Community Meals in Llangain Village

Llangain community wants to connect people across generations by creating a welcoming, vibrant place where people can gather through food, culture and connection.

Context: Llangain village is located in Carmarthenshire, Wales. The Llangain parish has a population of around 561 residents with approximately 13% under 18 years old , 37% over 65 and 50% in the 18-64 age bracket. With the village pub and shop now closed, Llangain Memorial Hall is the remaining place for the community to come together, other than the primary school.

There is active community involvement, with both Welsh and English speakers, and a new hall extension, although the kitchen is awaiting renovation funding. The community often travel to Carmarthen and Llansteffan for food.

"There is nothing right now in our village. Community is important to build and maintain resilience."

- Loss of key social spaces (e.g. pub closure) has reduced everyday opportunities to meet
- Residents often travel elsewhere for food and connection
- Community meals can help to bring people together

What did the community say about community meals? A relaxed and informal community event was held to find out what people wanted. At least 36 adults and 10 children came together to share ideas, experiences, and hopes for community meals in Llangain—revealing a strong appetite for connection as much as tasty food. Creative activities, prompt cards, a 'recipe for success' questionnaire and a large map of the area helped people to think about what already existed and what they want community meals to look like in their village.





What do people want most?

A place to belong

- Friendly, welcoming, inclusive atmosphere
- Somewhere to meet both familiar and new faces.

A space for all ages, regular and reliable space, consistent times, well advertised

A "go-to" social hub in the village

- Affordable and accessible
- Reasonably priced, healthy meals
- **Community-led activities**

"All people pulling together"



What is the recipe for success?

Community members would like the meal atmosphere to be:
Warm, welcoming, homely, vibrant, and inclusive, with both lively social areas and calm spaces for those who need them.

Key ingredients are:

- Tasty, wholesome, local food, from local farmers
- Friendly faces and a warm welcome
- Social spaces and ways to connect as well as small tables for conversation
- Balanced atmosphere (lively but not overwhelming)
- Inclusive options (dietary needs, include all ages)

"It will be great for the village, a meeting point for the residents of Llangain and welcoming visitors."

"Well advertised...bright coloured table cloths, food smells good."

MENU

What do people want on the menu?

A clear preference for **simple, varied, and local food**:

- Traditional dishes (cawl, Sunday dinners, pizza, pasta)
- Light bites (soups, toasties, sandwiches)
- Seasonal and themed meals (BBQs, cultural nights - Italian, Sushi, Welsh etc)
- Vegetarian and healthy options as standard

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

"Local bands, not too loud.....Make the most of the Welsh culture."

- Live music, film nights, and themed events - Jazz, modern pop
- Cooking workshops (breadmaking, butter making, pickling, local skills)
- Activities for families (bingo, concert, performances, 'Royal Banquet')
- Opportunities for local talent and culture - Twmpath

"The place to be... Something we want more of...."

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

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