

Our AGM: Making Every Moment Count

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is an opportunity to celebrate progress; reflect on the difference we are making and help shape the future of our charity.

Held on 24th September, this year's AGM introduced **a shorter, more focused approach**, designed to make the meeting more accessible, purposeful and meaningful for everyone involved.

We recognise that members are balancing busy lives, competing priorities and pressures on their time and capacity. By focusing on the updates and discussions that matter most, we aimed to make participation easier while ensuring members continue to have a valued voice in our future.

Celebrating our impact

A key highlight of the AGM was our Chief Officer's presentation of our **Annual Impact Report**, offering an opportunity to reflect on our achievements and the difference we make. It also recognised the collective efforts of our staff, members, supporters and partners.

We were pleased to welcome our Auditors Baker Knole to the AGM, where they presented their findings and confirmed a clean audit, reflecting our commitment to transparency, accountability and good governance.

Our refreshed AGM format reflects a simple principle: **make the time we spend together count.**

A shorter meeting does not diminish the



importance of the AGM or the role members play. Instead, it creates a more manageable opportunity to hear key updates, contribute to important discussions and stay connected with our work.

We want members to feel that their time is respected and that taking part is both worthwhile and achievable.

Looking ahead – together

You may not have attended the AGM this year, but there are many ways to contribute to our work, whether by attending our networks/Forum meetings/training, asking questions or sharing feedback. Every contribution helps us move forward with a clearer understanding of what matters.

Together, we can build on our impact and ensure VAMT continues to make a meaningful difference.



Mental Health Involvement & Development

Who speaks up for the people using mental health services when changes are being made?

As the Mental Health Involvement & Development Officer for Merthyr Tydfil, I work alongside people with lived experience of mental health challenges, as well as carers, families, community groups and mental health teams across Cwm Taf Morgannwg.

The best ideas don't always come from meetings or reports. Often, they come from the people who use services every day. My role is to support those voices to be heard.

No two days are the same. One day I might be supporting someone to take part in a meeting for the first time. Another day I could be working with a service on a new project, helping a person with lived experience prepare for a recruitment panel, promoting local support opportunities, or linking mental health teams with community organisations.

A big part of my role is supporting people at a pace that works for them. For some, that might be attending a one-off event or sharing feedback about their experiences. For others, it could mean becoming more regularly involved in groups, projects, workshops or recruitment activities. Whatever the opportunity, I aim to make sure people feel informed, supported and confident enough to contribute in a way that feels right for them.

Over the years I have had the privilege of working with some incredible people, whose experiences, ideas and insights continue to shape conversations across mental health services. Seeing people grow in confidence and recognise the value of their own experiences is one of the most rewarding parts of the role.

At its heart, mental health involvement is about listening to people and making sure their voices are heard. The people who use services bring valuable insights, and some of the best ideas come from those with first-hand experience.



"Services should be listening to the people who use them and being involved has helped me build confidence and meet new people. It's rewarding to know that my ideas and opinions are listened to."

Lived Experience Peer, Merthyr Tydfil

Do you feel strongly about improving mental health services?

Ways to get involved:

Join the conversation
Share Ideas
Come to Events
Choose Staff
Give Feedback
Help improve support for others
Make a difference

I can support you to be involved
please contact:

Sharon Jones

sharon.jones@vamt.net

07553 102266

01685 353900



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf Morgannwg
University Health Board



VOLUNTARY ACTION
MERTHYR TYDFIL
GWETHREDU GWIRFODOL
MERTHYR TYDFIL

Making a Difference in Merthyr Tydfil: The Macmillan Fundraising Committee

For more than four decades, the dedicated volunteers of the Macmillan Fundraising Committee in Merthyr Tydfil have been making an extraordinary difference to people affected by cancer in their local community. Since the committee was established in 1982, they have raised an incredible **over £1.4 million for Macmillan Cancer Support** – a remarkable achievement that reflects their commitment to helping others. The committee's fundraising efforts have helped support people living with cancer across Merthyr Tydfil, ensuring that the money they raise makes a real difference close to home.

One significant milestone came in June 2010, when the Macmillan Unit opened at The Prince Charles Hospital in Merthyr Tydfil. The unit was built with the help of funds raised by the committee, providing a lasting example of the difference their dedication and generosity can make to local people affected by cancer.

Beyond the funds they raise, the committee brings people together through their creativity, community spirit and dedication to supporting others affected by cancer. From ladies' luncheons and coffee mornings to fabulous hat parties, the committee knows how to make fundraising fun! Their most recent Mad Hatter's Tea Party was a wonderful example of their imagination, bringing people together for an enjoyable occasion in support of an important cause. The committee members can also be spotted out and about across the local area, giving their time to collection days and encouraging the public to support Macmillan.

Their dedication over more than 40 years is truly something to celebrate. Every pound raised contributes to Macmillan's work supporting people affected by cancer. The committee's achievements are a testament not only to the generosity of Merthyr Tydfil's residents but also to the determination of a group of volunteers who continue to give so much to their community.

MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT



Would you like to get involved?

Whether you would like to support the committee's fundraising efforts, make a donation or join this fantastic group of volunteers, there are plenty of ways to help make a difference.

The committee is particularly keen to hear from people who have the time, energy and enthusiasm to get actively involved in organising events, supporting collections and helping with the many activities that take place throughout the year. Those approaching or enjoying retirement, with some flexibility in their schedule and a desire to stay active and make a meaningful contribution to their local community, may find this a particularly rewarding opportunity.

To find out more, please contact Linda Pearce at linda.pearce@sky.com

With an incredible legacy behind them and plenty of enthusiasm for the future, the Macmillan Fundraising Committee continues to show that a little community spirit can go a very long way – and that, together, we can make a lasting difference to local people affected by cancer.

