



morwellt  
achub cefnfor  
seagrass  
ocean rescue



## PROJECT UPDATE – WINTER 2024

Hello from the Seagrass Ocean Rescue North Wales team. As we approach the end of 2024, we'd like to share our final update for the year and reflect on all that's been achieved, thanks to tremendous effort from our teams and volunteers.

### 2024 Highlights

It's been really interesting to trial some new seagrass planting methodologies this year, including using a sled attached to a boat to inject seeds into the sediment and planting seagrass transplants grown in our seagrass nursery.

The work on Ynys Môn is now up and running with multiple drop-in sessions held and planting across two trial locations near Holyhead completed in April.

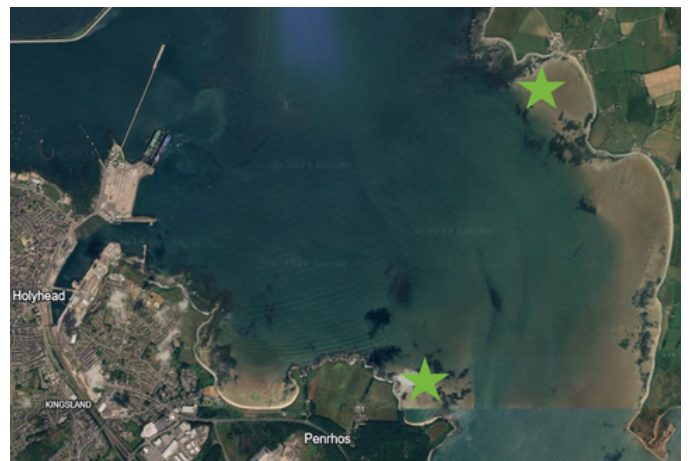


Finally, a highlight round up would not be complete without mentioning the seed picking effort during the summer- with over 100 volunteers taking part we collected 1.2 million seeds!

### Community Engagement

Recently we've held two drop-in sessions focussed on the restoration of seagrass in Holyhead Bay. One of the sessions was online and another was an evening at Holyhead Sailing Club.

The drop-in sessions are very informal and they're an opportunity for those that call in to get updates on how things are going with the trial planting, ask questions, and chat about ways to get involved or learn more about the project.

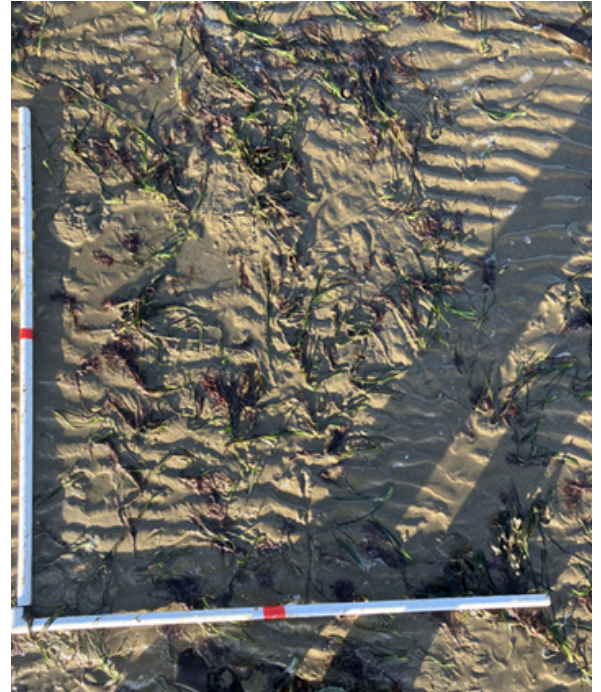


Keep an eye out for more drop-in sessions during 2025.

During November we took part in the Môr a Thonnau event in Pwllheli organised by Project Siarc. It was a fantastic weekend celebrating the area's coastal wildlife and cultural heritage through talks, nature walks, egg case hunts, art activities and more. We joined a host of other organisations including Ffrindiau Pwllheli and Gwyrddni and had lots of interesting chats with the people of Pwllheli at Neuadd Dwyfor.

