



**St Brides Major  
Community Council**



David Jones

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **2024-25**

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# CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME

**Welcome to the second annual report of St Brides Major Community Council.**

Last year's annual report was not only well received by residents it also won a high commendation from One Voice Wales at their 2025 conference!

I have been a Community Councillor representing Ogmore by Sea since 2017. I am privileged to be the Chair of St Brides Major Community Council for 2025/26.

During the forthcoming year I hope to focus on the following three areas, which many residents have raised as issues for them:

- A sustainable and reliable 303 bus service.
- Increased enforcement of the bylaws in our community.
- Initiation of the Community Councils Biodiversity Plan.

With financial support from the Community Council, Wi-Fi has been installed in All Saints Church. This now allows resident to join the monthly virtually as well as in person. Details to join the meetings will be published on our website: [www.stbridesmajor-cc.gov.uk](http://www.stbridesmajor-cc.gov.uk).

Our report is published slightly later this year than previously. This is due to the additional financial work required of us by Audit Wales following the removal of our long standing Clerk in early 2024. The Community Councillors are extremely grateful for the support shown to them during this challenging time, particularly Audit Wales.

I hope by reading about the work of the Community Council during 2024 – 2025 you will feel encouraged and consider attending our meetings, or supporting our initiatives in other ways.

**Heidi Morris**  
Chairperson

# ABOUT THE COUNCIL

St. Brides Major Community Council (the Council/Ward) currently covers the areas of St Brides Major, Castle Upon Alun, Southerndown and Ogmore By Sea. It is a semi-rural coastal community which proves popular with tourists in the summer months and walkers all year round. It is the western limit of the Vale of Glamorgan Heritage Coast.

Representing our 1,504 household electors, there are 5 councillors for the Ogmore by Sea ward and 6 covering St. Brides Major, Southerndown and Castle upon Alun. Their details are shown on page 5 and on our website. Councillors undertake a voluntary role with reimbursement for expenses of £156 pa. The council meets on the second Monday of the month with meetings being held in All Saints Church, Southerndown at 7pm where press and public are invited to attend.

Following a review by The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales there is currently a proposal before Welsh Government is to create a new community of Ewenny and St Brides Major. A total of 13 Councillors is proposed for this new Community Council with three from Ewenny, six from Ogmore by Sea and four from St Brides-Major.



Detailed functions of a community council are set out in the Local Government Act (1972) and associated legislation. For our Council this includes the burial ground, open spaces, seats, shelters, and footpaths. Under the **Local Government Act 2000** (as amended by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011), community councils have power to do anything they consider is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being, social well-being or environmental well-being of their area. An example agenda is shown on page 4.

Importantly Community Councils are independent bodies accountable to their electorate and responsible for their own duties and functions. Within the Council Tax of each home in the Ward this year £23.00 per household funds the Community Council and its functions. The relationship between the Welsh Government and Community Councils is one of support and guidance, rather than direct control. Community Councils are not directly accountable to the Welsh Government.



# THE COUNCIL MEETING

Councillors are appointed at the annual general meeting in May to individual positions such as Quarry Liaison, and to working groups – Finance and Governance, Biodiversity, Burial Ground and Personnel. Working groups meet quarterly and report into Council meetings.

## **St Brides Major Community Council Notice of Meeting**

A meeting of the council will be held on (date) at All Saints Church,  
Southerndown.

The public are invited to attend.

### **Agenda**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1. Apologies</b>                         | <b>8.1 Financial Report</b>                                      |
| <b>2. Declarations of Interest</b>          | <b>8.2 Budget Review</b>   |
| <b>3. Police Matters</b>                    | <b>8.3 Approval of Payments</b>                                  |
| <b>4. Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>       | <b>8.4 Finance Working Group:<br/>Update on Audit Wales Work</b> |
| <b>5. Matters Arising</b>                   | <b>9. Grant Projects</b>   |
| <b>5.1 Sports Pavillion</b>                 | <b>10. Website</b>   |
| <b>5.2 Annual Report</b>                    | <b>11. Burial Ground</b>   |
| <b>5.3 VOGC Removal of Rubbish<br/>Bins</b> | <b>11.1 Ground Maintenance</b>                                   |
| <b>5.4 Bus Shelter Maintenance</b>          | <b>12. Biodiversity &amp; Environment</b>                        |
| <b>6. Correspondence</b>                    | <b>12.1 River Quality</b>  |
| <b>6.1 Correspondence received</b>          | <b>13. Reports from Members</b>                                  |
| <b>7. Planning</b>                          | <b>13.1 Southerndown</b>   |
| <b>7.1 Applications Received</b>            | <b>13.2 Ogmores by Sea</b>                                       |
| <b>7.2 Applications Determined</b>          | <b>13.3 St Brides Major</b>                                      |
| <b>8. Finance</b>                           | <b>14. Date of Next Meeting</b>                                  |

# YOUR COUNCILLORS

## **Heidi Morris (Ogmore by Sea), Chair 2025-6**

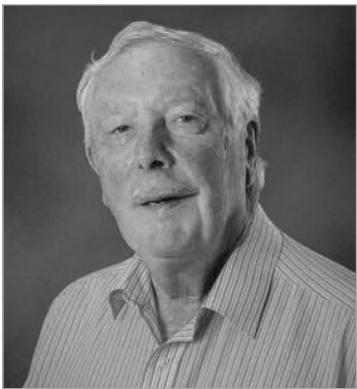
I have lived in Ogmore by Sea since 2013 and a Community Councillor since September 2017. One of my main reasons for becoming a Community Councillor is the importance of developing a community which has a strong sense of belonging and support each other. Living in such a beautiful part of Wales, it is important to look after our environment and keep it safe for future generations.



