



All Wales People First

• Talk Back •

The National Voice of People with

Learning Disabilities in Wales

Winter 2023



AdFest 2024 This is Me!

Have you booked yet?

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Editorial

Welcome to the Winter 2023 edition of Talk Back. Did you have a fabulous Christmas Break? We certainly needed a rest and we've sprinted in to 2024! Can you believe that there have already been two National Council meetings since the last Edition?

Plans for AdFest 2024 are coming together - Don't forget to book your place early. There's more information on our website.

There's a lot more in store for the rest of the year. It's all about listening to what's happening in your area, hearing about your experiences and ideas, and understanding what's important to you. Let's use self advocacy to help make changes for the better.

There are lots of ways you can let us and others know what you think. Here are just a few ways - doing a diary update with Claire or Kelly; a video clip; an article for Talkback; speaking with your National Council Rep; attending SATV with Gerraint. Get in touch with us if you want to get involved.

The AWPf team

The Team

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Member article

Faye Parrington



I've been very unwell since my last article. I wanted to share my experience because I think it's important that changes happen with the way that people with learning disabilities receive hospital care.



At the end of January I knew I needed urgent medical help. I had bad stomach pains, my skin was yellow and I was very sick. It took a few days for me to get a GP appointment and the GP then sent me straight to the hospital. The general wait time at the hospital Accident and Emergency was about 18 hours. I didn't have to wait long and was rushed through the triage system urgently. I had a bed within 2 hours. I'm very grateful for the way I was helped so quickly.



My experience wasn't so great after that. I spent 24 days in hospital feeling very unwell and confused. I didn't have much of a clue about my situation. There was no support for a person with a learning disability. Meetings were never planned in advance so that I could get family support.

Member article

Faye Parrington



I remember being on a list to have an operation a few times but nothing happened. I didn't understand what was happening and why. There were too many hard jargon words. Being on the list meant having no food for up to 18 hours. My anxiety was really bad.



I now know that I was supposed to have low fat and low salt in my diet, but I wasn't given the right diet at hospital. I even had fish and chips! It's a big worry that I had the wrong food and I hope that sharing my experience will help to make changes in future.



The meeting I had before being sent home was clearer. It was a planned meeting so I was able to get family support to help me understand things. I was given good advice about eating well to suit my illness. I understand the advice and I've lost a lot of weight. From what I understand, being a healthy weight and having healthy blood pressure will help me recover from the operation that I need. Unfortunately I'm having a lot of pain most days so I hope I will get the operation that I need very soon.

National Council update



The National Council are a group of 22 elected members who represent every county in Wales. We meet 4 times a year. We talk about what is important to members.

The last meeting was on 9th January in Llandudno Junction in North Wales.



At this meeting we were joined by Dawn Gullis and Mark John Williams from the Advocacy Framework Project – My Voice, My Rights, My Life. Mark and Dawn told us about what the project has done so far and what they have found out.



They asked us

- How our self-advocacy groups make decisions?
- What other types of advocacy our groups know about and use?
- If our groups ever get involved in 1 to 1 advocacy, or citizen advocacy?



We were also joined by Sally Holland on Zoom and Andrea and Elisa from Cardiff University in person. They talked about a new research

National Council update



centre called CARE. The centre will research adult social care.

They want someone from AWPf on the Board of CARE. They asked us how they can run the Board meetings to make them accessible to us. They also asked us about what the Board should do.



Joe Powell, Chief Executive told us about

- The Human Rights toolkit AWPf has written with British Institute of Human Rights. Tracy and Joe spoke about the toolkit at the House of Lords in December.
- The MIRROR Principles of self-advocacy. He asked Reps to review them and see how we could measure how well groups and AWPf are following the principles. Reps agreed to meet to do this.
- A business for AWPf. Dan Biddle has written a proposal about how a business for AWPf could work. Reps agreed for



National Council update

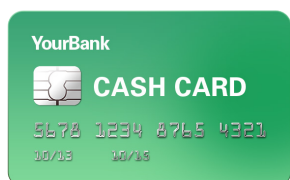


Dan to come to the next meeting to tell Reps about it.

Reps told us about issues in their areas.



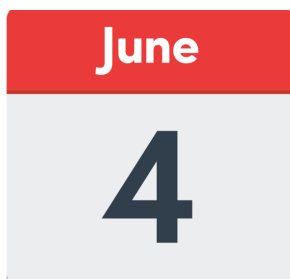
- Reps talked about problems with getting ID. It's hard to prove who you are if you don't have a passport or driving license.



- Andrea and Kurtis talked about paying for things. Not everyone has a bank card and lots of places will not take cash.



- Transport is still a big problem. Reps talked about buses being stopped or coming less often. This means there are more people on each bus which can be uncomfortable. Reps also said taxis are very expensive.



There was a National Council meeting on 5th and 6th March in Cardiff. The next meeting is on 4th June in Noth Wales.

Talk to your local Rep if you want to bring an issue to the next National Council meeting.

