

Your environment, let's shape it together



ENVIRO PEOPLE

Director's Message



Many of you have signed up to our staff volunteering database and been redeployed to areas of work to provide essential support for our communities, making best use of your skills. Colleagues have been supporting the essential food delivery hubs, assisting with the massive administrative task to ensure we have cleaners at the sites we need then when we need them, driving to support other services in particular our refuse crews, coordinating services for the homeless, and generally providing extra pairs of hands where they are needed. **Thank you.**

Some of you have used your skills and knowledge to deliver specific projects urgently needed in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. A huge effort from colleagues to identify buildings, design and install field hospitals, succeeded in being completed in just 3 weeks, due to everyone's commitment and long hours of work. Supervisors and team leaders have been working with colleagues in H&S to ensure that we have risk assessment and safe systems of work in place for all our activities. Teams have been established to ensure supplies of PPE equipment and make sure it is distributed to colleagues who most need it in social care and education as well as our own services. **Thank you.**

And many of you, like me, will be working from home. Trying to balance the working day with home schooling and child care, (you have my utmost admiration!) learning how to keep in contact with colleagues using digital means, dealing with the lack of social contact, and finding new ways to deliver our services in a remote way. I suspect our working lives will never return to exactly the same again, but while we start to plan how we will return to work, it is important for now we continue to stay at home. **Thank you.**

We have some staff at home shielding to protect themselves and their families, stay well. And to those who are unwell, we send our warmest wishes for you to get well soon.

Every day I hear stories of little acts of kindness and support amongst teams and colleagues, and these lift my spirits every time – keep being kind **#SirGaredig.**

With my sincerest gratitude for everything that you do, and most importantly stay safe at work and at home with your families. **Thank you.**

Next steps success and future opportunities

Last year saw Next Steps 10th anniversary and 10 successful candidates received an apprenticeship opportunity with our Property Maintenance team, CYFLE, Lloyd and Gravell and TRJ. Of these 10 successful candidates Corey Urch, Joshua Williams and Jeremy Kenny were successful in obtaining a position within the Property Maintenance team. Working in collaboration with Property Maintenance are CYFLE, Lloyd & Gravell, TRJ, Coleg Sir Gar, CCTAL.



Now in its 11th year, Next Steps is for men and women living within our county, aged 16 and over looking for an apprenticeship opportunity with an interest in obtaining qualifications in groundwork's, carpentry, bricklaying, plastering, painting and decorating. The programme has already changed the lives of countless local people – including people who have gone on to set up their own business and win national skills competitions. The successful candidates commence a minimum two year paid apprenticeship / training programme with

Lloyd & Gravell Ltd, TRJ Ltd or Carmarthenshire County Council. We will shortly be recruiting for 25 people to become professionals of the future.

Executive Board Members—Thank You

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the Department involved in the setting up of the Field Hospital for the exceptional effort that was put in to get them up and ready in such a short period of time.

I would also like to thank the refuse team for the excellent service they are giving to our householders, with the closure of the HWRC sites it has been extremely challenging with the amount of bags being put out, but you have all dealt with it exceptionally well. Thank you all very much for keeping up with the service in these very challenging times.

I also wish to thank all of our staff who are going above and beyond during this period.

Cllr Hazel Evans **Executive Board Member for Environment**

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to all members of staff, for all the hard work that is being done to keep the residents of Carmarthenshire informed and updated, but more importantly safe and free from as much harm as possible.

Delivering front line services can be difficult even at the best of times, but as we sail through these uncharted waters, I would like to assure you that you are doing it with the full support of all those around you.

This is just a quick message of thanks to express my gratitude to you all.

Cllr Phillip Hughes **Executive Board Member for Public Protection**

South West Wales Area Statement - Nature Recovery Plan

The Carmarthenshire Nature Partnership, which the council facilitates, has been in existence for over 20 years, working together to try and conserve, enhance and raise awareness about the county's diverse range of species and habitats. The Conservation Section has led on the production of the Partnership's [Nature Recovery Plan](#) for the county. It has been developed based on the objectives of a national Welsh Nature Recovery Plan, which address the issues that are driving the decline in biodiversity, and to support recovery. One of the next steps will be to capture how the Council already contributes to the objectives of the plan through the way we manage/maintain our land and buildings and the projects we undertake, e.g. [Carmarthenshire Bogs Project](#) , [Caeau Mynydd Mawr Marsh Fritillary Project](#).

