

All Wales People First

Talk Back

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

Summer 2022



Ten years on...
The National
Director

*It was new and
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disabilities*

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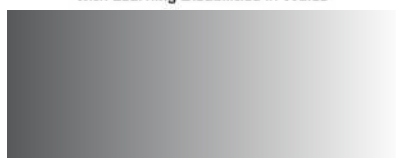
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AdFest



Editorial

Welcome to the Summer 2022 edition of Talk Back.

It's been awesome to catch up with so many of you face to face this year. For meetings, SATV Roadshow events and of course at the self-advocacy event of the year AdFest 2022!

If you missed AdFest or want a reminder of all the excitement, you can look at the AdFest report in the Resources section of our website.

The SATV Roadshow has been busy too. Thanks to Caerphilly People First for hosting us in August and to Cwm Taf People First for inviting us to the VIVA Fest main stage.

If you'd like us to run an SATV at your group, then please get in touch with Gerraint@allwalespeople1st.co.uk

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 really enjoyed seeing so many members at AdFest. Thank you to everyone who visited our photography studio.

We have been busy doing our last few photoshoots with members. Sam and Toby met us in Llandeilo to get photos of relationships. We have more photos of members at work and doing sports.

It was great fun at the beach with Levi and her Mum and daughter to get photos of family life.

We also filmed interviews with people at the VC Gallery in Pembroke Dock. Thank you to everyone who has taken part.

We will share lots of the photos and videos from the project in November at our end of project celebration event. This will take place on the 24th November from 2-3pm. It will be at the Senedd which is in Cardiff Bay. Jane Hutt MS is supporting our event and will be one of our speakers.

An exhibition of our photos and videos will be shown in the Senedd. Our exhibition will be

Through our eyes photography project



up from 16th November 2022 to February 4th 2023.

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 visit.

The project will finish in December. There will be new resources on the All Wales People First website for groups to use.



You will be able to watch a video of our photography workshop. We will share top tips for taking photos for social media.

There will be a library of photos. Groups will be able to use the photos to promote their activities.



A smaller selection of photos will be available for the media to use. This will increase positive representation of people with learning disabilities in newspapers and magazines. We hope that our photos and videos will encourage more people with learning disabilities to get involved with People First groups.

Through our eyes photography project



People who do not have learning disabilities will find out what is important to us in our lives. They will learn about the things we enjoy doing and the positive difference that we make in our communities.

We will share the highlights of the Through Our Eyes project on social media over the next few weeks.



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/>

If you take photos and 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

Article by [Natasha Hirst](#)

Social Care Wales



Llais Cenedlaethol
Pobl ag Anableddau Dysgu yng Nghymru



On 7th July, All Wales People First spoke to 87 staff in Social Care Wales. Social Care Wales work to make care and support better for children and adults. They are in charge of

Registering care and support workers, including Social Workers and child minders

- Deciding what qualifications care and support workers need
- Dealing with concerns about a registered care worker

We were invited by their Chief Executive, Sue Evans, to take over her monthly session when she talks to the people working for Social Care Wales.

We saw it as an opportunity to shape the way people working in care and support think about and treat people with learning disabilities.

Joe Powell, Chief Executive of AWPf, introduced All Wales People First and said how good it is to work together. Joe said that good support is vital for people with

Social Care Wales



learning disabilities and that a support worker can make or break their day.

Simon Richards, Vice Chair of the National Council, shared his experiences of social workers and living in supported living. Simon spoke passionately about the need for services to work with families, not just the person.



Simon also said that decisions need to be made on a case by case basis as each person is different. Simon has had to convince support staff that he is able to go out by himself and come home when he wants.

We shared a film by Cwm Taff People First about how to communicate with people with learning disabilities. Thank you for letting us use it!



Louise Price told Social Care Wales about her experiences of asking for support to live the life she wants and fighting to get the right place to live and the support she needs. The staff at Social Care Wales thanked Joe,

Social Care Wales



Simon and Louise and said they had found it very useful.

Simon said afterwards I talked about the good and bad parts of supported living from my point of view. Sadly there s been a bit too much bad for my liking, but that s another story. Just hope the people at Social Care Wales were paying attention.

The session was recorded and will be shared with staff who couldn t join the session and with the Board of Social Care Wales.

Article by Tracey Drew

Board of Directors



Congratulations to Bob Rhodes and David Whittle who have been elected as Co-chairs of the Board of Directors.

