

WELCOME TO RCT TOGETHER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TEAM END OF YEAR NEWSLETTER

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RCT TOGETHER

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES AND RESIDENTS TO THRIVE



RCT Together | Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
(rctcbc.gov.uk)

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Who are We?

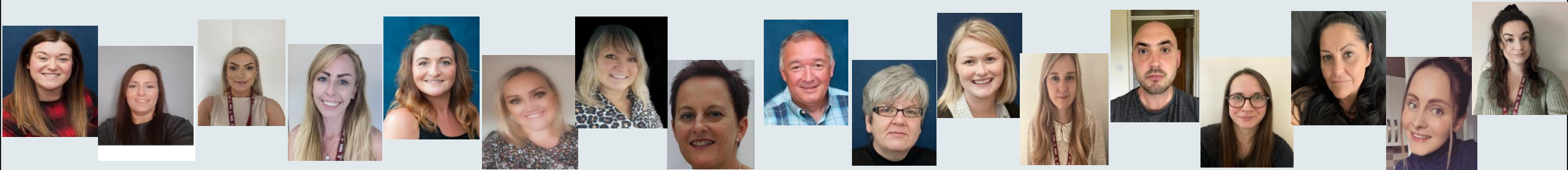
Established in 2015, RCT Together is the Council's approach to working in partnership with communities, Third and Voluntary Sector organisations and residents, to build more resourceful and resilient communities.

We aim to achieve this by working alongside residents and partners over the following broad areas;

- Community Resilience Hubs, Neighbourhood Networks and Resident Support
- Community Asset Transfers
- Community Programmes, Funding and Resources
- Sustainable Food Places
- Age Friendly Communities

The RCT Together Team Commitment to all is that we will:

Listen and be open to new ideas. Collaborate and treat everyone with kindness, respect and sensitivity, promoting a sense of belonging and encouraging vibrant, resilient communities built on a foundation of hope, honesty, empathy and integrity.



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Community Resilience Hubs, Neighbourhood Networks and Resident Support

Community Resilience Hubs support Neighbourhood Networks by providing a point of coordination for resident and community support needs. In these venues, people can receive information, advice and guidance. The Council also works with key partners, including the voluntary sector, to provide direct support to residents, from the Community Resilience Hubs.

Neighbourhood Networks are local partnerships made up of organisations and local groups that work together with Council services, to deliver what is needed in communities, and activities to develop communities further. Neighbourhood Networks are focussed around the geographic areas of the Community Resilience Hubs and can influence developments within communities and Public Services.

The Council recognises 7 Community Resilience Hubs:


- ❖ Yr Hwb Ferndale
- ❖ Porth Plaza
- ❖ Canolfan Pennar (Mountain Ash)
- ❖ Aberdare Library
- ❖ Llys Cadwyn (Pontypridd)
- ❖ Llantrisant Library
- ❖ Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre.


There are currently 13 Neighbourhood Networks active across RCTCBC


Networks held  82


Attendees  916

Resident support – ask for support at any time

 Number of resident requests for support 1693

 Number of new residents accessing the service 1117

 Number of emergency Supermarket Vouchers issued 562

 Number of Fuel Vouchers issued 48

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“ I have recently been released from Prison and had nowhere to turn and just wanted a fresh start and to get back on track. I reached out to RCTCBC Community Coordinators via the resident support and was impressed with the level of support and information provided to me in a friendly manner. I now have organisations to turn to and am engaging with these services”.

Everything you have done today has lifted a weight off my shoulders thank you

Knowing there was support from the Council has really helped us as a family and I really appreciate the help you have given us

Dewi Sant Pop Up Hub ‘Keeping Well this Winter’: In partnership with Taf GP Cluster Manager and Interlink RCT, an information pop up event was held to provide Information and Advice for residents. 36 residents attended with 10 organisations/services in attendance.

“As nurses we don’t get time to google search all services, whilst on my break I’m so glad I came across some agencies my clients will benefit from”.

“I’ve received 3 referrals as a result of this Pop Up Event all needing support with a family member living with Dementia”

“Brilliant collaboration and looking forward to seeing these become a regular thing”.

Very helpful and gave me very good advice – thank you

This has helped me a great deal today. Thanks for listening and making me smile.