The Council's involvement contributes to our duties under the Environment (Wales) Act 206 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. At the same time Natural Resources Wales have developed a series of 'Area Statements', covering seven separate, yet hugely diverse, parts of Wales. Carmarthenshire is in the [South West Area Statement \(AS\) region](#). This Area Statement identifies the key risks, opportunities and priorities that we all need to address to build the resilience of our ecosystems and support sustainable management of our natural resources. The work the council undertakes could contribute to action to address the main themes identified.

- Reducing health inequalities
- Ensuring sustainable land management
- Reversing the decline of, and enhancing, biodiversity
- Cross-cutting theme: mitigating and adapting to a changing climate

NRW will start a conversation with us on how best to take action – both in terms of delivery and in refining the detail where further work is needed. This is likely to involve more focused work on specific themes or around particular geographical areas.



RICS Social Impact Awards 2020, Wales Education Winner: Ysgol Pen Rhos, Llanelli

The winner of the RICS Social Impact Awards 2020, Wales - Education has been awarded to Ysgol Penrhos.

The awards recognise the built environment's positive and transformational contribution to society and the range of projects and initiatives below showcase the very best from across Wales. The Education category covers primary, secondary, tertiary or adult education facilities from schools to colleges and universities. Congratulations to our Surveyors!



The new two form entry primary school Ysgol Pen Rhos - replaces both Lakefield Primary School and Copperworks Infant Nursery School. It delivers a new, modern 21st century learning facility that has regenerated a derelict, once heavily industrial, highly contaminated brownfield site, prone to vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Ysgol Pen Rhos acts as a catalyst for regeneration and has become a real driver for economic benefit and change in the local area. Even better, the project has been selected as the overall Project of the Year from the winners of the 8 Categories for 2020.

Thank you to our Cleaners for keeping us safe!

Thank you to the cleaners that have kept our school hubs, food distribution centres, depots, offices and sheltered housing open over this period. They have gone above and beyond to respond to the need for more cleaning across these buildings to ensure front line services can continue to be provided.

Cllr Hazel Evans, Executive Board Member for Environment has sent a message of thanks for our Cleaning Team:

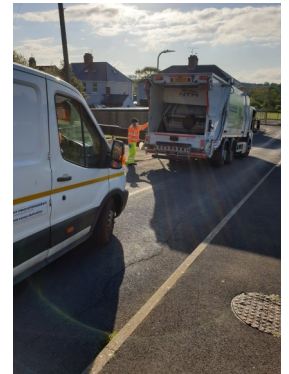
“I am writing to you all to thank you very much for the effort that you have put in since the start of this pandemic to ensure that all our offices, schools, fire stations and sheltered complexes have been cleaned to a very high standard ensuring that this highly contagious disease can be limited as much as possible. The Public and I appreciate the work that your our doing especially our schools and care homes, as well as other services we provide to external customers. It is often a service that goes unnoticed until it doesn't get done. I appreciate the difficulties faced by you and I appreciate the sacrifices that you are making with regard to your own personal lives. On behalf of myself and fellow executive board members as well as the general public Thank you very much.”



Roadworkers support deliveries & waste crews

Roadworkers from our Cillefwr, Glanaman and Trostre depots have been initially assisting with food deliveries to our schools from Castell Howell in Crosshands. They have since assisted with food packages being delivered direct to homes from schools.

We also have a number of roadworkers from our Trostre depot redeployed each day to the Waste / Refuse Unit as drivers in a support vehicle on refuse rounds. The support vehicle ferries one loader around the refuse round following behind the Refuse lorry.



Thank you to our Hi-Vis Heroes!

Whilst our waste operatives are going the extra mile during the Covid-19 crisis to keep waste and recycling collections going, residents have been making their appreciation felt for all their hard work.



