

## Hwb Bwyd Dyffryn Nantlle

### Key Facts

**Based in:** Penygroes, Dyffryn Nantlle, North-West Wales

**Established in:** 2022

**Business type:** Food Hub

**Company type:** Community Benefit Society / Social Enterprise

**Turnover:** Average £400-£500 per month

**No of employees:** 4

### Background & Values

#### Why a food hub?

*At [Yr Orsaf](#) we're a not-for-profit and community-based so there's a strong emphasis on responding to the needs of the community. There did seem to be a need for local produce to be made more accessible. Where we are it's about 15 minutes to the nearest town and the buses don't run that often. There's a wealth of local food being produced in the area but there wasn't one place where you could buy a variety of produce all in one go. It made sense for us to set up a food hub to support local producers, make their food more accessible, and make the whole experience as easy as possible for local customers.*

*We set up the food hub with the help of the [Resilient Green Spaces](#) grant and the Open Food Network.*

#### The Journey

*After going through the application process for the Resilient Green Spaces application and being successful with that, the next step was to contact local producers and get a pool of them together.*

*And then there were practical elements like setting up the hub and familiarising ourselves with the Open Food Network and familiarising producers with the Open Food Network and getting to know each other as well.*

*From that point we started marketing and we launched in September 22. From that point onwards it's been about increasing the number of producers and customers. The most recent development was inspired by [the Good Food Loop](#) in Devon and has meant we can now link up with another food hub - [Cadwyn Ogwen](#) in Dyffryn Ogwen. Our products are now available to their customers and vice versa.*

#### The Vision

Gwenllian, Food Hub Co-ordinator explains that the vision is "Simply put, to make local produce accessible to local customers", however she admits it's much more complicated than that as the prices for local produce are not always accessible to all customers. Their vision is to find a way to make that work. They are trying a few ways; for example the community meal is a free hot meal that is provided on a weekly basis and they try to buy local produce through the food hub for those meals. And for customers who can afford to buy the produce from the food hub there is an option to put in £1 to the community fund when they submit an order, and the money goes back into food projects in Dyffryn Nantlle.

## Success Factors

*The relationships with the producers have been so important. Nurturing and having that good relationship that goes beyond just selling has been key, as it's fed into other projects.*

*Another success factor has been collaborating and working with other food hubs. The relationship with Cadwyn Ogwen has grown from strength to strength because they received the same [Resilient Green Spaces] funding. We are working together and creating new opportunities.*

## Operations

### Key Infrastructure

- Prep table to pack orders
- Community transport for the deliveries
- Scales
- Fridge for storing veg on packing day
- An area to store orders for a few hours while we wait for them to be collected
- The use of community transport electric vehicles to make deliveries

The prep table, scales, shelves and fridge were purchased using funds from the [Resilient Green Spaces](#) project.

### Waste & Recycling

*All the packaging we've used so far has been paper or biodegradable plastic and we recycle egg boxes and our large paper bags.*

### Governance

The board is at the top of the decision-making process. Suggestions from producers and sometimes customers are raised with Gwennlian who then raises them with other members of staff and the Secretary of the board, or it is added to the report for the monthly board meeting. Items may then be discussed with the board and a decision comes back down again.

### Team Structure

All the [team members](#) share an office at Yr Orsaf.

- Gwennlian - Food Hub co-ordinator
- Greta - Manager of Yr Orsaf and Co-ordinator for the community hub
- Elenid - Community Transport Co-ordinator
- Alex - Community driver



## Community Involvement

Hwb Bwyd Dyffryn Nantlle team members are very involved with and embedded in the community. They have a constant relationship with their producers, other projects, volunteers and members of the public and the lines are often blurred between projects. For example one of the hub's flower growers had a conversation with the hub about needing practical help and as a result a group of volunteers from the community garden are going to be helping on the farm.

## Impact

Hwb Bwyd Dyffryn Nantlle identifies the difference they are making through feedback from their customers and producers.

People like that there's no plastic involved in the packaging. This differentiates the food hub from supermarkets.

Customers have reported that it's convenient that deliveries are made to people's front doors, or they can just walk in and pick up their order if they live in the village.

The food hub team also add a human touch by often writing poems on the delivery bags, which has been well received by many customers. The drivers often chat to people when the delivery is dropped off and that has been very beneficial for isolated members of the community.

## Communications

The customer base is the population of Dyffryn Nantlle and surrounding area and communication is done through:

- Local paper
- Newsletter
- Social media
- Email
- Word of mouth

*The people who tend to keep a tab on our social media accounts tend to be our customers on the Open Food Network platform as they are comfortable online.*



## Hub Operations

### Producers

*Our aim when we started was to support local producers so we recruited by targeting producers in Dyffryn Nantlle. But now we've partnered with Cadwyn Ogwen so we've got producers from Dyffryn Ogwen and a couple from Anglesey. It started small and now it's expanding in terms of distance and numbers.*

### Delivery & Pick up points

*So far the pick up point has just been Penygroes.*

*We're in discussion with the local farmers' market to have a pick up point there.*

*The community transport only works within the boundaries of Dyffryn Nantlle so we've been sticking with that. It's pretty straightforward; we deliver between 3 and 5pm on a Thursday afternoon and people come and collect their order between the same times.*

### Funding

- There is a 20% admin fee on products sold through the hub
- Hwb Bwyd Dyffryn Nantlle has been funded by the Resilient Green Spaces project until the end of June 2023, then Gwenllian's role will be funded by the National Lottery.
- Welsh government funds the community transport



## The Impact of the Resilient Green Spaces Project

[Resilient Green Spaces](#) was a £1.27m partnership project led by Social Farms & Gardens to pilot alternative re-localised food systems using communities and their green spaces as the driving force for change across Wales from March 2022 until June 2023.

This project was funded through the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.

Gwenllian says their food hub wouldn't exist without the grant and the support from the [Resilient Green Spaces project](#), which helped them to get set up from March 2022 through to June 2023.

The most useful aspect was the funding which paid for Gwenllian to be the part-time food hub co-ordinator and meant they could purchase their prep table, scales, shelves and fridge, as well as some social media advertising credits.

Gwenllian says other benefits of being part of the project were the support in setting up their food hub on the Open Food Network and creating links with other food hubs within the framework of the project.

## Looking to the Future

### Our strengths

*Our relationship with our producers and customers. And relationships with other community groups and Cadwyn Ogwen. We can dip into other community projects to strengthen the food hub.*

### Our biggest struggles

*Without grant funding we wouldn't be here. It's not self-sustaining in that sense.*

### Threats

*Making local food accessible in the current climate is a big challenge and that continues to threaten us. If we can't sell the produce and if the grant funding runs out then it has to stop.*

### Opportunities

*Creating local food resilience and resilience within the community and the role that the food hub plays within that and our other community food projects. Working with Cadwyn Ogwen has opened another opportunity where we expand on that and create a network of food hubs, and other community groups might want to set up their own food hubs and join us. Collaboration across different communities is key.*

Follow Hwb Bwyd Dyffryn Nantlle on social media:

[www.facebook.com/YrOrsaf](https://www.facebook.com/YrOrsaf)

<https://www.instagram.com/yrorsaf/>

