



# **EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES**

**PLACE-BASED APPROACHES TO IMPROVE  
HEALTH AND REDUCE INEQUALITIES**





# Welcome

**T**aking a place-based approach to improving health and reducing inequalities can give us a better understanding of how to coordinate actions and investments to improve the quality of life for communities.

Health inequalities arise because of the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age. These conditions influence our opportunities for good health, and how we think, feel and act, and this shapes our mental health, physical health and wellbeing.

By taking a joined up, place-based approach we can improve the conditions of communities which will support people to live healthier lives in a community that encourages them to flourish.

In this e-bulletin we have a range of articles which cover national regional and local initiatives, policies and programmes using a place-based Approach in Wales.

Let us know what you think of our e-bulletin by answering two questions. Click [here](#) for the survey.

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**Dr Sarah Williams** GP; Primary Care Lead for Green Health Wales; Royal College of General Practitioners Climate and Sustainability Lead for Wales; Primary Care Sustainable Lead Value in Health 23/24; Founder and Co-Chair Greener Practice Wales

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Public Health Network Cymru undertook a survey to understand what webinar topics members would like to see during 2024/25. The top three topics that members voted for were **Place-based Approaches, Behaviour Change and Social Prescribing**.

This information along with previous member feedback will be used to shape our upcoming events. Thank you to everyone who responded.

# Articles





## TIME CREDITS

### Practice

# Tempo Time Credits: Fostering Public Health and Community Well-being Across Wales

Rachel Gegeshidze

CEO Tempo Time Credits

In the heart of Wales, a visionary concept has taken root, weaving together the fabric of communities, fostering inclusivity, and promoting well-being for all. Tempo Time Credits, rooted in the Welsh Valleys and extending their reach across the nation, embody a novel approach to placemaking and public health. In this blog, we delve into the transformative power of Tempo Time Credits in nurturing social connections, enhancing mental and physical health, empowering communities, and facilitating skill development.

### Building Social Connections

At the core of Tempo Time Credits lies the ethos of social connection. By participating in activities and projects that earn Time Credits, individuals forge meaningful relationships, combatting feelings of isolation and loneliness. The recent surge in community engagement, exemplified by the redemption of over 800 Time Credits for Westend Shows at the Wales Millennium Centre, underscores the profound impact of social connections on mental health and overall well-being.

### Promoting Mental and Physical Health

Engagement in meaningful activities through Tempo Time Credits cultivates a sense of purpose and accomplishment, bolstering mental health. Moreover, many Time Credit activities involve physical movement, contributing to improved physical health and overall well-being. Whether through volunteering for community projects or participating in fitness classes, individuals embark on a journey towards holistic wellness.

## Empowering Communities

Tempo Time Credits empower individuals to actively participate in community development, fostering a sense of agency and belonging. By exchanging earned Time Credits for services or activities, community members contribute to the collective well-being. This empowerment not only enhances individual self-esteem but also strengthens social cohesion and community resilience.

## Facilitating Skill Development and Learning

Through Tempo Time Credits, individuals embark on a journey of continuous learning and skill development. By participating in diverse activities, individuals expand their knowledge, hone their abilities, and enhance their employability. This emphasis on lifelong learning not only enriches personal growth but also contributes to the socioeconomic prosperity of communities.

## Insights from the 2023 Impact Report

The 2023 Impact Report unveiled compelling insights into the transformative power of Tempo Time Credits:

Personal Testimonials:

Personal testimonials further illuminate the profound impact of Tempo Time Credits:

**57%** of respondents stated that earning and using Time Credits has improved their quality of life.

**61%** reported improved mental health.

**56%** are more able to manage their health and wellbeing.

**57%** feel more positive about their future.

**22%** have less need to use social care services.

**40%** can afford to do more things.

We also asked people about the difference.

“Volunteering gives me a sense of purpose and such a worthwhile feeling that I am doing something to help and contributing to those in my local community who need support and encouragement both physically, emotionally and mentally. That in turn improves my own wellbeing in all ways.”

“I lost my husband in 2021 and it has been very difficult adapting to life in a new area and missing him. Time Credits have got me out of the house, meeting new people and helping out at a coffee morning. I have made new friends and I’m feeling less lonely now.”

