. The remaining one survey project did not know.

6.37   When survey projects were asked about whether, and how their ENRaW partnership, will be sustained post funding:

- 11 said that it is being, or will be, sustained with the same members involved

- seven reported that it is being, or will be, sustained but with fewer members involved

- five reported that it is being, or will be, sustained with more members involved

- three reported that their partnership no longer exists, or will not exist post funding, including one who reported that a sister project absorbed elements of the ENRaW project

- four reported other future arrangements, including different elements being taken on by different partners and one project which didn't have a specific partnership but rather several partnerships responsible for different project activities.

6.38 Interviewed projects referred to particular workstreams or activities that had been designed from the outset in a way that ensured sustainability. They often listed types of infrastructure that was being sustained for many years post-funding such as footpaths, new furniture installed and trees that should survive and flourish. Promotional items paid for through ENRaW such as information boards or websites would also continue to promote improved sites.

6.39 It was also expected that specific workstreams would continue with small-scale ongoing funding from partners or other sources. Examples included:

- local volunteers working as biodiversity champions continuing to work onsite on INNS control

- e-bikes bought through ENRaW now sustained with some local authority funding

- a group generating a small income by selling scrap metal to sustain their activities

- a commercial relationship established with the local authority for a community furniture scheme to continue.

6.40 ENRaW funding has also proved to be a catalyst for the establishment of solid partnerships. Several interviewed projects were keen to continue with the good relationships that have been developed and were currently considering opportunities to work together on funding bids. Key partners from most projects were committed to continue working together, with many highlighting a closer working relationship or improved engagement between local authorities and partners as a result. Only a couple of interviewed projects stated that they did not think that their partnership would continue. One of these, a partnership of local authorities, stated that they had now largely reverted back to working in isolation, largely driven by the requirements of funding mechanisms such as the UK

Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF). The other described how ENRaW funding had 'tended to force people to work together where there isn't a real advantage in this.'

6.41   Many interviewed projects described how they would continue to be heavily reliant on securing further funding, suggesting that longer-term funding was the only way to achieve sustainability for their activities. Examples from projects included: beaver management that would require 20 years of funding and behaviour change activity that required 5-10 years of funding to embed fully: 'we need funding over longer periods in order to create real change.' However, there was a view that ENRaW funding had acted as an effective catalyst to enable them to leverage additional funding from other sources in many cases.

6.42   Projects mentioned that whilst ENRaW had been an incredible fund that had enabled them to deliver 'innovative', 'imaginative' and 'important' projects that had 'achieved fantastic work', more support and recognition from Welsh Government would help to ensure a greater understanding of what had been achieved to date and the longer-term funding required to sustain the work. Projects felt that they were trying to deliver solutions to complex, cross-policy problems associated with the climate emergency, that needed to be addressed, but also required longer term approaches. There was a desire to ensure that the Welsh Government policy team visited schemes in order to see first-hand the work that was being achieved, and to act as 'a critical friend' during the funding process in addition to ensuring budget spend and achievement of KPIs. There was also a hope that there would be more flexibility in future with any funding that came direct from Welsh Government without all the associated EU funding regulations.

> **Transitioning into commercial opportunities**
>
> One project has been successful in helping to pilot a number of innovative ideas but is now looking at how to transition into more commercial models of delivery.
>
> The project consortium is looking to build on the momentum developed during project delivery to further sustain its local food network. Elements of this is already underway, with future funding bids to the SPF being developed to support a food hub.

ENRaW funding had set up a composting scheme as part of the project, with a focus on creating the physical infrastructure to allow composting to happen for a long time into the future. In recent months, the team had offered a food waste collection service to local festivals. They are also looking for partnership opportunities with other businesses that produce food waste. The idea in the longer term is that it becomes a self-financing circular economy project that is interrupting the waste management system and creating compost for distribution locally. The project is also looking at other community composting pilots across the UK that are commercially viable, to learn key lessons.

A business plan has been commissioned to explore commercial ideas for using bracken and sheep wool.

The project is also exploring ways to disseminate the learning more widely in order to influence future government policy.

Volunteers played an important part in the project, and going forward, the project is looking to explore the opportunity to develop a volunteer support programme with training and induction in order to allow smaller partners an opportunity to offer more formal volunteering options in future.

Sustainability achieved from ENRaW kick-start

A large-scale funded project led by a local authority considered post-funding sustainability from the outset. By working closely with schools and communities, the resources, and their associated benefits continue to thrive, and their benefits are still being felt.

A community garden at a local school has been developed even further since project end. Close working relationships continue between two of the partner organisations and the schools, with advice being provided on how to expand the provision. The school is growing more, and a wider variety, of food than ever before and have also added a polytunnel to the area. This year, a wildflower meadow has also been established within the school grounds.

> The ENRaW project proved to be an excellent good practice example that could be shown to funders and to the local authority of what could be achieved. There is now a desire to replicate the model across other areas within the town.
>
> ENRaW has kick started a new approach to countryside management in this authority area. The excellent outcomes achieved by the project did not go unnoticed, and funding two new 3-year ranger positions within Countryside Services of the local authority have been secured as a result. Both these positions closely align with the outcomes of the ENRaW project and will help ensure that there are future opportunities to build on its success.

Securing additional or other sources of funding

6.43 In terms of securing additional or other sources of funding, the following findings were captured for surveyed projects[23]:

- nine reported that other Welsh government funding sources had been secured

- 11 reported that other non-government funding sources had been secured

- four reported that they were awaiting the outcome of a funding bid

- seven had not secured any other sources of funding but intended to do so

- two reported that their activities would be self-sustaining in the future, either in part or in full

- one had no intention to continue the project partnership and seek future funding

- six did not know or were unsure.

