



# NEWSLETTER

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## MENTAL HEALTH: YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Welcome to the second edition of our new-look newsletter!

It's been an eventful start to the year, which has seen us getting out and about in the community gathering residents' views about what matters to them in terms of their emotional well-being and mental health.

This follows on from the two 'summits' held in June and October of 2022, and will help shape the forthcoming Regional Emotional Well-being and Mental Health Strategy.

Despite having to contend with torrential rain, frost and even snow, we received a warm welcome from the groups we visited (including Swansea's LGBTQ+ weekly coffee morning, the new Cimla Warm Hub, and Swansea Council's Ageing Well /Action for Elders Walking Group).

We also spent a day at Aberafan shopping centre in Port Talbot



speaking to passers-by and encouraging them to participate in our engagement exercise (see above - shout out to Gerald for taking part!).

We're thrilled with the response and are very grateful to everyone for their contributions. These will be collated and incorporated into the next phase of the Strategy's development.

We'll update you on the progress of this vital piece of work in a future edition of our newsletter!



# INTRODUCTION TO CARE



AFRICAN COMMUNITY CENTRE, SWANSEA

Spirits were high at Swansea's African Community Centre (ACC) on 12 December as a group of learners came together to celebrate the completion of the **'Introduction to Care'** programme.

Funded via the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership, this initiative has helped to address the urgent need for additional resources across the health and social care sector by accessing an untapped group - members of the ACC.

Part of the ACC's remit is to support individuals who are transitioning from Asylum Seeker to Refugee status. Many of these have had health or social care experience in their country of origin and are keen to join the Welsh workforce, but require some additional support to do so.

'Introduction to Care' is a pre-employment training programme offering job coaching

support for those interested in pursuing a career in care. 73 learners have completed the programme to date, and around 30 of these have already found employment or gone on to undertake further qualifications in health/social care related subjects.

Nanya, one of the participants, said:



***"Thanks for what you are doing to get us settled in Swansea, help with the online training and finding jobs. I hope you know we appreciate it all."***



In addition to the training sessions, a series of employment workshops have been delivered by WeCare Wales, with ongoing support provided by Swansea Working.

This initiative has had a positive impact on the social care market, providing a vital increase to the workforce across both residential care homes and domiciliary care.

The plan going forward is to build on this success and roll-out the programme across a wider area, including Neath Port Talbot.

'Introduction to Care' is part of the remit of the West Glamorgan Prevention and Community Coordination Board.



# CO-PRODUCTION IN ACTION

In the last edition of our newsletter we gave a rundown of our efforts over the summer and autumn of 2022 to raise the profile of our work among the wider public. We attended events across the region with the aim of highlighting volunteering opportunities within the partnership, such as the service user and carer representative roles on our various Transformation Boards and the Regional Partnership Board.

It's fair to say that the partnership space is fast-paced and often quite nuanced, therefore ensuring volunteers feel supported is hugely important.

To this end, the role of **Volunteer Representative Coordinator** was created towards the end of last year. This will be a dedicated resource to provide hands-on support to our volunteers.

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**This was a brilliant opportunity for me to continue to be involved in a job vacancy process whereby I feel I was actively involved, valued and my contributions were appreciated. Also, this enabled a continuation to build upon established trust with various professionals with them recognising volunteer skills and experiences within the parameters of co-production and equal working practices.**

- Victoria

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Interviews for this role were held in November 2022 and in the spirit of co-production, two of our volunteer representatives were actively involved in the recruitment process. **Mark Davies** and **Victoria Morgan-Beattie** have been valued members of the partnership for a number of years, so their insights and experiences were key in terms of selecting the right candidate for the position.

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**I have enjoyed participating in this process, and was pleased to use my professional experiences and HR qualifications whilst being a Chartered member of the CIPD in a volunteering role for this Partnership's Management Office job vacancy.**

**To my knowledge, this vacancy is the first to fully embed co-production as part of a recruitment and selection process, and hopefully this methodology will be considered with future job vacancies with the numerous organisations involved with the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership. I look forward to being involved in another likewise experience.**

- Mark

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Along with Kelly Gillings (West Glamorgan Programme Director), Mark and Victoria came to a decision and the job offer was made to a brilliant individual who we can't wait to welcome to the team later on in the spring.

Keep an eye out for an introduction to our new recruit in the next edition of our newsletter!

## JOIN OUR PEOPLE'S FORUM!

Would you be interested in finding out more about the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership and the positive impact of our work?

Have you been inspired to volunteer with us, or maybe you'd like to learn more about how you could get involved in co-production?

The **West Glamorgan People's Forum** is being launched on **Tuesday 18th April 2023** at **Swansea.com Stadium** (formerly the Liberty), and we'd love to see you there!

The event will include a showcase of some of the great work being undertaken across our region, as well as a series of interactive workshops on some of our key themed priorities.

Spaces are limited so book your place now:

[www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/west-glamorgan-peoples-forum-tickets-551424815467](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/west-glamorgan-peoples-forum-tickets-551424815467)



# LEARNING DISABILITY STRATEGY

The past few months have seen some fantastic progress in terms of the development of our **Regional Learning Disability Strategy!**

On the 20th of October, members of our team attended the 'Keep Me Healthy' event at Swansea.com stadium to discuss some of the key themes that had emerged from targeted engagement events held earlier in the year.

The event was arranged by Your Voice Advocacy, who were commissioned by West Glamorgan to lead on the engagement for the new Strategy.

Event attendees were treated to a packed programme of presentations and activities from organisations that support people with a Learning Disability to take care of their health and well-being.



The West Glamorgan team joined other exhibitors at the event's marketplace space, where attendees could browse the various stalls and network with those delivering and receiving services.

As well as promoting the regional programme of work, our information stand featured an interactive engagement activity (pictured).

Participants were asked to rank themed headings identified during the initial phase of engagement in order of importance. Their responses will help shape the Strategy's focus and key priorities for implementation.

It was wonderful to see such energy and enthusiasm on the day, and we look forward to the formal launch of the Strategy later in the year.

## LET'S CONNECT...

Did you know that you can now follow us on **Facebook**?

Towards the end of 2022, we welcomed some new team members who will provide dedicated communications and engagement support to the regional programme. Since the pandemic we've done a lot to widen our reach both virtually and face to face, and having some additional resource will enable us to achieve even more in 2023.

**Click here** to view our new Facebook page, and don't forget to follow us on Twitter **@WGlamPship**.



For more information on the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership, please email [west.glamorgan@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:west.glamorgan@swansea.gov.uk) or telephone 01792 633 805.

This newsletter is available in different formats - please contact us with details of your requirements.