



Un Llais Cymru



One Voice Wales

Conference Report

Larger Councils Conference
and Innovative Practice Awards Ceremony

Royal Welsh Showground, Builth Wells 5th July 2017

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One Voice Wales is recognised by Welsh Government as the national representative body for Community and Town Councils in Wales, providing a wide range of services to our 583 member councils representing approximately 6000 councillors.

This report summarises the 5th Larger Councils Conference which this year for the first time incorporated the Innovative Practice Awards Ceremony

Key Note Speakers

- Jen Heal, Design Commission for Wales - Good Practice in Community/Place Planning
- Richard Baker, Welsh Government – Devolution of Services and Assets Transfers Support for Community and Town Councils

Innovative Practice Sessions (AM)

- Bio Diversity Approaches - Mold Town Council
- Community Delivery What We've Learnt So Far - Newtown & Llanllwchaearn Town Council
- Achieving a Green Flag Award for a Town Cemetery - Barry Town Council
- Designing your Annual Report - Cwmbran Community Council

Innovative Practice Awards Ceremony

Award Categories Include:-

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Best Sustainability Initiative | Best Community Engagement Initiative |
| Best Environmental Project | Best Tourism Initiative |
| Best Website | Best Youth Engagement Initiative |
| Best Annual Report | Local Council Service of the Year |
| Special Award for Heritage | |

Workshops (PM)

- Review of 2015/16 audits and Changes to the Audit Regime for Community & Town Councils - Deryck Evans, Wales Audit Office
- Sharing Innovative Practice - Lyn Cadwallader, OVW Chief Executive
- Making the Most of your Council Website and Effective Use of Social Media - Nigel Hillier and Dan Hillier, Vision ICT



Good Practice in Community/Place Planning “Shape My Town or Community”

Presentation by Jen Heal, Design Commission for Wales



Jen spoke about ‘Shape My Town’ an online toolkit to inspire and equip people to play a part in shaping places that matter to them:-

The Toolkit was for:-

- Individuals or groups who want to improve their local environment
- Local business groups aiming to influence a strategy for their town centre
- Community and town council or local authorities preparing a local plan or responding to a planning application
- Developers
- Designers

Further details may be found at www.shapemytown.org.uk

The full presentation is available on the One Voice Wales Website
www.onevoicewales.org.uk under Conferences

Devolution of Services and Asset Transfers Support for Community and Town Councils

Presentation by Richard Baker, Welsh Government

Richard's presentation was about the work of the National Assets Working Group (NAWG) which was a work stream led group looking at making better use of public assets.

Aim of NAWG:

To **enable and influence** organisations to adopt a collaborative approach in asset management

Share best practice guidance and case studies;

To **put in place tools** to support and encourage the realisation of the efficiencies and benefits that can be derived from proactive, strategic estate management ;

Provide **high quality support** for the delivery of public services.

Richard also spoke about:-

Community Asset Transfers (CATs)- a mechanism by which local Community Groups can secure an interest in the use of a Local Authority owned property (buildings or land) through ownership, lease or licence to enable them to deliver local services.

Community Asset Transfers are an opportunity for a community to :-

- empower itself, create opportunities and jobs.
- save facilities or services that could otherwise close and be lost to the community.
- grow and expand services previously limited or not prioritised by public bodies.

But

Community Asset Transfers must be considered very closely by Community Groups or social enterprises and they must be 100% convinced that they will become sustainable projects in the long term.

The full presentation is available on the One Voice Wales website www.onevoicewales.org.uk under Conferences

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Links to Assets Cymru:

<http://gov.wales/topics/improvingservices/assets-cymru/?lang=en>

<http://gov.wales/topics/improvingservices/assets-cymru/?skip=1&lang=cy>

Bio Diversity Approaches Presentation by Mold Town Council



Councillor Andrea Mearns and Samantha Roberts, Town Clerk spoke about the “MOLD GREEN BAND”

The Concept behind the project was:-

“To create a pedestrian ‘green band’ around Mold, accessible to visitors and residents, enhanced with wild flowers, with the aim of creating a quality visitor destination and a pollinator friendly habitat”

Councillor Mearns explained that the “Mold Green Band” is included in the Environment, Open Spaces and connections section of the Mold Town Plan 2017-2023 and then gave an overview of the process that works for Mold Town Council when working on a project:-

