

Llangurig Community Council Cyngor Cymuned Llangurig Annual Report 2024 - 2025

Foreword

As your Llangurig Community Council, we are pleased to present our Annual Report for the financial year 2024-2025. This past year has seen us continue our efforts across various aspects of village life, working to improve the well-being and infrastructure of our community. We have focused on both long-standing issues and new initiatives, working closely with local residents and external authorities such as Powys County Council and the Trunk Road Agency. We extend our gratitude to all residents who have supported us and contributed their time and effort to various community projects throughout the year. We hope this report provides a clear overview of our priorities, the activities undertaken, and the achievements realised during this period.

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Priorities

Throughout the 2024-2025 financial year, Llangurig Community Council prioritised several key areas to enhance the well-being and infrastructure of our community. A standing commitment was made to addressing numerous specific **Highway Matters**. This included addressing issues like the 50mph signage off Llangurig roundabout, as well as following up site meetings with the Trunk Road Agency (TRA) and highways department for bus stop repositioning and path improvements from the cemetery to the village. We also continued trying to persuade the relevant authorities to rectify the dangerous falling slates at the Black Lion , mitigating flooding above Pencroesau, and resolving inconsistencies with 20mph signage. Further highway priorities included addressing requests for grit bins near the pavement to the café , improving the bad bend on Llanidloes Road and requesting additional signage and clearing roadway blockages near Old School. Repairing damage to road edges on the back road to Llanidloes, alongside enhancements to the back road to Dernol and the old Llanidloes Road. We also addressed safety concerns related to overtaking on the island , tackle specific road surface issues (such as near the bus stop, Llanidloes Road camber, and Dernol Road potholes) , and manage concerns regarding HGV traffic on unsuitable roads (from the Post Office to Dernol). The narrowness of Maes Y Llan for emergency vehicle access was also a priority.

We also placed significant emphasis on **Village Infrastructure and Amenities**. This involved a commitment to repairing and replacing damaged Bin Surrounds at Cae Waen and Cwm Belan and addressing damaged posts by the Memorial. Developing and enhancing the council's Website ensuring it is fully functional, up-to-date, user-friendly, and accessible for all residents. Defibrillator Provision and Maintenance remained an ongoing effort, with plans to purchase, install, and secure funding for replacing both defibrillators and providing signage (e.g., "No Dog Fouling") on the Village Green. A dedicated focus was given to developing a new, safe, and engaging Village Play Area for local children, encompassing

pre-planning, securing necessary funding, conducting flood risk assessments, and ensuring resident input on equipment choices.

Within **Environmental and Community Concerns**, measures were taken to address persistent issues of Fly-tipping in a lay-by and Rubbish Burning, seeking expert advice from Environmental Health and Powys County Council (PCC). Continuous monitoring and reporting on Drainage/Sewage Issues affecting the community and the River Wye were also important. We actively protested against changes to Llanidloes Hospital services and encouraged resident participation in relevant surveys to ensure the community voice was heard. We initiated work on an application for funding for local community projects through the Community Wind Farm Fund, alongside a thorough review and informed response to new Wind Farm Applications impacting the local area. Engagement with broader county-level Sustainable Powys Initiatives and cost-cutting measures was also part of our work. Ensuring the timely advertising and filling of a Councillor Vacancy to maintain full representation, as was the thorough Policy Review and Implementation to ensure effective governance.

Finally, **Financial and Governance Oversight** remained paramount. This involved maintaining stringent oversight of accurate account balances and ensuring the timely payment of all council bills. We reviewed budgets and agreed the annual precept to ensure fiscal responsibility and adequate funding for services. Ensuring full compliance with audit requirements, including addressing and resolving qualified audits. We reviewed and updated internal financial reports and the asset register to maintain transparency and accuracy.

Activities

In pursuit of its stated priorities, Llangurig Community Council engaged in a comprehensive range of activities throughout the 2024-2025 financial year.

