

## The Expert Patients Programme

- Do you have a long-term health condition, such as Heart Disease, Depression, Arthritis, Back Pain, Stress and Anxiety?
- Or are you a Carer?
- Would you like to learn how to self-manage, day to day and have a better quality of life?

We are running **Free, NHS**, 6 week, self- management courses (2½ hours a week) in many areas of the Vale of Glamorgan. The course aims to give people the confidence, skills and knowledge to improve the management of their condition, adopt healthier lifestyles, and regain control of their situation.

If you feel this would help you, call Carol to book your place on:

Tel. 02920 350620

Email: [carol.stingl@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:carol.stingl@wales.nhs.uk)

[www.eppwales.org](http://www.eppwales.org)

Thursday 10 March 2011, 10am to 12.30pm  
Lower Penarth Community Centre, Brockhill Way

Tuesday 7 June 2011, 10am to 12.30pm  
Barry Library

Saturday 3 September 2011, 10am to 12.30  
Barry Library

Wednesday 7 September 2011, 1.30 to 4pm  
Albert Road Church & Community Centre, Penarth

Tuesday 1 November 2011, 10am to 12.30  
Barry Library

**We also run a 6 week course specifically for Carers called 'Looking After Me'**

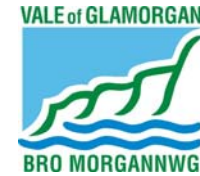
Tuesday 19 July 2011, 10am to 12.30pm  
Barry Library



## Join the Forum!

If you're interested in joining the Older People's Forum, please contact The Vale Older People's Forum, 1st Floor Fire Station, Port Road West, Barry CF62 3AZ or e-mail [admin@valeopf.org.uk](mailto:admin@valeopf.org.uk)

# The Herald



Spring 2011



Vale Older People's  
Strategy Forum  
Working For A  
Better Future



Edition 15

This publication has been made possible by funding provided by the Welsh Assembly Government to the Vale of Glamorgan Council

Welcome to The Herald! Keep up to date with the Strategy Forum

*Inside  
this issue:*

**Villages Around  
the Vale**

**Deafblind  
Cymru**

**Task Group  
Reports**

**Chairman's  
Report**

**Pleasures of  
Gardening**

**Bowel  
Screening  
Wales**

**Tools Get New  
Lease of Life**

**Safer Vale  
Partnership**

**Website News**

**Expert Patient  
Programme**

**Older People's  
Coordinator  
report**

## Forum Funding News

Members of the Vale of Glamorgan Older People's Forum attended a meeting at City Hall, Cardiff of Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February to discuss future funding of the Older People's forums in Wales.

Andrea Nicholas Jones Adult Social Services Policy Division, Health and Social Services Directorate General, Welsh Assembly made a presentation to the meeting. Older People's Coordinators from the Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff, Newport, Caerphilly, Port Talbot and Rhondda Cynon Taff were also attendance along with Wendy Burton Chairperson of the National Forum Partnership.



D.Warren WLGA.W.Burton  
Chair NPF.L.Wallis OPF.  
A.Nicholas Jones WAG.  
M.Edwards Chair OPF.

The meeting was chaired by David Warren Policy Officer (Older People and Ageing) Equalities Unit Welsh Local Government Association who informed the meeting that funding had been approved by the Welsh Assembly Government of £1million to be divided amongst the 22 Authorities in the Principality. This money would not be ring fenced but would go directly into the councils Revenue Support Grant. Although this is a cut on previous funding it was not as bad as was feared. It was hoped that pressure could be brought by the National Forum on councils to use this money for Older People's Strategies in their area. He said there would be a huge gap in the lives of older people if the forums did not continue. Wales is leading the way in the UK in this field.

The Co-ordinators of the forums who were present then gave a summary of future plans and aspirations for the coming months. There was a very positive feel to the meeting and all those present felt that the future was more assured.

## Welcome again Ladies and Gentlemen to the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of the Herald!

What a busy last six months we have had starting of with our Information day in November with the feed back it proved to be one of the largest attended, and some of the most prestigious speakers we have had for some time, they were so good we over ran time by 40 minutes. One of the highlight speakers was Mr. Andrew Bertie from Scambusters; there were also 25 organisations to support and advise members which also proved very successful.

