Un Llais Cymru
One Voice Wales

Community & Town Councils
Digital Guidance

Using QR Codes in Community and Town Councils in Wales

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Contents

Introduction to QR Codes

A QR code, or Quick Response code, is a type of matrix barcode (or two-dimensional barcode) that can be read by a smartphone, or other device with a camera. QR codes can store a variety of information including URLs (website links), contact information, and text, allowing for quick access to digital content.

Example of a QR Code linking to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

This example demonstrates how a simple QR code can be used to link to a website or digital resource. By scanning the QR code with a smartphone or QR scanner, users can quickly access online information without manually typing the details.

How QR Codes Function

QR codes work by encoding data into a pattern of black and white squares. When a device scans the QR code, it decodes the pattern and translates it into readable information. Most commonly, QR codes direct users to websites or online resources, but they can also contain direct text, contact details, or even Wi-Fi network credentials.

Utilizing QR Codes for Community and Town Councils

QR codes offer a dynamic and user-friendly method for community and town Councils in Wales to enhance their communication and engagement with residents. Below are several ways Councils can leverage this technology:

Meeting Agendas and Minutes

Councils can use QR codes to link to digital copies of meeting agendas and minutes. This provides easy access to important documents and promotes transparency. Note that this doesn't change the regulatory requirements around publication of notes and minutes of meetings.

Event Promotion

QR codes can be printed on posters, flyers, and newsletters to provide instant access to event details, registration forms, or virtual event links. This ensures that residents can easily stay informed and participate.

Surveys and Feedback

Placing QR codes on council communications or in public spaces allows residents to quickly access and complete surveys or provide feedback. This can lead to increased participation and more robust community input.

Access to Council Services

QR codes can direct residents to online portals where they can access various council services such as paying bills, reporting issues, or booking appointments. This streamlines processes and improves service delivery.

Historical and Tourist Information

QR codes placed on plaques or signage can provide historical information about landmarks or tourist attractions. This can enrich the visitor experience by offering detailed background information and multimedia content.

Generating QR Codes

Councils can generate QR codes using various methods, ranging from free online tools to more sophisticated software solutions. Here are the typical approaches:

Online QR Code Generators

Many websites offer free QR code generation services. These tools are simple to use and are often sufficient for basic needs. Examples include

QRCode Monkey (https://www.qrcode-monkey.com/)

QRStuff (https://www.qrstuff.com/)

GoQR.me (https://goqr.me/)

Cost: Free to low-cost, depending on customization and usage limits.

Step-by-Step Guide:

- Visit a QR code generator website as listed above.
- Choose the type of content you want to encode (e.g. website, text, email address).
- Enter the relevant information (e.g. URL for a website).
- Customize the QR code's appearance, if desired (e.g. colour, design).
- Generate the QR code by clicking the appropriate button.
- Download the QR code image and save it to your device.
- Print or upload the QR code to your desired medium.

QR Code Generation Software

For more advanced requirements, such as tracking scan statistics or integrating QR codes into larger projects, dedicated software may be more appropriate. Solutions like QR Code Studio (https://qrcode.studio/) or paid versions of free online generators can offer these features.

Cost: Varies from a one-time fee to a subscription model, typically ranging from £10 to £100+.

Step-by-Step Guide:

- Purchase and install a QR code generation software such as QR Code Studio.
- Open the software and select the type of content you want to encode.
- Input the necessary information, ensuring accuracy and completeness.
- Customize the QR code's design and settings according to your preferences.
- Generate the QR code and save the image to your device.
- Monitor usage and scan statistics if the software provides these features.
- Distribute the QR code through print or digital channels.

Integrated Solutions

Some content management systems (CMS) and customer relationship management (CRM) platforms offer built-in QR code generation features. This can be particularly useful for Councils already using these systems for other purposes.

Cost: Generally included in the subscription fee for the CMS or CRM.

Step-by-Step Guide:

- Log in to your CMS or CRM platform (e.g., WordPress, HubSpot).
- Navigate to the QR code generation feature or plugin.
- Choose the type of content to encode, such as a URL or contact information.
- Enter the relevant details and customize the appearance as needed.
- Generate the QR code and save the file to your device.
- Incorporate the QR code into your website or communications materials.

Conclusion

QR codes present a versatile and cost-effective means for community and town Councils in Wales to enhance communication, improve service delivery, and engage more effectively with residents. By integrating QR codes into their websites and other communications, Councils can provide quick and easy access to information and services, ultimately fostering a more connected and informed community.

Version History

	Date	Issuer	Reason	Review Date
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