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Social and economic research  
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# Impact of Community and Town Councils across Wales

## Social Impact Assessment Report



Un Llais Cymru



One Voice Wales

# Wavehill: Social and Economic Research

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# Acknowledgements

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## List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full name
LSOA	Lower super output area
ONS	Office for National Statistics
OVW	One Voice Wales
PEFTA	Pennard Energy, Food and Technology Assistance
SROI	Social return on investment
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WLGA	Wales Local Government Association

# Contents page

## Contents

Executive Summary.....	v
1. About this report .....	1
1.1 Key research objectives .....	1
1.2 Our approach to the assessment.....	1
1.3 Coverage of the report .....	2
2. Context .....	3
3. Total Social Impact of Community and Town Councils .....	6
3.1 Sample.....	6
3.2 Wales-wide Social Return on Investment.....	9
3.3 Volunteering .....	9
3.4 Warm hubs.....	10
3.5 Youth activities and childcare .....	15
3.6 Wellbeing activities.....	19
3.7 Food initiatives.....	21
3.8 Advice and support with payments .....	26
3.9 Distributing grants .....	27
3.10 Community transport .....	29
3.11 Digital inclusion, tech repair and recycling.....	31
4. The needs of Community and Town Councils .....	35
4.1 Barriers and challenges faced by Councils.....	35
4.2 Support available from One Voice Wales .....	37
5. Conclusions.....	42
Appendix A - SROI Inputs .....	44
Appendix B - SROI Value Table .....	46
Appendix C - List of Stakeholders .....	51

## List of figures

Figure 2.1: Consumer price inflation index, 2015 price levels as base year.....	3
Figure 2.2 Real term change in per-person revenue expenditure of Welsh local authorities since 2010 .....	4
Figure 3.1: Map of survey respondents and case study areas .....	8
Figure 4.1: Community and Town Councils by precept size.....	35
Figure 4.2: Number of self-reported cost-of-living activities delivered by councils by precept .....	36
Figure 4.3: Barriers to delivering cost-of-living activities reported by councils .....	37
Figure 4.4: Council usage of One Voice Wales' cost-of-living support .....	39

# Executive Summary

Community and Town Councils across Wales are playing an increasingly critical role in supporting residents through the cost-of-living crisis. As inflation reduced local authority spending power, and widening social and economic pressures have intensified since 2021, these councils have stepped in to deliver a variety of essential community led services during the cost-of-living crisis.

One Voice Wales commissioned Wavehill to undertake a social impact assessment of the sector's response to the cost-of-living crisis. Drawing on a survey of 237 councils, qualitative interviews, case studies and OVW data, the assessment uses a Social Return on Investment (SROI) framework to quantify the value created. In the past year, councils in the sample generated **£25.97 million in social value**, representing a social return on investment of **£4.86 for every £1 spent**.

Our research identified a substantial variety of activities delivered by Community and Town Councils to address the needs of their residents, including warm hubs, food initiatives, youth and wellbeing activities, support with benefits and payments, grants, support with digital inclusion and community transport schemes.

Our study also highlights the challenges and barriers faced by Community and Town Councils that want to deliver cost-of-living related activities in their communities, chief among these are

capacity constraints, both in terms of staffing and finances. Over half of Wales' Community and Town Councils operate on a precept of under £25,000, and 60% of the councils that responded to our survey employ just one member of staff, typically for eight hours per week. These constraints restrict councils' ability to expand services or initiate new activities. Despite this, the responses to our survey showed that 37% of councils currently delivering cost-of-living support wish to expand, and nearly half of non-delivering councils would like to begin providing support.

One Voice Wales is widely recognised by councils as a key enabler of delivery. The councils that responded to our survey reported high levels of satisfaction with OVW's cost-of-living support, giving the programme an average rating of **4.22 out of 5**. Many councils reported that their activities would have stalled, weakened or not progressed at all without OVW's support.

The findings point to a sector that includes a cohort of highly committed councils that have created demonstrable value for their local residents as well a cohort of councils with an ambition to offer more in the cost-of-living space. Growing the impact of the sector as a whole requires greater investment, improved local authority collaboration and sustained support from OVW to meet growing community needs.

Overall, Community and Town Councils Generated

# £25.97m

In Social Value

Warm hubs: £3,270,836

Youth activities: £16,541,219

Wellbeing activities: £1,940,890

Food initiatives: £717,553

Support with payments: £1,115,541

**£4.86**

Social Return on Investment for every £1 spent



**£169,200+**

in Volunteer hours

**£675,000+**

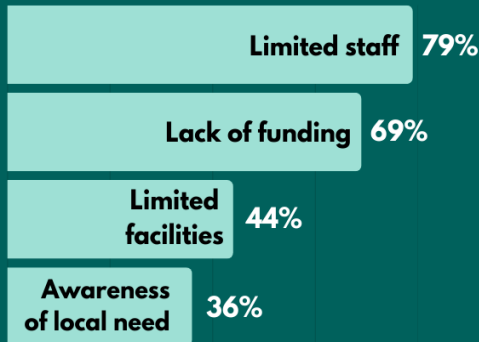
Direct financial impact of benefits advice



**187,000+**

meals provided

The top barriers faced by community and town councils delivering cost of living activities are:



On average, councils rated the usefulness of One Voice Wales' support as 4.22 out of 5



One Voice Wales provides guidance, reports and webinars about



Fuel poverty and warm spaces



Benefits



Digital inclusion



Wellbeing and support



Applying for lottery funding



Tackling food poverty



Community transport



Support at Christmas



Community engagement

# 1. About this report

One Voice Wales (OVW) commissioned Wavehill to undertake a study measuring the social impact of the work done by Community and Town Councils across Wales to address cost-of-living challenges in their local areas.

As the national membership body for Community and Town Councils, OVW has witnessed a noticeable growth in the number of councils across Wales taking a more active role in responding to cost-of-living pressures as a way of supporting their local areas. Through their Cost-of-Living Project, OVW provided a dedicated resource to share good practice and advise councils on the most effective ways to support their communities.

This report explores the various ways in which Community and Town Councils support their local residents. Using a social return on investment approach, the report outlines councils' social impact and the monetary value of their work. The report also highlights the work done by individual councils and challenges they face in supporting their residents.

## 1.1 Key research objectives

This research sought to better understand the impact of Community and Town Councils across Wales, aiming to address the following research objectives:

- 1) Quantify the monetary value and social impact generated by Community and Town Councils across Wales;
- 2) Highlight the initiatives and support delivered by individual councils across Wales to address the cost-of-living crisis in their areas;
- 3) Identify the barriers and challenges faced by Community and Town Councils as well as the support they need in the future;
- 4) Showcase the impact of OVW's work as a facilitator and enabler of the work done by Community and Town Councils across Wales.

## 1.2 Our approach to the assessment

Brief outline of the research methods and inputs.

The methodology for this assessment uses a Social Return on Investment (SROI) approach. This is a framework for measuring and accounting for the broader social, economic, and environmental value created by an intervention. Unlike traditional cost-benefit analysis, SROI goes beyond financial metrics to capture outcomes that matter to stakeholders, including improvements in wellbeing, social inclusion, and community resilience.

The fieldwork for this research was undertaken between November 2025 and January 2026 and included:

- A desk-based review of OVW’s data shared with Wavehill, including prior surveys, internal monitoring information and resources created to support Community and Town Councils.
- An online survey of Community and Town Councils collecting quantitative data on their cost-of-living related activities such as funding provided and number of people supported. All 731 Community and Town Councils were invited to complete the survey, we received 237 responses with sufficient data to include in our analysis, which constitutes a response rate of 34.2%.
- Consultations with OVW staff, board members and other key stakeholders, see appendix C for a full list of consulted organisations. These consultations were used to gain a broader contextual understanding of the Community and Town Council sectors and verify the results of our survey and model.
- Qualitative interviews with fifteen Community and Town Councils to collect further qualitative information about their engagement with One Voice Wales’ support. These interviews were undertaken either via telephone or virtually with councils that provided consent to be contacted further after the quantitative survey.
- Case studies to demonstrate the individual activities undertaken by Community and Town councils and their social impact.

### 1.3 Coverage of the report

The report is split into the following sections:

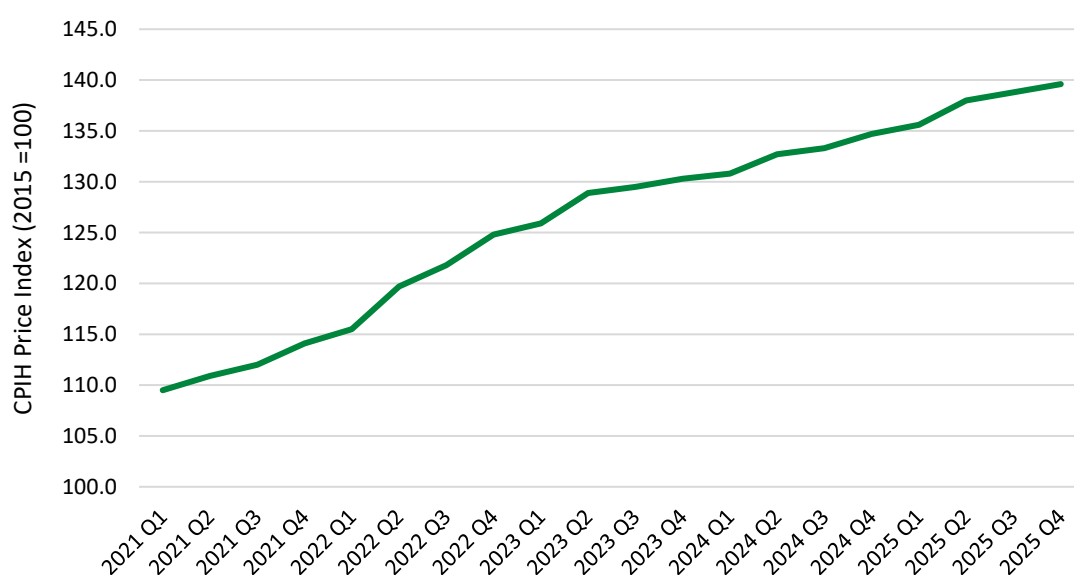
- Section 2: This section provides a brief overview of the socio-economic conditions in Wales which has coincided with the rise of Community and Town Councils choosing to deliver cost-of-living activities.
- Section 3: This section covers the results of our social impact model, opening with a discussion of the sample of Community and Town Councils that have provided that responded to our survey, followed by an outline of the social impact generated by the sector broken down by intervention.
- Section 4: This covers additional feedback collected in our survey and interviews with Community and Town Councils related to the barriers they face in delivering cost-of-living activities, the support they receive from One Voice Wales and the support they need to continue or expand delivery.
- Section 5: Conclusions and recommendations.

## 2. Context

This chapter sets out how the socio-economic context has changed in Wales since the COVID-19 pandemic, outlining the context in which OVW have observed a rise in the number of their members delivering cost-of-living interventions.

Since March 2021, households in Wales have experienced a period of volatile inflation. Although the rate of inflation has stabilised from its peak in October 2022, overall price levels at the end of 2025 were roughly 27.5% higher than they were at the beginning of 2021.

Figure 2.1: Consumer price inflation index, 2015 price levels as base year



Source: Office for National Statistics.

The Welsh Government's expert group on the cost-of-living crisis concluded that inflation, driven by macroeconomic factors, has had a 'profound and compounded effect on the lives of many people'<sup>1</sup>. These effects worsened pre-existing socio-economic conditions and created new social, health and wellbeing challenges. Rising rents and mortgage payments coupled with stagnating wages have reduced household disposable income, and the number of people claiming Universal Credit in Wales has risen from roughly 275,000 in 2021 to over 410,000 in 2025<sup>2</sup>.

