

INFORM

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Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil • Gweithredu Gwirfoddol Merthyr Tudful

February 2026

VAMT's Volunteer Recognition Awards Ceremony returns for 2026!

**Nominations
now OPEN !!!!**

The event is taking place at
**6.00pm on
Thursday 25th June
at the Bessemer Hotel
and will be hosted by
ITV Wales Rural Affairs
Correspondent,
Hannah Thomas.**

Application and guidance forms
for each of the categories can be
found on the VAMT website:

[https://vamt.net/en/volunteering/
volunteer-recognition-awards-2026-
nominate-now/](https://vamt.net/en/volunteering/volunteer-recognition-awards-2026-nominate-now/)

**Closing date for applications
is 12 noon, Friday 10th April**

This year there are 6 categories:-

**Young Volunteer of the Year
(25 and under Award)**

**Volunteer of the Year
(26 and over Award)**

Community Group/ Charity of the Year

Trustee Award

Outstanding Contribution Award

Sports Volunteer of the Year (This award, in partnership with VAMT, will be a closed nomination with each of the monthly Active Merthyr Volunteer of the Month winners put forward automatically for the award. This Award is designed to recognise and reward those volunteers across Merthyr Tydfil who are the backbone of community sport. Nominated by the general public, winners are chosen by a panel each month and presented with their award out in the settings in which the volunteer).



Bridging the Gap Youth – Merthyr Celebrates 20 Years of Making a Difference

A big shout out to our past and present members!

This September, Bridging the Gap Youth – Merthyr (BGY) will proudly celebrate its **20th birthday**, marking two decades of dedication, inclusion and community impact. To celebrate this milestone, we are inviting **past and present members, families and supporters** to join us for a special anniversary event at **The Hills Plymouth Cricket Club, Pentrebach, on 18th September 2026**.

Founded on **18th September 2006**, Bridging the Gap Youth – Merthyr has been a fundamental provision within the local community. As the first **organisation of its kind in Merthyr**, BGY was established to provide an afterschool and holiday club for children and young people aged **3 to 19** with additional and complex needs.



Our name, *Bridging the Gap Youth – Merthyr*, reflects our core mission: **to bridge the gap in youth activities and opportunities for young people**, ensuring they feel included, supported and valued.



Our **afterschool club** runs five days a week, offering meaningful play opportunities in a **warm, safe and stimulating environment**. Alongside this, our **holiday clubs** provide continued support and enrichment during school breaks, giving families reassurance and children consistency, fun and friendship.



Building on our success, BGY has recently expanded its provision to include support for adults aged **19 and over**. Our ***Moving Forward over-19s*** group helps reduce loneliness and isolation by providing opportunities to socialise with peers. The group meets every **Thursday during term time from 10.00am to 2.00pm**, offering engaging, age-appropriate activities such as arts and crafts, activity workshops and cookery sessions.



Today, Bridging the Gap Youth – Merthyr continues to grow and now employs **20 dedicated staff members**, all committed to providing high-quality care, support and uplifting experiences for children, young people and adults across our community.

As we celebrate 20 years of Bridging the Gap Youth – Merthyr, we look forward to welcoming familiar faces, sharing memories, and celebrating the journey we have taken together – and the many more years still to come.

BGY is based in Jerusalem Church, Castle Street, Pentrebach CF48 4BN.

If you are a past member and would like to join our 20th birthday celebrations, or if you are interested in registering for our afterschool club, holiday club or Over 19's provision, please contact Lisa Clack, Project Manager, on 07852 766928.



**NOMINATIONS ARE NOW OPEN
for the
ACADEMY OF SUCCESS 2026 AWARDS**

**The event will be taking place on
Thursday 18th June 2026 at
Merthyr Tydfil Football Club**

The awards were established to recognise and celebrate the achievements of young people 11 to 25 years of age throughout the borough.

The closing date for all applications is
FRIDAY 27th MARCH 2026.

Nomination forms are available from Emma Bagnall, you can contact her at eb@smt.org.uk


RNID RNID Drop-in Sessions in Merthyr Tydfil Support for NHS Hearing Aid Users

Do you use NHS hearing aids? RNID is here to help you get the most out of them! Our free **drop-in sessions** provide practical support and advice for anyone with hearing loss or tinnitus.


What's on offer?