6.44 The main sources of funding applied for, or secured, by surveyed projects were reported as:

- the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) and the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) (such as The Woodland Investment Grant [TWIG]) cited by 11 of those surveyed

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[23] Survey respondents could select more than one response.

- UK Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) cited by six of those surveyed

- the joint Welsh Government and NLHF Nature Networks Fund, cited by six of those surveyed

- funding from charities, trusts, and foundations as well as private philanthropic organisations, cited by nine survey projects.

6.45　Interviewed projects had secured additional funding from a number of different sources, including those cited by surveyed projects. Lottery funding was cited by nine respondents including funding via the NLCF's Climate Action Fund, NLHF's Nature Networks Fund and NLHF's Local Places for Nature Fund. Five interviewed projects had also either secured or were awaiting the outcome of bids to the Shared Prosperity Fund whilst elements of ENRaW projects were also now receiving on-going funding directly from their local authority. Three interviewed projects had received small-scale funding via the third sector, through organisations such as Cadwyn Clwyd, the Woodland Trust, the National Allotment Society and Trees for Cities with one project intending to apply to the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation in the near future.

> **ENRaW funding a successful catalyst for additional funding**
>
> The small-scale funding provided to one ENRaW project during Window 1 enabled them to successfully obtain development phase funding from NLHF, before being awarded funding for the full delivery phase of the project this year, the total value of which is around £4-5 million. The project feels that ENRaW enabled partners to establish a strong partnership during that small-scale funding phase, which has continued to be useful in terms of obtaining match-funding contributions. Whilst the project acknowledges that partnership working is not always easy, they results achieved from their work so far has proved to be very valuable.

Lessons learnt

6.46　The main lessons put forward by surveyed and interviewed projects related to grant administration and management, including:

- grant application issues (two survey projects) including the need for simpler and quicker application processes

- grant administration issues (raised by six surveyed projects) including the need for more flexible funding (three responses) to allow grant holders to move funds across different funding years and funding headings; and the need for prompter payments when making claims

- improving funders relationship management with grant funders, including the importance of having a dedicated case officer and good communication between funder and grant recipient (three survey projects). Some survey and interviewed grant holders suggested that they had benefited from a dedicated case officer of late e.g., 'the team at WG have been extremely supportive throughout, this was very reassuring when dealing with some unforeseen issues during delivery'

- the need for a longer-term period of funding (two survey responses), which also related to the point made that partnership working requires a longer lead-in time to develop and deliver a project (three survey responses). Several interviewed projects suggested it would be beneficial to build in a 'development phase' to any future partnership-based funding scheme.

6.47 The other comments made by survey projects related to a real sense of gratitude for the opportunity and funding provided, and a strong sense that it had helped them make a real difference, as demonstrated via the following survey quotes:

- 'thank you for your support; it has helped achieve something truly wonderful and community-led in a densely populated, diverse community'

- 'the ENRAW grant has been transformational for our project and the way that we work as an organisation. It has allowed us to do and achieve more than we could have done on our own'.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

7.1 Our conclusions draw upon the findings of both the interim and final phase evaluation. It is important to note however that in the absence of any monitoring data for Windows 2 and 3 funded projects, it is not possible to offer any views on the overall performance and achievements of the ENRaW scheme.

7.2 We conclude that ENRaW:

- closely reflected Welsh Government policy and strategies by supporting a wide range of cross-policy projects spanning community and social, environmental, economic, and cultural policies across Wales at scale and pace

- was promoted effectively and proved a popular funding scheme as it offered to support 100 per cent of project costs over a medium-term period of three years

- encouraged and supported significant cross sector working which would have been unlikely to have been achieved otherwise

- effectively supported the establishment and development of new partnerships and enabled others to expand and strengthen, both geographically and in terms of the partners involved.

7.3 ENRaW supported good quality projects which have been closely aligned to its community and social, environmental, economic, and cultural ambitions. There is good evidence that Window 1 funded projects delivered what they intended although Windows 2 and 3 projects faced greater issues, due to their shorter than planned period of delivery, dealing with grant administration issues and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on project delivery. Given the initial high demand for ENRaW it was disappointing that projects have only been able to spend 83 per cent of their allocated funding (accepting that a small number of projects have yet to submit their final claims). Whilst a significant amount of investment, at £44 million, was invested into the ENRaW scheme, over £7.5 million of this was not spent at the time of drafting this report in September 2023.

7.4 Due to their wide-ranging nature, funded projects have delivered a very wide range of outcomes which cut across different policies and sectors. The nature and scale of these outcomes varied from one project to another; and reflected their scope and

deliverables. ENRaW has been most successful in generating community, social and environmental benefits. Whilst still positive, projects have bought about fewer cultural and economic benefits. These outcomes are detailed in chapter 6 of this report and are best illustrated through individual case studies given their very distinct nature. Outcomes relating to improvements made (e.g., improved access and facilities) are the most likely to be sustained on an ongoing basis whilst outcomes which are dependent on ongoing resources and capacity (such as co-ordinating volunteering and educational opportunities) are the least likely to be sustained in the future without another source of funding. Projects which only received a small development phase grant via ENRaW (e.g., to write a business plan or feasibility study) did not report that their funded projects had directly achieved any of these outcomes, although it was hoped that future funded activities would do so.

