

# CONTACT



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
MERTHYR TUDFUL  
MERTHYR TYDFIL  
County Borough Council

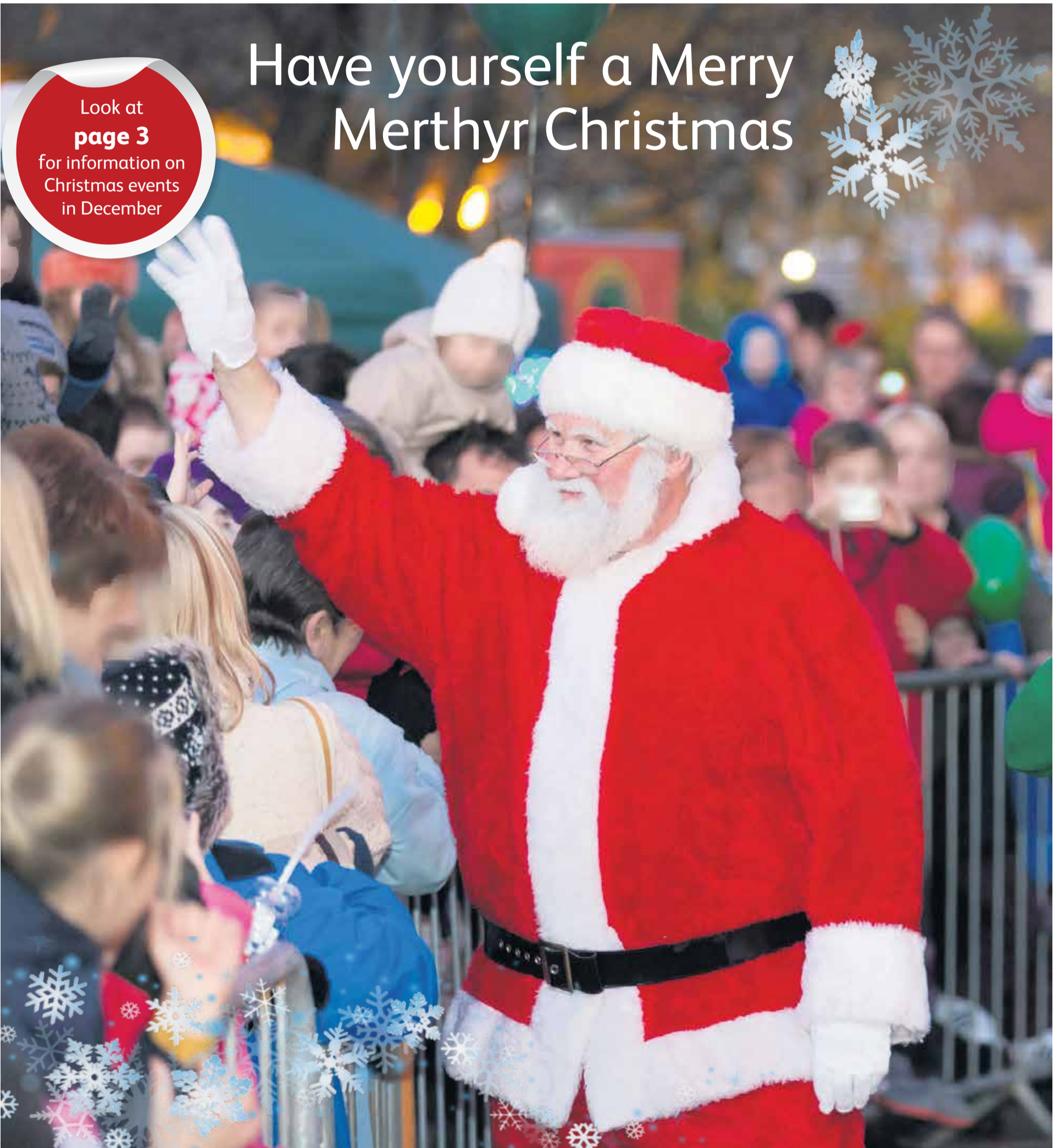
Newspaper for the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil

Issue 45

1st December 2016

## Have yourself a Merry Merthyr Christmas

Look at  
**page 3**  
for information on  
Christmas events  
in December



merthirtydfilCBC



@merthyrCBC



www.merthyr.gov.uk



Leader's Introduction Welcome to issue 45 of CONTACT...



November was a very good month in Merthyr Tydfil, with regeneration projects coming to fruition and new projects just beginning.

I was extremely pleased to hear that Cyfarthfa Castle was successful in its Phase 2 bid for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund for its re-development.

The Castle has always had significant historical value and we plan to see it not only preserved to tell the story of Merthyr Tydfil to future generations, but also to become a major economic driver.

