

July 2011

inform



Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil • Gweithredu Gwirfoddol Merthyr Tudful

LAUNCH OF COMMISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Partners highlighted the significance of the Commissioning Project in taking forward the relationship between local public and third sector organisations in Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf at a successful event to launch the Commission Accomplished Code of Practice and website. The event took place at the Orbit Centre in Merthyr Tydfil on 16th June 2011 and was attended by more than 80 people from public and third sector organisations.

Margaret McLaughlin, Project Officer, explained to the audience that the Code of Practice and website were the main products from a two-year Commissioning Project. This innovative Project was supported by the Cwm Taf Health Board, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and VAMT and Interlink as the County Voluntary Councils.

The Code of Practice, which has been adopted by partner agencies, provides for the first time a clear framework for the public sector to commission services from the third sector. This framework comprises a set of shared principles to guide commissioning relationships, together with 16 checklists that set out the undertakings from public and third sector organisations on what they can expect from each other.

The Commission Accomplished website, designed to support the implementation of the Code of Practice, is essentially a toolkit for disseminating and sharing good practice. It is also an opportunity to promote the local third sector and highlight its work. It is based on the 16 checklists in the Code of Practice

and provides a wealth of information on commissioning, procurement and the third sector. It carries links to many other useful resources, including the Value Wales Procurement Route Planner for Social Care.

Three speakers gave the audience food for thought by highlighting recent good practice initiatives. Gunther Kostrya of Value Wales gave a national perspective on work that has been undertaken to reduce the barriers to Small and Medium Enterprises engaging with public sector procurement. His colleague, Lisa Thomas-Lewis focused on the successful work that had been undertaken nationally to promote the use of community benefits as core and not-core requirements in service contracts. Claire Russell of NQC Limited gave an interesting presentation on the value of supplier engagement to effective procurement.

Next, Commissioning Project partners had the opportunity to describe how they planned to implement the Code of Practice. Samia Saeed of Cwm Taf Health Board outlined plans to review their systems to ensure compliance. Chris Lee of Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and Gareth Spencer of Merthyr Tydfil Council underlined the importance of having action plans with clear milestones and performance measures taken forward by the local Compacts and supported by the Local Service Boards. Finally, Ian Davy, Chief Officer of VAMT, spoke on behalf of VAMT and Interlink and outlined how the CVCs would support third sector organisations to engage with commissioning and procurement. This included

support for the development of third sector provider networks in each area and training specific to commissioning and procurement.

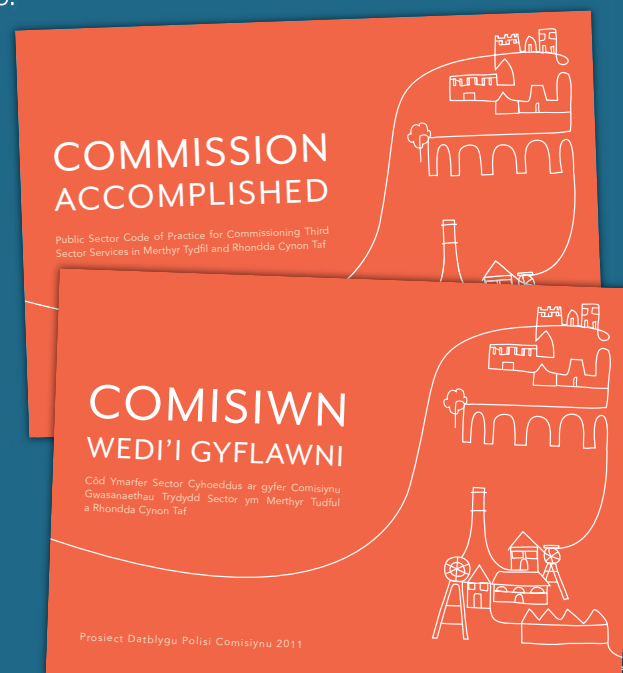
Further information

A Commission Accomplished Launch event report will be available soon on www.vamt.net/projects/commissioningproject and www.interlinkrct.org.uk

The Commission Accomplished website can be accessed on www.commissionaccomplished.co.uk. Your photos, cases studies and completed Value Added Facts Questionnaires can still be uploaded.

Limited copies of the b-lingual Commission Accomplished Code of Practice are available on request from VAMT and Interlink.

Demystifying Commissioning one-day free training, 12th July, Soar Centre, Merthyr Tydfil, WCVA in partnership with the Commissioning Project. To book your place, contact Margaret McLaughlin or Gareth Coles of WCVA on gareth.coles@WCVA.org.uk



Inside:

- VAMT news
- Partnership & Network News
- News
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Welcome

... to the July edition of Inform in 2011. Our aim is to provide our members with up to date news and information and we welcome contributions and feedback from all readers of the newsletter.

This month, we have updates on:

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YOU can be part of this magazine too!