Resident Support and Neighbourhood Network Case Studies

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Community Asset Transfers – A review of 2023/24

Caseload Information:

In 2023/24 the CAT Team;

- Received 216 enquiries for support
- Advertised 4 Council assets under the “30 Day Window of Opportunity” arrangements.

Council Assets transferred successfully into community management included:

- **Graig Community Centre**
- **Penrhiwceiber OAP Welfare Hall**
- **Land at Corbett St, Penyreglyn**

The following facilities re-opened as Community venues;

- **Former Ferndale Library** as Y Siop Fach Sero
- **Cana Centre**, Penywaun now “Hwb Cana

Working Collaboratively to support the Energy Efficiency of Community Buildings in RCT:

RCT Together Team have worked in partnership with Pen Y Cymoedd Windfarm Fund, Interlink, Coalfields Regeneration Ltd, Egin and key funders to maximise funding opportunities for community facilities requiring energy efficiency audits since 2022.

Over 450 community groups known to the RCT Together Team were encouraged to undertake an energy efficiency audit. To date:

14 Energy Efficiency Audits have been undertaken to add to the previous **43** bringing the total to **57** to date. **37** of these were funded through the funding partners with the remaining **20** groups reporting they have had audits undertaken independently.

99 groups have also been awarded **£540** each from the RCT Community Facilities Grant. Total value = **£53,460**. The grant has been administered on the basis that each group has either had an energy efficiency audit undertaken on their community building or will look for funding to undertake one in the next year.

Access To Information

The team generated 9 Social Value Reports & 8 Local Insight Reports for community groups

Funding Levered in:

UKG SPF Funding – RCT Community Grant funding amounting to **£250,798** was awarded to **17** community groups for capital improvements during 23/24 with an additional **£256,511** of external funding being reported as funding levered in to support further capital enhancements to community facilities in RCT.

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Community Asset Transfers – Spotlight on the re-development of two Council Assets in 2023/24

“Welcome to Our Woods”

A long term lease of land at Corbett St, Penynglyn) to Welcome to Our Woods was completed in May 2023 to enable them to pilot Community Orchard & Agroforestry activities as part of their National Lottery funded Climate Action Fund activities. The group are currently working with Black Mountain College delivering NVQs in Regenerative Horticulture and Coppicing on various sites. They are also steering group members on the RCT Sustainable Food Partnership.

Activities undertaken to date have included vegetation cleared to allow better access to site, boundary fencing and existing seating areas have been enhanced. Multiple tonnes of fly tipping removed and 25 fruit trees planted (apple, plum and pear). Further details of their project can be found via <https://www.facebook.com/welcometoourwoods/>



Our Values

We believe in working with nature.

We want a landscape that is prosperous for the community.

Balance between commercial, leisure and the intrinsic value of nature.

The forests are for everybody (inclusion).

We want forests that nurture, inspire and benefit existing and future generations.

It is important to celebrate the culture and heritage of the area.

We recognise the value of collaboration and participation in making decisions for the forests.



Graig Community Centre

A 21yr lease of Graig Community Centre to Pontypridd Town Council (PTC) completed in January 2024. After levering in capital funding support through UKG SPF RCT Community Fund of £23,300 plus investment by PTC, the building was officially re-opened to the public on Thursday 25th April 2024. We look forward to hearing about their asset transfer journey in the next issue. To find out more information about the building, please click on link below; [https://www.pontypriddtowncouncil.gov.uk/latest-](https://www.pontypriddtowncouncil.gov.uk/latest-news#LatestNews)



[news#LatestNews](https://www.pontypriddtowncouncil.gov.uk/latest-news#LatestNews)



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Funding and Resources

The Community Development Team Manage a range of funding and resources:

- Community Asset Transfer Fund
- Neighbourhood Network Fund
- Period Dignity in Communities Grant
- RCT Food Support Fund
- UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund RCTCBC Community Grant and Community Micro Grant
- Winter Hardship Fund
- Community Facilities Support Grant



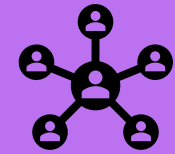
Total amount of Funding awarded to community groups circa **£1.9m**



Total number of community groups receiving grant funding **336**



22,835 improved engagement numbers; **4089** individuals receiving warm food and drinks within Winter Welcome Centres; **2528** improved social connections



'YOU said – WE did'

RCT Together
Neighbourhood Network
Survey 2021 **YOU** told us that
you wanted to see **MORE**
activities in **YOUR**
community

We **ACTED** on what we
heard providing **336**
community groups with
activity funding

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“ Being able to offer a warm space on a regular basis helped us build relationships with members of the community we hadn’t been able to reach previously. Some of which have now engaged in other services we offer or have been signposted to other services which benefit their wellbeing”.

