



ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

Foreword: Chairman's Report

On behalf of Bedlinog and Trelewis Community Council, I would like to welcome you to this Annual Report and thank you for taking the time to read it and engage with us. All Community Councillors and staff are proud of the community we serve and wish to support it to the best of our ability.

We have been through a year of uncertainty, with a global pandemic that touched every single one of our lives. Times like this show reinvigorated community spirit and there have been many thought provoking gestures of kindness and goodwill over the past year.

The Community Council has been at the forefront of grass roots support to its community by setting up the 'Hardship Fund' and providing funding to the 'FareShare' scheme so that surplus fresh food could be diverted to families in need.

The Clerk has continued to work throughout the pandemic remotely, to ensure statutory services could continue. Our existing plans for the past 12 months have continued to be worked upon and whilst COVID-19 has inevitably caused some delays with project timelines, but I am pleased to say that as far as we can allow, the projects are on track. Our Council meetings have continued throughout the year via a virtual platform.

It was also a sad time for the Council and the community as we lost our Chair, Cllr Helen Thomas, who sadly passed away. Helen dedicated many years to the community as a County Councillor and Community Councillor, and her dedication and legacy will never be forgotten.

We want people to know that the Community Council will continue to support the community and its local groups, long after the pandemic and a normal life can once again return.

We always welcome dialogue with the community and offer you the opportunity to engage with us via our contact details on our website
www.bedlinogcommunitycouncil.gov.wales

Cllr Richard Searl

Chairman of Bedlinog and Trelewis Community Council

About Bedlinog and Trelewis Community Council

We operate in the Town and Community Council sector, the grass roots of local government. We are one of 735 town and Community Council's across Wales.

A Community Council is a corporate body with a legal existence of its own. Any decisions taken by the Council are the responsibility of the whole body, and it is irrelevant if any Member agreed or disagreed with any proposal. A Community Council can legally raise money through the Precept – a levy which its residents pay through the Council Tax. It also has a range of powers which allows it to spend this public money on the services it provides. These may include playing fields, playgrounds, and community centres. The Community Council has a duty to ensure that the rules for the administration of the Council are followed – the Council must appoint a Chair, appoint a Clerk, appoint a Responsible Financial Officer, appoint an independent and competent internal auditor, hold an Annual Meeting of the Council, and keep records of all decisions related to Council business.

Council meetings are held once a month on the second Monday of every month, except for August when the Council is in recess. There are also Staffing Committee meetings held on an ad hoc basis.

Unlike County Councillors, Community Councillors receive no direct salary, and are only able to accept limited remuneration or expenses. Bedlinog and Trelewis Community Councillors have opted to forego remuneration and effectively give their services and commitment free, voluntarily, to the residents they represent.

The Community Council is split into two Community Wards, Bedlinog and Trelewis.

Councillors as Individuals

Community Councillors are elected by the electors of the community under Section 16 (2) of the Local Government Act 1972 every 5 years. A Councillor can also be returned by local by-election or co-option. Anyone elected as a Councillor cannot act as a Councillor until they have signed the formal Declaration of Acceptance of Office. This includes an undertaking to abide by the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the Council. Members are also required to declare any interests which they have, for example, in any associations or affiliations with groups, bodies or individuals. It is the individual Councillor's duty to declare an interest and leave a meeting if any issue being discussed could be perceived as securing any type of advantage to the Member. Councillors have a duty to act properly and responsibly in their role as a Councillor and a responsibility to attend Community Council meetings when summoned to do so.

When summoned to a meeting, Councillors will have been provided with an agenda, minutes, and reports. This allows them to prepare for the meeting and ensure that they are properly informed on the matters to be discussed. They have a

responsibility to act on behalf of the whole electorate, take an interest in all issues equally, and represent the views of the wider community in discussions.