If you would like to include an article, news item or focus on your group in the next edition then contact VAMT enquiries for more information: enquiries@vamt.net

Adverts/Inserts policy

In each Inform we are able to insert adverts and up to 5 different leaflets from member or other organisations. We have a rate card for private agencies who wish to advertise or place inserts in Inform and prices start from £25. There is a rate card for voluntary organisations for charges covering pre-printed inserts and inserts that need to be copied. Contact VAMT at **01685 353900** or enquiries@vamt.net

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Sharon Richards Health & Social Care Facilitator

Caroline Jones Expert Patient Programme Co-ordinator

Alison Harris Partnership Development Officer

Carol van den Berg Engagement Gateway Local Liaison Officer

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Cheryl Sneddon Temporary CF Development Officer (maternity cover)

Jonathan McLoughlan Community Development Officer

Linda Bevan Administrator (maternity cover)

Hayley Jenkins Communities First Development Officer

Caroline Jones Temporary Communities First Development Officer

FOCUS ON Keep Wales Tidy in Merthyr Tydfil

VOLUNTARY
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Keep Wales Tidy has a goal of a clean safe and tidy Wales, because we believe that people and society can only flourish where people feel safe in their community. Flytips, litter and graffiti cause people to feel unsafe as they are associated with crime and drug use.

Our principle way of combating these problems is our Tidy Towns Project in which local volunteers both within community groups and as individuals (litter champions) carry out a variety of projects in their community. These volunteers are supported by KWT with training, insurance and equipment from a dedicated Project Officer. KWT liaises between these groups and statutory organisations including the Environment Agency and local authority to help with removal of waste after events, provision of extra manpower and enforcement of litter and flytipping laws.



Clean up Team

Many of our community groups carry out a much wider range of work beyond litter clearance to cover areas such as community

allotments, refurbishment of graveyards, construction of bird and bat boxes and managing community parks and woodlands. Examples include the Friends of Rocky Park who with KWT's help managed to get a number of unsightly redundant metal garages removed from alongside the Trevithick Trail in Troedyrhiw or residents of Adref homeless hostel who helped to create wetland areas at Taff Bargoed Park in Trelewis.

Keep Wales Tidy is actively recruiting new litter champions to become our ambassadors out in the community. These are local people who regularly visit places such as parks and will clear up the litter whilst doing the others things they do, such as walking their dog or playing with their kids.

KWT provides litter pickers, bags, gloves, advice and most important public liability insurance. In return we would like to know how our Litter Champions get on and how it makes them feel to be actively involved in improving their community.

KWT has project officers in every council area and between them have a very wide range of skills these range from web and blog design through grant applications to recovery of heavy items from watercourses. This vast array of expertise enables us to train our volunteers in particular skills appropriate to the area in which they are working. Two recent examples are:-

- A training project in partnership with Dolygaer and "Bridges to Work" involved the removal of trolleys, motorbikes and other scrap from the rapids on the river Taff in Quakers Yard. The project which involved setting up hauling lines and winches.



Quakers Yard Rapids

- An Otter identification and holt building course at the Rock UK centre in Trelewis, in which trainees from as far afield as Cardigan came to learn these important conservation skills.
- A hedgelaying course run for in Trelewis volunteers from the whole of South Wales.



Hedgelaying

Contact details:

Paul Kent
KWT Merthyr Tydfil Project Officer
33/35 Cathedral road
Cardiff
CF11 9HB
Mobile **07875 662803**
Email **paul.kent@keepwalestidy.org**



Paul Kent



LOCAL NEWS

Green-Fingered Young People at Pant and Dowlais Boys and Girls Club

In addition to the 23 environmental community gardens which the young people of Pant and Dowlais Boys and Girls club have developed and maintain, they have now branched out into the world of allotment gardening.

As well as an established allotment site in Dowlais Top, they have turned a piece of ground adjacent to the Engine House, formerly used only for fly-tipping, into a well cultivated plot.

In partnership with Tidy Towns and Stephen Parle JCB Machines, the land was cleared, the acid soil taken away, and replaced with topsoil. Thanks to a "Climate Change" grant from Environment Wales a 16 foot greenhouse was completed which allowed the young people, aged from 8 upwards, to plant early vegetable seeds and seed potatoes ready to transplant onto the plot in early June. The young people are expecting a bumper crop this year which they will cook at the Engine House cookery lessons and then serve the first crop to the young people in a dinner party for 50 young people at the Engine House.

Any produce left over through out the growing season will then be sold at the Engine House to the multitude of parents that bring their children every day to the many activities that the Engine House as to offer on a seven day a week basis which in turn will pay for the seeds for next year crop. A parent commented *"how fantastic will it be to sit down to Sunday dinner knowing that the youngest member of the family will have grown all the vegetables on the table."*

For further information contact the Boys and Girls Club on **01685 375314**



Engine House Before



New Engine House Green House



Merthyr Rathbone Young Carers Project

Merthyr Rathbone has introduced a scheme particularly aimed at supporting and advising young carers or ex-carers aged 16-25 in their job search and helping them into training programmes.

