

Llŷn

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



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www.ahne-llyn-aonb.cymru

Llygad Llŷn

Llŷn AONB Newsletter

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Rural Skills Training

Our annual series of training in rural skills will continue during August 2026. We will be continuing to work on Mynydd Rhiw, maintaining the traditional dry-stone boundaries.

This training provides an opportunity for people to learn an ancient craft and to contribute to the preservation of the historic environment. You can also gain valuable skills for the future.

Also – you can quite simply join us to enjoy the fresh air in a spectacular landscape.

If you wish to register – please get in touch.



Volunteering

A significant amount of important work has been undertaken over recent months thanks to young people and adults volunteering to improve their communities.

Friends of the AONB

The Friends of the AONB undertake regular tasks – with Kevin Roberts, AONB Warden offering support and supervision whilst using tools and machinery. Anyone can join – drop us an e-mail!

Some examples of recent works include maintenance at Capel Newydd Nanhoron, improvements to the path leading up to the hillfort on Garn Boduan and beach clean-ups at Porth Neigwl and Aberdaron. We also improved a network of footpaths in Aberdaron.

The work at Aberdaron was so impressive – we decided to organise a nature walk with the pupils of Ysgol Crud y Werin to explore and enjoy the footpaths.

Volunteering as a Group

You can contact us if you would like to work together on a volunteering session – whether you are a school, youth club, society or a specific public service. We are always keen to co-operate!

One such event was organised in the Llandegwning area with the enthusiastic and hard-working members of the Rhiw Young Farmers Club and member of Cyfeillion Eglwys Llandegwning (a trust dedicated to ensuring the maintenance of the church).

The church (or eglwys in Welsh) of Llandegwning is in the parish of Botwnnog. It's a beautiful building with a rich history. The present building was built in 1840 and is listed by Cadw. There are no records in terms of when the original church was built but the site is consecrated to Sant Gwynin – but it is believed that he was a monk on Ynys Enlli.

We spent the morning cutting grass and overgrowth, planting, clearing and renovating furniture including the compost box.





Can We Work Together?

Please get in touch if you are a specific group or if you have a specific site in mind that needs improving. The site needs to be in a public location and within the AONB boundary.

ahne@gwynedd.llyw.cymru



Why Volunteer?

There are many benefits to volunteering – they include:

- Meeting new people – lifelong friends!
- Learning about special locations and the history of the area.
- It provides a sense of belonging and pride in your area.
- People who are currently learning Welsh can practice in a welcoming and supportive environment.
- Be a part of preserving the special heritage.
- Assisting to conserve the environment and wildlife.
- Gain valuable skills and confidence for future work.
- Gain volunteer hours as part of the requirements of specific qualifications and college courses.
- Improve general health.
- An opportunity to gain Lantra accredited qualifications with Coleg Glynllifon.

Events

Many events were held over recent months – to raise awareness of the landscape and special qualities of the area. Here are some examples: –

Nature Walk – Ysgol Crud y Werin, Aberdaron

Thanks to the volunteers who helped to maintain footpaths in Aberdaron, we enjoyed a pleasant walk with pupils from Ysgol Crud y Werin. The Aberdaron area has a network of interesting footpaths. We aim to assist in maintaining them and raise awareness of the leisure opportunities they provide. Some paths are coastal. Others are inland – and these paths are truly worth exploring with their varied wildlife and tales of myths and legends.

We walked from the school and turned opposite Becws Islyn to follow Afon Daron (afon is Welsh for river). We looked at many flowers and listened to the birds. We also heard stories about the smugglers who have walked these paths before us over the centuries. According to folklore, we were following in the footsteps of the legendary salt smuggler Huw Andro.



Many thanks to the children for an interesting morning with plenty of enthusiasm!

Thanks also to the warm welcome in Gegin Fach where we ended the journey.



Information Session – Creating Wildflower Meadows

Lead by Jo Porter from the Dolydd Llŷn project, an information session was held at Felin Uchaf in Rhoshirwaun looking at how to create and preserve wildflower meadows.

We then explored the grounds around Felin Uchaf with their spectacular wildflower meadows in bloom.

