



BYS A BAWD PAWB LLANRWST



Mae drws ym mwrlwm y dre', – o'i agor
Gwelwn graig o gyfle
Fel agor llyfr y bore
A geiriau'r iaith yn ffrwd gre'.

Myrddin ap Dafydd, 2025

Bys a Bawd Pawb Business Plan

February, 2025

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1. Executive Summary

Bys a Bawd is a much-loved Welsh bookshop, located in a traditional shop building in the centre of Llanrwst.

It was the first Welsh bookshop in Wales, and was opened in 1955 by Dafydd and Arianwen Parry, parents of the famous writer, publisher and former archdruid, Myrddin ap Dafydd¹.

It is the only Welsh language bookshop in Conwy, and this year celebrates its 70th anniversary.

Despite huge challenges facing the Welsh book and publishing trade, Bys a Bawd remains profitable.

The sustainability of the business makes Bys a Bawd an important example of a successful Welsh language bookshop. This success makes it an important cultural and literary asset; not just for Llanrwst, but for the whole of Conwy and Wales.

In April 2024, Menter Iaith Conwy organised two public meetings to discuss the idea of launching a community share offer to raise money to buy the shop. Around 50 people attended, with widespread and enthusiastic support for the project.

Following this, a group of ten people came forward to form the board and committee of Bys a Bawd Pawb. The group are a combination of local individuals with a wide range of professional, community and voluntary experience, who are keen to bring new energy and enthusiasm to the shop.

They want to develop Bys a Bawd into a cultural, creative and literary hub, open throughout the day and evening.

It will host events, talks, book signings, and small gigs. There will be space in the shop for members of the community to meet for a coffee, beer, and chat, with activities like a regular book club and literary talks providing a welcome opportunity to socialise.

The project will also offer creative activities for young people and children, including poetry and performance workshops, and storytime sessions.

The meeting room will be updated and renovated for multi-purpose use, including as an artist's studio.

All activities will be bilingual, with Welsh first – and everyone is welcome.

The group are launching a share offer in March 2025 to raise funds to buy the building.

It is thought to be the first ever community share offer set up to purchase a bookshop in Wales.

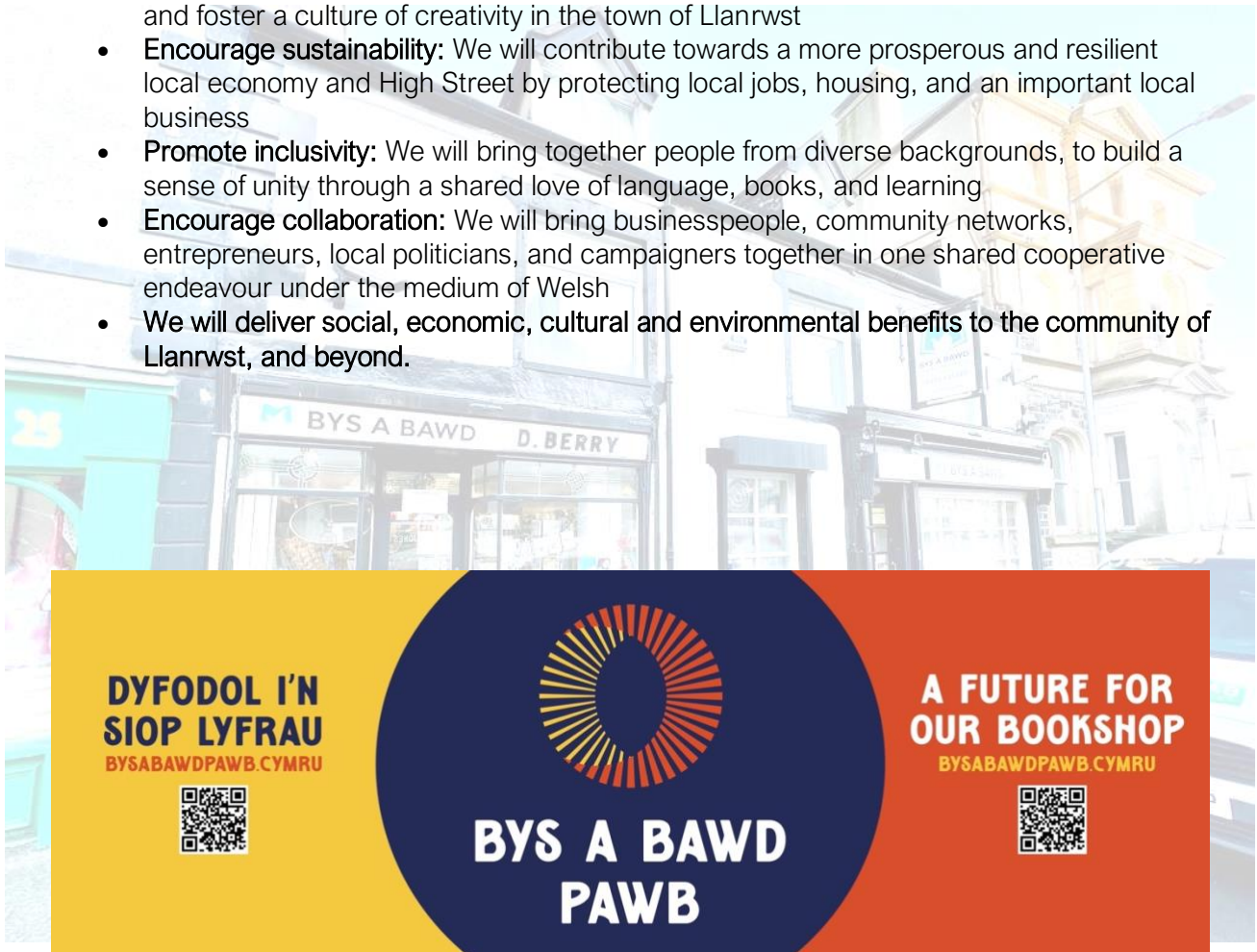
Bys a Bawd Pawb's aim is to:

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=blf7gFR-sGI>

Purchase Llanrwst's Bys a Pawb bookshop and run it as a community-owned business that will provide social, economic and cultural benefits for everyone who lives, works in and visits the town of Llanrwst, while protecting the future of Welsh literature, and the language, for the whole of Dyffryn Conwy and beyond.

