Castle Caereinion Community Council Annual Report

For the year 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

1. Introduction

This Annual Report provides an overview of the work of Castle Caereinion Community Council during the financial year from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. It summarises the Council's priorities, activities and achievements during the year and has been prepared in line with the requirement for community and town councils in Wales to publish an annual report as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of the financial year.

2. About the Council

Castle Caereinion Community Council serves the local community of Castle Caereinion and the surrounding area. As the level of local government closest to residents, the Council represents community interests, maintains an overview of local needs and concerns, comments on planning applications, manages local priorities within its powers and resources, and works with partner organisations where this benefits the area.

3. Council Membership and Officers

At the Annual General Meeting held in May 2025, the Council confirmed its appointments for the year ahead. Councillor Nigel Bowen was re-elected as Chair, and Councillor Gary Human was elected as Vice-Chair. The Council's membership during the year included Councillors Clive Jones, Paul Roberts, Robert Nash, Kate Hamer, Darren Oakley and Timothy Robinson, with Lucy Mason serving as Clerk. Representatives were also appointed to support liaison and local responsibilities, including One Voice Wales, the Recreation Association, Castle Caereinion United Charities, the Burgess Land Trust, Castle News, the Montgomeryshire Local Forum, and routine play area and defibrillator inspections.

4. Meetings and Governance

The Council met regularly throughout the year, ordinarily on Wednesday evenings at the Community Centre, with a public forum at the start of meetings to give residents the opportunity to raise issues of local concern. Scheduled meetings took place during the year, with the Annual General Meeting held in May 2025 and regular meetings continuing monthly except in December. An additional meeting was also arranged in December 2025 to consider time-sensitive planning matters. Throughout the year, the Council continued to discharge its responsibilities through properly convened meetings, recorded minutes, declarations of interest, financial reporting, and consideration of correspondence, planning consultations and community matters.

5. Training and Development

The Council recognises the importance of training and development in supporting effective local government and ensuring that councillors and the Clerk are able to carry out their roles confidently and lawfully. The Council has a training budget in place, which is kept under review and used for relevant learning and development opportunities for members and staff.

6. Biodiversity Section 6 Action Plan

The Council recognises its duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and, in so doing, promote the resilience of ecosystems. The Council has a Section 6 Biodiversity Action Plan in place and will keep it under review. During the year, the Council obtained a grant of £2,500 from Powys County Council through County Councillor Adrian Jones. The funding was awarded as an anti-poverty grant and was used to purchase fruit trees, native bulbs, bird and habitat boxes, compost and gardening equipment. The fruit trees will be planted once the final location has been agreed. The native bulbs will be planted in late autumn, to allow them to establish roots over winter. It is hoped that, over time, the Council will help to create a community orchard and garden that can be enjoyed by residents whilst supporting local wildlife. It is also hoped that wildflower corridors can be introduced as part of the Council's ongoing commitment to biodiversity. Through its meetings, decisions and day-to-day activities, the Council will continue to consider

biodiversity in relevant matters such as planning consultations, maintenance of community amenities, procurement and support for local projects. The Council also aims to raise awareness of biodiversity, encourage practical action where possible, and review progress periodically as part of its wider governance and reporting arrangements.

7. Planning and Local Consultation

Planning matters remained an important part of the Council's work during the year. The Council considered a range of planning applications and related consultations affecting properties and land within the community. In doing so, the Council sought to reflect local views and planning considerations relevant to each application, including design, access, drainage, impact on the local environment and the wider character of the area. Public attendance at meetings demonstrated the level of community interest in development proposals, and the Council continued to provide a local forum for discussion and representation in relation to these matters.

8. Finance and Accountability

The Council continued to manage its finances through regular reports to members, approval of payments at meetings and routine review of balances. At the Annual General Meeting in May 2025, the Council appointed Cadwallader and Co LLP as reporting accountants. During the year, expenditure included routine staffing and administration costs, as well as local spending linked to community amenities and maintenance. The Council also considered budget planning and precept matters as part of its normal financial cycle.

9. Community Engagement and Working with Others

The Council remained committed to open and accessible local government. Meetings included an opportunity for members of the public to raise concerns, and the Council used its website and published agendas and minutes to keep residents informed. Councillors and the Clerk also worked with a range of external bodies and local organisations during the year, including Powys County Council, local associations, community groups and sector bodies. These relationships helped the

Council to raise local issues, share information and contribute to wider discussions affecting the area. The Council was also supported by County Councillor Adrian Jones of Powys County Council, whose engagement helped to strengthen links between the community and the principal authority. The Council also provided small grants to the church and the Recreation Association in support of local community activity. The Council maintains the village playground as part of its wider role in caring for community amenities. The Council also purchased turf for an unfinished area left by builders, helping to improve the appearance and condition of the site. The Council would like to thank local volunteers for all their efforts in supporting village pride and community spirit, including ground preparation, laying the turf and the future upkeep of the area, as well as other jobs including painting the noticeboard, removing weeds from kerb edges, cleaning the bus stop and introducing flowering planters.

10. Highways and Reporting Local Issues

Highways matters remain an important concern within the community, including issues such as potholes, blocked drains, overgrown verges, damaged signs and other defects affecting the safety and condition of roads and footways. While the Council can raise concerns and support residents by drawing attention to local problems, responsibility for most highways matters rests with Powys County Council as the highway authority. It is therefore important that issues are reported to Powys County Council so that they can be logged, assessed and prioritised for action. Prompt reporting helps to ensure that problems are formally recorded and can strengthen the case for repair or maintenance where needed.