It was an interesting and timely session – which relates to many other current environmental initiatives in the area – such as Welsh Government funded scheme Ffermio Bro.



Events to Come...

INFORMATION SESSIONS – INVASIVE SPECIES

Thursday, April 30th – 1:30 – 3:00pm
Congol Meinciau, Botwnnog

An informal talk by Gethin Davies from the Eryri National Park Authority, led by Elin (Llŷn AONB Activities Officer) – looking at various invasive plants and how we can eradicate them successfully. We will also be hearing about the success of the National Park's LIFE Celtic Rainforests project. We will also hear about the work by the Llŷn AONB team to treat some invasive species in the area with the support of our volunteers.

Please register in advance – ahne@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
Session is held through the medium of Welsh – therefore please state whilst booking whether you need an interpretation service on the day.

INFORMATION SESSION – PLANNING AND HOSTING SUCCESSFUL GUIDED WALKS

Thursday, May 14th 1:30 – 3:00pm
Congol Meinciau, Botwnnog

Do you organize guided tours in your local area? Or do you intend to – but are unsure how to go about putting the arrangements into practice? Would you like to discuss your ideas in an informal and friendly atmosphere? This session will be a good opportunity to share experiences and good practice to provide you with the skills and knowledge to successfully organize guided tours that are accessible to everyone. We will also share information about interesting walks and footpaths in the area. This session is led by Elin (Llŷn AONB Activities Officer) and Carys (Congol Meinciau Coordinator).

Please register in advance – ahne@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
Session is held through the medium of Welsh – therefore please state whilst booking whether you need an interpretation service on the day.



A Special Dark Sky!

It is a fact that the Llŷn landscape is exceptionally beautiful in daylight – but the darkness of night also offers us the opportunity to see a magnificent natural sky. In addition to the enjoyment of experiencing the wonders of the universe – a high-quality dark sky is crucial for the prosperity of the natural world.

We are passionate about protecting the dark night sky in the area, collaborating and educating to reduce artificial light pollution – and applying to gain official status from the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA).

Several local activities have taken place to raise awareness about our special dark skies. In fact – Llŷn is one of the best areas in Wales in terms of night sky quality, and we are extremely proud that Ynys Enlli was certified as an International Dark Sky Sanctuary in 2023.

During the celebrations of Wales Dark Sky Week in February – there was a special evening in the company of Mair Tomos Ifans at Plas Carmel. Mair told stories from every corner of the world and fantastic tales related to the stars and the moon, and we joined Mair in singing traditional Welsh songs along with the harp.

Mair is part of a wider national project named Cysur y Sêr (<https://adversecamber.org.uk/cy/project/cysur-y-ser>) and we are extremely grateful to her for igniting enthusiasm and imagination – and for maintaining a wonderful and atmospheric evening. Thanks also to the staff at Plas Carmel for the welcome.



Ysgol Foel Gron

Additionally, renowned poet Meirion MacIntyre Huws visited several local schools conducting poetry workshops. We enjoyed discussing the meaning and importance of the area's special dark skies, what kind of wonders can be seen at night, and the harmful impact of artificial light pollution on wildlife. Thanks to every school for taking part and for the enthusiasm and wonderful poems by the pupils. A special thank you also to Mei for his guidance and for inspiring the children to enjoy the special natural landscape around them.



Ysgol Tudweiliog



Ysgol Edern

Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places

Under the Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places (SLSP) scheme Wales' Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks can apply to Welsh Government for capital grant funding.

The SLSP is a fund to support environmental projects with an increasing emphasis on nature recovery and decarbonisation.

Following on from successful projects over the 2022-25 period we are now in a new grant period covering 2025-27. Information regarding the current projects, which we have been working on during the past months, can be seen below:



1a Planting native trees

Following on from previous work one of the key capital projects has been the planting of native trees. Tree planting offers significant environmental benefits including:

- Creating habitats for wildlife
- Carbon sequestration
- Water purification and management
- Providing a sustainable resource for the future

The tree planting work was undertaken on the following sites:

- Tŷn Parc, Y Rhiw
- Plas yn Rhiw, Y Rhiw
- Land near the Cemetery, Nefyn

Native trees from local suppliers were used for planting, including oak, birch, holly, rowan, hazel and blackthorn/ hawthorn trees. Our partners on this project were the National Trust and Nefyn Town Council.