Our values are to:

- **Improve health and wellbeing:** We will provide services that our community needs, to improve our wellbeing and sense of belonging
- **Strengthen the culture:** We will promote and share our passion for the Welsh language, its powerful literary traditions, and share them with all
- **Promote and enhance literacy:** We will provide improved access to books and literature, and foster a culture of creativity in the town of Llanrwst
- **Encourage sustainability:** We will contribute towards a more prosperous and resilient local economy and High Street by protecting local jobs, housing, and an important local business
- **Promote inclusivity:** We will bring together people from diverse backgrounds, to build a sense of unity through a shared love of language, books, and learning
- **Encourage collaboration:** We will bring businesspeople, community networks, entrepreneurs, local politicians, and campaigners together in one shared cooperative endeavour under the medium of Welsh
- **We will deliver social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits to the community of Llanrwst, and beyond.**



2. Background to the initiative

The Bys a Bawd shop has been central to the Welsh life of Llanrwst and Dyffryn Conwy for 70 years and is a very important resource for the area.

The building contains a Welsh bookshop on the ground floor, and two flats (one two-bedroom maisonette and the other a one-bedroom flat) on the floors above.

The current owner wishes to retire. In 2023, she put the business, shop and flats up for sale.

When it became clear no-one wanted to buy the asset, the Books Council of Wales contacted Menter Iaith Conwy to ask if they would support a community-led purchase of the business.

In April 2024, Menter Iaith Conwy organised two public meetings to discuss the idea of launching a community share offer to raise money to buy the shop. Around 50 people attended, with widespread and enthusiastic support for the project.

A community benefit company has been established as a vehicle to purchase and run the enterprise. The governing body will be the company's Board and a manager and staff will be employed to conduct the business. Already there have also been promises from volunteers to help in the shop and with other activities.

There is huge potential to grow the already profitable business.

The plan is to re-design the shop space to create a Welsh cultural, creative, and social hub in the heart of Llanrwst, open throughout the day and evening.

It will host events, talks, book signings, and small gigs. There will be space in the shop for members of the community to meet for a coffee, beer, and chat, with activities like a regular book club and literary talks providing a welcome opportunity to socialise.

The project will also offer creative activities for young people and children, including poetry and performance workshops, and storytime sessions. All activities will be bilingual, with Welsh first – and everyone is welcome.

The core purpose of the business – that of a Welsh bookshop - will remain. It is vital this legacy is protected.

The plan is however to offer a wider range of contemporary crafts for sale, supporting local Welsh producers and artists. The range of toys and gifts will be extended, and the shop will sell an even broader range of Welsh books, magazines, and cards, as well as English language books relating to Wales and Welsh subjects.

The tenants who currently live in the flats will continue their tenancy throughout the change of ownership.

There are several spaces in the shop and ground floor area which are ideal for hosting a range of creative, literary, and cultural activities and events that support the teaching of new skills, the development of new creative enterprises, improved health and wellbeing, and social integration and interaction.

Local artists have already shown an interest in using one of the spaces in the building as a studio; this is currently lacking in Llanrwst.

There is plenty of space on the ground floor for configuring the shop to include some space for hosting meetings, events and courses and book launches. The existing kitchen could be used to support a small café bar for members of the community to meet for a coffee and a chat, or to browse while enjoying a panad.

Local brewers Cwrw Nant have expressed an interest in opening a small tap room next to the bookshop.

The profits of the shop and activities will contribute to the sustainability of the project, and of course rents from the flats will also provide a means of ensuring the long-term viability of the social enterprise.

3. The Society

The community has adopted the model of a Community Benefit Society, to be able to raise money through community shares.

The model operates on a not-for-profit basis, and the asset will deliver community benefit objectives, and any surpluses will be reinvested back into the asset and the community to further the intended aims.

Model Rules have been adopted and a Management Committee of ten is in place. The plan is to organise the committee into several sub-committees, responsible for different areas of activity.

Membership of the Society is by purchase of shares or multiples thereof and voting at General Meetings is on a one-member one vote basis.

Shares are available for £1 each – minimum investment is £50, with the maximum £10,000.

The target for the share offer is £230,000. This would cover most of the cost of buying the building and business, as well as the costs of purchase, and the revenue costs of developing the project.

Potential grant funds have already been identified for the renovation and refurbishment of the shop, as well as the cost of covering any shortfall in community share funds.

Bys a Bawd Pawb is keen to have an offer accepted on the building as soon as possible so that they can proceed with the purchase of the building, while developing plans for its renovation.

The Society will continue to run the shop following the purchase. The aim is to secure renovation funding by November 2025, with building works to be completed on the newly renovated shop by Summer 2026.

Since first forming a management board in November 2024, the group have been:

- 
- Working on grant applications
 - Creating a website
 - Registering as a Community Benefit Society
 - Developing the community share offer documents
 - Setting up a bank account
 - Organising a series of awareness raising events
 - Marketing
 - Arranging a valuation and surveys
 - Gathering quotes from architects and other professionals

Advice has been taken from the Plunkett Foundation on the possibility of the Society qualifying for HMRC Advance Assurance of the Share Offer to ensure that investments in the Society's Shares will qualify for Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme.

However, given the flat rental element of the investment, the Society do not qualify for SEIS.

