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# Our Wild Coast – Final Evaluation report

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A report to:  
North Wales Wildlife Trust

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## Glossary

Acronym / Key words	Definition / Description
John Muir Awards	The John Muir Award encourages people of all backgrounds to connect with, enjoy and care for wild places. To achieve an award, participants must meet the four challenges, complete the required time commitment, and gain an understanding of why they are participating. There are three levels of award: Discovery (four days/25+ hours minimum commitment); Explorer (eight days/5+ hours) and Conserver (20 days/125+ hours across at least six months). More information is available at <a href="http://www.johnmuirtrust.org/john-muir-award">www.johnmuirtrust.org/john-muir-award</a>
NLCF	National Lottery Community Fund
NWWT	North Wales Wildlife Coast
OBF	Our Bright Future
OWC	Our Wild Coast
The 'Three Asks'	The 'three asks' came about as a result of an Our Bright Future campaign asking young people about the one thing they would like to change for the environment. The ideas were collated and three themes emerged - Ask 1: more time spent learning in and about nature; Ask 2: support to get into environmental jobs; Ask 3: policy makers, employers, businesses, schools and charities to pay more attention to the needs of young people and the environment.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 OB3 Research was commissioned by the North Wales Wildlife Trust (NWWT) to provide external evaluation expertise and support to the organisation in its delivery of the 'Our Wild Coast' (OWC) project.
- 1.2 The aim of the evaluation was to assess the effectiveness and impacts of OWC in achieving its overall aim and outcomes. The specific evaluation objectives included the need to:
- assess the appropriateness of the project's design and delivery in relation to the identified need (as set out in the project application)
  - assess the progress of the project in meeting its aims and key outcomes
  - evaluate the project's performance against targets and deliverables
  - assess the difference made and impact of the project to beneficiaries (both hard and soft outcomes)
  - identify and determine the nature of any unintended outcomes (positive or negative) not covered by the outcomes or targets
  - consider the wider impact of the project
  - identify scope for further work.
- 1.3 OWC was a pioneering five-year scheme with the aim of improving the lives and prospects of young people in North Wales through participation in coastal conservation, community events and outdoor activities.
- 1.4 The project was part of a wider portfolio of 31 projects, all of which supported young people to lead change in their local environment and communities, under a UK-wide social movement called 'Our Bright Future' (OBF), funded by the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF). The project received £935,324 over the five-year period towards the total cost of £966,572.
- 1.5 The activities undertaken as part of the project intended to contribute to four main outcomes mainly:
- **Outcome 1:** Increased awareness of 1,440 young people in North Wales about the 'specialness' of their coastal environment and how the vocational skills they have developed can continue to contribute to its conservation
  - **Outcome 2:** Improvement in the environmental condition of 30 existing designated sites around the North Wales coast due to the intervention of young people

- **Outcome 3:** The creation or identification of 64 new sites of wildlife value as a result of projects led by young people in their local communities
- **Outcome 4:** Increased community cohesion as a result of wider involvement in the project's activities.

1.6 This is the final evaluation report by OB3 as part of the external evaluation provided to NWWT and covers implementation from April 2020 until project closure. It is also a summative review of the project across its duration.

1.7 The evaluation process has included:

- an inception stage – which focussed on developing an agreed logic model for the project and provided support to set up self-evaluation materials for the project team
- a first interim evaluation review (covering up to end December 2017) which provided an update on emerging policy developments and an initial reporting on cumulative results
- a mid-term evaluation report (covering up to the end of December 2018) which included a desk-based review and analysis of data and evidence, feedback from participants of the project to date and interviews with project staff
- a second interim evaluation review (covering up to end March 2020) which focussed on analysis of monitoring data, beneficiary data and project outcome evidence collated by the project team.

### **Structure of this report**

1.1 This report is presented in seven chapters as follows:

- chapter one: this introduction to the report
- chapter two: an outline of the review methodology
- chapter three: an overview of the Our Wild Coast project and the key developments and recommendations made across the evaluation process to date
- chapter four to six: outline the key findings in relation to implementation, performance against outputs and outcomes, impacts and lessons learned
- chapter seven: provides conclusions and recommendations.

## 2. Evaluation Methodology

2.1 This chapter sets out the method deployed for undertaking this final review and outlines some key methodological considerations.

### **Method**

2.2 The final review, which was undertaken between January-May 2021 encompassed the following elements of work:

- undertaking a thorough desk-based review including an analysis of monitoring data, beneficiary feedback, steering group and local action forum minutes and project outcomes collated by NWWT
- drafting research instruments for use with staff, stakeholders, and beneficiaries
- undertaking four face-to-face meetings with core project staff
- undertaking a series of six interviews via Teams with key stakeholders (including individual project leads such as teachers, community group leaders and OBF)
- drafting a short online survey which was sent to all project participants that had taken part in the OWC project from its establishment. The survey utilised Snap software and received 31 responses
- undertaking qualitative research with project participants including
  - observing a local area forum meeting via Zoom
  - conducting a series of five online ‘focus groups’ (via Teams) and gaining views of 30 young people
- triangulating the different sources of data, information, and evidence
- drafting this final evaluation report.

### **Methodological considerations**

2.3 Several issues should be considered that have affected the methodology and the evidence available as part of this final review.

2.4 The on-going impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that both the methodological approach for this final review and the reporting approach has been adapted. Our original aim was to meet with project beneficiaries face-to-face and observe activities that they were taking part in as part of OWC. Due to the lockdown this was not possible and therefore a series of online focus groups were arranged instead.

- 2.5 Similarly, all project leads, and stakeholders were interviewed via Teams rather than face to face.
- 2.6 In delivering our findings and recommendations we are mindful of the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the ability of the OWC project to deliver activities during its final year, and therefore consideration of the context is duly made. Any specific learning and positive unintended consequences of the pandemic on the way the project is delivered have also been highlighted.



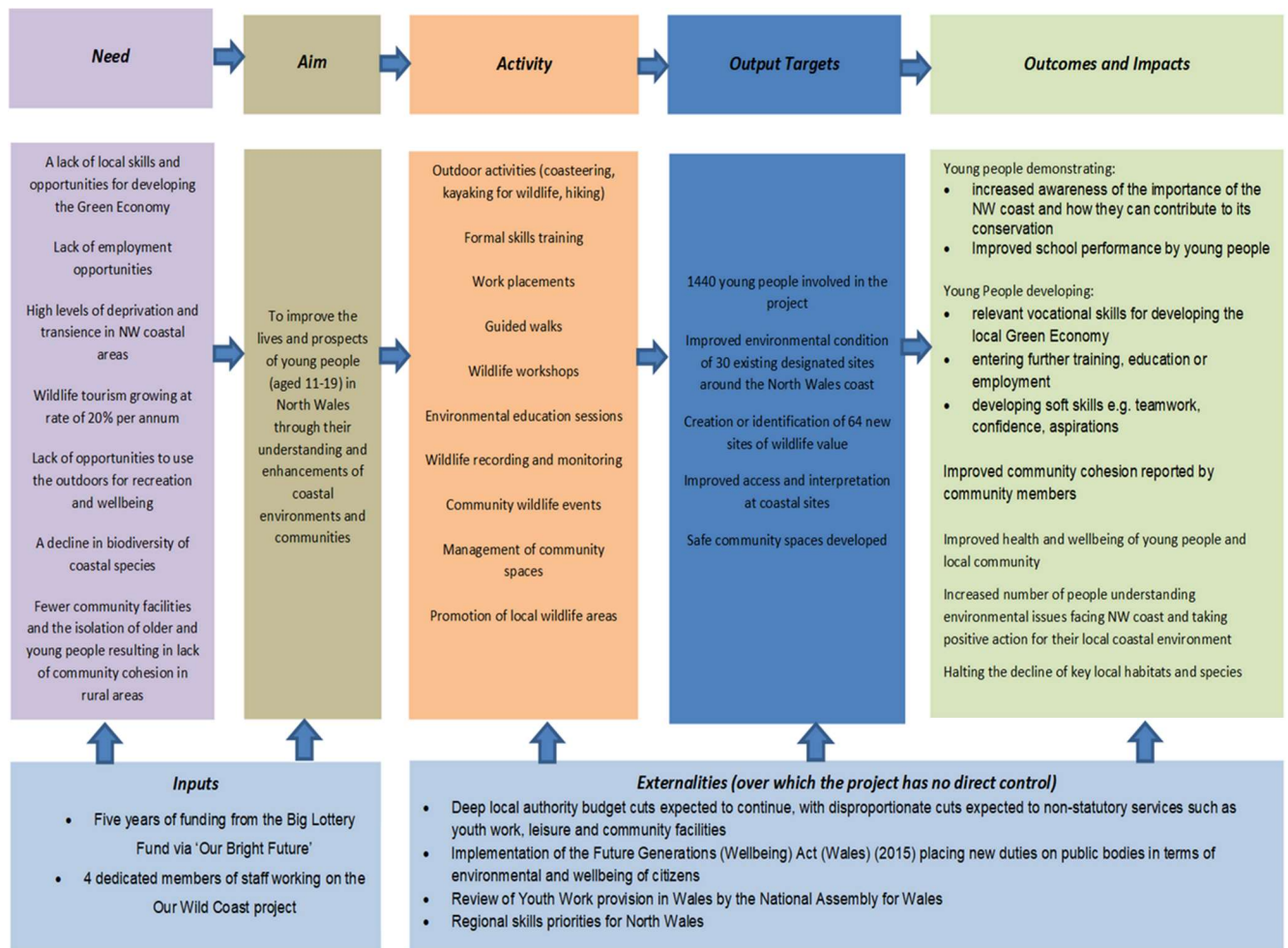
### 3. Overview of Our Wild Coast and key findings to date

3.1 This chapter outlines the original purpose, aims and objectives of OWC and provides a synopsis of the key findings and recommendations of the evaluation process to date.

