

Meet the manager.



Abigale Prescott-Bird is shop manager at the Reuse Centre in Newport.

What makes you happy?

The company of friends, being creative, sitting in my hot tub while drinking gin.

What's been the biggest challenge of lockdown for you?

The lack of social interaction. I'm used to

seeing and chatting with customers all day – I've really missed that. I've gone from full on social butterfly to nothing.

It's just me at home with my husband so I didn't really have anyone to talk to, except the cats!

What have you learned in lockdown?

That I have everything I need. There's no need to buy stuff for the sake of it, and my mind feels so much clearer for realising that a relatively simple life is rather fulfilling.

What would your super power be?

Teleportation! Think of all the places I could just go without having to hang around for hours in airports!

What is your guiltiest pleasure?

Sad as it sounds... Stationery. I flipping love stationery. Notebooks, pens, pencils, stickers, post it notes. Some notebooks I own are there just to look at, never written in.

What would your "last supper" consist of?

I'm talking a proper full on eat till you explode meal. Mushroom risotto starter followed by a fillet steak cooked on a hot stone with triple cooked chips and a thick gravy. For pudding a choc orange

souffle with short-bread biscuit followed by a cheeseboard. Washed down with a bottle of Portuguese Vinho Verde.

Have you ever had a near death experience and what happened?

When I was 22 I was taking my best friend out on a practice driving lesson a week before her test. We were in the countryside and she hit something on the road and rolled the car off a hedge.

The car tumbled over four times before landing on its roof in the middle of the road at the bottom of the hill.

People say their life flashes before them - it does. As I was bracing myself important life events were playing out in my mind, like a flickering film, it was quite surreal.

Amazingly we were left unharmed dangling upside down by our seatbelts. We pushed the wind-screen out and

crawled out from under the bonnet as petrol was pouring from the engine. Somehow we were both and she passed her test the week after!

How do you relax?

Crafting. I have the second largest bedroom in my house as a full on craft room. I make cards, machine sew, paint watercolours, make jewellery, upcycle furniture, needlefelt, linoprint, 3d paper-craft and decoupage, plus make all sorts of stuff with polymer clay. My craft room is my haven of peace and loveliness. I can escape in there and chill out.

What's your favourite item of clothing?

Scarves, I have lots of pretty scarves and I love them all, most of them have been bought in charity shops. A good scarf makes any outfit look better.

VOLUNTEER NEWS

Wastesavers Charity SPRING 2021



WELCOME BACK

How we're planning for your return ...

WE NEED YOU BACK!



Alun Harries, Charity Manager

Despite lockdown we've managed to help some people in crisis - but it's a fraction of our normal work.

Compared to normal times our ability to help people in need has been severely restricted, according to Nicola Rossiter, Reuse Operations manager at Wastesavers.

"It can be frustrating not being able to help as many people as normal," Nicola said. "I know we've said it before, but the last

year has really shown how important our volunteers are. Plus I just miss our volunteers - this place is too quiet!"

The two and five year olds were sharing a single mattress ...

As we've been unable to sell from our shops, we're working even more closely with support agencies and other local charities.

"I was really surprised by the reaction we had to a Facebook

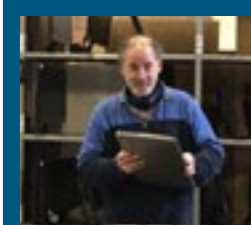
post that simply asked if any support agencies needed furniture," Nicola continued.

"Our stock was just gathering dust. We

for many but we were struggling to reach people in crisis.

"Within minutes of putting the post up we got more than 30 shares and reached more than 5,000 people. That's really unusual or us."

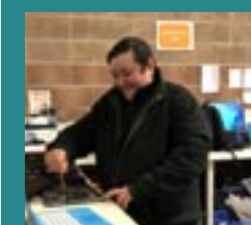
Youth homelessness charity, Llamau, were



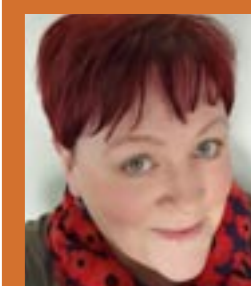
FROM VOLCANOES TO LAPTOPS



DEMANDING CHICKEN LOVES LOCKDOWN



WHAT MAKES AGNETA TICK?