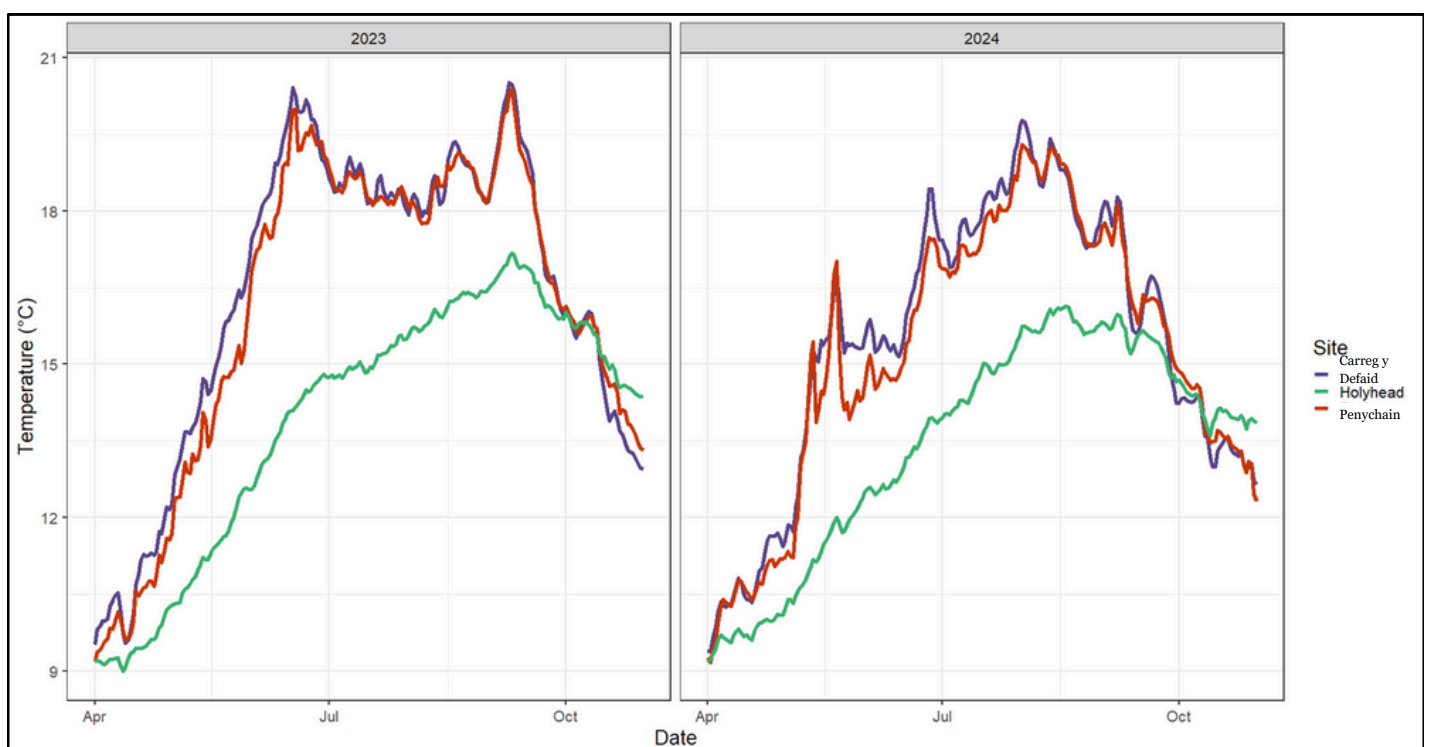
## Monitoring

Following the trial planting of seeds and transplants across our north Wales sites in early spring, the team monitored the planting locations during autumn to see if any seagrass had taken hold.



Encouragingly, the seagrass at both trial planting sites in Holyhead Bay appeared dense and healthy. Contrastingly, at both of our Llŷn sites (Carreg y Defaid and Penychain) very little of the seagrass from the trial plantings remained. This was an interesting disparity between the sites and we were keen to understand more.

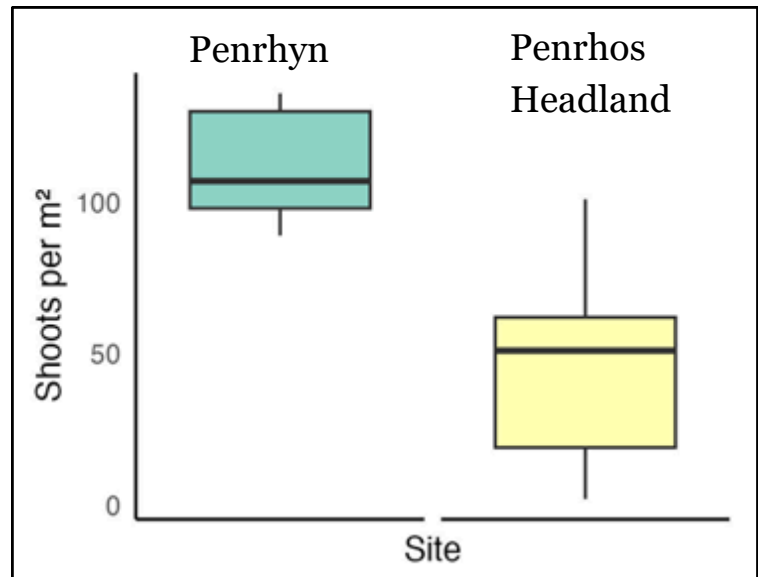
Upon reviewing the data behind the possible drivers of the seagrass loss at the Llŷn sites, it became clear that there was a meteorological cause.