Under **Highways Initiatives**, councillors and the Clerk repeatedly contacted and chased the Trunk Road Agency (TRA) and Powys County Council Highways departments for updates on numerous outstanding highway matters. The Clerk submitted reports on specific road issues, including 20mph sign visibility, blocked drains, poor road surfaces, and potholes. We also received and reviewed reports from Highways, which led to some critical issues, such as the back road to Llanidloes and the Old Llanidloes Road, being added to the capital list for the 2025-26 financial year. County Councillor Glyn Preston (GP) served as a vital liaison, contacting Highways directly and providing feedback to the Council. Furthermore, we took the initiative to find and provide What3words location IDs for specific problem areas, facilitating more precise reporting.

For **Infrastructure & Amenities Projects**, we engaged with Powys County Council (PCC) to secure permission for Community Council repairs to Bin Surrounds & Memorial Posts. Councillors actively sourced materials at their own expense and direct repair work was undertaken, with the Llangurig bin surround successfully rebuilt by March 2025, and plans for Cwm Belan and War Memorial posts set for April 2025. Regarding the **Website**, the Clerk worked with providers to bring the Council's website online and continuously update its content, including minutes and agendas. Comprehensive training was booked and completed by the Clerk, enhancing her ability to make website changes independently. Further enhancement work was approved and commenced. In terms of **Defibrillators**, the Council successfully purchased and installed one new unit. Applications for funding for a second unit were made (though the British Heart Foundation application was declined), prompting us to investigate alternative grant options. The Clerk was also tasked with contacting Llandinam Wind Farm regarding potential funding for this vital equipment. For the **Village Green**, the Clerk requested updated drawings of the boundary from MMP (consultants) were forwarded to our solicitor regarding the formal land transfer deeds. Draft

By-laws have been provided for Council consideration, and "No Dog Fouling" signs were ordered to manage the area effectively. Progress on the **Village Play Area** saw information for pre-planning submitted and subsequently approved. Councillors met with MMP to determine next steps, and agreed to proceed with a full Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Plan. The Council committed to supplying a resident survey to gather input on preferred play equipment, ensuring community engagement from the outset of the planning process.

Within **Environmental & Community Engagement**, One Councillor directly helped clear the affected lay-by of Fly-tipping and Powys County Council cleared it again subsequently. Councillors actively discussed and considered various deterrents, including improved fencing, additional bins, and surveillance cameras. The Clerk regularly reported instances of burning rubbish to Environmental Health and followed up on site visits and investigations. Meetings were also planned with residents concerning these issues. Previous **Drainage/Sewage** issues were noted as resolved in July 2024 minutes. However, new sewage problems were reported, prompting a Councillor to highlight these, and GP was assigned to speak with Russell George and Welsh Government (WAG) to seek pressure on Welsh Water. The Council committed to supplying information to GP regarding water consultation and pollution of the River Wye from the Sewage Farm. Regarding **Llanidloes Hospital**, we formally sent a letter of protest and actively reported on relevant Llanidloes Town Council meetings concerning proposed changes to hospital services. For the **Community Wind Farm Fund**, surveys were completed and forwarded to the Wind Farm to support funding requests. The Clerk requested that the application for the fund be carried over, initially to March 2025, and then further to September 2025, as planning approval is a prerequisite. Information was also sought on preferred play equipment types for the fund. Concerning a **New Wind Farm Application**, the Council reviewed a significant application for a new wind farm with 35 windmills and proactively requested a pre-public engagement meeting to discuss its implications. A Councillor attended a meeting focused on cost-cutting measures and self-help schemes within Powys as part of **Sustainable Powys** initiatives, contributing to broader sustainability discussions. Plans were made to advertise a council **Councillor Vacancy** in April. Among **Other Community Issues**, the Council arranged for a wreath to be purchased for the Remembrance Day service on the Village Green. We reported a rotten Wye Valley Walk sign and a cattle grid deterioration. It was noted that Llangurig will become part of the Gwynedd Maldwyn Senedd Constituency and changes to medical services in Rhayader may affect some Llangurig residents.

