



CYMRU Older People's Alliance

YOUR VOICE : EICH LLAIS

Cynghrair Pobl Hyn **CYMRU**

Summer Conference Newsletter

11th June 2019

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WELCOME TO THE CONFERENCE

I am delighted to welcome you to this first ever Cymru Older People's Alliance Summer Conference here in Cardiff.

We as Trustees are only in our second year in developing COPA as a new registered charity run by older people for older people to give a strong and independent voice for 50+ Forums and Groups across Wales. It has been a challenging period but I am glad to say we are now fully up and running and complying with all Charity Commission requirements. Through our Manifesto for Older People we are setting out our policy position clearly to take to Government, Councils and others.

Our Summer Conference is a celebration of the 50+ movement which was started more than 15 years ago! It will provide you with an opportunity to hear from the Minister about progress in refreshing the Strategy for Older People in Wales, the reform of the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing and other issues vital to the lives of older people. The Commissioner for Older People will also speak to you about her priorities for her term of office. You can also ask questions directly to our panel of experts that will include Helena Herklots our Commissioner, Malcolm Fisk, Chair of Age Cymru and Matt Jenkins, the senior Civil Servant at Welsh Government responsible for policy for older people.

In the afternoon, Age Cymru will facilitate a Workshop to inform and influence the Welsh Government's Review of Engagement of Older People. This is another opportunity for you to have your voice heard and live our moto of "Nothing About Us Without Us". In COPA we firmly believe that whilst there is great work going on in some Forums, it is all far too patchy. We think the framework of support for Forums across Wales must be reformed so that we can all work far more effectively on behalf of older people and ensure there is much more consistency about the support for and outcomes from the local Forums.

This next 12 months or so will be extremely important for older people as new policies emerge from UK and Welsh Governments that directly impact on the lives of all of us. The highlights - apart from Brexit (!) – are that we should hopefully have a UK Green Paper on the future of social care funding and some idea as to how vital under-funded care services can be improved. This will give the green light to Welsh Government we hope to progress a long-awaited debate on Paying for Care. There is new legislation being developed on the Human Rights of Vulnerable Groups that will build we trust on the strengths of the work on this issue over the last few years. We are also promised further development of policies on Transport and Isolation and Loneliness. There is also certainly a need for more attention to building bridges between the generations.

There is much to debate and where the interests of older people must be protected. We in COPA can help bring together the views, opinions and concerns of local Older People's fora to the national level. There is strength in numbers. Enjoy the Conference and please visit the Information Stands and our new web site.

Steve Milsom, Chair COPA



News from Carmarthenshire 50 + Forum.

We have had a very positive response to our digital 'reaching out' campaign via e-newsletter, Facebook and Twitter. We offered 50+ presentations to any local groups who include or represent older people, and we also invited expressions of interest from any members who wished to join our Steering Group.

The results have been most encouraging and we now have 4 new members being co-opted to the Steering Group and there are 5 presentations planned for delivery to a range of local organisations by Steering Group members. Just goes to show the power of digital communication – even among the older generation!!



Neil Williams, Care & Repair Cymru, GP Dr Daniel Vaughan and Angharad Phillips, Age Cymru

Great Success of Falls Awareness Week

Falls Awareness Week 2019 has again proved to be a great success in highlighting the important message that *falls are not an inevitable part of growing older*.

The week was organised by three national charities in Wales, Care & Repair Cymru, Age Cymru and Age Connects, and supported by Public Health Wales and the Welsh Government.

Falls cost the NHS £2.3bn every year and an older person dies in the UK every five hours following a fall. In many instances, the risks associated with falls can be lowered and even eliminated by some very simple, low cost changes to our behaviour.

Neil Williams from Care & Repair Cymru who Chairs the National Prudent Healthcare Falls Prevention Taskforce said: "This year we asked Primary Care professionals, particularly GP surgeries, to take two minutes to talk to their older patients about their risk of falling.

The *Take Action Today* campaign posters were delivered to every GP surgery across Wales to promote the message and highlight important information to the public, that they may not have considered about how to prevent a fall.

Neil continued: "We've had a very positive response from many GP practices who are promoting the falls awareness messages and how to take action."

Minster Surgeries Antonia Higgins, Practice Manager at Brynderwen & in Cardiff said "The Falls Awareness19 campaign was excellent as it reminded the whole Primary Care team of the part, they can play in falls reduction.