A rapid heatwave event in early May, followed by heavy rainfall leading to lower salinity would have stressed the seagrass, and strong and persistent west-south-westerly storms over summer would then have scoured any remaining plants.

It is highly likely that extreme weather events like these are related to climate change and were not something we could have predicted in our original models when selecting suitable restoration sites.

Holyhead Bay is more sheltered, and marginally cooler than the Llŷn sites which likely accounts for the different results discovered during the monitoring. The learnings from this year will provide a crucial insight when planning site selection and planting methods for future restoration work.



### **Ynys Môn Monitoring Results**

A huge thank you once again to all that have continued to support these efforts toward protecting and restoring seagrass meadows across north Wales. We look forward to continuing this collaborative project with you in 2025.

### **Education Pack**

Development of the new sections of the Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Education Pack is underway and we hope that all primary schools in Gwynedd and Ynys Môn will have access to the pack early in 2025 both as a physical copy in the classroom and online. Through the Seagrass Ocean Rescue project, we've provided seagrass themed sessions for several schools.

These are excellent ways of engaging local children with coastal wildlife and the importance of seagrass meadows which we plan to continue in 2025. The new sections of the education pack will include a dedicated seagrass element which will help teachers to build their confidence in discussing seagrass with their class and provide activity ideas.



## **We are Water**

Lily Tiger is a talented artist-filmmaker who is exploring our relationship with the water around us, its place in our communities and ecological functioning through an artistic project called 'We Are Water', part of the Natur am Byth project.

Lily has begun working with local communities along our coastlines, holding space for the discussion of these topics within creative workshops. Workshops so far have included the use of local clay from Pen Llŷn to create impermanent vessels, which will be returned to the ocean in a finale pilgrimage and installation event in the coming months. She has been recording conversations with a variety of different local people; researchers, business owners, land-workers, community groups, schools and researching how we can inspire a deeper sense of respect for our oceans and waterways.

Lily is contributing to the water quality project and hopes to create a striking sculptural piece using the testing kit and the colours of the tested samples. Using the colouration of the tested samples she also hopes to produce a water quality map of Wales!



## **Ocean Champs/NWWT Update**

This year's Seagrass Ocean Rescue Champions have been in full swing since April with sessions including team building, coastal exploration and underwater photography. The annual summer seagrass collection was held with a full schedule organised for the group including seed collecting, snorkelling, wildlife watching and underwater videography. Whilst the weekend proved to be windy it was largely dry. Other sessions included a nurdle hunt and fragment collection undertaken during a stormy day after a snorkelling session was called off. This session enabled the group to collect fragments washed up and replant at low tide (in the same bay).



Following this session the group were allowed to finish school early and help with seagrass monitoring at Penychain. Guest sessions leaders have included Jake Davies (photography) and author Nicola Davies who ran a session about nature writing.

The group have taken their work with restoration efforts forward by undertaking seed collection, fragment collection and planting and monitoring. The Champions also shared their knowledge of seagrass and the work being undertaken with a stall at this year's Ocean Film Festival in Venue Cymru and we were extremely proud of one of our Young SOR Mentors winning the Young Volunteer of the Year at NWWT's AGM.



## Getting in Touch

If you have any questions, please get in touch - we would love to hear from you.

- Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau SAC: Alison Palmer Hargrave (alisonpalmerhargrave@gwynedd.llyw.cymru)
- North Wales Wildlife Trust: Nia Jones (nia.jones@northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk)
- Project Seagrass: Flo Taylor (flo@projectseagrass.org)

We also now have a project mailing list – if you'd like to join for updates, please contact Alison Palmer Hargrave at [alisonpalmerhargrave@gwynedd.llyw.cymru](mailto:alisonpalmerhargrave@gwynedd.llyw.cymru).



Thank you to Stena Line for supporting and enabling planting in Holyhead.

Gwnaed y prosiect yn bosibl diolch i  
Project made possible thanks to



Prosiect a ddarperir gan  
Project delivered by

