



# COYCHURCH LOWER COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

Chairman: Councillor E. Caparros

Clerk: Ms M. Thomas

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Under the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the community council is required to produce a report showing how it is contributing to the wellbeing of current and future residents.

This document outlines the activities of the Coychurch Lower Community Council up to and including the financial year April 2025 to March 2026. The aim is to provide a summary of progress against the community council's objectives as well as details about council spend during the year 2025-2026.

## **BACKGROUND, April 2019 – March 2025**

The Community Council has been working on a plan to:

- improve the physical environment for residents;
- improve the access to opportunities for residents of all ages to exercise safely;
- comply with the community council's biodiversity obligations.

This falls into five main categories:

### 1. Village Presentation and Biodiversity

- a) 20 Lamppost planters are used along Main Road, Coychurch and 4 in Waterton Close, Waterton
- b) Two 5-tier planters were installed in 2021. One 3-tier and 3 round planters to compliment these were installed in St Mary's View and Glenwood Close
- c) The starter wildlife garden and a native hedge were planted in the play park. The hedge is becoming established and some management activity was carried out in 2025.

### 2. Activity / Exercise

The Coychurch Circular Walk was established, using local Right of Ways.  
The all-weather track/path was installed in the Community Field.

### 3. Play Park Refurbishment

The Community Asset Transfer for the play park is still on-going but while we wait we have an open ended lease for the play park which has enabled the community council to complete its 3-phase project funded by Welsh Government's Play Sufficiency Fund, Bridgend County Borough Council, the National Lottery "Awards for All" and Coychurch Lower Community Council residents through their council tax.

The ball court was replaced and new play equipment installed which is designed to stimulate children's imagination and encourage physical activity and for use by children with a variety of abilities. A new path around the ball court and repairs to the main footpath have reduced the risk of ice patches during the winter. The central picnic table has had its plank top and seats replaced.

### 4. Coychurch Community Field

The Community Asset Transfer of the field is in progress. Bridgend County Borough Council's Local Places for Nature team designed and proposed a landscape design for the

field aimed at improving biodiversity and managing the surface flood water. This plan was submitted for public consultation and supported by 84% of responders.

The ground plan included flood defence for the residents of Park View and several different wildlife habitats that over the years will become established and provide outdoor education opportunities for the local school.

The Local Places for Nature team completed the landscaping of the outer areas of the field and the installation of an all weather pathway with seating and picnic tables in December 2024. During that winter the flood defences included in the scheme were successful though some additional “tweaking” was identified in January 2025 to future proof the system.

Bridgend County Borough Council has removed the unusable pavilion. This has provided the opportunity for a larger car park which should help with the parking issues in Park View.

#### 5. Festive Lighting

We now have 8 electric festive lamppost displays for Main Road/Hawthorn Drive, Coychurch and annually hire solar powered Christmas trees for Waterton Close, Waterton because the lampposts there are not suitable for the heavier displays.

## **PROGRESS IN 2025 – 2026**

Much of the work this year has been to consolidate the procedures and actions now in place.

- **Village Presentation and Biodiversity**

This remains the largest budget item and during 2025-26. John and Idris Hanmer continued to use a low meadow standard in their grass cutting to encourage pollinators and low-growing wild flowers. This cut is to 7.5cm high and undertaken every three weeks.

The pots and lamppost planters throughout the village provided by Dean Martin from ADM Nurseries in Heol y Cuw were particularly attractive this year.

The beds were planted with lavender and spring bulbs in the autumn. This will reduce the need for spring and autumn planting in the coming years. Some plants were broken over the winter and will be replaced in the spring / summer 2026.

- **Play Park**

Regular visual inspections are carried out by the clerk and one of community councillors. The contractor also visits the site regularly. In this way we aim for early identification of any issues with the equipment/structures and address them in a timely fashion.

A number of the wooden parts needed repair/replacement in the play park this year. 2 cross beams were replaced under warranty. The powder-coated fittings were replaced with stainless steel and the zip wire needed new parts.

The annual RoSPA inspection of the play equipment in June 2025, carried out by an RPII qualified inspector from PlaySafety, indicated that all of the play equipment complies with the relevant safety regulations.

- **Coychurch Community Field**

There was a 2-year installation and maintenance contract in place, paid for by Bridgend County Borough Council, to ensure the planting had the best chance of becoming established.

During 2025 and the spring of 2026 it has been rewarding to see so many more people of all ages (adults, families, children) and abilities using the field as well as a children’s football club using the central grassed area.

The Community Council submitted an application for match funding for outdoor fitness equipment, bicycle racks, and further picnic tables to Bridgend County Borough Council. This was agreed during 2025 and the exercise equipment will be installed in the summer of 2026.

