

Penygraig and Williamstown Communities First

Green Map Project 2005 - 2006



communities *first* cymunedau yn gyntaf





**cherishing the past
valuing the present
visioning the future**

Mapping Common Ground 2003

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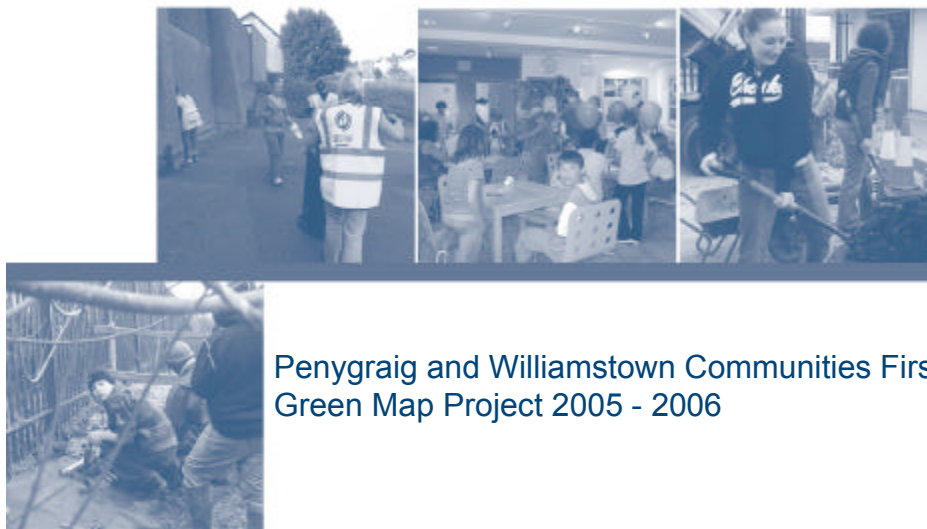
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Penygraig and Williamstown Communities First
Green Map Project 2005 - 2006

What is Green Map?

Green Mapping is a global movement that encourages communities world wide to care for and improve their local area by mapping the local cultural and natural environment. The movement has gained much support and praise for its innovation and success in promoting sustainable living and development in an enormously diverse range of communities around the world. Maps are constructed using a set of globally recognized icons, making it possible to see at a glance what your community offers or what needs to be changed or improved. However, Green Mapping is much more than producing a map. The process of community mapping has great scope for capacity building, allows the community to discover new things about the area and learn about local and global environmental issues. Most importantly it is a fun and exciting way of achieving the Green Map vision of 'promoting local ecological and cultural resources while empowering people to care for them', a local approach to global sustainability.

There are currently over 400 Green Map projects world wide and the Green Map community is continuously growing with approximately one new project joining the green map system (GMS) every week. The Penygraig and Williamstown project is the first youth lead project in the UK.

THINK LOCAL, MAP GLOBAL!

(Green Map slogan)



How does Green Map work along side the Communities First Visioning Framework?

Environment

Green Mapping is a fun and exciting way of achieving the Green Map vision of 'promoting local ecological and cultural resources while empowering people to care for them', a local approach to global sustainability. By involving the community in planning a sustainable action plan it empowers them to make changes and improvements to both the physical and cultural environment of the area. Work through Green Map can reach all areas of community life as it relates to each vision framework theme.

Active Community

Community mapping through Green Map allows the people of Penygraig & Williamstown to identify current issues and community needs and empowers them to develop their own ideas of how to tackle the issues that arise. By promoting sustainable thinking and practices the Green Map Project will allow the community to develop long term solutions to problems, rather than a number of short term 'quick fix' projects. It gives the community the chance to be involved in every stage of community development from visioning and planning to the realization of and care of community resources.

The youth green mapper's have already identified a number of areas they would like to see improved and developed; projects which they hope to implement in the near future. All such projects proposed by 'Tha Green Map Gang' will be advertised to encourage the wider community to get involved in the development of the area.



How does Green Map work along side the Communities First Visioning Framework?

Youth Activities

As the first youth lead Green Map project in the UK Penygraig & Williamstown Green Map project has been instrumental in empowering the youth of the area to take an active role in the sustainable development of their home town. Along the way they have developed a wide range of skills (see education & training), been able to explore different environments on a number of trips and have become part of a global movement. As the project is about much more than creating a map, it is on going and offers endless possibilities for the future to keep the youth of today and tomorrow involved in the active planning and development of their community.

