

Felindre Welfare Hall and adjacent fields – an important social and recreational resource

Feasibility study

Contact

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Executive Summary

Mawr Community Council and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee are exploring opportunities to expand upon facilities and services around Felindre Welfare Hall and adjacent fields as an important social and recreational resource for local communities.

Led by The means the feasibility study has sought to identify and refine emerging ideas and consider how these can be developed in a complementary and cohesive proposition.

Chapter 1 describes the study brief, broader approach and project summary. Given the starting point for the study, its aims have focussed more on undertaking a preliminary analysis and form of business case to identify the perceived gaps / demand, solutions / options, preferred option(s) and implementation approach.

Chapter 2 outlines the concept proposition and site review, summarising the place characteristics, features and assets and the local development policies.

Felindre is a rural village situated to the north of the County of Swansea and c.7miles (11km) north of the city centre.

Felindre Welfare Hall and fields are located in the heart of Felindre, adjacent to the B4489 which runs north/south from the A48 and M4 (J46) to Felindre where it then diverges to roads north to Garnswllt and West to Pontarddulais. The site is c. 1.5 miles (<1 mile in a direct line) west of the Lower Lliw Reservoir.

The site consists of the Felindre Welfare Hall, MUGA, playing fields, Sally's Way trail and woodland and a small field / scrub land.

The study area is owned by Mawr Community Council including Sally's Way trail and woodland (which was given to the community by a local farmer in memory of his daughter).

Felindre is classed as a Key Village (one of 18 in the county) and is subject to particular development policies described in 'CV 1: Key Villages' within the Swansea Local Development Plan 2010-2025. Key Villages are considered suitable for accommodating appropriate small-scale development, including new homes, community facilities and sustainable enterprises.

Other than Sally's Way the study area and proposals are within the village boundary. No site-specific proposals are identified within the village boundary.

Part of the study area is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation – this follows the river Lliw and encompasses Sally's Way trail and woodland. A section of the trail and woodland and part of the playing fields are within NRW Flood Zones 2 and 3. The study area is close to a section of Ancient Woodlands.

In rural areas, proposals for sustainable tourism and sustainable recreation will be supported where they seek to conserve and enhance the County's natural heritage and reinforce vibrant rural communities (TR 1: Tourism, Recreation and Leisure Development).

The **Local context** is discussed in **Chapter 3**, identifying the local background, strategic drivers and baseline conditions as well as recreation, outside activities and tourism.

Felindre is situated in Mawr which is the county's joint least densely populated ward. Mawr, comprises largely open, upland green space, apart from the villages of Felindre, Craig Cefn Parc, Garnswllt and the hamlets of Rhydypany, Salem and Cwmcerdinen. The remainder comprises mainly scattered farm developments.

The area has not seen population growth during 2015-2020. However, birth and death rates since then (ONS, 2020) would suggest that there has been recent growth. Anecdotally, in Felindre, the increase in young families moving into the area since the pandemic has resulted in local population growth.

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation highlights two domains that are of concern for Mawr. Its 'Access to services' domain is ranked 2nd most deprived in Swansea and 128th in Wales - this is within the 10% most deprived in the country and reflects the area's rural location and distance from amenities. The 'Access to services' domain captures deprivation as a result of a household's inability to access a range of services considered necessary for day-to-day living, both physically and online. Its 'Physical Environment' is within the 50% most deprived in the country and is ranked 36th most deprived in Swansea and 80th in Wales. The

'Physical Environment' domain measures factors in the local area that may impact on the wellbeing or quality of life of those living in an area.

Of importance to Felindre in terms of outdoor recreational activities and trails is Visit Wales' year of the trail (2023) and Swansea Council's aspiration to provide further support to northern wards to spread the benefits of tourism and relieve some of the pressures in the southern areas during peak periods.

Chapter 4 details the primary research and consultation undertaken for this study. Several phases of engagement were implemented to ensure that proposals respond to the needs of residents and visitors and that the community is aware of and can help shape them.

Firstly, emerging ideas, informed by the council and committee, were identified for further development. The intention was to consider how these could be developed in a complementary and cohesive proposition. The ideas included:

- Felindre Welfare Hall – additional facilities and services
- Playing fields – additional offering
- Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) – additional uses
- Sally's Way trail and woodland – reinstatement and forest school activities
- Children's play area – new addition
- Farmers market / vending machine

Secondly, a community survey was produced to gauge views on the project ideas and identify any others.

Thirdly, hard copy leaflets were produced and distributed within Felindre with the support of Mawr Community Council and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee to promote the survey and a drop-in session.

Fourthly, a children's survey was conducted in December 2022 to identify what types of equipment children would like in a park / playground.

During these discussions and alongside comments received through the survey a real interest has been conveyed from the community about what is needed in the area and the important social and recreational role that these proposals can play.

Opportunities, development principles and options are described in **Chapter 5**. Key quantitative and qualitative issues, challenges and opportunities arising from the socio-economic profile, literature research and discussions with project partners and locals has been interpreted into a SWOT analysis. This has informed the 'Market' opportunity, development principles and comparison of development options – enabling a rationale, operational / delivery aims and outcomes to be compared in order to maximise strengths and opportunities, address weaknesses and mitigate the impact of threats.

The research, consultation and site assessment demonstrate strong support for further development of the community resource to more fully meet 'community' need, address gaps in provision and improve the maintenance of Sally's Way trail and woodland.

Three levels of intervention / development options were compared in terms of scale and form:

- Option one: Baseline – continue as is;
- Option two: Improving facilities as an important social and recreational resource for Felindre;
- Option three: An important social and recreational resource with wider visitor market appeal.

A matrix was applied to each option to enable objective and comparable assessment. This consisted of eleven criteria based upon Mawr Community Council's and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee's aspirations, community need and development principles.

The highest scoring option by a significant margin was Option two: Improving facilities as an important social and recreational resource for Felindre with a weighted score of 79.50. This option fully meets 'community' need as identified by partners, consultation and primary research in this study, provides for needs of community and changing demographics, addresses gaps in provision for families and young children in particular children's playground, improves the maintenance of Sally's Way trail, woodland and habitats to create points of interest and attract more wildlife / biodiversity and proposals can improve the area's low 'Access to services' ranking (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation).

While each proposal can stand alone and has benefits for particular demographics of the community the greatest impact will be seen through realising a complementary package of proposals that fully utilise the community resources (facilities and services) and appeal to a broad range of users.

Chapter 6 outlines **delivery, finance and funding**. Mawr Community Council would be the natural lead for the development phases drawing upon partner support and expertise as necessary. The council has committed to ongoing revenue funding of both a Grants Officer and a Bio-diversity Project Co-ordinator. The council also benefits from the significant input of time and resource on a voluntary basis from the local community in the form of local councillors and the Felindre Welfare Hall Committee. It has a successful track record of securing funds, delivering projects and services and it owns the study area / facilities and is responsible for delivering a range of existing services.

The single biggest risk factor in being able to deliver the proposals is securing the necessary capital resource. A Funding Strategy will need to be agreed to provide an overview of actions, timescales and possible funding sources/approaches to achieve the preferred option. Several funding sources have been identified for further investigation:

- UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) – Swansea Council is regional lead authority for South West Wales
- Brilliant Basics (Visit Wales / Business Wales)
- Swansea Council Tourism Grant
- Mynydd y Gwair Wind Farm Community Fund
- The Welsh Water Community Fund

Summary conclusions and key recommendations are described in **Chapter 7**. Building upon the analysis and reviewing the development principles and development options has informed 4 recommendations.

Recommendation 1 – The preferred option ‘**Improving facilities as an important social and recreational resource for Felindre**’ should be pursued.

Recommendation 2 – Proposals should be developed and presented as a **complementary package that fully utilise the community resources (facilities and services) and appeal to a broad range of users**.

Recommendation 3 – **Mawr Community Council should be the lead for the development phases** drawing upon partner support and expertise as necessary.

Recommendation 4 – A **Funding Strategy** should be agreed to provide an overview of actions, timescales and possible funding sources/approaches to achieve the preferred option. Several funding sources should be further investigated with a view to submitting applications for the necessary capital resources.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Study brief and broader approach

The extension of the Rural Development Plan and funding package provides an opportunity to address some of the issues and challenges facing the northern rural wards in the City and County, particularly in Mawr, Llangyfelach, Pontarddlais and Penclawdd.

Over the past four months, The means in partnership with Planning Solutions Consulting, has been undertaking a series of feasibility studies on behalf of the Swansea Rural Development Partnership to support sustainable community regeneration in northern rural Swansea. Although different in terms of required outcomes, a common methodology has been applied across feasibility studies for each area, which will enable them to have a platform to apply for funding. This is summarised in the chart below.



Figure 1: Common methodology

In terms of the feasibility studies:

- The commission started with a mobilisation workshop to discuss the background and key issues, collect relevant information, confirm key stakeholder/partner contact details and refine and finalise the full work programme.
- A detailed Engagement Plan has been implemented for each of the four area to ensure that local community groups and key stakeholders have been involved in the feasibility work.
- The feasibility studies are founded on evidence. Each study has involved an analysis of need, opportunity and targeting in the form of an analysis and profile with appropriate econometric analysis and market demand assessment for each area.
- The output has been a range of options around the development opportunities and recommendations regarding the way forward.

Each study area were at different stages of progress – with some having a particular focus already agreed, some were well on their way to determining a preferred approach and others initially having a broader scope with a need to agree upon a specific area of interest. The intention was for the more progressed studies to test the rationale, produce several options and agree upon a preferred option. For others, to identify a need, a defined area and scope this out with a narrative that leads to identified projects. A core feature of the studies has been to align with the LDS aims, objectives and One Planet vision.

1.2. Felindre – project summary

At the time of commissioning, Mawr had a broader scope. The initial period of work was intended to identify with Mawr Community Council what should be included in the feasibility – what would benefit the ward and garner interest and support for future funding opportunities. The scope of the study was to then gain approval from Swansea Council, as the contracting authority, to ensure the aims and objectives of the commission’s funding are followed. Given the starting point for the study, its **aims have focussed more on undertaking a preliminary analysis and form of business case to identify the perceived gaps / demand, solutions / options, preferred option(s) and implementation approach.**

Through consultation with Mawr Community Council, Felindre was agreed as the study area – specifically the Welfare Hall, its grounds and adjacent fields. Services and facilities would be aimed predominantly at the local community with some opportunity for the inclusion of neighbouring areas and attracting visitors through the playing fields and nearby trails. A key partner in informing the study and realising aspirations for the area is the Felindre Welfare Hall Committee. They became integral in identifying and shaping proposals.

2. Concept proposition and site review

2.1. Proposition

Mawr Community Council and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee are exploring opportunities to expand upon facilities and services around Felindre Welfare Hall and adjacent fields as an important social and recreational resource for local communities.

Led by The means the feasibility study has sought to identify and refine emerging ideas and consider how these can be developed in a complementary and cohesive proposition. The emerging ideas include:

- Felindre Welfare Hall – additional facilities and services
- Playing fields – additional offering
- Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) – additional uses
- Sally’s Way trail and woodland – reinstatement and forest school activities
- Children’s play area – new addition
- Farmers market/vending machine

2.2. Site review – place characteristics, features and assets

Felindre is a rural village situated to the north of the County of Swansea and c.7miles (11km) north of the city centre. Felindre was formerly within the Mawr ward and is part of the wider Welsh Assembly and UK Parliamentary Constituency of Gower. One of 39 community areas in Swansea and one of 24 active councils – Mawr Community Council.

It has three shops and a public house; the Shepherds Country Inn. The nearby Lower Lliw Reservoirs are a popular venue for walking and fishing. The Welsh speaking primary school in the village closed in 2019 and has been redeveloped into a private facility for children with learning difficulties.

In 2006 Felindre played host to the National Eisteddfod on the grounds of the former steelworks. At its height in the 1970’s Felindre works employed c.2,500 people and was producing 490,000 tonnes of tinsplate per annum. Following a review of tinsplate plants within the South Wales division and the closure of several other works Felindre was wound down and closed in 1989.

Felindre Welfare Hall and fields are located in the heart of Felindre, adjacent to the B4489 which runs north/south from the A48 and M4 (J46) to Felindre where it then diverges to roads north to Garnswllt and West to Pontarddulais. The site is c. 1.5 miles (<1 mile in a direct line) west of the Lower Lliw Reservoir.

The site consists of the Felindre Welfare Hall, MUGA, playing fields, Sally’s Way trail and woodland and a small field / scrub land.

The site is on a hillside. The topography descends from south to north with the field / scrub land at the highest elevation. The Hall is raised above the MUGA and leads via a short path to the playing fields which have been levelled and have previously been used for football matches.

Two surfaced car parks are on-site with surface paths joining them to the facilities. One of which is adjacent to the Hall, encompassing its front (to the north) and side (to the west) adjoining the raised field / scrub land next to the main road. The second fronts (to the west of) the playing fields and is accessed via a path which runs parallel with (to the north of) the multi-use games area. The second car park experiences isolated incidents of anti-social behaviour on some evenings.