- Mold’s Cittaslow Accreditation
- Partnership Working
- Networks/Communication
- Complementary Priorities
- With or Without Funding
- The Stories It Tells about Ourselves

The full presentation is available on the One Voice Wales Website www.onevoicewales.org.uk under Conferences

For further information contact: Samantha Roberts, Town Clerk, Mold Town Council

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Website: www.moldtowncouncil.org.uk

Community Delivery What We've Learnt So Far

Presentation by Newtown & Llanllwchaearn Town Council

Councillor Sue Newham, Town Mayor began by rewinding 5 years to set the scene:

- In 2012, Newtown Town Council started a restructuring process.
- Taking on more staff
- Updating council policies and procedures
- Interacting more proactively with Powys County Council, neighbouring councils and local community organisations.

Councillor Newham said change had been hard but during 2015 and 2016 councillors began to see the benefits of the changes. In order to be successful with taking on new responsibilities, assets or services, a council needs a firm foundation and Councillor Newham recommended that councils carry out a health check to assess whether it is in a strong enough position to take on new services and assets.

Public Toilets - Councillor Newham spoke about the Town Council's experience of taking over two public toilets including the difficulties it encountered.

Green Space & Parks - The Town Council had submitted an expression of interest with Powys CC for 47 hectares of green space and parks, an adjacent café, and a building previously used as a radio station and is still in discussions with the local authority. In this respect the Town Council is working with a group of community organisations that use the land on an application to the Big Lottery's Community Asset Transfer Fund. In early 2017, the consortium of community organisations was awarded £47,500 to develop the bid for a sustainable future for Newtown's green spaces, a process which is underway at the moment. The Town Council has added £30,250 to that development phase fund. The detailed bid has to be completed by September 2017.

Day Centre - in 2015 Powys CC indicated that it was going to close the day centre but a voluntary group expressed an interest but when discussions stalled and then failed Powys CC held a public meeting where there was vocal and evident disquiet about the possible closure.

The Town Council decided to contribute £50,000 to the day centre service in 2017-18, in order to keep it open while Powys County Council and Newtown Town Council discuss other delivery models. The hope is for the service to continue in some form and the day centre building to be transferred freehold to Newtown Town Council.

Councillor Newham then outlined the lessons the Council has learnt from the Town Council's experience of asset transfer.

The full presentation is available on the One Voice Wales Website www.onevoicewales.org.uk under Conferences

For further information contact: Ed Humphries, Town Clerk

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Website: www.newtown.org.uk

Achieving a Green Flag Award for a Town Cemetery Presentation by Barry Town Council



Representatives from Barry Town Council spoke about:

- The make up of Barry Town Council
- Its Cemetery at Merthyr Dyfan, Barry
- The Green Flag Scheme
- How the Council achieved Green Flag Status for the Cemetery
- Tips based on experience
- Reflecting & Reviewing the Green Flag Assessment
- How Green Flag Status links to the Council's Strategy and Corporate Plan

The full presentation is available on the One Voice Wales website www.onevoicewales.org.uk under Conferences

For further information contact: Emily Forbes, Clerk Barry Town Council

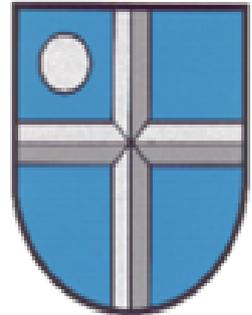
Tel No: 01446 738663

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Designing Your Annual Report

Presentation by Cwmbran Community Council



In this session the Clerk to Cwmbran Community Council, David Collins explained how the Council had developed its Annual Report.

David referred to a process from Genesis to Revelation and the Council's first attempt at an Annual Report in 2015.

Then in 2016 an Annual Report was developed based on goals

David said it was a living document that fed into the Council's budget setting process.

David explained how the Report would help the Council to address the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (WFGA) by enabling the Council to:-

- Consider how it will integrate the goals of WFGA into its forward planning
- How it will engage with its community
- How the Council will agree the steps it takes
- How it will monitor progress
- How it will report on the progress it makes

The full presentation is available on the One Voice Wales Website www.onevoicewales.org.uk under Conferences

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One Voice Wales

Making the Most of Your Council Website and Effective Use of Social Media

Presentation by Vision ICT



Nigel and Dan's presentation concentrated on 3 questions:-

1. Is your organisation responsive? Is your website responsive?
2. Do you know if your site is working for you?
3. Is social media right for your organisation?

