

CAERWENT COMMUNITY COUNCIL - ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Caerwent Community Council continues to serve the residents of Caerwent, Crick and Llanvair Discoed and this year there have been a number of changes.

We saw the retirement of our longstanding clerk in October 2022 alongside the appointment of a new clerk. We also have welcomed a new councillor who has become very proactive in council activities and we currently have a vacancy for a councillor for Dinham Ward following the resignation of one of our members.

We are fortunate in that we have some very experienced councillors including our local member who is currently Chair of the Planning Committee for Monmouthshire County Council. The councillors have many interests and varied employment experiences which help to enhance the activities of the council and this has a bearing on how we can best meet the needs of the residents we serve.

The council has several sub committees which meet regularly including finance and one which deals with the statutory reporting on the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 – Section 6

The Council continues to meet monthly via Teams, but we hope to begin face to face meetings in the Community Centre very soon. Members of the public can still attend virtually whilst we continue to meet via Teams.

Headlines For Year Ending March 31st 2023

***Community Council Elections**

The seats were uncontested and councillors resigning were thanked for their hard work and contributions.

***Police Reports**

These have been successfully resumed and the council would like to see further engagement and communication with police to support efforts made by our PSO.

***Traffic**

Traffic through Caerwent continues to be a concern to residents regarding volume and speed. The council responded to concerns raised via social media and have consulted with Highways in regard to signage and road markings. We also had a meeting with the Local MP regarding speeding and safety at school bus stops in Caerwent Village. As a result, there have been Police speed checks and new road markings at the bus stop concerned.

We still have HG Vehicles driving through the village and this requires photographic evidence to be submitted so that contractors can deal with individual infringements of the signs.

***Defibrillators**

We have purchased and are responsible for four defibrillators in the villages of Caerwent and Llanvair Discoed We regularly inform The Circuit that the defibrillators are ready for emergency use. The council have a good relationship

with and are grateful for the support of Aneurin Bevan Ambulance Trust and members of the public for their help in maintaining them.

The council arranged for an Awareness evening of CPR and defibrillator use with the Aneurin Bevan Trust. The response was excellent and reflects the interest and concerns shown by residents. Attendees said how informative the evening was and as a result confidence about CPR and use of defibrillators has been enhanced.

***Playing Fields**

The council are keen to encourage residents to use the facilities at our three main parks. This involves the council engaging our local handy man to perform visual inspections of the play equipment alongside the monthly inspections by the council. There has been a purchase of a new swing at Caerwent as well as repairs to other equipment.

The council have also engaged with the Playing Fields Association regarding the upkeep of the trail at Caerwent. A small working group on the council are consulting experts in horticulture as to which plants would be suitable to prevent damage to the trail and encourage biodiversity. There is also a weed pulling/Easter egg hunt to be held on the Playing Fields.

The council support the Playing Fields with an annual grant and a donation for the Christmas parties held at the hall.

The council handyman has successfully secured repairs to the Village Hall roof which was damaged.

The playing fields at Caerwent have been secured by a project undertaken by the council. Bollards and a locked gate have been installed to prevent any illegal entrants to the fields which boast two football fields, a trail as well as an extensive play park. The park at Llanvair Discoed required repairs to the fence and there are plans for a new fence to be built at Trewen park.

***General Repairs**

The Public Toilets have received extensive repairs including two new doors to the rear of the building and new fittings to female and male toilets. They continue to be cleaned and maintained by a local company who from time to time unblock drains and perform cosmetic work.

A new memorial bench has been purchased to replace one that has become worn and beyond repair.

***Donations**

The council make annual contributions to local groups and societies. The council also support the work of the Citizens Advice Bureau with a generous annual donation.

***Remembrance Service**

Another successful and well attended Remembrance Service was held again in the village. The service is co conducted by the Vicar and Pastor of both churches in Caerwent and arranged by the community council. Representatives of local organisations attend the ceremony to lay wreaths at the cenotaph.

***Christmas**

The council continue to provide a Christmas Tree and lights in the village of Caerwent. This year there were a few issues with the lights not working properly and the council managed to acquire a 50% reduction in costs. A Christmas wreath is also laid at the Cenotaph for the season.

***Dog Fouling**

Dog Fouling continues to be an issue periodically. The council have added another dog bin in the village bringing the total to 14 in the area. The bins have received new labels and are emptied on a weekly basis by a local company.

The council seek advice from the County Council Officer responsible and the clerk has attended an awareness meeting to learn how other communities deal with the issue.

Timely reminders are posted on our social media as to how the public should dispose of dog waste.

***Training**

The council has a clear Training Plan which has been adopted alongside our other policies and features on our website.

Councillors this year have attended Code of Conduct training and a number of planning courses which are invaluable to help make sensible recommendations for planning applications.

***Trees**

The County Council perform an annual tree survey which we pay for and take advice from. We have a varied number of tree species in the community and this year a local company have pruned the cherry and walnut trees at the west gate end of the village. There has also been some pruning to trees outside the Community Centre.

***Highways**

The council report on any issues with the highways in our area. A number of reports have been sent to the County Council in regard to potholes, wall damage, road signage and markings again this year with good results.

***Section 6 Reporting**

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (“the 2016 Act”) requires all community councils to prepare and publish a plan every three years setting out what they propose to do to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote resilience. Under section 6(7) of the 2016 Act.

We have a working group which have met to determine as to how best to fulfil this requirement and we have adopted the template suggested and this is an ongoing activity. This will be of great value when considering planning applications and will be underpinned in any project undertaken by the council.

We support a Wildlife Area in Crick which has received several awards and the Caerwent Meadows is a recent project for which we secure an annual grant of £2500 from Welsh Government.

***Community Halls**

We are very proud to own two large Community Halls which are very well used. The council leases the Caerwent Village Hall to Caerwent Playing Fields Association and Caerwent Community Hall is leased to Caerwent Community Centre Committee.

We have very close links to both committees and also make useful financial contributions on an annual basis.

The Halls are unique.

Caerwent Community Centre boasts a very large gymnasium which is used by a variety of groups and local organisations. The church recently has opened a community café there which they are hoping to expand. The hall also welcomes local young people to its weekly youth club which has been running for over 20 years.

Caerwent Village Hall boasts a lovely playing field

with a trail that circumvents it and features gym equipment and benches for residents to make use of. The Hall holds an Annual Flower Fruit and Vegetable show alongside a Village fete which has been running for over 40 years. The hall is regularly booked out to local organisations and as a function room. The committee are very active and as well as events throughout the year organise Christmas parties for the children and senior citizens in the community.

***Finance**

Caerwent Community Council has been supported by a precept of £50,860 this year and hold regular finance meetings to discuss how the money is to be spent. We have finished the financial year with balances of

Charitable Bank Account

£16,167.32 #

Business Bank Account £7,478.44

Our accounts and quarterly returns are posted on our website and last year we had an external audit by Audit Wales which has just been published.

Here is a list of organisations we supported with financial contributions this year

Maintenance of the Church yard £780

Church Lighting £150

Village Hall £1500

Community Newsletter £500

Community Centre £2,000

Christmas Parties £400

Crick Wildlife Reserve £200

Citizens Advice Bureau £2,500

Football Club £500

Embrace Nature £200

AM Spooner

Clerk To The Caerwent Community Council

April 2023