“Due to looking after my elderly mother who has vascular dementia I have been unable to make time for me to switch off and take time out, so the use of my Time Credits I have built up encourages me once a week to go swimming, this has helped my mental health enormously, just being able to swim gives me the focus and strength I need to continue to care for my mother, I am able to step into her world without getting anxious and upset after my swim.”

“I feel less alone and have a job again.”

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Tempo Time Credits serve as a catalyst for positive societal change, fostering healthier, happier, and more resilient individuals and communities. By promoting social connection, enhancing mental and physical health, empowering communities, and facilitating skill development, Tempo Time Credits embody a beacon of hope and solidarity across Wales. To delve deeper into our impact, explore our full Impact Report on our website. Join us in our journey towards a Wales where every individual’s time and talents are valued, and where solidarity and mutual support flourish.

Read our full impact report on our [website](#).



Practice

## Greener Prescribing - Reducing pharmaceutical burden through connecting the NHS community to planet, health and wellbeing

**Dr Sarah Williams**

GP; Primary Care Lead for Green Health Wales; Royal College of General Practitioners Climate and Sustainability Lead for Wales; Primary Care Sustainable Lead Value in Health 23/24; Founder and Co-Chair Greener Practice Wales



**G**reen Health Wales has developed a National Programme on Green Prescribing. They have assigned National Honorary Leads, Prof Les Bailie and Dr Will Beharrel to support the delivery of expert community place based engagement. Through this an NHS community of practice, engagement events and educational learning has started.

This article outlines Green Health Wales' National Programme on Green Prescribing and connects to a series of articles explaining place based green prescribing community programmes who have engaged with Green Health Wales.

Green prescribing is the use of green, eco therapy based practices to promote health. Examples of just some of the health benefits include reducing mental health problems, reducing high blood pressure, reducing the need for diabetic medication and reducing the levels of obesity. By being outdoors, exercising in green spaces, receiving nature based programmes can prevent the need for medication. Eco therapies make the link between planet, people and nature. Close contact with nature, promotes connected behaviour. Learning to heal within nature promotes climate sensitive activities and encourages climate protective behaviours. Medication enters our water systems, ground and can adversely affect the nature around us.

Whilst many medications can be life saving we need to harmonise the areas of over use and connect the dots to where complimentary based treatments, that are non medicated and just as good can be accessed as a first line treatment not a last line. We now know pain medication, for chronic pain is better treated with psychological support.

We need to find ways for our vulnerable members of the community to get this more readily, breaking down inequalities and promoting community eco therapies. Green Health Wales have organised a series of engagement sessions across Wales. Connecting local NHS staff to community projects. Using place based experiential engagement days for local NHS staff to interact with local community projects. Green Health Wales

is currently developing a Green Prescribing Hub to connect to local treatments, and other evidenced based NHS treatment options which reduce pharmaceutical burden. For both community and NHS staff to access and begin to use as first line treatment options. Harmonising over use of medicines and promoting first line evidenced based eco therapies.

## How we are creating change and what Green Health Recommends to NHS staff

Join the [Wales School of Prescribing](#) to get the latest updates.

### Social Prescribing

[Social prescribing](#) helps to connect people to community-based support to better manage their health and well-being.

Unfortunately, social prescribing currently has a lot of confusing language. Sometimes complicated labels are used for what are straightforward things and sometimes social prescribing is referred to as a different term, for example community connection, community referral or supported referral.

splossary™ is a [glossary](#) of social prescribing terms and descriptions – to help people understand the language used in social prescribing.

[The video below explains social prescribing and how to use the splossary™.](#)

### GP surgeries

Invite your local MIND and Mental health Well being, link workers, community connectors. As explained in the splossary above there are many names still being used across Wales. however have an education session in your surgery and connect with community projects to build your ability to social and green prescribe.

### Psychiatry

Join your local Health Board Green Groups to build community networks.

Use your college [position statement](#) to support building more eco-friendly therapies.

### Green Groups in Health Boards

Support NHS staff to access social and green prescribing options and referral systems in their clinics and day to day work.

### Third sector and charities

There are multiple programmes already doing great work across Wales. Some notably outstanding projects to highlight and promote spread and scale across Wales. Green Groups in Health Boards – reach out to your local third sector to see where you can make community project links.