7.5   The final phase fieldwork found extensive evidence that funded projects delivered activities in line with the RDP Cross Cutting Objectives, as well as the Welsh Government cross-cutting themes, often in innovative and meaningful ways. Whilst projects contributed positively to RDP Focus Areas which were closely aligned with their remit (such as rural development, jobs, and diversification) their contribution to other more technical Focus Areas ambitions was more limited as projects were not focused on agricultural or forestry innovation or developments. Engagement with marginalised communities was an exceptionally strong feature of ENRaW projects with extensive evidence gathered over the course of the evaluation that they worked with disadvantaged and under-represented groups. As was the case during the interim evaluation, the final phase fieldwork also found excellent and creative examples of funded projects using and promoting the Welsh language in a positive way. However, there was very little evidence to demonstrate how projects had embraced gender mainstreaming within their work, suggesting that this was a difficult expectation for community-based projects of this nature. **We would recommend that any future funding scheme provides greater guidance and clearer expectations to projects about what might be expected of them in terms of achieving gender mainstreaming cross-cutting objectives (Recommendation 1).**

7.6   Based on our findings from the interim evaluation, the Welsh Government has captured ENRaW achievements against an appropriate set of indicators which is helpful to demonstrate the outputs being achieved at scheme level. Some of the

outputs achieved by Window 1 projects are substantial e.g., engaging nearly 100,000 people and planting over 19,000 trees. An analysis of this data suggests that the scheme has performed well against its original targets and Window 1 projects have far exceeded the targets they set themselves. However, it is not possible to offer any conclusions about the performance of Window 2 and 3 funded projects given the absence of verified monitoring data via RPW. Feedback from funded projects suggest that they have achieved their KPIs and as such, there would be value in capturing and reporting upon their achievements once the outputs have been verified. **We recommend that the outputs achieved by Windows 2 and 3 projects are captured and reported, and that the Welsh Government consider publishing them in a short update report to complement this final evaluation report (Recommendation 2).**

7.7   Our interim evaluation concluded that the indicators adopted for ENRaW have not always been clearly defined or consistently interpreted, making it difficult to compare achievements between projects. **We therefore recommend that any future similar scheme should adopt clearer definitions for common indicators to allow for the reporting of more accurate achievements (Recommendation 3).** By way of example, we would suggest that any future scheme reports on the size (e.g., hectares or meter square) of any areas improved rather than simply the number of spaces improved.

7.8   Whilst there has been merit in aggregating project achievements in a quantifiable way, an assessment of their KPIs alone does not do justice to the excellent work undertaken by some projects. Their journeys are often best expressed through individual case studies and project level evaluation reports. This has been done particularly well by one project which produced a short film[24] to set out its achievements and difference made. **We would recommend that future grant funded projects are encouraged to adopt this short film-making method of disseminating their story and achievements (Recommendation 4). We would also recommend that ENRaW projects which have yet to fulfil their funding requirement to provide end of project evaluation reports are encouraged to do so (Recommendation 5).**

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[24] [DCC - Enraw - Final - Vimeo 1080](#)

7.9   To offer an assessment of ENRaW's value for money, it is worth considering the four criteria adopted by the National Audit Office to assess the value for money achieved from government spending: economy (spending less); efficiency (spending well); effectiveness (spending wisely) and equity (spending fairly)[25]. We consider each of these in turn.

- Economic: the lack of overall scheme outputs and achievements make it impossible to calculate the cost per output achieved and offer any views on these. When considering the outputs achieved by Window 1 projects alone, it appears that they provided better value for money than was anticipated given that most targets were exceeded.

- Efficiency: Projects made efficient use of their resources and adopted a prudent approach to delivery. There is also extensive evidence that projects utilised the time and efforts of volunteers in an effective way, to secure much added value to the grant funding provided. ENRaW could have achieved better value for money had funded projects been afforded their full delivery period to fully utilise their funding allocation and fully achieve their objectives.

- Effectiveness: the evaluation found that ENRaW funding was critical to enable projects and partnerships to establish and grow; and the funding has been utilised as intended in the majority of cases. In the absence of the funding, many projects would not have existed at all. Funded projects achieved more by working in partnership with others than they would have done individually, and there is good evidence that these partnerships are being sustained post funding.

- Equity: funding to projects was made available in a fair and equitable manner. The interim evaluation found that whilst Window 1 application arrangements were reasonable and appropriate; Windows 2 and 3 grant holders found the grant application and administration very challenging which impacted negatively on their ability to deliver successful outcomes. The final evaluation found that a key strength of funded projects' approach was their ability to recruit and support participants from diverse demographic and socio-economic backgrounds, thereby spending their project level resources fairly.

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[25] Successful commissioning toolkit Assessing value for money - National Audit Office (NAO)

Future funding

7.10   There is good evidence that ENRaW funded partnerships, projects and workstreams are being sustained post funding. In many cases, this is because partnerships have been able to secure grant funding from a range of other sources to sustain their activities. The popularity of the NLCF and NLHF as funding sources is notable amongst ENRaW partnerships, suggesting that they have been successful in aligning their local and regional ambitions to these other grant funding sources. The feedback also suggests that these other funding sources are often considered more suitable sources of funding for the partnerships concerned, and this might be something which the Welsh Government may wish to reflect upon in the future in terms of how future grant funding might best be made available (see Recommendation 10).

7.11   Stimulating cross-sectoral partnership working to achieve environmental, social, economic, and cultural outcomes continues to be a priority for the Welsh Government. However, the financial stimuli which it has at its disposal to support this agenda post RDP is more limited. Despite the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) becoming available to support collaborative and partnership projects, its focus upon the farming community means that ENRaW partnerships are highly unlikely to be eligible for support. **We therefore recommend that the Welsh Government consults with the sector to find out how much of a funding void will be created following the withdrawal of ENRaW, and to explore how it should prioritise the use of reduced funding to support cross-sector partnership working (Recommendation 6).**

Future grant funding administration

7.12   As reported in our interim evaluation, Window 1 grant application, assessment and administration arrangements were found to be reasonable and appropriate, and a clear strength of this funding window was the applicant's ability to deal directly with a Welsh Government officer. The transfer of the scheme into RDP mechanisms and the need to satisfy RDP funding requirements was disruptive and detrimental to the smooth administration of the scheme. These changes took place prior to the Window 2 and 3 grant application process and coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic; and the change in administration process was found to cause significant stress for projects and impacted negatively on their ability to deliver successful

outcomes, not least because of the loss of staff, community, and partner goodwill to their project.

