



# Mick Antoniw

*Working hard for Pontypridd*

Labour  Llafur

Monthly report **JULY 2014**

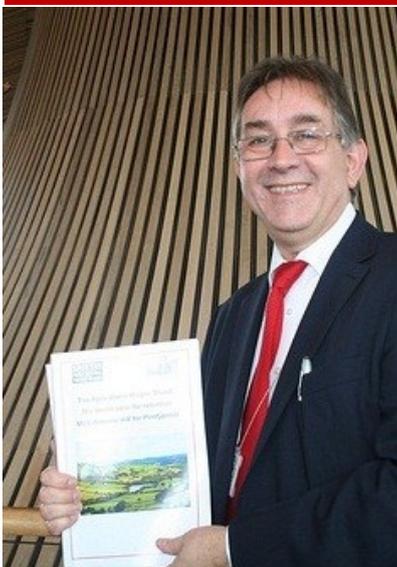


## COMMUNITY COUNCILS' REPORT

**Representatives from the Community and Town Councils within the Pontypridd Constituency presented their report on the future role of Community Councils to Local Government Minister Lesley Griffiths at the Senedd.**

The report, which advocates an enhanced role for Community Councils in the light of larger local authorities, is the product of a series of workshops I held with Community Councillors. The report is intended as a means of starting a conversation on the future role and responsibilities of Community Councils with Welsh Government. You'll find a copy of the report on my website.

## AGRICULTURAL WAGES BOARD VICTORY!



The Supreme Court's decision to dismiss the UK Government's challenge to the Agricultural Sector (Wales) Bill is a victory for some of the lowest paid people in our society. Almost 14, 000 Welsh agricultural workers will benefit from this decision to retain the Agricultural Wages Board in Wales.

Abolishing the AWB would have reduced pay and conditions and increased rural poverty and I've been delighted to be able to play a leading role in helping to retain the AWB in Wales.

The experience also shows that we need to move to a 'reserve powers' model in Wales as soon as possible. It is right that the Welsh Government should be able to make decisions of this sort, which are in the interests of the people of Wales, without delay and without the taxpayer needing to finance unnecessary court proceedings.

## £6m for Pontypridd town centre

The £6 million grant from the Welsh Government to Pontypridd town centre is great news.

The funding is part of the Welsh Government's Vibrant and Viable places initiative and includes the transformation of the old YMCA building into a multi-purpose, state-of-the-art community facility.



## PCSOs in our communities

Pontypridd is benefitting from the Welsh Government's £15.8m investment in Police Community Support Officers. The investment funds 500 additional PCSOs in Wales who help to make our communities safer.

PCSOs are a highly visible, engaging with people, providing reassurance and tackle anti-social behaviour. I've recently spent some time with PCSOs Sarah Perkins in Rhydyfelin (pictured) and Lewis Murphey in Church Village and can attest to what a great job they do.



## Hooked on sport

The results of a new Sport Wales Active Adults survey show considerable increases in the number of Welsh adults undertaking sport, physical activity and volunteering in sport.

The survey shows that those participating in any sport over the previous four weeks increased from 56% in 2008/09 to 70% in 2012 and 39% of adults say they are 'hooked on sport', meaning that they participate more than three times a week - an increase of ten percentage points or 262,000 people.

The percentage of people volunteering in sport has increased from 4.6% to 10.4%, which is equivalent to 325,000 of the Welsh population.

A great example of the boom in adult sport is Ponty's Park Run, which has more than 1100 registered runners and almost 5000 runs completed.

## Beddau Scouts

I was delighted to join the 1st Beddau Beaver Scouts and their Leader Claire Norris, on their recent sign-wash initiative.

They are a very industrious group and their enthusiasm is infectious. In fact I had trouble with keeping up with their rapid rate of cleaning!



## Rhdyfelin & Beddau libraries

I welcome the decision by the Andrew Morgan, new leader of RCT to keep the Rhydyfelin library open and to engage in discussions with the local community over its future.

It is a brave and positive step and illustrates a constructive commitment to public engagement at a time of very difficult decisions. We cannot of course underestimate the impact of the Coalition cuts and the implications these have for local services which local councillors have to implement to set a legal budget. Nevertheless, it is a victory for common sense and recognises the strong feelings held by local residents.

I'm also delighted that the Beddau land Tynant Library Community Support Group's (pictured) business plan to take community ownership of Beddau library has been backed by RCT.

Following meetings with the Rydyfelin and Beddau library groups, I met with the Minister to discuss library provision as part of his wider review. I believe that we have to look at library services in a different way, taking account of the changed role of libraries as community hubs and the growth of community trusts. The Minister said that he is keen to engage with community library groups to learn from their experiences.



## 'Save Ponty's second engine' petition delivered to the Assembly

At the beginning of June I joined members of the Pontypridd retained fire-crew to present their 9500+ signature petition to the Assembly's Petition Committee.

A few weeks earlier, Owen Smith MP and I presented our formal submissions to the Chief Fire Officer, Huw Jakeway. Members of the Ponty crew were with us and they handed in a copy of their petition together with hundreds of letters and emails of support from members of the public, local councillors, businesses, schools & colleges and other organisations.

There's no doubting the effort that has gone into the campaign, but we must continue to keep the campaign going right up until the final decision is made in September.



## Hawthorn High school visits the Assembly

It was great to host a visit by two groups of pupils from Hawthorn High School recently. It was a return visit in a way, since I had taken part in Hawthorn's 'Question Time' for years 12 & 13 the previous week. I was asked a range of challenging questions at both sessions and it was great to see the pupils—who were great ambassadors for their school—engaging so enthusiastically. I'm always happy to host school—and other organisations—visits to the Assembly. To find out more go to [www.assemblywales.org/visiting](http://www.assemblywales.org/visiting) or contact me via my website.

## GTFM

I was delighted to drop in on the presenters at GTFM and give my support as they finished their mammoth 75 hours 'Radiothon' in aid of GTFM and the Breast Friends charity.

GTFM provides a great service to our area and these sort of fundraising events deserve our support.



## The wrong time for Health & Safety cuts

The £80 million cut to the H&S Executive's budget by the UK Government directly impacts on workers, residents and construction companies in Pontypridd. There are a number of housing developments either underway or planned in Pontypridd, including the 850 home development on the Cwm Coke Works site. We also have more than 300 construction companies in Pontypridd. We have seen that construction site inspections in Wales have fallen by 35%, with the number of prosecutions falling from three in 2012 to zero last year. This cut by the Tory/Lib Dem Government can only make matters worse at a time when the construction sector is growing in Wales.



## Food bank volunteers

I helped out at the food bank collection at Tesco Upper Boat recently and was extremely impressed by the dedication of the Trussell Trust volunteers and the generosity of the public. 900 000 people in the UK now rely on food banks. It really is a terrible indictment of this Tory/Lib Dem Government.

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