

# The Volunteer

Winter 2019



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# Welcome ...



I can't believe it's almost Christmas already. Perhaps it's a sign of just how busy things are, but this autumn seems to have flown by.

The most important news is that the various shops are busy organising their Christmas meals – attending will undoubtedly help your wellbeing (see centre spread)!

There's also plenty of news from around our shops and we hope we provide a little insight into people's lives outside of work.

With this edition we also welcome new staff. In Treherbert we welcome Matthew and Lynsey and in Maesteg we welcome Katy and Carl.

By the next edition we may well be on our way to a new shop at a recycling centre in Cardiff.

How we can say thank you for all your hard work can be tricky but I think the London Trip went down pretty well, and we hope a works day out becomes an annual event.

Readers will also notice that

the back page puts some figures on how essential your work is for people in need. The statistics are quite shocking, so please don't underestimate the impact you have on people's lives.

And finally, we decided to help a particular charity this Christmas. Cyfannol Women's Aid in Newport proved the most popular choice with staff and volunteers.

The response to our social media call has been fantastic. If you know anybody who has a spare mobile phone (working) they want it to go to a good home, let them know we are collecting them for Women's Aid (you can find out why on page 8).

I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and hope that 2020 is a good and positive year for you all.

Saffy

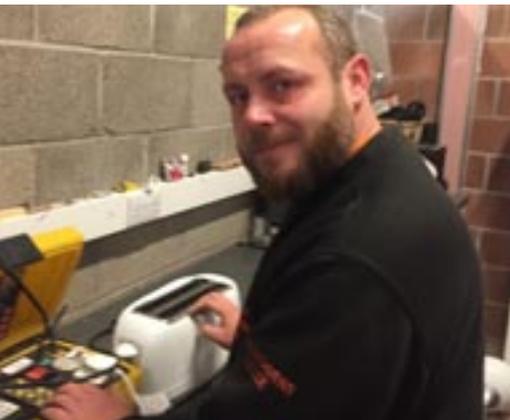


## Not all banks are the same

If you've got any kind of money problems give these people a try. (Upstairs in the indoor market)



# One million steps in one month



Gavin was a volunteer at the Reuse Centre but is now our staff member responsible for PAT testing all donated electrical items.

Despite being on his feet all day, in his spare time Gavin likes walking - very long distance walking - and

doing “wild camping” on the way.

Earlier this summer he decided to walk from Ystrad Mynach to Llan-drindod Wells. It took him three days. “I did it partly to get fitter,’ he said, “and also just to explore. I tried to get a mate along but he wasn’t up for the distances involved.”

That, however, didn’t put him off, and the solo walking experience just made him want to do more.

So in October he decided to take on a one million steps in one month challenge to raise money for Cancer Research UK. To get his step count up he walked from Cinderford to Worcester via Ledbury.

Needless to say he made it and has raised almost £2,000.

## Cheryl’s shed boutique

Cheryl has been volunteering at The Shed in Llantrisant for over a year. She spends much of her time looking after her “Cheryl’s Boutique” - a treasure trove of used fashion.

### Why do you like working here?

I like The Shed gang - it’s a kind of family. It gets me out of the house and I love meeting new people. If I wasn’t here I’d just be at home.

### What’s your most guilty pleasure?

Biscuits - there’s far too many around here.

### Have you ever had a near death experience?

A couple of years ago I came off my ten year old grandson’s BMX bike. He was on those foot bars on the

back and we hit a slope too fast. I had 29 stitches in my knee. I’ve been back on a bike since but I don’t think I’ll be giving lifts on a BMX again.

### How do you relax?

A hot bath and then watching the soaps. I love them all - Emmerdale; Corrie, East Enders.





# London calling

***Working out how to say thank you to our volunteers can be tricky. Then we came up with a day trip to London.***

It may sound simple but it took quite a bit of organising, particularly trying to work out where to go in London with a very limited budget.

An early morning start saw our first pick-ups with the Llantrisant Shed gang looking extremely lively despite the time of day. Next stop Newport before hitting the M4 and after a couple of hours London's Camden Lock Market just before lunchtime.

"Lunch was pretty interesting" recalls Phil Hurst of Wastesavers; "I think some people found the huge variety of food a bit overwhelming

at first. When faced with pretty much any food you fancy, from anywhere on the planet, and a bunch of stall holders all offering free samples, it can be a bit of an information overload."

A whistle stop tour around the old part of the market saw the Shed gang dive into Cyberdog - a kind of space age heavy trance music clothes shop with some pretty strange outfits (and staff). Cheryl was quite taken by one shop assistant (see opposite).

