Bargoed Town Council Annual Report 2023-2024

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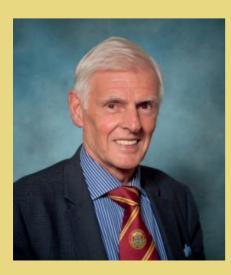
WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR

I am pleased to present Bargoed Town Council's third annual report detailing the work, events and activities delivered in the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Wow, what a year! I am certain our residents will agree, after reading the report, this has been one of the busiest years ever for Bargoed Town Council.

For me, as Mayor, I have visited several local organisations, attending both celebratory and more formal occasions such as remembrance services. It has been my honour and privilege to attend residents homes with small gifts in celebration of big wedding anniversaries or 100th birthdays. This year has reminded me of just how special our community is, and what interesting people our residents are, with such a great deal of history to draw from over the course of their lives.

The challenge, of course, for any local council is that of finding the right balance. Of providing a wide variety of services and community activities towards improving the quality of life and wellbeing for residents, while taking account of the implications on the public purse, the impact on future generations and the potential cost to the local environment. With the current economic climate being difficult to navigate, huge challenges exist for local councils and for Bargoed Town Council this is no different.

I believe Members have delivered for our community this year, and we look forward to working for the benefit of our residents again in 2024-25!



"It's an honour to work for the wellbeing of our residents!"

INAUGURAL "MAY FAIR" 2023

16,000 visitors came to Bargoed on Saturday May 13th for the Town's first May Fair.



The busiest day in Bargoed since footfall counters were installed in 2018.

Businesses from the town commented that the event was very well organised, great for the local economy and attracted people who had never visited Bargoed.





Members of Bargoed Town Council are excited to work with the team at CCBC on plans for the 2024 May Fair which will be held on May 4th!

EVENTS & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Bargoed Town Council plans and supports events that support local businesses and residents.



Bargoed in Bloom

Town Council was pleased to fund the prize monies for the new Bargoed in Bloom 2023 shop window display initiative launched by **Murray's.** Traders' displays joined with the Floral and Craftwork displays to brighten up and attract visitors to the town.

Residents got involved by knitting/crocheting flowers.



Festive Lights Switch-On

Working with **Crafty Legs Events, Markham Silver Band** and **Bargoed Male Voice Choir**, the improved Festive Lights Switch-On event was a great success.

Residents enjoyed combining shopping at the Christmas Food & Craft market, carol singing and toasted marshmallows!

Working with our partners, we aim for these two activities to be even bigger in 2024!

EVENTS & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES



Teddy Bears Picnic

The Parent Network delivered our first ever Teddy Bears Picnic on August 25th!

The event was attended by 534 residents and children enjoyed face painting, crafts and a bouncy castle.

Fun was had by all and we look forward to this year's event.



Lantern Workshops

We worked with CCBC Events team to put on Lantern Workshops. Families created these for our new Music and Lights Parade at the Winter Fair.

Unfortunately, due to poor weather conditions the event was cancelled, but we look forward to this year's new and improved event.

We're looking forward to the Light & Lantern Parade at this year's Winter Fair!

EVENTS & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES



Bargoed Town Council Presents

1pm to 6pm (pantomime starts at 2pm)

Friday December 8th 2023

For adults over 60 who are resident in Bargoed. Aberbargoed or Gilfach

Arthur Balfour Conservative Club

Limited Spaces - Book Tickets ASAP I Buffet Included

St. David's Day Afternoon Tea

March 1st marked our very first St. David's Day Afternoon Tea Party for residents over 60 years of age.

Almost 80 people attended.

The FREE event included bingo, raffle prizes and performances from local schools.

Beauty and the Beast Pantomime

On December 8th 2023, Bargoed Town Council held a pantomime event in the Arthur Balfour Conservative & Workingmen's Club (Aberbargoed) for residents over 60 years of age.

This FREE event was very well attended by 93 residents and included a raffle and refreshments.

