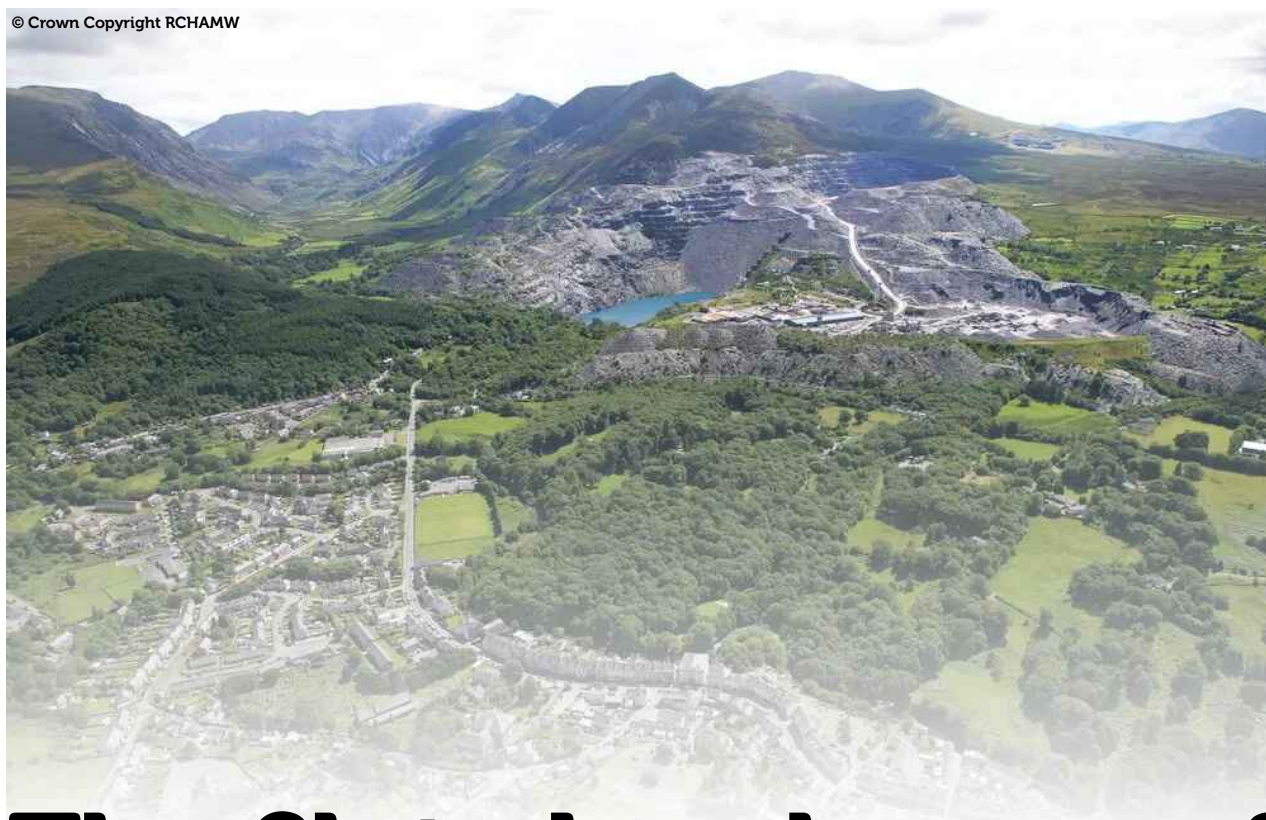




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The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales World Heritage Site

Annual Report 2024 – 2025



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Tirwedd Llechi Gogledd
Orllewin Cymru
Cofrestrwyd ar Restr
Treftadaeth y Byd yn 2021



SAFLE TREFTADAETH Y BYD
Llechi Cymru
Wales Slate
WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Foreword

Lord Dafydd Wigley

Chair, Llechi Cymru
Partnership Board



Getting the Job Done

Where have the last 12 months gone? In the annual report for 2024, I emphasised the need for time to realise plans that would bring benefits to Gwynedd's communities and businesses as a result of the World Heritage Site designation.

This year, looking back over the last 12 months I am proud of the work that has been seen across the slate landscape and I hope that you will get a taste of that in this report and agree that as partners we are really progressing with the work.

Over the past year, the Llechi Cymru Partnership – which I have the privilege and honour of chairing – has been familiarising itself with new governance and operating arrangements to reflect the all-important voices of our communities and landowners in our management structure. Holding two thematic workshops has been extremely useful in ensuring these voices are heard, securing this input into the partnership's current priorities – namely interpreting, marketing and communicating The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales to our community and the wider world.

Seeing that we have now attracted investment of over £35m in our areas is proof that having the designation leads to significant improvements across the area, which will deliver on our vision as a partnership to 'protect, preserve, improve and convey the area's important features to reinforce the cultural distinctiveness and strengthen the Welsh language, and become an important catalyst for economic regeneration and social inclusion'.

Whilst there are various construction projects still underway – with many of them due for completion during the next two years - the enthusiasm and eagerness of our communities and businesses to engage with their heritage and be part of the slate story is infectious. I am delighted that our activities as partners for communities and businesses are tying our slate areas together, to celebrate their differences – but also what they have in common. These activities are an essential golden thread to create a single World Heritage Site that respects and celebrates our past while creating opportunities, excitement and pride looking towards the future.

Although we are a new World Heritage Site, the recognition and reputation that Llechi Cymru has beyond the area is testament to the fact that we are delivering very innovative and important work here in Gwynedd and Eryri in terms of informal feedback for developments, community engagement and ensuring a voice for all in the future of the Site.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who has supported our work over the past 12 months – especially to all of the Llechi Cymru strategic partners for your sincere cooperation and invaluable support.

Important activities took place recording features of the landscape and local place names by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales and Eryri National Park. The popularity of World Heritage and Archaeology

courses run by Bangor University continued, along with their new partnership with the owners of Dorothea Quarry developing fieldwork opportunities for students. Exciting developments were seen at the National Trust at Penrhyn Castle in collaboration with Amgueddfa Cymru, as we witnessed museum craftsmen splitting and dressing slates within the castle walls – remarkable. Our thanks also go to Heneb, the Archaeological Trust for Wales, who support our LleCHi LleNI work. Of course, we must thank Cadw and the Welsh Government for all the support given – whether in expertise, advice, or funding to support our work. Finally, my thanks to Cyngor Gwynedd and its team of officers for all the activity, energy, and enthusiasm that has sustained Llechi Cymru throughout this busy year.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dafydd Wigley'.

Lord Dafydd Wigley

Chair, Llechi Cymru Partnership Board



AMGUEDDFA
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Contents



1. Background.....	1.
2. Governance and Management	2.
3. Caring for The Slate Landscape.....	4.
4. Sustainable Development in the Slate..	12.
Landscape	
5. LleCHI LleNI: Our World Heritage.....	23.
Site, Our Pride, Our Future	
6. Enjoying the Slate Landscape.....	29.
7. Learning about the Slate Landscape.....	36.
8. Further Information.....	39.

1. Background

1



It is now four years since we secured World Heritage Site status for The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales.

We received the designation from UNESCO based on a statement of Outstanding Universal Value, and this statement is at the core of all our work, and steers the Partnership Board's decisions on developments, investment, conservation and priorities.

Llechi Cymru Statement of Outstanding Universal Value:

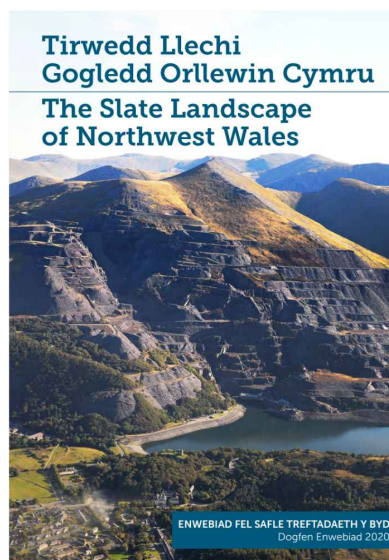
The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales is an exceptional example of an industrial cultural landscape that was profoundly shaped by large-scale slate quarrying and underground mining and by the working and transport of slate for national and international markets. The industry, particularly in the period from 1780 to 1940, dominated the world production of roofing slates, opened up new slate quarries and mines across the world through cultural transfer of technology and skills, and transformed both the environment and the way of life of those who lived and worked in the mountains of Eryri.

Our aim is to care for and celebrate the heritage of this powerful landscape. But this is also a living landscape – where people live and work. Our vision is to build on this important status to protect our history and heritage, whilst promoting and improving the region for the benefit of local communities and businesses.

Llechi Cymru vision:

Protect, conserve, enhance and communicate the important qualities of the area in order to reinforce cultural distinctiveness and strengthen the Welsh language, and become an important driver for economic regeneration and social inclusion.

Click [here](#) to view the nomination document.