## Practice

# Cynon Valley Organic Adventures: Grow With Us – Green Learning, Health and Wellbeing in Rhondda

**Janis Werrett,**

Cynon Valley Organic Adventures

**Professor Les Bailie,**

Professor of Microbiology, [School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences](#)

**Dr Andrew Cuthbert**

**C**ynon Valley Organic Adventures (CVOA) is a community-led social enterprise situated on the outskirts of Mountain Ash in Rhondda Cynon Taff. We were established in 2018 at a neglected 5-acre by the river Cynon. Its diverse natural habitats and wildlife were an ideal place to create our now thriving educational, horticultural and wellbeing activities. We did this with the enthusiastic support of young local volunteers. Today, our Green Valley home offers a rich variety of nature-themed experiences and learning courses for the Rhondda community and neighbouring

areas. We also offer wellbeing activities for individuals referred by Green Prescribing practitioners, such as local GPs, community link-workers, and local charities.

Our mission is to support the health and wellbeing of people in the community. Our objectives focus on improving life chances and employment opportunities of young people. We work with people whose lives are adversely impacted by myriad social, developmental, educational and practical challenges. We are particularly committed to helping young people not attending school or are at risk of leaving without

formal qualifications. Many live with complex difficulties beyond their formal education which diminishes their scope for high quality employment and personal development and exposes them to greater risks of social isolation and poor mental health.



We do not view this situation as a failure of community, nor an unavoidable consequence of long-term decline. We believe in young people's right to prosperous, fulfilling lives. Addressing their challenge required a committed investment in developing interventions and practical solutions that lead to improved outcomes, leading to increased job opportunities and a greater sense of belonging.

We created Cynon Valley Organic Adventure to help people overcome the challenges that frequently confront young people in our community. We do this in partnership with local agencies, statutory services, and community volunteer organisations. Our connections and the pathways we have developed are creating new opportunities for people to flourish, gain good qualifications, become more resilient, and better prepared for work. We always welcome the support of adult volunteers and mentors at Green Valley, indeed without them we wouldn't be able to sustain the production and delivery of so many new and exciting projects!

The proudest achievement of our Green Valley site was becoming an accredited branch of the West Midlands Open College Network. We now offer previously

unavailable education, skills and training opportunities for young people in social adversity, people living with neurodiversity, learning difficulties, and co-occurring mental or physical health difficulties. Our community-focused courses promote young people's knowledge and skills across a broad curriculum, covering Nature Conservation, Climate Challenge and Sustainable Horticulture. Courses include Environmental Conservation & Heritage, Community Forestry, Environmental Sustainability, and Building Hedgerows. We offer a holistic syllabus, which includes management courses covering in Horticulture, Woodland, and Wetland Habitats, as well as modules covering employability training and CV writing.



We are the only organisation of its kind in the local authority which offers this type of package. In 2021, we were thrilled to receive National Lottery Wales's project of the year award, recognising the hard work we and our dedicated army of volunteers invested in creating our gardening and nature programme.



Links:

Web: <https://www.cynonvalleyorganicadventures.co.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/organicadventure>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/cynonvalleyorganicadventures/>



**Practice**

## Reconciling Nature and Culture to Improve Health and Wellbeing

**Dr Will Beharrell,**

Specialising in Psychiatrist, Founder Fathom Trust



**GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES**



**Green Health Wales**  
**lechyd Gwyrdd Cymru**

**T**he Fathom Trust promotes a soulful approach to health and wellbeing for people who are socially isolated through illness or adversity.

By bringing together landowners, artisans, GPs and Mental Health teams, the charity creates therapeutic communities in places of natural beauty and tranquillity.

People are gently led through forty hours of craftmaking, conservation and contemplation over an eight-week course called 'Making Well' where they gain in self-understanding and learn to re-

establish connections to their own communities and natural habitats.

Referrals typically come from GPs, Mental Health teams, and local charities and are currently allocated to one of three sites across Powys including Ystradgynlais, Brecon, and Rhayader with support from the Arts Council Wales.

