

**Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i'r Pwyllgor Cydraddoldeb a Chyflawnder Cymdeithasol ar gyfer yr  
ymchwiliad i Gydlyniant Cymdeithasol**

**This response was submitted to the Equality and Social justice Committee on the inquiry into Social Cohesion**

**SC 23**

**Ymateb gan: Cydlynnydd Cydlyniant Cymunedol Canolborth a De-orllewin Cymru, Cyngor Sir  
Gaerfyrddin**

**Response from: Mid and South West Wales Community Cohesion Coordinator, Carmarthen  
Council**

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### Key Issues Impacting Social Cohesion in Mid and South West Wales

- **Rural Isolation & Service Accessibility**  
Many communities face challenges in accessing services, which can lead to social exclusion, particularly for ethnic minority communities, LGBTQ+ communities, asylum seekers, and older people.
- **Community Tensions & Misinformation**  
The rise of misinformation, particularly online, has contributed to negative narratives around migration LGBTQ+ issues, increasing community tensions.
- **Hate Crime & Discrimination**  
Reports of hate crime remain a concern, particularly for LGBTQ+ individuals, religious minorities, and asylum seekers. The team works closely with police and third-sector partners to raise awareness of how to report.
- **Housing & Accommodation for Asylum Seekers:** The dispersal of asylum seekers to rural areas, where infrastructure and support networks are limited, presents integration challenges.

### Best Practices & Interventions Supporting Social Cohesion

- **Tension Monitoring**  
Weekly local multi agency monitoring of tensions on a local authority level.
- **Online Challenges and Awareness**  
The team actively works on developing critical thinking skills through awareness raising of online hate and particularly around LGBTQ+ issues, asylum seekers and refugees, through public engagement, training and social media.
- **Hate Crime Awareness & Reporting**  
Collaboration with police, Local Authorities, schools, and community groups has helped increase awareness and reporting of hate crimes.
- **Community Engagement Events**  
Initiatives which bring diverse communities together to foster understanding (via Small Grant funding).
- **Training**

facilitating training for a variety of audiences. Eg Cohesion in Our Communities, providing information about successful projects; Power of Language – how the words we use can be harmful

- Awareness of key campaigns and initiatives  
Holocaust Memorial Day, LGBT History Month, Refugee Week, Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month, Hate Crime Awareness Week etc.
- Policy  
Embedding Community Cohesion within Policy and practice across Local Authorities

#### Welsh Government Support & Areas for Improvement

- Funding & Sustainability  
The community cohesion programme can be vulnerable to short term funding (until 2023, funding was annual, the current round of funds has been for 3 years). Any less than this makes it difficult to maintain long-term impact. Greater funding stability is needed.
- Support for Rural Areas  
Most funding and resources/services tend to focus on urban areas, whereas rural communities need tailored support to address unique challenges.
- Stronger UK Government Collaboration  
Issues such as online hate, immigration policy, and policing fall under UK Government powers. More collaboration is needed to address these challenges at a national level.
- Capacity Building for Community Groups  
Many grassroots organisations lack resources to apply for funding or expand their work. Training and simplified funding processes could help.