#### Theory of Change model

3.2 At the outset, OB3 set about developing a Theory of Change model for the OWC based on a desk-based review of documentation and a workshop with project staff. The initial model is outlined at Figure 3.1. It includes the output targets from the original bid that have been reported on throughout and a series of outcomes and impacts that OWC expected to deliver.

**Figure 3.1: Original OWC Programme Logic Model**



#### Interim review (2017)

3.3 The evidence provided for the interim evaluation review suggested that the OWC project was developing its activities in line with the original aim and objectives of the project. The project was successfully engaging with many young people across a wide range of age-groups and community settings and delivering meaningful conservation activity.

- 3.4 Some early issues with the delivery approach were identified and a decision was made to focus on fewer groups from Year 2 onwards so that groups could engage more regularly with project officers and be of sufficient size as to ensure that activities could take place. The re-allocation of funds and the intention to plan activities in advance, with a specific focus or aim identified for each group was also identified as a sensible adjustment to the delivery approach.
- 3.5 The evidence, even at this early stage, suggested that there was a strong culture of ‘continuous improvement’, with open and honest dialogue between project team members and a strong desire and willingness to improve project delivery, to try different approaches and to capture ‘what works’.
- 3.6 The following recommendations were made for Year 2 onwards:

**Recommendation 1:**

The project should agree an approach to capturing evidence from participants that was not overly laborious but was consistent across the three regions of delivery.

**Recommendation 2:**

Greater detailed evidence needs to be captured for Outcomes 1 and 2, particularly to demonstrate how the project has increased environmental awareness amongst the young people involved in the groups. The project team should also consider how evidence could be captured for Outcome 3 and re-assess the suitability of Outcome 4

**Recommendation 3:**

To ensure partnerships are developed consideration should be given to setting up Local Action Forums in the two remaining regions

**Mid-Term evaluation (2018-19)**

- 3.7 The mid-term review of OWC reported on strong performance against outputs and outcomes to date, with the adaptations made to the original implementation model - working more intensely and flexibly with fewer groups - working well. It also reported on how the OWC had begun to focus on a younger age demographic, with an increased focus on working with hard-to-reach, disadvantaged or disaffected young people and achieving good intended and unintended outcomes as a result.
- 3.8 The interim report in 2017 first raised the issue of increasing cross-regional activity as part of the Our Wild Coast project. The mid-term evaluation reported that this would now be much

more realistic to achieve given the strong relationships established with many of the networks and community groups involved and could generate outcomes for participants in terms of providing new social interaction opportunities in less familiar environments.

- 3.9 The mid-term evaluation again noted that project officers were dedicated, hard-working and committed to the project but felt under time and resource pressure to sustain the level of activity and record their outcomes. It was also clear that the project was being well-managed and was firmly rooted within the wider NWWT organisation.
- 3.10 The project continued to achieve strong outcomes and was on track to hit its targets in terms of numbers of participants involved in its activities. However, it was continuing to grapple with the need to monitor and record its wildlife protection activity in relation to Outcome 3.
- 3.11 Similarly, the mid-term evaluation raised the issue of the fit of Outcome 4 within the project and that looking to deliver against the ethos and principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) had become more relevant than the priorities of the then out-dated Community Cohesion strategy that the outcome was originally linked to.
- 3.12 The following recommendations were made in the mid-term review:

**Recommendation 1:**

As there continues to be some suggestion that groups are not clear of what the project sets out to achieve a draft programme should be developed in partnership with participants

**Recommendation 2:**

We continue to recommend that local action forums be established, particularly in light of the need to ensure the continuation and sustainability of activities

**Recommendation 3:**

Our Wild Coast should look to organise cross-regional environmental and outdoor activity during the remaining cycles of activity.

**Recommendation 4:**

NWWT should consider whether resources could be re-allocated from project management to on-the-ground delivery. Increasing officer roles to full time should be explored in this context.

**Recommendation 5:**

Projects should adopt a wider definition of what can be reported against Outcome 3 and guidance on this shared amongst project staff. The project should also discuss this with the OBF programme to seek approval for the change.

**Recommendation 6:**

Early evidence suggests that health and well-being outcomes for participants is a key unintended benefit being achieved by the project. We recommend that Our Wild Coast considers ways of capturing these health and well-being outcomes.

**Interim Review (2020)**

- 3.13 The overwhelming success of the OWC project at this stage of its delivery was already clear. The evidence clearly showed that it had engaged with a vast number of young people across the breadth of the North Wales region, and had substantial, long-term involvement with a significant percentage of these individuals. The project team had worked hard to establish relationships with schools and community groups and as a result some of the key outcomes have already been achieved (Outcomes 1 and 2).
- 3.14 Furthermore, it was encouraging to see significant progress underway with Outcomes 3 and 4, with a clear plan in place for achieving these over the remaining period. In particular, the success of the local youth forum in Anglesey and the roll-out of the same model in the other two regions was praiseworthy and had the potential to provide a sustainable legacy for the project, anchored in the community.
- 3.15 Without the impact of COVID-19, the main conclusion to this report would have been to simply carry on with what the project had planned. Staff had a clear realisation of where the focus needed to be during the final year, and the experiences of previous years would have made the delivery of group activities a relatively easy aspect, utilising the tried-and-tested approaches that had worked so well previously.
- 3.16 In its final year, it was recommended that the OWC project would benefit from a communication and advocacy strategy. It had already demonstrated how powerful this activity could be and it was also a clear priority for the OBF programme. At a time when, in Wales too, the Welsh Government was looking anew at its approach to youth work and support for young people, the OWC was well-placed to contribute to the conversation and influence future policy.
- 3.17 We made the following recommendations for the final year of the project:

**Recommendation 1:**

The focus of the project team for the final year should be on achieving the targets associated with Outcomes 3 and 4.

**Recommendation 2:**

We recognise that the outbreak of the coronavirus will make it difficult to add substantially now to any outcomes. As a result, it is important that all activity to date is retrospectively captured and fully reported upon, particularly in relation to Outcome 3 and 4.

**Recommendation 3:**

In light of the coronavirus outbreak, it is important that the OWC project consider how any activities in relation to Outcome 1 and 4 can continue to be achieved digitally.

**Recommendation 4:**

The OWC project should seek to utilise the renewed interest in the local environment and in exploring the outdoors as a result of the Covid-19 lockdown as an opportunity to highlight the importance of the outdoors and the environment for young people's mental health and wellbeing. The project should develop a clear communication and advocacy plan for the remaining period to contribute to the 3 asks of the OBF programme.

**Recommendation 5:**

The outbreak of the Covid-19 coronavirus will have impacted on the ability of the project to undertake its activities. We therefore recommend that the OWC project team discuss with OBF/NCLF the various options available to them to fulfil the remaining requirements of the project. This should include a discussion around the reprofiling of targets, the reallocation of funding to more appropriate activity and/or the possibility of further extending the timescale for the project.

## 4. Implementation and management

4.1 This section considers whether the OWC project activities were in keeping with its original aims and objectives and its alignment with the programme level priorities of Our Bright Future. It also looks at the implementation of the project over the past year, the impact and response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its management and staffing by NWWT.

### **Rationale and Need**

4.2 In general, staff and stakeholders were of the view that from an early stage, the health focus and benefits that could be derived for individuals from OWC activities was going to be just as important as supporting young people to become more connected to the environment.

4.3 It also became apparent that the nature of the groups that were being engaged were such that the first few months of activities needed to focus on building trust and developing a relationship with young people rather than immediately aspiring to change the local environment. The OWC project demonstrated the importance of building up engagement over time.