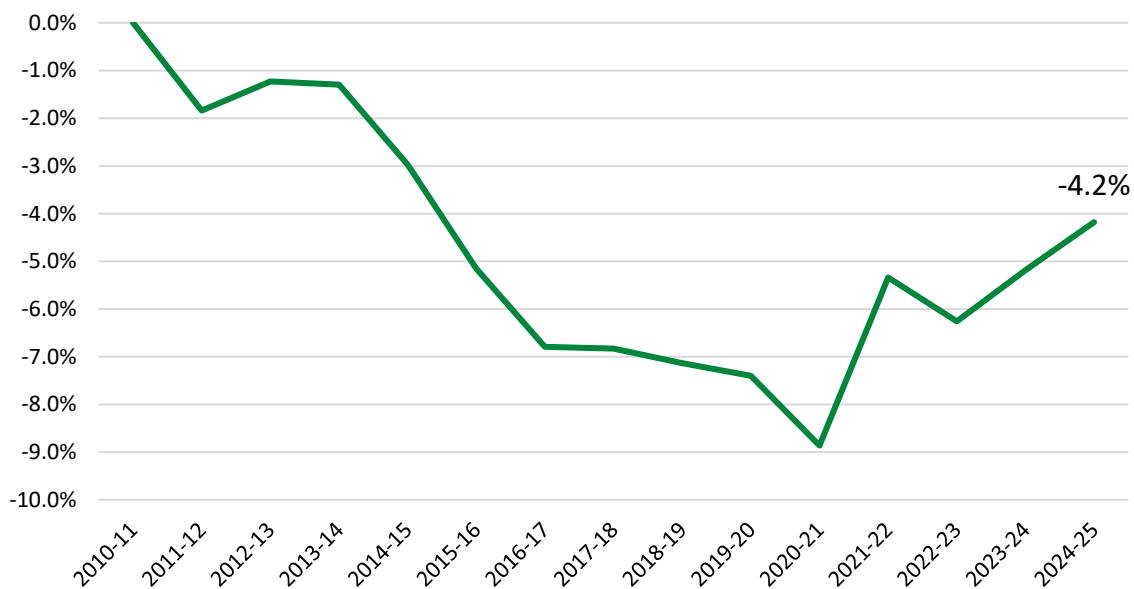
<sup>1</sup> Welsh Government Expert Group on the Cost of Living Crisis, [Summary Response and Recommendations for Action](#), August 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Welsh Government, [Labour Market Overview](#), September 2025.

Research conducted by Public Health Wales in 2023 showed that 94% of respondents had noted an increase in their cost-of-living, with 77% of people saying they were either very worried or somewhat worried about the rising cost-of-living. Their research found that the cost-of-living crisis was leading to a wide range of problems, including 44% saying it had negatively impacted their mental health, 19% saying it impacted their physical health, 76% changing their food buying habits, and 23% increasing their money borrowing<sup>3</sup>.

Coupled with this notable rise in inflation has been a long running, real term cut in the spending power of local authorities across Wales. The Institute for Government reported that the focus of local authorities across the UK has long since shifted towards financial survival, having been slowly cutting universal, preventative and non-statutory services since 2010<sup>4</sup>. The figure below shows that on a per-person basis, real revenue expenditure from local authorities in Wales remains lower than 2010/11 level by over 4%.

Figure 2.2 Real term change in per-person revenue expenditure of Welsh local authorities since 2010



Source: Wavehill analysis of Welsh Government data on local government revenue budgets and mid-year population estimates.

Community and Town councils often act as the first point of contact for their residents, being able to respond in a fast and flexible manner to local needs. In many localities across Wales, Community and Town Councils have stepped into the gap created by a growing need for support and shrinking public services to deliver warm hubs, childcare services, free and reduced cost food schemes and many other activities that address local needs.

<sup>3</sup> Public Health Wales, [Not enough for essentials as the cost of living crisis bites](#), October 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Institute for Government, [Performance Tracker 2025: Local Government](#), October 2025.

In 2023, One Voice Wales established a cost-of-living team in response to its members' needs for new skills and resources to address challenges they were facing in their local communities. The aim of this initiative was to provide resources and facilitate peer-to-peer learning to improve the overall capacity of the sector to better deliver necessary services across Wales.

# 3. Total Social Impact of Community and Town Councils

This chapter presents the results of our social impact model, based on data collected from our survey of 237 Community and Town Councils, presenting a breakdown of social value generated by each impact theme identified and an overall estimate of the sector’s social return on investment of their cost-of-living activities. This chapter also briefly outlines the sample included in the model and how the results should be interpreted.

## 3.1 Sample

Our survey was co-developed with OVW, aiming to collect quantitative information relating to the inputs and outputs of Community and Town Councils’ cost-of-living activities. These data could then be input into a social return on investment framework to estimate the monetary social impact generated by these activities. Our technical note outlines the analysis method used in full.

The survey was distributed by OVW’s cost-of-living project team to all 731 Community and Town Councils with weekly reminders to complete the survey. We received 237 responses that provided sufficient data to be included in the model. The data collected in the survey related to cost-of-living activities and the support offered by OVW to councils.

Cost-of-living pressures create a range of challenges that vary between each locality and require varied responses that best suit that locality. To capture this in our survey, we analysed OVW’s register of the cost-of-living work done by Community and Town Councils. The activities were grouped into eight themes based on their expected social impacts. These themes are outlined in the table below:

Cost-of-living impact theme	Description or example	% of our sample delivering this activity
Warm hubs	Heated spaces that allow residents to socialise and save money on heating bills.	31%
Youth activities and childcare	This included youth clubs, after school and summer holiday clubs.	25%
Wellbeing activities	Group activities to improve physical or mental wellbeing such as exercise, nature walks, arts and crafts or film clubs.	22%
Food initiatives	This could include foodbanks, free meals, community growing schemes or meals on wheels.	22%
Advice for payments	This primarily involved working with organisations to provide people with advice on benefit payments.	23%

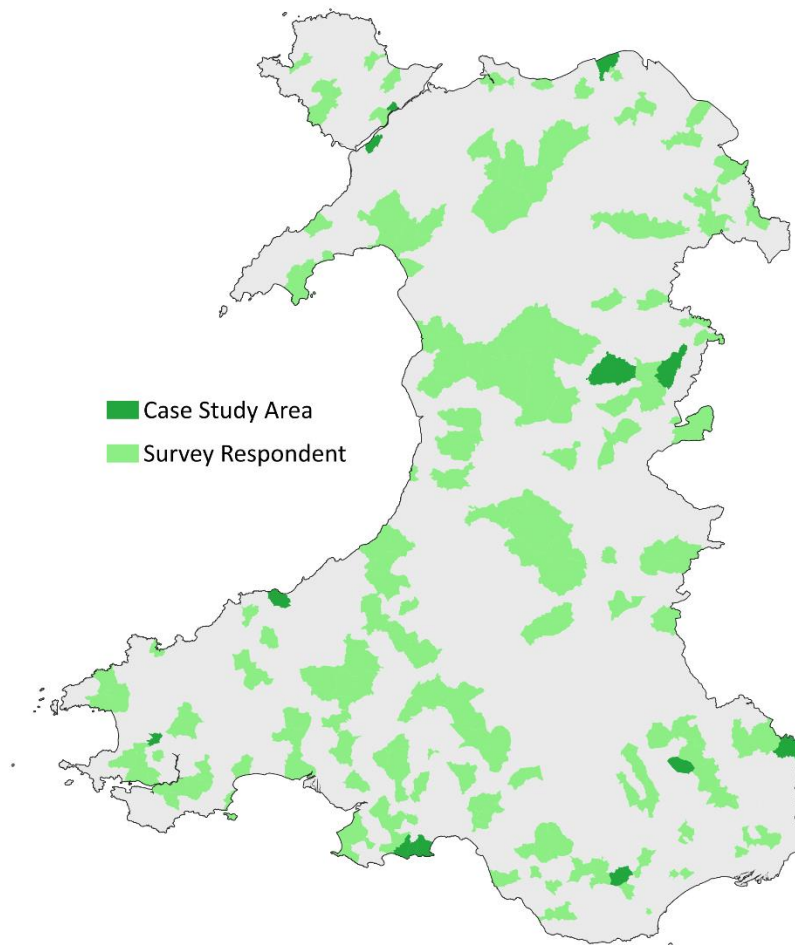
Cost-of-living impact theme	Description or example	% of our sample delivering this activity
Grants	Funding directly allocated from Councils either to community groups or individuals.	6%
Community transport	This included community buses, volunteer driver schemes and schemes to reduce fares.	6%
Digital inclusion, repair and recycling	This included support for people to improve their skills and confidence using digital technology. It also included tech repair and recycling through donations.	8%

Source: Wavehill's survey of Community and Town Councils (N=237).

Among our respondents, 43% of councils noted that they did not deliver any cost-of-living activities. Those that did typically delivered between two and three activities (e.g. a warm hub and a wellbeing activity). However, this would often vary based on the precept size of the councils (see section 4.1).

Figure 3.1 provides a breakdown of the geographic coverage of our survey respondents. The map indicates a relatively good spread of respondents with no geographies clearly excluded from the sample. It is important to note that not all parts of Wales, especially urban areas, are represented by a Community or Town Council.

Figure 3.1: Map of survey respondents and case study areas



Source: Wavehill's survey of Community and Town Councils (N=237).

We verified our preliminary findings through discussions with staff at OVW and several external stakeholders during the research interviews. Independently of one another, these participants estimated that approximately 150 to 200 Community and Town Councils across Wales are actively engaged in delivering cost-of-living support. Based on this insight and considering that the survey was distributed through OVW networks, we suspect it is highly likely that our sample is skewed towards the most active and engaged councils.

In light of this, we do not consider it appropriate to scale up our results to represent the full population of 731 councils. Our survey may, in fact, have captured a substantial proportion of the sector's total activity and impact, though this is difficult to confirm quantitatively. For this reason, we report only the impacts evidenced directly through the survey 237 responses, without applying any extrapolation to the wider sector.

## 3.2 Wales-wide Social Return on Investment

Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a framework for measuring and accounting for the broader social, economic, and environmental value created by an intervention. Unlike traditional cost-benefit analysis, SROI goes beyond financial metrics to capture outcomes that matter to stakeholders, including improvements in wellbeing, social inclusion, and community resilience.

The Social Return on Investment (SROI) value is expressed as a ratio, calculated by dividing the total value of the impact by the total value of the investment. All outcomes have been projected over a one-year period, meaning the impact value represents the present value without the need for discounting.

$$\text{SROI Ratio} = \frac{\text{Total Present Value of Outcomes}}{\text{Total Inputs (Investment)}}$$

In our calculations of the impacts, we have established the total of all impacts at **£25,966,475**. This represents the total value created by all Community and Town Council cost-of-living activities, excluding grants programmes and community transport.

The Net Present Value, the Total Present Value minus the total of all inputs (**£5,338,036**), is **£20,628,438**. This amount represents the total extra value created by Community and Town Councils.

This gives an SROI ratio of **£25,966,475 / £5,338,036 = £4.86: £1**. This means for every pound of investment in Cost-of-Living activities **£4.86** social value is created.

## 3.3 Volunteering

Volunteering activity enabled by Community and Town Councils plays a significant role in enabling the delivery of the wide range of cost-of-living activities described below.

Due to the way data has been collected, volunteering has been treated as a separate source of social value within the impact model. Survey responses captured volunteering activity at an aggregate level, rather than being attributable to individual initiatives. As a result, volunteering should be understood as an element of social value that is spread across multiple areas of activity, rather than as an outcome linked to any single intervention.

For the purposes of the social impact model, volunteering is associated with a number of well-evidenced outcomes:

- Increased individual wellbeing and sense of purpose
- Improved social connections and reduced isolation
- Development of skills, confidence and employability

Data collected through the survey indicates that Community and Town Councils enabled substantial volunteering activity, with an estimated 2,300+ volunteers delivering a in total over 169,000 hours of support. When valued using standard social value proxies, this volunteering activity is estimated to have generated **£2,299,563 in social value** for volunteers in the last year.

### 3.4 Warm hubs

Warm hubs have been one of the most commonly associated interventions with the cost-of-living crisis, with stakeholders noting that available funding from public and third sector bodies to deliver these hubs has grown substantially since 2022. In the context of rising costs and increased social isolation in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, these spaces provide residents with access to a warm, welcoming environment that can act as a gateway to wider support services. Community and Town Councils can often be best placed to deliver this activity, being able to make use of local knowledge and existing community assets like halls and community centres.