7.13 A future funding scheme designed to support cross-policy, partnership-based projects should reflect both the strengths of the ENRaW's grant funding design as well as the lessons learnt from its administration.

7.14 **We recommend that the Welsh Government recognises, and builds upon, the strengths of ENRaW's grant funding design should it provide similar funding in the future, notably (Recommendation 7):**

- **the consultation process and the input of stakeholders into its co-design**

- **its intended long-term approach to provide funding over a three-year period**

- **its offer of both revenue and capital funding**

- **its full cost recovery funding model**

- **its two-stage application process consisting of (i) a simple and short EoI stage and (ii) a full application stage**

- **its focus on sustainable partnership and collaborative working across multi policy areas**

- **its focus on regional and landscape scale delivery.**

7.15 **We recommend that the Welsh Government adopts the following lessons learnt to inform any future similar grant funding scheme (Recommendation 8):**

- **timescales for approving applications and providing confirmation of funding should be set out in advance and adhered to**

- **applicants and grant holders should be able to deal directly with a dedicated funding officer**

- **reporting and grant claims processes should be commensurate to the level of funding awarded**

- **processes for approving scheme expenditure should be simplified and shortened**

- **funded projects should have greater flexibility to accommodate changes to their budgets**

- **claims, monitoring and reporting processes should be better designed to suite large, complex, and collaborative projects.**

7.16 **We also recommend that any future similar grant funding scheme for partnership projects should be designed to (Recommendation 9):**

- **include a short development period, of around three to six months, to allow partnerships to develop a comprehensive delivery plan, establish their governance arrangements and embed collaboration and trust**

- **facilitate the sharing of experiences and good practice between funded projects.**

7.17 Interaction between ENRaW projects and Welsh Government officials diminished over time, and despite ongoing projects being able to deal directly with a named officer over the course of 2023, this interaction has focused on financial spend and claims issues. In light of this and the recommendations set out above, the Welsh Government may wish to consider whether a more suitable approach to implement a partnership funding scheme should be adopted in the future. This could mean making adaptations to the current RPW Online model; establish an Intermediary Body (IM) management model or deliver the funding through another organisation such as the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) or National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). **We therefore recommend that the Welsh Government explores and reviews the merit of alternative partnership grant funding mechanisms such as via the NLCF or NLHF, should it decide to make available similar funding in the future (Recommendation 10).**

Annex A Research instruments

Topic guide 1: Welsh Government and RPW management staff

Background

1. [if not previously interviewed] Tell me about:
   - your role
   - your involvement with ENRaW

Strategic Fit

2. What new strategic priorities or broader policy developments (if any) have there been since this time last year, that might be of relevance to the ENRaW scheme?
   - What implications might these developments have for ENRaW (and any future similar funding scheme)?

3. What contribution has the ENRaW scheme made to achieve the aims of its key policy drivers, particularly:
   - the principles of the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) and
   - the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act?

4. Have the ENRaW grants helped facilitate a more integrated policy approach?
   - If so, how?
   - If not, why not?

Programme delivery

5. What changes (if any) have been made to the administrative arrangements for the ENRaW grant since this time last year? Probe re: monitoring and reporting of grant achievements and support provided to grant holders
   - What improvements have there been (if any)?
   - What challenges or issues have there been (if any)?
   - What action (if any) has been taken to implement the mid-term evaluation recommendations?

6. What barriers and challenges has the ENRaW grant scheme faced since this time last year?

7. What have been the key enablers over the last year for the ENRaW grant scheme to achieve its targets and objectives?

Grant achievements

8. To what extent has the ENRaW grant achieved its aims and objectives namely:
   - developing, regenerating, and broadening access to sustainable green infrastructure
   - improving the quality of the urban and rural built environment; and
   - developing resilient ecological networks, areas, and nature-based solutions.

9. What would you highlight as the main outputs and outcomes achieved by the ENRaW scheme?

10. What are your views on the performance of funded projects?
    - Are projects achieving agreed outputs and outcomes including any agreed variations as set out in Welsh Government policy and RDP?
    - What accounts for any strong or under performance?

RDP focus areas, cross cutting themes and objectives

11. What contribution have the ENRaW grants made towards the eight RDP Focus Areas[26]?

12. What contribution have the ENRaW grants made towards against the cross-cutting themes and objectives? Probe for **examples of projects which have contributed towards**:
    - equality of opportunity (e.g., gender or ethnic minority make-up of employees or volunteers)?
    - gender mainstreaming?
    - sustainable development[27]?
    - tackling poverty and social exclusion?
    - demonstrating or delivering innovation?
    - adaptations to minimise impact on the climate? (e.g., behaviour changes like reducing waste or water use, preventing wildfires)
    - mitigating against climate change (i.e., prevent or reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases)? (e.g., use of renewable energy, tree and meadow planting,)

13. What contribution have the ENRaW grants made towards supporting the use of the Welsh language?
    - Which projects would you highlight as good practice and why?

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[26] These are 1. increasing efficiency in water use by agriculture; 2. increasing efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing; 3. facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, of by-products, wastes, residues, and other non-food raw material for purposes of the bioeconomy; 4. reducing nitrous oxide and methane emissions from agriculture; 5. fostering carbon sequestration in agriculture and forestry; 6. facilitating diversification, creation of small new enterprises and job creation; 7. fostering local development in rural areas and 8. enhancing accessibility to, use, and quality of, information and communication technologies in rural areas.

