

Cambrian Village Trust Sensory Garden and Fruit Orchard



Well-being goal



Ways of working



The Cambrian Village Trust is a charity based in the Rhondda Valleys, in the Cwmclydach Country Park. The Trust works with a number of other organisations to offer a range of health and wellbeing activities, sports, and outdoor learning opportunities to their local communities.

The Cambrian Village Trust (CVT) was set up in 2001 with a view to providing football opportunities to young people in the local area of Tonypanyd.

Since that time, CVT has expanded to include a community café – the Cambrian Lakeside Cafe Bar – which is considered by locals to be the heart of the community. The site offers a number of activities for various community groups, including

- Leisure activities and outdoor learning for adults with learning disabilities
- A health and well-being programme for groups of: men over 50; young women; people living with anxiety and depression
- People with physical and sensory impairments; young people with autism; and carers

CVT first partnered with TfW in 2020, when we were awarded our first National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) under the Local Places for Nature grant. This money was used to create the “Stalk to Fork” garden, which was developed with a view to enhancing biodiversity, educating the community on environmental protections, and growing fresh fruit, vegetables and herbs. The garden was met with such success, we were delighted to extend the opportunity to CVT to work together once more.

Under the Community Woodlands Scheme, our second NLHF grant, CVT have been able to enhance the accessible green spaces at the site, with the development of the Cambrian Village Trust Sensory Garden and Fruit Orchard.

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Having this garden will make a world of difference to the community members we work with, not just for their health, wellbeing and development but as a way to improve their skills, knowledge and lifestyle.

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Key words: Community Woodlands, grant funded projects, National Lottery Heritage Fund, sensory garden, food growing, accessible green space, community engagement, future generations, partnerships, sustainable impact



The project aim was to install a secure sensory garden for use by the supported groups and Sight Life, a charity for the blind, and as a continuation of the Stalk to Fork garden.

The site chosen was an unused piece of land next to the car park. The funding was used to transform this area by planting a mix of flowering and fruiting trees and shrubs, of both flowering and fruiting species, to offer sensory stimulation. The garden is fully accessible with a pathway installed across the full length features a number of seating areas for users to enjoy. The polytunnel serves as both an educational space, allowing the opportunity for community members to improve their skills, and a facility to grow additional plants for the two sites, with opportunities to grow from seed, harvest crops and use fruit to make jams and chutneys.

With the installation of both garden sites, CVT were able to appoint a full-time Sustainable Food and Nature Coordinator, who will take responsibility of the gardens. They will run courses and community sessions to further educate local people in food production.

The new garden has been enthusiastically received by the local community and members of the Trust. With a number of event and community growing days having been held, Sight Life say,

“Members can experience calmness and enjoy their surroundings in a safe, welcoming space”.



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The garden is a catalyst for creating social connections between our volunteers, groups and community members, and has improved their physical and emotional well-being.
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