We hope to build on our new events to bring people together, reducing loneliness and isolation.

COMMUNITY WELLBEING ACTIVITIES



Bargoed Town Council have made it a priority to promote wellbeing within our community. Over the past year Council has arranged, supported or delivered community activities such as:

Table-top Games & Pokemon: Once-a-month workshops delivered at Bargoed library by Caerphilly CTG throughout the year. A total of **353** children attended during 2023.

Easter Activities for young people: With the support of Caerphilly Youth Service, cooking, craft, sport and dance sessions were delivered from the Hangar in Aberbargoed. In total, 78 young people attended. A good time was reported to have been had by all.

Geocache: A treasure hunt with a difference, providing outdoor leisure activities while learning about the natural world and our local history. Working with Gwent Wildlife Trust, Gilfach Scouts and the Integrated Wellbeing Network we have two geocache trails running in our community now; One in Bargoed Urban Park and one in Bargoed Woodland Park. **420** site visits on the woodland park and **720** on the urban park far. **"Really fun geocache, who is very easy to find, moved a couple of sticks and logs found it straight away".**

"A bit more tricky this one, but a nice walk in the woods" "Lovely walk listening to the birds and seeing the signs of spring" "A quick easy find. Was very happy to meet a dinosaur in this one."

Bird Boxes workshop: Town Council engaged the services of **Salvaged Creations CIC** to deliver workshops in Bargoed library where 28 residents attended.



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COMMUNITY WELLBEING ACTIVITIES

Two sessions of beginners **guitar playing workshops** were delivered by **RecRoc** at Bargoed each week for 6 weeks in February and March 2024. All twelve sessions were fully booked!

Welcoming Spaces were expanded by town council to include Art & Craft sessions for adults. Over 70 people attended the additional sessions delivered by Platfform at Gilfach Bargoed Community Centre, and Cartref Community Hall expanded their provision attracting new residents to their craft sessions.

Members continued the expansion of **Community Gardening opportunities** through installation of 20 new raised beds at parks, church premises, primary schools, community venues and the Big Box Bite Project. Fruit bushes and vegetables were planted and the community orchard expanded with additional fruit trees. Food Growing areas are popping up in all areas of the community through the support of young people at Caerphilly Youth Service and volunteers in the community.

Christmas Selection Boxes were delivered for all 1158 children in the six primary schools and the home schooled primary students.

Bug Barn Making Workshops were arranged at Bargoed library where 28 residents learned new woodworking skills and learned all about the importance of insects for biodiversity.





COMMUNITY WELLBEING ACTIVITIES

Our skilful residents developed lovely **craftwork floral displays** to brighten up some of the community railings throughout the Bargoed in Bloom period last year. From colourful knitted post box toppers to crochet flowers and large petal displays, the community came together as one to lift the spirits of local residents and celebrate all things floral.

Bargoed in Bloom feedback included: "Well done to everyone that took part, nice to see our little town of Bargoed making a fabulous community effort" and "Congratulations to all the winners and all the shops and businesses for brightening the town."

Members once again continued the expansion of the **Community Floral Displays** bringing in additional floral fountains and beehives, new barrier baskets and half barrels. The biodiversity working group planted wildflower seeds in the heart of Bargoed around the miners heads statue and feedback from primary school children about the bees they watched when walking home from school was quite something. **"They look absolutely stunning, thank you Bargoed Town Council". "So beautiful". "They look very nice too".**

Summer Sports Scheme: Town Council extended provision of the scheme this year with Caerphilly Sports Development Team and the Skateboard Academy providing sporting activities for the six weeks school holidays at Heolddu in Bargoed and four weeks from the Hangar in Aberbargoed.

