

KERRY COMMUNITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT



Cyngor Cymuned CERI / KERRY Community Council
Serving the Villages of Kerry, Sarn and Dolfor.

Annual Report for Kerry Community Council 2025-2026

ORGANISATION:

Kerry Community Council (KCC) encompasses the villages of Kerry, Sarn and Dolfor. the three villages are represented by the following councillors/ officials:

Chair	Cllr. C. Seal. (Kerry).
Vice-Chair	Cllr T. Blatch (Kerry) Co-opted July 24
Cllrs.	Cllr. V. Wildish (Kerry) Cllr. D. Jones (Sarn) Cllr. B. Pryce. (Sarn) Cllr. R. Gardner (Dolfor) Cllr. M. Morgan (Kerry) Cllr. S Robertson (Kerry) Cllr. E. Meredith-Jones (Kerry) Cllr. C. Fairclough (Dolfor) Co-opted Sept 24 Cllr. F. Blatch (Kerry) Co-opted March 25 Cllr. T Davies (Sarn) Co-opted April 25 Cllr. A Davies (Kerry) Co-opted July 25
County Cllrs	Cllr. K. Lewis (Dolfor) Cllr. B. Breeze (Kerry & Sarn)
Biodiversity Officer	Cllr. E Meredith- Jones
Clerk/ Proper Officer	Sarah Reast
Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)	Ria Roberts

Contact details for councillors can be found on the Kerry Community Council website or upon request from the clerk
clerk@kerrycommunitycouncil.gov.uk

The Council aims to communicate with residents, to represent their views at council meetings and to ensure the well-being and maintenance of the three villages. To facilitate this, councillors sit on a number of diverse committees and sub-committees to make themselves as approachable and visible as possible.

KERRY COMMUNITY COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES & COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON OTHER ORGANISATIONS' COMMITTEES:

Committees/ Sub Committees/ Organisations	Councillors/ Officers
Planning Sub-Committees	Kerry – Cllr. V. Wildish Cllr. E Meredith-Jones Cllr. M Morgan Sarn - Cllr. B. Pryce Cllr. D. Jones

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	Dolfor- Cllr. C Fairclough Cllr. R. Gardner
Biodiversity Sub Committee/ Officer	Cllr. E. Meredith Jones Cllr. S Robertson
Village Hall Committees	Kerry - Cllr V Wildish Sarn - Cllr. B. Pryce Dolfor - Cllr. C Fairclough
School Governors- Kerry	Cllr. F Blatch
One Voice Wales, Montgomeryshire Area Committee (2 representatives)	Cllr. V. Wildish Cllr. C. Seal
The Vale of Montgomery Rural Cluster (2 representatives)	Cllr. C. Seal Cllr. S. Robertson Cllr. E Meredith Jones (Clerk)
Amenities Sub-Committee	Cllr T. Blatch (Chair) Cllr. B. Pryce Cllr. V. Wildish (Clerk) Cllr C. Seal
Garreg Lwyd Hill Wind Farm	Cllr. R Gardner Cllr. D. Jones
Garn Fach Wind Farm	Cllr. R. Gardner
Community Grants Sub-Committee	Cllr. V Wildish Cllr. D. Jones Cllr. T Davies
Finance & Governance Sub-Committee	Cllr. C. Seal Cllr. T Blatch Cllr B. Pryce Clerk RFO
Powys County Council & Town and Community Council Meetings	Cllr. V. Wildish
Powys Farm Estates Group	Cllr. D Jones Cllr. T Davies Cllr. C Fairclough

Throughout the year councillors/clerk also participated in on-line meetings and discussions with other organisations including PCC Planning; PAVO; SLCC, OVW; Sustainable Powys and groups concerned with environmental issues such as Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust

KERRY COMMUNITY COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

The council employs three part time staff, as follows.

Clerk

Sarah Reast was appointed as Clerk in April 2025 and has settled in well. She has built up her knowledge and understanding of the area and the Council's processes over the year and is undertaking formal training (Introduction to Local Council Administration) to add to her proficiency

Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

Ria Roberts was appointed Clerk/RFO in October 2022 and has obtained the FILCA & ILCA qualifications. Ria resigned as Clerk in April 2025

The separation of the roles of Clerk and RFO has strengthened governance and accountability - a change that has worked extremely well and improved oversight.

Playground Caretaker

K. Cornell visits the two playgrounds every week to make routine checks and to report any problems back to the Council. He also maintains the area immediately surrounding the war memorial.

KERRY VILLAGE INSPECTION

In August 2025 Kerry councillors undertook a visual inspection of Kerry Village. Issues arising were discussed by the Council and actioned, as appropriate.