Our **Financial & Governance Activities** Reserves were transferred to a deposit account to ensure sound financial management. The Clerk submitted VAT refund claims, recouping funds for the council. The Clerk's probationary period was formally reviewed, leading to the decision to make her employment permanent. The Clerk actively responded to the external audit, and internal audit reports were reviewed by the Council. An Asset Register Review was completed, including the incorporation of depreciation figures to ensure accurate financial reporting. The Clerk's pay rise was formally approved by Councillors, aligned with NALC guidelines. The precept for the 2025-26 financial year was determined and agreed upon in December 2024, following a review of budgets and spending to date for both current and preceding financial years. All outstanding highway matters were systematically transferred onto a dedicated spreadsheet to facilitate improved tracking and real-time updates. Council policies were discussed and approved.

Achievements

Llangurig Community Council made good progress and delivered tangible positive outcomes across its priority areas during the 2024-2025 financial year.

In terms of **Infrastructure Improvements**, a new defibrillator was successfully purchased and installed in October 2024, enhancing emergency preparedness in the community.

Furthermore, funding from the original project was secured in July 2024, with an additional £200 allocated in future precepts for its and the second defibrillator's ongoing upkeep. For Bin Surrounds & Memorial Posts, agreement was secured from Powys County Council, granting permission for the Community Council to undertake these vital repairs. Notably, the Llangurig bin surround was fully rebuilt and replaced by Community Councillors by March 2025, demonstrating effective community action. The council's **Website** was successfully brought back online in October 2024, greatly improving public access to information. By March 2025, the Clerk had completed essential training, enabling independent updates, and current minutes and agendas were consistently added by February 2025, ensuring transparency and timely communication with residents. Further enhancement work on the website was approved and initiated, promising continued improvements.

Our efforts in **Community Planning & Development** also saw success. The pre-planning application for the new Village Play Area received positive feedback in February 2025, marking a crucial step forward. Councillors formally agreed to proceed with both a Flood Risk Assessment and a Flood Plan in February 2025, and committed to submitting the full Planning Application now with a soft flood risk assessment by March 2025, demonstrating clear progress towards a key community asset. The **Village Green boundary** was redrawn and formally sent to Solicitors for submission in March 2025. Draft by-laws were also provided, to assist in managing this important community space. Furthermore, the refurbishment of the village Tea Rooms was reviewed by the Conservation Officer, who confirmed it did not impinge on conservation rules and acknowledged it as a "clear benefit to the community" in July 2024, resolving earlier concerns and validating a local business improvement.

Significant achievements were also made in **Governance & Financial Management**. The Clerk's probationary period was successfully completed in September 2024, leading to her permanent employment, ensuring continuity and stability in council administration. The financial reports and accounts for the 2023-24 financial year were formally approved in June 2024. A comprehensive Asset Register Review was successfully completed in June 2024. A sum equal to the Council's potential future liabilities totalling £9,019.95, was transferred to a deposit account by October 2024, enhancing financial resilience. A VAT refund claim was successfully submitted, recovering funds for the council. The precept for the 2025-26 financial year was formally agreed at £6,665 in December 2024, reflecting careful budgetary planning for the upcoming year. All outstanding highway matters were systematically transferred onto a dedicated spreadsheet, establishing a more efficient and transparent system for tracking issues and updates.

The precept

Your Council are pleased to have been able to reduce the annual Precept by 22% compared to the previous three years. Cost controls have allowed us to make this reduction and we hope to be able to maintain this lower level into next year although there are some capital costs under consideration. The Play Area expenses so far have been covered from Reserves provisions made for this purpose and the capital cost of the Play Area is intended to be covered from non Precept fund raising

Other

The Council continues to be grateful to the members of the community that maintain the Village Green and the flagpoles and flags used for Remembrance Sunday and other important dates.

Finally we would like to pay tribute to Councillor Dewi Jones who passed away in March 2024. He was an active and effective Councillor and his contribution to the work of the Council has been and remains much missed.