Thanks to former Co-chair Ruth Northway for her dedication to the role. Ruth did not stand for re-election but still shares her wealth of skills and experience with us as a Board member. Welcome to new Board member Kay Williams, who we look forward to meeting at our next Board meeting



Chief Executive's update

Human Rights



All Wales People have been very worried about the Human Rights Act of 1998. The UK Government wanted to change it. It created a Bill of Rights to replace the Human Rights Act.

We believe the Bill of Rights would:

- Weaken our human rights

- Make it harder to challenge the government if we feel they have taken our rights away

- Make it harder to appeal a decision we feel that is unfair.



Times have always been difficult for people with learning disabilities.

We are not treated as equals in society.

This means we are more likely to need to use the Human Rights act than most other people.

This is especially important at the moment because of very difficult political times such as:

- Brexit

- Covid 19

- Cost of Living crisis



The UK Government set up an independent panel to ask the public on their opinion on changing the Human Rights Act.

Chief Executive's update

Human Rights



I was part of a session with the panel which looked into whether the Human Rights Act needed to be changed.

The session was organised by the British Institute of Human Rights (BIHR).

Everyone who spoke at the event said that the Bill of Rights would weaken our Human Rights.

This included the British Institute of Human Rights and other rights organisations such as Liberty.

The panel concluded that there was no need to change the current Human Rights Act.

But the Government still wanted to change the law anyway.

We worked very hard to keep our human rights by:

- Speaking to our members about their experiences in Wales.

- Chairing the BIHR Ask the Expert event on zoom.

- Lobbying the UK Government with the BIHR and Pembrokeshire People First to produce accessible versions of the Bill of Rights consultation document.

- Working with the BIHR and Pembrokeshire People First to extend the consultation deadline so that people with learning



Chief Executive's update

Human Rights



disabilities had enough time to respond.
Responded to the UK Governments consultation on the Bill of Rights.

Attended many Human Rights events and groups.

Responded to the Joint Committee on Human Rights call for evidence.

Wrote a letter to all Welsh MPs asking them not to support the Bill of Rights.

Shared resources with local self-advocacy groups so they could write to their MPs to challenge the Bill of Rights.



The Bill of Rights had a first reading in the UK Parliament.

The second reading was due on 12th September.

The new Government decided that the second reading would not go ahead.

They said they will not go ahead with the Bill of Rights

We will watch the situation for any developments as this could change.

We are in touch with the main rights organisations in the United Kingdom.

This helps us to keep up to date with the latest developments.

Article by Joe Powell



Ten years on...

The National Director



In 2012 we advertised for a National Director. It was new and exciting because the position was for someone who had lived experience of learning disabilities.

Many people said it could not be done. But the National Council were confident it could work. Before the job was advertised they made sure the job was designed well. So that it would have the best chance of working.



After a 2 day interview Joe Powell got the job. It is important that the success of the last 10 years is celebrated because the role is a success for everyone involved with All Wales People First. It worked because you've made it work.



Joe's appointment made a statement that people with learning disabilities can be leaders.

I would like to thank everyone connected to All Wales People First for continued support and encouragement since I started work with you on 9th October 2012. Representing members across Wales is the greatest honour I could ever have. I will continue to do my very best to fight with you to make Wales more equal for people with learning disabilities
Joe Powell



AdFest 2022



*It's nice to get to know people
and nice to be off Zoom* **Sam T**



Loving it..making new friends
Kara



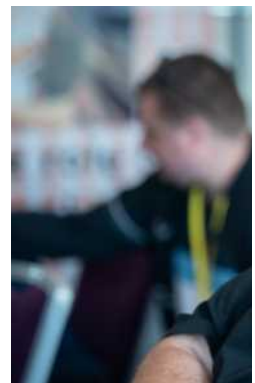
Patient Experience & Community Involvement Team Amazing day!

@AllWalesPF #Adfest2022 Great to be back on the road again meeting
and colleagues old and new, talking all about our #EasyRead resources
@welshambulance and @NHS111Wales #LDWeek2022

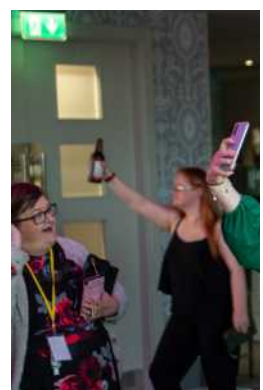


Gig Buddies

participate
time attending
we really enjoy



*The buzz over the last two days
has been absolutely incredible*
Gerraint





Gig Buddies Cymru Thank you/Diolch to [@AllWalesPF](#) for inviting us to
participate in [#AdFest2022](#) at the [@QuayHotelandSpa](#)! This was our very first
attending the Conference, so to [#Reconnect](#) with others was brilliant and
we enjoyed it! [#FfrindiauGigiauCymru](#) [#GigBuddiesCymru](#)



*Amazing! I feel more
independent and confident"*
Sam H

...y here at
...eting friends
[#GigBuddiesCymru](#),



*What helps wellbeing?
Meeting Zoom friends face to
face for the first time is so good!"*
Ffion

Member article

The Covid Hangover - Simon Richards



Hi everyone, my name is Simon Richards. I m the Vice-chair of the All Wales People First National Council. I m a member of Cardiff People First and I have a paid job with Barod CIC.