2. Governance and Management

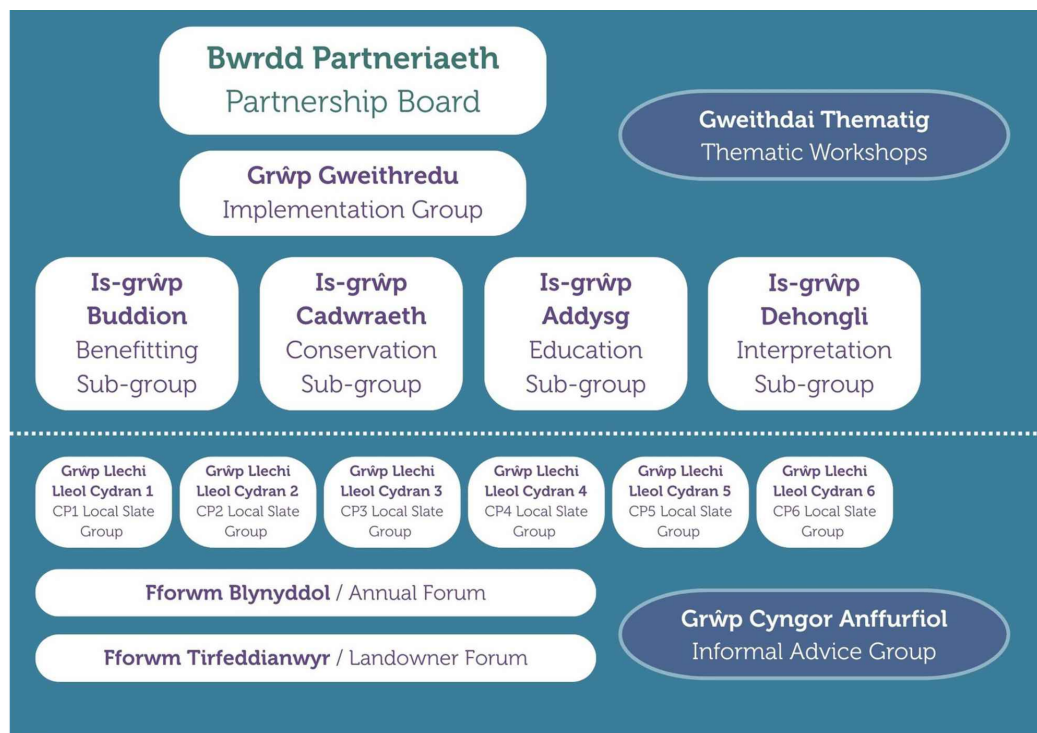
All World Heritage Sites are managed by an accountable body, Cyngor Gwynedd in our case. Cyngor Gwynedd has been successful in attracting both core and external funding to form a team of officers working in the field; this year we are very fortunate to have six designated members working together as part of the team, under the guidance of Roland Evans, Assistant Head of Economy and Community at Gwynedd Council.

Llechi Cymru team:

- Hannah Joyce (Llechi Cymru Regeneration Programme Manager)
- Dan Amor (Northwest Wales World Heritage Coordinator)
- Amy Jones (Llewyrch o'r Llechi Project Manager)
- Lucy Thomas (LleNI LleCHI Project Manager)
- Bet Huws (LleCHI LleNI Interpretation and Community Engagement Officer)
- Ffion Gwyn (LleCHI LleNI Learning and Skills Development Officer)

The Llechi Cymru World Heritage Site Partnership Board is responsible for running the site at a strategic level. It was decided to adapt the structure of the partnership and implement resulting changes from 2025 onwards. The objective was to give everyone a voice in the management of the World Heritage Site by ensuring community representation at Partnership Board level and offering communities, businesses, landowners and strategic partners the opportunity to attend relevant Sub-group meetings.

Llechi Cymru governance structure:



A Skills and Education Sub-group has been established, providing a forum for individuals and organisations in the field of education to come together to ensure synergy between activities, and to identify gaps to fill in educational provision under the slate banner.

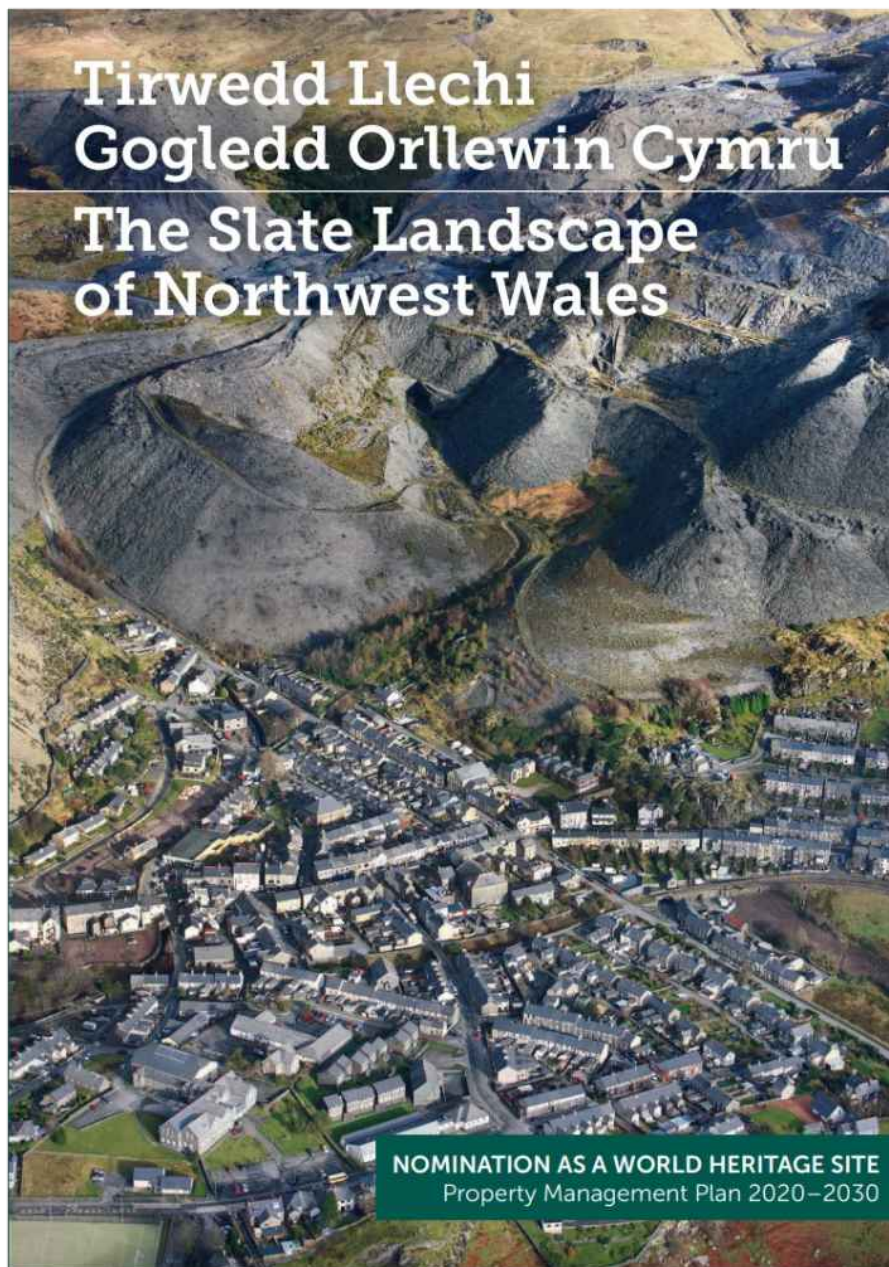
As part of the new structure, there are opportunities to hold thematic workshops when members feel the need to pay particular attention to specific matters. This year, we have held two workshops, one on interpreting the slate landscape, and a follow-up session on marketing and markets.

For more information on the World Heritage Site's management structure and to view a current list of Partnership Board members, click [here](#).

Click [here](#) to view the minutes of the Partnership Board meetings.

The World Heritage Site is managed via our management plan, which runs from 2020 to 2030. We have now reached the pivotal midpoint stage, and the Partnership Board is in the process of undertaking a midterm review and an updated version of our management plan will be released in early 2026. This update will ensure we reflect accurate, current information on the World Heritage Site.

The management plan can be viewed [here](#).



3. Caring for the Slate Landscape



The Llechi Cymru Conservation and Planning group meets on a quarterly basis, discussing the development and implementation of appropriate conservation and protection measures, as well as planning policy matters.

Representation on the group includes the local planning authorities (Cyngor Gwynedd and Eryri National Park Authority), Cadw and Heneb. One of the Site's priorities is to ensure the physical legacy of the historic slate landscape for future generations, but we also recognise that this is a living landscape, which contributes to the economic and social well-being of our communities.

The World Heritage designation is not intended to prevent change in the landscape, but rather is a means of supporting and managing positive changes, which are being developed with sensitivity towards the area's special heritage.

Informal Feedback on Proposed Developments in the World Heritage Site

Developers are given the opportunity to receive informal feedback on proposed developments in, or close to, the World Heritage Site, before entering the formal planning process.

The sessions are voluntary and, so far, there has been positive feedback from those who have taken advantage to the service. The sessions are an effective way of bringing together representatives from planning, conservation, economic development and community consultation backgrounds to offer professional feedback on ideas in the context of the World Heritage Site.

Various organisations from the private and public sectors have taken advantage of these sessions.

During this year, we held three informal feedback sessions. For more information on the process, click [here](#).

Who should discuss with us?



- we do not expect small scale developments to discuss with us (e.g. domestic extensions within a town/village setting)
- if you feel that your development has the potential to impact the World Heritage Site and/or its setting (in a positive or negative way)
- a planning officer may suggest that it would be useful for you to contact us
- developers or agents can contact us

When should you discuss with us?



- it's important for these informal discussions to happen before your development enters the formal planning process (before the pre-application process)
- Once your development is in the planning system, the officers who would have been able to offer informal feedback through this process will no be statutory consultees and as a result unable to offer feedback in this manner

How to discuss with us?



- contact llechi@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
- send us an overview document noting any information that could be useful to facilitate the discussion (e.g. location, size, description, building materials, purpose of the development, how it contributes to our vision and aims)
- attend a meeting with officer and representatives to discuss your idea and receive informal feedback

What to discuss with us?