Bangor University estimate that this works has a social value of £7.70 for every £1 invested. The University of South Wales is currently undertaking a realist evaluation of this work, which is due to be published

in 2025. Fathom uses a similar approach to improve the health and wellbeing of healthcare professionals, creating peer groups to offer solidarity and support in the workplace. It is also starting to work with children whose illness or family circumstances mean that they are not receiving a regular education.

Since starting in 2020 Fathom has observed the profound effect that immersion in the natural world has had on the health and wellbeing of people who arrive in various states of distress and disconnection, and the positive effect it has on the healthcare workforce, many of whom have found

that applying their skills in a natural setting makes their work more effective. In this way, Fathom is conserving local heritage, reducing the burden on the health workforce, improving natural habitats, and improving the health and wellbeing of local communities.

Please see [www.fathomtrust.com](http://www.fathomtrust.com) for more information and for stories of those who have completed the Making Well course.





Yma o Hyd, Sophia Leadhill Cefn Mawr community members

**Practice**

## The Bridge that Connects: World Heritage Site Art Project by the Canal & River Trust (2023-2024)

Harnessing our ancestry, heritage and landscape for shared health, wellbeing and our future climate.

**Claire Farrell,**

Art, Culture and Placemaking Strategic Developer for the Canal & River Trust; Visiting Lecturer University of South Wales; Director WERK, Lecturer Institute of Creative Arts, Birmingham City University Cultural Planning, Art Policy



The Canal and River Trust are delivering a culture and community-led contemporary art and placemaking project which has been funded through the Shared Prosperity Fund (North) and UK Government Levelling-up Fund.

The Bridge that Connects is a cultural programme taking place between December 2023 - December 2024 that seeks to engage and empower communities to explore their past and present

identities, connectedness and future aspirations. Working with artists and creative practitioners, intergenerational community groups and individuals will be encouraged to participate and lead in the co-creation of temporary works and interventions in public spaces that reflect their individual place-identity, heritage, shared history, futures and connectedness to each other, Wrexham, and the world.

The project has been inspired by the Canal & River Trust's place-based approach and ambition to better understand the opportunities, challenges and individuality of the waterway environments and surrounding diverse communities. The project catalyst is the UNESCO Pontcysyllte Aqueduct World Heritage Site (WHS) which sits within an Area of Outstanding Beauty and Area of Special Scientific Interest that is home to post industrial towns and villages with communities that

span extreme demographics and health inequalities. Working with communities, key stakeholders and in partnership with Greener Practice Wales we will explore culture and community-led positive health benefits through a myriad of creative experiences and learning that connect communities to the waterways, surrounding landscape and nature. We will identify 'place specific' opportunities for co-creation to empower communities to redefine, enhance and reimagine their physical environments through volunteering, nature based citizen science and adoptions of the towpaths, basins and waterways to take ownership of, protect, preserve and cultivate the land and eco systems for community, health, ecology and our shared climate.

Ongoing community engagement events are taking place across these communities Trevor, Cefn Mawr, Fron, Chirk and Wrexham beginning from May 2024. These events, activities, interventions and workshops will explore identity through heritage, social history and culture. We are inviting communities to share their heritage, lived experience and what matters to them, and through iterative storytelling that moves, evolves, accrues, connects and transforms we

will find opportunities to make these identities visible in the landscape. Working with artists, creative practitioners and multiple cross sectoral