If the Society raise enough money to buy Bys a Bawd, the business will be run by the management board, on behalf of investors. It will employ professional staff but have also been approached by many people who would like to volunteer.

4. Aims & Objectives

Our Core Aim

The purchase of a significant asset in Llanrwst for the benefit of the community, the economy and the Welsh language and culture.

Our Objectives

Objectives go into more detail and explain exactly what needs to be done to reach the aim.

- Ensure an effective and energy-sustainable building
- Operate a viable and profitable business under the Bys a Bawd Pawb brand

- Maintain two flats for affordable rent to local people (definition of local and rental levels to be set in line with Conwy County's Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate²)
- Create a space which is flexible, attractive and welcoming to every member of the community
- Ensure availability and accessibility that meet the community's needs
- Create meaningful and structured opportunities for volunteering and skills development
- Be a fair employer
- Promote Welsh language and literature
- Promote literacy and learning through the medium of Welsh
- Create a lively programme of cultural and creative events and activities to add social and financial value to the whole project, and enhance the lives of all who participate

5. Actions and Timeline

September 2024: Successfully apply for funding to develop and business plan and begin the process of applying for grants to support the development of the share offer, and purchase of the building

November 2024: Formation of a management board and committee

December 2024: Successfully apply for funding from Cwmpas to develop the community share offer, and pay for marketing materials, a valuation and further surveys

January 2025: Apply to register Bys a Bawd Pawb as a Community Benefit Society; apply for a bank account

February 2025: Develop a marketing plan. Launch social media pages, and secure widespread press coverage for the plan across BBC Cymru Fyw, Golwg, and S4C.

February 28th, 2025: Gig held to launch community share offer. People can make pledges to invest.

March 1st, 2025: Community share pledge page is opened. Stundin in Llanwrst for St David's Day.

March 18th, 2025: Share offer Q&A session held in Glasdir Library

April 5th, 2025: Colli'r Plot podcast live recording in Glasdir Library to support Bys a Bawd Pawb share offer

April, 19th, 2025: Application submitted to the WCVA's Social Investment Cymru fund for a loan, in case of any additional funds needed to cover a share offer shortfall

April 19th, 2025: Community share offer closes at midnight.

April 21st, 2025: Negotiations begin with the owner to purchase the building, or use the community share offer funding to secure an offer.

² <https://www.conwy.gov.uk/en/Resident/Benefits-and-grants/Housing-Benefits/Housing-Benefit.aspx>

May 7th, 2025: Bys a Bawd Pawb apply to the Welsh Government's CFP for £300,000 to match fund the share offer investment and support the cost of renovation

To happen within three months of purchasing the building:

- Confirmation of staff and volunteer management system, within the first month
- Coordinate and create a management plan for the employees and volunteers based on regular meetings and an overview system
- Setting up of sub-committees to take responsibility for the different aspects of the business
- Begin drawing up a set of bespoke bilingual policies to guide the governance of the project.

6. The Asset



The shop is run by owner Dwynwen Berry, who purchased it in 2013. The bookshop business creates a small profit of £8,792 (this is based on accounts from 2021/2022).

The flats create an annual profit of £6,484.

Together, this amounts to a net annual profit of £15,276.

In February 2023, due to retirement plans, she put the business and flats up for sale for a total asking price of £395,000.³

Bys a Bawd Pawb have had an independent 'Red Book' valuation done of the building by local surveyor Gareth Thomas.

His independent assessment is that the whole building, business, and the two flats are worth £322,000. The breakdown is below:

³ https://www.rightmove.co.uk/properties/131872217#/?channel=RES_BUY

Component	Value
Two flats	£190,000
Shop	£112,000
Business	£20,000
TOTAL	£322,000

Bys a Bawd Pawb has therefore based its share offer target of £230,000 on this valuation.

This would cover the cost of purchase of the flats and existing business (£210,000), as well as the costs of the purchase itself, and the costs of developing the project to RIBA Stage 3 and applying for planning permission.

Bys a Bawd Pawb is applying for up to £300,000 match funding for the purchase and renovation of the shop from the Welsh Government's Community Facilities Programme.

This application will be submitted by May 7th, 2025, and gives the venture an opportunity to own the building outright whilst also securing enough funding for a renovation programme. The amount of this fund which will be used for the purchase versus the renovation depends entirely on the success of the share offer.

However, with no guarantees that any funding bid will be successful, it is vital we raise as much as possible from the share offer.

Please note that to date the flats and shop have been run as separate individual businesses from each other.

The initiative intends to run the whole building as one business; this is reflected in the financial forecasts.

7. The Market

Books

The shop's latest accounts show that Bys a Bawd is a profitable business, although with a small profit of £8,792 (this is based on accounts from 2021/2022). This is supported by the income from the flats, which create an annual net profit of £6,484.

Book sales account for around 40% of total shop income.

The sustainability of the business makes Bys a Bawd a rare example of a successful Welsh language bookshop. This success makes it an important cultural and literary asset; not just for Llanrwst, but for the whole of Conwy and Wales.

Bys a Bawd's success is particularly notable given that it is an extremely difficult period for everyone involved in the book and publishing trade in Wales.

Constraints on public funding have had a direct impact on the number and range of books purchased for homes, schools and libraries. According to the Books Council for Wales (BCW), cuts to its budget for Welsh language publications amount to 40% in real terms over the last ten years, which has led to a 34% reduction in the number of Welsh books published by the main publishers with grant support.

Publishing Wales, a trade organisation founded in 2022 to represent Welsh publishers, in October 2024 sent an open letter to ⁴ members of the Senedd warning that the industry is on a "financial cliff-edge" after years of funding cuts.

In the letter, members of Publishing Wales said the situation is "critical" after "more than a decade when standstill funding has been outpaced by inflation and increased costs".