[27] Sustainable development is an organising principle for meeting human development goals while also sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services on which the economy and society depend

Impact and difference made

14. Which ENRaW projects have achieved the greatest social and community impacts? Why is this? Probe for examples of projects which have:
    - improved access to, and quality of local green spaces
    - improved health and wellbeing in the community
    - involvement of local community groups and volunteers
    - increased social responsibility and sustainable behaviours within the community

15. Which ENRaW projects have achieved the greatest environmental impacts? Why is this? Probe for project examples which have:
    - created new, or maintained existing woodland, hedges etc
    - improved quality of local environment
    - enhanced biodiversity and ecological/ecosystem resilience
    - taken actions to reduce carbon emission

16. Which ENRaW projects have achieved the greatest economic impacts? Why is this? Probe for project examples which have:
    - generated income or revenue
    - attracted investment from other sources
    - created, secured, or protected jobs
    - supported new qualifications or skills

17. Which ENRaW projects have achieved the greatest cultural impacts? Why is this? Probe for project examples which have:
    - increased community role in shared responsibilities for long-term sustainability
    - delivered activities and events to local and wider communities
    - increased knowledge and understanding within the community (through training or engagement)
    - tackled local issues such as repairs, restorations to protect heritage

18. What impact have the grants had in supporting and developing collaboration and partnership working in supported areas?

19. What is your perception of the sustainability of projects and/or partnerships post the funding period?
    - What are the critical factors to ensure the ongoing sustainability of projects and/or partnerships?

20. What wider benefits and impacts have been achieved by the ENRaW grants than what was originally intended?

Value for money

21. In the absence of ENRaW funding, what would have been achieved otherwise? Probe for e.g., collaboration; multiple benefits; longer term sustainability of delivery beyond the grant; new approaches to delivery

22. Has the grant scheme provided value for money?
    - If so, how?

- If not, how could it?

Lessons and the future

23. What lessons have been learnt from the delivery of projects funded via the ENRaW grant scheme?
    - What works/does not work in terms of SMNR practices?
    - Which projects have been successful/less successful? Why is that?
    - What are the key lessons to inform future Welsh Government policy and funding mechanisms?
    - What changes or improvements would you suggest making to any successor of the ENRaW scheme?

24. What would you identify as future funding priorities?

Topic guide 2: Funded ENRaW project lead interviews

1. [if not interviewed during interim evaluation phase] Tell me a little about your organisation and the ENRaW funded project. Ask about:
   - background and development of project idea
   - what it set out to achieve and need for their project
   - partners involved
   - how they got to hear about and got involved with ENRaW
   - confirm which funding window did they applied for/receive support.

Project delivery

2. Tell me a little about the progress made by your ENRaW funded project [since we last spoke]. Ask about:
   - whether project is ongoing/completed
   - the journey to date
   - what has been achieved
   - any major changes to what was planned and why they occurred

3. What changes (if any) have been made to the administrative arrangements for the ENRaW grant since this time last year? Probe re: monitoring and reporting of grant achievements and support provided to grant holders
   - In what way have these changes helped or hindered your project?

4. What barriers and challenges, if any, has your project faced [since this time last year]?
   - How did you overcome these?

5. What have been the key enablers for your project to achieve its targets and objectives [over the last year]?

Grant achievements

6. What would you identify as your project's main achievements?

7. To what extent has your project achieved/is your project achieving its aims and objectives?
   - What accounts for any strong or under performance?

8. To what extent has your project achieved/is achieving its funded KPIs?
   - What accounts for this?

9. To what extent has your project contributed to ENRaW's broader objectives to:
   - develop, regenerate, and broaden access to sustainable green infrastructure
   - improve the quality of the urban and rural built environment; and
   - develop resilient ecological networks, areas, and nature-based solutions.

10. To what extent has your project developed new:
    - products

- practices
- partnerships
- processes and
- technologies?

11. What evidence does your project have that:
    - it is delivering outcomes which cut across different policy and sectors e.g. achieving environmental and wellbeing outcomes?
    - it is achieving more by working in partnership than if it was being delivered by just one organisation?
    - the local community is making greater use, and taking greater ownership, of their local resources and green spaces?
    - the local community/partners will continue to be involved post-funding?

RDP focus areas, cross cutting themes and objectives

12. What contribution has your project made towards the eight RDP Focus Areas[28]?

13. What contribution has your project made towards against the cross-cutting themes and objectives? Probe for **examples** of:
    - equality of opportunity (e.g., gender or ethnic minority make-up of employees or volunteers)?
    - gender mainstreaming?
    - sustainable development[29]?
    - tackling poverty and social exclusion?
    - demonstrating or delivering innovation?
    - adaptations to minimise impact on the climate? (e.g., behaviour changes like reducing waste or water use, preventing wildfires)
    - mitigating against climate change (i.e., prevent or reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases)? (e.g., use of renewable energy, tree and meadow planting,)

14. What contribution has your project made to support the use of the Welsh language? Please provide examples.

Impact and difference made

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[28] These are 1. increasing efficiency in water use by agriculture; 2. increasing efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing; 3. facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, of by-products, wastes, residues, and other non-food raw material for purposes of the bioeconomy; 4. reducing nitrous oxide and methane emissions from agriculture; 5. fostering carbon sequestration in agriculture and forestry; 6. facilitating diversification, creation of small new enterprises and job creation; 7. fostering local development in rural areas and 8. enhancing accessibility to, use, and quality of, information and communication technologies in rural areas.

