

PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND COMMITTEE  
20<sup>th</sup> January 2016

**REPORT OF SDF ADMINISTRATOR**

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**SUBJECT:  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND UPDATE REPORT**

**Background**

The Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) supports innovative sustainable projects that develop and test new ways of achieving a more sustainable living for current and future generations. The funding is to assist projects that focus on demonstrating practical solutions relevant to environmental, social, cultural and economic aspects of life. Projects can range from locally based to those applying across the National Park or a wider area.

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (PCNPA) administers the fund according to operational guidelines stipulated by the Welsh Government (WG). The SDF Committee is responsible for considering all applications for financial assistance in connection with the SDF and to monitor and review the scheme

**Project Applications**

There are six new applications for consideration:

**SDF 0354 – Pembrokeshire Sustainable Shellfish Pilot Initiative**

This project aims to demonstrate that it is possible to improve the sustainability of static fishing gear off the Pembrokeshire Coast and consequently reduce the impact that lost fishing gear is having on the marine environment and local economy.

Funding is sought over three financial years: 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18.

**SDF 0355 – Strumble Tidal Flow**

This project aims to realise the first community owned/led tidal flow project in Wales and in doing so mitigate the community's impact on climate change and provide a sustainable energy source and security of supply, whilst also bringing local financial benefits for both local investors and local community initiatives.

Funding is sought over two financial years: 2015/16 and 2016/17

Any grant assistance approved for this project will be State Aid as defined under Articles 87 and 88 of The Treaty of Rome and would therefore be offered as 'de minimis' aid under the Commission Regulation (EC) No 1407/2013

### **SDF 0356 – On the Trail of Wild Honey**

Funding support is requested to further develop an existing ecologically sound wild meadow seed and ecological consultancy business including an expansion to existing capacity in the wild seed harvesting enterprise but also to keep bees, process honey and provide hives for apiaries on conservation-minded farms. The SDF has previously awarded £7,135 towards equipment for the seed harvesting business.

Funding is sought in this (2015-16) financial year.

Any grant assistance approved for this project will be State Aid as defined under Articles 87 and 88 of The Treaty of Rome and would therefore be offered as ‘de minimis’ aid in the agriculture sector under the Commission Regulation (EU) No 1408/2013.

### **SDF 0357 – Compost Heat Recovery**

To enable the sustainable expansion of a National Park based tree surgery business this innovative project intends to use a Compost Heat Recovery system to provide an environmentally friendly source of heat for a kiln to dry firewood. The SDF has previously approved £11,760 of funding towards the firewood kiln.

Funding is sought in the next (2016/17) financial year.

Any grant assistance approved for this project will be State Aid as defined under Articles 87 and 88 of The Treaty of Rome and would therefore be offered as ‘de minimis’ aid under the Commission Regulation (EC) No 1407/2013

### **SDF 0358 – Pembrokeshire Park Play, Our Way**

By learning through play, in an informal and fun way, “Pembrokeshire Park Play, Our Way” aims to build a greater awareness and understanding amongst children, young people and play-workers of the culture, wildlife, landscape and land use of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park (PCNP).

Funding is sought in the next (2016/17) financial year.

### **SDF 0359 – Pembrokeshire Outdoor Schools**

The Pembrokeshire Outdoor Schools (PODS) partnership wishes to develop and deliver a new programme of training and support for schools focusing on a wide range of cross-curricular learning opportunities, whilst also promoting a greater understanding of and empathy with PCNP and more generally, the natural world.

Funding is sought over two financial years (2016/17 and 2017/18).

### **Project Change**

#### **SDF 0345 – Biomass Firewood Kiln**

<b>Total Project Value</b>	<b>SDF Grant Approved</b>	<b>SDF Grant paid to date</b>
£27,720	£11,760	£0.00

Funding for this project, which involves the construction of a firewood kiln to be fuelled by biomass, was approved by the SDF Committee in September 2014. The project was due to have been completed by the end of March 2015 but securing a suitable site for installation of the kiln has proved more difficult than anticipated due to planning constraints. A site, with land owner agreement, has now been identified as suitable for both the firewood business and an associated rural dwelling. A planning application was therefore finally submitted in December 2015. An extension to the project timescale to the end of this financial year had already been agreed.

