

Integrated Wellbeing Networks Newsletter - November 2021



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We've got lots to tell you about since our last newsletter.

Our Team across Torfaen, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Newport work with local people, organisations, groups and services to promote and enhance community wellbeing.

We've set up Well-being Networks in each area to achieve this aim, and Network members are working together on projects that address shared priorities and ambitions. Some of our projects are outlined here, these act as a springboard for development of initiatives that support well-being and recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Nature Prescribing in Caerphilly

We are privileged to see these projects grow and hear from the people involved. As part of work to promote activities in the area we recently organised filming sessions in Caerphilly, we met a number of community groups, it was inspiring to hear the positive effects experienced by

individuals in the community. Keep an eye out for the videos soon!

The Team has continued support for community centres and hubs re-opening safely and developing their well-being offer ('what's on for local community') in the new context of pandemic recovery.

This includes gaining a detailed understanding of groups and provision that have re-started and proves invaluable for keeping health and social care partners updated on where community members can be signposted.

We are continuing to support the roll-out of [Connect 5 training](#) - the training gives people the skills and confidence to have conversations about mental health. We continue networking and linking the local workforce with well-being support and assets.



Good progress is being made with developing local solutions for well-being information, including the development of local web portals complementary to Dewis, alongside video content mentioned previously, we hope to spread the word to both professionals and the public about local opportunities.

We've been pleased to welcome three new Community Involvement Officers to the team, situated in Torfaen, Newport and Blaenau Gwent. The new officers allow us to expand upon our engagement with the community, you'll hear some of what they've been up to in this newsletter.

We're excited to let you know about our Participatory Budgeting (PB) work in Blaenau Gwent, Newport and Torfaen in the following pages. You can also find more information on PB and on how we did it, [here](#).

In **Newport**, the Participatory Budgeting process **'Our Voice, Our Choice, Our Port'** took place between January and March 2021. 24 projects were awarded funding and we're proud to have helped facilitate this.

The winners included:

- **Fit and Fed'** initiative in partnership with County in the Community (Newport County AFC) which feeds young children and provides opportunities for sport and exercise .



- **Shahporan Bengali Adult Mental Well-being Project**, organised by Shahporan Bangladeshi jam'e mosque.



- **Laptops 4 Home Learning** Newport Uskmouth Rotary - Aims to upgrade used computers to benefit students at home.



- **Well-being Ambassadors Social Group** Newport Mind - opportunities for socialising.

- Programme of workshops for **Newport Women's Group for refugees and asylum seekers**



via the British Red Cross.



[You can find out more about PB here.](#)

The Ringland and Pill Well-being Collaboratives have been meeting and a number of brilliant projects are being progressed. The meetings present a good opportunity for organisations to come together and are key vehicles for spreading the word about local services and opportunities.

We're continuing to work with partner and community organisations to develop Well-being Centres/Safe Havens across

key areas in Newport so that they provide a 'minimum standard' of support and assistance. We also have plans to further develop green activities in hub areas and work with our new Community Involvement Officer, Hattie, and key partners to engage and involve local people.



Ringland Community Hub

A review of 'what's on' (opportunities and services beneficial to physical and mental health) guide in Ringland and Pill is underway.

We've worked with hubs and local organisations to ensure easy public access to key well-being websites and online resources including Dewis, Infoengine, Melo, national advice sites including Citizens Advice and more. We hope our work has played a part in making sure information gets to the people who may benefit from it.

We are developing a web portal to promote local wellbeing provision, and have started work on the Your Newport Your Wellbeing interactive map. We look forward to sharing more information with you soon.

Work continues to identify more socially vulnerable residents in IWN areas and in particular in Pill. A number of projects have started up to engage residents in activities available locally.

Community conversations will commence in Ringland in the w/c 25th October, and we are aiming to start in Pill at the end of October.

Work in **Torfaen** (Blaenavon and Croesyceiliog & Llanyrafon) continues to develop. Initiatives and opportunities continue to build in the local area and it's great to see local people getting involved, and reaping the benefits of participation.

In Blaenavon, the resource centre stands as a good example of a local hub offering a broad array of services. Pobl, Torfaen Customer Care, Platfform, Hafan Cymru and Citizens Advice have now returned and are delivering weekly outreach sessions at the centre.



Blaenavon Resource Centre

In response to recent conversations with the community and network members, we've now sourced signage and an intercom to facilitate easy access to the North Torfaen Wellbeing Team (Adult Social Care) who are based upstairs.

We recently held a productive partnership surgery between Gwent Police, Bron Afon, Community Safety and Torfaen Customer Care, where the benefits of partners working in a shared space was highlighted by attendees.

We're continuing our work at upskilling the team at Blaenavon Medical Practice, working with staff and Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners, to network and help them signpost to a broader range of well-being activities and support available locally. This includes developing a mental health pathway linked to the Melo website, building on the work started in Blaenau Gwent.

The Croesyceiliog & Llanyrafon Networks met in September at the

Woodland Road Sports & Social Centre, with more dates in the diary. The focus for this group is to develop 'community conversations': engaging the community in helping us develop future plans that address priority areas for local people.

Ensuring information reaches the right people can be a challenge. We work to ensure information disseminates as effectively as possible, and our networks serve as great 'vehicles' for getting information out to the community.