In the BCW Annual report 2022/23⁵ it is reported that there is strong Welsh Government support for the book and publishing sector and in particular the new plans to stimulate reading among children and young people are set out. It is also reported that the advances of online publishing can be a challenge for the book industry but also opportunities come with it.

There are certainly opportunities for the booksellers to have an online presence to market and sell books.

BCW also provides services to support bookshops and notes that Welsh book shopping in particular is a social service in their community, by giving Welsh speakers and learners the opportunity and space to meet and discuss community issues in general - not just Welsh literature.

It is also noted that for book shopping to succeed they must be flexible in terms of the books being sold, and creative in terms of their marketing and sales methods and the range of other products available to the buyers.

This is exactly in line with the vision of this initiative. Bys a Bawd Pawb is aware of the challenges, and confident that by regenerating the store, it will survive them.

The Welsh Government has very recently, in February 2025, announced increases in funding to Welsh book publishing.⁶ The total increase for 2025/26 is £392,000.

This funding will be channelled through the Books Council of Wales (BCW) – a supporter of Bys a Bawd Pawb.

Therefore, the campaign to open Bys a Bawd as a community-run bookshop could not have come at a better time.

⁴ <https://www.thebookseller.com/news/publishing-wales-warns-industry-on-financial-cliff-edge-in-open-letter-to-senedd-members>

⁵ <https://llyfrau.cymru/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Annual-Report-and-Accounts-2022-23-24-July-2023-T.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.gov.wales/significant-funding-increase-confirmed-next-chapter-wales-publishing-sector>

The management committee and directors are ready to meet the challenges, by seeking funding to renovate and update the shop into a literary and cultural hub, designed to host events, community activities, and offer a warm welcome to those wanting to enjoy their newspaper or book with a panad or glass of local ale.

By diversifying the range on offer to include some English language books as well as a curated selection of arts and crafts produced by local artists, Bys a Bawd Pawb will increase footfall, and create new income streams to support the shop's programme of community activities.

Toys

According to a 2023 study by Tigh company, the toy industry in the United Kingdom is an important and profitable market, growing steadily every year. Toys and games market revenue went from around four billion pounds in Britain in 2015 to just over 4.7 billion in 2021 and is expected to reach over five and a half billion by 2027.

Other reports which make two important points:

- There is a shift towards buying experience as a gift and so creative toys and games are becoming more appealing.
- Since the pandemic, customers have woken up to the importance of buying local and buying things that are maintainable.

Arts and Crafts Equipment

The art industry has experienced a huge change in recent years which has led to an increase in demand for art supplies. It has led to stimulus in supply and demand for art supplies and materials. Online supply of art materials is expected to expand as it is expected to penetrate the market more.⁷

The Bys a Bawd Pawb shop can take advantage of this by increasing their range.

8. The Competition

There is no other bookshop in Llanrwst. However, there are shops selling Welsh crafts, including the nearby Siop Sioned; we will ensure that the products on sale at Bys a Bawd Pawb do not duplicate their offer.

The new Llanrwst Library at Glasdir is a large reader friendly environment with a flagship children's library.

Opened in 2020, has meeting rooms for hire and has free access to public computers and free Wi-Fi; facilities to print, scan or photocopy documents; a beautifully designed, bespoke children's library, regular advice sessions from Revenues and Benefits staff; use of the

⁷ <https://www.businessresearchinsights.com/market-reports/arts-and-crafts-market-100197>

Macmillan Health Information hub; story time for the under-5s; online taster sessions; and a reading group.

The library has a wide range of books to suit everyone including a health hub with books and information to support physical and mental wellbeing.

Bys a Bawd Pawb will complement what is on offer in the library; offering a more suitable activities for older children and young people, a more informal, catered environment for people to participate in a book club in the evening, as well as book launches and events.

Menter Iaith Conwy also offers meeting rooms for hire, as well as Glasdir Library. Bys a Bawd Pawb will take this into consideration when developing the redesign of the space.

There are several community-based drop-in organisations in Llanrwst; a full duplication analysis of the activities on offer and how Bys a Bawd Pawb will support and complement existing activities and facilities is currently being developed.

9. Community engagement

An online and paper consultation was launched on 10th February 2025. It closes on March 21st.

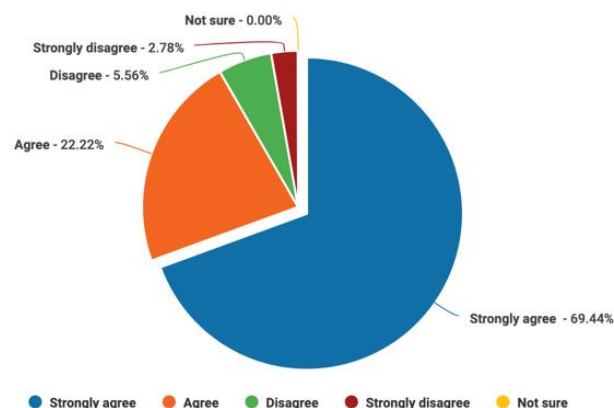
So far, there have been a total of 74 responses; 36 in English; 38 in Welsh.

We anticipate more responses as the share offer progresses.

So far, the response has been overwhelmingly positive, and extremely useful in helping the venture develop an understanding of the activities, programmes, and events they should offer, what the gaps in current provision are, and how important the shop is as a community and educational resource.

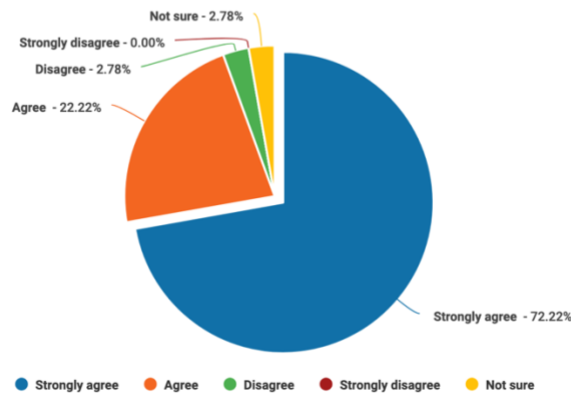
Over 91 percent of those who have responded in English agree that the venture's plan for Bys a Bawd will make the best use of the asset, and provide social, cultural and economic benefits for the whole community.