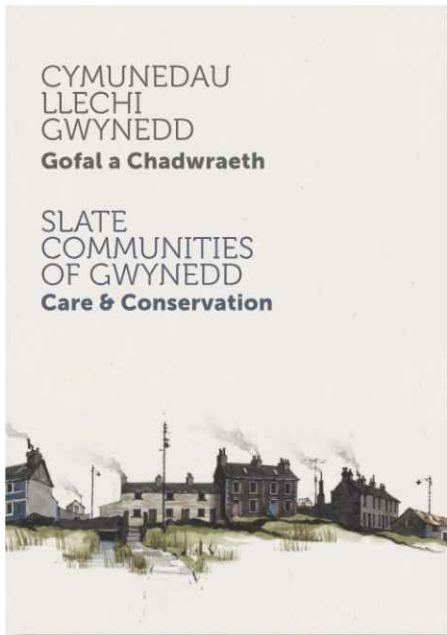


- It is not the size / value of the development that is important, but the potential impact on the World Heritage Site and its setting
- initial / concept ideas only
- an opportunity to scope ideas
- it is an informal and voluntary process, it is our intention that the process enables discussions rather than creating barriers

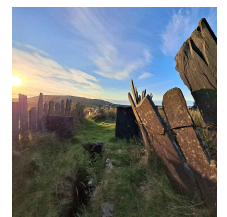
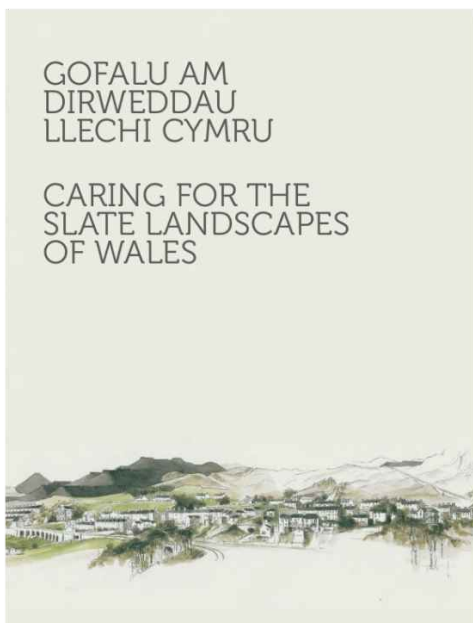
Advisory Booklets

Two booklets have been created to try to share practical information with residents, landowners and developers on the special characteristics of our slate landscape and communities.

If you are interested in the unique nature of the towns, villages and communities that make up the slate landscape of Northwest Wales, 'Care and Conservation' booklet worth reading. Aimed at property owners, it outlines the rich heritage of our slate communities and offers practical advice on protecting and preserving the historic character of our slate communities. It provides a brief overview of planning policies and processes, and information on where to find further guidance. To view the guide, click [here](#).

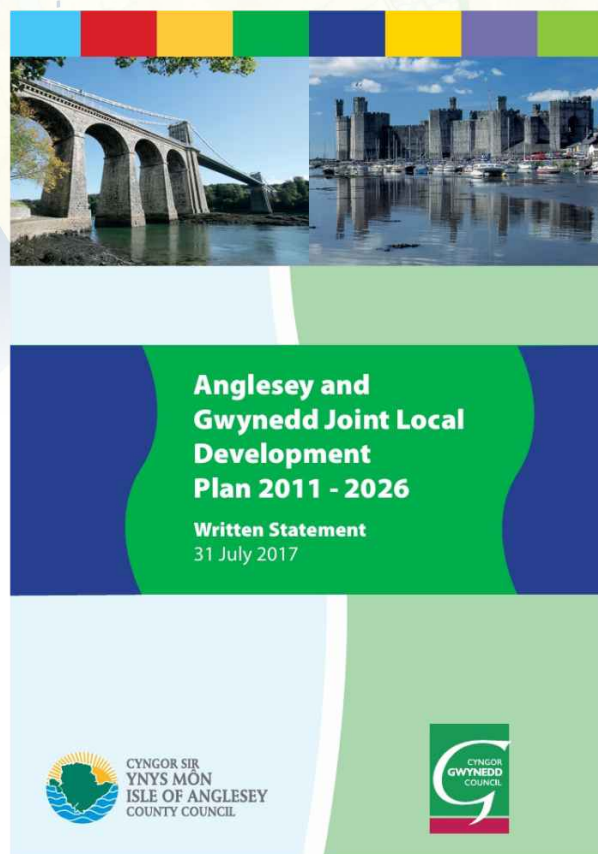
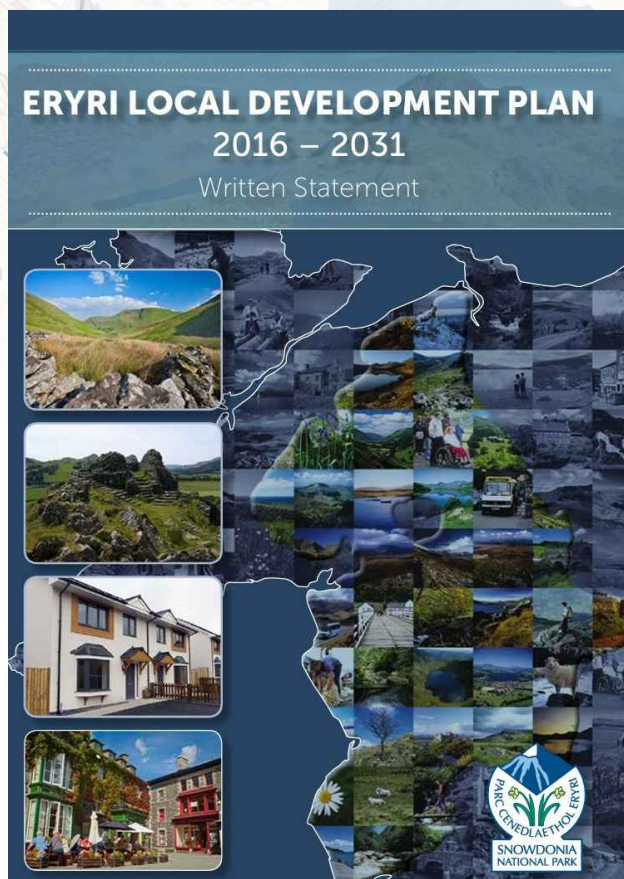


If you are interested in the various slate landscapes across Wales, our booklet 'Caring for the Slate Landscapes of Wales', is also well worth reading. It summarises the history of the slate industry, describes what makes slate landscapes special, and offers guidance on how to look after these important places. It is written for all of us who live and work in these landscapes, or who come to visit. To view the on-line version, click [here](#).



Planning

With regards to The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales, the legal requirement is that decisions on planning applications are made in accordance with the adopted Local Development Plan. The local development plans that have been adopted for these two Planning Authorities are: Joint Local Development Plan (Gwynedd and Anglesey) 2011-2026 and: Eryri Local Development Plan 2017-2031.



The above documents contain planning policies which specifically relate to developments within or affecting the setting and/or significant views into or out of world heritage sites.

In order to provide more detailed guidance to prospective applicants, councillors and planning officers, the Supplementary Planning Guidance - The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales has been prepared jointly by the two planning authorities.

To view this Supplementary Planning Guidance, click [here](#).

While UNESCO status is a formal designation of our area as a World Heritage Site, the protection that already existed in the slate landscape through National Park status and the Register of Historic Landscapes is a foundation for the protection of our landscape and its important features.

Since inscription, the majority of planning applications that have been submitted within and (or) near the World Heritage Site area have been in Cyngor Gwynedd's planning authority area, reflecting the more urban nature of the area. Out of the **108** refused applications, only **3** contained reasons for refusal that referred to the World Heritage Site. However, even without the World Heritage Site designation, the three applications would have been refused.

What is important with each planning application is that the relevant information and evidence is submitted with the application, and prospective applicants are encouraged to take advantage of the aforementioned pre-application service provided by both authorities.

Place Names

Eryri National Park Authority in partnership with the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales have held place name workshops in Abergynolwyn, Corris, Talsarnau, Plas Tan-y-Bwlch and Waunfawr. To date, 6,299 place names have been uploaded to the List of Historic Place Names as a result of the project.

