



Progress on the growth of seagrass in Dale Roads

Richard Unsworth and #teamseagrass

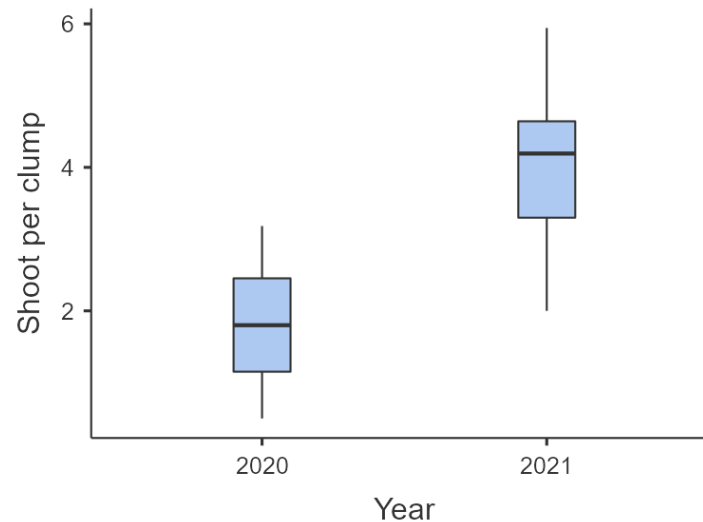
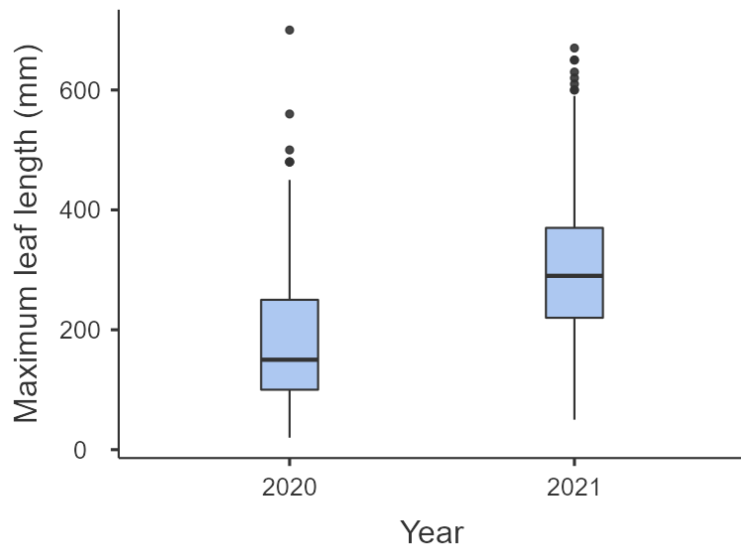
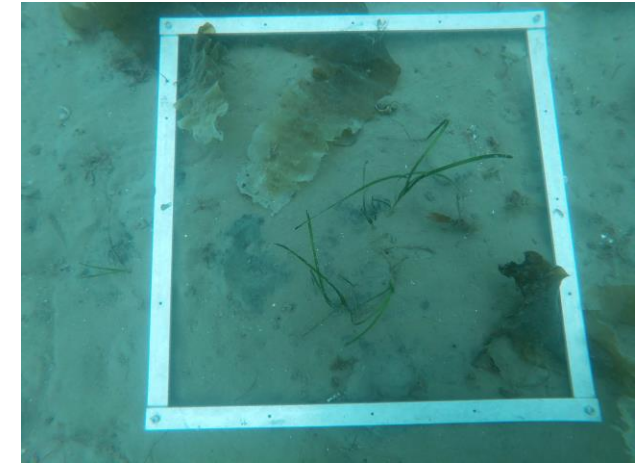
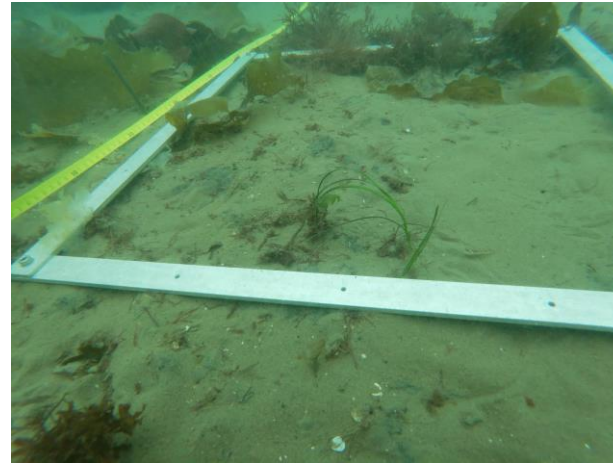
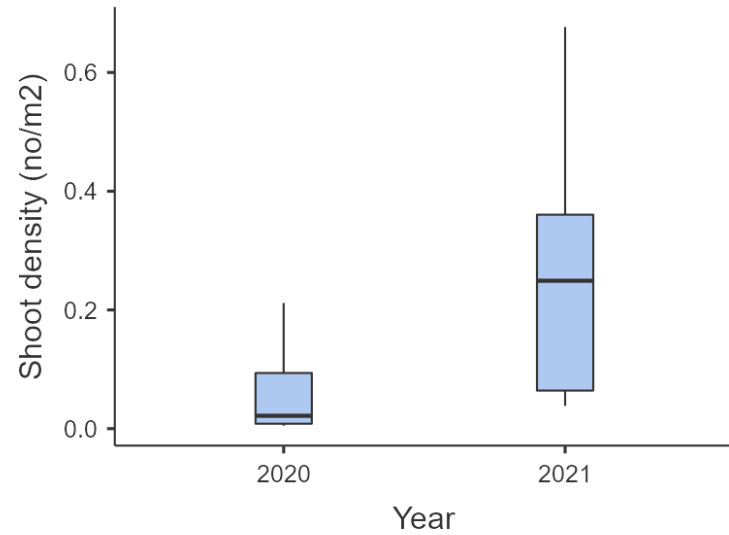
Project Seagrass & Swansea University