- NHS hearing aid cleaning and tubing replacement
- Free replacement hearing aid batteries
- Free hearing checks
- Pairing hearing aids with mobile phone apps
- Information on assistive devices and technology
- Guidance on accessing local support and services
- Tips for managing hearing loss and tinnitus
- Communication advice

When and Where?


 The Town Centre Hub
3 Newmarket Walk, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8EL

 **Last Thursday of every month**

 **11:00am – 1:00pm**
No appointment needed – just pop in!

For more details:

 **contact@rnid.org.uk**

 **0800 808 0123**

2 wish

2wish is a dedicated bereavement charity providing vital support to anyone affected by the sudden and unexpected death of a child or young person aged 25 and under. Founded in 2012 following the tragic loss of her son George and husband Paul, Rhian Mannings established 2wish to ensure that no one faces such a devastating experience alone.

Who 2wish Support

2wish serves a wide and inclusive community. Support is available to:

- Immediate and extended family members
- Friends and colleagues
- Witnesses and first responders
- Professionals impacted through their work
- Individuals affected by historic bereavement with no time limit on accessing help
- And anyone else affected in Wales, or within our serviceable areas in England

2wish's Services

2wish provides a range of support services that include:

- Immediate support within 48 hours of referral
- Memory boxes and bereavement rooms in hospitals
- Counselling and complementary therapies
- Focus support groups, residential weekends, and events
- Specialist support services for children & young people and professionals affected by sudden death in young people through their work

These services ensure that those affected understand what will happen in the days, weeks, and months after their loss, with 2wish acting as a bridge between families, hospitals, police, and support networks.

For more information, please contact Gaynor Davies at gaynor@2wish.org.uk



Supporting Brighter Futures: Services at Media Academy Cymru's Merthyr Office

From its base on Merthyr Tydfil's High Street, MACs (Est. 2010), Merthyr Office plays a vital role in supporting individuals, families, and communities across Merthyr County. The office hosts a range of specialist services designed to reduce harm, promote wellbeing, and empower people to make positive, long-term changes in their lives.

One of the key programmes is Positive Masculinity, which works with boys and men to explore healthy identities, emotional wellbeing, and respectful relationships. The service challenges harmful stereotypes around masculinity and creates safe spaces for participants to talk openly about emotions, peer pressure, anger, and mental health. By encouraging empathy, accountability, and positive role models, Positive Masculinity helps young men build confidence and develop healthier ways of relating to others and themselves.

The Braver Choices Weapons Programme focuses on preventing and reducing weapon-related harm. Working with young people at risk of carrying weapons, the programme explores the real-life consequences of violence while supporting safer decision-making. Through education, mentoring, and reflective work, Braver Choices empowers participants to manage conflict and choose alternatives to violence, helping to create safer communities across Merthyr County.



MACs Merthyr team also delivers the APVA (Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse) Service – Parallel Lives, supporting families experiencing harmful behaviours from young people towards parents or carers. Parallel Lives works with both young people and parents, offering practical tools, emotional support, and strategies to rebuild relationships. The service promotes understanding, communication, and boundaries, helping families reduce conflict and feel safer at home.

Another important programme is the 18–25 Young Adult Diversion Service, which supports young adults involved in or at risk of offending. The service addresses underlying issues such as mental health, substance use, housing, or unemployment. Through one-to-one support, advocacy, and access to local opportunities, young adults are encouraged to build stability, resilience, and a positive future.

For further information or for a referral form please contact
info@mediaacademycymru.wales

Merthyr Tydfil Camera Club

Photography is a pastime that unites people – so Merthyr Tydfil Camera Club is a wonderful place to meet new and like-minded friends and have great fun and with activities that will improve your physical and mental wellbeing. It could even help you take better photographs!

Founded in 1938 as the Merthyr and District Camera Club, the club has undergone various name changes over the years. At its peak, the club had a membership of up to sixty enthusiastic photographers. Although there are fewer members now, their enthusiasm is stronger than ever!

Everyone is welcome, whether you are young or old or new to the club. Feel free to join us on any Wednesday evening and get to know our members. You can find details of our programme on the club's website (merthycameraclub.co.uk) under the 'Club's Programme' tab. Plus, your first month of membership is completely free.

Our club meets every Wednesday at 7.00pm in the Cefn Community Centre, New Church Street, Cefn Coed-Y-Cymmer, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 2NA which is on the north side of Merthyr Tydfil, and normally finishes around 9.00pm.