Friends of Nant Llwynog Park

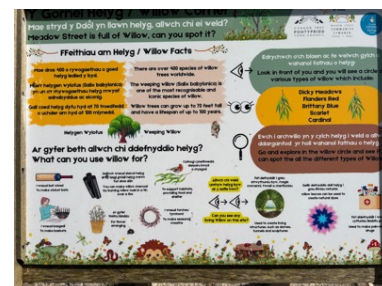
Nant Llwynog is one of those gems in Merthyr Tydfil. They have become cherished open spaces once the old industries have gone. The mining and quarrying era left a legacy which is well recognised. The greening up of the valleys has begun and nature has come back to create a rich heritage of countryside, species and wildlife. We now promote them for biodiversity and as places for health and better well being. We were delighted to be granted the Green Flag Award again in 2026/27.



Outdoor and indoor Work



Wetland and woodland den are used as a focal point for outdoor classroom work. We are pleased to invite outside experts for viewing, identification and recording of species as well as others for practical working and demonstrations. We include local school groups and Ramblers in the mix, who also contribute to certain maintenance and conservation project work. These include work on removal of edge encroachment of invasive plant species. Grassland need to be kept free of spreading scrub, which has



little habitat value for smaller plant species, insects, birds, whether resident or migratory. This allows young people a chance to improve their skills while knowing they contribute to habitat improvements. It is the mosaic of different habitats that make the park so valuable to wildlife and to human visitors alike.

Events with Park Friends

The park friends organise a series of events through the year. These are mostly free family events in the park and are advertised on our website and on social media posts



We also collaborate with other sites and facilities, such as the old bowling green gardens, Rock UK Climbing Centre and Meadow Street. These events share equipment and support others to join.

Working with Communities

The Park Friends at Bedlinog are aware of the need for legacy and improvements in any local and public facility. We held various events in the spring and over the summer and are looking forward to a full programme next year, and to working with our Local Access Forum and Local Nature Partnership in renewed vigour.



Website: [Nantllwynog.wordpress.com](https://nantllwynog.wordpress.com)

[Facebook.com/groups/NantLlwynogParkFriends](https://facebook.com/groups/NantLlwynogParkFriends)

Contact: edawson1215@gmail.com

CAEL CYMORTH GYDA'CH CYMHORTHION CLYW GIG

Gallwn eich helpu i gael y gorau o'ch cymhorthion clyw GIG.



Dewch i sesiwn galw heibio ar gyfer:

- Glanhau a newid tiwbiau cymhorthion clyw GIG
- Batris cymhorthion clyw newydd, am ddim
- Archwiliadau clyw am ddim
- Paru cymhorthion clyw ag apiau ffôn symudol
- Gwybodaeth am ddyfeisiau a thechnoleg gynorthwyl
- Mynediad at gymorth a gwasanaethau lleol yn eich ardal
- Gwybodaeth am reoli colled clyw a thinitws
- Awgrymiadau a chynghor ar gyfathrebu



GET HELP WITH YOUR NHS HEARING AIDS

We can help you get the most out of your NHS hearing aids.



Visit a drop-in session for:

- NHS hearing aid cleaning and tubing replacement
- Free, replacement hearing aid batteries
- Free hearing checks
- Pairing hearing aids to mobile phone apps
- Information on assistive devices and technology
- Accessing local support and services in your area
- Information on managing hearing loss and tinnitus
- Communication tips and advice



GALWCH HEIBIO - NID OES ANGEN APWYNTIAD

Dydd Llun olaf y mis
11:00am – 1.00 pm
Merthyr Central Library
High Street, Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8AF
contact@rnid.org.uk
0808 808 0123

POP IN - NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED

Last Monday of the month
11:00am – 1.00 pm
Merthyr Central Library
High Street, Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8AF
contact@rnid.org.uk
0808 808 0123



Supporting people
who are deaf, have
hearing loss or tinnitus



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf Morgannwg
University Health Board

Mae'r gwasanaeth hwn yn cael ei redeg mewn partneriaeth â gwasanaethau awdioleg y GIG.
RNID yw enw masnachu'r Sefydliad Cenedlaethol Brenhinol Pobl Fyddar a Thrwrm eu Clyw. Elusen gofrestredig yng Nghymru a Lloegr (207720) a'r Alban (SC038926).

This service is run in partnership with NHS audiology services.

RNID is the trading name of The Royal National Institute for Deaf People.
A registered charity in England and Wales (207720) and Scotland (SC038926).





Nottingham
Business School
Nottingham Trent University

Message from David Cook, Health & Social Care Project Officer for WCVA

When Baromedr Cymru last looked at funding, 45% of organisations said their financial position had deteriorated, 56% had used reserves in the previous 12 months and 33% said funders did not cover their full costs.

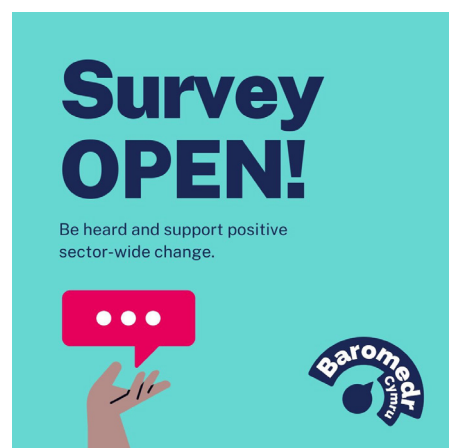
Wave 5 is now open from **7 October to 4 November**, giving us an important temperature check on what has changed since then. Alongside the regular questions tracking trends across the voluntary sector, this wave looks at how organisations are managing financially, how easy or difficult it is to secure funding, whether grants and contracts cover the true cost of delivery, and how funding pressures are affecting future plans.

Voluntary organisations of every size and type across Wales are encouraged to take part. Whether their financial position has improved, stayed the same or become more difficult, their experiences will help show how the funding landscape is changing across the sector.

What's in it for your organisation?

