



**All Wales People First**

# Talk Back

*The National Voice of People with Learning Disabilities in Wales*

**Spring 2022**



## Through our Eyes Photography Project

University Student Anna Howell, May 2022

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## Editorial

Welcome to the Spring 2022 edition of Talk Back.

It's good to be getting out and about again. Since the Winter edition of Talkback we've been able to hold a face to face National Council Meeting. We met in the Ramada Plaza Wrexham hotel and did a lot of work over two days. We talked about whether we want to start a business.

You can read more on page 7.

AdFest 2022 happened earlier this week and we will be sharing more about what happened in the next Talk Back.

The SATV Roadshow is getting out and about more too! We will be visiting Cwm Taf People First and Carmarthenshire People First over the next few months. If you'd like to host an SATV roadshow event contact

**Gerraint.**

Gerraint is still running the nightclub event on Zoom every other Tuesday night. Contact **Gerraint** or **Claire** for the link if you'd like to join in.

**The AWPf team**



# The Team

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# Through our eyes photography project

## The project team



**Natasha Hirst**  
Project Manager



"Through Our Eyes"



**Lucy Hinksman**  
Project Worker/  
Photographer

We have a very exciting update about the Through Our Eyes project. We will hold an end of project celebration event at the Senedd which is in Cardiff Bay. Our event will be at lunchtime on the 24th November. Jane Hutt MS is supporting our event and will be one of our speakers.

We will also have an exhibition of our photos and videos in the Senedd. Our exhibition will be up from mid-November to mid-January. This means that politicians and members of the public will have two months to see the exhibition.

They will be able to learn about your valued roles. The exhibition will show the positive contributions that people with learning disabilities make across Wales.

We will send more details about the event soon, including how you can book to attend.

People First groups around Wales can organise their own visit to see the exhibition. You can also book a tour of the Senedd if you

# Through our eyes photography project



visit.

It has been great to visit more members and see all the interesting things you do.

Cardiff People First organised meals out. It was great to socialise with you!

Caerphilly People First had a brilliant wellbeing day. They made seed bombs and went for a walk.



Simon showed us around on the buses in Cardiff. Public transport is important for independence but not everyone has access to this.

Anna Howell told us about her life at University and her hobbies. She does archery. She also enjoys taking part in medieval re-enactments!



We got creative with Stacey on Barry Island and watched Kamar try surfing for the first time.

We have taken lots of photos of people with learning disabilities at work. We also

# Through our eyes photography project



interviewed people about their jobs and why employment is important.

We would like to interview some more members about their experiences of living with a learning disability. Interviews help us to share more of your stories and views. We will use quotes from the interviews for creating images with text on, like posters. We will also use parts of the interviews for a short film.

Let us know if you would like us to visit you to take photos of the things you do.



## **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/>



*Article by Natasha Hirst*

# Should we start a business?



## Should All Wales People First start a business?

On May 3rd, National Council Reps and some Board members of AWPf met in Wrexham at the National Council residential meeting. They talked about starting a business.

James Tyler, Chair of the National Council, explained why this is being talked about now.

- Members asked AWPf to help them get more money for local groups, help groups work together more and tell more people about self-advocacy.
- All Wales People First would be a stronger organisation if we got money from different places, not just Welsh Government.
- We said we would look at it in the MIRROR Strategy
- AWPf is sometimes asked by other organisations to do work. We can't say yes to every piece of work because of our current rules.



Joe has talked to Social Firms Wales about how All Wales People First could earn money in different ways.

Here is what Joe found out

- All Wales People First could set up a separate business without breaking our rules.



# Should we start a business?



- If the business failed, it would not hurt All Wales People First.
- If the business was a success, it could mean AWPf could help local groups more.

Reps talked in groups about what exciting things could happen if AWPf started a business and what concerned them about AWPf starting a business.