MEET THE MANAGER

Chicken demands attention

Those of us lucky enough to have pets have found them a constant source of amusement and escape from boredom.

We caught up with Mark, one of our volunteers from the Reuse centre, the proud owner of an especially demanding chicken.

Tina is a Silky bantam. "She got her name because she walks like Tina Turner," explains



Mark. "She'll follow me around chatting to me all day.

"If I'm working in the

garden and don't pay her attention she just gets louder and louder until I give her some

attention.

"We bought her two years ago along with three others chickens;

Mother Clucker (the bossy one), Blue (she's slightly blue) and Rizzo (from Grease - the tough female gang leader).

"We have since bought two hybrid chickens, (normal sized ones, which my wife calls T-Rexes' due to their size). They are called KFC and McNugget.

"I'll leave you to figure that out."

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Continued inside ...

WELCOME BACK!



Well, where do I begin? What a very strange and difficult few months for us all. But just like the daffodils that are popping up around us I think life will soon be returning to our shops.

So, what does this mean for us all? Well, we have been making plans for our return.

When we have the green light to re-open I will contract you all.

It's highly likely we will set up volunteer rotas which will enable us to have everyone back safely.

When you first come in we will carry out a Covid-19 refresher induction, bringing you up to date with current procedures and the latest PPE information.

Over the last few weeks I have been looking through individual progress plans for every volunteer. When you're back I'd like to meet up with you individually and update these. It's a chance to catch up, for us to find out what really matters to you about volunteering

with us and look at your hopes for the future with us. And perhaps talk about any concerns you may have, or if there's anything on your mind.

As for me, (thank you for asking) I have missed you all so much! When I came back to the office it made me so sad to see the Christmas tree still up with Easter so soon.

I can't wait for all of the shops to be filled with the sound of happy volunteers, chatting, making tea and catching up with each other!

During lockdown I read a quote; 'We stay apart for now so that when we are back together no one is missing'. I think that applies to us all.

Looking forward - the first week of June is Volunteers Week. We will be arranging lots of exciting things to celebrate - I think we all deserve some fun.

Sally

From filming volcanoes to helping schoolchildren get laptops.

David has been a regular volunteer in our IT department helping refurbish computers for two years.

As demand for our laptops has never been higher David came in to help clear the backlog.

He first discovered us through the council. "I'd done quite a lot with computers in my past work. A few years ago I spent nine weeks in hospital. That made me decide to look after myself and look for something less stressful - but still interesting," he explained.

"As soon as I arrived it was clear just by the sheer volume of computers that help was needed," he continued. "This place is now twice the size from when I first came. It's been great to see how this proper eco project has grown."

David sees volunteering here very much as



a two way street. "For me this place is a very non pressured place to work; I can do as much

Lockdown gave me valuable time

or as little as I want. And for Wastesavers; there's a mountain of computers that need attention before redis-

tribution - so we both benefit."

"There's also a really nice and diverse group of people here," he adds. "I think at any one time there are perhaps five different languages represented."

Lockdown has been tough for many so how has David found it?