4.4 Having said this, stakeholders felt that OWC had absolutely remained true to its original aims: ‘as any project, it develops to be different, but the core direction and feeling of it has remained steady – the ethos is still there – the heart remains’. Whilst the creation of new habitats has been a less prominent aspect of the project, the development of communities and wellbeing of participants has grown. Thus, OWC became a vehicle to support individuals on their own personal development journey alongside developments that improved local nature habitats.

4.5 OWC found its feet early on and was clear about its approach and new structure – working with fewer groups in a more intense manner. Its evolution has also provided NWWT with key lessons about how to develop projects of this nature in future. Building enough flexibility into a project involving young people is important, from the outset – as is a need to follow the lead of young people – by engaging with them early on and asking them what they want.

4.6 The other strength of the project is how it has been able to be flexible to respond to the needs of individual groups – a group working with disengaged young people demonstrating some challenging behaviours will require a different approach to that for a group of home educated young people or those with learning disabilities. Each will have their own requirements and OWC has adapted and followed the lead of young people within their

groups and adapted to the different strengths and skillsets of its individual project officers. As a result, staff and stakeholders feel that the project has been able to achieve much bigger impacts and leave a legacy.

## **Implementation of OWC**

### Getting involved

4.1 During the focus groups, participants were asked how they first got involved with OWC. The responses demonstrate the wide networks and variety of approaches taken by the project team to recruit to the project. There were also examples of multiple cohorts attending OWC from the same schools or community groups which also demonstrate the strong links developed between the project and certain groups of young people over the duration of the project. Participants heard about the project in several ways:

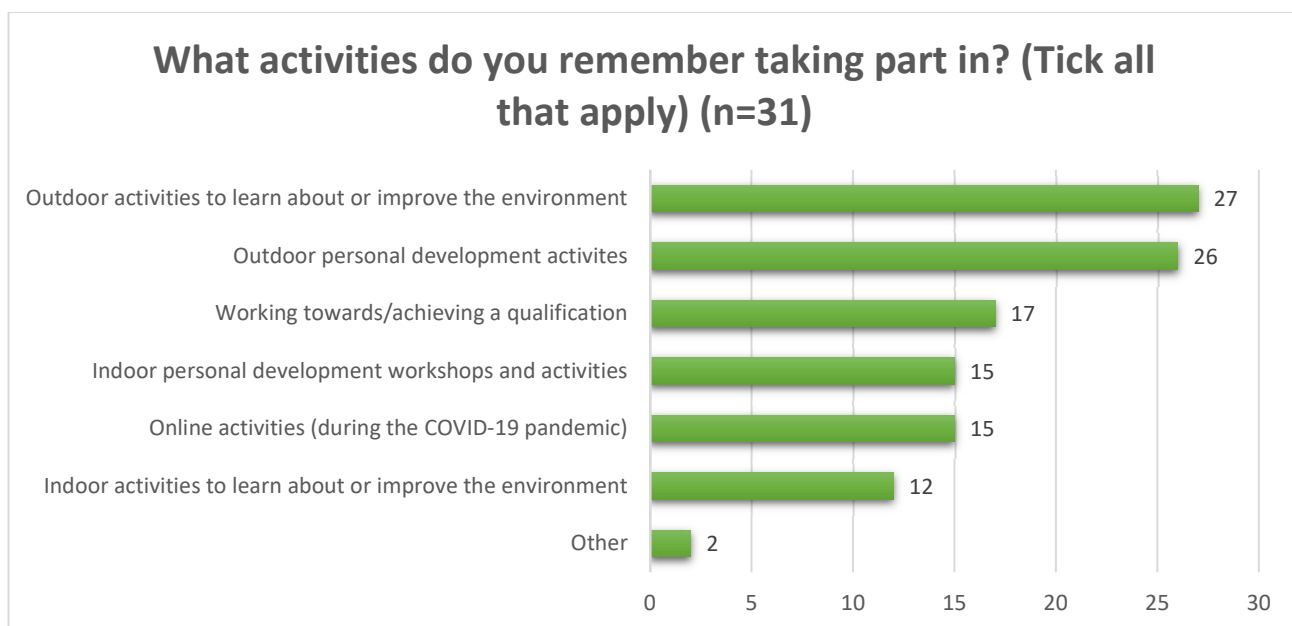
- Home-schooled participants had joined after a parent saw the project advertised on social media
- Some had joined because they had heard about it through family or friends at their community group or school who had previously attended activities: 'My brother really enjoyed being part of the project and so I wanted to join'
- An offer to join had been open to all pupils at one school and they had either attended a taster session or received a talk from an OWC officer who had explained the project: 'it sounded like a good project and an opportunity to get outdoors more'.

### OWC groups and their activities

4.2 Staff and stakeholders all commented that the approach to hosting groups and organising activities had become finely tuned by the final year. The first two years provided an opportunity to experiment and see what worked. The project team had grown in confidence by the final year and had big plans for the final year of OWC: 'The model was working – young people were engaging, and we gained traction'. Staff commented how recruiting in 2019 had become much easier – to the point where young people were turned down from some groups and application processes had to be introduced in some schools for teachers to decide on participation: 'we were victims of our own success!' Similarly, by the final year a range of activities were offered to groups and more habitat creation activities included in the mix.

- 4.3 A particular highlight mentioned by several stakeholders was the Ysgol Tir Morfa garden development. This was described as ‘a fantastic success’ and was attributed to the ‘passion and determination’ of both the OWC project officer and the teachers at the school in enabling young people at the school to come together to design and create the wildlife friendly safe – all achieved in a COVID-friendly manner.
- 4.4 Project staff also mentioned how the John Muir awards had worked effectively as a framework to engage many young people with the outdoors – enabling the participants to understand conservation and share, via display boards or a community event, what they had learned.
- 4.5 The COVID-19 pandemic had a huge impact on the ability of the OWC project team to work with groups. With lockdown it became impossible to meet and to develop rapport with new groups. The establishment of new groups was halted at the end of March, and the period until May 2021 was uncertain and difficult, and only the local area forums remained. Trips and visits were cancelled. By May, project staff had been furloughed.
- 4.6 In our survey with OWC project participants we asked what activities they remembered taking part in. As the responses at Figure 5.1 show, the outdoor activities – to learn about the environment, make improvements to the environment or undertake personal development activities were those most commonly recalled:

Figure 4.1: What activities do you remember taking part in with the OWC project?





4.7 Participants were asked why they decided to take part in the OWC project, and the responses can be categorised into four main categories. Participants told us that they joined the project because it seemed interesting, they liked the coast and nature, or they wanted to learn about and help their local environment. The other most likely response was that it was an opportunity to gain a qualification or work experience. Participants liked the fact that they would gain a qualification or that it provided them with career-relevant volunteering experience. Others mentioned that they took part in the project to have fun or spend time with friends. A few mentioned that they saw the project as an opportunity to boost or build their confidence.

#### Local action forums (LAF) and traineeships

4.8 The local action forums (Môn Gwyrdd and the North Coast) had been established by the final year of the project. The Anglesey based local action forum was now mature, having been established in 2016, and stakeholders described how it was going well, with young people increasingly taking ownership of the agenda and discussion. The Anglesey LAF was successful in a Grow Wild funding bid for £4k and staff and beneficiaries commented on how this had boosted the confidence of those involved. The intention in the final year of the project was for the North Coast LAF to restore a community woodland and integrate its activities with local communities. Initially in the final year of OWC the LAFs organised games, community displays, nature led walks and beach cleans. Whilst some of these activities could not continue due to the COVID-19 outbreak, stakeholders mentioned how the LAFs continued to be hosted as online forums and had managed to maintain an 'extraordinary level of enthusiasm' throughout lockdown. Forum group participants were praised for the way they diversified their thinking and ran innovative initiatives including Minecraft competitions, a Christmas campaign, Facebook live quizzes and sharing garden photos.