The plans for Bys a Bawd will provide wide benefits for the whole community (economic, social and/or cultural) and will make the best use of this asset



Almost 95% agree that the campaign to purchase Bys a Bawd as a community asset will create a sense of community pride in Llanrwst, and hope for the future of the Welsh language in Conwy.

The campaign to purchase Bys a Pawd as a community asset will create a sense of community pride in Llanrwst, and hope for the future of the Welsh language in Conwy



Comments include:

This is a golden opportunity to retain and strengthen community links and engagement with Welsh culture and the Welsh language in the town. There is a huge potential for a dynamic team of dedicated people to make it a highly successful community hub.

The perfect setting! And a wonderful way of continuing the community focus

I think it will provide a great resource for the welsh speaking community, which is great, but I don't think it will provide the same opportunities for non fluent Welsh speakers. For example, I'm a freelance art teacher running workshops and a Welsh learner but I wouldn't be able to run groups in Welsh so would not be able to use the space (e.g. hire a room, volunteer, deliver a workshop, get a job) if everything has to be delivered in Welsh. That said, I think it's a good thing to have this, but I think it's important to be honest about the impact on the "whole" community.

Several events are being planned during the share offer to get the views of the community and share the consultation even further.

10. Partnership working

There is much community support for this project, and we have support from the wider area from stakeholders, community networks, and local businesses.

There will be a range of opportunities to volunteer and be part of this project at every stage. Maintaining our social mission, our responsibility to the shareholders and wider community is an important factor governing the success of this project.

Through our initial community questionnaire, around 16 people so far have noted they would be interested in volunteering to help run the venture.

Of these, 11 are Welsh speakers; this is vital to ensure the bilingualism and linguistic integrity of the project is maintained. Of course, all volunteers of all backgrounds are more than welcome.

It is clear from the consultation results so far that there is a real opportunity for Bys a Bawd Pawb to play a key role in the integration of Welsh speakers and non-Welsh speakers in the town.

Many Welsh learners crave the opportunity to practice in a non-formal way; Bys a Bawd Pawb will do this by immersing volunteers and activity participants in the Welsh language in a way that is gentle and inclusive.

We intend to provide volunteering opportunities at every stage, examples of volunteering opportunities include the following:

- Project development stage – committee and sub-groups, stocktaking, painting, decorating
- Running the business – helping in the shop, selling tickets, running the coffee bar, assisting in the management of staffing and contract.
- Promotion of social activity – arranging community events and activities of all kinds to increase participation, opportunities for socialising and to get more people involved.

So far, offers have included engaging local schools in activities, working with children to provide activities, and assisting with the transfer of existing staff to the new venture.

We will also work with local partners to maximise the benefits of this project for all and to ensure that we reach a wider range of people. We already have support from the following organisations and will continue to discuss with various other partners:

The Glasdir Library: One of the committee's members, Nia Wyn Jones, works at the library – providing a key link with this important partner. They are already supporting us by hosting an information stand during the share offer, and we will work together in future to co-produce activities and events.

Llanrwst Town Council: They are highly supportive of the plans and have already produced and paid for leaflets publicising the venture. They are hosting the group as part of the Llanrwst St David's day celebrations and have been working to publicise the share offer digitally. Members of the town council are also members of the Bys a Bawd Pawb management committee.

Menter Iaith Conwy: They led and initiated the formation of Bys a Bawd Pawb, and have provided governance, funding and technical support. They will work in partnership with the shop and use it as a base for Welsh language focussed activities and events.

Conwy Council: Three local members on Conwy County Borough Council are members of the steering group namely: Nia Owen, Aaron Wynne, and Dilwyn Roberts. The venture therefore benefits from their influence and contacts within the town, while maintaining political neutrality.

Gwasg Carreg Gwalch: This local and highly respected printing press is run by Myrddin ap Dafydd, whose parents founded Bys a Bawd back in 1955. He has already offered support for the share offer through the writing of a special commemorative 'englyn', as well as recording a

video for marketing purposes. We will work in partnership to host book launches, literary talks – and to strengthen Llanrwst's reputation as a 'town of letters'.

Books Council of Wales: This organisation created to support Welsh-language publishing first came up with the idea for the share offer after approaching Menter Iaith Conwy to offer their support. Since then, they have held several meetings with committee members, and are currently supporting the digital marketing of the share offer.

Cwrw Nant: The venture has already met with this local, Welsh brewery to discuss the possibility of setting up a 'tap room' in the shop to attract more foot fall and support more evening events. Their ethos of supporting local, Welsh business fits in with Bys a Bwd Pawb's approach.

Local artist Eleri Jones: Eleri has showed interest in hiring the back space as a studio. This is in line with the development of the centre as a cultural and creative hub.

11. Community activities

In our initial community consultation, we have asked the question:

Do you have any ideas as to what activities should be held in Bys a Bawd – or are you interested in working with us to provide an activity or service?

Comments include:

“work with the family centre for kids club ideas; reading club where women/men can get together in the evening, wine night in partnership with amser da, partner with local businesses where possible, open afternoon for parents to come with kids and discounts on books if viable, authors visiting”

“Welsh language classes, movie nights, traditional crafts exhibitions, demonstrations, book club”

The most popular options so far include:

- An evening book club
- Art exhibitions
- Literary talks and book launches
- Kids and young people's book clubs
- Informal Welsh language classes and book reading sessions
- Skills classes in Welsh for young people, such as how to vlog, and basic poetry composition
- Partner with Amser Da to offer book readings and literary evenings with food and drink
- Small gigs – for both children and adults
- Children's book and word-based activity sessions

More ideas will come forward as the consultation progresses, and the venture creates more partnerships and engagement from the wider community.