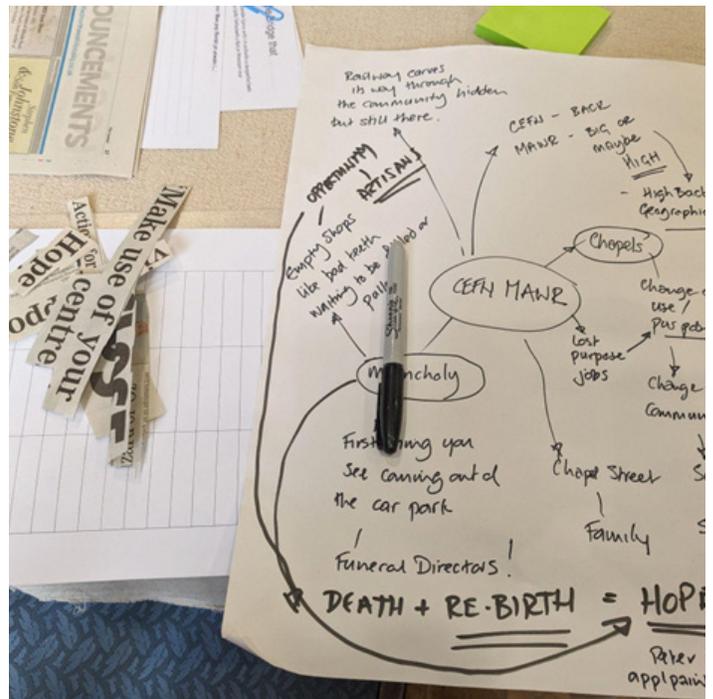
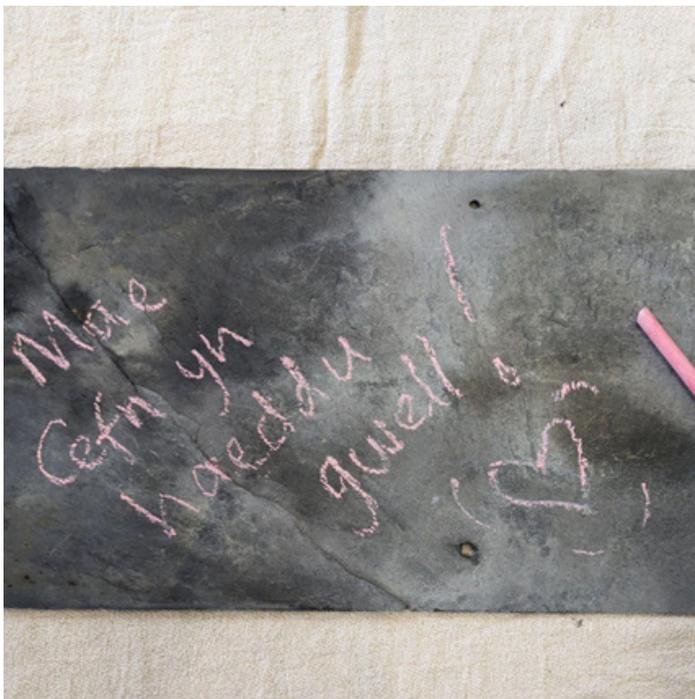
knowledge, experiences and local organisations in the area to bring together with wide ranging land stewards, social and green



Cefn Mawr Clay Industry © Geof Charles National Library of Wales

place based partners the Canal & River Trust and Greener Practice Wales are exploring how this incredible landscape with a wealth of minerals once cultivated and consumed by heavy industry can now support the health and wellbeing of the communities now and in the future. We are identifying and mapping existing environmental, creative and ecological

prescribing leads, clinicians, public health professionals with a vested interest in community development, health inequalities, suicide prevention to environmentally triggered trauma to share best practice that will inform the co creation of pilot activity later this year within this project.



Photographs by artist Sophia Leadhill taken from a May community event in Cefn Mawr to explore place identity. The artist is one of the artists-in-residence for The Bridge Connects who will be overseeing this programme strand with Green Health Wales. Leadhill has a twenty year practice in community arts and is currently studying Art & Health MA specialising in Trauma and the Environment.



Practice

# Creating greener, more sustainable mental health services in Wales: the value of co-production

**Dr Kathryn Speedy,**

Honorary Lead for Green Health Wales; Higher trainee in Child and Adolescent Mental Health, South Wales; Royal College of Psychiatrists Green Scholarship; Royal College of Psychiatrists Planetary Health and Sustainability Committees and EcoCAMHS group



**I**n Wales, public bodies including the NHS, have a statutory responsibility to consider the well-being of future generations (1), and ensure that we do think long-term and carry out sustainable development. This also applies to our National Healthcare Service (2). When we look at the practices needed, including “adopting a preventative health approach in all we do” and “empowering individual to manage their own health conditions whenever possible”, then a place-based approach is essential to achieving this.

Addressing health inequalities will lead to improvements in health that subsequently reduces the demand on our healthcare service, with a concomitant reduction in its carbon footprint and environmental impact.

Achieving this, requires an increase in awareness of sustainable healthcare amongst healthcare staff; including provision of the knowledge, skills and resources required, and systems convening (3).