Education & Training

Green Mapping has lots of scope for capacity building and those involved have lots of opportunity to develop a wide range of skills including:

- Knowledge of local and global environmental issues
- I.T.
- Photography
- Communication Skills
- Marketing Skills
- Event Organization
- Art & Design
- Cartography
- Geography
- History



They also learn a lot of additional soft skills including working as part of a team, relating with others, time management and organizational skills which will hopefully empower and raise confidence in those involved. The project can also help identify community interest and can act as a vehicle for putting forward the wishes or needs for further training initiatives.

How does Green Map work along side the Communities First Visioning Framework?

Jobs and Business

In a world of rapid globalization the promotion, development and support of local business and social enterprise is at the heart of the green map ethos. Green Map also encourages and helps local businesses implement green practices and raising the profile of certain environmental issues can lead to significant economic benefits and also to the development of job opportunities e.g. an awareness campaign on energy conservation could lead to cuts in energy costs for many businesses or an improved recycling service could provide opportunities for jobs and employment.

Health & Wellbeing

Awareness campaigns on certain environmental issues can again have a number of benefits on health and wellbeing. There is a very useful link between food and the environment and raising awareness on certain issues such as local food produce, seasonal eating, fair trade produce, organic food, and GM free foods offers great opportunities for side projects focusing on healthy eating. Other popular side projects of Green Map projects include community gardens or outdoor classrooms which offer a range of outdoor exercise opportunities. The general community management of green spaces which the project will encourage also provides alternative forms of exercise and fitness.

The youth involved have gained significant knowledge on such environmental issues surrounding food and have focused on healthy eating throughout the project. On trips and residential the group have been involved in developing and cooking healthy meals using as many fair trade and organic products as possible and have learnt lots about planning a healthy diet.



How does Green Map work along side the Communities First Visioning Framework?

Many of the activities from photo taking days to litter picks and working in Swansea Community Farm have also entailed a lot of alternative and out door exercise. A number of the group, serious about improving their health, has also started using the Valleys Kids community gym as a result of Green Map.

Crime & Community Safety

Crime often results from the poor design of community's e.g. poor lighting, and as green mapping empowers people to be directly involved in the planning of their community, they can develop safer community strategies as part of the ongoing green mapping process. The fact that green mapping encourages people to mark the negative as well as positive aspects of their community such as danger spots, un-used waste land, traffic hazards, dumping grounds, pollution hot spots etc allows them to tackle such problems affecting issues of community safety. The project also has a lot of scope for inter-generational work which can be vital in reducing the perception of crime by encouraging different generations to work together breaking down generational barriers and dismissing stereotypes.

After the completion of the first map we hope to make a history Green Map of what the area used to be like, a positive intergenerational project which would encourage people of all ages to get involved!

Penygraig and Williamstown Green Map Project

The green map project has worked with local youth aged between 9 years old and 16 years old from Valleys Kids middle club, Williamstown Boys and Girls Club and Tonypany Community Collage. They have undertaken a very diverse range of work while developing the map which is explained in more detail below.

Work

Club nights:

The Green Map club night, held every Wednesday evening, was where the group did the majority of their work. It was at these sessions they learnt about numerous environmental issues from healthy eating to energy conservation, mapped the community resources, worked on designing the map, undertook numerous arts and crafts activities, planned events and developed project proposals.

Photo taking days:

Both the middle club group and boys and girls group went on photo taking days around the area mapping the positive and negative resources in the area. Some wonderful photos were taken and later displayed at the Green Map Photo exhibition. The group also began a video documentary to highlight the lack of resources in the area which will be sent to a group of young green mapper's in Scotland and as part of their 'no more parks like prisons' campaign.

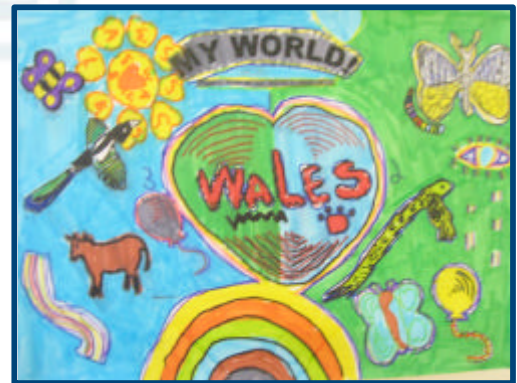


Penygraig and Williamstown Green Map Project

Events

Photo Exhibition:

The group helped organize and run the hugely successful photo exhibition that took place this June. At this event all the photos taken as part of the project were on display along with the 'My World' entries from local schools. There were also a number of environmental awareness stalls including one run by the group which offered information and advice, a chance to sign up for any future projects and recycling bags and freebies. Also at the event was the suggestion tree made by the group that offered the rest of the community to share their ideas of how to deal with local problems. There was a prize giving ceremony for the competition winners with some great prizes up for grabs. There were even more prizes given away in a raffle in which prizes were kindly donated by local traders. The day was a great community event.



