

GOLDCLIFF COMMUNITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2026

Vision, purpose and community planning

Goldcliff Community ("the Council") serves the small rural community with a population of around 400 residents. Most local services are provided by Newport City Council ("NCC"). The Council are responsible for a community hall (the Schoolrooms) and arranges the management of local common land and a churchyard. In respect of NCC the Council acts as a conduit for community engagement and concerns of local residents.

Community engagement in a area where homes are scattered is a challenge. Following the closure of the last church in the community, the Schoolrooms and the local pub are the main community facilities.

The Council have refreshed the Schoolrooms and plan further works to make it attractive for local community activities. Wider community engagement is an area of focus for the coming year and is referred to below.

The Council team

The Council comprises seven members. During the year two members have resigned and one new member has joined and there is currently one vacancy. Brian Cork, who unfortunately passed away in April 2026, and Roger Preece who resigned during the year were both long standing members with a wealth of experience and local knowledge which is a loss to the Council. Their contribution to the Council and the community is really appreciated.

Members of the Council:

- Robert Dowsell
- Julie Evans (Joined November 2025)
- Elaine Ford (Clerk)
- Wayne Fox (Chair)
- Jeff Rowland (Vice Chair)
- Julia Waters

Decisions of the Council are made by the council as a team and sub committees have been used very occasionally for one off areas of interest, and report to the Council as a whole. Each member of the Council has an area of interest, such as planning, roads to focus discussion at meetings.

The role of Clerk is undertaken by one of the members. The need/requirement for a Clerk role employed as an Officer of the Council is kept under review but the Council do not feel the cost of this can be justified to the community at this time.

Training plan

GCC routinely considers the training need of members and any officers having regard to good practice and identified needs. There is a core requirement for members to undertake Code Of Conduct training during each term of office and for new members to complete new councillor training. This has all been completed.

Individual members bring skill sets of their own to the Council and a set training program is not considered appropriate, but members recognise the need to enhance the level of formal training over time. Members attending training are expected to feed back to other members on points they believe appropriate in terms of sharing knowledge and influencing future training.

The training modules operated by One Voice Wales are intended to be the core training resource, supplemented as necessary.

In addition to Code of Conduct and new member training for three members, training modules undertaken this year have included Governance, Finance and Legal.

The focus for the coming year will be on sharing the experience this has provided by recent training, together with formal training in areas relating to community engagement and health and safety.

Community engagement

As referred to above, engagement with a wide spread community is a challenge. The Council facilitated a consultation in respect of a local derelict hall and received a higher level of engagement than has been experienced in the past and the Council wants to build upon this.

The interests of many of the adjoining communities are aligned and the Council intends to build stronger relationships with other Community Councils/Community Interest Groups.

The main topics raised by the local community are the condition of local roads and fly tipping which fall within the remit of NCC, the actions of road users which fall within the remit of the police and the local drainage system which is overseen by NRW. The Council works with NCC, the police and NRW in relation to identifying issues, but resource issues are cited as the main issue for the lack of any substantive action or investment. Members of the community are encouraged to also report issues direct as it avoids any delay in reporting and very often priorities are driven by the number of reports received.

The Council website is being updated to include link to local services. There are a number of local social media interest groups and having regard to the roles these fulfil the Council does not itself have a social media presence.

Health & wellbeing

During the year the Council arranged the installation of a defibrillator kindly provided by British Heart Foundation at the Schoolrooms. There are now three units in the community.

Business processes and activities

The Council's income is primarily from a precept levied on the local community and collected by NCC as part of Council Tax billing. Charges are made to users of the Schoolrooms not connected with the local community, but otherwise it is available for use by local groups and residents free of charge to encourage use, with donations welcome towards costs. Outgoings of the Council largely comprise insurance and utility costs for the Schoolrooms and grounds maintenance costs.

Appropriate records, systems and processes are maintained. The Council recognises that there is scope to improve areas such as the documentation of policies, with good progress made in understanding the historic position of the Council following the loss of records on the death of the former clerk.

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystem

The Council's direct influence on biodiversity is limited:

The Council manages the local hall, with users responsible for rubbish.

- Road verge management is undertaken by NCC.
- The Council arranges for the cutting of local common land but itself does not have ownership or management rights.
- There is a small area of grass adjoining the hall which is routinely cut in season for H&S reasons and used by waterfowl from the adjoining reed. The Council arranges the maintenance of one local church and funds the church in respect of one other church with arrangements which respect and encourage biodiversity.
- The members of the Council are the trustees of an area of land let to a local farmer with obligations to maintain it in an appropriate manner.
- Tree planting has been undertaken during the year and opportunities to encourage wild flowers on a small area of land are being explored.

The Council seeks to embed its duty in respect of its obligations under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 into its future decision-making and to strengthen its role in promoting biodiversity awareness through its community activities and the upkeep of local land.

Finances

The precept is the primary source of funding for the Council. Following a reduction in 2025, it has remained unchanged for 2025/6 and 2026/7 per property, with the income received varying only by the number of eligible properties.

	2025		2026	
Precept	£7,808	90%	£6,296	97%
Other	£690	8%	£40	1%
Interest	£170	2%	£159	2%
	<u>£8,668</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>£6,495</u>	<u>100%</u>
Utilities for hall	£945	13%	£1,478	24%
Insurance	£525	7%	£455	8%
Grass cutting	£2,150	29%	£1,565	26%
Repairs	£1,391	19%	£2,068	34%
Other	£2,449	33%	£490	8%
	<u>£7,460</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>£6,055</u>	<u>100%</u>
Surplus	<u>£1,208</u>		<u>£440</u>	

Largely hall rental for elections

2 churches & Schoolroom

New fire escape and heaters in 2026

2025 included backlog audit fees

Approved 14 May 2026