

Our Cwm Taf

**News from the Public
Services Board
January 2019**



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CWM TAF
PUBLIC
SERVICES
BOARD

Welcome to the first newsletter of the Cwm Taf Public Services Board.

The 'Cwm Taf PSB' is made up of organisations right across Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf including the health board, two local authorities, police, fire service, third sector, Natural Resources Wales and probation service. Instead of working separately we are all now working together far more closely to make sure we address some of the big challenges we face in our communities.



Professor Marcus Longley,
Chair, Cwm Taf Public
Services Board

The PSB was set up after the Well-being of Future Generations Act was passed by the National Assembly, and aims to change the way local public services are planned and delivered for the future. Wales is the first country in the world to introduce legislation to protect the next generation and all decisions we now take will have to consider the impact they have on our communities and our environment in the future.

The PSB's purpose is to ensure everyone works together to improve the well-being of our communities, through effective partnership working. The CTPSB's Well-Being Plan has four well-being objectives which are:

- Thriving Communities;
- A Strong Economy;
- Healthy People; and
- Tackling loneliness and social isolation (cross-cutting objective).

The work of the PSB must consider the well-being of the people of Cwm Taf now and those who will live and work here in the future. This will be achieved by ensuring that all the work of the PSB is carried out in line with the sustainable development principle of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, which sets out five specific ways in which the PSB must go about meeting its duty.

The Our Cwm Taf quarterly newsletter will provide an update on how our organisations are working differently as partners and what the PSB is doing to make things better in your community.



RCT County Youth Forum to tackle bullying and mental health

Through RCT's County Youth Forum young people have decided that the two issues they were keen to tackle were bullying and mental health, and they have set up two sub groups to look into them.

Over the last year the young people have jointly gone through training including Young People's Mental Health First Aid training and Public Speaking training.

The young people wanted to create a resource that raised awareness of bullying and isolation and how this can have a damaging impact on young people's mental health. The main aim of the video is to promote the message of being kind and understanding of others and the battles that they face, as well as promoting where young people can access support.

The video will be a prompt for discussion in issue based sessions throughout youth clubs in RCT. The video will be supported by age appropriate resources both of which are being finalised currently with young people, with the resource being launched later this year.

Once launched, the video will be rolled out in youth clubs throughout RCT delivered by young people within the forum who have received training. The young people will be supported by Youth Engagement and Participation Service staff during each of these sessions and throughout the project.

Plans to create 'edible playgrounds' in Gurnos and Rhondda Fach!

Unfortunately eating the swings won't be part of this innovative idea, but planting and learning about gardening at dinner time could be on the agenda for some schoolchildren in the Cwm Taf area very soon!

In the two Cwm Taf Community Zones of Gurnos and Rhondda Fach, Natural Resources Wales is exploring options to 'green' the areas including tree planting, edible playgrounds, raised beds, green rooved shelters and wildflower planting for pollinators.

NRW will be liaising with local housing associations, voluntary groups and the local councils to scope suitable potential areas in which to start the projects. The edible playground initiative which NRW hopes local schools will be interested in developing has been introduced in some parts of England to encourage children to be active and take care of their local environment with great success – you can read more details here - <https://www.treesforcities.org/our-work/edible-playgrounds/hitherfield-primary-school>

Evidence shows that being outside and connecting with nature can provide many benefits including guarding against obesity; reducing the symptoms of stress and ADHD; minimising childhood short sightedness and promoting academic attainment.

To support outdoor learning in the Cwm Taf area NRW also has a range of curriculum linked learning resources available for schools including woodland based activities and messaging around waste, recycling and fly-tipping for inclusion in lesson plans. For more information please contact: education@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk





Just One Small Change can help you #FeelGreat!

Thousands of public and voluntary sector staff who work across Cwm Taf will be encouraged to take up the 'One Small Change' challenge this Spring.

The campaign which was piloted in Cwm Taf University Health Board in 2017 encourages staff to pledge to make just one small change to their daily lifestyle and commit to it for 30 days.

The change can be as simple as drinking more water every day, walking during every lunch break, swapping your coffee for decaf or doing some star jumps before your team meeting!

Cwm Taf Public Health Consultant Angela Jones said, "Being healthy and fit doesn't have to be hard work and by pledging just one small change to your daily life you can help improve your health and feel so much better.