Reminder of key stats



- Licence from NRW to plant seeds in a 2 hectare area of seagrass over a 5 year (2020-2025) period together with a Crown Estate licence to use their land over the same period (annual payment to TCE)
- February 2020 – planted 900k seeds
- December 2020 – planted a further 2-300k seeds
- ~4505 minutes of volunteer time (nearly 27 solid weeks).
- 602 people hours spent collecting seeds.
- ~2,121 volunteers were involved.
- 35 different groups around Wales (46 around the UK).
- 19 Welsh schools.

Seagrass in Dale is increasing in density & coverage



Total mature shoots in plot

2020 = 1162

2021 = 5550

Clumps have been recorded beyond footprint indicating some spread of seeds



Video: Sam Rees

Challenges of planting seagrass seed in Dale

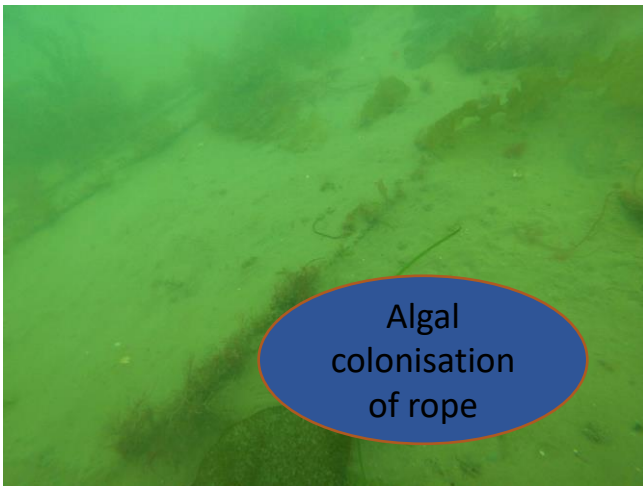


Transient
kelp



Low success
rate in 1st
year

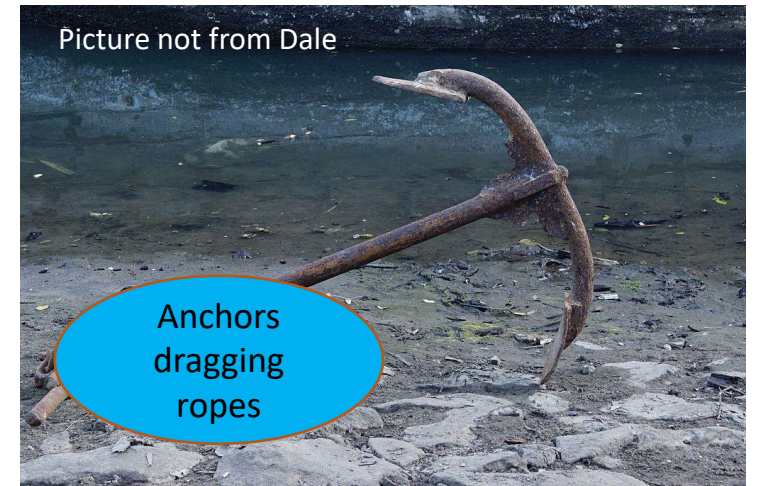
Lots of
Lessons
Learnt



Algal
colonisation
of rope



Seed
storage
failure



Picture not from Dale

Anchors
dragging
ropes



Accumulated knowledge and experience on seagrass restoration developed in Dale has improved seagrass restoration in the UK and around Europe.

Six other active seagrass restoration projects running in the UK building on the pilot project in Dale.

Conclusions



Seagrass density no where near as high as we hoped for at this stage.

Seagrass clumps are now quite evenly spread across whole of 2 hectare area.

Seagrass clumps are healthy and density is increasing each year.

Trials of different methods indicate we would have had better success if we'd hand planted bags into the sediments.

Alternative storage methods would have improved success.

Ropes weren't as successful as hoped as degradation was too slow resulting in anchor snagging.

Seagrass is on a firm footing, they are healthy and will expand over time.

Six years is the accepted point at which restoration projects are largely assessed for success.

Monitoring will continue each year.

Thanks