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# Evaluation of Caru Cymru

## First Evaluation Report

Keep Wales Tidy

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Evaluation of Caru Cymru, First Evaluation Report, Version 1

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## Glossary

<b>Acronym/Key word</b>	<b>Definition</b>
ENRaW	Enabling Natural Resources and Wellbeing – a Welsh Government / EU funded support scheme.
KWT	Keep Wales Tidy
LEQ	Local environment quality
NRP	Natural Resources Policy - a statutory product of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introducing national priorities in Wales
RDP	The Welsh Government Rural Communities Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 - part of the EU Rural Development Programme, the 2nd Pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy
SMNR	Sustainable Management of Natural Resources - an approach to working sustainably introduced by the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 consisting of nine principles.
WBFGA	Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

## Executive Summary

- i. This report presents the first evaluation stage of Caru Cymru up to March 2022. Keep Wales Tidy (KWT) and its partners are delivering the Caru Cymru programme between April 2021 and March 2023. The project is funded through the Enabling Natural Resources and Wellbeing (ENRaW) scheme of the Rural Development Programme (RDP) with a total budget of £6,317,562.71, including match funding.
- ii. There remains a strong strategic fit for Caru Cymru and in its delivery the Project is addressing key policies including:
  - Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
  - Environment (Wales) Act 2016
  - Natural Resources Policy
  - Prosperity for All
  - Programme for Government
  - Litter and Fly-Tipping Prevention Plan for Wales
- iii. The needs identified at the Baseline evaluation remain unchanged, with stakeholders emphasising their current relevance. At the national and local level there is a clear rationale for Caru Cymru.
- iv. The resources are in the main sufficient to deliver the Project objectives. The majority of activities are being delivered, leading to the majority of targets being met, exceeded, or well on their way. Covid-19 has been the dominant factor in any delay or alteration to planned activity with the resultant effect on 6 target outputs. The Project team and partners are highly competent and adaptable with Caru Cymru greatly benefiting from the skills and experience of the team at KWT. A full discussion of the inputs and activities can be found in sections 3 and 4.
- v. It is too early to assess outcomes and impacts of the Project, however there are early indicators that they will be met. Caru Cymru is successfully addressing its Cross Cutting Themes (CCTs)

### **Recommendation 1: Cohort working**

There are benefits to be leveraged by encouraging closer relationships within cohorts of partners. For example, local authorities could benefit from greater communications among themselves to aid best practices and innovation. This would be best done by using pre-existing options rather than creating further novel channels dedicated to this. Partners should be encouraged to take their own initiative in establishing communication. Furthermore, KWT could chair dedicated partner meetings focused on sharing experience and best practice.

### **Recommendation 2: Circular economy vs waste**

Caru Cymru should continue to reach out to the repair movement, including Repair Café Wales and Benthyc Cymru. Homing in on a focus on the circular economy rather than purely waste as the key message will tie into behaviour change, and more closely align with emerging policy. This would also contribute further to the Sustainable Development CCT and encourage more innovative thinking from partners.

### **Recommendation 3: Partner engagement**

The Project could benefit from sharing localised data back to the LAs and community groups. This would require more bespoke comms and for partners and volunteers to report data to KWT for analysis. Greater local granularity will demonstrate the purpose of monitoring data collection, by making its impacts more tangible.

To aid this, the project should ensure that it is engaging partners at a suitably senior level in order to leverage the possible actions of the partners fully. For example some LAs are struggling to maintain the attention of their own senior staff required to fully prioritise Caru Cymru.

## **1. Introduction/Background**

- 1.1 In 2021 Miller Research were appointed by Keep Wales Tidy (KWT) to undertake the evaluation of the Caru Cymru programme. The evaluation encompasses assessment of programme process and impacts and takes place over multiple stages.
- 1.2 This report presents the findings of the first evaluation and will provide a light touch review of the programme's progress to date. This Evaluation has comprised a desk-based review of programme documentation and data and two online workshops: the first with the Caru Cymru programme team and the second with local authorities and other partners.
- 1.3 The first evaluation will note progress against objectives and make formative recommendations to address any issues arising.

### **Background to Caru Cymru**

- 1.4 The Caru Cymru programme is funded by the Enabling Natural Resources and Wellbeing (ENRaW) Scheme and runs from April 2021 until March 2023. It is being delivered by Keep Wales Tidy and partners, including Welsh local authorities, Cardiff University, and Fly-tipping Action Wales. The programme has a total grant budget of £6,242,563.
- 1.5 Caru Cymru aims to create a pan-Wales, strategic, collaborative partnership to deliver action to improve local environment quality (LEQ) across Wales. Delivery of the programme will be evaluated against its four objectives
  - Engage and empower the people of Wales to take action to improve front door LEQ issues
  - Develop and implement innovative, targeted, awareness and behaviour change campaigns to prevent LEQ issues from occurring

- Support and deliver Welsh Government policies and priorities and capture and share outcomes and stories of participants, demonstrating the human benefit of Caru Cymru
- Share best practice to improve future delivery

### **Evaluation Rationale**

- 1.6 Evaluation is a key requirement for all programmes that have been funded via the Rural Programmes 2014-2020 programme, of which ENRaW is a part. Evaluations are necessary to independently assess interventions, provide guidance as to where improvements might be possible, and identify learning to inform future interventions. As such, it is imperative that an effective approach is undertaken to evaluating Caru Cymru.
- 1.7 We understand that there is an expectation for the evaluation to look at the contribution is making to the goals of various strategies and policies of Welsh Government including Prosperity for All, Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Environment (Wales) Act 2016, and Natural Resources Policy. This is in addition to evaluating progress towards programme objectives and the impact of programme delivery.