Warm hubs were the most commonly delivered activity by the Community and Town Councils that responded to our survey with 31% noting that they delivered one of these hubs. Four out of five councils that delivered a warm hub noted that they combine the activity with other services, the two most common services delivered alongside the warm hubs were free meals or refreshments and signposting to other local services, usually from the local authority.

For the social impact model, we have identified that warm hubs most commonly have the following impacts on the attendees:

- Heating cost savings
- Reduced social isolation
- Signposting to relevant services
- Provision of free meals

Based on the results on our research, it is estimated that warm hubs delivered by Community and Town Councils generated **£3,270,836** in social value.

## Case Study: Llanfair Caereinion Town Council

Llanfair Caereinion is a town eight miles west of Welshpool in the north of Powys. The town council is responsible for roughly 1,700 residents, 800 of which live within the town centre. Many local residents are employed in the retail, education, agriculture and tourism sectors, the latter of which is centered around a heritage railway that attracts 26,000 visitors a year and operated by nearly 300 volunteers from all over the UK.

Nearly one in five dwellings in the local area have a single occupant, so as COVID-19 restrictions across Wales eased in early 2021 and the rates of inflation began to climb, many community organisations across the town had identified social isolation and heating costs as a major challenge for a cohort of residents across the town. Five hubs now operate on different days of the week from the church, the library, the black lion pub, the heritage railway and the community café and regularly support roughly 30 residents. Llanfair Caereinion Town Council play a crucial role supporting several of these warm hubs, by providing the space in the town's library for one of the warm hubs and by providing financial support to each hub when needed.

Beyond warm hubs, Llanfair Caereinion have undertaken several other activities to address cost-of-living challenges in the local area including working with Powys Council to set up five new bus stops in the town as well as early morning and evening buses to allow locals to commute by bus to their work in Welshpool. The council have also established two self-sustaining community assets in the community café and youth club. Set up in 2023, the community café hosts events, provides hot meals for local residents and operates as one of the warm hubs in the town. After a year of town council management, both the café was able to transition into an independent self-managing entity that provide important services for local people in Llanfair Caereinion.

The concept for the youth club was developed by the council's Youth Forum as part of their 'Youth Plan for Llanfair', it now provides a space for 25-30 young people across two age groups. The council continues to provide revenue support for the youth club, enabling the club to continue providing a safe space for the young people of Llanfair to socialise and engage in a range of activities. They also continue to work in partnership with the town's warm hubs, able to flexibly respond to their needs as they arise.

## Case Study: Haverfordwest Town Council

Haverfordwest is the largest urban area in Pembrokeshire with a population of roughly 12,000 people. The Garth and Castle LSOAs in Haverfordwest are ranked in the top 10 of health and employment deprivation in Pembrokeshire.

Responding to cost-of-living challenges observed in their local area, councillors Randell Thomas-Turner and Dani Thomas-Turner organised a 'feed the ward' event for the residents of Castle Ward in Haverfordwest. The initial event provided warm meals for 47 attendees; its success prompted the town council to invest a further £850 from their precept to expand the scheme. The renamed 'Feed the Community' scheme ran once a month out of the HaverHub between November 2025 and March 2026, providing a warm space and free hot meals for local residents and families, operating between 2:30pm and 5pm.

Using Feed the Community as a central anchor, Haverfordwest Town Council have partnered with a wide range of organisations to offer additional support for the families and residents that attend the event. Some of the partners in attendance included local businesses, youth groups, voluntary organisations, faith groups and teams from the local authority. Residents had expressed to the council that it can often be challenging to get in contact with all the local services they may need to access. Feed the Community acted as a central hub for local people to access the following services:

- Free hot food and nutritious meals they could take home to reheat.
- Free spectacle frame repairs and advice on eye care.
- Donations of non-perishable foods, sanitary products and children's toys.
- Signposting to local government teams and charities specialising in apprenticeships, social isolation, additional learning needs and community transport.
- Free haircuts provided by a local barber.

The following five sessions attracted roughly 60 attendees per event, costing roughly £170 per session to cover venue hire and the cost of food. Building on the successes of the Feed the Community, the event is taking on a new name: 'Connecting the Community'. Having secured warm hub funding and six months of sponsorship from Specsavers, Connecting the Community will continue to serve as a central hub allowing residents to connect with community services from a single accessible space.

## Case Study: Monmouth Town Council

Monmouth Town Council serves roughly 10,500 residents across five wards, where differing levels of opportunity, connectivity and access to services shape community needs. A long-term pattern of younger adults leaving due to housing and affordability pressures—often returning later in life—combined with inward migration of older residents’ results in an older population with higher rates of long-term health conditions, social-isolation risks and demand for wellbeing support. Digital exclusion is an issue among older and low-income households. Economically, Monmouth reflects the strengths and vulnerabilities of a border market town. Strong cross-border links and a vibrant retail and community-services sector coexist with lower-wage, seasonal and insecure employment, creating financial precarity during economic stress. High housing costs and limited rental options deepen pressures on households, leaving some residents stable while others face rising living-cost exposure and require coordinated, year-round support. Situated at the confluence of the Rivers Wye and Monnow, the town experiences notable flood-risk, with several low-lying communities vulnerable during heavy rainfall.

The 2022 cost-of-living crisis increased hardship among both already-vulnerable residents and newly affected households. Flooding caused by Storm Claudia in November 2025 further increased demand for warm spaces and temporarily closed key venues such as Ty Price and Bridges Community Centre.

### Coordinated Warm-Space Provision

The council’s Cost of Living Crisis Working Group (est. 2022) coordinates warm space provision by linking existing community offers, developing new spaces where needed, and ensuring consistent weekly access. Provision is promoted via Facebook and printed leaflets, with spaces offering free refreshments, social connection, hot meals and practical support (WiFi, device charging, newspapers). From 2022-present residents have been able to access a daily offer, including:

- Monmouth Library/Hub: daily newspapers, WiFi, device charging during opening hours.
- Methodist Church – Wesley’s Warm Welcome: hot drinks/light meals, twice daily on set days.
- St James Community Kitchen: free two-course meal on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays (temporarily closed due to flooding).
- Ty Price Meet & Eat: free food to eat in or take home (temporarily closed due to flooding).
- Wyesham Christian Fellowship: regular warm-welcome sessions.

Monmouthshire County Council supports through signposting and has now taken on production of the warm spaces leaflets.

The coordinated warm-spaces network has become a reliable safety net, particularly following recent flooding. St James’ Community Kitchen typically attracts around 40 people (including volunteers) for its Wednesday lunches and also hosted a Christmas Day meal for residents who otherwise would have been alone or reliant on the scheme.

Warm-space provision has also demonstrated flexibility and dignity-based support: Attendees can eat in or take food home, including one resident with mental-health needs who feels safe attending but prefers to eat at home.

The environment is inclusive—e.g. a participant was able to bring her dog, which was also fed and was able to take a “doggy bag” home.

The warm-spaces leaflet demonstrates the scale and reliability of provision, with multiple options available daily, including hot meals, drinks, WiFi, device charging, newspapers and social activities.

#### Community Grants Programme

Monmouth Town Council uses its annual £25,000 community grants programme to support warm spaces and other community groups. Grants funded initiatives include those which provide cost-of-living and warm spaces-related support. For example:

A £4,000 grant for the Winter Tight project in Wyesham, expanding warm space provision in a more deprived part of the town.

A grant for the town library to fund their warm spaces storage for food and drink.

#### Partnership Agreements

The council also maintains multi-year partnership agreements to secure specialist advice and support services in the town. These agreements ensure stable, year-round access to financial, mental-health and food-support services. They include:

- Citizens Advice Monmouthshire – £20,000 annually
- Mind Monmouthshire (Mind in Gwent) – £15,000 annually
- Monmouth Community Fridge – £7,000 annually

Multi-year partnership agreements create a coordinated, preventative safety net, strengthening Monmouth’s overall resilience during the cost-of-living crisis.

They ensure year-round access to specialist financial, mental health and food support services, including:

- Mind in Gwent provides essential mental health support that helps residents cope with the stress and instability associated with rising living costs. Between April–September 2025, council funding enabled Mind to support 60 people, deliver 245 support sessions, and provide 148 one-to-one wellbeing sessions to 30 individuals.
- Community Fridge strengthens household food security, redistributing unwanted food to those in need. Annual funding covers core operational costs, ensuring the service remains available even during disruption. Following flooding, a satellite site at St James, Wyesham maintained access to free food for residents unable to travel.
- Monmouthshire County (Monmouth) Citizens Advice ensures residents can access expert, year-round advice to stabilise their finances during sustained economic pressure. The organisation supported 2,820 people across Monmouthshire in 2024–25, including 57% with disabilities or long-term health conditions — groups disproportionately affected by the cost-of-living crisis. This resulted in the resolution of 1,525 benefits issues, 614 financial-services issues and 449 debt problems. The organisation also helped secure £4.13m in additional income and write off £340k in debt.

The Cost-of-Living Working Group will continue to:

- Coordinate, communicate and signpost warm-space provision.
- Use the Community Grants Programme to respond to emerging cost-of-living needs
- Maintain partnerships with Mind, Monmouthshire County (Monmouth) Citizens Advice and the Community Fridge.

## 3.5 Youth activities and childcare

Examples of activities that fall within this theme include youth clubs, after school or holiday clubs and regular activities for children such as art or sport clubs. These activities often play a crucial role reducing the expense of childcare, providing social and stimulating environments for children and young people, and in some cases, reduce anti-social behaviour in communities. Research by the children's charity Coram shows that between 2024 and 2025, the cost of childcare increased by nearly 10%<sup>5</sup> and the Welsh Government's statistics show that although there are now 130 more youth clubs in Wales since its low point in 2020, the number of youth clubs remains 31% lower than it was in 2010<sup>6</sup>.

Youth activities and childcare was the second most common type of activity delivered by the Community and Town Councils that responded to our survey with 25% reporting they delivered an activity in this theme. Half of the councils that delivered these activities noted that they also provide meals for the children that attend their activities.

For the social impact model, we have identified that youth activities and childcare most commonly have the following impacts on the young people:

- Support to explore their values, beliefs, ideas and the issues that matter to them
- Opportunity to develop their voice, influence and sense of place in society
- Development of practical and life skills that help them realise their full potential
- Food support.

Based on the results on our research, it is estimated that youth activities and childcare delivered by Community and Town Councils generated **£16,541,219** in social value. This excludes potential impacts on parents, as the data did not allow us to distinguish the ages of young people or identify who would have required paid childcare.

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<sup>5</sup> Coram, [Childcare Survey 2025](#), March 2025.

<sup>6</sup> Welsh Government, [Youth Service Attendance by Local Authority and Setting Type](#), 2025.

## Case Study: Blaenavon Town Council

Situated in the north of Torfaen near the source of the river Llwyd, Blaenavon is a town of roughly 6,000 residents. The town's long industrial history as a hub for coal and steel led to its nomination as UNESCO world heritage site in 2000 with attractions like the Blaenavon Ironworks and Big Pit National Coal Museum.

Blaenavon has an active town council that sets its annual precept based on the activities they would like to deliver in three priority areas: supporting the over 65 population, supporting children and young people, and increasing community awareness of local activities and services. Through extensive consultation with members of the community and a survey distributed at local schools, the town council identified the summer holidays as a particularly challenging period for local parents and children due to the increased burden in terms of childcare and food costs. At the time of the consultations in 2019, Blaenavon was ranked in the top quintile for education, health and income deprivation of LSOAs in Wales.

Councillors and staff at Blaenavon used their contacts at Torfaen Play Service to arrange a service that responded to challenges faced by the families in Blaenavon. The council's collaboration with Torfaen Play Service has continued for seven years, providing a care setting five days a week where children can play, have a free nutritious breakfast and lunch and get support with homework. In the summer of 2025 alone, Blaenavon Town Council used £11,600 to sustain the summer play camp, caring for an average of 120 children a day, including nine children with additional learning needs that received one-to-one support. Over 4,500 meals were provided to children over the course of the summer holidays by the scheme. This support has made a significant difference to many families, removing childcare pressures, providing children with nutritious meals and putting them in a stimulating and fun environment during the holidays.