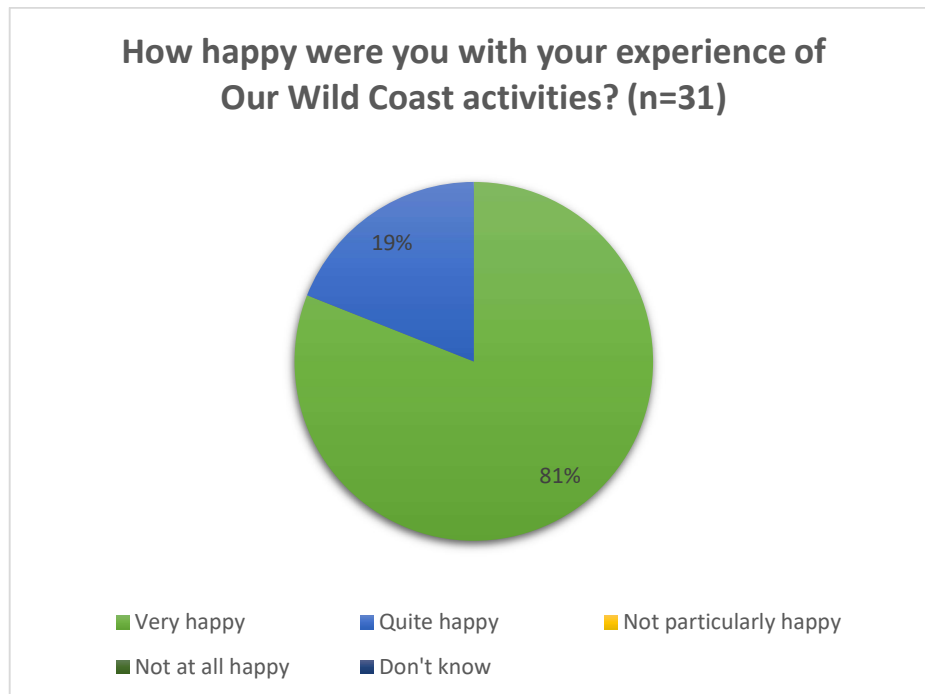
4.9 The traineeships introduced in 2019 and continued in 2020 also resulted in the recruitment of new members with new ideas. was deemed by staff to be a huge success: 'this was arguably our biggest success this year'. Thirteen young people took part in traineeship opportunities and a further five were involved in a paid internship programme.

4.10 Whilst the final year of the LAFs had not been as expected, nevertheless, stakeholders felt that they had learned a lot from the process and that this would be used to inform the new Climate Change funded NLCF project to be managed by NWWT.

#### Satisfaction with the OWC experience

4.11 We asked participants about their OWC experience and how satisfied they were with the activities offered. The response was overwhelmingly positive with a 100% satisfaction rate:

Figure 4.2: How happy were you with your experience of OWC activities?



4.12 Participants were asked what they enjoyed the most about being part of the OWC project. The responses generally fell into three main types of responses. Firstly, participants noted how much they simply enjoyed being outdoors, taking part in activities or exploring the local environment:

- 'exploring new areas'
- 'being outdoors, 'to go out', 'being outside with friends'.

4.13 Secondly, a set of responses highlighted their enjoyment in learning new skills or learning more about the environment:

- 'learning about the animals and doing new things'
- 'learning about all the different types of nature that is right on my doorstep and how to identify it'
- 'I enjoyed the outdoor learning aspects most'.

4.14 Participants noted how the project had given them a new perspective and that they look at things differently when visiting the coast now, with a newfound understanding of the places they visit. Evidently, being involved in OWC had helped them appreciate their local

environment more. Several participants at the focus groups also mentioned how they now enjoy passing on their knowledge to family and friends.

- 4.15 Thirdly, several participants highlighted their enjoyment in being able to work as part of a wider team or group of young people, including working within the OWC forum:
- ‘forum meetings and getting together with new groups of young people’
  - ‘I loved getting to know people in the areas that have similar goals and learn from each other’
  - ‘I enjoyed the group activities...and having fun with the team’.
- 4.16 Participants were asked whether there was anything that could be improved about the activities of OWC. By far the most common response was that there was nothing that could improve on the experience. In addition, several participants took the opportunity to praise the project:
- ‘Nothing! The activities were eye opening, helped me learn massively and the people running it were so lovely, helpful and informative’
  - ‘the project was 5 star. It is just a shame it had to come to an end. I have no suggestions for improvements as it was fantastic’.
- 4.17 Of the suggestions for improvements made, the vast majority simply asked for ‘more’ of the activities offered or more opportunities for in-depth learning:
- ‘I’d have liked a few more learning opportunities. I enjoy learning about almost anything’
  - ‘perhaps a more in-depth teaching of individual species’
  - ‘the outdoor activities were more frequent’
  - ‘mwy ohonynt’ [more of them]
  - ‘doing it more often’.
- 4.18 A key strength of the project, highlighted through the myriad of comments received via the focus groups and the survey, were the project officers who worked closely with participants. Project officers were consistently mentioned and praised for their knowledge and ability to organise suitable activities, often developed to fit with particular curriculum requirements too.

4.19 It was also often remarked how fond participants were of the project officers they worked with and how they had been inspired by their passion, enthusiasm, and warmth:

- ‘The staff are all amazing and always approachable’
- ‘Charlotte is funny, adventurous, easy to get along with. [She] has made the project: she is so passionate about everything – she even did a tour of her own garden through a live link during lockdown’
- ‘Eurig is great – he makes us want to take part’
- ‘Andy has been brilliant – he is an excellent role model for young people. He is a very positive mentor’.

### **Management and staffing**

4.20 Stakeholders reflected on the learning points from a management point of view. Many stated how at project inception there can be a tendency to ‘get blinded and pursue engagement’ in order to get the project off the ground, and as a result time was spent trying to appease people or work around groups that weren’t entirely committed. Having taken a step back and realising that they needed a more realistic approach, with five groups per officer rather than four – then the planning, delivery and evaluation of activities and sessions became more manageable.

4.21 It was generally felt that the management and staffing structure had been ‘about right’ and once their approach became ‘tried and tested’ and well-established, the OWC project officers were able to maintain momentum. Several stakeholders praised the mix of skills and experience across the project team and although it was described by one staff member as a ‘happy accident’ it proved a highly successful mix. Within the team there was an outdoor instructor, a youth worker and a scientist. Across the team they had the ability to establish rapport with young people, establish youth forums, plan and structure activities, utilise their various life experiences to support young people – including groups with real challenges and behavioural problems. Having a good, strong, and complementary team was deemed by stakeholders to have been responsible for the success of the project. The management of NWWT was also praised – both in terms of being supportive of project staff: ‘the number one priority is the staff’ and for the reporting side: ‘their reports are on time...and the writing style brings it alive. They mention what hasn’t gone well and how they found solutions’.

- 4.22 A few stakeholders felt that the marketing and communication side of OWC could have been stronger. The website could have included more information about the project and more regular input onto Facebook and Instagram would have been well received. However, stakeholders also acknowledged that they did not have the necessary resources within the project to deliver on communications: ‘but in future we could be clearer’ and the suggestion of a marketing plan from the outset could help improve their online engagement.

### **Alignment with Our Bright Future**

- 4.23 Stakeholders mentioned that OWC engaged well with the OBF programme and were one of the more active projects, particularly in terms of arranging and facilitating exchange visits with other OBF projects. In total OWC hosted five weekend visits for other project representatives.
- 4.24 OWC was often described as ‘unique’ in the sense that they were one of only two OBF projects in Wales – and the only fully bilingual one, and one which was more rural in nature. As such, other projects, especially urban based ones were interested in seeing the more unstructured approach of OWC and the way the local environment was utilised: ‘they’ve definitely engaged and share loads. If a project rang to ask, they would always be more than happy to share ideas’. Whilst OWC was described as an ‘outlier’ project within the OBF portfolio, it was also seen as one which was able to contribute across all the programme aims. In particular the youth forums were highlighted by stakeholders as something which enabled young people to have more say and contribute to the ‘3 asks’.
- 4.25 OWC attended OBF conferences, events and regional workshops throughout the programme duration and took part in their online activities such as webinars over the past year. One key highlight mentioned by several stakeholders was the OBF parliamentary reception which provided a new experience for OWC participants to attend and take part in such an event. Stakeholders also praised the OWC project for getting involved in the policy aspect and sharing the learning on a wider platform.

### **COVID-19 pandemic**

- 4.26 The final year of OWC has been a challenging one. A project which requires face to face contact and indoor and outdoor hands-on activities – particularly in the early stages with new cohorts of individuals who need to develop rapport and trust – is not one that can easily adapt to online delivery. The project had to cancel a number of activities at the start of the first lockdown but quickly realised that they had to try to continue to engage with young people in any way possible. This had mixed success – many of the groups have individuals

with learning needs and an online approach didn't work. Similarly, many of the school-based groups had individuals who were not engaging in classroom structured learning and had been chosen due to wanting to engage in outdoor activities and practical, hands-on learning.

- 4.27 OWC recognised that they could not continue to work with all the intended groups, and therefore focused on the groups who could and wanted to do something online. A number of innovative activities were organised during lockdowns from Minecraft and Discord server gaming activities, asking individuals to share pictures of local walks and increasing social media content sharing. Facebook live quizzes were also arranged. From June until September 2020 all project officers were furloughed and therefore OWC project activities were halted (although this was also usually a quiet time for the project in terms of activities in any case). Some exciting activities that had been arranged such as the annual get-together of all groups and a trip to Scotland also had to be cancelled. In September, and with a window of opportunity to engage in some socially-distanced activities outside, project officers worked to make the most of the opportunity via socially distanced nature walks, online watch parties and debates.
- 4.28 The Local Action Forums (LAF) have been able to continue throughout the pandemic and have provided young people with opportunities to take the lead. Forum members have developed in confidence – chairing meetings, arranging quizzes and hosting events.
- 4.29 It was also noted that OBF as the over-arching programme had been very understanding and flexible from the outset of the COVID-19 outbreak and had consistently reiterated the NLCF message that in times like this the funding could be used to do something positive in their community. This provided OWC with the reassurance that they could move funds around and change their project delivery as required: 'that gave us confidence'.

