

Department of Place and Infrastructure

Winter 2023 Newsletter



I would like to wish you all and your families a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Here we are approaching another Christmas. We can certainly reflect on another busy year for 2023, with many changes within the Department and to some of the services we provide.

We have seen a few retirements as mentioned in my last newsletter and we have also had a few numbers joining our various teams within the Department.

A major change during the course of this past year has seen the amalgamation of the former Transportation and Highways division with the Waste & Environmental Services division to create the new Environmental Infrastructure Division. This is quite a significant undertaking and work continues in setting up the new arrangements. The functions within remain unchanged and we continue to provide our core services that include recycling and refuse collection, street cleaning, grounds maintenance, enforcement activities, highway maintenance, transport and transportation services, parking management and vehicle maintenance.

The other significant change has been the transfer of the Property Design and Property Maintenance units from the Department to the Chief Executive Department in order to provide a more strategic and cohesive property management service. In addition, the team from within the Service Improvement & Transformation Division that supported the property design and maintenance function have also transferred to the Chief Executive Department.

We have seen a major change in the waste collection service in the last 12 months with the introduction of a new weekly recycling service, a three weekly glass collection service and the collection of black bag waste every three weeks. The changes have resulted in improvements to our recycling performance with an accumulative total of about just under 72% recycling in the first two quarters of the year. Of course, we still need to do more on this front and the team are already starting to consult and undertake early-stage planning for the kerbside sort collection system in preparation for the second phase roll out in Autumn 2025.

We are now firmly into the winter maintenance season with gritting activities well underway, our trucks serviced and calibrated, our salt barns well stocked and our network of salt/grit bins in our communities filled. The weather we have experienced thus far during autumn and into early winter has certainly tested our systems with preparations made for storms that brought high winds and heavy rain to the County. Our response to the emergency situations through this period has meant dealing with fallen trees, blocked culverts/drains and numerous incidents of flooding.

Our highway network has already suffered due to the extreme weather with two separate sections of road in the Carmarthen area being closed for several weeks due to a landslide and an incident relating to water damage. Our teams of designers, asset and operational managers, construction gangs and contractors are working hard to restore the highway network at these two locations.

We have also implemented the Welsh Government's 20mph speed limit initiative across the County's road network in accordance with Government guidance. This has been a huge undertaking and we continue to monitor the effectiveness of the 20mph scheme.

Another major aspect of the Department's work has been the advancement of the Tywi Valley Path with the current focus being on design, the preparation of work package contracts and the ongoing process relating to land purchase for the scheme. We

have during the last week of November been part of a Public Inquiry relating to the compulsory purchase of land. We await the outcome of the Public Inquiry by Welsh Government's Planning and Environment Decisions Wales unit.

We continue to put strategies, plans and measures in place to enhance our contribution to looking after the environment in ecological and carbon reduction terms, with a number of aspects being worked on to achieve our objectives.

Significant work has been undertaken during the year on the Council's new Local Development Plan which in plain terms sets out a framework of for future development and land use within the County. This Plan is a key enabler for the County when considering future developments and their impacts.

In this context, the Place & Sustainability Division continue to deal with significant planning applications that are of real importance to the County as well as dealing with smaller scale planning applications and other aspects such as sustainable drainage considerations, building control and planning enforcement cases. We continue to improve our performance in this respect.

Our teams within the Service Improvement & Transformation Division continue to support the delivery of the Department's full suite of functions and services. The teams within work collaboratively across the Department and the wider Council in improving systems, processes, procuring and implementing IT based solutions and making sure that invoices and data are processed in a timely manner to ensure we can deliver our functions in an efficient way. An important aspect of the team's work is to coordinate and manage customer contacts, responses and complaints. Given the scale of services we deliver as a department, this is a significant undertaking.

Other functions provided within the Service Improvement & Transformation team include direct services such as the cleaning of schools and buildings and operational training services. These teams are very busy because the demand for these services is sizeable.