## 2. Policy Drivers and Need

### Key Policies

- 2.1 This section examples the need for Caru Cymru in the context of the policy environment of Wales. It will demonstrate how the programme aligns with various policies and which goals it is making contributions towards.
- 2.2 There is a strong strategic fit for the Caru Cymru Project within the UK and Welsh policy landscape. In the Baseline report it was determined that Caru Cymru closely aligned with the following policies:
- Enabling Natural Resources and Wellbeing (ENRaW)
  - Rural Development Programme
  - Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
  - Environment (Wales) Act 2016
  - Natural Resources Policy
  - Prosperity for All
  - Programme for Government
- 2.3 These identified policies remain relevant to the Caru Cymru Project, and stakeholders are confident that the objectives will meet these policy needs. Caru Cymru is described by the Local Authority partners as having a singular direction with all aspects of LEQ being under one heading. The Caru Cymru team explained that joining up in this holistic approach partnership has been strengthened at both grassroots and strategic level.
- 2.4 More recent policy also coincides with the objectives of Caru Cymru, emphasising the continued need for the Project due to its strategic alignment:
- Litter and Fly-Tipping Prevention Plan for Wales*
- 2.5 The consultation responses for the Litter and Fly-Tipping Prevention Plan for Wales were published in April and going forward Wales will have a national fly-tipping and litter strategy which Caru Cymru will strong align with. The model of Caru Cymru will address national aims

with partnership working while keeping towards local interventions with a community focused approach.

## **Need**

2.6 With Caru Cymru strongly rooted in the aforementioned policies, the Project addresses the following needs identified in the Baseline report:

- To change behaviours to reduce damage to local environment preventable sources such as litter, dog fouling, fly-tipping etc.
- To engage new sections of society
- To make local environments more attractive places to live, work, and invest in.
- To support local communities to improve local environment
- To enable cooperative solutions
- To increase awareness of existing activities
- To manage local environments in proactive, sustainable ways
- To have a consistent pan-Wales approach to enable efficient use of resources

2.7 These needs have remained unchanged, and stakeholders emphasised in a baseline workshop that the “need is as strong as it ever was”.

2.8 Based on the policy needs in Wales at a national and local level, there is a clear rationale for Caru Cymru. It ties together complementary demands to deliver against a wide range of Welsh Government strategies.

## **Objectives**

2.9 To address the overall aim to create a pan-Wales, strategic, collaborative partnership to deliver action to improve LEQ across Wales, Caru Cymru delivers against four objectives:

- Engage and empower the people of Wales to take action to improve front door LEQ issues
- Develop and implement innovative, targeted, awareness and behaviour change campaigns to prevent LEQ issues from occurring
- Support and deliver Welsh Government policies and priorities and capture and share outcomes and stories of participants, demonstrating the human benefit of Caru Cymru
- Share best practice to improve future delivery

These objectives remain unchanged and are still relevant to the policy drivers and needs. The Project team and partners remain confident in the objectives and fully believe they will be achieved by the Caru Cymru.

### 3. Project Inputs

3.1 Project inputs are the resources available to undertake activities that address the objectives. The key evaluation question at this stage is does Caru Cymru have sufficient resources in order to meaningfully achieve its objectives?

3.2 Overall Caru Cymru has access to sufficient resources. The Project is able to call upon significant non-financial resources across Wales and utilise them in concert. Delays with RPW have meant that the initial stages of the Project proceeded at risk. Regular contact between Caru Cymru management within KWT, and RPW, has mostly resolved these issues.

#### *Finance*

3.3 Caru Cymru has a budget of £6,317,562.71. £6,242,563 has been awarded as grant funding by ENRaW to cover costs including staff, publicity, promotion, and events. Budget has been allocated to translation costs for publicity, promotion and events to ensure parity of the Welsh and English languages.

3.4 £75,000 private match funding has been secured for the Project at £25,000 over each of the three years. In addition, volunteer hours have been calculated to equate to an additional value of £4,250,000 over the course of the programme.<sup>1</sup>

3.5 Thus far, the funding has been adequate with the expectation that it will remain so for the duration of the Project. Delays with RPW have proven to be a strain on the resources of Caru Cymru, with a considerable number of hours devoted to communications between KWT and RPW.

#### *Skills and Experience*

3.6 Delivering the programme will make use of skills and knowledge of the staff of KWT, Cardiff University, local authorities, and Fly-tipping

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<sup>1</sup> Calculated using WCVA rate of £8.50/hour for 500,000 hours

Action Wales. Additional skills and knowledge will be lent by local communities and businesses.

- 3.7 The skills available to the Project are sufficient. Stakeholders amongst Project partners highly value the skills and experience of KWT, noting that they are effective at using data to inform decision making.