"Lockdown gave me

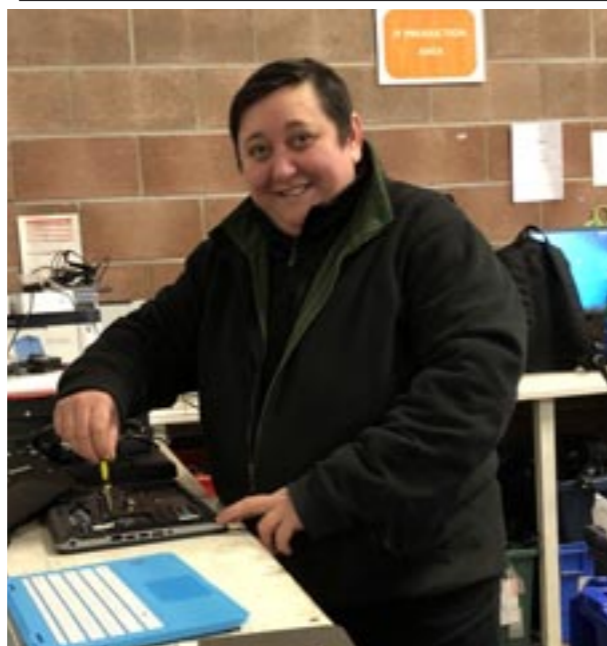
valuable time to think about things - and that's been important for me."

Much of that time was spent going through his 200 hrs of video footage of volcanoes, a passion he has followed for decades.

"I spent a lot of time in Sicily filming Mt

Etna a few years ago. I've made documentaries in the past but with the pressures of work never had the time to go through all that old footage.

"Lockdown has given me that time. But I'm also pleased to be back even if it's only for a day. I've missed our team here."



What makes Agneta tick?

Agneta is a volunteer with the IT department in the Reuse Centre.

She recently came in to help with the backlog of computers generated by the Donate IT programme.

When she started she knew very little about computers. Now, however, she can fully test and refurbish most laptops.

As ever, *Volunteer*

News asks the searching questions on everybody lips...

What makes you happy?

Family. I just love seeing family, especially my young nephews. It's not been easy in lockdown.

What is your most guilty pleasure?

Horror films. I really enjoy the genre. My favourite is 13 Ghosts.

It's set in a house made out of glass and some really nasty characters in it.

How do you relax?

I really enjoy fishing, especially at night. I find sitting by a lake all night relaxing.

Not a lot of women enjoy fishing but I've been doing it since I was ten. We used to live next to a river and me and my friends

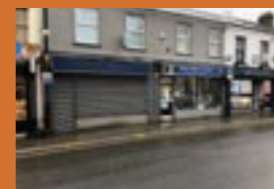
Shops in development - all will need volunteers



Cardiff - Lamby Way



Roseheyworth



Aberdare Cannon St (These 2 shop fronts)

As a volunteer with us you are our best ambassadors.

If you know anybody near one of these locations (or near our current shops) who may be interested in volunteering let them know these will be opening over the next few months.

All these new shops, and our current shops, only exist thanks to generous support from local councils in: Blaenau Gwent; Bridgend; Cardiff; Merthyr Tydfil; Newport and Rhonda Cynon Taff.

Pentrebach Superstore opens

The "New lease of Life" re-use superstore in Merthyr was just starting to gather customers and getting known locally when the latest lockdown struck.

Frustrating for everybody, but it's already got a good amount of stock, a growing presence on social media and enthusiastic staff and volunteers. This major development is down to generous funding from Merthyr Tydfil council. Once we are open again we will be planning the grand official opening this large store deserves.



Continued from front page

... one of the first to respond. We donated a large number of household items helping them make the supported accommodation they manage for young people feel more like a home.

As almost all charity staff are on furlough, and with no volunteers, senior management have taken on the task of deliveries.

"We've come across high levels of poverty when delivering," Nicola recalls. "Last week, for example, we delivered a sofa, beds, tables and chairs to a family with two children who had been moved into emergency accommodation."

"They had a roof over their heads but nothing much else."

"The two and five year olds were sharing a single mattress on the floor and there was literally no other furniture; no sofa, no table or chairs, no TV."

"We firmly believe everyone should have something to sit, sleep and eat on. That's not a big ask."

Welcome aboard

You may come across some new faces when you return.

In Pentrebach we welcome Beth Rosser (area manager) with Richard Smith and Beth Difford (shop assistants). In Treherbert it's hello to Mel Hogben, our new shop assistant. And finally, Tom Belcher, regional manager for all the recycling centre shops.