"Patients have contact with many members of our Primary Care team, from GP's and nurses to the receptionist, prescribing clerk and their local pharmacy.

"This campaign acts as a reminder to everyone in Primary Care that we can all play a part in keeping patients out of hospital and injury free by ensuring they are aware

of the risks and dangers of falls. Prevention is far better than cure for us all and takes just a couple of quick questions to the patient!

“The “Take Action Today” poster is very clear and easy to read for patients, directing them to the most appropriate service in taking action. This is really refreshing as it signposts patients in the right way, not just to their GP.

“Congratulations to Age Cymru, Age Connect Wales and Care & Repair Cymru for a really worthwhile campaign.”



Older People's Commissioner for Wales Comisiynydd Pobl Hŷn Cymru

Helena Herklots – Commissioner for Older People in Wales

Developing my strategy – with the voices of older people at its heart

At the end of March, I published my strategy – Making Wales the best place in the world to grow older – which sets out my priorities and the action I will take to improve the lives of older people throughout Wales.

My work as Commissioner will be focused on three key priorities that will help to transform the experience of growing older in Wales: ending ageism and age discrimination, stopping the abuse of older people and enabling everyone to age well.

In addition to delivering a wide range of work against these priorities, I will also continue to work with a wide range of partners to influence policy and practice at both a national and a local level; identify, celebrate and promote good practice; monitor and scrutinise the work of public bodies, holding them to account when failures occur; provide help and support directly to older people through my casework service; and empower older people by publishing a range of useful information guides and booklets that have a strong focus on their rights.

But developing my strategy, and subsequent work programme for 2019-20 would not have been possible without an extensive programme of engagement with older people throughout Wales.

My team and I travelled the length and breadth of Wales – visiting 82 groups and engaging with over 3,000 older people – to hear about their experiences of growing older, both positive and negative, the changes they would like to see that would make Wales the best place in the world to grow older, and how these changes could be delivered.

Having used this engagement to help me to identify my priorities and develop my strategy, I undertook further engagement with older people to determine the action I will take against them. I ran a consultation, to hear older people's ideas about the work I should deliver during 2019-22, which received over 260 responses, alongside further engagement events held throughout Wales to ensure that as many older people as possible could contribute to the development of my work programme.

My strategy and 2019-20 work programme are available to download from my website, together with a short summary report that provides an overview of the consultation responses I received. You can download the documents here:

<http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/publications/strategy.aspx>.

Going forward, engaging with older people will continue to be a key part of my work and my team and I will continue to travel throughout Wales to hear directly from older people about their experiences of growing older, the things that matter to them and the changes they would like to

see that would make a positive difference to their lives; older people's voices will continue to guide and shape my work as Commissioner. But more than this, I want to use engagement to empower older people, to grow their knowledge and understanding about their rights and other key issues, something I will be taking forward now that the delivery of my work programme has begun.

Too often, engagement with older people is seen as an 'added extra' or a tick-box exercise, which should never be the case. Engagement should instead be seen as a crucial way of capturing information and intelligence, utilising older people's knowledge and experience to make sure we can get things right and deliver the change they want and need to see.

