

Rural communities to share £1.3 million fund for green projects



(L-R) Howard Sutcliffe, of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB; Haf Roberts and Cara Roberts of Cadwyn Clwyd's Green Communities Project, and Haf Jones, of Conwy County Council. PIC: Mandy Jones Photography.

TOWNS and villages across North East Wales are being challenged to come up with innovative green projects to earn a slice of a £1.3 million fund aimed at boosting the local environment.

The Green Communities Fund aims to provide money to kick-start sustainable community-led projects and is being launched this month across the rural areas of Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham.

Up to 30 towns and villages across the region can benefit and are being invited to submit their proposals for schemes which can range from creating bee gardens to bio-diversity corridors and bicycle networks.

It is being administered by rural development agency Cadwyn Clwyd and funded by the Welsh Government Rural Communities Rural Development Programme funded

by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), and Welsh Government.

Project Lead Haf Roberts, based at Cadwyn Clwyd's Corwen office, said: "The message is to bring people and nature together because one of the lessons from Covid is how important our green spaces are to our physical and mental well-being.

"The quality of the local environment directly affects us so this initiative aims to help improve and enhance community green spaces, strengthen local biodiversity and mitigate the effects of climate change."

They aim to deliver the wellbeing goals in the Welsh Government's Wellbeing and Future Generations Act by focusing on Covid recovery and green growth at a community level.

It is a Welsh Government scheme under the ENRaW Fund (Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being) to support improvements to where people live, work and play.

Cadwyn Clwyd's partners in the project include Denbighshire, Conwy, Flintshire and Wrexham County Councils.

Howard Sutcliffe, of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, said: "The time is right now as we've entered a world of climate change and green infrastructure with COP 26 just around the corner and this project is all about improving the quality of life, especially after the pandemic.

"This project really brings green values into the community and we will see the benefits on the ground for all the community such as tree-planting, electric charging points and projects everyone can benefit from."

Communities with an idea for a project within the eligible counties can declare an interest by filling in the form available on the Cadwyn Clwyd website at <http://cadwynclwyd.co.uk/green-communities/>