The study area is owned by Mawr Community Council including Sally’s Way trail and woodland (which was given to the community by a local farmer in memory of his daughter).

Felindre Welfare Hall

The building footprint is approximately 360m² (40m long by 9m wide) and comprises an entrance / foyer area, lounge, kitchen, main hall with stage, two smaller spaces / office space, meeting space (formerly a club room) and changing / shower rooms.

The Hall is available for hire for parties, meetings, and events and holds weekly events / sessions:

- Monday: Pilates 6.00pm-7.00pm
- Tuesday: Old Age 2.00pm-4.30pm Every fortnight

- Wednesday: Sewing Club 6.00pm -8.00pm
- Thursday: Warm Space Initiative 12.00-2.00pm, Bingo 7.00pm-9.30pm
- Friday: Play/Youth Club 5.30pm-7.00pm

Multi-Use Games Area

To the north west of the Hall. The MUGA has been laid to hard standing with markings and facilities suitable for football, basketball, netball and hockey. The pitch is fenced and floodlit.

Playing fields

The fields are grassed and well maintained. They have been levelled and are suitable for sports activities such as football.

Sally's Way trail and woodland

The trail leads from the car park next to the playing fields, across the river Lliw (designated a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation), through woodland to the former primary school Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Felindre (now a private facility for learning difficulties). The trail is overgrown and not fully walkable.

Field / scrub land

Unused land to the south west of the Hall and adjacent to the main road. Overlooking the rest of the site the steep ground is edged by wooden fencing and trees.



Figure 2: Felindre Welfare Hall and adjacent fields – area mapping / visualisation



Felindre Welfare Hall (from main road)



Felindre Welfare Hall (from Sally's Way)



Field / scrub land (from Hall)



MUGA (from main road)



MUGA



Field / scrub land



Playing fields



Sally's Way (entrance and sign)



Sally's Way



Felindre Welfare Hall (entrance)



Kitchen (centre of building)



Lounge (right of building)



Changing / shower rooms (far left)



Spare room (left of building)



Main hall (centre / left of building)

Figure 3: Felindre Welfare Hall and adjacent fields – photography / visualisation

2.3. Local development policies

The Swansea Local Development Plan 2010-2025 (adopted on the 28th February 2019) forms the statutory development plan for Swansea Council. Together with the national plan (Future Wales: National Plan 2040) it is used as the primary material consideration to inform decisions on planning applications and development proposals. The LDP consists of a written statement and proposals maps which set out the full range of plan policies and proposals to achieve “a positive approach to managing and promoting growth, and to deliver the supporting infrastructure required to underpin the transformative change that Swansea is anticipated to experience as the city at the heart of the Swansea Bay Region”.

Felindre – Key Village

Felindre is classed as a Key Village (one of 18 in the county) and is subject to particular development policies described in ‘CV 1: Key Villages’. Key Villages are considered suitable for accommodating appropriate small-scale development, including new homes, community facilities and sustainable enterprises. Development at Key Villages must ensure that the proposal:

- Is located within the defined settlement boundary, as shown on the Proposal Map;
- Sympathetically integrates with the surrounding natural and built environment, taking into account the unique rural character of the village and the quality of the surrounding landscape and seascape;
- Protects important rural views and vistas;
- Does not have a suburbanising effect;
- Would not result in the loss of natural heritage or valuable Green Infrastructure, or otherwise harm heritage assets; and
- Utilises previously developed land and/or redundant buildings where possible.

Other than Sally’s Way the study area and proposals are within the village boundary. No site-specific proposals are identified within the village boundary (see map below). The village boundary is delineated in green. It is close to a designated renewable and low carbon energy area (light purple). It is adjacent to a swathe of ‘limestone, sand and gravel and sandstone categories’ located across the north of the county (yellow/orange shaded area).

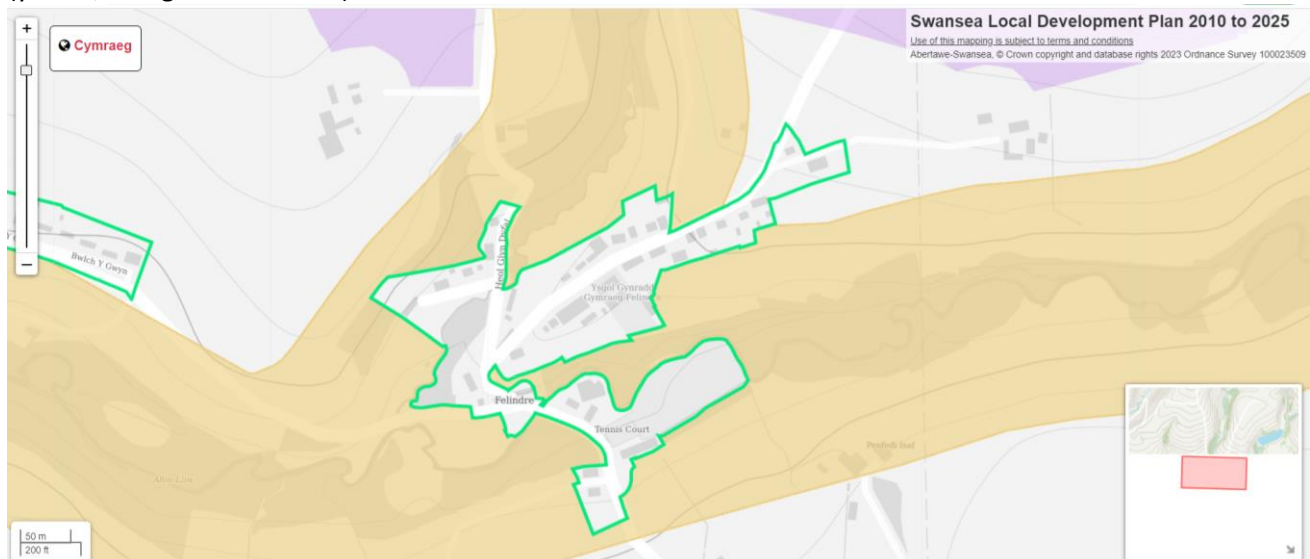


Figure 4: Swansea LDP 2010-2025 proposals map (Felindre)

Part of the study area is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (green diagonal lines, map below) – this follows the river Lliw and encompasses Sally’s Way trail and woodland. A section of the trail and woodland and part of the playing fields are within NRW Flood Zones 2 and 3 (blue horizontal and purple vertical lines). The study area is close to a section of Ancient Woodlands (green hatched). These designations are determined by other ‘mechanisms or bodies’ and are not included in the LDP Proposals Maps.

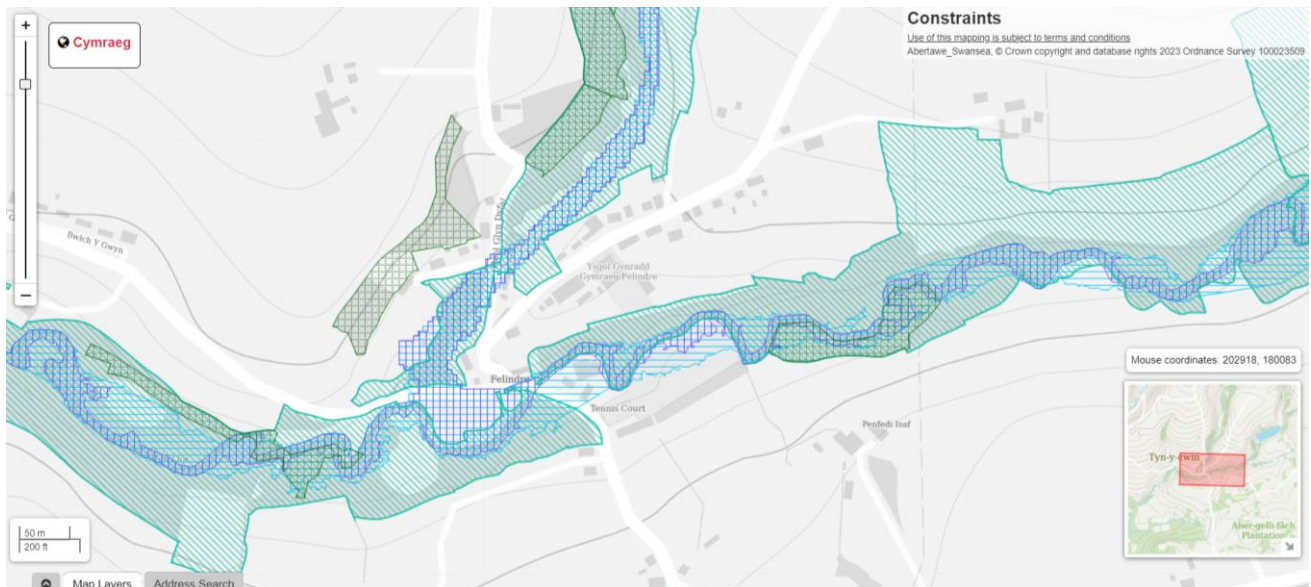


Figure 5: Constraints and issues map (Felindre)

Tourism and Recreation in rural areas

In rural areas, proposals for sustainable tourism and sustainable recreation will be supported where they seek to conserve and enhance the County's natural heritage and reinforce vibrant rural communities (TR 1: Tourism, Recreation and Leisure Development).

The Greater North West (GNW) Zone and Strategic Development Areas (SDAs)

The GNW encompasses former industrial communities such as Gorseinon and Pontarddulais, which have become primarily dormitory settlements served by large District Centres.

A number of sites have been allocated historically for employment purposes, but not yet developed for a variety of reasons, including the Felindre strategic site.

The selected growth strategy within the Swansea LDP proposes the creation of a limited number of sustainable new neighbourhoods at SDAs within, or close to the existing urban area. SDAs are considered by the Local Planning Authority as having the greatest potential to contribute to the plan's vision and strategic objectives and deliver well-being and sustainable development.

Opportunities for settlement growth have been identified where it is supported by infrastructure provision. New infrastructure is needed to help sustain existing communities as well as support growth. The LDP identifies that such infrastructure is not realistically likely to occur without further development.

SDAs are allocated within the Greater North West (GNW) Zone at:

'SD G: Northwest of M4 J46, Llangyfelach' which seeks to create a new sustainable settlement that will complement the adjacent Felindre strategic employment site.

The site of the former tinplate works at Felindre located North of Junction 46 of the M4 has already been prepared for use as a serviced Strategic Business Park for B1 and B2 uses to accommodate emerging industries, high tech manufacturing, high level services and ancillary uses along with car parking. Land at Felindre will play a key role in the economic growth of Swansea. This strategic site will deliver up to 800 dwellings with 565 likely during the Plan period.

Land north west of the Felindre business park also provides the opportunity to create high quality attractive new sustainable urban villages with the potential to continue to grow beyond the Plan period. A masterplan for the villages will be produced by the Welsh Government.

Active Travel routes have been planned from the residential led development site North of Clasemont Road, Morryston to the north west of the site at Felindre.

3. Local context

3.1. Local background, strategic drivers and baseline conditions

The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales has recently made proposals from its local authority electoral boundary review to the Minister for Finance and Local Government. These boundary reforms have taken effect for Swansea from the 2022 local government elections. The number of wards in the county has reduced from 36 to 32. This has resulted in Mawr being subsumed by three wards - Clydach, Llangyfelach and Pontarddulais (see boundary maps below). Felindre village will become part of Llangyfelach ward. Official statistics are not available for the new ward boundary. This has also impacted the number of and boundaries of LSOAs. Mawr LSOA will be reconfigured in to multiple LSOAs aligned to the three wards, however, no official statement has been made re how this will be achieved.

Figures referred to are for pre-2022 boundaries.

Mawr is the county's joint least densely populated ward – covering an area of 57.82km² and with a population of 1,857 (the smallest ward population in the county) it has a population density of 32 people per km¹. Mawr, comprises largely open, upland green space, apart from the villages of Felindre (in the south west), Craig Cefn Parc (in the south eastern part), Garnswllt (close to the County's northern boundary with Carmarthenshire) and also the hamlets of Rhydypany, Salem and Cwmcerdinen. The remainder comprises mainly scattered farm developments.

The two villages of Craig Cefn Parc and Garnswllt grew up around the coal mining and related industries, dating back to at least the 19th Century. Craig Cefn Parc is today a mixture of local authority housing, traditional semi-detached 'worker houses' and modernised, large, detached properties. Garnswllt exhibits a similar mixture of styles.