In April 2024, The Royal College of Psychiatrists in Wales hosted a one day conference at the National Botanic Garden of Wales; bringing together healthcare and third sector organisations to think about the value of co-production in creating greener, more sustainable mental health services in Wales. Co-production had already been highlighted as an important part of the college guidance, published in November 2023 (4).

The conference was supported by a number of members of Green Health Wales, and feedback on the day was overwhelmingly positive.

The conference programme focused on Green prescribing, with a mixture of scientific research studies and local project presentations, providing evidence that nature-based interventions and activities can improve physical and mental well-being.

The benefits of Green Prescribing will play an important role in delivering greener, more sustainable healthcare. However, these initiatives cannot be designed without a place-based approach, to ensure that they are relevant to and meet the needs of the population they will be used by (5). Returning to the value of co-production, we need to include the people using the service, in its initial design and ongoing development.

Although this conference was an important step in achieving this, attendance was comparatively low and so the Welsh Government vision of all healthcare staff promoting environmental sustainability (2) still feels distant, unless significant resource can be allocated to sustainable healthcare education and

the establishment of this as a priority for healthcare leadership and delivery.

1. <https://www.gov.wales/well-being-of-future-generations-wales>

2. <https://www.gov.wales/delivering-sustainable-healthcare-position-statement#:~:text=The%20health%20and%20social%20care%20climate%20emergency%20national%20programme%20has,and%20pressurised%20metered%20dose%20inhalers>

3. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/spread-and-adoption/systems-convening/>

4. <https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/docs/default-source/improving-care/nccmh/net-zero-mhc/delivering-greener--more-sustainable-and-net-zero-mental-health-care---guidance-and-recommendations.pdf>

5. <https://www.ecehh.org/research/7837-2/>



Practice

## The Pill Collaborative – a place-based Network

**Victoria Dyer,**

Service Development Lead

**Chloe Cheal,**

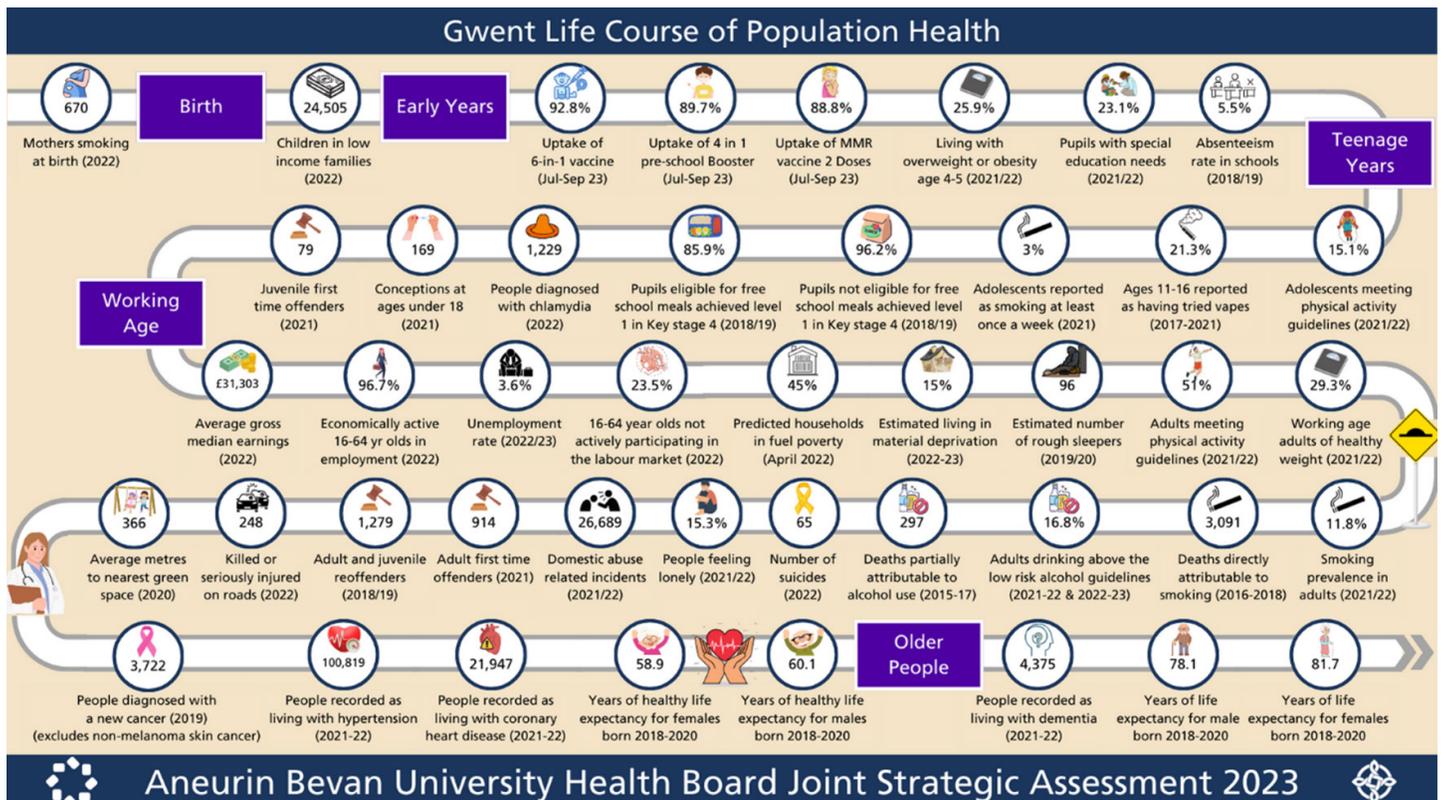
Community Involvement Officer,  
Integrated Wellbeing Network, Aneurin  
Bevan University Health Board

