

COMMUNITY SHOP

CASE STUDY

Cwmni Cletwr Machynlleth



KEY DETAILS

Primary trading activity Shop

Amount raised for business £497,000

Official opening date May 2013

Number of members Over 40

Number of volunteers Over 50

Population area served 2,235

Other activities offered

Café, group activities, toddler-storytime, library, oil-buying syndicate, food orders, electric car charging points

About Cletwr

Cletwr is a community shop and café in a remote rural area which has lost many of its services. Aiming to make life better for the community, whatever they do is measured against that simple purpose. In the last 10 years, the village has lost the shop, post office, café, petrol station, school and the church. All that was left was a chapel and a pub. There was nowhere for people to meet their neighbours. The only employment was a few farms and home-based businesses. For young people, there was no future in the community.

Journey

Cletwr garage played a valuable role in the village of Tre'r Ddol for almost 50 years. It acted as the 'village shop' for those years - a place for trading gossip as well as providing essentials for local people. After closing in 2010, a valuable service was lost and after 12 months the idea to re-open it as a non-profit community venture was born. With the backing of the community, the shop and café re-opened as a community business in May 2013.

The plan was simply to provide a shop and café for locals. This has developed into a primary purpose to provide facilities and services to the community, but with the profit from the business being used to fund a growing range of activities and services.

Services

Cletwr offers a range of activities, which together address many of the problems of rural life. For example, they take on a number of young volunteers and later employ many on a part-time basis. Rural poverty is also being addressed, by providing basic items reducing the need for an expensive 18-mile bus trip to a supermarket. Cletwr's fuel oil syndicate helps people buy smaller quantities of oil at a good price.

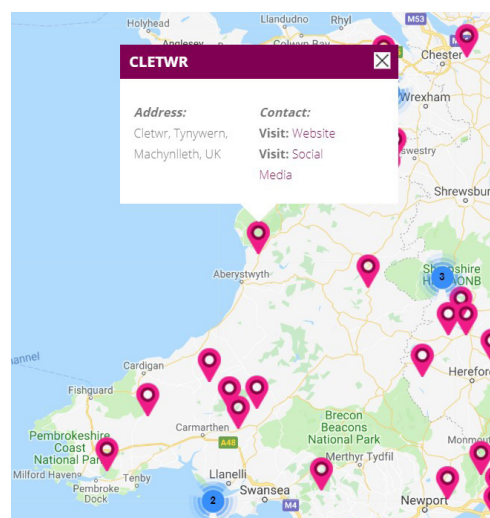
They're also planning on how to work with other organisations, providing access to services such as Citizens Advice and Credit Union.



Impact

Cletwr believe in providing facilities and services for the community, with the 'profit' being used to fund a range of activities. A wide-range of volunteer activities are organised, engaging more than 50 volunteers in a parish of 250 households. Volunteering helps young people both meet and work with older people who benefit from the 'buzz' of mixing with younger generations. Additionally, they offer a wide range of activities; from farming and environmental discussions to guided walks and local history. These activities help local people to socialise, keep healthy and engaged in life and the community. Cletwr is also a proud supporter of the Welsh language - offering a free Welsh library, regular storytime sessions in Welsh for toddlers and Welsh classes.

Cletwr attempts to listen to what members of the community want or need, and do what they can do address that need. As well as capturing feedback, they also ensure there is a clear focus on how to address the long-term needs of the community. The shop has completed a move to a new building, and the sense of engagement brought to volunteers is that of a community finding itself and enjoying being together.



Plunkett's role

Cletwr have been involved with a number of key Plunkett Foundation events and activities since opening as a community shop. Cletwr were named Winners of our Wales Award at the Rural Community Ownership Awards in 2017. The team have also featured in an awareness campaign Plunkett ran in 2017, raising the profile of community businesses tackling loneliness.