## 5. Outcomes and impacts

5.1 This chapter reports on the OWC’s performance against its agreed key performance indicators over the course of the project and discusses the barriers and issues faced during delivery, particularly in the final year of the project as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This section also seeks to identify the main achievements of the OWC and presents evidence of the impacts and difference made by the OWC to participants and to the local environment of North Wales.

### Outputs and outcomes

5.2 Table 5.1 shows the total number of participants who participated in-depth in the OWC project:

Table 5.1 Cumulative data on participants of the Our Wild Coast project (as at December 2020)

<b>Age</b>	
11-14	194
15-19	235
20-24	83
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	242
Female	270
<b>Occupation</b>	
Full-time employment	1
Part-time employment	58
Full-time student (school/FE/HE)	425
Part-time student (school/FE/HE)	76
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>512</b>

Source: End of year report, 2020

5.3 Cumulative data obtained from quarterly reports and annual reports to the Our Bright Future programme also provide details of a strong performance against the four project outcomes:

Table 5.2 Cumulative performance against the four OWC project outcomes

<p><b>Outcome 1:</b> Increased awareness of 1,440 young people in North Wales about the ‘specialness’ of their coastal environment and how the vocational skills they develop can continue to contribute to its conservation</p>	<p>This target had already been achieved by end 2019, but additional participants involved in 2020 increased the results further. By the end of 2020, 1,516 young people had engaged with the project as demonstrated below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 512 young people formally registered within groups and maintained long-term engagement with the project</li> <li>• A further 49 young people engaged with the project’s activities at least once</li> <li>• An additional 955 young people were made aware of their coastal environment via presentations</li> <li>• The project annual reports show that a total of 23 participants gained AQA unit awards, 149 completed the John Muir Discover Award, 32 completed the John Muir Explore Award and 1 completed the John Muir Conserver award. All these awards were achieved solely on the OWC project, and some young people also progressed to higher awards.</li> <li>• A total of 23 young people also undertook a traineeship in the final two years of the project.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 2:</b> Improvement in the environmental condition of 30 designated sites around North Wales coast thanks to intervention of young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A cumulative total of 45 existing habitats was recorded</li> <li>• Community spaces improved included 14 beaches, 13 nature reserves, six school spaces, four woodlands, three parks/playgrounds, three river</li> </ul>



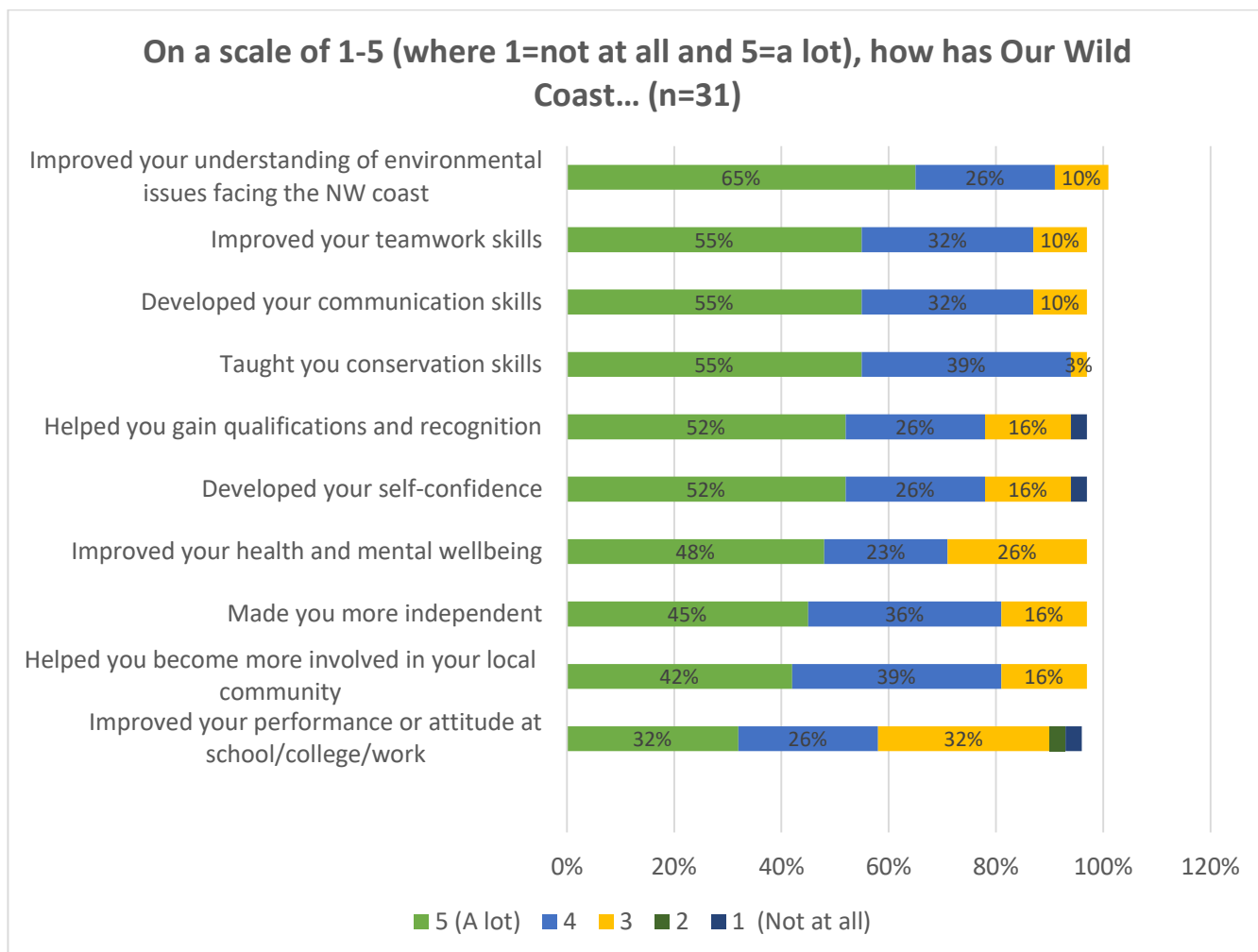
	catchments, a community garden and an allotment.
<b>Outcome 3:</b> Creation or identification of 64 new sites of wildlife value as a result of projects led by young people in their local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twelve new community spaces were created by the OWC project</li> <li>• Several new sites were developed in the final year including wildlife friendly school gardens, a wildflower space and new woodland areas</li> <li>• Activity in relation to this outcome was going to be the focus of the final year but the pandemic stopped much of the planned activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome 4:</b> Increased community cohesion as a result of wider involvement in the projects activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of three youth-led environmental forums in each of the project regions</li> <li>• Community engagement and lobbying activities held throughout the project duration (previously reported upon in the interim and mid-term evaluation reports).</li> </ul>

### Impacts and difference made

#### Impact on participants

- 5.4 100% of the participants who responded to the survey thought that OWC had a positive impact on them as individuals. Across the specific impacts listed in the survey, high responses were seen across the board in terms of what that impact was as demonstrated at Figure 5.1:

Figure 5.1: The impact of OWC on individuals



5.5 The comments received from the survey provided more detail on how OWC had impacted on individuals in terms of their improved understand of environmental issues and their conservation skills:

- ‘the course has given me the confidence to share the knowledge I have gained to educate other people’
- ‘the outdoor educational activities were useful as they gave me an insight into the role of education in conservation’
- ‘I know so much more about the environment and nature: the importance, diversity and preservation of wildlife’.

5.6 This feedback was reinforced during focus group discussions. Participants noted how they had become more aware of environmental issues and what they could do to help. They referred to

their enjoyment of activities such as litter picks and their passion to do more after the project ended, often roping in friends and family to help.