Merthyr Town Football Club has undergone a major transformation, with the help of almost £2m of funding from the Welsh Government's Vibrant and Viable Places Programme. I was at the Club last month when its fantastic new facilities were officially opened by the Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM, First Minister of Wales, where I learnt, in more detail, of Merthyr Town's journey from the brink of extinction to this thriving community hub.

Another project that assists communities to become sustainable is the hydro-electric scheme, which was switched on last month by WG Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs Lesley Griffiths, AM.

This scheme, which was the idea of the Friends of Parc Taf Bargoed, will provide power to the National Grid, earning enough money to fund the long term management and maintenance of the park and a dedicated Park Warden post.

Keir Construction recently started work on the new Trago Mills site. This brand new £40m retail and leisure facility will be Trago's first ever Welsh location and the first site outside Cornwall and Devon. The new store will provide job opportunities during construction, as well as around 400 jobs in the retail, leisure and warehousing sectors once open in spring 2018.

We've also seen further retail developments, with the Arcadia Group coming to our Tesco store, bringing with it a number of new concessions and giving shoppers in the town centre even more choice.

Every year, the range and quality of Merthyr Tydfil's Christmas celebrations get bigger and better and a huge amount of hard work is going into making 2016's unforgettably special, as can be seen from the events on page 3.

I wish you a very happy and healthy Christmas.

Leader of MTCBC

# Christmas is, for many, the most magical time of the year.



Merthyr Tydfil CBC's Cabinet Members wish you a Merry Christmas happy, healthy and prosperous New Year

With Christmas nearly upon us, there are many fantastic festive events and activities happening across the County Borough to look forward to. The Town Centre and Cyfarthfa Retail Park are already bustling with activity, with people buying seasonal food and gifts

As we approach the New Year, we naturally take time to reflect on the past 12 months. 2016 has given us many things to celebrate in Merthyr Tydfil; the Physical Regeneration of our County Borough is going from strength to strength, with millions of pounds of investments being poured in to improve things like infrastructure and tourism.

More recently, we have seen Merthyr Tydfil nominated as one of the top ten finalists in the 'Wales Best Place' competition, and our Town Centre declared as the fifth best in the UK in the 'Great British High Street' annual competition.

Thanks to our residents, we have seen a significant improvement in our recycling figures and this is also the fourth year in succession that there has been an improvement in our schools, placing our young people in a strong position to move on to the next stage of their lives.

We must now continue to build on this success and together, get Merthyr Tydfil the recognition it deserves.

As we now start the celebrations of Christmas, we must also take time to think of those less fortunate than ourselves. If there is one thing

people want at Christmas it's the security of having their family around them and a home that is safe; unfortunately, not everyone has that and many people will be spending the festive period ill, homeless or alone.

Everyone can play a part in helping to make someone's Christmas a little bit better. Checking in on elderly family and neighbours to make sure they are well, not just physically but emotionally too can make a difference. A simple knock on the door could help you identify someone who may need extra help over the winter months. There are also schemes available to support both the elderly and those most vulnerable in our community. To find out more about these local organisations visit [www.dewis.wales](http://www.dewis.wales)

We must all pay tribute to the hundreds of doctors, nurses, carers, volunteers and all the other emergency services who also give up their Christmas to help the vulnerable – thank you to each and every one of you.

At this time of year, it is also important to acknowledge those who spend this season away from their home, family and loved ones whilst representing our great country in the Military Services.

As we look forward to 2017 there will, of course, be challenging times ahead; however there will also be many things to look forward to – exciting regeneration projects, such as the development of Cyfarthfa Park, new job

opportunities with employers, such as Trago Mills, and the ever growing tourism industry in Merthyr Tydfil and the surrounding areas. **Merthyr Tydfil certainly is a place to be proud of!**

As we approach the end of the year and the festive celebrations commence, we must not forget the true meaning of Christmas and show goodwill to our loved ones and others around us.

On behalf of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's

Cabinet, Councillors and staff, we would like to wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

*Dai Barker*  
*Harvey Philip*  
*Linda Chris*

## THE SANTA APPEAL

**COLLECTION CENTRES**  
Civic Centre  
Thomastown House  
Unit 5 Triangle Business Park, Pentrebach

The purpose of the Appeal is to enable members of the public to buy presents for children who are likely, otherwise, to miss out on Christmas. Friday 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. before Friday 16th December 2016.

These children may not be visited by Santa at all unless you help. All gifts should be handed into the Collection Centres before Friday 16th December 2016.

THANK YOU

Please support us in helping these deserving children, for further details or donations contact (01685) 725038 between Monday and

The Appeal is organised with the co-operation of Social Services & Social Regeneration

Telephone : (01685) 725038 or 725042 for further information



*Trowch fwrdd y gegin yn swyddfa uwchdechnoleg.*

*Transform your kitchen table into your own high-tech office.*



**Gwneud gweithio gartre'n brofiad gwych.**

Gyda band eang cyflym iawn, mae'n hawdd cynnal sesiynau fideo gynadledda, agor a rhannu ffeiliau anferth a chydweithio gan ddefnyddio'r dechnoleg amser real ddiweddaraf – a gwneud popeth ar yr un pryd. Felly, gallwch lwyddo yn eich gyrfa ac anghofio'r cwbl am broblemau teithio i'r gwaith.

