

Cyngor Cymuned Gilfach Goch Community Council



Adroddiad Blynnyddol / Annual Report 2025-26

Cynnwys / Contents

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Cyflwyniad

Dyma adroddiad blynyddol Cyngor Cymuned Gilfach Goch ac mae'n grynoded o waith y Cyngor Cymuned dros y flwyddyn ddiwethaf hyd at 31 Mawrth 2026.

Introduction and Chair's report

Gilfach Goch Community Council's Annual Report is a summary of the work of the council in the year to 31 March 2026.

Residents sometimes ask us what it is we do, why we do it and how things are financed. The Local Government Act 1972 sets out our roles and responsibilities (see below). In recent years, we have worked with Keep Wales Tidy who have provided and paid for benches as part of nature packages. We thank them for that support.

Under the [Local Government Act 2000](#) (as amended by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011), community councils have power to do anything they consider likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being, social well-being or environmental well-being of their area. This is also why we put on an annual forestry run and fun day in August.

We considered renovating and extending our former council office in Etna Terrace. Even a modest renovation was set to cost more than we thought was good value so we sought out alternatives. The White Hut on Cambrian Avenue became available and we secured it from RCT Council as a community asset transfer at minimal cost and with Welsh Government funding for renovation. We want it to be a community resource as well as a place of work and council business.

We decided to demolish the former office on Etna Terrace and turn it into a community garden that can be enjoyed by all. We are working with council body One Voice Wales on biodiversity and other planning aspects and we thank them for their practical and financial support.

Residents are always entitled and welcome to attend and observe our monthly council meetings.

Read more: <https://law.gov.wales/community-councils>.

Andrew Draper, Chair

Cyngor Cymuned / Community Council

Community councils in Wales are governed by the Local Government Act 1972, which sets out their roles and responsibilities. A community council is a body consisting of community councillors. They are elected by the local government electors for the community and hold office for five years. The chair is elected annually by the council from among the councillors.

Among the services and amenities most commonly provided are play areas and open spaces, benches, allotments and bus shelters. Under the [Local Government Act 2000](#) (as amended by the

Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011), community councils have power to do anything they consider is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being, social well-being or environmental well-being of their area.

The main source of funding for community councils is the funds raised through a precept (a charge) to council tax under section 41 of the [Local Government Finance Act 1992](#).

Cynghorwyr / Councillors

Hendreforgan Ward: Richard Walters & Elizabeth Price

Gilfach Goch Ward: Joan Abbott & Richard Price

Garden Village Ward: Andrew Draper, Julie Rees & Allun Warren

An elected member acts on behalf of the whole community and takes an interest in all issues. They listen to and represent the views of the community when discussing council business and working with outside bodies. Members play an important part by thinking creatively about what they can do together to improve the lives of local people. The community council meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month other than August. These meetings are open to the public and media to observe.

The following payments were made to councillors in 2025-26

Councillor	Payments for costs incurred – telephone, broadband etc. (max. £208 per member)	Other	Total
Cllr Allun Warren	156	52	
Cllr Elizabeth Price	156	52	
Cllr Richard Walters	156	52	
Cllr Joan Abbott	156	52	
Cllr Julie Rees	156	52	
Cllr Richard Price	156	52	
Cllr Andrew Draper	156	52	
	£1,092	£364	£1,456

In accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Measure 2011, community and town councils must publish within their authority area the remuneration received by their members by 30th September following the end of the year to which the payment relates. This information should also be sent to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales by the same date. Nil returns are also required. See Annex 4 of the Panel's report for more information.

Staffio / Staffing

Dawn Walters	Clerk and responsible finance officer	20 hrs per week
Huw Jones	Outdoor assets caretaker	12 hrs per week
Russell Scully	Groundsperson, Holly Street allotment	20 hrs per week

Ein blaenoriaethau gwariant / Our spending priorities

Sut rydym yn cael ein hariannu / How are we are funded?

The council is funded mostly by the council taxpayer. Other sources of income are the rental of plots at the Holly Street allotment, ground rent for garages and windfarm grants.

Ble mae'ch arian yn mynd / Where does your money go?

The council agreed a precept of £87,861 to spend on the provision of services in 2025–26. For the council taxpayer the Band D tax levied was £84.93.