## Excited

- More people could know about self-advocacy, AWPf and learning disabilities
- AWPf could ask local groups to work together to do some of the work
- More people could get involved
- The good work some groups are doing locally could be expanded to the whole of Wales
- We could get money for groups
- More people with learning disabilities could get jobs
- AWPf could get bigger – more members and more staff



## Concerned

- How would it affect the work of AWPf?
- How would we set it up, find start up



# Should we start a business?



- money and write a business plan?
- Would we be treading on other organisation's toes? Will we be fighting for the same pot of money?
- How do we make sure everyone gets a chance to be involved?
- Who would monitor quality?
- How will working for AWPf affect members – benefits, rural areas, transport?



Bob Rhodes, member of the AWPf Board of Directors, reminded Reps that to make the business a success we will need to bring in business experts.

Reps were asked to think about what an AWPf business might do to make money

- Training
  - o professionals
  - o self-advocates
  - o self-advocacy support workers and facilitators
  - o first aid
  - o rights
- Business planning & advertising especially for people with learning disabilities and autism
- Job searching and getting paid jobs
- Easy read service
- Working with public services to change them for the better
- Organising events



# Should we start a business?



- Creating films
- Working with health boards to employ people with learning disabilities (like Cardiff People First and Cardiff & Vale Health Board)
- Working with young people/carers

Any business that All Wales People First sets up will need to make more money than it spends. This is called making a profit. Any profit the business makes will belong to All Wales People First and can be used anyway decided.



Reps voted on whether AWPf should start a business. The vote was 100% in favour of starting a business.



The next step is to hold a sub-group meeting with members of the Board and some National Council Reps. The sub-group will look at the information from Reps and the draft business plan Joe and Social Firms Wales have written. The sub-group will decide on a plan and bring it to National Council to decide on.

Any final decision about creating a new business will be voted on at the Annual General Meeting.



*Article by Tracey Drew*

# Chief Executive's update

## EGM



All Wales People First called an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting (E.G.M.) on 3rd May at the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Wrexham.

All Wales People First wanted to make some changes to our rules. Our rules are called Memorandum and Articles.

We wanted to ask members if they still agreed to changes made at the October Annual General Meeting.

And:

- 1) Whether we could change the Companies Act from 1985 to 2006.
- 2) Whether we could combine our: Memorandum of Articles with our Articles of Association.
- 3) Whether we could change our old rules for the new rules.

Unfortunately, the meeting could not go ahead because it wasn't quorate.

Quorate is the legal number of members who have to be at a meeting to make decisions.

This meant that we had to call another meeting.

The next meeting was held on the 22nd June. Day two of AdFest 2022.

We will give an update soon on how members voted.

*Article by Joe Powell*



# Member Article

## Samantha Hall



Hi everyone, my name is Samantha Hall and I'd like to share a bit about me and what I do.

I've got a busy life and most days I have lots to do to. I love being out and about spending time with my friends and my amazing boyfriend Toby.



Lockdown wasn't great because I couldn't get out and about so much, but I made the most of social media and staying in touch that way.

I use Twitter, Facebook and Tik Tok a lot and I've got quite good at doing clips for Tik Tok.

I have two jobs and I love work so much!



I'm the Vice Chair of Carmarthenshire People First. My work there includes talking to people about what Carmarthenshire People First does and I do computer work.

I am the rep for Carmarthenshire on the All Wales People First National Council.



We have meetings on Zoom at Carmarthenshire People First and we are getting out and about more now too. Our members seem happy to be going out again, but I'd say they like mix of meeting online and getting together face to face.

# Member Article

## Samantha Hall



We did some wellbeing packs for the group's members and now we're busy working on a Spring wellbeing pack.

I also work for the AssistMyLife App project at Barod CIC. That's the job I'm doing today actually. I'm part of the project team who developed the app.



Now that the app has been launched I do a lot of the promotional work to get people to download and use the app on their phone.