What's On

Monday

 <p>Dementia Support Group 1.30pm Bethlehem Chapel</p> <p>More Information</p>	 <p>Dance Fitness Classes with GEEJ Coaching 7-8pm Blaenavon Con Club</p> <p>More Information</p>
 <p>Shining Stars - Ladies Choir 6.45pm 35 Broad Street, Blaenavon</p> <p>More Information</p>	 <p>Adults Walking Netball Club Monday 7-8pm (From Sep 2021) @ Blaenavon Active Living Centre Email: blaenavonnetball@yahoo.com</p> <p>More Information</p>

Tuesday

 <p>Arts Class - for abled & disabled 1.30pm Bethlehem Chapel</p> <p>More Information</p>	 <p>Torfaen Take A Stroll Health Walk 12.00pm - Easy walk 1-2 miles Progressive Walk 2.00pm - Moderate walk 3-5 miles Meet at Blaenavon Heritage Centre For more info contact...</p>
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Healthy Blaenavon What's On Webpage

We are developing our local, digital communications, supporting development of the [Connect Torfaen website](#), which provides information on local activities and organisations nearby. We are gathering feedback from partners (pictured above) and community members as the Healthy Blaenavon website continues to develop.

We're excited at the progress of Participatory Budgeting in Torfaen. Two webinars were hosted in October, this signalled the launch of the application process. Using the ['Vocaley.org' platform](#) - Community groups and individuals can create projects and ideas to support the community.

We'll let you know more soon.

Work in **Caerphilly** is continuing at pace. As mentioned in the introduction, we were pleased to meet a number of community organisations and groups in September and film their activities. Thanks to those who took part, we are pleased to highlight your brilliant work!

We've hosted productive meetings with our growing Well-being Networks in September and October. Here are some highlights from our busy borough:

Rhymney War Memorial Park

The Friends of the Park group has continued to meet to collaborate on improving the park for all. The group hosted a community outdoor 'Love The Park' event on July 31st, involving Arts Development at Caerphilly County Borough Council, GAVO and Flourish, using a Planning for Real consultation approach. As a result of this, we have supported further discussions around a new walking group, heritage and community choir.

Dementia Friendly Bargoed



www.dementiafriendlybargoed.wales

The steering group has created a delivery plan for the remainder of the calendar year across 3 focus themes (businesses and shops, children, young people and students, community, voluntary, faith groups and organisations). We are also using the lessons learned for developing and extending to Dementia Friendly Risca.

Risca Hack of Kindness

This event was held on September 16th at Channel View Community Centre with over 40 community members from various groups along with services in attendance. There was great feedback on the day. Wales Coop Centre who facilitated the event are preparing a report capturing ideas from the community that support wellbeing in the area. We hope will provide a firm basis for Participatory Budgeting.

We are looking forward to progressing Participatory Budgeting in Caerphilly in partnership with Caerphilly Borough Council over the next few months.



Nature Prescribing

www.naturewellbeing.wales

The Nature Prescribing pilot has been running with GP surgeries in Caerphilly and is just about to finish with around 40 referrals into our network of providers. Initial evaluation has been conducted and the final results will be available in October, looking at the perspectives of the participants, practices and providers to produce a model that can be rolled out going forward.

Caerphilly Wellbeing Friends

We are developing on the Caerphilly Wellbeing Friends initiative alongside GAVO as our key partner, building up our social media presence and developing an online 'what's on' schedule – working to ensure local people know about opportunities available locally.

[Caerphilly Wellbeing Friends](#)

In **Blaenau Gwent**, we've carried out a series of PB sessions and allocated funding to a number of brilliant community organisations.

In mid-2021, Blaenau Gwent Council commissioned MutualGain* to develop and deliver an online Participatory Budgeting programme.

*MutualGain are specialists in building social capital and have an extensive track record of training and supporting the delivery of PB projects across the UK.

The scope and reach of the programme was agreed with key partners prior to the commencement of the community planning group training programme. Partners involved included: Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Aneurin Leisure, Natural Resources Wales, GAVO, Blaenau Gwent Integrated Wellbeing Network, and Tai Calon

[To find out more about the process and a complete list of winners head here.](#)

Here's a selection below, we're proud to have supported these brilliant projects.

- **Gelli Crug Park-** Initiative to improve facilities at Gelli Crug Park, Abertillery.
- **Families First Sow Pretty** - to set up a community gardening group for families, carers and young people.
- **Tredegar Torpedoes Swim Squad** -for new equipment and sessions.
- **Men's Den** – Funding for a range of activities. Including a mixture of no cost, walks and visits to local sights of interest. Addressing issues of isolation and loneliness for middle age/senior men exacerbated by Covid 19.

We've also continued working on a number of other priority areas and initiatives, and have been pleased to welcome our new Community Involvement Officer, Rosalin , to the role.

In response to feedback from the community about getting more physically active, we've linked with

Aneurin Leisure to implement further family activities at Brynmawr Welfare Park, (**Launch pictured below**) Aneurin Leisure will provide volunteers for the first 6 weeks and will fund training for community volunteers to take over the coordination of the Stroll going forward.



We've been pleased to carry out engagement within the community, including at the Brynmawr Fit & Fed sessions, at the Brynmawr Park, and at Coleg Gwent Ebbw Vale Fresher's Fayre.



It has been brilliant to speak to the community about priorities and issues important to local people. We also recruited a number of community members as Wellbeing Friends.

We're also working with the newly appointed DEWIS Coordinator to ensure the identified services are on DEWIS. As part of work to promote 'what's on' to the community, a partnership with a local radio station has been established. Providing a regular interview slot with community groups and services on a monthly basis. This gives an opportunity for local services to promote themselves to people living nearby.

In addition, our web portal and interactive map promoting local services, opportunities, groups and activities is developing, and we will update on this in the next issue.



Contact us.

If you've got any questions about the programme or would like to get involved - we'd love to hear from you.

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