[29] Sustainable development is an organising principle for meeting human development goals while also sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services on which the economy and society depend

15. What difference is your project having on the local[30] community and society? Probe for:
    - improved access to, and quality of local green spaces
    - improved health and wellbeing in the community
    - involvement of local community groups and volunteers
    - increased social responsibility and sustainable behaviours within the community

16. What difference is your project having on the local environment? Probe for:
    - creation of new, or maintenance of existing woodland, hedges etc
    - improvement to quality of local environment
    - enhancing biodiversity and ecological/ecosystem resilience
    - actions to reduce carbon emission

17. What difference is your project having on the local economy? Probe for:
    - income or revenue generation
    - attracted investment from other sources
    - created, secured, or protected jobs
    - supported new qualifications or skills

18. What difference is your project having on the local culture? Probe for:
    - increased community role in shared responsibilities for long-term sustainability
    - delivered activities and events to local and wider communities
    - increased knowledge and understanding within the community (through training or engagement)
    - tackled local issues such as repairs, restorations to protect heritage

Value for money

19. In the absence of the grant funding, what do you think would have happened?
    - Would the project have been delivered in its entirety or on a smaller scale?
    - Would the project (or elements of it) have been delivered over the same or longer time period?
    - How would you have funded the project (or elements of it) in the absence of grant funding?

20. Was the funding used in the way intended, as set out within the original application?
    - If not, why not?
    - Were any cost savings made in delivering the project? If so, what were these?
    - Could any cost savings have been made in delivering the project? If so, what were these?
    - Were all the resources used essential to the completion of the project?
    - Could the same outcomes have been achieved in other, cheaper ways?

Lessons learned and ongoing sustainability

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[30] If regional, or pan-Wales project, tailor wording for Q10-13 at the appropriate geographical level

21. To what extent are any changes and difference made being sustained since the end of the ENRaW project (or likely to be sustained post funding)? What evidence do you have of this?

22. Is the project and/or partnership being sustained (or likely to be sustained) post funding?
    - Why is this?
    - How are any ongoing activities or partnership working being funded?

23. What are your current funding priorities or needs?

24. What changes or improvements would you suggest making to any successor of the ENRaW scheme?

Topic guide 3: Funded ENRaW project case study – Welsh Government policy leads

Introduction

1. Tell me a little about your involvement with the ENRaW funded project(s) and what the project set out to achieve. Ask about
   - what the project(s) set out to achieve and need for the project(s)
   - advice and support provided during the application stage
   - how applicant(s) responded to advice and support provided and how project(s) was modified/adapted

Strategic fit and contribution with policy

2. In what way does the project(s) contribute to Welsh Government's strategic priorities?
   - How does it contribute towards key primary drivers such as waste, biodiversity, and local environmental quality policies?
   - How does it contribute towards key secondary policy drivers such as mental health, healthy weight, and tourism policies?

3. How does the funded project(s) fit with key legislative drivers?
   - To what extent has the Well-being of Future Generations Act influenced the development and delivery of the project?
   - In what way has the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 influenced the design and delivery of the project?

4. How have the principles of the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) influenced the development and delivery of the project(s)?

Project delivery and achievements

5. What are your views about the progress made by the ENRaW funded project(s)? Ask about:
   - What has been achieved
   - Any major changes to what was planned

6. To what extent has the project(s) achieved/is the project(s) achieving its intended outputs and outcomes?
   - What accounts for any strong or under performance?

7. To what extent has the project(s) developed new:
   - products
   - practices
   - partnerships
   - processes and
   - technologies?

8. To what extent has the project(s) contributed to ENRaW's broader objectives to:
   - develop, regenerate, and broaden access to sustainable green infrastructure
   - improve the quality of the urban and rural built environment; and
   - develop resilient ecological networks, areas, and nature-based solutions.

RDP focus areas, cross cutting themes and objectives

9. What contribution has the project made towards the eight RDP Focus Areas[31]?

10. What contribution has the project made towards the cross-cutting themes and objectives? Probe for **examples** of:
    - equality of opportunity (e.g., gender or ethnic minority make-up of employees or volunteers)?
    - gender mainstreaming?
    - sustainable development[32]?
    - tackling poverty and social exclusion?
    - demonstrating or delivering innovation?
    - adaptations to minimise impact on the climate? (e.g., behaviour changes like reducing waste or water use, preventing wildfires)
    - mitigating against climate change (i.e., prevent or reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases)? (e.g., use of renewable energy, tree and meadow planting,)

11. What contribution has the project made towards supporting the use of the Welsh language?

Impact and difference made

12. To what extent has the project(s):
    - delivered outcomes which cut across different policy and sectors e.g., achieving environmental and wellbeing outcomes?
    - achieved more by working in partnership than if it was being delivered by just one organisation?
    - contributed to a local community which is making greater use, and taking greater ownership, of their local resources and green spaces?
    - been supported by local community/partners who will continue to be involved post-funding?

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[31] These are 1. increasing efficiency in water use by agriculture; 2. increasing efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing; 3. facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, of by-products, wastes, residues, and other non-food raw material for purposes of the bioeconomy; 4. reducing nitrous oxide and methane emissions from agriculture; 5. fostering carbon sequestration in agriculture and forestry; 6. facilitating diversification, creation of small new enterprises and job creation; 7. fostering local development in rural areas and 8. enhancing accessibility to, use, and quality of, information and communication technologies in rural areas.

