

# CARTREFI CO-OP

*Newsletter*



*Inside the Issue*

## COUNCIL OF MEMBERS

The Council of Members got together to get to know each other and to find out more about their exciting new role.

## GREENBELT FESTIVAL

Adrian was invited to speak at the Greenbelt festival, which brings together people who love social justice, faith and music.

## NATIONAL NEWS

Our members are doing great things all over Wales. Read about the most recent stories here.

## MESSAGE FROM ADRIAN

I co-presented a workshop recently with a researcher, Dr Diane Burns, who specialises in the economics of social care: in other words, the money side of things. It was at the National Social Care Conference in Cardiff. There was a good turnout of people from Social Services including directors, commissioners and councillors. People from agencies like Age Cymru and the Carers Trust were there too. Diane and I explained that providing social care is not like providing optional things (like fancy cars, shirts and watches) for sale in a global market in order to make a profit. It's an essential local service that the whole community needs in order to be moderately civilised.

Social care also provides a lot of local jobs (more than the NHS in Wales) and this is potentially a big positive for the economy of our local communities. But not if the jobs are under-valued.

Everyone in the room agreed that the biggest money issue in Care was support workers' pay. There was a lot of agreement that the way outsourced care was commissioned was a big contributor to low wages and inequality with care workers in local government and the NHS. People in the room thought this should be a top government priority. Someone thought maybe care should all go back inside the

county council, but most people thought the best way forward was to change the way councils buy care.

With help from Welsh Government, they need to insist on decent wages, provide sufficient funding, and 'get heavy' with those providers who squeeze workers' pay as a source of private profit. It won't happen overnight, but at least there are senior people starting to see the light. Cartrefi will keep arguing the case.

Any comments?  
[contactthecoo@cartrefi.coop](mailto:contactthecoo@cartrefi.coop).

## COUNCIL OF MEMBERS INDUCTION

*by Jenny Hartles*



*Pictured: (From left to right) Lydia Evans, David Wilton, Samantha Taylor, Tina Stamp, Yvonne Williams, Mark Morgan, Robert Moore, Sioned Evans, Nae Cook and Robert Quarell.*

The Council of Members met for the first time on 24th August in Llandrindod. Everyone got to know each other and found out more about their exciting new role; representing members and working with Cartrefi's Board of Management.

The meeting discussed what it means for Cartrefi to be a co-op and it was agreed that we need a short, snappy explanation. (Can you help? See the Co-op Question on page 5). Council Members learned about the important things they will be involved in; like appointing the Board, and reviewing how we spend our money, and how well we are doing as a support provider and community builder. There were plenty of opportunities for working in small groups, and support staff were great at making sure everyone could share their thoughts and ideas.

All of the Council agreed that they are looking forward to representing their members and having a real say in how Cartrefi is run. David Wilton, Community Supporter representative for the South, emailed that evening to say 'I really enjoyed the day, and thought it was a great launch of the Council'. The next meeting is on 25th October where Council members will be preparing to meet the Board of Management. The Council will meet four times a year, and we'll give regular updates on their work.

## MY FEAR OF COMPUTERS

*by Andrea Lloyd*



*Pictured: Andrea Lloyd*

Over the last 12 months Cartrefi has helped me to conquer my fear of using computers. My manager, assistant manager and the local office administrator have encouraged me and helped me learn ICT. As a result of their persistence I am more productive and informed in work. I can now access my emails, and fill in active support diaries online with people we support.

## MY CARTREFI EXPERIENCES

*by Brian Williams*

Cartrefi help me to keep my friendships and make new ones. I don't have support from Cartrefi Cymru Co-op anymore, but by being a co-op member I still get to be involved. I attend lots of different Cartrefi events - Cartrefi always let me know what is going on. I enjoy the Bingo nights, sometimes I win prizes! I also like to go to the Bob Cook games in Swindon with my friends who get support from Cartrefi. I compete in the shotput and discus and I have won 7 medals in the past.



*Pictured: Brian at the Bob Cook games*

On the last Thursday of the month I go to the Brecon Cartrefi Office for 'Get Together Club' where I get to see my friends David, Audrey and Kath. I also meet lots of new friends! My friends Kath and Sharon use sign language, this is something I would like to learn.

Previously I had always been frightened of deleting things. I am more confident in my role, and have been able to save time on certain tasks in work as I don't have to ask for help. Now I am looking forward to sharing my skills with other members of staff. I am willing to learn more - as my job evolves, I want to be proactive!

# EXCHANGING IDEAS AT THE GREENBELT FESTIVAL

by Adrian Roper

I was invited to speak at a festival in Northamptonshire which brings together people interested in social justice, politics and faith (and beer and music!). A number of co-ops (like the Energy Co-op) sponsored a programme of talks about things like "how can we run businesses for the common good, rather than just to get rich?"

A lawyer and nice guy called Cliff Mills interviewed me about Cartrefi's co-op journey: what difference it was making, and what challenges we still faced. Debbie Shannon spoke about Link Psychology Coop which is bringing school psychologists together to work as a team. She talked about the psychological benefits of co-operatives. Having a say in your own organization is good for your mental well-being!

Despite the rain, the tent was full of interested festival goers, and hopefully many of them went away with some new ideas and hopes. I certainly did.



