**Ambleston Community Council / Cyngor Cymuned Ambleston**

**Annual Report 2023/2024**

Meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month (except August and December). Ambleston Community Council has six councillors, Eirian Forrest is Clerk and can be contacted by email amblestoncc@gmail.com or 07896 591221. Meetings are open to members of the public to attend.

At the Annual General Meeting on 26 June 2023 Mrs Rosie McDonald was elected as Chair with Mr David Ambrey elected as Vice Chair. A new Chair and Vice Chair will be appointed in the Annual General Meeting on 20 May 2024.

The minutes and other documents are available to view on the Ambleston Community Council’s website, and the Community Council has a Facebook page.

**What has happened/happening:**

* Wallis Pond - Princess Gate Spring Water has been bought out by Nestle UK. They were looking for projects to improve water quality, Wallis Pond was suggested to them as a potential project. Following discussion with Pete Howe, PCC and Mair Rees, NRW regarding the removal of silt and overgrowth and a replacement sluice gate, Nestle approved funding for the works to be done in two phases. Due to the amount of rainfall over the winter, and early 2024 the water levels were too high which could have caused an environmental incident; therefore, a decision was made to delay the commencement of work until Autumn 2024. Phase 2 will be done in 2025.
* Boundary Commission Review:A review of Community Boundaries being conducted by Pembrokeshire County Council and the Boundary Commission under sections 25 and 31 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 (The Act). Ambleston Community Council object to the proposals and a consultation response was submitted in December 2023.
* Wallis bracken cutting project - Cwm Arian Renewable Energy (CARE) had been in contact with Mair Rees and Ross Grisbrook at NRW, and Jim Dunckley from Pembrokeshire County Council, to see if they could collaborate on conservation projects and had recently visited Wallis Common. Cwm Arian are setting up a social enterprise which will help to manage common land for ecological benefit, by cutting vegetation and transforming it into fuel briquettes, because of the extent of the bracken on the common NRW suggested that Wallis would be a good starting point. CARE applied for some funding to carry out this work.
* Broadway Partners went into liquidation and was taken over by Voneus Broadband.
* Casual Vacancy - Gail Davis resigned in January 2024; Carly Skyrme was co-opted in March 2024.
* Community Council Website – the website is currently hosted by Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC). Due to changes in legislation the platform is no longer compliant and will be withdrawing it as PCC doesn’t have the resources to redevelop it and the server technology is approaching the end of life and will be decommissioned by no later than 31st March 2025. Town and Community Councils have a duty to meet these Regulations, therefore, the community council will have to run and fund their own website.
* Enhancing Pembrokeshire Grant – gathering ideas from the community for projects. Ideas to date: Christmas Tree and lights for Ambleston, bird hide for Wallis Pond, Pilates, and other courses in Ambleston Memorial Hall, improve local walks, footpath around the pond. Discussions are ongoing.
* Withyhedge Landfill **–** Since the end of the summer 2023 the community has been experiencing a strong toxic odour emanating from the landfill. Reports of sore eyes, headaches, coughs have giving cause of concern for people’s health. When Resources Management took over the site there was a list of remedial works needed to bring the site up to required standards. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) issued an Enforcement Notice giving a deadline of 5th April 2024 to complete the engineering works required to resolve the issue. The deadline has passed, and the issue has not been resolved. The ’Stop the Stink’ campaign have been working tirelessly by pressing NRW, Pembrokeshire County Council, Public Health Wales, and other bodies to get this issue resolved. A new deadline of 14th May 2024 has been given to address the issue. The stench is ongoing.
* Grit bin was purchased and is situated by the bus shelter in Ambleston.
* **Highway matters reported**/**discussed:**
* Potholes and road surface issues are an ongoing problem and are reported to Pembrokeshire County Council.
* Faulty streetlights, drainage problems, signage, fly tipping and other general issues are reported as they arise.

**Finance:**

* Council Tax Precept set for the financial year £2700.00.
* End of year financial account up to 31.03.24 – Total receipts £4752.09. Total payments £2867.09. Barclays account balance was £1945.00 on 31.03.24.
* Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – A mandatory payment of £156 is available to all Community Councillors who can choose to opt-out of receiving this payment.
* Insurance is in place with Zurich Municipal Insurance and complies with regulations.
* The audit conclusion for the year ended 31st March 2023 was unqualified with no matters arising and recommendations.

**Donations given:**

* Wales Air Ambulance - £25.00
* Pembrokeshire YFC - £25.00

Appeals for donations are considered for local charities or of direct benefit to the local community.

**Planning:**

* The Local Development Plan review (LDP2) is ongoing and has been delayed due to new guidance from National Resources Wales on Phosphates.
* Planning applications considered have been development on private land.

All planning applications can be viewed on Pembrokeshire County Councils website.