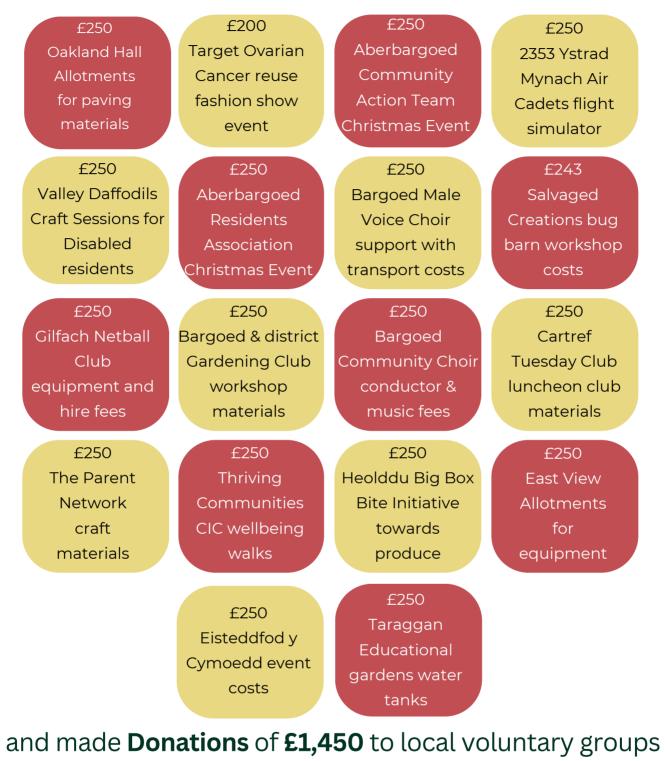
Throughout the six weeks provision **at Heolddu 792 children took part**, with a further **254 children participating** during the two weeks **at the Hangar in Aberbargoed**.





GRANTS & DONATIONS

The Small Grants Programme supported local voluntary and community groups with **£**4,443 of grants.



and services

£250	£100	£400	£100	£500	£100
Cerebral	Норе	Bargoed		Wales	Kidz Cancer
Palsy	Rescue	Branch Royal British	SSAFA	Air	charity
Cymru	Dogs Trust	Legion		Ambulance	

DISCRETIONARY GRANTS

Bargoed Town Council priorities include cost of living support and improving the wellbeing of our residents.

King Charles i	İ
Coronation	
Events	

- £400 to Cartref Community Hall Coronation Party
- £500 to Valley Daffodils Coronation Event
- £450 to the A&A Club Gilfach Event
 £500 Bargoed Welfare Bowls Club Coronation Event





- Foodbanks
- £1,500 to St Gwladys Fareshare
 Foodbank, Bargoed
 £1500 to Dhympoxy Valley, Food
- £1,500 to Rhymney Valley Foodbank, Aberbargoed
- £1,338 to support Valley Storehouse.

Winter Fuel Bills at Community Venues	 Three Key Community Y Gilfach, Bargoed and the Estate ward received £5 with winter fuel Bills. Gilfach Bargoed Commun Centre, Cartref Commun YMCA Gilfach. 	e Park 500 to help unity		
WELCOME SPACE	Welcoming . Spaces Provision	 £500 to Platfform for craft mornings for disabled people. £1,200 Inside Out Cymru provision of artist led craft sessions across several welcoming spaces venues £500 to support Thriving Communities CIC Christmas Day lunch 		

In 2023-24, we provided discretionary grant funding in support of local foodbanks, supporting local community venues with increased winter fuel costs, provision of welcoming spaces and community events for King Charles III Coronation.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council meets monthly on a Wednesday except August when council is in recess. Meetings commence promptly at 6pm.

A full list of monthly meeting dates can be found on the town council website.

Meetings take place on a hybrid basis using the Microsoft Teams platform and the Town Hall in the Courthouse building adjacent to Bargoed Police station.

Members of the public are entitled to attend most meetings of council.

If you would like to attend a meeting, you should contact the Clerk or Deputy Clerk to discuss options or to obtain a meeting link and agenda.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Audit

Section 12 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 requires community and town councils in Wales to make up their accounts each year to 31 March and to have those accounts audited by the Auditor General for Wales.