The scheme can help Young Carers or ex-carers aged 16-25 with:

- Job search
- Training
- Advice/information on your caring role.

The scheme offers one-to-one, confidential support, to give the best help possible in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere, which is just a phone call away.

For further information contact:

Sheila on **01685 383173** or **07720346122** or call in to Rathbone at 148 High Street, Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8DP on **Monday and Tuesday 9:00am-4:00pm** or **Wednesday 9:00am-1:00pm.**



LOCAL NEWS

Final touches at Cyfarthfa Park's Sensory Garden

A partnership between local schools, local sensory impairment groups, the Midec Centre, MTCBC, Merthyr Valleys Homes, Ar Agor photography group and Town and Park Communities First has resulted in a number of mosaics being produced to provide some of the finishing touches at the Sensory Garden in Cyfarthfa Park, an idea which had been on the wish list for the garden for some time.

Pupils from Twynyrodyn Community School, Cyfarthfa Junior School, Caedraw Primary and Brecon Road Infants joined artist Chris Partridge from Mobile Arts to develop mosaics with the themes of the history of Merthyr including Cyfarthfa Ironworks, Richard Trevithick, the Glamorgan Canal and Cyfarthfa Castle. Funding for the project came from Merthyr Valleys Homes and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council. Michelle Lewis from MTCBC also provided audio script descriptions of the mosaics for the audio boxes in the garden.



The mayor, Paul Brown and Deputy Mayor Lisa Mytton attended the unveiling.

Pioneering Sight Loss Training Course Comes to Merthyr

A pioneering training scheme helping people with sight loss to cope better with everyday life, is being launched in Merthyr. Visually Impaired Merthyr (VIM) has won a grant for 'Finding Your Feet' a training scheme developed by people with sight loss. Run by Cardiff, Vales and Valleys, it covers everything from going out shopping to tips on using transport services and managing your money and finances.

The course runs over six weekly sessions of three hours in duration and people can go along to as many days as they would like.

Dr Morgan Evans, Chair of VIM said: "We are excited that such a major initiative has been launched here. We are a small group but to feel part of a larger organisation like CVV, gives the community ownership of the scheme. It is great that the course can help people to realise that losing your sight is not the end of their independence."

In an innovative feature, Finding Your Feet the Merthyr scheme will be managed by Sara Johnson, CVV Trainee Support Officer who is visually impaired.

Sara said: "It is fantastic that Merthyr is the first area outside of the pilot scheme region to have Finding your Feet in operation. We hope to make a big difference to for people in the area, bringing them really good hands-on advice for a more independent lifestyle."

To register interest please contact:

Rebecca Jones
CVV Locality Development Manager
Merthyr Tydfil
Mobile: **0778 7590707**
Office: **01443 486731 ext 4160**
Email: **rebecca@cibi.co.uk**

NEWS FROM THE NETWORKS

Did you used to work for the NHS?

The Merthyr Tydfil Branch of the NHS Retirement Fellowship is on the lookout for new members. A national charitable organisation, the Merthyr Tydfil branch is one of over 200 branches across the UK. Each branch carries out activities which reflect the wishes of the members. Activities range from organised holidays, sport and leisure activities, day outings, meetings with a variety of speakers discussing different topics and, not least, continuing interest in local health services.

If you are interested in finding out more, then please contact Christine McCarthy on **01685 721814**.



• Independent • Local • Listening •

Age Concern Morgannwg have developed a new Healthy Ageing project available to any OAP group or Scheme in the Merthyr Borough

The project provides an opportunity for all to benefit from Free cooking classes and can also provide free chair-based exercise taster sessions for any OAP group or scheme. The project also provides information and advice on:

- Healthy Eating
- Conditions and Illnesses
- Health Services
- Looking after your body
- Age Concern Morgannwg services and schemes.

For further details contact **Chris Lazo** or **Susie King** on **01685 353939**

Have a Voice in Local Mental Health Services

What is the RCT and Merthyr Tydfil Joint Planning Group?

The Mental Health Joint Planning Group meets once every 3 months at the Cwm Taf Local Health Board at Abercynon. Some of the responsibilities of the group include:

- Approving major changes to mental health services
- Monitoring how well mental health services are performing
- Focusing on particular services or issues when required

Who attends the Joint Planning group?

The group consists of senior managers from Cwm Taf Local health Board, service user and carer representatives, and representatives from local mental health organisations, RCT County Borough Council & Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.

Would you like to become involved?

To ensure the views of Service Users are properly represented at the Joint Planning Group, a Service User Planning group can meet up before the Joint Planning meeting to discuss mental health services & issues affecting service users in RCT and/or Merthyr Tydfil. Two members of the Service User group can then, if they are wish, present the issues raised in the Service User planning meeting to the Joint Planning Group. We can offer support to any service user who wishes to become involved, to ensure that you feel comfortable to put forward your views on local services. We also cover your travelling expenses.

Who do I contact for more information?