[32] Sustainable development is an organising principle for meeting human development goals while also sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services on which the economy and society depend

13. What evidence do you have of the difference the project(s) is having on the local[33] community and society? Probe for:
    - improved access to, and quality of local green spaces
    - improved health and wellbeing in the community
    - involvement of local community groups and volunteers
    - increased social responsibility and sustainable behaviours within the community

14. What evidence do you have of the difference the project(s) is having on the local environment? Probe for:
    - creation of new, or maintenance of existing woodland, hedges etc
    - improvement to quality of local environment
    - enhancing biodiversity and ecological/ecosystem resilience
    - actions to reduce carbon emission

15. What evidence do you have of the difference the project(s) is having on the local economy? Probe for:
    - income or revenue generation
    - attracted investment from other sources
    - created, secured, or protected jobs
    - supported new qualifications or skills

16. What evidence do you have of the difference the project(s) is having on the local culture? Probe for:
    - increased community role in shared responsibilities for long-term sustainability
    - delivered activities and events to local and wider communities
    - increased knowledge and understanding within the community (through training or engagement)
    - tackled local issues such as repairs, restorations to protect heritage

Value for money

17. To what extent do you think that the funded project(s) has provided value for money? Why do you say this?

Lessons and the future

18. What lessons have been learnt from the delivery of projects funded via the ENRaW grant scheme?
    - What works/does not work in terms of SMNR practices?
    - Which projects have been successful/less successful? Why is that?
    - What are the key lessons to inform future Welsh Government policy and funding mechanisms?
    - What changes or improvements would you suggest making to any successor of the ENRaW scheme?

19. What would you identify as future funding priorities?

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[33] If regional, or pan-Wales project, tailor wording for Q10-13 at the appropriate geographical level

Annex B: Web survey

OB3 Research is conducting a long-term evaluation of ENRaW on behalf of the Welsh Government.

As part of this final stage of the evaluation we wish to gather feedback from funded projects about the benefits, impacts and difference made by your project.

We kindly ask that you complete this brief questionnaire to tell us about the outcomes and impacts of your project. The survey should take no more than ten minutes to complete.

More information about the evaluation, including a Privacy Notice setting out how we will use your feedback, is available here: www.ob3research.co.uk/privacy-notice-enraw-applicants.

Our Survey Accessibility Statement is set out here: www.ob3research.co.uk/survey-accessibility-statement.

Project delivery and achievements

B1 Which of the following best describes the current circumstances of your project?

❑ Your ENRaW project remains underway
❑ Your ENRaW project is close to completion
❑ Your ENRaW project is complete
❑ Other

Please specify:

_____

B2 Did ENRaW funding help you to:

[Select all that apply]

❑ Establish a new partnership
❑ Expand the number of members within an existing partnership
❑ Expand the range of members within an existing partnership
❑ Strengthen an existing partnership
❑ None of these

B3 To what extent have you achieved (or are likely to achieve) your ENRaW project aims and objectives?

❑ To a large extent
❑ To some extent
❑ To no particular extent
❑ To no extent at all
❑ Don't know

B4 To what extent have you achieved (or are likely to achieve) the KPIs set for your ENRaW project?

❑ Achieved or exceeded all KPIs
❑ Achieved almost all KPIs
❑ Partially achieved KPIs
❑ Not achieved most KPIs
❑ Not achieved any KPIs

B5 What factors account for the successful delivery of your ENRaW project?

_____
_____
_____
_____

B6 What barriers, if any, have you faced in trying to achieve the aims and objectives of your ENRaW project?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Benefits and difference made

C1 What benefits has your ENRaW project generated (or you expect it to generate)?

	Significant benefits	Some benefits	No particular benefits	No benefits at all	Don't know
Environmental benefits	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Economic benefits	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Community and social benefits	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Cultural benefits	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

C2 What contribution, if any, has your ENRaW project made (or you expect it to make) to the following environmental outcomes?

	Major contribution	Some contribution	No contribution	Not relevant to our project	Don't know
Reduced negative impact of people on vegetation e.g. by introducing footpaths	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Reduced instances of littering, fly tipping and/or arson	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Reduced air and noise pollution	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Increased tree and/or hedgerow planting	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased community gardens and food growing	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased or improved meadows	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased biodiversity	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased habitat restoration	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Improved woodland management	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Improved protection from invasive species	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Action to help reduce carbon emissions	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Other environmental outcomes	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

[If C2l=1 OR 2] Please specify these other environmental outcomes:

_____

_____

C3 [IF C2=1 or 2] **To what extent will these environmental outcomes be sustained post ENRaW funding in your opinion?**

	Fully sustained	Sustained to some extent	Not likely to be sustained	Don't know
Reduced negative impact of people on vegetation e.g., by introducing footpaths	❑	❑	❑	❑
Reduced instances of littering, fly tipping and/or arson	❑	❑	❑	❑
Reduced air and noise pollution	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased tree and/or hedgerow planting	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased community gardens and food growing	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased or improved meadows	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased biodiversity	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased habitat restoration	❑	❑	❑	❑
Improved woodland management	❑	❑	❑	❑

Improved protection from invasive species	❑	❑	❑	❑
Action to help reduce carbon emissions	❑	❑	❑	❑
Answer provided at {C2m}	❑	❑	❑	❑

C4 What contribution, if any, has your ENRaW project made (or you expect it to make) to the following economic outcomes?

	Major contribution	Some contribution	No contribution	Not relevant to our project	Don't know
Generated income or revenue	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Attracted investment from other sources	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Supported acquisition of new skills	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Supported acquisition of qualifications	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Created new jobs	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Safeguarded jobs	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased visitor numbers to the local area	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Other economic benefits	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Please specify these other economic benefits:

_____

C5 [If C4=1 OR 2] To what extent will these economic benefits be sustained post ENRaW funding in your opinion?

	Fully sustained	Sustained to some extent	Not likely to be sustained	Don't know
Generated income or revenue	❑	❑	❑	❑
Investment from other sources	❑	❑	❑	❑
Acquisition of new skills	❑	❑	❑	❑
Acquisition of qualifications	❑	❑	❑	❑
Creation of new jobs	❑	❑	❑	❑

Safeguarding of jobs	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased visitor numbers to the local area	❑	❑	❑	❑
Answer provided at {C4i}	❑	❑	❑	❑

C6 What contribution, if any, has your ENRaW project made (or you expect it to make) to the following social and community outcomes?