Negotiating the underground to get down to Trafalgar Square proved

the next challenge. Trying to keep a group of 15 together can be tricky. We eventually jumped out at Charing Cross, took in Trafalgar Square and then walked down Whitehall. Passing Downing Street we saw a small demonstration (nobody was too sure what it was about).

We eventually reached Parliament Square. No matter what your political leanings, the Houses of Parliament are an impressive piece of architecture.

Parliament Bridge offers great views down the Thames (hence the cover photo) but at £27 per person we decided the London Eye looked better from below.

Our final destination was across town to the Tate Modern via St Pauls. By the time we had bounced over the Millenium Bridge our group was starting to sag a little. But Tate Modern always has some challenging if not confusing art. As



expected it got a variety of reactions from our party, ranging from “this is total rubbish” to “wow that’s amazing”.

This was a long day - dropping off the last volunteers in Llantrisant at 11:30pm. If you have an idea for next year please let us know.



*Cheryl makes a new friend.*

*The Llantrisant Shed gang hit Camden Town.*

# Five ways to wellbeing

Personal wellbeing has two parts: feeling good and functioning well.

Wellbeing may be a bit trendy right now but it's based on common sense.

As a volunteer you are already doing something in the "Give" section.

Special thanks go to the New Economics Foundation who developed the Five Ways approach.

## Connect ...

Connect with the people around you. At home, work, school or in your community. Think of the building blocks or cornerstones of your life and focus on developing them. Strong connections will support you every day.

## Take Notice ...

Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

## Keep learning ...

Try something new. Follow your interest. Sign up for a course on a different responsibility. Fix a bike. Learn to swim or how to cook your favourite dish. A challenge you will overcome. Learning new things will make you more confident as you grow.

people around you.  
pool or in your local  
of these as the cor-  
fe and invest time  
Building these  
support and enrich

## Be active ...

Go for a walk or a run. Step outside.  
Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance.  
Exercising makes you feel good. Most  
importantly, discover a physical activ-  
ity you enjoy and one that suits your  
level of mobility and fitness.

## ng ...

Rediscover an old  
that course. Take  
nsibility at work.  
play an instrument  
favourite food. Set  
enjoy achieving.  
s will make you  
well as being fun.

## Give ...

Do something nice for a friend. Thank  
someone. Smile. Volunteer you time.  
Join a community group. Look out as  
well as in. Seeing yourself, and your  
happiness, linked to the wider com-  
munity can be incredibly rewarding  
and creates connections with the  
people around you.



# Matthew's journey

Mathew, Lynsey & Nadine

Life has changed drastically in 2019 for Matthew, the Shop Assistant at the Treherbert Shed.

Matthew had previously worked at the local glass works but found himself out of work following a hand injury. Being unemployed knocked his confidence but one day in early 2019 he visited the Shed in Llantrisant and noticed a "volunteers needed" sign.

He got chatting to Paula, the Shed Manager.

"There was something that just switched inside me," he recalls, "I felt like I had finally found what I was looking for."

Mathew started to volunteer there and his outlook quickly improved. "I felt like myself again. Every day I started to feel stronger and the people I met really made a difference. Plus I'm now helping the environment for my little boy."

Mathew's partner Nadine noticed the change in him. "I could see how happy it was making him and I really wanted to be a part of that" she explains. So Nadine also started to volunteer. "I was applying for jobs", she recalls, "but it was difficult because I lacked experience and after a while started to lose confidence. Volunteering at

'The Shed' really made a huge difference to me."

This experience is quite common amongst volunteers according to Lynsey Richards, the Treherbert Shed Manager. "The volunteers we get are all very different, and all get different benefits from volunteering. A common theme, however, is that I see a growth in confidence in all our volunteers after only a short time."

"Helping volunteers back into work and reach their goals is always important," she continued, "I always help them with learning new skills in the shop as well as team work and customer service skills. I'm also always happy to help with advice on C.V's and interviews."

Across the Wastesavers charity as a whole, 35% of our paid staff were volunteers with us.

*Staff don't normally look this rough except on halloween.*



# Trauma teddies & mobile phones



The first thing that strikes you when walking into the Cyfannon Women's Aid office in Newport is the box full of knitted teddies.

"Those are our trauma teddies" explains Dawn, Fresh Start Support Worker. "They go really fast with the number of children we have passing through here".

This is quite heart wrenching, but I'm here to find out two things - what the group are doing with the i-Pads a major company gave us last month, and why they've requested phones.

"The i-Pads are really helpful for the older children who've outgrown teddies" explains Taz, the Children and Young Persons Worker. "We had an eight year old boy and his mother in last week. They had to get out fast and he'd left his computer behind - the look on his face when we gave him the i-Pad was priceless."

