



# Blaenavon Town Council Case Study

## At a glance


Amid the cost-of-living crisis, Blaenavon Town Council has introduced many innovative initiatives to remove financial barriers, to ensure residents can access essential activities for health, well-being, and community engagement.

## Costs & Impact

### Community Wellbeing Days 2023 and 2024

 **£0**  
Cost to Residents


 **500+**  
Attended each event

 The cost for this initiative in March 2023 was £729 and May 2024 was £871.


### Befriending Cinema Club


 **£0**  
Cost to Residents


 **50+**  
Attended per session over 20+ sessions

 Council covered cost of film screening, refreshments and transport costs. The total cost for this initiative in 2023/24 was £2,567.

### Outdoor Cinema Project 2024


 **£0**  
Cost to Residents. Normal cost per ticket £12


 **300**  
Attended over two nights

 Total cost was £4645, but the cost to the Council was £2,500, as jointly funded by a grant from Torfaen Council using the shared prosperity levelling up grant.

### Community Swimming Initiative

 **£0**  
Cost to Residents

 **60+**  
Attended per session over 4 sessions

 The cost for this initiative in 2023/24 was £1018. The cost to the Council was £0 as this was funded by a grant received from Street Games, a Welsh Government initiative.

## Challenges

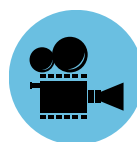
Faced with the ongoing challenges of the cost-of-living crisis Blaenavon Town Council looked at ways to engage with the community, provide free or low-cost activities, and work with local partners to ensure residents could access essential services without financial strain.

## Solutions

- In March 2023 and May 2024, the Community Wellbeing Days brought together local organisations and 500 residents at each event, for a day of services and activities, resulting in positive feedback and plans for future events.
- The Cinema Befriending Club, running from 2022 to 2024, has successfully combatted loneliness through free monthly film screenings, engaging over 1,100 residents and securing ongoing support.
- The Outdoor Cinema Project this year provided 300 local residents with the opportunity to enjoy a free outdoor cinema experience against the beautiful backdrop of the Blaenavon Iron Works.
- The Community Swimming Initiative offered free swimming sessions to over 60 residents per session, promoting physical and mental health, with continuation planned for 2024/25.



Community Wellbeing-Day



Befriending Cinema Club



Outdoor Cinema Project



Community Swimming

## Key Stages

- 1 Find out which Powers the Council requires**  
All community councils in Wales need specific legal powers that enable them to provide various services and support for their local communities. These powers, granted by legislation, allow councils to undertake a wide range of activities and initiatives to improve the well-being and quality of life for residents.
- 2 Carry Out a Risk Assessment**  
Conduct a comprehensive risk assessment to identify and mitigate potential issues that could arise during the event. This process should include evaluating safety hazards, planning for emergencies, ensuring compliance with regulations, and preparing contingency plans to address any unforeseen challenges.
- 3 Find out who you can Collaborate with**  
Actively seeking community-focused grant programs can provide financial support for council projects, while partnerships with local businesses, non-profits, and government entities offer shared resources and collaborative opportunities. These collaborations can drive innovation, boost community engagement, and lead to sustainable outcomes benefiting the entire community.

# Blaenavon Befriending Film Club Video



“my wife passed away two years ago, and this has been a life saver for me”

Befriending Film Club Member

## Powers Used by Blaenavon Town Council



### Community Wellbeing Day 2023 and 2024.

This is authorised under S144 Local Government Act 1972 covering two elements of the activity namely - Power to provide facilities for conferences and exhibitions and also to encourage tourism.



### Befriending Film Club

This is authorised under S137 Local Government Act 1972 (General Power) - Power to incur expenditure for certain purposes not otherwise authorised.



### Outdoor Cinema Project

This is authorised under S145 Local Government Act 1972 - Power to provide entertainment and support to the arts including festivals and celebrations. It is also authorised under S144 Local Government Act 1972 namely - Power to encourage tourism.



### Community Swimming

This is authorised under S137 Local Government Act 1972 (General Power) - Power to incur expenditure for certain purposes not otherwise authorised.



## These are Blaenavon Town Council's examples and are not recommendations:

Powers & justifications can differ, councils should consider their specific circumstances. For advice and guidance, councils may wish to contact their One Voice Wales Development Officer. [admin@onevoicewales.wales](mailto:admin@onevoicewales.wales)

## Resident Feedback:

Feedback from residents across all initiatives highlighted the value of free access, the opportunity to engage with local services, and the strengthening of community ties.

“We feel very privileged to live in a town with a council who ensure that there are opportunities and activities for everyone.”

“The cooking on a budget sessions have helped me and my family with trying to get good meals and ingredients for less money during this cost of living crisis.”

## The Future:

Blaenavon Town Council is committed to continuing it's community wellbeing initiatives & to explore new and innovative opportunities to address the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. These include Mums & Daughters Fitness, a Veterans Support Hub, and the Community Kit Room.

Community Wellbeing Days, the Cinema Befriending Club, additional Cooking on a Budget sessions, and the Community Swimming Initiative are all set to continue. The focus remains on sustainability, inclusivity, and community-driven solutions to address the cost-of-living crisis.

## Want To Find Out More?

For more information on the One Voice Wales Cost-of-Living Crisis project contact the team at:



[CoLC@onevoicewales.wales](mailto:CoLC@onevoicewales.wales)



<https://bit.ly/3KYHftK>