



# Cletwr newsletter

## Winter 2015

Siop Cynfelyn is a community-run project that provides a range of services at the Cletwr site, Tre'r-ddôl

# Poised to Purchase!

The community company is about to become the owners of the whole of the Cletwr site and premises. We anticipate that the purchase agreement with the current owners of the Cletwr (Sue and Huw Lewis) will be completed before Christmas. This has been made possible through the Lottery award announced in February 2015, and confirms their support for this enterprise.

There won't be any noticeable differences until we are able to embark on the new building project, hopefully in 2017. However, we will have a new spring in our step because owning the building will give the business greater security and increased confidence.

The revised version of the plans for the building are on display in the cafe. Please come and have a look at them.

## Shop Talk

After struggling during the quiet first part of the year we focused hard on organising and preparing to maximise our sales over the holiday season. We achieved record sales whilst maintaining an excellent stock availability and a welcoming customer experience with all staff and volunteers being super-efficient.

This summer we introduced a souvenir range for tourists with help from a local supplier, Hyfryd Wholesale from Llandrindod Wells, who gave us the advantage of buying small quantities to test the waters. It proved so successful we ended up placing four orders with them.

Sales from the Welsh Books Council also increased widely this summer. These are all higher profit-margin items than food and this will ensure we can maintain our competitive prices on essentials like bread and milk during the hard winter months, for the benefit of the whole community.

**Christmas stock is now on the shelves** with more new products arriving weekly: we have lots of luxury Christmas items, stocking fillers and our famous Welsh hampers. We are extending the range this year, with dedicated hampers for Chocolate Lovers, for Coffee Lovers, for Christmas Day Treats, and many more - or make your own bespoke selection. Look at examples in the shop or online. Give us a week's notice if you can.

**We have revised our winter opening hours** to suit your demands, which means that the shop and café will be open till 5pm on a Saturday; and we'll be opening the cafe at 9.30am every day.

**Our popular Christmas Fair will be held on Saturday 12th December.** Some of our local suppliers will be here offering tastings and samples of their produce; and you can pre-order your turkey and other meats, and your fresh fruit and veg, for convenient one-stop collection on Christmas Eve. You can order your hampers or just pop down for a glass of mulled wine and home baked mince pie.



*Brian Davies, Sylvie Fombonne, Karen Evans and Lowri Jones receive the Welsh Group of the Year Award, in Aberystwyth University's celebration of lifelong learning.*

## Welsh Learner Events Rewarded

Our Welsh Learners events have been particularly well supported, and have won no less than the award for Welsh Group of the Year! The award celebrates the shop's success in bringing together Welsh speakers and learners to use the language and make it visible and audible to customers and to those who travel through. The group's activities include 'Dal ati', a Saturday morning chat and cuppa once a month; *Amser Stori*, a story time for parents with small children and babies, every second Thursday afternoon; and a monthly Welsh film night. And of course the inception of our brand new Welsh lending library. Diolch i bawb!

Don't forget, you can also like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, or join our mailing list to receive regular updates about events and all things Cletwr.

## Introducing a new kid on the block - Our new assistant manager

"Hello. I'm Suzanne Davies, or Sue if you prefer. I'm 40 years old and have lived in Mid Wales pretty much my whole life. I come from Newtown originally and have lived in Machynlleth for 25 years. I'm a single Mum with 2 nearly grown up children. I have a finance/business background, mainly with third sector organisations, but have a little retail experience and many years in the hospitality sector.

I've always been community oriented, so I've thoroughly enjoyed my job at Siop Cynfelyn so far. The staff and volunteers have been so welcoming and it's lovely to be a part of such a vital community project. I'm excited about the future plans and feel extremely grateful to be involved."

## White or Brown?

It's been a very busy Summer. We've had record numbers of people in the cafe, which in turn has led to record takings. On one Saturday during the school holidays we worked out we'd used every chair in the cafe 6 times over! We've also had some very nice comments in the visitors' book, and lots of repeat customers.

But we HAVE listened to you. Our weekend breakfast menu has proved so popular that there will be a revised menu from the 2nd of November, and breakfasts will be available every day of the week, from 9.30. One customer was so impressed with our vegetarian breakfast she brought her friend the following week.....all the way from Brecon!

But of course none of this would have been possible without our dedicated (and incredibly hard working!) team of volunteers, employed staff and young workers, all of whom deserve a mention, our sincere thanks....and quite possibly a medal! In addition to actually serving customers they do everything from washing dishes and tea towels to making our cakes, baked goods and pounds of jam and chutney...and everything in-between.

