



Bro Glantwymyn



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The National Lottery Rural Futures Programme

Rural Futures is a National Lottery funded project which aims to help make good things happen in rural communities in Wales. The programme is run by a consortium comprising Severn Wye and BRO Partnership and is working in the nine eligible rural counties across Wales.

The Powys County Ward of Glantwymyn is one of the areas included in the first round. Bro Glantwymyn is a rural area with a sparse setting and with isolated dwellings. The boundary area is over 22, 000 hectares.

The report is primarily for the benefit of local residents and groups to capture what has been expressed by the community thus far, although it should also be of interest to regional support agencies. This report does not claim to be a definitive account of everyone's views in the area, but is intended as a starting point for further exploration and development of responses to local issues and opportunities raised by the people who have chosen to participate to date.

The community led priorities outlined below have been highlighted since spring 2018 through engagements, discussions, community meetings, events and workshops.



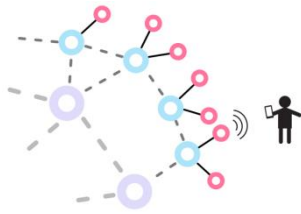
One of the key community conversation exercises was delivered through the Rural Futures mobile story studio. The 'Story Bus', visited many villages and was designed as a welcoming creative space for the community to tell, listen to and exchange stories from the past and to share their ideas and views on the future of Bro Glantwymyn. Several of the recorded stories from across the Ward are available on the [Story Map Website](https://uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/e9e41dd0c0a265033fe52c5ce2ca9ed4/cemmaes-cwm-llinau-and-glantwymyn/index.html)*

4 key priorities have thus far emerged from the engagement processes and this report focusses on exploring each of these alongside examples of people's responses and relevant data. The 4 key community priorities explored below include:

- 1 - Community Cohesion
- 2 - The local economy and employment
- 3 - Access to services and amenities
- 4 - The future for young people

*<https://uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/e9e41dd0c0a265033fe52c5ce2ca9ed4/cemmaes-cwm-llinau-and-glantwymyn/index.html>

Community Priorities



1. Community Cohesion

There are strong community networks across the area. These networks and strong cultural heritage traditions, combined with well-organised community groups, provide a strong foundation on which to build community support.



Community cohesion and the importance of close connections between people in the villages is a key concern for people as it is not as strong as it used to be. The integration of new people moving into the area is important. The lack of shops and places to meet people compounds the issue.



Community hubs can be an excellent way to provide activities for the whole community and opportunities to celebrate cultural traditions and Welsh Language use. Over half of people living in Glantwymyn are fluent in Welsh, 35% more than the average in Powys and Wales as a whole.

Cwm Llinau

- "We need to make the villages sustainable, people don't know each other, there needs to be a place for people to meet because then they share ideas. People don't want to see change happening and losing the Welsh Language. I think we need to reach out to people to increase interest in learning the language. We'll have to create hubs in each village as places where people can meet together".

Penegoes

- "The area changed quite a lot in the 60's with immigration and the community was dying".
- "We used to have a community BBQ every year, but we haven't done that for a while. There is no place for the community to meet regularly".

Ceinws

- "People in the village don't know each other or talk to each other, the whole atmosphere has changed. Now that the village hall has been brought down there is nowhere to meet. I'd like to see a village where people come together more, more community spirit. We've got such a diverse group of people living here now, both local and from away, and such a lot of skills and talents, we can get the village back to life again".

Derwenlas

- Important for the future: "Wider range of events in the community centre. For the community – how to keep traditional 'cultural life' post Brexit and how to ensure sustainable development".
- "Game nights. Film nights including old local films. Pottery sessions".
- "As well as a venue for the current regular events the community needs to embrace the hall more for local celebrations. To do this the hall needs to be refurbished. The committee is doing a great job.. but investment is needed".
- "The hall is being used by the Guides, and has also seen an increase in its use for family community events. This has helped to raise the profile of the hall".

Aberhosan

- "I would like to see a prosperous community where a number of different social activities exist and meet regularly in the social centre especially in the community centre in Aberhosan being the focal point of the area and the village".
- "I would like to see a strong, fruitful and multiplying community in Aberhosan. With the village hall being the centrepiece and focus".

Cemmaes

- "It's a struggle to gain funding for community centres".
- "It would be lovely for people to feel they can come outside their house and have opportunities to sit down and meet people, to have a chat, and a community garden".
- "It would be nice to see more of a community, hopefully there will be in the future".



The Benefits of Community Hubs

- They provide safe and welcoming spaces for local people
- Develops the existing capacities and (physical and social) assets of rural places.
- Foster dialogue about the diverse challenges facing rural communities
- Develop consensual proposals for dealing with these challenges
- Key sites for the development of broader alliances between local people and local state and third sector organisations
- Hubs involve the development of both physical and social infrastructure.
- Community Centres in Bro Glantwymyn include Halls at Glantwymyn, Cemmaes, Cwm-Llinau, Derwenlas, and Aberhosan. Ceinws used to have a community hall and hope to reinstate one.