Each Councillor and the Community Ward they represent is shown in the table below:

Bedlinog Community Ward	Trelewis Community Ward
Cllr Elizabeth Evans (Elected)	Cllr Ian Thomas (Co-opted)
Cllr Gillian Preston (Elected)	Cllr Jeff Beard (Co-opted), Vice Chairman
Cllr Sherelle Jago (Co-opted)	Cllr Vanessa Matthews (Co-opted)
Cllr Christopher Frayne (Co-opted)	Cllr Richard Searl (Co-opted), Chair
	Cllr Deborah Brown (Co-opted)

The Chairman

The Chairman is elected by the Members at the Council's Annual Meeting and serves for 12 months. The Chairman is in a position of authority in presiding at meetings of Council. With the advice of the Clerk, the Chairman is responsible for ensuring that effective and lawful decisions are taken at the meetings of the Council. There are several aspects to being a good Chairman including a commitment to the role, a willingness to appreciate the views and experiences of others and the ability to manage meetings in an orderly manner. It is important that there is mutual respect between the Chair and the Clerk and between the Chair and other Members. The Chairman has a casting vote in the event of a tied vote. No single individual Councillor (including the Chairman) can make a decision on behalf of the Council. The Chairman is responsible for involving all Councillors in discussion and for ensuring that Members keep to the point. The Chairman is often the public face of the Council and, in this respect, will be expected to convey the corporate view and not his/her personal view.

The Clerk

The Clerk is employed by the Council to provide administrative and professional support for the Council's activities. Any other members of staff employed by the Council are responsible to the Clerk who is their line manager. The Clerk's primary responsibility is to advise the Council on whether its decisions are lawful and to recommend ways in which discussions can be progressed. The Clerk takes their instruction from the Council and not from any individual Councillor. It is the Clerk's duty to implement the decisions taken by the Council, although certain actions can be delegated by the Council, so the Clerk may act on their behalf. The Clerk is also the Council's Responsible Financial Officer. The role involves a broad spectrum of work and responsibilities, including financial management, administration, estates management, project management, and health and safety. Whilst it is good practice for the Clerk to consult on the content of an Agenda with the Chair, the Clerk has the final say as the Council's 'Proper Officer' and legal signatory of the agenda. All correspondence for the Council should be addressed to the Clerk.

In addition to the Clerk, Bedlinog and Trelewis Community Council employs a Caretaker.

Functions carried out by the Council

The Council is responsible for Bedlinog Community Centre, and this is available for hire. It is also responsible for the 'kickabout area' in Bedlinog and Bedlinog Allotments.

The Council takes its representative role on behalf of the community very seriously and is often consulted by Welsh Government and other public bodies on its views in relation to their policies and activities.

The Community Council has also agreed a Charter with Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council which sets out how they will work together for the benefit of the local community whilst recognising respective responsibilities as autonomous, democratically elected bodies.

The Charter is designed to build on existing good practice and embrace the shared principles of openness, respect for each other's opinions, honesty, and a common priority of putting citizens at the centre. The Charter is based on equality of partnership and is not a top-down arrangement.

A full list of the Community Council's Powers can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

Planning

Community Council's have a statutory right to be consulted on applications for planning permission and the Council has a special role, representing a broader yet still local view which can be set alongside the comments of those with a more individual interest.

During financial year 2020-2021, the Community Council consulted on and considered a total of planning **10** applications for Bedlinog and Trelewis.

Grants

The Community Council is committed to supporting and strengthening the many networks and community groups that help to make a positive difference to Bedlinog and Trelewis as a great place to live and work, for everyone.

Grants are awarded to community organisations that demonstrate a clear need for financial support. Projects and activities must have a specific benefit to residents.

During financial year 2020-2021, the Community Council awarded grants to the following organisations:



Bedlinog AFC were awarded £1000 towards the cost of repairs following damage caused by Storm Dennis.



Bedlinog Primary School were awarded £202 to buy every pupil a selection box and book for Christmas.



Trelewis Primary School were awarded £482 to buy every pupil a selection box and book for Christmas.

COVID-19 Pandemic

Throughout the pandemic, the Community Council have concentrated on supporting those that were struggling in the community and in need of help. We set up the 'Hardship Fund' for those residents in financial hardship and eligible to seek financial assistance. Up to three payments of £50 were made to households that were in financial hardship due to the coronavirus pandemic e.g., due to loss of earning or increased expenses. A total of **91** hardship payments were made to residents in need.

