

Fideo I Bawb Community Engagement Report



Introduction

Stiwdio Dyfi presents a CRF Powys Localities Initiative funded project called “Creative Space and Outlets” to the communities in Machynlleth and surrounding area. This report assesses the community impact of these projects locally so that Stiwdio Dyfi CIC are able to develop and improve their future operations for the benefit of the locality.

In my role as community engagement officer my role has been to advise Stiwdio Dyfi on their community engagement activity and to record and assess the effect of their Creative Spaces and Outlets project on the local community.

Sos Coch Sinema - Evaluation of Video Recorded Audience Feedback

The feedback for the Sôs Coch Sinema project was overwhelmingly positive, with a strong focus on the value of super-local events being easily accessible and offering not only entertainment but a cultural experience, and providing a valuable subject for discussion, allowing people to get to know each-other locally. This is a key issue in villages in the Dyfi Valley area, where Welsh-speakers and incoming English-speakers with different social circles find it difficult to mix socially. From Fideo i Bawb’s twenty-years of experience working in “village integration” in the area, the Sôs Coch Sinema model could prove to be an excellent way to achieve this in the future.

People were very keen on the idea of a long-term regular programme of screenings. Many people highlighted the need to use their village halls and community centres more regularly, especially after Covid. The desire for regular local cinema screenings was overwhelmingly expressed. People spoke highly of cinema provision in Aberystwyth and Tywyn, but felt they were too far to travel. There was unanimous support for having a night out locally which didn’t involve driving or having to find public transport, although there were instances of people travelling from another village when they hadn’t been able to make the screening in their village, suggesting that the idea of cinema, or a particular film, exerts a strong pull. The screenings also attracted people who hadn’t been to those venues before, which helps to strengthen venues struggling to re-energise after Covid.

As previously mentioned, an important learning from the Sôs Coch cinema project is the importance of producing fully bilingual publicity material. Fideo i Bawb received second-hand anecdotal evidence that a few Welsh speakers found the English front page off putting and did not even attend the screenings as a result. Despite this there were in fact strong Welsh-speaking audience attendances at all of the screenings. Other feedback received were the difficulties of attending screenings due to childcare issues - strong disappointment was expressed at having to miss the screenings - and a desire to have daytime film screenings for older people who often prefer not to go out in the dark.

The low ticket price was sometimes mentioned and the advantages of a “cheap night out”, although other people felt the cost saved on travel would make a higher ticket price acceptable. People focussed more on the quality of the films and the local social experience. However, it seems likely that providing this service at a low cost would help people in the current cost of living crisis, and especially to help reach those who might not otherwise come.

Some people mentioned it was nice to go somewhere familiar – this may be an important factor in combating social anxiety, especially after Covid, and perhaps increase confidence for Welsh and English speakers who often don't know each other to meet at an event which is less likely to be socially awkward and stressful, and that it is “handy for older people and young people to be able to go easily”.

Fideo i Bawb was particularly impressed by the programming of such a wide range of films, especially in MOMA in the Tabernacle in Machynlleth where the regular programme attracted strong audiences and very positive feedback. Those groups who had selected part of the programme – for example the very popular Queer Cinema screenings - were particularly happy with the events, and in fact these “niche” films brought in strong audiences (some of whom came from outside the area), who expressed real pleasure at being able to see work which otherwise they would not be able to see, especially on a big screen. These films brought them diverse stories and it was fed back that events like this make queer people feel safer and supported in the area - normally they would have to go to London to see such films.

There was strong feedback from the Machynlleth screenings about the wide range of films on offer, the diversity represented and the fact that they weren't the usual mainstream offering appealed strongly to these audiences. There was also high turn outs for the more mainstream films which people were already familiar with.

Refreshments were popular, and people fed back that it made it more of a social occasion. Some people suggested that it would be good to have more facilitated after-film discussion to extend the social aspect and for people to get to know each other.

