

All Wales People First

Talk Back

The National Voice of People with

Learning Disabilities in Wales

Winter 2019



A festive team victory V to
self-advocacy 2019

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Editorial

Welcome to the Winter 2019 edition of Talk back. A final 2019 victory V to self advocacy, and welcome 2020! The new year has been super busy already. We've been out and about a lot, and hope to get around to catch up with you all!

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Membership update



So far this year, we have been busy visiting groups talking about All Wales People First and helping members to fill in some new membership forms. We have 30 new full members for 2020. Welcome to you all!

It was a privilege to be invited to Vale People First's launch of their exciting new filming project **Changing your Thinking**. We look forward to seeing the finished films!



We had a great time at the very first Cwm Taf People First Annual Conference at Miskin Manor. Lots of people signed up to join All Wales People First! It was an excellent two-day event.

Thanks to members of the People First Bridgend group in Pyle Community Centre for inviting Kelly along. Welcome to our new members!

Thanks also to Dawn, Joanna and members of Cardiff People First who gave Kelly a warm welcome at their community group meetings.



Although some regional People First group meetings and events have had to be cancelled for March 2020, we hope to get around and visit more groups later in 2020!

We will be printing your new membership cards and getting them to you soon!

We met with UK learning disability groups



On 28th November, All Wales People First met with people from Learning Disability England and People First Scotland.

We met in Manchester.

Attending the meeting for All Wales People First was:

Simon Richards (Chair of the National Council)

Linton Gower (Vice Chair of the National Council)

Tracey Drew (Member Engagement Advisor, All Wales People First)

Joe Powell (Chief Executive, All Wales People First)

Learning Disability England were represented by:

Gary Bourlet

Samantha Clark (Chief Executive)

Anna Balding

Scotland People First were represented by:

Keith Lynch

Caroline Kingston

We met to share what we have been doing.

And the things we have struggled with.

We all faced similar problems in the work we do:

Negative attitudes towards people with learning disabilities.



We met with UK learning disability groups

Hate/ Mate Crime.

Lack of opportunities in employment.

LGBTQ

We were all very worried about self-advocacy.

And the uncertain future it faces.

We talked about how we can work together in the future.

The main thing we talked about is the importance of changing attitudes of people with learning disabilities in the future.

We are going to meet in the future to think more about how we can do this.

And how we can maybe campaign together.

All Wales People First offered to host another meeting with Learning Disability Wales and People First Scotland in Wales.

This is to take this work forward.

We are going to see if we get a self-advocacy group in Northern Ireland to join us too.

We all believe that together we are stronger.

Especially when it comes to important decisions that are made in Westminster.

That affect everyone in the United Kingdom.

The meeting was very positive.

It was good to see how we all worked.

It was good to learn from each other.

And to be good support to each other.

We will keep you updated on any progress we make.

Hopefully we can be stronger together in the future.

Article by Joe Powell

Reducing loneliness and social isolation

Stacey Traylor's story...



In February 2020 Welsh Government launched **Conected Communities - a strategy for tackling loneliness and social isolation and building stronger social connections.**

The 4 main goals of the strategy are:
More chances for people to connect.
More services in communities.

Strong communities where people support each other.

People to understand these issues better.



Our members tell us that loneliess and social isolation are very real issues for people with learning disabilities. They tell us the main reasons are because of barriers around transport, other people's attitudes, lack of confidence, lack of employent and social opportunities.



Over the next few editions of Talk Back we will be printing member's personal stories about their experiences of loneliness and social isolation.

This is Stacey Traylor's story...

"I was bullied in school and I felt very lonely. The bullies seemed to be waiting on every

Reducing loneliness and social isolation

Stacey Traylor's story...



corner to beat me up. I couldn't get any help from school. I don't think the school believed me.

Nobody wanted to be my friend because of my learning disability. School was very hard for me and my anxiety got really bad.

When I moved to the Vale 5 years ago, I got involved with Vale People First and things started to change for the better.



I met my boyfriend Kurtis in 2016 through a Vale People First Speak up group. I started to feel really happy and less lonely. I now have more confidence through having friends and support around me and I feel less isolated.

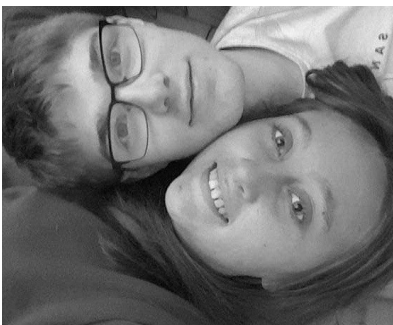
On February 14th I proposed to Kurtis.

It's a funny story which I will never forget...

It was freezing cold and Kurt was running late.

My dog Charlie was barking at some swans and trying to get away. When Kurt arrived I asked him to walk ahead of me with Charlie.

I went down on one knee, and as Kurt turned around to check where I was, I asked him to marry me.



I couldn't hear what he said at first. He said yes! I am so looking forward to what our future brings!" **Article by Stacey Traylor & Kelly Stuart**

News from Groups



Caerphilly



Hospital passport

At the beginning of February Stacey and Edward from the University of South Wales visited Caerphilly People First to get our views on what information should be included in hospital passports for people with learning disabilities.

A hospital passport is designed to give hospital staff helpful information about you, which will enable them to make your stay in hospital more comfortable.

During the meeting Ffion, Hannah and Amy were asked to decide which ten pieces of information they thought the passport should include, and then rank those ten pieces of information in order of importance.

On Thursday 27th January 2020, Ffion and Hannah – supported by Christy – attended the first TRAC (Teaching Research Advisory Committee) meeting of 2020 at the University of South Wales.

TRAC members have decided that the group needs to have a presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and at the next meeting we will split into groups and start working on our social media pages.