By taking part, you will receive:

- **A tailored Individual Insight Report** so you can compare your organisation's experience with wider voluntary sector trends
- **Useful evidence for funding conversations**, helping you put your own experience into a wider Wales-wide context
- **Evidence to support planning and decision-making with trustees**, senior teams, partners and stakeholders
- **Access to the wider findings**, helping you understand what other organisations are experiencing and how the sector is changing



Take part here https://nbsntu.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7QVHOkxfzmfBAO

Opens on 7 October | Closes on 4 November | Takes around 15-20 minutes



Case Study: Overcoming Housing Barriers

Receiving a cancer diagnosis is overwhelming under any circumstances, but for one of our recent participants, it came alongside a devastating practical barrier: severe housing instability.

His living circumstances were so precarious that his clinical team had to make the difficult decision to place his cancer treatment on hold, as it simply was not safe for him to undergo treatment and recovery without a secure home environment.



How CRT Together Stepped In: When the referral came through, our Link Worker immediately stepped in to provide dedicated, hands-on support. We worked closely with the participant to navigate the often complex local authority housing register. Our team didn't just point him in the right direction; they supported him through the entire application process and strongly advocated on his behalf to ensure he received priority housing status.

The Outcome: By successfully addressing his housing situation, we were able to remove the single biggest barrier to his healthcare. With a safe and secure roof over his head, the clinical team gave the green light, and he was finally able to safely resume his cancer treatment.

The Wider Impact: This case perfectly illustrates why practical, non-clinical support is just as crucial as medical care for people living in our coalfield communities. By tackling insecure housing, financial hardship, and isolation, we are actively breaking down health inequalities and ensuring that a person's living circumstances never dictate their ability to survive and recover from cancer.



Make a Referral Today

Every referral helps us reach someone struggling with the everyday impacts of a cancer diagnosis.

Scan the QR code below to connect a patient with a local CRT Together link worker, who can support with non-clinical concerns your patient may have.



If you'd like a quick refresher on how to refer, or would like us to visit your team to talk about the programme, please get in touch.

together@coalfieldsregen.uk
WWW.CRTTOGETHER.ORG

Tackling Health Inequality Together - Merthyr Tydfil begins its journey to become a Marmot Place

In June 2025 Wales became a Marmot Nation, adopting the eight principles of health equity – and integrating the work with what was already being delivered through the Well-being of Future Generations Act. This strongly aligns with the work already being done across Merthyr Tydfil's voluntary and community sector.

Following this commitment, the Welsh Government announced three local authority areas were to become 'Health Equity 'Marmot' Places'. Merthyr Tydfil, Denbighshire, and Neath Port Talbot are now receiving a national package of support for two years until April 2028.

September 2026 saw Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and partners launch the 'Merthyr Tydfil Becoming a Marmot Place' programme at a well-attended Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Centre. Partners for the programme include Welsh Government, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, Public Health Wales, University of South Wales, voluntary sector, charities, education providers, and others. This marked the start of an exciting journey working together to place health equity at the centre of what we do.

The 'Merthyr Tydfil Becoming a Marmot Place' programme is a long-term commitment to improving health and wellbeing, reducing inequalities and creating the conditions that enable everyone to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. However, this ambition cannot be achieved by public services alone. The voluntary and community sector has a vital role to play in shaping, delivering and influencing this work.

Community organisations are often closest to residents, understanding the challenges people face and providing trusted support every day. This knowledge, experience and connections will be fundamental to the success of the programme.



Why is this programme so important?

We know that health is influenced by much more than healthcare. Factors such as housing, education, employment, income, social connections and the environment all affect people's opportunities and life outcomes.

Too many people continue to experience poorer health and reduced life chances because of inequalities that sit beyond their control. This programme aims to tackle these root causes and create lasting change across our communities.

Many indicators of health, wealth and resilience in Merthyr Tydfil have been moving in the wrong direction for decades. Average life expectancy here is 75.1 years, compared with 78 across Wales. Merthyr Tydfil has the highest rates of mental illness and poor wellbeing in Wales, and in 2021-22, 29.2% of children in the county (3,800 children) were living in poverty.

Continued...

This is not a short-term piece of work. It is a shared commitment to building a healthier, fairer and more resilient Merthyr Tydfil for future generations.

Becoming a 'Marmot Place' will involve a new collaborative approach to tackling health inequalities affecting residents, with partners working together and with communities to improve access to health services, education, employment and housing.

Health inequality is unfair and avoidable. It impacts upon how long people are likely to live, live healthy lives, the health conditions they experience and the care available to them. A Marmot Place recognises that health inequalities are shaped by people's living, learning and working conditions.

How will we work?

This programme will be built on the five ways of working that are set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Throughout the programme, from design through to monitoring, we will collaborate with partners, and involve our communities, integrating our plans and strategies based on what our residents need. We will consider the long-term, how we can work preventatively and focus on early intervention.

As such the programme has been built around three key elements to reduce inequalities and improve opportunities for all.

What matters to communities - Data and insight working groups, together with a deep listening exercise with our communities, will help us better understand our challenges and set future priorities.

Making it happen - Understanding what needs to be different to address what comes from the 'what matters to communities' element. How we allocate and use our resources will be critical to the success of the programme.

Creating the conditions for success - A focus on understanding and changing the conditions holding inequalities in place, through applying the learning from the other two elements. We want to be able to measure impact and change our focus as needed.



What will success look like?

By working together and building stronger partnerships, we want to create more resilient and sustainable services to achieve:

- Better health and wellbeing outcomes for residents;
- Reduced health inequalities, creating a fairer Merthyr Tydfil where everyone can thrive; and
- Increase opportunities for people to live healthy, active and fulfilling lives.

We would like you to get involved

The success of this programme depends on genuine partnership working and community involvement.

Whether you are a voluntary organisation, community group, charity, social enterprise, faith group or volunteer network, there will be opportunities to contribute through engagement activities, working groups, deep listening exercises and collaborative projects.

By bringing together the passion, insight and expertise of the voluntary and community sector, we can ensure that local voices help shape services and drive meaningful change.

Interested in getting involved?