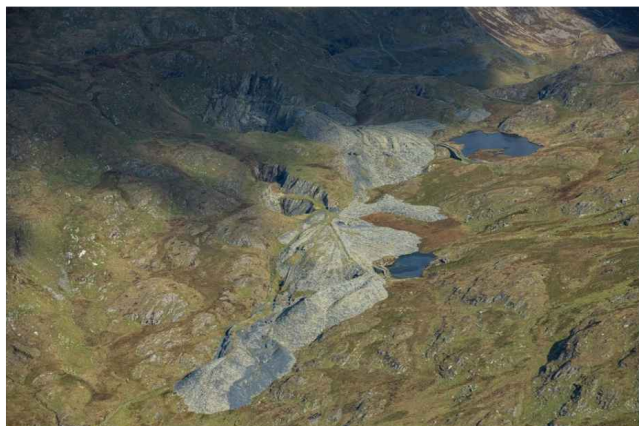


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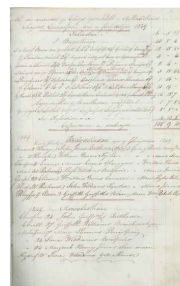
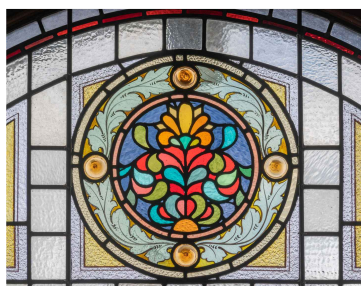
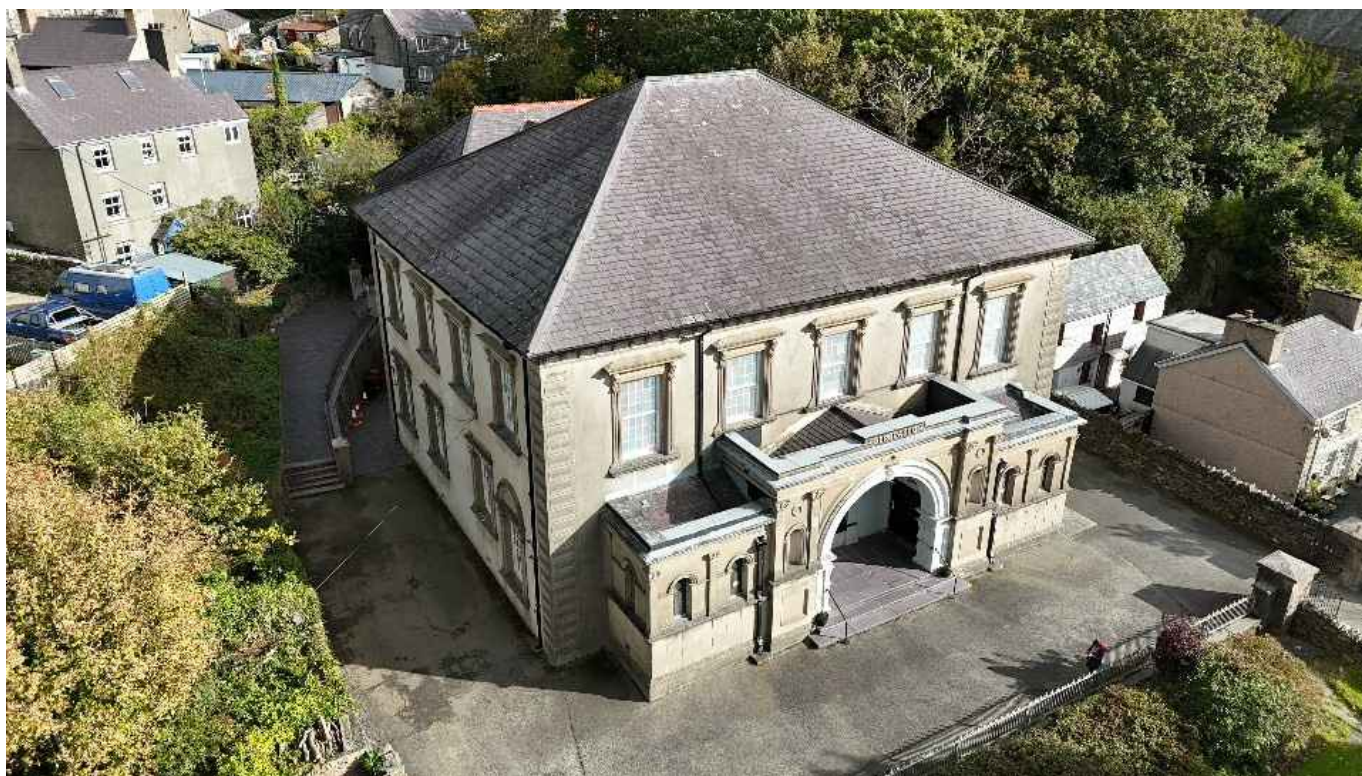


The Royal Commission surveyed the central and western quarries of the slate landscape from the air twice during the year; in June many of the major quarries including those around Blaenau Ffestiniog, Nantlle and Prince of Wales were recorded from the air, and in October there was an opportunity to record spectacular images of several quarries including Dinorwig Quarry and those around Yr Wyddfa. Images are now available on-line at www.coflein.gov.uk linked to individual records from those quarries..



Images: © Crown Copyright RCHAMW

The Royal Commission has carried out a survey at the Jerusalem Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapel (now the Presbyterian Church of Wales), Bethesda, as part of our ongoing project to research and record Nonconformist Chapels. It is one of only five Grade I listed chapels in Wales but, like many other chapels, it is increasingly fragile. More information can be found [here](#).



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Conservation Projects

Conservation projects are being realised through funding secured through Cyngor Gwynedd, and also from partners across the slate landscape. Some examples of conservation projects are set out below.

Penrhyn Quarry Hospital, Bethesda

Following urgent work on the structure in 2024, an ambitious plan is currently underway on site to ensure the long-term stability of the Old Penrhyn Quarry Hospital, with the vision that the site will be publicly accessible and open to all following the completion of the work, as well as offering onsite interpretation

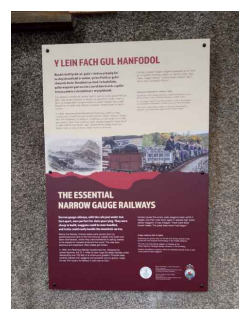
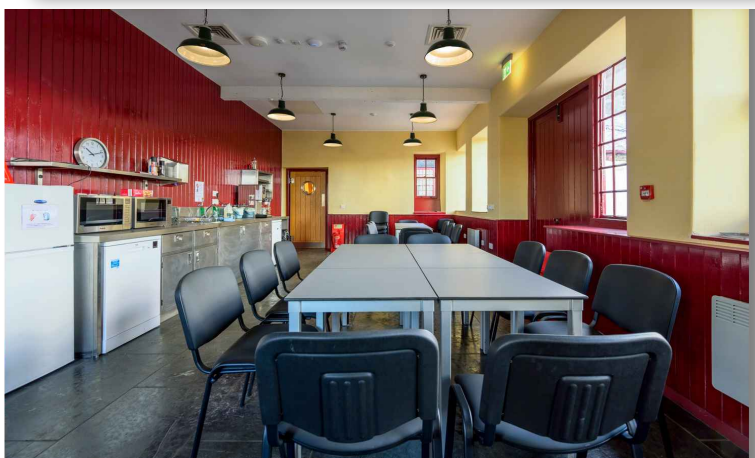
The project is a partnership between Cyngor Gwynedd - through the Llewyrch o'r Llechi scheme funded through UK Government, - and Cadw and Welsh Slate (Breedon).

Site visits have been organised in collaboration with Partneriaeth Ogwen, inviting Dyffryn Ogwen residents to visit the structure, learn about its history and understand more about the conservation techniques being used to protect the building. There will be further opportunities for visits and hands-on experiences at the site over the coming months



Boston Lodge, Ffestiniog Railway, Porthmadog

In 2025, the ambitious Ffestiniog and Eryri Railways project came to an end. Between 2022 and 2025, work on Boston Lodge has saved heritage buildings, skills and assets. Some of the most significant heritage buildings have been preserved and re-created and opportunities provided for staff and volunteers through a project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. 211 individual work placements were organised, most of these for young people in Gwynedd. Among the most successful partnerships were those with local colleges, where young people joined the team to learn skills and gain experience. Over 600 volunteers worked on the project, contributing 36,000 hours of labour. Over 120 new volunteers came to work on the railway, including many very young volunteers and a good number of older people who are at risk of social isolation. More than 600 people attended 61 workshops to develop traditional skills, meaning that these skills will now be preserved for future generations. 87 guided tours of Boston Lodge were carried out during the project, providing access to more than 1000 members of the public to the oldest railway workshops in the world for the first time.

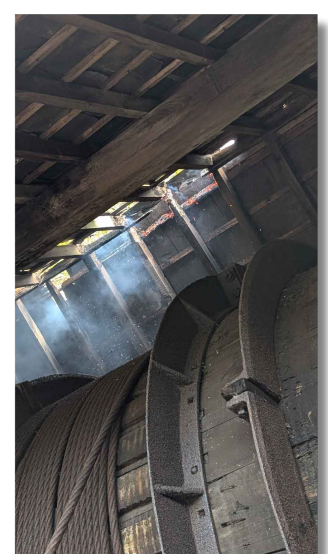
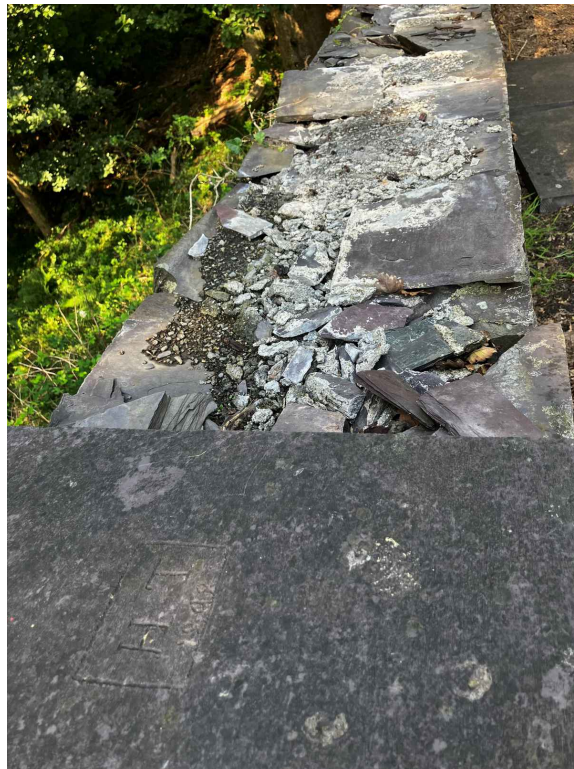


Cwmorthin Terrace, Blaenau Ffestiniog

In August 2025, Heneb was busy working with local volunteers to record buildings and structures in Cwmorthin that will be a resource for future conservation work. An archaeological record was undertaken, including Rhos Cwmorthin, Capel Tiberias and Tyddyn Cwmorthin, building on work already carried out by community groups at the site. This is part of the LleCHI LleNI project and there will be an opportunity to take part in other community conservation activities across the slate landscape over the next four years.

Heritage Crime

Unfortunately, heritage crime is one aspect of World Heritage Site management that is a cause for concern, something which happens to varying degrees across the slate landscape. A Heritage Crime Working Group has been established for North Wales, and North Wales Police is now part of our Benefitting Sub-group enabling a dialogue with heritage site owners and managers. There's information on how to report a heritage crime on the Llechi Cymru website [here](#) and we urge anyone who witnesses a heritage crime to call 999, or anyone who is aware of a heritage crime to call 111.



4. Sustainable Development in the Slate Landscape



The vision of the World Heritage Site considers sustainable development central to the area's success, this involves supporting a sustainable landscape which encourages economic development and opportunities for communities to thrive, whilst supporting our language and culture, and respecting our heritage.