Fun Days:

The group helped out at this year's Communities First fun days. They volunteered at both events offering support to staff and running their own environmental awareness stall. They were at hand to offer information and advice on green mapping and a number of environmental issues from fair trade to energy conservation that they have learnt about during the project. At the Party in the Park event they also held a fundraising stall selling painted glass set and flower pots that they had made to raise money for green map.

Penygraig and Williamstown Green Map Project

The group also designed, planned and run a treasure hunt using the green map icons to allow other young people in the community to become familiar with them. The activity was hugely successful with over 40 children taking part, learning about the icons while having fun.

Full Partnership Meeting:

The group volunteered to run a display at the full partnership meeting this September. They made a beautiful display of the work they have done over the last months and their future ideas and were on hand to let the community know all about Green Map and how they can get involved.



Residential

Little Bryn Gwyn Trip:

The group took a trip to Little Bryn Gwyn in the February half term with a healthy eating theme. All weekend the group was encouraged to eat healthily, trying lots of new foods and learning how to cook a number of healthy balanced meals. They also did lots of green map related art work and went on some interesting environmental trips. While away they went to the Swansea Community Farm where they planted trees, helped with the gardening, met the animals and learned all about the running of community farms.



Penygraig and Williamstown Green Map Project

Later they visited the Swansea Environment centre where the Swansea Green Map was made and took part in a number of educational activities learning about lots of issues from saving water to eco buildings. It was a wonderful teambuilding and educational trip!



Tipi Trip:

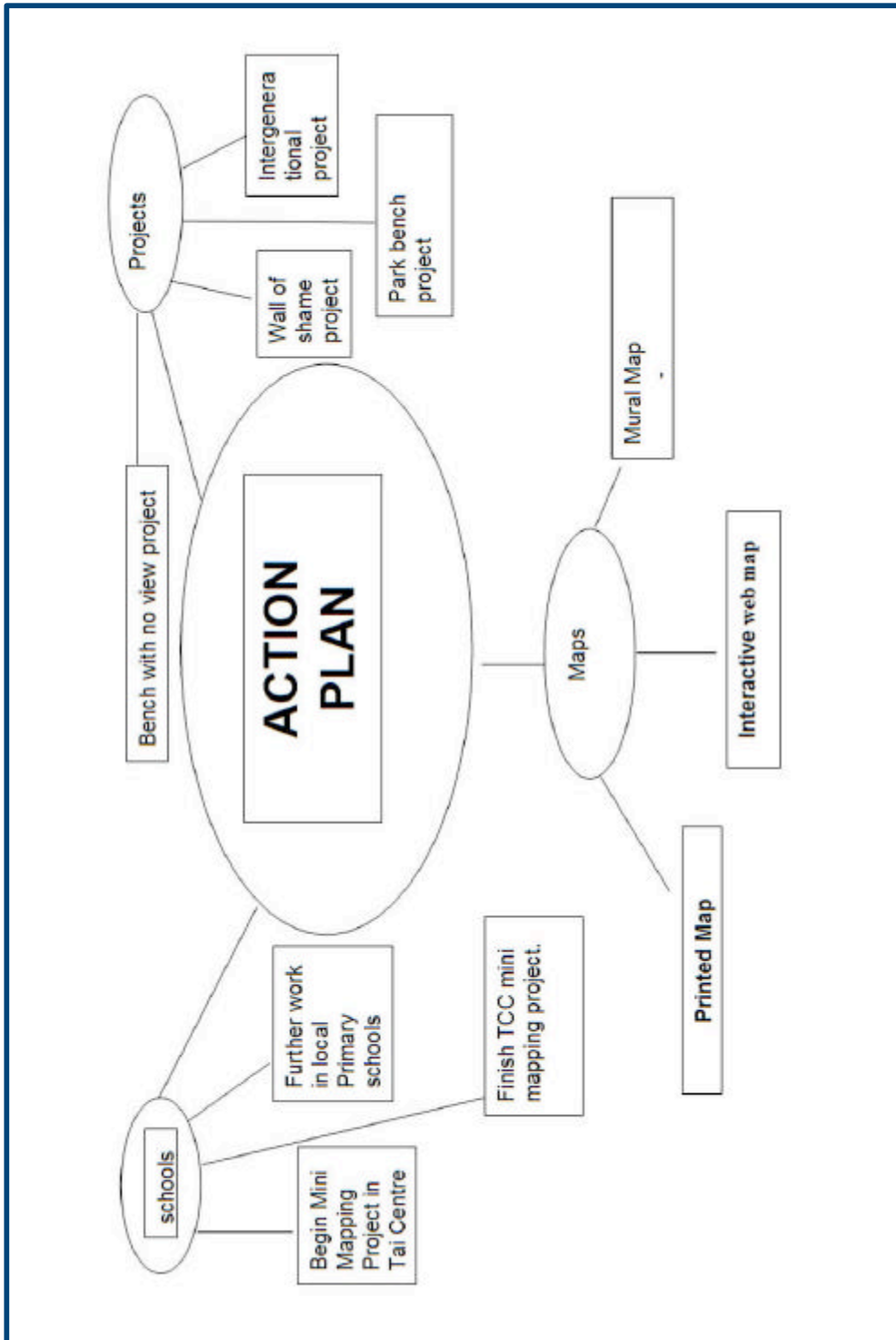
As a celebration and reward for the groups hard work we ran a trip at the end of the summer to Cardigan where we stayed in the Tipi West campsite and ran a day trip to the Cardigan Bay Coastal Farm. The trip was a great chance for the group to get in touch with nature and learn some valuable camping skills, including making a fire and cooking a (very yummy) BBQ. Staying in the tipi's overnight was a great experience and at the farm the group met and fed all sorts of animals from pigs and goats to emus and lamas. The highlight of the trip however was spotting two dolphins and watching the seals play off the beautiful Cardigan coast. We hope the photos show the fun we had on this unusual trip!