## **Stewart Edwards (St Brides Major), Vice Chair 2025-6**

I joined Community Council in 2022 after standing down as Ward Councillor for 5 years. I have lived in St Brides Major for 40 years, my three children all went to the school in the village and my wife Angela, and I have voluntarily looked after the Sports Pavilion for the last 8 years!





### **Ron Eccles (St Brides Major)**

My wife Khawla and I lived and worked in Cardiff for some 40 years, myself at Cardiff University and my wife at Cardiff Metropolitan University. We started to live in Ogmore by Sea when we retired, to be near our son and his family who live in Ogmore by Sea and our daughter and family who live in Bridgend. I served as a Community Councillor and Chairman for many years in Radyr and Morganstown Cardiff, and I was pleased to join St Brides Major Community Council in 2025. I am very interested in preserving and enhancing our natural environment and I am a member of the biodiversity group on the council.

### **Allan Morgan (St Brides Major)**

I have lived in the community all my life, originally in Heol y Mynydd and now in St Brides Major with my wife Jeannine and our daughter. I work for an agricultural machinery dealer in Llandow. In my spare time I enjoy supporting the Cardiff Devils ice hockey team and playing darts for the Three Golden Cups team. I first became a Community Councillor in 2008, although I had a short spell of the council between 2016 and 2018. I have been Chair of the Council on two occasions.



### **Sharon Evans (St Brides Major), Biodiversity lead**

I joined the Community Council in 2022. I am a happily retired hospital consultant and have lived in Southerndown for 25 years. Before that, I lived in St Brides Major for 10 years where our two children attended the primary school. I am keen to promote biodiversity awareness, recycling, reduction of waste and litter, and cleaner air. I'm kept busy volunteering in the 3rd sector. I enjoy hiking, playing the piano, visiting gardens, travelling and reading (geopolitics, ancient history and historical novels).

### **Martin Howells (St Brides Major)**

I joined the Community Council in 2024. I have lived in Ogmore by Sea for 12 years and previously St Brides Major for 19 years with my wife Tina and my two children Jemma and Adam. My children went to the St Brides Major Church in Wales Primary school where I was a school governor. I have worked in my insurance business for 25 years before retiring this year and now I am the Ogmore Hall Manager, and a voluntary Keep Wales Tidy litter picking champion. I have a keen interest in our environment and local areas. I enjoy mountaineering, local walking and holiday breaks in our campervan with our dog Ruben.



### **Barry Lewis (St Brides Major), Finance lead**

I have lived in St Brides Major for 30 years, having moved from the Isle of Wight with my wife Sue and two sons, Mark and David. For 24 years I worked at Spectrum Technologies in Bridgend, initially as a Systems Engineer and finally as a Product Manager before retiring in 2016. In 2007 our son, Mark, became the Landlord of the Fox and Hounds, something that we as a family enjoyed and all contributed to. In 2017 I joined the Community Council with a present focus on ensuring that the Sports Pavilion and Field comes under the ownership of the local community. I am an avid golfer and have served on the Board at Coed y Mwstwr Golf Club since 1998.

### **Rhodri Stephens (St Brides Major)**

I am from a local family whose ancestry can be traced back in the St Brides Major area for generations. I have been a Community Councillor for over 10 years and take a keen interest in voluntary work for the upkeep of the surrounding areas.





**Angela Parry (Ogmore by Sea), Personnel lead**

Married to a Welshman, we moved to this area on retirement from the NHS in England where we had both worked for nearly 40 years. I have returned to work twice, most recently during the pandemic. I became a Community Councillor in 2018, keen to understand more about our local rural community and how it can be maintained and enhanced. I became a School Governor at St Brides Major Church in Wales Primary School in 2024.

I undertake a range of other voluntary roles and enjoy playing golf and participating in our local river clean up activities.

**Adrian James (St Brides Major), Burial Ground lead**

I have been a Councillor since 2008 and have lived in the St Brides Major since 1962, virtually all my life. I am an ex-Royal Navy submariner serving on ballistic missile submarines in the engineering dept, having completed the Nuclear Engineering course and as a ship's diver. I joined Ford Motor Co Bridgend Engine plant in 1980 and worked there in



various positions including the chemical and metallurgical labs and ending in the Engine laboratory. I retired in 2014. I have a degree in Environmental development awarded from the Open University. I have a keen interest in environmental matters from a practical point of view. In other words, what can be achieved at a small community level. I am currently the lead Councillor for the church yard which is the responsibility of the Community Council, covering maintenance and the allocation of grave spaces. I deal directly with the undertakers. My hobbies include boating, I have a motor cruiser in Neyland Pembrokeshire and spend as much time as I can cruising out of the Milford Haven waterway.

# THE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM



I'm Jamie Williamson, your local Community Police Officer. I work closely with PCSO Angela Stone, your Police Community Support Officer. We both work from Llantwit Major Emergency Services Station and provide a visible presence in our communities from day to day. We do everything, from answering Emergency calls and executing Search Warrants, to carrying out targeted patrols and calling into local schools. We are assisted by teams of 'Response Officers', who work out of Barry Police Station. They also answer Emergency, and more Routine calls in the Rural Vale of Glamorgan.

