



Rural Resilience



Why This Matters

Community and Town Councils in Wales play a vital role in supporting their communities—especially during the cost-of-living crisis.

Rural resilience is vital to the wellbeing, sustainability, and long-term prosperity of Wales. Strengthening rural resilience means ensuring that our communities can adapt, recover, and thrive in the face of adversity.

It's about building capacity locally: empowering people, maintaining vital services, supporting local economies, and preserving cultural identity.



**Hear from
Community Transport
Association
Thriving, not just
Surviving**

Common Challenges

Rural Community and Town Councils often find it hard to deliver services:

- Places are far apart and hard to reach.
- There is not much public transport.
- Internet and phone signals can be poor.
- People live in small, spread-out communities.

These problems make services more expensive to provide and with small budgets councils may struggle to do everything that is needed..

These problems also make it harder for people to get the help they require but councils are close to their communities and really understand what local people need. They can:

- Create services that suit their area.
- Work with others to find smart solutions.
- Help make sure support is fair, easy to access, and long-lasting.

Community and Town Councils are in a great position to help their areas, even when times are tough.

What Does Rural Poverty Look Like?

◆ Employment and Low Wages

- Lack of job opportunities, underemployment, seasonal work.
- Commuting challenges.

◆ Fuel Poverty

- High heating costs due to old housing stock and off-grid fuels.
- Disproportionate impact on older and disabled residents.

◆ Digital Exclusion

- Patchy broadband/mobile coverage.
- Limits access to services, education, jobs.

◆ Access to Services

- Long distances to GPs, shops, schools.
- Poor or non-existent public transport.

◆ Child and Family Poverty

- School meal reliance, food insecurity, youth outmigration.

◆ Loneliness and Mental Health

- Isolation, especially for older adults and carers.

Rural Transport Challenges

Rural Wales faces:

- Few buses/trains
- Isolation for older, disabled, or low-income residents
- Poor access to health services
- Limited options for young people
- High travel costs

How Community Transport Helps

Community Transport is local, non-profit, and run for the community: it can take many different forms:

- Dial-a-Ride minibus services;
- Volunteer car lifts;
- Group and social trips

It helps by:

- Reducing isolation
- Enabling independence
- Improving service access
- Cutting carbon by sharing journeys

How to Get Started

1. Ask the community what's needed
2. Contact **CTA Wales** for free advice: ctauk.org/wales
3. Look at local examples
4. Start small – one car, one volunteer
5. Seek funding – local grants, Lottery, businesses

A Note for Councils

It may feel daunting, but:

- Many start small and grow
- CTA Wales offers step-by-step support
- One volunteer can change lives

Find more information, resources and support on the One Voice Wales website: **Community Transport** and The Transport & Health Integrated Research Network **Think**

Supporting Vulnerable Residents

Rural councils can support vulnerable residents by setting up warm, welcoming spaces in winter, helping run food banks or larders with local partners, offering community transport for those who are isolated, and keeping in touch with elderly or at-risk people through volunteer check-ins.

Guide to Older People Engagement & Services

Guide to Warm Hubs

Tackling Food Poverty, a Guide for Councils

Preserving Cultural and Social Identity

Councils can preserve local identity by supporting festivals, promoting the Welsh language, sharing local stories through arts, and bringing generations together through shared activities.

Guide to Organising a Community Event

Working in Partnership

Work with others to share resources, apply for funding, and speak up for rural communities at regional and national levels.

Guide to Working with Partners

Strengthening Local Democracy and Participation

Strengthen local democracy by involving residents in budget decisions, giving young people a voice, holding open forums to hear community views, and building volunteer networks to support local needs.

Guide to Youth Engagement & Services

Effective Community Consultation & Engagement

Building Capacity and Resilience

Councils can improve digital access for all, prepare for emergencies like floods or power cuts, and regularly review community needs, and vital services.

Guide to Digital Inclusion

Legislation & Powers

Powers & justifications can differ, councils should consider their specific circumstances. For advice & guidance, councils may wish to contact their One Voice Wales Development Officer.

admin@onevoicewales.wales

Community Benefit Funds

At a Glance

 What are they?

Grants provided by local wind farms and solar energy companies to support rural communities near renewable energy developments.

 What can they fund?

- Community wellbeing projects
- Climate action initiatives
- Energy efficiency improvements
- Local service enhancements

 Who is eligible?

Community and town councils located near a wind or solar energy site.

 Where to start?

Check with your local renewable energy operator or your County Voluntary Council for details on how to apply.

 Don't miss out—many rural Welsh communities are already benefiting!

Examples of Good Practice



Bishopston Community Council Community Bus provides a regular service connecting residents to shops, services and transport links in Mumbles. Reducing isolation and supporting independence through accessible reliable transport.



[Case study video](#)

Cwmaman Town Council Community Fridays bring together essential services, support, and social opportunities under one roof to help residents access the help they need locally.

[Case Study](#)

Llannon Community Council Over 50s Lunch Club offers a warm, welcoming space for older residents to enjoy a subsidised hot meal, socialise, and take part in fun activities, helping to reduce loneliness and strengthen community connections.

[Case study](#)

Prestatyn Town Council Warm Hub initiative provides a safe, welcoming space for residents to enjoy hot meals, social activities, and support services—helping to combat isolation and the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis.

[Case Study](#)

Llwchwr Community Council's Digital Champion Project has evolved into a monthly community digital café, offering free access to IT equipment and Wi-Fi, alongside dedicated digital support for residents.

[Case Study](#)

Bedlinog & Trelewis Community Council is fostering community resilience through targeted initiatives designed to support and empower local residents.



[Webinar presentation](#)

Useful Information:



WLGA
[Rural Manifesto 2025](#)

New research from the **Joseph Rowntree Foundation** shows that poverty is deepening in Wales

[Rural Futures Wales](#) Impact Report & Case Studies

Want to Find Out More?

For more information on the One Voice Wales Cost-of-Living Crisis project contact the team at:



[One Voice Wales Website](#)



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<https://bit.ly/3KYHftK>