Evidence shows however that small, incremental changes can have impact, particularly if those changes are instigated and owned by people themselves."

Porters David and Carl at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital in Llantrisant clocked up the miles as part of the #FeelGreat Challenge, recording the steps they did as part of their jobs on pedometers for 30 days as they aimed to improve their fitness regimes!

Other pledges from staff in the health board included cycling to work one day a week; doing the plank each morning and switching biscuits for fruit during the coffee break.

For more information about the campaign and to see if you could make one small change visit <http://cwmtaf.wales/feelgreat/>

Public sector bodies commit to the 'Employability Pledge'

Organisations across the public sector in Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf have joined forces to provide more opportunities for work and training for local people.

Whilst still in development the initiative is a key plank of the work of the Public Service Board and aims to ensure people have better access to job opportunities and training schemes in the health board, the two local authorities, police and fire services, as well as the environment body Natural Resources Wales.

The Pledge which has been signed by all of the main public sector bodies in the Cwm Taf area also aims to provide more professional development opportunities for existing employees and ensure the public sector is seen as an employer of choice.

More information will be available via the Public Service Board website www.ourcwmtaf.wales as the initiative is developed





RCT Youth Engagement and Participation Community Project

More than 40 young people from the Youth Engagement and Participation Service Ferndale and Treorchy Youth Clubs have joined forces to help improve the open spaces in their communities.

Working together with South Wales Police, RCT Parks and Environmental Services departments, they have spent their days at Darran Park painting benches, planting bee friendly flowers, weeding areas around the lake and some general tidying for members of the community to use and enjoy the area.

The Rhondda YEP Service staff were super proud of the young people's positive attitudes and their willingness and commitment to the project. They were amazed at the difference they made to the area.

Hayley Manns, YEP Service Community Youth Offer Coordinator said: "This project has been a great success. The young people have been working really hard to improve the area and really enjoying the days as a whole. We have been using our YEPS social media site www.wicid.tv to post updates and it has attracted a lot of positive attention from residents. The residents have stated that they are so pleased to see young people getting involved."

Tackling loneliness and isolation a major priority for the PSB

These case studies show how the Welcome Friends group is bringing elderly people together

Daphne aged 90, below, was referred by the Interlink coordinator and although being very mobile and independent, was extremely lonely and anxious about meeting new people. She did not have much support from family and was only on a nodding acquaintance with neighbours. She was introduced to a volunteer befriender and they immediately got on really well. She now receives weekly visits and phone calls and the volunteer enjoys her company as much as Daphne does. She was keen to attend our weekly social group in Pontyclun to play scrabble and meet other people but could not make that initial step on her own. Her volunteer brought her for the first time and she was made very welcome. Now she comes her own every week and has continued to have home support from her volunteer.



Carl, aged 75 pictured above right, was also referred by Interlink in need of support to get out during the day as he suffered memory problems and Parkinson's. He was introduced to Paul in July who started bringing him to the Welcome Friends group. He also enjoys short car trips in the local area and although his mobility is deteriorating he can still engage in conversation and playing board game. He now stays for lunch at the day centre and attends other activities there too. His wife is so grateful for the respite she is now able to enjoy knowing that Carl is in safe hands.

Josie is 85 years old (right) and was referred to Welcome Friends in mid July. She has severe mobility issues and poor sight following a stroke and has been housebound for some considerable time. She has carers calling throughout the day but spends long periods on her own. She is very chatty and loves making conversation. In early August, volunteer, Lana who has similar interests to Josie and they have quickly built up a positive relationship. Lana visits Josie twice a week.



With Lana's support, Josie was recently able to attend a lunch club. Josie's carers had made sure that she was ready in her wheelchair for the taxi to pick her up while Lana accompanied Josie on the journey to the venue. On returning home, Lana stayed with Josie until the carers arrived to move her from her wheelchair.

Josie had a wonderful afternoon and said it was lovely to get out of the house, have some company and be able to chat with all the people at the lunch. She hopes to be able to do it again sometime.

You can find out more information about the Welcome Friends group here <https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/opportunity/welcome-friends-rhondda-cynon-taf/> or call Interlink RCT on 01443 846200

To find out more about the work of the Cwm Taf Public Services Board; and what's going on to improve your local community please visit www.ourcwmtaf.wales.