The council's agreed budget for 2025–26 was as follows:

INCOME	BUDGET
Balance 31st March 2025	134,041.00
Precept	87,861.00
Allotment rent	937.00
Ground rent	840.00
Misc. income	10,077.00
Windfarm/Grantscape	6,000.00
VAT refunds	6,302.00
TOTAL	246,058.00
EXPENDITURE	
PERSONNEL	
Wages – clerk inc. oncosts	23,000.00
Wages – other inc. oncosts	25,000.00
Chair's allowance	300.00
Employer's NI payments	5,150.00
Windfarm/Grantscape	6,000.00

ADMIN.	
Office/misc.	3,000.00
Ground rent	5.00
Audit	1,700.00
Insurance	1,750.00
Water charges	150.00
Electricity	800.00
BT phone	800.00
Council tax	1,221.00
Remunerations/Training	2,456.00
PUBLIC SERVICES	
Allotment	10,000.00
Bus shelters	10,579.00
S137 grants	10,000.00
Donations:	4,000.00
Memberships	1,000
Biodiversity project	3,500.00
New park	60,000.00
Christmas/Easter/Spring	13,285.00
Fun run	6,715.00
MISC.	
Office refurbishment	45,000.00
VAT PAID	6,302.00
CONTINGENCY	4,345.00
TOTAL	246,058.00

Gilfach Goch Community Council training plan

Training for councillors

Councillors are provided with access to:

- *The Good Councillors Guide* produced by local councils' body One Voice Wales.
- Basic presentations prepared by One Voice Wales include:
 - Induction
 - Code of conduct
 - Local government finance
 - Health and safety
 - The council as an employer
 - Understanding the law.

Councillors are encouraged to request online / face-to-face training by visiting the One Voice Wales page to see the current training schedule. Councillors receive these training opportunities frequently via e-mail.

Biodiversity

The community council will continue to invest in the allotment at Holly Street and will work alongside the allotment association. Employing a groundsperson has proved worthwhile. A communal polytunnel has been made available. One section of the site is fully accessible.

Another area has bee hives. They aid in the pollination of plants and crops as bees are the champions of cross-pollination and beekeeping can help save honeybee colonies that are in danger. Keeping bees helps flora and fauna to flourish by providing nectar and pollen, which in turn helps them to reproduce and build healthy populations. Several bird / bat boxes have been put up in the trees and a hedgehog box has also been positioned.



Interlink staff working with the Friends of Gilfach Goch Day Centre during National Volunteering Week.

Gilfach Goch Community Council works closely with Miskin Tree Services. They regularly work alongside qualified ecologists and have a keen interest in protecting the environment. They:

- only use biodegradable chain oils and splash trays
- check all tree splits, twists and cavities for bats before working on them
- check for nests
- check the ground for wildlife – aquatic, dormice, bumblebees etc. around the drop zone before work.

Do your bit

We encourage local organisations and residents in Gilfach Goch to promote and maintain biodiversity wherever and however they can. As a council, we consider the net benefits of biodiversity when considering planning applications to stop any proposed development negatively impacting habitats or populations of species.



RCT Council ecologist Richard Wistow has called the area around the duck pond at the top end of Gilfach Goch “a great example of thriving valleys biodiversity.” We have installed a nature board there telling our positive biodiversity story.

Community orchard

With the help of volunteers, the community council planted a community orchard on RCT land in High Street in March 2023. Not all 12 fruit trees thrived and at least one has been stolen and others broken or damaged. New trees have been planted, also in conjunction with Keep Wales Tidy who funded the project.

Wild flowers

The community council has signed up for RCT Council’s ‘Let’s Talk Wildflowers’ Scheme, which aims to promote wild flowers. We have nominated areas we think should be considered for wildflower management.

Footpaths around Gilfach Goch

Many Gilfach Goch residents are keen naturalists. Walking the footpaths around the area is a popular pastime. Walkers are asked to proactively report on biodiversity issues which the community or county borough council could address.

Biodiversity projects – such as establishing bird boxes and nature corners – are encouraged. One school in the village has undertaken forest-based learning activities.

New premises

It was an exciting year for Gilfach Goch Community Council with the move to the new premises in Cambrian Avenue, opening in May 2025. An official opening event for the whole community was held at the Gilfach Goch Community Association (GGCA) on 26 May. The event was planned on the green outside the new headquarters but due to inclement weather, it moved to the GGCA. The office at Etna Terrace was demolished in December and will be replaced by a community garden. Refurbishment plans proved unrealistic and unreasonably expensive.

The community garden will be built on a circular economy principle, as part of the solution to our global climate emergency. We are minimising waste and reusing as much of the former site, such as paving slabs, as possible. Everything has value.

The new premises are on long-term let to Gilfach Goch Community Council by RCT Council under a community asset transfer arrangement, with subsidised monthly rent and Welsh Government grant for renovation.

Forestry run



The annual forestry run / fun day was held on 20 August. It drew over 100 runners to a successful and well attended fun day. Cllr Wendy Lewis, Mayor of RCT Council and Cllr Huw David, Mayor of Bridgend Council, were in attendance to present the awards.

Community movie nights

Screenings of *How Green Was my Valley* and *The Coal Beneath our Feet*, *the Wind Above Our Heads* were held at the Rock Church and were well attended. Following this trial, the council office is now fully equipped for community film screenings, every two months initially.

Community grants

The community council makes funding – known as S137 community grants – available to local groups and organisations. These groups are vital to the richness and diversity of community life and activities, and the council is proud to exercise this important role to support them.