Beyond their youth activities, the council supports a wide range of other activities aimed at tackling social isolation and improving community health such as the Mum's and Daughter Fitness Group, Blaenavon Crafts Afternoon, paid family trips to various activities, or the Befriending Film Club, the latter of which attracts 60 residents a month.

Blaenavon town council view addressing cost-of-living challenges as a key element that runs through many of their activities. Building on this, they're seeking advice from One Voice Wales to develop a partnership with the Torfaen Voluntary Alliance and the Community Transport Association to set up a community transport scheme in the town.

## Case Study: Mumbles Community Council

Mumbles Community Council serves a diverse coastal community within the City and County of Swansea, with a population of around 16,000 residents. While the area is often perceived as relatively affluent, it includes significant variation between neighbourhoods, with pockets of deprivation sitting alongside more prosperous areas.

Like many communities, Mumbles also experienced significant post-pandemic social impacts. Extended periods of lockdown highlighted gaps in children's opportunities to socialise, rebuild confidence and access enriching activities outside the school environment. At the same time, families faced rising food costs and limited access to affordable holiday activities, increasing pressure on household budgets during school breaks. Extended periods of lockdown highlighted gaps in children's opportunities to socialise, rebuild confidence and access enriching activities outside the school environment. At the same time, families faced rising food costs and limited access to affordable holiday activities, increasing pressure on household budgets during school breaks.

The council identified a set of interrelated social and economic challenges affecting families during school holidays. Children needed opportunities to rebuild social confidence and interact beyond the school environment following long periods of isolation. School holidays were widely recognised as financially challenging for many families, who may be unable to afford paid activities or childcare.

Food insecurity was also a growing concern, with some families struggling to provide nutritious meals during school breaks when free school meals were unavailable. Alongside this, there was a recognised need for community building activities that could reduce isolation, strengthen local connections and encourage families to spend time together in shared spaces.

The Mumbles Family Fun Days were originally developed by the community council as an initiative to support children's social recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. Now in its fifth year, the programme has evolved into a well-established annual offer delivered in partnership with Whitestone Primary School and the Red Linden Centre youth club in West Cross. The project is supported by local shops, local sports centres and community centres, the Community Fridge and community volunteers. The project is supported by local shops, local sports centres and community centres, the Community Fridge and community volunteers.

The programme is deliberately aligned with school holiday periods, such as the February half term and summer break, when entertainment and food costs are highest for families. The council designed a free, high-quality holiday programme that combined food support, social connection and creative engagement.

Key elements of delivery include:

- Targeted funding, secured from Swansea City Council through Tackling Poverty and COAST (Creating Opportunities Across Swansea Together) funding streams, enabling all provision to be free for families.
- Partnership led delivery, drawing on schools, community centres, local businesses, sports teams and volunteers to widen capacity and reach.
- Free activity sessions, typically two hours long, offering arts and crafts, clay play, creative workshops and teacher led activities suitable for different ages.
- Nutritional support, with all children receiving free snacks and a free lunch, ensuring full inclusion without stigma.
- Sustainability and environmental wellbeing, led by an Environmental Engagement Officer, with activities such as seed planting, seed bombs and “mini-beast” hunts embedded into the programme.

The Mumbles Family Fun Days now play a central role in supporting families during school holidays. In the previous year, the programme supported 1,490 families, illustrating both substantial reach and continuing demand.

The initiative has also strengthened community cohesion. The Fun Days are widely described as part of “the fabric of the Mumbles community,” with some families attending regularly since 2021 while new participants continue to join each year. Parents report improved family wellbeing, expressing pride in their children’s creative work and valuing access to high-quality activities that enable relatives and friends to socialise together.

Parents report that children benefit from enhanced social development, with opportunities to mix with peers outside their own school environment, helping to rebuild confidence post-pandemic and support connection within the wider community. The council intends to continue applying for targeted funding to maintain provision.

## 3.6 Wellbeing activities

This theme covers a broad range of activities that relate to improving the mental and physical wellbeing of councils' residents. As outlined in the previous section, the cost-of-living crisis has had a negative impact on the physical and mental health of a large proportion of people across Wales. Community and Town Councils have responded to this by delivering activities that aim to reduce social isolation, teach skills, improve fitness and create a sense of community spirit.

Activities aimed to boosting people's wellbeing were being delivered by 22% of the councils that responded to our survey. The most common examples of wellbeing related activities among our survey respondents were fitness groups (including dance, aerobics, yoga, pilates and swimming lessons), art and craft groups, forest and trail walking groups, educational activities (such as forest schools, local history tours, and training courses) and film or theatre clubs. One-time activities, especially for families, like local festivals, fireworks and holiday events were also common. The vast majority of these events were free for participants and centred around providing people with social contact and experiences they may not otherwise be able to afford.

For the social impact model, we have identified that wellbeing activities most commonly have the following impacts on the attendees:

- Improved wellbeing from regular attendance
- Happiness.

Based on the results on our research, it is estimated that wellbeing activities delivered by Community and Town Councils generated **£1,940,890** in social value.

## Case Study: Prestatyn Community Council

The Singing Strummers initiative was established to support the Prestatyn community's wellbeing during the cost-of-living crisis. There are an estimated 19,278 people living in the community, nearly a third of which (29.1%) are 65 and over, compared to only 21.7% across Wales. Most neighbourhoods in Prestatyn also fall within the top half of most deprived areas in Wales.

The project delivers uplifting group singing sessions, accompanied by instruments such as ukuleles and guitars, creating a relaxed and inclusive musical environment for participants of all abilities. The sessions are hosted by Prestatyn Town Council in the Council Chambers, delivered in partnership with Mind, and funded through a community grant. This funding ensures the sessions are free and open to all.

A key strength of the Singing Strummers project is its welcoming and informal atmosphere. Musical leader Lee Davis described the sessions as friendly, supportive, and inclusive:

"It's just such an easy atmosphere and environment to be in. We're all like one big family. We do take the mickey out of each other – it's just good fun and a good laugh and it's for their mental wellbeing; it's just an amazing thing really."

The sessions use the power of music to help participants relax, reminisce, express themselves, and enjoy shared experiences.

Participants highlighted the positive impact the project has on their mental health and wellbeing. Several described how the sessions help them cope with personal stress, improve their mood, and reduce feelings of isolation by connecting with others in a supportive group setting. One participant shared:

"It helps me cope with my stresses. I've had cancer and things like that, and it's just good for you. Everybody's so friendly. We've all got a need to be in the group, and I just enjoy singing."

A volunteer with Singing Strummers, highlighted the benefits of involvement not only for participants, but also for those who help deliver the project:

"It's great fun, and you get to meet such a wide array of people with all backgrounds and experiences. It gets you away from everyday stress and from bad news on the telly, which is good. And of course, the singing and the music just lift the spirits."

## 3.7 Food initiatives

Food initiatives cover a wide range of interventions all centred around tackling food poverty including foodbanks, community pantries, free breakfast and lunch clubs and initiatives to grow and distribute fruit and vegetables. The ONS reported that inflation for food and non-alcoholic beverages rose by 4%, which was higher than the overall inflation of 3.8%. Research from the Trussel Trust shows that demand for food parcels in particular remains high, with food poverty in Wales especially prominent among families with three or more children<sup>7</sup>.

Just over one in five of the councils that responded to our survey (22%) noted that they deliver some kind of food initiative. In many instances, food initiatives were delivered in partnership with local foodbanks, preexisting community groups or shops and supermarkets.

For the social impact model, we have identified that food initiatives most commonly have the following impacts on the attendees:

- Access to Nutritious Food
- Improved Physical and Mental Health
- Educational and Social Benefits
- Cost Saving on food shop
- Free meal.

Based on the results on our research, it is estimated that food initiatives delivered by Community and Town Councils generated **£717,553** in social value. An estimated 132,200+ meals were distributed through community and town council food support initiatives.

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<sup>7</sup> Trussel Trust, [Emergency food parcel distribution in Wales](#), March 2024.

## Case Study: Aberporth Community Council

Aberporth Community Council serves four villages: Aberporth, Parclylyn, Blaenannerch and Blaenporth. The community has an electorate of approximately 2,183 residents across 1,563 households. The area is rural and coastal, with a local economy that is highly seasonal and influenced by tourism and second homes.

During the summer months the population increases due to visitors, while outside peak season local businesses depend largely on permanent residents. Employment patterns reflect this seasonality, with some residents working intensively for part of the year and experiencing reduced income during winter months.

The area also exhibits disparity in income and living conditions across the community. Alongside relatively affluent older residents and second-home owners, there are younger families facing housing and cost pressures. Parts of the area fall within Flying Start catchments<sup>8</sup>, indicating pockets of deprivation that are not always visible.

Since 2020, the cost-of-living crisis has had a disproportionate impact on some families within the community. While many households manage without formal support, those experiencing financial hardship often face acute challenges, particularly during school holidays when access to free school meals and breakfast provision is reduced. The Community Council became increasingly aware of these pressures through several channels. Consultation activities linked to the council's budget setting in early 2025 highlighted community priorities and concerns. Furthermore, partnership working with the village hall, which delivers a "Heart of the Community" project including lunch clubs, a warm hub and a community fridge, also provided insight into emerging needs around food insecurity. Finally, these concerns were highlighted by local schools in the area - although all primary school pupils receive free school meals, access to breakfast and affordable food during holidays remained an issue. This evidence prompted the council to explore targeted food provision during school holidays.

In response, Aberporth Community Council secured £2,000 of funding from the Ceredigion Food Partnership to deliver a Family Breakfast Club during the school holidays. The project provided free weekly breakfasts for families, alongside craft activities and take-home fruit and vegetable packs to support food access beyond the session itself.

Over the delivery period the project achieved:

- 140+ healthy breakfasts provided
- 83 fresh fruit and vegetable packs distributed
- A programme of crafts, play and outdoor activities for children.

Sessions were hosted at Aberporth Village Hall, co-located with the Community Fridge, enabling surplus food to be redistributed and reducing food waste to landfill. The project also linked with Dillad Dwywaith to provide families with access to affordable second-hand clothing.

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<sup>8</sup> [Flying Start](#), Ceredigion County Council.

The activity launched in early 2025, following a successful community food event in the New Year, with delivery running through to late spring/early summer 2025. Over time the programme evolved to include outdoor play, herb planting, bug hunts, bird feeder making and indoor activities, helping to attract families and encourage longer engagement and social interaction.

Delivery was supported by volunteers from both the Community Council and the Village Hall.

The Family Breakfast Club supported approximately 15 families per session, with 30–35 children attending each week. While this was slightly lower than initial expectations, it reflected meaningful engagement from families most in need. Children were identified as the primary beneficiaries.

The activity provided regular access to nutritious food during school holidays, reducing pressure on household food budgets. Beyond food provision, the sessions created a safe, welcoming space for children to socialise, take part in structured activities, and spend time outdoors.

Even though sessions took place only once a week, they provided an important anchor point for families and helped reduce isolation, particularly in a rural setting where transport and service access can be limited.

Looking forwards, The Community Council is exploring opportunities to continue and expand the programme in the next financial year, including provision during the February half-term. Discussions are also underway with the Ceredigion Food Partnership to develop a local fruit and vegetable market, improving access to affordable, locally sourced produce for the wider community.

This initiative would respond directly to identify gaps in access to fresh food and could extend benefits beyond families to older residents and other vulnerable groups. However, volunteer capacity remains a limiting factor for future projects, with the Community Council relying on a small number of councillors. Partnership working with the Village Hall has helped address this by providing access to additional volunteers and operational support, although future sustainability will depend on continued funding, volunteer availability and maintaining partnership arrangements within the community.

## Case Study: Welshpool Town Council

Welshpool is a small market town serving both its resident population and surrounding rural communities. Rural areas in Wales face particular challenges linked to food access, including transport barriers and fewer local services, alongside rising living costs and low or fixed incomes.

Welshpool Town Council plays an active role in supporting community-based services, working alongside volunteers, local businesses and community groups to provide practical assistance. These services have become increasingly important as demand for food support, warm spaces and social contact has grown following the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.

In Welshpool, older residents, people living alone, and individuals with disabilities were identified as particularly vulnerable to both food insecurity and social isolation. The pandemic also highlighted gaps in informal support networks, increasing the risk of isolation among residents with limited mobility or social contact.