- 5.7 Several comments from the survey also highlighted how OWC had supported individuals in their personal development skills and their mental wellbeing:
- ‘the animal and plant identification has helped me through personal struggles where I have felt lonely and disconnected from ...people’
  - ‘the group activities were the most useful to me as it helped build my confidence while working and interacting with new people as a team’
  - ‘I improved my social skills’
  - ‘they helped me build confidence talking to large groups of people’
  - ‘it’s made me more confident around people and more willing to try things that I wouldn’t have otherwise considered doing’
  - ‘my daughters’ confidence, resilience and desire to learn has improved so much. It has had a knock-on effect on everything, including her wellbeing’.
- 5.8 This also came through strongly in the focus group discussions, with participants noting how the project had helped them with their confidence, social skills and wellbeing. Participants mentioned that being outdoors ‘felt good’ and that the project had made them go outdoors more rather than be ‘stuck at home. Several participants also highlighted how their involvement with the project had helped them during lockdown periods of the COVID-19 pandemic – with forum meetings in particular enabling them to keep in touch with acquaintances and providing them with a focus and a purpose.
- 5.9 Project staff also provided insights into the impact on individuals who had been involved in OWC activities. They described how, with some groups of individuals who were displaying behavioural issues, that the experience of OWC ‘felt like we’d performed an intervention...we really had some breakthroughs’. Staff described how young people who had not visited a beach or knew places existed locally had accessed something new and that it had opened their eyes. Feedback from parents asking for the online provision of OWC during lockdown to continue, even when attendance numbers were low because of the positive impact on some participants was also mentioned. Staff also mentioned anecdotal evidence of participants taking their families out to the local environment or those from challenging home backgrounds, blossoming and building in confidence – and felt that this could at least be attributed in no small part to their involvement with the project.

Figure 5.2 – Note from a participant’s parent

Jane<sup>1</sup> took part in the [traineeship scheme that NWWT ran in August]. Probably like all pupils this year, she had an emotionally turbulent spring and summer and had settled into an unspectacular but quiet desperation.

The apprenticeship scheme changed all that – she got her oomph back. She came home each evening rosy cheeked and positive, full of good ideas and funny stories...

She is now [at University] trying to put her newfound skills into practice...she has already discovered every rockpool within cycling distance!

Whilst I [was] already aware of the restorative properties of nature to one’s spirits and wellbeing, I am convinced that these properties are much enhanced by the kindness, enthusiasm, knowledge, and can-do spirit of the NWWT staff. Thank you.

5.10 OWC staff have also collated a vast amount of self-evaluation evidence from projects which again reflect the comments from the survey. An evaluation of the final year of the Môn Gwyrdd LAF provides a number of comments from participants. Completing the conservation traineeship during the lockdown was highlighted as a positive, and the fact that the forum continued to meet throughout lockdown even when staff were furloughed was also ‘a big deal’ for many participants:

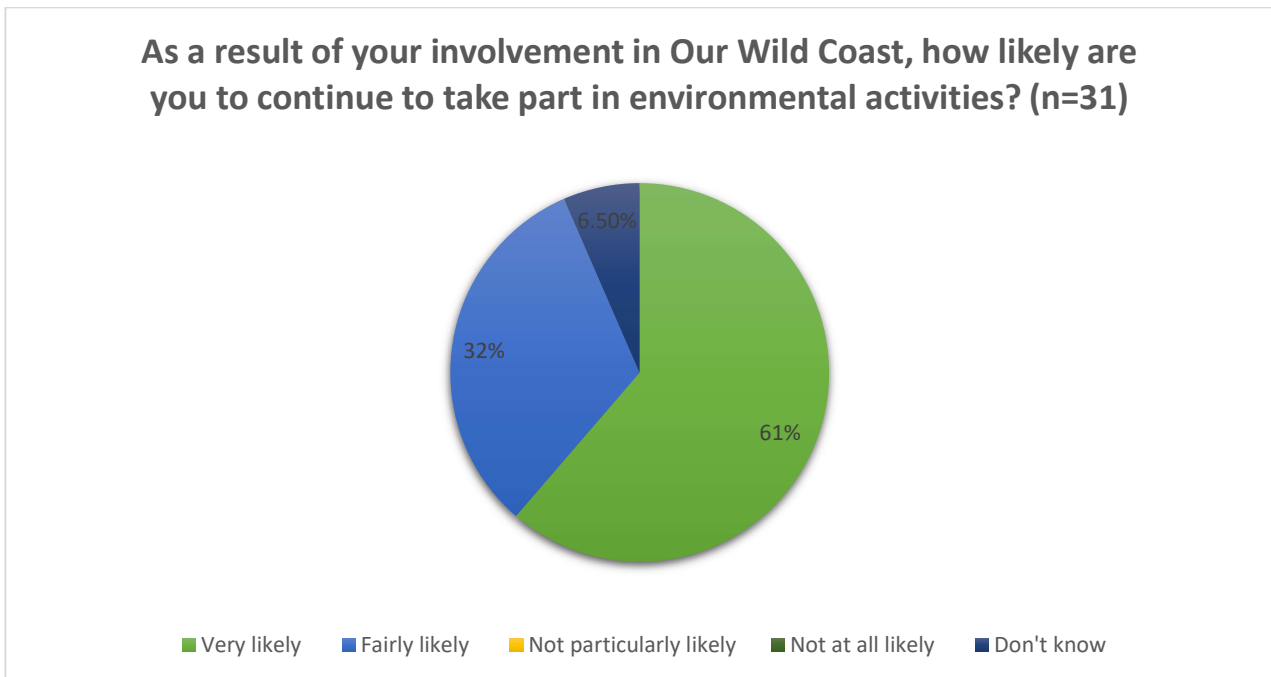
- ‘I think the project helped with my mental health [during lockdown] as it gave me something to focus on during the time when I wasn’t sure what was happening with everything else’
- ‘the project helped me with my mental health – it has kept me connected to the outside world and motivated me to get involved in activities’
- ‘the project has been amazing for my mental health, particularly during the first lockdown’.

5.11 This evaluation does not include a longitudinal element and cannot measure the extent of the impact of OWC on participants in the longer-term. However, participants who responded to the survey were nonetheless overwhelmingly of the view that their involvement in OWC meant that they would continue to contribute to environmental activities

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<sup>1</sup> Not her real name

Figure 5.3: Likelihood of continuing with environmental activities



- 5.12 When asked what their hopes and plans were for the future, a third of survey respondents were looking to develop a career in environment/conservation:
- 'to get a job in conservation and renewable energy'
  - 'I would like to become a marine biologist and travel to places to improve the environment'
  - rwyf yn bwriadu mynd i Coleg i wneud cwrs Rheoli Cefn Gwlad gan gynnwys Coedwigaeth' [*I intend to go to college to undertake a Rural Land Management with Forestry course*]
  - 'I hope I can get a job in a nature-based environment'.
- 5.13 Similar comments were received during focus group discussions, with participants noting how their participation in the project contributed to a John Muir Award that 'would look good on the CV' in future.
- 5.14 A further ten surveyed participants mentioned how they wanted to continue being involved in their local area or volunteer to improve their local environment:
- 'to continue volunteering with NWWT'
  - 'I would certainly like to continue volunteering and being involved in local action'
  - 'hopefully get more involved with nature'.

## 6. Sustainability and lessons learned

- 6.1 This chapter sets out the key lessons highlighted during fieldwork that should be considered in the design and delivery of any future youth provision. It also seeks to identify the anticipated future policy priorities and requirements for any environment-based provision to support young people in North Wales.

### **Sustainability**

- 6.2 From the discussions with staff and stakeholders it became apparent that the sustainability of OWC's activities had been forefront in the minds of project staff throughout. Several options had been explored including the option to package OWC into a scheme that could be offered for secondary schools – for example, the John Muir awards, and volunteering opportunities could be packaged for purchase. Initial discussions with schools had demonstrated that there was demand for such a service, and prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, some schools were on the verge of contracting a project officer to undertake this work on their behalf.
- 6.3 Discussions with project staff also show that they were quite pragmatic and realistic that there would not be a continuing funding stream that would enable OWC to continue in its current format but embedding aspects of the provision was considered a viable approach. For example, ensuring that there are opportunities to engage and encourage young people to become members of the NWWT and to be active volunteers. There are plans in place to link young people engaged in the OWC youth forums with their local volunteer branches and opportunities are being developed in association with these. Project staff have also worked to ensure strong linkages between individual groups and their local nature reserves. For example, the Home Education group has been linked with their nature reserve and another project is being connected to Countryside services in her area. The COVID-19 pandemic has scuppered plans somewhat, and project officers reported that their plans to make these linkages were more challenging as a result.
- 6.4 Another sustainable outcome from OWC has been the appointment of a young trustee who have been involved with the programme to the NWWT Council. This has been a successful aspect of the work and is something that the organisation is keen to continue with.
- 6.5 Most of the sites where environmental activity took place were on the nature reserves and will continue as part of the NWWT's wider work programme and any environmental improvements will carry on or be maintained.