Out and about with Gerraint Jones Griffiths



Joe and I visited North Wales on 16th February. It was a very long day trip on the train but worth it. Was lovely to meet SWS and Advance Brighter Futures. We talked about All Wales People First and offered our support with developing a self advocacy group. I talked a bit about SATV. I hope we can welcome some new members soon.



As it was a long train journey, I took the opportunity to do some Tik Tok clips. I interviewed Joe about his role and what he does when he's not at work. If you'd like to see what he said, take a look at our Tik Tik account **@allwalespeoplefirst**



It's great to be back on SATV this year. I'm hoping to do monthly sessions on Zoom from March. Come and have a chat, I'd love to catch up with you all.



Don't forget to keep in touch by joining me on Zoom every other Tuesday night for Gerraint's Nightclub. Joining details are on Facebook and Insight.

Gerraint Jones Griffiths

Chief Executive's update



This is going to be a very busy year for All Wales People First. This year we hope to complete the work we are doing with the ADSS on an Advocacy Framework for Wales. The ADSS stands for 'Associated Directors of Social Services'. This will make proposals to the Welsh Government about how we need to make advocacy services better for people with learning disabilities in Wales. This work was funded by the Welsh Government after we told them that people with learning disabilities were struggling to get advocacy services. This includes self-advocacy. We hope that this framework will help to make things better within advocacy.



Our Human Rights Toolkit is now complete and available to access. The toolkit was produced in collaboration with the British Institute of Human Rights. The toolkit tells members how to make human rights claim if a decision that affects their life is unfair. Find out more on our website.



We will write our new MIRROR Strategy this year. The MIRROR Strategy is our Business Plan. Our National Council has the final say on this.

Joe Powell

AdFest 2024

This is me

19th
& 20th
JUNE



Future Inn, Cardiff

For more information and to book your place:
www.allwalespeople1st.co.uk 07399059631

News from groups



Caerphilly People First

We have been holding our weekly Reconnect through Music group, run by RecRock. The aim of the project is to create a sense of belonging between individuals who are isolated, lonely, stressed or feeling low. Over 30 members love coming together to perform their favourite songs. We almost blow the roof off with our singing, dancing and playing drums and guitars. Our confidence has increased.



Our Reconnect through Cookery sessions continue to be very popular, with 46 people attending the most recent session



Natalie and Amy recently took part in a simulation exercise at the University of South Wales to train Midwifery students and Learning Disability Nurses. We think people with learning disabilities are increasingly likely to become parents. They are entitled to have access to the right support to do this. We hope that the training will improve the care and treatment people with learning disabilities receive in the future.



News from groups



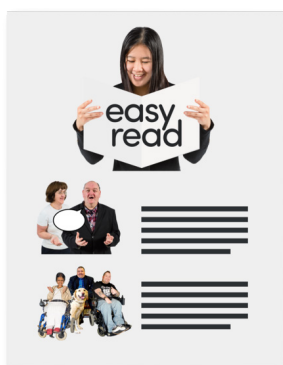
Lana's Cafe at **Vale People First** has been busy providing a wellbeing Hub on Thursdays. We have produced a wellbeing guide; activity packs for children; access to the internet for researching energy tariffs; soup and a hot drink. We have had some great feedback. This is funded by GVF levelling up.



Lana's Cafe collected for the food bank in the run up to Christmas. We collected a lot of items.



Vale Youth Speak Up made a new leaflet and PowerPoint presentation to help attract the next generation of young people. They are visiting Ysgol y Deri and will be attending events at Barry Memorial.



Speak Up have been working with Noah Nyle from Victim Support. We have been awarded a 'Hate Crime Trustmark' for our work assisting with the easy read training package. We have also become Hate Crime Champions and we are equipped to make referrals where needed.

News from groups



Newport

We had a great day with our member Ope Abidogun on our This is your Life Project. Ope told us her life story and how she travelled from Nigeria to settle in Newport. Diolch Ope!



We had a festive arts and crafts session with the Gwent Wildlife Trust. We used foraged materials and got stuck in to the fun of making wreaths with hydrangeas, ivy, mistletoe and berries. It was a very much appreciated mindfulness session.



Speaking for myself this arts and craft session helped me forget my anxiety and stress as my attention was on folding and flexing the willow into a wreath plus designing my thoughts in to the wreath.



At our All members meeting we found out that our group started in 1995 so is 30 years old next year in 2025! Watch out for some exciting updates!

Zarah Kaleem

News from groups



Conwy

Rebecca Jones was nominated for the Womenspire 'Community Connector' Award. Rebecca travelled to Cardiff with her family for the award ceremony. Staff and members joined on zoom.

There were four finalists in Rebecca's category. We watched short films from each of the finalists about the amazing work they do in their communities. It came to announce the winner and Rebecca won! We are so proud of her. What a massive achievement.



