

# CARTREFI CO-OP

## Newsletter



### Inside the Issue

## ELECTIONS ARE COMING

Co-op members will be voting to elect a National Representative Council. p.04

## CO-OP STATISTICS

The number of Coop members is growing, check out just how many like minded people have signed up! p.04

## NATIONAL NEWS

Coop coverage from Mid, South and North Wales. Celebrate good news stories, and learn what co-op activity is still to come. From p. 02

## MESSAGE FROM ADRIAN

One of our members in north Wales suggested we should share our Co-op newsletters with everyone who might want to join, and hey presto, that's what we are doing.

So...a big hello to all Cartrefi Co-op members, and a big hello as well to all those lovely people who are also part of Cartrefi but who haven't decided yet whether to fork out £1 on co-op membership.

Joining a co-op is a voluntary thing and everyone's choice must be respected. It's also an open and equal opportunities thing. So if anyone supported by Cartrefi, or employed by Cartrefi, wants to become a Cartrefi co-op member, then it's your right.

There are lots of reasons why people might want to become a co-op member, but here's one. If you think job roles and status labels are only a small part of who we all are, and if you like the idea of a company where people are respected as human beings with equal rights and dignity, then you can help Cartrefi be that sort of company by becoming a co-op member.

If you have any queries, please ask at your local forum, and/or send them to [info@cartrefi.coop](mailto:info@cartrefi.coop).





*Pictured: South Wales members*

## NEW EXPERIENCES

*by Eleanor and Julie*

With the help of Cartrefi's support I am now able to stay at home or have support out in the community rather than go to day service. I didn't enjoy day centre and found other things to do instead. I have started going to sensory story telling/music. I am currently looking for another activity to join with the support of Cartrefi. It has made such a difference, I am much happier, I look forward to getting up and going to new places!

## SHARING SOUTH STORIES

*by Alys Phillips*

Co-op members in South Wales were invited together at Llanharan Rugby Club to share their stories of Cartrefi Cymru as a support provider and a Co-operative. Members worked in groups to think about the most important change they have experienced as a result of Cartrefi. Everyone wrote down their story to feed back to their groups, each member of the group had a vote to decide on two favourite stories. The chosen stories were shared with everyone at the event, where people were proud to read them. All of the chosen stories will be submitted to the National Chair Forum, where four will be selected, in preparation for being put forward to the Board of Trustees, to make decisions about how to improve Cartrefi.

There was a supportive atmosphere at Llanharan and everyone enjoyed lunch together, and went home as valued contributors. There will be similar story gathering events in North and Mid Wales. The stories not submitted are too good not to share, and will feature in this monthly newsletter.

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## WATER DELIVERY

*by Sian Roberts*

At the beginning of this month, much of Wales was hit by snow. Though it may have been great for building snowmen, it also resulted in many homes across North Wales were left without water due to the freezing and bursting of pipes across the region.

Awen Haf, co-op member and support worker from Gwynedd, displayed her community spirit when she came to the rescue in Bleanau Ffestiniog, delivering water to those who were stranded due to severe weather.





*Pictured: Neil Price*

## MY JOURNEY

*by Neil Price*

I have become more independent and been given more work placement opportunities. I have expanded my group of friends and support network through Cartrefi.

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**I have expanded my group of friends and support network through Cartrefi**

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I am more active, I go to the gym and enjoy walking. I am currently receiving support to apply online for a job at Tesco. I am more settled in the house.

My next ambition is to improve my monetary skills by going to college. I am looking forward to achieving this, with the support of Cartrefi.

## FAIRTRADE COFFEE MORNING

*by Alys Philips*



*Pictured: Janet Lewis, Barbara Thomson and Judy Griffiths*

Enthusiastic members of Brecon Forum partnered up with the COOP food store to raise initial funds to set up an accessible walking group. They held an inclusive cake demonstration at Brecon Office, where people we support, and employee members baked (and ate) lots of sweet treats – the COOP supported this by donating Fairtrade ingredients. The cakes were then sold at a Fairtrade Coffee Morning in Brecon town: by inviting the community in, members of the Forum were able to raise awareness of their community building aspirations and raise £70 to contribute to setting up a walking group.

## CHAIR TRAINING

*by Alys Phillips*

Co chairs, and chairs of our co-op forums are invited to attend a second training day in April at Llandrindod.

The purpose of this training will be to provide co-op members with the required skills to run an inclusive forum: enabling people to have their say, and vote on what matters to their communities.



*Pictured: Co Chairs in action*

## DID YOU KNOW?

Women have had a prominent role in the co-operative movement, right from the early stages. In 1883, an organisation called the Women's co-operative Guild was established. It was a British organisation, where 2 of the 7 founding members were from Aberdare in Wales.

Not only did the guild educate about co-operative values, it also had political influence and supported the rights of women. This included issues like Women's Suffrage and health.

One of the big political achievements of the guild was getting maternity benefits included in the National Insurance Act 1911 due to the pressure they put on the government. By this time they had 32,000 members. The Guild had such influence, that in 1914 they were involved in an International Women's Congress at the Hague.

At its peak the guild boasted 72,000 members. After 133 years, the National Cooperative Women's Guild closed in 2016. It's safe to say though, that they left a lasting impact, proving the effectiveness of co-operative working.

## MEMBER STATISTICS

We currently have:

# 383

Co-op members across Wales

## ELECTION PREPARATION

The elections for the National Representative Council will be held this June. Co-op members will be voting to elect:

- 4 co-op members who are people supported by Cartrefi
- 4 co-op members who are employees of Cartrefi
- 4 co-op members who are community supporters
- 2 trustees from the Board of Management

The elected council will represent the views of members - and of people supported by Cartrefi who may not be members, promote a member-led approach within the company and ensure that members can influence top-level plans and decisions through discussions at Local Forum meetings feeding into Council and Board meetings.

**If you want to stand for election, or vote to elect a representative you must be a co-op member by 31st June 2018**

## CO-OP QUESTION

**What would you like to know about the upcoming elections?**

We would love to hear your questions so that we can help to inform all members on what it means to sit on the Council of Members, and to have the power of their vote!

## GET IN TOUCH

Share your Co-op story with us to feature in next month's newsletter.

 @CartrefiCymruCoop

 @CartrefiCymru

 02920 642 250

 info@cartrefi.coop