With waste and recycling collections crucial to public and environmental health during the Covid-19 crisis, waste workers – deemed 'key workers' by the government – have continued to carry out essential services during the epidemic. Much like for frontline NHS workers, waste workers have been receiving thanks and gratitude from householders. Many of whom are self-isolating or social distancing to limit the spread of the virus, providing great encouragement in these difficult times. #Sirgaredig

Your environment, let's shape it together



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It's easy to keep up to date with all staff news, discounts and events by registering your personal email address.

Be the first to hear about:



Staff news and events



Staff discounts

Have your say...



Receive up to date communication

**YES!
SIGN ME UP**

By signing up today you will:

Help us become more environmentally friendly



EMAIL your Name, Employee Number and Email Address to: KellyThomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

OR complete and return this form to:
Freepost RSHS-UALU-GJJS, Business Support & Performance,
Carmarthenshire County Council,
Block 1, Parc Myrddin, Carmarthen
SA31 1HQ

Name:

Employee Number:

Email Address:

If you do not respond you will continue to receive the newsletter by post.

How we use your information

We will use the **personal email address** you provide to keep you up to date with **staff news and updates**. Your information won't be used for any other purpose(s). The legal basis for using your personal data in this way is your Consent for us to keep your email address and communicate work related news and updates. We won't share this information with any other Council service or external organisation. We'll keep your personal data for the length of your employment.

Contact details:

Kelly Thomas, Senior Customer Focus Officer,
01267 228130

Your Data Protection rights

For more information about your rights and to obtain contact details for our Data Protection Officer, please visit our website: www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/data-protection

Llanelli Town Hall improvements approved

Thanks to the efforts of Property Design and Planning, Welsh Government have given Listed Building Consent to Llanelli Town Hall. This will allow for the proposed new ramp, repairs to the Portico roof and also associated incidental stonework repairs to be carried out. The existing external platform lift, which has become beyond economic repair, will be removed. This will be a permanent and attractive solution for this iconic building.

Keeping our roads safe

Duty Officers, Supervisors, Highway Inspectors and emergency highway crews have continued to inspect our highways, carry out emergency and safety repairs and respond to incidents such as Road Traffic Collisions. The team provide an essential service 24 hours a day and seven days a week to ensure our roads are safe for those who need to travel.

Property Design & Maintenance assist to provide field hospitals

In just three weeks, contractors selected from the new South West Wales Construction Framework, worked with Carmarthenshire County Council's property design and maintenance teams to turn the facilities around at short notice and at a remarkable pace.

They have converted two leisure centres, a bowling and events arena and a rugby stadium into temporary hospitals to help Hywel Dda University Health Board deal with its response to coronavirus.



Roger helps with food parcel deliveries

One of our Civil Enforcement Officers, Roger Thomas, quickly volunteered to help with the delivery of food parcels in Llanelli. Roger has been helping deliver the food parcels since the 27th March using one of our Council vehicles

Fleet keep our essential vehicles on the road

Our Fleet Management team has been working tirelessly throughout the Coronavirus epidemic to ensure that our essential Council vehicles are kept on the road. These vehicles include key refuse collection wagons, highways vehicles and social care vehicles. Members of this dedicated team worked over the Bank Holiday weekend to back-up front line services.

STAFF STORIES

Redeployed to assist housing during Covid-19



During this lockdown period I have been doing work for the Housing section feeding the vulnerable people in Llanelli and fulfilling a liaison role between the Housing section and the voluntary sector to provide information on homelessess. Several homeless / sofa surfers and people living in unsuitable accommodation have been identified and helped by the Housing Options team through this liaison.

Using my experience of managing the Sosban Soup Station (outside of work), I was asked to highlight the issues evident in Llanelli then replicate my outside work to ensure the most vulnerable in society were fed. This has resulted in a Monday to Friday service during lockdown run directly by Carmarthenshire County Council and collaboration with Ty Gwyn Community Church to support the Life Café on weekends. This may be the only direct food provision of this kind in Wales? Over the course of the first week over 150 meals were provided. The most vulnerable have any combination of issues, such as poverty, housing, substance abuse and mental health so direct food provision allows the Council to ensure they are cared for in ways other provision may not be fit for purpose. The team of Carmarthenshire County Council staff from across the authority along with external volunteers have worked together seamlessly to cook soup, prepare snack bags, hand out food and do crowd control to ensure physical distancing.