**T**he Pill Collaborative is a network of partner organisations, community groups, local business and voluntary bodies who were brought together by the Integrated Wellbeing Network (IWN) to drive forward key place-based objectives for Pillgwenlly. The meetings are held bi-monthly online via Teams with the agenda shaped by each member with guest speakers invited to present wider knowledge and insights that can inform planning for the local service delivery. These continuing conversations have shaped programmes within the area

and facilitated relationships between organisations to strengthen the impact of work. This is underpinned by the ‘Pill Masterplan’ which was commissioned by Newport City Council to understand the specific needs of the community.

The Service Development Lead, for the Integrated Wellbeing Network shared an infographic from the Gwent Joint Strategic Assessment depicting a ‘Life Course’, an “overview of the health and wellbeing of the people of Gwent” (1), which sparked positive interest. The Principle Public Health Practitioner

for Newport was then invited as a guest speaker to explain some of the Newport data sets behind this model.



This in turn led to the next collaborative meeting being held in person and a workshop type format to explore the data in more detail. Partners have been increasingly interested in the Wider Determinants of Health, Health Inequalities and Gwent Joint Strategic Assessment data sets to help inform priorities.

Following Gwent becoming a Marmot region and identifying key principles to work towards in order to reduce health inequalities, the themes of focus for the workshop were based on those partners in attendance (housing, local authority, primary

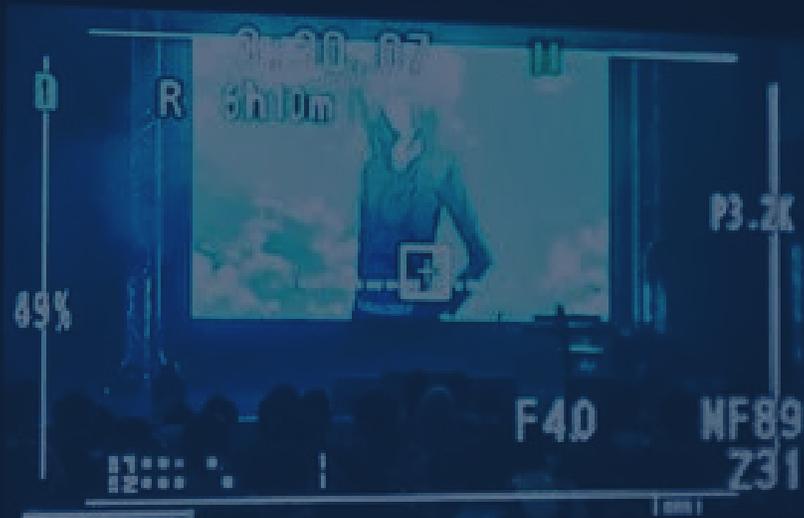
care), ensuring relevance and positive contribution to discussions and action planning.