Please let us know if you are interested in joining the Service User Planning group. Our contact details are; Rachel Wyatt or Helen Rees, Service User Involvement Officers, Tel **01443 846200**, email rwyant@interlinkrct.org.uk, hrees@interlinkrct.org.uk

NEWS FROM THE NETWORKS

Carers' Week 2011

A number of events and information stands marked Carers Week 2011 between **13th – 17th June**. Support stands were placed throughout the borough, along with support and guidance available for Carers from Alzheimers Society, Barnardos, Hafal and VAMT.

Support stands were placed in Merthyr Library, Pontcae Medical Practice, Castle Bingo, Morlais Medical Practice and the Hollies Health Centre, in the lead up to the Carers Network Event/Information Day held on **17th June** at VAMT. This event provided carers with access to useful information they may need including young carers employment and training or benefits information.



Members of Merthyr Tydfil People First's successful jewellery class recently had a stall at the town centre's farmers market to showcase and sell their products. To date the class has earned over £1,000 as a result of selling their products and are currently looking to recruit volunteers to help support the classes. They would also welcome donations of old or broken jewellery, especially beads which can be broken up and reused. Further information is available from Pat Ramm (patramm@hotmail.co.uk)

New Venture for Merthyr and the Valleys MIND



Merthyr and the Valleys MIND have opened a book stall in the "Old Circus" in Pontmorlais, which is open from **Monday – Saturday between 9:00am and 5:00pm**.

A wide selection of books are available, but MIND are always grateful for more donations, especially children's books. They also have opportunities for volunteers with sessions available between **10:00am – 1:00pm, or 1:00pm-3:00pm**.

For further information call in to the Old Circus, or contact **01685 359183**

Open Day M.I.D.E.C.

Maesgwynne Industrial Estate
Cefn Coed, Merthyr Tydfil
Wednesday 14th September 2011

Come and visit our Demonstration Centre and experience the latest Telecare Technology.

Free transport provided from Merthyr Law Courts to MIDECE and back. Commencing 10.00am and every 30 minutes thereafter until 2.00pm

Trustee Week

Following its launch last year, this year's Trustees Week will take place between **30th October – 6th November 2011**.

The creation of Trustees Week aims to recognise the commitment which thousands of people give as trustees of charities.

Charitable Incorporated Organisations finally on their way?

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, is today publishing the first part of its guidance for anyone interested in setting up a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and two model constitutions for forming a CIO, ahead of the expected implementation.

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), brought in by the 2006 Charities Act, is an incorporated form of charity which is not a company. It only has to register with the Charity Commission and not Companies House and is only created once it is registered by the Commission. A CIO can enter into contracts in its own right and its trustees will normally have limited or no liability for the debts of the CIO. The Commission has published its guidance and the model constitutions to enable charities, advisers and anyone else interested in setting up a CIO to decide if the CIO structure is the right one for them, and to familiarise themselves with the guidance and constitutions ahead of implementation. The guidance will be added to over the coming months. The documents are also being published to coincide with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) starting to register Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations (SCIOs) from **1st April**.

The documents may be subject to change once Parliament has agreed the regulations, however it is expected that any changes would be minor. The regulations which complete the legal framework for CIOs have not yet been debated by Parliament and the Office for Civil Society will in due course publish a timetable for implementation.

Implementation will be phased, with new organisations among the first to be able to register as CIOs, and existing charitable companies being able to convert to CIOs towards the end of the implementation period.

The CIO will be most suitable for small to medium-sized organisations that employ staff or enter into contracts. The guidance sets out the rules and the benefits for CIOs, how to register, what CIOs will

have to do which is different from an unincorporated charity and what is involved in running a CIO including reporting requirements.

Many aspects of running a CIO will be the same as other forms of charity, but there are important differences and additional obligations on the trustees of a CIO which are set out in the guidance.

The Commission has published two model constitutions:

- The foundation model for charities whose only voting members will be the charity trustees
- the association model for charities that will have a wider membership, including voting members other than the trustees

A CIO using the foundation model will be like an unincorporated charitable trust, run by a small group of people (the charity trustees) who will make all key decisions. A CIO using the 'association' model will have a wider voting membership who must make certain decisions (such as amending the constitution), will usually appoint some or all of the charity trustees (who will serve for fixed terms), and may be involved in the work of the CIO.

The Charity Commission and the Office for Civil Society (then the Office of the Third Sector) held a consultation at the end of 2008 to give the public the opportunity to comment on the proposed regulations. Following the consultation, a number of significant changes were made to the regulations to simplify the CIO structure. One significant change made is that there is now no provision for a CIO or the Charity Commission to keep a register of charges (such as mortgages) over CIO property, which may impact on the usefulness of the CIO structure for larger charities with significant assets.

For more information visit:

www.charitycommission.gov.uk/Start_up_a_charity/Do_I_need_to_register/CIOs/default.aspx

NEWS FROM THE NETWORKS

Going the Extra Mile for Stroke!

