

CONTACT



Community Magazine for the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil

Autumn 2026



60th Anniversary
of the
Aberfan Disaster

Page 2

£20 Million
Pride in Place
projects

Page 3

Riverside Plaza
Playground
is now open!

Page 8



Councillor David Isaac was elected Mayor of Merthyr Tydfil at the Council's Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 13th May 2026, taking over from the immediate past Mayor, Councillor Paula Layton, as First Citizen of the County Borough.

If you would like to invite the Mayor to an event, or donate to the Mayor's appeal, please contact:

mayoral@merthyr.gov.uk



Libraries: More Than Just Books!

Across Merthyr Tydfil Libraries, residents can access free Wi-Fi, public computers, printing, digital support, family history resources and online services such as BorrowBox and PressReader.

Visit your local library today and discover everything we have to offer: merthyrlibraries.co.uk

This year marks the 60th Anniversary of the Aberfan Disaster

The 21st October will forever be etched upon the hearts of the people of Merthyr Tydfil. A day when 144 people – including 116 children – tragically lost their lives when a spoil tip slid down a mountain, engulfing Pantglas School and some of the surrounding houses.

This year, to mark the 60th anniversary of the disaster, a series of commemorative events have been organised for those wishing to pay their respects and remember the lives that were lost that day. For more information please visit merthyr.gov.uk/Aberfan

If you were a pupil, teacher, or member of staff in the school at the time of the disaster and would like to attend a special commemorative event to mark the anniversary, please contact:



mayoral@merthyr.gov.uk



01685 725320



Cllr Brent Carter
Leader of the
Council

Hi all, welcome to our autumn edition of Contact.

As you may know, the Redhouse has been taken back into Council ownership. Because it's been closed for some time there has been deterioration internally, so there's lots going on behind the scenes to get it back open to the public. We'll keep you updated as things progress.

This year marks the 60th Anniversary of the tragic Aberfan disaster, a day we will never forget. Please see the article adjacent to learn how we'll mark the anniversary this year.

From 1st October 2026, residents will no longer need to separate paper and cardboard for recycling collections. Please read more on **page 6**.

Did you know that Lifeline services are moving to digital as part of the national BT phone line upgrade? If you use a Lifeline service, it is important to act now before the January 2027 deadline. All you need to know can be found on **page 7**.

For the latest news and updates visit merthyr.gov.uk or follow us on social media.

B. Carter

Pride in Place Programme – Call for Projects Now Open!

Merthyr Tydfil has been selected to receive a share of £5.8 billion of UK Government Pride in Place funding. Pride in Place is a 10-year programme with an allocation of up to £20m. A local Neighbourhood Board is responsible for identifying, assessing, and selecting which projects receive funding.

All projects will be guided by three core objectives:

- to help create thriving places,
- to build stronger communities
- to enable local people to take back control over their area's future.

Grants of up to £75,000 are available to support ideas that help Merthyr Tydfil thrive, covering areas such as regeneration, housing and projects that improve health and wellbeing.

To find out more or get involved visit Merthyr.gov.uk/PiPP or email PiPP@merthyr.gov.uk

PRIDE IN PLACE
LED BY YOU – BACKED BY UK GOVERNMENT



Marchnad Dan Do

Merthyr
Indoor Market



Cllr Jamie Scriven
Economy, Regeneration,
Leisure & Tourism
Cabinet Member

Have you visited Merthyr Tydfil Indoor Market lately?

Located in St Tydfil's Shopping Centre, stalls include everything from crafts and collectibles, pet supplies, hardware and gems, to Welsh Cakes, juices, smoothies and Thai Food – there's something for everyone!

Open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Saturday.



Welsh Jewish Cultural Centre given the go-ahead

The restoration of one of Wales' most important Jewish heritage sites is a step closer to becoming a reality, thanks to grants from the National Heritage Lottery Fund and Welsh Government's Transforming Towns programme.

The £6m project will see the Merthyr Tydfil Synagogue transformed into a Welsh Jewish Cultural Centre, celebrating the history of Jewish communities in Wales and giving people the opportunity to learn about the impact of the community through an exciting activity and events programme. The centre will also enhance Merthyr Tydfil's visitor offer and provide much-needed cultural facilities.

Plans for the transformation are well underway, and physical works to the Grade II listed building are set to start in 2027.

Two New Schools Set to Transform Learning in Merthyr Tydfil

This September marks a major milestone for education in Merthyr Tydfil as two new schools open their doors through funding from Welsh Government and the Council's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.