The full presentation is available on the One Voice Wales website
www.onevoicewales.org.uk under Conferences

For more information contact: Nigel Hillier/Dan Hillier

Tel No: 01392 669497

Website: <http://VisionICT.com>

Review of 2015/16 Audit and Changes to the Audit Regime Presented by Deryck Evans, Wales Audit Office



Deryck Evans' presentation covered :-

- The 2015/16 Audit
- The External Audit
- The role of the Wales Audit Office and the External Auditors
- The Annual Return
- The Audit Outcomes
- The Key Facts
- What Auditors Want to Know
- Governance Themes for 2015/16 and 2016/17 and onwards
- Budget Setting & Monitoring
- Internal Audit
- Common Errors

What the Outcome of the 2015/16 Audit Tells Wales Audit Office

- Councils need to understand their legal responsibilities for looking after public funds
- Proper and effective financial management arrangements must be put in place
- Members must provide effective scrutiny of their council's financial affairs and satisfy themselves that they have an effective system of internal audit
- Members must have a clear understanding of the external auditor's role and how they can work with the auditor

How Councils Can Prepare for Audit

The Support Arrangements in Place to Assist Councils

The Sources of Information/Publications

The full presentation is available on the One Voice Wales website
www.onevoicewales.org.uk under Conferences

Sharing Innovative Practice

Lyn Cadwallader, One Voice Wales Chief Executive

Lyn began his presentation by praising the quality of the entries received for the inaugural Innovative Practice Awards. The judges who were independent to One Voice Wales had not found the task easy and lessons had been learnt with regard to the judging criteria that would be implemented for the 2018 Awards. In 2018 community and town councils would be provided with a more detailed application process that would outline the judging criteria.



There had been eight Awards categories but it had become apparent to the judges that there needed to be a ninth and a special Award for Heritage was given at their request. The winners of the 2018 Innovative practice Awards were as follows:-

Best Annual Report: Cwmbran Community Council

An Annual Report that brought recognition to the Council both locally and beyond.

Best Environmental Project: Three Crosses Community Council

A Biodiversity Audit of the Village.

Best website: Higher Kinnerton Town Council

A website that reflects the Community Council's core strategies of Community, Commerce and Communication.

Best Community Engagement: Borth Community Council

A Community Emergency Plan that has brought the community together.

Best Tourism: Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council

Attractive Floral Displays that have helped to increase the local tourism trade.

Best Sustainability Initiative: Chepstow Town Council

Working with a Fairtrade Forum an initiative that demonstrated a sustainable choice meaning that the town can meet people's needs today without compromising the needs of the people in the future enhancement of its cultural heritage, creativity and innovation.

Best Youth Engagement: Pontardawe Town Council

Work with Youth Representatives including the development of an interactive website for young people 'Go Valley' and a 'Youth Representative Guide'.

Best Local Council Service of the Year: Solva Community Council

The development of a fully integrated community base domiciliary service for residents.

Special Award for Heritage: Llangollen Town Council & Llantysilio Community Council

The refurbishment and restoration project that restored and reopened the historic Chain Bridge situated at Berwyn within the Dee Valley.

Best Annual Report Award

Winner: Cwmbran Community Council



The 2016 Annual Report describes how Cwmbran Community Council has contributed to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Cwmbran, using Wales-wide sustainable development principles and Case Studies to illustrate success.

The Report includes details of future objectives, a Statement of Well-Being and a description of the budget cycle.

The Report has been acclaimed as Best Practice. It has brought recognition to the Council both locally and beyond. It has raised awareness of the Council's contribution to the delivery of Wales-wide goals. It is lively, colourful, informative and easy to read. It has provided a template which others have followed. Cwmbran Community Council's Annual Report can be viewed on the One Voice Wales website www.onevoicewales.org.uk

For further information contact : David Collins, Clerk Cwmbran Community Council

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Website: www.cwmbbran.gov.uk

Highly Commended Entry:

Chepstow Town Council



Best Environmental Project Award
Winner: Three Crosses Community Council
Sponsored by: Autocross Euroshel



In 2014 the 'Village of Three Crosses Common Good Trust' on behalf of The Community Council successfully applied for an Environment Wales Pre-project grant to carry out a Biodiversity Audit across the village. The trust was awarded the sum of £5000 and commissioned the Wildlife Trust of South & West Wales (WTSWW) to undertake the project.

