



Sustainability in the Early Years

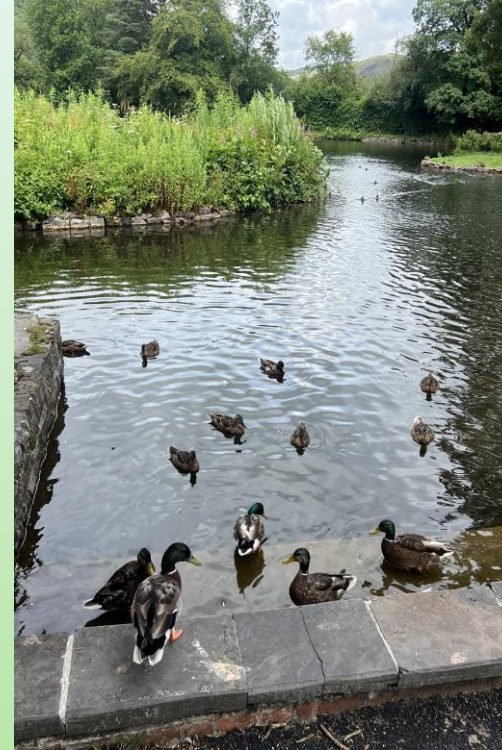
Explore, Discover, Conserve:
My Walk Around Craig-Y-Nos
Country Park...

ECEY6005

2405790

Discover: Reconnecting with Craig-Y-Nos

I have chosen to revisit Craig-Y-Nos Country Park because it holds a special place in my heart and a fond childhood memory. I used to visit Craig-Y-Nos with my grandparents regularly, this place provided me with so much happiness, curiosity and a sense of calm. Some of my favourite memories of this place is feeding the ducks and spending hours at the rock pool, throwing stones into the water and listening to the gentle splashes. As a child, I did not realise at the time but these moments I took away from nature provided me with such peace and overall positive wellbeing, it was my own form of therapy.

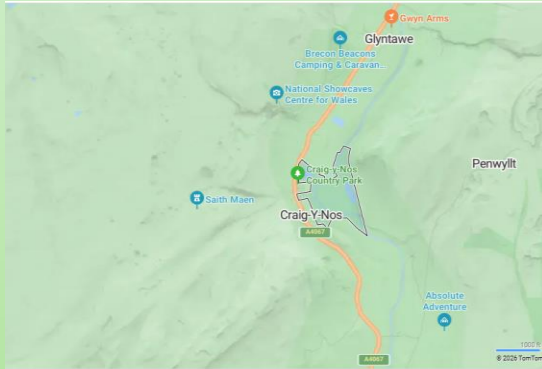


As I have gotten older, my life has become a lot busier. I have moved from a small village and nearer to the city centre which I have found that I am spending less time in nature. I am balancing work, studies and supporting my partner in the military and because of this I have not returned to Craig-Y-Nos for many years.

Participating in the John Muir Award has given me an opportunity to set aside some time to reconnect with a meaningful place that brings back so many happy memories!

Discover the area

Revisiting Craig-Y-Nos Country Park allowed me to rediscover the beauty of an area that meant so much to me as a child. As I explored, I noticed the stunning surrounding mountains, peaceful lake, waterfalls, and rock pools that create an inviting natural environment. I also enjoyed observing the variety of plants and wildlife, from ducks and birds to mosses and wildflowers.



I was fascinated by the historic Craig-y-Nos Castle, which adds to the area's unique character and shows how nature and history exist side by side.



This visit reminded me that places like Craig-Y-Nos offer endless opportunities for exploration, learning, and developing a connection with nature. These experiences are especially valuable in the early years, helping children to appreciate, respect, and care for the environment from a young age.

Reusing wood and spotting creativity



As I was walking the trail around Craig-Y-Nos, I also spotted dens that people have made from branches and sticks, this made me realise how natural materials can be used creatively for play and exploration.



When I looked inside of these dens, I discovered that logs had been used as natural seating, encouraging visitors to rest and connect with the natural environment, particularly for younger children.



Whilst I was exploring Craig-Y-Nos, I spotted lots of sustainable features, many of these were reused wood and old machinery. They used the machinery to chop old wood to create fencing.

