

**FUTURE FARMS  
PARTNERSHIP**

# **FUTURE FARMS IN BUSINESS**



Funded by  
UK Government  
Wedi ei ariannu gan  
Llywodraeth y DU

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2025**





## BACKGROUND

Future Farms in Business is the third phase of an initiative delivered by the Future Farms Partnership, which consists of:



This third phase aimed to:

- Secure and implement a planning application for three dwellings and related infrastructure on part of the farm estate owned by PCC at Sarn, near Newtown.
- Recruit growers to set up new horticultural enterprises and take on the accompanying dwellings.
- Increase local networking between growers and start to build their potential market.
- Advocating for policy, funding and legislation to facilitate more small-scale, nature-friendly horticulture enterprises in Wales.



Phase 3 was structured in four interrelated workstreams:

NO:	WORKSTREAMS	WHAT WAS ACHIEVED
1	<b>GROWER JOURNEY:</b> Seeking expressions of interest from potential growers to live and work on the site, selecting growers, and training opportunities.	Through two rounds of adverts and 15 expressions of interest, three suitable growers were selected for the Sarn site.
2	<b>SITE DEVELOPMENT:</b> Subject to planning approval, undertake the first stages of the build (utility connections/alternative provision, access to site, hard standings, packing shed).	Despite the long delay in securing Planning Permission, all funded building works under this phase were completed by February 2025.
3	<b>MESSAGING &amp; REPLICATION:</b> To advocate a key message that this project is a practical example of one approach to creating rural enterprise opportunities and increasing the demand and supply of fruit and vegetables.	A web presence has been developed and the project has generated a lot of interest, locally and nationally. More time is needed to engage with the local community, and this can be addressed in future activity.
4	<b>NETWORK BUILDING:</b> Supporting new growers through connecting with a wider network and working with potential customers (including public sector) to help drive demand for fresh produce.	The Future Farms in Business Partnership is particularly strong and will be able to provide substantial support for the growers. Funding to further the aims of the Local Food Partnerships in Powys will provide opportunities that the growers can access.

Now that Phase 3 has been successfully completed, the Partnership has identified the following next steps:

- Further infrastructure development on the site in Sarn to meet the needs of the micro enterprises, which will focus on building three temporary houses under a 5 year planning permission. Funds for this, amounting to around £250,000, have already been secured through the ACP3W grant operated by Powys CC.
- Reflection, refinement and replication of the model elsewhere in Wales, including financing.
- Ongoing support to develop the market for local fruit and vegetables across Wales.
- Support to upskill existing and new growers with a particular focus on agro-ecology.

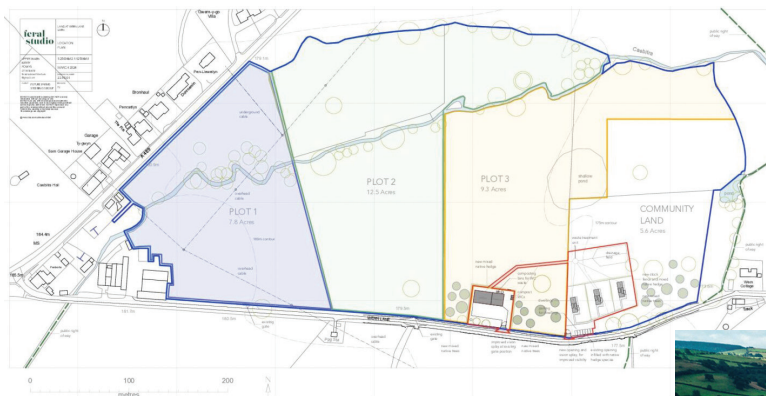




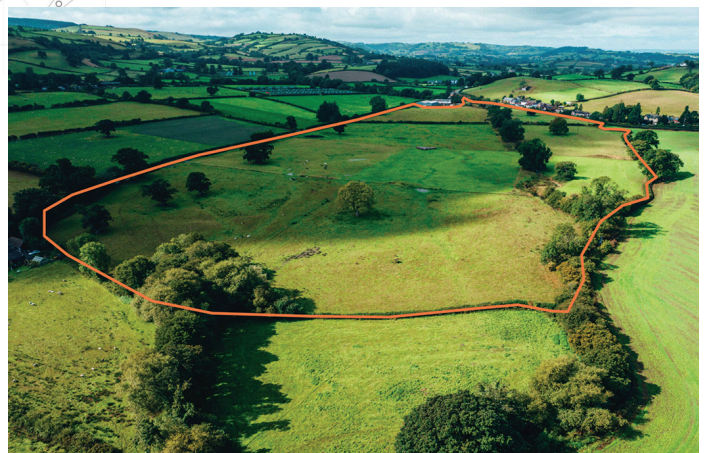
## LESSONS LEARNT

The pilot project at Sarn has generated a number of important lessons:

- The very tight timeframe for delivery, coupled with the delay in obtaining Planning Permission was challenging. Community involvement takes a considerable amount of time and this aspect will need to be revisited, allowing more innovative ways to enable future development to be community/grower driven.
- Although the Planning Permission took longer than anticipated, this approach has now been tested and this should make it easier for rolling out this approach in a variety of different ways and in different areas.
- The Partnership has learnt a lot in a very short space of time, and again this experience will put them in a good position to develop different models to encourage more food growing across Wales, possibly with links to rural housing organisations.
- Key to the roll out of such schemes will be further training for growers. The Sarn initiative showed that there is a lack of potential business owners with the necessary combination of growing and business skills.



Scale map of the site showing the three plots, plus aerial boundary view





Artists impression  
of Nissen Hut  
dwellings



Artists impression  
of packing  
& storage shed

Groundworks  
have commenced  
onsite in  
January 2025



## POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- The development of the Planning Guidance by Powys County Council and the subsequent approval of the Sarn development is a significant step forward. There are important policy lessons here for Welsh Government and other Local Authorities in Wales.
- Horticulture is big business and strong local supply chains are fundamental to our national health and security. In Wales we need to think about food security, and significantly increase the amount of fruit and veg we grow for local consumption.
- There is scope to use a lot more of public sector land to grow fruit and veg and key to this will be a consistent local demand based on public procurement.

