



All Wales People First

Talk Back

The National Voice of People with Learning Disabilities in Wales

Summer 2021



Watch out! the photography project is out and about...

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Editorial

Welcome to the Summer 2021 edition of Talk back.

It was great to see so many of you at our summer AdFest event on Zoom! We are busy putting together the report and it will be available soon.

Since the last edition of Talkback, Covid 19 restrictions have eased and we have been able to get out and about a bit.

There are lots of face to face and online events planned for the rest of the year. We re looking forward to being able to meet you in person for the first time in a while! Take a look at our website for the latest on events.

We are still running our usual online events Self Advocacy TV and Gerraint s Nightclub.

Contact gerraint@allwalespeople1st.co.uk or claire@allwalespeople1st.co.uk 07399 059631 to find out more

The AWPf team



The Team

Joe Powell

Chief Executive

joe@allwalespeople1st.co.uk



Kelly Stuart

Policy and Communications Manager

kelly@allwalespeople1st.co.uk



Victoria Sidwell Brown

Business and Finance Manager

victoria@allwalespeople1st.co.uk



Tracey Drew

Membership Engagement Advisor

tracey@allwalespeople1st.co.uk



Philippa Davies MIRROR Co-ordinator

philippa@allwalespeople1st.co.uk



Claire Morgan

Business & Communications Administration Assistant

claire@allwalespeople1st.co.uk



Sarah Ansell Support Worker

sarah@allwalespeople1st.co.uk



Gerraint Jones-Griffiths

Outreach Worker

gerraint@allwalespeople1st.co.uk



Through our eyes photography project

The project team



Natasha Hirst
Project Manager



"Through Our Eyes"



Lucy Hinksman
Project Worker/
Photographer

We have been able to get out and about around Wales to work with members face to face. We have enjoyed seeing what your groups have been doing.

We held a photography workshop with members at The Beach Hotel in Prestatyn in August.

Members learned how to take creative photos with their smartphones and cameras. We took photos of things with interesting shapes, patterns and colours that we found.

Even our Chief Exec Joe had a go at improving his photography. Everybody made great progress and created some fantastic images. We had loads of fun together!

Would you like to learn how to take better photos? Let us know if you would like us to run a photography workshop for your group.

We have visited groups to take photos of members. We are creating photos of people with learning disabilities that are positive. The photos show members doing things that are important to them, like meeting friends.

Through our eyes photography project

Torfaen People First had their photoshoot at Pontypool Park. We had a conversation about consent and privacy. It is important to have consent to take photos of people.

We took photos at the Carmarthenshire People First walk and talk and the Ceredigion Our Voice Our Choice AGM.

Pembrokeshire People First ran a Summer School. We have amazing photos of their activities and performances.

We also interviewed some of our members about their experiences of living with a learning disability. Interviews help us to share more of your stories and views.

Let us know if you have any activities or meetings coming up that we could take photos of.

If you take photos you d like to share, we would love to see them!

You can email Lucy on lucy@allwalespeople1st.co.uk

Or Natasha on natasha@allwalespeople1st.co.uk

We have a Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/ThroughOurEyes0>

We are on Twitter <https://twitter.com/ThroughOurEyes0>

We are on Instagram.

<https://www.instagram.com/throughoureyes0/>

Chief Executive's update

We're coming out so you'd better get this party started .

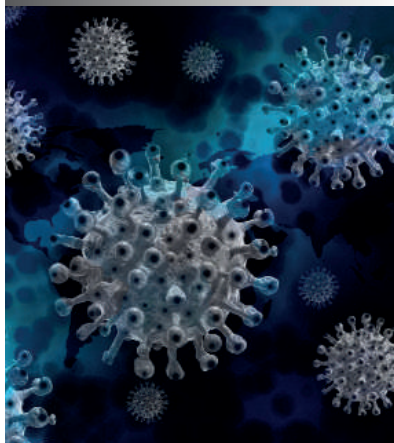


All Wales People First is trying to return to normal after Covid 19.

We want to get out and about and work with members in person.

Real self-advocacy happens when we come together.

We have to make sure that we do this safely. And that it is in line with the law.



Now that we have all had our Covid jabs and Restrictions are being lifted, we want to focus more on member and staff wellbeing.

Although it is important we keep ourselves protected from Covid

It is also very important that we protect our mental health.



Members and staff have had a difficult time over the last year and a half.

The National Council have given us permission to hold the next meeting on the 5th October 2021, in person.

They have also agreed to hold the Annual General Meeting on that day too.

