

Carmarthenshire County Council Election

Swiss Valley Ward



Your Independent Candidate

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Independent

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Printed and promoted by Mr Giles Morgan, 61 Oaklands,
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My name is Giles Morgan. I live in Oaklands, Swiss Valley with my wife Claire and our two sons. Having been born and bred up here and with my parents still living in our community I feel I have a good grounding on the issues that affect us all. I certainly know more people up here now having been your local councillor since 2004. Swiss Valley is where I was brought up and this is my home.

I was educated at Swiss Valley Primary School and Bryngwyn Comprehensive School. I went on to get my Degree at Staffordshire University and worked in London for a few years, before my wife and I moved back to Llanelli with our family to start my own small business.

As your current Carmarthenshire County Councillor and Llanelli Rural Councillor I have tried to resolve as many issues as I could, and move our **community forward**. Since becoming your councillor I have been a consistent voice for our area, with many things achieved:

1. Swiss Valley Reservoir investment / community adoption
2. Community events supported (Christmas Tree, Pantomimes)
3. Swiss Valley School—major classroom modernisation
4. New children's play area/park provided for Swiss Valley
5. Landscaping/Tidy up around our shops
6. Youth Club restored to Swiss Valley
7. Traffic calming introduced in line with residents concerns
8. Nursery provision established in Swiss Valley school
9. Investment in roads and pavements
10. Investment in our community centre
11. Path from Dafen to Swiss Valley along link road
12. Setup a new online newsletter www.swissvalleynews.co.uk
13. Fought for Prince Philip and care home provision in Llanelli
14. Steering the adoption of Swiss Valley sewer systems to a conclusion with Welsh Water

Swiss Valley Reservoir

At the last election I promised to give us a solution to the problems at the reservoir. I wrote to the Managing Director of Welsh Water outlining our concerns as to the current management of the facility. I highlighted how the reservoir wasn't being looked after, with litter everywhere, and bins not being emptied. Following on from that I had more meetings and worked alongside several key individuals from Welsh Water and Llanelli Rural council, until a community adoption was agreed upon. The community adoption was the first of its kind in Wales and has allowed us to improve the reservoir after securing around £300k of grants. With this money the car parks have been upgraded, along with the paths around the reservoir. Additional benches and wheelchair friendly seating has also been installed or is about to be installed. A new pontoon with wheelchair access has been built and the toilet block refurbished. A regular patrol checks for litter, and empties the bins. We have introduced permits for fishing in the Lower Reservoir and restocked it in conjunction with local anglers. The permits allow us to have a small income that can be used to further improve the running of the reservoir and sustain it longer term. There are now regularly organised water sports such as kayaking. All of this you may have seen in the local newspapers and social media and the Weatherman Walking BBC series has also paid the reservoir a visit, and that programme will be broadcast on Friday May 20th. S4C's 'Iaith ar Daith' also filmed on location there recently. I always knew we all thought a lot of the reservoir but the number of positive comments on how the improvement works have been received has been phenomenal. It's a great success story and I will continue working to ensure the adoption goes from strength to strength. During covid this good news story was very well received particularly when options to leave the house and socialise were limited. This fabulous facility is such a jewel in our crown, and if you haven't been there recently I'd encourage you to pay a visit, as you may be pleasantly surprised!

Swiss Valley School

Since 2004 I have been a governor on Swiss Valley school but only in the last 5 years have I been its Chair. We have had to grapple a deficit that was heading towards 6 figures and all the while maintaining an excellent level of education for our pupils. We all want our learners to have the best educational experience possible. At times the school has been penalised for being inclusive and we've needed to fight for additional learning needs funding, which is something both I and the headmaster undertook forcefully and successfully, and which benefitted all schools in the area. The budget continues to be challenging but in the last year we've made tough decisions and whilst going through another ESTYN inspection, in which we again came out as an excellent school we went into a positive financial position. We still need to be careful but over time we can start to plan some exciting new projects to develop the school further, and from which our children will benefit.

Important to the stability of the school was the introduction of nursery provision that has no doubt brought great benefits to families in our area, but it wasn't on a long term footing. Recently the council amended the statutory starting age for arriving at our school from 3-11 and allows the nursery to be marketed more widely particularly through the school admissions system. The wrap around care offered to parents allows the school numbers to be bolstered year on year and this is something I'll continue to nurture and support.

I'd like to personally and publicly thank all the school staff for their work during covid.

for SWISS VALLEY

Youth Club

When we restarted Swiss Valley Youth Club back in 2009 we weren't sure how long it would last, but in 2019 just before covid hit we celebrated 10 years back in business. We had planned a party but at the end of 2020 covid struck so that wasn't possible. Its one of the last privately run youth clubs in Llanelli, staffed by local volunteers. Initially we charged an entry fee but over the past few years we've raised over £3000 which now allows us to offer free entry. Unfortunately covid rules forced us to close the youth club, but we do anticipate opening again in September ready for the new school year.

Bus Services

I recently wrote to the bus company asking them to restore a more regular bus service to Swiss Valley. Swiss Valley is a commercial route (not subsidised) and they blame covid and difficulty recruiting drivers for the current 2 hour service we get. People without cars can feel isolated in our community and a 2 hour bus service doesn't help plus of course it can be longer if a bus breaks down. I will continue to engage with First Cymru on this issue. I'll also be exploring dial-a-ride services and route subsidies with the council.

Tree Planting

More trees will be planted in the coming years. The ravine's are showing their age and as trees get felled for safety reasons I'd like to plant more to replace them, allowing our flora and fauna to be preserved for the coming generations. Accompanying children from Swiss Valley school we have planted trees in the reservoir, and many more will follow all around our community.

