



COITY HIGHER COMMUNITY COUNCIL SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2020

CHAIR'S WELCOME

Dear Residents

As Chair of the Community Council I'd like to welcome you to this latest edition of our newsletter.



When the Council set out its plans for 2020 we could never have imagined the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic and the impact it has had on our lives. Sadly, some of us may have lost friends or loved ones and I would like to offer my sincere condolences on behalf of the Council. All of us have been touched by the pandemic in different ways and that includes the Community Council. As a mark of respect to those who have suffered during this time, in memory of those lost and in thanks for the excellent work of the NHS staff, we will be planting daffodils alongside the path from the bus stop on Coity Road into the hospital as a permanent memorial.

Unfortunately, we've had to cancel some of our plans for this year, such as the summer play schemes in Coety and Litchard Primary Schools and our play areas have been closed. However, I'm pleased to say that we have continued with important work to help make our community a better place to live and the play areas have now reopened. We still have ambitious plans for Coity Higher which you can read about inside.

During this challenging time and in the coming year, the Community Council remains committed to providing services to the Coity Higher wards.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and find it informative. The Council and I would welcome your feedback about what we're doing and how the Community Council can continue to improve the service we provide.

Councillor Martin Williams
Chair of Council



IMPROVING OUR COMMUNITY

WHAT'S NEW?

We've once again successfully obtained significant funding to improve our community assets, this time to refurbish Litchard Park play area and we've signed a 35 year lease to maintain it. The refurbishment is scheduled for early September and as well as replacing most of the equipment, the refurbishment will include new benches and bins both inside and outside the fenced off play area. In total we've secured £16,000 to match fund the Community Council's contribution of £16,000 towards the project.



We've also:

- Installed a handrail at Celtic View steps
- Installed more bins and dog waste dispensers and benches
- Added to our Christmas decorations
- Continued with footpath maintenance, grass cutting, weed clearing and our floral displays throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

SAFER ROUTES PROGRESS

As we reported in our last edition the Community Council has been working in partnership with BCBC to develop a Community Access Plan focussed on targeting highway and footpath improvements to encourage people to make more journeys on foot or by bicycle. We've been successful in attracting funding of £222,000 for Coity Higher's second phase of our Safer Routes programme from the Welsh Government and this will see new safe crossing points installed throughout your community as well as speed watch signs.

This funding will see a safe pedestrian corridor with dropped kerbs and crossing points linking Coity Road opposite the hospital with Litchard school. The scheme will also install safe crossing points within Coity village and also see the installation of an actuated speed warning sign on Heol West Plas.

These measures will make our community safer and encourage people to walk to our schools and generally leave their cars at home for short journeys.

However there is still more work to do and we are committed to continuing to work with Bridgend County Borough Council to seek further funding to complete our Community Access Plan. This is good news as so far this year we've attracted an additional £254,000 to deliver key projects within the community.

NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES

We have been particularly successful in developing our Community Access Plan and working with others to attract funding to deliver road safety improvements. Our attention is now focussing on community assets and other facilities within Coity Higher. We currently maintain allotments, there are a number of community halls and centres and as a Community Council we have expressed a formal interest in taking over the playing fields in Great Western Avenue and Litchard Cross. But what do you want to see in Litchard, Pendre and Coity? We would love to hear from you, either as individuals or community groups to understand what further facilities our community needs or how we can develop what we already have.

AWARDS SUCCESS COMMUNITY AWARD WINNERS



This year the winner of the award, which is presented each year for outstanding contribution to the

community, was Sean Molino of Forces Fitness. Sean won for his voluntary work with schools to promote health and well-being and his voluntary work with veterans.

Harley Morris of Litchard was the winner in the under 18 award, for all his hard work in campaigning to stop people parking on pavements and blocking dropped kerbs.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY AWARD

Once again this year at the end of the summer term, we provided Litchard and Coity Primary Schools with a trophy and £50 of vouchers to they can recognise the contribution made by a child or group of children to the community. Litchard Primary Schools award is to take place in the autumn, but Coety Primary selected Myla Svikeris as their winner for making conscious decisions to improve the local community and environment.