In response, councillors and volunteers sought to expand existing services and develop new initiatives that combined immediate food support with opportunities for social engagement. Welshpool Town Council supports a range of cost-of-living initiatives, delivered through council-run services and councillor-led projects, aligned with approaches seen across other Community and Town Councils in Wales, such as meal provision, food sharing schemes and community-based support models, they are outlined below:

### Community Hub (formerly Warm Hub)

The Community Hub was established in October 2022 by Councillor Nick Hows, initially as a Warm Hub in response to post-pandemic challenges and rising household costs. It operates from council buildings provided free of charge and is financially self-sufficient, relying on donations from supermarkets, local businesses, community groups and residents.

Food provision includes hot meals such as baked potatoes with fillings, toasted sandwiches and soups. Equipment, including microwaves, panini presses and soup kettles, was sourced entirely through public donation following local appeals. Additional financial donations have been received from community organisations, including local Freemasons.

The hub has since developed into a broader Community Hub, providing both food and social contact. Residents attend not only for meals and warmth, but also for company and informal support. The hub also provides opportunities to signpost residents to other services such as Citizens Advice and statutory agencies.

Attendance has increased over time, with over 80 people attending on a single day during peak periods.

### Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels has operated in Welshpool for over 60 years and is owned and run by Welshpool Town Council. The service operates five days per week, delivering approximately 80 meals weekly, with a further 30 meals served on site.

Around 15 volunteers support food preparation and delivery. Equipment such as freezers and catering tools have been donated by local businesses and volunteers, helping to maintain service capacity.

The service supports residents who are elderly, disabled or unable to prepare meals themselves. For some recipients, volunteers are the only people they see during the day, providing both nutritional support and informal welfare contact.

#### Give and Take Scheme

The Give and Take scheme was established by Councillor Carol Robinson in response to the cost-of-living crisis. The scheme operates seasonally from July to early autumn and provides free fruit and vegetables to residents.

Produce is donated by local growers and residents, following promotion through social media and community networks. Uptake increased as awareness grew, with both donations and participation rising over the summer period.

The scheme also provides opportunities for informal conversations with residents who may be experiencing wider difficulties, acting as an additional point of community contact and support. The approach aligns with food sharing and surplus redistribution models promoted by Community and Town Councils across Wales to reduce waste and improve access to affordable food.

Together, these initiatives provide support to residents experiencing food insecurity, financial pressure and social isolation.

- The Community Hub provides regular access to hot food, warmth and social contact, with high attendance indicating sustained local demand.
- Meals on Wheels ensures consistent access to nutritious meals for residents who are unable to cook for themselves, while also providing regular welfare contact.
- The Give and Take scheme improves access to fresh produce during peak growing months and supports households facing short-term food pressures.

Volunteers reported that some residents described the services as a “lifeline”, particularly those living alone or with limited mobility. The combination of food provision and social interaction supports wellbeing alongside addressing immediate cost of living pressures.

"Without the Pantry, I don't know how I'd manage - it's a lifesaver."

These outcomes are consistent with wider evidence that Community and Town council-led initiatives can reduce isolation, improve food access and strengthen community resilience, particularly in rural areas.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Papargyropoulou et al, [Impact of food hubs on food security and sustainability](#), 2024.

## 3.8 Advice and support with payments

Community and Town Councils primarily facilitate this activity instead of directly delivering it themselves, either providing a space for organisations to deliver advice around finances and benefits or signposting people to these services while engaging them at other activities like warm hubs or wellbeing activities. Research by policy in practice estimated in 2024 that £23 billion of support was unclaimed across the UK<sup>10</sup>, the biggest sources of which were universal credit and council tax support. There are many barriers for individuals seeking to secure their benefit entitlements including gaps in knowledge, social stigma and the complexity of applications, councils can potentially act as a mediator to ensure people are put in connection with organisations that can provide the best support.

Slightly less than a quarter of the councils that responded to our survey (23%) reported supporting this kind of service in some way. Three quarters of these councils did so through a partnership with another organisation, by far the most common being Citizen's Advice and staff from the local authority.

For the social impact model, we have identified that advice and support with payments most commonly have the following impacts on recipients:

- Increased income
- Reduced anxiety
- More positive about the future
- Increased empowerment
- Increased financial skills
- Signposting to relevant services.

Based on the results on our research, it is estimated that advice and support payments facilitated by Community and Town Councils generated **£1,115,541** in social value.

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<sup>10</sup> Policy in Practice, Missing Out 2024.

## Case Study: Caia Park Community Council

Caia Park Community Council covers roughly 13,000 residents across the east of the city of Wrexham, making them one of the 10 largest Community or Town Councils in North Wales. The council have a 20+ year track record of delivering cost-of-living activities for their residents, having identified challenges related to low incomes, debt and limited digital access. The Queensway and Wynnstay wards are among the 10% most income-deprived for children in Wales.

Responding to this, Caia Park Council have long supported small team of advice workers that provide impartial and confidential advice to the residents of Caia Park and neighbouring areas in Wrexham. The team assist both online and face-to-face with a range of issues including welfare benefits, debt, housing, consumer rights and Universal Credit. Furthermore, the team can issue foodbank vouchers to eligible residents and represent them at tribunals. The advice team at Caia Park are also well-networked with other services including Citizen's Advice, Shelter Cymru, Wrexham Foodbank and local housing offices enabling them to provide coordinated assistance to residents in need.

The service is fully funded by Caia Park Community Council and operated in 2023/24 with a £96.3K budget, accounting for 38% of the Council's precept income. It also provides a weekly session for Offa Community Council on a cost-recovery basis.

In 2023/24, the team supported 341 individuals across 586 different cases. In total, the service has secured over £1.5 million for their clients, including £1.42 million ongoing financial benefits and £154,000 in backdated lump sums. The service is seen as a lifeline for many of Caia Park's residents which often face complex needs stemming from multiple kinds of deprivation. As cost-of-living pressures continue, the service is seeking external funding to expand their support offer by improving digital access and increasing their outreach with vulnerable residents.

## 3.9 Distributing grants

Six percent of the councils that responded to our survey noted that they distributed their own grant funds, this was done by allocating a proportion of their precept income as grant funding for community organisations to deliver cost-of-living activities. Several stakeholders noted that this often occurred in areas when an experienced organisation is already operating in an area (for example a voluntary or third sector group delivering wellbeing activities or a youth service), posing a duplication risk if the council were to deliver the work themselves. In some instances, Community and Town Councils also provide cost of living grants for individuals to support with heating or food purchases.

Due to the relatively small number of councils that noted in our survey that they deliver grants combined with the wide variety in the structures and target audiences of these grants; we have not included this impact theme within the social impact modelling. Analysis from our survey shows that councils that responded to our survey distributed roughly £97,000 in grants in the last year.

## Case Study: Pennard Community Council

Pennard Community Council serves a dispersed rural area on the Gower Peninsula. Its 2024 electorate of 2,322 reflects a mixed demographic, with an older population now joined by younger families following the development of new affordable homes. The community experiences significant inequalities: Southgate is relatively affluent, while areas such as Sandy Lane face entrenched deprivation. Limited transport—only a twice-weekly community bus—leaves residents without cars isolated from employment, services and healthcare. Some residents sold cars during the pandemic and could not replace them, leaving only two small shops within reach. Digital exclusion also increased hardship, highlighting the need for practical support, for example to access online grocery shopping.

The council launched the Pennard Energy, Food and Technology Assistance (PEFTA) Scheme in June 2020 to ensure no one goes hungry. Eligible households can receive up to £50 (£20 for the first adult, £10 for each additional adult or child), with spending restricted to local shops to support both residents and small businesses. Payments pause automatically during travel or hospital stays, and households can dip in and out of support, maintaining dignity and flexibility.

PEFTA costs around £600 per month (£7,000 annually) and is funded through council reserves, Swansea Council grants and the local Pennard Charity, with additional donations from businesses. The council works with Swansea Council's Area Coordinator and conducts six-monthly reviews to ensure continued need and good governance. One Voice Wales supported the council with advice on statutory powers and grant applications to set up the scheme.

Other cost-of-living initiatives delivered by the community council include:

- Warm Hub: Operated for two–three years on a £1,760 budget, providing weekly access to hot food and drink at a local coffee shop and free items at community facilities. Surplus funds enabled two large community lunches for 150 residents.
- Period Dignity Project: A grant of £1,992.50 funded eco-friendly sanitary products placed in public locations.
- Community Garden: A £52,000 Heritage Lottery-funded project offering shared growing spaces and promoting social inclusion and biodiversity. It hosts volunteer sessions, school involvement, nature-based activities and skills workshops.

Since launch, PEFTA has supported 34 individuals across 18 households. Beneficiaries include pensioners, single parents and people living alone facing financial strain due to redundancy, health issues or caring responsibilities. Reported benefits include better nutrition, reduced stress and improved wellbeing—for example, one pensioner was said to have “a spring in his step” after being able to buy fresh food again. Local shops also benefit from guaranteed regular trade.

The Warm Hub, Period Dignity Project and Community Garden have each added important layers of support alongside the PEFTA scheme, broadening the council's response to the cost-of-living crisis. These initiatives extend the reach of PEFTA by addressing not only immediate financial hardship but also the wider social, nutritional and wellbeing needs of the community. Attendance at the Warm Hub was modest, but the community lunches and coffee mornings it supported provided a vital social lifeline, reducing isolation during a period of significant financial and emotional strain. The Period Dignity Project eased further pressure on households by supplying free sanitary products in community spaces, all of which were used, demonstrating clear demand. The Community Garden offers complementary support through shared growing spaces that help reduce food costs, strengthen intergenerational links and enhance biodiversity. With around 30 registered volunteers, it supports asylum seekers, home-educated children and older residents.

PEFTA has been recognised through a One Voice Wales Innovative Practice Award. The community council plans to maintain PEFTA as a safety net and expand community garden activities.

### 3.10 Community transport

Community transport initiatives have played an important role in helping residents access essential services and participate in community life, particularly in areas where public transport provision is limited or has declined in recent years. For many rural and valleys communities, as well as for older people and those with mobility challenges, transport can present a significant barrier to accessing healthcare, food, social activities, and support services. In this context, a handful of Community and Town Councils have developed transport initiatives to address accessibility issues in their localities.

Six percent of the councils that responded to our survey noted that they delivered or supported a community transport initiative. Stakeholders and councils noted that community transport initiatives can often be challenging to establish and manage in an area, with each locality needing a unique solution to address the challenges they face. Examples of the community transport initiatives delivered by the survey respondents include a community bus (either by purchasing a bus or partnership with another organisation to supply vehicles), subsidising transport routes to specific areas like warm hubs, GPs or shops, or managing a volunteer driver scheme.

As a resource-intensive and developing area, we have opted not to include community transport in the social impact model due to small samples and a wide variety in delivery model.

## Case Study: Bishopston Community Council

Bishopston is a village on the Gower Peninsula, with limited local retail and service provision within the village itself. Residents commonly travel to nearby settlements, particularly Mumbles, to access a wider range of shops, health services, hospitality venues and onward public transport connections into Swansea city centre.

As with many villages in semi-rural and coastal areas, access to private transport plays an important role in enabling residents to reach essential services and social opportunities. For residents who do not drive or who prefer not to use private vehicles, options for regular and affordable transport can be limited. This can create barriers to accessing services and maintaining social connections, particularly where distances are too great to walk and taxi costs are too expensive for routine journeys.

Bishopston Community Council established a community bus service many years ago to provide a regular transport link between Bishopston and Mumbles. The service was created in response to local need, with the aim of improving access to shopping, health services, social activities and onward transport connections.

The bus operates twice a week and runs four return journeys per day. It serves multiple stops across Bishopston, as well as a stop at Caswell, before travelling to Mumbles and returning. This approach allows residents from different parts of the village to access the service without needing to travel to a single central pick-up point.

The service is funded partly through the Community Council's precept, but the majority of funding comes from fares paid by service users. The council has regularly reviewed the cost of the service and has discussed the possibility of discontinuing it in order to save money. However, due to the strong outcomes the service delivers for residents, particularly in relation to social isolation and access to services, the council has consistently decided to retain the service.