Although we are not set up as a teaching camera club, you will find our members extremely helpful in offering advice and encouragement on all aspects of using a camera and producing a final print or digital projected image.



Throughout the year we run various workshops covering all aspects of photography, including subjects like Macro photography, Portrait photography, and using Photo Editing software. These evenings are conducted by our very own members who have knowledge in a particular subject or field, or we have Guest speakers in to give us all expert advice.

Internal and External Photographic Competitions are a big part of the club for those who wish to participate. We have at least four internal competitions where members can provide up to three colour prints, three monochrome prints, three colour PDI's and three monochrome PDIs. These are judged by club members which makes for a lively evening of viewing other members images. We also enter external competitions against other clubs throughout the year, this is also remarkably interesting as we get to see what kind of work is being produced by photographers at other clubs, and how the various judges are receiving it.

Merthyr Tydfil Community Trust – Call for Applications

The Merthyr Tydfil Community Trust runs a small grants scheme that is open to small voluntary and community groups for any charitable purpose (excluding religious activities).

Grants awarded will not normally exceed £300. However, grants can be made up to £500 at the discretion of the trustees.

Applications can only be considered from organisations whose income in the last financial year was less than £10,000.

The application must be for an activity based in the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil.

Application forms are available from Ian Davy, email ian.davy@hotmail.co.uk or phone 07966 698017.



The deadline for applications is **Friday 5th June 2026.**

Fundraising successes for Merthyr Tydfil Community Trust

The Trust recently held a fundraising quiz night which raised an excellent £775. This will be added to the Trust's funds and distributed to small community groups in the Borough.



Well done to the quiz winners (pictured) who were Absolutely Fabulous from Citizens Advice Merthyr Tydfil. A very big thank you to the West End Bowls Club for hosting us and to the fabulous quiz masters, Clive and Simeon.

Also, thanks to everyone who donated raffle prizes, including Casa Bianca, Crown Inn, Koz, Aberglais Inn, Tesco Merthyr, Glen Jones (Melrose IT), Rio's Hairdressers, Gerald Jones MP and Dawn Bowden MS.

In addition, the Trust were delighted to receive £267.86 from Tesco's monthly book sale in their Merthyr Tydfil store.



Eich llais mewn iechyd | Your voice in health
a gofal cymdeithasol | and social care

Llais is the national, independent body set up by the Welsh Government to give the people of Wales a stronger voice in their health and social care services.

LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Child and Adolescent Mental Health and Neurodevelopmental Services

Public Event for young people (age 14-16)

Llais is bringing together young people and experts to talk about Child and Adolescent Mental Health and Neurodevelopmental Services

Whether you're receiving mental health or neurodevelopmental support or just curious about services, and don't know where to start, this event is for you.

Join our interactive conversation at The Orbit Centre, Merthyr Tydfil for an in-person session.

 **Mon 30 March**

 **9.30am–2pm**

 Orbit Business Centre, Merthyr Tydfil

Follow us or get in touch for details:

 01443 405830

 ctm@llaiscymru.org

 www.llaiscymru.org

Llais yw'r corff cenedlaethol, annibynnol a sefydlwyd gan Lywodraeth Cymru i roi llais cryfach i bobl Cymru yn eu gwasanaethau iechyd a gofal cymdeithasol.

GWRANDO AR LEISIAU POBL IFANC

Gwasanaethau Iechyd Meddwl a Niwroddatblygiadol Plant a Phobl Ifanc

Digwyddiad Cyhoeddus i bobl ifanc (14-16 oed)

Mae Llais yn dod â phobl ifanc ac arbenigwyr ynghyd i siarad am Wasanaethau Iechyd Meddwl Plant a Phobl Ifanc a Niwroddatblygiadol

P'un a ydych chi'n derbyn cymorth iechyd meddwl neu niwroddatblygiadol neu ddim ond yn chwifrydig am wasanaethau, a ddim yn gwybod ble i ddechrau, y digwyddiad hwn yw'r un i chi.

Ymunwch â'n sgwrs ryngweithiol yng Nghanolfan Orbit, Merthyr Tudful am sesiwn wyneb yn wyneb.

 **Dydd Llun 30 Mawrth**

 **9.30yb–2yh**

 Canolfan Fusnes Orbit, Merthyr Tudful

Dilynwch ni neu cysylltwch am fanylion:

 01443 405830

 ctm@llaiscymru.org

 www.llaiscymru.org

Volunteer with RNID – Make a Difference!