The WTSWW had a vision of an environment rich in wildlife for all and aims to rebuild biodiversity by engaging people of all ages with their local environment.

The rationale of the audit and report was to undertake an ecological survey of the various accessible and designated sections through the village, concentrating on vegetation, invertebrates, mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians. The project had three aims;

1. To provide baseline ecological data for the village
2. To provide recommendations and future management advice and proposals.
3. To involve the community as much as possible in the survey, collection of data and proposals.

The final report, some 63 pages in length and with colour photographs, showed that Three Crosses had a very good and diverse ecology

In 2016 the Biodiversity Report, and the achievements over the last twelve months by implementing the recommendations, was very useful when part of the land surveyed was the subject of a village green application.

The village was able to show usage by residents into the area to observe wildlife on its doorstep.

For further information contact : Ian Donaldson, Clerk Three Crosses Community Council

Email : crwyscc@gmail.com

Tel No: 01792 874929

Website: www.threecrosses.org.uk



Autocross Euroshel Limited



Euroshel's bus shelters offer the perfect long lasting solution for your street furniture needs. Manufactured in our own in-house facility from high quality stainless steel and in accordance with BS EN-1090-2, our shelters are both attractive and hard wearing, requiring minimal maintenance. Our shelters have been installed by our highly trained installation teams across the country from Parish Councils to City Centres and our ISO 9001 certified quality management system means our customers receive an unparalleled level of service from enquiry right through to after-sales care.

Roof and glazing choice • Solar or mains lighting
Seating • RTPi bracketry

Euroshel also manufacture and supply cycle shelters, smoking shelters,
pay station shelters and sports dugouts



Best Website Award

Winner: Higher Kinnerton Community Council

Sponsored by: Vision ICT



The main headings of Community, Commerce and Communication are reflected through all Higher Kinnerton Community Council (HKCC) activities and with the changes happening in local government and the need for communities to work together to support and deliver community services, the Community Council set about prioritising links with its residents to communicate, engage and deliver.

The new website has undergone several redevelopments but members are satisfied that the site of today reflects the Community Council's core strategies of Community, Commerce and

Communication. The site is easy to navigate for residents and anyone who is interested in finding out more about Higher Kinnerton and what goes on in the village. All the members have their profiles on the site so residents know who they are.

All the Council's statutory documents as well as back copies of its newsletter are loaded and easy to locate. The local businesses who support "Our Village" the newsletter have a presence on the site with a link to their own business website if they have one, as well as providing a web 'presence' for community groups and local institutions such as the school, church and village hall.

Not all local residents are members of Facebook but still want to see what is happening on the village Facebook page, so the Council has provided a link where they can access the site without having to actually join.

Members are committed to continuous improvement and the next stage of website development, as well as making it always relevant, is to examine how HKCC can make it more user friendly for visually impaired people by the addition of an "accessibility tab". Members are proud of the HKCC's communication strategy and believe what HKCC has achieved reflects our ambition to be a truly inclusive community accessible to all.

For further information contact: Liz Corner, Clerk Higher Kinnerton Community Council

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Telephone: 01244 660277

Website: <https://www.higherkinnerton.org.uk>

Highly Commended Entries:

Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn Community Council

Penarth Town Council

We are proud to be one of the largest and most experienced website providers to the local council sector



Smaller Councils

We will collaborate with you to provide a specific website package so you can fully comply with all your legal requirements.

Our websites ensure ease of use while we provide on-going help and support.



Data Backup

How would you cope if you lost all your data?

We will support you in ensuring this never happens with our secure automatic hourly back ups. All your data will be stored in UK data centres.



Larger Councils

We want you to join our pack and for your council and community to flourish as a result of our partnership.

We offer fully responsive websites with clear navigation; designed in full collaboration with you and our friendly team.



Vision ICT were amazing, they guided us through the process in an easy going but highly professional manner. They were, and are, a delight to work with. We cannot recommend them highly enough. Superb professionals who know their stuff with an easy going manner that made the whole process an enjoyable one.



Best Community Engagement Initiative Award Winner: Borth Community Council



The community of Borth is susceptible to coastal storm surges and catchment flooding with properties at risk from flooding, regular high winds and even a local bog wild fire. The community highly value this challenging location, to continue to flourish here it needs to be a resilient community.