Abergeirch

An area of land, approximately 18 hectares, between the village of Edern and the coast has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The river Geirch runs through the site and enters the sea at Abergeirch. The site has been designated as one of special scientific interest due to its special marshy wetland vegetation.

As part of this project Ecoscope was commissioned to carry out an ecological assessment of the site and the features that make it unique. The report also includes recommendations on how parts of the site can be sustained and restored. During 2026-27 it is hoped that work can be undertaken to implement some of these actions as well as improving on-site access and signage.

Decarbonation of Village Halls

The aim of this project is to assist village halls/ community centres to decarbonise through measures such as installing insulation, switching to low energy LED lighting, zero carbon heating systems and the creation and/or storage of renewable energy. The measures will also contribute towards financial sustainability as they save costs.

During 2025-26 the AONB Unit worked with three village halls/ community centres to undertake the following improvements:

- Edern Community Hall – a simple project to upgrade all the lights to LED ones.
- Sarn Memorial Hall – a battery system to store renewable energy (solar panels already in place) and reduce reliance on the electricity grid.
- Canolfan Trefor (Village Hall) – lighting upgrades to LED, installation of roof mounted solar panels, battery storage system, insulation.



Access and Infrastructure projects

In addition to the nature and decarbonisation projects, the AONB Unit had a number of infrastructure/access improvement projects. A few of these projects are mentioned below:

- Porthor – restoration of multi-use path along the coast and installation of picnic benches.
- Aberdaron – reopening and improving path No 16 from Aberdaron towards Bodwrdda.
- The Harbour at Trefor – renewing railings along the quay and installation of new benches.

Non-native Invasive Species

This project is again a follow-up to previous work with non-native species in and around the AONB. Non-native species are harmful to the area's native wildlife and are identified as a threat. We were therefore keen to try to get rid of these species in certain locations.

During 2025 work to dispose of the himalayam balsam was carried out on two sites – at Pistyll and Penllech. Although other sites had been identified, the plant seemed to be so strongly established in some of those areas that it would not be possible to get the non-native species under control.

Japanese knotweed is generally easier to eradicate than balsam because it does not spread as quickly. Therefore, during 2025, a lot of effort was put into spraying the knotweed at various public sites, and in particular in the village of Trefor. We will revisit these sites in 2026 and re-treat if necessary.