	Major contribution	Some contribution	No contribution	Not relevant to our project	Don't know
Improved facilities within the community	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased community engagement	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Improved health and wellbeing of members of the community	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased access to local green spaces	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased volunteering opportunities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased educational opportunities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased opportunities for local people to connect with nature	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Other	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Please specify these other social benefits:

_____

C7 [If C6=1 OR 2] To what extent will these social and community benefits be sustained post ENRaW funding in your opinion?

	Fully sustained	Sustained to some extent	Not likely to be sustained	Don't know
Improved facilities within the community	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased community engagement	❑	❑	❑	❑
Improved health and wellbeing of members of the community	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased access to local green spaces	❑	❑	❑	❑

Increased volunteering opportunities	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased educational opportunities	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased opportunities for local people to connect with nature	❑	❑	❑	❑
Answer provided at {C6i}	❑	❑	❑	❑

C8 **What contribution, if any, has your ENRaW project made (or you expect it to make) to the following cultural outcomes?**

	Major contribution	Some contribution	No contribution	Not relevant to our project	Don't know
Increased community knowledge and understanding of sustainable behaviours	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased community responsibility for long-term sustainability	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased number of events and activities within the community	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased community ownership of heritage assets and activities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Improved or restored heritage assets	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Other	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Please specify these other social benefits:

_____

C9 [If C8=1 OR 2] **To what extent will these cultural benefits be sustained post ENRaW funding in your opinion?**

	Fully sustained	Sustained to some extent	Not likely to be sustained	Don't know
Increased community knowledge and understanding of sustainable behaviours	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased community responsibility for long-term sustainability	❑	❑	❑	❑
Increased number of events and activities within the community	❑	❑	❑	❑

Increased community ownership of heritage assets and activities	❏	❏	❏	❏
Improved or restored heritage assets	❏	❏	❏	❏
Answer provided at {C8f}	❏	❏	❏	❏

^{C10} **Had you not received ENRaW funding, what would have happened?**

[Please select the description which best matches what you think might have happened]

- ❏ The whole project would have gone ahead anyway within similar timeframes
- ❏ Aspects of the project would have gone ahead anyway within similar timeframes
- ❏ The project would have been delayed, but some or all of it would be undertaken in the future
- ❏ The project would not have progressed at all
- ❏ Don't know

^{C11} **How would you have funded these activities without ENRaW funding?**

_____

RDP focus areas, cross cutting themes and objectives

^{D1} **How much contribution have activities funded by your project made to the following eight RDP focus areas?**

	Major contribution	Some contribution	No contribution	Don't know
Increase efficiency in water use by agriculture	❏	❏	❏	❏
Increase efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing	❏	❏	❏	❏
Facilitate the supply and use of renewable sources of energy	❏	❏	❏	❏
Reduce nitrous oxide and methane emissions from agriculture	❏	❏	❏	❏
Foster carbon sequestration in agriculture and forestry	❏	❏	❏	❏
Facilitate diversification, and create new enterprises and jobs in rural areas	❏	❏	❏	❏
Foster local development in rural areas	❏	❏	❏	❏

Enhance access to, use, and quality of ICT in rural areas	❏	❏	❏	❏

D2 [If ANY D1 ANSWER = 1 OR 2] **Please provide examples of how your project has contributed to any of these eight RDP focus areas:**

_____

_____

_____

D3 **How much contribution have activities funded by your project made to:**

	Major contribution	Some contribution	No contribution	Don't know
Promote and support equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming	❏	❏	❏	❏
Promote and support sustainable development	❏	❏	❏	❏
Help tackle poverty and social exclusion in rural areas	❏	❏	❏	❏
Help safeguard the environment	❏	❏	❏	❏
Develop innovative and ground-breaking solutions for rural areas	❏	❏	❏	❏
Help address climate change	❏	❏	❏	❏

D4 [IF ANY D3 ANSWER = 1 OR 2] **Please provide examples of how your project has contributed to these cross-cutting theme(s) and objectives?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

D5 **How much contribution have activities funded by your project made to support the use of the Welsh language?**

❏ Major contribution
❏ Some contribution
❏ No contribution at all
❏ Don't know

D6 [IF D5=1 OR 2] **Please provide examples of how your project has supported the use of the Welsh language:**

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Sustainability of your project and partnership

E1 Is your ENRaW project being sustained (or do you anticipate your ENRaW project will be sustained) post funding?

❑ Yes, all elements of the project are being / will be sustained
❑ Yes, elements of the project are being / will be sustained
❑ No aspects of the project are being / will be sustained
❑ Don't know
❑ Other

E2 Is your ENRaW partnership been sustained (or do you anticipate your ENRaW partnership will be sustained) post funding?

❑ Yes, it is being / will be sustained with the same members involved
❑ Yes, it is being / will be sustained but with fewer members involved
❑ Yes, it is being / will be sustained but with more members involved
❑ No, the partnership no longer exists / will not exist
❑ Other

E3 Please use this space to provide any further information:

_____

_____

E4 Has the ENRaW funding enabled your project partnership to secure any additional or other funding?

[Select all that apply]

❑ Yes, other Welsh government funding sources have been secured
❑ Yes, other non-government sources have been secured
❑ We are currently awaiting the outcome of a funding bid
❑ Not yet, but other sources of funding will be sought
❑ Activities will be self-sustaining (in part or full)
❑ There is no intention to continue with the project partnership/seek funding
❑ Don't know / Not sure

E5 [IF E4=1 - 4] **What other sources of funding have been (or will be) applied for?**

E6 **What lessons from ENRaW should be considered in any future collaborative funding mechanisms?**

_____

_____

_____

E7 **Finally, do you have any other comments to make about ENRaW?**

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for completing this survey. Please ensure that you submit the survey.