*Pictured: The panel at "The Exchange"*

# STEPHEN'S RACE THE TRAIN STORY

by Stephen Williams



*Pictured: Stephen next to the steam train*

Last year I saw Ian (my support worker) racing the train in Caernarfon. I said I wanted to take part next time. I asked Ian to help me train in the gym. Ian, Neil and I raced the train all the way back to Caernarfon train station, but the train won. It was great fun participating in the race on 18th July 2018.

On the day of the race we got the steam train from Caernarfon. All the runners and their friends go on there too. We sat in the first class carriage

and travelled to Dinas. At Dinas we got off the train and lined up at the start line and waited for the "honker" before we started running.

Everyone was running fast and I was trying to catch Neil, my manager. My personal trainer was keeping me motivated because I was finding it difficult to keep running. I stopped a few times but I was determined to keep going. We overtook the train but shortly after it caught us up. All the passengers were cheering us on. I kept running but the train went out of sight, I didn't give up, I just kept trying my best.

About half way we caught up with the train which gave me an incentive to keep going. A bit further on I got tired again so my personal trainer phoned my mum so she could motivate me, The steam train overtook us once more.

When we got to the 4km mark I wanted to stop but with the help of my support worker and the crowd I made it to the finishing line where the train was waiting. Non and Sali my support worker was there.

I completed the 5k race in 32 minutes which was my personal best. I received a coaster as a prize and I raised over £100 for the RNLI. I feel very proud of myself. I would love to do it again next year and beat my manager Neil.

Neil Bastow, Stephens manager commented 'he has total respect for Stephen and he is amazed at how well he did. Ian also did a great job sharing every step with Stephen, encouraging him right the way to the end'.



*Pictured: Ian, Stephen and Neil*

# MID WALES CELEBRATES 3RD ANNUAL SUMMER SHOW

by Siobhan Carey

Mid Wales held its third annual summer show on Sunday 9th September in The Market Hall in Brecon. This is the first year that we have been able to hold it in a venue that is able to accommodate the number of people attending, and also open its doors to members of the public! Having this venue meant we were able to ask people who utilize the space in the market during the week if they wanted stall space at the summer show and we were delighted when some stall holders took us up on the offer!

I want to express my personal gratitude for the effort and extra time that everyone puts into making these shows both past and present, such a success. You are all an inspiration to me and contribute hugely to the success of the day. I took a look around the stands and can honestly say that these shows really do show off people's talents and gifts, whether that is the preparation leading up to the day, volunteering to run a stall or entering the many variety of competitions.



*Pictured: The Market Hall*



*Pictured: Delyth Prosser*



*Pictured: Stallholder*

It was lovely to see members of the community coming in and looking around the stalls and asking people about the work we do and engaging positively during the day. A special thanks to Robbert Quarell, our Community Supporter Council representative for handing out the trophies!

# RUNNING FOR CO-OP DEUDRAETH

by Sioned Evans

Steffan Jones a Support worker in the Dwyfor and Meirionydd area raised money for Co-op Deudraeth and the Cambrian group by taking part in the Liverpool half marathon back in March this year. He managed an impressive time of 1hr 53. Steffan is a keen runner and has taken part in a few marathons over the years.



*Pictured: Steffan Jones*

Well done Steffan for your achievement.

## MEMBER STATISTICS

We currently have

# 480

Co-op members across Wales

# DID YOU KNOW?

15% of adults in Wales are not online.

This can lead to missed opportunities to save money, find work, learn skills and access important services. Many of them are already coping with issues such as loneliness, poverty or unemployment.

Digital Communities Wales helps organisations that are working with people who could benefit from having basic digital skills.

It is a Welsh Government project which is delivered by the Wales Co-operative Centre.

Their support is free and includes:

- Digital training for staff and volunteers to help encourage others to get online and use the internet effectively and safely
- Short-term loans of digital equipment including tablets, laptops and fitbits
- Help to develop a digital volunteering programme

For more information, contact [info@cartrefi.coop](mailto:info@cartrefi.coop).



# CO-OP QUESTION

Imagine you are chatting to someone you know and they say

"I hear Cartrefi is a co-op now. What's that all about?"

What would you say that would quickly answer the question?  
Here is a suggested answer:

"Cartrefi is all about doing right by people. Obviously that means doing right by the people we support, but it also means doing right by employees and communities. By becoming a co-op, we are giving everyone the chance to have a say in how we are run, and we are encouraging everyone to use their ideas and gifts. **In a nutshell, it's about sharing power and talents- for better care, better workplaces, and better communities**".

# GET IN TOUCH

Please spare 2 minutes of your time.

We need your help to make our newsletter better for all our members.

We are asking you to complete a short survey. To do this please click here or visit <http://bit.ly/NewsletterFEEDBACK>

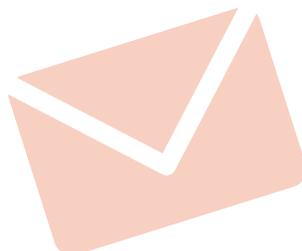
If you have any questions please contact Alys on:



02920 642 287



[info@cartrefi.coop](mailto:info@cartrefi.coop)



Catch up with Adrian's recent blog  
"Participation in a big, new co-op"

<http://bit.ly/Coopparticipation>

## GET CONNECTED



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