2. Local economy and employment



People highlighted the importance of the need for employment opportunities, especially for young people, to safeguard the sustainability of the villages into the future.



The people of Glantwymyn are well educated and skilled, putting them in a good position to benefit from new opportunities and respond to challenges and change. Those with the highest level of qualification level 4 or more is higher in Glantwymyn (32%) than in Powys (28%) and Wales (26%).



(25%) average.

31% of people aged 16-74 are in full-time employment in Glantwymyn compared with 36% across Wales. There are more skilled manual workers in Glantwymyn (38%) than unskilled; significantly more so than the average for Wales (25%). The amount of people with no qualifications (20%) is lower than the average for Powys (26%) and Wales (27%). The percentage of Lone parents in employment (45%) is far higher than the Powys (32%) and Wales



Brexit is a significant threat to an area where agriculture is a key employment industry. The loss of markets and subsidies could have a significant impact on the local economy, livelihoods and employment opportunities. The threat from Brexit and the loss of markets and subsidies cannot be understated. Farming diversification is a challenge in some parts of the Ward due to the steep terrain.



Employment in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industries is high. National and local policy needs to be informed by communities. Coordinated government and external funding can direct investment to deliver effective services and support the local economy.



People have to travel considerable distances to work. This also impacts on community cohesion, because people don't see each other during the day. Car ownership is higher in Bro Glantwymyn than in Powys and Wales with the average distance travelled for work being 32.6km in 2011; double the Wales average. Most people drive to work (688), but a significant amount work mainly at or from home (214).



The 'labour market circle' refers to the way in which limited employment opportunities in rural areas may result in skilled workers migrating to urban areas which reduces the skill level in the rural workforce, which in turn discourages future economic investment and leads to further deterioration in the local labour market.



309 Glantwymyn Households earn below 60% GB median income, i.e. under £17, 000. 165 Households live in 'Fuel Poverty'. 8% of children are living in poverty in Glantwymyn compared with 23% across Wales. 331 children live in 'Decile 5' ('Decile 1'= 10% least deprived / 'Decile 10'= 10% highest levels of deprivation). 9% of households lack central heating.

Ceinws

- "The village is quintessentially North Wales with the landscape, culture and people. The people are different to those in towns, close knit communities, who used to work and live together. There have been big changes. About 50% of the people used to work in the village the forest village or Machynlleth. Now people travel much further.
- "There is nowhere near as much employment now".

Aberhosan

- "We want a prosperous community and a strong local economy with work for young people and jobs for all ages".
- "Don't focus work in the big towns".
- "We need jobs to support people of all ages".

Various villages

- "It used to be a hive of activity and industry".
- "We need more small business opportunities".
- "Affordable artist studios".
- (future aspiration) "People can have time for a good work and home balance with local opportunity for small businesses".
- Derwenlas, "The village used to be a hive of activity based on the wharves and on boatbuilding, as reflected in the fact that there used be a post office, bakery and other services. There is now only the pub."

3. Access to services and amenities



Access to services and amenities is a key concern, especially due to the cuts in public services. This generation has seen a dramatic drop in the availability of shops and banks.



This includes the closure of the Bro Ddyfi Health Centre and infrequent public transport. 20% of people have a limiting long-term illness in Glantwymyn compared with 23% across Wales. Half the population declares that they have very good health.



The lack of Broadband is something that affects all sections of society, not least tourism and farming operations and communications.



The close proximity of Machynlleth as a service center is important. Planning area discussions on the challenges of sustaining public services in rural communities are necessary in order to identify innovative ways to ensure that the rural communities are successful and sustainable.



Cwm Llinau

- There have been big changes over the years, we have lost a lot of services, shops including a bakers, clothes shop, butchers and post office, and now the surgery is closing. It has been a 16 mile round trip to get a pint of milk. The old people will suffer".
- There used to be a shop, two chapels, a post office, a shoe shop and a bake house. A lot has changed in the area, including the use of the Welsh language".

Penegoes

- "The banks in Machynlleth are closing now, it will become a ghost town. There were two shops in Penegoes, but now no shops, no pub and no church".

Aberhosan

- "I wish that there will be infrastructure in place for the Internet, phone network that will allow us to live and work in the area and that there will be jobs to support people of all ages".
- "That there is support for the rural community – the same facilities as in the towns – broadband, mobile signal phones are available. Services are more scarce than ever; need banks, be able to get a doctor's appointment easily".

Cemmaes

- "How do we keep people and shops in the area? The banks are going. What will bring people here in the future and how do we keep the language if we don't keep the young people?".
- "There used to be shops selling groceries and all sorts (including petrol), also a shoe shop, a police station and a paint and decorating shop".
- "There has been a loss of services locally, the village shop closed when supermarkets opened in the main towns, buses are non-existent and the surgery is now closing. The village might be dying. Some form of community transport is needed, as is parking space".