Regulation 14 of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 states that smaller local government bodies i.e., those with annual income and expenditure below £2.5 million must prepare their accounts in accordance with proper practices.

The completed audit of the 2022-2023 accounts can be viewed by clicking <u>Completed external audit_annual return_Bargoed TC 2022-23</u>

Why should Town Council hold reserves?

For many reasons: For stability and to manage unexpected occurrences For invoices not yet received To capitalise on opportunities for growth

Bargoed Town Council currently holds Running Costs Reserves & Earmarked Reserves for activities including the following:

Members costs Wellbeing Activities Feedback Questionnaire Strategic Planning Youth Activities Events Programme 2024 Environmental Projects Youth Gaming Project Hanbury Square Christmas Tree Summer Music Festival Bi-election Premises

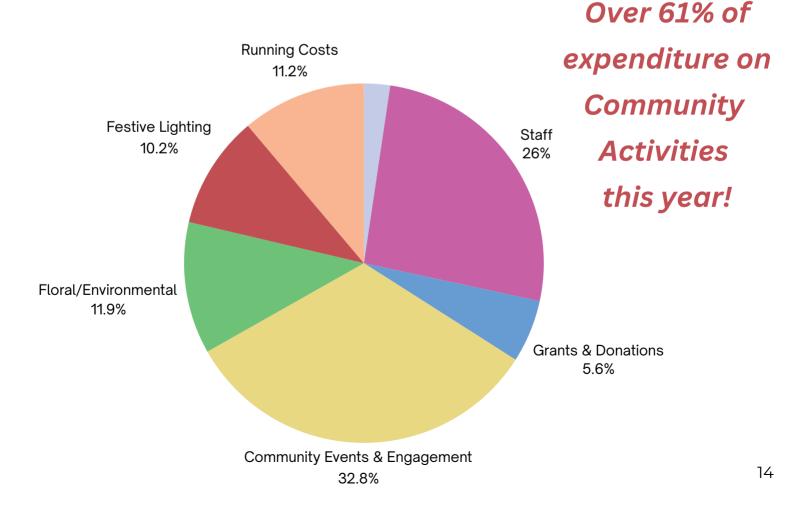
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

As at 31st March 2024

Town and Community Councils' primary means of income is through the 'precept.' This is the proportion of annual council tax that is paid by the electorate towards supporting the local councils' sector. In addition to the precept, councils may have income from investments, fees for services, grants and donations, refund of VAT payments from HMRC.

INCOME EXPENDITURE Bank Interest Members/Civic Costs 2,404.52 3,696 Precept Staff Costs 171,746.00 41,023 8,893 HMRC VAT Recovered Grants & Donations 8,389.51 Community Events & Fees/Charges 165.00 86,350 Activities **Total Income Running Costs** 182,705.03 17,577 **Total Expenditure** 157,538.94

For the 2023-2024 financial year, the precept was £ 171,746.00



Your Town Councillors

GILFACH WARD



Howard Llewellyn Mayor 07435976289



Carol Andrews CEC Chair 07522222109



PARK WARD

Deputy Mayor P&R Chair 07428158848



Rhyanon Price 07494468521

BARGOED WARD









Sue HamerThomas 07852907435

Dianne Price 07875167471

Josie Bissex 07527010802 David(Tich)Williams Dawn IngramJones 07870624801

07484754559

ABERBARGOED WARD



Peter Collins E&E Chair 07887397664



Jacky Davies 07538825316



Megan IngramJones 07854423908



Yvonne Price 07496004479

Events and Environment Committee: Cllrs Collins (chair), Carroll, R Price, Bissex, HamerThomas, D Price, D IngramJones, Williams, Y Price.

Community Engagement Committee: Cllrs Andrews (chair), M IngramJones,

Williams, J Bissex, D IngramJones, R Price.