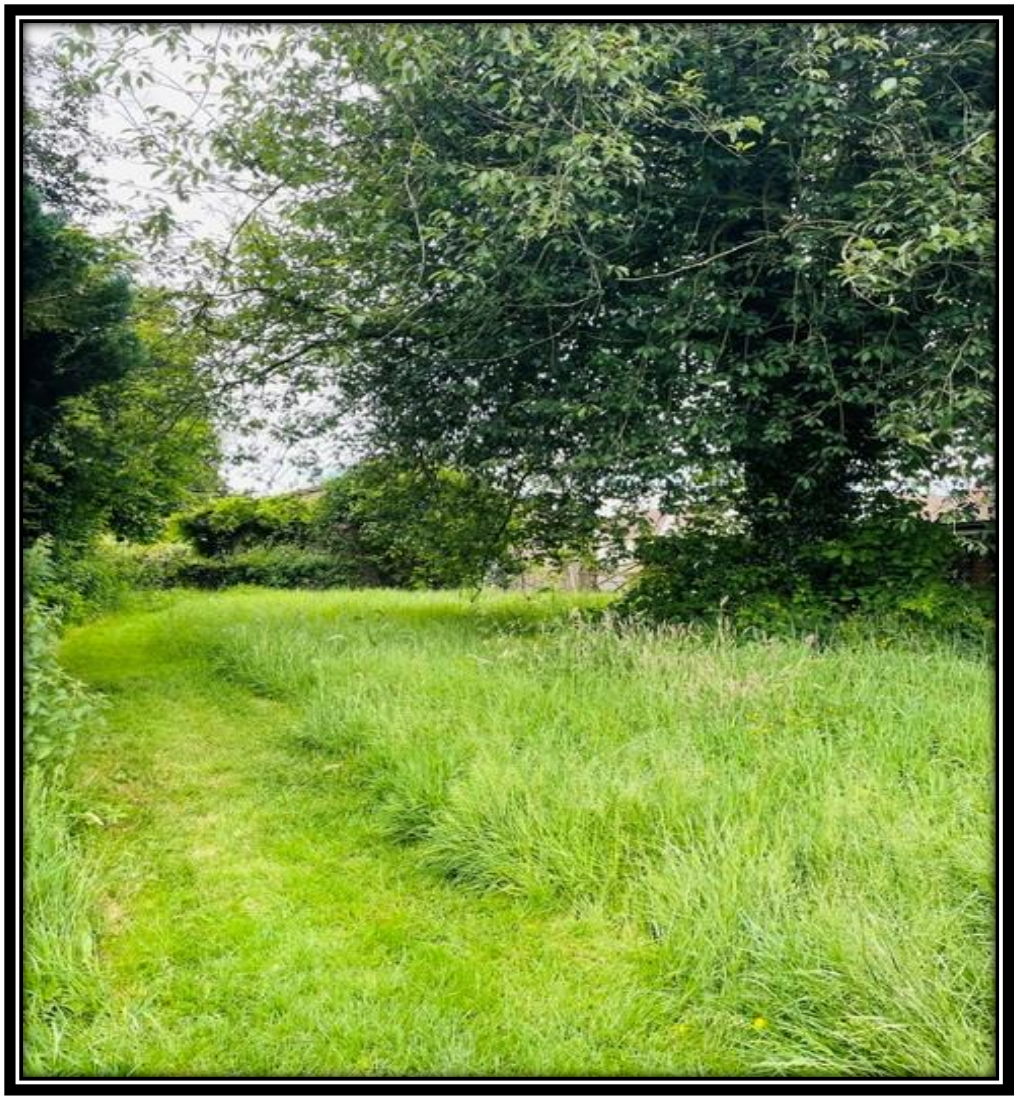
11. Looking Ahead to 2026/27

In 2026/27, the Council will continue to focus on the issues that matter most to the community, including local infrastructure, amenities, planning matters, environmental maintenance and effective representation of residents' concerns. The Council is in the process of refurbishing a red telephone kiosk, which will be available for community use. The Council has also purchased a new bench made from recycled plastic to replace an unsafe bench, improving both safety and the quality of local amenities. In addition, the Council has arranged for new bins to be provided by Powys County Council. These bins include a section for recycling, helping to support cleaner public spaces and encourage environmentally responsible waste disposal.

The water trough, originally built in 1885 and refurbished by the Council in 1993, remains an important local feature. The Council hopes to progress restoration of the water trough area and would welcome community input on the future use and improvement of the space. The Council will continue to review its governance, financial management and communication arrangements to ensure that it remains accountable, transparent and responsive. As always, the Council welcomes engagement from local residents and values the contribution made by councillors, the Clerk and partner organisations in supporting the community.

The historic water trough, first built in 1885 and refurbished by the Council in 1993.

The Council’s new recycled-plastic bench, installed to replace the previous unsafe bench.



The area behind the garages has been earmarked for the biodiversity project. A path has been cut through, leaving the rest of the ground for wildflowers to grow.

Reduced mowing will allow anything wild to grow; however, the Council will look to introduce native wildflowers if the area is particularly low in biodiversity.