It was originally intended that this firewood kiln would be fuelled by a biomass boiler. Waste from the processing of firewood and woodchip from the tree surgery business was going to be dried and then used as fuel for the boiler. As Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) payments were to be claimed for the biomass boiler it did not form part of the original SDF application. Further research has however identified an even more sustainable compost heat recovery system as an alternative source of heat for the kiln. The proposed compost heat recovery system would not be registered on the RHI programme and is the subject of a new application (SDF 0357) to the SDF.

### **Project Update**

#### **SDF 0349 – Dr Beynon’s Bug Farm: Phase 3**

Dr Beynon’s Bug Farm project links science, research, education, conservation, sustainable farming practice and tourism to deliver significant environmental and economic benefits. This phase planned to build upon phases 1 and 2 to see the Bug Farm open to the public and in addition to on-site bug hunts, guided walks, workshops and discussion events include: a Pembrokeshire (temperate) walk through bug house, a tropical bug experience, a cocoon constructed from the old grain silo and a ticket office/shop and gallery.

Work on the project has been relentless with highlights of the overall project progress provided in Annex III ‘2015 Highlights at the Bug Farm’.

In summary, the Tropical Bug house is now complete, the old milking shed has been successfully converted into a ticket office and shop/gallery, buildings for the labs, lecture rooms and offices are now fully, sympathetically and sustainably restored and up and running, a Dutch barn has been converted into an invertebrate related indoor play space, landscaping undertaken to complete the half mile educational trail to showcase wildlife and farming in action and the walled garden cleared, landscaped and planted as a haven for insects. The Bug Farm also now has two full time employees and has been undertaking an intensive PR marketing campaign.

Due to delays in building works and material deliveries the Farm and associated ‘Grub Kitchen’ restaurant business partially opened to the public in late October 2015, which was later than planned as it was hoped to open for the start of the tourist season in July 2015. A full launch is now re-scheduled for Spring 2016 when all Phase 3 work will be complete. Elements of the SDF funded phase 3 project which have been delayed include the Cocoon (old grain silo), which to date has been moved and fitted into its final position with fencing and landscaping completed in order to funnel public to the exhibit

but the internal design work and decoration now scheduled for winter 2015-16. Also the Pembrokeshire Temperate Polytunnel, which will now be fitted in Spring 2016 as it is not ideal to fit and stock the polytunnel through the autumn/winter months.

A final SDF claim for Phase 3 of the project has been submitted but 10% of the overall SDF payment has currently been withheld because of the elements of the project for which completion has now been rescheduled for spring 2016.

<b>Total SDF Project Value (predicated)</b>	<b>Actual Total SDF Project Value to date</b>	<b>SDF Grant Approved</b>	<b>SDF Grant paid to date</b>	<b>SDF Grant left to pay</b>
£128,013	£129,830.68	£32,034	£28,830.6	£3,203.4

**Action:** SDF Committee to indicate whether to pay the remaining SDF money at this point in time or to continue to hold the final amount until such time as all work on The Cocoon and Temperate Polytunnel has been completed.

### **Project Progress**

Summary detail of projects currently receiving support is provided in Annex II. More detail on any project is available upon request. Please note that quarterly claims and progress update reports for the third financial quarter (Oct – Dec 2015) are due in January 2016 but because of print deadlines it is not possible to process the claims and include the updated detail in Annex II of this report.

### **SDF Annual Report**

The SDF annual progress report, providing information on progress of the SDF fund in 2014-15, was presented to the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee in November 2015. Members were pleased to learn what had been achieved and commended the Fund, particularly its ability to support projects that were innovative and therefore took a risk. During discussion however, as it is recognised that the money distributed was public money, some assurance was sought as to whether funded projects were still operational or successful once the support ended. It was explained that because SDF is able to fund projects with an element of risk that not all projects will necessarily go on to be successful, there is often a considerable delay between the funded start-up phase of a project and any perceived future success, that success criteria are not easily defined due to the diverse nature of the projects funded and also that once the funding ceases there is no ongoing reporting requirement from which to measure continued operation or success. It was therefore agreed that Officers would investigate whether an evaluation project to look at the success or continuation of previously funded projects was feasible.