Policy and Resources Committee: Cllrs Carroll (chair), Andrews, Llewellyn, Collins, Davies, Bissex.

Human Resources & Staffing Committee: Cllrs Carroll (chair), Andrews, Collins, Davies, Llewellyn.

WHY DID OUR CURRENT MEMBERS **BECOME COUNCILLORS?**

I have lived in Bargoed all my life and seen just how amazing the town and surrounding areas can be. After noticing a lot of my peers leaving the town, I wanted to do something to try to entice people back into the area and give them something to stay for.

I just wanted my community to grow and I felt I could involve the community in decision-making.

I wanted to try and make a difference to my area and my residents. Councillors can make a difference if they have the courage of their convictions and get on with the job and stand your ground. I am the people's voice, as they voted me in. Dianne

The community was so very supportive of me at a difficult time in my life, and I wanted to repay the favour by working within the Jacky

My role as a specialist debt

adviser at Citizens Advice Was

making it clear that many social

issues were leading to people

struggling with debt and mental

health issues. I wanted to be

involved with local issues that

could help with the cost of living

as well as improving the

I wanted to become a town councillor to represent the views of the residents of Gilfach both at a town & county level. Carol

I hoped to enhance the lives of our residents through the many and varied events which the town council are privileged to bring to the community in order to enhance their lives and improve their wellbeing.

Josie

Basically, after spending my working life in the town centre, when I was offered the opportunity of becoming a Town Councillor, I recognised an opportunity to contribute something more to the community (i.e. give something back). Peter

Reg

I became a town councillor because I have a passion for the town and community and I would like to try to make a difference to help and support residents within the community. Rhyanon

I became a councillor 20 years ago because Bargoed had become a forgotten town. As a volunteer through numerous charitable organisations I was made aware that women were allowed as local councillors so I went for it. Sue

I would listen and take on the views of the people of **Bargoed and** hopefully make the town a better place to live in. **David (Tich)**

My passion is my community. have lived in Aberbargoed all my life and I am also a member of the Residents Association.

wellbeing of Bargoed residents. I regularly undertake litter picking and through both my roles I aim to improve things for Aberbargoed. Yvonne

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 introduced payment of allowances to Councillors, and they are now determined by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. Some allowances must apply to all members, however individual members can decline part, or all, of their entitlement. The council is required to publish details of all payments made to each Councillor.

The panel "strongly believe that councillors should be reimbursed for expenses they necessarily incur whilst carrying out their duties or receive a contribution to help defray these costs".

What are the Allowances?

Mandatory Payments

- Extra Costs Payment All councils must pay their members £156 a year (equivalent to £3 a week) towards the extra household expenses of working from home.
- Councils must either pay their members £52 a year for the cost of office consumables required to carry out their role, or alternatively councils must enable members to claim full reimbursement for the cost of their office consumables.
- Costs of care of personal assistance

Optional Payments

- Mayor or Chair's Allowance up to £1,500 maximum
- Deputy Mayor or deputy chair Up to £500 maximum
- Attendance Allowance
- Financial loss
- Travel and Subsistence

Bargoed Town Council paid a total of £1,598.98 to its Members during the 2023-24 fiscal year as detailed overleaf:

Meeting Attendance & Allowance Payments

Name	Full Council of 14	P & R of 10	E & E of 11	C E C of 5	H R of 3	Extra Costs & Consumable S	Mayor/Deputy
Carol Andrews	12	5	1/1	5	3		
Josie Bissex	13	9	9	3			
Reg Carroll	13	10	11		3	£208	£325 Deputy
Peter Collins	14	8	11		3		
Jacky Davies	14	8			2		
Sue Hamer- Thomas	14		9			£208	
Martin Harry (resigned)	1/6					£78	
Dawn Ingram- Jones	14		7	5		£208	
Megan Ingram- Jones	n			4		£208	
Howard Llewellyn	14	3			2		
Dianne Price	3		1			£51.99	
Rhyanon Price	11		5	1			
Yvonne Price	3/4		2/3			£103.99	
David (Tich) Williams	13		11	3		£208	