12. Finances

In the year ending March 2022, accounts show that the shop business generated a net profit, £8,792.

Please note that no owner's salary has been taken from the business.

Below are the gross profit margins generated by items sold in the store:

Item	Gross margin (%)
Books	40
Toys	40
Art tools	20

The rental of the flats shall continue in accordance with the agreements of the tenants.

Flat address	Income (£)	Letting agent fee costs (£)
29a Denbigh Street	3450	
29b Denbigh Street	4170	
Total	7620	1136
TOTAL AFTER COSTS	6484	

The flats

Llanrwst and Dyffryn Conwy in general are no different to the rest of rural Wales in terms of difficulties in creating homes for local people.

There has been a steady demand for the flats at 29 Denbigh Street, and there are currently 1,643 people on housing waiting lists in the county of Conwy.

It is noted that the rents currently charged in the flats, are lower than the levels set by Local Authorities Wales and Rent Smart Wales for paying housing benefit.

When there is a review of the tenancy agreements, or a new agreement is drawn up for a new tenant, the rent will be reviewed and raised.

Current rent figures are used in the financial outlook.

Projections

Based on income and expenditure in the year ending March 2022, accounts show that the shop business generated a net profit of £8,792 and an income from the flats of £6,484.

Based on increased income generated by the renovation of the bookshop and the introduction of a small café/ tap room, as well as an increase in rents in line with Rent Smart Wales recommendations, the income would increase substantially.

Although expenditure would also increase, small grant funding would offset this increase to maintain profitability, which would grow to a stable profit by 2028.

	2026	2027	2028
Total Income	£196,300	£203,600	£220,000
Total Expenditure	£165,515	£200,099	£203,699
Difference (+ / -)	£31,285	£4,501	£16,301

13. Population, demographics and language

At the last Census in 2021 the population of Llanrwst was 3026 people, with 59% speaking Welsh and 47% able to speak, read and write Welsh.

It is interesting to note that the percentage of speakers among young people up to the age of 24 is 71%.

These facts suggest that there is a strong linguistic basis for the business based on the development of a market for Welsh literature and products, and there is a strong need for activities to support children and young people's access to Welsh language books.

This is also evidenced by comments within the consultation, from both English and Welsh speaking parents: *"I been learning Welsh for a few years now and whilst I am not fluent I love visiting the shop for textbooks and a chat. My kids love the books too and when they were younger all the Cyw toys! I was made so welcome as a learner it would be such a mistake to lose this community asset."*

Housing need in Conwy County

Conwy County Borough Council statistics show that 1,643 people are on the waiting list for rental housing, so there is a huge market for the rental sector.

The Economy

Conwy County's economy is largely dependent on agriculture and visitors, with the visitor industry built up mainly along the coast, although attractions such as Zip World and Betws Y Coed's shops attract thousands of visitors down the valley via Llanrwst.

What this split in the economy does is create two markets for goods and experiences – an indigenous and stable market based on the agriculture industry and a seasonal visitor market.

Valley businesses can take advantage of both markets when planning their goods and experiences.

14. The need for the project

The Books Council of Wales has said that, at a time when Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) figures show that literacy in Wales is significantly lower than in the other UK nations⁸, “the importance of a Wales-based literature, where children and adults can see themselves reflected in books, cannot be under-estimated”.

The Council also raised concerns that book sales to schools and libraries have suffered due to austerity measures and the cost-of-living crisis and warned that “children’s access to books in Wales is becoming ever more limited”.

Critics have urged the Welsh Government to restore the level of book and publishing funding to what it was in 2010, and for it to be protected for the future, saying that not doing so would jeopardise the Government’s efforts in their Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers strategy.⁹

Bys a Bawd Pawb, therefore, is a venture that neatly supports the fulfilment of several educational, cultural and linguistic strategies and policies.

By offering a service that supports enhanced literacy, Welsh learning, and a vibrant Welsh language publishing industry, Bys a Bawd Pawb is an important and much-needed project for the whole of the county of Conwy, and beyond.

Community Council

Llanrwst Town Council supports this initiative as it aligns with some of the Council's main objectives, which are:

- To protect, enhance and enrich quality of life and opportunities for those we serve
- To protect and promote the character and identity of our local town and environs, our rich culture, heritage and language
- To represent effectively the needs, wants and aspirations of those we serve and, to the extent we can, to turn those desires into reality.

⁸ <https://research.senedd.wales/research-articles/how-did-wales-perform-in-pisa-2022/>

⁹ <https://nation.cymru/news/government-urged-to-restore-funding-to-welsh-language-publishers/>

- Ensure that future local place and development plans and service changes or developments proposed by other bodies reflect the needs and circumstances of our community and its constituent neighbourhoods

There is one member of the Town Council on the management committee.

County Council

Conwy Council implements a cultural strategy: 'Creating Conwy' - the cultural strategy driver for Conwy County Borough Council, 2021 – 2026.

One of the cornerstones of this strategy is to protect and nurture the Welsh culture of the county, and therefore this initiative fits perfectly with this objective, specifically by coupling business and economy development with the Welsh language.

Regional – Ambition Board

The Welsh language and Welsh culture are seen as an important part of the objectives of the North Wales Ambition Board's aim to create a progressive and sustainable economy in the area. This initiative fulfils this objective, by using the Welsh language as the basis to strengthen the local economy of Llanrwst and the area.