My personal thanks to students of St. Cyres School Penarth, the Catering staff of the YMCA and to the VOGC staff Helen Moses and Shelly Best and our Coordinator John Porter whose help was very much appreciated. My Congratulations to Jane Weldon, Lynda Wallis and Joan Castle for completing their Microsoft Publisher training with VCVS, this training will enable them to be self sufficient when publishing this and future editions of The Herald.

The Transport, Health and Age Discrimination working sub groups continue to represent the over fifties agenda throughout the Vale, while the Housing Group has suspended operations during the period of stock transfer. The Forum is working on the Development plan for 2011 to 2113 which will guide us through the next two years. And the Vale of Glamorgan has just delivered a draft Community Strategy for 2011 – 2021. We have not yet had any information on Funding for year 2011 but we do hope that the Vale of Glamorgan even with the financial climate as it is help us sustain our financial needs to keep supporting you the members.

Due to the rising costs and changes in funding grants the Older People's Strategy Forum will no longer be able to mail future editions of the Herald to its' members homes. As a cost effective alternative we will use a number of distribution sites where you can collect your copy. We will give regular notice of distribution sites in libraries, G.P. surgeries and in local press and radio announcements. We are sorry to announce these changes but unfortunately at the present time this change is unavoidable.

**This years' A.G.M. will be held on the morning of Thursday 30th June 2011, in the Corporate Suite at the Civic Offices in Barry.**

Finally my thanks go to the Executive group members who have supported me over the last year and the Sub group members who have worked tirelessly and of course you the members thank you all

Mike Edwards Chairman of the Vale of Glamorgan Strategy Forum

## Age Concern Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan

"You Don't Know Until You Give It A Go Day" coming to a Leisure Centre near you

Age Concern Cardiff and the Vale and The Vale of Glamorgan Leisure Services would like to invite over 50's and their friends to pop in for a cup of tea and give a new activity a go.

These Free Open Access days will offer taster sessions of different activities that already run in the Vale of Glamorgan. Free Tea and Coffee will be available between 10.30am and 2.30pm, so if you're in the area, come along to:

**Cowbridge Leisure Centre on Wednesday the 9<sup>th</sup> March**  
**Barry Leisure Centre on Wednesday the 16<sup>th</sup> March**  
**Penarth (Cogan) Leisure Centre on Wednesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> March**

While at the event you can find out what's already happening in your community. There will be information on footpaths, cycle routes, private gyms, health spas and existing activity groups. You will have the opportunity to suggest new activities or changes that may help you attend existing ones.

Taster sessions in Nordic Walking, Bowls, Extend, Yoga, Belly Dancing, Badminton and A Photographic Challenge Walk plus many more. See local posters for each centres line up and times.

If you are over 60 why not bring proof of age, a swimsuit and towel to Barry or Penarth and have a free swim while you are there.

## Dates for your diaries

### Colcot Darby and Joan Club

Meet every Monday from 2pm - 4pm at St Davids Methodist Hall

At corner of Winston Rd and Colcot Rd

Come for tea and biscuits. Usually a visiting speaker/musician

Annual Summer Outing.

Contact Christine Deane on 01446 701537

### 'Chatterbox'

Coffee Morning meets every

Wednesday morning from 10.30am - 12 noon

At Croft Cottage, 127 South Road, Sully

(next to surgery)

All Welcome

### Coffee Morning

Each Thursday at 10.30am

At the Old School,

Sully

Everyone Welcome

## Age Discrimination Task Group

The group has had two meetings since the last issue of the Herald. In November the Adult Planning Operations manager within the Vale, gave an outline of the work being done with the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board to provide Adult Services. It is hoped that by working together duplication of services will be prevented and help to ensure more integrated services. Members of the group were to raise issues which were discussed at some length. The group will ask for a return talk later in the year for an update of how the integrated work is progressing.