People of all ages and abilities were challenged to Step out for Stroke by joining a sponsored walk at the landmark Millennium Stadium on Wednesday 11th May. Over 150 people joined the walk organised by The Stroke Association in Wales to raise awareness and funds for stroke. This followed last year's successful flagship event where over £12,000 was raised.

Step out for Stroke had a variety of entertainment provided for supporters. This included a martial arts display, a gentle warm-up with fitness instructors, face painting, and beauty therapists on hand to massage tired limbs.

Everyone who came was invited to have a guided tour of the stadium, a rare chance to walk in the footsteps of so many sporting legends. Blood pressure testing also took place throughout the day as high blood pressure is the single biggest cause of stroke.

Bridget Stadden, Regional Fundraising Manager in Wales says:

"We would like to thank everyone who supported The Stroke Association by taking on this challenge and achieving such brilliant results.

Around 11,000 people have a stroke each year in Wales and it is the leading cause of adult disability. The people who took part in this sponsored walk have helped us raise awareness of this devastating condition whilst also reducing their own risk of stroke through exercise.

We are also very grateful to the Millennium Stadium for giving us the venue for free as part of their Community Events initiative."

Further Step Out walks took place in June in the Gower Peninsula, Swansea and Bryn Bach Park, Tredegar.

For information and advice about stroke, call The Stroke Helpline on **0303 3033 100** or visit **www.stroke.org.uk**



Over 150 people joined the walk



Eifion Wynne + Wendy Williams



FUNDING NEWS

VAMT's Capital Small Grants Scheme Opens

Following Welsh Assembly Government approval, VAMT's Capital Small Grants scheme is once again open for applications. Application forms and guidance notes can either be downloaded from our website or provided in hard copy. Grants of up to £4,000 can be awarded, but must be for capital items only. This includes small building works, equipment, etc but does not include consumables, eg paper, printer ink etc.

There are two closing dates for this financial year: **30th September 2011** and **31st January 2012**.

Grants must be spent within 6 months. Decisions on applications are normally made approximately 2 weeks after the closing date.

Pro Bono Environmental Support scheme

Pro Bono is an advisory scheme for charities that are looking to develop clear policies and strategies to reduce their overall environmental impact; particularly those that do not have their own in-house expertise or resources. Some of the areas covered by the programme include: how to improve energy distribution and efficiency around a building; how to improve a garden, for practical, educational and environmental purposes; and how to help staff educate those in the charity's care about practical environmental issues and activities, such as recycling. Charities operating in the UK may apply for support through the programme. Applications may be submitted at any time.

www.wspenvironmental.com/media/docs/aboutus/Charity_Application_Form.pdf

Fancy £1500 towards your community sport project?

Merthyr Tydfil Community Chest offers grant of up to **£1500 in any 12 month period** for activities that:

- Encourage more people to become more active, more often
- Raises the standards of existing activities

It's fair to say that the Merthyr panel has not always been able to allocate the full funding awarded to the Borough due to insufficient applications being made. There are criteria to follow - and restrictions in what can be funded, but this fund is not only for ball-related-sports. Whatever you thought of this grant process previously, please rethink.

Have a look at this link and see if you could benefit from **£1500**. Application form and guidance notes can also be accessed via the link - www.sportwales.org.uk/funding--support/our-grants/community-chest.aspx

Funding Success

Congratulations to New Pathways who have successfully bid to the Big Lottery for almost **£500,000**.

The project will provide specialist counselling to children and young people aged between 3 and 18 who have suffered from any kind of trauma and support to parents and/or carers and other professionals who are supporting them.

Apology

Please accept our apologies if you sent us copy for this edition of Inform, and it hasn't been included. Unfortunately our email system crashed just after the call for articles had been sent and we were unable to receive emails for a couple of days.



LOCAL NEWS

Open doors for arts celebration

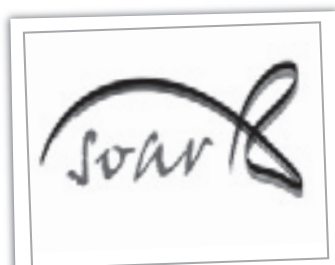
Exciting news! Merthyr has a brand new arts centre, which offers resources for community and professional groups and performers. Soar threw its doors open on Saturday the 2nd of July to welcome everyone from Merthyr and beyond and launched its first full season of performances, courses and events.

Between 10am and 4pm the whole complex opened to the public with entertainment, stalls, workshops and much more. Local Community groups and schools took to the stage in the Theatre throughout the day. The whole place came alive, and the excitement regarding Soar was infectious.

At 8pm Theatr Soar's stage as well as the Morlais hall was bouncing to the sounds of folk singer Amy Wadge, Celtic songstress Katell Keineg, and popular local group The Noughts and Crosses.

