

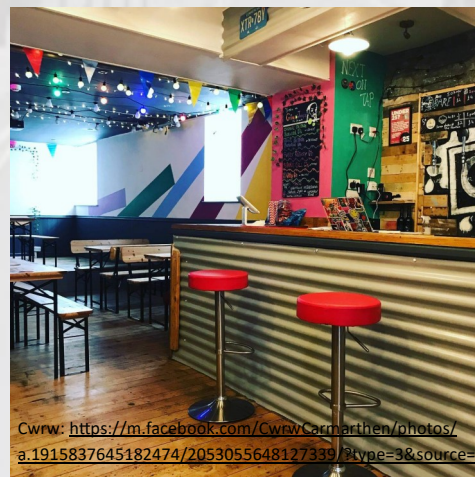
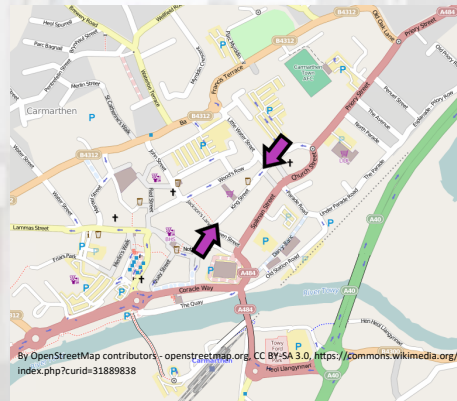
Independent Business in Carmarthen

Introduction

Carmarthen is known as the oldest town in Wales, and is steeped in legends of the wizard Merlin (Discover Carmarthen, 2019), however over recent years developments have been made to modernise parts of the town, seemingly leaving King Street behind. Upon walking through king street there is an array of independently owned businesses and a real focus on local products. There are many empty buildings and businesses closing regularly, despite this there still seems to be a real sense of community and determination within the business owners. Having lived in the area most of my life I have witnessed the stark changes within the town, and have worked in a few of the independent businesses and seen first hand their struggle to stay open. My passion for one local business led me to gaining a job there and being asked to return to the building when another business took over. This lead me to wonder about the sense of community on this street in particular as it appears to be mostly independent businesses.

Research topics and questions.

- ♦ Is there really a sense of community within the business owners on this street? Do businesses rely on each other?
- ♦ Social Media and online shopping— Do business owners perceive the rise in online shopping to be the cause of businesses closing in the area? Is a social media presence important?
- ♦ Is there a feeling of being left behind when the rest of the town is being developed?
- ♦ Why is there such a high focus on local produce?
- ♦ What do these independent businesses mean to the local community?
- ♦ What is my position within this community?



Cwrw: <https://m.facebook.com/CwrwCarmarthen/photos/a.1915837645182474/2053055648127339/?type=3&source=54>

Methods and Ethics

Reflexivity—Making sure to reflect honestly and openly about my own position within this research. Having grown up and lived in the area most of my life it will be important to be aware of the issues surrounding being a “native” anthropologist (Narayan, 1993). Keeping a reflexive journal of my experiences.

Interviews—I would conduct a series of ethnographic interviews with both business owners and customers, making sure to gain permission for each one. Ensuring that the interviewee can lead the conversation in any way they feel important (Ellen, 1984).

Participant Observation—working within one of the businesses alongside the owner and staff. Depending on time constraints possibly working within multiple businesses. Possible starting options are Cwrw and The Tangled Parrot.

Ethics—Within my proposal I will consider the possible ethical impacts of my research. What possible consequences could occur as a result of my research?

References

Discover Carmarthenshire (2019) *Discover Carmarthen*. Available at: <http://www.discovercarmarthenshire.com/places/carmarthen-the-west/> [Accessed 02 October 2019]

Narayan, K. (1993) “How Native is a “Native” Anthropologist?” *American Anthropologist*. Vol. 95 No. 3 PP671-686.

Ellen, R. (1984) *Ethnographic Research: A Guide to General Conduct*. Canterbury: Academic Press.