

CASE STUDY

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

Siop Griffiths Gwynedd, North Wales



In 2011 the local community established 'Dyffryn Nantlle 20/20', a community enterprise to help deliver youth activities and training linked to local history and culture and celebrating the Welsh language.

Dyffryn Nantlle 20/20, wanted to purchase and renovate Siop Griffiths, an iconic building and former hardware shop in Penygroes which had been empty for more than five years. They wanted to renovate the building to include a café, shop, B&B facilities and an outdoor activities business. The project would expand a digital activities project that had been running in the area over a number of years and provide much needed training and employment opportunities for local young people.

Details:

Dyffryn Nantlle 20/20's main committee, comprising 8 local people, led on the project. The project was supported by Village SOS led in Wales by DTA Wales to help them progress their project ambitions.

The committee raised £53,000 from more than 200 local residents (including crowd-funding) and was awarded £10,000 in grants towards the purchase of the building.

Dyffryn Nantlle 20/20 also received support from Wales Co-Operative Centre, Co-Operative Mutual Solutions, Sylfaen Cymunedol, Pensel Architects and Burum consultants.

- They carried out community consultations
- Drew up a legal structure and registered as a Community Benefit Society
- Organised a community share issue

Tel: 01286 882134

Email: benica@gn.apc.org

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/dn/2020

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- Developed detailed financial projections and a risk analysis for the business plan
- Applied for planning permission.

The new body, Siop Griffiths Cyf, succeeded in the summer of 2017 with an application to the Rural Communities Development Fund (from Europe), but in October 2017 failed with a stage 2 People and Places application. Because of the need to begin the project by the end of the year to draw down the European money, Siop Griffiths negotiated a loan with Cyngor Gwynedd for the match funding. With this secured building work begins at the end of April 2018, to develop the first project, the cafe.

In the meantime Siop Griffiths has been applying for further funding to develop the other projects. A stage 2 application to Welsh Government's Communities Facilities Fund is being assessed, to develop a digital creation centre for young people, and use of the cafe as a community hub. Nearly £9,000 has been secured to buy equipment for the centre from Arloesi Gwynedd Gwledig, to run taster sessions with Bangor University, to prepare for the centre.

Siop Griffiths has also re-applied to People and Places, to develop the accommodation, and employ a Development and Marketing Officer.

Lessons Learned:

- Contact groups that have undertaken a similar project and support organisations to help you refine your ideas.
- Rather than 'make, do and mend', be confident in your ideas and your abilities to complete your project.



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