Pathway Improvements

We have seen a restoring and upgrading of our pathways, most noticeably by the ravine's and I hope more will come as part of a safe routes to school bid currently lodged with Welsh Government.

Community Centre

Over £50000 worth of investment has gone into our community centre with a brand new kitchen and fire exit, together with new outside railings installed over the past few years.

Covid and Home Working

It has been without doubt the strangest of times, and too many have been taking away from us too soon. I'd like to thank all sections of the community for pulling together during covid. I played a small part in delivering food to those self isolating. Fresh produce from Swiss Valley school garden was also donated to local food banks during the pandemic.

Broadband is now more important than ever for home working, and liaising with BT I would like more superfast broadband everywhere in our community. At the last elections we were still waiting for some areas to get superfast broadband and our rural areas still have issues. 10% of the Llanelli exchange is full fibre and I will be encouraging BT to get to 100% as soon as possible. For anyone running a small business in our community I support your need to have the best possible broadband speeds.

Safer Roads

From an initial zone around the school we will be pushing out and introducing a 20mph zone for all roads as part of a Welsh Parliament directive to make all roads 20mph. In 2018 and in response to parental concerns a new pelican crossing was erected in Llethri Road. I am committed to making Swiss Valley safer and we have another "Safe routes to School" bid lodged with Welsh Government. If successful we aim to make further improvements to roads, all in the name of safety, and particularly child safety. Pot holes also need targeting and I have reported some roads already.

Fly Tipping

I support the enforcement action taken for fly tipping and dog fouling. I regularly photograph and report dumping in and around Porth Dafen and the Reservoir. One individual drove from Merthyr but was caught and severely fined. Bags will be opened and names/evidence logged.

for LLANELLI

Park Howard

Only a few years ago the future of Park Howard seemed in doubt, and we were all worried. Following the last election I have been part of a collaboration group overseeing improvements in the park, working alongside Carmarthenshire County Council, Llanelli Town Council, Park Howard Association, and Friends of Llanelli Museum. The park remains our cherished asset and we want it to get the investment it deserves without threat of being sold off.

Care Homes/Social Care /Prince Philip Hospital

Social care budgets are often in deficit and regularly under pressure due to the fact we are all living longer. A mix of good quality care facilities must be available locally. I voted to protect and retain Caemaen and other facilities several years back, and my views and voting actions within the council on these types of services have been consistently clear. Investment in these local care facilities is vital and I will continue to support that. I'll be supporting the new assisted living facilities coming to Llanelli soon, and continue to keep a watchful eye on the services provided at our Prince Phillip Hospital.

Town Centre - Level Playing Field

We can all park for free in Trostre and Pemberton, but small local independent business owners are penalised when we can't do the same in town. You can park for free after 10am on Mondays and Tuesdays, and on weekends Coleshill car park is free. I think we need to expand this initiative to give our town centre fair play as well as reviewing shop and market rents where possible.

Leisure Centre

I support plans to develop a new leisure centre in our town. Our current leisure centre looks old and tired but something new is coming to replace it. The £27 million pound leisure complex in Machynys is something I will be excited to see open. 8 lane swimming pool, new courts, hydrotherapy pool, all long overdue.

Apprenticeships

If you're a school or college leaver thinking of joining the council as an apprentice I have been a strong advocate for increasing apprenticeship starting rates.

BEING INDEPENDENT ON 2 COUNCILS

Being your INDEPENDENT County Councillor gives me access to a substantial set of resources when solving issues up here in Swiss Valley, and for drawing down investment into our area. Being your Llanelli Rural Councillor gives me access to more resources again. 1 councillor working within both councils is our best platform to resolve issues. At this election we again see candidates who don't live in our community standing. They haven't attended any community group meetings or volunteered to help out at any of our events but appear in the run up to an election. You can support another local candidate however in these elections. Mr Stephen Bowen (Cofia Cabs) who lives in Swiss Valley is also standing as a Llanelli Rural councillor. Steve has lived in Swiss Valley for 18 years and runs a local taxi business. For the first time in some years you can return 2 local candidates who live and take an interest in your area. I would be happy to work with Stephen and hope you can support him too.

I'd like to ask for your support to be returned to both Carmarthenshire County Council and Llanelli Rural Council. This is very important from my perspective. As an INDEPENDENT candidate I am beholden to no political party. My aim is to look after Swiss Valley but so often I see party politics enter our lives. I will challenge party political hypocrisy. My party are the people and residents of Swiss Valley, and what best serves your interests. Talking with so many of you, I know that there is a strong feeling that your councillor should be LOCAL, and LIVE in Swiss Valley.

MY PITCH TO YOU

Having read this pamphlet I hope you can see that I have been a strong force for the improvement of our area. I'm proud of what has been achieved since 2004 and will continue to work in this vein for the next 5 years, with your support.

Swiss Valley is a great place to live. I still have the drive and enthusiasm to move our community forward, whether it be for small things such as street nameplates or major things such as reservoir improvements. Whatever council is responsible I will hold them accountable for the large amount of council tax we all pay in Swiss Valley. I want as much of our taxes back, and my view is no-one cares what council provides the facilities in our community, so long as they are there, readily accessible, and looked after properly.

A vote for me also secures Swiss Valley Youth Club funding, and is a vote for the positive work carried out by our voluntary Residents Association and Community Centre Committees who have done so many great community events and projects over the years.

I am the only candidate who has consistently been active in our community, and not just in the run up to these or any other elections. I have brought to a conclusion all the major issues we have faced, sewers, childrens play ground, shops, youth club, school modernisation, reservoir and worked to resolve each of them. I hope my achievements to date will allow you to lend me your vote and I will continue to keep you informed as your Llanelli Star correspondent and through my online newsletter www.swissvalleynews.co.uk, together with any other meetings we may need in the future.