It's been a privilege to employ my management and organisational skills from outside work to bring the project together in a matter of weeks and see the appreciation of the service users as they receive hot soup, tea / coffee and a snack bag every night.

Gary Glenister—Development Management Officer

Redeployed as a Cleaning Services Trainer during Covid-19

Since Thursday the 26th of March and part of the redeployment and volunteering in the council, my new role has been to assist with the training of 500 cleaning staff across the various hub schools, offices and housing complexes in the County. Amanda Evans - Conservation Project Officer and myself Shaun Miles – Building Control Surveyor volunteered from the Environment Department and assisted with the training of the cleaning staff.

Our redeployed role is to train cleaning staff in our designated areas, on the new enhanced cleaning arrangements required for these buildings in line with COVID-19 Government guidelines. My redeployed role entailed attending training on the new cleaning regime and then visit the various locations in my designated area to provide training to ensure the cleaners were up to date on the new Government guidance in relation to COVID-19. Once the cleaners were updated on the new regime, I have been in contact with them on a weekly basis to ensure they have the necessary resources to undertake their roles. This included providing them with the recommended, Titan cleaning product and PPE (disposable apron, and gloves) to ensure safety is maintained. **Shaun Miles—Building Control Surveyor**



STAFF STORIES

Redeployed at a food hub during Covid-19

Following the initial completion of the departmental “skill set” questionnaire I was redeployed from the ‘day job’ of determining planning applications to working at the food hub at Ysgol Dyffryn Amman in Ammanford from the outset on Friday 27th of March 2020, one of three such food hubs across the county with the others being at Queen Elizabeth School, Carmarthen and Bryngwyn school in Llanelli. This expanded over the following couple of weeks to a total of seven hubs spread over Carmarthenshire.



The work involves the preparation of food boxes/bags and when we first arrived the scale of the work became immediately apparent. At the beginning it all felt rather strange to be honest and the logistics of laying everything out, auditing the amount of food/goods available, to the issues of social distancing and developing an efficient method of packaging.



Logistically having a number of hubs became a problem due to both the supply chain breaking down and ensuring there were sufficient staff to maintain the packaging of the goods at each location. Eventually, on the 20th of April a central hub was established at Neuadd y Gwendreath, part of the former Gwendraeth school in Drefach. A two-shift system led by Steve Pound, more usually the Building Control Manager and myself was introduced along with a dedicated risk assessment for the site location, ensuring controls on social distancing, PPE, safe methods of packaging along with dedicated online training courses for each member of the team.

We are now into our second week at our new hub and it seems to be working very well. Although the work can at times appear daunting with the unloading of deliveries/pallets, opening all of the goods, making up of the individual bags/boxes, loading of the vans with what are heavy, completed packages and the restocking of goods in readiness for the next shift, both teams approach the task diligently and achieve remarkable outcomes. Subject to the availability of goods the teams are regularly producing 200-300+ completed packages per shift.

Both Steve and I have found that there has been a sense of wellbeing achieved by volunteering along with a team spirit and comradeship from working as part of a team with colleagues from across the Planning division. The volunteering work has also given us an opportunity to get to know members of the department you don't necessarily get to talk to on a regular basis. We all feel it is a different challenge to what we are normally used to at work and it certainly gives us a greater perspective of what really matters.

On a personal level as someone who received free school meals, albeit many years ago, it is particularly satisfying to be part of an enterprise that is ensuring that those children who would usually have free school meals continue to receive food packages during this unprecedented time. Like everyone, we do hope that things will get better soon and that Steve, I and the teams are no longer needed at the food banks. In the meantime we will continue to help out as much as we possibly can.

Steven Pound & Graham Noakes
Building Control Manager & Senior Development Management Officer

STAFF STORIES

Redeployed at a Care Hub during Covid-19

During the Easter holidays, I was asked if I would assist at one of the school hubs. Selected schools have been kept open for keyworkers' children to attend for essential childcare, in order they can carry on to provide an essential service.