Networking:

The group has made useful links with another youth club involved with green mapping in Scotland. There is a lot of scope to work closely with this group including a pen pal scheme and exchange trips.

Action Plan Diagram



Action Plan

Maps

Printed Map

The group has made a number of lists of many diverse community resources and 'grot spots' and has matched them with the relevant icons. The next stage will be to place these on an initial map and write the narratives explaining what each resource offers. After this is complete they need to finish the design of the map to be sent off to the printers. The group will then work with the Communities First team to plan a launch event and distribute the map.

Interactive Map

Once the first printed map is complete a new project to create an interactive map can be started. The group can work with a professional web designer to create a web page where their Green Map can be used interactively. This project would have great capacity building scope while making the map more accessible and more easily updated.

Mural Map

As an opportunity for a great summer art project, the group would like to create a large mural of the map in a central community spot. This would make the map visible to all and create a new community art spot, while providing a fun and creative project for the local youth to be involved with.

Action Plan

Schools

Tonypandy Community College

The first task is to finish mapping the schools green resources and mark them on the existing map they have created. The group is also designing their own 'local icons' to illustrate the different school departments and these need to be finished and also marked on the map. Once the mapping of sites is complete the group need to decide the format of the map, will they create a printed version, interactive version or both? When the format of the map is decided they can begin the design and production and start planning a launch event. After the first map is complete the group can start planning the tidy up and art projects they have been considering throughout the project and begin to undertake action on some of these ideas.

The Tai Centre

After their involvement in the 'My world' art competition the Tai Centre have expressed a keen interest in participating in a mini mapping project of the school. This is a great opportunity to work with the school and create a very exciting map, with scope to do related environmental side projects within the school.

Local Primary Schools

After working within all the local primary schools on the My World competition there is a good opportunity to build on the existing relationships and do further work in the schools. Approach each school and see if they would be interested in doing a mini mapping project.

Action Plan

Projects

Park Bench project

The group would like to tidy up the benches in Penygraig Park through a community art project. The group would like to brighten up the benches by painting them with some colourful designs. Some of their ideas include a history bench which would tell the story of Penygraig Park from past to present and a poem bench with an inspirational poem written by the group about the park.

The Wall of Shame Project

The youth identified the wall at the very end of Vicarage Road as one of the worse eyesores in the area and would like to do something about it! If permission is granted they have suggested doing another community arts project and painting a mural on the wall. TCC arts department has shown interest in being involved in this project and if possible would like to use this space for an annual rolling mural project, working with new groups of youth each year on designing and painting currently very ugly wall!

Bench with no view project

One of the biggest problems identified has been tipping and dumping and one of the areas which have been ruined by this problem is the grassland just before the Vicarage Road lay-by. The group wish to do a tidy up project on this waste land and make it a friendly green space that can be used by the near by residents. The bench that looks on to this area has been nick named 'the bench with no view' and the objective of this project is to make it 'the bench with a wicked view!'. Hopefully there is scope to work with Ground Work on this project. The environmental group will be able to work with the community in transforming this currently scrap piece of land.

Action Plan

Intergenerational project

A great idea for an extension to the first Green Map could be done through a wonderful intergenerational project. The group could work with the history society and older local residents to find out what Penygraig was like 50 years ago and create a 'now and then' map comparing how the environment and community resources have changed.