Goetre Community Primary School will move into its new purpose-built, fully accessible building, providing places for 420 primary pupils, nursery provision, Flying Start childcare, specialist learning spaces and a dedicated community wing for local residents to use outside school hours. The new facility reflects the school's expanded role at the heart of the community.

At the same time, the Saint Carlo Acutis Catholic School will welcome pupils to its new 3 to 16 campus, bringing nursery, primary and secondary education together on one site. The school features modern classrooms, specialist teaching facilities, sports provision and community spaces, creating a seamless learning journey from nursery through to Year 11.

Together, these developments represent a significant investment in education, opportunity and community wellbeing across Merthyr Tydfil.



Cllr Gareth Lewis
Education, Culture &
Welsh Language
Cabinet Member



Essential works progressing at Cyfarthfa Castle & Park

Improvement work is continuing at Cyfarthfa Castle and Park, thanks to funding from Cadw, the Council, the Welsh Government's Brilliant Basics programme and The Cyfarthfa Foundation.

Important repairs are being carried out to the castle's roof and drainage systems to help protect the historic building and preserve it for future generations. Visitors will also benefit from improvements to the reception area, shop and café, along with better signs and wayfinding throughout the park.

The Council and The Cyfarthfa Foundation remain committed to enhancing Cyfarthfa and will continue to seek further investment to build on the progress already being made, ensuring the castle and park remain a valued attraction for residents and visitors alike.

Pre-loved school uniforms...



Are available to collect **free of charge** from:
The New Lease of Life Shop during every school holiday.

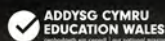


Unit 20, Merthyr Tydfil Industrial Park,
Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 4DR

Donations of clean uniforms that are
still in good condition are welcome.



Merthyr Tydfil yn ailgylchu
Merthyr Tydfil recycles



Check if your child is eligible
for **Free School Meals** and up
to **£200 for School Essentials**.



Gwneud
i bob
dydd
gyfri

Make
every
day
count



#CollwchYsgolCollwchAllan
#MissSchoolMissOut

Bridging the Gap Youth – Merthyr (BGY) is celebrating its 20th anniversary, marking two decades of supporting children and young people with additional and complex needs across our communities.



As BGY celebrates this landmark anniversary it looks forward to reflecting on its achievements and continuing its mission.

To mark this special milestone, a 20th anniversary celebration will be held at **The Hills Plymouth Cricket Club, Pentrebach, on 18th September 2026**. Past and present members, families and supporters are invited to attend and help celebrate two decades of achievement, memories and community spirit.

For more information contact Lisa Clack, Project Manager, on **07852 766928**.

Read more here: merthyr.gov.uk/news-and-events

Considering fostering?
There's never been a better time to join us in Merthyr Tydfil!

Fostering is an opportunity to make a real difference in children's lives by providing safe, stable and caring homes.

With support every step of the way, you'll be welcomed into a local community committed to helping children thrive.

merthirtydfil.fosterwales.gov.wales



Cllr Louise Minett-Vokes
Social Care, Health & Youth Participation
Cabinet Member



Supporting Unpaid Carers

Recognising. Valuing. Supporting you.



*You care for others,
we're here to care for you.*



*Thank you
to all unpaid
carers in
Merthyr Tydfil*



We listen

Your views help shape our services



We support

Information, advice and wellbeing support



We help you take a break

Short breaks and respite opportunities



Stronger together

Working in partnership for unpaid carers



Find out what support is available for you

merthyr.gov.uk/carers

From 1st October 2026, residents will no longer need to separate paper and cardboard for recycling collections.

At the moment, paper and card have to be presented separately. From 1st October 2026, these materials can be placed together, making recycling simpler and quicker for households across Merthyr Tydfil.

Why is this changing?

Improvements in recycling processes mean that paper and cardboard can now be collected together and sorted efficiently for recycling.

The change will:

- Make recycling easier for residents
- Reduce the amount of sorting needed at home
- Help improve the efficiency of collections

Residents are still asked to make sure paper and cardboard are kept clean and dry so they can be recycled successfully.

We'll share more information about the change nearer the launch date.



Cllr David Jones
Deputy Leader
Climate Change & Communities
Cabinet Member

Don't Throw Away Good Clothes

Many unwanted clothes, shoes and textiles still have plenty of life left in them.



While textiles can still be taken to Household Recycling Centres, there are several other options that help keep items in use for longer and support local communities at the same time.

Before recycling textiles, consider:

- Selling items through online platforms
- Donate to local charity shops
- Use textile banks at community locations
- Gift quality items on to family and friends

Fridge and Freezer Collections

You may have seen reports in the news about difficulties recycling fridges and freezers across the UK.