Ysgol Y Ddwylan, Newcastle Emlyn was to be my school for two days per week. Although I didn't hesitate in accepting this new role as I wanted to 'do my bit', I was apprehensive about what was ahead of me – I had been working from home, and now all of a sudden it was back out to the community, to care for children who's parents were on the 'front line'.



The schools hubs are open from 8am – 6pm, and operate on a pre-booked 'drop in session', so some children would be there 8am – 4.30pm, and others would arrive in the afternoon, and stay later, depending on their parent's shift pattern. With ages ranging from 3 ½ – 12 years old, it was a challenge to keep everyone occupied with various age related activities, whilst being safe when doing so.



We tried to keep everything as normal as possible, so the day followed a typical school routine. First breakfast, then outside to walk the 'daily mile', then usually we'd have a painting session. School breaks were kept the same, with other activities e.g. story time, watching Cyw on TV, time on a tablet – usually Minecraft!

These are all usually normal activities, however, we were constantly making sure the 2mtr distance was kept (except for siblings), and of course the cleaning of items and surfaces was constant. This kept us busy – even when they were playing outside! Thankfully, we had gorgeous weather during the Easter break, so this helped a lot!

The children enjoyed art & craft activities, so to combine the fact that they loved collecting sticks, with the lovely weather, on my last day we had an outdoor craft session. As you can see from the photos, they created some lovely pieces, which were then painted and taken home. I think we all enjoyed this activity!

I really enjoyed my time working at the school! One thing for sure, making a cup of tea in a shared setting is a real challenge..... I lost count how many times I'd washed my hands in the process!

Stay safe everyone!

Nicola Olsson
Assistant Road Safety Officer

WELSH CORNER

Learning Welsh Online

This is currently a very worrying and difficult time for everybody, but one of the positives is that people have time to do things that they have intended doing for many years.

You can start learning or improving your Welsh by visiting <https://learnwelsh.cymru/learning/online-taster-courses/>

for online taster courses. The courses introduce everyday words and phrases and are available to everyone, for free.

To get started, you'll just need to log in or create an account – it only takes a few moments (choose 'Other' in the drop down menu as you create your account).

Good luck with learning Cymraeg!



VE DAY 75

Celebrating VE 75

On the 8th May 1945 a huge sense of relief surged through the nation. Street parties many of them impromptu, were held all over Wales including Carmarthenshire.

This tradition has stayed with us and plans had been made to celebrate the 75th anniversary this year in various forms across the county with organised concerts, parades and parties. However due to the coronavirus situation (lockdown) people were encouraged to celebrate VE 75 in their homes and on their doorstep rather than in parades and street parties.

We hope you had the opportunity to reflect and remember the sacrifices made by older generations.

Llanelli's very own Ritz

The Ritz Ballroom which had opened in 1934 and used to hold dances for the young people of the town was requisitioned for army purposes from June 1940 until March 1943.

The loss of the amenity was keenly felt as many marriages owed their existence to the Ritz! After 1943 its success continued and many top British bands appeared there (Including The Who).



Carmarthen's very own hero

Carmarthenshire had contributed hugely to the effort. The list of WW2 heroes from the county is too numerous to list here but it included Brinley Parry Richards who was born in Carmarthen on 22nd January 1920. He was a well educated man who had achieved a double first in French and Classics. He refused to bear arms against his fellow man and instead joined the Friends Ambulance Unit.

In 1944 this unit served in France and whilst attached to a French unit in Paris Brinley drove his ambulance into a cul de sac under fire to rescue French soldiers who had been pinned down by the Germans. As a result of his heroism he was awarded the Croix-de-Guerre by the French

Our beaches & Parks

During the dark days of World War II, Carmarthenshire's beaches and rolling hills were host to thousands of British and American troops as they meticulously prepared for D-Day and the invasion of German-occupied Europe. The remains of the so-called "dragon's teeth" and other defences used for practising the landings can still be seen at Morfa Bychan near Pendine.