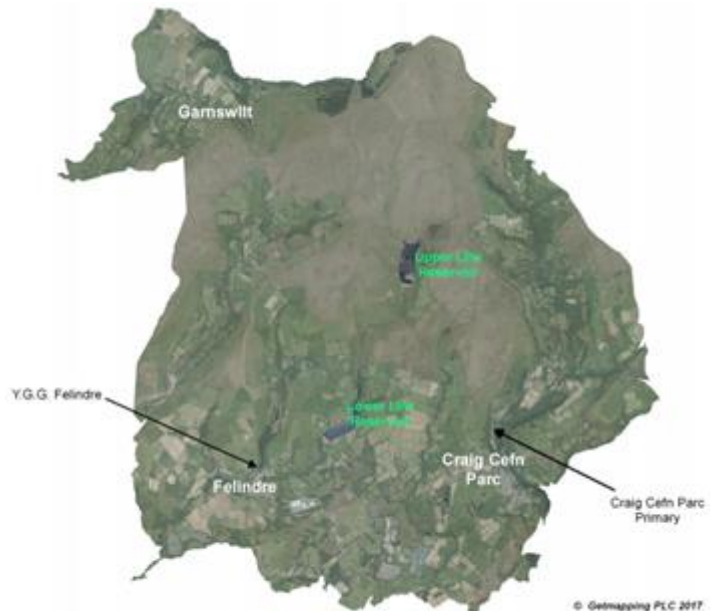


Figure 6: Mawr ward and key settlements

¹ 2019 Mid-Year Population Estimates, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

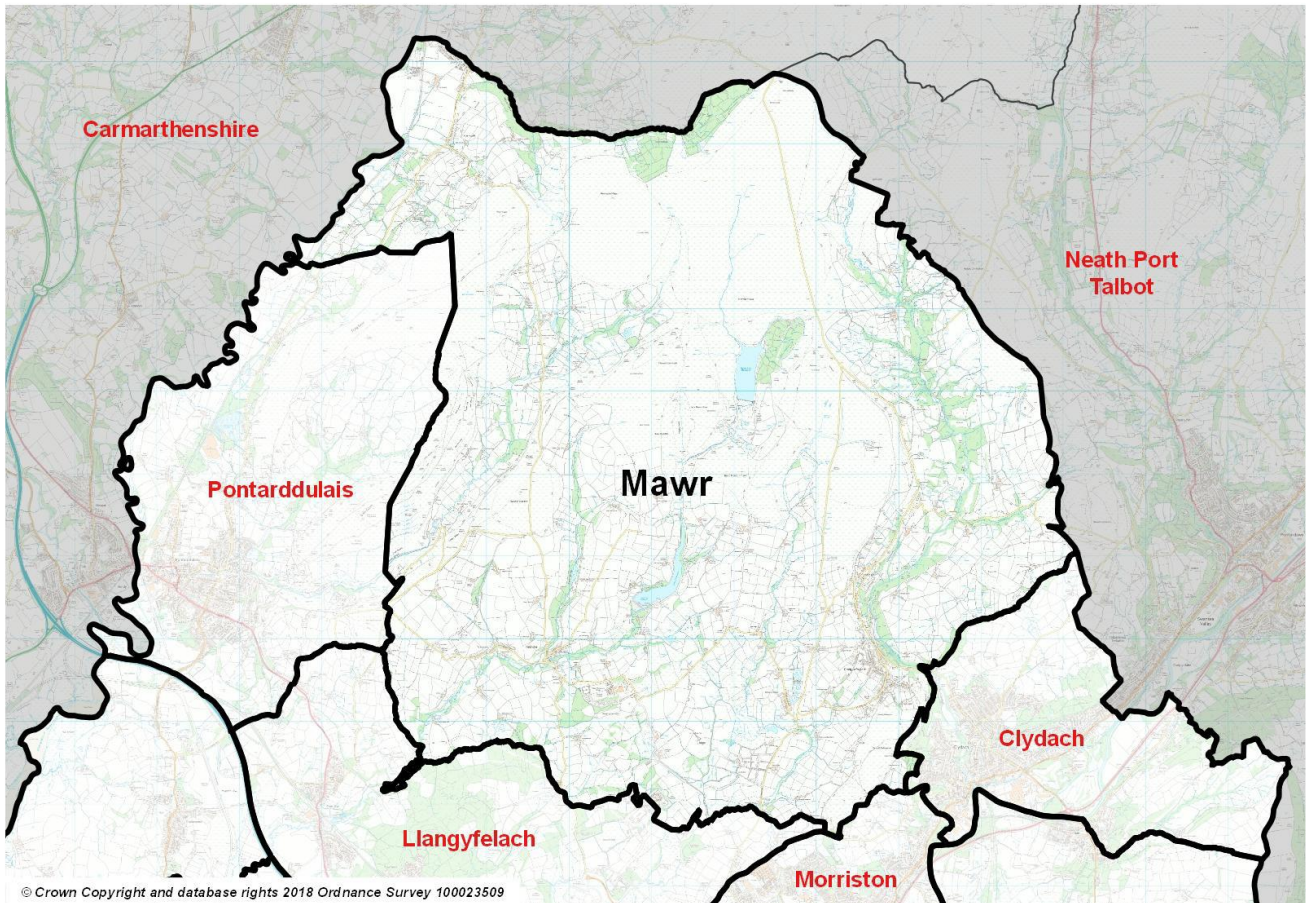


Figure 7: Mawr pre-May 2022 ward boundary

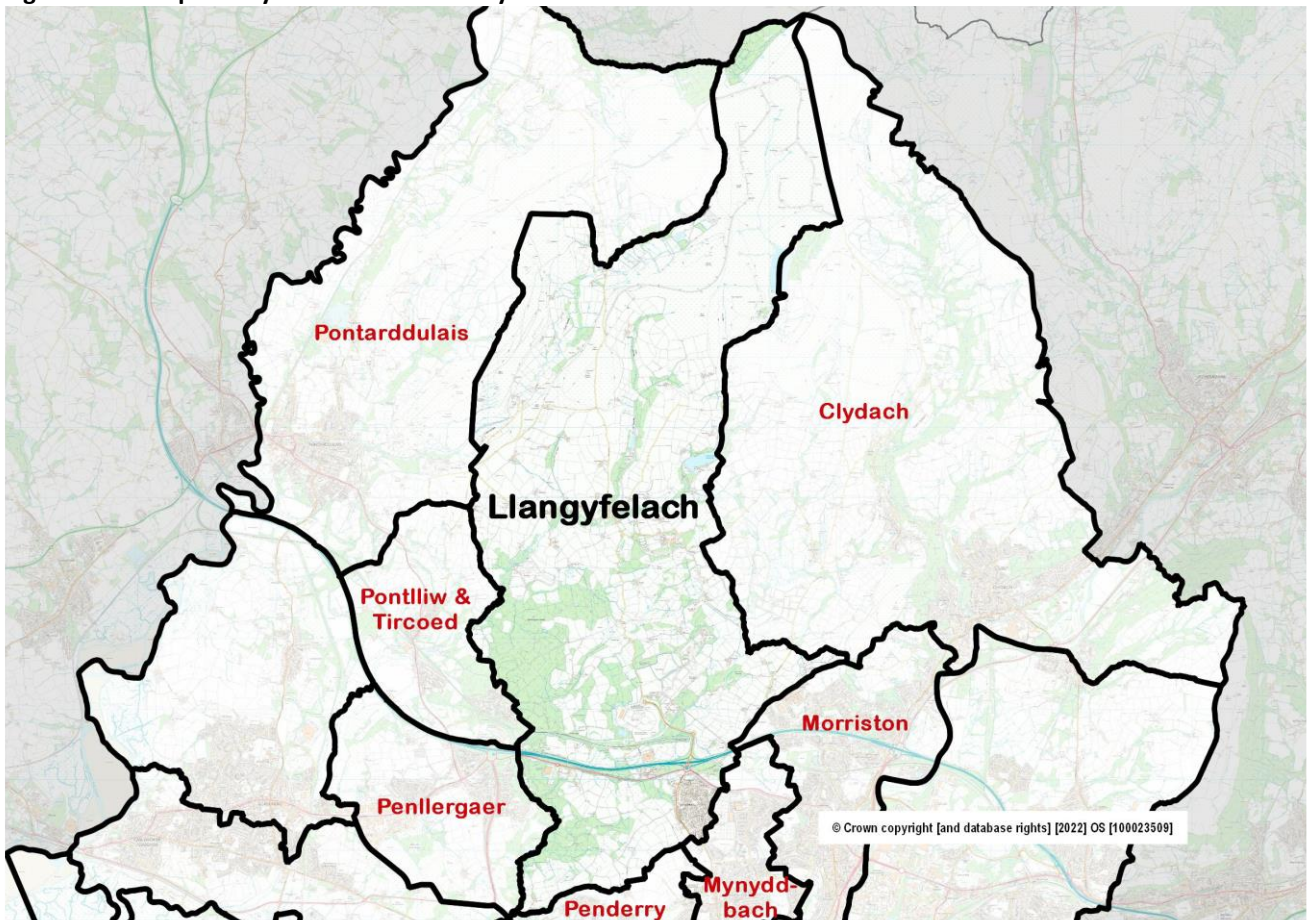


Figure 8: Post-May 2022 ward boundary – Felindre within Llangyfelach ward

Mawr has a higher proportion of over 65's than the county average. The proportion of 16-64 year olds is lower – this is a result of the 16-24 and 25-44 age ranges with the 45-64 group significantly higher.

Area population	Mawr	Swansea
Total population	1,857	246,563
0-15	18.6%	16.9%
16-64	59.0%	63.3%
65+	22.4%	19.8%

Source: Small area population estimates (2020), ONS

Figure 9: Area population - Mawr and Swansea

The area has not seen population growth during 2015-2020. However, birth and death rates since then (ONS, 2020) would suggest that there has been recent growth. Anecdotally, in Felindre, the increase in young families moving into the area since the pandemic has resulted in local population growth.

The ability to speak Welsh at 38.3% is significantly higher than the county average of 11.4%.

Qualification levels are close to the county average.

The area has a higher proportion of economically active people than the county average with self-employed at 13.8% double that of the county. Of those economically inactive there is a higher percentage of those retired. Employment in the area is estimated to be 175 jobs (ONS workplace estimate, 2020) with the major employer type being agriculture.

Economic Activity (people aged 16-74)	Mawr	Mawr %	Swansea %
Economically Active	936	67.8	63.0
Employees: Part-time and Full-time	679	49.2	47.9
Self-employed	191	13.8	6.6
Unemployed	37	2.7	3.9
Economically Inactive	445	32.2	37.0
Retired	256	18.5	15.6
Looking after Home or Family	58	4.2	3.7
Long-term Sick or Disabled	73	5.3	6.9
Other	14	1.0	2.1
Students (economically active and inactive)	73	5.3	13.3

Source: 2011 Census, ONS

Figure 10: Economic Activity (people aged 16-74) - Mawr and Swansea

Mawr's residents have higher levels of managerial and professional occupations and intermediate occupations than the Swansea average.

Socio-economic classification (NS-SeC)	Mawr	Mawr %	Swansea %
All usual residents aged 16-74	1,381	100	100
1-2. Higher managerial, administrative & professional	429	31.1	27.5
3-4. Intermediate occupations	396	28.7	20.3
5-7. Routine and manual occupations	446	32.3	33.9
8. Never worked and long-term unemployed	38	2.8	5.2
Not classified (full-time students)	72	5.2	13.1

Source: NS-SeC – National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (three-class version), 2011 Census, ONS

Figure 11: Socio-economic classification (NS-SeC) - Mawr and Swansea

The average net annual household income in the area at £25,900 is the joint 14th lowest in the county and is 4% below the average of £26,900. This is informed by the ONS’s model-based estimates at MSOA (Middle Super Output Area) level for 2015-16. And uses MSOA Swansea 002 which most closely aligns to the ward boundary.

The household composition comprises significantly more ‘married or same-sex civil partnership couples’ than Swansea at 39.4% vs. 30.4%.

Detached properties account for significantly more of the household accommodation type (52%) than the county average (23.2%) with a higher percentage of households owned outright (44.7% vs. 33.4%).

House prices have seen a reduction in value averaging -£24,250 (-15.4%) at the time that Swansea has seen an increase of £6,000 (4%) (House Price Statistics for Small Areas, ONS, for year ending June 2020). These figures may be impacted by a limited number of sales (of which the values were below that of others in the area).

The predominant council tax band for ‘dwelling stock’ is E compared to B-C across Swansea (Valuation Office Agency administrative database, 2020).

The table below references information compiled by the Statistical Directorate of the Welsh Assembly as part of the 2019 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation. It indicates the overall index and the rank for the eight domains for the 1 Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) within Mawr ward. There are 1909 LSOAs in Wales and 148 in Swansea. The lower the rank/number the higher the level of deprivation. Bracketed numbers are the rankings within Swansea.

Mawr ward comprises of 1 LSOA - Mawr (LSOA code W01000803). Its overall domain ranking places it outside of the most deprived areas in Wales and at around the midpoint of the country's average – 1,029th in Wales and 72nd in Swansea. Its domain rankings are generally middle to low. However, its 'Access to services' domain is ranked 2nd most deprived in Swansea and 128th in Wales - this is within the 10% most deprived in the country and reflects the area’s rural location and distance from amenities. The 'Access to services' domain captures deprivation as a result of a household’s inability to access a range of services considered necessary for day-to-day living, both physically and online. Its ‘Physical Environment’ is within the 50% most deprived in the country and is ranked 36th most deprived in Swansea and 80th in Wales. The ‘Physical Environment’ domain measures factors in the local area that may impact on the wellbeing or quality of life of those living in an area.