Abercegir

- "Abercegir was built in 1841 for the mills and mines; it had shops, a smithy, a Chapel and a pub".

Ceinws

- "A safe place to live with good transport links. Better housing would be an asset for the community".
- "Better formalised car parking"
- "For the future it would be good to see some small houses built on the camp, so that the young people can have the option to stay rather than move away".

Bro Glantwymyn - Travel times to key services

Average travel time (mins) by walking or public transport to the nearest key services.

Post Office	Library	GP	Pharmacy
86.0 (mins)	132.0 (mins)	103.0 (mins)	131.0 (mins)
Wales average = 0.0 (mins)	Wales average = 33.5 (mins)	Wales average = 26.6 (mins)	Wales average = 26.7 (mins)
Primary School	Secondary School	Food shop	Leisure Centre
62.0 (mins)	98.0 (mins)	106.0 (mins)	134.0 (mins)
Wales average = 16.4 (mins)	Wales average = 35.4 (mins)	Wales average = 18.2 (mins)	Wales average = 40.0 (mins)



Digital services

Connections with low broadband speeds (less than 2 Mbit/s)	Average broadband download speed (Mbit/s)	Average broadband upload speed (Mbit/s)
108	7.86	0.97
16.5% (Wales average = 4.6%)	Wales average = 29.34	Wales average = 3.44
Source: Ofcom 2016		



4. The future for young people



The need for employment opportunities and facilities for young people was discussed in all villages. Youth 0-15 = 17%; 16-24 = 8%; Adults 25-44 = 22%; 45-64 = 32%; 65-84 = 18%; 85+= 3%



Cuts to services and a lack of amenities and activities can make the area less attractive for young people to stay, thus impacting the community sustainability of the area. The lack of affordable housing compounds issues such as youth migration.



In some instances Young people's employment preferences are changing. Not everyone wants to follow traditional employment routes. This may increase with the predicted changes to the future of work through the 4th Industrial Revolution, characterized by automation and digital technology.



Provision is needed in order to enable and support a wide range of employment opportunities closer to home. Business hubs and workshops can provide places for small businesses to work together and share ideas and equipment.



The 'demography circle' whereby a lower population density, a higher proportion of elderly residents and out-migration of young people, with resulting low birth rates, all have adverse economic impacts.

Glantwymyn

- "What will bring people here in the future and how do we keep the language if we don't keep the young people?".

Ceinws

- "Teenagers need a place to hang out. Maybe associated with skills events as well as social events (informal). A shared community facility that is a flexible space".
- "There is much less jobs available for young people, so they have to leave the area. It's important that we do things for the young children because they have their lives in front of them".

Aberhosan

- "A strong local economy to keep young people here".
- "It is essential to have work for our young people".
- "I would like to see more young people in the area and attending the centre".

Bro Glantwymyn Data

2,040

Population

44

Average
age

900

Households

230

Pensioner
households

1,255

working age
population

214

work from
home

688

people drive to
work

33km

average
distance
travelled to
work

Rural challenges

Material hardship in rural areas is often concealed and downplayed within the context of living within beautiful landscapes and self-reliant communities.

There are several causes that contribute to challenges facing communities in rural areas, which can include:

- Job insecurity, low income and seasonal part-time work
- Lack of services, because there are fewer people living in rural areas to support and sustain the services
- Infrequent public transport
- Lack of affordable housing
- Poor access to employment opportunities and public services
- Poor broadband
- Lack of large scale employers

Effects

- Rural premium – higher living costs
- Fuel poverty
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of training opportunities
- Struggle to pay bills
- Social isolation and rural deprivation.
- Higher incidence of low pay combined with higher living costs in rural areas increases the risk of in-work poverty.

Strategies to combat poverty in rural areas need to be based on the contextually embedded experiences of the people that live there. Principles of community based interventions include:

- Building on assets, knowledge and capacities
- Developing community alliances
- Gaining resources, knowledge and skills
- Creating strategic collaborations

Rural Futures Projects

The Lottery want to fund projects which focus on ‘helping people struggling to meet their basic needs or access public services, who don’t have reasonable living conditions or who might be isolated from others’.

Rural Futures projects in Bro Glantwymyn are not limited to but could include those that support:

1. Access to services and facilities, including increasing community transport services.
2. Opportunities for employment, such as business hubs, advice, training or removing barriers to accessing work, such as through childcare.
3. Community facilities such as village halls and community hubs, increasing places to meet and opportunities to deliver services.
4. Advice and support for people with e.g. health, debt or fuel poverty difficulties.



“Community-led approaches to tackling rural poverty need to be accompanied by broader multi-scalar, integrated and strategic policy interventions in areas such as economic development, affordable housing provision, transport infrastructure, digital connectivity and other essential service provision”.

Paul Milbourne, 2018.