ONE VOICE WALES INNOVATION AWARDS

We are delighted to announce that once again this year the Council was recognised in two categories of the Innovative Practice Awards. The Community Council received a Highly Commended in the Community Asset Transfer category for its work in transferring and upgrading the play areas in your 3 wards into its care and a Commended in the Best Website category.

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS AND CHARITIES

Last year we supported many groups and organisations, providing financial support for a range of events and activities totalling over £1,000.

These include donations to Bridgend Carers, Wales Air Ambulance, Wildmill Table Tennis Club, Choirs in the Castle, Jam in the Castle, Pride in Coity and Coety Primary School.



FOOTPATHS

We are particularly fortunate in Coity Higher that we have an extensive network of footpaths which you can explore. In many ways our community is a central hub for footpaths that link Bridgend to the Valleys, Coychurch and beyond. Some of our footpaths are well used on a daily basis and others by more seasoned ramblers.

The laws in Wales provide you with the right to walk, ride, and cycle on public rights of way in the countryside. Public rights of way include footpaths and bridleways. Public rights of way are listed and described in Definitive Maps and Statements (legal records of public rights of way). Footpaths are for pedestrians only, bridleways are for walkers, horse riders and cyclists. Cyclists on these paths are meant to give way to walkers and riders.

Within your 3 wards there are many footpaths and bridleways, in fact 45 in all, these are mainly in Coity and Litchard and the Community Council maintains them under an agreement with BCBC. There are some more urban paths that we know are used regularly and are included in our monthly maintenance schedule, but others are rural and we rely on you to let us know if a footpath needs attention. If you come across a footpath that is overgrown and needs maintenance, then please contact our Clerk on the number below or via the contacts page on our website.

Below is a digital interpretation of our footpath map, if you want any further information then the local authority will have a definitive map or you can contact our Clerk for assistance.

Whilst we want you to enjoy the many miles of paths within our wards, there are rules to follow when using public rights of way. Included in these are that you are not allowed to:

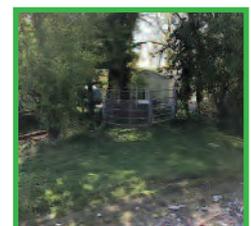
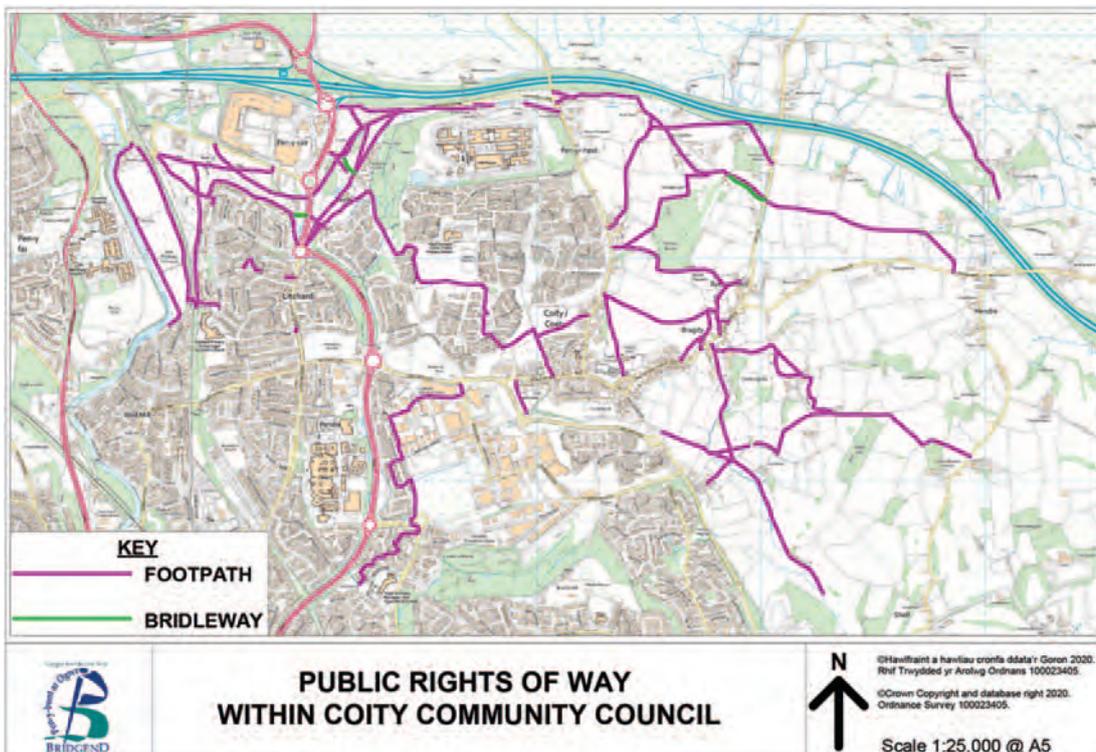
- **disturb or harm any wildlife found on a public right of way.**
- **drop litter**
- **trespass on neighbouring lands and must keep to the footpaths**