Ward	Lower Super Output Area:	Domains and Rank								
		Overall	Income	Employment	Health	Education	Access to services	Housing	Community safety	Physical environment
Mawr	Mawr	1029 (72)	1139 (82)	1217 (95)	1335 (100)	1198 (83)	128 (2)	746 (48)	996 (72)	805 (36)
	Most deprived	Rank								
	10%	1-191								
	20%	192-382								
	30%	383-573								
	50%	574-955								

Figure 12: Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation – Mawr ward / Lower Layer Super Output Area

3.2. Recreation, outside activities and tourism

Tourism and recreation have become increasingly important sectors of the local economy of rural Swansea, particularly within the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The wider Swansea Bay area welcomes more than four million visitors every year.

STEAM tourism research in 2019 estimates 4.79 million annual visitors to the area (-0.2% on 2018) of which 3.12 million (-1.6% on 2018) are day visitors and 1.67 million (+ 2.5% on 2018) staying visitors. The total economic impact of tourism in the area is £477.22 million (+2.2% on 2018) which supports 5,998 jobs (+ 3.4% on 2018)².

A 2019 Swansea Bay visitor survey found that the coast, beaches, scenery & landscape remain key attractions with walking a key activity³.

The area includes a number of popular attractions, many of which continue to invest and develop their product offer in line with future trends and visitor aspirations. While many of these are within the Gower AONB amongst the main attractions is Penllergaer Valley Woods (listed by Cadw on the statutory register Registered Historic Parks and Gardens). This is located close to the next motorway junction west of Felindre; c.4.5 miles / 10 minutes car journey time.

The wider area includes a number of walks highlighting interesting locations and features along the way. Swansea Council has recently launched four new walking guides as part of a Gower Coast Walks series. A key emphasis is the All Wales Coast Path initiative, which includes the 55-mile-long coast path stretching around the entire length of the Swansea and Gower coastline.

In addition, there are also a selection of walking trails to explore rural Swansea, including the Mawr Heritage Walking Trail which links the Lower Lliw Reservoir to Felindre.

The wider area has also developed a number of food tours and food foraging trails to explore through initiatives like the Swansea Bay Good Food Circle.

Of importance to Felindre in terms of outdoor recreational activities and trails is Visit Wales' year of the trail and Swansea Council's aspiration to provide further support to northern wards to spread the benefits of tourism and relieve some of the pressures in the southern areas during peak periods.

2023 is Visit Wales' year of the trail – Llwybrau/Wales by Trails. The 'Wales, by Trails' picks up from the success of Visit Wales' five themed years to date: adventure, legends, sea, discovery, outdoors. The themed years support the strategic aim of spread, spend and seasonality by presenting Wales as a welcoming, inclusive destination open all year round. Visit Wales believe trails as a theme is experience-led and simple enough to cater for a wide range of interest and is flexible enough for partners, destinations, and tourism businesses large or small to get on board and support. Post-pandemic people are increasingly seeking curated experiences that reconnect them, be that to heritage, culture, nature, community. The trails theme will encourage people to find forgotten treasures, embrace journeys of the senses and make memories along pathways around attractions, activities, landscapes and coastlines.

The Leader programme has made investment to grow and develop the tourism product, including the RDP Rural Accommodation Growth Scheme, which secured investment to improve accommodation provision in rural Swansea. While the Leader programme is drawing to a close, the recently announced Shared Prosperity Fund, which will be a significant funder across the region and which Swansea Council is regional lead authority for South West Wales, will make a number of pots available including the Sustainable Communities Fund and Rural Innovation Fund.

² STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model) 2019

³ Swansea Bay Visitor Survey 2019, Swansea Council

4. Primary research and consultation

4.1. Summary phases of engagement

The concept, developed with Mawr Community Council and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee, was to explore opportunities to expand upon facilities and services around Felindre Welfare Hall and adjacent fields as an important social and recreational resource for local communities. Several projects had already been considered by the council and committee who are local representatives and residents. These had been informed by their knowledge of the area and discussions with the wider community. Several phases of engagement were implemented to ensure that the proposals respond to the needs of residents and visitors and that the community is aware of and can help shape them.

Firstly, emerging ideas, informed by the council and committee, were identified for further development. The intention was to consider how these could be developed in a complementary and cohesive proposition. The ideas included:

- Felindre Welfare Hall – additional facilities and services
- Playing fields – additional offering
- Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) – additional uses
- Sally’s Way trail and woodland – reinstatement and forest school activities
- Children’s play area – new addition
- Farmers market / vending machine

Secondly, a community survey was produced to gauge views on the project ideas and identify any others. The survey would also be used to identify those that wish to be kept informed and / or shape the future development of proposals. The survey was made available online with a link and QR code promoted via Mawr Community Council and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee websites and Facebook pages. Hard copies were made available for collection, completion and drop-off at the Felindre Welfare Hall.

Thirdly, hard copy leaflets were produced and distributed within Felindre with the support of Mawr Community Council and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee to promote the survey and a drop-in session. The session was organised for Saturday 5th November 10.00-11.30am at Felindre Welfare Hall to discuss the project on a one-to-one basis and assist anyone with completing the survey.

Fourthly, a children’s survey was conducted in December 2022 to identify what types of equipment children would like in a park / playground.

During these discussions and alongside comments received through the survey a real interest has been conveyed from the community about what is needed in the area and the important social and recreational role that these proposals can play.

This broadly encompasses:

Felindre Welfare Hall plays an important role in the community, acting as the hub of the village and an important location for social gatherings.

Mawr Community Council and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee continually seek to build upon the services being delivered through the hall and the standard of the facility. Recently they secured a grant from Swansea Council as part of a county-wide Warm Space Initiative in response to the cost of living crisis to provide safe, warm and welcoming places within communities where people can go to during the winter.

The hall and its facilities are well liked and supported by the community:

“Felindre is such a beautiful area with such a fantastic hall, playing fields etc ... to be able to improve/increase facilities to encourage use would be amazing. This hall was built by the community with their own funds and it is up to us to continue in their footsteps.”

Suggestions for future additions include:

“More concerts”

“More community clubs”

“Youth club reinstated”

“It would be nice to see more events, classes etc both inside and outside.”

“Fun activity days for families”

Playing fields and children’s play area.

Park / playground area. With the closure of the Welsh speaking primary school Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Felindre in 2019 an important local facility for children to socialise, learn and play was lost. The area does not currently have a play area for children and this provision would be very welcome. Anecdotally, the change in demographics with a growth in number of children and young families is not reflected in provision of services / facilities. The area does not have a children’s park / playground. With the move of Llangyfelach AFC out of the Hall and its playing fields the council and committee are now in a position to consider alternative options and sites for provision of children’s play facilities. Locating the play facilities on a part of the playing fields would be preferable to the field / scrub land as this is next to the main road and on steep ground.

Comments include:

“Children’s play area is paramount.”

“Above all else, the park for children should take priority. This is something which the majority of residents have raised for a number of years.”

“Since the village school has unfortunately closed it is essential that we have a children’s play area so that the children have an opportunity to meet up and get to know each other and help integrate new arrivals to the village.”

“A playground for the children of the village and to entice visitors. All other areas seem to have new playgrounds and are well used it would be lovely to have a safe area for the children to play. Use to use the old playground constantly when my children were young, miss it now for the grandchildren.”

“I have a young family and more activities and a park etc will be an amazing addition for my young family to use.”

“Would be great to have more there to safely engage the Children like in Rhydybandy, Llangyfelach etc where parks are quietly tucked away.”

“Felindre is the only village in Swansea to not have a park for young children which is really sad considering our demographic. Our population of young children has grown significantly and the facilities currently on offer do not reflect this.”

“We must be the only village in Swansea without a playground for our children, these needs addressing.”

Playing fields. Support for other areas of the playing fields include:

“Somewhere safe to walk.”

“A really nice dog walk”

“Meet the animals day for kids?”

Sally’s Way has an important local history and its clearance of overgrowth and bringing back in to use will provide an opportunity to act as a core access point for woodland / environmental activities, improve linkages with the playing fields, children’s play area and potentially the wider Mawr Heritage Walking Trail by linking to Heol Myddfai (possibly via the Shepherds Country Inn and / or the new school for learning disabilities) and forming part of the return loop.

Informal discussions between Mawr Community Council and the newly opened school for learning difficulties has identified a real interest in accessing the top end of the trail directly from the school grounds Use of the trail, playing fields and hall would be welcomed by both organisations.

The Mawr Heritage Walking Trail is an existing route described by Visit Swansea Bay as “Parsel Mawr (Big Parcel), better known as ‘Mawr’, is the beautiful rural hinterland of Swansea. The Mawr Heritage Trail takes walkers through the pretty village of Felindre and the popular Lower Lliw Reservoir, passing landmarks that illustrate the significant contribution Mawr has made to the growth of Swansea and South Wales through its farms, mines and the reservoir itself.”

The trail starts and finishes at the Lower Lliw Reservoir and in an anti-clockwise direction to Felindre where it then loops back on itself. The trail is approximately 3.5 miles (5.6km) long with an estimated walking time of 2-2 ½ hours.

Comments for Sally's Way include:

"Sally Way and forest school would be absolutely amazing as the school use to use it for this purpose and to reinstate it would be so apt. The area is so easy to access and so close to parking areas making it easy for both clubs, schools and out of school hour activities. It would be a great enticement to get people to come to the village as well as the local community."

"Sallys Way has a nice history, however it has overgrown significantly since the school was closed. Unless it becomes a part of the wider village, such as a path connected to Heol Myddfai, it will continue to overgrow and be a financial burden and hazard to walk in. Now that the school is gone, it has no purpose."

Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA). Encouraging the use of the facility for sports activities and no longer using the area for parking.

Comments include:

"Older children also need sports facilities to encourage them to meet outdoors and socialise in the community"

Farmers market / vending machine proposal received 84% support. 66% of the support was considered desirable. This alongside discussions and comments received suggests strong support – and is likely to be seen as supplementary / complementary provision alongside other proposals.

"Farmers market would be a lovely idea as it ties in with the feel of the village."

4.2. Community survey and drop-in session



Figure 13: Drop-in session in Felindre Welfare Hall

Survey respondents

43 surveys were completed. Of these 36 (84%) live within or close to Felindre and 7 (16%) were day visitors / tourists. 78% of respondents live within 10 minutes of Felindre Welfare Hall.

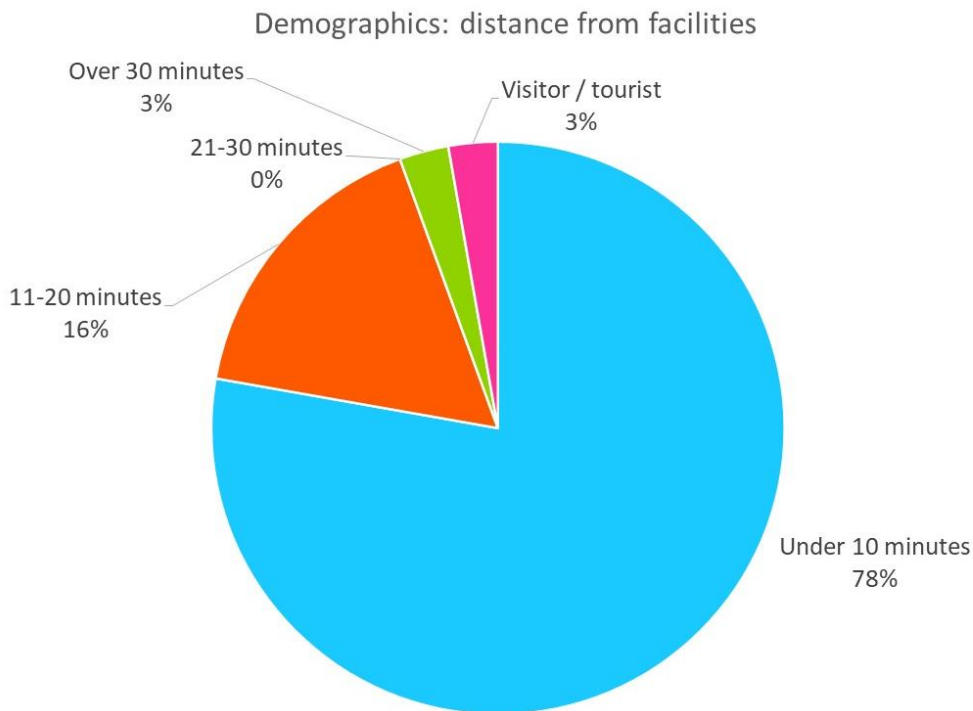


Figure 14: Proximity to study area

Respondents to the survey represented a good spread of age ranges, other than 0-16 and 16-24 year olds. The younger age range's (below 16) views were captured as part of a specific discussion and park / playground survey. 68% of respondents were female.