More recently, the council has started using DANSA as the transport provider, which has enabled the service to be delivered more efficiently and at lower cost. This change has improved the financial position of the service, and in some months the service has generated a small surplus. Any surplus is reinvested back into community activities.

Feedback from service users has been strongly positive, with residents describing the service as being of a very high standard and highlighting its importance to their day-to-day lives. Regular users report that the service enables them to meet friends, access shops and services, and make trips that they would not otherwise be able to make easily.

Users have stated that without the service they would either have to walk approximately three miles to reach Mumbles, which is not feasible for many, or rely on taxis, which are expensive for regular use. The availability of a reliable and affordable transport option therefore makes a significant difference to their ability to remain active and independent.

Service users have also highlighted that access to dependable transport has helped reduce feelings of social isolation and has supported independent living. The service allows people to leave their homes, maintain social contacts and continue using local services.

The Community Council continues to monitor the cost and usage of the service, particularly given pressures on local authority and community council budgets. While financial sustainability has been a recurring discussion point, the social value of the service has remained a key factor in decisions to continue operating it.

### 3.11 Digital inclusion, tech repair and recycling

This final impact area covers a broad range of activities including IT lessons, device repairs, support recycling technology or the donation of physical good like technology or toys for children. Although all of these activities don't tend to be delivered simultaneously, while scoping cost of living impact areas, we uncovered several cases where councils offered digital inclusion and repair support or repair and recycling services together.

This impact area seeks to address a broad range of issues that emerge as a result of cost-of-living, including increased technology costs and digital exclusion, which can exacerbate cost-of-living challenges as more essential services move online. Research from the Understanding Society survey corroborates this, showing that financial pressures push people to cut spending on services and broadband. In-turn, this can often push people that are 'offline' to more expensive phone contracts, bus and train tickets and basic goods and service<sup>11</sup>.

Eight percent of councils noted that they delivered an activity that fit into this impact area. The most common activity were IT lessons to improve digital literacy, however other councils reported delivering activities like repair cafes, donation drives and charity shops.

For the social impact model, we have identified that support around digital inclusion, repairs and recycling most commonly has the following impacts:

- Improved confidence in using the internet
- Cost of repair avoided
- Cost savings from not needing to buy a new device
- Carbon savings from not needing to buy a new device.

Based on the results on our research, it is estimated that initiatives related to digital inclusion, repairs and recycling delivered by Community and Town Councils generated **£80,973** in social value.

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<sup>11</sup> Understanding Society, [Digital exclusion worsens cost of living crisis](#), April 2024.

## Case Study: Llanfairpwll Community Council

Llanfairpwll is a town located in the southeast of Anglesey near the Britannia Bridge leading to Gwynedd. The town supports a healthy tourism industry and is home to roughly 3,000 residents, many of whom travel to Caernarfon or Bangor for work. Although the town is considered one of the least deprived areas in Wales, there are areas across Llanfairpwll which face challenges in terms of cost-of-living challenges that have exacerbated digital exclusion and social isolation among some older residents.

At the start of 2024, members of Llanfairpwll Community Council sought to address the challenges they'd identified by establishing a two hour IT support session every Monday afternoon based in the town's Memorial Hall. Operated by two of Llanfairpwll's councillors, the sessions attract a cohort of eight regular weekly attendees as well as two to four occasional visitors. The sessions place a strong focus on group learning while also dedicating time to addressing any technology issues that people bring to the session.

Councillors noted that the sessions have had a really positive impact on the confidence of regular attendees when using technology, helping people who had often previously been seriously digitally excluded. At the start of 2024, many of the attendees had little or no experience using digital technologies, leading the councillors to initially focus on topics that would provide strong foundations like internet browsing, word processing and online communication through email and messaging. Less than a year on, community councillors facilitating these sessions have enabled the attendees to better engage personal hobbies and interests, more frequently socialise with friends and family and often access cheaper goods and services like train tickets or shop coupons, alleviating some cost-of-living pressures.

At the end of 2024, the councillors that lead the group were successful in a £9,650 grant application to the National Lottery to improve their IT infrastructure. They now have 15 new laptops and a charging locker in the Memorial Hall, allowing them to continue the weekly sessions, grow the number of weekly attendees and ensure the longevity of this support for Llanfairpwll's digitally excluded residents.

## Case Study: Rhossili Community Council

Rhossili is a small, highly rural community located on the western tip of the Gower Peninsula, within the Gower National Landscape. The area includes several designated conservation sites making it environmentally significant. The community has a resident population of approximately 215 people, nearly 40% of which are older than 65, and is characterised by a low population density with dispersed hamlets and villages.

While property values in the area are relatively high, this does not necessarily translate into high household incomes, with many residents living on fixed or pension incomes. This context has heightened vulnerability to the cost-of-living crisis, particularly in relation to the increasing shift of essential services to digital channels.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the community quickly realised the importance of having reliable online communication channels. A volunteer developed community website was used to connect residents with essential services and local information. When restrictions eased, it became clear that this digital resource should remain and expand. However, a paper-based survey of 170 households revealed a need for digital inclusion support. While most residents owned two or more devices and had internet access, nearly 71% expressed a desire for more IT support.

Rhossili Community Council successfully secured £1,190 of funding through the Swansea Rural Development Partnership to launch the Rhossili Community Hwb IT Support Pilot supported in kind through council locations and volunteer time. Delivered between late 2022 and early 2023, the programme focused on practical sessions in a friendly, jargon free environment. Topics were directly shaped by community responses to an IT needs survey with key areas of interest including avoiding online fraud, emailing with attachments, using QR codes, spreadsheets, video calling, and navigating the 'Ask My GP' online system.

Across six core workshops and a series of follow up sessions, the project supported 82 participants, with sessions typically attended by 8–30 residents. All workshops included interactive exercises, and several also offered one-to-one follow up support. Evaluation forms completed at each session showed strong improvements in awareness, understanding, skills and confidence, with most sessions achieving 75% or higher ratings in the top two scoring categories. Participants particularly valued the social environment, practical demonstrations, and the option to borrow devices to continue practising at home.

One resident's story became a powerful illustration of the project's impact. Previously reliant on his wife for any online activity, he attended sessions as a complete novice. After borrowing an iPad and receiving personalised support, he gained enough confidence to manage online shopping, book GP appointments and stay connected with friends and family. He described the programme as opening up new independence in daily life.

Although the formal funding period ended in early 2023, Rhossili Community Council continues to provide digital support and equipment loans. Since the conclusion of the pilot, additional sessions on online safety, artificial intelligence and using smartphone cameras have been delivered, and the council remains committed to sustaining this work.

## Case Study: Caernarfon Town Council

Caernarfon is a small community in Gwynedd, with an estimated population of 10,299 in 2024. The town's recent history of retail decline is consistent with broader structural challenges in Gwynedd's local economy, where closures of small shops have reduced access to essential goods and shifted spending power away from town centres. Interconnected economic and social challenges include a decline in local retail options, with many shops closing and the remaining larger stores offering only limited ranges, leaving residents with few affordable essentials. Families often must travel elsewhere to buy brand-new items, adding travel costs to already high retail prices. For those on low incomes, this creates significant financial pressure.

The *O Law i Law* initiative began during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the Caernarfon Town Council recognised the urgent need for children's essentials and started collecting and storing donated items for families. This emergency response evolved into a permanent community shop in the town centre, selling donated goods at a fraction of their original price. Supported by 25 volunteers and one paid staff member, the shop has become an important community asset and now operates at a profit.

The Town Council oversees all aspects of the project, managing the end-to-end process of sorting, cleaning and pricing donated goods to ensure they meet high standards. The council also coordinates the volunteer team, whose work is central to turning community donations into reliable, good quality stock. The shop focuses on high-demand items such as baby clothes, furniture, toys and second-hand school uniforms. This has proved essential for families managing on tight budgets, helping them to access items in excellent condition without the financial strain of buying new. Parents highlighted that before the shop opened, items such as school clothes were 'hard to get' locally. The shop also eases pressures associated with key moments in family life—such as preparing for a new baby—or expensive seasonal periods like Christmas.

Although originally conceived as a short-term response to the pandemic, the shop's ongoing success has shown that the underlying challenges were longstanding. Its development into a permanent community resource reflects the deep-rooted need for affordable essentials and the importance of a sustained, locally based solution.

## 4. The needs of Community and Town Councils

This section will discuss the barriers and challenges faced by Community and Town Councils when seeking to deliver cost-of-living activities, drawing on evidence from the wider available literature, feedback from our council survey and qualitative interviews undertaken with a sub-sample of councils and other stakeholders.

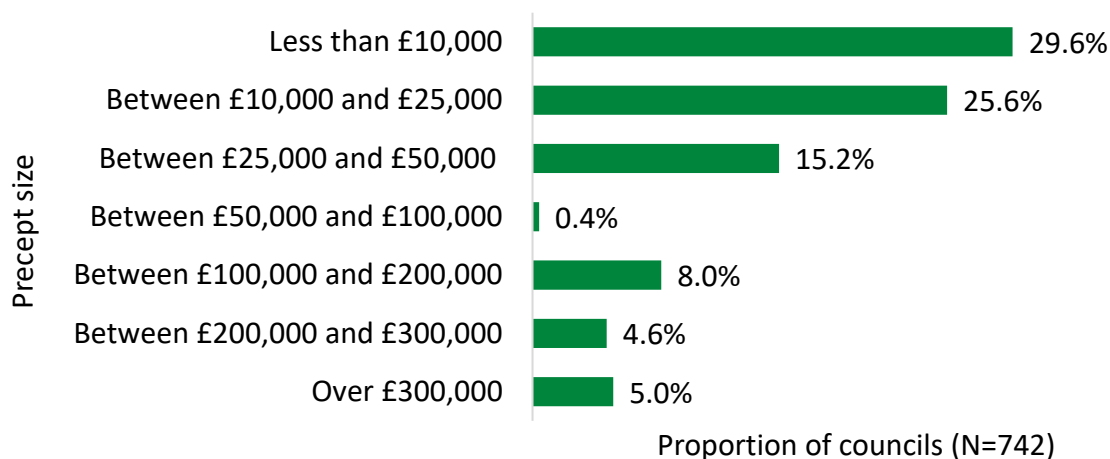
### 4.1 Barriers and challenges faced by Councils

Stakeholders and councils reported that often the most foundational challenge faced by Community and Town Councils when it comes to delivering any activities in their local area is capacity, both in terms of staff and finances.

For most Community and Town Councils, their budget is mostly determined by the size of their precept, a tax charged to their residents on top of council tax. Audit Wales reported in 2022-23 that 75% of Community and Town Council income came from their annual precepts<sup>12</sup>.

Figure 4.1 shows that over 55% of Community and Town Councils across Wales had a precept budget of less than £25,000 per year, likely inhibiting their ability to put significant financial resource behind any cost-of-living activities in their areas.

Figure 4.1: Community and Town Councils by precept size.

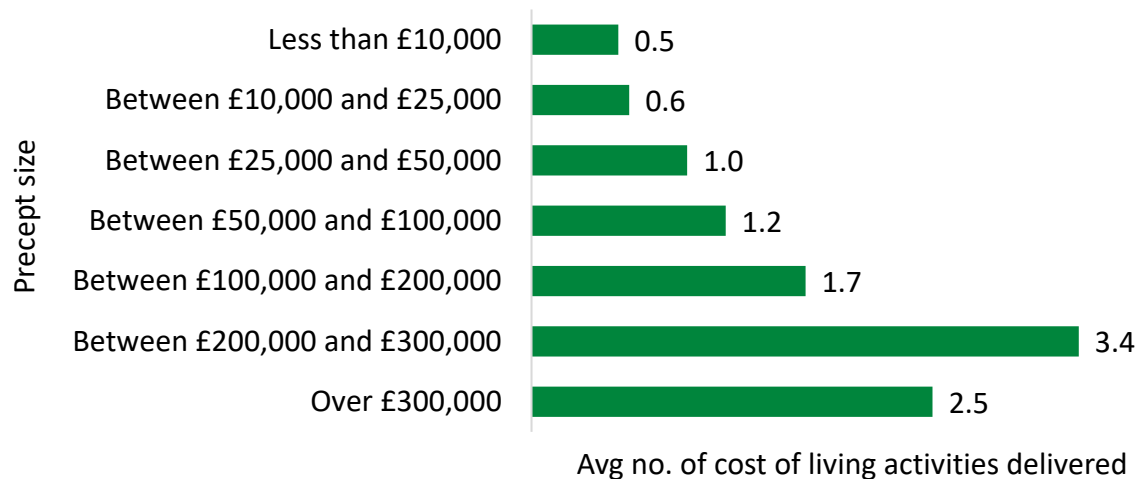


Source: Stats Wales council precept data 2022-23, blank observations (N=86) excluded.