*Infrastructure and assets*

- 3.8 Caru Cymru's clear structure is proving to be effective. The Project has enabled partners to coordinate resources, notably in the procurement of equipment. Stakeholders also commented that KWT added value by being seen as an authority of LEQ. This has in some cases engaged peripheral stakeholders within local authorities more efficiently, leading to decisions and actions to be taken much more quickly.

*Monitoring and evaluation*

- 3.9 The comprehensive monitoring processes in place for Caru Cymru are beneficial and clearly demonstrating the activities undertaken. Monitoring data is reported to KWT by partners, mostly by use of the Epicollect app. Some partners have alternative modes of data collection with the result that it can be seen as onerous to report in multiple formats. There is greater benefit overall in using the systems provided by KWT as this provides data that is comparable across Wales. This will also provide better indication of the outcomes and impacts made by the Project, as well as increase learning of best practice between partners.

## 4. Progress of Project Activities

- 4.1 Activities are the actions of the programme, how it is using the resources and generating its outputs. This section has been established through assessment of Caru Cymru’s monitoring outputs and progress reports submitted to RPW. More detailed understanding has been gained through qualitative conversations with KWT and local authority partners.
- 4.2 The output targets for the Project and current progress to date, correct of December 2021, are outlined in table 5.1.

**Table 5.1: Caru Cymru Output Indicator Targets and Progress to date**

Output Indicator	Target (March 2023)	Progress to date (March 2022)
Establish network of Community Litter Picking Hubs	200 hubs	148
	33% hubs located in deprived areas	44%
	4,000 litter-picks	638 hub clean ups
Support and Expand Network of volunteer Litter Champions	15,000 clean-ups undertaken by champions	19,226
	100 wellbeing and skills survey of litter champions	0
Co-ordinate National Clean up Campaigns	8,00 clean-up events, involving 6,600 people	388
	6,600 people involved	3,675

Output Indicator	Target (March 2023)	Progress to date (March 2022)
Provide support to help facilitate volunteer action and long-term community ownership	900 community groups supported to improve LEQ	522
	400,000 hours undertaken by volunteers	85,180
	9,000 green space improvement activities	3,390
	100 new community groups	44
Increasing number of Community Green Flag awarded sites	20 new sites	22
	5 Green Flag Community applications from deprived areas	8 (from the 30% most deprived areas in Wales)
	10 groups working towards Green Flags	20
Develop interventions to encourage responsible disposal of litter	22 local trials	5
	22 LA adopted new interventions	12
	100 orgs maintaining litter-free zones and 1200 clean-ups	43

Output Indicator	Target (March 2023)	Progress to date (March 2022)
Awareness Raising and Public Engagement	3 National Campaigns	2
	Production of LEQ campaign toolkit: 1	1
Single use plastic reduction and increase in reusables	100 orgs with reduction plan	6
	11 LA undertaken internal review of single-use plastics and have a plastic reduction plan	5
Support the development, delivery and monitoring of the WG National Litter and Fly-tipping Prevention Plan	Production of 8 LA Litter strategies	4
	22 LEQ action plans	22
	6 research papers produced	4
Bring together range of partners and stakeholders to deliver action on LEQ	£20,000 of Private Sector investment	£125,381
	£4,000,000 of volunteer effort	£851,800

Output Indicator	Target (March 2023)	Progress to date (March 2022)
Increase in reuse/recycling collected during community clean-ups	15 councils recycling waste at community litter picks	18
	3 trials to increase recycling and generate income from community groups from waste	1
	10 groups generating income from recycling/reuse activities	4
Creation of Tiny Forest to improve biodiversity in urban area	1 Tiny Forest planted with 300 native trees.	1
Air Quality behaviour change pilot with a school	1 Pilot run	0

Source: Caru Cymru quarterly reports

4.5 As Table 5.1 above highlights, the Project is progressing well in achieving its output targets. Nine targets have already been met or exceeded; 16 more are currently well on target. Six have been identified by KWT as at risk of not being met by Project end and are discussed below. Overall, the delivery team are confident in the majority of targets and Caru Cymru's ability to meet them.

4.6 The Project experienced delays at early stages of delivery due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, the delivery of some activities has been adapted or delayed to ensure success. It is important to note that Caru Cymru has made steady and consistent progress whilst abiding to Welsh Government Covid-19 restrictions.

**Support volunteer activity to help empower communities across Wales to tackle poor local environment quality issues in their area**

*Establish network of community Litter Picking Hub*

- 4.7 Since October 2020, Caru Cymru has opened 148 hubs and has supported 638 clean-ups across Wales. Out of the 148 hubs, 44 per cent have opened in deprived areas, in excess of the 30 per cent target, contributing to the CCTs and demonstrating a demand across all communities in Wales. All hubs have now re-opened after Covid-19 regulations forced their closure earlier in delivery. These will be joined with more as KWT staff are continuing to be heavily involved in creating additional hubs.
- 4.8 Stakeholders were positive about the Project's reach of engagement so far, and its ability to engage with communities; particularly the 'difficult to reach' groups across Wales. The number of community hubs that were opened in deprived areas was noted as a key activity; stakeholders had confidence in the Project's ability to adjust the engagement process to different communities across Wales.
- 4.9 Promotion of the hubs has been very active, utilising the KWT website and social media to promote dates for new hubs opening. On these platforms, the public has had access to videos showcasing the hubs, hub managers and the volunteers.
- 4.10 Caru Cymru partnered with BBC Radio Wales as part of the 'Make a Difference' campaign to promote the re-launch of the litter picking hubs. Clean-up events were organised with Radio Wales' presenters and heavily promoted:
- 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021 – Help Wynne Evans clean up Cardiff Bay on Talk Like a Pirate Day
  - 25<sup>th</sup> September 2021 – Join Behnaz Akhgar at Swansea Marina Park Beach Clean