The launch events were an opportunity to see all the facilities and possibilities available at the theatre and the surrounding complex. But, the doors are always open, so if you missed the launch, don't worry, you can come in any time to enjoy a latte or pancake at the Cwtsh cafe; browse the books, CD's, DVD's and crafts at the shop; and get to know the various tenants, courses and events that will be making use of Soar. You may also hire one or more of the numerous spaces in Canolfan Soar and Theatr Soar, for your own events. We hope that visitors will be inspired to suggest their own ideas for future events, and even organise their own performances.

For further information please visit our website:
www.theatrsoar.com
www.merthyrtdful.com
01685 722176 or
email swyddfasoar@merthyrtdful.org



Drysau agored ar gyfer dathliad celefyddydol

Newyddion cyffrous! Mae gan Ferthyr ganolfan celfyddydau newydd sbon, sy'n cynnig adnoddau i grwpiau cymunedol a pherfformwyr proffesiynol. Agorodd Soar ei drysau i bobl o Ferthyr a thu hwnt ar Orffennaf yr 2^{il} gan lawnsio ei thymor llawn cyntaf o berfformiadau, cyrsiau a digwyddiadau.

Rhwng 10yb a 4yh roedd y ganolfan gyfan ar agor gydag adloniant, stondinau, gweithdai a llawer mwy. Roedd grwpiau cymunedol ag ysgolion lleol yn perfformio ar lwyfan Theatr Soar trwy'r dydd. Daeth yr holl le yn fyw, ac roedd yr awyrgylch yn drydanol.

Gyda'r hwyr roedd llwyfan Theatr Soar yn ogystal â Neuadd Morlais yn neidio i synnau gwerin Amy Wadge, y gantores Celtaidd Katell Keineg, a'r grwp lleol poblogaidd the Noughts and Crosses.

Roedd y digwyddiadau lawnsio yn gyfle i weld yr adnoddau a'r posibiliadau sydd ar gael yn y theatr a'r adeiladau eraill. Ond, mae'r drysau'n dal ar agor, felly os y colloch y digwyddiad cyffrous hwn, peidiwch â phoeni, gallwch daro l mewn unrhyw bryd; dewch i fwynhau latte neu grempog yng Nghaffi Cwtsh; edrychwch trwy'r llyfrau, CD's, DVD's a chrefftau yn y siop; a dewch i adnabod y tenantiaid, cyrsiau a digwyddiadau amrywiol sy'n gwneud defnydd o Soar. Mae modd hefyd l chi logi un neu fwy o'r niferoedd o stafelloedd sydd yma yng Nghanolfan a Theatr Soar. Rydym ni'n gobeithio y bydd ymwelwyr yn cael eu hysbrydoli i awgrymu eu syniadau am ddigwyddiadau yn y dyfodol, ac i hyd yn oed drefnu eu perfformiadau eu hunain.

Am ragor o wybodaeth cysylltwch â ni neu ewch i'n gwefannau:
www.theatrsoar.com
www.merthyrtdful.com
01685 722176 neu
ebostiwch swyddfasoar@merthyrtdful.org

TRAINING

Training from Newlink Wales

- Training the Trainer Level 2/3
21st & 22nd July 2011, Cardiff,
Voluntary Sector **£160**, Statutory Sector **£170**
- Substance Use and Cultural Awareness Level 3
13th September 2011, Cardiff,
Voluntary Sector **£115**, Statutory Sector **£125**
- Working with Drug Users in Housing Settings
Level 2
20th September 2011, Cardiff,
Voluntary Sector **£115**, Statutory Sector **£125**
- New and Emerging Drugs Level 2/3
13th October 2011, Cardiff,
Voluntary Sector **115**, Statutory Sector **£125**
- Legal Rights of Substance Users Level 3
17th October 2011, Cardiff,
Voluntary Sector **£160**, Statutory Sector **£170**
- Substance Use and Sexual Abuse Level 3
18th – 20th October 2011, Cardiff,
Voluntary Sector **£380**, Statutory Sector **£390**

If you want further information or require a copy of the NewLink Wales training booklet please contact us on our details below:

NewLink Wales
Meridian Court
North Road
Cardiff
CF14 3BE

Tel: **02920 529002**
Fax: **02920 619250**
Email: **training@newlinkwales.org.uk**
www.newlinkwales.org.uk

Training from ASH Wales

ASH Wales offers a Tobacco Control Training Programme for those who are interested in finding out how to work with young people on smoking related issues. A dynamic hands on training course that empowers participants with effective ways of addressing tobacco use with young people. Topics such as prevention, cessation and tobacco advocacy with young people will be covered.

The next opportunity to undertake this full days training are:

- **14th September 2011** at the Phoenix Centre Swansea,
- **16th November 2011** at Gabalfa Scouts Hub Centre Cardiff

Book online or contact us directly for a booking form.

For further information about the course and to register you can visit our website: **www.ashwales.org.uk/training-for-teachers-and-youth-workers/** or email **laura@ashwales.org.uk** for more information.