Explore

As I explored Craig Y Nos Country Park, I noticed how the area had been thoughtfully cared for while still protecting its natural beauty. I found bird houses, benches, and shelters that encourage people to enjoy the outdoors while supporting local wildlife. I also spotted a café at the entrance of the country park, this was very inviting as the outdoor seating area was overlooking the country park.

I enjoyed exploring the different flowers and plants that I came across. Watching bees and flies pollinating flowers and plants reminded me of the important role they play in maintaining healthy ecosystems.



Plants and flowers I spotted



China Rose – These flowers are non-toxic to our wildlife.



Meadowsweet – This plant is a type of Herb.



Foxglove – Toxic to dogs and Cats.



Pontic Rhododendron – Toxic to dogs and cats.



Butterfly Bush – This plant is a type of shrub. This plant is attractive to butterflies, bees etc.

Natural water growth

Whilst I was exploring, I came across lots of water with natural growth as seen in the images I have taken during my walk. The natural water was seen to be supporting many plants to grow which helps to create a healthy habitat for wildlife.



Protection for wildlife

While exploring Craig-Y-Nos, I noticed multiple signs reminding visitors to keep dogs on leads and to always pick up after them. These simple messages play an important role in protecting the local environment. Keeping dogs on leads helps prevent wildlife from being disturbed, especially birds and other animals that live around the lake and surrounding habitats. Cleaning up dog waste also helps keep the area clean, prevents pollution, and protects both wildlife and other visitors.

These signs reminded me that caring for nature is everyone's responsibility. Small actions can make a big difference in preserving natural spaces, ensuring they remain safe and enjoyable for both people and wildlife.



A precious little duck that was hoping for some food!



Conserve



During my walk at Craig-Y-Nos Country Park, I noticed there were very few dog waste bins. This could lead to dog waste being left behind, which can harm wildlife, pollute the environment and make the park less enjoyable for visitors.

To: enquiries@beacons-npa.gov.uk

Cc/Bcc, From: luciedaley@icloud.com

Subject: Craig Y Nos - Dog mess bins

Dear Powys County Council,

I am writing to request that additional dog waste bins be installed at Craig-y-Nos Country Park.

I have noticed that there are many signs throughout the park reminding visitors to pick up after their dogs, which I fully support. These signs encourage responsible dog ownership and help maintain a safe and enjoyable environment for everyone. However, there are very few bins available for people to dispose of dog waste, which can make it inconvenient for visitors to dispose of it responsibly.

Installing more dog waste bins along popular walking routes, near entrances, and in other busy areas would encourage visitors to follow the guidance provided. This would help keep the park clean, reduce the risk of pollution, protect local wildlife from harmful bacteria and parasites, and ensure that all visitors can enjoy the park in a safe and pleasant environment.

Craig-y-Nos Country Park is a valued outdoor space enjoyed by local residents and visitors. Increasing the number of dog waste bins would help maintain a clean and welcoming environment for everyone.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my request. I hope you will consider installing additional dog waste bins at Craig-y-Nos Country Park.

Yours faithfully, Lucie

To gain the John Muir award, I emailed the local council to explain why more dog waste bins are needed. By providing more bins, it encourages people to dispose of dog waste responsibly, helping to protect wildlife, keep the park clean and ensure everyone plays their part in caring for the environment.

Reflection:

Returning to Craig-Y-Nos as an adult has reminded me of the importance of slowing down and appreciating the natural world. I was able to understand and rediscover the wildlife, peaceful surroundings, and sense of belonging that I had experienced as a child. This visit highlighted how natural spaces can support our wellbeing while also encouraging us to value and protect the environment.



This is my dog Diego, he also explored Craig-Y-Nos for the first time! We followed the rules of the country park and kept him on the lead and picked up and disposed of his waste.

This experience has reinforced my understanding of sustainability in the early years. Positive experiences in nature during childhood can create lasting emotional connections with the environment. By fostering these connections from a young age, children are more likely to develop respect, care, and responsibility for the natural world throughout their lives. Revisiting Craig-Y-Nos has reminded me that regaining paradise is not about finding somewhere new, but about reconnecting with the places that were my own first experiences and memories with nature.