We would love to hear from organisations and community groups who want to support the development and delivery of the 'Merthyr Tydfil Becoming a Marmot Place' programme. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact TacklingHealthInequality@merthyr.gov.uk for more information.

Working together to build a healthier, fairer and more equitable Merthyr Tydfil.

Pride in Place Programme Continues to Build Momentum Across Merthyr Tydfil



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TYDFIL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

The Pride in Place Programme Board continues to make progress in delivering its community-led regeneration programme, with recent activity focused on strengthening community engagement, supporting local projects, and exploring new opportunities to improve the quality of life for residents across the programme area.

A wide range of engagement activities have taken place over recent months. This has included ongoing engagement with the Youth Cabinet to ensure young people's voices help shape future investment decisions, participation in the Merthyr Pride event, and the development of new approaches to gathering and sharing community feedback.

Future engagement opportunities include the development of a "Gateway to Merthyr" heritage walk to showcase the town's rich history, culture, and identity. The initiative forms part of wider discussions about strengthening local pride, celebrating community assets, and creating opportunities for residents and visitors to connect with Merthyr's unique stories.

The Pride in Place Programme Board would like to hear from you!

If you are an organisation based in Merthyr Tydfil and you would like to suggest ideas or explore opportunities to get involved in future projects and engagement activities, please contact us at pipp@merthyr.gov.uk



Become a Digital Champion for the NHS Wales App



Ap GIG
Cymru
NHS
Wales App

Digital Champions help family, friends and people in their community understand and use the NHS Wales App. They support people to build confidence using digital health services, and signpost them to the right help and support when needed.

Digital Champions are trusted supporters, not technical experts.

Register your interest in Digital Champion training

Our Digital Champion training is for people aged 18 and over. It lasts 1 hour and is delivered online through Microsoft Teams. It gives you an introduction to:

- digital exclusion
- NHS login and identity verification
- how the NHS Wales App works
- privacy and safeguarding
- where to signpost people for help and support



Cofrestrwch eich diddordeb mewn hyfforddiant Hyrwyddwr Digidol

Mae ein hyfforddiant gwirfoddol i Hyrwyddwyr Digidol yn para awr ac yn cael ei gynnal ar-lein dros Microsoft Teams. Ar

hyn o bryd, caiff ei gynnal yn Saesneg ac mae'n rhoi cyflwyniad i chi ar y canlynol:

- allgau digidol
- mewngofnodi i'r GIG a dilysu hunaniaeth
- sut mae Ap GIG Cymru yn gweithio
- preifatrwydd a diogelu
- ble i gyfeirio pobl am gymorth a chefnogaeth

Upcoming training dates for 2026 and 2027

December 2026:

- Tuesday 8 December, 10am to 11am (English session)
- Thursday 10 December, 2pm to 3pm (Welsh session)

February 2027

- Tuesday 9th February, 10am to 11am (English session)
- Thursday 11th February, 2pm to 3pm (English session)

March 2027

- Tuesday 9th March, 10am to 11am (English session)
- Thursday 11th March, 2pm to 3pm (English session)
- Tuesday 16th March, 10am to 11am (Welsh session)

Dyddiadau hyfforddiant ar gyfer 2026 a 2027

Rhagfyr 2026

- Dydd Mawrth 8 Rhagfyr, 10am i 11am (Sesiwn Saesneg)
- Dydd Iau 10 Rhagfyr, 2pm i 3pm (Sesiwn yn Gymraeg)

Chwefror 2027

- Dydd Mawrth 9 Chwefror, 10am i 11am (Sesiwn Saesneg)
- Dydd Iau 11 Chwefror, 2pm i 3pm (Sesiwn Saesneg)

Mawrth 2027

- Dydd Mawrth 9 Mawrth, 10am i 11am (Sesiwn Saesneg)
- Dydd Iau 11 Mawrth, 2pm i 3pm (Sesiwn Saesneg)
- Dydd Mawrth 16 Mawrth, 10am i 11am (Sesiwn yn Gymraeg)



This is the latest update from the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board (CTM PSB), and the PSB work across Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Bridgend. If you would like to know more about the CTM PSB and what we do, please visit our website: www.ctmpublicservicesboard.wales

PSB's have a requirement to undertake a Well-being Assessment to set out the key issues for well-being in CTM. In July 2026 the CTM PSB agreed to the creation of a joint regional evidence base for the purposes of undertaking the Well-being Assessment and Population Needs Assessment, supported by the RCT Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC).



A critical part of developing and understanding that evidence base was to hold a HDRC 'Evidence Pie' Workshop that took place on Monday 28th September and was attended by over 70 members from our networks, sub-boards and key stakeholders. The session focused on introducing the HDRC Evidence Pie, that highlights a wide range of information through the lens of the six areas shown in the image on the left. This was used as a framework for the interactive mapping exercise on evidence currently held for PSB priorities of climate change, community cohesion and health inequalities; identifying gaps in the evidence base and understanding future training and support needs to ensure evidence gathered can be used effectively to support PSB priority areas. You can find out more information on the [HDRC Evidence Pie here](#).

Following on from the workshop, we are now gathering all evidence that we collectively hold across our organisations, so we can identify gaps for further engagement and research if needed, to feed in to the Well-being Assessment and Population Needs Assessment.

We're asking partners across CTM to share existing data, research, reports, case studies, stories and more to help paint a picture about people's lives in CTM. Full details and guidance documents and video

s are available to view on the CTM PSB Website and the Regional Partnerships website via the below links:

<https://www.ctmpublicservicesboard.wales/CTMAssessment>

<https://ctmregionalpartnershipboard.co.uk/population-needs-assessment/>

To submit your evidence, please **complete this online form** for each piece of evidence you're submitting. The deadline for this work is **30th October**, and we ask that you please share this request with partners and networks to build the most comprehensive picture of people's needs and experiences in CTM as possible.

