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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to convey my support for the invaluable work undertaken by the 'Nature of our Village Project', in conjunction with the Penparcau Community Forum.

The project aims to substantially enhance the wildlife record and awareness of the local natural environment in the village of Penparcau, Aberystwyth. Thanks to the meticulous work of the project, we now have a greater understanding of the wealth of both common and rarer animal and insect species that can be found locally – ranging from bees and dragonflies, to otters and sharks.

This wealth of information has been accrued thanks to the tireless work of the project – conducted throughout the year and in all weather – to document the different species that inhabit and contribute to the local environment. Such information, which is made so easily accessible and interesting by the reports produced by the project, undoubtedly serve to increase the community's awareness and engagement with their natural surroundings; as evidenced by the increasing regularity of nature walks and community litter picks.

I have seen first hand the hard work that has gone into the Project's reports, including the "How's Our Wildlife Doing? Part 2" report, published in February 2018. The report encompasses a mass of data and interesting research from local wildlife surveys undertaken from November 2016 to October 2017. The success of the project is all the more impressive considering that much of its stellar work has been undertaken on a very modest financial budget, which has meant that they have had to rely on the committed work of a small team of dedicated volunteers.

I strongly believe that the project demonstrates the very best of community action – bringing together local volunteers, and a promoting the passion for the protection of the natural environment. There is little doubt that the impact of the project is invaluable, and is of particular importance when considered against the aspirations detailed in the Future Generations Wales Act 2015. Its contribution to public interest in the local environment and biodiversity is considerable, and certainly unique.

Once again may I reiterate my full support to the 'Nature of our Village Project', and I urge you to look favourably upon any appeals for support presented by the group that may assist them to continue their important work.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Lake AS/MP - Ceredigion