Community Meals provided by Cilfair Farm

Cilfair Farm wants to share local produce, connecting farmers and growers to people and place, celebrating food and community

Context: Cilfair Farm produced free-range eggs for over 10 years and introduced a small herd of old native breed cattle in 2020. Using regenerative farming methods, the farm works to support wildlife and produce high-quality beef. They want to share their love of food through community meals.

Participants at the consultation event highlighted the rich network of local assets, including growers, farmers, dairies, allotments, community gardens and food producers. Many felt these resources should play a central role in community meals, helping to celebrate local food while supporting stronger connections between producers and residents.

"It meets many needs - social isolation, hunger, connection, being part of something."

- Accessibility is essential as transport is one of the biggest barriers to attendance - lift shares, flecsi bus and community transport is needed
- Affordability is important, ensuring that meals remain open to everyone

"No one turned away."

What did the community say about community meals? A relaxed community event was held at the Llwyngwair Arms, Newport on 23rd April 2026. At least 13 community members attended to explore what successful community meals could look like. Participants used creative activities, maps, prompt cards and a "Recipe for a Successful Community Meal" questionnaire to share their ideas and experiences. People wanted community meals to be welcoming, inclusive spaces where everyone feels comfortable and connected. They highlighted the importance of bringing together children, older people, disabled people, families and those attending alone, while celebrating local food, producers and growers and strengthening community relationships.







What do people want?

"Welcoming, warm, gentle, comfortable, inclusive community coming together."

(A place) "People feel like they can come alone or in a group, sit, talk and eat together."

"They want to get to know their neighbours."

"A celebration of local producers and local food."



What is the recipe for success?

Key ingredients are:

- Friendly hosts and greeters welcoming people at the door
- Long tables and communal seating that encourage conversation
- Accessible venues and transport support
- Opportunities for families, children and people of all ages to participate
- Affordable pricing and flexible payment options
- A relaxed atmosphere with gentle music and space for conversation
- Food that is locally sourced, seasonal and sustainably produced

"Nice lighting. Long tables so people can mix, hosts to chat to people and introduce to others."

"Sliding scale - lowest point should be very low to make it accessible."

"Cooked well. Nice flavours. Recognisable."

MENU

What do people want on the menu?

People favour simple, wholesome food from local growers, farmers and producers

- Traditional two or three-course meals
- Meat and vegetarian options
- Burgers and homemade chips
- Soups and salads
- Seasonal vegetables
- Pulses and legumes
- Healthy, locally sourced dishes
- Familiar and filling comfort food

More than a meal.... People don't just want food—they want experiences:

- Quizzes and games
- Live music and dancing
- Arts and crafts
- Talks about food growing and production
- Farm visits and tours
- Seasonal celebrations
- Activities for children and families
- Community discussions on topics that matter locally

"Meetings where it's discussion with purpose, then food and continue over works well."

"Talks about how the food grows and who and where. Combine with better insight into life of producers."

Background: This project emerged from the Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales project. Through Innovation Labs in 2025, participants explored how food can enhance wellbeing in rural communities. The vision was to support shared meal initiatives that use local produce, celebrate culture and bring people together, helping to strengthen wellbeing, community cohesion and rural prosperity. Acknowledgement: Special thanks to Ein Cegin and Sophie Bennett for providing mentoring and support to the communities. Contact: www.eincegin.org

CYMRU WLEDIG LPIP RURAL WALES

UK Research and Innovation

For more information contact: Robin Donnelly
cilgwynbarn@gmail.com - 01239 821166
OR for LPIP: Amie Andrews: ama108@aber.ac.uk