



**Pembrokeshire Coast  
National Park Authority**  
One of Wales' breathing spaces



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government



# PONT Progress

## July 07- October 07



**Pori  
Natur a  
Threftadaeth**

A member of the UK Grazing Animals Project

Adeiladu pontydd ~ Helpu natur ~ Gwella tirweddau  
Building bridges ~ Helping nature ~ Improving landscapes

# PONT Commons Day



**Report of the Pori Natur a Threftadaeth (PONT) Conference to discuss the implications of the new provisions within Part 2 (Management) of the Commons Act 2006 to facilitate the sustainable grazing management of Wales' commons.**



By C. Morgan - PONT, GAP Cymru Cytlynydd (Cynlluniau Pori Lleol) / PONT, GAP Cymru (Local Grazing Schemes) Coordinator



**Adroddiad Cynhadledd Pori Natur a Threftadaeth (PONT) i drafod goblygiadau'r darpariaethau newydd yn Rhan 2 (Rheoli) Deddf Tir Comin 2006 i hwyluso rheolaeth gynaliadwy ar bori ar diroedd comin Cymru.**



Gan C. Morgan - Cytlynydd PONT, GAP Cymru (Cynlluniau Pori Lleol)

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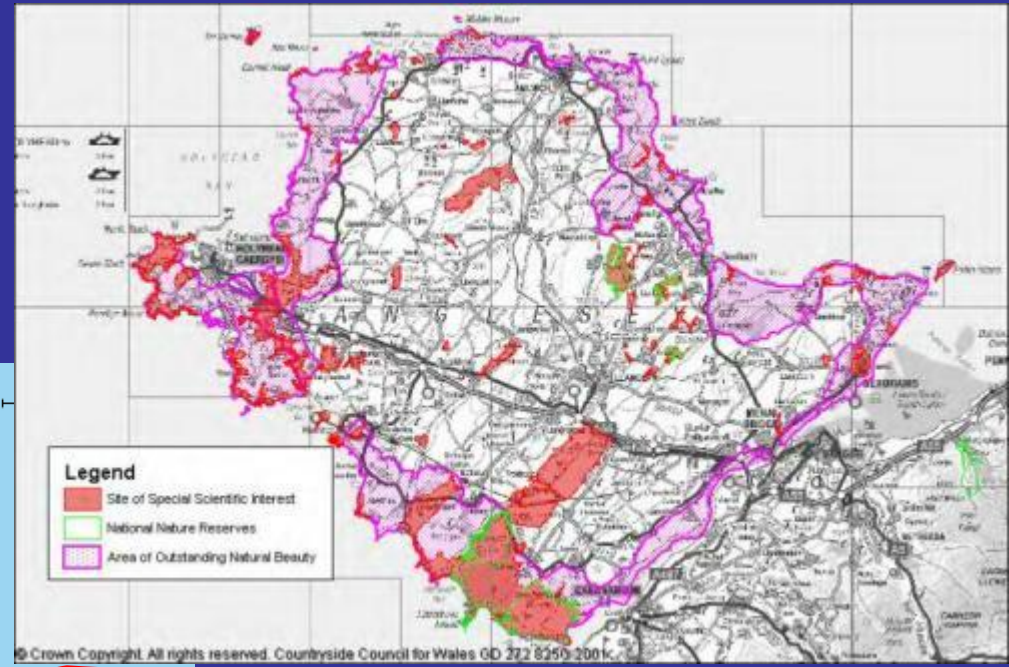
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# Local Grazing Scheme Updates

- Ynys Mon



- Penderyn



- Wentwood

- Tywi Forest



**Forgotten Landscapes Project based in the Blaenavon Area encompassing 4 upland commons.**



**Ideas in discussion with partnership and Commoners Associations**

**Cattle grazing reintroduction by farmers leasing stock.**

**Removal of scrub ponies to reintroduce Welsh section A semi-feral hill ponies.**

**Bracken control using stock ,machinery and chemicals.**

**Traffic calming, signage and information to increase understanding of grazing commons by locals and visitors alike.**

**Development of local brand and marketing.**

**Machinery ring**

**Commons watch**

**Importance and history of Commoning.**



# CCW Uplands seminar

## **CONSERVATION IN THE WELSH UPLANDS – THE FUTURE**

Maintain stock owners and managers in the local community ,so maintain thriving local communities.

Low input locally marketable produce for locals and visitors.

Wildlife and detailed vegetation management through use of stock rather than chemicals or machinery, with a reduction in fossil fuel based emissions from stock use

Carbon sequestration through appropriate grazing management of peat based habitats.

Soil and water management.

Linking landscape management by stock to food production.

Reinvigorate the strong cultural status of all Wales's indigenous grazing animals.



# Conservation Grazing Profile.

## Welsh Mountain

### Summary

Small, lightweight and thus ideal for grazing sensitive wetland sites, the Welsh Mountain pony is also hardy and adapted to doing well on poor quality forage. Apart from requiring routine husbandry, it is a fairly low-maintenance breed with good potential for use in a range of conservation grazing situations.



Marion O'Hara

### Hardiness

A hardy, thrifty and adaptable breed, well suited to year-round conservation grazing.