**I weld os gallwch chi gael band eang cyflym iawn heddiw, ewch i [llyw.cymru/bandeang](http://llyw.cymru/bandeang)**

**Make working from home super.**

With superfast broadband, it's easy to hold video conferences, access and share huge files and work with colleagues using the latest real-time technologies – and do it all once. So now you can excel in your career and make your commute a thing of the past.

**To find out if you can have superfast broadband today, visit [gov.wales/broadband](http://gov.wales/broadband)**

**Band Eang Cyflym Iawn Merthyr Tudful**  
Cyflym, diolch i ni. Gwych, diolch i chi.

**Superfast Broadband Merthyr Tydfil**  
We made it fast. You make it super.



**Special festivities in store in the heart of Merthyr Tydfil**

goods from local artists and craftspeople.

The town centre's impressive cultural venues, Theatr Soar and Redhouse, have a jam-packed December with theatrical performances, music, Santa – and a fabulous pantomime.

Redhouse is the venue on **Friday, 2 December** for the inaugural annual Community Christmas Concert featuring the Redhouse Performance Academy stage school, Treharris Male Voice Choir, Choir of Light Dare To Sing Ladies Choir and Merthyr Tydfil's own CAST Musical Theatre. The show starts at 7pm.

On **Saturday 3 December**, Theatr Soar hosts Groto Sion Corn from 10am to 2pm. That evening, Redhouse will have a performance of Shirley Valentine by Swansea company Lighthouse Theatre from 7.30pm, tickets cost £8 with concessions at £6.

On **Friday 9 December**, Santa in Love at Theatr Soar

is a musical including games as well as favourite Christmas songs. Santa will be available after the show to meet your little ones and read their letters from 1.30pm. The theatre's box office number is 01685 722176.

Favourite Electric Light Orchestra tribute band Explosive Light Orchestra will be making its third appearance at Redhouse on **Saturday 10 December** (8pm). Tickets cost £15 from the Redhouse Box Office or by calling 01685 384111.

A 'Noson Carolau' - Carol Evening is taking place at Theatr Soar on **Tuesday 13 December** (6pm), while from **Wednesday 14 to Saturday 24 December**, Redhouse is the venue for Aladdin – a Magical Pantomime Adventure.

The show promises a fun-packed occasion for the whole family with plenty of songs and audience participation. There are three performances a day on **14, 15 and 16 December**,

at 9.30am, 12.30pm and 7pm; two shows per day on **17, 19 and 20-23 December**, at 2.30pm and 7pm; and there's one show on **Christmas Eve** at 2.30pm. Tickets are £10 adults, £8 concession and £32 for a family ticket (two adults and two children).

Theatr Soar hosts a 'Parti Nadolig' - Christmas Party - on **Thursday, 15 December** at 7pm; Redhouse is staging a Christmas Fayre on **Saturday 17 December** at 10am; and **Monday 19 December**, sees the unique opportunity for families to enjoy Breakfast with Santa, also at Redhouse from 9am. Santa will present each child with a gift and certificate to prove they've met him. Followed by a Christmas craft workshop, there are four time slots available at 9am, 9.30am, 10am and 10.30am, and tickets cost £8 per child (free for adults)

Visitors to the town centre can leave their vehicles in the pay and display car parks for £1 all day on Saturdays so there's no

need for them to rush back to their cars but instead enjoy the extensive range of shops, cafes, pubs and restaurants across the town centre.

Merthyr Tydfil's Christmas programme is jointly organised and funded by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, The Big Heart of Merthyr Tydfil and St Tydfil Shopping Centre, together with other town centre partners.

County Borough Council Leader Cllr Brendan Toomey said, "Every year, the range and quality of Merthyr Tydfil's Christmas celebrations get bigger and better. A huge amount of hard work is going into making 2016's unforgettably special."

Les Byard, Chair of The Big Heart of Merthyr Tydfil Business Improvement District, said: "Christmas is a crucial time of year for the town's traders and there are so many reasons to shop here in the town centre. My message to everyone is to shop in Merthyr, support your local businesses and enjoy a fabulous run-up to Christmas."

Top-notch shopping, the finest festive food and drink and an extensive programme of entertainment are all on offer in Merthyr Tydfil this Christmas.

**Saturdays 3, 10 and 17 December** will feature St Tydfil's Community Christmas at the shopping centre, with guest appearances, live entertainment and seasonal music.

