



CASE STUDY: PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

PENNARD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Ideas into Action




Vocaleyes



Community engagement at it's best

Pennard Community Council (PCC) represents a population of roughly 2,700 people and is responsible for a range of local services including a community hall, burial ground, playing field and are responsible for several community events.

More than just managing facilities, the role of the community council is to strengthen and bind the community.

Since 2012, PCC has developed a reputation as a proactive community council that pushes engagement. This has been wide ranging and includes the amplification of City and County of Swansea and Welsh Government consultations as well as looking for ways to make the community council more transparent and engaging.

In March 2018, PCC committed £5,000 of their budget to projects suggested directly from the community. In taking this decision, PCC became one of the first councils in Wales to conduct participatory budgeting and prompted a visit from Gower MP Tonia Antoniazzi on 13 April 2018.

One of the first councils in Wales to conduct participatory budgeting.





Community democracy

As part of the community engagement strategy, residents were encouraged to suggest ideas in the project and also rate and debate each other's ideas using a digital democracy platform.

The project was published in local media, which provided a good awareness-generating campaign.

With the project now at the start of its third year it has expanded to two streams. The £5,000 environment stream and now a new £5,000 youth stream.

Over the course of the project so far, 407 people have actively fed back thoughts into how their community council area could be improved, representing over 15% of the electorate.

This level of engagement is unprecedented for the community and represents a positive shift towards a council that is better able to react to people's needs.

The project has drawn 101 ideas from the local community and 4,146 interactions, showing a strong use of the platform to feedback with each active citizen feeding back on an average of over 4 ideas.

Outcomes

As part of the ongoing consultation, Pennard Community Council have looked at popular ideas and worked hard to make them happen.

In some instances the council has funded projects directly as part of the funding streams, in some instances they have engaged with other organisations within the community to make things happen and in some instances it has been a combination of the two.

How the platform works

VocalEyes provided quantitative and qualitative data, ratings (votes) and comments in favour, neutral and against a proposal.



Youth Ideas	Rating
A new Skatepark	4.8
Sports Clubs for Girls and Young Women	4.4
Eco Youth Council at Gower Roundhouse	4.5
Digital Skills - Video Making Workshop	4.2
Multi use games area up the park	4.7
A Youth Community Council	4.8
Youth Cafe	4.6
A social club/cafe for 16yrs plus	5.0
Outdoor Gym Equipment	4.9
Bike & Skateboard Repair Stand & Pump	4.9
Pennard Chess club	4.6
A Covered Gazebo in the Playing Field	4.7
Conversation Cafe	4.9
Online Quiz Night	4.5
Start up a cub / scout group	5.0

Environmental Ideas	Rating
Install drinking fountains	4.4
Dog poo bins at the cliffs/toward castle	4.3
2 Minute Coast Clean	4.5
Litter Pick	4.7
Community solar panel scheme	4.2
Peaceful garden	4.1
Plant More Trees	4.6
Improved road signage by commons	4.6
More bins at Pennard Roundabout	4.2
Compost bins provided by the PCC	4.1
Adder Conservation Boards	5.0
Hanging Baskets	3.5

A new skatepark

The UK are so behind the rest of the world on giving kids recreational spaces. It's no wonder our mental/physical health are in such decline. Let's get it done. Give our kids a boost.

Awesome. Would be amazing if it could happen soon!

Install drinking fountains

As they would need to be "cow proof" how about setting them into a cairn like structure. This would protect the pipe work as well as being aesthetically pleasing. Welsh Government have launched a "refill" scheme along the Coastal path, this would complement that, taking pressure off local businesses at peak times / in fine weather when lots of walkers are active. This could reduce the use of plastic in Gower too.

Sports Clubs for Girls /Young Women

Playing fields can accommodate girls football, rugby, hockey, lacrosse, cricket...loads of possibilities! I also think school PE teachers need to open their minds!

Girls should be able to play all the same sports as boys. my brother plays basketball in school for P.E and I play netball. I hate netball and love basketball.

Improved road signage

I am fully supportive of this idea. There's is pretty much no signage to warn of free roaming animals. It's quite disgusting that highways haven't installed any. This is desperately needed the signs are not visible enough and need replacing. The speed and behaviour of drivers across Fairwood and Cefn Bryn is frightening

Ideas into action

Ideas from the community will be supported and turned into projects.



A new water fountain:

There was good feedback on the idea for a new water fountain, with 54 people voting and an overwhelmingly positive response from local business as well as the wider population, the water fountain became the most popular idea in the environmental projects stream.

PCC partnered with Pennard Stores, a local business, to realize the project. The council committed £3,619.62 to the purchase and installation of the fountain while Pennard Stores provided the location and access to their water supply. Whilst the timing of the completion of the project was unfortunate, coinciding with the start of the Covid pandemic, there was a good reception when it was finally allowed to be opened. It's installation has not only allowed people to refill bottles but has allowed the shop to discontinue single use plastic bottled water.

More dog poo bins across the cliffs and toward the castle:

Whilst the suggested locations of new bins proved to be impractical as the county council would be unable to get vehicles there to empty them, the presence of this idea did motivate the community council to imagine what could be done to mitigate the problem. This inspired a map of local bins with QR codes on all the current locations to let people know where there were other bins if that one was full and also how to contact the county to empty them. This solution was put in at virtually no cost and is helping to mitigate the problem.

Improved road signage on the Gower commons:

While the community council is not in charge of signage, it can magnify various local issues to be better heard by higher tiers of government. The noise created around this campaign was amplified by Vocaleyes and, in turn, by community councillors. The signage on the common has now been improved.

Ideas into action

Ideas from the community will be supported and turned into projects.



Peaceful garden with compost bins:

These were two ideas with a common theme and also sat well with ideas in different topics on the Pennard group. PCC have therefore started making a community garden in partnership with Pennard Primary School. Pennard Primary School provided land for the project and PCC have paid for secure fencing to segregate it from the school in order to comply with safeguarding regulations. The council have now started turning the area into a community garden with rewilded areas and community composting. As a result of the consultation, PCC have secured £12,000 in funding from the European Union in order to progress this project.

2 Minute coast clean with 'litter pick':

This was another case where two projects naturally converged. There is often a demand for litter picking events although their timing is always more difficult to manage. In order to maximise the number of litterpicks and participation, PCC partnered with two local pubs to make equipment available to anybody wanting to do their own litter pick. The Beaufort Arms and The Southgate both agreed to keep equipment on their premises and be responsible for signing it out and in. The community council spent £165.14 on the litter pickers and hoops to be kept there. This has resulted in good publicity for local businesses as well as another facility for local litter picks.



Impact

- 7 admins and 11 editors
- 407 members and 101 ideas
- 3295 ratings, 735 replies and comments
- 161 pledges

4,146

Interactions

51

New projects



Next steps:

Pennard Community Council have seen the huge benefits in a digitised community consultation and are entering their first year with two funding streams; a youth fund as well as the environment fund. With such striking success from the first two years of this project, it is going to be exciting to see what new projects can be developed.

The community garden will become a community feature between the school and community hall. There are discussions about replicating the successful water fountain in another part of the village.

On top of this there are also already some great ideas populating the platform as to what the council can help with for young people. Whether that be a skate park, a chess club or a social club. With a continuing council commitment to engagement, this project will go from strength to strength and although there have been some amazing stories already, the most exciting times lie ahead!