### **SDF Forms**

All SDF forms and guidance documents (except for the SDF evaluation form) have now been updated. You will note that the application forms received and presented in this

Committee pack are the new amended forms. Unfortunately, due to the necessity to be able to print out application forms without losing text, it has not been possible for the forms to be in pdf format as originally anticipated. This therefore still leaves some word processing and formatting functionality frustrations when completing or amending them.

### **SDF Funding Surgery and Funding Fair**

In collaboration with PAVS the SDF Administrator held a Funding Surgery on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2015. Only three appointments were booked but following the surgery two applications for funding were submitted.

The SDF Administrator also attended the PAVS Funding Fair on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015, which was extremely well attended and generated a lot of enquiries in relation to both the main SDF and the Little Green Grant (LGG). It is becoming more apparent that a lot of people/groups/organisations, are chasing ever decreasing sources of financial support. The large number of LGG applications received is possibly a result of interest shown at the funding fair.

### **SDF Financial position**

**£100,000** was allocated to support SDF projects in 2015-16. In addition, a balance of £35,186 was carried forward into the 2015/16 financial year which meant that at the beginning of the year £135,186 was the overall amount available to support projects in 2015-16.

In July 2015, project SDF 0329 ended prematurely which meant that £13,977.96 previously committed became re-available for new projects and £686.46 of funding allocated to LGG-46 last financial year is also re-available because the project did not proceed.

Therefore if the £686.46 is added to the £4,500 allocated to support LGGs this year it leaves **£18,966** available to support new project applications to SDF and **£2,060** to support new LGG applications. You will note from the table below that applications under consideration are requesting £23,377 this year, which means there is a deficit of **£4,411** if all applications for funding are considered worthy of approval.

The following table shows that the applications under consideration are requesting a total of £96,991 of funding over three financial years but in 2015-16 requesting £23,377 whereas there is only £18,966 of funding available.

<b>Application Reference</b>	<b>Planned 15-16 (£)</b>	<b>Planned 16-17 (£)</b>	<b>Planned 17-18 (£)</b>	<b>Planned 18-19 (£)</b>	<b>Total (£)</b>
SDF 0354	6,422.02	9,845.62	3,969.71		20,237.35
SDF 0355	6,875.00	6,187.50			13,062.50
SDF 0356	10,080.00				10,080.00
SDF 0357		29,928.84			29,928.84
SDF 0358		5,045.76			5,045.76
SDF 0359		9,257.00	9,380.00		18,637.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,377.02</b>	<b>60,264.72</b>	<b>13,349.71</b>		<b>96,991.45</b>

Past experience is that a number of projects do not always end up claiming their committed funding allocation by the end of a financial year and therefore if, after consideration of the applications seeking funding in 2015-16, the Committee may wish to approve project funding that a decision is made to over commit funds by the amount of £4,411. This decision would be based on the expectation that there would be some slippage and some projects would not claim all of the funding committed to them in 2015-16. If a worst case scenario resulted and the expected minor slippage did not occur, it would be necessary to delay the payment of some claims until April 2016 when the money could be paid from the 2016-17 SDF allocation.

The table below gives a summary financial position for the fund:-

	2013/14 (£)	2014/15 (£)	2015/16 (£)	2016/17 (£)	2017/18 (£)
WAG SDF grant	200,000	100,000	100,000		
Funding carried forward	86,631	33,018	35,186		
Total Funding available	286,631	133,018	135,186		
Little Green Grant	4,343	4,500	4,500		
SDF committed spend	286,924	129,057	111,720	18,609	4,495
Projects for consideration			23,377	60,265	13,350
Total paid to Projects	253,613	93,332	59,647*		
Refund	-	-	686.46**		
Balance/Uncommitted	33,018	35,186	<b>19,652</b>		

\* Paid to date 05/01/16

\*\* LGG-46 refund

A more detailed breakdown of the current financial position can be viewed in Annex 1

### **Little Green Grant – Funding for a sustainable Pembrokeshire**

The **Little Green Grant (LGG)** helps to deliver the fundamental principles of the SDF. Applicants may apply for up to £1,500 towards a project. The grant is administered by PAVS.