6.6 NWWT has been successful in obtaining a £2.5M Climate Action Fund grant from the NLCF and stakeholders felt that this was testament to how much learning the Trust had taken on board regarding youth engagement and empowerment as a result of OWC – and its local youth forum activity in particular. Stakeholders also felt that the OWC project had provided a legacy at the NWWT as an organisation too. Traditionally the NWWT's core funding has always been on conservation, with the engagement aspect largely left to charitable funding and having to apply for funds on a regular basis. However, OWC had started a movement and generated interest in building capacity and expertise within the organisation so that youth provision could become a long-standing, sustainable provision in the future: 'we're not there yet but this project has become part of the fabric of NWWT for four years...it has started a culture shift'.

### **Lessons for the future**

6.7 One of the unintended consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic was perceived by stakeholders to be the recognition of the important link between health and being outdoors. As such, it was felt that there was an opportunity to build on the lessons learned via OWC as the NWWT builds its youth provision for the future.

6.8 The key lessons highlighted by stakeholders for the development of any similar project in the future included:

- seeking early input and opinions from young people during the early stages of a project's development so as to ensure provision is responsive to their needs. It was felt that had this been done prior to OWC the need for an outdoor activity budget, as well as a focus on adventure activities and wellbeing would have come to the fore sooner
- the need to build in flexibility so that ideas can be explored, and relationships strengthened before longer term outcomes can be achieved
- the longevity and continuity of working with groups for many months as seen in OWC needs to be replicated in order to reach the required level of trust and understanding with a group of young people
- utilising the longer-term approach to provide a greater level of up-skilling and training as part of the project than could be achieved via OWC
- the need to evaluate everything – continually ask young people for feedback and about what they want to do and what they enjoy – and engage them throughout the process

- the need for better technology and the capability to engage with it through the creation of media content and via the use of digital tools
- understanding that achieving real youth participation requires time and must be youth led.

- 6.9 Some stakeholders also felt that to create a better legacy, the connectivity between projects such as OWC and the NWWT as an organisation needed to be stronger. Developing more ‘young people friendly’ opportunities within core NWWT activities and engaging them with the volunteer branches would enable a clear, sustainable path for those who wanted to continue to contribute to their local environment when funding for individual projects came to an end. ‘There is a way to go – but we are beginning to realise that things need to be different and more inclusive – and we are certainly moving in that direction’.
- 6.10 In terms of the future focus, the ‘three asks’ of OBF remain important, and a focus on the health and wellbeing of young people and a need to tackle digital poverty were seen as key policy priorities in the medium term.
- 6.11 Finally, stakeholders recognised how difficult it had been for the project team and for the participants themselves to have to bring the project to an end during lockdown. The project team were praised for their positive attitude and their unflinching passion in making the best of the situation: ‘they’ve thought about the longer-term impact for the young people, and they’ve been proactive throughout’.



## 7. Conclusions and recommendations

- 7.1 This section presents our conclusions on the key lessons and issues to be considered for the design of any future youth provision which utilises the environment and outdoor activities. This is followed by a set of recommendations.
- 7.2 OWC has achieved its overarching aim of improving the lives and prospects of young people in North Wales. This has been done via coastal conservation and outdoor activities, and, to a lesser extent through community events.
- 7.3 Our evaluation activity across the four years has consistently seen how the OWC project has reflected upon the approach and the activities undertaken and adapted to the requirements of the groups. Whilst every aspect of the original logic model has remained valid and true, it has allowed for the focus to shift in direct response to the needs of participants. The structure of the project itself and the flexibility of the funders, NLCF and the overarching programme, OBF, have been instrumental in enabling this.
- 7.4 OWC has performed strongly against its key outcomes and over-achieved on many. It has engaged with over 1,500 young people over the duration of the project (Outcome 1), but more importantly it has provided in-depth, continued provision for over 500 and it is here that the impact of the project has been achieved. The fact that over 150 young people have also achieved awards or completed traineeships means that the project has contributed significantly to skills development and to interest in environmental and conservation activity.
- 7.5 The project has improved the condition of 45 environmental sites (Outcome 2) and whilst the identification of new sites (Outcome 3) and activities around community cohesion (Outcome 4) have not featured strongly, this was identified early on in the project and it adapted accordingly. One of the most powerful unintended consequences of OWC is how it has contributed to the wellbeing and mental health of young people taking part in its activities. This is an important finding that demonstrates clearly how the OWC fits with the policy priorities in Wales today and its activities can contribute to the outcomes that the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act aspires to.
- 7.6 Recommendations made during interim reviews and the mid-term evaluation have largely been acted upon, and the project has developed in confidence, utilising the strengths and wide-ranging skills that project officers provided. The COVID-19 pandemic has understandably impacted on the project's ability to deliver on all its planned activity in the final year, but it is clear that OWC had evolved and matured into an effective model.

- 7.7 The project has provided a myriad of outdoor and indoor activities to young people and has been innovative and continually building up opportunities and developing new ideas. The integration of the John Muir awards has also been a great success. Whilst the Local Action Forums took time to get off the ground and become fully established, they nevertheless have provided valuable lessons for the design of any future provision.
- 7.8 OWC has shifted to working with younger age groups in the main and did not shy away from working with challenging and hard-to-reach groups that often do not get the chance to take part in such opportunities. The feedback received from participants clearly show that the outdoor activities to learn about the environment or for personal development were valued. It is also clear that working in-depth and over a longer timescale has enabled project officers to build trust and rapport with participants which in turn has enabled greater benefits and positive impacts for individuals to be realised.
- 7.9 The evaluation has captured evidence of the wide-ranging impacts and differences made by OWC. Participants have learnt a number of new skills but have also increased their confidence and improved their wellbeing. Whilst the development of environmental and conservation skills can be demonstrated by the high number of participants achieving John Muir awards, for example, the evidence for the softer skills and mental health impacts are more anecdotal in nature. This evaluation cannot track the longitudinal impact on participants but there is certainly some evidence to suggest that as a result of their OWC experience, many participants are continuing to engage in environmental activities, and some have gone on to study or consider future careers in the environment sector.
- 7.10 Despite the limitations in place as a result of the pandemic, the final year has continued to provide lessons for future implementation – including the use of online delivery and social media. The project should also be applauded for delivering a series of traineeships during such a challenging year and for continuing to do everything possible to support the young people involved.

### **Recommendations**

We make the following series of recommendations:

#### **Recommendation 1**

The evidence gathered suggests that the OWC approach delivered health and wellbeing outcomes to participants. For future funded activities of this nature, NWWT

should consider utilising evaluation tools to measure these outcomes from the outset so that they can be more robustly evidenced.

### **Recommendation 2**

Funders and delivery organisations alike should look to embed the lessons learned from the OWC model of delivery when designing youth provision. This includes engaging with young people (including co-producing a project) from the outset; working with fewer groups for longer and more in-depth periods and continually adapting and improving provision by being led by the specific needs and requirements of participants.

### **Recommendation 3**

In the final years of OWC the development of the local action forum model and the engagement of young people who are keen to explore opportunities to study and work in the environment sector has become more prominent. Future projects should explore further opportunities to develop this aspect including traineeships and apprenticeships. There is also scope to build on the lessons learned from the LAFs to enable forums of this nature to help inform future policy and/or as consultation groups for relevant organisations in the future.

### **Recommendation 4**

The OWC project has provided NWWT with experience and expertise in developing quality youth provision. The Trust should consider options to further its engagement in youth provision such as via public sector contract delivery e.g. Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) or youth service for local authorities.

### **Recommendation 5**

NWWT should continue to seek opportunities to embed the learning from OWC into its core activities including involving young people as trustees and volunteers and considering ways of making its local volunteering branches as ‘youth friendly’ as possible.

## Appendix A – Staff and stakeholders discussion guide

### Involvement with Our Wild Coast

1. What is your current role?
2. In what way have you been involved with OWC?
  - (Prompt) nature and duration of involvement

### Rationale and Need

3. What did OWC set out to achieve?
4. To what extent have OWC activities been in keeping with the original aims and objectives?
  - did they change over time? If so, in what way?
  - what are the reasons for any changes?
  - did activities take place as originally planned?
  - if not, why not?
  - Prompt re: impact of COVID-19
  - were there any gaps in what was provided?
5. To what extent has OWC been well aligned with and contributed towards:
  - programme level priorities of Our Bright Future<sup>2</sup>?
  - national priorities and policies e.g. Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, Environment Act, Youth Work strategy
  - what fits well/not so well and why?

### Our Wild Coast – Implementation

6. What are your views on how the project has been implemented? (Prompt for changes since mid-term review)
  - approach (areas, activities)
  - activities (type, range, duration)
  - promotion and recruitment of target audiences
  - impact of COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. online provision)
  - activities (type, range, duration)
  - what lessons, if any, would you identify so far?
7. What are your views on:
  - the breadth of activities offered?
  - the local forums?
  - the quality of the provision offered?
  - the relevance of the provision offered?
  - the support provided?