KERRY CEMETERY SURVEY

The annual year end Cemetery Survey was conducted by Cllr. C. Seal, the RFO and Clerk 14th April 2025. The survey did not identify any major issues and minor maintenance issues were reported to Cemetery Maintenance contractor. Sadly, two benches have gone missing from the cemetery, reducing visitors' ability to sit and rest when they visit.

The Council is ensuring long-term burial provision for the community through the cemetery extension zones soon to be used as the older part of the site is nearly full.

The Council have resolved to digitise the burial records going forward for the purpose of ease of reference and data security. Digitising the historical records will also be undertaken when time allows and additional sources of funding have been explored.

ROSPA REPORTS

Annual Safety Inspection RoSPA reports were completed for the play equipment at Kerry Recreation ground and Dolforgan Park. Remedial actions and recommendations have been actioned, as appropriate.

MEMBERSHIPS:

- Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations (PAVO)
- One Voice Wales (OVW)
- The Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)
- Vale of Montgomery Rural Cluster (VMRC)

FINANCE:

See attached Statement of Accounts (Appendix A). The Council has consistently achieved unqualified audits from Audit Wales, demonstrating sound financial management and compliance.

Bank Balances as of 31/03/2026

Note: To satisfy tighter internal controls, the Council resolved to change bank accounts from HSBC to Unity Trust.

Unity Trust Current Account: £16,123.07

Unity Trust Instant Access Account: £47,289.70

Total Funds £45,943.82

ASSETS AND SERVICES MANAGED:

- Kerry Public Conveniences
- Dolforgan Park including the Grade II listed bridge and children's play area
- Children's play area at St Michael's School, Kerry
- An area for play at Herbert Court, Kerry
- Kerry Cemetery
- War Memorial

KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 2025/26 – Including achievements to date, projects currently in progress and planned for the future:

1.General

- To continue to support the local economy by awarding contracts to local businesses and sole traders wherever possible
- To continue to financially assist with the offer of grant funding projects undertaken by local groups and organisations which provide a benefit to the local community in general.

2. KCC Green Energy Project

For the first full year of exporting solar energy, our panels generated a Solar Export Credit of £292.03 for FYE 31/03/2026, with electricity import costs of £1,230.00. This represents a solid 24% reduction in overall energy costs. While this is lower than the anticipated 51%, the increase in electricity prices this year has naturally reduced the percentage saving

Thanks to financial savings, KCC is committed to maintaining public toilets, ensuring they remain open and accessible for both residents and visitors. Access to public conveniences is crucial, especially for individuals with hidden disabilities. By providing these essential services, we are making a positive impact on the community, enhancing the quality of life for everyone.

The toilets are used by:

- Local residents including people with disabilities and children using the nearby playpark/ Walking Groups/Tradespeople including delivery drivers/refuse collectors/postal workers/taxi & mini-bus drivers.
- People attending funerals, weddings and regular services at St Michael's Church (the church does not have its own toilets) and the Baptist Chapel.
- Visitors/holidaymakers travelling from the Midlands and south Shropshire as a welcome comfort break before continuing on their journey to other parts of Wales.

3. St Michael's Adventure Playground Maintenance Programme

The Council carried out a significant repair programme in 2024-25 to ensure that the playground remains a safe and fun area for the children. Some minor maintenance issues were identified in the ROSPA inspection report in 2025-26 and the necessary remedial work took place in April 2026

Rope repair on bridge - £600.00

Repair of rubber seal on swing bars - £100.00

The renewal of the playground lease agreement with Powys County Council, has been completed allowing consideration of further developments for the future. The need for improvements to the fencing and signage which remains under the ownership of Powys County Council have been reported and is awaiting attention

4. Dolforgan Park

Some minor maintenance issues to do with the play panel and basket swing were identified in this year and have been addressed in April 2026 at no cost to the Council

Some extra signage asking that no ball games be played in the immediate vicinity have been installed

5. Kerry Football Club

The Council have met with the Football club to discuss the renewal of their lease for the football ground and are pleased to hear about the growing success of the club especially at the junior level which has welcomed a great number of members. The Council will continue to liaise with the club to support the development of improved parking areas.

6. Training Plan

The Council completed and published an updated training plan for Councillors /Clerk in November 2025 to meet Welsh Government requirements. The Council actively encourages Councillors to utilise training provided, enabling them to carry out their roles more effectively and with greater confidence. The Clerk ensures that all available bursaries are utilised to reduce the precept burden on the local community.

7. Biodiversity

The Council continues to maintain the Kerry Cemetery Butterfly Garden with the aid of dedicated local volunteers which continues to thrive as a valued biodiversity and community space.