RNID Supporting people who are deaf, have hearing loss or tinnitus



FEEL GOOD VOLUNTEERING

Make a valuable difference to people in your local area who are deaf, have hearing loss or tinnitus.

RNID is looking for volunteers in Merthyr Tydfil and surrounding areas. By volunteering, you'll make a valuable difference to people who are deaf, have hearing loss, or tinnitus.

Volunteering is flexible, rewarding, and a great way to give back to your community. You'll help at local drop-in sessions, provide support, and make a real impact.

Find out more and sign up at:

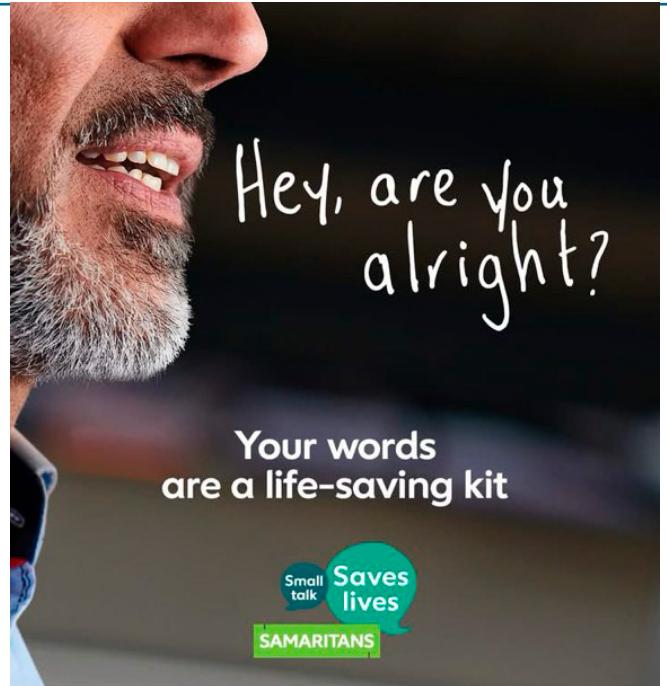


rnid.org.uk/volunteering



0800 808 0123

RNID



In partnership with  

The South Wales Valleys Samaritans

The South Wales Valleys Samaritans Hub has been working from an office in the Voluntary Action Centre since 2018. Founded in 2015 as a project to encourage help seeking behaviour in the South Wales Valleys, we have developed in to a Hub with around 35 volunteers.

Samaritans was originally started in 1953 as 'the fourth emergency service' for the suicidal. Our mission remains to reduce death by suicide. We do this by non judgmental listening and we receive around 5 million calls per year nationally. We have phones in our office in VAMT, but we were founded with the aim of taking our service into the community as much as possible with a variety of outreach and community based activities.

We are always looking for volunteers and, if you think that this work might interest you please look at 'Becoming a Volunteer' on the Samaritans website:- www.samaritans.org - and contact us, either by phoning Martin on **0755 3118799** or by emailing SouthWalesValleys.Recruitment@samaritans.org

Volunteer With Merthyr District Scouts – Make a Real Difference



Merthyr District Scouts continues to grow and inspire young people across our community—and we rely on the enthusiasm, commitment, and skills of local volunteers to make it all happen. Whether it's helping to run activities, supporting other volunteers, or shaping the direction of the district, every role helps young people gain valuable skills for life.

We're now looking for more adults to join our district team, and there's a place for everyone.

We're Recruiting a New District Chair

Merthyr District Scouts is currently seeking a dedicated **District Chair** to lead the District Executive Committee. This important role supports good governance, encourages positive decision making, and helps ensure the district is well organised and thriving.

You don't need a Scouting background—just a fair, organised, and supportive approach, along with a desire to help the district be the best it can be.

Join a District Team – Flexible Opportunities for Every Skillset

We're also looking for people to join and support our various District Teams, including:

- **Programme Team** – supporting great activities and events across the district
- **Volunteer Experience Team** – welcoming and supporting adult volunteers
- **Growth & Development Team** – helping more young people access Scouting
- **Support & Operations Team** – assisting with admin, communications, logistics, and facilities

Volunteering is **completely flexible**. You can give an hour a month, help on one project, or take on a more regular role—whatever fits your lifestyle.