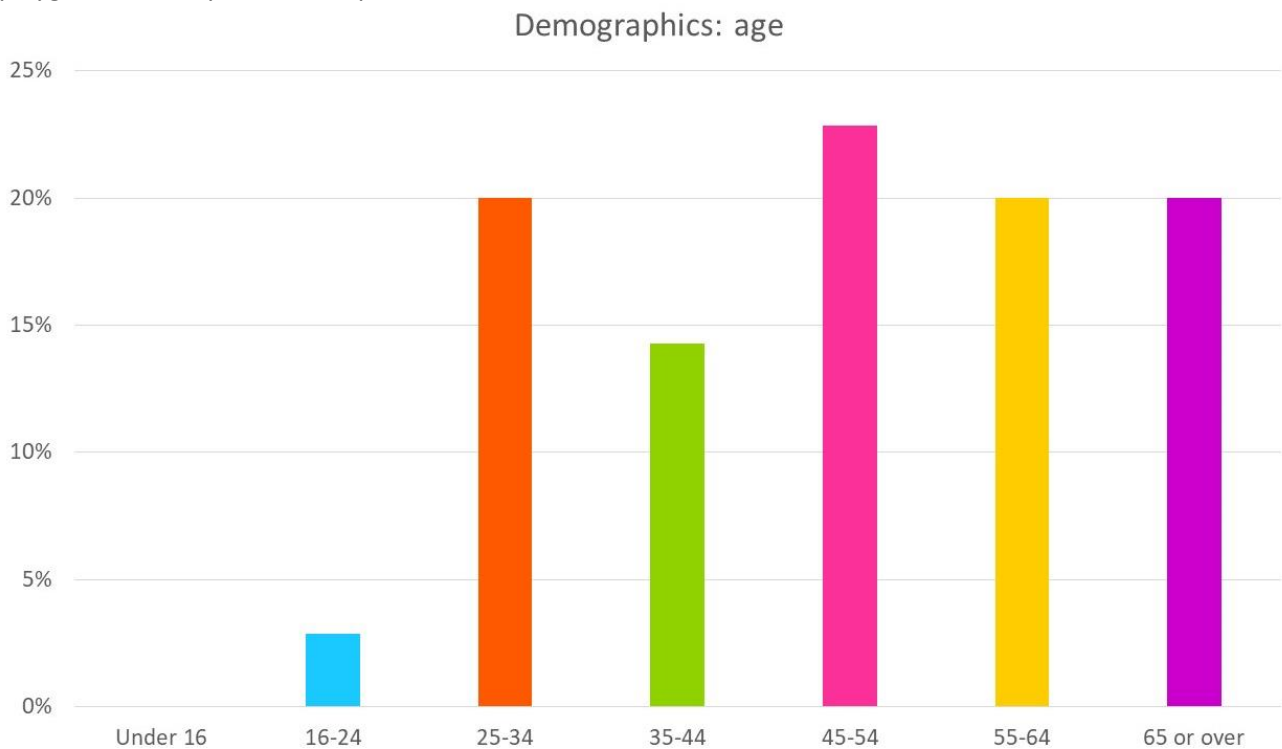


Figure 15: Respondent age range

Current usage – frequency and duration

The playing fields has the greatest frequency of visits. 40% of respondents use the fields at least once a week, 7% once or twice a month, and 19% several times a year. 16% have not visited.

9% use the Welfare Hall at least once a week, 12% once or twice a month and 49% several times a year. 7% have not visited.

The Multi-use Games Area and Sally’s Way have the greatest variation. 19% use the MUGA at least once a week, 9% once or twice a month and 37% several times a year. 16% use Sally’s Way at least once a week, 9% once or twice a month and 30% several times a year. 30% of respondents have not visited either. This suggests that awareness of and / or their current appeal is more limited – for those that do use them they tend to do so on a regular basis while others choose not to or are not aware of them.

Comments support this:

“Sally’s Way has a nice history.”

“Very few people know what MUGA is or what Sally's Way is”

“I lived there (on/off) since 1993 - and never heard of Sally's Way? Where is this please?”

“Please stop using multi games area as a car park, no longer suitable for playing ball games due to damage to the surface.”

“The Ganges court should NOT be used as a car park as it is spoiling the court.”

How often do you visit / experience these facilities?

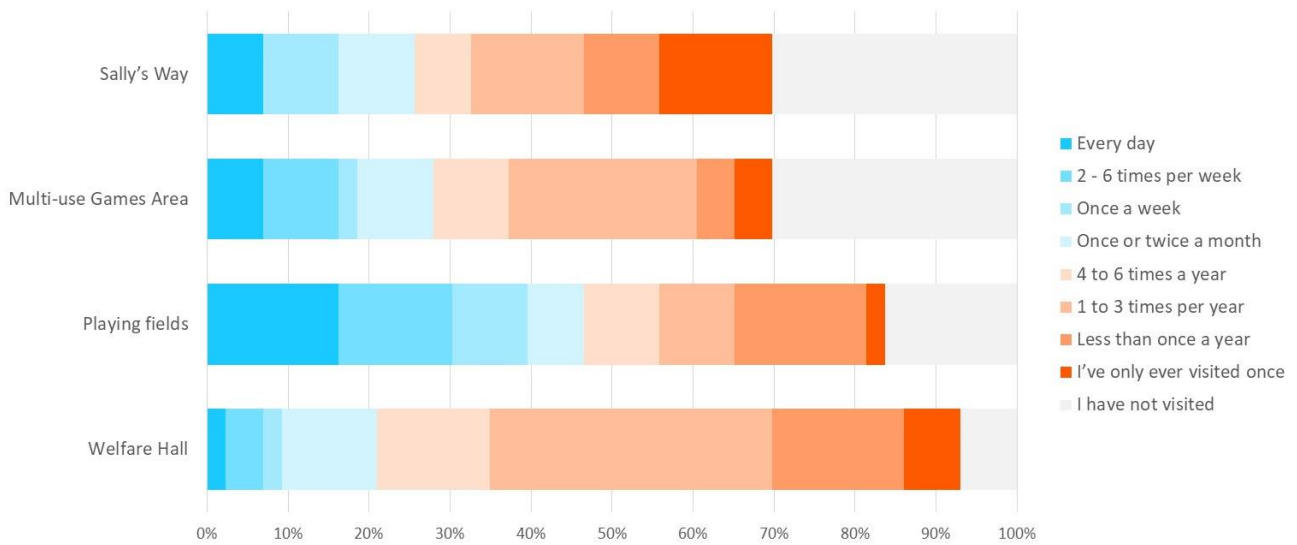


Figure 16: Regularity of visits

Other than at the Welfare Hall duration of visits typically last no more than 2 hours. This varies across the facilities.

How much time do you typically spend when visiting these facilities?

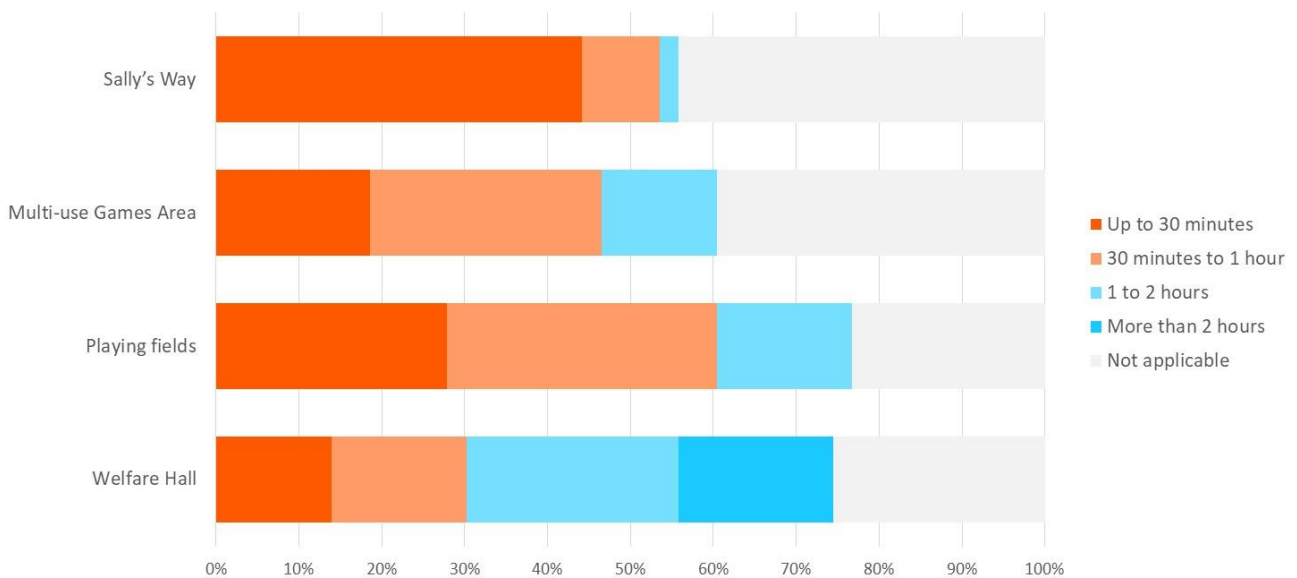


Figure 17: Duration of visits

Removing the 'not applicable' response to focus on those that use the facilities indicates that there is a spread of duration for the Welfare Hall (peaking at 34% for 1-2 hours)

The peak durations for the other facilities are: 0.5-1 hour at the playing fields (42%); 0.5-1 hour at the MUGA (46%); and up to 30 minutes at Sally's Way (79%).

How much time do you typically spend when visiting these facilities?

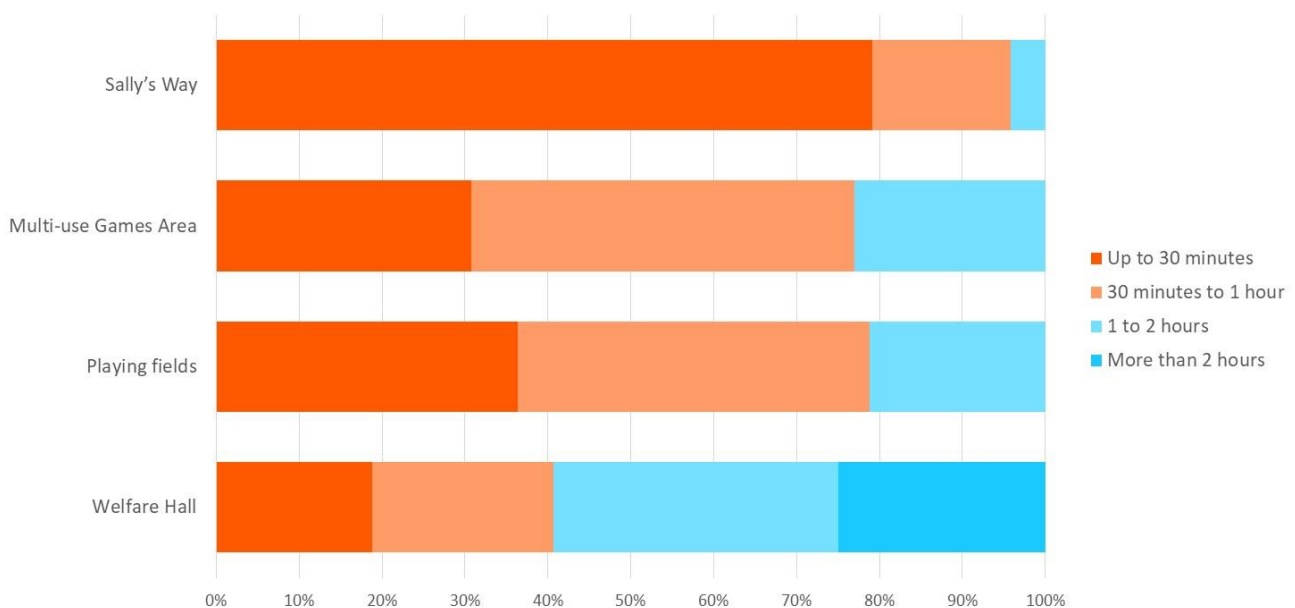


Figure 18: Duration of visits excluding n/a responses

Participants were asked to give their likely motivation for future visits and were asked to keep this to one answer only i.e. confirming their main reason. 40% stated to use facilities in a safe environment. 18% to take part in an organised group led activity. 16% to socialise with friends or family. While given as separate responses for outdoor activities 'to spend time outdoors and relax' and 'to go for a walk' the two had a combined percentage of 24. To take part or watch sport activities had 3% and to take part in a formal school visit as part of a school trip or activity outside of the classroom had 0%. The school trips would need to be considered separately and any future provision would need to be developed with consultation of neighbouring schools.

When you visit in the future, what do you think the main reason will be?