- 9<sup>th</sup> October 2021 – Take part in the port Eirias Beach Clean with Kiri Pritchard Mclean

*Support and expand network of volunteer Litter Champions*

- 4.11 Active volunteering is at the heart of the Caru Cymru Project and 15 out of 19 Public Service Board wellbeing plans across Wales identified volunteering as key to achieving their targets.
- 4.12 Since October 2020, KWT litter champions and council partner champions have undertaken 19,226 clean-ups. No clean-ups took place in February and March 2021 due to Covid-19 restrictions. The period immediately after the end of the restrictions, April – June 2021, saw the highest number of clean-ups undertaken, 3490. EpiCollect was used to collect the data, tracking the number of clean-ups, litter champions and volunteers taking part.
- 4.13 The wellbeing and skills surveys are a key target to be addressed in the next quarter. As such, the evaluation does not consider the current number towards target, zero, as a cause for concern.
- 4.14 The first ‘Spring Clean Cymru’ media launch took place in March 2021, encouraging individuals, households and schools to get involved whilst staying in line with WG covid regulations. Out-of-home advertising, in partnership with Keep Britain Tidy, was used at key locations across Wales. Promotion of Spring Clean Cymru 2022 launched in early January 2022. As this was once again part of the Great British Spring Clean, Caru Cymru worked closely with Keep Britain Tidy and Keep Scotland Beautiful on the development of the campaign.

**Support national volunteer activity to raise awareness and help communities tackle poor LEQ**

*Co-ordinate National Clean-up Campaigns*

- 4.15 Caru Cymru’s support of national volunteer activity can be seen in its collaborative work with Keep Britain Tidy and Keep Scotland

Beautiful. Promotion of the 'Spring Clean Cymru' campaign, one operation within the 'Great British Spring Clean 2021', 2021 took place in June after its media launch in March. This was a successful campaign with publicity being shared by local authority partners, national media, and others such as the British Dragonfly Society. The campaign made use of a unified brand with resources, such as the social media graphics and press-release templates, shared with Caru Cymru partners.

- 4.16 Caru Cymru's resources were distributed in both Welsh and English, from social media frames to registration for clean-up events on the Keep Wales Tidy website.
- 4.17 Covid-19 restrictions had a significant impact on school involvement during the national clean-up campaigns in 2020 and 2021. To overcome this setback, the Caru Cymru placed a greater emphasis on school engagement during Spring Clean Cymru 2022. School-specific resources were produced, and the Eco-Schools campaign was promoted through newsletters and social media channels. As a result, 156 schools registered their involvement between January and March 2022.
- 4.18 To date, 388 clean-up events (target 800 by the end of the Project), with 3,675 people involved (target 6,600 by Project end), have been held. This progress demonstrates the resilience of some of Caru Cymru's activities to Covid-19 which has caused significant disruption to original plans since the launch of the Project.

**Undertake activities to empower communities, and develop a sense of pride and ownership as a prevention method to future LEQ problems**

*Provide support to help facilitate volunteer action and long-term community ownership*

- 4.19 Assessment of the progress made towards this delivery indicator, particularly when compared to its original targets, suggests that the

Project activities here have not been as impactful as others. This is largely due to issues relating to Covid-19 and restrictions put in place to deal with the pandemic. For example, group activities were severely restricted for 18 months from March 2020, with emphasis directed towards litter champions instead.

4.20 Since October 2020, 522 groups and organisations have been supported to improve LEQ out of a target of 900. Out of the targeted 400,000 hours undertaken by volunteers, 85,180 have been completed, and 3,390 green space improvement activities have taken place out of 9,000. Despite the initial impression that Caru Cymru are making steady progress, the KWT team have categorised these targets 'at risk' of not being met.

4.21 The limits imposed by Welsh Government restrictions in the face of Covid-19 are responsible for these figures. Delivery of these activities was placed on hold for at least a year, disrupting vital momentum, and forcing an essential restart to them once restrictions eased. Due to this the evaluation concludes that these figures represent good progress despite falling short of baseline expectations.

4.22 Caru Cymru has faced a further challenge regarding data collection. Epicollect was not used unanimously across the community and volunteer groups, as intended. It is likely Caru Cymru have been under-reporting on elements of engagement and, therefore, that the total number of volunteer groups is greater than 34.

*Increasing number of Community Green Flag awarded sites*

4.23 Caru Cymru has exceeded every target set for this indicator. 22 new Green Flag community sites were awarded in 2021; this is a KWT record and greater than the Project target of 20. 8 (target of 5) were from the 30 per cent most deprived wards in Wales, contributing to the CCT and demonstrating a strong demand across Wales.