New Staff Member

Welcome to Ravi Vedi, who joined VAMT in June. Ravi formerly worked for Voluntary Action Cardiff and joins the team as a Community Economic Development Officer, funded by Convergence, and part of a Consortium bid between Wales Council for Voluntary Action and County Voluntary Councils across Wales. There will be more from Ravi in future editions of Inform.





Cwm Taf Health Board Update from Jenny Ludlow

Jenny Ludlow is a Third Sector Independent Member of Cwm Taf Health Board and contributes news to each edition of Inform

The theme of this month's briefing is service change. There is much to be discussed in the coming months and the Health Board will welcome opportunities to meet with the Voluntary and Community sectors on a wide range of issues, with the ultimate goal of delivering modern, quality, safe health services

Changes for the Future

The Chief Executive, Allison Williams, gave a presentation in the public Board Meeting on June 8th around the scale of the change agenda for the Health Board and its communities.

Allison delivered the presentation in public as a start of a conversation with the Health Board's stakeholders and community about what future services should look like. She was clear that this conversation was not part of the formal consultation on changes, but stressed that there was a lot of preliminary work to do with stakeholders in terms of discussing issues broadly and collecting views and feedback.

One of the key drivers for change is that the Health Board has a relatively small population. Guidance is that a population of 400,000 is needed to support the services and specialties of a District General Hospital. Cwm Taf currently has a population of 330,000 yet has 2 DGHs, one of which is 10 years old and the other undergoing major redevelopment. Considerable capital therefore has been invested in both sites

The Health Board will wish to adopt an approach of running one DGH service which happens to be located over 2 sites. A single integrated service model for Cwm Taf means that there will be equity of delivery and waiting times for all residents. Services may continue to be delivered on multiple sites particularly non emergency services. However some may have to move to a

single site. If this happens the Health Board will want to preserve on multiple sites the aspects of the service that are not dependent on access to beds on a 24 hour basis, such as outpatients, day cases, and day assessments. The Health Board would also maintain a local front door so that patients can be assessed locally and then transferred if necessary. This already happens for conditions such as head injuries or burns.

Many clinical services are becoming increasingly under strain because of shortages of doctors. This is for a number of reasons including the European Working Time Directive which has reduced the numbers of hours that doctors can work; changes to the regulations which have reduced significantly the numbers of overseas doctors able to come into the UK to work; and changes to the numbers of doctors in training in Wales. The end result is a Wales and UK wide shortage of medical manpower.

The Health Board will need to discuss all of its services with stakeholders and the community. However the priorities are paediatrics, maternity services, anaesthetics and trauma because of the shortage of medical manpower. Paediatrics is currently under pressure but other services are also struggling to find doctors in sufficient numbers to maintain current service configuration. This is a Wales and UK wide problem and not one for Cwm Taf alone. Maintaining 24 hour medical services in all the specialties and locations in which they currently run is likely to be unfeasible.

It is important to stress that whilst the Health Board has to meet financial savings targets, the service change agenda is not finance driven, but driven by manpower shortages and the acceptance that services need to be modernised. Quality and safety will always be paramount.

The Chief Executive signalled that engagement would start this summer and stakeholders and community groups are invited to express interest

CWM TAF LHB UPDATE

in having a presentation and discussion with Board members and senior managers.

The first major service area to be reconfigured will be that of mental health. The mental health proposals, which are about to go to formal consultation after lengthy stakeholder engagement, are all about using our resources more appropriately to provide better and safer services.

Mental Health Consultation

The Health Board has been discussing potential changes to the delivery of mental health services for adults of working age for some months.

Discussions with service users and carers in particular highlighted that they would like to see:

- Improved access to mental health services within primary care (with a strong view that as soon as someone has plucked up the courage to say that they are experiencing mental ill health that they require timely support)
- An enhanced range of voluntary sector and community-led day services, which provide greater opportunity for talking to people in similar situations, as well as opportunities for meaningful activity such as volunteering or training
- Greater capacity for supported accommodation
- A stronger raft of community based mental health services which aim to prevent crises and support rehabilitation and recovery
- Better transport to services
- Admission to hospital as a place of safety when someone suffers an acute crisis

Health Board staff working in mental health services for adults of working age highlighted the following issues:

- Adult mental health services across all parts of Cwm Taf will look different in the years to come – as they do now when compared to 5 years ago.
- Opportunities to safely repatriate patients to locally developed rehabilitation services should be pursued as a priority.
- Due to the need to build capacity in community and rehabilitation services, it is anticipated that

there will be growth, rather than a reduction, in mental health jobs. This process has already started with the advertising of new Staff Grade posts.

- Further development of community models of care will reduce our dependency on inpatient beds. As we reduce acute mental health beds we will need to consider whether we can sustain 2 acute mental health inpatient units within Cwm Taf.
- The activity in Cwm Taf can really only sustain one Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU).

However, it is recognised that this is a difficult issue when we have acute beds on both sites.

Ultimately, all discussions with service users, carers, staff and wider stakeholders highlighted that the two questions people really wanted to have the answer to were where services will be in the future and when changes will take place.