Three applications (see following table) have been approved to date this financial year:-

Ref	Project Title	Applicant	Summary Description	Decision	Funding (£)
LGG-50	Cartref COCA Sustainability Enhancements	Caerhys Organic Community Agriculture (COCA)	Contribute towards straw bales and lime render to be used in the construction of a new community building to socialise in, store and share the produce grown by the community	Approved	1,500

			cooperative.		
LGG-51	Coastlines	Coastlines	The project aims to record observations of the landscape to develop an increased pride and appreciation for the community in which participants live. Funding will contribute towards 3 community arts workshops.	Approved	1,068.50
LGG-52	Nature's Gift	Narberth Museum	Funding towards the cost of 6 workshops as part of Narberth Museum's winter educational programme. The focus will be on "forgotten" skills and techniques. Using foraged, recycled or collected materials the projects will make participants re-aware of local, traditional and more sustainable crafts as a way of documenting social history.	Approved	557.62
				TOTAL	£3,126.12

11 new LGG project applications were received in December 2015 requesting £13,560.75 of LGG funding. There is however only **£2,060.34** of the LGG funding allocation left to distribute this financial year as shown below:-

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
<b>Committed to PAVS for LGG Projects</b>	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£4,500.00	£4,500.00
<b>Refund -unspent LGG 2014-15</b>				£686.46
<b>Money committed to approved projects</b>	£7,553.60	£4,342.87	£4,500.00	£3,126.12
<b>Balance</b>	-£1,553.60	£1,657.13	£0.00	£2,060.34

Assessment of the applications by the SDF Administrator and the PAVS Development Officer is currently taking place. It may be that some projects, if eligible and considered worthy of support, could be awarded funding from next (2016-17) financial year instead of this year.

This is really an unprecedented number of LGG applications and is perhaps a reflection of how difficult it is to obtain grant support in the current economic climate.

Administration of the LGG is currently undertaken by PAVS. There is no resource allocated to PAVS to undertake this work and whilst it has always been possible for them to work in partnership with us and provide this service for a small number of applications it should be noted that with the limited resources and funding that PAVS has available it may not be possible to continue to do so in the future.

**Date of Next SDF Committee Meetings**

Wednesday 18th May 2016

## Annex I

	SDF Projects	Project value	SDF funding	Intervention rate	SDF paid to date	Planned 15/16	Planned 16/17	Planned 17/18	Planned 18/19
329	eduCAT TYF Connect	115540.88	57840.88	50.06%	16634.91	0.00	0.00	0.00	
343	<b>A stitch in Time</b> PCNPA	51625.90	25318.25	49.04%	5136.67	23622.35	0.00	0.00	
345	<b>Biomass Firewood Kiln</b> LM Tree Solutions	27720.00	11760.00	42.42%	0.00	11760.00	0.00	0.00	
346	<b>Solva Care</b> Solva Community Council	94038.00	23408.00	24.89%	2523.58	12704.00	10704.00	0.00	
347	<b>Off Grid Street Food</b> Pemb Beach Food Co Ltd	10240.69	5120.69	50.00%	4193.00	5120.69	0.00	0.00	
348	<b>Medieval Kiln</b> Newport Memorial Hall	131150.00	15000.00	11.44%	0.00	15000.00	0.00	0.00	
349	<b>Dr Beynon's Bug Farm Phase 3</b> Dr Beynon's Bug Farm Ltd	132063.00	32034.00	24.26%	28830.60	32034.00	0.00	0.00	
351	<b>Marine Energy - Education and Fisheries</b> Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum	10286.55	4981.55	48.43%	2328.03	4981.55	0.00	0.00	
352	<b>Bee Wild West Wales</b> BBCT	70493.00	20824.00	29.54%	0.00	6497.33	7904.67	4494.67	1927.33
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>643158.02</b>	<b>196287.37</b>		<b>59646.79</b>	<b>111719.92</b>	<b>18608.67</b>	<b>4494.67</b>	<b>1927.33</b>
	<b>SDF Deferred Projects</b>								
	<b>Total</b>								
	<b>Projects for consideration</b>					<b>Planned 15-16</b>	<b>Planned 16-17</b>	<b>Planned 17-18</b>	<b>Planned 18-19</b>
354	<b>Pembrokeshire Sustainable Shellfish Pilot Initiative</b> Pemb's Marine SAC					6,422.02	9,845.62	3,969.71	
355	<b>Strumble Tidal Flow</b> TBG					6,875.00	6,187.50		
356	<b>On the Trail of Wild Honey</b> Jordanston Mountain					10,080.00			
357	<b>Compost Heat Recovery</b> LM Tree Solutions						29,928.84		
358	<b>Pembrokeshire Park Play, Our Way</b> Clybiau Plant Cymru Kid's Clubs						5,045.76		
359	<b>Pembrokeshire Outdoor Schools</b> PCNPA						9,257.00	9,380.00	
	<b>Total</b>					<b>23377.02</b>	<b>60,264.72</b>	<b>13,349.71</b>	<b>0.00</b>