Like many local authorities, we have been affected by a shortage of fridge processing capacity. As a result, bulky waste collections for fridges, fridge freezers and standalone freezers have been temporarily suspended. Read more; merthyr.gov.uk/news-and-events

Thinking of getting rid of a working appliance?

Before disposing of it, you may wish to consider:

- Selling it online
- Passing it on to family or friends
- Donating it to a community group or charity

If you're buying a new appliance, check whether the retailer offers a take-back service. Many retailers will remove and recycle your old appliance when delivering a replacement.



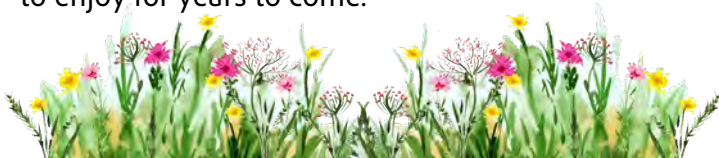
MerthyrTydfilRecycles



Merthyr Tydfil is continuing to make significant strides in protecting and enhancing local biodiversity, with a strong focus on improving habitats for wildlife. One of the council's top priorities is grassland management, where the introduction of a cut and collect approach is delivering impressive results.

Surveys across managed grassland sites have shown an estimated 72% increase in plant species diversity, with a greater variety of wildflowers and native plants now flourishing. These richer habitats provide valuable food and shelter for pollinators and other wildlife, helping nature recover across the county borough.

Alongside grassland improvements, efforts are focused on strengthening habitat connections, supporting priority species, and engaging local communities in conservation. Together, these actions are helping to create healthier, more resilient green spaces for both people and wildlife to enjoy for years to come.





Have Your Say

Your views matter to us. Complete our surveys and consultations by visiting: merthyr.gov.uk/HaveYourSay



Cllr Anna Williams-Price
Financial Sustainability,
Assets & Commercial
Cabinet Member



Budget Consultation 2026/27

Our annual budget consultation starts soon.

Every year we ask residents to have their say to help us to set a balanced budget for the Council. This year our consultation will run for 8 weeks over the autumn/winter.

To have your say visit merthyr.gov.uk/haveyoursay



Lifeline services are moving to digital as part of the national BT phone line upgrade.

If you use a Lifeline service, it is important to act now before the January 2027 deadline.

Don't worry - the Council is here to support you every step of the way. Please contact us as soon as possible so we can discuss your future plans.

Questions or concerns?

- Call 01685 725000
- Request a call back via our Lifeline: merthyr.gov.uk/do-it-online/request-or-apply/lifeline-enquiry-request-form

Cost of Living: Support & Advice

If you need support with the **Cost of Living** please visit our dedicated web pages for advice.

merthyr.gov.uk/cost-of-living



Merthyr Tydfil Together

In summer 2025 South Wales Police launched Merthyr Tydfil Together, a partnership initiative between the police, Council and other local partners to combat anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the Town Centre. The three-phase approach focuses on targeted crime disruption, stabilising affected areas, and addressing the root causes of criminality.

Since the start of the operation, significant enforcement activity and partnership engagement has resulted in **430 intelligence submissions, 339 arrests, 185 ASB referrals and 12 Community Protection Warnings**. These outcomes demonstrate the commitment by policing and partner agencies to tackle criminality and protecting our communities.

As we move into phase two of the initiative, successes will be measured by not only reductions in crime and ASB, but by the extent to which communities feel safer, more connected, more resilient and more confident in the future of Merthyr Town Centre.



The brand-new Riverside Plaza playground is officially open to the residents and visitors of Merthyr Tydfil.

This unique playground design takes inspiration from the nearby Cyfarthfa castle and caters to children of all ages and abilities.

This is just one of many playground projects happening in Merthyr Tydfil at the moment. Since the launch of the playground refurbishment programme, 22 sites have been restored, with plans for more to come.

Keep an eye on our website for more information.



“

Your **Merthyr**,
Your Voice.

”

Join our new Citizens' Panel

We're inviting local residents to join us and play a part in improving the lives of those working and living in our County Borough

For more information or to join please email;
corporate.communications@merthyr.gov.uk

Merthyr Tydfil's story is one of grit, innovation, and resilience - a place where iron once forged a nation and where a strong sense of community endures.



Cllr Brent Carter
Leader of the
Council



Watch Merthyr Tydfil: Our Story now!
Visit merthyr.gov.uk/OurStory



GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL

Did you know...

You can ask a question, add an item to a forward workplan, or attend a public meeting in person?



merthyr.gov.uk/council/have-your-say/the-councils-participation-strategy