The Community Emergency Plan was born out of the need to take responsibility for its own protection against the elements which in turn helps to create a more resilient community. The Plan is about actions to take in an emergency, working in partnership and building a community network, it has become an effective means for engaging with the community.

Borth Community Council has taken the lead in developing the Plan but in conjunction with Natural Resources Wales, Coastguard, RNLI, Ceredigion County Council and the community. This has brought professional organisations and residents, their skills, experience and local knowledge together for a common local cause.

Community engagement nurtures a sense of ownership, feedback is actively encouraged to ensure the continually evolving Plan is right.

Methods used to engage with the community:-

- Public meetings, Community Warden meetings, Drop-in sessions
- Councillors as members of local community groups e.g. WI, Senior Citizens, Church
- Community Emergency Warden network
- Noticeboards, Community Council Facebook page and Community website <http://www.borthcommunity.info/index.php/emergency-plan>
- Attending Community Engagement evenings
- Community Wardens and Community residents email groups
- Text alert system (during power/landline cuts)

The Plan has brought the community together.

For further information contact: Margaret Walker, Clerk Borth Community Council

Telephone: 01970871932

Email : mirellaborth@googlemail.com

Website: www.borthcommunity.info/

Highly Commended Entry:

Higher Kinnerton Community Council

Best Tourism Initiative Award

Winner: Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council



Pembrey & Burry Port are ex-industrial coal ports. There was once a large coal fired power station and a zinc works. The area around the harbour was crowded with railway sidings. More recently, the zinc works disappeared, as did the power station and grant funding enabled the conversion of the docks into an attractive floating harbour.

Pembrey & Burry Port is in an attractive setting, has stunning views of the Gower peninsula and has an interesting history (Amelia Earhart landed here after crossing the Atlantic) – but there are many other pretty harbours along this coast. Pembrey & Burry Port needed a unique selling point to re-invent it as a tourist destination.

To rejuvenate the area, the Town Council considered improvement to the outlook through attractive floral displays. These proved to be very popular and were well received by local residents, businesses and visitors.

Following on from this, the Town Council felt that tourism would benefit from formal recognition and subsequent promotion of the impressive floral displays. Therefore, it successfully entered Wales in Bloom for the first time in 2013. Since this time, the Council has triumphed, with Pembrey & Burry Port winning the Town Category in the 2014, 2015 and 2016 campaigns.

As a result of its success, Pembrey & Burry Port was honoured to be nominated as the Wales finalist in the Town category to the RHS Britain in Bloom 2015 campaign and has again been nominated as the Wales finalist in the 2017 competition.

Owners of local hotels, guest houses, caravan sites, restaurants and public houses have all experienced an increase in trade and have reported very positive comments from their guests about the floral displays. During the last two years there has been a new public house, new restaurants and a new caravan site. Numerous sources indicate that tourism is “blossoming”.

For further information contact: Melanie Carroll-Cliffe Clerk Pembrey & Burry TC

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Website: <http://www.pembreyburryport-tc.gov.uk/>

Best Sustainability Initiative Award

Winner: Chepstow Town Council

Sponsored by Rigby Taylor



For the last 10 years the Town Council has provided innovative support for the Fair Trade Forum which began in 2006. The initiative has demonstrated a sustainable choice meaning that the Town can meet people's needs today without compromising the needs of people in the future enhancement of its cultural heritage, creativity and innovation.

Chepstow Fair Trade Forum works in partnership with the Council having made linkages all over the UK and across the globe with similar groups. Work has been delivered over 10 years to make fair trade in Chepstow a reality. However working with the Fair Trade movement and growers across the world has helped to shape and influenced the vibrancy and resilience of Chepstow.

The Fair Trade Forum is a key aspect of sustainable tourism it aims to introduce initiatives that help small business with fair trade products to prosper and grow. It raises the awareness of the importance of Fair trade and it aims to maximise the benefits from tourism for stakeholders through mutually beneficial and equitable partnerships between national and international stakeholders. It also supports the right of indigenous communities, whether involved in tourism to participate as equal stakeholders within the Town.

To that end this year and every year Chepstow has hosted various fair trade Growers from across the world and this year hosted Nimrod Wambette, a coffee grower from Uganda to help support and promote his products. The Council awards a small grant each year to support the Fair Trade Forum and attends regular steering group meetings, hosts the group's activities on its website and offers advice and support.

