



Grow From Home Progress Report

A collaborative, family based growing project
in Clase, Swansea

Our fourth growing season: December 2023-April 24

Now in its fourth growing season Cae Tan CSA and the *Grow From Home* project is supporting 13 families to develop basic skills around growing fresh, seasonal produce in their own gardens using regenerative methods. By providing them with raised beds, compost, seeds, tools, compost bins and a dedicated grower for support, they learn how to grow a variety of fruits and vegetables and reduce food bills, improve their health and wellbeing, and contribute to local biodiversity.

Managed and delivered by Cae Tan's education officer, Jessie Kidd, families are directly linked to our *Sustainable Schools* programme delivered at Clase primary school with all locations within half a mile of the school. Five families are supported through *Local Places for Nature* with further funding support provided by *The People's Postcode Lottery*.

The project aims to:

- Reconnect families with the land and their food by growing produce at home
- Teach simple, sustainable growing techniques
- Reduce food poverty and improve health by growing accessible, seasonal, and highly nutritious fresh produce
- Provide a link between growing in school and growing at home
- Reflect on food choices, and the impact on the climate and biodiversity crisis

Local Places for Nature Funding

Our 2024/25 season is supporting four existing families, 16 participants in total and adding an additional two families to the project. All families are offered a wide variety of flower and vegetable seeds, strawberry and lavender plants, small propagating greenhouses, metal storage containers, compost, manure, large pots for tomatoes and cucumbers, potato sacks and tools. New families have been offered two 1.2 m² raised beds each and one existing family has had an additional 1.2 m² bed.

The Winter Season

During the winter season families were shown how to care for their soil, replenishing it with manure, autumn leaves and covering for protection. Understanding soil health and its role in regenerative food growing is a key theme across this project. Nature continued to provide harvests of carrots, parsnips, kale, leeks and purple sprouting broccoli and we planted garlic for the following season.



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The Spring Season

As we approached spring we began to build our outdoor storage containers, added compost to beds, started to sow seeds, planted potatoes, onions and broad beans. It has been a record breaking wet February offering an opportunity to discuss climate change and food security. Through our Sustainable Schools programme we aim to have a summer celebration event at Clase primary, bringing families together to share produce and experiences.



Opportunities to enhance biodiversity

Conversations around biodiversity and its protection are another key theme in this project. All families grow flowers to encourage pollinators and nature friendly pest control is always a hot topic. We aim to plant lavender, nasturtiums, sunflowers, borage, calendula and marigolds to create rich and varied habitats. We discourage any use of synthetic fertiliser or pesticide, linking lessons back to soil health and introducing ideas around gut and mental health. Participants are beginning to add their own value to their gardens by buying flowering plants, building greenhouses and joining growing groups

Seeds and Seed Sovereignty

In agriculture and gardening, seed saving is the practice of saving seeds or other reproductive material (e.g. tubers) from vegetables, grain, herbs, and flowers for use from year-to-year for annuals and nuts, tree fruits, and berries for perennials and trees. This is the traditional way farms and gardens were maintained for the last 12,000 years. However our right to owning our food is being challenged. Since the 1930s, it has been possible for companies to 'patent' seeds that they have developed, meaning that they own the rights to the seeds and can charge others for using them. The majority of seeds used in this project are open pollinated and links to local seed companies, such as The Real Seed Company and The Incredible Seed Library are shared with participants. This year we are looking to save even more seed to be distributed around the project and to friends and families.



What's next:

Once the soil has warmed up we will sow directly into our raised beds and continue to nurture seedlings in our greenhouses. Participants will be swapping seedlings and continue to use the very popular Whatsapp group to share links, advice and to ask questions. We have applied for further funding for a trip to both Cae Tan CSA and Cae Felin CSA, inspiring a new generation of growers both young and old.

For more information contact Project Manager, Jessie Kidd, on Jessie.caetan@gmail.com