Following the successful Biodiversity Engagement Event (B.E.E.) organised in collaboration with the VMRC in 2024, the Council and the VMRC have been busy working on further events for the Summer of 2026 to be held in Kerry on the 6th of June 2026 with possible participants such as Havenmore Hedgehog Rescue, British Trust for Ornithology, Montgomeryshire Field Society and others. Stagecraft (Newtown) have supplied 2 outdoor planters for the school children to fill and Kerry School children have been helping design a free bag for visitors (funded by Kerry Community Council).

The 2024 B.E.E. held in Kerry was submitted for and received an award at the One Voice Wales Awards Ceremony. The awards honour innovative projects from community and town councils across Wales and the certificate received can be seen in the entrance area of Kerry Village Hall.

The Council published a Biodiversity Report in December 2025 which was submitted to and approved by One Voice Wales according to their responsibilities under Section 6, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Duty, Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which can be found on the web-site under 'News and Announcements'

8. Dolforgan Bridge Maintenance & River Mule riverbank erosion project.

The Grade II listed bridge had a scheduled survey in May 24, which highlighted the requirement for major maintenance and some immediate minor maintenance.

The Council engaged a contractor to complete the minor maintenance however the cost of the major maintenance will require significant grant funding.

Due to winter storms the riverbank at Dolforgan Park, adjacent to Dolforgan Bridge, has suffered significant erosion. If the Council does not attend to this issue the bridge structure will be undermined.

The Council has liaised with Powys County Council to review environmentally friendly options for repair and in addition has obtained grant funding of £13,119.40 to allow the Council to carry out the necessary repairs. The Council has also resolved to agree a contribution of £4,000.00.

The project has been only partially completed which was to take place in two phases. The reason for the delay was due to the time for PCC to issue the river entry/permit and subsequent inclement weather restricting access to the river

Phase 1 of the work was to relocate the large volume of sediment on the inside of the bend immediately upstream of Dolforgan Bridge to the outside of the bend in order to level out the river bed and slow down the flow of water and its ability to erode the bank. This work was completed in September 2025 but most of the benefits were again reversed during subsequent winter storms. Phase 2 is to install sheet piles along the river bank which will create a robust and lasting solution. This work will be carried out during the Summer of 2026

9. Farm Estates engagement project

The Council has worked constructively with Powys County Council to support the local farming community, including engagement to ensure tenant farmers' interests are properly considered. The Council held a very well attended meeting on 27th of May 2025 for Powys Officers and elected members to clarify the County Council's position on Farm Estate management and possible sales.

A motion proposed and carried at the event stated that the Council:

1. Recognises the valuable contribution that council-owned farms play in supporting food production and enabling young entrants into farming.
2. Regrets that selling council-owned farms risks reducing Powys's and Wales's food security and traditional farming practices, causing a shifting towards less sustainable practices.
3. Calls on Powys County Council to impose a moratorium on the sale of council-owned farms.
4. Calls upon the recognition of the importance of farming to the social and economic viability of the broader community

As a result of the event, a moratorium on the sale of council-owned farms was imposed whilst Powys County Council reviewed their new policy for future tenancies. The Council continue to keep a watchful eye on the progress of this policy.

10. Engagement with the Community and other organisations

- Kerry Community Council continues to engage with its widespread communities of Kerry, Dolfor and Sarn using the usual village noticeboards, local shops and pubs and also the internet based options including the Council website and Facebook page
- Kerry Community Council keeps in close contact with its two County Councillors Cllrs. Ben Breeze and Karl Lewis

11. Kerry Community Project Grants (S137)

Each year the Council allocates and sets aside a sum of money to be distributed between local organisations for projects which are deemed to be beneficial to their local communities. Organisations are invited to apply to the Council grants for these projects. From next year any monies remaining after all the grants have been paid may be granted to the village halls to spend according to their needs but in accordance with the Council's strict legally binding funding powers. The Council will ask for detailed reports about the

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use of the money in order to allocate expenditure under the correct regulatory powers. This decision was made in the light of reflections in the previous year's report on the challenges around attracting grant applications.