The World Heritage Site Benefitting Sub-group includes representation from the public, private, voluntary and third sector, and seeks to ensure that World Heritage Site designation brings the greatest benefit to communities in the slate landscape.

Since receiving the designation, Cyngor Gwynedd and its partners have secured over £38 million of investment into the area, this is alongside partner grants, as well as private sector investment in assets and sites across the slate landscape.

"Since I became Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet Member for Economy and Community, I have been delighted to visit the slate landscape to see the exciting developments that have been underway, the enthusiasm and support in our communities.

Cyngor Gwynedd is delighted to be leading on our World Heritage Site and on the Llechi Cymru partnership; seeing our vision gradually become a reality for the benefit of communities, businesses and the slate landscape of the area is truly encouraging.

This is a huge story that puts Gwynedd on the world map. This is a momentous story – not only for our past or today – but also for tomorrow and our future generations. Cyngor Gwynedd will continue to seek to capitalise on our rich heritage with all our partners to ensure prosperity from our slate to all communities in the area."

Councillor Richard Medwyn Hughes



Wedi ei ariannu gan
Llywodraeth y DU

Funded by
UK Government

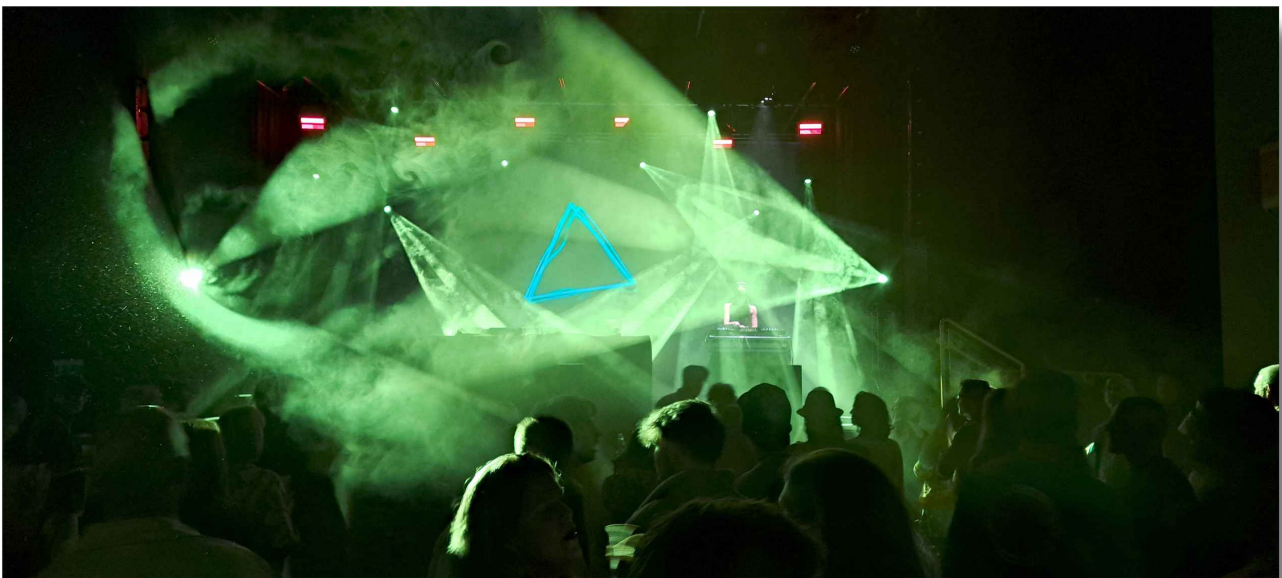
Llewyrch o'r Llechi

The Llewyrch o'r Llechi scheme is now seeing the impact of the hard work to realise ambitious plans in three of our slate communities. Since receiving the grant allocation from UK Government in 2022, we have seen several schemes completed, including:

Hwb Ogwen

Neuadd Ogwen

Work to upgrade Neuadd Ogwen has been completed; the investment has transformed the Neuadd and secured a prosperous and sustainable future for them by enabling them to run a programme of events of the highest calibre throughout the year, attracting world-renowned performers with the technology and venue quality now available in Bethesda.



Dilwyn Llwyd, Manager of Neuadd Ogwen said, "The investment and improvements we have made make Neuadd Ogwen feel like a real arts centre and music venue, and the future looks bright".

The investment has also enabled the Neuadd to provide a platform for local talent, for voluntary organisations wanting a welcoming space, and also for professional organisations to host events such as conferences.

Yr Hen Bost

Under the leadership of Partneriaeth Ogwen, Yr Hen Bost upgrades are underway, demolition and site preparation work has been completed, contractors are working hard to realise the dream of creating an innovative Heritage and Community Centre for Dyffryn Ogwen.



Yr Hen Bost also presents an opportunity to celebrate the carved slate heritage of Dyffryn Ogwen; Ann Catrin Evans has been appointed to create stunning artwork reflecting this unique history on the front wall of the building.

Improving Connectivity to the Slate Landscape

Several streams of work are planned to improve connectivity between Dyffryn Ogwen and the slate landscape, a new bridge has been installed near Porth Penrhyn and a new cattle underpass has been built under Lôn Las Ogwen to improve accessibility by removing a series of gates on the path.

Over the next few months work will be underway to upgrade Pont Sarnau - a new bridge will be installed, followed by the removal of the old bridge, along with improvements to the footpath linking Parc Meurig with Lôn Las Ogwen, to improve access to the slate landscape.



Hwb Dinorwig

Redevelopment of the National Slate Museum

The National Slate Museum is now closed in order to undergo conservation work and a substantial upgrade. However, the Museum's presence continues through a 'Museum on the Move' scheme, there is a temporary presence at Penrhyn Castle, Caernarfon Slate Quay and Dinorwig Quarry Hospital, as well as a number of activities in slate communities during the summer 2025 (such as below, Cwmystadrlllyn).



The redevelopment is an ambitious scheme, which sees an investment of over £28m at the Gilfach Ddu site to secure the museum as a gateway to the World Heritage Site, and as part of the Amgueddfa Cymru family, enabling exhibition space for national collections in North Wales.

The redevelopment includes significant conservation work for Gilfach Ddu, the creation of a purpose-built education space, the construction of a new shop and café and the remodelling of existing spaces to create more exhibition space, improved accessibility across the site to ensure that every nook and cranny of the site can be enjoyed by all, innovative interpretation and a new collections gallery.



© Amgueddfa Cymru

Parc Padarn Improvements

Work packages at Parc Padarn have been in place for over a year now, and significant conservation work has now been completed on the A Incline, including Tŷ Drwm and its machinery. Work is nearing completion on the new welcome block which includes new toilets and changing rooms, exhibition space, landscaping and interpretation space, visitor reference information and a meeting space.

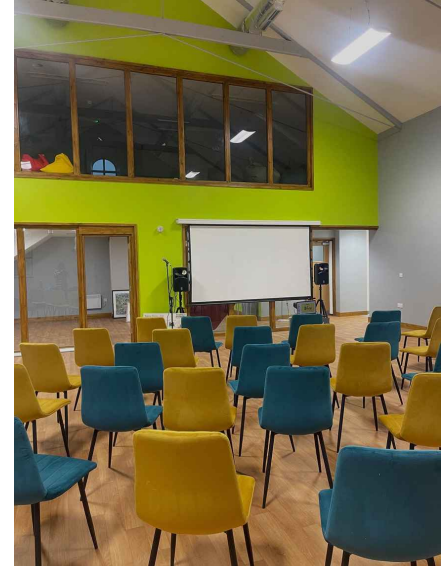


Plans are underway for other structures within the Park over the coming months, including conservation work and upgrades to the Hafod Owen building, as well as upgrades to the Fire Queen Shed to create a display and interpretation space for the engine which will return to Gilfach Ddu following an extended period in the Penrhyn Castle collection, and more recently, the Vale of Rheidol Railway. A project to upgrade the car park will be completed, to increase the number of parking spaces onsite, as well as remodelling the flow of the car park to improve accessibility and user safety.

Hwb Ffestiniog

Yr Aelwyd

Yr Aelwyd upgrade work has been completed. Antur Stiniog has transformed the building into an impressive youth and community centre offering a wide range of activities and support services for young people, as well as a top-quality venue for community and cultural activities. The building has been upgraded to include innovative energy developments to secure Passivhaus status for the building which will ensure the long-term viability of the building for Antur Stiniog.



Siop Ephraim and Caffi Bolton (22 and 23 Church Street)

Contractors have been on site since the beginning of September to undertake the upgrade of two empty shops in the centre of Blaenau Ffestiniog which have stood vacant for many years. The buildings are part of the historic character of Blaenau Ffestiniog High Street, and the preservation of these historic features is a priority within the scheme. When complete, the buildings will offer residential space for local families, and start-up business units as well as creative space for community use.



Llwybr Llechwedd

A footpath and cycle path facilitating improved access between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Llechwedd Quarry has been completed. The plan was developed as part of the area's active travel priorities. The scheme has been shortlisted on the CIHT Sustainable Travel Awards for 2025.

Town Centre Improvement Plans

As part of our vision to improve town centres and community areas across the slate landscape, we have continued to develop a number of exciting projects this year. This work reflects a commitment to strengthening community ties, celebrating local heritage and offering visual and practical improvements in these areas.



Public Art

It has been a busy and varied year in terms of public artworks, with several notable pieces now completed:

- **Porthmadog** – Four sculptures by Howard Bowcott, which interpret the history and heritage of the town through local materials and symbolic form. The artwork was developed in collaboration with pupils from Ysgol Eifion Wyn, and if you look carefully you will see shells shaped by the young people forming part of the sculptures.