People really liked it being Welsh with some Welsh language, seeing Welsh talent. Nice to see local people that they know in the short films, which further highlights the important role of local film production in community memory and identity. Some people expressed enjoyment at seeing the local adverts and learning more about what's happening in the local area, and some newcomers were “astonished” to be able to see films so locally and with such high quality picture and sound.

A strong regularly-heard feedback was the sense of excitement that Sinema Sôs Coch had engendered in both Machynlleth, with its extensive programme of screenings, and in the villages, where people expressed a real desire for social events for all ages after Covid. Regular nights would be welcome and build

community cohesion through regularly meeting up, meeting new people and having something to talk about together. Young people fed back that local cinema was very welcome, as it's important to have something cultural that appeals to them, especially after the isolation of Covid, and this inclusivity was reflected by all the different groups attending screenings.

Wider community engagement conversations with people living outside the Dyfi Valley showed a definite degree of interest in village halls and community centres having access to screening equipment to hold their own cinema nights – it was suggested that a group of village halls could club together to buy equipment, but direct feedback from the screenings suggested that people would welcome support from an organisation with specialist exhibition knowledge such as Stiwdio Dyfi to support them to select and maintain suitable equipment, and to advise on booking films and copyright, as this is can be a rather labyrinthine process much helped by having support to negotiate a regular supply of films with a low booking fee. Gathering feedback it was noticeable that even in village halls/community centres with existing projection equipment it was considered too difficult to screen films independently.

People widely enjoyed the “offbeat” comedy, the “black humour”, and the chance to see films they wouldn't have seen otherwise. People said that the selected screening programme included a good choice of films as they appealed to all age groups, and that this would be good to continue in order to attract a range of local audiences. It was often described as the only chance to see local films and enjoyed the mix of ideas – the main film attracts people in and then they get a chance to see something different and local. However, one person suggested that perhaps it would be good to prepare audiences for the short films as they were a “bit different”, and two of the people we interviewed found the local short films a bit confusing, and showing three 15-20 minute films took too long in addition to the main feature. Following this feedback, learning for Stiwdio Dyfi could perhaps be to provide more explanation beforehand or have a discussion afterwards. (From a Fideo i Bawb perspective I think introducing more discussion post film could be socially useful).

Some people said they'd like to see the programme develop into a film festival and provide opportunities for local filmmakers.

Some people found the seats at MoMa Machynlleth very uncomfortable as they are church pews and there's not much leg room.

In conclusion, Sinema Sôs Coch has undoubtedly been a huge success in both Machynlleth and the Bro Dyfi area, raising a great deal of support and excitement for this to continue on a regular basis.

The audience feedback was collected on video by Fideo I Bawb which can be viewed upon request.

Radio Dyfi - Evaluation of participation feedback survey

When asked 'What were the areas we did well on with the workshops?' participants responded as such:

"Friendly and informative. Great to have a workshop leader who can speak from experience "

"Enjoyed both and learnt lots"

"broad themes overall and clear focus in each session; experienced facilitators "

"They were very inclusive - everyone was made to feel welcome and their ideas respected. The practitioners of the workshops were very professional and knew so much about radio"

"The vision to do all of this in the first place and pull it off is pretty amazing! The topics and scope of the workshops seems good too."

When asked 'What areas do we need to improve on with the workshops?' participants responded as such:

"Mostly just that the booking seemed to be a bit confusing. The system almost worked but not quite and so it was hard to tell if properly booked on to a session."

"More workshops and a permanent radio station to be able to broadcast regularly"

"Longer more in depth workshops would be good next time "

When Asked 'How important to you was it that the workshops were free?' 67% of votes were a 4 which means they consider this important but not as important not essential.

When asked 'How would you rate your overall experience participating in the workshops?' 73% responded with a 5/5 with the remaining 27th responding with a 4/5.