The issue surrounding fuel poverty of older and vulnerable people was then discussed. Decision that the group support Age Cymru and Consumer Focus Wales Campaign to highlight fuel poverty issues in these vulnerable groups. This to include:

- Mandatory social tariffs for vulnerable older people on low incomes, disabled people, and people on income support/pension credit.
- Information on criteria for inclusion on social tariff is more readily available to the general public. i.e. more leaflets and 'paper information be made available'
- Establish whether those with slot/card meters are being disproportionately charged higher rates for their gas or electricity, and are not included in deals for customers.
- The group to write to all relevant parties outlining their concerns, and raising the above issues.
- A response is made by the group on the Government Consultation on Funding of Care and Support. This response was made by 28<sup>th</sup> January 2011 deadline.
- A letter was sent to Ministry of Justice, asking for an update of the consultation on the upper age limit of jury service, which closed in June 2010, a letter was also wrote on this issue to the Commissioner for Older People in Wales on this issue.
- The Health task group will be monitoring waiting times in doctor's surgeries. The Health group to report back to this group if evidence of age discretionary practice is found.

### Highlights of report for meeting in January 2011

Responses have been received from A.M. Jane Hutt on fuel poverty, which will raise our concerns with the Minister for Social Justice. Subsequently the group received a letter from Jane Davidson A.M. Minister for the Environment Sustainability and Housing with responses to our concerns, and an invitation to respond; which we have done. Correspondence from Alun Cairns M.P. for the Vale of Glamorgan who has written to the Energy and Climate Change Secretary to the raise the points the group has raised and asks for his consideration of the proposal, with a promise to write when he receives a response. Positive information received from ofgem and Age Cymru, who will now update their information to have a new section on pre-payment meters.

We have made a response to the proposed changes in the consultation on Disability Living Allowance. On the 15<sup>th</sup> February two representatives from the group attended the launch in Cardiff of the 'Coping with Cold' report on Responses to Fuel Poverty in Wales. Information on the report can be found at [www.bevanfoundation.org](http://www.bevanfoundation.org) Participants were able to ask questions to representatives of National Energy Action, Chair of Governments Advisory group on Fuel Poverty, and Energy UK. We have also responded to the proposals being made by the Welsh Assembly on the replacement of the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme, and how it will affect older people. More information on the group's activities and information can be found on the age discrimination page on the forum website.

Jane Weldon, Age Discrimination chairperson

## Unwanted tools get a new lease of life

At Christmas or in the New Year sales you may have benefitted from the arrival of a new piece of DIY equipment, or perhaps some new sewing or knitting projects. These may replace an old tool – or perhaps several – many of which will then find their way via the tip into landfill. Maybe you or a relative have work or hobby tools and equipment, once precious but now sitting unused in the shed, garage or loft.

**Tools With A Mission Cymru** would be delighted to help you. For more than 25 years, TWAM has been collecting and refurbishing unwanted tools and equipment and providing them to people who are able to use them. Often this means sending shipments overseas, where those who may otherwise be dependent on aid handouts are enabled to earn a living and to support themselves and their families. The range of tools and equipment which can be given a new lease of life includes plumbing, carpentry, mechanical, sewing, knitting, catering, hairdressing, typewriting etc. (You can find a comprehensive list at [www.twam.co.uk](http://www.twam.co.uk))

Local people have been actively involved in TWAM for over 10 years, and at the beginning of 2010 we opened a centre in Penarth to gather and sort the tools, and act as a hub for other collectors in South Wales. Volunteers can collect any equipment you no longer want, from a shedload to a button box. We are also happy to speak about the charity's work to interested groups such as WI, Probus, Rotary, churches etc.