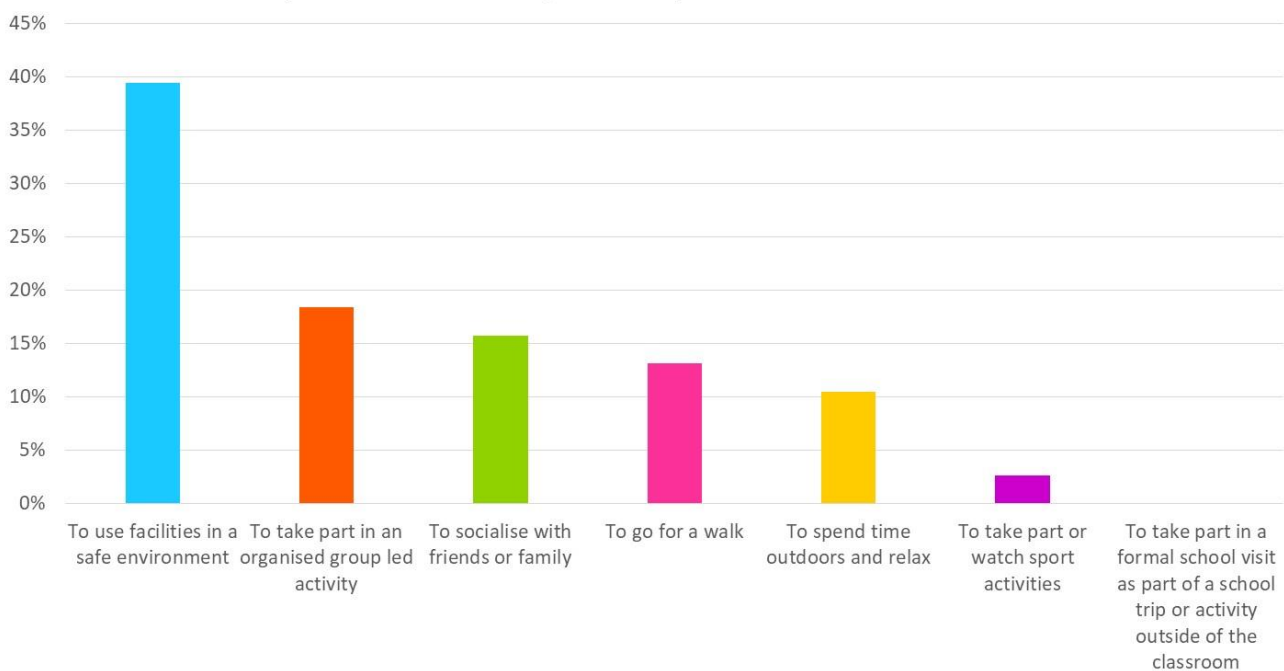


Figure 19: Likely motivation for future visits

Informing proposals – key interventions and future demand

Respondents were asked what they would like to see introduced / upgraded and to rate the proposals as essential, desirable or not necessary. There was strong support for the majority of the proposals.

Please tell us what you would like to see introduced at the following facilities.

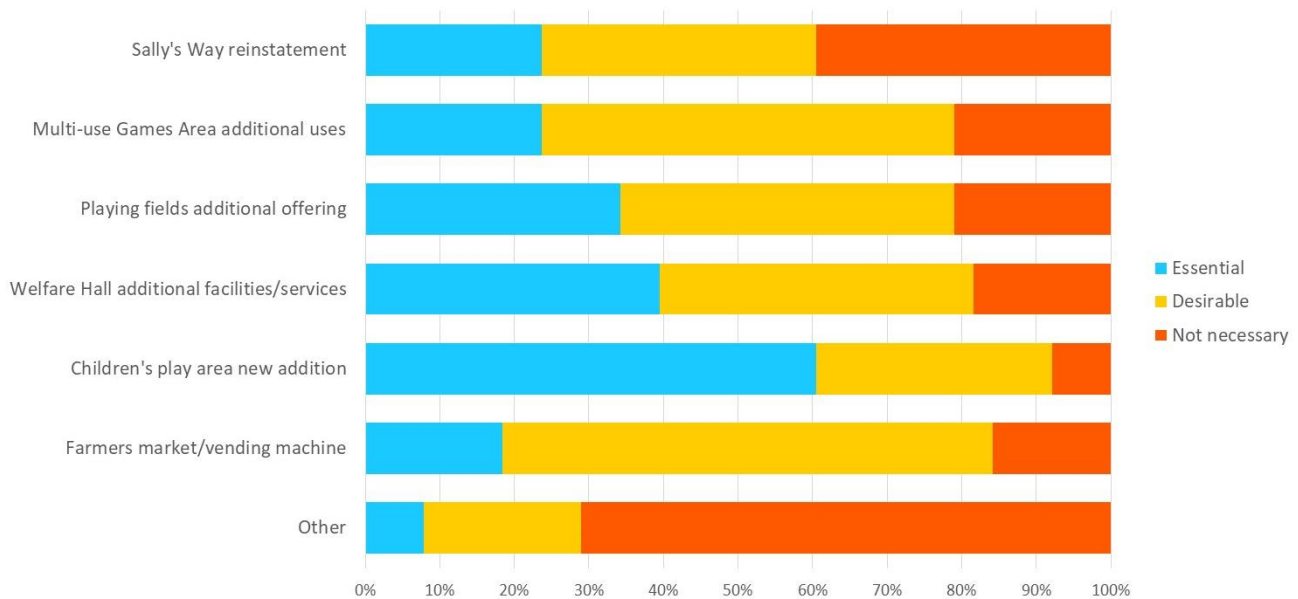


Figure 20: What respondents would like to see introduced / upgraded

Overall support has been aggregated in the table below to illustrate essential and desirable combined percentages. The proposals have been ranked according to highest overall support.

- The children’s play area has the highest level of support at 92%. Two thirds of this support consider it essential and a third desirable;
- The farmers market/vending machine has the second highest level of support at 84%. A fifth of support consider this essential and four fifths desirable;
- Welfare Hall additional facilities/services has the third highest level of support at 81%. Almost half of support consider this essential;
- Playing fields additional offering has 78% support. 40% of this support consider it essential;
- Multi-use Games Area additional uses is supported by 78% of respondents. Of these nearly a third consider it essential;
- Sally's Way reinstatement has 60% support. 40% of this support consider it essential;
- Other (which when reviewed were activities which could be provided through the existing facilities) is supported by 28% of respondents. Over a quarter consider this essential.

Proposals	Overall support	Essential	Desirable	Not necessary
Children's play area new addition	92.11%	60.53%	31.58%	7.89%
Farmers market/vending machine	84.21%	18.42%	65.79%	15.79%
Welfare Hall additional facilities/services	81.58%	39.47%	42.11%	18.42%
Playing fields additional offering	78.95%	34.21%	44.74%	21.05%
Multi-use Games Area additional uses	78.94%	23.68%	55.26%	21.05%
Sally's Way reinstatement	60.52%	23.68%	36.84%	39.47%
Other	28.94%	7.89%	21.05%	71.05%

Figure 21: Support for proposals

Participants considered whether investment in the facilities and services would encourage them to visit more often. The percentage of those stating yes has been ranked by highest likelihood:

- Welfare Hall additional facilities/services 84%
- Playing fields additional offering 76%
- Farmers market/vending machine 76%
- Multi-use Games Area additional uses 71%

- Children's play area new addition 68%
- Sally's Way reinstatement 50%
- Other 13%

Would investment in the facilities and services encourage you to visit either for the first time or more often?

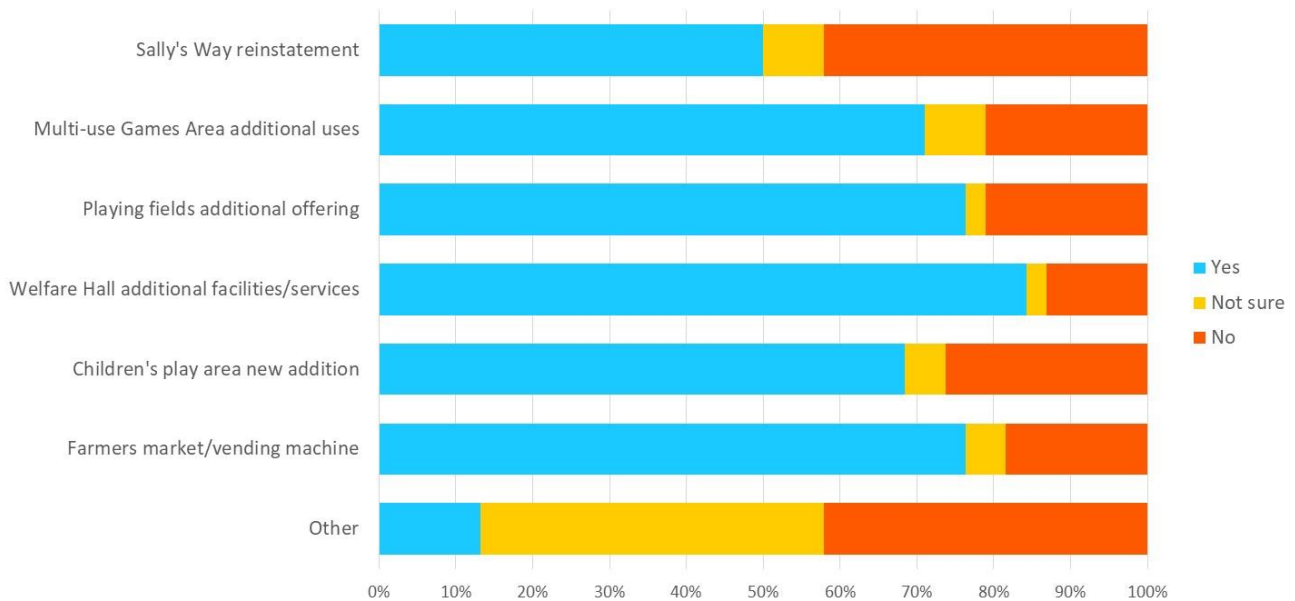


Figure 22: Encouraging more visits

4.3. Children’s park / playground survey

A group session was held in Felindre Welfare Hall, by Mawr Community Council and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee, to ask children what equipment they would like included in a playground / children’s park. 16 children participated. 5 items were suggested as prompts and children were encouraged to think of any others. Illustrations were used to help with discussions – these were previously produced when the council and committee approached suppliers to gauge what could be created and the associated costs. The core elements comprise of a slide, swings, climbing frame and seesaw.

Item	Responses
Slide	16
Swings*	15
Cradle swing	15
Climbing Frame	14
Seesaw	14
Other**	6

Figure 23: Children’s park / playground survey

* Swings: Plus one for disabled children and one for adults

**Other: Roundabout x2; Trampoline x1; Sandpit x1; Digger x1; Pirate ship x1



Figure 24: Two playground equipment illustrations produced for Felindre Welfare Hall and fields

5. Opportunities, development principles and options

5.1. Site opportunities and challenges – SWOT analysis

Key quantitative and qualitative issues, challenges and opportunities arising from the socio-economic profile, literature research and discussions with project partners and locals has been interpreted. This has informed a SWOT analysis – a strategic planning technique to help identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats related to project planning for the Felindre study area. Through the quantitative and qualitative work the objectives of the study have been specified and the internal and external factors that are favourable and unfavourable to achieving them identified. The SWOT analysis groups key pieces of information into two main categories: Internal factors – the strengths and weaknesses internal to the area; and external factors – the opportunities and threats presented by the environment external to the area.

This SWOT analysis has informed the ‘Market’ opportunity, development principles and comparison of development options – enabling a rationale, operational / delivery aims and outcomes to be compared in order to maximise strengths and opportunities, address weaknesses and mitigate the impact of threats.

	Helpful	Harmful
Internal factors	Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment of Mawr Community Council and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee to identify and address gaps in local provision of services and facilities • Core facilities already onsite • Proposals are to be located on land / in facilities that is within the ownership of MCC • Proximity of facilities / proposals to one another and ease of access between them • Facilities and complementary services already act as a draw for the community • Accessible location, within the heart of the local community 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available financial resources • Topography of the field / unused land to the south west of the Hall • Maintenance of Sally’s Way trail and woodland • Isolated incidents of anti-social behaviour • Access to services across the ward • Physical Environment across the ward
	Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in young families moving into the area since the pandemic has resulted in local population growth • Limited recreational space and community facilities outside of the study area. An opportunity to further develop a community resource which is accessible to a broad range of users • No children’s playground in the area • Opportunity to improve biodiversity – improved habitats to create points of interest and attract more wildlife • Proposals can improve the area’s low ‘Access to services’ ranking (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation) • Linking proposals to Mawr Heritage Walking Trail (Lower Lliw Reservoir to Felindre loop). • Visit Wales’ year of the trail and Swansea Council’s aspiration to provide further support to northern wards to spread the benefits of tourism • Shared Prosperity Fund – including Rural Innovation, Sustainable Communities, Developing Place, Supporting Local Business 	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased competition for public sector finances
External factors		

Figure 25: Site opportunities and challenges – SWOT analysis

5.2. 'Market' opportunity

The research, consultation and site assessment demonstrate strong support for further development of the community resource to more fully meet 'community' need, address gaps in provision and improve the maintenance of Sally's Way trail and woodland.