## SDF Projects – Summary Table

Annex II

Ref SDF	Project	Applicant	Description	Total Project Value  (£)	Grant Approved  (£)	Grant Paid to date  (£)
<b>Active Projects</b>						
343	A Stitch in Time	PCNPA	Funding is contributing towards the employment of a part time project coordinator for a pilot river catchment based project to control invasive non-native plant species in the Gwaun Valley.	51,626	25,318	5,137
345	Biomass Firewood Kiln	LM Tree Solutions	<p>SDF funding will contribute towards a firewood kiln that is integral to the sustainable expansion of a local tree surgery business. Originally the kiln was to be heated by a biomass boiler but it is now planned to heat the kiln using an innovative compost heat recovery system.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The start of this project has been delayed while site suitability and planning permission issues are resolved. Also while changes to the kiln heat source have been researched and another application to the SDF for the compost heat recovery system prepared.</p>	27,720	11,760	0.00
346	Solva Care Pilot Project	Solva Community Council	This project aims to improve the health and wellbeing of the local community by establishing a social enterprise company that will provide care packages tailored according to need. Funding will contribute to a part time coordinator, who is in post, to run a two year pilot. The coordinator will establish a volunteer framework. Volunteers will be given training so that a team of volunteers will support locally based carers.	94,038	23,408	2,524
347	Off Grid Street Food	Pembrokeshire Beach Food	Café Môr, a street food vendor based at Freshwater West which serves locally sourced sustainable food aims to develop the	10,241	5,121	4,193

		Company Ltd.	UK's first off-grid catering outlet. Funding has contributed to the installation of photo-voltaic panels, a wind turbine, a battery bank and more energy efficient white goods allowing the mobile catering unit to operate without the need for an on-site generator. A case study has been written and the final claim and report is expected January 2016			
348	Newport Medieval Kiln – Conservation and Interpretation	Newport Memorial Hall	<p>The community will create a new cultural heritage attraction by conserving a medieval pottery kiln (15<sup>th</sup> Century), registered as a scheduled Ancient Monument. They will also deliver a complimentary programme of community engagement and educational events. Essential structural changes will improve environmental conditions currently threatening the fabric of the kiln. This work will also allow public access and provide a multi-purpose education resource area with interpretation of the kiln and medieval Newport.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> There has been a slight delay to the start of this project due to the unforeseen need to interview for a project manager but it is now progressing well.</p>	131,150	15,000	0.00
349	Dr Beynon's Bug Farm: Phase 3	Dr Beynon's Bug Farm Ltd	This phase of the project will build on Phases 1 and 2 to deliver an exceptional, unique, year round, all weather experience for tourists, local community, schools, colleges and universities. It will see the Bug Farm open to the public and in addition to on-site bug hunts, guided walks, workshops and discussion events will include: a Pembrokeshire (temperate) walk-through bug house, a tropical bug experience, a cocoon constructed from the old grain silo and a ticket office/shop and gallery. The project links science, research, education, conservation, sustainable farming practice and tourism to deliver significant environmental and economic benefits.	132,063	32,034	28,831
351	Marine Energy – Education Development and Fisheries Diversification	Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum	SDF funding will assist delivery of an engagement programme to raise awareness of the marine energy potential of the sea surrounding Pembrokeshire and associated opportunities for socio-economic benefit. The project will focus on young people and the local fishing community to raise awareness of potential involvement and opportunities by delivering a new education	10,287	4,982	2,328