If you have any questions regarding submitting evidence, please contact the RP's Engagement Consultant, Nikki Giant, at nikkigiantconsultant@gmail.com, or the PSB Support Team at PSB@bridgend.gov.uk



International Volunteer Managers Day: 5th November 2026

From recruiting and training volunteers to providing support and encouragement, volunteer managers and coordinators play a vital role in helping organisations make a difference in their communities. International Volunteer Managers Day on 5th November is an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the people who work tirelessly behind the scenes to support, inspire and champion volunteers.



This year's theme, "**Legacy and Leadership: Honouring the Past, Present and Future**", recognises the lasting impact volunteer managers have on organisations, volunteers and communities.

VAMT would like to thank everyone across Merthyr Tydfil who supports and coordinates volunteers. Your work helps strengthen our communities every day.

If you are responsible for recruiting, managing or supporting volunteers and would like advice, guidance or an opportunity to discuss volunteer-related challenges, please get in touch. VAMT offers support to volunteer-involving organisations on volunteer recruitment, retention, good practice and volunteer management.

To find out more, contact Frances Barry at frances.barry@vamt.net or Lowri Hunt at lowri.hunt@vamt.net

Tour de France Grand Départ GB 2027: JOY Makers

As many of you will know, the Grand Départ GB 2027 will pass through the southern end of Merthyr Tydfil on **4th July 2027**, bringing world-class cycling to our local communities. As part of the event, organisers have been recruiting **JOY Maker** volunteers to help create a memorable and welcoming experience for riders, spectators and visitors.

VAMT has been pleased to support the promotion of these exciting volunteering opportunities over the last few months and we would like to thank everyone who expressed an interest.

If you manage to secure a place as a JOY Maker, **congratulations!** We hope you enjoy being part of this once-in-a-generation event.

If you aren't successful this time, don't be disheartened. There are plenty of other opportunities to get involved locally. Whether you're interested in supporting sporting activities, community events, festivals, fundraising activities or ongoing volunteer roles with local charities and community groups, VAMT can help you find an opportunity that matches your interests, skills and availability.



To find out more about volunteering opportunities across Merthyr Tydfil, contact lowri.hunt@vamt.net or visit the Volunteering Wales website: <https://volunteering-wales.net/>



Our Merthyr, Cowbridge, Blackwood and Talbot Green shops are in need of passionate, hardworking volunteers to join their teams. Whether you like being front of house or prefer working behind the scenes - we have a role for you!

Learn new skills, gain work experience and join a team who cares

We need charity shop volunteers!

Merthyr / Cowbridge / Blackwood / Talbot Green



Pop in for a chat or apply online here _
[https://www.hoperescue.org.uk/
charity-shop-volunteer](https://www.hoperescue.org.uk/charity-shop-volunteer)



Tŷ Hafan

Family Support Volunteers Needed

Tŷ Hafan is recruiting Family Support Volunteers to provide practical help to families caring for a child with a life-shortening condition. Volunteers are matched with families based on their skills, experience and location, and can offer support with a range of everyday tasks.

Roles may include being a listening ear, helping with household tasks such as cleaning, laundry or driving, assisting with gardening, or supporting families with everyday administration and errands. Full training and ongoing support are provided.

Even a few hours each week can make a meaningful difference to local families. If you're interested in finding out more about becoming a Family Support Volunteer with Tŷ Hafan, visit their website or contact their Family Support Volunteer Manager at debbie.allison@tyhafan.org or for more information, see the links below:

https://www.tyhafan.org/support-us/family-support-volunteering/?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=family-support-volunteering-2026&fbclid=IwY2xjawUYm5pwZG9mAWV4dG4DYWVtAjEwAGJyaWQRMDhsdnIUS1VVZTlweWpROWNzcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjlwMzIxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEeb6y11XWoODCWttDhHLchpXsb9MmdnkjJ0LjZ4QanhRIRxGbUn6JESs1vEe8aem_kBfMCdoq-2_3HMKoUzPD8A



COULD YOU BE OUR NEXT TRUSTEE?

HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF SUPPORT FOR
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN ABERFAN



Trinity Childcare and Family Centre is a charity based in Aberfan, supporting children and families through childcare and a range of community services for children aged **7 weeks to 12 years**.

We're registered with CIW, and our focus is helping children thrive in their early years and beyond.

Our centre is supported by a qualified, experienced and dedicated team — and Trustees play a vital role in supporting, challenging and championing our work so we can keep delivering the very best for children and families.



You don't need previous trustee experience. What matters most is your commitment, your curiosity and your willingness to help us make good decisions.

WHAT THE ROLE INVOLVES



Attending board meetings and contributing to decisions that keep the Centre safe, sustainable and effective



Supporting the leadership team with strategic thinking, oversight and constructive challenge



Acting as an ambassador for Trinity within the local community



Helping us plan for the future and respond to opportunities and challenges



TIME COMMITMENT:

This can fit around work and family life — typically a small number of meetings each year, plus occasional reading and input in between.

WHAT YOU'LL GAIN



Use your skills for a cause that matters locally



Develop experience in charity governance and leadership



Help shape services that support children and families



Be part of a supportive, values-led team

*Make a
real difference
in Aberfan*



You'll be fully supported: induction, training and ongoing guidance are provided. We're also very happy to arrange an informal chat before you decide.



WE'D ESPECIALLY WELCOME PEOPLE WITH EXPERIENCE IN:



Finance



People Management



Fundraising



Community Leadership



Or anyone with a fresh perspective!

INTERESTED?

To arrange a chat and find out more, please call us or message us — we'd love to hear from you.



Tel: 01443 693777



Email: info@trinitychildcare.wales



Find us on Facebook:

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





OUR MISSION

To improve people's lives and strengthen community bonds through freestyle workshops and structured tuition that promotes fun, inspiration, creativity, and self-expression. To offer fun activities that can connect generations, incorporate therapeutic art activities and spread love, joy, and make a positive impact on individuals and communities, one step at a time.



