



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019

## Cyngor Cymuned Pontyclun Community Council

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# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The agreed aim of the Council is to “work with residents and their organisations to ensure an active, lively and successful future for the communities of Pontyclun.’ During the past year the Community Council has achieved a great deal in support of this aim, and I thank all those residents, Councillors and council staff who have worked together to make Pontyclun a better place.

The Council has agreed a number of strategic objectives and this Annual Report will refer to our activities in support of these objectives.

## **Pontyclun Community Council will promote the well-being of the residents and develop initiatives that will foster community cohesion and social inclusion through social and cultural activities.**

Cllr Margaret Griffiths convenes the working group tasked with achieving this objective. The range of activities created and supported by this group of Councillors during the past year has been remarkable.

Last May Pontyclun’s first ‘Picnic in the Park’ took place. On a beautiful sunny day hundreds of residents came together to enjoy each other’s company in Pontyclun’s recently created Park. We are grateful to the Community Garden Group of volunteers and the local Environment Group who were prominent in the picnic activities. Councillor Carole Willis was a remarkable organiser of children’s games.

In June the Council organised its first Walking Festival in partnership with the local Ramblers Association. Our Clerk, Julius Roszkowski, brought this Festival together.

Last November the Council organised a series of events to commemorate the achievement of Peace in 1918. The events included:

- Children’s choirs and a public lecture at Y Pant School
- An Afternoon Tea at Café 50
- A lunch of 1918 recipes organised with the U3A
- A walk through Pontyclun of 1918 with local historian Edgeley Thomas
- An exhibition of 1918 prints at Giles Gallery and Pontyclun Library
- An evening of music and poems with local choirs and the local folk club organised by Councillor Mike Davies

Last December the Council worked with local Macmillan Fundraising Committee to organise the Christmas Festival at the Athletic Club which coincides with the switching on of the Christmas Lights. We thank the Macmillan Committee for organising the Christmas Market along with the local choirs and musicians who provided the music - including the rock band of Councillor Martin Ashford.

Café 50 is provided by the Community Council and continues to be a focal point for older people in our community. As well as providing affordable cooked lunches, it now hosts a wide range of social activities during most mornings, afternoons and evenings. Whilst the activities are run by volunteers, they are well supported by our staff, notably the Café 50 Coordinator Tara Davies, and council members, notably Councillor Gwyn Jackson who organises the weekly quiz. Café 50 works in a close partnership with the Pontyclun University of the Third Age which is able to use the Café 50 space for the wide range of its learning groups. Café 50 is supported by local organisations and businesses including the Community Shop, Full Stop Law and Leeke's.

Pontyclun is distinguished by the strength of our community, the willingness of so many to contribute and support each other. The Community Council works best when it supports the support that we freely give each other in our shared spirit of social solidarity.

## **Pontyclun Community Council will take action with other agencies to improve the economic well-being of the residents, community, services and businesses**

Cllr Gwyn Jackson convenes the working group to recommend actions which support this objective. The working group identified the importance of encouraging visitors to Pontyclun as a means of developing the local economy. To this end it has contributed to plans for the Walking Festival, the Christmas Festival and Picnic in the Park. The local economy requires a town centre which is attractive and vibrant. The Council's investment in summer flowers and the Christmas lights is an important means of supporting local business.

Following extensive consultation with local schools and local residents this Working Group recommended proposals to RCT Council and the Welsh Government to create safer walking routes in the centre of Pontyclun. As a result, there will be investment in the next year to create a 20-mph zone in Pontyclun Town Centre, more dropped kerbs and more pedestrian islands along our main roads.

Following meetings with residents, organised by RCT Councillor Margaret Griffiths, during the next year the Community Council will be submitting proposals for greater traffic safety in Groes Faen and Miskin.

During the last year a partnership between the Community Council and RCT Council has resulted in extra parking places in front of the Rugby Club in the town centre.

The Community Council has pressed RCT Council and Network Rail for an extension of the car park at the Railway Station. A technical feasibility study has been completed and it is hoped that work on the extension will begin in the next year.

The Council has been petitioning the Welsh Government and Transport for Wales for extra train capacity at Pontyclun. During the next year Transport for Wales has promised that there will be a 40% increase in the number of seats as larger carriages are provided. The Community Council continues to make the case for increased train frequency.

## **Pontyclun Community Council will take action to work with other organisations to improve the physical environment of the community**

Cllr Karan Lane is the energetic and enthusiastic convenor of the working group that supports this objective.

The councillors work closely in support of the volunteers in the Pontyclun Environment Group. As part of the Pontyclun Spring Clean in April 2019, 38 volunteers and members of the Pontyclun Environment Group, including 6 community Councillors, spent the weekend collecting litter left in various parts of Pontyclun, Miskin and Hendy. In total 85 bags were filled with rubbish. Our thanks and congratulations go to every volunteer, the young and less young.

