



Have your say: Shaping Plunkett's advocacy work

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#ComBizTogether

Why do we do policy/advocacy?

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Foundation

- Represent our members' priorities and concerns
- Champion the rural voice and the community business sector, UK-wide
- To make the case for community ownership as a business model, supported by robust, evidence-based research
- Create a more enabling environment for new and existing community businesses

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Who are we trying to influence?

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- UK Government & devolved administrations
- Local government
- Opposition parties & MPs
- Other stakeholders & funders

How do we influence?

- Data -> Research -> Evidence
- Briefing documents ([UK Community Right to Buy](#))
- Campaigns
- Meetings with civil servants & stakeholder groups
- Conferences
- Press & media
- Consultations by Govt. Departments

Recent examples of our influence

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Welsh Parliament
Local Government and Housing Committee

Community Assets

October 2022

223. The Plunkett Foundation called for communities in Wales to have a right of first refusal where assets become available for sale:

"We believe that where local residents have identified assets of value and importance to their community, that they should be afforded a right of first refusal to purchase the asset should it become available for sale. Furthermore we believe that the asset for sale, should be available [at] a fair price that has been set by an independent valuation."¹⁶⁷

224. They told us that funding and a greater emphasis on empowering communities should accompany legislation:

"I think making sure that funding goes alongside legislation is absolutely critical, but I think the term 'empowerment' is what this inquiry should continue to focus on, because I think if you can empower residents to give the confidence that they can do this and that they have the backing of you as an institution and as a wide sector of organisations operating across Wales, that would be the most transformative thing. Having the legislation then becomes secondary, because you've got the empowerment at a grass-roots level. So, please keep focusing on how can you build that capacity at a grass-roots level so that these assets are genuinely seen as an opportunity for communities to take on."¹⁶⁸



Recommendation 15.

The committee recommends that:

The Welsh Government should make arrangements to consider options for developing Welsh specific legislation, tailored to meet Welsh needs. The commission we have recommended should consider the need for legislation to support community ownership and empowerment in Wales by the end of the current Senedd term.

Response: Accept in Principle

The terms of reference for the commission can include a review of legislative options for Wales.

The commission will, in implementing this recommendation, need to reflect on independent evaluation(s) of the impact of legal provisions enacted elsewhere, to ensure that a legislative recommendation for Wales would actually support increased community ownership and empowerment and deliver value for money.

Financial Implications: Yes. Current resourcing will not support the development and establishment of a commission within the recommended timeframe.

For the Committee's report and Welsh Government's response: <https://business.senedd.wales/mqIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=39259>

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Where do members fit in?

- Gathering your views through discussion forums & consultations
- Promotion of your stories & impact
- Community Business Membership Panel

How can you get involved?

- Keep up to date with Plunkett's newsletter and policy blog:

<https://plunkett.co.uk/policy/>

- Respond to our [**Better Business survey**](#)
- Writing to your MP and tell them about our work

How would you like to be involved?

What are Plunkett's main asks?

Short-term asks in the current climate:

- Dedicated funding for retrofit, improving **energy efficiency, and renewable energy** generation for community businesses
- **Rural-proofed** policies and support, taking into account listed and "hard to treat" buildings
- **Increased and extended energy bill relief** specifically for small businesses
- **VAT reduction** and/or other measures that take into account the negative impact of wider economic situation and inflation

Long-term asks for improved legislation, policies & funding:

- **UK wide CRtB** (more detail e.g. re. ACVs, independent valuation attached)
- **Extend & improve COF** (e.g. "at risk" requirement rules out new and innovative businesses seeking match funding)
- Use **Dormant Assets** to invest in new community businesses through a Community Enterprise Growth Plan, and fund business advice and support
- **Other improvements** to support new businesses set up, e.g. empowering local govt and access to banking

Today's discussion

- What are you currently struggling with?
 - “To survive”
 - (short-term: employment, rising costs etc.)
- What would you like to see in the longer term?
 - “To thrive”
 - (make it easier to acquire apprenticeships, green investment etc.)

Today's discussion

- What are the top 5 challenges you're facing right now? (Short- and long-term)
- What would help you overcome those challenges?

Stay in touch!

The logo for the Plunkett Foundation, featuring the text "Plunkett Foundation" in white on a green rounded rectangular background.

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- Suggestions for how to involve you in policy work
- Check out the Policy & Research section of [Plunkett's website](#)
- Respond to the [Better Business survey](#)
- Contact me:
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- @Gina_Plunkett

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Plunkett Foundation provides practical advice, support and training to help communities establish and run successful community businesses with long-term survival rates.

To get information and support for your community business, please contact the Plunkett Helpline on 01993 630022 or info@plunkett.co.uk