



Council jargon explained - What is the 'Precept'.....

The Precept, currently £15464, is the only funding available to Ponthir Community Council and is part of the Community Charge collected by Torfaen County Borough Council from your council tax.

The cost per household varies but for this financial year it is based on £21.33 per annum for a Band D property.

In January, Community Councils submit their annual application for the level of Precept they require from their County Borough Council and we are requesting that the Precept is frozen for the next financial year.

The budget for this financial year is displayed on the noticeboards. We are committed to keeping the Precept low, minimising administrative waste and maximising the investment in grants and projects in our community.

The Community Council has plenty of ideas on how to improve the local community and support local groups as detailed in these newsletters, and is using surplus funds from previous years to fund them.

The Gwent Best Kept Village Competition 2014

The Gwent Best Kept Village Competition is organised by the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) and is sponsored by Chepstow Garden Centre.

We plan to enter the competition again this year and hope to build upon the success of previous years. In 2013, Ponthir scored 79 marks out of a possible 100 and the judges made many positive comments, including praise for volunteers in the village who help to maintain some of the public areas.

Some of our residents are judges for this competition and two of them, Russell and Helena Thomas, kindly gave a presentation at our January Council meeting to advise us of the judging criteria and to suggest areas for improvement.

We are up against stiff opposition from villages such as: Langstone (who were last year's winners), Bassaleg, Rhiwderin, Magor, Undy and Raglan. Judging takes place throughout June 2014 with no prior warning, so in order to get a head start, we are looking for volunteers who are willing to join our 'Best Kept Village Group'.

If you are interested in getting out in the fresh air and helping to improve our village, please contact me on 07971 948351.

Cllr Jo Bold



We would love to hear your views on the issues we have discussed...

Call: 07971 948351

Email: ponthircc@hotmail.co.uk

A copy of this document could be made available in Welsh. Please contact us on the telephone number or e-mail below.

Mae copi or ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg. Cysylltwch a ni ar y rhif ffôn neu drwy e-bost isod.

Ffôn: 07971 948351 E-bost: ponthircc@hotmail.co.uk

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PONTHIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Community Matters

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Voice for Youth!

We are looking for two Youth Representatives for the Council, aged between 15-26, who would like to be a voice for youth in the community. If this sounds like you, we would love to hear from you.

Welcome to the second edition of 'Community Matters' from Ponthir Community Council.

...We hope you enjoy it!

The Community Plan

Over the last few months the council has been working hard on a community plan. In this edition we are going to introduce three different projects we have identified as being relevant to this community. The Councillor who has adopted each project will introduce it to you. However, we would like your help to decide on a fourth project.

Our contact details are on the back page and we look forward to getting your ideas!

The projects are:

- Community War Memorial and Garden
- Playground Equipment
- Christmas Lights
- Over to you!

In the next edition of the Newsletter in May, we will include a voting slip for you to decide on which project we should adopt.

The most popular project will then be taken forward. We think it's very important to get your view and not just guess what would be the best choice - real democracy in action!



Community War Memorial and Garden

I was surprised that our community is currently included in Remembrance Sunday at the War Memorial in Cwmbran. After some discussion with the Council I feel it would be good to have a permanent War Memorial in the centre of the village. This could be used to hold a Remembrance Service for the community to remember all who lost their lives fighting for our country.

I would like the memorial to be housed in a small garden which people from the village can use throughout the year as a place for peace and reflection. The project is likely to cost in the region of £10,000. The Community Council will pay half of this cost and grant assisted funding will cover the remainder. I have started looking at memorial designs but need help on deciding the best place for the memorial, so your suggestions would be appreciated.

Cllr Robert Davies



Playground Equipment

Located in the centre of the village, the play area has been a much loved facility for many years. Unfortunately, the equipment is becoming depleted and is now only suitable for the very youngest children. Play equipment is very expensive and an investment of £5000 would only provide one additional item suitable for a 4 to 10 year old.

I am hoping though that by championing the play area residents will identify their support for this initiative. This will lead to a longer term objective of investigating external funding and undertaking local fund raising in order to restore the playground to its former glory.

Cllr Stuart Bailey



Christmas Lights

We can safely say that the reintroduction of the village Christmas tree with those fabulous white lights were a huge success in 2013! We had many positive and warm comments from villagers and commuters who passed through. This Christmas we could step up and embrace the festive spirit further and become the envy of surrounding villages with illuminated street lighting decorations similar to those in Usk.

A dozen white LED festive images placed tastefully on street lights from Lamb Lane to Barnfield for example, would look stunning. Driving or walking through the village you will instantly get that Christmas feeling and I'm sure they would be greeted with much excitement by the children. The estimated cost to supply and fit them for the first year is circa £5000, followed in subsequent years by c. £2000. If the community votes for this project, we will carry out a presentation of options prior to final approval.

Cllr Peter Matthews



Meet our new Councillor – David Green

I am the newest member of Ponthir Community Council having been co-opted last December.

I have lived in Ponthir for over 40 years and my children and grandchildren have attended school here. I am retired and a widower.

I thoroughly endorse the Community Council's aims and vision for Ponthir's future.



Showcasing Community Activities - Exercising with Music

Exercising is not just hard work.....it can be enjoyable as those who attend the Extend exercise classes in Ponthir have discovered. The class involves movement to music for the over 60's, open to both men and women, and it helps prevent falls, improves balance, circulation and muscle tone.

The class is held every Monday in Ponthir Village Hall between 2-3pm and is run by a qualified falls prevention instructor, Ruth Bishop, who structures the exercise to suit all needs. Those who attend say they definitely have improved

Grant Makes a Big Difference

We are so pleased to have received a £1000 grant from the Community Council! The additional laptops the school has purchased together with the wi-fi, means that whole classes can now undertake their work or research collectively. For example, the IT lesson can be taught and all children now have the opportunity to access a laptop rather than waiting for 'their turn.'

They have enhanced the learning taking place by ensuring that the skills acquired are being used far more frequently. Lessons can now be planned for whole classes using ICT.

Plus, the installation of wi-fi means that the laptops can be used anywhere in the school and learning materials accessed accordingly. It's been a great help, allowing us to keep us up to date with technology.

Ceris Spooner, Head Teacher, Ponthir Church in Wales School.



Meet our Community Support Officer - Riccardo Oliver

I work from Cwmbran Police Station as a Community Support Officer (CSO) and I cover the Llanyrafon wards, which includes Llanfrehfa and Ponthir. I have previously been a Special Constable in Newport and a CSO in Pontypool. I have enjoyed the last few months in this area and I am glad to have been able to help those I have met and look forward to helping others in this community.

CSO Amy Cousins also covers this area on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening, so please come and share any issues or concerns you may have with us. Also, feel free to email riccardo.oliver@gwent.pnn.police.uk or amy.cousins@gwent.pnn.police.uk and leave either an address or phone number so that we can contact you as soon as possible to discuss any issues.

Alternatively, the next PACT meeting is taking place on **19th February between 7-8pm at Ponthir Village Hall** and you can raise your concerns/issues there. PACT stands for Partnerships and Communities Together and is the name given to partnership and community engagement, held at neighbourhood level to enable members of local communities to highlight their concerns and identify priorities for their Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