We again face serious budget pressures for next year and I must consider how we address the budget situation for the Department. The Chief Executive, other directors and I who collectively form the Corporate Management Team continue to work with the Council's Cabinet to meet these challenges. The final budget settlement from Welsh Government will not be known until just before Christmas.

I hope this brief note sets out the some aspects and scale of the services we provide as a Department and identifies some of the work that you have planned, been involved in and delivered over the last 12 months or so.

It remains for me to truly thank each one of you for your contributions and hard work in delivering our wide range of services to the residents, businesses and our partners in Carmarthenshire, as well as to the visitors to our County. A big thank you also to the property design/maintenance/support teams for their contribution to the Department over the course of this year and previous years.

I realise it can be hard to meet all the demands placed upon us as a Department at times, but I know you always do your best to try and meet those demands. Your continued support and dedication is truly appreciated.

Ainsley

Pool Cars

We have a dedicated page with all information on our departmental pool car scheme - [Place & Infrastructure Pool Cars](http://intranet/our-people/travel-parking/place-infrastructure-pool-cars/)
<http://intranet/our-people/travel-parking/place-infrastructure-pool-cars/>

It is essential that all pool cars users use this page to answer questions and to find information on the scheme before contacting officers.

To ensure that the pool car scheme can continue, it is essential that drivers take responsibility for completing the forms correctly, reporting faults and reporting damage. It is important that no one takes a pool car without booking on the outlook booking system and completing the forms.

We wish to make you aware that all drivers must complete a driver assessment before driving any of our automatic vehicles, regardless of whether they are fully

electric or hybrid or petrol/diesel. This is mandatory, please book via TSTraining@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Any mechanical issues need to be reported immediately to envbsufleet@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Any booking issues please email EMSO@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Please do not contact officers directly, you must use these mailboxes




Physio Wales Promo

Our Physio Wales service is open to all staff within the department.

We have received excellent feedback from staff who have been referred and we would encourage all line managers to use this service to support their staff when necessary.

All line managers have to do is email Physiotherapy Wales to request an assessment for their staff member. It's as easy as that! Email: donna.wilcox@physiotherapywales.co.uk


Do you suffer from neck, shoulder, or back pain?





Book your Triage session with Physio Wales via your line manager.

The triage session will be able to give us the best next step for you:

- Physio Treatment Plan
- Exercise Plan
- & much more...
- Triage clinics in Llanelli and Carmarthen



In partnership with



Christmas Jumper Day!



National Christmas Jumper Day was on Thursday 7th December.

We'd like to invite you to host your own Christmas Jumper day at work during December to help raise money for the Save the Children Charity.

By pulling on our Christmassy knits and donating, we'll be supporting children in the UK and around the world to keep safe, healthy, and learning. We'll be helping them fight for the future they deserve.

You can Sign up today or use the account I have already created and share within your Teams.

To donate £5 text **CCCSAVE** to **70050** or [Visit our Just Giving Page here.](#)

We look forward to seeing all your Christmas Jumpers!

40 years

Viv 40 years Long Service

Viv Philips has passed a huge milestone in his career in 2023 with 40 years' service.



Viv is a Principal Engineer within the Engineering Design unit and started his Career with the former Dyfed County Council in September 1983 as a Technician in the Highways improvement design section. Throughout his career Viv has mainly been involved with Highway design and improvement initially with Dyfed County Council and Llanelli

Borough Council before reorganisation in 1996 when he joined Carmarthenshire County Council.

Viv did spend a brief period within the Architects Department of Dyfed County Council but soon realised what his vocation would be. I would like to thank Viv for his valuable input and dedicated service.

Adrian Harries

Steps Challenge... Lets Discover Carmarthenshire!

We are launching our very first Operational Vs Office Staff Steps Challenge!