			programme and holding targeted stakeholder events.			
352	Bee Wild West Wales	Bumblebee Conservation Trust (BBCT)	Through learning and participation this project will use fun and interactive ways to engage, promote and enable action to make PCNP a buzzing haven for bumblebees. Working with communities, BBCT will explain the importance of bees and what can be done to protect them. They will achieve this through citizen science, conservation work parties, events, an education and activity programme and a toolkit for community groups, which will help to make green spaces more bee friendly.	70,493	20,824	0.00



# Dr. Beynon's Bug Farm

## 2015 Highlights at The Bug Farm

January



We hit the ground running in 2015, continuing with clearing the farm and restoring the listed buildings. We focused on the buildings that would become laboratories, lecture room (above) and offices. All are now fully restored and The Bug Farm is up and running as a **scientific research & education centre**.

## February



February was a big month for us as, for the first time, the **Tyddewi Herd of Welsh Black Cattle** were turned out to graze at The Bug Farm. However, the cattle were not the only new arrivals: We were delighted to welcome Hannah Banks to The Bug Farm. She is now a hugely valuable member of the team. We also had to show you what happens to dung on Valentines Day at The Bug Farm...

## March



St Davids Day saw The Bug Farm appear on national television as part of **BBC Countryfile's St Davids Day special**. Our University of Oxford D.Phil. student Paul Manning explained his field experiments which look at effects of grassland management on soil fauna and Sarah unearthed the secret world of the cellar beetle in The Bug Farm farmhouse.

## April



April was the month of the **3<sup>rd</sup> Dung Ecology Meeting**. Co-organised by Sarah and the University of Bristol, it was a fantastic event aiming to promote communication between researchers, agriculturalists, farmers, vets, and policy makers with an interest in dung ecology and its contribution to agricultural systems. Back at the farm, work on the Walled Garden began in earnest. We have dug a pond, installed invertebrate habitats and planting is complete. The Walled Garden will open to the public in spring 2016.

## May



Things started to get busy in May! Alongside Grub Kitchen, The Bug Farm had a stand at The Really Wild Food & Countryside Festival in St Davids. It was a great way to meet locals and tourists alike. The giant hissing cockroaches and Andy's Cricket Cookies were stars of the show! With spring well and truly sprung, it was a pleasure to welcome the West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre recorders to The Bug Farm to help us uncover and identify what native wonders we have here. This Southern Marsh Orchid was a particular favourite. Also on the farm, a wild bird seed crop was sown next to the spring barley, and we were thrilled to add a bull to the Welsh Black herd: Syfni Dewin Du 5<sup>th</sup> is a real gentleman and a pleasure to have in The Bug Farm family! We were thrilled to win the Special Agricultural award at the West Wales Business Awards!

#### June



June saw Sarah film with Dr George McGavin for The Secret Life of Your House, a program all about the little creatures we often share our homes with! It aired on ITV on 2<sup>nd</sup> June at 9pm. Meanwhile, Andy from Grub Kitchen was busy manning a pop-up stall in Cardiff city centre with Rentokil, serving grub Kitchen insect canapés for their 'Pestaurant'. The busy month continued with a lovely day trip to Burns Pet Nutrition open day. The Bug Farm stand drew quite a crowd and it was great to network with fellow farmers. Back in Pembrokeshire, we were delighted to welcome the St Davids WI to The Bug Farm for a sneak preview and afternoon tea. Grub Kitchen's cakes and scones went down a storm... praise indeed! Sarah was also extremely honoured to be elected as a trustee and council member of the Royal Entomological Society.

#### July



In July Sarah headed to Bridgend to host a Dung Beetle and Grassland Management training course for the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales. As well as studying in the classroom, they headed out into the field to delve in dung! We must also mention the cutest and fluffiest of the new arrivals! Meet Jingle and Tuesday, two of our favourite egg suppliers. We also have plenty of beautiful Bug Farm cockerels for sale...