The increasingly popular farmers' market is setting up on **Friday 2 December** at Graham Way

**Friday 23 December** at St Tydfil Shopping Centre, with some 15 stalls offering excellent local produce and handmade



# MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS

The Civic Centre and other Council offices and departments will be open from 8.30am – 2pm on Friday 23rd December and will be closed on the following days :-

Monday 26th December 2016  
Tuesday 27th December 2016  
Monday 2nd January 2017

## REFUSE and KERBSIDE RECYCLING / GREEN WASTE COLLECTION

Usual collection day	Will be collected on
Friday 23rd December	Normal Collection
Monday 26th December	Tuesday 27th December
Tuesday 27th December	Wednesday 28th December
Wednesday 28th December	Thursday 29th December
Thursday 29th December	Friday 30th December
Friday 30th December	Saturday 31st December
Monday 2nd January	Tuesday 3rd January
Tuesday 3rd January	Wednesday 4th January
Wednesday 4th January	Thursday 5th January
Thursday 5th January	Friday 6th January
Friday 6th January	Saturday 7th January
Monday 9th January	Normal Collection

## CIVIC AMENITIES SITES

The Civic Amenities Sites will be closed on Sunday 25th December and Sunday 1st January. Normal winter opening times (9am - 4:30pm) apply on all other dates.

## REGISTRARS

Friday 23rd December	8.30am – 12pm
Monday 26th December	Closed
Tuesday 27th December	Closed
Wednesday 28th December	Open as Normal
Thursday 29th December	Open as Normal
Friday 30th December	Open as Normal
Monday 2nd January	Closed
Tuesday 3rd January	Open as Normal

## EMERGENCY HOUSING/SEWER REPAIRS

The telephone number for emergencies relating to drains serving Merthyr Valley Homes properties during the holiday period is Merthyr Tydfil (01685) 385231. Sewerage problems relating to all other properties should be directed to Dwr Cymru / Welsh Water on 08000 853968.

## SOCIAL SERVICES :

Friday 23rd December 8.30am – 2pm – Open as Normal  
2pm–4.30pm Children’s Services Duty Officer  
01685 724506

2pm–4.30pm Adult Services Duty Officer  
01685 351267  
4.30pm onwards – Emergency Duty Team  
01443 743665

## Saturday 24th December-Tuesday 27th December Closed – Emergency Duty Team 01443 743665

Wednesday 28th December Open as normal  
Thursday 29th December Open as normal  
Friday 30th December Open as normal

## Saturday 31st December – Monday 2nd January Closed – Emergency Duty Team 01443 743665

Tuesday 3rd January Open as normal

## BURIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Please note that the Bereavement Services Office be closed on Monday 26th and Tuesday 27th December 2016 and on Monday 2nd January 2017

Burial arrangements will be as follows:

Interments application received:	Funeral to take place:
Tuesday 20th December	Friday 23rd December
Wednesday 21st December	Wednesday 28th December
Thursday 22nd December	Thursday 29th December
Friday 23rd December	Friday 30th December
Wednesday 28th December	Tuesday 3rd January
Thursday 29th December	Wednesday 4th January
Friday 30th December	Thursday 5th January
Tuesday 3rd January	Friday 6th January

The office will be open as normal from Tuesday 3rd January 2017

You are reminded that interments cannot take place on Sunday, Good Friday or Easter Monday, Bank Holiday or other appointed for Public Thanksgiving or Mourning, except in cases of emergency, to be certified by a Coroner or Registered Medical Practitioner, such interments to take place before 12 noon.

Should you find any difficulty with these arrangements, please telephone the Bereavement Services Office on 01685 725145 as soon as possible.

Please note that all MTCBC cemeteries are open to the public every day of the year including Christmas Day, weather permitting

Gareth Chapman  
Chief Executive

# MTCBC’s CCTV Control Room critical to cracking down on anti-social behaviour

South Wales Police (SWP) and the Council’s CCTV Control Room Operators have been working in partnership to clamp down on anti-social behaviour following a recent spate of activity in Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre.

Public nuisance offences and incidents of harassment, alarm and distress are just some of the offences that have been committed, which have resulted in a number of people being issued with Criminal Behaviour Orders or even being imprisoned.

Inspector Alex Coleman from South Wales Police, said: “There have been a number of anti-social Behaviour offences committed in the Merthyr Tydfil town centre area, particularly on the stairwell of the multi-storey car park, where

individuals having been using the area to inject drugs.

“Following police intervention and the positive implementation of Criminal Behaviour Orders, we have obtained several positive results, and a number are also pending.

“This is another excellent example of an effective partnership approach. Our determined collaboration with partner agencies will improve the town centre environment to ensure it is a place that people can enjoy.”

The Council’s Control Room monitors 90 cameras throughout the County Borough. These cameras, along with the Control Room Operators, act not only as a deterrent but also assist the Emergency Services. The CCTV Control Room is also

linked to the Town Centre Storennet Radio and SWP Radio, where it daily assists SWP, Security Guards and shop staff.

During 2015/16 the cameras recorded over 561 live incidents which were passed to SWP, and received over 309 formal requests to review past CCTV footage as part of SWP incident evidence gathering process.