When asked "What type of workshops would you like us to run in the future? "

participants asked for a range of workshops to such as:

"Just more DJ teaching workshops"

"More in depth technical and a longer workshop on how to avoid common mistakes in presenting radio shows "

"Perhaps one-to-one workshops using the equipment would be helpful if people need it further down the line."

"More of the same; more digital DJing as i wasn't able to make it to those sessions but would like to"

"Documentary and podcast making - recording and editing audio pieces and spoken word content."

"I loved it! Would be great to get more workshop time on how to make the most of the equipment"

When asked Would you be interested in being on the new radio committee decision making board? " Roughly 90% responded that they would be interested thus demonstrating a keen interest amongst workshop participants to take a more active role in the governance and organisational side of Radio Dyfi.

Evaluation of workshop responses: Whilst the the survey attracted less than 20% of the total participants who were involved in the workshops the responses given were overwhelmingly positive. The quality and variety of the workshops has been noted multiple times and the overall experience was a majority of 5/5. It seems the biggest issue with the workshops was the booking system used. In fact many found the google booking system confusing and were unsure if they had filled in the form successfully. Stiwdio Dyfi should look for a new way of booking people into workshops as the current format seems to be causing people trouble. Most of the other criticisms are around having a more permanent location so that there are regular and consistent workshops which are scheduled far in advance.

When asked "Were you one of the 20 DJ's who broadcast over the two pilot weekends? " and with a follow up question of "If "Yes" to the above, can you please tell us about your experience? What went well, how can we improve? " project participants responded as such:

"I found the experience immensely interesting, satisfying and fun. The studio locations were obviously temporary so any problems re. set up e.g. being unable to sit whilst broadcasting will be sorted with a permanent studio. One issue that I feel needs some attention is the changeover from from one programme/presenter to the next as it was a little hairy trying to start a programme without having time to set up properly, ditto at the end of a programme."

"Playing music on the radio was fun."

"thoroughly enjoyed it...all went well considering! More help with the equipment will improve us all but i'm just grateful for the opportunity "

"It was a brilliant experience and very exciting.. it felt like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to talk about the things we were talking about during the show. It definitely ignited something as I can't stop having ideas about what I would like to do if I had the opportunity to broadcast again! The set up was great and made easy by having somebody show us the ropes. The training session with Dave was also

really helpful and made me feel like I might be able to have a go using the decks etc at some point.”

"Having previously dj'ed over the years at parties I'd given up that sort of thing but I've kind of drifted out of retirement and had a great time & enjoyed playing records to the Dyfi Valley and the wider world. Looking forward to DX3 having a permanent home and maybe making this a regular thing and encourage other people into sharing their musical tastes and lives.”

"Really enjoyed the opportunity to play out to a local audience and community; a great initiative! Equipment was good, just needs a permanent studio with appropriate dampening etc so the microphone can be used. “

"Amazing experience, I got to think about so many ways to reach the audience, through music, through the themes of the slot and I learned about the equipment. I also listened to the radio and it was so much fun to hear reference to local events and people. “

The responses from the DJ's who hosted radio shows is extremely positive with enjoyment being a commonly expressed feeling. There was the suggestion of a call in phone so that local people could call in and suggest songs that are then played on the radio, this could also enable more conversations to happen between listeners and the DJ's. It sounds like the DJ's are keen for more and just waiting to get on air again!

Hwb Ffasiwn Da - Workshop Feedback From participation Survey

When asked “How would you rate the organisational quality of the Hwb Ffasiwn Da project? ” project participants replied as such:

“There was no organisation on the day of the show, it was difficult because models arrived at different times, it was left to the designers to get models when they could, this caused issues as Andrea's fabric drapes ~~did it~~ didn't end up getting shown. It was very stressful for the models as there were not enough time, we should have met with them a few times realistically and I feel we should have met more to work out the practicalities and style of the show as it was all very rushed and disorganised on the day.”