What's ahead? Well obviously Christmas is looming, so one of the treats to look forward to is our home-made mince pies. Because of the feedback we had last year we'll also be selling our own mincemeat in the shop, alongside Christmas jams and chutneys from our wonderful Jambuster team. A prize in the Christmas raffle will once again be a huge glazed Christmas cake, so don't forget to buy your tickets! All profits from the raffle will go towards match funding for our new building.



*Moses & Migrants walk: led by Caroline de Carle and Chris Forster Brown.*

## An Eventful Time

Over the last 6 months, we've organised a number of events: some tried and tested, others new - many in direct response to what YOU asked of us.

Many of the new events were held over the summer, with varying degrees of success. Perhaps the most popular addition were the guided walks, with themes as diverse as the dawn chorus, map and compass reading, landscape photography, meditation, and the flora and fauna of Cors Fochno. Due to their success, we plan to organise lots more - keep your eyes peeled for future walks!

Over one weekend in August, we hosted the Dyfi Biosphere day (including the well supported Cletwr Fern Survey), followed by a Craft Fair on the Sunday. Many thanks to Llangynfelyn Show for the loan of their marquee - there would have been some very soggy crafters without it! This was the first craft fair that the shop has organised, but it won't be the last! There will be a Winter Craft Fair in December - if you're interested in holding a stall at this or any future craft fairs, do get in touch with us.

Although Gwilym and Lowri, the events Co-ordinators, worked tirelessly to bring it all together, NONE of this would have been possible without the support of so many of our volunteers who endlessly give not only their time, but their creative input and their enthusiasm: Diolch o galon!

There's a new season of special events and regular gatherings coming up, including guided walks, storytelling, film nights, family arts and crafts, the Annual Christmas Food Fair, and of course Santa will be visiting the Cwtch Grotto. And there's another chance for good neighbours to learn from the British Heart Foundation how to use a defibrillator in an emergency. For more information, have a look at the full events guide.

### ...and please don't forget the Annual General Meeting!

This will be held on **Sunday November 22nd at 3.30 pm in the Llanfach, Tre Taliesin**. The committee literally cannot make strategic decisions without your support. You have a right to be kept informed and to give us your thoughts. Please help by supporting us! This is a critical time in the life of our community enterprise. Nomination forms for people to join the Board of Directors are available in the shop.

## Business Plan Mark 2

Largely overlooked but crucial, the business plan is a statement of our thinking about what we want to achieve and what it will take. Any funding bid has to have a business plan, and it's important that everyone looks at it. The first plan enabled us to make a bid to the National Lottery, and it is now out of date. The second plan will take us through the next stage - the rebuilding programme, and the development of the activities we have been trying out. Please look at it, and feel free to make comments on it - all comments welcome. We will be putting it on the Siop Cynfelyn website soon.

## Helping other Communities to do their thing...

When we started, we spent quite a lot of time investigating how other communities ran their shops, cafes and hubs. Most were really inspirational, if daunting. Well, Siop Cynfelyn is beginning to inspire others and now communities trying to develop their own enterprises come to learn from us, or invite us to visit to share advice. It's good to know that we can start to hand on our hard won experiences.

## Cletwr Community Services Survey Autumn 2015

Since the shop and cafe opened in May 2013, its role as a community hub has developed through a programme of activities and events. In order to plan the future, we are conducting an important survey to find out if people would be interested in an expanded range of services delivered through the hub, and if you would make use of them.

**So do drop into Siop Cynfelyn on November 18th (3.00 pm - 7.00 pm)** when there will be an opportunity to find out more about what the community hub could offer, plus a chance to chat to people representing some of the services mentioned in the survey included here in the newsletter. We would be grateful if you could fill in this survey, and return it to Siop Cynfelyn by November 30th.

## Winter Opening Hours

### Shop

Sunday	8.30 - 16.00
Monday	8.30 - 13.00
Tuesday-Friday	8.30 - 18.30
Saturday	8.30 - 17.00

### Cafe

Sunday	9.30 - 16.00
Monday	9.30 - 12.30
Tuesday-Saturday	9.30 - 17.00



Contact the shop 01970 832 113; [cletwr@cletwr.com](mailto:cletwr@cletwr.com)

For more information on anything contained in this newsletter please log on to

[www.cletwr.com](http://www.cletwr.com)