Since April this year we have already captured 206 live incidents and received 110 formal requests to review past footage.

Combatting anti-social behaviour is paramount to making people feel safe and secure whilst going about their everyday lives. If you see anti-social behaviour please call 101.



## SOME RECENT RESULTS:

*A woman, 27, from the Merthyr Tydfil area sentenced to 16 weeks imprisonment x 2 for public nuisance offences. Included within her order is a two-year exclusion from the town centre area.*

*A man, 39, from Merthyr Tydfil, received nine weeks imprisonment as a result of three breaches of his Order. This Order is in place for three years which also includes exclusion from the town centre.*

*A man, 22, from Merthyr Tydfil has breached his order on five occasions resulting in a total of 40 weeks imprisonment. Again he is excluded from the town centre for a period of two years.*

*A man, 31, from Merthyr Tydfil has breached his order and upon his first breach received 16 weeks imprisonment. He also has an exclusion attached to the order for a period of five years.*

*Police currently have four further Criminal Behaviour Order applications pending and six under investigation.*

# 12 TIPS OF CHRISTMAS!

## A Trading Standards gift from us to you...

1. If you're buying a gift which costs more than £100 consider using your credit card. The credit card company will have the same obligations towards you as the retailer which sold the product.
2. Before you buy ask if you can return an unsuitable item for a full cash refund. If they agree get it agreed in writing. You have no legal rights if you buy an unwanted gift. You are relying on the shops discretion IF THEY will refund your money.
3. Proof of purchase is very important if you do need to return anything. Put receipts in a safe place as soon as you start shopping.
4. Beware the Pirates! Buying copied goods (DVD's clothing, make-up electrical products etc.) can lead to disappointment. Poor quality or in some cases, dangerous items, could ruin your Christmas.
5. Once you've bought a gift, try the item if possible to ensure it works before Christmas morning.
6. Ensure Christmas lights are turned off and candles are extinguished when you are not around. Make sure that decorative lights you put outside the home are suitable for outdoor use.
7. Ensure that the toys you buy are CE marked and suitable for the child. Check for age restrictions and hazard warnings.
8. Give cash instead of gift cards, if the retailer goes out of business before the card is used the gift card is worthless and the money is lost.
9. When shopping online use websites that you know and trust. Always look for the padlock sign in the address bar when entering your personal and payment information.
10. Watch out for offers from fly-by-night web merchants which are too good to be true! They will be offering "the gift" of the season that is out of stock everywhere else. As soon as you have parted with your cash they will close the account/website etc. never to be seen again.
11. If you're giving a charitable donation in lieu of a gift make sure your money doesn't end up in a scammer's pocket. Call the charity on their official telephone number or type their address directly into your internet browser, don't click on hyperlinks or use phone numbers on flyers.
12. If you're ordering presents, get written confirmation they'll be delivered in time. If you don't, you might get an estimated delivery date only and have to accept goods after Christmas.



BONUS TIP: Don't over spend

this festive season and start the New Year with a financial hangover! Work out what you can afford and stick to your budget. The Money Advice Service 0800 138 7777 provide free and unbiased help and guidance on all money matters. For consumer advice call Citizens Advice Consumer Service 0345 4040506.

## HAVE A SAFE AND CRIME-FREE CHRISTMAS

Trading Standards, South Wales Police and fellow partner agencies are helping you to have a safe and crime-free Christmas.

While a happy and joyful time for many, Christmas is also a favourite time of year for criminals.

This year we are running roadshows which will take place in December to raise awareness of what you can do to prevent yourself becoming a victim of crime.

Trading Standards advises: "Don't be tempted to buy cheap goods from suspicious sellers on EBay, Facebook or any other online platform. They often turn out to be counterfeit and of a very poor quality. Counterfeit electrical goods could be unsafe and we have found cosmetic products which have contained excessive amounts of chemicals and metals, such as lead. Trading Standards advice is: Don't buy counterfeits! Apart from the safety risks, you are funding organised crime."

You should also be on your guard and avoid buying from strangers on the doorstep; we have had reports of TV's and mattresses being sold, which seem a bargain at the time but prove to be faulty or dangerous. Councillor David Jones Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Public Protection

says: "The excellent work carried out by our Trading Standards team will mean that for many residents Christmas will not be spoiled by sub-standard toys, perfumes and alcohol. The media regularly reports counterfeit toys that do not function or last as long as the genuine articles do. When toys do not function as intended the disappointment of our young, and young at heart, is only surpassed by the anger of the purchaser.

"Even more serious is when, because of unregulated manufacture, items can be dangerous. Examples of this are battery-powered items catching fire when being charged, vodka that contains alcohol that was intended for use as anti-freeze and fireworks that literally explode as soon as they are ignited.

"I hope that you will support the genuine traders in Merthyr Tydfil in these challenging times - they really do need your support and will still be trading here long after the counterfeiters have disappeared."