- **Tywyn** – A slate wagon was placed in the centre of the town, decorated with words by poet and novelist Manon Steffan Ros, linking the industrial past with contemporary creative expression. The reverse side of the slate notes Tallylyn Railway stations to emphasise the link between Bryneglwyys Quarry and the export of slate from Tywyn.



- **Penygroes** – Sculptures of Blondins by artist Angharad Pearce Jones, specifically referring to the history of the quarries and slate conveyor systems typical of the quarries of Dyffryn Nantlle.



- **Blaenau Ffestiniog** – A striking slate mosaic mural on the side of a building in the town centre created by the local Original Roofing Company, skilfully reflecting the pattern and texture of the slate with a 'car gwyllt' and other features of the Bro Ffestiniog slate landscape including the zig-zag path, the Moelwynnion, slate tips, music, and the Welsh language.

Input from the local community was provided in the development of the above artistic designs, with consultation sessions and creative workshops ensuring that the artwork reflected the voice and identity of residents.



Further art schemes are underway at:

- **Llanberis** – A new sculpture by Howard Bowcott, currently in the design process.
- **Bethesda** – Installation of work by Ann Catrin Evans, which will feature carved slate on the front wall of Yr Hen Bost.

In addition, we are developing an art interpretation plan which will include interpretation boards or a digital QR code for each site, depending on the location of artworks, explaining the meaning and inspiration behind each piece, and their connections to the slate landscape. Interpretation will include detailed information on the Llechi Cymru website, feeding into a slate art circular route to encourage people to consider the works in a historical context and create opportunities for people to explore and contribute to our local economy.

The Llewyrch o'r Llechi Fund has also funded two murals:

- **Blaenau Ffestiniog** – A proposal to install a mural on 'Yr Aelwyd' building that will only appear when the wall is wet, creating an interactive and immersive experience.
- **Tregarth** – Mural of an engine, on the Community Centre, by Artist Darren Evans.



Signage

Scheme installing new pedestrian signage have been completed at:

- Penygroes
- Tywyn

And are being implemented in:

- Porthmadog
- Blaenau Ffestiniog
- Llanberis
- Bethesda



These signage schemes are a key element of disseminating and reinforcing the Llechi Cymru brand, whilst ensuring that local identity is maintained and strengthened through the use of local slate colour palettes and a style which reflects the community. These signs are designed specifically for pedestrians and to encourage people to explore the slate towns. We look forward to introducing welcome signs at our slate towns in the coming months as part of this ongoing development.

Infrastructure Improvements

We have continued to invest in local infrastructure, with the following improvements completed or in the pipeline:

- New smart bins and benches in strategic locations. Some benches contain audio packs, providing local history or stories by means of spoken word.
- Resurfacing footways and roads to improve safety and accessibility.
- A new boardwalk in Llanberis, improving access to footpaths around Llyn Padarn.
- Electric vehicle charging points as part of our commitment to sustainability.
- Picnic tables, including those associated with community initiatives such as those developed at Parc Padarn.
- Information boards and an interpretation plan linking improvements to the history and heritage of the area.



Community Schemes

A number of community schemes have also been supported:

- Blaenau Ffestiniog – A brand new multi-use play area, designed to support local youth and sports activities.
- Llanberis – Installation of a new outdoor gym to improve provision for children and families.
- Information boards in key community settings, aimed at sharing local knowledge and promoting community pride, including on Lôn Las Ogwen in Bethesda.



5. LleCHI LleNI: Our World Heritage Site, Our Pride, Our Future



In September 2025, the World Heritage Site's community project, LleCHI LleNI, was one year old and celebrating the end of a busy first year. The project, worth £2 million over five years (2024-2029), has been funded by the National Heritage Lottery Fund and partners. It is a people-centred project, with the heritage, culture, language and unique character of our slate communities at its heart. Our aim is to provide engagement for all, instilling a strong sense of place and local pride in the slate landscape, improving well-being, providing opportunities, developing skills and boosting the local economy. The team has around 60 projects, some of which will take place more than once within the programme, which will take place across the six component parts of the slate landscape and beyond.



The year in figures

Between September 2024 and September 2025 the project has:

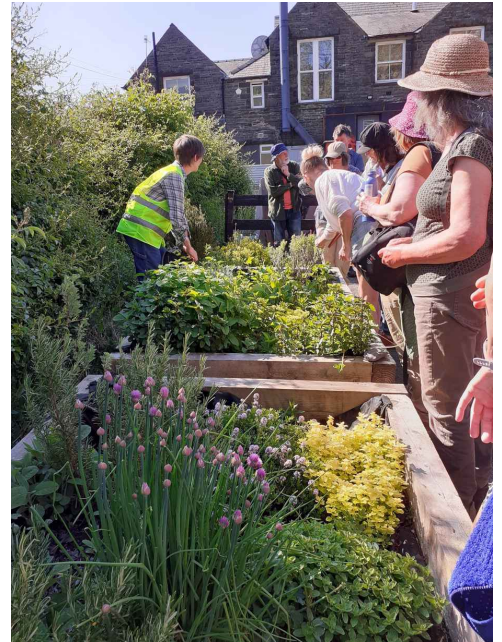
- Hosted and participated in 48 events to celebrate our quarrying heritage, care for the landscape, develop skills in our communities and encourage well-being.
- Included 1,957 attendees to our events and activities including 1,188 children across Gwynedd.
- Allocated grants worth £117,174 to 21 community groups.



Here are some highlights from the year...

History at Our Feet

One of the most popular elements of the project is the walks in the slate landscape with expert guides. These are an opportunity to tread the land and learn about the history of the area.



Over the past year we have held walks with Dr Dafydd Gwyn at Dorothea Quarry and Cwmystradllyn, tours with Gareth Roberts and Menter Fachwen at Deiniolen and Clwt y Bont, Cwm-y-Glo and Craig yr Undeb, a trip to Blaenau Ffestiniog with Catrin Roberts to learn about Martha Jones, the 'Doctor Dail' (herbalist) who prepared medicine for the quarrymen, and a trip to Llanberis with Gwyn Edwards to learn about the folklore of the area. These tours are an opportunity to collaborate with local initiatives and there is often an opportunity to support local businesses by having a cup of tea and cake along the way. To ensure accessibility, we also organise talks and lectures. These have included a lecture about the Great Strike in conjunction with Menter Iaith Gwynedd in Mynydd Llandygai, along with talks in Rhiwlas and Llanberis with Martin Davies and Gareth Roberts.



"Touching and collecting and tasting connected us to the landscape. Walking up close to a slate landscape and discussing worker's experiences created a feeling of connection. The interweaving of people's history and the history of the leaves was good."

"As a person who comes from a quarrying area, I feel very at home. But it's always nice to learn about other areas."



Well-being and Slate



One of the aims of the LleCHI LleNI project is to encourage well-being within our communities through heritage and by immersing ourselves in activities and coming together as a community. During the first half of 2025, Grŵp Brodio Bont has been very busy creating embroidery based on the slate landscape. The work will be exhibited at Pant Du and Storiell in 2025 and 2026.

In March and April, primary school children in the Dyffryn Nantlle area had the opportunity to learn about the techniques of photographer Carwyn Rhys Jones and create their own work portraying what makes them happy.

We are also delighted to be working with the Eryri National Park Authority on a programme of well-being events including a mindfulness walk in Cwm Pennant in July and a children's Forest School in Dyffryn Ogwen in August.

Reaching Audiences

We strongly believe that the designation is for everyone so it's vital that we reach a variety of audiences across the slate landscape and beyond. It was therefore a pleasure to collaborate with the National Slate Museum team on the 'Museum on the Move' touring exhibition as interpretive panels, artefacts and quarrymen and historians travelled around community hubs and local events in the six component parts of the World Heritage Site between June and September.



As part of an activity to highlight the less obvious histories of our heritage, a 'Llechi'r Enfys' (Rainbow Slate) evening was held in February, with Mike Parker and Norena Shopland with Kristoffer Hughes and Arwel Gruffydd discussing sexuality, gender and growing up in the slate landscape.

"Welsh people must break the stone, the rock doesn't understand English" (Dafydd Jones 1803 – 1868)

The slate industry was the most Welsh-speaking heavy industry in the UK with the majority of workers using the language. The Welsh language is central to the heritage, culture and identity of our slate valleys and at least 65% of the residents of our slate valleys speak Welsh today. Encouraging the use of and celebrating the importance of the Welsh language is at the core of the LleCHI LleNI project. In February, a session was held for people new to the area or to the Welsh language and there was an opportunity for an introduction to the Welsh language with tutor Ann Bierd and a session about the area's history and folklore with Kristoffer Hughes.

The Slate Football Festival

The playing fields of Y Gloddfa Glai, Talysarn were brimming with excitement in June as over 200 children from some of Gwynedd's quarrying areas came together in a special football festival.

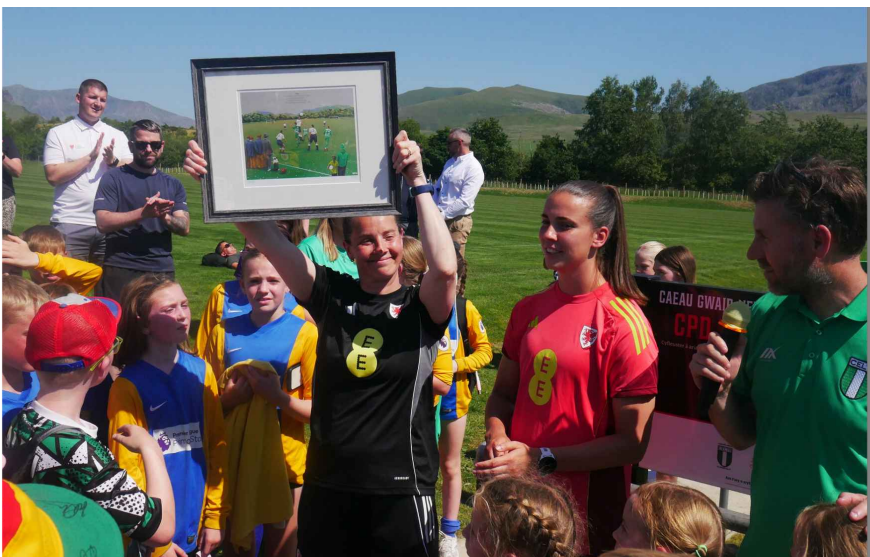
The festival celebrated the official opening of Talysarn Celts Football Club's revamped football pitches, and the historic connection between the slate quarrymen and the game of football.