Taff Rocks, who also manage Smyrna, Aberfan, is registered in England and Wales as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Registered Charity Number: 1192749

ABOUT TAFF ROCKS

Taff Rocks, who also manage the Smyrna venue in Aberfan, is a small non-profit-making charity dedicated to bringing therapeutic creativity to the communities we are proud to serve.

We are run by a board of volunteers with one member of staff. This member of staff has been made possible by a partnership between Trinity Childcare and Family Centre and Taff Rocks and is funded by Invest Local Ynysowen.



• Need more information or want to apply?

Contact us on info@taffrocks.org.uk to arrange an informal 'chat' and have any questions answered or to be nominated / considered for trusteeship. Or drop by our website at taffrocks.org.uk

• Diversity and Inclusion

We are committed to building a diverse and inclusive trustee board. We encourage applications from all backgrounds, including people from diverse ethnic, socioeconomic, and disability backgrounds



Thinking of becoming a TRUSTEE?

Full support, mentoring and free training available.

THE TRUSTEE ROLE

Responsibilities:

- Attending board meetings.
- Contributing to strategic planning.
- Ensuring the charity's financial health.
- Representing Taff Rocks in public.

Specific skills desired:

- Financial expertise,
- Marketing,
- Fundraising,
- Enjoy what you're doing.

Commitment:

- Four board meetings per year,
- Occasional full or partial board meetings for specific tasks or 'emergencies.'
- Trusteeship is a voluntary position and expenses will be reimbursed.
- 12 months minimum term. Your decision for an end date for retirement after the 12 months.

WHY BE A TRUSTEE?

- Make a difference in the communities we serve.
- Gain new skills.
- Networking with other professionals.

Training:

We don't leave you on your own during your trusteeship, we offer:

- A probationary period.
- Mentoring from other trustees.
- Free, online trustee training from ICAEW.

INFORM

— Cwm • Taf • Morgannwg —

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Be part of something amazing.

Volunteering with INFORM helps build stronger, happier and more connected communities across Cwm Taf Morgannwg.

AS A VOLUNTEER YOU CAN:



MEET NEW PEOPLE

Build friendships and be part of a welcoming team.



LEARN NEW SKILLS

Develop your skills, boost confidence and try new things.



GAIN VALUABLE EXPERIENCE

Strengthen your CV and take the next step in your journey.



MAKE A REAL IMPACT

Support your local community and make a difference.



RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES

including:



ADMIN WORK

Help keep things running smoothly behind the scenes.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Get creative and help share our message online.



HELPING AT EVENTS

Be at the heart of our events and support our community.



AND LOTS MORE!

There are lots of ways to get involved.



R.C.T

COVERING



MERTHYR



BRIDGEND

CONTACT US TO FIND OUT MORE



07904960683



informctm@yahoo.com



www.informctm.org



Tempo

— TIME CREDITS —

We reward our volunteers with Tempo Time Credits.

Give time. Get time.



**Wythnos yr
Ymddiriedolwyr**



Trustees Week 9 – 13 November 2026

Connected Trustees Coffee & Catchup

10th November at 11am at VAMT

Join fellow trustees for an informal morning of networking, conversation and support. This is a chance to connect with other trustees, share experiences, discuss challenges, and explore any training, governance or funding support that may help you in your role.

Let's celebrate Trustees' Week and recognise the incredible contribution trustees make to our communities! Light refreshments will be available.

To book your space contact lowri.hunt@vamt.net or karen.vowles@vamt.net

Young Trustees at Merthyr College

As part of Trustees' Week, VAMT will be hosting a Young Trustees Information Stand at Merthyr College to raise awareness of trusteeship amongst young people and encourage them to consider becoming involved in local charities and community organisations.

Young trustees bring fresh perspectives, new ideas, digital skills, lived experience and a valuable understanding of issues affecting younger generations. Having younger voices represented at board level helps organisations remain relevant, inclusive and connected to the communities they serve.

Trusteeship also provides young people with an opportunity to develop leadership, governance, strategic planning and decision-making skills, while making a meaningful contribution to causes they care about.

If your organisation is interested in diversifying its board or would like support recruiting younger trustees, please get in touch with our Third Sector Officer, Lowri at lowri.hunt@vamt.net



WCVA events

Our colleagues at WCVA have an array of training events happening both online and in person during this week. To find out more click the link and keep a watch on VAMT social media for more information:

<https://wcva.cymru/trustees-week-is-back-for-2026>

MERTHYR TYDFIL

CONNECTED TRUSTEES COFFEE MORNING

Trustees' Week 2026



VOLUNTARY ACTION
MERTHYR TYDFIL
GWEITHREDU GWIRFODDOL
MERTHYR TUDFUL



Celebrate Trustees' Week with a friendly morning of networking and support. Meet fellow trustees, share experiences, and discover training, governance and funding opportunities to help you in your role.

- Tea, coffee and light refreshments provided
- 10th November 2026
- VAMT Offices
- 10am-12pm

**PLEASE BOOK YOUR PLACE BY EMAILING
KAREN.VOWLES@VAMT.NET OR LOWRI.HUNT@VAMT.NET**

DBS Disclosure Eligibility Workshop

3rd November 11:30 – 1pm Teams

VAMT are working with our colleagues at Interlink and BAVO to offer a great opportunity to learn how DBS checks help protect vulnerable groups.

DBS Disclosure Eligibility Workshop

Working with staff or volunteers? Learn how DBS checks help protect vulnerable groups and support safe recruitment.

