

# RAGLAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Ty Nant,  
Old Trap Rd,  
Gilwern,  
Abergavenny,  
Monmouthshire  
NP7 0HW

## **Re: Raglan Community Council boundary changes**

Raglan has a busy proactive Community Council. We currently cover the wards of Raglan, Penyclawdd and Llangovan and Llandenny although we have unofficially regarded Llandenny and Kingcoed as 2 separate wards for some time which is in line with the changes suggested. Apart from the last election where 5 out of 11 members chose not to stand for re-election for a variety of reasons our seats are normally contested at election. Members of the public often attend our meetings and pre-meeting discussions with public are not uncommon.

## **The bigger picture**

Being a member of the Community Council in Raglan doesn't just mean turning up for our monthly meeting. Councillors represent the community at County and National level though the association with One Voice Wales.

1. Councillors have an active role on other bodies and other organisations in the community members Act as representatives of Raglan Community Council on:
  - Raglan School Governors.
  - Several representatives on Village Hall Committee.
  - Representation on Community Centre Management Committee.
  - Representation on the Community Plan group
  - Several representatives of the Monmouthshire Rural Committee.

With the development of a new school and community facilities in the village then these representatives are key to the provision of facilities. Members attend frequent meetings with 21<sup>st</sup> Century-Schools team, developers and members of community.

2. Two representatives on the One Voice Wales area committee and also on the One Voice Wales National Executive representing the Monmouthshire and Newport area.

Two representatives from Raglan Community Council played an active part in the Charter Liaison group, attending meeting regularly with County Councillors and officers to improve relations between Monmouthshire County Council and Community and Town Councils. Members from the Community Council still attend the working liaison group meetings between the Community Councils and the County Council.

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This shows the commitment Raglan Community Council and the greater framework of Local Government. This is not just a parochial view of community life. This also shows the commitment to improving working relations and communicating with Monmouthshire County Council.

3. One representative on Monmouth CAB, actively involved
4. Representation on the Twinning Association.
5. One member also our County Councillor, keeping us well informed and keeping a 2-way dialogue going. She is also a School Governor in addition to our Community Council representative
6. Representation on the steering group for our Village Led Plan which is now in the draft stage.
7. Consultation currently underway with county officers followed by further public consultation so that we can take a proactive approach to devolution of services. If this process continues as planned we will be managing a larger budget and spending more time/accepting greater responsibilities

## **The Community Council:**

We are fortunate that our Council consist of a range of ages with 4 women, 7 men. Our members have a wide range of skills and experience between them, increasingly important as we prepare to take on greater responsibilities in the next few years. We have a range of people working full-time, part time, self-employed and retired. The danger of reducing numbers and forcing the remaining councillors to take on extra work/responsibilities is that we will inevitably lose some of the younger working members of the council as they are unable to put in the time commitment or attend daytime meeting. We also find that as a rural community many factors can influence ability to attend such as flooding/snow, lambing/harvest time and school holidays, again making a smaller number of councillors unviable.

There is a genuine risk of us not being quorate at certain times of year with a lower total number of councillors.

## **What we do now:**

We have allotments owned by the Community Council. This is managed through our allotments sub-committee

We have a Dog Walk, maintained by Community Council.

We provide and fund dog waste bins in the village.

We provide Christmas lights.

We are involved in local projects in conjunction with Raglan History group, Raglan Music Festival, Raglan in Bloom and Raglan Twinning Association

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This is on top of normal routine issues such as highways, planning etc

We would struggle to maintain this level of active involvement with only 7 representatives. In the current economic climate we are going to increase our time-commitments and responsibilities.

## **Boundaries:**

The inclusion of Gwehelog within our community has a far greater impact on them than it does Raglan CC as a whole. We are used to operating as a Community Council covering the surrounding parishes but the precept for them would increase to cover things like allotments, dog walk and dog waste bins in Raglan which would not be used by residents as they would tend to gravitate towards Usk for facilities, shops, schools. It would also mean a split in County Councillor boundaries as would move Penyclawdd and Llangovan to Mitchell Troy Council. Bryngwyn would be a more logical addition as it shares the same vicar as the Raglan and Llandenny churches. Cuckoo's Row and Warrage Road should remain within Raglan as it is seen very much as part of the village. Residents walk into the village to use facilities, shops, school.

Total LDP numbers have not been taken into with at least a potential 45 dwellings to be added to the village and also much infill has taken place in the last few years.

## **Representations:**

Please find below a number of representation made to the council regarding the proposals

*Councillor Helen Williams has received a number of verbal representations relating to Warrage Road and Cuckoo's Row objecting to the proposed move to Mitchell Troy.*

*Mr Edwards,*

*You asked for comment. I have no strong views as to what is best but I have some questions about as to what is proposed.*

*\* Why has this work been done and why is change needed? That is, what triggered the work group and what problem(s) were they trying to address. The document gives no clue of, overall, what you are trying to achieve so it is difficult to assess its worth.*

*\* I am afraid that I don't understand the comment that "All channels of communication through the Pen-Y-Clawdd ward run north to south with no clear link between the Pen-Y-Clawdd ward and the rest of the Raglan wards". From my perspective in Pen-y-clawdd, we are a lot closer to Raglan than we are to Mitchel Troy. We have little contact with Michel Troy but lots with Raglan. What does the sentence mean?*

*\* I also have some concern that current issues, for example, the proposed turbine, about which there has been much debate and work done and about which our current local Raglan representative is fully informed will be handed over to another group with less understanding of the local feeling and further away. Raglan will see it, Michel Troy will not. Those opposing the plan will have to start the education process all over again. Or is that one of the aims of the changes?*

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*\* Lastly, have you found out how Michel Troy feel about the proposed change. How would Pen-y-clawdd fit with their structure. Maybe you should find out and let us know what are the implications for Pen--y-clawdd before Raglan hands us over.*

*Best wishes.*

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*Adrian*

*Thank you for your email, and apologies for the late response.*

*My personal view reflects on the proposal to move Penyclawdd from Raglan to Mitchel Troy, and are based on my and my families relationships locally.*

*With three children who have all been through or are still at Raglan primary school, and with all three children involved with Scouts in Raglan, with our doctor in Raglan, and with the good range of shops in Raglan, we are regular visitors to the village and feel very much part of the community of Raglan.*

*By contrast, I don't think that I have ever stopped in Mitchell Troy, and don't know anyone in Mitchell Troy.*

*I would therefore wish Penyclawdd to remain part of Raglan CC, where our Councillor can have an influence (however limited that may be) on shaping the community that we are part of. If we become part of Mitchell Troy we will have no influence at all.*

*I hope that this is helpful.*

*Regards*

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*Dear Adrian Edwards,*

*Thank you for taking the time to discuss the current revue that is taking place regarding the proposed changes to the boundaries of Penyclawdd.*

*I am very happy with the current status quo and see no reason for there to be any changes. Also, when reading your attachment, I could see no positive evidence for change. It would be interesting to know when the revue was first initiated and why it is deemed so necessary?*

*Raglan is some 5 minuets down the road and a hub that features in our daily lives and there is a strong attachment. We also have the historic benefit of dealing with and knowing our local official contacts. Like many changes in life it is difficult to see any disadvantages until it is too late, which is sometimes a good reason to leave well alone.*

*As you are all aware there has been an overwhelming objection from our local community to the application to erect a Wind Turbine and although the final judgements are made by the planning committee the Raglan council has been fair and in many ways sympathetic to our cause. It would therefore be unforgivable if the change in the boundaries were to have any significant affect on that issue.*

*Thank you once again and it was good to talk to you.*

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*Kind regards,*

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