#### August



August saw Sarah chair the Global Food Security's 'Insects as Animal Feed' conference in London. Attended by experts across the field, the conference delivered a report on crucial research questions required for this exciting new industry in the UK. Sarah and Andy also headed to London to film for BBC Tomorrow's Food. On The Bug Farm we all lent a hand to lay our grass mesh visitor car park: Only 3000 pegs to hammer in by hand! The Tyddewi Herd continued to grow with twin calves born at the end of August. The youngsters are thriving and still enjoy play sessions with Alfie the dog (who has settled in brilliantly). Sarah, along with her student Warwick Wainwright and Professor Mike Christie at Aberystwyth University, published a landmark paper, putting an economic value on some of the ecosystem services delivered by dung beetles to the UK cattle industry! They estimated that dung beetles may save the UK cattle industry more than £367 million per year! Please follow this [link to the paper](#).

### September



As our soft public opening neared, we began to move our live tropical invertebrates to their display tanks. The Bug Farm is now home to one of the biggest public displays of live invertebrates in the UK, all now housed in our **Tropical Bug Zoo!** We also began to take delivery of some magnificent art for our Bug Art Gallery, and the gift shop stock increased each week. Out in the fields we made the most of the one week of good weather to cut a late hay crop: It was a fantastic team effort to get it in the barn before the rain came in. This superb quality wildflower meadow hay and haylage is now for sale. Despite all the busy days at the farm, Sarah and Andy still found time to head to Dublin for The Royal Entomological Society's International Symposium, Ento' 15. Sarah delivered a plenary lecture while Andy provided edible insect canapés for the president's reception.

### October



October was a momentous month for The Bug Farm as, after months of hard work clearing, planning, building, curating and painting, **we opened our doors to the public for the first time in October half term**. Transforming disused farm barns into a top class visitor attraction and café/restaurant has been by no means easy, but we are delighted with how far we have come and to see the place buzzing with satisfied visitors makes it all worthwhile! At the end of October we welcomed a group of 'My Welsh Adventure' competition winners, who enjoyed feasts at Grub Kitchen as well as the sunniest Bug Hunt of the year! Sarah also published an article about edible insects in The Conversation. [Follow this link to the full article](#). In October, we found out that we had won the Plantlife International Meadow Makers Award (Wales) for her habitat conservation work at The Bug Farm. Some of the award-winning meadows will be open to the public as part of the Bug Farm Trail in 2016.

#### November



November was definitely the month of **press and publicity**. With The Bug Farm home to Grub Kitchen, hailed as the **first edible insect restaurant in the UK**, we were inundated with requests for TV, radio and newspaper/magazine interviews. Both Andy and Sarah featured on BBC News, ITV News, S4C's *Heno* and Sky News. Even Michel Roux Junior gave Andy's cricket cookies his seal of approval when Sarah headed to BBC Radio 4 for an interview! Amongst others, The Bug Farm and Grub Kitchen have been featured in the Independent, the Observer and the Sunday Times as well as the Western Telegraph and even the Financial Times! Phew! We also loved having the enthusiastic youngsters from the Monkton Priory Project visit us in November for a day all about bugs, linked to their curriculum topic of 'Australia'.

#### December



December saw visitors continue to come to The Bug Farm. We were delighted to welcome mosaic artist Maddie Janes, who held a workshop with us. Some really beautiful mosaic bugs emerged! Congratulations to our D.Phil. student, Paul Manning, who published the first paper to come out of his research at The Bug Farm. You can read the abstract by [following this link](#). Bugs were also on the menu for Christmas, as Sarah and Andy were featured on Sky News for a story on the Grub Kitchen Christmas lunch. The pair also provided an alternative Christmas meal for the Jonathan Ross Show Christmas special, feeding guests including Sir Ian McKellen, Aziz Ansari, Fiona Bruce and Cinderella (aka actress Lily James)!

**December marks the end of our second very busy year at The Bug Farm and we would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has been part of the adventure so far. Please see our websites for Bug Farm & Grub Kitchen winter opening times. We are planning an official launch of the visitor attraction in spring 2016...we have LOTS of exciting new exhibits and events planned! We wish you all a Happy New Year!**

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