“We have laughed uncontrollably in good company with a hot drink and food and plenty of activities”

“You’re doing a great job, so glad I came, I feel more confident, I will come again”

A neighbour supporting a gentleman who lives alone after the death of his mother and requires support with many areas of his life has benefitted from attending the centre. He now attends every Coffee Morning and feels confident to attend on his own. He stays and spends time drinking coffee and socialising with other community members and volunteers.

The gentleman said - “I haven’t been out of the house for 7 years, I haven’t seen my sister for 4, and I’ve seen her here today, first time I’ve spoken to her in 4 years. The Sister said – “I haven’t been in the centre since I was a little girl, it’s lovely to see it open again, they’ve tried coffee mornings before, but no one came, it feels different this time, it really feels like the centre is coming together again”.

“very informative running sessions about the fund, the guidance and application process.”

“support has been phenomenal for this grant application and previous applications. Always available, always knowledgeable and provide excellent networking”

Funding and Resources Case Studies

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Age Friendly Communities

RCT Became a member of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Network of Age Friendly Communities and Cities, in March 2024



Community Dementia Programme Fund

- 20** Number of groups
- 469** total beneficiaries aged 50+
- 370** reporting increased social connections
- 327** reporting improved Mental Health
- 332** reporting feeling less isolated
- 203** reporting they are more active
- 406** reporting increased awareness of support services



RCTCBC Dementia Friends

- Hosted **6** Dementia Friends Information Sessions creating a total of **110** new Dementia Friends.
- Alternative or Digital Dementia Friends Information Session, with required monitoring, **289** Dementia Friends
- Dementia Friends Ambassadors **33** individuals from funded groups and organisations have committed to undertake the relevant training



“ It has changed my life. You can feel the warmth of the friendliness in the club. It is a lifeline. I live on my own so to be able to meet up and chat to lots of friendly people is very important to my mental health. I look forward to going”.

“It gives us purpose to our lives and an opportunity to meet and chat with such friendly people”

“The pantomime reminded me of happy times spent with my children and grandchildren and we laughed all afternoon”

Monday Club to facilitate a range of sessions for members – seated pilates, craft, information sessions, social activities, special events with much needed partnership working.

As a group it is good for us to ensure that older members of our community are able to access the opportunities we provide as a group. The funding allowed us to develop additional opportunities and a range of activities to ensure interest for all members.

As a group we have learnt so much about Dementia and how small things can make a difference, for example having patience and showing kindness and compassion can help those living with the condition. This will enable us to better support those affected by Dementia in our community.

We have also learnt that a relatively small amount of funding can be put to very good use.

“i specifically enjoyed the Pilates as it helps with my hip arthritis and helps coordinate my brain and body movements”

“the talk on Dementia has proved invaluable as after a discussion with a friend, I discovered she has the beginning of **Dementia**”

Age Friendly Communities Case Studies

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Watch out For - Upcoming Developments

RCT Together – Neighbourhood Network Survey

We would like to find out more about what is important to individuals and their communities. The findings will be used to shape future developments.

[Snap Surveys
\(welcomesyourfeedback.net\)](https://welcomesyourfeedback.net)

RCT Together Team Evaluation

YOUR feedback is important to us – look out for the smiley faces and please provide your honest feedback



RCT Together Website Developments

New **and improved webpage** coming soon!



CONTACT THE TEAM

For **Community Asset Transfers** and General enquiries please contact -



rcttogether@rctcbc.gov.uk



01443 425368

For **Community Resilience Hubs, Neighbourhood Networks and Resident Support** please contact -



communityresiliencehubs@rctcbc.gov.uk

For RCTCBC **Community Grants** please contact the Community Programmes Team -



spfrctbccommunitygrant@rctcbc.gov.uk

Or visit the RCT Together **Web page**



[RCT Together | Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council \(rctcbc.gov.uk\)](http://rctcbc.gov.uk)

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