- **Thrifty** – able to do well and maintain condition year-round on poor quality forage. However, lightweight and quick to lose condition with inadequate feed; so careful monitoring essential.
- **Supplementary feed** – may be required by breeding mares and in severe weather.
- **Hardy** – able to withstand extremes of weather. Natural shelter is sufficient.
- **Adventurous** – ranges widely around available area, particularly colts and stallions, even when quite hazardous or treacherous. Takes a sensible careful approach to exploring.
- **Adaptable** – some populations on saltmarsh remain immobile during high tides, thus avoiding the risk of falling in hidden ditches. These ponies also appear to have developed a tolerance to the salt content of the plants.
- **Surefooted** – appear comfortable negotiating rocky sites, salt marsh and ditch systems.

### Physical Attributes and Husbandry

A lightweight, fairly biddable breed, requiring routine husbandry.

- **Handling** – fairly easy to gather and contain unhandled animals within a pen.
- **Size** – a small pony breed, weighing approximately 200-250 kg.
- **Background** – evolved in the Welsh hills and mountains; may have been 'improved' with Arab blood in the 19th century, which may have reduced hardiness.
- **Appearance** – range of colours.
- **Hooves** – has small, hard feet. Unlikely to require foot care if kept on rocky, hard sites; feet likely to require attention on softer ground or better keep.
- **Laminitis** – very rare on poor quality keep.
- **Summer** – fairly tolerant of biting insects, but may have thinner skins than other native breeds and may appear disturbed and restless when flies bad and may move in and out of water bodies to ease irritation. Sweet itch can occur.

- **Containment** – standard fencing is usually adequate, as are ditches; however, well able to jump and occasionally swim to better keep.

### Grazing Characteristics

Good at maintenance grazing on a range of habitats, but unlikely to control development of scrub.

- **Grazing** – prefers grasses, particularly those in a shorter sward, but will also take coarse species. Eats young Purple Moor-grass, Tor-grass and Small-reeds. Eats Reed Sweet-grass and Common Reed.
- **Rushes and sedges** – favours smaller, but will eat larger sedges too. Some individuals eat Saw Sedge. Eats Sharp-flowered Rush, Soft Rush, Black Bog-rush and other finer Rushes. If grazing Black Bog-rush in winter on soft peat sites where the plants are not in large tussocks, the ponies may pull up the tuft including the roots and over time greatly reduce its abundance. Does not happen in the summer. To resolve this, ponies may be moved off in autumn and returned in Spring.
- **Flowering** – minimal impact. May take some Willow regrowth and some new growth of Gorse during winter.
- **Daisies** – Yellow Flag, Meadowsweet, Bog Asphodel, Bog Myrtle, Orchids, Heather.
- **Wetlands** – relative light weight an advantage on boggy sites.

### Interaction with the Public

Unhandled animals suitable for use on public access sites, provided sufficient area is available to allow avoidance of dogs.

- **Reaction to people** – on large sites, it will generally ignore and avoid people, particularly if unhandled.
- **Reaction to dogs** – variable and may relate to degree of handling. Can be oblivious, highly curious or potentially agitated. Some dog-related incidents with groups kept on cliffs. Stallions and mares with foals may become aggressive if threatened.
- **Public perception** – an attractive breed, generally viewed positively by the public. Can attract negative attention during late winter with condition loss.



Meeting to develop a set of Conservation Grazing Characteristics for the Section A semi-feral Hill Pony.

**Date:** Monday the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007

**Venue:** Sennybridge and Maescar Community Hall, Station Road, Sennybridge, Powys LD3 5RR.

### Draft Program:

**10AM**

**10.30**

**10.45**

**11.30**

**12.15**

**1.00**

**2.00**

**2.45**

**3.30**

**4.00**

### Tea and Coffee available

Introduction to the meeting – WPCS President Mrs. Liz Mansfield

Session 1 Summary Description

Session 2 Hardiness

Session 3 Interaction with the public

**Lunch** – Cawl and sandwich buffet

Session 4 Physical Attributes and Husbandry

Session 5 Grazing Characteristics.

Final summation and any further questions / discussion.

**Latest to end.**

**Directions-** Hall is off the A40 adjoining the village car park. It is signposted as the community centre, id addition to the car park and tourist information. The turning is opposite the Sennybridge Post Office

**Parking** – Small public car park is adjacent to the hall, so please car share if possible.



# And Finally.....

- Database
- Information Sheets
- Grazing Course

Take this from the viewpoint of the livestock farmer thus: -

Benefits to animal welfare

Benefits to live weight gain

Benefits to taste of meat

Benefits to profit margins

I know that taste and profit margins are the next stage on in the chain but if they're presented up front as the reason for doing things, we might attract more support.

How to achieve the above benefits?

Breeds, stock types within breeds\* and their special qualities (e.g., extra digestive enzymes, suitability for 365 days outdoor rearing etc)

Mixed stocking

Vegetation structure desired in different situations

To shepherd or not to shepherd

When to use ponies

What other capital works (fencing, grids, scrub clearance)?

Case studies



**Diolch yn Fawr**

**Thank you**