This is the second year when the Environment Group has organised its Spring Clun. Whilst a lot of rubbish was collected, Pontyclun was noticeably cleaner than last year. As a community we are indebted to the walkers and dog walkers who collect litter day in and day out. We have benefited from a number of young school children who have been collecting litter every weekend as part of their Duke of Edinburgh award. Environment Group members have adopted 'black spots' and do regular litter cleans.

Darren and Ray, the Community Council staff, litter pick on our public rights of way and in Pontyclun Park. RCT staff litter pick each week in the shopping areas.

When we keep our community clean, we feel better. We are more likely to go out and socialise. Our health improves. We attract more visitors and local businesses benefit. It is no small matter.

The Community Council is also pleased to work in support of the Community Garden volunteers who provide a wonderful facility in Pontyclun Park - beds of flowers and vegetable which can be freely picked by any visitor to the Park.

## **Pontyclun Community Council will administer the Council and its activities to ensure that residents get good value from the Council**

The Administration Working Group, convened by the Cllr Paul Griffiths, was appointed to make recommendations to the Council on matters relating to the administration financing of the Council. Due to increases in employment and energy costs the Council has agreed to increase its annual budget for 2019/20 from £113,410 to £118,480. The average cost to a household for the Community Council will increase from £32.50 to £34.20. Our expenditure will include the provision of Pontyclun Park, Café 50, public toilets, the car park, Ivor woods, 24 miles of footpaths, summer flowers, Christmas lights, grants to local groups, summer and Christmas festivals. Our full budget can be found on [www.pontyclun.net](http://www.pontyclun.net). The Council increased its precept reluctantly, but it was of the view that its services represent good value for money and were worth preserving. The Council has been commended for its financial management by its external auditors and credit goes to the Administrator, Karen James, and the Clerk, Julius Roszkowski.

The Council has seven members of staff, six of whom are part-time, and it benefits from the commitment and wide range of skills that they bring to the organisation.

Pontyclun is a successful community with a vibrant town centre serving the settlements of Groes Faen, Miskin, Mwyndy, Hendy, Brynsadler and Talygarn. The success is achieved through the contributions of local residents, local groups and businesses. I believe that the Community Council plays its part through the support it gives others.

**Paul Griffiths**  
**Chair of Pontyclun Community Council**

# COUNCIL SERVICES

The Council provides many local services and works with RCT CBC and Community groups to help support the community.

In particular we

- own and manage the Car Park in Heol yr Orsaf
- look after the War Memorial
- own and manage Pontyclun Park and the play facilities there
- own and manage Ivor Woods and the land at the bottom of the Hollies
- maintain the public footpaths in our Community
- lease and manage Café 50
- Provide public conveniences in Heol yr Orsaf
- Provide floral displays in many locations across our Community
- Arrange a number of Community Events including a Summer Picnic in the Park and a Christmas Festival
- Co-ordinate a number of Community Groups including a Dementia Support Group, Walking Rugby & Football, a weekly Quiz for the over 50s and a monthly Film Club

We are pleased to have obtained Bee Friendly status. This recognises the actions the Council has done to improve our environmental management of our open spaces in a manner which supports pollinators.

The Council is a Disability Confident - Committed employer and is a signatory to the Armed Forces Charter

# HOW WE ORGANISE OURSELVES

The Council consists of 11 elected members and we employ 1 full time and 6-part time staff.

The Council meets monthly at Café 50 and residents are welcome to attend and contribute to our meetings.

We have 4 working groups who consider the Council's plans and agree actions and priorities.

The **administration working group** (Convened by Councillor Paul Griffiths) discusses matters relating to how the Council runs itself with the aim to streamline how we operate and engage our residents.



The **Economy working group** (Convened by Councillor Gwyn Jackson) discusses how we can help promote Pontyclun and make it a place more people wish to live in and visit.

The **Environment working group** (convened by Councillor Karan Lane) looks after our various open spaces, including Pontyclun Park and Ivor Woods.

The **Social & Cultural group** (Convened by Councillor Margaret Griffiths) aims to arrange events and activities to promote our wellbeing and to develop social events and a feeling of community.

This group also makes recommendations on Café 50.



# CAFÉ 50

Café 50 continues to develop and thrive.

Café 50 aims to be a welcoming social hub for anyone over the age of 50, by providing a range of activities and classes designed to enhance social interaction, learning new skills as well as provide support to those who need it



It is open Monday to Friday with hot meals provided at lunchtime at affordable prices. This gives the more vulnerable and lonely in our community the opportunity to enjoy a hot meal which socialising with like-minded individuals.

