



*Hidden talents*

# AdFest

24-25 June 2025

The Kinmel & Kinspa, Abergele

## What happened this year?

# Introductions

*“What does today's theme  
**‘Hidden Talents’** have to do with  
self-advocacy?”*  
**Joe Powell**



## Day 1

**Lucy Hinksman**, Chair and **Kurtis Marshall**, Vice Chair of the All Wales People First National Council, welcomed everyone to AdFest 2025. Lucy introduced the ‘Hidden Talents’ theme.

“It's about celebrating our talents, passions and skills from across Wales”.

Joe asked the members what today's theme ‘Hidden talents’ has to do with self-advocacy?

Joe said that we all have talents and we are more than just the label ‘learning disability’. Understanding our talents helps us to find how we can contribute to society as active and equal citizens.

Part of self-advocacy is about being seen and being visible. Being part of our communities also opens doors to new opportunities.

We had a lot to share about the theme and about our own hidden talents.



## Hidden talents?

Joe asked us to use the AdFest two days as an opportunity to be proud of who we are, what we have achieved, and to be inspired by others too.



*"It's about coming out of your shell and being more confident"*  
Andrea



*"Every single person in this room today has lots of hidden talents"*  
Simon



*"Hidden talents is about expressing who you are and it's being your own person and standing up for yourself"*  
Shayna

*"It's about getting your views across to Welsh Government and the Regional Partnership Boards"* Shell

## What can we offer? What do we need?

“What hidden talents do you have that can make other people’s lives better?”

We learnt about using our hidden talents to change our world.

We thought about the skills we have and what is missing in our lives.

We wrote down 2 things we can do well - our talents.

We wrote down 2 things that we wish we knew how to do or things we want someone to do it with.

We matched everyone’s talents up with the things we want to do.

This is a great way of doing new things we want to do and sharing what we’re good at with others.

### **Workshop hosted by:**

Rick Wilson, Community Lives Consortium.





## Drag me Fabulous

“stand in a circle and make a sound and movement to express how you're feeling”



“Feeling fandabidozi”  
“Excited!”



We were invited to rummage through the Dragma box to pick a costume and accessories to wear.

We walked around strutting our stuff to songs like ‘I’m sexy and I know it’. The costumes and the songs helped us to express ourselves and feel confident.

“Drag helps you get out of the box”. Paul ‘Rainbow Pride’ said the only time he feels feminine is when he puts his drag costume on.

**Workshop hosted by:**

House of Deviant



## Loud & Proud

*"So don't be afraid to let them show, your true colours, true colours. Beautiful like a rainbow"*



Choirs For Good is about putting choirs into the heart of local communities.

During the 'Loud and Proud' workshop, we had a go at singing with a group and we learnt a song.

We gave a performance to everyone at the end of the day!

Hosted by Leslie Churchill Ward,  
Choirs for Good





# Vocal Hands Singing & Signing

*"Love love me do, you  
know I love you. I'll always  
be true, so please love  
me do"*

Using Makaton with singing is a fun and easy way to learn to use signs with singing.

We had fun learning to sing and sign 'Love me do'  
We performed for everyone at the end of the day!

**Hosted by:** Carla & Joanna & Michele,  
Conwy Connect



# Energiser

*"Guys, do you all want one more song?! I can't hear you!"*

**Flossie Sunshine**

*"Yes !!!!!!!!!!"*

## The House of Deviant

Defiant - Inclusive - Fierce!

Flossy Sunshine, Gethin McCarr and Rainbow Pride shared their fabulous drag performances with us.

Lots of us joined in with the human train across the floor.

House of Deviant kept their promise to show us the limitless possibilities that unfold with the right support and opportunities!







#ThroughOurEyes0





**Members** - The Linton Gower Memorial Award, for a member who has done something outstanding towards the running of their self-advocacy group.

**Sponsored by:** Mencap Cymru

**Award winners:** Blaenau Gwent People First; Samantha Hall



**Ideas** - a member, or a group, who have worked with others on an idea. The idea should be something that improves the lives of people with learning disabilities in Wales.