**Develop programme of work on LEQ issues to create preventative interventions and encourage behaviour change**

*Develop interventions to encourage responsible disposal of litter*

- 4.24 Since October 2020, Caru Cymru have conducted five local LEQ trials; with the findings shared via the online portal. The trials have covered a range of litter-related issues across various locations in Wales. Trials that have taken place include:
- Blaenau Gwent: smoking related litter
  - Cardiff: chewing gum litter
  - Powys: smoking related litter
  - Denbighshire: 2min beach clean
  - Blaenau Gwent: fast food litter
- 4.25 The remaining trials have been finalised and are planned to take place in the Spring/Summer of 2022. Their locations span from Gwynedd to Pembrokeshire, indicating Caru Cymru's wide-ranging reach and demand.
- 4.26 To date, there are a total number of 12 interventions by local authorities. Between January and March 2022, five new interventions were established, including:
- Powys: 'Put a Lid on It' campaign to encourage residents to contain recyclables when presented for collection.
  - Denbighshire: the local authority will provide 'gull proof sacks' to residents to prevent damage to bags and limit quantity of waste put out for collection.
  - Monmouthshire: the local authority has committed to increasing investment in bins.
  - Newport: a trailer-mounted matrix sign, purchased with CC money, is now in use. The signage allows for bilingual messaging to be displayed.
  - Vale of Glamorgan: The local authority has implemented the requirement that all new concession stands must use recycled or recyclable materials.
- 4.27 Caru Cymru are on track to meet the target of 100 businesses and schools maintaining litter-free zones around their premises, with 43

sites recorded to date. Furthermore, 168 schools and businesses had registered their interest by the end of Q4. There is clearly a strong demand for taking responsibility for local environment issues.

*Awareness raising and public engagement*

- 4.28 Caru Cymru has run two national campaigns to date: 'Make Memories, Not Mess' and 'Leave Only Pawprints'. The Delivery team are confident that they will be able to meet the target of three campaigns by the end of the programme.
- 4.29 The Dog Fouling national campaign launched in October 2021 with a national press release and social media. The 'Leave Only Pawprints this Christmas', a campaign burst on social media, launched in December 2021. Tenders for the Roadside Litter campaign went live in January 2022, and a workshop for this campaign is currently being planned.
- 4.30 Caru Cymru also sent out a survey to haulage companies and commercial drivers in quarter three. Significant progress has been made regarding the fly-tipping trials. Caru Cymru has sent out a survey to local authorities, with the aim to ascertain the current scale and nature of the issues of fly-tipping.
- 4.31 The LEQ campaign toolkit is now live on the Caru Cymru website. This provides free access to all Caru Cymru campaign materials in one location. It also allows the materials to be customised to local campaigns whilst maintaining the universal Caru Cymru branding.
- 4.32 Caru Cymru's willingness to cooperate with the national approach, such as the collaboration with Keep Britain Tidy, was praised by stakeholders as it enables variation in pilots and increases scope of engagement. Stakeholders also highlighted the importance of sharing best practice across Wales. An efficient way of achieving this is Caru Cymru feeding into national campaigns and utilising a range of social media platforms.
- 4.33 The use of social media and virtual campaigns have been essential to Caru Cymru's wide range of engagement. It has enabled the Project

to adapt the delivery of some aspects of the programme to overcome Covid-19 restrictions. This good use of social media should continue throughout the remainder of the Project.

*Single-use plastic reduction and increase reusables*

- 4.34 Two organisations now taking action to reduce single-use plastic as a result of Caru Cymru. In addition, five local authorities have undertaken internal review of single-use plastics and implemented a plastic-reduction plan: Caerphilly, Powys, Wrexham, Ceredigion, and Merthyr Tydfil. This activity has faced challenges as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic as organisations that been using reusable materials such as coffee cups reverted back to single use for fear of transmission of the virus. In recognition of the issue, this objective was de-prioritised

*Support the development, delivery and monitoring of the WG National Litter and Fly-Tipping prevention plan*

- 4.35 Keep Wales Tidy are not actively promoting local authority litter strategies until the Welsh Government formally publishes the Litter & Fly-tipping Prevention Plan as the local strategies are (partly) designed to inform the national plan and subsequent actions. Whilst this /delay remains solely due to Welsh Government's scheduling, Caru Cymru should continue to offer support and guidance if approached by local authorities and communities to ensure their engagement and the demand remains consistent.

- 4.36 All 22 LEQ Action plans are in place and are being reported against quarterly. Alongside this, through Caru Cymru, KWT continue to provide advice and guidance to national and local authority agencies and the public. Public enquiries have been received from students from schools, universities and colleges for data and advice, with the Project able to offer support and guidance.

- 4.37 As outlined at the Baseline evaluation, Welsh Government hold a strong interest towards Caru Cymru as the pilots and objectives align with broader policy objectives. This is still the case at the First

Evaluation stage. Caru Cymru should continue to provide guidance on to national whilst waiting for the national strategy and continue to look for collaborative pilots at a national scale in order to share best practice across Wales.