In the review year, grants went to the following:

Garden Village Ladies Arts & Crafts Class	£300
Moriah Chapel	£1500
Hendreforgan Community Primary School	£500
Gilfach Goch Community Singers	£500
Gilfach Goch Old Peoples Welfare Fund	£800
First Responder Group	£250

Bethel Methodist Church	£800
St. Barnabas Church Community Shop	£100
Gilfach Bushi-Kai Karate	£250
Swn Yr Afon Tenants Social Fund	£500
Red Valley FC	£800
Lil Amigos Parent & Toddler Group	£800
Gilfach Goch Ladies Bowls	£300
Gilfach Goch Quilting Group	£500
Friends of Gilfach Goch Day Centre	£500
Real Acts of Community Kindness	£300
Community Pantry	£300
Gilfach Goch FC Juniors	£500
Gilfach Goch Senior Citizens	£200

A grant of £5,000 was received from the Mynydd Portref Wind Farm and was allocated as follows:

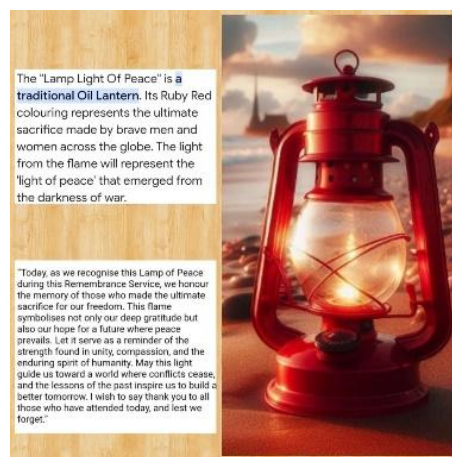
Gilfach Goch Junior Rugby 3G Pitch Lighting	£2,000
Bethel Church	£1,000
Moriah Chapel	£1,000
Rock Church	£500
St Barnabas Church	£500

Donations were also made to the following:

Gilfach Goch Junior Rugby 3G pitch lighting	£2,000
GGCA skateboard training	£600
Messy Monsters Day Nursery	£300

Remembrance Sunday

The community council, along with the GGCA, ensured that a Remembrance Sunday service took place at the cenotaph in Evanstown Welfare Park. The clerk, Dawn Walters, led the service and members of the churches in the village, Borough Councillor Aurfron Roberts and pupils of Hendreforgan and Abercerdin schools took part. A white poppy wreath symbolising peace was laid by the community council, and Ogmores Valley Community Council laid a lamp of peace. There was a personal address from Cllr Andrew Draper, Chair of the council. Refreshments were served at the pavilion following the service. Cllr Joan Abbott decorated a grassed area.



Infrastructure

The community council has shown a continued commitment to investing in the provision and maintenance of bus shelters to encourage more people to use sustainable transport. We work closely with RCT Council on this.

We invest in benches. They provide much needed respite for people walking around our community and increase the likelihood of people walking instead of driving. These benches are well placed throughout the community and are pleasant for people to sit and enjoy some of the spectacular views in our area. They also have an added benefit of encouraging people of differing abilities to get out and about, safe in the knowledge that there are places to stop and rest on the way.

The community council is a consultee of the RCT Council planning department for all planning applications in the community. This provides another local voice to ensure residents' voices are heard.

The community council contributes towards the local playgrounds in conjunction with RCT Council. We are contributing to plans and some finance for a new, much needed play area at the top of High Street. A land rights issue has considerably delayed progress and we continue to press the case.

Supporting local businesses

Where possible, the community council utilises local businesses and contractors to undertake any work needed. This local economy approach gives the maximum boost to the local economy by keeping spending local. We follow rules on obtaining quotes, spending and the allocation of work.

Christmas lights, pantomime and more



The community council provides, funds and maintains the Christmas features on lamp posts for a pleasant, festive environment along with Christmas trees to local businesses, shops and public houses. Hendreforgan school was given a tree, and it held a community event for the switching on of the lights on 28 November. We hosted a Christmas pantomime for all pupils at the school and a festive afternoon tea dance at the OAP Welfare Hall.

The Clerk and the Reverend Rachel Wheeler visited Hendreforgan School and told the Easter Story. All pupils received an Easter egg.

A greener and more sustainable place

Gilfach Goch Community Council has a vision of making the village a greener and more sustainable place to live and work.

The allotments in Holly Street are being developed and are already a sustainable source of community food.

We continue to investigate the potential for generating hydropower from our river, the Ogwr Fach. We are aware it has been attempted before, and we will learn the lessons of history. What was

unviable before may be viable now. Renewable energy sources are more important than ever as they reduce the impact of fossil fuel-based energy.

We have joined the work of Valleys Community Energy, a project that seeks to build energy projects that are operated and owned by local communities. That means profits are retained and invested locally rather than extracted to developer companies elsewhere.

Gilfach Goch Community Council

Cyngor Cymuned Gilfach Goch