This year the Town celebrated with a unique flag flying ceremony with a fair trade flag was flown from the council's offices.

The full presentation is available on the One Voice Wales Website www.onevoicewales.org.uk under Conferences

For further information contact: Lucy Allen, Deputy Clerk Chepstow TC

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Website: www.chepstow.co.uk

Introducing Flora Native

Flora Native is a diverse and comprehensive range of native UK provenance wildflower mixtures that create, restore, and enhance distinct habitats and landscapes. Specialist grasses complete the collection.

- All wild flora are of native or naturalised origin ensuring quality, reliability and performance
- Encompass landscape architect specifications
- Mixtures of wildflowers and grasses, 100% wildflowers and 100% specialist grasses
- Selected species available as plug plants, bulbs and wildflower turf
- Features flowering species found in the RHS 'Perfect for Pollinators' list
- Ecological habitats, reclamation, SuD's, urban landscapes, green roofs, road and rail, golf courses, country estates.....
- Acidic to alkaline, coastal to clay, wetland to woodland

The Flora Native Collection

Wildflowers 20/80

- ✦ Traditional mixtures containing 20% wildflowers and 80% grasses
- ✦ Mixes for a diverse range of ecological habitats
- ✦ Restore, create and enhance the landscape

14 different mixtures available including Acidic, Chalk & Limestone, Clay, Coastal & Salt, Sandy and Alluvial Loams as well as Wetlands, Hedgerows, Woodland, Flowering Lawns and species rich in Nectar and Pollen.

Natural Meadows

- ✦ Gentle grassland mixtures containing 95% grasses and 5% wildflowers
- ✦ Grasses provide texture and attractive seed heads
- ✦ Pastel shades of wildflowers provide a glimpse of colour and added interest

3 different mixtures including those for Impoverished Soils, Chalk & Limestone and Summer Flowering.

Wildflowers 100%

- ✦ Ideal where a diversity and abundance of wildflowers would enhance the landscape
- ✦ Restores bio-diversity
- ✦ Creates swaths of colour through cultivable soil in established grassland
- ✦ Ideal where there is a competitive seed bank of grasses already present.

3 different mixtures available including Cornfield Annuals, Green Roof Installation and for Habitat Restoration and Enrichment.

Specialist Grasses 100%

- ✦ Companion sowing with 100% wildflower mixtures
- ✦ Ideal for specific soil types and environmental influences
- ✦ Habitat restoration
- ✦ Soil stabilisation

7 different mixtures available including soils that are Wet or Dry, Heathland/Acid or Chalk/Limestone soils as well as Coastal and Woodland areas.

RT
rigby taylor

Freephone 0800 424919

Web site: www.rigbytaylor.com

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Best Youth Engagement Initiative Award

Winner: Pontardawe Town Council



The Town Council was one of the first Council's in Wales to elect Youth Representatives to the Council. We are now in our fourth year. Our Youth Representatives can be aged from 15 years old and perform all the functions of our other Councillors but without the right to vote.

Our Youth Representatives have revolutionised our decision making on issues that affect Youth in the Community by providing the views and problem solving capabilities of another generation.

They liaise with their peers and bring back to Council the views and ideas of the next generation.

Our Youth Representatives created and introduced an interactive web site to replace the dated 'Out of School Activities' Brochure which provided details of activities for children and young people in the community. The change of media was not only very cost effective but also involved the young people in the creation of the art work for the web site and provided the information in a format that would appeal to a younger generation. This is an evolving project that we hope can be linked to local school intranets and that has already been expanded to provide information for seniors and the disabled in the area.

The Youth PACT is also to be championed by our Youth Representatives in partnership with the local Police Force.

As well as improving the Council we feel that the Youth Representatives themselves have gained a great deal in personal growth from being included in the discussions on community matters. Young people have a great deal to give to projects and our Youth Representatives have always risen to the challenge.

Our longest serving Youth Representative Harri Evans-Mason whose final term of office finished on the 31st December 2016 has taken part in seminars, been part of the team to create the 'Youth Representative Guide', created the 'Go Valley' site and is now employed by the 'Children's Rights Unit' to support and encourage Youth Representation in other Organisations.

