



# Community Pub

CASE STUDY



## Yr Heliwr Nefyn



### A pub with social aims

Yr Heliwr is a community pub, established by volunteers, with the aim of bringing social, environmental and economic value to the town of Nefyn and the surrounding area.

The 'Sportsman', as it was formerly known, is an historic pub and hotel dating from the mid 19th century. It is located in the old Nefyn conservation area and Yr Heliwr is the Welsh translation of 'Sportsman'.

The pub was an important part of social life in Nefyn for many generations, until it closed its doors in 2009, along with a number of other local shops and businesses on the town's High Street.

In 2018, a public meeting was held to discuss the possibility of buying and reopening the pub as a community initiative. Support was evident and over 80 residents attended, filling the room with enthusiasm and ideas. Shortly afterwards, a committee was created to lead the project, and a Community Benefit Society was established to run Yr Heliwr.

A share offer was launched in May 2018 and over 500 shareholders invested over £80,000 to purchase the building, which was purchased by the community in November 2018. A business plan was commissioned in order to develop the next steps of the venture.

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To develop the project and renovate the old pub, Yr Heliwr raised £500,000 from a number of organizations: The Welsh Government, Gwynedd Council, Calor Gas, the National Lottery, and the Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA). Construction began in February 2020, and Yr Heliwr reopened to the public in July 2021.

## A pub with social purpose



As part of their community benefit and social impact plan, the pub organises and runs a variety of projects that help to support and develop the potential of local people.

These regular activities promote inclusion and encourage people of all ages to meet up and learn new skills. Being based in a rural community can be challenging; this vital support often helps to reduce social isolation and it helps some people to overcome feelings of loneliness.

## Projects and activities include:

- Social evenings for Welsh learners
- Coffee and cake mornings
- Art and craft workshops for children
- A knitting and crochet club
- A 'Family Kitchen'
- A digital cafe to help people learn new IT skills

## Community Garden

In 2021 the pub received £15,000 from Regeneration Wales and the National Lottery to establish a community garden on a piece of donated land in Nefyn. The garden not only provides food for the volunteers and Yr Heliwr kitchen, but it also gives local people the opportunity to work on a piece of land and grow their own produce. In addition, the garden is the ideal home and environment for wildlife and native plants.



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## Arts and Culture

One main objective is to protect and promote the Welsh language and the heritage of Wales, so Yr Heliwr holds regular free events which are open to anyone who is interested in learning more about local culture.

## Family Kitchen

The team at Yr Heliwr is aware that due to the cost of living crisis, in every community, money is tight at the moment. With this in mind they now run a monthly Family Kitchen, offering a hot, tasty and nutritious meal prepared by the chef with a 'pay what you want' model in place. All profits go to the local food banks and the donations help to support other families.



This case study has been made possible through funding from Scottish Government as a way to inspire community owned pubs about the many ways they can address issues facing rural communities.

## Yr Heliwr is so much more than just a pub

Eifion Davies, Tafarn yr Heliwr committee member, says: "The objective of the society that runs the community pub is always to be of benefit to the community of Nefyn and the surrounding area.

By developing the public house we aim to decrease loneliness, protect the Welsh language and local cultural heritage, as well as provide employment, tourism amenities and generally use the pub's services to benefit the community in any way possible."

If you are interested in starting or developing a community pub please contact the Plunkett Foundation - **01993 630 022**, [info@plunkett.co.uk](mailto:info@plunkett.co.uk) or visit [www.plunkett.co.uk](http://www.plunkett.co.uk) to find out how we can support you.

The Plunkett Foundation helps rural communities across the UK to tackle the issues they face by promoting and supporting community business. In addition to developing and safeguarding valuable assets and services, community businesses address a range of issues including isolation, loneliness, wellbeing, work and training.

If you share our vision for a vibrant rural economy with rural community business as its heart, why not join Plunkett as a member? Find out more about our membership packages [here](#).