<sup>2</sup> The 'Our Bright Future' programme has the following specific objectives: more local communities enjoying environmental improvements through activities led by young people; young people gaining new skills; better evidence about how young people can improve their local environment.

- what has worked well or been most successful and why?
- how, if at all could OWC have been improved or provided differently?

8. How effectively has the OWC been managed by NWWT?

- *Prompt:* monitoring and reporting arrangements
- *Prompt:* marketing and communications
- what has worked well?
- what could have been improved?
- what key learning points have you identified?

9. What are your views on the staffing structures and capacity put in place to deliver OWC?

- have the key skills and expertise been available to deliver OWC effectively?
- have there been any gaps? If so, what?

10. In what way has OWC worked with or complemented the work of other Our Bright Future projects?

### Performance against targets

11. How has OWC performed against its KPIs over the course of the project?

- how appropriate were the original KPIs?
- how have these been adapted during the project's delivery?
- what other indicators would have been useful to reflect the project's achievements
- what accounts for any good or weak performance?

12. What barriers or issues has OWC faced during delivery?

- to what extent and in what way have you been able to overcome these issues?

13. Has the OWC project delivered value for money? Why do you say that?

### Outcomes, impacts and difference made

14. Would you identify as the main achievements of the OWC?

15. What contribution or difference has the OWC project made to supported beneficiaries in terms of?

- improving understanding of the environmental issues facing the North Wales coast?
- improving school performance or gaining qualifications and recognition?
- learning conservation specific skills?
- other 'softer' gains such as improved self-confidence and independence?
- improved health and mental wellbeing?
- becoming more involved and integrated in their local community?
- what evidence do you have of these changes?

16. To what extent can these impacts experienced by supported beneficiaries be sustained in the long term?
  - how do you envisage these impacts will be sustained?
17. What contribution or difference has the OWC project made to environmental issues facing the North Wales coast? Probe for:
  - improvement in environmental condition of existing designated sites
  - creation/identification of new sites of wildlife value
18. To what extent do you think any improvements to the environment can be sustained in the long term?
  - how do you envisage these impacts will be sustained?
19. To what extent might these outcomes and impacts (on beneficiaries, on the environment) been achieved in the absence of OWC?
20. Have there been any unintended outcomes (positive or negative) because of OWC?
  - if so, what are they?

### Future Needs

21. What are the key lessons from OWC that should be considered in the design and delivery of future provision for young people?
  - what are the main lessons for the NLCF?
  - what are the main lessons for NWWT?
22. When OWC comes to an end, how, if at all, will young people be supported to engage with environmental activities across north Wales?
  - If so, what are the gaps likely to be?
  - What are the options to fill these gaps?
23. What do you anticipate the likely future requirements for environmentally based activities and provision to support young people in North Wales to be?

## Appendix B – Focus groups with participants – discussion guide

### Involvement with Our Wild Coast

1. Tell me a bit about your background?

*[Ask as appropriate warm-up questions about where they live, what they study, hobbies]*

### Our Wild Coast - Getting Involved

2. How did you get involved with OWC and the activities offered?

- How did you hear about the OWC?
- Were you referred by an organisation or person?
- When did you become involved?
- Why did you decide to take part?
- What concerns, if any, did you have?
- What were you hoping to gain from taking part? (Probe: better understanding of coastal environment, learn new skills, meet new friends, gain new qualifications, improve soft skills)
- Were you looking for support to help resolve any issues or challenges? If so, what were these?
- Had you been involved in similar activities elsewhere? How did this compare?

### Nature of Activities

3. What have you done during your involvement with OWC?

- Ask about the nature and content of the activities
- Ask about how the activities were delivered – location, timing, format
- Ask about intensity and duration of activities undertaken
- Ask about who delivered the activities

4. What is your opinion of OWC and the activities you've undertaken?

- What activities did you like? Why?
- What did you think of the OWC staff?
- How did they support you?
- How satisfied/happy have you been with what has been provided?
- Did it meet your initial expectations?
- What was good about the project?
- What was not as good about OWC?
- How could OWC be improved?

### Benefits of being involved with the Our Wild Coast project

5. In what ways do you think that being involved with the project has helped you?  
How (if at all) has it...
- improved your understanding of the environmental issues facing the North Wales coast?
  - improved your performance or behaviour at school/college?
  - helped you gain qualifications and recognition?
  - taught you conservation skills?
  - developed any 'softer' skills such as self-confidence, communication, attitude, teamwork, independence?
  - improved your health and mental wellbeing?
  - helped you become more involved in your local community?
  - meeting new people/friends?
  - can you give some examples of these changes?
6. How do you think that the support provided by OWC will help you in the future? (e.g. in terms of future study or work plans/ambitions?)
- Why do you say this?
7. Had you not been involved with OWC what do you think would have happened/what would you have done instead?
- Would you have been able to access similar activities and support elsewhere? If so, where?

### Looking to the future

8. What are your plans/aspirations for the future?
- Have your plans/aspirations changed as a result of being involved in OWC?
9. How likely are you to continue to be interested and involved in looking after the coastal environment in your area?
10. What support do you think you will need in the future to help you sustain any positive impact/change that has come about as a result of OWC?
11. Finally, do you wish to make any other comments about the project?



## Appendix C – Online survey of participants

North Wales Wildlife Trust has commissioned OB3 Research to evaluate the OUR WILD COAST project.

We kindly ask that you complete a very short survey, which should take no more than ten minutes of your time, about your involvement and experience of the OUR WILD COAST project.

Further information about the evaluation, including a Privacy Notice is available [here](#)

**A hoffech lenwi'r holiadur yma yn:**

**Would you like to complete this questionnaire in:**

- English
- Cymraeg

### Section A: Involvement in Our Wild Coast

**A1** What activities do you remember taking part in with the OUR WILD COAST project?

- outdoor personal development activities*
- indoor personal development workshops and activities*
- outdoor activities to learn about or improve the environment*
- indoor activities to learn about or improve the environment*
- online activities (during Covid-19 pandemic)*
- working towards/achieving a qualification*

*Other please specify:* \_\_\_\_\_

**A2** What was your status at the time you first came into contact with the OUR WILD COAST project?

**Were you:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <i>Paid full time employment</i>                | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Doing unpaid work or volunteering</i> |
| <i>Paid part time employment</i>                | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>On a traineeship/apprenticeship</i>   |
| <i>Self-employed</i>                            | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>In Further Education learning</i>     |
| <i>Not in education, employment or training</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>In Higher Education learning</i>      |
| <i>Looking after family or home</i>             | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Doing something else (Specify)</i>    |
| <i>In full time education</i>                   |   |

*If other please specify*

\_\_\_\_\_

**A3** Why did you take part in the OUR WILD COAST project? (Open ended)

\_\_\_\_\_

## Section B: Our Wild Coast activities

- B1** How happy were you with your experience of OUR WILD COAST activities?  
 *Very happy*                       *Not particularly happy*       *Don't know*  
 *Quite happy*                       *Not at all happy*
- B2** [ASK IF B1 = very or quite happy] What did you enjoy most about being part of the OUR WILD COAST project? (OPEN ENDED)
- B3** [ASK IF B1 = not particularly happy/not happy at all] Why were you not happy with your experience of the OUR WILD COAST project? (OPEN ENDED)
- B4** How useful was taking part in the OUR WILD COAST project for you and your future plans?  
 *Very useful*                       *Not particularly useful*       *Don't know*  
 *Quite useful*                       *Not useful at all*
- B5** [ASK IF B4=very useful or quite useful] What OUR WILD COAST activities were most useful to you and why? (OPEN ENDED)
- B6** What, if anything, could have been improved about the activities provided by the OUR WILD COAST project?
- 
-

**Section C: How OUR WILD COAST has made a difference to you**

**C1** Do you think that your involvement in OUR WILD COAST has had a positive impact on you?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Don't know

**C2** On a scale of 1-5 (where 1= not at all, and 5= a lot) how has OUR WILD COAST...

	1	2	3	4	5
Improved your understanding of the environmental issues facing the North Wales coast					
Improved your health and mental wellbeing					
Helped you become more involved in your local community					
Improved your performance or attitude at school/college/work					
Helped you gain qualifications and recognition					
Taught you conservation skills					
Developed your self-confidence					
Developed your communication skills					
Improved your teamwork skills					
Made you more independent					
Other (please specify)					

**C3** As a result of your involvement in OUR WILD COAST how likely are you to continue to take part in environmental activities?  
 [Likert scale of 1-5, where 1 not likely, 5 very likely]

**C4** What are your hopes/plans for the future? [OPEN ENDED]

**C5** Do you have any further comments you wish to make about your experiences with OUR WILD COAST? If so, please add them here [OPEN ENDED]

Thank you for completing this survey.

Please click on the [Submit] button below to send your responses to us.