In terms of market analysis, it is likely that key user groups of the new developments will be:

Primary

Local residential marketplace

- Primarily within a 10-minute drivetime. The key market / audience is likely to be a cross-section of the local community; families, teenagers, retired people, recreational walkers, isolated individuals and those with learning difficulties.
- The catchment would also include those within a 20-minute drivetime, particularly those north of the M4 and surrounding areas to Felindre.

Local learning education visits

- Range of formal and informal learning opportunities around biodiversity, environmental and wood activities.
- School visits and specialist interest groups.

Secondary audiences

Visitor market

- The visiting friends and relatives (VFR) market can form a modest part of the visitor mix.
- Opportunities to link to neighbouring attractions such as the Lower Lliw Reservoir via the Mawr Heritage Walking Trail. This would likely be more limited in scale and rely on the popularity of the reservoir and interest in exploring nearby areas e.g. appealing to 'niche' interests / demographics and those local to Swansea or the immediate vicinity of neighbouring counties.

Figure 26: Market analysis - key user groups

5.3. Development principles

A number of development principles have underpinned the generation of options and appraisal process.

A community resource providing social and recreational opportunities primarily to the local community and with some visitor market appeal:

- **Further develop the community resource to more fully meet 'community' need and be accessible to a broad range of users**
- **Provide for changing demographics in the area**
- **Address gaps in provision particularly for families and young children**
- **Improve the maintenance of Sally's Way trail and woodland, bringing them back in to sustainable use**

Figure 27: Development principles

5.4. Development options

Three levels of intervention are outlined below as a comparison of scale and form. The larger the scale the greater the impact of the project in terms of benefits, capital cost, risk and delivery programmes. The options compare and contrast what is appropriate and what would most closely align with the partners and community's aspirations, market opportunities and development principles. The three options are:

- Option one: Baseline – continue as is
- Option two: Improving facilities as an important social and recreational resource for Felindre
- Option three: An important social and recreational resource with wider visitor market appeal

Option one: Baseline – continue as is

Summary description	To continue as is with a commitment to the ongoing revenue funding of the Bio-diversity Project Co-ordinator role, delivery of existing services within the facilities, but with limited ongoing maintenance and little to no further capital investment.	
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise existing facilities and deliver current services within usable space constraints • Minimise capital costs and risks to Mawr Community Council 	
Key audiences / markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate local community (primarily within a 10-minute drivetime) 	
Strengths / advantages / benefits		
Weaknesses / disadvantages / constraints		
Strengths / advantages / benefits	Weaknesses / disadvantages / constraints	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core facilities already onsite • Facilities and complementary services already act as a draw for the community • No further capital funding requirements / commitments • No additional resource required beyond that already committed to • Delivery programmes / services are largely understood and budgeted for • Lower risk (financial) approach for Mawr Community Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partially meets ‘community’ need as identified by partners, consultation and primary research in this study • Significant gap in provision for families and young children • Limitation to the health, wellbeing and environmental benefits achieved • Will be an underutilised site • Collective impact of facilities and services will be limited compared to other options • Enhancement of biodiversity and environmental improvements will be negligible • Maintenance of Sally’s Way trail and woodland will remain an issue 	

Figure 28: Option one: Baseline – continue as is

Option two: Improving facilities as an important social and recreational resource for Felindre

Summary description	An important social and recreational resource for Felindre. Improve existing facilities, address gaps in provision for families and young children, bring back in to use Sally’s Way trail and woodland and safeguard wider community access to the playing fields.	
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop and realise the benefits of complementary community resources for a broad range of users • Meet ‘community’ need • Address gaps in provision of facilities and services in the area • Bring back in to use Sally’s Way trail and woodland 	
Key audiences / markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community (10-minute and 20-minute drivetimes) • Local learning education visits • Visitor market – visiting friends and relatives (VFR), ‘niche’ interests / demographics and those local to Swansea or the immediate vicinity of neighbouring counties. 	
Strengths / advantages / benefits	Weaknesses / disadvantages / constraints	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An opportunity to further develop a community resource which is accessible to a broad range of users • Fully meets ‘community’ need as identified by partners, consultation and primary research in this study • Provides for needs of community and changing demographics • Proposals can improve the area’s low 'Access to services' ranking (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation) • Addresses gap in provision for families and young children in particular children's playground • Improves the maintenance of Sally’s Way trail, woodland and habitats to create points of interest and attract more wildlife / biodiversity • Linking proposals to Mawr Heritage Walking Trail (Lower Lliw Reservoir to Felindre loop) for wider appeal • Can align with Visit Wales’ year of the trail and Swansea Council’s aspiration to spread the benefits of tourism to northern wards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher risk (financial) approach for Mawr Community Council requiring capital funding • Higher maintenance costs and resourcing requirements • Some opportunities for additional revenue generation but likely to be limited to hire of spaces and attendance at bespoke events / classes 	

Figure 29: Option two: Improving facilities as an important social and recreational resource for Felindre

Option three: An important social and recreational resource with wider visitor market appeal

Summary description	Extend the improvement of facilities to have greater appeal to the visitor market. With a larger focus on what role the playing fields, Sally’s Way and woodland can play alongside neighbouring visitor attractions.	
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater appeal to the visitor market 	
Key audiences / markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community (10-minute and 20-minute drivetimes) • Local learning education visits • Visitor market – visiting friends and relatives (VFR), ‘niche’ interests / demographics and those local to Swansea or the immediate vicinity of neighbouring counties. 	
Strengths / advantages / benefits		
Weaknesses / disadvantages / constraints		
Strengths / advantages / benefits	Weaknesses / disadvantages / constraints	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking proposals to Mawr Heritage Walking Trail (Lower Lliw Reservoir to Felindre loop) for wider appeal • Can align with Visit Wales’ year of the trail and Swansea Council’s aspiration to spread the benefits of tourism to northern wards • Potential to have broader appeal and attract more visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher risk (financial) approach for Mawr Community Council requiring capital funding • Higher maintenance costs and resourcing requirements • Limited additional revenue generation beyond that of option 2 • The level of appeal and likelihood of attracting additional visitors to those identified in option 2 is questionable 	

Figure 30: Option three: An important social and recreational resource with wider visitor market appeal

5.5. Options appraisal

A matrix was applied to each option to enable objective and comparable assessment. This consisted of eleven criteria based upon Mawr Community Council's and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee's aspirations, community need and development principles:

Site and environmental considerations	
Physical site fit / integration (within existing landholding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well does the option fit in terms of location / wider space use requirements?
Environmental impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential environmental impact re sustainability, waste, pollution and the suitability of the proposed use for the landscape and setting Added benefit / environmental improvements
Market considerations	
Market appeal / fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to engage with the local market place (including group usage)
Generate visits from wider marketplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates visits from the wider tourism market
Capital requirement and project delivery	
Indicative capital costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicative high-level cost assumptions
Practical project deliverability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ease of deliverability including development process
Development risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of risk associated with delivery of the option - overall risks associated with taking forward the proposed option including securing funding and marketing the offer (High, Medium, Low, No risk)
Operational and financial	
Complexity to operate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complexity to manage during the operational phase
Revenue generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the option have the ability to generate revenue?
Operational costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The level of costs associated with the option in terms of managing the facilities and services
Impacts	
Social and well-being benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to generate social and well-being opportunities for the local community

Figure 31: Options appraisal criteria

Criteria was scored for each option – ranging from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) according to the extent that each was satisfied. Each criteria had a weighting which represents the level of importance compared to one another. This ranged from 1.0 to 2.75. The score of each criteria was multiplied by the weighting to give a weighted score. Scores and weighted scores have been totalled for each option. There is a maximum total score of 55 and total weighted score of 100.

Criteria	Weighting	Options					
		Option one: Baseline – continue as is	Option two: Improving facilities as an important social and recreational resource for Felindre	Option three: An important social and recreational resource with wider visitor market appeal	Score	Weighted score	Score
		Score	Weighted score	Score	Weighted score	Score	Weighted score
Site and environmental considerations							
Physical site fit / integration (within existing landholding)	1.5x	2	3	5	7.5	4	6
Environmental impact	2.0x	1	2	4	8	3	6
Market considerations							
Market appeal / fit	2.75x	1	2.75	5	13.75	4	11
Generate visits from wider marketplace	1.0x	1	1	4	4	4	4
Capital requirement and project delivery							
Indicative capital costs	2.0x	4	8	3	6	2	4
Practical project deliverability	1.5x	4	6	4	6	2	3
Development risk	2.0x	5	10	3	6	2	4
Operational and financial							
Complexity to operate	1.5x	5	7.5	3	4.5	2	3
Revenue generation	1.0x	2	2	4	4	4	4
Operational costs	2.0x	4	8	3	6	2	4
Impacts							
Social and well-being benefits	2.75x	2	5.5	5	13.75	4	11
Score	55	31		43		33	
Total weighted score	100		55.75		79.50		60.00

Figure 32: Options appraisal scoring and comparison

The highest scoring option by a significant margin is **Option two: Improving facilities as an important social and recreational resource for Felindre** with a weighted score of 79.50. This option fully meets ‘community’ need as identified by partners, consultation and primary research in this study, provides for needs of community and changing demographics, addresses gaps in provision for families and young children in particular children's playground, improves the maintenance of Sally’s Way trail, woodland and habitats to create points of interest and attract more wildlife / biodiversity and proposals can improve the area’s low 'Access to services' ranking (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation). The greatest risk factor is the need for Mawr Community Council and partners to secure capital funding to implement proposals.

Option three: An important social and recreational resource with wider visitor market appeal is the second highest weighted score at 60.00. This option extends the improvement of facilities to have greater appeal to the visitor market; with a larger focus on what role the playing fields, Sally’s Way and woodland can play alongside neighbouring visitor attractions. There is a level of uncertainty around fit / integration, delivery / development, increased capital costs and balancing local community requirements vs broader visitor market appeal that has resulted in lower scores being applied to these criteria.

The means: to change places for the better

This option could be considered as a continuation of option 2 at a future date once the preferred proposals have been delivered and the extent of additional capital investment is better understood.

The lowest scoring option at 55.75 is **Option one: Baseline – continue as is**. This is the least riskiest option in terms of capital and operational costs but scores low on physical site fit / integration, environmental impact, market appeal / fit and social and well-being benefits as it will not fully meet ‘community’ need as identified by partners, consultation and primary research in this study, will not address the gap in provision for families and young children or bring back in to use Sally’s Way trail and woodland.

6. Delivery, finance and funding

6.1. Delivery approach and governance

Mawr Community Council would lead the development phases drawing upon partner support and expertise as necessary.

The study area is owned by Mawr Community Council including Sally's Way trail and woodland. Agreements and permissions would need to be sought to link any of the proposals, such as Sally's Way and playing fields, to adjoining third-party landowners.

Mawr Community Council has a successful track record of securing funds, delivering projects and services. The Council has, more recently, appointed a Grants Officer who is responsible for securing grant funding for the community council plans in improving the area and services to the Mawr community as well as managing projects and the grant awards administration.

The community council has committed to the continued revenue funding of the Bio-diversity Project Co-ordinator role. This role is responsible for the two biodiversity sites of Craig Cefn Parc Community Garden and Garnswllt Fields. There is scope for this role to support delivery of aspects of the programme for Felindre. In particular Sally's Way trail clearance and redevelopment to bring back in to use and a woodland biodiversity / environmental programme. This could provide an opportunity to develop a volunteer programme; promoting ways for local people to become involved in the further development and maintenance of facilities and services.

6.2. Determining financial requirements

Mawr Community Council has committed to ongoing revenue funding of both the Grants Officer and the Bio-diversity Project Co-ordinator. The council also benefits from the significant input of time and resource on a voluntary basis from the local community in the form of local councillors and the Felindre Welfare Hall Committee.

The single biggest risk factor in being able to deliver the proposals is securing the necessary capital resource.

Children's park / playground

Gorlas Community Council, in Llangunmor (Carmarthen), has recently sought suppliers and installers for play equipment. The contract is for the provision of new play equipment at Drefach Recreational Park together with the supply, preparation and installation of new safety surfaces and the preparation and repair of existing safety surfaces and basis. A maximum budget of **£50,000 + VAT** was made available. This excludes fencing which enquiries at other locations suggest are in the region of **£15,000-20,000 + VAT**.

Playing fields

Any further development beyond the siting of the Children's park / playground will need to be considered by Mawr Community Council.

Sally's Way trail and woodland

With the use of the council's revenue resource and a volunteer programme (should it be progressed) the capacity to deliver the trail clearance and redevelopment can be largely met. Provision will need to be made for costs of materials and equipment. This will need to be calculated by Mawr Community Council. As a guide supply and construction costs were provided for another area in Swansea:

- Vegetation clearance to form paths and open areas **£5,800**
- Laying paths with treated timber edging, some tarmac **£34,500**

Multi-Use Games Area

Cleaning of surfaces and patchwork / making good along with refurbishment of floodlights to encourage greater use. Costings to be determined.