"After Abi's event there needed to be a bit of a quicker response to questions. Will did provide a comprehensive email a few days later though and there was a good team What's app which one of the making contributors sorted out which was very useful. I just sensed that there was a bit of confusion at times. For example, I had volunteered to do make up which was exciting, but I only had one day to sort things out in a short time scale, and I needed to know if there was a small budget. In the end there wasn't any sole makeup artist but thinking time is as precious as making time this should have been decided pre event I think. “

"More time getting ready on the day of the show.”

Evaluation: According to community participants, Stiwdio Dyfi need to improve the organisational quality of future fashion shows. It is understandable that there may be some organisational issues with an event that had a two week lead in time, however one of the participants said that there was “no organisation on the day of the show” which is a concern. From the responses of the fashion shows participants it seems the primary issue was not a long enough lead in time for these organisational elements to be put in place. Perhaps a professional production manager or line producer next time, somebody who will be there on the day and in the weeks leading up to the show who is a specialist in organising fashion shows. A fashion show is a complex and sensitive process fraught with organisational subtleties which make the difference between success and failure. It might be a good idea to hire someone who has lots of experience with running fashion shows to join the team next time.

When asked “How has your overall experience been of the Hwb Ffasiwn Da project” participants responded with 100% 5/5 which was a surprise given that there were organisational concerns expressed in the prior question.

When asked “Please provide as much detail as possible to help us improve our services” participants responded as such:

"I enjoyed being part of hwbffasiwnda. The teaching at the old curry house and being part of the show in at the plas."

"I feel motivated because of Hwb Ffaswin Da, that's priceless for me."

"I feel a small community committee could be formed to help plan future events."

"Fabulous creative chat with likeminded people and something for the amateurs in the community. Lovely to be showcased with professional input."

"Just amazing for getting it together and highlighting the interest and creativity that exists in our town!!!! It's all in our hands..literally!!! THANK YOU. Looking forward to seeing the photos and footage."

When asked “Would you be interested in more industry events like the fashion show? ” 100% of participants said yes.

It seems that although there were organisational issues the overall response was a very positive with people’s motivation increased, enjoyment was had and inspiration was found! The idea of a committee for the next show seems like a good one as it would help ensure that project participants were included throughout the process.

When asked “In your opinion what needs to happen to make the fashion industry in the Dyfi Biosphere thrive?” participants responded as such:

"A space for sewers. A room with machines and things to use for sewing"

A shop would help, if local designers showcased work in a shop the project would gain momentum and a shop could be a hub for advertising events.”

"More of the same to build confidence. Fab marketing. The Mid Wales area has so many creative and special people who do ordinary jobs but who have hidden making and creative skills on offer and nowhere to sell/showcase their work. it needs to make inroads into the minds of the community and wider area to make an even greater impact. The hub can provide a springboard for new ventures and a centre where people can get ideas and help as well as skill sharing.”

It seems there is at least some demand for a local shop/ physical space, however only three people have stated their desire for this and it seems like not enough people to consider seeking funding to set up a community sewing shop or the likes. There was full support however for more events such as the fashion show with accompanying workshops.

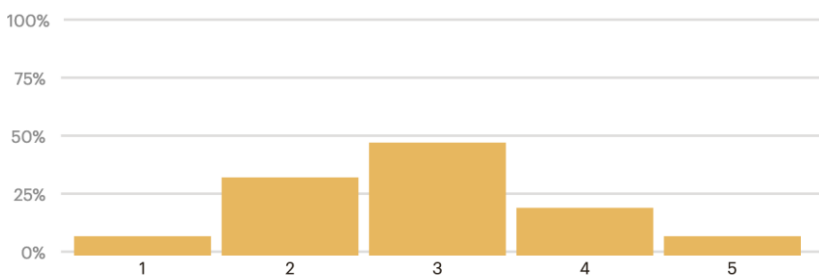
Overall the feedback is that there needs to be improved organisation and longer lead in time if there are any further fashion events locally, however despite concerns over this it seems participants were able to overlook this and the overarching sense is that people enjoyed themselves immensely and would like more events such as this to happen locally.