See 'Go Valley' on <http://www.govalley.info/>

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Best Local Council Service Award Winner: Solva Community Council



The need for a fully integrated community based domiciliary service was identified by Solva Community Council as early as October 2013. The aim was to improve well-being and quality of life, by: enabling residents (often with multiple morbidities) to remain in their own homes; eradicating isolation and loneliness; and providing support and respite for carers. To this aim Solva Care was set up under the auspices of the Community Council to concentrate on mental, physical and social health whilst other local initiatives would attend to the natural and built environment, education, and leisure.

Solva Care is considered to be a unique and innovative project in the UK. It is often described as a 'bottom up' project because *it was set up by the community, in response to the expressed needs of the community*, to enhance health and wellbeing. It was planned to set up a social enterprise consisting of a voluntary service which would provide support, and to integrate this service with domiciliary or 'hands on' care..

A year after launch, funding had been secured, a Coordinator appointed and volunteers identified and trained. Questionnaire returns show the voluntary service to be a resounding success. Following a meeting with Government Officials, Solva Care is now in a position to successfully address the barriers which have slowed progress in the domiciliary care side of the service .

These barriers concern rules on engagement and recruitment that community initiatives should be mindful of.

Since the Pilot Project was formally launched in October 2015, thirty volunteers have been recruited, trained and DBS checked. They deliver, on average, a total of 150 hours a month of rapid and responsive support to over 40 clients and their carers. The most common types of support provided are respite care, transport and pop in visits, with the rest of the support being many and varied, for example, shopping, collecting prescriptions, dog walking, and accompanying clients on walks and events. The clients that benefit are the most ill and vulnerable in the community and residents living with dementia and their carers. Without Solva Care, many would not be able to live independent lives in their own homes.

For further information contact : Bruce Payne, Clerk Solva Community Council

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Highly Commended Entries:-
Llandough Community Council
Barry Town Council
Tredegar Town Council

Special Award for Heritage

Llangollen Town Council & Llantysilio Community Council



The Chain Bridge Refurbishment and Restoration Project aimed to restore and reopen the historic Chain Bridge situated at Berwyn within the Dee Valley. The first Chain Bridge was built in 1817 by Exuperius Pickering and it is believed that the subsequent bridges have reused these original chain links making it the oldest chain link bridge in the Western World.

In 2011 Llangollen Town Council and Llantysilio Community Council purchased the bridge from the hotel after years of neglect. The councils were successful in gaining funds from the HLF, Cadwyn Clwyd, WREN, Denbighshire County Council and the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB. The project started in November 2013 and was expected to run for 9 months; however it ran for a total of 18 months.

In November 2013 the project began work to engage children, young people and members of the community with the project through various activities such as Bridge to Schools, writing a book on the bridge and various art projects. The restoration work took place between October 2014 and May 2015. The bridge was finally reopened to the public at an opening ceremony on the 28th May 2015.

The project was successful in reopening the bridge, retaining as much of the original fabric as possible. All members of the community, from the young to the elderly, every one of all abilities were made to feel welcome to the project. This has been shown with over 250 school pupils involved in activities, 24 memories collected and over 100 people attending talks on the bridge's history and the project. Over 750 people like our Facebook page and we have received messages from around the world in support of the project.

The Project has helped to show the councils and the community what can be achieved through partnership working and restored and reopened an iconic and well-loved historic site in the Dee Valley.

Funding was secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund, WREN, Cadwyn Clwyd, Denbighshire County Council and the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to enable restoration and ensure preservation of the site for future generations.

The project was delivered by Llangollen Town Council a relatively small council having a precept of only £87,800 at the time. The refurbished bridge has been recognised both locally and nationally having received awards for the Llangollen Civic Society and the Chairman's special award for heritage from the Wales Cymru Institution of Civil Engineers in 2016

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ABOUT ONE VOICE WALES

One Voice Wales is the national representative organisation for Community and Town Councils in Wales. The vision subscribed to by One Voice Wales is:

“Working with local councils in Wales to shape places communities want to live in”

One Voice Wales aims to support Community and Town Councils in achieving this vision and has adopted the following Mission Statement to guide its work:

“To represent the interests of Community and Town Councils; raise awareness and understanding of this primary tier of government; and work collaboratively with our partners to ensure the sector contributes fully to the goal of developing dynamic and sustainable communities in Wales.”

One Voice Wales wishes to thank all those who attended the Conference and a special thank you to all those who submitted an entry for the Innovative Practice Awards 2017

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