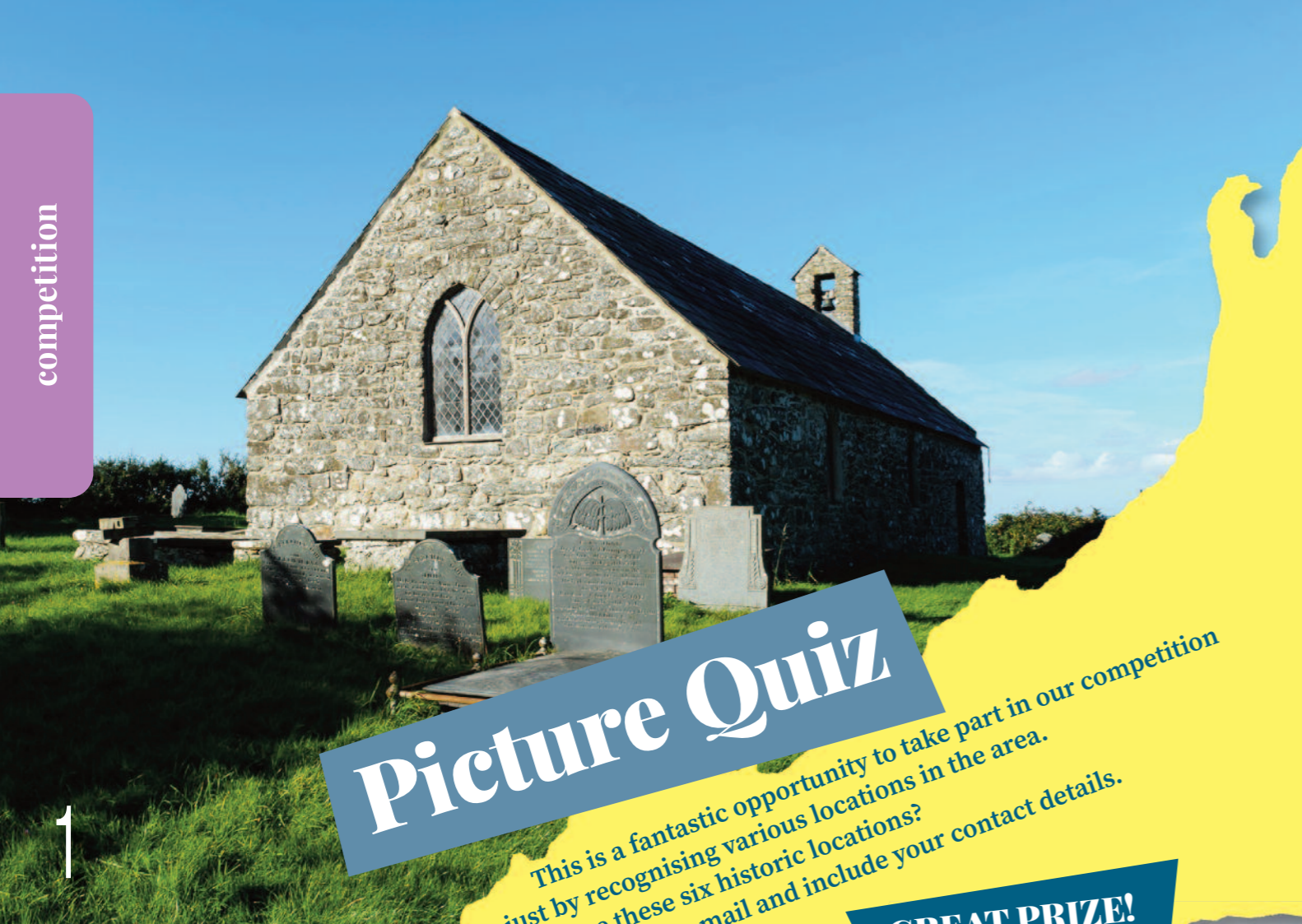
Also as part of the work on invasive non-natives rhododendron trees were cleared at the lower levels of Garn Boduan and near the beach at Llanbedrog.

During the spring we will be holding an awareness raising event in relation to on-native invasives in partnership with Eryri National Park. All are welcome. Please see more information and registration details on page 9.



More information on these and other projects will be provided and continually updated on our Instagram account. You can also contact us directly by e-mail: ahne@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