<sup>12</sup> Audit Wales, [Financial Management and Governance – Lessons from Audit for Community and Town Councils in Wales, 2025](#).

Evidence from our survey offers some support for this correlation, showing that councils with larger precepts report delivering on-average a higher number of cost-of-living activities, with a notable increase in activity for councils with budgets over £200,000. Under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015), Community and Town Councils with a gross income or expenditure above £200,000 are expected to contribute to the objectives of their local public service board’s well-being plan. Further research is needed to understand whether the Act influences the decision of councils to deliver cost-of-living activities.

Figure 4.2: Number of self-reported cost-of-living activities delivered by councils by precept



Source: Wavehill’s survey of Community and Town Councils (N=237).

Staff capacity also presents a significant barrier, with stakeholders and councils noting that many councils are only able to afford to employ one member of staff on a part time basis. In these cases, it was noted that the basic administrative requirements to operate a Community or Town Council can often take up the entire paid time of a clerk.

A majority of our survey respondents (60%) reported having only one member of staff, among these councils the single member of staff was contracted to work an average of eight hours a week, the equivalent of 0.2 full time workers.

When discussing the capacity of Community and Town Councils, a majority of stakeholders and councils also noted that the skills, interests and expertise that staff and councillors brought to their roles could impact their likelihood of delivering cost-of-living support. Participants of the qualitative interviews provided several examples where an individual’s background could augment a council’s ability to deliver. Examples included:

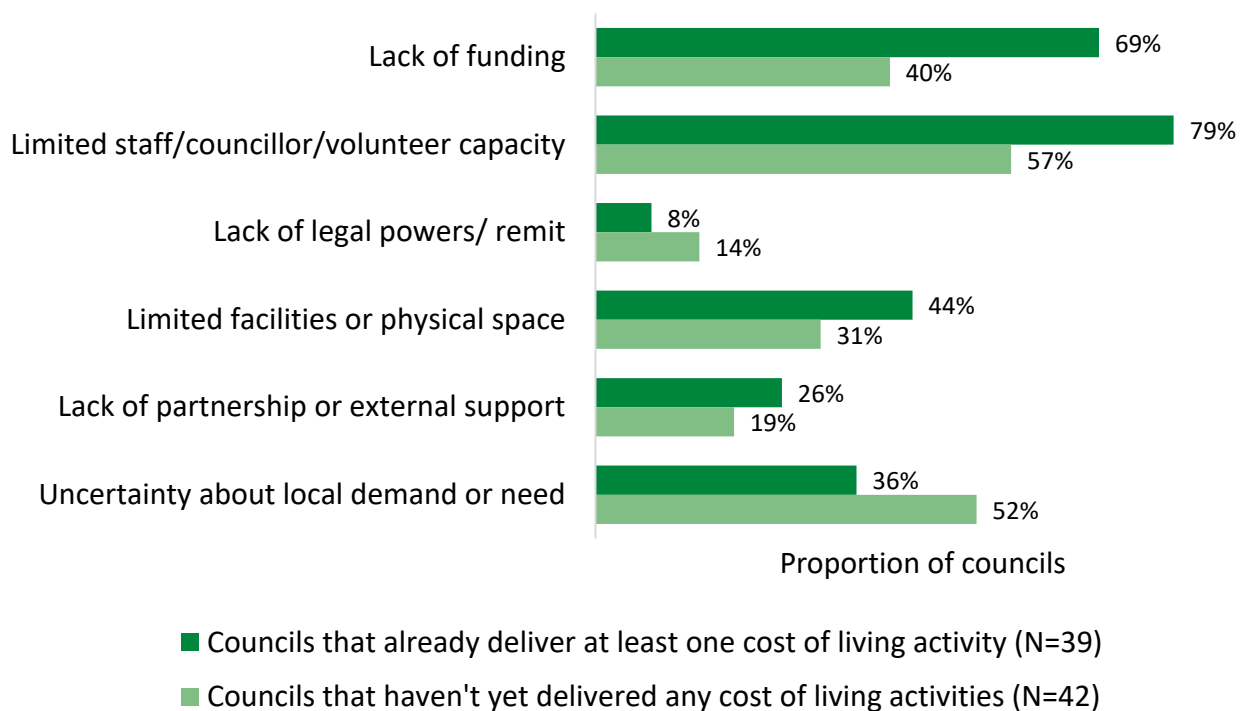
- Community and town councillors that had certain professional connections (e.g. in the voluntary sector or with certain other organisations or businesses) could be in a stronger position to coordinate cost-of-living activities in an area.
- Town clerks with a background in financial management were better prepared to take on a community asset that could be used to deliver cost-of-living activities.
- Community and town councillors that were also county councillors would be in a better position to liaise with a unitary authority to deliver cost-of-living activities.

- A diverse council in terms of age, ethnicity and gender could be in a stronger position to understand the needs within their communities and respond effectively.

Our survey of Community and Town Councils found that 61% of respondents delivered at least one cost-of-living activity. Among these councils, 37% reported that they would like to deliver additional cost-of-living services. Among the remaining 39% of survey respondents that noted that they did not deliver any cost-of-living activities, 46% noted that they would like to deliver one.

Figure 4.3 below shows the result of our follow-up question to councils, which asked about the barriers they faced that stopped them from either delivering further cost-of-living activities or delivering their first cost-of-living activity. The Figure shows that funding and staff, councillor or volunteer capacity are the most prominent barriers for councils that are already delivering cost-of-living activities and seeking to expand their offer. Although capacity and funding are also prominent barriers for councils that have never delivered a cost-of-living activity prior, uncertainty about local demand or needs emerges as a barrier for over half of these councils.

Figure 4.3: Barriers to delivering cost-of-living activities reported by councils



Source: Wavehill's survey of Community and Town Councils.

## 4.2 Support available from One Voice Wales

This section will outline the support provided to Community and Town Councils from OVW.

One Voice Wales provides a range of advice, support and advocacy services on behalf of Community and Town Councils across Wales. Responding to Welsh Government priorities and the growing needs of their member councils, OVW established a dedicated cost-of-living team in 2023 which provides additional support to councils, empowering them to act as the first point of contact for local people in need. Their cost-of-living team deliver the following resources:

- **Cost-of-living newsletters:** One Voice Wales release several monthly newsletters highlighting training opportunities, good practice case studies from other councils, as well as grant funding opportunities. In 2024/25, OVW’s cost-of-living team signposted councils to over 110 different grants and funds.
- **Hosting the cost-of-living forum:** One Voice Wales has established an online cost-of-living forum where OVW, Community and Town Councillors, and clerks can share resources, advice, and good practice on addressing local challenges. More than 150 councils are now members of the forum.
- **Training, webinars and resources:** One of the core elements of OVW’s cost-of-living support to councils, they have provided a wide range of toolkits, guides, case studies and webinars to enable councils to establish, manage and improve their own cost of living activates in their local areas. The support is based on peer-to-peer learning, enabling councils to share best practice and build capacity.

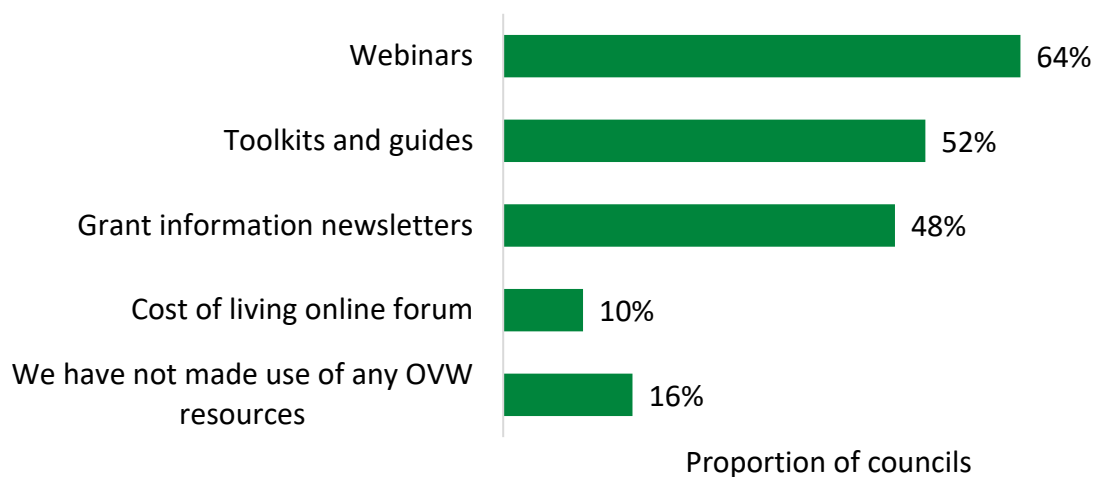
**One Voice Wales Guides**  
Including guidance docs, reports, case studies and webinar recordings.

 Fuel poverty and warm spaces	 Wellbeing and support	 Digital inclusion
 Community transport	 Tackling food poverty	 Applying for lottery funding
 Benefits	 Community engagement	 Support at Christmas

Councils were asked in our survey about their usage of OVW’s different cost-of-living support strands. Figure 4.4 shows that the most commonly used strand among the respondents was the webinars, followed closely by the various activity toolkits and grant

information newsletters. The most popular combination of OVW’s support used by survey respondents were the webinars and toolkits (18%), a combination of all support on offer excluding the online forum (13%) and the webinars and grant newsletter (13%).

Figure 4.4: Council usage of One Voice Wales’ cost-of-living support



Source: Wavehill’s survey of Community and Town Councils (N=214).

When asked which elements of OVW’s support council found particularly useful, the following themes emerged in their responses:

- Over half of councils highlighted how easy it was to get in contact with support staff at OVW and how quickly they could get a thorough and helpful response to an issue they faced.
- Roughly a third of councils discussed how OVW’s support with more procedural matters helped to free up capacity to deliver other work.
- A third of councils also noted how regular updates on funding opportunities and examples of good practice from other councils were also very useful aspects of their support.

Councils were also asked to rate the usefulness of the support offered by OVW’s cost-of-living team, scoring an average of 4.22 out of 5.

Beyond the survey, we undertook fifteen additional qualitative interviews with Community and Town Councils to better understand the impact that OVW’s cost-of-living support has had on their activity.

A third of councils noted that they had made use of OVW’s toolkits and one-to-one support to improve the cost-of-living activities that they had already established prior to engaging with OVW. Two councils noted that OVW are in the process of supporting them to establish a new cost-of-living activity from scratch (a warm hub and a community transport scheme) by providing guidance on best practice and how to comply with legal requirements.

When asked how their activities would have developed without support from OVW, a third of councils believed their activities would have remained mostly the same, primarily

because their activities predated OVW's Cost-Of-Living project. Five councils noted that they would have lacked grant information, guidance and support on how to develop or expand their activity in an effective way, potentially leading to challenges in terms of funding or managing the activity in the longer term. Four councils noted that the good practice guides from OVW enabled them to improve their offer, some examples of the improvements included funding free sanitary products to address period poverty and developing community growing scheme to provide free seasonal food. Two councils noted that they were co-developing their activities with OVW, therefore these activities would not have gone ahead without support.

When asked about the most useful aspects of OVW's support, half of the interviewed councils discussed the reliability of OVW's day-to-day support with legal advice and support with compliance and operational questions. Two councils continued to note how this operational support helped to free up the overall capacity of the council staff, enabling them to focus on delivering the cost-of-living activities. Five councils each highlighted the value of the best practice toolkits and funding newsletters as enablers of their cost-of-living activities.

