Grantee Q&A: collaboration and contingency key to



The restored pub has become a focus for socialising and a hub of key community facilities. Photo: Ty'n Llan.

Siôn Jones, project manager for the restoration of the Grade II listed Ty'n Llan Tavern near Caernarfon, shares what he's learned throughout the process – from the importance of meticulous planning to managing the day-to-day surprises of delivery.

About the project

We supported the people of Llandwrog to take their 19th-century pub into community ownership with a grant of £1.8million in 2023. The historic building, which had been abandoned, has now been restored and reopened as both a pub and a hub of community services and support, along with an extension housing a new restaurant and holiday lets. The project is currently working with partner organisations across North Wales to further expand Ty'n Llan's facilities and establish a community garden.

What did you find most challenging about your application and how did you overcome these challenges?

“The hardest part was pulling together input from so many people and shaping it into one clear plan. We solved it by spending a lot of time upfront agreeing a shared vision and being honest about what the building and the community needed. Once we’d done that, the application fell into place.”

What would you recommend future applicants spend more time on when developing their application?

“Costs, programme and risks. A well-tested budget and a realistic timeline make everything easier later on, especially when construction prices move or unexpected issues appear during the build.”

What one piece of advice would you give to someone applying for funding for the first time?

“Don’t do it in isolation. Bring the right people with you from the start: your volunteers, specialists, architects and community partners. It makes the application stronger and builds the team you’ll rely on once the project begins.”

When delivering your project, what surprised you?

“The le
escala
import



The 19th-century building has been brought into community ownership and back to life. Photo: Ty'n Llan.

What one thing do you know now that you wish you'd known before you began?

"You can never have too much contingency. Market conditions, delays and monitoring and evaluation complexities can eat into budgets quickly. Having a bigger buffer from the start would have taken some pressure off."

Following this project, what are you most looking forward to in your organisation's future?

"We're excited about what the new space will let us do. The project has given us the capacity to run more community events, host more groups and make better use of the building throughout the week. With a finished kitchen, restaurant and flexible spaces, we can now plan activities and partnerships that simply weren't possible before. It's something the whole area has been waiting for."

This is part of a series of Q&As with successful grantees – helping to demystify the project application and delivery process and share experience across the sector.



Karen and the project team gather to celebrate the launch of the Maroon Mile at the Heart of Midlothian Memorial Clock, in the city's Haymarket.



the heart of Edinburgh

A community group build benches as part of the Lost Peatlands project. Photo: Neath Port Talbot Council.



ect narrative

A portrait of Twimukye Mushaka, by photographer Karen Gordon, featured in the project's exhibition highlighting migrant stories in Scotland.

Grantee Q&A: building a platform for a community's heritage