- 4.38 Annual litter surveys provide excellent evidence to demonstrate the impact of Caru Cymru. Through them data is available to compare trends across several years. The LEAMS surveys were completed for 2021/22 and the all Wales report was produced in March 2022.

*Bring together range of partners and stakeholders to deliver action on LEQ*

- 4.39 Caru Cymru and partners produce annual LEQ plans for local authorities and the Project supports them to develop long-term strategies and monitoring for priority issues in their areas, whilst feeding into national indicators and relevant strategies.

- 4.40 As well as public sector partners, businesses has been successfully engaged with Litter Free Zones and since October 2020 Caru Cymru has a secured a total of £106,381 investment to tackle poor LEQ issues from the private sector.

- 4.41 Caru Cymru has been working collaboratively with Caerphilly and Merthyr Tydfil councils, alongside South Wales and Gwent Police, Gelligaer and Merthyr Common to tackle litter and fly-tipping on a monthly basis. For example, a trial has begun with Alun Griffiths for the A55 to tackle litter at hotspots around their construction

*Increase in reuse/recycling collected during community clean-ups*

- 4.42 Feedback from litter champions to local authorities has highlighted the strong desire to enable sorting of waste at collection along the same lines as the sorting carried out for domestic collection. Local authority partners have pointed to the difficulties in doing this including the need for clearly separate bags or other litter picking resources. Options are being considered and currently 15 local authorities are recycling waste collected during community clean-ups. As part of the

trials 1 pilot has been run to increase reuse/recycling and generate income for groups.

*Creation of Tiny Forest to improve biodiversity in urban area*

- 4.43 The Tiny Forest pilot has been successfully delivered in partnership with Holyhead town council. A mix of 25 native species have been used to create a biodiverse area containing 1050 trees. The site is accessible via two gates and contains an open-air outdoor classroom. 30 volunteers were involved on planning day and the implantation went smoothly thanks to the partnership working of the town council and Caru Cymru.

*Air Quality behaviour change pilot with school*

- 4.44 The air behaviour change pilot is currently in the early stages of development in partnership with Cardiff University, Eco-Schools, and Welsh Government.

## 5. Addressing the Cross-Cutting Themes

5.1 Caru Cymru has received funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government. Under this funding, programmes must incorporate the following cross-cutting themes:

### *Equality of Opportunity (Including Gender Mainstreaming and Welsh Language)*

5.2 As part of equal opportunities, there is the responsibility to integrate the Welsh Language into all facets of the programme to ensure good practice and better meet the needs of Welsh speakers and learners.

5.3 Caru Cymru is delivering well against its commitment to the Welsh language, with its engagement and dissemination activities being carried out bilingually. Culturally, the name itself is about being proud of being Welsh. Having a Welsh only programme name is important in promoting the Welsh Language when developing the brand, with few programmes having used a solely Welsh name. Having additional resources in the marketing team meant that the Project has been able to dedicate more time to sourcing Welsh speakers and capturing their stories. Caru Cymru has budgeted for a significant amount of content translation, and this is thoroughly utilised.

5.4 No specific targets were identified for gender mainstreaming. There is no concern that the Project is targeting, or benefitting, specific communities to the detriment of others.

### *Sustainable Development*

5.5 Sustainability is woven throughout the core goals of Caru Cymru. Resource efficiency is promoted with the campaign to reuse and reduce Single-Use Plastics. SDG goals such as responsible

consumption and production are also indirectly targeted via the commercial litter-free zones, which ensure businesses are responsible and take littering seriously to support the local community environment. With people engaging with the litter around them and taking part in volunteering to tidy it up, there is the hope of subsequent behaviour change and reduced littering. This is being researched by academics at Cardiff University.

### *Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion*

- 5.6 Although Caru Cymru is not addressing poverty and social exclusion directly - as this was not an objective of the Project - they are keenly aware that many issues tackled directly have a high correlation with deprivation and other social factors. Although there were concerns expressed by some partners that the Project was not reaching as many new geographical areas as it could, 41 per cent of the KWT hubs are located in deprived areas, which is above target. This misperception is probably due to the very high hopes of some partners. Mapping of activity, by litter champions and trials, would also help to demonstrate how Caru Cymru is tackling poverty and social exclusion.
- 5.7 The environmental aspect of Caru Cymru benefits local environmental quality and provides community, social and well-being benefits. It was noted by partners that the Project struggles at times to reach into disadvantaged communities around litter, they felt that this was an issue for all interventions, not just Caru Cymru, and that Caru Cymru was able to draw on campaign and research development with poverty reduction indicators to achieve this better than previous projects. The economic aspect of a place that is clean and welcoming was also noted as a potential poverty-reducing factor as it means an area is more likely to generate economic activity.

### *Well-being of Future Generations Act*

5.8 The Well-being Future Generations Act (WFGA) requires all public bodies to work towards the Seven Well-being Goals, and Five Ways of Working to increase sustainable development in the areas of environmental, economic, social, and cultural well-being. It is important to embed all of the Ways of Working into the Caru Cymru approach.