As you probably know, South Wales Police has many Specialist Departments that support front line Officers like us. The most visible of these teams and the Officer's you're most likely to see out and about, are from the Roads Policing Department, or the Territorial Support Group. The Roads Policing Department are regulars in our Wards, dealing with Road Traffic Collisions and carrying out routine and targeted traffic stops. The Territorial Support Groups assist front line Officers with searches, some more serious Public Order Incidents and in making quick entries to buildings, using a wide array of specialist equipment.

Angela and I are committed to maintaining a regular Policing presence in our more rural area, despite the natural draw to busier areas like Penarth and Barry.



Can I take this opportunity to bring to your attention a 'Go Safe' initiative called, 'OPERATION SNAP. Operation SNAP is a response to increasing submissions of video and photographic evidence relating to driving offences that members of the public have witnessed. Until now, these reports have been submitted to the police in all sorts of ways and so a streamlined process has now been developed to deal with them. This will hopefully make it easier for all involved. Should you wish to report such an incident, please visit <https://gosafesnap.wales>. Just fill in your details and upload your footage.

Please continue to use the 999 number in an Emergency, and the 101 facility for Non Urgent calls. (101 reports can be made either on the phone, or online via the South Wales Police website). Alternatively please feel free to ring or email me.

✉ **PC 239 Jamie Williamson**  
Llantwit Major Police Station  
Llanmaes Road  
Llantwit Major  
CF61 2XD

☎ 07584 771110

✉ [jamie.williamson@south-wales.police.uk](mailto:jamie.williamson@south-wales.police.uk)



# FINANCE

AND THE

# ANNUAL ACCOUNT

SUMMARY

The main source of funding for Community Councils are the funds raised through the Precept (a charge) to council tax under section 41 of the **Local Government Finance Act 1992**. A community council must calculate its budget requirement for a financial year in accordance with section 50 of that Act and issue a precept to the billing authority (Vale of Glamorgan). This is paid in three instalments: April, August and December. Our 2024 - 2025 accounts are shown on the next page.

As previously reported last year, towards the end of 2023/4 financial year, the Council was contacted by Audit Wales regarding the non-submission of required documents since 2020 by our then Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO). Rather than participate in an investigation our longstanding Clerk and RFO chose to resign. Councillors, particularly Cllr. Barry Lewis have worked tirelessly hard to provide necessary evidence to Audit Wales. As a result of the information provided the charge levied to the Council, once quoted as £7000.00 was reduced to £2656.00. A delayed submission for the 2024 / 25 accounts was agreed with Audit Wales. This was due to the resignation, for personal reasons, of our Clerk Mr Ian Hughes. Mr Hughes was in post from October 2024 until April 2025.

Following a rigorous recruitment process in the early autumn an appointment to the role of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer ( RFO) to the Council was made. Regrettably following a short period in post the successful applicant resigned. This has proven to be a challenging post to fill due to the issues revealed following the resignation of the long standing Clerk in early 2024 combined with the forthcoming merger with Ewenny Community Council. The Council are in discussion with both One Voice Wales and our Vale Councillors to see how best to move forward.

All Councillors undergo financial training provided by One Voice Wales (OVW), the principal organisation for community and town councils in Wales. They also submit an annual declaration of interest form (available to view on our website) and any updates to these are noted at the start of each meeting.

# Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

## Accounting statement 2024-25 for:

Name of body: **St. Brides Major Community Council**

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 (£)	31 March 2025 (£)	
<p>Please round all figures to nearest £. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or nil balances. All figures must agree to the underlying financial records for the relevant year.</p>			
<b>Statement of income and expenditure/receipts and payments</b>			
1. Balances brought forward	40,112	30,561	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Must agree to line 7 of the previous year.
2. (+) Income from local taxation/levy	22944	26,640	Total amount of income received/receivable in the year from local taxation (precept) or levy/contribution from principal bodies.
3. (+) Total other receipts	2847	5,240	Total income or receipts recorded in the cashbook minus amounts included in line 2. Includes support, discretionary and revenue grants.
4. (-) Staff costs	5313	5714	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, taxable allowances, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and termination costs. Exclude reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on external borrowing (if any).
6. (-) Total other payments	30029	29,192	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook minus staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	30561	27,535	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6).
<b>Statement of balances</b>			
8. (+) Debtors	0	0	<b>Income and expenditure accounts only:</b> Enter the value of debts owed to the body at the year-end.
9. (+) Total cash and investments	30561	27,535	<b>All accounts:</b> The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and investments held at 31 March. This must agree with the reconciled cashbook balance as per the bank reconciliation.
10. (-) Creditors	0	0	<b>Income and expenditure accounts only:</b> Enter the value of monies owed by the body (except borrowing) at the year-end.
11. (=) Balances carried forward	30,561	27,535	<b>Total balances should equal line 7 above:</b> Enter the total of (8+9-10).
12. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	0	14803	The asset and investment register value of all fixed assets and any other long-term assets held as at 31 March.
13. Total borrowing	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