An observation that wasn't recorded but was mentioned several times from local people was that the Fashion Show itself was a closed event. People from the local community seemed disappointed that they weren't able to book tickets and come to the show. It would be worth considering a more open event in the future as it seems there is appetite from local people to participate more as audience members.

Outreach Evaluation

Question 1 has 128 answers (Range) Avg rating: 2.9

“How connected do you feel to local arts provision in the Dyfi area? / Pa mor gysylltiedig ydych chi'n teimlo i'r celfyddydau lleol yn ardal Dyfi? ”

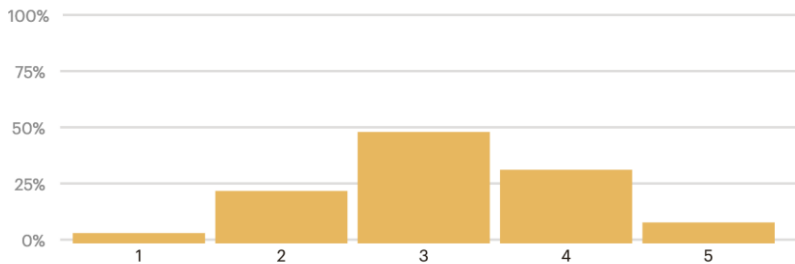


Evaluation of the Stiwdio Dyfi Creative Spaces and Outlets Survey

1 = Not connected / Dim cysylltiedig - 5=Very connected / Cysylltiedig iawn

Question 2 has 128 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.2

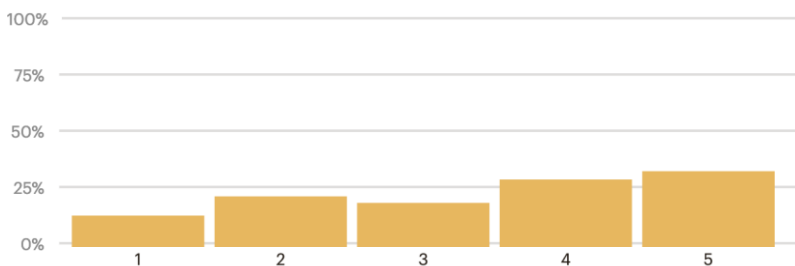
“How easy is it to discover arts events happening in the local area? / Pa mor hawdd yw hi i ddarganfod digwyddiadau celfyddydol sy'n digwydd yn yr ardal leol?”



1= Impossible / yn Amhosibl - 5 = Very easy / Hawdd iawn

Question 3 has 128 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.4

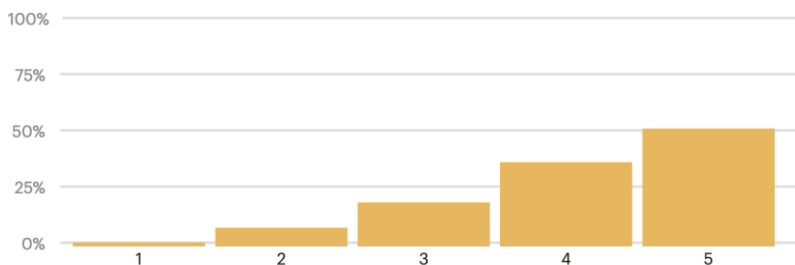
“A local radio station / Gorsaf Radio Lleol”