See the Trading Standards Christmas shopping list above of do's and don'ts to help you avoid Christmas Nightmares. Inspector Tony Carpenter at South Wales Police, said: "Unfortunately in the run up to Christmas there can be an increase in crimes such as burglary and alcohol-related violent crime. There are lots of things you can do to help us keep crime low and keep yourself safe over the festive period and we will be increasing patrols in hotspot areas."

Please come along to our

**Merthyr Tydfil roadshows:**

- 14 December Merthyr Tydfil Town Shopping Centre 10am - 2pm
- 20 December Cyfarthfa Retail Park 10am - 2pm

For more information on crime prevention go to [www.south-wales.police.uk](http://www.south-wales.police.uk)

For Trading Standards Advice telephone 03454 040506.



**KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GETTING IN TO!**

Make sure the taxi you hail is fully licenced

Here's what to look out for...

- ONLY Hackney Carriages can be flagged down from the road (they must be black in colour and have a top roof light)
- A licence plate on the rear exterior and a plate in the windscreen
- A valid licence sticker displayed on the front doors
- A valid driver's identity badge displayed in the vehicle (plus another that the driver must wear)
- A meter (Even if a fare is agreed before the journey starts the driver MUST have the meter running until you reach your destination)
- A table of fares on display

To report an unlicenced vehicle call (01685) 725000

Cynor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
MERTHYR TYDFIL  
MERTHYR TYDFIL  
County Borough Council



# Up and Coming

## You too could become a Young Reporter

The Up and Coming is a project for young people in Merthyr with an interest in journalism or media to share interesting and positive

stories and to influence policy. We create news articles, blog posts and videos covering everything from food festivals to chess championships. Young people get to have their voice heard on issues they have an interest in, and influence the things that

matter to them.

## Get Involved

If you think that sounds like something you'd like to be involved with then please contact Tom Stupple on: 01685 355999, email [ts@smt.org.uk](mailto:ts@smt.org.uk) or tweet us @upandcomingsmt



## Health in Focus: Irlen Syndrome

Our Jen goes to the Welsh Assembly

Words By Jennifer Owen

On October 17th 2016, Merthyr resident Jennifer Owen went to the Welsh Assembly, taking the fight to get Irlen Syndrome recognised, as part of International Irlen Syndrome Awareness week.

Jennifer gave a speech to Assembly Members describing her experience with Irlen Syndrome, with the aim to get the condition recognised in the NHS and schools. Currently, those with the condition are not able to get NHS funding for medical assessments and treatment.



### Jennifer's Story

Jennifer was first diagnosed with Irlen Syndrome in 2012. Since her diagnosis, local charity Merthyr

Mendicants has assisted with funding to purchase the special lenses for the spectacles needed to manage the symptoms. She says: "My life is so much better because I can read and write properly now, without getting headaches."

Jennifer is now the Irlen ambassador for South Wales. She gives regular presentations about the condition and campaigns to raise awareness of Irlen syndrome. "It's important to raise awareness as it's a very important issue and makes life a lot harder." Jennifer is looking forward to a more positive future.

Helen Irlen founder and director of Irlen Institute said: "I am pleased to have Jennifer Owen talking to the Welsh Assembly about Irlen Method. As someone who has struggled her entire life until she was tested and provided with individually created Irlen spectral filters, she can describe personal struggles and how Irlen has changed her life. The most reliable information comes from those who have experienced the benefits of the Irlen method for themselves. Jennifer is fighting for all children and adults who are presently not being identified with reading difficulties related to perceptual processing or Irlen Syndrome."



Jennifer with AM Dawn Bowden and MP Gerald Jones

## Music in the Community: The Big Music Project

Words by Evan Davies



The Big Music Project is a lottery-funded project that aims to open doors into the music industry for young people aged 14-25. There are hubs for the project all over the UK, and our hub is located in Georgetown Youth Club, Merthyr.

As well as assisting with personal and career development opportunities within the music industry, The Big Music Project supports young people to run their own music events and projects, and deliver peer education skills to other young people in their community.

### So what have we done so far?

- We have run several 'open mic' nights at our youth club so we can perform music and listen to our friends perform.
- We set up and run a Night of Talent at the New Crown Inn, where bands performed on the night and we raised money for our project.
- We took part in a project run by TRAC (a folk music company). Over two months we set up as a group of musicians and eventually performed at the Soar Theatre in Merthyr.
- We performed at the international Kaya Music Festival in Margam Park. We performed as a 5-piece band, called The Optimists, with three vocalists, guitar and bass.

Our next step is to recruit new members. We are organising an event to introduce people to this fantastic project.

[www.thebigmusicproject.co.uk](http://www.thebigmusicproject.co.uk)

## Youth Parliament

Words by Ashleigh Davies



Parliament is a big scary place where big, important politicians make decisions that impact on all of us... at least that's what I thought until I was asked to go there and debate.