**If you have any equipment we could use, would like a speaker to visit your group or are interested in joining us as a volunteer, please telephone John on 029 20707027 or Andy on 07769 503239, or email [twamcymru@gmail.com](mailto:twamcymru@gmail.com). Alternatively, please call in at the TWAM centre in Dingle Lane, Penarth CF64 2EU (opposite Bute Cottage Nursery School). We are open regularly on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, and at other times by arrangement. We look forward to helping you!**



TWAM volunteers renovating old tools



These tools are being packed into containers and being shipped overseas to Zambia



The tools are to be used by people in their villages to become more self sufficient

## Coordinators Report

The OPSF Executive and its working sub-groups continue to work effectively on the behalf of all residents over fifty years of age, advocating your needs and rights tirelessly at local and national arenas. If you have any issues and causes you want addressed or if you wish to highlight any positive event or experience you can make representation to the OPSF by contacting me as detailed below. The OPSF Executive and Sub Group members are attending workshops that will take its development plan onward to 2013. This work has led to the formation of a new working sub group whose remit will be Arts, Crafts and Leisure as one part of the Positive Ageing Agenda. Some time later this year when this group is established it is hoped another Positive Ageing Group will be formed to address issues of Employment, Volunteering, Education and Training. We are looking for anyone over fifty years of age who would be interested in volunteering to support these groups. So if you are interested in any of the above fields please contact me. We do not require a massive time commitment from you, just a couple of hours every two months, and in return you will gain from positive social interaction and the pleasure of knowing you are making a difference for the over fifties in the Vale. We are particularly interested in attracting volunteers aged in their fifties and sixties as they are under represented at present; however we will welcome all support from any interested person.

I am pleased to announce that the Vale of Glamorgan Council have a draft Community Strategy 2011-21 that can be accessed at [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/communitystrategy](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/communitystrategy) alternatively information is available at local libraries. The Strategy sets out a vision for the future of the area and how we might improve the quality of life in the Vale over the next ten years. The Strategy includes a number of Partnership Plans and Strategies including the Older People's Strategy.

The other good news is that the WAG funding for the Older People's Strategy has been continued up until 2013, it is no longer ring fenced and has been allocated to the Revenue Support Grant, however indications are that the Grant will be used by the majority of local Authorities in Wales to continue the support of the Strategy.

We wish to improve our communications with all members of the OPSF and to do so need to update our contact database so we can keep you up to date with all matters affecting you. To do this effectively it would be of great advantage if we could have your address including post code, phone contacts and more importantly if you are on-line including with the library or other sites your E-mail details, please, please, please send updated contact details so we can better support you.

**John Porter Older People's Strategy Coordinator**  
**Corporate Partnership Team Vale of Glamorgan Council 1st Floor**  
**Barry Fire Station, Port Road West CF62 3AZ**  
**Tel:01446 450201 E-mail: [jporter@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:jporter@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)**

## "Station 20" Making the Vale a Safer Vale

The Safer vale Partnership launched of a brand new facility that will be used to support groups working with communities and young people in the Vale of Glamorgan to reduce crime and disorder and make a real difference to making the Vale a Safer Vale.



Jane Hutt AM at the launch of Safer Vale Partnership

"Station 20", offers a bright, comfortable and safe environment for any community group or partner to deliver activities that assist in the reduction of crime and the fear of crime. Chief Fire Officer, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Andy Marles and Chairman of the South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Anthony Ernest said; this is an excellent initiative and example of the strong outcomes of what Partnership working can achieve.

Wales' Social Justice Minister Carl Sergeant said, "Earlier this year, I visited the Safer Vale Partnership and I was delighted to see how current crime prevention programmes are helping to make the Vale a safer place to live.

"I hope Station 20 at Barry Fire Station will help them continue their good work and that many more community groups will get involved in the activities on offer. He continued "Creating safe communities across Wales is a priority for the Welsh Assembly Government and I support any project which helps achieve this."

Deborah Gibbs, Safer Vale Manager, Safer Vale Partnership, said; "One of the key challenges to the provision of this facility has been availability of a suitable venue to deliver prevention, intervention and community projects. At the time partnership officers were looking for suitable venues, the fire service was looking for opportunities to increase their engagement with the community so this was an excellent and timely collaboration".

Merion Evans, Station Manager, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service said; in the lead up to the launch all partners have been working hard together to produce this facility that will assist in the reduction of crime and the fear of crime in the community.

He continued "The development process has brought the fire service and the local authority closer together. As a consequence of this closer working relationship, fire officers and partnership co-ordinators are designing new policies for domestic abuse, anti social behaviour and community engagement".