Because I've got good social media skills, I do a lot of social media work to promote the project.

You can find out more about the AssistMyLife app for your phone by visiting [www.assistmylife.wales](http://www.assistmylife.wales)

We are on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook too @assistmylife



***"I am ready for work this morning...look forward going in to work this morning... I am loved it I am..."***

***A Job, a great boyfriend, and a great friend's and family I have... and been a great vice chair and rep for Carmarthenshire people First to... am loved it I am... what I do..."***



# News from groups



**Mold Self-Advocacy** decided on a set of rules for their group and had elections. Gary, the chair of the group said “ *I am confident that with the new action plan: We are back on track. We will help Prestatyn self-advocacy as much as we can with their conference*”. Glyn, one of the new reps for the Police Equality meeting for Disability, says: “*We need new members. We have a lot to do, but not enough members.*”



**Denbigh Self-advocates** are writing the set of rules for the group. Danny said “*We want to speak up for ourselves so that we can make our own choices and not that choices made up for us*”. Colin said: “*We want to work for Safe Places, meet people, talk to them.*”



**Denbighshire South Bilingual group** had their first meeting on the 18th of May. In the next few months they will have a group name and members will elect the team that will be running the group.



**Self-advocacy Prestatyn** are preparing for a conference on 21 October to present the work of Self advocacy. It will be managed and supported by people with learning disabilities. Bryn says “*Services need to know how to communicate with us, listen to us and support us. We want to make a small film at the conference to show what we can do.*”

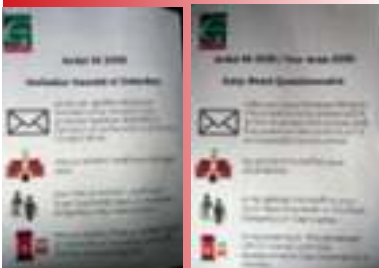
# News from groups



**The Rainbow Gogs Yr Enfys (RGYE)** Scott attended his first AWP national council meeting: *"We learned to speak up in a group and worked together as a Team"*. RGYE has reps for the NWLDPG and the Police equality LGBT+ meeting. Debbie and Batin agreed *"We want to take part on the Wrexham Pride. We will prepare a Pride Disco"*. Their video *Love, Life, LGBT+ and Learning Disabled* will be launched at AdFest.



**The Gwynedd Tea at Three group** wrote a letter to the Local Authority about no easy read documents being available for a local consultation. They responded and have now provided an easy read document. Now everyone can have their say on what they would like to see in Gwynedd county area in the future.



Harry attended his first AWP physical meeting in Wrexham. Harry said *"I love being a rep for All Wales People First and the rep for whole of Gwynedd. It has been a really amazing time yesterday and today. I want to thank everyone for treating me nicely it been a really interesting day today I can't wait to see everyone"*.



**Self-advocacy Groups in North Wales** meet sometimes to speak about consultations or positive actions they want to do together to achieve more.



## News from groups



**The Vale People 1st** Teenscheme holiday provision went ahead for the second week of the Easter Holidays. Unfortunately, we couldn't run the first week because of care staff being ill with Covid.

We did an Easter Egg hunt outside in the nice weather. We also had a great time making chocolate crispy cakes and lots of Easter arts and crafts.

We introduced new t-shirts and hoodies for all the staff and volunteers to wear, the young people designed the logo themselves and all the staff loved them!!



Our Winter Wellbeing Fayre at Ysgol Y Deri was held on Saturday 26th March. Lots of Vale People 1st members and young people from Ysgol Y Deri attended. We had a fantastic day and were joined by;

The Hurts So Good Graffiti team who did 40 boards for young people who attended.

We had vintage cars; face painting; Tracey Raikes Zumba session; Ron's drumming; Professional singer Kirsty Leigh; photo booth; face painting; lizards and animals and a craft corner.