The Council provided £3,530.00 of Grant Funding for community projects in 2025-26, which have made a significant difference to the various local organisations' members and residents. The Grants awarded were as follows::

- Dolfor WI – Purchase of mobile dartboard for use in the Village Hall - £230.00
- Sarn Bowling Club – Installation of lights and floodlights by clubhouse and to car park - £200.00
- St Michael's School – Grounds maintenance - £1300.00
- The Kerry Events and Defib Group – Purchase of marquee to further develop the Kerry Funday - £750.00
- Kerry WI – Purchase bulbs and planter for Kerry Village - £100.00 – “We would like to take this opportunity to thank the council for their ongoing support enabling us to plant up extra containers to enhance the village and also plant more snowdrops on the bank opposite the shop. They have all flowered beautifully this year and we are very pleased with the result.”
- Kerry Bowling Club – Upgrade path so more accessible to members - £750.00
- Dolfor Free Church – Purchase two hot water boilers for event refreshments - £200.00

REFLECTIONS ON WHAT WORKED WELL AND NOT SO WELL:

Positive Reflections

- The Council is pleased with the various project outcomes as detailed above
- The Council has experienced another busy year with all the councillors being actively engaged in the community either directly or via sub-committees/ external organisation committees. The Council prides itself on being very accessible and is enthusiastic in its efforts to represent as many different aspects of the community as possible
- The Council co-opted 2 new members, Cllrs Trystan Davies (Sarn) and Andy Davies (Kerry)
- The Council continued to be successful in seeking grant applications to support local concerns and reduce the burden on the precept
- The Council delivered a successful programme of Grants for Community Projects (S137 funding for community projects) as detailed above
- The Council has continued to enhance its governance and to uphold and exceed the established high standards of public accountability.

Negative Reflections

- Due to inflation the Council was forced to increase the precept for 26/27 by 4.18% for a total of £36,523.00. The calculation formula used was inflation plus 10% - for this year the increase based on the calculation is 3.8% + 38% = percentage increase of 4.18% exactly - rounded up to nearest whole pound
- The Council struggles to make progress on highways matters despite regular reporting on pot-holes, signage, landslides and other problems

FUTURE OBJECTIVES:

- St Michael's Adventure Playground Maintenance Programme – The play equipment requires constant maintenance, and some items need replacing. The Council has agreed a maintenance programme to ensure that the playground remains a safe and fun area for the children.
- To continue to address residents' concerns regarding speeding traffic in Kerry in collaboration with Powys and Welsh Government road agencies and GoSafe.
- Biodiversity Projects in collaboration with the VMRC e.g. Biodiversity Engagement Event - Saturday 6th June 2026.
- To replace the old noticeboard at the Village Hall
- The Council has a commitment to apply for grant funding for projects, as appropriate.

Finally, Kerry Community Council are keen to ensure that we represent the whole community in our ward and if any resident or group feel that we could do better in an area please let us know and we will add it to a future agenda for discussion

Signed:

Chair

29/05/202

(signed copy on file)

Statement of Accounts Below. Appendix A

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Kerry Community Council STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS
Opening Balance		
Balance at Bank	46,035.36	
Cash in Hand		
Precept	35,057.00	
S106 Payments		
Grant Funding	13,119.40	
Bank Interest	901.85	
Donations & Sundry Income	50.00	
Clerk Wages		7,361.03
HMRC PAYE		1,272.40
PAVO Payroll Administration		264.00
Stationery		70.19
Website, email & SSL Costs		336.32
IT Services & Equipment		198.29
Audit Fees/ Accounting Software		1,132.60
Sundry Expenses		255.57
Kerry Grants S137		2,900.00
Dolfor Grants S137		430.00
Sarn Grants S137		200.00
Cllr/ Council Officer Training		477.00
One Voice Wales Membership		461.00
ICO Data Protection		47.00
SLCC Membership		116.00
VMRC		250.00
Cemetery Maintenance		3,808.40
Cemetery Contingencies		139.92
Annual Insurance PL/EL/ Assets		2,064.35
Cllr Basic Payment		780.00
Cllr Travel, Subsistence & Consumables expense		306.46
Kerry Toilet Contract Monthly payment		3,652.80
Kerry Toilet Electricity Charges		1,230.00
Kerry Toilet Water Charges		990.10
Kerry Toilet Janitorial Supplies		299.26
Kerry Toilet Maintenance, Repairs & Contingenci		645.44
Grass Cutting Dolforgan Park/ Herbert Court		1,740.00
Cemetery Fees	4,190.00	
FHU Servicing		58.79
Playground Caretaker Salary		820.64
HMRC Employers NI		390.45
Conferences		130.00
RoSPA Reports		156.00
Pension Payments (Employer/Employee)		137.12
Unity Trust Service Charges		73.00
Dolforgan Bridge Erosion Protection Project		50.00
RFO Salary		2,483.60
Solar Panel Export Payment	292.03	
Legal		550.00
Lloyds Bank Credit Card CHG		3.00
VAT	1,592.28	1,752.42
	55,202.56	38,033.15
Closing Balances:		
<u>Balances in Bank Account</u>		<u>63,204.77</u>
Cash in Hand		0
TOTAL	101,237.92	101,237.92

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the council as at 31 Mar 2026

Signed *Bia Roberts*
Responsible Financial Officer

Date 11/05/2026