5.9 Overall, Caru Cymru continues to contribute to the national policy.

**Table 6.1: Caru Cymru alignment with WFGA wellbeing goals**

A Prosperous Wales	Caru Cymru works towards a more prosperous Wales by encouraging resource efficiency via influencing behaviour change and advocating reducing and reusing single-use plastics
A Resilient Wales	As part of maintaining healthy functioning ecosystems, Caru Cymru champions litter-picking and campaigns against fly-tipping to reduce pollution of water and land.
A More Equal Wales	Caru Cymru contributes to the equality of health and wellbeing outcomes by ensuring that deprived areas have litter picking hubs so that local environmental quality is improved.
A Healthier Wales	As part of creating an active nation, Caru Cymru has community groups and litter champions which participate in litter picks. The community groups and ethos of Caru Cymru to take care of your local area emphasise the Project's place-making and dedication to community wellbeing
A Wales of Cohesive Communities	Caru Cymru contributes to making Wales attractive and safe with clean-ups and rubbish collections. These also keep people active in communities, with litter champions and community groups formed as ambassadors for caring for their neighbourhood.
A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Welsh Language	The Project promotes Welsh culture and language most obviously through its name, which is Welsh-only, and encompasses the spirit of caring for and respecting Wales. Caru Cymru also promotes the Welsh language and culture by producing all content bilingually.
A Globally Responsible Wales	Caru Cymru helps Wales to be Globally responsible, positively contributing to the SDGs to create a more sustainable world via local actions.

Source:

## 6. Emerging Outcomes and Impacts

### Outcomes

6.1 The effects of the Caru Cymru Project include its outcomes (the medium-term change arising from the outputs of its activities) and its impacts (the longer-term and much more indirect change, partially arising from the Project).

6.2 At this stage of the evaluation, it is too early to fully assess the outcomes of the Project. The expected outcomes from Caru Cymru are as follows

- National network of litter picking hubs and volunteer litter champions
- Coordinated LEQ actions, collaborative practices to deliver national action to improve LEQ, and local communities and businesses taking ownership of LEQ
- Increased awareness, local action, responsible disposal of litter, and use of reusables.
- Increase in reuse and recycling of waste collected during community clean-ups
- Creation of a Tiny Forest in Wales

6.3 There is an indication that these are being met, with the growing number of litter picking hubs and champions. The activities contributing to these outcomes have been discussed in section 5. The pilot project of the Tiny Forest was completed in February 2022.

### Impacts

6.4 The desired impacts of Caru Cymru, such as reduction of LEQ problems across Wales, the implementation of a National Litter strategy, and increased health and wellbeing cannot yet be quantified. Those interviewed highlighted that waste prevention might take four to five years to 'bear fruit', so it is currently too soon to evaluate it after one year of activity. The work being done by Cardiff University will

help the Project directors to understand to what extent Caru Cymru had an impact on behaviour change in Wales.

- 6.5 The final stage of the evaluation will explore the extent to which these anticipated impacts are realised and suggest the extent to which they are attributable to Caru Cymru.

### **External Factors**

- 6.6 Projects such as Caru Cymru are affected by factors outside of the Project's control or vision that must be considered. The focus on external factors is two-fold. Firstly, how do factors outside of Caru Cymru effect delivery, outputs, outcomes and impacts. Secondly what has the Project done in the face of external factors and how effective has this been?

#### *COVID-19*

- 6.7 The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the progress and activities of Caru Cymru. Some of the areas impacted are:
- the temporary closure of community litter hubs & KWT offices prevented nearly all activity for a time with the impacts of closures still ongoing, particularly around hub staff training. This has had a knock-on effect on receiving data through Epicollect
  - the LEAMS survey was not possible in 2020
  - a greater focus on LEQ issues (PPE litter, fly-tipping, littering in green spaces/beaches)
  - the availability of staff members and volunteers self-isolating. Some hubs still face intermittent closures due to staff shortages.
  - a delay with the consultation on the proposed Litter and Fly-Tipping Prevention Plan by Welsh Government.

- 6.8 Not all the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are a threat to Caru Cymru. The greater focus on LEQ issues, potentially caused by more restricted movements by the public in their local outdoor areas, has raised the wider desire to participate as volunteers, or increased priority on LEQ by partners.
- 6.9 KWT created solutions to these challenges, as well as made other changes to adapt to the external factors:
- Once restrictions eased the litter champion scheme was fully re-launched, and a new household category was introduced so that household 'bubbles' could litter-pick together.
  - Virtual platforms were utilised to ensure activities could continue safely when in person engagement was not possible. Examples include litter champion and hub manager training webinars, and all Wales partner meetings.
  - Equipment was distributed by the equipment supplier direct to champions/hubs after successful completion of training webinars (as staff were not able to meet volunteers to train and equip face to face). A large supply of project-branded bin bags was sent to the equipment supplier so they could be included in all litter champion/hub kits and work could continue.
  - An additional 'Make Memories Not Mess' campaign was launched to combat the increased rates of litter as Covid-19 restrictions began to ease.
  - Budget changes were requested (and re-evaluation approved) to take into account the necessary changes to the project due to Covid, for example additional marketing work
- 6.10 A litter strategy guide from KWT to local authorities has been delayed as Welsh Government's Litter and Fly-tipping Prevention Plan has itself been delayed. The results of the consultation were published in March 2022 and this aspect of Caru Cymru will resume in the final year of delivery.

