

## **Community No. M07 - CAERSWS**

### **Introduction**

1. The community of Caersws lies in a landscape that is defined by the confluence of the river Severn with its tributaries the afon Carno and the river Trannon. At this point the river valley widens into a broad vale; even so, northwards the community's terrain rises to the moorland of Waun Garno and to the moorlands - rising to Y Glonc - that surround the three upland lakes, Llyn Du, Llyn Mawr and Llyn y Tarw. This community lies at a major hub in the regional transport network, at a meeting point of the A470 and A489 roads, and is traversed by the Cambrian Coast railway line; settlement in the community is defined by these important routes. The key settlement of Caersws has a good range of infrastructure and services; the small village of Clatter has a modest range of community services and facilities, and the small village of Llanwnog has limited community services and facilities. Away from these villages, further settlement is found in the rural settlement of Pontdolgoch and in scattered farms and dwellings.

2. The community has a population of 1,526, an electorate of 1,189 (2005) and a council of 12 members. The community is warded: Caersws with 682 electors and seven councillors; Llanwnog with 507 and five. The precept required for 2005 is £15,000, representing a Council Tax Band D equivalent of £23.86.

3. Before the 1986 Review, this community formed the community of Llanwnog, which was warded with two wards, Llanwnog and Caersws. The neighbouring community of Aberhafesp was considered too small to be viable, and there were proposals for amalgamation in this area, with the proposal that initially found favour with the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales being a merger of Aberhafesp and Llanwnog communities. (There was no question at that time that the then Llanwnog community was viable in its own right.) There was strong opposition to this proposal from Aberhafesp Community Council, and, following a public Local Inquiry on 20 September 1978 at Tregynon, the Commission stated: "We have considered all the representations made to us and also the information and views presented to us at the inquiry and we are now of the opinion that the best solution is to leave Aberhafesp as a separate community."

4. The Commission therefore turned its attentions to the then Llanwnog community. Boundary adjustments were made: to transfer Plas newydd to Carno community and to transfer an area at Bron y nant and Ystrad faelog to Trefeglwys community. (In the Decision Letter of the Secretary of State for Wales dated 21 October 1985, an additional transfer of two properties known as Cefn Gwyn and Sentry to Trefeglwys community was also made following representations.) The Commission considered that it would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government to transfer a large area to the north of the Llandinam community, comprising Dolhafren, Maesmawr and

Carnedd that looked to the village of Caersws for the provision of its services, to the Caersws ward of the Llanwnog - Caersws community.

5. The warding arrangement that currently exists was proposed by the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales, with the allocation of councillors being: Caersws – seven and Llanwnog – five, based on the electorate at 1980. The former Montgomery District Council had suggested that a more appropriate name for this community would be "Caersws". This proposal was accepted by the Commission.

### **Summary of representations received prior to preparation of Draft Proposals**

6. A submission form has been received from Caersws Community Council, proposing no changes in this community.

### **Assessment**

7. The electorate of Caersws has increased from 1,030 in 1980 to 1,189 in 2005, and this increase will continue, particularly through the further development of the key settlement of Caersws. The Unitary Development Plan allocates land in the small village of Clatter for five further dwellings and land in the small village of Llanwnog for 10 further dwellings. Further development in these villages will be limited to infill development and opportunities for affordable housing development adjacent to the settlement development boundaries. The Plan allocates land in the key settlement of Caersws for 95 dwellings and there are also opportunities for infill development and opportunities for affordable housing development adjacent to the settlement development boundaries here. There are also opportunities for affordable housing development in the rural settlement of Pontdolgoch in accordance with Policy HP9 of the Plan, for a limited number of dwellings in the open countryside in accordance with Policy HP6 of the Plan, and for conversions in accordance with Policy GP6 of the Plan. The land allocated in the Plan is yet to be developed, and we note that this community's electorate will therefore probably rise to about 1,380, suggesting a continued entitlement in accordance with Table 7 - Guide to Allocation of Councillors to Community Councillors above to twelve councillors.

8. We proceed to give consideration to the warding arrangement in this community. We consider that the warding arrangement continues to serve this community well and meets the criteria in the 1972 Act that (a) the number or distribution of the local government electors for the community is such as to make a single election of community councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and (b) it is desirable that areas of the community should be separately represented on the community council. We consider that this is particularly desirable in this community with one ward embracing the key settlement of Caersws and the other comprising the more rural area that focuses on the small villages of Clatter and Llanwnog and the rural settlement of

Pontdolgoch. The ward boundary follows the course of the rivers Carno and Severn and the Manthrig brook, field boundaries and the Trefeglwys road. However, the settlement boundary of the key settlement of Caersws is now extending beyond this ward boundary. We therefore consider that it would be appropriate to extend the ward boundary of the Caersws ward northwards along the afon Carno, and eastwards to take in Penyborfa fach, Penyborfa fawr, Henfryn, Bryn newydd and Bryn glas, to join the existing ward boundary on the Trefeglwys road.

9. Schedule 11(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 requires us, in fixing the number of community councillors to be elected for each ward, to have regard to any change in the number or distribution of the local government electors of the community which is likely to take place. We would suggest that the electorate of the Caersws ward might increase to about 840 over the forthcoming years, while the electorate of the Llanwnog ward will remain at about 540 in the same period. The projected ward electorates and councillor entitlements would be as follows:

	Caersws	Llanwnog
Projected Electorate	840	540
Percentage of total electorate	60.9	39.1
Councillor entitlement	7.31	4.69
Existing councillor allocation	7	5

In light of this table, we consider that the existing allocation of councillors between wards will continue to reflect broadly the projected distribution of the local government electors in this community. Admittedly (and as is suggested below), until the development envisaged in the Unitary Development Plan is complete, the present allocation of councillors in this community will tend to favour the Caersws ward slightly. However, we consider that this is acceptable, for once that development is completed a better balance in representation will be found. The more extensive rural area of the Llanwnog ward will then have a slightly higher level of representation, appropriate to meet the challenges of population sparsity in that ward.

### **Draft Proposals**

10. That there should be a community of Caersws;

The community should have a council of 12 members;

The community should be warded as at present, but that an adjustment should be made to the ward boundaries to extend the ward boundary of the Caersws ward northwards along the afon Carno, and eastwards to take in

Penyborfa fach, Penyborfa fawr, Henfryn, Bryn newydd and Bryn glas, to join the existing ward boundary on the Trefeglwys road.

(Ward)	Electorate	No of Councillors	Electors per Councillor
Caersws	682	7	97
Llanwnog	507	5	101