The National Council will decide whether they want to keep meeting in person in future.

Chief Executive's update



This will depend on:

Welsh guidance
How safe Wales is

- Whether members feel confident to meet up again.

The Member Engagement Advisor Tracey Drew will ask the Regional Councils too.

Each Regional Council will decide if they want to meet in person or on zoom.

Where and when they will meet.

How the meeting should be set up to keep everyone safe.

As a member led organisation we want the members to have absolute control.

But, we can only do this within the law.

MIRROR Co-Ordinator Philippa Davies is starting to meet groups in person.

She wants to help local groups as we are coming out of the restrictions.

She is there to help groups to plan for the future.

This is especially important during these very uncertain times.

We hope you will reach out to her.





Chief Executive s update



She is there to help.

Philippa s role was created via member feedback that AWPf should help local groups more.

This is part of our plan to help save self-advocacy.



As well as Regional Councils working with regional partnership boards in the design of local services.

Covid restrictions have made this very hard. We now want to get cracking.

And continue to work with you to show the value of self-advocacy to local authorities.

The All Wales People First Annual General Meeting

All Wales People First will be holding its Annual General Meeting on the 5th October 2021.

This is on the same day as the National Council meeting.



It will be in person in Cardiff.

All members in Wales are welcome to join the Annual General meeting part of the day.



Chief Executive s update



We will provide you with food and drinks. The Annual General meeting is held separately from AdFest. This is because the accounts would not be ready in time for June when AdFest takes place.

Moving AdFest to June was agreed by the National Council.

This is so we can celebrate the achievements of people with learning disabilities during:

Learning Disability Awareness week or
Learning Disability Pride



It is really important we get as many members to attend the AGM meeting as possible.

We are not member led without you.

We have some proposals to change our constitution.

The constitution is the rules that All Wales People First have to follow.



The changes have been suggested by a think tank.

The think tank have been made up of:

Members of the National Council
Members of the AWPB Board of Directors

Chief Executive s update



Their suggestions have been given to the National Council.

They have decided which proposals should go to the Annual General meeting.

It is at the Annual General meeting when the final changes are made.

This is your organisation.

Only you have the right to change our rules.

But we need enough people to attend to make any changes legal.



The Annual General Meeting will include a fun event.

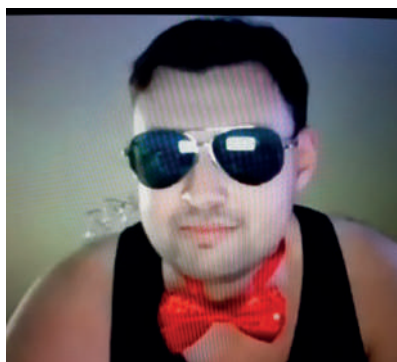
Hosted by Gerraint Jones-Griffiths.

We hope you will enjoy finally meeting again and having fun in person.

In the meantime, we will send you the Annual Report for 2020/21 in the post.

And minutes from the last meeting in October 2020.

And an agenda for the day.



Come and join us and have some fun.

We are really looking forward to seeing you in person once more.



Joe Powell, Chief Executive

News from Groups



Rhiannon has been working in the **Newport People First** office for the past month and has been speaking to members regularly. They all agreed on the group's first meeting outside at Belle Vue Park.

It is a beautiful park, it is accessible and is familiar to the members. All decisions at Newport People First are member-led and the group encourages members to get involved with the projects by sharing their ideas.



The first edition of the group's Buzz Magazine was produced in May. There were Members Stories, Quizzes, a What's On, and lots more. Joe Blackley is the Editor and Zahra Kaleem is the Sub-Editor for Buzz Magazine.

Rhiannon met Liz and Hilary from the Dignity Bag charity. Dignity bag put together care packages for women who are on a tight budget and who struggle to buy some types of items. Newport People First received 12 of the packages to deliver to members.



Group update provided by: Rhiannon Currie

News from groups



SOUL **Wrexham** will start emerging from the tragedy of losing Linton last December. In the weeks to come the Coordinators, Adrian and Danny will go and visit people to see if they are ready to meet in person.

Flintshire self-advocates have started their regular group meetings. They meet once a month in the Daniel Owen centre. A virtual drop-in is available for people who cannot come to the group meetings. The next step is how to plan the future.



Prestatyn and **Denbigh** worked together on Zoom through the Pandemic. A new DSSSAN network was set up with social services and the Champion for disability from Denbighshire council. Together the network looks at changes to local services and possible solutions.