Earn Tempo Time Credits Through Volunteering

By joining the Merthyr District Team, volunteers are **eligible for Tempo Time Credits**. These are thank you rewards you can earn for the time you give. They can be used for a variety of activities and experiences, such as:

- **Leisure and fitness sessions**
- **Cinema tickets**
- **Family days out**
- **Arts and cultural events**
- **Discounts at participating local and national venues**

It's a great way to enjoy new experiences while giving something back.

Get Involved

Volunteering with Scouts is fun, flexible, and hugely rewarding. You'll meet new people, build your own skills, and make a lasting difference to young people in Merthyr.

If you're interested or would like an informal chat, we'd love to hear from you.

Contact: merthyrscouts@btinternet.com

The HOPE Project – Age Cymru’s independent advocacy project



Could you be an advocate?

Age Cymru’s HOPE Project delivers independent advocacy for older people (50+) and carers across Wales. HOPE (Helping others participate and engage) is a partnership project between; Age Cymru, Age Cymru local partners and Age Connects Wales partners across the whole of Wales. HOPE is funded by Welsh Government under the Sustainable Social Services Grant until the end of March 2027.

Founded in 2020, this exciting project supports people to; engage, participate, gain information, have their voices heard, understand their rights, make choices, be involved, share experiences, raise awareness of advocacy, and develop skills and knowledge.

HOPE aims to support people at an early stage in their issues or concerns to prevent them slipping into crisis.

In 2025, the HOPE Project was awarded the Advocacy Quality Performance Mark (QPM) from the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi). This has been achieved due to the excellent support offered to older people by Age Cymru’s HOPE and Dementia Advocacy teams. The QPM is the UK’s only independent quality performance mark for organisations offering independent advocacy; an essential service for people who need support to express their needs and have increased choice and control in their lives.

Louise Hughes, Head of Safeguarding and Advocacy at Age Cymru said: “We’re delighted to have been awarded the QPM for another three years and that we’ve been recognised for the hard work and quality of our services. We’re proud of the work we do, and the person led approaches of all our staff and volunteers.”

Gail Petty, QPM Manager and Lead for Advocacy and Rights at NDTi said: “The Advocacy Quality Performance Mark is only awarded to advocacy organisations who can demonstrate that they are providing excellent services to people often experiencing challenging situations in their lives. It indicates that they have the training and policies in place to ensure people’s rights are upheld and their preferences are heard and responded to.”

The service wouldn’t be possible without our team of amazing Volunteer Advocates; their dedication and compassion to have allowed HOPE to support over 350 people in the last year alone.

We always have opportunity for more people to join us as Volunteer Advocates. No prior experience is needed – we will provide an in-depth advocacy training package to equip volunteers with the skills and knowledge needed to advocate for HOPE clients.

Advocacy volunteering can be delivered either virtually, (through telephone or video calls) or in-person (at community spaces or the client’s home). We can be flexible and support you to volunteer in a way that works best for you.

If you are interested in volunteering as an Advocate, or if you feel you may benefit from the support of an Advocate, please get in touch. To contact the team, email advocacy@agecymru.org.uk

The Three Valleys Community Rail Partnership

The Three Valleys Community Rail partnership, which is hosted by VAMT and funded by Transport for Wales, are pleased to say that as of January 2026, they are now an accredited partnership with Community Rail Network and the Department of Transport. Thank you to everyone who has supported us through the process.



Partneriaeth Cymunedol
Rheilffyrdd Y Tri Chwm
Three Valleys Community
Rail Partnership



Community Rail
Accredited Partnership
2025-26

If any of our members are interested in being part of this exciting Partnership please contact verity.lewis@vamt.net

Summary of upcoming funding and training opportunities


 March

Wednesday 11 March

Cwmpas – Media Literacy Training (In person)

 10:00am – 12:00pm


 VAMT

 To book a place, please email:
emily.whiteman-cranston@vamt.net

Please share this opportunity with anyone who might benefit.


Monday 24 March

ARA – “Bet You Can Help” Level 2 Award (In Person)

 9:30am – 4:00pm

 VAMT

 Accredited qualification (RSPH / Ofqual)


 To book a place, please email:
emily.whiteman-cranston@vamt.net

Please share this opportunity with anyone who might benefit.

New Welsh Government Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector

The Welsh Government has published the updated Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector. The Code sets out the principles and expectations for how public bodies should fund Third Sector organisations in Wales. It aims to strengthen partnership working, improve transparency, and ensure funding arrangements are fair and effective.