## 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusions

- 7.1 The evaluation conclusions are structured using the head of the EU Better Regulations Framework.

#### *Coherence and Relevance*

- 7.2 The objectives for Caru Cymru remain highly coherent to the policy context. The original need for the Project has only increased with the disruption caused by Covid-19 and the change in behaviours caused by the pandemic. Stakeholders have expressed how the Project is well placed to address further needs arising from the Covid-19 pandemic.

- 7.3 The inputs and activities remain relevant to the objectives of the Project. They are responsible for the outputs generated so far and the emerging effects are clearly linked to Project delivery.

#### *Efficiency*

- 7.4 Feedback from stakeholders and a review of Biophilic Wales' monitoring systems suggest that it is being delivered efficiently by a highly competent and experienced team. The project has greatly benefited from the skills and experience of the Project Team at KWT. The Project team have proved to be adaptable in the face of unprecedented external challenges, redeploying resources to meet changing circumstances with the result that progress targets are being met or exceeded.
- 7.5 Delays with RPW have impacted on the efficiency of the Project, with the initial stages proceeding at risk and subsequent delivery affected by the considerable time devoted by KWT in communications with RPW.

#### *Effectiveness*

At this mid-term stage there is some evidence about the effects of the project and what added value it delivers. Whilst there have been

some delays, areas of the Project delivered so far have been effective in delivering outputs. Where partners have expressed a desire for more from Caru Cymru, this is caused by success and the appetite to take these further rather than any failure in delivery from Caru Cymru. Local Authority trials, shared comms materials, and Litter Free Zones have been highlighted by partners as examples they wish to see continued. There is room for greater peer learning between the partners which may need additional facilitation.

Overall, the monitoring carried out by Caru Cymru has been effective and thorough. Where there is concern around monitoring systems, for example in recording volunteer hours (see section 5) this is due to inconsistent use of the tools by volunteers. Action is already underway to address this.

## **Recommendations**

- 7.6 Based on the findings of this evaluation, Miller Research make the following recommendations for the ongoing progression of Caru Cymru.

### *Cohort Working*

- 7.7 There are benefits to be leveraged by encouraging closer relationships within cohorts of partners. For example, between local authorities who would benefit by sharing best practice, solutions to shared challenges, and experiences with each other. Greater communications and cooperation within groups of similar partners would facilitate this. Creating bespoke options, such as a forum or other software platform, is not recommended as they are unlikely to be widely used. The best options would be to use pre-existing platforms such as instant messaging apps, or for KWT to share contact details of similar partners to create a cohort. Partners should also be encouraged to take their own initiative in establishing communication. Furthermore, KWT could chair dedicated partner meetings with a focus on sharing experience. Partners noted that the

current partner meetings are useful, but they often left wanting to hear more from their peers, something which is not possible with the current format.

#### *Circular Economy vs Waste*

- 7.8 Caru Cymru should continue to reach out to the repair movement, including Repair Café Wales and Benthyc Cymru. Homing in on a focus on the circular economy rather than purely waste as the key message will tie into behaviour change, and more closely align with emerging policy. This would also contribute further to the Sustainable Development CCT and encourage more innovative thinking from partners.

#### *Partner Engagement*

- 7.9 The Project could benefit from sharing localised data back to the LAs and community groups. This would require more bespoke comms and for partners to make sure they report data to KWT via Epicollect for analysis. Greater local granularity would demonstrate the purpose of monitoring data collection, by making its impacts more tangible.
- 7.10 To aid this, the project should ensure that it is engaging partners at a suitably senior level in order to leverage the possible actions of the partners fully. For example some LAs are struggling to maintain the attention of their own senior staff required to fully prioritise Caru Cymru.

## **Annex A: Methodology**

This evaluation report will provide an assessment of data returns, progress reports and other evidence provided by the programme team and partners. We have adopted the Theory of Change approach, which is informed by the robust logic model (Annex B), created at the Baseline evaluation stage. This has ensured an effective framework for both formative (objectives, process, management) and summative (achievements and effects) evaluation. Our overall approach uses data gathered by partners and aggregating this for analysis in order to draw conclusions about the overall project performance. Keep Wales Tidy has a well-developed monitoring and evaluation plan in place. Our approach for the First evaluation has continued to build on this plan by sense checking, generating ownership amongst stakeholders and encouraging learning across all partner organisations.

The First evaluation stage comprised of the following tasks:

- a review of the evaluation logic and evaluation framework model from the baselines stage, assessing continued suitability
- a desk-based review of Welsh Government and UK policy and other relevant documentation, identifying any changes in wider policy context
- a desk-based review of progress reports to date and monitoring information gathered by the Project
- two online workshops, assessing progress and any arising issues. The first was held with the programme team and the second with local authority partners, to cover programme delivery, management and governance, support data collection and receive suggestions for process improvement.
- The first evaluation report, noting progress against objectives and formative recommendations

This stage will be followed by a second light touch evaluation in autumn 2022. A final evaluation will shift the concentration from a process evaluation towards an impact evaluation. It will have an emphasis on progress achieved and the effects of the Caru Cymru programme.

Annex B

Logic Model: Caru Cymru