Member Training & Representation

In accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Bargoed Town Council produces a Training Plan which can be found on the website. During the 2023-24 fiscal year, Members undertook training as follows: **Websites, IT and Social Media**: Cllrs Andrews, Bissex, Carroll, Collins, Davies, M IngramJones, D IngramJones, Llewellyn, R Price, Hamer-Thomas, Williams Introduction to Planning (Planning Aid Wales): Cllrs Llewellyn, Andrews, Carroll, Bissex, D IngramJones, Williams, Collins

Introduction to Community Engagement: Cllrs D IngramJones, Davies Community Engagement Part II: Cllrs D IngramJones, Davies Understanding the Law: Cllrs Andrews, Llewellyn



The Council as an Employer: Cllr Collins New Councillor Induction: Cllr Y Price The Councillor: Cllr Andrews Code of Conduct: Cllrs Andrews, Williams, R Price, D IngramJones, M IngramJones, Llewellyn, Carroll, Davies, Y Price, Collins, Bissex, HamerThomas.

Representation on Other Bodies

Caerphilly Town and Community Councils Liaison Committee: ClIrs H Llewellyn, R Carroll Gwent Integrated Wellbeing Network : ClIrs J Bissex, C Andrews, S HamerThomas, M IngramJones St Gwladys Bargoed Primary School: ClIr D (Tich) Williams Gilfach Fargoed and Park Primary Federation School: ClIr R Carroll Aberbargoed Primary School ClIr M Ingram-Jones Ysgol

Bro Sannan:Cllr M Harry until Sept 2023 Ysgol Gymraeg Gilfach Fargoed: Cllr J Davies One Voice Wales Area Committee Cllrs M IngramJones, J Davies





Committee Reports Our Committees have been Busy, Busy, Busy!

P&R members focus on effective use of public money for maximum community benefit, improving governance & reporting. We have looked at opportunities to work closer with our businesses and develop initiatives to increase footfall in the town. The CEC held four sessions, one each at Bargoed, Gilfach and Park wards and one with young people at Heolddu school. Youth Rep opportunities have been advertised and Members have plans for several additional engagement activities including suggestion boxes, a questionnaire survey.

A successful year for the E&E committee as can be seen throughout this report. Working in partnership with the Gwent Integrated Wellbeing Network, CCBC and several local businesses a great deal has been achieved for the benefit of our local community. On a disappointing note, the Winter Fair was unfortunately cancelled, but we distributed the extra selection

boxes to the two local food banks (Aberbargoed and Bargoed) for an extra Christmas treat for local families. A big **THANK YOU** to all who **volunteered** to assist with planting of shrubs, fruit bushes and bulbs in the community. We look forward to more next year!



Ever Thought of Being a Councillor?

To be a local councillor, you must be at least 18 years old and a qualifying commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, a relevant citizen of the Union or a qualifying foreign citizen. You also need to meet at least one of the following four qualifications:

Are, and will continue to be, registered as a local government elector for the community in which they wish to stand;

Have owned or occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the community area for the whole of the 12 months before the day of their nomination and the day of the election;

Main or only place of work during the 12 months before the day of their nomination and the day of election has been in the community area;

Have lived in the community area or within three miles of it for the whole of the 12 months before the day of their nomination and the day of election.

What could you get involved in as a town councillor? Floral displays Developing new projects Community activities Festive lighting Markets & craft fairs Representing the community at remembrance events Representing residents' interests with local issues Scrutinising the work of CCBC School governing bodies Attending awards ceremonies & celebrations Dementia friendly initiatives Community gardening initiatives Consulting on planning applications Wellbeing activities Sitting on local committees Youth provision Working with other local councils Business liaison Grant funding Promoting the community of Bargoed... the possibilities are endless.