Vending machine / farmers market

A feasibility study undertaken by The means in Carmarthenshire for a town centre and tourism setting vending machine initiative identified several types of machine and price points. The appropriateness of these will need to be determined by Mawr Community Council and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee according to the type of produce to be made available and how secure the setting will be. A regular farmers market can be run as either an addition to the vending machine or an alternative should the capital costs be considered prohibitive.

- **Classic snack / drink vending machine**
Automatic Merchandising Wales Ltd, who are based in Neath, offer a similar machine on a lease basis with a **rental cost of £70 per week for a minimum of three years**. There would also be a £120 a year 24 hour call out cost. A vending machine like this one can also be bought on eBay for anything from **£1000 to £3000**.
- **Fresh produce carousel machine**
Admiral Vending Systems, who are based in Swansea, offer the following pricing structure which includes a contactless payment system, coin mechanism, delivery, setup, and training: **Outright Purchase £9,460; Lease rental per week / 5 years £47.15; Lease rental per week / 3 years £72.04**. There is also an insurance coverage cost, VendProtect, at £6.50 a week which covers mechanical breakdown and engineers' visits.
Automatic Merchandising Wales Ltd offer a similar machine on a **lease basis with a rental cost of £70 per week for a minimum of three years**. There would also be a £120 a year 24 hour call out cost.
A carousel vending machine like this one can be bought outright on eBay for anything from £2000 to £3000.
- **Locker vending machine**
A specialised unit, by JSR Services Ltd, which are 'bespoke' machines connecting different size panels or lockers together. Lockers can be kept cold or maintain room temperature. A unit consisting of **25 lockers with a touch screen would cost between £12,000 and £15,000, reduced to £8,000 without a touch screen**.
- **Milk vending machine**
These have increased in popularity in recent years and investment is typically made by a dairy farmer who then stocks their own produce. These machines can cost between **£20,000 and £70,000** depending on the model and the need for the farmer to also invest in a pasteuriser. Examples include Y Stand Llaeth in Nantgaredig and Y Stand Llaeth in Nantgaredig.

A form of shelter / housing unit or outdoor building may also be needed. A permanent structure outside would require planning permission.

Farmers market. Gazebo / stalls cost between £375-450 + VAT for one 3m x 3m structure with 3 vinyl side panels, roof and carrycase. Special **weights to keep the structure secure cost £100** for each gazebo (4 for each structure at £25 per weight). Should **vinyl printing be required, to add a logo, this is c.£100 per panel**. The configuration of these stalls can allow for up to two traders per gazebo if the space requirements are limited to a display table for each set of produce.

Careful consideration would need to be given to agree the preferred location. Two options have been identified: A section of the rear car park; The MUGA (with restrictions to ensure the surface does not get damaged and only at times when this would not impact its use for sports).

Felindre Welfare Hall

Refurbishment costs to be determined by Mawr Community Council to fully utilise the premises and deliver additional services.

6.3. Developing a funding strategy

It will be necessary for Mawr Community Council to put in place a Funding Strategy to provide an overview of actions, timescales and possible funding sources/approaches to achieve the preferred option 'Improving facilities as an important social and recreational resource for Felindre'. The Grants Officer will play a key part in identifying, applying for and managing the funds along with support from Swansea Council officers.

Several funding opportunities that should be further investigated as part of the Funding Strategy include:

The Leader programme has made investment to grow and develop the tourism product, including the RDP Rural Accommodation Growth Scheme, which secured investment to improve accommodation provision in rural Swansea. While the Leader programme is drawing to a close, the recently announced **UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)**, which will be a significant funder across the region and which Swansea Council is regional lead authority for South West Wales, will make a number of pots available including the Sustainable Communities Fund and Rural Innovation Fund.

The UKSPF is part of UK government's commitment to level up all parts of the UK by delivering on each of the levelling up objectives:

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging.
- Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest.
- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost
- Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency.

The end date for programme delivery is 31 December 2024. £132 million has been allocated to South West Wales with Swansea due to receive £34.4 million. An initial application period will close on the 29th March 2023 with a second round expected in June 2023.

Swansea is operating six 'anchor' projects on key themes of the programme aligned to corporate and partnership strategies. These contain a range of support measures, commissioned activities and third party grant schemes. Further information should be sought from Swansea Council, particularly about:

- **Supporting Communities Anchor:** Grant funding for community/ third sector projects. A range of grants available to support local groups and organisations to enhance local community spaces, facilities and activities. Grants will support the development of social capital, asset based development and impactful volunteering.
- **Transforming County Place Anchor:** Village and town centre small scale enhancements – local authority led greening/ green infrastructure and public realm enhancements in towns and villages in the county.
- **Rural Anchor:** Successor project to the Rural Development Programme providing funding for rural community development, climate change and net zero based activities and rural business activities.

Brilliant Basics (Visit Wales / Business Wales) is a capital fund to deliver small-scale tourism infrastructure improvements across Wales. The grant is available up to £300,000 with a maximum intervention rate of 80%. There is no minimum grant amount. The current round of funding is open to Local Authorities and National Park Authorities. The closing date for Expression of Interests is the 16th March 2023. Full spend must be incurred and claimed by 31 March 2025. Mawr Community Council should enquire about future funding rounds.

The objectives of the fund are to:

- Invest in small infrastructure projects that benefit both communities and visitors in strategically important tourism locations.
- Develop high quality infrastructure projects that support the wider tourism offer in destinations giving visitors a memorable experience throughout their stay.
- Support basic facilities to remain open all year and cater for visitors well into the evening.

For this round of funding, the priority is focused on 4 key areas:

- Alleviate pressure points. Find infrastructure solutions to overcome pressure on areas as a result of increased visitor numbers.
- Environmentally sustainable destinations. Develop new or transform existing infrastructure to make the destination more environmentally sustainable, thereby helping to reduce the carbon footprint.
- Inclusive Tourism / Accessibility. Support projects that remove obstacles and barriers within a destination and improve access to facilities for all.
- Enhancing national products, for example, projects that enhance and raise the profile of the Wales Coast Path.

The means: to change places for the better

Of importance to Felindre in terms of outdoor recreational activities and trails is Visit Wales' year of the trail and Swansea Council's aspiration to provide further support to northern wards to spread the benefits of tourism and relieve some of the pressures in the southern areas during peak periods. The **Swansea Council Tourism Grant** has been recently secured by the Shepherds Country Inn for accommodation provision.

The **Mynydd y Gwair Wind Farm Community Fund** can be applied to for part-funding of the Welfare Hall refurbishment costs and / or park / playing fields equipment / fencing as Mawr Community Council has successfully done for Garnswllt Welfare Hall and Craig Cefn Parc Community Garden and the playing fields. The **Welsh Water Community Fund** is another example of successfully secured grants by the Community Council.

7. Summary conclusions and key recommendations

7.1. Summary conclusions

The concept, developed with Mawr Community Council and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee, was to explore opportunities to expand upon facilities and services around Felindre Welfare Hall and adjacent fields as an important social and recreational resource for local communities. Several projects had already been considered by the council and committee who are local representatives and residents. These had been informed by their knowledge of the area and discussions with the wider community.

Further discussions, a drop-in session and a survey were conducted for this study.

Projects identified for further development into a complementary and cohesive proposition included:

- Felindre Welfare Hall – additional facilities and services
- Playing fields – additional offering
- Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) – additional uses
- Sally’s Way trail and woodland – reinstatement and forest school activities
- Children’s play area – new addition
- Farmers market / vending machine

The study area is fully owned by Mawr Community Council and benefits from proximity of facilities / proposals to one another and ease of access between them.

A real interest has been conveyed from the community about what is needed in the area and the important social and recreational role that these proposals can play.

Key quantitative and qualitative issues, challenges and opportunities arising from the socio-economic profile, literature research and discussions with project partners and locals has been interpreted into a SWOT analysis. This has informed the ‘Market’ opportunity, development principles and comparison of development options – enabling a rationale, operational / delivery aims and outcomes to be compared in order to maximise strengths and opportunities, address weaknesses and mitigate the impact of threats.

The research, consultation and site assessment demonstrate strong support for further development of the community resource to more fully meet ‘community’ need, address gaps in provision and improve the maintenance of Sally’s Way trail and woodland.

The **key user groups** of the new developments will be:

Primary

Local residential marketplace

- Primarily within a 10-minute drivetime. The key market / audience is likely to be a cross-section of the local community; families, teenagers, retired people, recreational walkers, isolated individuals and those with learning difficulties.
- The catchment would also include those within a 20-minute drivetime, particularly those north of the M4 and surrounding areas to Felindre.

Local learning education visits

- Range of formal and informal learning opportunities around biodiversity, environmental and wood activities.
- School visits and specialist interest groups.

Secondary audiences

Visitor market

- The visiting friends and relatives (VFR) market can form a modest part of the visitor mix.
- Opportunities to link to neighbouring attractions such as the Lower Lliw Reservoir via the Mawr Heritage Walking Trail. This would likely be more limited in scale and rely on the popularity of the reservoir and interest in exploring nearby areas e.g. appealing to 'niche' interests / demographics and those local to Swansea or the immediate vicinity of neighbouring counties.

Several **development principles** have underpinned the generation of options and appraisal process.

A community resource providing social and recreational opportunities primarily to the local community and with some visitor market appeal:

- **Further develop the community resource to more fully meet 'community' need and be accessible to a broad range of users**
- **Provide for changing demographics in the area**
- **Address gaps in provision particularly for families and young children**
- **Improve the maintenance of Sally's Way trail and woodland, bringing them back in to sustainable use**

Three levels of intervention / development options were compared in terms of scale and form:

- Option one: Baseline – continue as is
- Option two: Improving facilities as an important social and recreational resource for Felindre
- Option three: An important social and recreational resource with wider visitor market appeal

A matrix was applied to each option to enable objective and comparable assessment. This consisted of eleven criteria based upon Mawr Community Council's and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee's aspirations, community need and development principles.

The highest scoring option by a significant margin was **Option two: Improving facilities as an important social and recreational resource for Felindre** with a weighted score of 79.50. This option fully meets 'community' need as identified by partners, consultation and primary research in this study, provides for needs of community and changing demographics, addresses gaps in provision for families and young children in particular children's playground, improves the maintenance of Sally's Way trail, woodland and habitats to create points of interest and attract more wildlife / biodiversity and proposals can improve the area's low 'Access to services' ranking (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation).

While each proposal can stand alone and has benefits for particular demographics of the community the greatest impact will be seen through realising a complementary package of proposals that fully utilise the community resources (facilities and services) and appeal to a broad range of users.

Mawr Community Council would be the natural lead for the development phases drawing upon partner support and expertise as necessary.

The council has committed to ongoing revenue funding of both a Grants Officer and a Bio-diversity Project Co-ordinator. The council also benefits from the significant input of time and resource on a voluntary basis from the local community in the form of local councillors and the Felindre Welfare Hall Committee.

The Council has a successful track record of securing funds, delivering projects and services and it owns the study area / facilities and is responsible for delivering a range of existing services.

The **single biggest risk factor in being able to deliver the proposals is securing the necessary capital resource**. A **Funding Strategy** will need to be agreed to provide an overview of actions, timescales and possible funding sources/approaches to achieve the preferred option.

Several funding sources have been identified for further investigation:

- UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) – Swansea Council is regional lead authority for South West Wales
- Brilliant Basics (Visit Wales / Business Wales)
- Swansea Council Tourism Grant
- Mynydd y Gwair Wind Farm Community Fund
- The Welsh Water Community Fund

7.2. Key recommendations

Building upon the analysis and reviewing the development principles and development options has informed 4 recommendations.

Recommendation 1 – The preferred option ‘**Improving facilities as an important social and recreational resource for Felindre**’ should be pursued.

Recommendation 2 – Proposals should be developed and presented as a **complementary package that fully utilise the community resources (facilities and services) and appeal to a broad range of users.**

Recommendation 3 – **Mawr Community Council should be the lead for the development phases** drawing upon partner support and expertise as necessary.

Recommendation 4 – A **Funding Strategy** should be agreed to provide an overview of actions, timescales and possible funding sources/approaches to achieve the preferred option. Several funding sources should be further investigated with a view to submitting applications for the necessary capital resources.

Appendix 1: Drop-in session publicity leaflet

Felindre Hall and adjacent fields – an important social and recreational resource

We want to hear your views



Mawr Community Council and Felindre Welfare Hall Committee are exploring opportunities to expand upon facilities and services around Felindre Welfare Hall and adjacent fields as an important social and recreational resource for local communities. We want to ensure that proposals respond to the needs of residents and visitors. We are keen to hear your views and would be grateful if you could answer a few questions to help shape the future of this project.

We are holding a drop-in session on Saturday 5th November 10.00-11.30am at Felindre Welfare Hall to discuss the project. Refreshments will be provided.

We have also produced a short questionnaire and would be grateful if you could complete this by the 27th November using the url or by scanning the QR code. Hard copies of the questionnaire are also available from the Community Council.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FCZC65W>



If you have any questions about this project, please email james.thomas@themeans.co.uk

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