National - Well-being of Future Generations Act

The initiative is in line with two of the themes of the act, namely;

- Prosperous Wales - this initiative supports the economic development of the area by running a successful business, and contributes towards the cultural confidence of the population.
- Wales and a vibrant culture where the Welsh language thrives - the continuation of the services offered by Bys a Bawd and the additional development of the cultural hub will undoubtedly be a linguistic asset to the town and area.

15. Governance, Management and Staffing

Governance

Bys a Bawd Pawb is registered by the Financial Conduct Authority as a Community Benefit Society (CBS).

A CBS is governed by a Board of Directors elected by the members at a General Meeting, usually an annual general meeting, but could also be an Extraordinary General Meeting.

There are currently ten board members.

The Board is responsible for the legal operation of the company and business. It is a strategic body that implements the vision behind the company and establishes policies and protocols for running the business efficiently and successfully.

The Board meets weekly and receives reports from staff relating to financial matters and business development.

The plan is to create sub-committees to scrutinise specific aspects of the business and to make the best use of the directors' experiences and skills. It may be an option for the Board to establish the following subsidiaries:

Building – supervising the structural developments

Business & staffing - scrutinising the shop's business activities

Finance – to monitor the business accounts

Marketing – overseeing the marketing tips outlined in the Marketing Plan

Events – to help organise activities and events as described in the Business Plan.

The subcommittees could co-elect other company members or supporters of the initiative to add expertise and skills to their work.

Management

The role of the Manager is essential, not only to ensure that the business is run efficiently, but to be a liaison to the committee.

The role of the committee is strategic and not responsible for day-to-day management. However, there are occasions when volunteers are needed to ensure the business runs smoothly, and these are mainly committee members. This is welcome, but it should not be the norm. Volunteers will be recruited and, where appropriate, trained to support the existing paid staff in their duties, and to support the community events and activities.

Staffing

Currently, there are three staff employed to run the shop. One is a full-time Manager on a £30,000 salary, including oncosts and pension. There are also two part-time jobs at a salary of £9,833 each, including pension and oncosts.

The total cost of staff wages was £49,666 at the end of March 2022.

The plan is to continue to employ these staff in the shop, and arrangement will be made for the transfer of their pensions to the new venture.

As stated previously, there will also be opportunities for volunteers to contribute to the shop's work and events organised at the cultural hub, which will contribute significantly to the financial sustainability of the whole project.

An agent is currently appointed to manage all aspects of letting and inspecting the flats including letting for tenants, collecting rents, and ensuring all landlord legal requirements are met.

16. The Management Committee



Bys a Bawd Pawb is registered by the Financial Conduct Authority as a Community Benefit Society.

The Society exists to carry on business for the benefit of the community and is committed to:

- trading for the benefit of the community, and not for anyone's private benefit
- retaining profits and applying profit to advance the Society's Purpose

Bys a Bawd Pawb is subject to the rules of the organisation and the Management Committee will manage the affairs of the Society.

This Committee consists of ten people, the management committee are as follows:

Tecwyn Ifan (Secretary)

An influential Welsh singer and songwriter from Glanamman, Carmarthenshire, Wales. A Baptist minister in Pembrokeshire for many years, he was a member of the group Perlau Taf during the 1960s and 1970s and, in 1972, formed a band with Cleif Harpwood, Iestyn Garlick and Phil Edwards ("Phil Small").

For a period of five years, Tecwyn was Chief Officer with Menter Iaith Pembrokeshire. He was a member of the Conwy Language Initiative Committee from 2007 to 2020, and a founder and leader of the Urdd Household in Pontrydfendigaid from 1981 to 1988. He established and led Aelwyd yr Urdd Fynnon Wen, Pembrokeshire, between 1977 to 1981, and established papur bro 'Cardi Bach' from 1977 to 1981.

"I believe that losing a Welsh bookshop in Llanrwst would be a tremendous loss for the area. The Bys a Bawd Pawb project deserves all the support, which is why I am involved in the scheme."

I am confident that BaBP has the potential to gain renewed confidence in the Welsh language especially among the youth of the Conwy Valley, giving them the opportunity to take possession and protect it as our nation's most valuable treasure.

I also hope that Bys a Bawd Pawb can develop into an important and valuable centre in Llanrwst. It has the potential to be a Community Hub, similar to what has been established in a number of towns such as Llanrwst over the past few years.

"We really need a location that is the centre of everything Welsh here."

Nia Owen (Director)

A second language Welsh teacher in secondary schools for 28 years before changing career and becoming a County Councilor for Llanrwst, Llanddoged and Maenan after the County Council elections in 2022. Nia has been the chair of the Conwy Valley Cathedral Eisteddfod for three years and is a member of the eisteddfod committee. She is also the vice-chair of the Llanrwst Country Show, and the vice-chair of Menter Iaith Conwy, and treasurer and one of the founders of CoRwst, the mixed choir of Dyffryn Conwy. She is also a volunteer with Nant Conwy Rugby Club.

"A Welsh bookshop has been in the town of Llanrwst all my life and has been part of my experience of shopping here since I was a little girl. It is so important that such a shop continues to be a prominent presence in the town to maintain and support the Welsh language, our culture and our traditions. In fact, by now, Bys a Bawd is the only such shop in Conwy County, and it is so important to so many people.

In a world that has increasingly gone online, shops like Bys a Bawd are so important as a place to meet others, to discuss literature and Welsh issues, to ask for advice and much more. My hope regarding the project is mainly that we have a cultural centre in Llanrwst that can offer a number of different services and experiences hand in hand with the special library we have here in the town. At the moment, Bys a Bawd is essentially just a shop, but it can be much more. We must also remember the two flats which provide extremely important dwellings in a town where rental properties are scarce. Our intention would be to protect the two flats from becoming Airbnb type holiday homes, something we really don't need here in Llanrwst."