Get ready to lace up those trainers and join us for an exhilarating challenge – the Great Place & Infrastructure Steps Challenge! We're excited to announce a friendly competition between our operational and office staff to see who can log the most steps **between the 15th – 26th January!**

How it works:

- **Pick Your Team:** Choose to join either Team Operations or Team Office when you sign up. Please e-mail ShRees@carmarthenshire.gov.uk A spreadsheet will be added to files where we can record our Steps weekly.
- **Step Tracking:** Use your fitness tracker or smartphone app to record your daily steps. Every step counts! All operational teams will be provided with a printable steps tracker which they can hand in to their supervisor every week to email to us to record.
- **Weekly Check-ins:** We'll have weekly check-ins to track each team's progress. Updates will be shared every week to keep the excitement alive.
- **Celebrate Success:** At the end of the challenge, the winning team will not only earn bragging rights but also a well-deserved celebration to acknowledge their achievement.

Christmas Cancer Challenge



If you cannot wait until the new year, why not join me, Shannen Rees, I am raising money for a charity close to my heart, Cancer Research UK. Their Christmas Challenge is the '12 dips of Christmas Challenge'. This is where you must 'dip' into cold water such as the sea on 12 different occasions. I have been exploring the beautiful beaches around us to carry out this challenge.

Join me and register at Cancer Research UK <https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/page/shannens-giving-page-35>

Behaviour Standards

Christmas parties are a time to relax and enjoy the season's festivities, and although they are normally held outside the workplace and the working day please remember that a 'works do' is an extension of the workplace and you are still representing the Authority.

Please ensure you have read the [Behavioural Standards in the Workplace guidance](#), which also contains a section on alcohol in the workplace and a link to our Alcohol and [Substance Misuse Policy](#), and also read our [Social Media Policy](#) in respect of posting content. If you you're looking for support or advice to reduce your alcohol consumption you find out more by visiting our [Health & Wellbeing](#) intranet pages.

You must not accept any personal gifts, loans, fees, rewards or advantage from service users, contractors, potential contractors, or outside suppliers, regardless of the value.

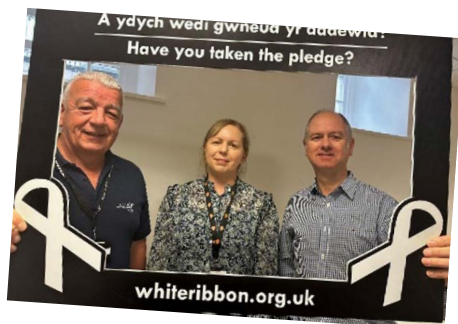
If you are offered anything, regardless of the value, you must decline the offer and then declare it, by visiting your [MyView account](#) and using our new on-line "Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality" process, which you can find under the "My Forms" section. The full guidance can be found on our [Officer Code of Conduct](#) page on the intranet,

If you are a manager, could you please ensure your teams are aware of this message.

*Please enjoy
your celebrations
responsibly.*



White Ribbon Campaign



White Ribbon is the UK's leading charity that works with men and boys to end violence against women and girls.

Domestic abuse affects both sexes, but men are more likely to be the perpetrators. However, male violence against women is not only a women's issue, but a social problem that we all need to address.

We are supporting this year's White Ribbon campaign, which started on Saturday, November 25 and continues for 16 Days of Action.

This year the campaign is asking how you can #CHANGETHESTORY and there are two ways for you to help. One is to challenge the 'harmless' attitudes and behaviours that enable violence for women and girls. You can do this by making the promise "to never commit, excuse or remain silent about male violence against women and challenging anything inappropriate that you see." If you haven't already done so, you can [make the promise online TODAY](#).

You can also complete the e-learning module which you can access via our [Learning & Development Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence intranet pages](#).

Above are some photos of our Place & Infrastructure Team taking the pledge.

Learning Session

A program of themed learning sessions have been arranged for Place & Sustainability staff and following our first session, it has been noted that the topics maybe useful to a wide range of staff across the department.

Take a look at the [Learning sessions available to you intranet page](#) where you can access previous learning session recordings as well as information on the next learning sessions scheduled.