Helena Herklots

Commissioner for Older People

<http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/home.aspx>



Nordic Walking

Barry Sidings – Pontypridd course April/May 2019

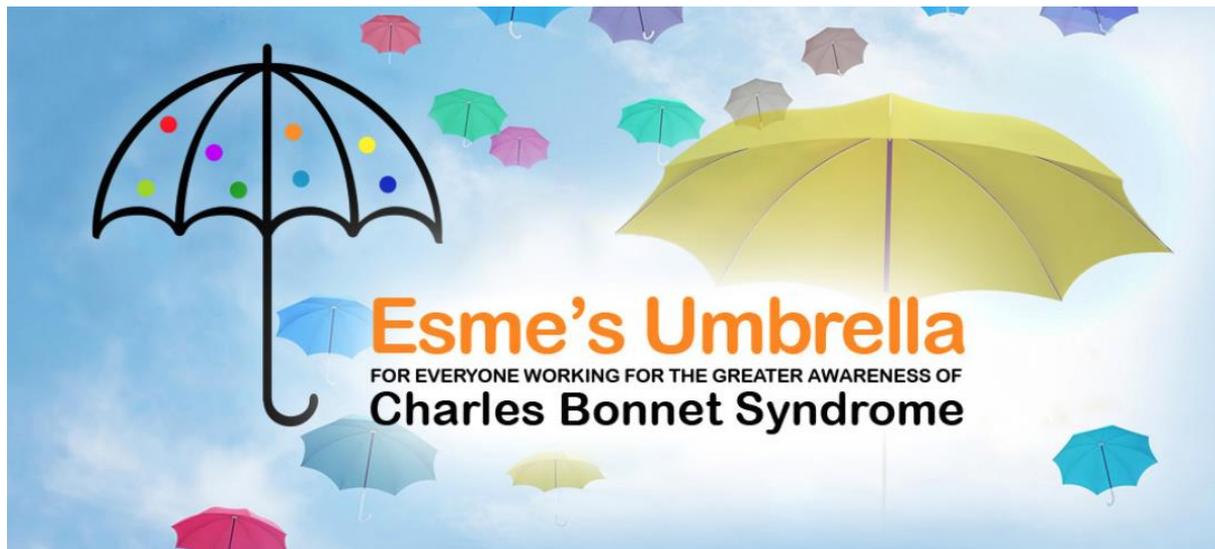
Instructor: **Alan Rumble**

The people below successfully completed their 5 week course enabling them to walk with Age Cymru Nordic Walking groups and celebrated with coffee and certificate presentation.



Rosie, Ann, Phil, Diane, Angela and Jan

For details of classes in your area please contact Rebecca Phillips on 02920 431535



Why Esme? Read her story at

www.charlesbonnetsyndrome.uk/why-esme/

Charles Bonnet described the syndrome named after him in 1760. The condition produces vivid, complex visual hallucinations that occur in psychologically normal people.

This is Joy's story.

"I have been seeing things for years. There has been a rather nice black cat that creeps into the lounge and sits by my chair. When I go to stroke her, she disappears. This was tolerable but when I started seeing zig zag flashing lights, blue flowers on non-flowering shrubs and owls perching on the picture frames, I thought I should get help.

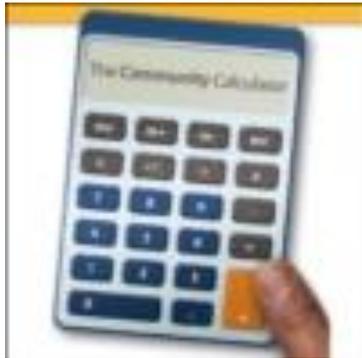
My ophthalmic consultant said all this was par for the course for people with eye conditions, particularly for those with Wet and Dry Age-related Macular degeneration. I wish he had warned me when I was first diagnosed!

I am actually relatively lucky. Some people see really scary things like snakes coming out of the teapot. Others see demonic faces coming towards them.

My worst experience was getting off a bus and being unable to move because I was surrounded by traffic cones and I couldn't see the traffic. The only thing to do was to close my eyes and wait until the hallucination had passed."

The Macular Support Group meets in Caerphilly Library on 3rd Tuesday of every Month 10.30-12.30

Caerphilly 50 + - <https://www.caerphillyover50.co.uk/>



Age Cymru's Community Calculator helping to prioritise the charity's campaigns

At the 2018 National Eisteddfod in Cardiff last summer, Age Cymru launched its Community Calculator to help gauge older people's opinions about what does, and doesn't, make their locality age friendly. The charity will use the findings of the survey to prioritise its own work and campaigns in the months and even years ahead.

Based on a previous model launched in 2010, the bi-lingual Community Calculator asked participants to rate ten elements of their community with marks out of ten which are then broken down into national and local authority areas.

The survey asked about aspects such as access to local shops, and the availability of public transport and public toilets. It also asked about the state of local pavements, neighbourhood safety and to what extent were their opinions sought in community decisions and plans.

Having distributed the survey across the four corners of Wales, it was closed in February 2019 with more than 1,000 responses.

From the initial analysis, there are three obvious stories emerging from the data: **Toilets, Pavements; and Your Voice** (or lack of).

- 565 respondents (56%) said **public toilets** were poor with only 181 (18%) saying they were good or excellent.
- 347 respondents (34%) said their **pavements** were poor and only 245 (25%) saying they were good or excellent.
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- 330 respondents (34%) said their **voice** was not heard with only 264 (27%) saying it was good or excellent.

Needless to say Age Cymru will be using the data not only to inform its own campaigns in the months ahead but also to influence decision makers throughout Wales.

For further information about the Community Calculator call Michael Phillips or Ceri Cryer on 029 2043 1555.