PLACES OF SPECIAL INTEREST ON YOUR WALKS

During your walk there are many interesting things to see along the way including Coity Castle, walks along the Black Path and the Coity Burial Chamber – there is an ancient burial chamber off Heol Las in Coity and this monument is of importance in educating about prehistoric burials and rituals. Consideration is being given to new signage to highlight the site and to clean up the monument. The 12th century castle ruins need no introduction situated next to the beautiful St Mary's Church on Heol yr Ysgol and then there is the surrounding commons in Litchard and Coity, rich with flora and fauna for walkers interested in wildlife both with stunning views across Bridgend. Why not follow the Nant Brynglas circular walk or the Bridgend Circular Walk, they both include parts of Coity Higher?



See our website for information and maps.



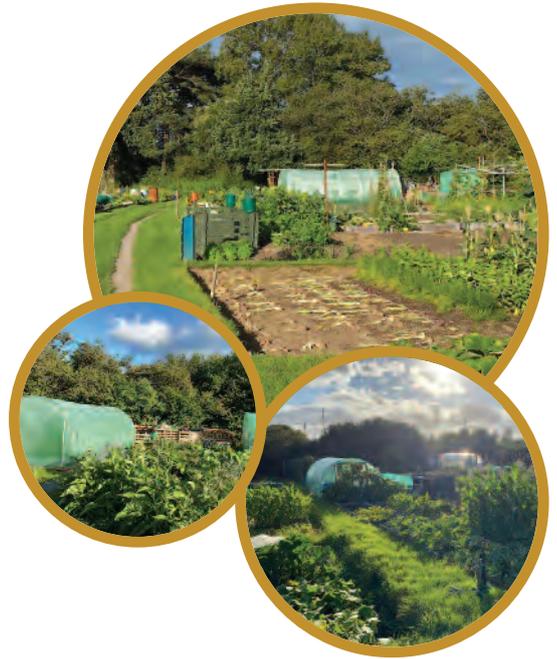
ALLOTMENT GARDENS

THE GARDENS

The Community Council manages its allotment gardens in Coity Higher, which has 38 plots. It is a well looked after, pleasant, sunny site in a quiet, secluded area and the plots are varying sizes there are full, half and 2/3 plots. There is a communal shed, water taps dotted around the site and, a bench for tenants to sit and chat, a noticeboard so that we can keep in touch with our tenants and a small car park. The site is surrounded on three sides by mature trees and is bordered by houses on the other side.

Allotment gardens are an excellent way of getting exercise, enjoying excellent produce and making like-minded friends, if you've never had an allotment but fancy giving it a try then why not start with a half plot.

At present a full plot is £36 and this will increase to £38 for 2020/21.



IMPROVEMENTS

Over the last few years we've made many improvements to the gardens. We've laid two large sections of the roadway to tarmac, installed a new gate, a new soakaway, bench and a noticeboard and in the last month we've provided a skip for tenants to clean up their plots, which was very well received.

Before the nesting season a full risk assessment of the surrounding trees was carried out and as a result of the report some routine tree maintenance will be carried out in the next few months.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A PLOT

There is always a waiting list for plots and priority is given to residents of our wards. To be added to our waiting list please contact the Clerk or apply via our website's allotment tab or our contact us page

www.coityhighercommunitycouncil.co.uk/allotments/

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