



## BRINGING THE OUTDOORS IN DURING LOCKDOWN

Winter 2020-21 has been more challenging than everybody hoped, including those of us here at Tir Coed. We spent autumn 2020 preparing our sites and developing 'Covid-19 safer' activities, but as winter took hold we were only given a small window in November to get people out into the woods before the new restrictions came in.

Nevertheless, it was an uplifting month for Tir Coed as we were able to welcome **123** people into the woods. These included **91** individuals taking part in one of **14** Bespoke Activity Sessions hosted across the four counties, **11** trainees completing courses cut short by the outbreak of the pandemic earlier in the year and **21** Tir Coed volunteers.

While we were unable to take as many people out into the woods for our usual range of activities and courses as we would have liked, we have spent the past few months striving to share our love of the woodlands with others by bringing the outdoors directly into people's homes through their phones, laptops and tablets

Over the past year Tir Coed has produced **46 bilingual videos for our YouTube channel**, including **24** "How to" videos providing easy to follow tutorials on everything from carving a simple spatula to sharpening chisels safely and making a fully functional pole lathe. These instructional videos alone have already been viewed more than **1,250** times and remain available for many more viewers online. To help boost mental health and further promote our message, we also produced a series of short "20 seconds of calm" videos, which have been viewed around **3,500** times across our social media platforms.

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In January, Tir Coed began developing and delivering online webinars where members of the public have been able to join staff via live Zoom broadcasts for woodland walks, practical tutorials, quizzes, and outdoor and indoor sessions. **30** individuals have taken part in the first three sessions with more still to come. Details of upcoming webinars can be found in the [Calendar](#) section of our website.

At the same time Tir Coed mentors have been reaching out to former trainees to offer ongoing support and guidance. More than **100** trainees have been contacted via email and another **25** spoken to by phone. These conversations have offered encouragement to those struggling at home.

While the hedgehogs and dormice have been hibernating, Tir Coed has been a hive of activity with the arrival of **8** new members of staff. We are delighted to welcome [communications and marketing manager Steve Adams](#), development officer Gill Ogden, [Ceredigion co-ordinator Simon Lovatt](#), [Pembrokeshire co-ordinator Beth Osman](#), [Carmarthenshire mentor Jenna Hyatt](#), and Powys activity leaders Iona Blockley and Vic Pardoe. Meanwhile, Eleri Phillips completed her PhD and is now taking her first steps into a voluntary sector career, supporting Tir Coed as a research and evaluation leader as part of the Llechi Glo a Chefngwald project. We are also very happy to welcome Cath Seymour to the role of LEAF project manager after her brilliant contribution to Tir Coed over the past 3 years as Ceredigion coordinator.

With the easing of restrictions likely to begin over the coming weeks, we are gearing up for a return to the woods. Activity leaders are busy preparing Tir Coed woodland sites for the arrival of a new batch of trainees and volunteers and we currently have plans in place for a series of Welcome to the Woods sessions in mid-April. Our 12-week courses are scheduled to begin again in early May. Again, details of upcoming courses and sessions can be found in the [Calendar](#) section of the Tir Coed website.

As we step into spring, appreciating the bird song and the buds on the trees, it feels as though we can put a long cold winter behind us and welcome the light - we look forward to seeing you in a woodland soon!

*Team Tir Coed*

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LET'S BE PART OF THE SOLUTION TOGETHER