Organisations are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the new Code to understand how funding processes should operate.

 For more information and to access the full Code, visit:
[Welsh Government – Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector](#)



Are you interested in being a Voluntary Sector representative at Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Councils Scrutiny Committees?

Be vocal and help make a difference... Become a Co-opted Member on one of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's Scrutiny Committees.

Scrutiny is an umbrella term covering a wide range of roles with key legislative responsibility for:

- Holding the Cabinet to account
- Policy Review and Development
- Reviewing and scrutinising the performance of the Council and help drive improvements in services.
- External scrutiny

Overview and Scrutiny Committees help ensure local public services are delivered effectively and efficiently and have wide ranging powers to investigate areas of local interest.

Scrutiny can question decision makers, call in expert witnesses or hear evidence from other local stakeholders. Investigations are not restricted to Council run services, any area of interest to the local community may be investigated by scrutiny.

There are currently vacancies for Voluntary Sector Co-opted representative on three Scrutiny Committees.

- **Corporate Support and Resources Committee,**
- **Learning & Education,**
- **Social Services.**

If you are interested in learning more about the role and responsibilities of Voluntary Sector Scrutiny Committee members contact

karen.vowles@vamt.net



WcVA
CgGC

Baromedr Cymru: Unlock sector insights to support your decision making

WCVA has launched Baromedr Cymru – the new Welsh voluntary sector barometer

What is Baromedr Cymru?

Baromedr Cymru is a new rolling data source designed to give an up-to-date, accurate picture of what's really happening across the voluntary sector in Wales.

Why sign up?

By taking part, your organisation will gain:

- Personalised data each quarter to support evidence-based decision making.
- Access to a sector-wide dashboard showing key trends and how they are changing over time.

What's involved?

Participation is simple. Each quarter, a nominated staff member or volunteer from your organisation completes a short survey – taking just 10–15 minutes.

How does it benefit you?

For a small investment of time, you'll receive insights that could make a real difference – helping you plan, adapt, and respond to emerging challenges and opportunities.

<https://wcva.cymru/views/get-sector-insights-to-support-your-decision-making/>

Should you need support to complete the survey, please contact karen.vowles@vamt.net or emily.whiteman-cranston@vamt.net

You Said, We Did – Training & Awareness Sessions

Last year we asked members what training and awareness sessions they needed to maintain the resilience of their organisation and support the delivery of their services.

Based on the responses received we delivered training and information sessions on the following:

First Aid, Paediatric First Aid, Business Planning, Data Protection, NSPCC Speak up Campaign, Disclosure & Barring Service Disclosure Workshop, ARA Youth Gambling and Gaming Harms Prevention training, Committee Skills and Safeguarding Training.

We also invited a number of funders to deliver Meet the Funder sessions to ensure that you are able to access the information directly from the funder. These included **Welsh Government Community Facilities Programme, Easy Fundraising, Sport Wales, Lloyds Foundation - Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation's Programme, Coalfields Regeneration Trust, Merthyr Valley Homes, Coalfields Regeneration Trust – Breaking Barriers Fund, National Churches Trust, National Lottery & Awards for All.**

For the coming year, 2026/27, we will be looking to develop funding surgeries with National Lottery and Awards for All. This will be taking place in the VAMT offices and face to face appointments can be made. We will also continue with the Meet the Funder sessions.

We will be planning more training sessions based on your needs as members. However, we need to know how we can help you and your organisation to thrive in 2026!

Contact karen.vowles@vamt.net or emily.whiteman-cranston@vamt.net to discuss your training and development needs.

Community comes together to support local centre

On Monday 26th January, a brilliant mix of volunteers came together to support Cefn Coed Community Centre. The focus of the morning was decluttering-clearing out old and unused items to help create a more workable, welcoming space for the future.

Over 30 volunteers attended. This group was made up of individuals that currently use the centre, members of the local community and a team from EE.

A huge mention goes to Sian Quinan, who spearheaded the idea and generously volunteered her time, working alongside community centre staff and Lowri from VAMT to bring the morning to life.

A heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers who gave their time and enthusiasm – your efforts made a real difference in just a few hours.

If you'd like to help out and volunteer at Cefn Coed community centre, please contact Lisa on cefncoedcommunitycentre2013@gmail.com



CTM Mental Health Forum

At the Voluntary Action Centre, 1pm-3pm
Dates to be confirmed

Third Sector Mental Health Forum

The Forum is a sub-group of the Together for Mental Health Partnership Board and is a network comprising mental health third sector organisations, service users, carers and the statutory sector to enhance partnership working and co-production across Cwm Taf Morgannwg, with the aim to influence positive change in services provided for people with mental health issues.

