

Annual Report for the financial year April 2023 – April 2024

Draethen Waterloo and Rudry Community Council



Forward

Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry Community Council is close to Caerphilly Town Centre in the South of Caerphilly County Borough.

The Council represents and serves 3 rural Wards in South East Wales: Rhydygwern, Llanfedw and Rudry.

There are 9 positions for Community Councillors to represent these wards within the Primary Authority of Machen & Rudry Ward.

These positions represent 2 Community Council Members for Rhydygwern; 2 for Llanfedw and 5 for Rudry.

The details of the electorate in the DWR wards are –

Llanfedw – 206

Rhydygwern – 123

Rudry - 575

Resignations. Rebuilding. Restructure and Refocus

Resignations

On the evening of DWR's AGM on the 25th May 2023 the Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk plus other councillors verbally resigned with immediate effect. There was no pre warning of this and no care or consideration of what their actions would do for the communities they were supposed to look after.

This left only 2 councillors – effectively leaving the DWR CC unable to operate!

Rebuilding

I started engaging with other interested parties including Caerphilly CBC to ask for help in rebuilding a new DWR council. I'm pleased to say everyone I spoke with were happy to help.

Caerphilly CBC were able provide Cllr Chris Morgan and Cllr Amanda McConnell to sit on DWR council to assist in the rebuilding of the new team.

I would like to thank them both personally for being efficient, helpful and professional. Without their involvement we would not have been able to turn things around.

In addition, in July our temporary clerk Bob Campbell joined until we recruit a permanent clerk. He had been a key part of a small team and enabled us to operate professionally at all times, for this we are extremely grateful.

A new council needed to be established as soon as possible.

Therefore, on the 29 June 2023 the publication of a Notice of Election was advertised. Followed by Elections on the 3rd August 2023.

This added another four to our new team – Cllr Beth Rich, Cllr Rob Heaton-Jones, Cllr Kevin Ingram and Cllr Phil Rosser.

Restructure

On the 12th September 2023 we held our first official meeting of the new DWR in a temporary venue and I am honored to mention I was elected Chair with Cllr Kevin Stanworth as Vice.

This enabled DWR to start rebuilding relationships.

Since then, we have completely revisited our contracts and procurement processes leading to big savings for the council, by removing unnecessary expenditure.

All equipment stored in a container in Bedwas has been returned to the community and is being used by those communities it was bought for. This includes litter pickers, rings and bags. A digital bingo machine which is now being enthusiastically used by Rudry Villages monthly social gathering. Plus, Speed guns and associated equipment.

In November 2023. We added another Councillor Zoe Hewer to the time. She has immediately got stuck in with community's issues and is working with associated partners to come up with a solution to off roaders blighting the countryside.

Regaining access to DWR's bank account was particularly tortuous, stressful and lengthy to achieve. We finally achieved this in December 2023! My thanks to Cllr Kevin Stanworth for assisting me in this task.

We finally emptied the container and ended the contract on the 18th December 2023. Saving £960 per annum of public funds.

DWR was at head of the procession to lay the wreaths on Remembrance Sunday at Caerphilly's Cenotaph.



Plus doing the same at St James Church in Rudry.



In addition, Poppies were put out in all three villages

Christmas Time in 2023



Refocus

So, come the new year and we started 2024 with a clean sheet and excited to have a great team that work together.

We have now been able to focus on doing what a community council should do – doing its best to deliver for the communities it represents.

DWR CC have been the lead on establishing a partnership working arrangement between Michaelston Y Fedw Community Council, Newport City Council and Caerphilly County Borough Council.

The first meeting was entitled The Three Bridges as everyone in our locality is affected when traveling about their business. We needed to include both Newport and Caerphilly Council to work in partnership as all these bridges cross to council areas.

I'm pleased to report the first and second meetings have been increasing well attended and heads of departments and practitioners from both councils now have an increasingly positive communication dialogue and I expect there to be better and more accurate communication with both respective communities when it comes to closure of roads, maintenance of highways and bridges and designing a plan to reduce flooding, fly tipping and speeding. Plus, other items being discussed.

We have been successful in obtaining funds via Rural Development Funding from Caerphilly CBC to be able to install CCTV road facing cameras to add to the network of cameras that already exists. These cameras have been proved to reduce fly tipping plus other criminality in other communities with both Caerphilly and now Newport councils been able to successfully prosecute anti-social and criminal behaviour.

In addition, we have funding to help people that are worried about fuel costs. As many of our residents are not on mains gas the cost of fossil fuels such as LPG and heating oil is rapidly increasing. Whist everyone would like renewable technology to reduce costs and save the planet. It is not a simple path to take.

This project is called “The Renewal RoadMap” and we will be publicizing more about this in the coming months.

DWR Monday Afternoon Club at Rudry Parish Hall which runs every 2nd Monday of the month which includes a buffet, raffle, sing along and bingo.



Rudry Waterloo and Draethen Flower Displays



Christmas Time in 2023

I would like to thank Cllr Rob Heaton Jones for being the lead on delivering brilliant and colorful flower displays in Rudry, Waterloo and Draethen.

He galvanized all parties and got local volunteers to produce such a wonderful display at a fraction of the cost of previous contractors. (One previous contractor charged £1,500 just for watering the displays). All this is now being done by kind hearted people who care about their communities.

As of 1st May 2024, we now have a new Clerk, Mrs Myra Osborn. We welcome her onboard.

Finally, for now. Draethen, Waterloo and Rudry Community Council are Platinum Sponsors of the Machen Show so we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on Saturday the 6th July 2024 where we will share a marquee with BTM Community Council and Ruperra Castle Trust.

Regards

Lee Cecil

Chair

Draethen Waterloo & Rudry Community Council.

www.dwrcouncil.co.uk