

# Coed-y-Paen News

Dec 2019

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## Forthcoming Events

Tues 24 Dec, 6.30 – Carol Service  
Sat 25 Jan – Burns Night Supper  
Wed 19 Feb, 7.30 – AGM  
3 March – Poems & Pints

## Residents Association News

### Be Proud of Your Community

The 'Best Kept Village' competition was superseded this year by 'Be Proud of Your Community'. Villages could enter in categories entitled 'Go Wildlife', 'Taking Care of Your Community', 'Remembering Them', 'Saving the Planet' and 'My Favourite Place (for young people aged 11-25 yrs)'.

The emphasis has changed to judging projects within communities which not only benefit wildlife but bring the community together. We put together an impressive document highlighting the community spirit in CyP and the judges came to the village in August to probe deeper. As a result we were awarded Silver for 'Taking Care of Your Community' and Bronze for each of 'Remembering Them' and 'Go Wildlife/My Favourite Place'. The framed certificates are in the Carpenters Arms and the church vestibule.

As a competition this is still evolving and we expect to have more guidance on what the judging criteria will be next year, however we know they will be keen to see encouragement and preservation of wildlife and the planting of native wildflowers. The judges seemed to suggest that areas at the edge of the churchyard could be set aside for this. The CyPRA committee agrees that any projects we embark upon should be for the particular

benefit of CyP rather than fulfilling judges' requirements so any comments/suggestions you have will be carefully considered. I hope we will be able to show our entry and feedback on the website shortly.

### News from the reservoir

Since the withdrawal of the planning application in the summer, Welsh Water seem to have been complying with the various conditions imposed on the use of the site and our concerns about the 'direction of travel' have been allayed. We understand that they recently met with Torfaen Council, Gwent Ornithological Society, Gwent Wildlife Trust and others. This was the report Lynn Perryman had from Steve Williams, Torfaen Ecology:

*DCWW has employed 2 new 'All Wales Biodiversity Officers to help DCWW meet its obligations under Section 6 of Environment (Wales) Act 2016. One of these officers, Rhodri Jones, attended the meeting at which various concerns were raised.*

*GOS / TORFAEN tabled a 'TOP FIVE' of positive actions they would like DCWW to undertake at the reservoir. These are:*

*The setting up of a 'wildlife conservation liaison group';*

*A programme of ecological monitoring to inform an updated Management Plan;*

*Reinstatement of ponds at north end;*

*New Osprey Pole; and*

*Replacement of the Tern raft.*

This seems to be a 'direction of travel' which most of us will welcome.

## Bug Count

Denise's Bug Count in the churchyard in May drew over 20 people ranging from youngsters <3 to slightly older ones >80! Valuable data was collected and fed back to 'OPAL' (Open Air Laboratories). It culminated in the building of a 'bug hotel' which I understand is at 'full occupancy'! Is it time to build a bigger, 5\* version – perhaps like the one at the reservoir?!

## Village barbecue

The annual barbecue was again at Sue & Graham's at the beginning of August but numbers were lower than previously (around 30). Nevertheless everyone had a good time and £506 (incl gift aid) was made for Christchurch funds. We will bring the date forward next year in the hope that it will suit more people.

## Village Christmas Dinner

42 neighbours enjoyed The Carpenters' Christmas menu on 11 Dec. As usual Matt & Mark and team produced a lovely meal and (to coin a phrase) 'a good time was had by all'. Denise organised a raffle with interesting prizes which raised about £150 for Residents Association funds.

## Village Website

David James has volunteered to run the village website so no doubt it will be more useful from now on! He will be able to show more photos and generate new pages so if you have any suggestions for useful information which could be there – just let us know! Take a peek – [www.coedypaen.net](http://www.coedypaen.net)

## Broadband update

Our wireless network is now fed from the fibre line running through the village and seems to be trouble-free! Our provider has plans to offer 'Fibre to The Premises', maybe starting work as early as February, through his new company 'Beacons Telecoms Ltd'. I have sent a detailed email to everyone on the Broadband group, but if you haven't received that and may be interested, just email me. Briefly, the service will be 100MBps<sup>-1</sup> and the monthly cost will vary from £12 (phone only) to £36 for unlimited data download (all subject to there being sufficient subscribers.

*Sue Rogers*

## CLiPs News

Two village litter picks were held this summer and about a dozen volunteers, plus dogs, turned out and cleared litter from the lanes leading in and out of Coed-y-Paen. On both occasions an orange bin bag full of rubbish, as well as another bin bag full of plastic bottles, drinks cans and other recyclable items was collected.

Many thanks to everyone who helped and here are the links to view Nick's photos

8<sup>th</sup> June 2019

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/cloudrive/share/eFBIx5U5Tt935SaCsA6fDHM4Mj5AW3qi2kZztohiF0>

17<sup>th</sup> August 2019

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/cloudrive/share/f8NqukpWH7y5jjA63MadU86P3pfD02SSzxP7m2QAYxG>

Due to the wet autumn and personal commitments, it hasn't been possible until now, to hold another village litter pick but weather permitting please come along and join us to clean up our local lanes before Christmas. Meet in Christchurch churchyard at 10.00am on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December.

*Val Clare*

## Hope and Homes for Children

HHC is a 25 year old Charity dedicated to closing orphanages and placing children in small family homes, working all round the world but particularly in Europe and Africa. The Usk Support Group has always had strong connections with the village and during 2019, the charity's 25th Anniversary year, fundraising events have included a Burns Night in January, an Afternoon Tea Party (both in CyP), a Quiz, a Spring Walk and Lunch, and a Christmas Walk and Lunch. Regular sales at Usk Car Boot Sales and the canteen at the Farmers Market are also excellent sources of funds and over £3000 has been raised during the year. More information on the charity can be found at [www.hopeandhomes.org](http://www.hopeandhomes.org)

*Jean Scarborough*  
(Secretary, South Wales Support Group)

## **Church News**

We do hope everyone will join us at our Carol Service this Christmas Eve when our Church is filled with family, friends and neighbours starting the village Christmas in a very special way. We feel that our Church is important to our community, the spiritual heart of our village and plays a valuable role in many of our lives in different ways.

In order to keep it open and maintain the building we have to carry out certain building work and repairs. We have a big project ahead of us which is a new roof. We have started the process to apply for a "Faculty" which is permission from the Governing body to replace the roof with a new one. We are extremely fortunate to have Clayton living in the village who has agreed to carry out this work for us at a very generous cost.

We will be looking for new ways to make use of the building and fund raising to sustain it for the future. I am sure no one would like to see a deteriorating building which could ultimately become a ruin in the centre of our village.

We look forward to a wonderful village Christmas and Happy and Healthy New Year for everyone. Please join us in not only restoring the building but supporting some new events which hopefully will be enjoyable and fun for us all. In this way you can all help us keep our Church open for everyone in the years to come.

*Cilla Davies*

## **Community Council News**

Not a great deal to report – firstly, just a reminder that the current recycling procedures we are having to follow are just a trial in selected areas of Monmouthshire, so it is important that we provide feedback in terms good and bad points of the system, before they decide whether to roll it out across the county. I am happy to collate any comments you may have and feed them back to Mon CC.

Secondly, after 7 years as chairman of Llanybi council, I have decided to step down. I will be continuing as a member for Coed-y-Paen.

*Graham Rogers*