## TREV comes to the Vale

The Safer Vale Partnership has launched a new community reassurance vehicle which will be deployed in the communities across the county. Known as **TREV** (The Reassurance and Engagement Vehicle) it will be seen throughout the Vale of Glamorgan promoting a safer community for the residents.

The new vehicle will provide a platform for all members of the partnership to improve public engagement opportunities with the differing communities throughout the Vale of Glamorgan.

The outside of the unit is decorated with a map of the Vale and includes photographs of popular points of interest. When parked and deployed the vehicle is transformed. The sides open out and a front canopy raised to convert it into an office or meeting space complete with flat screen television and DVD, computer desk, lounge seats, running water and sink, an electrical supply from a diesel generator or mains adaptor provide power and lighting. Access to the unit is via fitted steps or ramps.

Councillor Paul Church, Chairman of the Safer Vale Partnership said "TREV is an ideal engagement tool for the Safer Vale Partnership as it can be utilised throughout the Vale of Glamorgan. The Safer Vale Team can also be visible when using it to monitor areas that have been suggested as being a "hot spot" for Anti Social Behaviour, distribute "reporting anti social behaviour" leaflets, provide residents with information and reassurance and complete surveys to gauge feedback".



## Margaret Read MBE

Sadly, Margaret passed away suddenly on December 29<sup>th</sup> 2010. Margaret was wheelchair bound as she suffered from Charcot Marie Tooth Disease, an heredity neuromuscular disease which is progressive. However, Margaret's Scottish spirit and determination provided our group with both knowledge and insight, particularly in the field of disabled transport.

She and Don moved to South Glamorgan in 1981, and East Vale Community Transport (EVCT) was formed in 1986. Margaret was tireless in her campaign work; and for seventeen years acted as National Secretary of the Wales Neurological Alliance. She was awarded an MBE in 2001 for services to the Vale Community. Margaret was integral in the founding of the Vale Centre for Voluntary Services to the Vale Community, and remained a trustee for thirteen years, retiring in December 2010. Margaret was a truly remarkable lady who will be very much missed by our group, the Vale community and all volunteers in Wales.



Margaret Read MBE pictured right in her role as Chair of EVCT

Gill Davies, Transport Task Group

## Transport Group

**Several areas of concern have been brought to our attention and we are following these up.**

- It is becoming noticeable that it is getting very difficult to get to Llandough Hospital by public transport, particularly for those who suffer disabilities.
- It has recently come to our notice that the council is conducting a review of the bus services that they supply, and these include some services to Llandough Hospital.
- Parking has also become a bigger problem, can this be improved?

**The Assembly Government has set up a "Blue Badge Unit"**

- The Transport Group is displaying an interest in the proposal for badges for those with Alzheimer's and associated problems.
- How parking can be controlled in designated areas on private land e.g. Supermarkets

We will be responding to these proposals by the end of February, and further updates will be posted on the Forum website.

Millwood Estate, the area to the west of Pontypridd Road in Barry has not got a dedicated bus service. Unlike the area to the east (Severn Avenue) which has services which divert from Pontypridd Road. Why not Millwood Estate? A letter has been sent to the appropriate bus company, and we await their reply!

Greenlinks Community Transport continues to thrive in the Western Vale. As well as a mini bus Greenlinks now has the use of a seven seater VW Sharon. (Kindly donated by NPower) **There is still a lack of voluntary drivers. Contact Graham Cartwright 0800 294 1113 for information on volunteering.**



List of bus routes we understand are affected by the Council Review of supported services. 86 87 88 89 94 (Evenings) 95 (Evenings) 96 (Evenings) 100 145 146 320 322 B3 V1 V2 V3 V4 V5 V6 X2 (Evenings and Sunday) X5.

We understand there will be a consultation period over the next two to three months, and the Transport Group intends to make their views known on these proposals. It is understood that decisions will be made prior to September 2011.

Peter Honeywill, Chairperson Transport Group

## Bowel Screening Wales

Did you know that a new NHS screening test, aimed at finding bowel cancer early, has been launched across Wales?