The Youth Parliament was designed to give young people an opportunity to debate with each other about what they want the young people's priority to be over the coming year. The young people's priority for 2016 was to combat racism and racial discrimination.

I attended a training day for the debate back in August, where I met the other members of the Youth Parliament for Wales. It was an exciting day where I learnt how to build a strong argument for debating, and how to stand confidently and project my voice well. Following on from this, I also attended a residential in October where I further developed my skills.

I am now looking forward to travelling up to London in November to pitch the priority for young people in the Houses of Parliament - let's just hope there is no Guy Fawkes waiting in the cellar when I go there.

## What is Irlen Syndrome?

Irlen Syndrome is the brain's inability to process full spectral light. It is not a visual impairment, but because the brain is not able to process visual information, the result is a range of visual distortions in the environment and on the printed page.

People of all ages may experience symptoms including: light sensitivity, headaches or migraines, and difficulty or discomfort when reading.

When reading, those with Irlen Syndrome might see the words on the page flicker or blur; the words seem to move; and sometimes they see colours, shapes, or shadowy lines on the page. Understandably, reading

can become very tiring.

The condition is made worse by environmental factors such as lighting, brightness, glare and high contrast patterns and colours. Black on white text, typical in school textbooks, can cause the most discomfort.

### Managing Irlen Syndrome

Many people with Irlen

Syndrome use coloured overlays. Overlays are a strip of coloured plastic that is placed over text to correct the visual distortion. Many people worldwide use this technique.

Individuals with the condition may find it useful to wear spectacles with coloured lenses. Irlen spectral filters are precision-tinted for each individual, filtering out the exact wave

lengths of light which is creating the perceptual difficulties. Only a certified Irlen diagnostician can identify the best colour-correction hue and saturation.

Anybody wanting to find out more about Irlen Syndrome visit the website [www.irlenuk.com](http://www.irlenuk.com) or call Stephanie Jamison, Irlen diagnostician for South Wales and South West England, on 01242 539810.



# Carer Support Merthyr Tydfil

Do you provide care for an adult or disabled child?  
Is the care you provide unpaid? Then you are a carer.

Carers deliver much of the care in Merthyr Tydfil and we recognise that whilst caring can be rewarding, it can also be stressful and tiring.

If you are a carer and think you need help you can talk to the Carers Information and Development Officer who is there to offer support to carers across Merthyr Tydfil.

If you would like to find out more about this service, you can contact the Carers Information and Development Officer at Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil on 01685 353907.

 Merthyr Tydfil Carers  
 @merthycarers



COME ALONG AND EXPERIENCE  
THE MAGIC OF

# Santa's Grotto at Cwm Golau Integrated Children's Centre

Tuesday 6th, Wednesday 7th & Thursday 8th December 2016  
4.00 p.m. – 7.00 p.m.

MINCE PIES AND HOT DRINKS

BOOKING IN  
ADVANCE IS  
ESSENTIAL  
TEL (01685)  
727374

VISIT SANTA  
AND HIS  
HELPERS  
FOR JUST  
£1.00



For further information, please contact us on  
01685 727374, Cwm Golau ICC, Duffryn Road, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4BJ

## UNISON is one of the UK's largest trade unions, serving more than 1.3 million members.

We represent full-time and part-time staff who provide public services, although they may be employed in both the public and private sectors.

Contact Unison Office 01685 725050  
Michael Crimmings Unison Branch Secretary Email  
address: [Mike.Crimmings@Merthyr.Gov.Uk](mailto:Mike.Crimmings@Merthyr.Gov.Uk)



# HAVE YOUR SAY ON RECYCLING

The Council's new recycling services have been in place for over a year and, thanks to our residents we have made huge improvements in the amount of waste recycled, exceeding the target set for last year by recycling 62% of the waste collected.

Recent figures show that 75.61% of Merthyr Tydfil householders are participating in our recycling service, and those participating in the food waste collection have almost doubled in the past 18 months, with 60% of households currently using the service.

We want to hear your views on your local waste and recycling services so that we can find out what people think of them and monitor our services for the future.

Tell us what you think by completing our online questionnaire at [cwmtafhub.com](http://cwmtafhub.com)





# Public Notices

**NOTICE OF MAKING OF AN ORDER HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL FOOTPATH DOWLAIS 18 DIVERSION ORDER 2016**

The above order, made on 29th November 2016, under section 119 of the Highways Act 1980 will divert the public footpath running from grid reference S005940736 to grid reference S005940736 to a line running from grid reference S005940736 to grid reference S005960732, as shown on the order maps.

A copy of the order and order maps have been placed and may be seen free of charge at Unit 5, Triangle Business Park, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 4TQ between the hours of 0900 to 1700 on Monday to Friday. Copies of the order and maps may be bought at the price of £10.