- The four themes identified for discussion were:
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all
  - Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
  - Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention
  - Tackle racism, discrimination and their outcomes
- By taking a place-based approach, the group were able to take a deep dive, share insights and perspective on aspects of the community

that are impacting the data. Understanding the makeup of the community, service delivery and barriers facing an identified place, in a collaborative way will drive improvements and access to services, that will ultimately empower more residents to live healthier lives as part of a flourishing community.



# Videos



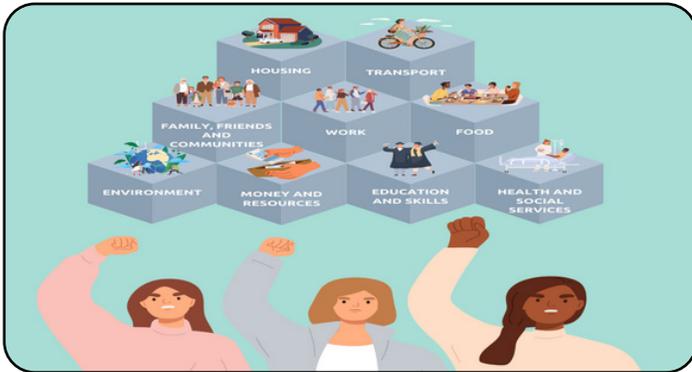
BARS

EVF DTL ZEBRA

LCD WFM

COUNTER-RESET/TC SE

FUNCTION SHTR/F



### **Building blocks for gender equity: Strategies for a prosperous future for women in Wales**

This webinar explored the links between gender and the wider determinants of health and discussed the role of gender-inclusive policies in shaping equitable economies and health systems. It was an opportunity to look at the prevailing gender inequalities which impact health beyond health services.

[Watch](#)



### **A participatory systems mapping approach to exploring education achievement in Wales – a reflection on theory and practice**

This webinar gave an overview of the Wider Determinants of Health Unit’s work in relation to education as a determinant of health

[Watch](#)



### **Becoming a Marmot region: sharing learning**

This webinar explored the approach taken by Aneurin Bevan Gwent Public Health Team and Coventry Council to becoming Marmot regions and highlighted learning and recommendations.

[Watch](#)

Explore our video library on our website [View all our videos](#)

# News & Resources



...you have been in this game  
so long and what have you

Walk and most  
never talk.

11





[Welsh young people lead the way championing 30 years of Eco-Schools](#)

20-06-2024



[Public Health Wales Annual Survey: User External user feedback on data and knowledge products](#)

14-06-2024



[Sports project helps more women to get active](#)

02-05-2024

[All News](#)

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## [Welsh Ambulance Service Mental Health Helplines leaflet](#)

Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust

## [Left Out in the Cold: The Hidden Impact of Cold Homes](#)

Institute of Health Equity

[All Resources](#)

# Next Issue

## GENDER EQUALITY IN WALES



Addressing challenges in gender equality requires a comprehensive approach that aims to reduce inequality, strengthen economies, and build stable, resilient societies that give everyone a chance to thrive.

Regardless of where you live, gender equality is a fundamental human right. Men and women should be able to contribute fully across various spheres of life, whether at home, in the workforce, or in other areas of life. However, persistent gender inequalities exist which profoundly impact overall life experiences.

Evidence has shown that women in Wales face challenges which directly and indirectly influence their health, and that black and minority ethnic groups and disabled and lone parent women face especially worse health inequalities linked to social and economic status. Women are also disproportionately affected by violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

By aligning efforts to promote gender equity with broader socio-economic objectives, Wales can forge a path towards a healthier, more prosperous future for all its residents.

For our upcoming e-bulletin, we invite articles that highlight successful initiatives and best practices in promoting health equity and gender equality in Wales. These can be national, regional or local initiatives, policies or programmes.

Our article submission form will provide you with further information on word count, layout of your article and guidance for images.

Please send articles to [publichealth.network@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:publichealth.network@wales.nhs.uk) by 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

[Contribute](#)