*Bowel Screening Wales* launched a home testing kit in October 2008, which is currently being sent to *all men and women aged between 60 and 69*. And by the year 2015, the programme will have been extended to all men and women aged between 50 and 74.

Participants are sent the test kit which they complete in the privacy of their own home, post it back free of charge, and they receive the results within two weeks.

58% of all participants have already received the test kit, sent it back and have been given a clear result; however there is still a big number of participants in Barry who are still yet to return their test kits, leaving them at potential risk.

The screening test looks for hidden blood in the bowel movements (faeces or stools). This may suggest a higher chance of bowel cancer. It can also detect other changes such as polyps (small growths). Most polyps are harmless but some can lead to bowel cancer. The test will not tell you if you have bowel cancer, but it will tell whether you need further tests.

Bowel Cancer – often called Colorectal, Colon or Rectal Cancer – is the third most common cancer in men and women in Wales, with more than 2000 new cases diagnosed each year. It is also the second most common cause of cancer death in men and women, and the lifetime risk of being diagnosed with bowel cancer is around 1 in 20 for women and one in 18 for men.

Dafydd Snelling of Bowel Screening Wales commented: “Research has shown that people who complete their free NHS bowel cancer screening test kit reduce their risk of dying from bowel cancer. We have participants who are very grateful to Bowel Screening Wales that have contacted us to offer to share their story. Their stories can be found on You Tube, by going to the Bowel Screening Wales channel. “

### What are the symptoms of bowel cancer?

You should see your doctor if you have any of the following:

- Bleeding from your back passage or tiny traces of blood in your bowel movements
- A change in your regular bowel movements (such as constipation or diarrhoea) for six weeks or more.
- Severe stomach pains which started recently and are continuing.
- Unexplained weight loss.
- Unexplained anaemia (due to a lack of iron in your blood).



## Website News

The website continues to raise awareness of as many issues as possible that affect people aged 50+. Coverings subjects from cheques being withdrawn in 2018, to help and support provided for older drug users.

We keep you informed of what each of the task groups are currently involved in. This ranges from campaigning against proposed cuts in local bus services, addressing fuel poverty, fighting for an end to mix sex wards in hospitals, and involvement in the current stock transfer situation within the Vale. It is disappointing that we do not receive as large a response to our requests for your comments on such issues; your involvement creates a stronger voice for these campaigns. **So please, let us have your comments by emailing us at [admin@valeopf.org.uk](mailto:admin@valeopf.org.uk)**

You can take part in research projects via our website. The All Wales Hate Crime Project is currently on our website for you to take part in.

News of the OPF website is spreading! We have had twenty countries throughout the month going onto the site. There are 68% from the UK, 24% from the U.S.A. and countries including Russia to Denmark.

Let us know what you think of the OPF website. Are there any issues that you want us to bring to over 50's attention? These are difficult times for older people as they try to manage financially in a very difficult climate, with cutbacks seeming on an almost daily basis. The forum will continue to raise awareness of as many issues as possible via its website at [www.valeopf.org.uk](http://www.valeopf.org.uk)

Jane Weldon, Website Manager

### 'Phishing'

A “Phishing” email falsely disguises itself as being from a genuine company, or a friend, with the objective of extracting your personal details in order to carry out identity theft or fraud.

If you are ever sent an email asking you to confirm passwords or personal details you should always be suspicious and check its authenticity. A ‘Phishing’ email might display the following tell-tale signs:

- Addresses with “Dear Customer” rather than with your name.
- The company email address may look unusual.
- It may be badly written or have spelling mistakes.

**If an email looks suspicious, whether it's from a legitimate company or a friend, DON'T enter any personal details and delete the email without clicking on any of the links.**



(Continued on page 7)

## Health Group

Our health is important to each one of us and the shape of local services is changing rapidly. The Cardiff and Vale University Health Board has approved the changes proposed in recent public consultations. The midwifery unit at Llandough hospital will close this year with services moving to the new obstetric and midwifery unit at University of Wales hospital. Also a new mental health in-patient unit will be built at Llandough hospital for patients throughout Cardiff and the Vale. Other important changes will be the concentration of rehabilitation services at Llandough (including neuropsychiatry), the new older persons mental health assessment unit at Llandough and an acute stroke unit.