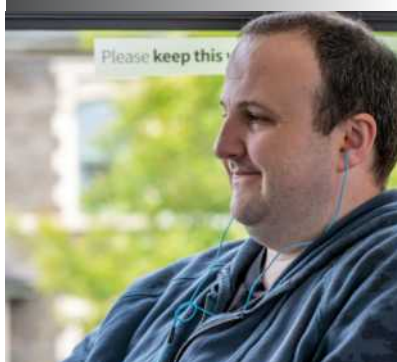
I love squirrell spotting and I ve recently got in to bus spotting too.



Getting out in the fresh air and spotting squirrels kept me going through lockdown. My spot the squirrel pictures have grown quite a following on social media!



In many ways things feel like they re getting back to business as usual but there are still some not so nice reminders which I find hard. I still see a lot of mask stickers and social distancing posters on buses and other places. It s very confusing.



The thing I find the hardest is not being able to have visitors in the house. Even several months on since all Covid restrictions were lifted in Wales. I live with five other housemates in supported living. We re allowed to have guests to the garden, but none in the house.

Member article

The Covid Hangover - Simon Richards



When I asked why, I was just told Covid. I'm not sure if it's the staff or the support provider who've made the rule, but I don't feel comfortable to question the rule and ask more questions.

There's no chance of change on the horizon either, which does get me down sometimes. I'd like for family, friends and my partner to be able to visit me in my own home. Unless I want to meet in the garden then I have to always travel to them.



I'm not sure that I know what normal feels like anymore, but I'm getting out and about a lot and going to events like I used to pre-Covid. The weekly Karaoke is so much fun again.



I'm part of the Hijinx Odyssey Theatre Group, and we're busy practicing for our latest performance called Doctor Dolittle's Wild Adventure. The show will be happening on 1st, 2nd and 3rd December in the Wales Millennium Centre's Weston Studio in Cardiff Bay. You can find out more and book tickets by visiting www.hijinx.org.uk/doctor-dolittle/



Simon Richards

News from groups



Mold Self-advocacy group had volunteer training on Health and Safety, Empowerment and Equality and Diversity.

The last two months we worked with North East Wales Cohesion to create a film about the group and the impact of Hate Crime. We hope to launch the video at the Prestatyn Self-Advocacy conference in October. We started with the Safe Places Scheme in Mold.

Denbigh Self-advocates started again after a summer break. We spoke about things we can do to keep us safe. We had a good catch-up. Peter will do another sponsored walk for RNLI in September. Last year we collected £300

Self-advocacy Denbigh is the organiser for Safe Places in Denbigh. Lots of work has to be done. We need funding for the next annual membership fee.

Prestatyn Self-advocacy received funding from the Lottery Community Fund to run our conference Hear our Voice - Hear me now. The guest speakers will talk about Human Rights; Friends and Relationships; Health and Equality. The Police and Crime

News from groups



Commissioner for North Wales will be spaking and Joe Powell will give the closing speech.

The Rainbow Gogs yr Enfys had a special Pride Event - a Radio-online disco with Alex Sweeny. 47 members took part.

Debbie Williams attended her first North Wales Police LGBTQI Diversity meeting at North Wales Police Headquarters.

Debbie also met up with the local MP Liz Savile Roberts.



Clwyd Peacocks / Peunod Clwyd, is a new self-advocacy group in the south of Denbighshire.

We had a good session this week thinking of a name for the group. We came up with the Clwyd Peacocks.

Ruthin has a lovely castle, and in the grounds they have Peacocks. They make a lot of noise and also give a good show with their feathers. Just like our group!

We are hoping to hear some noise soon from Hywel, Alex, Emma and Becky.

Missing from the picture is Steve and Laura who are also part of this group.



News from groups



Your Voice Advocacy

We have been working on a lot of things. We wrote a letter to the Electoral Commission about how hard voting can be for some people.