During the pandemic, the County Council suspended providing their pest control service. The Community Council engaged with a private company and covered the cost of a first visit for those residents that had a pest issue – we supported a total of **9** households.

The Community Council supported the food parcels being delivered by the Ward County Councillors and funded **£355** worth of food, as well as funding the **£195** FareShare Cymru Community Food Membership cost, for surplus food to be redistributed to residents in need.

We also funded **£300** for six volunteers to complete Food Hygiene training to prepare and deliver meals for residents that were isolated and/or shielding.

The Community Council also funded **£4000** worth of Chrome Books for children in the community that were digitally excluded and unable to learn from home whilst schools were closed.

Local Places for Nature



The Council was extremely pleased to receive a **50k** grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Welsh Government as part of the Local Places for Nature capital grant scheme. Nature is our oldest form of heritage and looking after it and helping people to understand its importance has never been more relevant.

Via the grant funding we have been able to enhance nature and the visual aspect of our community by installing street planters and lamppost baskets throughout the route of Trelewis to Bedlinog.



We have re-developed Bedlinog Allotments to create new accessible entrances and paths, raised beds for community growing, as well as raised beds for the local schools to grow their own fruit and vegetables and learning outdoors. There also new toilet and wash facilities for the school children to use.



The grant has also allowed us to purchase grass cutting devices and fund training for volunteers to use the cutting equipment with confidence and safely and understand safety requirements.

Circular Economy Fund

Welsh Government's aim is to move to a circular economy in Wales where waste is avoided and the things we use are kept in use for as long as possible. The Community Council was successful in obtaining a **39k** grant from this fund and used it to enable Bedlinog and Trelewis to become champions in Wales.

We were able to install four water bottle refill stations within the community to reduce the use of residents' single-use plastic. When out for a walk, residents can refill their re-usable water bottles with fresh clean water.



The water bottle refill stations can be found at Nant Llwynog Park, Bedlinog; The Rock UK Summit Centre, Trelewis, and there are two around the lakes at Parc Taf Bargoed, Trelewis.

We wanted to encourage residents to re-use their food waste also – so we provided free compost bins to **61** residents in Bedlinog and Trelewis who are now able to make their own compost.



We had solar panels fitted to two community buildings – these will enable renewable energy and reduce our carbon footprint. They will also save money on energy bills which will mean less public money is spent on electricity bills.

We have also launched a social media campaign to encourage residents to recycle, to educate on the benefits of recycling and to re-use their waste. The residents of Bedlinog and Trelewis are well on their way to making Wales a circular economy.

The National Lottery Community Fund

Thanks to National Lottery Players, the Community Council were successful in their application for **£2500** for the children of Bedlinog and Trelewis to have a treat after an extremely difficult and unsettling year. The money was used to pay for pupils of both schools to attend the Climbing Centre for a day of activities.



Community Engagement

For the first time, the Community Council engaged with the community via a Community Engagement Survey. We wanted to know how well residents felt we communicated with them, and whether this could be improved. We also wanted to know what you felt the Community Council's priorities should be for the forthcoming year. The main areas you wanted us to concentrate on were:

- More litter/recycling bins in the community
- Produce a Newsletter for those residents that do not have access to social media
- Improve and maintain children's playgrounds
- Make improvements to the Tennis Courts and bring the Pavilion back into use

These are now our priorities for the forthcoming year, and we will continue to update residents on the work we are doing in these areas.

Other Work

We have continued to support residents' requests during 2020-2021 for more dog waste bins. Additional bins have been installed at the new playground in Stormtown, Trelewis; near to Glyn Bargoed House, Trelewis; Pleasant View, Bedlinog; Garth Terrace, Bedlinog.

In December 2020, we had more Christmas lights than previous years with 12 installed in each village. Our wish is to install a Christmas light near to every street within the community, but unfortunately, not all lampposts are suitable to have them installed and not all are owned by MTCBC, so permission to install is an issue. We will do our best to ensure they are spread out as much as they possibly can be so that as many can benefit from them as possible.

We continue to receive monthly Police reports from South Wales Police and consult with the Police on how we can work together to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the community. Going forward, we want to engage with the community on what they think the priorities should be for the PCSO's within the community and we will report these priorities back to the Police.