There is now a great variety of groups from crafts to quizzes, games and exercises to education and even a Film Club.

Groups wishing to use Café 50 should contact the Council Offices to see what spaces are available and any costs - note groups focussing on over 50s can have space for free between 9am and 3pm Monday to Fridays.

# SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

## How can we help?

The Council is grateful to all the groups that organise events in our community, whether they be one off ones or regular occasions such as the bonfire night events at the Pontyclun Rugby Club. These all help to make the Pontyclun Community a great place to live. If you have a community event you wish us to list on our website/Facebook page, then please contact the Clerk.



## Supporting Community Groups

The council allocates some of its budget each year to supporting local groups. This year we gave grants totalling £2450 for groups encompassing the full range of our residents from the youngest to our most senior.

In addition, we publicise events by displaying posters & articles on our noticeboards, website and Facebook pages and give help and advice where we can.

The Council has allocated a further £2500 towards grant support for this 2019-20 and details of how to apply can be found on our website, [Pontyclun.net](http://Pontyclun.net)

## Volunteers and Placements

The Council works with organisations to help people looking for a way back to work by offering workplace placements.

In addition we work with local volunteers to help improve our community through a number of projects.

## Looking forward

The Council has some great plans to support the Community going into 2018-9 and beyond.

We have several local events planned including a Picnic in the Park on 8<sup>th</sup> June and a Christmas Festival in conjunction with MacMillan cancer Support on 30<sup>th</sup> November. We are investigating options for additional parking, improving local facilities and promoting Pontyclun and our Community.

***“We believe all residents, businesses, staff and visitors of Pontyclun should have the opportunity to make the best of their lives.***

***The Council is here to help facilitate those opportunities now and into the future.”***

We would be delighted to hear from members of the Community about things that they would like to see and from local businesses who would like to help, and support develop our community.

## Our Supporters

The following local organisations have given financial support towards events or the running of the Council during this year -

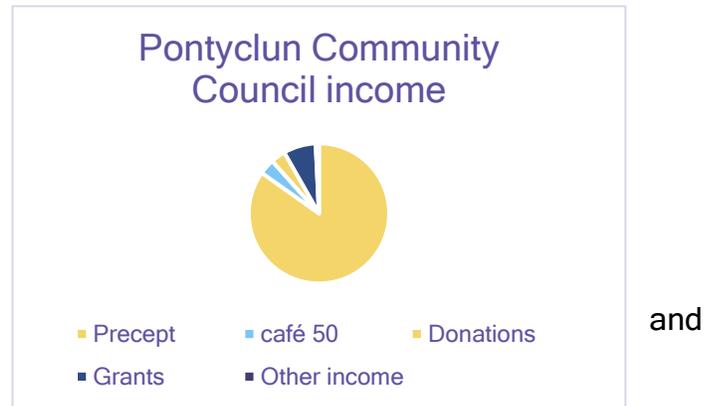
- The Community Shop
- Hapi Project
- Taf Ely Primary Care Cluster
- U3A
- Café 50 Tuesday Quizzers
- Spar
- Tesco
- Co-op
- Yarnmongers

# OUR FINANCES

## Funding the Council

The Council is paid for by a precept on local residents. The precept for 2018-9 was £113.4k,

In addition, we raised funds by seeking grants the hire of Café 50.



The Council is also pleased to acknowledge the kind support of local businesses who have supported us by making donations towards events or the running of Café 50.



Overall due to additional grants and donations and VAT refunds from previous year we had a small surplus in our budget for last year which was added to our reserves.

Reserves currently stand at £97k with £37k of that earmarked for specific future commitments such as replacing the Playground equipment when it reaches then end of its useful life.

## Our Auditor's view

"We are pleased to report that, in the areas examined this year, the Councils' officers continue to operate effective financial control systems with no significant areas of concern identified.

On the basis of the overall satisfactory conclusion of our review process for the year, we have duly signed off the Internal Audit Report in the year's Annual Return (2018-9) assigning positive assurances in each relevant area.

We are pleased, once again, to acknowledge the continued high quality of records maintained by the Clerk/RFO which we categorise as exemplary."

# OUR VALUES

Our values help us achieve our strategy. They will help us to make Pontyclun a place where people choose to live, and where businesses will thrive. Our values underpin the way we operate as an

organisation. They influence our choices and our behaviours - they are the thread running through everything we do.

Our values are: People. Place. Pride.	
<b>People</b>	Every day we will treat people with the respect they deserve and believe only our best is good enough.
<b>Place</b>	We will strive to make Pontyclun an even greater place to live, work and visit.
<b>Pride</b>	We are proud of what we do and will accept the responsibility invested in us, rising to meet the challenges we face.





# CONTACT US

You can contact the Council by



Telephone 01443 238500



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