# Annual Governance Statement

We acknowledge as the members of the Council, our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed?		'YES' means that the Council:	Toolkit
	Yes	No*		
1. In consultation with the community, we have developed a vision and purpose for the Council and used this vision to inform the Council's plans, budget and activities.	YES		Has consulted with the community and focussed its activities to meet the community's needs	A, C
2. We have adopted a Code of Conduct for members and officers and implemented an appropriate training plan for members to ensure all councillors understand their role and responsibilities.	YES		Ensures that councillors understand and are equipped to deliver their roles and responsibilities.	B
3. We have ensured that we electronically publish the information the Council is required to publish by law, on its website at www.stbridesmajor-cc.gov.uk	YES		Is transparent about its activities and provides the public with all information required by law	A, C, D, E
4. We have taken all reasonable steps to ensure that the Council complies with relevant laws and regulations when exercising its functions, including employment of staff and payment of allowances to members.	YES		Has only done things that it has the legal power to do and has conformed to codes of practice and standards in the way it does so	
5. We have adopted standing orders, financial regulations and terms of reference and ensure that these are followed when conducting business including functions delegated to committees.	YES		Has adopted rules and procedures to govern how the Council conducts its business including procurement of goods and services.	B, E
6. We have put in place arrangements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective financial management including the setting and monitoring of the Council's budget</li> <li>Maintenance and security of accurate and up to date accounting and other financial records</li> <li>Identifying potential liabilities, commitments, events and transactions that may have a financial impact on the Council.</li> </ul>	YES		Calculated its budget requirement in accordance with the law and properly monitors its financial position throughout the year	D
7. We have maintained an adequate system of internal control and management of risk, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption including clearly documented procedures for authorising and making payments</li> <li>assessment and management of risks facing the Council</li> <li>an adequate and effective system of internal audit and reviewed the effectiveness of these arrangements.</li> </ul>	YES		Made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge including arranging for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether these meet the needs of the body.	D, E
8. We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in previous reports from internal and external audit.	YES		Considered and taken appropriate action to address weaknesses /issues brought to its attention by internal and external auditors.	D, E
9. We have provided proper opportunity for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.	YES		Has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect the body's accounts as set out in the notice of audit issued by the Auditor General.	E
10. <b>General power of Competence</b> – The Council has resolved to adopt the General Power of Competence set out in Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021		* NO	Meets the eligibility criteria to exercise the general Power of Competence	E

\* Please include an explanation for any 'No' answers

*A.A. Morris 6/11/25  
\* Criteria not met. Brewin 6/11/25*

## Additional disclosure notes

Include here any additional disclosures the Council considers necessary to aid the reader's understanding of the accounting statement and/or the annual governance statement

The following information is provided to assist the reader to understand the accounting statement and/or the Annual Governance Statement

### 1. Expenditure under S137 Local Government Act 1972

Section 137(1) of the 1972 Act permits the Council to spend on activities for which it has no other specific powers if the Council considers that the expenditure is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, the area or any part of it, or all or some of its inhabitants, providing that the benefit is commensurate with the expenditure. Section 137(3) also permits the Council to incur expenditure for certain charitable and other purposes. The maximum expenditure that can be incurred under both section 137(1) and (3) for the financial year 2024-25 was £10.81 per elector.

In 2024-25, the Council made payments totalling £7877 under section 137. These payments are included within 'Other payments' in the Accounting Statement.

### 2.

In April 2024 the Community Council approved donation payments to:-

The Local Nursery School to ensure that the Nursery remained open until the end of term. (£1000)

The Local TAFFS group, namely Trees and Flowers for Southerndown, (£64.95)

The Community Council continued to release funds( £6312) to the local groups successful in gaining the 23/24 grants.

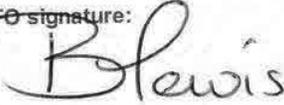
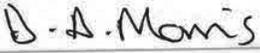
In their audit of our Annual Return for the comparative period to 31 March 2024, Wales Audit identified several lines in that year which needed amending. Accordingly the following lines have been amended in the comparative year (2024) in this Annual return: line 2 £22,944 (was £30,530), line 3 £2,847 (was £8,262), line 4 £5313 (was £4,228), line 6 £30029 (was £44,115).

## Trust Funds

Trust funds – The Council acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing trust fund(s)/assets. We exclude transactions related to these trusts from the Accounting Statement. In our capacity as trustee, we have discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s) including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A	Has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.
			✓	

## Council approval and certification

The Council is responsible for the preparation of the accounting statements and the annual governance statement in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the Act) and the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.

<b>Certification by the RFO</b> I certify that the accounting statements contained in this Annual Return present fairly the financial position of the Council, and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be, for the year ended 31 March 2025.	<b>Approval by the Council</b> I confirm that these accounting statements and Annual Governance Statement were approved by the Council under minute reference:
	<b>Minute ref:</b>
<b>RFO signature:</b> 	<b>Chair signature:</b> 
<b>Name:</b> Barry Lewis	<b>Name:</b> Heidi Morris
<b>Date:</b> 5 September 2025	<b>Date:</b> 8/9/2025

\* Please include an explanation for any 'No' answers

## Annual internal audit report to:

Name of body: **St Brides Major Community Council**

The Council's internal audit, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, has included carrying out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ending 31 March 2025.

The internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the Council's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the following control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council.