The Community Council will continue to support the community to be a safe, happy, healthy environment to live in. We hold Council meetings monthly and the public are welcome to attend. We value your contribution and feedback and would love to hear from you if you have any concerns, issues, or ideas that you wish the Community Council to consider and support.

Appendix 1 – Legal Duties and Powers

Activity	Powers and Duties	Statutory Provisions
Annual meeting	Duty to hold	Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraph 23
Allotments	Powers to provide allotments Duty to provide allotment gardens if demand unsatisfied	Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, s23
Borrowing	Subject to Welsh Ministers' consent power to borrow money for capital purposes	Local Government Act 2003 Schedule 1 para 2
Burial grounds, cemeteries and crematoria	Power, as a burial authority, to acquire and provide with a duty to maintain	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss. 9 and 10

	Power to agree to maintain monuments and memorials	Parish Councils and Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous) Act 1970, s.1
	Power to contribute towards expenses of cemeteries	Local Government Act 1972, s. 214
Bus Shelters	Power to provide and maintain shelters	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953, s.4
Bye laws	Power to make byelaws for: Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms Pleasure grounds Parking places Open spaces and burial grounds	Public Health Act 1936, s.198 Public Health Act 1875, s.164 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.57(7) Open Spaces Act 1906, s.15
Charities	Powers regarding local charities	Charities Act 2011, Part 15
Activity	Powers and Duties	Statutory Provisions
Christmas Lights	Power to encourage visitors	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Citizens Advice Bureau	Power to support Citizens Advice Bureaus	Local Government Act 1972, s.142 (2A)
Climate change	Power to promote local energy saving measures	Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006, s.20
Clocks	Power to provide public clocks	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.2
Closed Churchyards	Powers to maintain	Local Government Act 1972, s.215
Code of conduct	Duty to adopt a code of conduct Duty on councillors to comply with the code of conduct	Local Government Act 2000, s. 51 Local Government Act 2000, s. 52
Common land and village greens	Power to protect common land and village greens where the owner is not registered	Commons Act 2006, s.45
Community centres	Power to provide and equip community buildings Power to provide buildings for use of clubs having athletic, social or educational objectives	Local Government Act 1972, s.133 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19
Community meetings	Power to convene and duty to give	Local Government Act 1972,

	notice	Schedule 12, paragraphs 30, 30D and 30E
Community polls	Duty to consider taking action and giving notice	Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraphs 26A and 29A
Conference facilities and exhibitions	Power to provide facilities	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Co-option of members	Powers to co-opt persons to fill vacancies Duty to advertise	Representation of the People Act 1985, s21 Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006, Reg 5 Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, s116
Activity	Powers and Duties	Statutory Provisions
Crime prevention	Powers to spend money on various crime prevention measures	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.31
	Duty to exercise functions with regard to the effect on crime and disorder	Crime and Disorder Act 1998, s17
Drainage	Power to deal with ponds and ditches	Public Health Act 1936, s.260
Entertainment and the arts	Power to provide entertainment and support to the arts including festivals and celebrations	Local Government Act 1972, s.145
Finance	Duty to make arrangements for the proper administration of the council's financial affairs and to secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs	Local Government Act 1972, s151
	Duty to make a budget calculation	Local Government Finance Act 1992, s.50
	Power to issue a precept to a billing authority	Local Government Finance Act 1992, s.41
	Duty to keep accounts for audit	Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014
	Power to make financial contributions etc for the purpose of BID projects	Local Government Act 2003, ss. 43,58
General power	Power to incur expenditure for	Local Government Act 1972, s. 137