We had the gazebo in the center of it all, full of information about Vale People 1st for people to have a look at. We had fantastic feedback from everyone who attended.



## News from groups



**Caerphilly People First** members Ffion, Natalie and Sophie recently attended an online workshop identifying research priorities for the Wales COVID-19 Evidence Centre (WCEC). They talked about the impact of the pandemic and lockdown.

During Mental Health Awareness week, the Caerphilly People First Reconnect Focus Group focused on their mental health and wellbeing. We spent some time digging, planting and painting. The group also took part in a wellbeing game and talked about what makes us sad, happy and angry. We finished off our session with a lovely walk in the sunshine.



We recently met with our local MP about the proposed changes to the Human Rights Act and the inaccessible consultation process. Our MP wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Justice to share the concerns that people with learning disabilities have about the proposed changes to the Human Rights Act. He also stressed how important easy read consultation documents are. We received a response from the Minister for Justice explaining that the accessible version of the consultation was delayed due to an external supplier.

We have been very busy with training and face to face activities such as TRAC; Governance; Isolation and Loneliness.



## News from groups



**Conwy Connect** meet on zoom every week and have a WhatsApp Group where people share photos, information and support each other.

We met to look at the Welsh Government's Learning Disability Plan and to agree what we wanted to say about it.

We also looked at the Human Rights Act Reform consultation. Richard Redmond (All Wales People First Rep) attended a meeting to say that the consultation was not accessible for people with Learning disabilities. The Consultation was extended. We were happy because it gave us chance to say what we thought about it.



Bethan Foxall (North Wales Participation Rep) and Carla Williams (NWPG Deputy Rep) went to North Wales Participation Group meeting. Michele Williams (Shell) is the new Co-Ordinator for this group. Bethan hopes that lots of positive changes will take place. Bethan thought it was nice to see most of the Reps for North Wales at the meeting.



Richard Redmond went to the National Council meeting in Wrexham. He got to meet lots of new people and spent time with other Reps. The meeting was very interesting and Richard made lots of notes to feedback to the forum

Everyone is excited about attending AdFest!

# News from groups



putting people first  
rhoi pobl yn gyntaf

## People First Bridgend

6 of People First Bridgend's self advocates took part in Bridgend Council's learning disability service development day at Court Coleman Manor.

The event was well attended by 30 professionals from across the county. Each of the 6 self-advocates oversaw a group of professionals and told them what is working well and what could be done better.



The groups decided that it was important that all services are co-produced, that the council and its providers work together better to the same goals, and wherever possible, people should be helped to do normal things in normal places instead of service settings.

Four workstreams came out of the development day: Get people using public transport by themselves more; be able to do activities whenever people want; give people better technology and the skills to use it; work together better and more often.



A follow-up day was planned for late May. People First Bridgend's self-advocates will be consultants for all workstreams.

# facebook



**All Wales People First, Chief Executive - Joe Powell - 12 May-**

Was great to attend and speak at the inaugural meeting of the Cross Party Group on Learning Disability yesterday on Zoom. Sionedd Williams MS was voted as the Chair and Samantha Williams of Learning Disability Wales was elected as the secretariat.

Respect to Learning Disability Wales for their hard work and effort on this. We will do our best at All Wales People First to make sure as many people with learning disabilities as possible can be involved.



## Round up



**Wales People First, Chief Executive - Joe Powell 8 February**

Thanks to everyone at Caerphilly People First for inviting me to attend their Winter Wellbeing session based on materials designed by Carmarthenshire People First and being rolled out at a National level. Today the members and I made seed bombs and threw them out in the woods on our wellbeing walk. Be interesting to see how they bloom.



**All Wales People First, Chief Executive - Joe Powell 25 March-**

Thanks to all members of 'Friday Friends' group (West Glamorgan People First) for welcoming me to their group. Thanks also to the group for allowing Lucy to take pictures for our fabulous Through our Eyes Photography Project. Your Voice Advocacy.