Twelve primary schools took part, with representation from years 5 and 6 playing in a five-a-side tournament. In addition to the matches, each school had prepared information about a local influential figure with a connection to the slate industry, with these contributions on display in the club house.

One of the highlights of the afternoon was the visit of Rhian Wilkinson, Manager of the Wales Women's Football Team who called by following her announcement of the Wales Women's football squad on the summit of Yr Wyddfa earlier in the day.

"Without a doubt, the pupils and us as staff had an unforgettable day."



Children and Young People

With family ties and the lived experience of the quarries weakening over time, raising the awareness of children and young people on their heritage is crucial. Between March and July 2025, the LleCHI LleNI Learning and Skills Development Project Officer held workshops in 12 primary schools in the Slate Landscape in collaboration with partners. Footage of the visits is available on our [YouTube channel](#).



Welsh rapper and beatboxer, Mr Phormula, has visited young Welsh learners in language immersion units at Ysgol Tywyn, Ysgol Tryfan and Ysgol Eifionydd to create soundtracks using words associated with slate heritage. In addition, there was a lively session with Mr Phormula at the National Eisteddfod in Wrexham.



Resources for children and schools are available on the Llechi Cymru website here: [Poetry](#), [Songs](#), [Colouring](#), [Maps](#).

Coming Soon

Over the coming months the team will be very busy organising more events, working in partnership with Cwmni Frân Wen on performances to highlight the 'Lost Voices' of the slate landscape, working with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and the Eryri National Park Authority on a programme of Traditional Skills training, and recruiting young people to take part in the Young Slate Ambassadors scheme in collaboration with Yr Urdd.

For more information visit [LleCHI LleNI Project](#) | [LLECHI CYMRU - WALES SLATE](#)

6. Enjoying the Slate Landscape



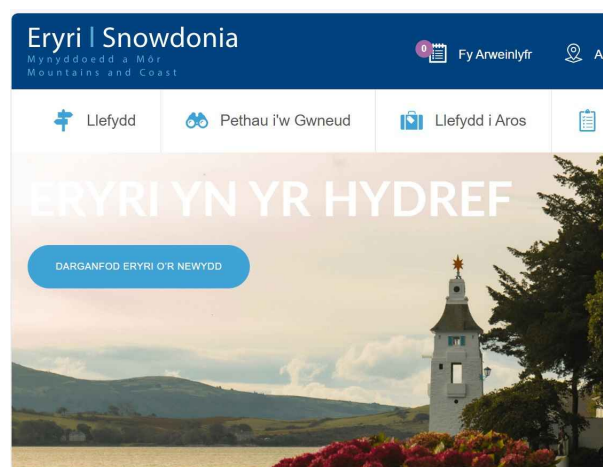
One objective of our management plan is to ensure residents and visitors can enjoy, experience and understand the World Heritage Site. A high proportion of LleNI LleCHI project activities contribute to this objective, including walks, well-being activities and the slate young ambassadors scheme which have already been mentioned in this report. Below are some further examples of how we respond to the opportunities and challenges associated with enjoying the slate landscape.

Llechi Cymru Gateway and Story Network

As part of the redevelopment of the National Slate Museum, we are working with the Amgueddfa Cymru team to develop a Gateway and Story Network model. The vision is to create a physical portal at Gilfach Ddu for the World Heritage Site, and to further develop the www.llechi.cymru website to act as the digital portal for access to information on the slate landscape. The physical and digital portals will complement each other by offering a wide range of information on the slate landscape, UNESCO status and our language and culture, with the intention of encouraging visitors to explore the landscape further and follow the story which interests them. The model is intended to spread the benefits of the designation to all areas of the World Heritage Site, and to be used as a tool in an effort to alleviate visitor pressure in the busiest areas, increase knowledge of the landscape amongst residents and visitors and to serve as an opportunity to extend the season.



© Amgueddfa Cymru



Eryri Mountains and Coast

The Eryri Mountains and Coast website and social media accounts provide a platform for the World Heritage Site as part of the Gwynedd and Eryri destination. Working with them provides an opportunity to align with Visit Wales and Visit Britain's national priorities in terms of running campaigns and targeting visitors. Working with Eryri Mountains and Coast in delivering sessions to businesses is an opportunity for attendees to learn more about the rich heritage, UNESCO principles and a chance to share information on marketing, target markets and visitor expectations, as well as an opportunity for businesses to understand more about featuring on the Eryri Mountains and Coast website and participating in an event or featuring on a campaign list. Further information can be found on their website, [here](http://www.eryri.co.uk).

Itineraries

To encourage travel around the slate landscape's different locations there is a choice of three itineraries on the [Llechi Cymru website](#), created in partnership with Go North Wales. These itineraries focus on different areas and cater for varying schedules. There are plans to create further itineraries as part of the LleCHI LleNI project in order to encourage green travel, follow different heritage themes and stories, support local businesses and to try and encourage tourism during less busy times of the year in order to boost the local economy.



Snowdonia Slate Trail

For the **Snowdonia Slate Trail** Trust this year has been a busy one, with wardens regularly walking the trail and carrying out minor maintenance work. The number of wardens has increased to 15. The Trust has worked with Cyngor Gwynedd Highways Department to fund access improvements in Waunfawr and Ffestiniog, following a comprehensive survey. The Trust also worked with Cyngor Gwynedd Highways and Bethesda Town Council to install information boards at Porth Penrhyn and Bethesda, along with purpose-built benches.

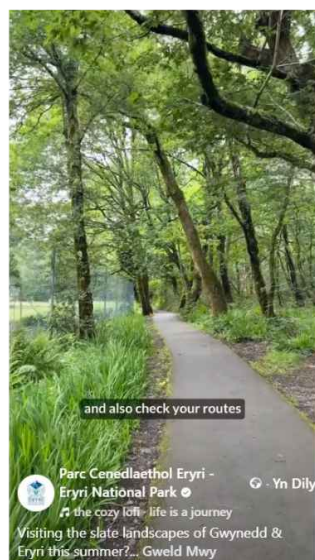
The group has secured £1 million in funding over five years to explore community tourism in the slate valleys of Gwynedd, working with the Conwy area in the Machno valley, and to develop long-term projects that promote sustainable tourism around the Trail.



Responsible Enjoyment of the Slate Landscape

One of our priorities is to encourage responsible enjoyment of the World Heritage Site, and to earn respect for our communities, language and culture. This is a living landscape, and we ask those who come here to respect local communities and the wishes of landowners, and to respect our special historic landscape.

We have been working with the Eryri National Park Authority on a visit safely campaign by creating short information films to post on Llechi Cymru and Eryri National Park social media accounts, emphasising the importance of visiting responsibly and preparing in advance. An example of one of the films can be seen [here](#).



We have an ongoing campaign working with Adventure Smart to share messages on responsible visiting on our social media channels – messaging on preparing before visiting, respecting the landscape, its people and the language and to be aware of the challenges that visitors might face in rural Wales.



On Facebook, our safety campaign assets have received over 1,300 views, and 1,131 views on Instagram.

Summary, Llechi Cymru Social Media, October 2024 – September 2025

The last year has been one of growth and success for our Llechi Cymru social media accounts. Our Facebook and Instagram presence has gone from strength to strength, with notable progress in terms of reach and follower engagement, reflecting an increasing interest in the story of our heritage and slate landscape. This year also saw the launch of our presence on Bluesky, an exciting new platform offering Llechi Cymru further opportunities to reach new audiences and develop our digital voice. Results point to a successful year for our online brand – and a firm foundation for further growth in the year to come.



© AS Photography



On **Facebook**, the post with the widest reach was “Treading the Land: Cwmystadrlllyn Guided Walk”, shared 21 times and appearing on numerous local group pages. The most popular post in terms of engagement was a reel promoting a Museum on the Road talk with Dr Dafydd Gwyn, Tyddyn Mawr.

The most successful content on **Instagram** was a post on public artworks at **Tywyn** and **Porthmadog**.

Follow us on @llechicymru on social media for more information

Facebook



Content: 250 stories, 199 posts
Views: 603.9K (597.2K organic + 6.7K ads)
Reach: 71.5K (+96.9%)
Content interaction: 8.9K (+144.8K)
Followers: 4,408 (+9.4%)
Post with best reach: Troedio'r Tir: Cwmystradllyn Guided Walk

Instagram



Content: 331 stories, 138 grid posts
Views: 71.6K
Reach: 22.7K (+5.6%)
Followers: 1,569 (+60%)
Most successful content: Tywyn a Phorthmadog public artworks

Slate Ambassadors

Individuals can learn more about the slate landscape, UNESCO status and World Heritage by completing specific modules as part of the **Gwynedd Ambassador** and **Eryri Ambassador programmes**.

We are also running information sessions for businesses. Two pilot sessions have already been held, and the first public session is planned for next year. Businesses with an interest in learning more about the World Heritage Site and its significance are invited to attend one of the sessions, in the hope that what they learn at the session can then be shared with customers, colleagues and neighbours, spreading the message on the importance and uniqueness of our slate landscape.