Nia Wyn Jones

Brought up on a farm in Ysbyty Ifan, she worked most of her professional life as a Community Librarian at Mold and now lives in Penmachno and works part time at Llanrwst Library. From 1996 – 2017 she was responsible for purchasing Welsh and Welsh interest stock for Flintshire Libraries. She has experience of volunteering in the third sector as secretary for Menter Iaith Sir y Fflint 1998 to 2018 and continues in her role as secretary of the Daniel Owen Festival.

Aaron Wynne

Conwy County Councilor for Llanrwst, Llanddoged and Maenan since 2017. Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure services for a period of three years.

Member of the Board of Governors of Bro Gwydir Primary School and Dyffryn Conwy High School since 2017, Chair of the Conwy Valley Flood Partnership Forum, and Citizens Advice Trustee since 2020

“Bys a Bawd is important to the town of Llanrwst and the wider community here in the Conwy Valley. Now, this is the only Welsh bookshop in Conwyshire. We need to do everything we can to ensure its continuity and its ability to serve the residents of the area. If we want to see the number of Welsh speakers in the county rise once again, we need shops and initiatives similar to this. It is vitally important to support the goal of one million Welsh speakers by 2050. I hope this project can save the only Welsh bookshop in Conwyshire from having to close its doors. Bys a Bawd is a cultural boost for the town of Llanrwst and the wider community. There is room and there is a need for a business like this in this area.”

Llyr ap Glyn

Llyr has worked for various organisations, mainly advising on the law. Having worked for the Citizens Advice charity in Llanrwst, he has developed an appreciation for the challenges people face.

He has also worked in business taxation, developing an appreciation of the challenges facing high street businesses. More recently has been working for the Welsh Government dealing with new legislation, and currently working as a Legal Adviser in the magistrates' courts. He is a Governor at Ysgol Bro Gwydir, and has been volunteering with a number of events in the town over the past year, eg G Dafydd ap Siencyn festival, Town Council Events and Llanrwst Country Show. Llyr has been a member of a number of committees and events over the years, eg Cylch Meithrin, National Eisteddfod Fundraising Committee, Young Farmers Club, G festival Gwydir.

“Bys a Bawd bookshop is an important part of the High Street in Llanrwst. Like many similar towns, Llanrwst has seen the High Street decline over recent years. Losing Bys a Bawd would mean that there is less choice available in the town for books, cards, stationery etc. I fear that this would lead to fewer people shopping in the town, and possibly change shopping patterns, meaning that shoppers travel to more populated areas, leading to a further decline in the high street in Llanrwst. The Shop is also an important part of the town's Welsh culture, as the staff are all bilingual, and a number of unique products are available in the shop which are such an important part of Welsh culture, eg Magazines, Papurau Bro, and Books of all kinds.

“There is also an incredible opportunity to develop; carrying out activities, working with the community and responding to what the needs of the town are. My hope as part of this initiative is that we can continue to provide two properties within the town center to let at a reasonable price, whilst at the same time generating additional income to support the initiative.”

17. Project costs

Purchase of the Building

The current sale price of £390k is significantly higher than the valuation of £322k.

The group therefore will use the share offer funds as a 'deposit' to secure an offer, once negotiations formally begin.

The purchase will be funded in the first instance from the sale of community shares.

If there is a shortfall, the balance of the purchase price could be met by a proportion of the Community Facilities Grant fund, to which the Society has already been invited to apply.

The group has also been invited to apply for a WCVA Social Investment Cymru loan, which could also cover the shortfall in any share offer, although the preference is not to do this, and use grant funding and share offer funds to purchase the building.

As there are no guarantees that any funding bid is successful, it is vital that the Society raise as much as possible in community shares.

The Society expect that the cost of purchase, including legal fees and surveys, could run to around £5,000.

The share offer target is £230,000, enough to cover the purchase of the flats and business, additional costs, and the costs of developing the project to RIBA Stage 3.

Running costs

The shop's latest accounts show an annual profit of £8,792.

The net rental income from the flats is £6,484 a year, funds which would be used to support the overall financial sustainability of the whole venture.

These figures lay strong financial foundations for the enterprise and reflect its potential for growth.

Grant funding sources

The purchase will be funded through a combination of grants (the Welsh Government Community Facilities Programme), the raising of community shares, and if a loan is required, from WCVA's Social Investment Wales fund (this is repayable at an interest rate of 6%).

Revenue costs already secured:

Cost	Fund	Amount
Business plan and CFP first stage grant application	Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)	£10,000
Development of community share offer, valuation, marketing materials and printing costs, developing CFP grant application and WCVA grant application, event costs	Perthyn Fund	£10,000

TOTAL	£20,000
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Revenue costs to be secured:

Cost	Amount
Architects fees RIBA Stages 1 - 3	£5100
Measured survey	£1550
Legal fees	£2000
Insurances	£1000
Quantity Surveyor cost estimate	£900
Structural, asbestos, timber and damp surveys	£1900
Planning permission fees	£648
VAT advice + accountancy fees	£2000
TOTAL	£15,098
VAT @ 20%	£3,019.60
TOTAL	£18,117.60

Capital funding to be secured:

Cost	Sum	Funding Source
Shop purchase	£112,000	CFP funding
Renovations	£100,000 +	CFP funding
Flats + business purchase	£210,000	Community shares
TOTAL	£422,000	

The Business Plan as described here assumes that our efforts to raise sufficient funding from a range of sources are successful.

If they are not, the plan will be scaled back, and the renovation will be halted or scaled back.

The big strength of this plan is that the business is already running, is profitable – and can continue running with no investment needed once the community buys the building.

At an appropriate point, and before major expenditure is incurred, (above and beyond the actual purchase of the premises), a finalised plan, based on funding which has been secured, will be put to the members for approval.



18. Appendices

18.1: Financial projections (based on 2021/2022 Bys a Bawd accounts)

18.2: Red Book Valuation