We are waiting to hear back from Transport for Wales about problems in our area. We have worked on lots of Easy Read projects. The last one was about Human Rights.

Adam was nominated for an Unsung Hero award.

Kara and Richard our Neath Port Talbot and Swansea Reps had to travel across Wales to get to the All Wales People First National Council on 3rd & 4th May. They went all the way to Wrexham without support on the train. It was a big success for them.

On June 21st & 22nd Kara and Richard had to travel alone across Wales again for the All Wales People First Conference. There was a train strike! It was a lot of stress to work out how to get there but they did it. Well done Kara and Richard!

At Adfest Richard ran the Magic Moments workshop with Nick Andrews from Swansea



News from groups



Caerphilly People First

Natalie, Ffion and Sarah have been working with the University of South Wales on a new project. Co-producing an accessible outcomes measure based on the Health Equalities Framework and Service Development project. The Health Equality Framework is an assessment used in Wales to check on your health and life.

We held a consultation event called 'Have Your Say' to gather the views of people with learning disabilities on issues which affect their lives. We will now work towards delivering on the recommendations and ideas.

Ffion started facilitating a relationship course, which she and Insight designed. During the first week of the course, the group talked about what makes a good relationship, what makes a bad relationship, and the warning signs of a bad relationship. They also discussed how to make friends, and how to deal with falling out with friends. The session finished with a 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire' relationship quiz designed by Vale People 1st. At future sessions we will be talking about identity and LGBTQ issues.



News from groups



This is an exciting time for **Conwy Connect**. We are celebrating our 25th Anniversary. Members have been talking about how being a member of Conwy Connect Forum has helped us in our lives.

During Adfest, we enjoyed going swimming in the hotel together. Since then we have started a swimming club. This runs on a weekend, and anyone from Conwy Connect is welcome to come along.



I have formed a walking group that runs once a month. This encourages members to get some exercise in the fresh air and enjoy spending time together.

Conwy Connect Forum is planning a special meal out in September. This has been suggested by a few of our members. Everyone is busy planning this on our WhatsApp group already!



We hold a training meeting every six weeks for the Representatives and Deputy Representatives for the North Wales Flyers Group, All Wales People First and Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group. In our meetings we discuss how we can be good at our job as Reps and Deps . We are excited as our next planned meeting will be in our new office.

Richard Redmond (AWPF Rep)

News from groups



Cardiff People First staff members Dawn Gullis and Zarah Kaleem have been shortlisted for the Womenspire awards. They will be at the ceremony. Anyone can get a free ticket to see it online www.chwaraeteg.com

Zarah is still trying to bring together anyone with a learning disability who is Black, Asian or any other minority ethnic community, from anywhere. She needs People First groups to find people and help them to take part.

Joanna Jones and Stacey Traylor are coming to the end of their secondment with NHS Cardiff and Vale Learning Disability Teams. They have done some amazing work and achieved a lot. Their colleagues are doing everything they can to keep them working there. Zarah is also seconded to do some work as a research assistant at the Welsh School of Architecture.

Sarah Thomas is working with other organisations to run peer support groups for people with a learning disability who miss friends and family who are dead. It's part of our Forever Memories work.

Becky Pritchard is volunteering to give free reusable period products to women in Cardiff

facebook®



All Wales People First, Chief Executive - Joe Powell - 23 August

Enormous thanks to all who participated in the first of our Trading Arm Think Tanks today. National Council, Board members and AWPf staff came together with Social Firms Wales to discuss and develop an idea for creating a trading arm as approved by the National Council at our meeting in May.

We pledged to investigate the merits of running a Trading Arm as part of our MIRROR Strategy Business Plan 2019-2023.



All Wales People First, Chief Executive - Joe Powell 21 July

Thanks to Ffion Poole and all Caerphilly People First for allowing me to attend a relationship training day delivered by Ffion and co designed with Lisa French of Innovate Trust. Today was the first in a series of workshops. There will be a different theme each session. I d recommend you check it out if you can.



Round up



All Wales People First, Chief Executive - Joe Powell 7 September

Was lovely to attend Cwm Taff People Firsts fab VivaFest event at Swallows Barn today and to speak about self-advocacy and human rights on the main stage. The All Wales People First posse came out too in full support of the event.

Big thanks to Kelly Stuart for the lift back to the station so I could reach my next destination



REST IN PEACE
Your Majesty

Our social media platforms will be paused until Monday as a mark of respect to the passing of Her Majesty the Queen.

We thank you for 70 years of service Ma'am. Our thoughts are with your family. Rest In Peace