Events

A number of successful events have taken place over the past year, here are some examples:

Dr Dafydd Gwyn's talk at Cwmystradllyn in conjunction with the National Slate Museum as part of the Museum on the Move tour:



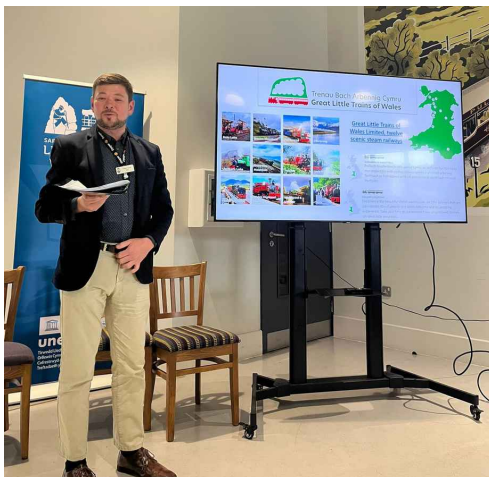
·Art workshop with artist Jwls Williams at Nantlle Barracks:



A discussion panel and activities for children as part of the Bangor History Festival 2025:



·Thematic Workshop to discuss interpretation:



Creative workshop for families, Llanfair Quarry, with Mair Tomos Ifans:



One very special event we were able to host was an emotive and powerful lecture by Dafydd Wigley on the battle for compensation for slate quarrymen (Yr Aelwyd, Blaenau Ffestiniog):



Gwynedd and Eryri 2035

The Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy Partnership 2035 has continued to implement plans to support a sustainable visitor economy in the area. Particular attention has been paid to responding to local priorities, infrastructure improvements, sustainable transport, volunteering schemes and Gwynedd and Eryri ambassador schemes as well as communication and marketing campaigns to encourage visitors to respect the area and prepare before visiting.

Close collaboration continues between the Llechi Cymru team and Cyngor Gwynedd's Tourism, Marketing and Events Service.

The latest information on the Partnership's activities can be found [here](#).

Residents' Survey

Cyngor Gwynedd carries out a tourism survey for residents of the county on an annual basis, to better understand the views of local communities on tourism. Residents were asked if a World Heritage Site was relevant to their community and to answer some questions about the impact of World Heritage status.

The findings of the first survey in 2024 stated:

Table 11: When you consider your community, do you believe that the World Heritage Site has:

	Yes	A little	No
Created prosperity and added pride amongst residents	39.8%	33.8%	26.3%
Increased the number visiting	42.0%	36%	22.3%
Created challenges in terms of infrastructure	19.9%	26.4%	53.7%

For those who responded (yes or a little) that a World Heritage Site caused challenges in terms of infrastructure, they were asked what type of challenges these were. 486 respondents answered "yes" or "a little", and of these, 88.1% believed that there were parking challenges, 66.7% noted litter challenges, and 26.5% noted damage or vandalism.

It is encouraging to see that the majority of respondents see the World Heritage Site as something positive that creates excitement and pride locally. In term of challenges, we are trying to find solutions or mitigation methods to minimise impacts on residents. The 2025 survey has been conducted, and we are awaiting the results.



7. Learning about the Slate Landscape

A key objective is to ensure that the World Heritage Site is a hub for shared learning and research, to foster an understanding and appreciation of the values and attributes of this landscape, and to educate residents and visitors on the uniqueness of our special area.

Education and Skills Sub-group

Following a request from partners through the World Heritage Site Benefitting Sub-group, we have established an Education Sub-group. The purpose of the group is to bring together World Heritage Site partners to share knowledge and resources, facilitate opportunities for collaboration, ensure consistency, avoid duplication and think strategically about the field of education across the site. Capacity is a challenge for many of us in the heritage sector and it is hoped that members of the group will be able to work together on activities, support each other and seek funding for projects.

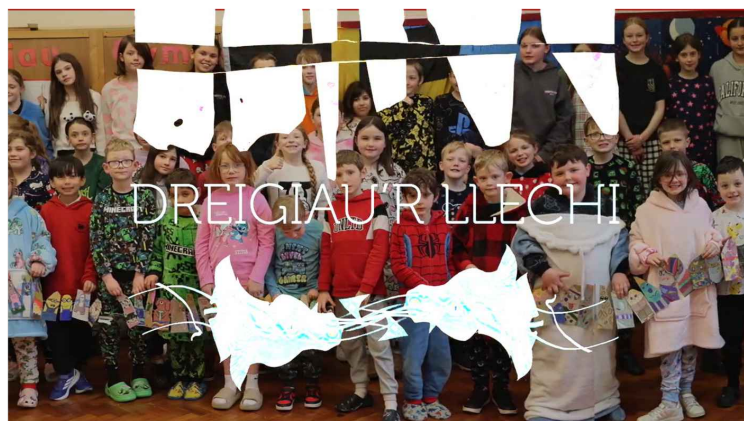
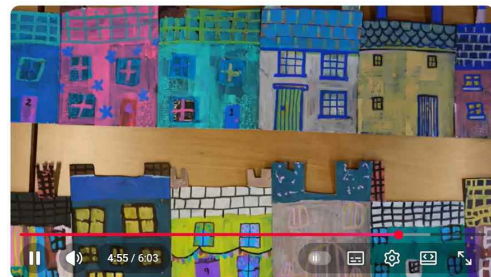
Primary School Workshops

Between March and July 2025, LleCHI LleNI's Learning and Skills Development Officer, Ffion Gwyn, co-ordinated and led sessions in twelve schools in component parts 5, 1 and 2 in conjunction with the Archives Education Service, the National Slate Museum and local partners. In the Porthmadog area, Llechen Lân (a local roofing company) provided sessions giving children the opportunity to handle slate - really bringing heritage to life. Songs Ffion has composed have been very popular with the children. See examples of children's work in the films below:

[Ysgol Cefn Coch \(click\)](#)



[Ysgol Borth y Gest \(click\)](#)



Young Ambassadors Scheme

We are very busy recruiting young people between the ages of 13-16 living in Gwynedd to become Young Slate Ambassadors. There will be an opportunity to learn more about their history and heritage, take part in outdoor activities, creative workshops, meet new people and develop skills. All activities take place within the World Heritage Site once a month. Transport will be arranged, and all activities will be free of charge and under the care of Yr Urdd Outdoor Service and the Llechi Cymru team.

It is a very good opportunity for those who are thinking considering a career in environment, heritage, tourism, sport, history or leisure. The scheme will provide new experiences and can contribute to volunteering hours or community participation for courses such as the Welsh Bacalaureate.

To find out more watch this **short film**:



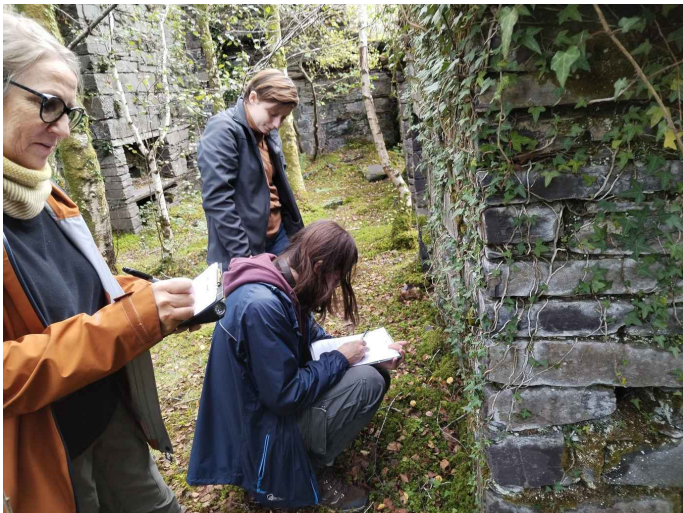
Bangor University

History, Heritage and Archaeology Department

The slate landscape has been invaluable for Bangor University's MA in Global Heritage, offering students a unique opportunity to engage directly with a World Heritage Site on the university's doorstep. This exceptional resource provides hands-on experience in heritage and archaeology, embedding practical fieldwork and site-based learning into our teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The slate landscape is embedded throughout our curriculum, where it serves as a springboard for global heritage studies - using the local to illuminate the global. We have also been fortunate enough to welcome guest speakers from across the Llechi Cymru community, whose contributions provide our students and researchers with invaluable real-world insights and perspectives.

The significance of the landscape extends beyond formal degree programmes. We have seen increased interest from the local community, with the site now featuring as part of our adult education short courses.

Project Dorothea



Images: © Bangor University



Dorothea Pumped Hydro and Bangor University continue to work together in a long-term partnership to deliver Project Dorothea. This year, our work has focused on archaeological recording, conservation of industrial heritage, community engagement, and skills development for students. The main focus of activity centred on the slate cutting shed, a scheduled monument and part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site. The structure was archaeologically recorded by a combined team of Bangor University students and, for the first time, veterans participating through Alabaré's Boots on the Ground initiative. Their involvement provided a valuable opportunity to gain hands-on heritage experience, strengthen CVs, and develop practical skills in the unique context of the slate landscape.

Project Dorothea has also been engaging with the public through guided tours of the site.



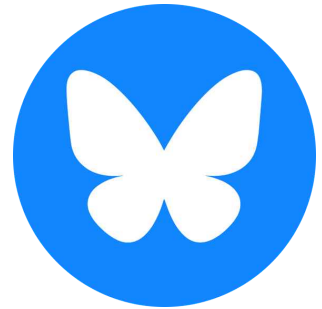
PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY



8. Further Information



For the latest information, follow us on social media:



Quarterly updates are prepared to share information with stakeholders about what has happened over the previous months, which can be found on [our website here](#).

Email address: llechi@gwynedd.llyw.cymru.

Website: www.llechi.cymru

Thank You

Thanks to all our partners and everyone who has been involved in the work of Llechi Cymru over the past year, we look forward to continuing to work with you over the next period and continuing to celebrate and share our special landscape with our communities, businesses, visitors and the world.





DATHLU'R DIRWEDD

llechi



CELEBRATING
THE



late
LANDSCAPE