In our Forum group any member can be elected as a Representative (Rep) for two years. Bethan Foxall, was the the North Wales Flyers Representative for Conwy for 2 years. Bethan did an amazing job but her time came to step down to give another member an opportunity to represent Conwy at the North Wales Flyers Meeting.

Forum members had a discussion about the role of the Rep and what is expected of the Rep. Members had a vote, and Peter Marsh is now representing members from the Forum.



News from groups

Ceredigion - Our Voice Our Choice



Hywel Da University Health Board 12 Month Challenge.

In March we will host the last of these workshops. They were designed in partnership with the local Learning Disability Health Champions and delivered by the Learning Disability Nurses. The workshops have covered things like our right to Annual Health checks with our GPs, and recognising the signs of Breast and Testicular Cancer and what to do. We have learned a lot from the workshops.



Relationship training. In April we will be organising 4 workshops in Ceredigion. They will focus on Relationships such as Friendships and Dating. The workshops will be delivered by Ffion Poole from Caerphilly People First. We are looking forward to welcoming Ffion.



'Dyma Ni' Exhibition. Mencap Ceredigion have an exhibition at the Ceredigion Museum in Aberystwyth. The exhibition celebrates 60 years' of Mencap's service in the County. The work is funded by the Heritage Lottery fund. The exhibition



News from groups



launched on 24th February and will run until 6th April. Thanks to Mencap Ceredigion for inviting us and our members to take part.

Get together & Mencap Ceredigion Swimathon.

We attended Mencap Ceredigion's monthly Swimathon in Newcastle Emlyn. After the swimming session we provided lunch for the attendees.

We shared what work we had been doing and we asked about any general concerns. We work closely with Mencap Ceredigion and its members. Partnership working assists both Mencap Ceredigion and OVOC in improving the lives of those within our local community.

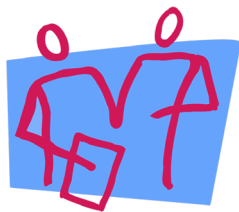
Dream team.

We are currently working with Carmarthenshire People First and Pembrokeshire People First on the review of the Learning Disability Charter. To be included in a project like this is exciting, rewarding and can benefit our community.



News from groups

People First Bridgend
Pobl Yn Gyntaf Pen-Y-Bont



putting people first
rhoi pobl yn gyntaf

Bridgend

We are very happy to welcome Sandi to People First Bridgend as our new Independent Professional Advocate. Sandi is doing great work and is settling in nicely. We had several members come back to People First Bridgend that we haven't seen since the pandemic! Welcome back!



We visited Swansea University to meet social work students. We told them about our work and did our roleplay about bad meetings. They gave us great feedback. This year, we will be training some students about advocacy, being a good social worker and how to communicate so that people understand. Some of these students will be working in Bridgend.

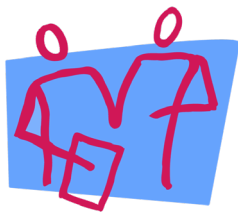


We helped South Wales Police do a "recorded intermediary assessment". This is when an officer with speech and language training interviews a person to get to know how they communicate. This was filmed and will be used to train other officers. We have planned 4 sessions of specialist interview training with the police in 2024. This is where



News from groups

People First Bridgend
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putting people first
rhoi pobl yn gyntaf

the police learn how to communicate and ask questions to people with learning disabilities by practicing interviewing them.

Our council ran an event called My Home, My Way. It was to get views for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg home plan. Nearly 70 people turned up. We did a presentation about what people in Bridgend think. Support providers and landlords also did presentations, then we did workshops in groups. What we said will be put into a plan that decides how money is spent on homes across the region.



We did a presentation for the council's supported living staff and tenants. We talked about what People First is and what it is like to be a member. Lots of people are interested in our work.

We were asked by our council to interview lots of people using daytime opportunity services in Bridgend. This is a big piece of work for 2024! What people say will be put into plans for how services look in the future.



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All Wales People First, Chief Executive - 18 January

Met with the ADSS/practice solutions team today in Shrewsbury re the ongoing Advocacy Framework: Julie Boothroyd, Imogen Blood, Mark John-Williams and Caitlin Snuggs. Today we discussed the shaping of the first draft of the framework, referencing a wide number of stakeholders, including commissioners, people who work in advocacy and most importantly our members. This includes the excellent work undertaken by our members last week at the National Council. All Wales People First believes all forms of advocacy are important for our members but obviously our main interest is in self-advocacy. In my opinion it's the best form of advocacy and the ultimate preventative service. We will keep members updated.

Round up



All Wales People First, Chief Executive - 31 January

Members of the All Wales People First staff team were joined by members Chloe Aineomugisha and Zarah Kaleem along with board members David Whittle, Ruth Northway and Kay Williams for Cultural Competency training at Diverse Cymrus offices in Cardiff today.

We have signed up to Diverse Cymrus 'Cultural Competency' certification scheme as part of our journey to extend self-advocacy to those who are typically excluded.

Thanks to our trainer Tony Hendrickson for a truly excellent session. This will help our journey towards inclusion enormously