A – Being Elected – at a normal election which takes place every five years or at a by-election in the event of 10 or more members of the electorate requesting one when a casual vacancy arises.

B – Being Co-opted - Co-option is what happens in the event there are not enough candidates at election time, and the Council chooses who will fill the vacant seat on the Council.

Town Council is a non-political corporate body. Whichever route you take to becoming a councillor, once you formally accept the office, it makes no difference; you are councillors working together to serve your community. Your task is to bring local issues to the attention of the council, and help it make decisions on behalf of the local community.

WHO DOES WHAT?

Caerphilly County Borough Council or Bargoed Town Council?

Knowing which local government organisation to contact can often be quite difficult. Bargoed Town Council is the first tier of local government. Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC) is the principal authority which is a tier above. While Bargoed Town Council is not able to directly deal with the following issues, Members are more than happy to liaise with relevant departments at CCBC on behalf of our community:

For Residents:

Bins and Recycling Litter and Rubbish Universal Credit Making a Payment Street cleansing

For Businesses:

Business Waste Property Availability Trading Standards Licenses & Permits Business grants and funding

Dog Fouling Council Tax Housing Libraries Online Services Roads and Pavements Schools and Learning Sports and leisure centres Transport and Parking Planning and Building Control

Commercial Waste Business promotion, support and advice Planning for Business Online Services

Contact Bargoed Town Council for:

Wellbeing Activities. Tickets for Older People's Events. Details of Community Activities. Support from your local ward Councillors. To let the Mayor know of a family 90th or 100th birthdays. For your community organisation to apply for a grant. To raise an issue you are concerned about in the community. To share your ideas for new projects, events & activities. To get involved in community activities. To start volunteering. To support with litter picking. To advise us of a BIG wedding anniversary. To invite the Mayor to attend your event. To provide us with feedback on town council activities. For information on drop in sessions, how to speak on an issue at a town council meeting. To compliment or make a complaint.

Future Plans

Members have ambitious plans for the forthcoming year. Working closely with partner organisations across the business, public and voluntary sectors, several new initiatives have been planned for Bargoed town centre:

NEW Easter Egg Trail Expanded Bargoed in Bloom Period NEW Summer Music Festival Bigger Festive Lights Switch On Dementia Friendly Bargoed Initiative Further expansion to the food growing areas & community orchard.

Town Council are working with the Gwent Integrated Wellbeing Network on more bespoke wellbeing activities for young people. Members are always happy to receive suggestions/ideas from residents about additional activities they would like delivered in our community.

Watch the Bargoed Town Council social media and website for details of new activities as they develop!

www.bargoedtc.org.uk

Members Email Addresses:

Howard Llewellyn - CllrLlewellyn@bargoedtc.org.uk Carol Andrews - CllrAndrews@bargoedtc.org.uk Reg Carroll - CllrCarroll@bargoedtc.org.uk Rhyanon Price - CllrRPrice@bargoedtc.org.uk Sue HamerThomas - CllrHamerThomas@bargoedtc.org.uk Dianne Price - CllrPrice@bargoedtc.org.uk Josie Bissex - CllrBissex@bargoedtc.org.uk David (Tich) Williams - CllrWilliams@bargoedtc.org.uk Peter Collins - CllrCollins@bargoedtc.org.uk Jacky Davies - CllrDavies@bargoedtc.org.uk Megan IngramJones - CllrM-IngramJones@bargoedtc.org.uk Yvonne Price - CllrYPrice@bargoedtc.org.uk

CDNTACT US

Town Council Office:

Town Clerk/RFO: Helen Williams clerk@bargoedtc.org.uk Deputy Clerk/Deputy RFO: Timothy Oliver deputyclerk@bargoedtc.org.uk

Telephone: 01443 830184 The office is generally open to the public between 9am and 3pm on Wednesdays.

Bargoed Town Council

Town Hall Bargoed Police Station Hanbury Road Bargoed CF818XF



@bargoedtc