#### 4.2.1 Demand for future support

When asked about what could be offered by OVW to support the needs of Community and Town Councils in the future, over half of the survey respondents noted that they were already satisfied with the support on offer, either noting that OVW did not need to add additional elements to their cost-of-living support or that they should continue with the same kind of offer. Smaller groups of respondents provided some suggestions for additional support stands that could be offered to improve their cost-of-living activity:

- **Training:** Respondents noted that they want OVW to continue offering foundational training for councillors and clerks, several noted they would like further basic training on the legal obligations of councils. Other examples of suggested courses include training on how to consult the local community and how to deliver cost-of-living activities with a small group of volunteers.
- **Support writing grant applications:** Several respondents noted that OVW could build on their grant signposting service by supporting councils to write their grant applications, smaller councils in particular noted that writing grant applications has been a challenge for them.

- **More examples of good practice:** Respondents were very positive about the examples of good practice that OVW's cost-of-living team have already highlighted. A handful of respondents noted that they would like examples of good practice from smaller councils and examples of good practice when it comes to collaborating with other organisations to avoid duplication of work in an area.

When asked what support they needed beyond OVW to carry out their work in future, a quarter of survey respondents noted they did not need any additional support. However, the most frequently raised issue was the availability and accessibility of funding outside of their precept.

A third of respondents highlighted the ongoing challenge of securing sufficient financial resources to deliver local projects, maintain community facilities and respond to emerging needs. Some respondents emphasised the need for more direct funding streams from Welsh Government, rather than relying on limited allocations that filter down through local authorities. Several stakeholders also highlighted this as a key tension for smaller councils, where increasing their precept to fund more cost-of-living activities could require taking more from those that are in need the support. These stakeholders continued by noting that OVW was effectively positioned to coordinate links between potential third sector funding opportunities and Community and Town Councils, especially in circumstances where large grant providers need to contact councils delivering services at a grassroots level.

A quarter of survey respondents expressed the need for improved communication and more constructive working relationships with local authorities and other large organisations. Respondents commonly reported difficulties in receiving timely responses, identifying the right contacts or accessing consistent information from county councils and key public bodies. One Voice Wales has worked extensively with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) to formalise and improve the relationships between local authorities and Community and Town Councils, especially in terms of offering WLGA training to councillors and improving the collaboration between both tiers of government when it comes to financial planning for community asset transfers.

## 5. Conclusions

Evidence collected as part of this research project has shown that Community and Town Councils have generated substantial social value through their response to the cost-of-living crisis. Our social impact modelling estimates that in the past year alone, nearly £26 million has been generated in social value by the councils that responded to our survey, constituting a social return on investment of £4.86 for every £1 spent by councils. It is likely that this figure is an underestimation of the total value generated by the sector as a whole.

Our research shows that council capacity, both in terms of staffing and finance, is the defining barrier restricting the delivery of cost-of-living activities, with our results showing a strong correlation between precept size and the delivery of cost-of-living support. As the sector currently stands, the majority of councils have a precept under £25,000, limiting the expansion of positive impacts without further support. Despite these barriers, a substantial cohort of councils are keen to either expand beyond their current cost-of-living delivery or begin delivering cost-of-living activities for the first time.

Survey evidence and interview testimony shows that One Voice Wales is seen as a valued enabler of the cost-of-living support delivered by sector, with councils praising the administrative and operational support provided, the responsiveness of their staff and the guides and signposting offered by the cost-of-living team. Our research has uncovered many instances where council cost-of-living activities have been improved by the support of OVW. It is likely that OVW's guidance and support will be even more influential in shaping the positive social impact of the cost-of-living activities delivered by councils in the coming years as the focus turns to enabling smaller, yet ambitious, councils to deliver support for their communities.

Stakeholders consulted as part of this research echoed many of the survey findings. When discussing the capacity constraints of Community and Town Councils, the skills and interests of staff and councillors were felt to be a strong determinant of a council's likelihood to deliver cost-of-living related activities. In terms of council finances, most stakeholders noted that additional funding sources beyond encouraging councils to increase their precept could potentially increase the number of councils that are able to deliver cost-of-living activities in their local area.

Based on the findings of our report, we have proposed several recommendations aimed at OVW:

- 1. Continue to deliver the current offer included in the Cost-of-Living project:** Respondents to our survey provided positive feedback about all aspects of the support offered by OVW, particularly praising the webinars, guides and signposting to grants.
- 2. Expand support to aid councils with grant writing:** Several councils expressed a need for additional support to build their grant writing capacity. OVW could provide advice on grant writing good practice or provide one-to-one support for councils looking to seek grant funding.

3. **Increased tailored support for smaller councils:** The Community and Town Council sector is skewed towards councils with small precepts and low staff numbers. Respondents to our survey expressed a desire for tailored support that accounted for resource constraints.
4. **Develop a community engagement guide:** After capacity, the most common barrier for councils seeking to deliver a cost-of-living activity for the first time was a lack of knowledge of local need. OVW should use their usual combination of guides and peer-to-peer learning to share good practice on the best ways to gauge the demands and needs of local communities.
5. **Broader sectoral engagement:** Analysis of our survey sample and stakeholder testimony indicates that our results may be skewed to overrepresent the most active councils in the cost-of-living space. Broader light-touch sectoral engagement is needed to understand the work done and challenges faced by the sector as a whole.

Beyond OVW, we have proposed some additional recommendations that could improve the positive social impact of Community and Town Councils.

6. **Expand available sources of funding:** For smaller councils in particular, there can be a strong tension between increasing the precept in order to support the delivery of cost-of-living activities. Community and Town Councils need a more diverse range of funding sources to expand their support delivery without potentially impacting the disposable income of local residents. This could be done either through expanding the eligibility criteria of certain grants or by offering new direct funding sources to Community and Town Councils.
7. **Improve monitoring and data collection on outputs:** As Community and Town Councils continue to deliver frontline support for their residents, a more structured approach should be taken to monitor the inputs and outputs of the support provided to support future planning and strengthen the case for external funding.
8. **Improve collaboration with local authorities:** The working relationship between Community and Town Councils and local authorities across Wales varies in its frequency and structure, many respondents to our survey noted that engaging with local authorities could be challenging and time consuming. A more formalised working relationship between these tiers of local government may improve the efficiency of local support delivery. A potential model to follow are the tenets for working with Community and Town Councils established by Carmarthenshire County Council.

# Appendix A - SROI Inputs

Table A.1: Input values

Intervention	Type	Value
All	Volunteer time	£2,511,813.18
	Paid staff time	£980,763.86
Warm hubs	Funding	£166,529.29
	Location/in-kind support	£161,013.30
Wellbeing activities	Funding	£393,088.84
	Location/in-kind support	£23,461.58
Youth activities	Funding	£516,536.21
	Location/in-kind support	£107,201.38
Benefits advice	Funding	£179,972.91
	Location/in-kind support	£84,395.02
Digital inclusion	Funding	£45,304.92
	Location/in-kind support	£7,200.00
Food support	Funding	£166,313.26
<b>Total Value</b>		<b>£5,343,593.75</b>

## Appendix B - SROI Value Table

Intervention	Stakeholders	Outcome description	Proxy	Value	Unit	Quantity	Deadweight %	Attribution %	Impact
All	Volunteers	Avoided replacement cost	Social and Economic Value of Volunteering	£2,477.00	Number of volunteers	2,372	35%	50%-75%	<b>£2,299,563.20</b>
		Improved wellbeing							
		Improved employability							
		Improved health							
		Improved social connections							
Warm hubs	Users	Heating cost savings	Hourly cost to heat an average household	£0.16	Person hours spent in warm hub	797,940	54%	50%-75%	<b>£35,536.43</b>
		Reduced social isolation	Value of reduced social isolation	£4,668.00	Number of people	5,710	54%	50%-75%	<b>£2,970,818.19</b>
		Signposting to relevant services	Value of food banks signposting to relevant services	£3,213.00	Number of people	224	45%	33%-75%	<b>£251,084.51</b>
		Free meals	Value of a free school meal in England	£2.00	Number of meals	19,740	34%	33%-75%	<b>£13,397.29</b>
Wellbeing activities (e.g. art classes,	Regular participants	Increased wellbeing	Value of being a member of a social group	£2,122	Number of people	2,847	50%	50%-75%	<b>£1,773,726.75</b>

Intervention	Stakeholders	Outcome description	Proxy	Value	Unit	Quantity	Deadweight %	Attribution %	Impact
nature walks, cinema club)	Participants in infrequent activities	Increase in happiness	Value of engaging in hobbies, arts or crafts	£12.18	Attendances	0	50%	50%-75%	<b>£167,163.33</b>
			Value of attending theatre, dance performance or concert	£19.65		120	50%	50%-75%	
			Value of sports or exercise activity	£10.11		107	50%	50%-75%	
			Value of gardening activities	£10.93		2,100	50%	50%-75%	
			Value of nature observation activities	£9.67		300	50%	50%-75%	
			Other events	£10.00		9,285	50%	50%-75%	
		Increased wellbeing	Mother and baby course	£100.00		306	50%	50%-75%	
<b>Youth activities</b>	Young people (regular attendees)	Improved wellbeing and economic benefits	Estimate of the wellbeing and economic value of a young person engaging in youth activities per week equivalent of FT activity	£1,550.00	Number of people	23,007	59%-60%	25%-75%	<b>£16,502,174.35</b>
	Young people (one-off attendees)	Improved wellbeing	One off attendance at youth clubs, Scouts, Guides	£57.00	Number of people	1,541	59%-60%	25%-75%	<b>£15,893.72</b>

Intervention	Stakeholders	Outcome description	Proxy	Value	Unit	Quantity	Deadweight %	Attribution %	Impact
			or organised activities						
	Young people (all)	Free meals	Value of a free school meal in England	£2.00	Number of meals	34,798	18%	25%-75%	<b>£23,150.43</b>
<b>Benefits advice</b>	Clients	Increased income	Reported average increase in income (if reported data is not available)	£760.00	Number of people receiving outcome	1,945	23%	50%-75%	<b>£676,137.72</b>
		Reduced anxiety	Cost of De-Stress and Sleep Well course	£48.65	Number of people	4,797	23%	50%-75%	<b>£94,410.10</b>
		More positive about the future	Cost of Positive Psychology self-help book	£12.50	Number of people	4,167	23%	50%-75%	<b>£21,070.99</b>
		Increased empowerment	Increased empowerment	£69.51	Number of people	5,172	23%	50%-75%	<b>£145,428.70</b>
		Increased financial skills	Cost of a Customer Budgeting Course	£104.26	Number of people	272	23%	50%-75%	<b>£11,457.83</b>
		Signposting	Value of food banks signposting to relevant services	£3,213.00	Number of people	4,209	50%	25%	<b>£167,035.84</b>
<b>Digital inclusion</b>	Users	Digital inclusion	Improved confidence in using the internet	£240.00	Number of people	518	50%	50%-75%	<b>£52,485.71</b>

Intervention	Stakeholders	Outcome description	Proxy	Value	Unit	Quantity	Deadweight %	Attribution %	Impact
	Users	Cost of repair avoided	Cost of power socket replacement	£90.00	Number of devices	208	50%	50%-75%	<b>£5,895.00</b>
	Users	Lifetime cost savings	Cost savings from not needing to buy a new device	£310.23	Number of devices	208	50%	50%-75%	<b>£20,320.07</b>
	Environment	Carbon savings	Cost per tonne of CO2	£283.16	Tonnes of CO2	31	50%	50%-75%	<b>£2,171.84</b>
<b>Food support</b>	Users of regular food support	Access to nutritious food	Value of being supported by a foodbank	£185.00	Number of people	13,190	45%	50%-75%	<b>£709,644.46</b>
		Improved physical and mental health							
		Educational and social benefits							
		Cost saving							
	Users of infrequent food support	Free meal	Value of a free school meal in England	£2.00	Number of meals	10,295	45%	50%-75%	<b>£7,908.73</b>

# Appendix C - List of Stakeholders

We spoke to individuals from the following organisations to help inform our contextual understanding for this research and verify the preliminary results of our social impact model.

Organisation
Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisations
One Voice Wales' National Executive Committee
One Voice Wales' Cost-of-Living Crisis Team
Society of Local Council Clerks
Welsh Government
Welsh Local Government Association

## Contact us



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