The groups also met the new Police and Crime Commissioner and will work closely with the Police to make it easier for people to get in contact

Prestatyn received a grant for their project
Learn to teach Digital inclusion for us .



News from groups



A Welsh Language self-advocacy group will be starting in South **Denbighshire** soon.

Gwynedd group is still meeting on Zoom. The group is discussing the changes to day-services, and reductions in the online meetings with Llwybrau Llesiant. On 20th August they will discuss the future of Gwynedd Day services and online groups.



Ynys Môn group is now official and has an agreed constitution. The group is working with the local authority as the authority wants to include self-advocates in interviews for trainee social workers.

The Rainbow Gogs Yr Enfys are getting ready to change from a drop-in to a self-advocacy group with a constitution.

In the next two months, we have some sex education planned.



The group is for anyone with a learning disability or autism in **North Wales** who identifies as LGBTQ+. Group meetings happen on Zoom once a month.

News from groups



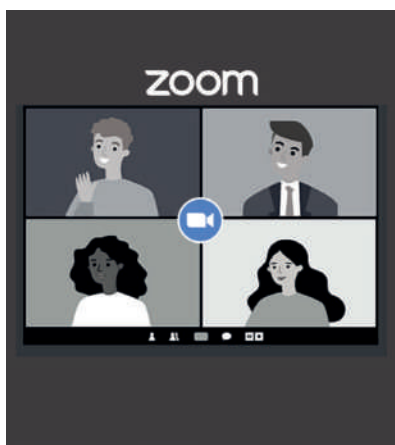
Dawn Gullis, Zarah Kaleem, Joanna Jones **of Cardiff People First**, and Stacey Traylor **of Vale People First** are working on the Our Health: Our Voice Project. They work alongside Public Health Wales and the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. The project started in November 2020.

Joanna and Stacey filled in Health Profiles for adults with a learning disability in Cardiff and the Vale. They also deliver free online training for organisations and carers.



The Once for Wales Health Profile is a pocket-sized booklet that includes important health information that a Doctor or medical person will need in appointments.

For more information please contact Cardiff People First on info@cardiffpeoplefirst.org.uk.



“I am the Public Relations Project Officer at Cardiff People First. I contacted supported living houses and health care providers to give everyone an opportunity to have a health profile. My role now involves holding

News from groups



a weekly meeting on zoom and in a Cardiff Park **Dawn Gullis**

“While I was typing the health profiles I felt that I was doing something worthwhile that would really help to make a difference

Sarah Thomas



I love doing the project, we gather so much information and I also like doing the training. I am looking forward to the future and seeing what s coming next **Stacey Traylor**

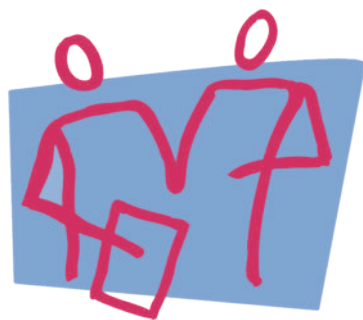
“It gave me so much joy to fill in the Health Profiles for people with a learning disability. This is because Health Profile could save a life!

Joanna Jones



I m passionate about sharing disability awareness especially supporting people with a learning disability from BAME community!... from a personal perspective I have empathy because society doesn t take us seriously from lack of knowledge of what we can achieve when given the chance! **Zarah Kaleem**

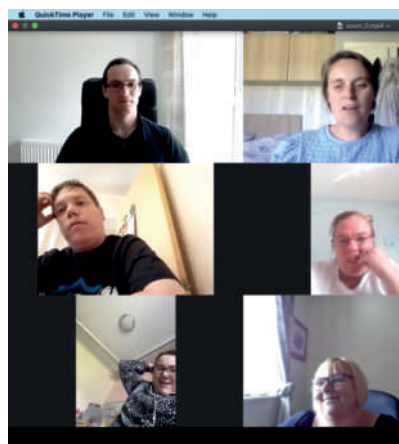
News from groups



putting people first
rhoi pobl yn gyntaf

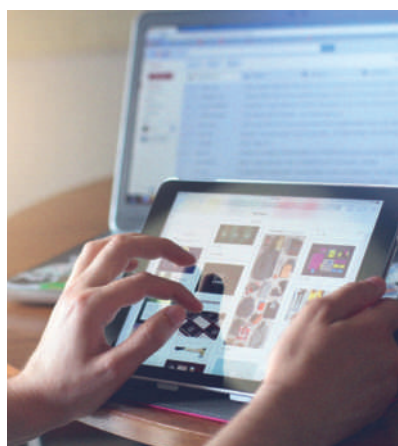
On the 13th of July, Members of **People First Bridgend** s Advisory Team met the new Corporate Director of Social Services, Claire Marchant, on Zoom.