The LHB has been clear in its message that it would like to continue to invest in community based mental health services. However, this has to be balanced against the sustainability of acute mental health services on two sites. It is therefore proposed that the LHB proceeds to formal consultation on mental health services for adults of working age, which will focus predominantly on the options for the future siting of acute in-patient services.

However, any proposals relating to the future siting of mental health acute in-patient services represents a substantial change and requires a formal consultation process. The LHB is now discussing this with the CHC. The LHB will propose to the CHC that formal consultation on mental health services for adults of working age could commence in July 2011.

The guidance stipulates that a formal consultation period of a minimum of 6 weeks should be sufficient in most cases if the issues have already been fully explored through engagement.

Paediatric Services

The Community Health Council joined the Health Board at its public meeting on the 8th June. A key issue presented to the CHC by the Chief



CWM TAF LHB UPDATE

Executive was the position of the paediatrics service.

Paediatrics is one of the first areas to be severely impacted by a shortage of doctors. In the coming months, the Health Board is faced with serious reductions in doctors available in this specialty to keep the service running 24 hours a day in both Prince Charles and Royal Glamorgan Hospitals. The PCH rotas in particular will be struggling to maintain cover. However the Paediatric Department has recognised the difficulties and the risks, and has contingency plans to address these, in order to continue to deliver services at the current locations if possible.

However the position is fragile and will be monitored daily. The Board agreed that the Chief Executive should take emergency action to restrict services should there be problems in maintaining doctor cover and safety. What this will mean is that on a temporary basis resources would be used to cover emergency care, so that there may be reduced non urgent outpatient appointments for example. It may also be necessary to move the 24 hour inpatient service to one of the two main hospital sites as a temporary measure.

Whilst everything possible will be done to maintain levels of service the prime consideration is to have safe services. Should 24 hour services at PCH be suspended this will not effect residents being able to turn up with children at A&E for example. Children would be assessed and if necessary stabilised and transferred.

The Health Board considers it important to be open with the community about these potential difficulties so that if action does become necessary the reasons will be known and understood. Any crisis action would be precisely that, and not pre-emptive of any future services changes. The Community Health Council will be kept fully informed.

Cwm Taf Public Health Strategic Framework

In 2009 the Welsh Assembly Government produced their Public Health Strategic Framework, "Our Healthy Future", setting out

challenges until 2020. This document renewed a commitment that everyone in Wales has a fair chance to lead a healthy life.

Cwm Taf has developed its Public Health Strategic Framework to support this, recognising the parts to be played by both the statutory, voluntary and community organisations.

The Framework identifies actions to be taken, and the measures of success, for such issues as:

- Smoking
- Physical inactivity
- Teenage pregnancy
- Mental wellbeing
- Alcohol and drugs
- Vaccination and immunisation
- Accidents and injury rates
- Health at work
- Health inequalities

Copies of the Framework are available from the Health Board

Third Sector SLAs

In its commitment to support local Third Sector organisations, the Health Board agreed that the funding allocation to existing Service Level Agreements (SLA) would not be reduced. Each organisation received confirmation of their allocation in March 2011, stating that whilst no inflationary increase had been applied to their funding, the Health Board's intention was to continue supporting local services during the current challenging economic climate.

Improved Performance

One of the most challenging Welsh Government targets for Health Boards in Wales is that of 95% Patients being seen within 4 hours in A&E. Prince Charles Hospital is now achieving the best performance across Wales and met the target of 95% in April. The new A&E department (as yet only part opened) and new processes have been key in this achievement.

Want to Volunteer? SOVA Needs you

We are looking for volunteers across Merthyr Tydfil (Travel and Expenses covered). We are looking for volunteer mentors to support ex-offenders over a minimum of a 6 month period. This allows integration back into the community and empowers them to pursue new life goals. Full training and CRB disclosure given.



Families & Friends of Prisoners

Volunteer Advisor/support
Travel and expenses covered
The role will be to represent FFOPS at the Merthyr Tydfil Courts and handle referrals; FFOPS offer the following services, advice on court procedures, information about prisons, escorting families and offenders to court and emotional support.

Safer Merthyr Tydfil Youth Mentoring Scheme



- Do you have 1-2 hours spare a week?
- Would you like to help a young person who requires a little extra support?
- Would you benefit from the experience of working with young people?
- Would you like to gain an OCN accredited qualification?
- Would you like access to extra training such as counselling skills, risk assessment, child protection and Drugaid Level 1 and 2?
- Are you over the age of 19?

Project staff will support you every step of the way from one to one support, training sessions, group meetings and team building. All out of pocket expenses will be met.

Please call **01685 353913** or **01685 353901**
for more information on any of the above opportunities.

This newsletter has been published by Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil,
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The views expressed in this edition of Inform are not necessarily those of Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil.

Croesawir erthyglau nail ai'n ddwyieithog neu'n uniaith Gymraeg.

The closing date for articles for the next edition (October 2011) is **12th September 2011.**