

# Heather and Hillforts

## Upland Landscape Partnership Scheme

The project is taking place in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is a protected landscape. It has seen a focus particularly in the upland areas of the Clwydian Range.

The project is aimed at raising the profile of the importance of the heather moorland areas of the Clwydian Range amongst its many visitors. It seeks to associate the biodiversity and natural beauty of the area to the traditional farming practices and to ensure that the economic benefits that visitors bring supports this management.

The project has produced a range of digital material and a number of key hubs in popular visitor areas that promote the importance of the uplands, particularly at Moel Famau and Loggerheads Country Parks. It has also brought farmers, food producers and businesses together to ensure local produce is part of the visitor experience and that it is understood that food production contributes to the natural beauty of the area.

## OUTCOMES/RESULTS

**1** The project has produced a range of digital material to highlight the importance of the heather moorlands and the traditional agricultural management that supports a range of biodiversity and key rare species in Wales such as black grouse and curlew.

**2** It has developed an Audio Visual Room at Loggerheads Country Park where a range of audio and video material is on display for visitors which include a fly over the Clwydian Range and interviews with farmers and conservationists

**3** The project has also help the farmers to produce a strong brand for their upland lamb that associates it with the biodiversity and natural beauty of the uplands. It reminds visitors that heather moorland and traditional welsh breeds of ewe produce high quality food.

**4** The project has produced digital material to promote Clwydian Range lamb showing how the uplands are traditionally managed and the traditional welsh breeds that are used.

**5** The project has also brought together high quality food producers in the Clwydian Range Food Trail linking food production to the landscape and promoting it to visitors. Through a collaborative website visitors are able to visitor food producers and see food being prepared.

**CLWYDIAN RANGE AND DEE  
VALLEY,  
UNITED KINGDOM**

**LOCATION**

*The project is aimed at the reconnection of people to the upland areas of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley in order to ensure the development of sustainable management for the benefit of the important biodiversity and local economy*

**VISITORS  
BIODIVERSITY  
LOCAL ECONOMY  
FOOD TRAIL**

**KEY WORDS**

**6** The project has brought traditional and modern technology together at Moel Famau Country Park with the development of a Shepherd's Hut Information Centre. This is a traditional style shepherds shelter that has been converted serve local produce from the mountain and provide information about the area in one of the busiest visitor hubs. Visitors can learn about the rich biodiversity and management of the heather moorland and buy local produce associated with it.

**7** A Digital Information Point using an App on an Ipad has been installed in the Shepherd's Hut to show films about the importance of the habitat and its management and to provide information on walks, the history and culture of the area.

**8** The farmers of the Clwydian Range are developing new markets for their lamb in the tourism sector which is now associated with high quality landscapes, traditional management that benefits landscape and biodiversity.

**9** An increasing number of farmers are returning to the traditional management that the moorlands depend upon because of the opportunities that these new markets provide.



AV Room at Loggerheads Country Park



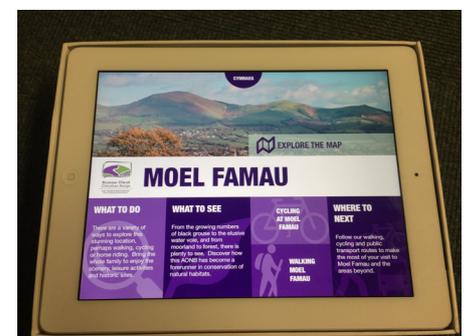
Shepherds Hut – Moel Famau Country Park

## MORE INFORMATION

Heather moorland is one of the worlds most scarce habitats and supports some of the UK's rarest birds, such as black grouse, curlew, merlin and red grouse. Over the last 60 years Wales has lost nearly half of its heather moorland and what's left is in poor condition. Changes in farming practices have lead to a decline in the traditional farming practices that the moorland habitats depend upon and there has been a corresponding decline in the upland bird species. These areas are also among our most popular visitor areas and yet the link between traditional agricultural management and biodiversity is little understood.

The projects aimed to stimulate traditional moorland management within the farming community by raising awareness of its importance among visitors and providing opportunities for farmers to link their produce to this natural beauty and biodiversity.

The project was a partnership of a number of funding bodies.  
Heritage Lottery Fund  
European LEADER funds  
AONB Sustainable Development Fund



Digital Information Point – Shepherds Hut Moel Famau



Clwydian Range Lamb Brand

**The target audience** was primarily visitors to the area as well as the communities surrounding the upland areas of the Clwydian Range

- The project produced a series of digital animations showing the early occupation of the uplands dating back to the Iron Age.
- It produced a series of films including a fly over the Clwydian Range, film of heather management and close up wildlife footage as well as interviews with farmers and conservationists.
- It produced a App which provides information on the wildlife, management, history and culture of the area. It promotes walks and activities in the area and promotes other local businesses. The App is contained within a Digital Information Point within a traditional Shepherds Hut in one of the busy car parks in the area.
- The project has developed a Audio Visual Room at nearby Loggerheads Country Park where films of the wildlife, culture and history of the area are projected – visitors can choose which films to view and gather information on walks and other activities in the area.
- The project produced a mobile phone Wi-Fi and Bluetooth audio guide has been established on bus routes around the Clwydian Range. Passengers can listen to the audio guide on their mobile phones via Bluetooth whilst travelling through the Range.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

**Clwydian Range Food Trail** [www.foodtrail.co.uk](http://www.foodtrail.co.uk)

**Animations of Iron Hillforts and farming since the Bronze Age**  
[Animation 1](#) | [Animation 2](#)

**Fly over the Clwydian Range Video**

**Shepherds Hut** <http://shepherds-hut.com>

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## LESSONS LEARNED

- 1 Issues encountered when working with digital media.
- 2 Mobile phone audio guides encountered problems with poor reception and download times. Monitoring data found that most users downloaded the information either prior to or after visiting the site where wifi was available.
- 3 Mobile phone technology developed so quickly that users favoured mobile platform friendly content rather than mobile phone content.
- 4 Correspondingly the project concentrated on developing web material and ensuring that web content was mobile platform friendly.
- 5 Availability of access to internet in remote areas – the car parks and honey pot areas are often remote and have poor signal and no wifi. Wifi installation is not possible. In order to get round this we developed a Digital Information Point with a stand-alone app that does not need to be linked to the internet but is able to provide a range of information and works like a live website.