



# Caernarfon Town Council Case Study

## At a glance

Caernarfon Town Council has proactively tackled the cost of living crisis by initiating and supporting community driven initiatives like o law i law and Porthi Dre. These projects have reduced food insecurity, provided affordable children's essentials, and strengthened community resilience.

## Community Impact

- o law i law employs 25 volunteers and one full-time staff member and has provided thousands of families with affordable or free children's clothing, uniforms, toys and baby equipment.
- Porthi Dre has one full-time and 3 part-time staff as well as 40 volunteers who have served over 15,500 free hot meals since March 2023 .
- Through it's FareShare Partnership held every Wednesday, surplus food is distributed with people able to purchase bags of food for just £3.
- Community Engagement Initiatives such as Clwb Hwyl and Caban y Cofis have brought residents together, reducing social isolation.

"...it's really good for the town because we haven't got much here."  
 'o law i law' Shopper

## Challenges

The cost of living crisis has placed immense financial strain on Caernarfon residents, particularly families with young children making it difficult for many to afford essential items such as food, clothing, and childcare equipment. Food insecurity remains a pressing issue, with families struggling to access affordable, nutritious meals, while social isolation worsens the impact, increasing the need for community support.

## Solutions

The Town Council spearheaded initiatives designed to alleviate financial burdens while promoting sustainability and community solidarity. These solutions included:

### o law i law

- Located in Caernarfon Town centre, this council run shop sells high quality second-hand children's clothes, prams, and toys at affordable prices to residents.
- Also works in partnership with health visitors, social services, and refugee charities to provide free essential items to those most in need.
- Encourages the community to donate goods, reducing waste and promoting sustainability.



Toys



Cots, prams & essentials



Children's Clothes



Recycling

### Porthi Dre

- A central community space offering food distribution, meal services, and social support programs.
- Now run as a separate enterprise it brought together all the initiatives that the Town Council had started up initially as separate projects in response to Covid.
- FareShare Partnership offering a weekly reduced food bag and a hot meal ensuring no food goes to waste.
- Social clubs, activities and coffee mornings that contribute to the well-being of the local community.



Warm spaces



Fitness Classes



Hot Meals



Community Support

# Caernarfon 'o law i law' Video



“All the things are clean and it's ideal if you haven't got a high budget to get everything you need for your new baby”  
**'o law i law' Shopper**

## Funding & Powers



Caernarfon Town Council received a Welsh Government grant to assist with the initial costs of the services provided to residents. A further grant from the Welsh Government supported the setup costs of the **o law i law** shop, which now operates at a small profit through sales and donations.



**Porthi Dre**, a community hub, now operating as a charity, evolved to take over all services previously provided by Caernarfon Town Council. It received a Welsh Government grant to establish the building and install a commercial kitchen. Additionally, it receives £20K annually from Caernarfon Town Council who continue to support it to help cover overhead costs.



All community and town councils in Wales need specific legal powers that enable them to provide various services and support for their local communities. These powers, granted by legislation, allow councils to undertake a wide range of activities and initiatives to improve the well-being and quality of life for residents. Eligibility for the general power of competence (GPOC) provides greater freedom for councils to act. Powers and justifications can therefore differ if eligibility for GPOC has not been confirmed and councils should consider their specific circumstances and always seek advice about the legality of proposals to avoid acting beyond their powers.



For advice and guidance, councils may wish to contact their One Voice Wales Development Officer [admin@onevoicewales.wales](mailto:admin@onevoicewales.wales)



## The Future

Caernarfon Town Council plans to expand **o law i law**, and ensure it is sustainably funded. Whilst Porthi Dre will look to enhance their services with financial advice and mental health support. Strengthening youth engagement through skills training is also a priority, ensuring long-term support for residents and a more resilient community.



“It was a short term thing, but it's become something permanent”

**Dewi Jones**  
Clerk Caernarfon TC

## Want to Find Out More?

For more information on the One Voice Wales Cost-of-Living Crisis project contact the team at:



[CoLC@onevoicewales.wales](mailto:CoLC@onevoicewales.wales)



<https://bit.ly/3KYHftK>