

Cost of Living Crisis Project

SUMMER WELLBEING STARTS IN THE COMMUNITY



[Supporting Children & Families](#)



Love these events –
feel part of the
community”

Understanding the Summer Pressure Point

The long summer break can increase household costs by hundreds of pounds. For families already stretched, this period can intensify:

- Food insecurity
- Social isolation
- Mental health pressures
- Digital exclusion
- Reduced access to structured activities

Mumbles
Community
Council
Family Fun
Days Case
Study

[CLICK HERE](#) >>



Wednesday 5th August



Playday is the national day for play, celebrated each year across the UK. It is a celebration of children's right to play, and a campaign that highlights the importance of play in children's lives.

To find out how to get involved and top tips for planning an event

[CLICK HERE](#) >>

SUPPORTING FAMILIES DURING THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

- Community picnics or family fun days
- Holiday activity sessions in parks or community halls
- Craft, sports or play sessions organised by local groups
- Toy, book or sports equipment libraries
- Promoting local holiday food programmes



A Summer of Support, Not Struggle

The cost-of-living crisis continues to challenge households across Wales, but local action makes a tangible difference. By combining practical financial support, accessible activities and safe community spaces, councils can transform the summer experience for families.

With schools breaking up in July, many parents face six weeks of additional food costs, childcare pressures and activity expenses. By planning now, councils can deliver visible, meaningful support during July and August – improving wellbeing while easing financial strain.

July and August present an opportunity to demonstrate that when communities work together, no family is left behind.

As we look ahead to the summer months, the message is clear: early planning, partnership working and inclusive delivery will ensure this season is one of wellbeing, connection and resilience for communities across Wales.

Community and Town Councils can play an important role in strengthening their local food system by working closely with their **Local Food Partnership**. These partnerships bring together councils, community groups, businesses and volunteers to improve access to healthy, affordable food and to support local food initiatives.

Aberporth Community Council Family Breakfast



A Simple Summer Wellbeing Checklist

Councils looking to support residents this summer might consider:

- Promoting local activities and community groups
- Sharing information about cost of living support
- Supporting free or low-cost community events
- Encouraging volunteer initiatives
- Helping residents connect with local services and each other

Even small steps can make a meaningful difference.



Play Wales encourages communities to prioritise play as a simple, low-cost way to support children and families.



Councils are encouraged to share examples of what is working locally - let us know about your initiatives that are making a difference

MAKING THE MOST OF COMMUNITY SPACES

Getting Out and About for Free!

Community and Town Councils are well placed to help residents make the most of free, local opportunities to get out and about during the summer months.

Outdoor spaces such as parks, play areas and sports fields offer accessible ways for families to stay active without added cost. Simple initiatives can make these spaces even more inviting—such as providing shared “toy boxes” with loose play items like balls, skipping ropes or frisbees, encouraging informal, creative play.

In coastal communities, bucket-and-spade exchange stations can be a practical and sustainable way to support families while reducing single-use plastics. Small ideas like these can make a big difference, particularly during the school holidays.

Councils can also promote local rights of way, woodland walks and traffic-free routes, helping residents discover safe places to walk, cycle and explore nature close to home. Clear signage, maps or suggested routes can encourage more people to give them a try. At the same time, linking outdoor activity with town centres through initiatives such as family-friendly trails, scavenger hunts or themed walks can help bring people into local high streets. This not only provides free entertainment for families but also supports local shops and businesses.

By thinking creatively about how spaces are used, councils can help ensure that staying active, social and connected doesn't have to come at a cost.

BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPORT



Back to School Support

Key Challenges Families Face

The transition back to school is about more than uniforms and stationery. Families often face financial pressures linked to clothing, transport, and meals, alongside the emotional adjustment of returning to structure after the summer break.

Blaenavon Town Council & Cwmbran Community Council offer a sports kit swap



Supporting Families for a Positive Start to the School Year

Run a "Back to School" Community Support Drive

- Uniform swap shops or donation schemes
- School supplies banks (bags, stationery, lunchboxes)
- Partner with local businesses for donations

Share Local Support Information Create and distribute a simple directory including:

- Food banks
- Holiday activity programmes
- Mental health support services
- Youth clubs and safe spaces

Partner with Schools & Organisations

- Work with local schools to identify needs early
- Collaborate with charities and volunteer groups
- Align messaging so families get consistent support

Importantly, support should be inclusive and accessible to all. This includes considering the needs of low-income families, those with additional needs, and diverse communities. Offering flexible support options, clear communication, and—where possible—translated materials can help ensure no one is left behind.

MEALS ON A BUDGET

While free school meals are now available to all primary school children in Wales, support is still important for families with older pupils. Secondary school students may qualify for free school meals depending on household circumstances, but many families will still need to provide packed lunches. Councils can help by sharing simple, low-cost lunchbox ideas and signposting to trusted sources.

SIGNPOST TO GRANTS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Families may be eligible for a range of grants and financial support

- The Welsh Government's School Essentials Grant.
- Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI), which provides financial assistance to farming families
- Guidance and information from Children in Wales, highlighting wider financial support available to learners and their families

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