Any representations about or objections to the order may be sent in writing to the Legal & Democratic Services Manager not later than 30th December 2016. Please state the grounds on which they are made.

If no such representations or objections are duly made, or if any so made are withdrawn, the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council may confirm the order as an unopposed order. If the order is sent to the Secretary of State for Wales for confirmation any representations or objections which have not been withdrawn will be sent with the order.

**Dated** 1st December 2016

**C M Kennedy,**  
Legal & Democratic Services  
Manager, Merthyr Tydfil  
County Borough Council,  
Civic Centre, Castle Street,  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF47 8AN

**NOTICE OF MODIFICATION ORDER Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 THE FORMER MID GLAMORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT BOROUGH OF MERTHYR TYDFIL TROEDYRHIW 115 DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER 2016**

The above Order made on 29th November 2016, if confirmed as made, will modify the definitive map and statement for the area by adding to them the footpath that commences on the maintainable highway at a gate and adjacent kissing gate at grid reference S006760353 and proceeds initially along a tarmac surface and then along an earth track for approximately 76 metres in a general south-easterly direction to terminate at grid reference S006810348 where it joins Public Right of Way bridleway Troedyrhiw 200. The width is between 2 - 3 metres

A copy of the order and order maps have been placed and may be seen free of charge at Unit 5, Triangle Business Park, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 4TQ between the hours of 0900 to 1700 on Monday to Friday. Copies of the order and maps may be bought at the price of £10.

Any representation or objection to the Order must be sent in writing to the undersigned by 13th January 2017 and applicants are requested to state the grounds on which it is made.

If no representations or objections are duly made to the Order, or to any part of it, or if any so made are withdrawn, the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, instead of submitting the Order to the National Assembly for Wales may itself confirm the Order. If the Order is submitted to

the National Assembly for Wales, any representations or objections which have been withdrawn will be sent with it.

**Dated** 1st December 2016

**C M Kennedy,**  
Legal & Democratic Services  
Manager, Merthyr Tydfil  
County Borough Council,  
Civic Centre, Castle Street,  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF47 8AN

**NOTICE OF MODIFICATION ORDER Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 THE FORMER MID GLAMORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT BOROUGH OF MERTHYR TYDFIL TROEDYRHIW 203 DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER 2016**

The above Order made on 29th November 2016, if confirmed as made, will modify the definitive map and statement for the area by adding to them the footpath that commences at grid reference S006910345 and proceeds along a natural surface in a general south-easterly direction for approximately 207 metres to terminate at grid reference S007050329. The width is 1 metre.

A copy of the order and order maps have been placed and may be seen free of charge at Unit 5, Triangle Business Park, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 4TQ between the hours of 0900 to 1700 on Monday to Friday. Copies of the order and maps may be bought at the price of £10.

Any representation or objection to the Order must be sent in writing to the undersigned by 13th January 2017 and applicants are requested to state the grounds on which it is made.

If no representations or objections are duly made to the Order, or to any part of it, or if any so made are withdrawn, the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, instead of submitting the Order to the National Assembly for Wales may itself confirm the Order. If the Order is submitted to the National Assembly for Wales, any representations or objections which have been withdrawn will be sent with it.

**Dated** 1st December 2016

**C M Kennedy,**  
Legal & Democratic Services  
Manager, Merthyr Tydfil  
County Borough Council,  
Civic Centre, Castle Street,  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF47 8AN

**NOTICE OF MODIFICATION ORDER Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 THE FORMER MID GLAMORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT BOROUGH OF MERTHYR TYDFIL TROEDYRHIW 213 DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER 2016**

The above Order made on 29th November 2016, if confirmed as made, will modify the definitive map and statement for the area by adding to them the footpath that commences at its junction with Public Right of Way footpath Troedyrhiw 18 at grid reference S006120346 and it proceeds along a natural surface for approximately 240 metres initially in a general south-westerly direction and then in a general north-westerly direction to terminate at a gate at its junction with the Taff Trail, Public Right of Way bridleway Troedyrhiw 77, grid reference S005950335. The width is between 1 and 1½ metres.

A copy of the order and order maps have been placed and may be seen free of charge at Unit 5, Triangle Business Park, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 4TQ between the hours of 0900 to 1700 on Monday to Friday. Copies of the order and maps may be bought at the price of £10.

Any representation or objection to the Order must be sent in writing to the undersigned by 13th January 2017 and applicants are requested to state the grounds on which it is made.

If no representations or objections are duly made to the Order, or to any part of it, or if any so made are withdrawn, the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, instead of submitting the Order to the National Assembly for Wales may itself confirm the Order. If the Order is submitted to the National Assembly for Wales, any representations or objections which have been withdrawn will be sent with it.

**Dated** 1st December 2016

**C M Kennedy,**  
Legal & Democratic Services  
Manager, Merthyr Tydfil  
County Borough Council,  
Civic Centre, Castle Street,  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF47 8AN