	Agreed?				Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body)
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**	
1. Appropriate books of account have been properly kept throughout the year.	x				Reviewed and tested I&E summary discussed variances with Cllr Lewis.
2. Financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	x				Financial regulations need updating. A sample of items from the income and expenditure summary tracked to supporting documents. VAT was reclaimed in the year under VAT126 related to 23/24, a claim relating to 24/25 is outstanding
3. The body assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.		x			No formal risk register exists. Risks managed as they arise, this review should be formalised.
4. The annual precept/levy/resource demand requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored, and reserves were appropriate.	x				The budget was approved on a timely basis and the precept received matches the VoG announcement.
5. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	x				Income received matches the bank reconciliation, the council plans to overhaul the burial fees process to ensure all fees are invoiced. No output VAT is due.
6. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			x		Petty cash is not used.
7. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with contracts/ minuted approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.				x	No clerk at start or end of year, 2 short payroll periods checked to P60's. Payroll operated by external bureau DWA. Remuneration Committee minutes not reviewed. Queried status of allowances paid to councillors.
8. Asset and investment registers were complete, accurate, and properly maintained.		x			An asset register has been prepared but needs to be developed to match insurance & risk registers.

\* Please include an explanation for any 'No' answers

	Agreed?				Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body)
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**	
9. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	x				Reviewed sample of monthly bank reconciliations. Checked to opening and closing year end bank statements.
10. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments/income and expenditure), agreed with the cashbook, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate, debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	x				Checked calculations of movements across the year reconcile to bank statements above. No debtors or creditors recorded
11. Trust funds (including charitable trusts). The Council has met its responsibilities as a trustee.			x		The council does not operate any trust funds

For any risk areas identified by the Council (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed) adequate controls existed:

	Agreed?				Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body)
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**	
12.			x		No additional work areas identified.
13.					
14.					

\* If the response is 'no', please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\* If the response is 'not covered', please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or if coverage is not required, internal audit must explain why not.

My detailed findings and recommendations which I draw to the attention of the Council are included in my detailed report to the Council dated 5 September 2025.

### Internal audit confirmation

I/we confirm that as the Council's internal auditor, I/we have not been involved in a management or administrative role within the body (including preparation of the accounts) or as a member of the body during the financial years 2024-25 and 2025-26. I also confirm that there are no conflicts of interest surrounding my appointment.

Name of person who carried out the internal audit:	James Wynne
Signature of person who carried out the internal audit:	
Date:	05 September 2025

\* Please include an explanation for any 'No' answers

## Recommendations from Internal Auditor

Our internal auditor made both recommendations and suggestions. These are listed below. As a Council we have turned these into an action plan and begun work. An update on this will be available on our website with final reporting in the 2025/26 report. We would like to extend our grateful thanks to Mr James Wynne for his help, guidance and support.

1	As the Council are aware, these accounts and internal audit are late, and both this and last year's internal audits were completed after the year end. Recommend that the process of selecting and starting work on the internal audit for 2025/26 starts as soon as possible so that the internal audit is completed before the end of the year and the year-end accounting process can be completed on time.
2	Website appears to need significant updating – almost all pages contain old information. Note also that the Transparency code requires councils to publish Council Meeting minutes within a month of the meeting (last minutes posted on St Brides website were for 1 March '25). Section 151 of the Local Government Measure 2011 requires the council to publish a statement of payments made to members & submit this to Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru, this document should be made available on the website.
3	The council address on Google is: "31 Ty Gwyn Dr, Brackla, Bridgend CF31 2QF" – does this need updating?
4	Councillor allowances are taxable unless within HMRC exemptions, payments to councillors should be reviewed to ensure that they are compliant with HMRC guidance (eg. EIM65970).
5	The process for recovering VAT using a VAT126 was introduced during the year, a further £800 claim has been prepared for 24/25 which will be claimed in 25/26 and further claims going back 4 years may be possible.
6	The financial regulations appear to be old and should be reviewed at least every 4 years. Given the processes around banking, petty cash, the lack of detail on burial fees and the imminent introduction of Scribe Accounts, these regulations need updating.

7	The council is required to maintain and annually review a register of financial and other risks and this document should be included on the website.
8	The insurance policy shows significantly more property holding than the asset register, recommend that the asset register is developed further to link in with the insurance and risk registers.
9	Adopting Scribe Accounts is a welcome development, I recommend attaching scanned in copies of all purchase invoices & any other evidence (with approval) to Scribe to assist with the scrutiny of expenditure through the year
10	Reviewing the approval of invoices, council minutes & other documentation was not easy, recommend that all minutes as published are clearly marked as "final" or signed and there is an indication on invoices (or the Scribe record) that these invoices were approved or the date of approval.
11	Approved expenditure is not shown in the minutes, instead an appendix is referred to which is not attached. Recommend that the full list of approved payments is noted in all minutes.
12	The system for billing and calculating burial fees is not clear and potentially risks a loss of income, the I welcome the plan to bring in Scribe Accounts to help manage this income and a clear process for the control of burial income needs to be written and added in to section 9 of the financial regulations.
13	The system for billing and calculating burial fees is not clear and potentially risks a loss of income, the I welcome the plan to bring in Scribe Accounts to help manage this income and a clear process for the control of burial income needs to be written and added in to section 9 of the financial regulations.
14	Having only two signatories at the bank is potentially risky and exposes the council to the possibility of being unable to make payments, a minimum of three and ideally four bank signatories should be in place to cover eventualities.
15	On a minor note, interest earned on the Council reserves is low at Barclays, this could be improved by using other banks, although the work involved in making this switch may outweigh the benefits in the short term.

# BIODIVERSITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

We are privileged to live in an area with several sites of special scientific interest with varied habitats - coastal, marine, woodland, grasslands, rivers, calcareous heath and enclosed farmland all supporting rich biodiversity. The Council are advised by local experts and are in partnership with local and county wide groups such as TAFFS, Butterfly Conservation Wales, and the Vale Nature Partnership. We have now published our Biodiversity Plan on our website, mandated in Section 6 (Biodiversity and Ecosystems Resilience Duty) of the 2016 Environmental Wales Act.

We continue to pursue our interest in the monitoring of bathing water quality and actively support the Ogmore river clean led by 'A Peace for Nature'. The picture below shows the estuary and the diggers at work during the recent clean in May 2025.

We support community litter picking to enhance our environment and protect wildlife and have a litter picking hub in each of the three villages.



Ogmore river clean 2025

We have supported the High brown fritillary project and are delighted to see these butterflies emerge this year in their unique habitat. Areas throughout the three villages and within the burial ground have not been mowed or strimmed to encourage and support wildlife. These actions are great opportunities to engage with and inform our community whilst providing an ethos of duty of care for our environment.



**Male fritillary spotted by a volunteer on 26/05/2025**

We have made a commitment to commence conversations regarding the restoration of the Pitcot pool “Pwll y Mer” in St Brides Major in the coming year. We will be working with the Vale of Glamorgan ecologists, environmentalists and independent experts in freshwater conservation for this ambitious and costly task.

If you would like to get involved with us on any of these important initiatives, please do get in touch.

# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

## THE CHURCH WARDENS

Community councils were established under the Local Government Act 1972 (LGA 1972) and replaced the previous system of parish councils. Responsibility for the Burial ground at St Bridget's Church and all War memorials in the ward remain a key responsibility of St Brides Major Community Council.

Whilst the Council is not responsible for Church buildings or the ministry, this year we have provided some financial support to two churches in our ward.

All Saints in Southerndown and St Bridget's in St Brides Major are two of the twelve churches that make up the Ministry Area of The Glamorgan Heritage Coast. The two churches are supported by three churchwardens and a local church committee with the majority of our



**St. Bridget's St. Brides Major**  
Joy Newton  
07977 701713

services taken by the Reverend Emma Street who resides, with her family, in the vicarage in St. Brides Major.

The churchwardens' role is to manage the day to day running of the church and to support the clergy as they travel around the Ministry Area to undertake baptisms, weddings, funerals and regular services of worship and they are the local point of contact. Despite ever increasing maintenance costs and reduction in congregation size we are trying to keep our churches going so that we can pass on our

places of worship to future generations.

In addition to this ongoing challenge another extremely costly problem has arisen. You may have noticed that the bells in St. Bridget's have not been rung for some time. This is because the dilapidation of the bell tower renders it unsafe and discussions are currently taking place to find ways to raise the money needed to either just make it safe (£60,000) or bring the bell tower back into full use (£100,000).



**St. Bridget's St. Brides Major**  
Angela Edwards  
07794 386288

The churchwardens are here to help you in any way we can, but we need your help too. Please continue to support YOUR local churches. Remember its 'Use Them or Lose Them'.



# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

## JOHN DAVIES



An annual report is an opportunity to highlight the work of individuals who contribute to, and provide a boost for, our community and for whom the Council has provided support.

John Davies is the person many residents will have seen but may not know.

You will see him in the early mornings doing extraordinary voluntary work for the benefit of the community at the Ogmore Hall.

Since 2023, John has been landscaping, gardening, and maintaining the grounds around the Ogmore Hall particularly “The Community Bank ” where he has created a wonderful display of flowers, shrubs and fruit trees which have all been donated by residents.

His hard work and gardening knowledge has been a source of inspiration to the residents and he happy to give plenty of advice on what grows well in the Ogmore by Sea which is invaluable.

The Community Council contributed to a new store that has been built at the hall which is now being used by several groups including John and his helpers. Crowd funding has provided a green-house and more.

John, your work is greatly appreciated.

# SMALL GRANTS PROJECTS

## FINAL REPORTS

The Community Council regularly provides donations to support local groups. As reported last year the Council provided competitive funding for five projects that aimed to benefit the life and wellbeing of residents. The funding for this has now completed and shown below are the final reports from each project submitted by the project leads.

### Ogmore by Sea art project: Ken Rogers

Further to receipt of funding for the village Community Art Group at Ogmore by Sea at the end of 2023, the Art Group was formed at the end of 2023, and we started to meet regularly from the start of 2024. The initial aim was to meet at the Village Hall, and this has continued throughout 2024 and into 2025. By July this year the group have been meeting regularly for 18 months.

#### Aims

The group was formed in a volunteering capacity to promote leisure art activities (painting or other media) for adults in the village. The purpose being to enjoy the sessions, have regular meetings of likeminded people to foster wellbeing and have fun through creativity. The above still is true, the art undertaken varies and it's all in an atmosphere of enjoyment and being creative whatever your ability is.