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Picture Quiz

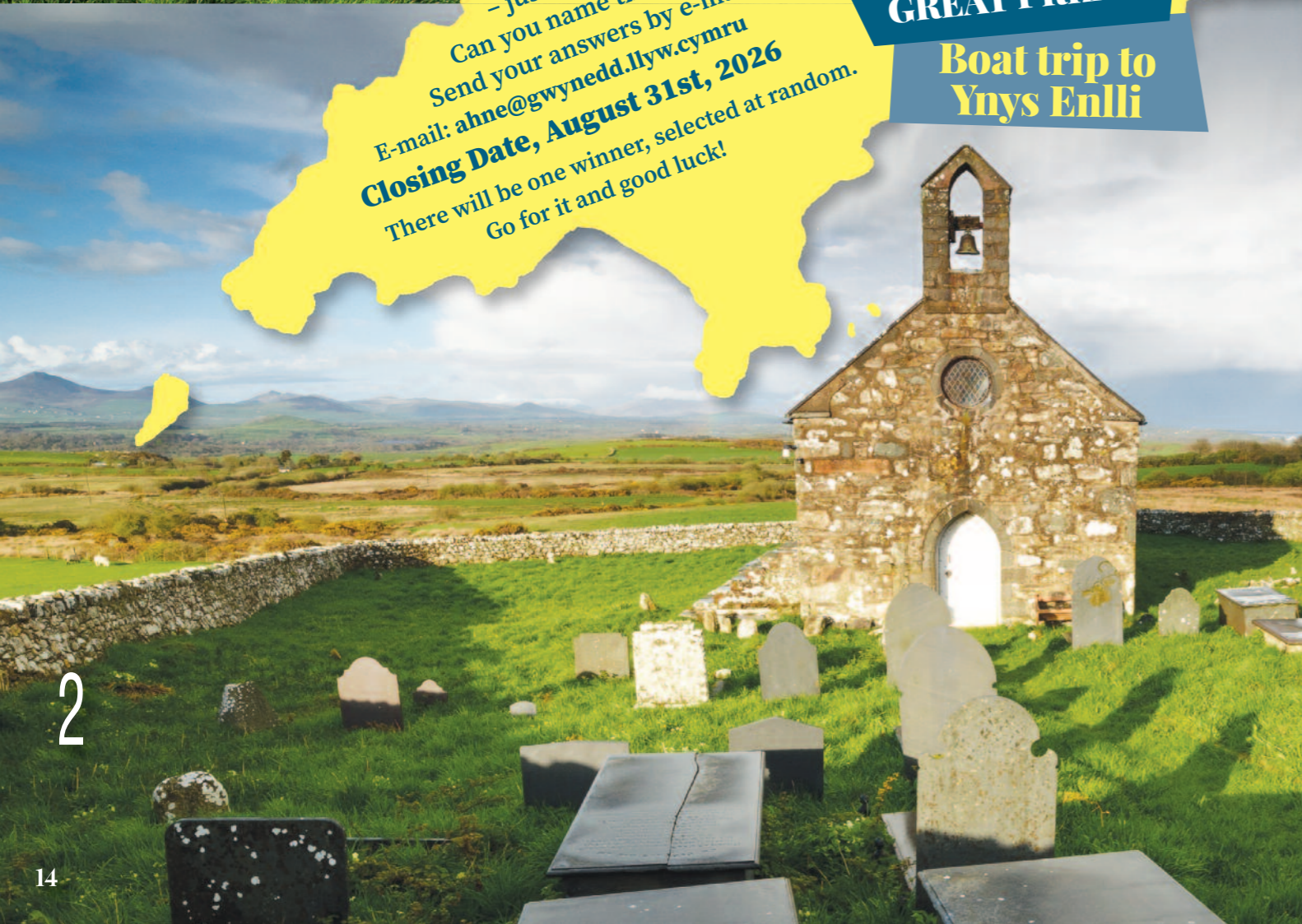
This is a fantastic opportunity to take part in our competition - just by recognising various locations in the area.
Can you name these six historic locations?

Send your answers by e-mail and include your contact details.
E-mail: ahne@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
Closing Date, August 31st, 2026
There will be one winner, selected at random.
Go for it and good luck!

GREAT PRIZE!

Boat trip to Ynys Enlli

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The Sustainable Development Fund

It is a pleasure to announce that the Sustainable Development Fund continues in the 2026 / 2027 financial year, and we will be accepting applications during the year.

What is the Fund?

Wales' Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty annually receive funding from the Welsh Government to support environmental and sustainable projects in these special areas.

Here in Llŷn – the Fund is administered within the AONB unit, and the Grants Panel meet regularly to assess and make decisions on various applications.

What kind of projects are eligible?

There is an emphasis on supporting projects that maintain or improve the landscape and special features, sustain nature, improve key community resources and reinforce the Welsh language and culture.

This year – the Welsh Government has introduced new guidelines. 60% of the funding will be required to be allocated to projects that respond to the nature and climate crisis and losses in biodiversity.

Who can apply?

The Fund can support applications from agencies, voluntary groups, community councils and other organizations – if you have a constitution and a bank account. Individuals and private companies can also apply – if it can be shown that their projects would benefit the area and the wider community.

Please see the Llŷn AONB website for more information or get in touch with us for a further chat and to discuss your ideas:– ahne@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