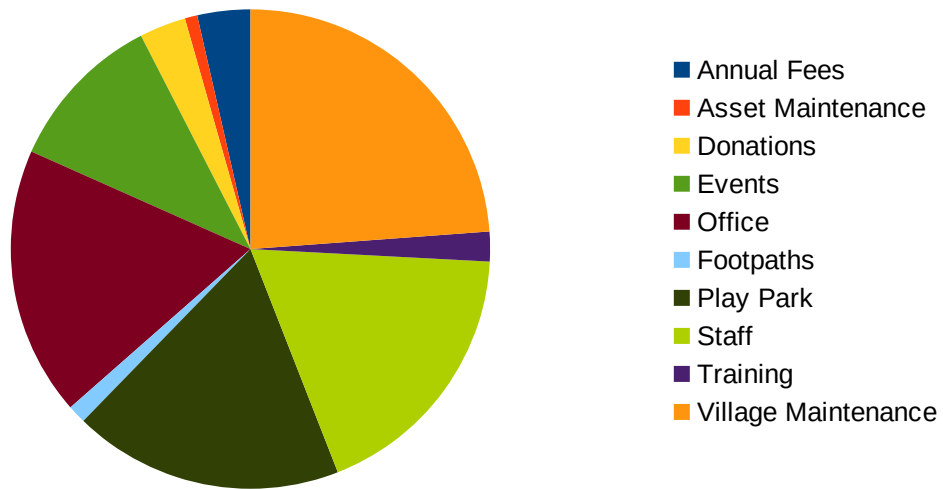
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## WHERE DOES YOUR MONEY GO?

The precept for 2025-26 was £42,620. The revenue spend was £34,456. The pie graph shows the proportion of the money spent by category.

### COYCHURCH LOWER COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Area of Spend as a Proportion of Total Expenditure 2025-26



### ***What is included in each category of spend?***

*(Residents are welcome to view the detailed accounts as part of exercising their electoral rights during July 2026 – see the website [www.coychurchlower-cc.gov.uk](http://www.coychurchlower-cc.gov.uk) or the village noticeboard for details during June).*

### **SPENDING CATEGORIES**

Village Presentation (24%) includes:

- Twice yearly planting of: 3 flower beds on Main Road (lavender planted in the autumn this year), two 5-tier planters (Main Road and Dyffryn Close), one 3-tier planter (St Mary’s View), 3 large round plant pots (Glenwood Close), 4 rectangular planters (Manor Drive).

- b) Planting, installing 20 lamppost planters in Coychurch village and in 4 Waterton Close
- c) Watering of planters and pots during the season
- d) 3-weekly grass cutting in the village and play park
- e) Weed spraying in the play park and along the public footpaths/Right of Ways within the village

Office (18%) costs include hire of storage space, office and the purchase of consumables.

Staff (18%) costs include the clerk's salary and PAYE.

Play Park (18%) includes ground, boundaries and equipment maintenance costs as well as the cost of emptying the litter bins and disposing of the rubbish.

Events (11%) includes hire of solar powered Christmas trees for Waterton Close, and the supply, installation, removal and storage of the electrical displays used on Hawthorn Drive and Main Road.

Annual Fees (4%) includes council employee and public liability insurance, council membership of One Voice Wales, clerk's membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks, and the Information Commissioner's Office registration.

Donations (3%) are small grants to local community organisations. In 2025–2026 to St Crallo's Church to assist with graveyard maintenance (a ROW passes through the graveyard) and the cost of the external lighting of the church; and to the Memorial Hall Coychurch Trust to support the annual Santa's Grotto at the Williams Memorial Hall.

Training and Development (2%) online courses for councillors and clerk

ROW/Public Footpaths (1%) includes clearance of the right of ways within Coychurch village.

The remaining funds from the precept for 2025-2026 have been added to a general reserve fund and to allocated reserve funds being accumulated for future projects or unexpected costs.

The specific allocated reserve funds going into the 2026-2027 year are for:

- Election Costs - £750
- Play Park Maintenance/Replacements - £12,250
- Coychurch Community Field development - £45,000
- Defibrillators - £800

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## **APRIL 2026 ONWARDS**

Contributions / ideas from residents as to where the community council should focus their activity in the coming year will be welcome.

### **Village environment / Biodiversity**

We have planted lavender, a pollinator friendly plant, in the beds in the village and are looking at the types of plants to be used in the planters and pots around the village. Native and pollinator plants will be preferred so if residents have any favourites let the clerk know and they will be considered.

### **Community Field and Pavilion**

Completion of the Community Asset Transfer for community field will be a priority this year. The maintenance of the Local Place for Nature will pass to the community council in April 2026. Maintenance/grass cutting equipment for the central area will be purchased/leased/shared as appropriate as soon as the Community Asset Transfer is completed. We will be seeking volunteers to join a "Friends of Coychurch Community Field" group during the year.

### **Play Park**

After several setbacks, the Community Asset Transfer of the Play Park will be completed. The usual maintenance of the equipment and the grounds will continue and there will be some trimming/maintenance of the native hedge.

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## **IN CONCLUSION**

The community council will continue to work for the residents in the Coychurch Lower ward and support the Williams Memorial Hall (as its sole trustee) as a venue for local groups for people of all ages and abilities to meet for recreation, socialisation, exercise, health improvement and education. The trustee's plans for improvements to the building have been posted on the Hall's social media page, <https://www.facebook.com/MemorialHallCoychurch>

Over the next few years the council's focus will be on the development of the Coychurch Nature and Leisure Park, building on the Local Places for Nature project, with extra litter and dog waste bins, more picnic tables and, if funding is obtained, a new community building.

The council welcomes any proposals from residents for community projects for the future.

Please contact the Clerk with any suggestions you may have:

email: [clerk@coychurchlower-cc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@coychurchlower-cc.gov.uk)

or use the contact page on our website: [www.coychurchlower-cc.gov.uk](http://www.coychurchlower-cc.gov.uk)

or by phone on: 07549 019798