



How are Community and Town Councils Supporting Digital Inclusion?



At a glance

Community and town councils across Wales are actively working to bridge the digital divide and promote digital inclusion through various initiatives.

Targeted support is essential to ensure all residents in Wales can fully participate in the digital world.



Coedpoeth Community Council are working in partnership to deliver free IT workshops and support to upskill residents.

Courses include:

- Using a laptop
- Using email
- Online safety
- Searching the web



Challenges

Limited broadband in rural areas, high costs of devices and internet, and varying digital skills contribute to digital exclusion—reducing access to services, education, jobs, and social connection, and deepening existing inequalities.

Solutions

Community and town councils can provide free broadband, subsidised or loaned devices, and local digital skills training through libraries, hubs, and outreach.

By partnering with local organisations and digital inclusion networks, they can reach those most affected, helping close the digital divide and improve access to services, education, and opportunities



DIGITAL TRAINING: By securing grants or working with partners, community and town councils are delivering digital training to help residents access services safely and independently.



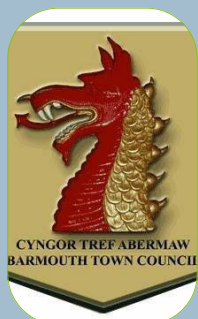
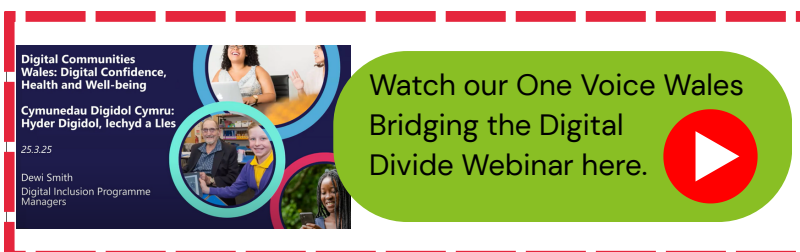
INTERNET PROVISION: Free Wi-Fi in community buildings, along with advice and access to low-cost mobile data through the Good Things Foundation, is improving digital access.



ACCESS TO EQUIPMENT: Providing IT equipment and conferencing tools helps residents join virtual meetings and stay connected.



DIGITAL SUPPORT: Digital Drop-In sessions and Cafes with volunteers offer hands-on support for online tasks.



Barmouth Town Council partner with Tanio Bermo Project to deliver digital initiatives and support re-purposing.

The Repair Cafe includes refurbishment of laptops which are then made available to residents. They have obtained funding to deliver digital workshops including:

- Smartphones for Beginners
- Inkscape to create graphics
- 3D Printing with access to a 3d printer
- Vinyl printing with access to a vinyl press

Impact

The work of community and town councils around digital inclusion is helping residents to stay connected, access essential services, build confidence with technology, and participate more fully in modern life which is increasingly online.

By improving digital skills and access, community and town councils are helping residents save money through online services, access better deals, manage finances more easily, and reduce travel costs—offering vital support during the cost of living crisis.

More Examples of Good Practice



"I can now access the Doctor, order food online etc. I'm very grateful to those who ran the course for all their hard work — and patience."

Rhossili Community

Council developed a Hwb project to improve digital engagement, informed by a community needs analysis. The Hwb provides IT equipment, free Wi-Fi, ongoing support, and a user-friendly website with local information and activities.

Interactive workshops were delivered to build digital skills and confidence. Sessions were free, jargon-free, tailored to individual needs, and paced by attendees reaching a total of 108 participants.

The project was funded with £10,223.57 from Swansea City Council's Rural Development Fund, supported by match funding through volunteer time.



Llŵchwr Town Council

Llŵchwr Town Council partnered with the Cwmpas Digital Champion Programme to recruit and train volunteers with the skills to support residents to get online.

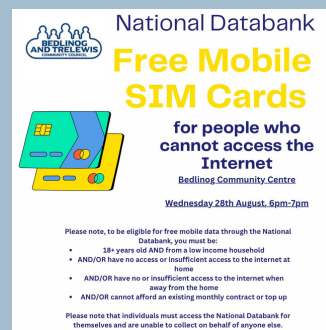
Their Digital Champion Project developed into a monthly community digital cafe which provides free access to IT and wifi with digital support

The Council have linked in with PCSOs and now make a laptop or tablet available for people who may need to access urgent help anonymously.

The project is helping to remove barriers to digital access and offers a safe, supportive space for residents to build skills and confidence online



As members of the National Digital Inclusion Network, **Bedlinog and Trelewis Community Council** provide free mobile data to residents experiencing data poverty or living on a low income.



By gifting mobile data, the Council is helping to ensure that those who are digitally excluded can access essential online services, stay connected with family and support networks, and participate more fully in community life

Funding & Powers

All community councils in Wales need specific legal powers that enable them to provide various services and support for their local communities. These powers, granted by legislation, allow councils to undertake a wide range of activities and initiatives to improve the well-being and quality of life for residents.

Powers and justifications can differ, and councils should consider their specific circumstances.

For advice and guidance, councils may wish to contact their One Voice Wales Development Officer.

admin@onevoicewales.wales

Want to Find Out More?

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



CoLC@onevoicewales.wales



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



[Cost of Living Website](#)