Join us for an informative 90-minute session delivered by Owain Rowlands the DBS Regional Outreach Advisor for Wales. The session is designed to help organisations understand how to work effectively with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to strengthen safe recruitment practices. This session will cover:

- The benefits of DBS and your organisation working together
- The different levels of DBS check
- Eligibility, when a volunteer or employee is eligible for a check
- What 'regulated activity' is
- What the DBS Update Service is
- Safe recruitment practices

To reserve your space at this event through Eventbrite click here [DBS Disclosure Eligibility Workshop Tickets, Tuesday, November 3 • 11:30AM - 1PM GMT | Eventbrite](#)

EE Internet Safety & Digital Voice Workshop:

Tuesday 3rd November 2026 | 1:30pm to 3:00pm

**Voluntary Action Centre,
89-90 High Street, Pontmorlais,
Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8UH**

As more everyday services move online, many people are finding it increasingly challenging to stay safe, access information, and keep up with changes in technology. To help address this, VAMT is hosting a free workshop with EE focusing on Internet Safety and Digital Voice.

The session will explore how to stay safe online, raise awareness of common scams and online risks, and provide practical advice that can be shared with the people your organisation supports. EE will also discuss the Digital Voice switchover and how the move from traditional analogue landlines to digital technology may affect individuals and communities.

This workshop may be particularly useful for organisations working with older people, carers, families, vulnerable adults, and anyone who may be at risk of digital exclusion. Trustees, staff, volunteers and service users are all welcome to attend.

To book your place, please contact lowri.hunt@vamt.net

Safeguarding Group B

09:30am to 4:30pm Thursday 12 November 2026

Voluntary Action Centre, 89-90 High Street, Pontmorlais, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8UH

To find out more or book, contact karen.vowles@vamt.net



Free

CWM TAF MORGANNWG RECOVERY COLLEGE

Online Stress Management course

Over 6 sessions you will receive practical support, expert insights, and simple tools to help you feel better. Available and Accessible anytime.

To start the course go to **newhorizons-mentalhealth.org.uk/stress-management-course** or scan the QR code below

For more details contact us at:

✉ info@newhorizons-mentalhealth.co.uk

📞 01685 881113

🌐 newhorizons-mentalhealth.org.uk



You said ... we did ✓

Last year our members asked us to co-ordinate and deliver training sessions including the following:

Safeguarding B, First Aid, Committee Skills, Directors Roles and Responsibilities, Young People and Gambling Awareness, Trauma Informed training, Bystander Intervention Training and Food safety. Over 157 individual members attended these sessions.

You said ... we did ✓

Consultation Newsletter

Feedback from our recent members survey highlighted that members wanted more information about consultations from our statutory partners and Welsh Government.

The monthly Consultation Newsletter is available to members who express an interest in receiving it. It includes consultation information from Welsh Government, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, CTM University Health Board and other major partners such as Transport for Wales and Welsh Water.

"Everything is in one place, easy for me to refer to and find on an email. When they all come separately I can easily lose the individual consultation to reply to.."

If you are interested in receiving the Consultation Newsletter, contact karen.vowles@vamt.net

Sustainable Funding

You said ... we did ✓

Feedback from our members survey highlighted that having funding information available regularly to them would be beneficial.

We developed a regular Funding Newsletter which is available in hard copy or electronically. We also invited a number of funders to deliver Meet the Funder sessions to ensure that you are able to access the information directly from the funder.

These included Welsh Government Community Facilities Programme, Easy Fundraising, Sport Wales, Lloyds Foundation - Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation's Programme, Coalfields Regeneration Trust, Merthyr Valley Homes, Coalfields Regeneration Trust – Breaking Barriers Fund, National Churches Trust, National Lottery & Awards for All.

Funding Newsletter

VAMT produces a monthly Funding Newsletter to help organisations stay up to date with funding opportunities, grants, awards, and fundraising initiatives relevant to the third sector in Merthyr Tydfil.

The newsletter brings together local, regional and national funding opportunities in one place, helping groups save time and identify opportunities that may support their projects, activities and long-term sustainability.

If you would like to receive the Funding Newsletter electronically or in hard copy, please contact lowri.hunt@vamt.net