The Health Group has recently discussed issues of mixed-sex accommodation in local hospitals, which we have been informed will be phased out by 2014/15, flu vaccination, support for service veterans with mental health problems, Welsh Assembly Guidance on Health Board consultations with Health Councils when they intend to change services and the state of the health of the population in the Vale.

### Did you know that in the Vale of Glamorgan:

- Mortality for men and women is amongst the lowest in Wales
- Life expectancy is amongst the highest in Wales
- Mortality from circulatory disease is amongst the lowest in Wales
- Female mortality from cancer is the second lowest in Wales (out of 22 local authorities)
- Consumption of fruit and vegetables and physical exercise levels is the average for Wales
- Overweight and obese adults are the third lowest in Wales
- Drinking more than daily guide amounts of alcohol is the second highest in Wales and binge drinking the fifth highest in Wales
- Smoking levels are close to the average for Wales
- Overall physical and mental wellbeing is close to the average for Wales



**Note: This is the average position in the Vale of Glamorgan and there will be differences in different parts of the local authority giving rise to health inequalities.**  
Ron Walton, Chairperson of the Health Group

## Affected by epilepsy?

### Ask your AM – What can you do for me?

#### Would you like the opportunity to speak to your A.M. and ask them about epilepsy services in your area?

The Welsh Assembly elections are fast approaching, so **Epilepsy Wales**, together with the All Wales Epilepsy Forum, is hosting a public event at the Welsh Assembly, Cardiff Bay between **12.00 noon and 1.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> March** when you can meet with your A.M. put your questions to them.

**The event is open to anyone affected by epilepsy** – whether having epilepsy yourself, whether you are a family member or carer, a professional or friend, an employer or have an interest in epilepsy.

For further details please contact: Lesley Morris, Epilepsy Wales, [epilepsywales@aol.com](mailto:epilepsywales@aol.com)

## What can you do to help prevent bowel cancer?

- Take part in the bowel screening programme every two years if you are eligible.
- Eat a high-fibre diet with plenty of fruit, vegetables and carbohydrates (such as wholegrain pasta, bread and rice). This is believed to reduce your risk.
- Take moderate amounts of exercise. This may protect you against bowel cancer.
- See your doctor if you have any symptoms or concerns about your bowels.

For more information, log onto the bowel Screening Wales website:  
[www.bowelscreeningwales.org.uk](http://www.bowelscreeningwales.org.uk) or phone **0800 294 3370**

## Deafblind Cymru

Deafblind Cymru provides services and activities for people who find it hard to see and hear. It is estimated that there are at least 3000 people in Wales with some degree of deafblindness. By definition deafblind people are either deaf or hard of hearing AND blind or partially sighted. The combination of hearing and sight loss presents deafblind people with many challenges in their everyday lives. Deafblind Cymru is part of Deafblind UK – see [www.deafblind.org.uk](http://www.deafblind.org.uk) for more information on Deafblind UK.



Our Cardiff deafblind group meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month at Cardiff Institute for the Blind, Newport Rd, Cardiff from 10:30am-12:30pm. The group welcomes new deafblind people and their companions. We are looking to recruit volunteers to support our groups for example volunteer drivers, group volunteers and befrienders. We have had speakers such as Cardiff Community Health Council and Age Concern and we have visited Cardiff Castle and the Museum; we are currently planning outings for the Summer.



Deafblind members Sian and Maria at Dyffryn Gdns

Our project also provides a one to one caseworker support service that can help deafblind people address a wide range of personal issues for example helping people to get suitable equipment to help them overcome barriers caused by dual sensory loss. Any questions, just ask us. **Deafblind people can also phone our Information and Advice Line for assistance. The number to call is 0800 132 320.**



We have free membership for deafblind people. There are almost 300 members in Wales benefiting from our membership services including our free quarterly magazine Open Hand.

Deafblind Cymru can also help organisations and groups by providing deafblind awareness training and information talks. We can also give advice on improving your accessibility to deafblind people.