To join the Forum or for more information contact sharon.jones@vamt.net

Volunteer Managers' Forum

At the Voluntary Action Centre, 10am - 12pm
Wednesday 18th March
Wednesday 15th July

Established in 2008, the Forum serves to support third sector organisations managing volunteers to ensure they have an opportunity to network, receive peer support, share best practice and access training and volunteer management development.

To join the Forum or for more information contact frances.barry@vamt.net

The Children, Young People & Families Forum

At the Voluntary Action Centre, 9.30am - 12pm
Thursday 12th March
Thursday 11th June

Initially established in 2004, the Forum has been running in its current format since 2022. It provides support to our member organisations delivering services for children, young people and families to come together on shared interests.

To join the Forum or for more information contact emily.whiteman-cranston@vamt.net

Food Prosperity Network

All meetings are via Teams at 10am - 11am
Wednesday 6th May • Wednesday 8th July

Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil was approached in Autumn 2018 by Food Sense Wales to establish a network, focused on food poverty in Merthyr Tydfil, a partnership approach involving third and statutory sectors.

Merthyr's Food Prosperity Network is an alliance of community groups and third sector organisations, as well as related stakeholders including public health professionals and National Food agencies such as Feeding Britain.

The Network has gone from strength to strength supporting affordable food provision such as Food Pantries, Big Bocs Bwyd and Food Banks to develop, support each other, share good practice, maximise resources and ensure a co-ordinated approach to supporting communities and families.

This was particularly evident during the pandemic and now during the ongoing cost of living crisis.

The Network meets quarterly online via Teams.

For more information on how to become part of this vibrant Network contact emily.whiteman-cranston@vamt.net

Health and Wellbeing Forum

At the Voluntary Action Centre, 10am - 12pm
Wednesday 20th May 2026
Wednesday 19th August 2026

This Forum is open to third sector colleagues and aims to provide a platform for providing third sector services operating locally and regionally. It further serves to ensure engagement with the sector around strategic developments within both Merthyr Tydfil County Borough and the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board area.

To join the Forum or for more information contact ian.Howell-Morgan@vamt.net

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INFORM, BLOG AND BULLETIN

We are always delighted to showcase the voices, experiences and knowledge of our members and wider community.



Contributions are welcome for:

- *Inform* magazine
- Our blog
- The VAMT Bulletin

Whether your piece is short and practical or more detailed, your contribution could inspire and support colleagues across the sector.

How to Submit Articles

To add anything to our Blog our Bulletin as well as being featured in the next edition of *Inform*, please email your article to frances.barry@vamt.net. *Please note the closing date for July's Inform will be Friday 19th June 2026.*

That's all from VAMT for now.

We value your feedback and suggestions. If you have any comments about this newsletter or ideas for future editions, please send them to info@vamt.net.

Voluntary Action Centre

89-90 Pontmorlais, High Street,
Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8UH

Tel: 01685 353900 • email: info@vamt.net

www.vamt.net



Cefnogi Trydydd
Sector Cymru
Third Sector
Support Wales

VAMT Team

Sharon Richards
Chief Officer

Laura Johnson
Business & Finance Manager

Claire Williams
Operations Manager

Frances Barry
Lead Officer – Volunteering
and Communications

Karen Vowles
Lead Officer –
Community Development

Karen Powell
Lead Officer - Health and Wellbeing

Lowri Hunt
Volunteering Officer

Sharon Jones
Mental Health Service User
Involvement Officer

Emily Whiteman-Cranston
Community Resilience Officer

Susan Jones
Community Co-ordinator

Ian Howell-Morgan
Community Co-ordinator

Laura Brosnan-James
Community Development Officer –
Invest Local Ynysowen Programme

Verity Lewis
Community Rail Partnership Officer

Diane Lewis
Business Support Officer

Board Members

Michael Ronan
Anne Roberts MBE
Kayleigh Nor-Val
Nicola Mahoney
Jeff Evans
Gareth Marshall
Julia Burgess
Ryan James
Victoria Winkler
Carol Evans

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Croesawir erthyglau nail ai'n ddwyieithog neu'n uniaith Gymraeg.