The local beaches here were used for D-Day landing rehearsals. Newton House, in Dinefwr Park, Llandeilo, was a British hospital and later a prisoner of war camp. German and Italian PoWs were also taken to camps such as that at Llanddarog. Drefach Felindre produced material for army uniforms and also hosted a US Army base.

Celebrating VE 75

In nearby Pembrey a Luftwaffe pilot lost his bearings in June 1942 and landed at the airfield mistaking it for a runway in occupied France. On landing he had waggled his wings to celebrate the fact that he had just shot down a Spitfire over Devon. As it taxied to a parking space a duty pilot jumped on the plane's wing and took the German prisoner with a flare gun! The captured plane, a Focke -Wulf Fw 190 fighter, was a highly advanced aircraft and superior to the latest Spitfire so the capture was a coup for the RAF.

RAF Pembrey became a Battle of Britain fighter base and was a temporary home for many World War II flying aces including Wing Commander Guy Gibson, of Dambusters fame. The Royal Ordnance Factory also in Pembrey was vital to the war effort. It was the country's largest producer of TNT at that time. German aircraft dropped bombs during 1940, reportedly one of the first Luftwaffe raids in Wales.

Educating in Carmarthenshire

In June 1940 over a thousand London schoolchildren arrived at Llanelli Station clutching their gas masks and ration books. They were billeted with foster parents throughout the area and attended various schools or suitable buildings so that they could continue their education.

A farmer near Llanarthne who remembers receiving evacuees said that when the time came for them to return home they couldn't find one of the boys who was hiding and didn't want to go back. They have fond memories and still write to them to this day.



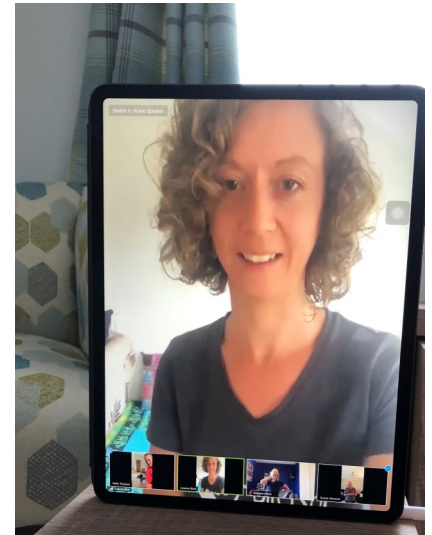
Llesiant Gweithwyr Employee Wellbeing

Join us for Yoga online

In order to attend the online sessions provided by 'Birdsol', everyone will need to complete this form <https://bit.ly/2WLIR24>.

They will then receive an email that explains how to book via a website/app called Gymcatch. The link to join will be available via Gymcatch. This will take them to Zoom where the class will be held. In order to use Zoom you will be promoted to download it which takes less than a minute. IT do not support access to Zoom on any of our corporate devices. To access the yoga classes, we request that you use your own devices e.g. phone/tablet/laptop. When they start up Zoom they will be held in the waiting room where I will check whether people have booked on.

The sessions will be held weekly on a Tuesday and Thursday 7.45-8.30am.



Looking after your wellbeing during Covid-19

Feeling a little unsettled about the COVID-19 outbreak and how it might affect your life is normal and looking after yourself during this ever-changing situation is extremely important. There are some useful tips that will help you do so on our intranet staff pages.

<https://ourpeople.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/our-people/coronavirus-guidance/looking-after-your-well-being/>

Let's stay connected

Maintaining healthy relationships with people you trust is important for your mental wellbeing. Think about how you can stay in touch with friends and family while you are at home – by phone, messaging, video calls or online – whether it's people you usually see often or reconnecting with old friends or neighbours.

Maintaining contact with a support network can help you to stay calm and in control of any concerns and is likely to help others too.

Additional Support for staff

The Employee Wellbeing Advice and Support Centre has been set up during this uncertain period in order to support you with the worries or concerns you may have at this time. Please use the online form to access this support or speak to your supervisor.

<https://ourpeople.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/our-people/coronavirus-guidance/looking-after-your-well-being/>