"But these are more than just bits of kit," she continues, "they're vital to help distract distressed children going through a traumatic time."

The i-Pads have also helped relieve pressure on staff and give the women a degree of independence.

"Everything is online these days" explains Jen, Fresh Start Team Leader, "and that can clog up our system as our staff need to work on the few computers we have. With the i-Pads the women can sort out some of their priorities themselves. They give them a bit of independence and a helping hand to start their new life."

The other items requested by Women's Aid are mobile phones. "Almost all our clients will have lost or dumped their mobile phone" explains Dawn. "It's because of the inbuilt tracking. If you need to escape you don't want to be visible every time you go online. But you may also need to contact friends or relatives. So a replacement phone is essential."

A big thanks to all our commercial recycling customers who have donated phones.



# Meet the manager!

Katy Scourfield is the Maesteg Sidings shop manager.

## *What makes you happy?*

My family, I've got two children who are rapidly heading towards being teenagers (sometimes I think they are there already).

## *How do you relax?*

I read a lot and love horseriding. When I'm on a horse (I borrow one from a friend) I just forget about all the troubles of the world.

## *What do you think you've learned since starting here?*

Patience. Setting this shop up and getting going has taken longer than I thought. But it's great when you see people so happy with something they've bought here.

## *What's your most guilty pleasure?*

A little bit of Christmas whatever the month. Quite often I can be found cwtched up in the middle of summer watching a Christmas film. I like that "peace on earth and goodwill to all men" thing.

## *Have you ever had a near death experience?*

I fell off a horse and bounced off a car bonnet when I was 17. My horse bucked when we came to a junction. I remember coming round,



people looking at me and saying "is she dead" so I decided I'd better get up quickly before it got out of hand.

Years later at a wedding my husband's uncle was telling our table about the time he hit a young woman off a horse – that was me!

It's a small world.

## *What would your super power be?*

Transportation.

## *What's the favourite item of clothing you own.*

1950s style dresses - I have a few.

## *What would you have for your "last supper"*

Sushi - but it has to be from a restaurant in Cambridge New Zealand. The little old lady who ran the place was a force of nature but it's the most amazing food I've ever tasted.

Wastesavers presents ...

"Amazing"  
Saffy Doney

"Brilliant"  
Alun Harries

# *A Volunteer Christmas Meal*



**starring ...**

The G. Man



C. Pud

Co-starring Iveaten Toomuch & DJ Overfull

Newport	11 December (evening)	Blaina Wharf Pub
	19 December (lunchtime)	Resource Centre
Llantrisant	17 December (lunchtime)	Coach House Cafe
Treherbert	21 December (evening)	Ystrad Rugby Club
Maesteg	To be arranged	

## **Totally Hooked Crochet Group**

Total  
beginners  
welcome

Every Friday at the Reuse Centre 10:00 till 12:00

## Support Organisations

Citizens Advice Bureau	03444 77 20 20
Newport City Council	01633 65 66 56
Newport Mind	01633 25 87 41
Womens Aid	01633 84 02 58
Samaritans	01633 25 90 00
Newport Credit Union	01633 21 49 13
JGwent Drug & Alcohol Service	03339 99 35 77
BAWSO (Black & Ethnic minority)	01633 21 32 13

# Used furniture can change lives

To you it may be just an old table, but to someone else it might help them turn their life around.

That might be a tall claim, but as the End Furniture Poverty Alliance describe it ...

*“It’s the single mother and child sharing a mattress on the floor for a bed; the family with no cooker who can only make hot food that requires hot water from a kettle; the family with no wardrobes or chests of drawers so clothes are stored in black bags on the floor; the family where there is no table for children to eat from or do their homework. When there isn’t enough money for fuel or food, where does the money for furniture and appliances come from?”*

Newport has some of the highest levels of child poverty in the UK.

Bettws, Lliswery, Pill and Victoria all have child poverty levels in excess of 40%. According to the Children’s Society a child is living in poverty when they are in a family with an income below 60% of the UK’s average.”

For example: A couple with two children living in poverty has less

than £58 per day – that’s £15 each (after housing costs) to pay for food, bills, childcare, transport, household items, clothes and other expenses.

The same family on an average income has about £96 per day – that’s £24 each - to cover all other expenses.

Children living in poverty are more likely to experience; poor physical health; mental health problems; underachieve at school; be bullied at school. The list goes on.

But there’s more to it than just providing cheap furniture.

Your donation provides volunteering opportunities that not only help reduce social isolation but also provide a route back into work.

35% of the paid staff in our reuse activities were previously volunteers with us.