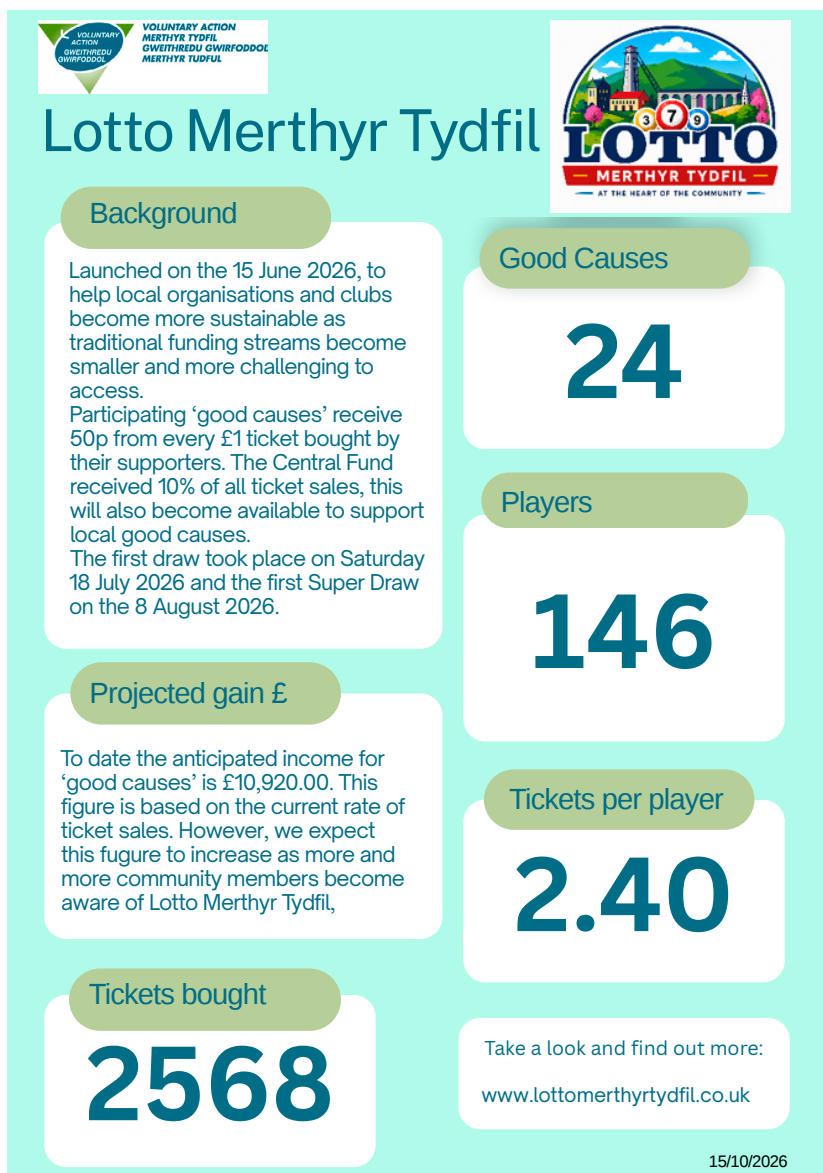
Lotto Merthyr Tydfil

Lotto Merthyr Tydfil provides local voluntary and community organisations with an easy way to generate unrestricted income while encouraging people to support good causes across the county borough. Tickets cost just £1 per week, with 50p from every ticket going directly to local good causes. Organisations can sign up free of charge and receive a share of the funds raised through supporters playing the lottery.

Over the coming months, VAMT will be offering additional support to organisations already signed up to Lotto Merthyr, helping them promote their lottery page, attract new supporters and maximise the income generated through the scheme.

For organisations that have not yet signed up but would like to find out more, we will be hosting a Lotto Merthyr Tydfil Information and Support Session at the VAMT Building on 17/11/2026 (10am-11:30am). This session will provide an overview of how Lotto Merthyr Tydfil works, the benefits for local groups, practical ideas for promotion, and an opportunity to ask questions. If you're unable to attend, Lowri is happy to arrange a one-to-one meeting to discuss whether Lotto Merthyr Tydfil could be a good fit for your organisation.

Whether you're already part of Lotto Merthyr Tydfil or simply curious about whether it could work for your organisation, we'd love to hear from you. To find out more about Lotto Merthyr, visit www.lottomerthyrtudfil.co.uk or contact lowri.hunt@vamt.net



Meet the Funder Sessions

National Lottery Community Fund Surgery, Voluntary Action Centre, 11 November 2026

Lotto Merthyr Tydfil, Voluntary Action Centre, 10:00 17 November 2026

To book your space at the Meet the Funder sessions, contact karen.vowles@vamt.net or lowri.hunt@vamt.net

The Children, Young People & Families Forum

3rd December 2026 10am at VAMT

This will be our regular meeting with networking and presentations from Claire Short, National Manager (Wales), Lucy Faithfull Foundation Wales.

If you would like to ensure you get more information about the Children, Young People and Families Forum contact karen.vowles@vamt.net and we can add you to the mail list

Dates for the diary 2027

The forward planning dates for the Children, Young People and Families Forum are

11th March 2027 10th June 2027
9th September 2027 9th December 2027

These will all be in person events at VAMT starting at 10am.

To join the Forum or for more information contact karen.vowles@vamt.net

Third Sector Mental Health Forum

The forum continues to provide an opportunity for colleagues from across the third sector to connect, share experiences, discuss current challenges and opportunities, and explore ways of working together to support mental health and wellbeing in our communities.

Sign up to the Mailing list:
<http://eepurl.com/jmDqnE>

Volunteer Managers' Forum

**At the Voluntary Action Centre
Date/time tbc**

Established in 2008, the Forum serves to support third sector organisations managing volunteers to ensure they have a network, receive peer support, share best practice and access training and volunteer management development.

To join the Forum or for more information contact lowri.hunt@vamt.net or frances.barry@vamt.net

Health and Wellbeing Forum

**At the Voluntary Action Centre,
10:00 – 12:00
18 November 2026**

This Forum is open to third sector colleagues and aims to provide a platform for providing third sector services operating locally and regionally. It further serves to ensure engagement with the sector around strategic developments within both Merthyr Tydfil County Borough and the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board area.

To join the Forum or for more information contact Ian.Howell-Morgan@vamt.net

INFORM

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INFORM, BLOG AND BULLETIN

We are always delighted to showcase the voices, experiences and knowledge of our members and wider community.



Contributions are welcome for:

- Inform magazine
- Our blog
- The VAMT Bulletin

Whether your piece is short and practical or more detailed, your contribution could inspire and support colleagues across the sector.

How to Submit Articles

To add anything to our Blog our Bulletin as well as being featured in the next edition of Inform, please email your article to kathryn.hay@vamt.net Please note the closing date for Feb/March's Inform will be 22 January 2027.

That's all from VAMT for now.

We value your feedback and suggestions. If you have any comments about this newsletter or ideas for future editions, please send them to info@vamt.net

Voluntary Action Centre

89-90 Pontmorlais, High Street,
Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8UH

Tel: 01685 353900 • email: info@vamt.net

www.vamt.net



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Cefnogi Trydydd
Sector Cymru
Third Sector
Support Wales

VAMT Team

Sharon Richards

Chief Officer

Laura Johnson

Business & Finance Manager

Claire Williams

Operations Manager

Frances Barry

Lead Officer – Volunteering
and Communications

Karen Vowles

Lead Officer –
Community Development

Karen Powell

Lead Officer - Health and Wellbeing

Lowri Hunt

Third Sector Officer

Sharon Jones

Mental Health Involvement &
Development Officer

Susan Jones

Community Co-ordinator

Ian Howell-Morgan

Community Co-ordinator

Laura Brosnan-James

Community Development Officer –
Invest Local Ynysowen Programme

Verity Lewis

Community Rail Partnership Officer

Kathryn Hay

Business Support Officer

Board Members

Michael Ronan

Kayleigh Nor-Val

Nicola Mahoney

Gareth Marshall

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The views expressed in this edition of Inform are not necessarily those of Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil.
Croesawir erthyglau nail ai'n ddwyieithog neu'n uniaith Gymraeg.