From our grant application in 2023 we gave the following itemised aims, with our judged outcomes (from discussion with attendees) noted on the right hand side:

To promote wellbeing, confidence, and self-esteem of the participants.	Yes
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Reach as many likeminded people as possible in the village to have enjoyment and togetherness.	All newcomers welcome
Promote the sense of community.	Yes
To have a sustainable art group, to create and have fun in doing so.	Yes
To meet in the village hall as a central location (with good access and welfare facilities), with a place of warmth during the winter months.	Continuing with this arrangement
Be a group open to all abilities.	Yes
Spending funds within the village, by using the village Hall.	Yes
Have collaborative art across the Vale to share ideas with other likeminded groups, such as by participation through showing of art; exhibitions at village shows etc.	The Group had its first Exhibition in Oct 2024 and was well received. The Group is having its second Art Exhibition in the Village Hall on Sunday 13th July.
To record activities on social media to encourage other local residence to join in.	There are regular postings of wonderful art produced.

### Presently

We are now self-funding, and it is predicted that this arrangement will continue into the near future. However, should any council funds become available in the future please advise us.

## Southerndown Community Golf Croquet Club: Bev Guilford / Neil Smurthwaite

### Introduction

This Update Report is written at the request of the St Brides Major Community Council, following their pump priming financial 'start up' grant in 2024. The Croquet Club is now well established here in Southerndown, with many local people as members, plus some people from Ogmores by Sea and St Brides Major.

There is a regular group of players who meet every Wednesday for a 'club evening', plus extra competitions and social events (see photos).

There is now also a well established volunteer Support Team who, between us, cover the many and varied tasks required to keep a club of this nature up and running.

We regularly publicise the club on Facebook and posters in local stores and invite membership enquiries from everyone within the St Brides Major catchment area.

### Financial Viability and Sustainability / Membership Numbers

The financial viability of the club depends on two factors:

1. That the specific routine running costs of the Croquet Club are covered by the membership fees and;
2. That between the Croquet club, The Southerndown Cricket and Social Club; and Great Western Cricket Club we are able to cover the cost of renting the field from Dunraven Estates and to cover the water and electricity rates.

I'm delighted to say that at some point in winter 2024 our membership numbers had grown enough to break even with our Croquet Club running costs, and that as we entered the new Spring and Summer season of 2025, they have grown further to begin to make a contribution to the cost of renting the field.



Southerndown Community Golf Croquet Club ...

Posted by Neil Smurthwaite

18 May · 🌐

A fabulous fun croquet competition this morning, led and umpired superbly by Steve. Email [scscgcroquet@gmail.com](mailto:scscgcroquet@gmail.com) if you would like to join us. Weekly club sessions plus regular socials and competitions. A very friendly welcoming club based here in Southerndown.



(However, there is still considerable responsibility and challenge with the three clubs to continue to fundraise and seek voluntary contributions to continue to cover those latter costs, so your continued support is valued and very appreciated).

In summary, thanks to the 'start up' grant from the Community Council and our subsequent membership drive, our Croquet Club running costs are now self sufficient, but we still need to increase membership numbers further, and access other sources of funding, to continue meet the rent and rates costs for the field itself.

### Membership recruitment

We are continuing to find different ways of recruiting new members:

- The most successful of which is word-of-mouth. However, we also
- Regularly publicise the club on Facebook and on notices in local stores;
- And we regularly run 'open 'try out sessions' for members of the public to come along and have a go, to see if they would like to join the Club.



### Legal responsibilities

We have ensured that we have adequate Public Liability Insurance in place to cover both members of the club and also any guests and visitors who come along to play and or watch Croquet

We also routinely undertake regular Health and Safety risk assessments and ensure that any actions that have been identified to reduce any of the risks assessed are undertaken and recorded.

### Community engagement

From the outset we wanted the Croquet Club to be a welcoming fun club for members to be part of. The social element is as important to us as the competitive side, and I am delighted to feedback that our weekly club sessions are a lot of fun, supplemented with 'special' social events where we share food and drink whilst playing a competition. We openly welcome other local residents on these evenings, both to enhance community cohesion, and also to promote membership.

During the winter months the social event was switched to an evening a month at the Three Golden Cups (far too cold to sit around eating vol-au-vents on the Pavilions veranda!)

### Competitions

We have at least 4 competitions each year, expanding them to include a social event (see photos of the Club's main recent competition, 'The Stanley Bowl')

### Future plans

As well as continuing to pursue Increasing membership, and encouraging more local individuals to participate, we are also actively exploring involving children (with their families) more. (Note: We are not approved to run sessions directly for children).



**Congratulations to Sheila, this year's Stanley Bowl Competition winner!**

Further, following an approach by a local disabled resident, we are exploring with the Croquet Association running 'Accessible Croquet' sessions for people unable to participate in the normal game of Croquet, due to disability or infirmity, to be able to play an alternative style of game alongside other members.

### Conclusion

We believe, thanks to the Community Councils 'start up' grant, that we have been able to establish a fun, well run and successful Croquet Club here in Southerndown, robust enough now to keep covering its own regular running costs, and striving, alongside The Southerndown Cricket and Social Club; and Great Western Cricket Club, to contribute to the significant financial challenge of meeting the rent for the field and covering the Electricity and Water rates.



## High Brown Fritillary Project: Dot Williams

Firstly, I would like to thank the Community Council for their generous grant which has supported the work of Butterfly Conservation within the Alun Valley and Old Castle Down areas. At the time of the grant application there was some uncertainty as to whether the National Lottery Heritage Fund would provide funding for the Natur Am Byth program.