Claire asked People First to run a focus group about people s experiences during lockdown. Members were very honest about what they liked and did not like.



Claire will use member s views to introduce her annual report. Claire will visit the Advisory Team again later in the year.

On the 11th of August, Bridgend Council will start their plan to improve services. This is where a group of people from the council, NHS, service providers, parents, charities, and people with learning disabilities come together to discuss what does and does not work about learning disability services.



The Council asked People First Bridgend to let them know what people with learning disabilities have said about things needing to

News from groups



improve. The Advisory Team will do this. When doing this work with the Council, People First Bridgend will also use the results of a consultation it did during lockdown. 78 people were interviewed.

People First Bridgend are continuing to run a self-advocacy group online. Members of the Advisory Team are now very confident on Zoom and decided that they would like to facilitate parts of the meeting themselves. Each meeting, a member volunteers to be the Chair and takes charge of the presentation.



This was a big step for some shy members. On the 28th of July, People First Bridgend had its first face-to-face meet since lockdown. Advisory Team members and staff met at the Red Dragon pub in Bridgend.



8 members attended and Phillipa from All Wales People First came to meet members. Everyone had a nice time together. People First Bridgend plan to continue doing this every 3 months.

News from groups



Caerphilly People First has started a new group which is called the Caerphilly People First Reconnect Focus Group. Members talk about self-advocacy, share experiences, and talk about what they would like to happen. So far, the group has done: Safeguarding training sessions; Online safety training; Ipad training; Work on a Welsh Government consultation about hate crime; One-page profiles; Weekly walks; Pride LGBTQIA+ workshop.



Caerphilly People First is working with Caerphilly local authority and parents and carers, on the future of day services for people with learning disabilities in Caerphilly. It is hoped that the future will bring more person-centred daytime opportunities.



Chairperson, Ffion, recently took part in a discussion on the Women Equality Network (WEN) Cafe Podcast, talking about the pandemic, and how it s had an impact on her day-to-day life. If you would like to listen to the podcast it s available on the Podbean app or online at: <https://wenwales.org.uk/wen-cafe-podcast/>



News from groups

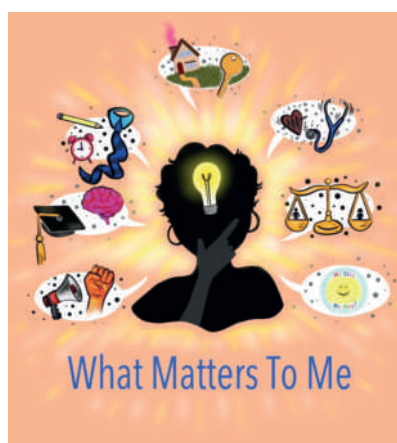


Cwm Taf People First

Cwm Taf People First started to get out and about in August. They held a series of Roadshows for people with learning disabilities living across **RCT, Merthyr** and **Bridgend**.

Staff held workshops and met with members in two marquees to find out “what matters to me now

They used a variety of ways to capture peoples voices by using illustration, films, building blocks and graffiti boards.



There have also been focus groups to talk about the things which members say are important to them.

Sam Taylor's groups talk about education, friendships and health and wellbeing.

Tom Watling's groups talk about housing, safer communities and access.



The Full Circle Project has looked at hard words and what they mean. The group made a film about hard words. Take a look at the Cwm Taf People First Facebook page if you would like to see the video.

facebook®



All Wales People First, Chief Executive - Joe Powell
20 August

Was great working with the Through our Eyes Photography Project team and participants today in Prestatyn. I learned an awful lot from Natasha Hirst today.

If you are given the chance to take part in the project, please make sure you take it. Great fun and very empowering way of getting our voices heard.

Thanks to both Natasha Hirst and Lucy Hinksman for helping me with a personal visual project this evening too.



Round up



All Wales People First, Chief Executive - Joe Powell
4 August

The National Council met once more on zoom yesterday. Amongst topics discussed was proposed changes to our Mem and Arts which will be submitted to full members at our Annual General Meeting this October. Anna from Mencap Cymru spoke to members about their Our Social Networks project. Members also held a one minute silence for Vicky Lanfear who sadly passed away last week. The meeting was chaired as ever by James Tyler and Simon Richards.