The group have also decided to produce a TRAC logo and a leaflet explaining the work the group does.

It was also decided that TRAC would create an email address which all People First groups involved with TRAC will have the login details for, in order to access information and paperwork.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 26th March 2020.





Lets Work Together

Our first Annual Conference called **Lets Work Together** was held at the Miskin Manor Hotel on 10th and 11th March.

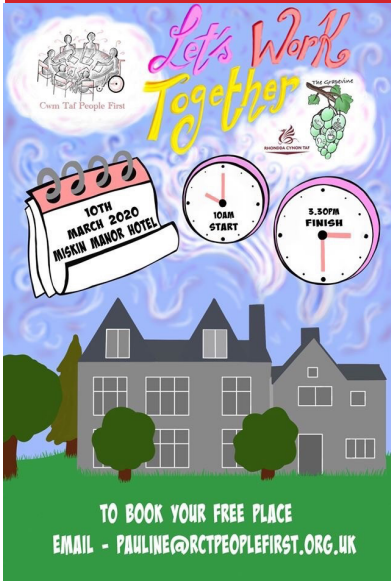
Joe Powell from All Wales People First was a guest speaker. Joe talked about the history of self-advocacy and why self-advocacy for people with learning disabilities is so important.

There were workshops about Gig Buddies and Stay up Late, using an ipad, Citizen Powered Communities, and Celebrating women.

Our member Darren did a ghost walk after dinner on 10th March.

There was a quiz and music too.

People who attended told us they had fun, met new people and learnt a lot.



Impact report 2019

We have written an Impact report for 2019. This is some of the information we wrote in the report.

We have held weekly group meetings, conferences and parties throughout the year for people to have fun, socialise and make friends.

679 people were supported during our 2019 period.

That is an average of £1.38 per person, per week.

We have attended 174 public meetings and conferences.

We have secured £67,573.60 of additional funding from:

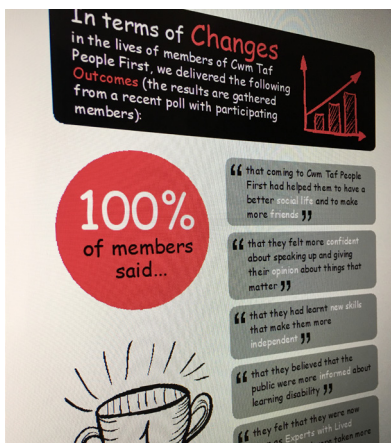
Pontypridd Town Council.

Interlink.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

Track 2000.

Lloyds Foundation.





Annual Conference

We held our Annual Conference on 18th February.

The Conference was called **Join in and Speak up** and it took place at the Learning Action Centre in Ebbw Vale.

Paul Swann and Andrew Day attended to talk about the Gwent Advocacy Strategy and GATA Helpline.

Emma Scherpatong attended to talk about the Blaenau Gwent Equalities Plan.

Gerraint Jones-Griffiths attended to talk about the Engage to Change Project.

David Arnold talked about the Blaenau Gwent 50+ Project, and David Williams talked about the Gwent Citizen Panel.

Sadie Rogers talked about Growing Space.

We also took part in a workshop about What Matters to Me.



'Getting out, Getting on'

Vale People First Active Communities Group held a meeting to launch our new project.

A lot of people turned up, including Kelly Stuart from AWPf.



The new project is called "Changing Your Thinking".

The project will involve making 6 short films.

The films will be on different conditions our members might suffer with. These conditions are autism, epilepsy, mental health, downs syndrome, speech and language problems, learning difficulties.



The films will have our members talking about their condition and how they manage to overcome it.

Look out for our Oscars Ceremony 2021!!!!.

West Glamorgan People First

**West Glamorgan People First
had a relaunch event on
October 9th.**



The event was at the Waterfront Community Church.



West Glamorgan People First had an information stand.



I answered lots of questions about what we do.



Your Voice Advocacy had a stand as well.



So did the Old Mill and WhizzKids.

West Glamorgan People First



Mad Jay the DJ did the entertainment.

He was very funny and loud.



There was lots of dancing.

Mad Jay did some games and competitions.



There was face painting and hair styling.

And a game where you won a prize every time.



The event was fantastic. I've never been to a launch before.

It was good to see new people join as members.



By Richard, West Glamorgan People First member

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**All Wales People First,
Chief Executive,
Joe Powell - February 26**

Some of the staff team and I took part in excellent training in Human Rights for Advocacy and Self Advocacy in London today BIHR - The British Institute of Human Rights. It was excellent training and the learning will definitely inform our approach going forward and will be linked to our 2021 political manifesto



**All Wales People First,
Chief Executive,
Joe Powell - December 16**

It Was an honour to spend the afternoon with Ann Williams, the winner of the first ministers Christmas card competition (held at AdFest 2019) at the first ministers offices in Ty Hywel, Cardiff today. The first minister himself presented Ann with a copy of the official card and a framed copy of the design for her award. so that today could happen.



Round up



**All Wales People First,
Chief Executive,
Joe Powell - February 10**

Was a privilege to attend the launch of the 'Reducing Restrictive Interventions Event' in the Attlee Room at the House of Lords this afternoon, hosted by Baroness Hollins. I'd like to say a big thanks to Edwin Jones of the Challenging Behaviour Code of Practice for connecting me with an invitation. Was also really nice to see Paula Hopes and her colleagues from the NHS too. The report is quite disturbing to say the least and some of the stories from some parents were powerful and harrowing. Although AWPf is an organisation for adults, I felt it was important to be there to see some of the links between children and adults and the poor treatment that still seems to be prevalent within the system. I made a pledge to share any information I could with our self advocacy networks in Wales and I will be signing the Challenging Behaviour Charter on behalf of All Wales People First.