The grant enabled the volunteer group to continue the work to save Wales's rarest butterfly and support the habitat for other species in the area. As a result of the grant two of the volunteers were able to train as Outdoor First Aiders (a vital role in supporting volunteers on working groups), a large contribution was made for a volunteer to undertake chainsaw training and also for another to obtain their brush-cutter certificate. The purchase of hi-visibility vests enables the volunteers to work more safely especially during the autumn/winter months when visibility can be poor.

On May 26th 2025 a small group of volunteers were cutting back bracken to ensure that potential breeding sites for the high brown fritillary would be accessible to any butterfly that wanted to use them.



Photo by Paul Dunn

They were rewarded by seeing the first high brown fritillary of the year!

It was particularly gratifying to the volunteers as this is an area that has been managed solely by them over the years.

As one of the volunteers I would like to personally thank the Community Council for their support in enabling this work to continue. As I am now lucky enough to also work with Butterfly Conservation for two days a

a week I would also like to extend thanks from Butterfly Conservation for the generous grant and I do hope that some Community Council members will be able to visit the site both to see the work that's been undertaken and even see some butterflies!

## Southerndown Surf Live Saving Club: Rachel Evans



On behalf of Southerndown Surf Lifesaving club, I would like to thank you for the funding we received from the community grant. As you know, we applied for the grant funding to purchase equipment that would be used in putting our junior members through their lifesaving awards. We had been struggling to get our members through the awards due to a lack of resources and we had not had a member sit their level 1 or level 2 since before 2020. The grant funding enabled us to purchase a projector, three training defibrillators and 2 lifeguard boards and I am pleased to share that these resources have helped us put 10



Transition boards purchased with the grant



Level 2s (with their parents!)

members through their Beach Lifesaving Level 1, 8 through their Beach Lifesaving Level 2, and 3 through their National Vocational Lifeguard Award (NVBLQ).

We are immensely proud of our members for achieving these

awards and very grateful to the community council for helping fund the resources needed to keep our small community club going. Your funding has enabled us to continue supporting local residents to learn the skills needed to keep themselves and others safe in our sea.



NVBLQs



Level 1s



## CaminoH Pilgrimage Walks: Lee Gonzalez

The congregations of St Bridget's Church - St Brides Major, All Saints Church - Southerndown and the Glamorgan Heritage Coast Ministry Area team would like to offer their sincerest thanks to the Community Council for their generous donation of funds to enable the installation of two pilgrimage boards. The funds were used to pay for the printing of the boards and the materials to make the frame and stands.

These pilgrimage boards have been very well received by the community and detail some of the history of the churches as well as outline pilgrim walk routes around the area. They have become a valuable resource for outreach in the community and have particularly benefitted visitors to the local area who would otherwise not have been able to access some of this information.

In terms of pilgrimage: The Glamorgan Heritage Coast Ministry Area is encouraged to establish and re-energise some of the ancient pilgrims routes in the area, and the pilgrim boards are a very good first step in helping to achieve this.



# VE DAY CELEBRATIONS

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2025, residents gathered to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day at Ogmore by Sea Village Hall.



**A shared moment of celebration  
At Ogmore By Sea Village Hall**

- 6:00 pm – 8.30 pm Fish and Chip Supper available from Hilary and Iain's £10.95 per head.
- Pre book slots available from 6 pm to 8.30 pm on 01656 880661.
- 6.00 pm Bar available from Welsh Coffee.
- 8.30 pm All Aloud Choir performance.
- 9.25 pm The Tribute Reading.
- 9.30 pm Lighting of the Beacon.
- 9.30 pm Singing of I Vow To Thee My Country.

Organised by Saint Brides Major Community Council

This is the fourth event in the past 5 years where the Community Council has provided funding for residents to come together to commemorate or celebrate. In 2020 the Council provided mementos to every household for 75th anniversary of VE day where tea parties were held during lockdown; the Platinum Jubilee of the late Queen Elizabeth's was in 2022 and then the Coronation of King Charles in 2023.



Residents enjoyed a Fish and Chip Supper, were entertained by our local All Aloud Choir performing popular songs from the era, with great audience participation. The evening ended with the lighting of the beacon and heartfelt singing of I Vow to Thee My Country.

# HOW THE COUNCIL CAN HELP YOU

The Community Council is interested to know what you want from your Council. If you have any ideas or suggestions for future projects, please do get in touch or if there is an issue that needs our attention, please do let us know.

We are especially looking for young people (16-25 years) who would be interested in representing the interests of young people within the community. These representatives can participate in council meetings and contribute to discussions on matters affecting young people. The Welsh Government encourages this through the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note that the following matters fall under the Vale of Glamorgan Council and as such the Community Council can lobby for action or change but it has no power to act directly or to insist something happens.

County Council matters are:

- Highways
- Road Signs
- Education
- Refuse and Recycling
- Verge Grass cutting
- Social Services
- Planning

For these matters please do get in touch with:

Carys Stallard: [cstallard@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:cstallard@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

Jo Protheroe: [jprotheroe@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:jprotheroe@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)



# FINAL THOUGHTS

Thank you for taking the time to read our annual report. We are grateful for those who kindly agreed to feature. If you would like to provide feedback on this report or contribute to the work of the Community Council in anyway please do contact [clerk@stbridesmajor-cc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@stbridesmajor-cc.gov.uk).

**With grateful thanks to David Jones who gave permission for the Community Council to use his landscape photographs in this report.**