1 = Not important / Ddim yn bwysig - 5 = Very important / Bwysig iawn

Question 4 has 128 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.1

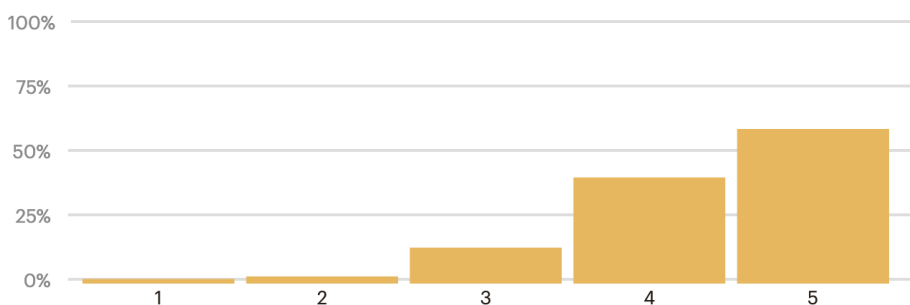
“A range of creative workshops / Amrywiaeth o weithdai creadigol”



1 = Not important / Ddim yn bwysig - 5 = Very important / Bwysig iawn

Question 5 has 128 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.3

“Regular local community cinema screenings / Dangosiadau sinema gymunedol leol rheolaidd”



1 = Not important / Ddim yn bwysig - 5 = Very important / Bwysig lawn

Cinema provision followed by creative workshops seem like a popular and in demand form of creative provision locally at a grassroots community level. It seems that there is at least some high demand for a radio station although there are also many who see radio as not important. However, this is in contrast to the radio and digital skills participants in the ‘manifesto making’ workshops with Clusta and the conversation agency, where ideation demonstrated strong demand. More people feel disconnected to local art provision than connected although it seems the majority know what’s going on locally. The cinema and workshops have very clear signals from the survey participants, whereas the radio station is a mixed response and connectedness and awareness of local arts provision is in the middle.

The written responses to the question “If you’d like to add any further thoughts on local arts in the Dyfi area, please do so here / Os hoffech chi ychwanegu rhagor o syniadau am gelfyddydau lleol yn ardal Dyfi, gwnewch hynny yma” has been collated and stored on Stiwdio Dyfi’s Clusta collection and is available to view here: <https://app.clusta.live/stiwdiodyfisurvey/spark/7936a003-66e0-4a93-ae3d-4043782428a7>

Printed Press

Stiwdio Dyfi were given a short period of time to do outreach/ marketing for their projects.

They began their outreach programme by co-ordinating with Theatre South’s publication Just In Time. This took the form of two editions of a newspaper style arts paper. They printed the first copy and distributed in Machynlleth through people’s letterboxes, and at stores, cafes, pubs and garages in the surrounding area - This all happened on the first week of September and then again on the first week of October.

Although it was difficult to determine the exact effect the Just In Time publication had on the projects, it was made obvious to me that the paper played an important role in informing local people about the project in a more in-depth way than a social media post or a poster would have been capable of. The first edition seemed to announce the projects in a more conceptual way with explanation as to why they were happening and how. The second edition of the paper contained all the workshop and cinema dates which I think people found very useful as it was all in one place i.e to find out what Stiwdio Dyfi was doing this month all one had to do was get a copy of that paper which was widely available in most areas in the valley. Overall I think the paper was very successful in getting the creative spaces and outlets kick-started, and the very wide availability created a breadth of awareness of the project and its activities.

However, I think in terms of engaging with the Welsh language community the paper had less effect as the majority of the paper was in English with only headlines, dates and other key information translated. The paper would have accessed more people locally if it had been totally bilingual. Given that this was not Stiwdio Dyfi's own publication it would not have hurt Stiwdio Dyfi's reputation as a bilingual organisation, however for future projects it will be beneficial to have this type of printed media in both English and Welsh. It seems timely, based on the outcomes of the Stiwdio Dyfi survey (and all the anecdotal evidence) to look into the establishment of a regular 'what's on' publication for the Dyfi Biosphere. This could take the form of a locally designed, bilingual, 'zine', which could be picked up locally at various pick up points. It would work at uniting arts & community, expanding on existing stakeholder engagement and involving those who live and work here in developing and disseminating it. The format could be an ecologically sound hard copy along with a weekly email update, ensuring a broad reach and the opportunity for people to connect around and be part of.