If you are able to host a learning session or you have a topic that you would like to see feature on the learning session programme, please email: kellythomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

New Starters

We have also recently welcomed several talented individuals to our Place & Infrastructure family, and we couldn't be more delighted to have them on board.

They bring a wealth of skills, experience, and fresh perspectives that will undoubtedly contribute to the continued success and growth of our department.

A warm welcome to:

Edward Gibson & Ricky Elsey, *Workshop Technician's*

James Wright, Stuart Powell & Tamas Orban, *Roadworker's*

Carys Attwell, *Planning Hwb Officer*

Karen Bolton, *Planning Enforcement & Monitoring Officer*

Dylan Morgan, *Flood Defence & Coastal Protection Technician*

Casey Colcombe, *Graduate Trainee Flood Defence and Coastal Protection Officer*

Guy Morris, *Kerbcraft Trainer*

Andrea Evans, *Information Management Assistant*

Ffion Hopkins, *Architectural Technologist*

Georgia Sloley, *Programme Officer*

Richard Heseltine, *Refuse/Recycling Loader*

I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to our newest members of the cleaning team! Your role is instrumental in maintaining a clean and comfortable environment for our schools and corporate buildings, and we are truly grateful to have you on board.

Cheryl Smith, Giulio Pollano, Lianne Lavercombe, Agata Warchol, Sharon Pickup, Chloe Edwards, Nicola Bagagiolo, Rhian Carroll, Anna Luszczywska, Ffion Randell, Agnieszka Zubilewicz, Angharad Jones, Silvana Worrall, Katarzyna Niewiadomska, Kim Davies, Georgina Kyei, Laura Williams, Nicola Lloy, Michelle Dummer, Rachael Summers, Helen Punshon, Alexandria Mccauley-Williams, Sophie Evans, Maggie Vetter, Rachael Summers, Sonia Campbell, Casey Lowes, Catherine Howells & Nicola Lloyd.

Welcome

Leavers

We wish to send our best wishes to the following staff who have left their roles since Sep 23:

Stephen Pilliner, *Head of Transportation & Highways*

Louise Mcfarlane, *Learner Travel Policy & Development Officer*

Andrew Boote, *Fleet Inspector*

Tracey Gough, *Waste Operations & Commercial Services*

Glenda Brettle, Carwyn Williams, Nicola Hancock, Claire Yeo, Amanda Evans, Gwyneth Williams, Charlotte Roberts & June Evans, *Passenger Assistant's*

Elgan Griffiths, *Grounds Operative*

Stephen Bonar, *Park Keeper*

Owain Enoch, *Development Management Officer*

Brian Vanstan, *School Crossing Patrol*

Luke Davies Lovell, *Building Surveyor*

Elenor John, *Architectural Design Officer*

Stuart Rudge, Nicholas Chappell & Philip Leaf, *Roadworker's*

David Evans, *Depot Foreperson*

Gareth Scourfield, *Trunk Road Technician*

Luke Smith, *Fleet Workshop Apprentice*

Laura Beale, *Project Support Officer*

Aaron Evans, Matthew Barresi & Adrian Thomas, *Refuse/Recycling Driver's*

Jonathan Willis, *Environmental Projects Manager*

Daniel Amner, *Waste & Recycling Warden*

Rhian Evans, Joanne Lloyd, Emily Coombes, Emma Turner, Gemma Kelly, Phillippa Gower, Louise Roberts, Aimee Rees, Ffion Randell, Bethan Aston, Sonia Jenkins, Jennifer Tippett, Halaina Hillier, Michael Bryan, Keith Williams, Anarawd John, Nichaela Cullen, Kim Davies, Andrew Pontin, Caroline Taylor, Susan Porter, Becky Hughes, Dianna Davies, Sonia Campbell, Daniel Steele, Paula Edwards-Parry, Rhys Cassell, Donna Bromham, Davina Kestin Rhea Phillips, Grace Nakiwala, Dawne Randell, Margaret Denyer, Rachael Summers, Anarawd John, Wayne Williams & Becky Hughes, *Cleaner's*.