**For more information about us or to find out where and when your local deafblind group meets, please contact Nerys Probert, Group Co-ordinator, Deafblind Cymru, Trident Court, East Moors Road, Cardiff CF24 5TD.**

**Email: [nerysprobert@deafblind.org.uk](mailto:nerysprobert@deafblind.org.uk). Telephone 02920 601472  
Minicom 02920 495919.**

## The Pleasures of Gardening

Growing older, many people move from a large house with a garden to a flat: then the pleasure of working in their garden is lost. A good alternative is to acquire an allotment- although in these days of recession, there is sometimes a need to go on a waiting list for one, as more people want to save money by growing their own crops.

Although there is an annual fee to be paid, this is more than repaid by the expense saved on buying fruit and vegetables – to say nothing of the delicious taste of freshly picked produce.

It is best to share with someone as it is less effort and more pleasurable to do the work together; although initially it might be hard work, this becomes much less if one can do a small patch of digging, weeding, and planting each day rather than tackling large areas in one go. A small part given over to veg., bordered by flowers and furnished with chairs, makes a picnic area, adding to the enjoyment in good weather.

In the Cogan allotments there are about two dozen plots, which are rented by adults of all ages, from 20+ to 80+; and there is a special camaraderie as plants are exchanged and help is given by the old-stagers to the newcomers!

Children often come with their parents to “help” and thus they are introduced to the joys of gardening. They love picking the strawberries or catching the plums from the trees shaken by dad or granddad!

In 2010 it was suggested by the Secretary Anne-Marie that a plot is given over to for a “kinder garten”, a leisure garden for children. This is now well under-way, with folk helping to clear the ground, dig out a pond and put in native water plants; which are now growing well. The framework for a polytunnel was put up and this spring the plastic cover will go on this. A flower meadow for bees and butterflies will be created : then groups of school children will be invited, with their teachers or parents, to come and plant crops with the help of the senior gardeners. Thus, old and young can enjoy working together.

Joan Castle, Cogan Allotment Holder



Joan working on the allotment she 'shares' with Colin at Cogan Allotments

## Villages around the Vale: featuring Ewenny, Llangan and Treoes

The residents of Ewenny Village are very pleased that the Ewenny Community Council has, with the help of grant funding from Creative Rural Communities, The Welsh Aggregates Levy and Tidy Towns, refurbished the playground which is situated on the Wick Road and has been a playground since 1938 with only one piece of play equipment in place. The newly refurbished playground was officially opened on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2010 by Alun Cairns MP with the Mayor & Mayoress of the Vale of Glamorgan, Jane Hutt AM and a large number of local residents and children in attendance. Refreshments were served in the Village Hall and a good and enjoyable time was had by all.



Ewenny Priory and Church in Ewenny, Vale of Glamorgan

The Ewenny Village Hall can be hired and it comprises of the Main Hall, Kitchen facilities, small rooms of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, toilets and good car parking at rear and is available for single or regular hire at very competitive prices. Please contact the Caretaker with any enquiries on 01656/648814. It is an ideal venue for your children's party.

There are several classes currently held at the hall e.g. Art. Kick Boxing, Kung Fu, W.I. and U3A. PACT meetings are held on alternate months and most of Ewenny Community Council activities are held on a regular basis.

The village has an excellent ladies' Fashion Shop, a good Hair Salon and the Bridgend Farm Nurseries is under new management with a very nice coffee shop. A good village stores, which used to be the Post Office, now sells home made pasties, pies and delicatessen. St. Michael's Priory Church is a tourist attraction and well worth a visit and it is the home of the Ewenny Arts Festival that arranges regular monthly events with local artists including schools, well known artists and International artists. For further information on events please contact Helen 01656/667047 or Mari 01656/664105. Ewenny Pottery is well worth a visit to watch Alun Jenkins the potter and his daughter Caitlin making pots and, of course, visit the shop which has a wide range of pottery for sale. There are two cafes in the same area that are well recommended.

The Community Centres at Llangan & St. Mary Hill and Treoes and available for hire and have good facilities. The planning of LLANFFEST for June 11<sup>th</sup> 2011 has now begun. **For further information contact 01656/664105.**