Social Media (Instagram & Facebook)

Stiwdio Dyfi have been very active on social media over September and October. The two social media channels they used were Facebook and Instagram.

Radio Dyfi Facebook reach: Posts: 48; reach of 4.2k; post engagement: 458 accounts.

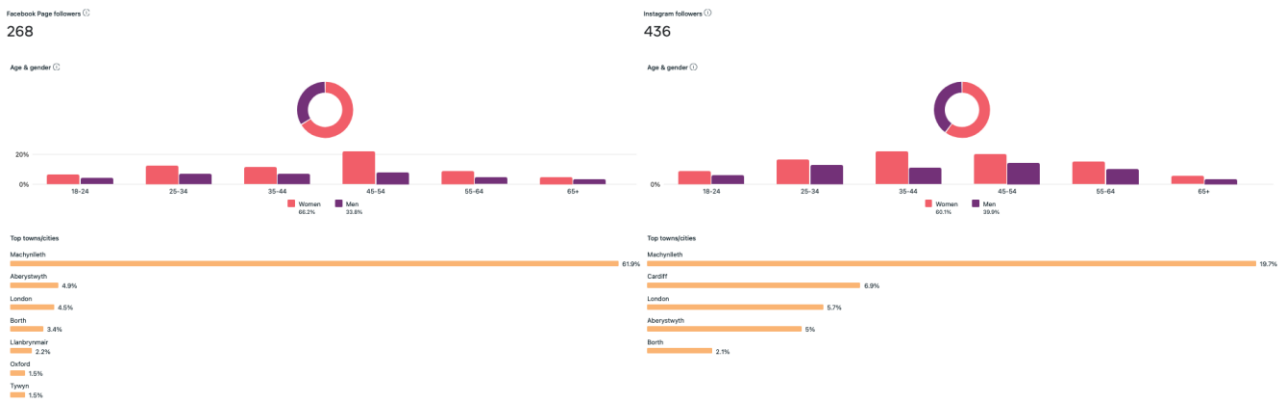
Radio Dyfi Instagram reach: Total Followers gained:181; Posts: 27; Stories: 21;



accounts reached: 321; Accounts engaged: 75.

Sos Coch Sinema Facebook reach: Post Reach : 80 individuals posts which reached 11.5k people and an engagement of 1k people.

Sos Coach Sinema Instagram reach: Total Followers gained: 436; Posts: 55; Stories: 53; Accounts Reached: 819; Accounts Engaged: 436



Hwb Ffasiwn Da Facebook reach: 1.7k; Engagements: 158; Posts: 16



The data exported from Meta's Insights demonstrates how Stiwdio Dyfi ran a social media campaign from the very beginning of the CRF project to great effect. Given that all the accounts were created at the beginning of the project with no previous activity, the numbers are quite impressive particularly as no budget was spent on paid advertising for the pages meaning they were grown organically. Sôs Coch Sinema reached the most people with over 11.5k people supposedly reached with an engagement of 1k. Machynlleth has a population of just over 2000 people and we can see that 58% of the 1k people engaged lived in Machynlleth thus around a quarter of Machynlleth engaged with Sôs Coch Sinema's Facebook posts over the projects duration which is a large proportion of the town. What is also evident however is the low conversion rate of people reached to people engaged compared to the weekly email newsletter engagement rate illustrated below.

Newsletter Evaluation of Data Report

Email / Survey Analytics

330 mailing contacts gained during the project period

232 total responses to surveys / signup forms

Weekly email newsletter

8 newsletters sent in total - from these:

904 total email opens

56.2% average email open rate (low: 50.9% / high: 62.9%)

9.7% average click rate (clicks on URL links in email) (low: 5.4% / high: 18.9%)

Whilst the social media statistics appear much more impressive, it is clear that the engagement rate (open rate) is a much larger percentage of those reached than social media. Per post Stiwdio Dyfi is engaging a much higher number of people with their weekly email Newsletter than with their social media posts which are far more frequent but much less engaged with.