**Sponsored by:** At Autism

**Award Winners:** James Tyler

AT-Autism



**Rights** - a member or group who has helped people know about or access their rights.

**Sponsored by:** North Wales Together

**Award winners:** Anita Clasby; Zarah Kaleem

(Anita and Zarah could not make the awards ceremony, Alex Perry and Lucy Hinksman accepted on behalf of the winners)





# Awards

**Reflect** – a member or group who can show they have learnt from their experiences and made a change.

**Sponsored by:** Learning Disability Wales

**Award winner:** Jac Hughes



**Organisation** – for a group that has worked together to be a strong group and included everyone.

**Sponsored by:** First Choice Housing Association

**Award winner:** Llwybrau Llesiant



**Review** – for a group or member who has achieved something special.

**Sponsored by:** First Choice Housing Association

**Award winner:** Cwm Taf People First



**Chief Executive's Award** – for an individual with a learning disability, for their services to self-advocacy over many years.

**Award winner:** David Whittle

**Congratulations to award winners!** Thanks to award sponsors and guest presenters The Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Abergele.





**mirr**  
ideas rights  
members





mirror  
review  
organisation  
reflection













## Content creation



*"How do you use Tik Tok?"*  
**Gerraint Jones Griffiths**

We looked at Tiktok and what people use it for.  
We talked about trending dances, lip synching, FYP,  
STEM, and how important hashtags are. We had fun  
learning and recording the Chicken Banana dance.

**Hosted by:** Gerraint Jones-Griffiths, AWPF



*"What ideas do you have for All  
Wales People First's Tik Tok? "*



# Confidence through Acting

*"Does this person look confident or not confident?"*

**Tom Spencer**

Tom is a neurodivergent actor, entertainer and writer. He has been performing and writing for 21 years.

He has experience in amateur theatre, filmmaking, comedy, singing and radio.

Tom shared his experience of acting and living with a learning disability.

We learnt about gaining confidence in everyday life.

**Hosted by:** Tom Spencer



# AWPF Manifesto 2026

Wales will vote on a new Welsh Government next year. All Wales People First wants to create a manifesto to tell politicians what changes members want as people with learning disabilities in Wales. We shared our ideas about the manifesto.

**Hosted by:** Tracey Drew, AWPf

*"It's not nice being treated as a second class citizen. We need to keep the equality and we need to be included"*



*"Social isolation. People are not going out, especially in rural areas. They have difficulty because of lack of transport"*



## How we started a band



*"Shower power! "*  
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*"Shower power! "*

Bwthyn Sonig is a Tŷ Cerdd project. Tŷ Cerdd are the music centre for Wales. They focus on supporting musicians.



Bwthyn Sonig collective did a workshop and the after lunch energizer session.

They talked about how they started a band and shared some tips about songwriting and music making. We had a go at a song 'Shower power.

**Hosted by** Rosey Jones - Bwthyn Sonig Organisation Ty Cerdd



# Talents



**Thanks to all of our members who shared their talents with us by video and in person.**

Simon Richards - Singing 'Try Smiling'

Nicole Bird - Singing 'Murder on the dance floor'

Fran Holmes Singing - '2 out of 3 aint Bad'

Tracy Austin - Radio show and playing bass

Kara Williams - Playing the drums

Nat King - Dancing to 'Fight for this love'

Harry Rendell - Singing 'Just like a pill'

Sophie Hinksman - Public speaking

Jac Hughes - Public speaking in Welsh: poem 'Cofio' by Waldo Williams

Victoria Waller - Public Speaking, content creation

Kamar Elhoziel - Live ukulele





# Talents



Sam Hall - Pebble painting art

David Whittle - Bookmark making

Clare Whittle - Knitting crafts

Lucy Hinksman - Photography

Sammy Tahramanis - Singing 'Chasing Cars'

Gary Spencer - Displaying fishing medal

Adam Dawkins - Instructing dance for well-being

Michael Allcock - Gardening

Richard Batchelor - Wheelchair basketball

Andrea Pugh - Makaton song

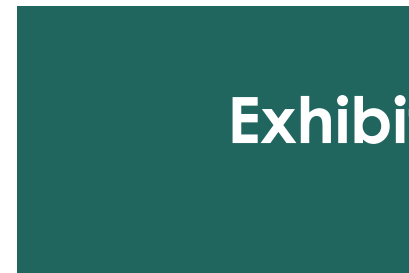
Jeanette Mannings - Crochet

William Ashford Payne - Guitar

Lee Thomas - Singing and entertainment









**Cymru Gyda'n Gilydd**  
**Wales Together**  
 Cymru i bobl ag Anableddau Dysgu  
 Wales for people with Learning Disabilities



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itors



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“See you all next year!”



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