	certain purposes not otherwise authorised [also see Wellbeing below]	
Gifts	Power to accept gifts	Local Government Act 1972, s.139
Activity	Powers and Duties	Statutory Provisions
Highways	Power to enter into agreement as to dedication	Highways Act 1980, s.30
	Power to repair and maintain footpaths and bridleways	Highways Act 1980, ss. 43, 50
	Power to plant trees etc and to maintain roadside verges	Highways Act 1980, s.96
	Power to complain to highway authority regarding protection of rights of way and roadside wastes	Highways Act 1980, s.130(6)
	Power to erect flagpoles etc on highways	Highways Act 1980, s.144
	Power to contribute to traffic calming schemes	Highways Act 1980, s. 274A
	Power to provide roadside seats and shelters	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.1
	Power to light roads and public places	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.3
	Power to provide parking places	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.57
	Power to provide traffic signs and other notices	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.72
Investments	Power to participate in schemes of collective investment	Trustee Investments Act 1961
Land	Power to acquire by agreement, to appropriate, to dispose of land	Local Government Act 1972, ss.124, 126, 127
	Power to accept gifts of land	Local Government Act 1972, s.139
Litter	Power to provide receptacles in public places	Litter Act 1983, ss.5.6
Lotteries	Power to hold a lottery operating license	Gambling Act 2005, s.98
Activity	Powers and Duties	Statutory Provisions
Marine management	Power to obtain advice from the Maritime Management Organisation	Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, s.25

	Power, by agreement, to accept delegation of functions	Marine and Coastal Access Act, ss. 55-57
Meetings	Duty to hold annual meeting	Paragraph 23(1), Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972
	Duty to hold meeting within 14 days of a community council election	Paragraph 23(2), Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972
	Power to call extraordinary meeting	Paragraph 25, Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972
	Quorum for meetings	Paragraph 28, Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972
	Duty to notify time and place of meeting	Paragraph 26(1)(a), Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972
Mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Powers to provide mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1936, s.198
Minutes	Duty to draw up minutes of community meetings Duty to draw up minutes of community council meetings	Paragraph 35, Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972 Paragraph 41, Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972
National Parks	Duty to have regard to purposes for which National Parks are designated	National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, s.11A
Newsletters	Power to provide information relating to matters affecting local government	Local Government Act 1972, s.142
Open Spaces	Power to acquire land and duty to maintain them	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10
Property and documents	Powers to direct as to their custody	Local Government Act 1972, s.226
Public buildings and village halls	Power to provide buildings for public meetings and assemblies	Local Government Act 1972, s.133
Public conveniences	Power to provide public conveniences	Public Health Act 1936, s.87
Activity	Powers and Duties	Statutory Provisions
Public spaces protection orders	Right to be notified of proposal for an order	Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, s.72
Publication	Duty to publish documents relating to the business of the meeting Duty to have a publication scheme	Paragraph 26(1)(aa), (b), Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972 Freedom of Information Act 2000

Parks, pleasure grounds	Power to acquire land or to provide recreation grounds, public walks, pleasure grounds and open spaces and to manage and control them	Public Health Act 1875, s.,164 (Local Government Act 1972, Sched.14 para 27) Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890, s.44 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10
Recreation	Power to provide a wide range of recreational facilities	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19
Staff	Power to appoint staff	Local Government Act 1972, s.112
Standing orders	Duty have standing orders with respect to contracts for the supply of goods and materials or the execution of works	Section 135, Local Government Act 1972
Status	Power for a community council to resolve that the community shall have the status of a town	Local Government Act 1972, s.245B
Town and Country Planning	Right to request the local planning authority for notification of planning applications	Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Schedule 1A, paragraph 2
Tourism	Power to contribute to certain organisations encouraging tourism	Local Government Act 1972, s.144 (2)
Activity	Powers and Duties	Statutory Provisions
Transport	Power to establish car-sharing schemes	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.26
	Power to make arrangements for taxi fare concessions	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.28
	Power to investigate provision of public transport services and to publicise information on such services	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.29
	Power to make grants to for bus services	Transport Act 1985, s.106A
War memorials	Power to maintain, repair, protect and alter war memorials	War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923 s.1; as extended by Local Government Act 1948, s.133
Website	Duty to make specified information available electronically	Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, s.55
Wellbeing	Power to do anything which the council considers likely to achieve the promotion or	Local Government Act 2000, s.2

	improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the area, subject to s137 limit on expenditure	
Well-being of future generations	Duty to take all reasonable steps towards meeting local objectives in the local well-being plan (and to report annually) if the council's gross income or expenditure was at least £200k in each of the 3 years prior to publication of the local well-being plan	Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, s. 40
Welsh language	Duty to comply with Welsh language standards	Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, s. 25
Youth representatives	Power to appoint youth representatives	Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 ss.118-119