

# Newsletter

communities *first* **cymunedau yn gyntaf**



## Merthyr Tydfil Academy of Success

On Friday 8th January 2016, the Merthyr Tydfil Academy of Success held their annual awards.

The awards ceremony recognised individual, group and organisation's learning achievements throughout the past 12 months and beyond.

The focus of the awards is to recognise the many different ways in which children and young people within the County Borough excel through participation in extra-curricular activities and active citizenship.

It is a fantastic opportunity to celebrate children and young people's achievements. Also for organisations to share good practice and celebrate the positive impact their provision or service has had on the lives of children and young people in Merthyr Tydfil, through providing opportunities for learning.

Partaking in extra-curricular activities can improve children and young people's confidence, school attendance, social skills and achievement.

It can also engage children and young people to find success outside of the formal learning environment. These experiences can then influence potential career paths.

The winner of the "Extra Curricular Activities, Making a Difference at School Award" was Afon Taf High School Homework Club.



Head of Afon Taf Cliff Smith with Learning CF Lead Officer Claire Williams, Sophia Morgan, Owen Bennett and Deputy Head Emma Clarke

The homework club aims to equip an increasing number of young people with qualifications to enable them to move on to further education and/or training.

Communities First provides funding for staff, whilst the school provides venue, light refreshments and transport for students.

This project provides young people in year 10 with access to extra educational support in the form of homework clubs.

The clubs are held after school during the week as well as Saturday mornings. The focus of these sessions is to provide additional support in English & Maths.



Head Girl: Sophia Morgan, Head Boy: Owen Bennett with Mayor: Councillor David Isaac.

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## LOOK OUT FOR

more information in the **South Cluster Communities First** column in the Merthyr Express, or view our Facebook profile page at **South Cluster Communities First.**



## Career Clubs

Communities First continue to deliver Community Career Clubs in Aberfan and Treharris. Please come along to either Treharris Boys and Girls Club between 10.00–12.00 or Aberfan Library between 1.00 and 3.00 pm every Wednesday if you would like assistance with any aspect of job searching or using Universal Jobmatch.

We also support our participants to gain work-related qualifications such as **Food Safety, Manual Handling, First Aid** and **CSCS** (Construction Skills Certification Scheme).

Congratulations to our last cohort of CSCS candidates who ALL passed their Health and Safety AND CSCS tests with flying colours and are now fully qualified to work on construction sites. **Well done guys.**



## Cooking and Nutrition Classes

South Cluster Communities First provide a range of cooking and nutrition classes throughout the Cluster at a number of venues. These classes allow participants to be hands on and cook a healthy meal from scratch.

They offer loads of information on general nutrition and focuses on a healthy balanced diet.

Please check out our Facebook page for when classes are being delivered.



## South Cluster Communities First Well Being Programme

We wish to support people's general well-being and positivity.

Communities First are working in partnership with the Cwm Taf Valley Steps Programme to provide a number of well-being courses that can teach you to increase or maintain a positive attitude at times when you may be feeling stressed or low.

*From January 2016 we have the following course booked in to date:*

*All the classes will be held in St Matthias Church, Treharris.*

### Stress Control Course

**Tuesday 12th January**

10am – 11.30am

**Tuesday 19th January**

10am – 11.30am

**Tuesday 26th January**

10am – 11.30am

**Tuesday 2nd February**

10am – 11.30am

**Tuesday 9th February**

10am – 11.30am

**Tuesday 16th February**

10am – 11.30am

### Mindfulness Course

**Tuesday 23rd February**

10am – 11.30am

**Tuesday 1st March**

10am – 11.30am

**Tuesday 8th March**

10am – 11.30am

**Tuesday 15th March**

10am – 11.30am

**Tuesday 22nd March**

10am – 11.30am

**Tuesday 29th March**

10am – 11.30am

## Afon Taf High School

This term our Family Liaison Officer Beth Evans has been working on rewarding good attendance and attainment.

Communities First also helped put on a bingo and afternoon tea for local senior citizens before Christmas.



Some Year 10 pupils raised money on a charity walk to put on the event. Accompanying the afternoon tea, the school choir sang Christmas carols and instrumental solos.



## Food Co-op

Looking to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables locally?

There are 3 local food co-ops that service your area. You can purchase fantastic quality produce at all three of these co-ops for a very affordable price.

Fruit, vegetable or salad bags are only £3 or a dozen eggs for just £2. Order each Friday morning for the following week.

Details for each Co-op are below:

**Treharris Food Co-op** – every Friday 9.00am at Treharris Boys & Girls Club

**Quakers Yard Food Co-op** – every Friday 9.00am at Fir Tree Centre

**Merthyr Vale Food Co-op** – every Friday 9.30am at South Cluster Communities First Base (Tram Road)



## Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhyd-y-Grug Homework Club

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhyd-y-Grug received funding from Communities First to set up an after school homework club in the autumn term.

The club supports children to complete and hand in their homework on time.

The homework club runs every Monday after school with a member of the teaching support staff taking the lead.



Further support is dependent on availability; this could either be in the form of other teachers on site or the Primary School Family Support Worker.

It is hoped this will continue through the next term.

Building on the success of this homework club Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhyd-y-Grug has been successful in achieving funding of £25,000 from the Aberfan Education Fund.

This gives them sustainability and allows them to expand opening the club to more pupils.

## South Cluster Communities First Healthier Lifestyle Programme

We wish to provide those living in the South Cluster with opportunities to get active.

We run 10 weeks of FREE exercise classes in venues across the Cluster from January 11th 2016 the below classes will be running for 10 weeks:

### Monday Morning

Women's Varied Exercise Class  
**9.30am – 10.30am**  
at Troedryhiw Willows Centre

### Wednesday Evening

Women's Varied Exercise Class  
**5.00pm – 6.00pm**  
at Aberfan Community Centre

These classes are free and include a taster in a range of different exercises such as kettlebells, boxercise, circuits etc.

These classes are for all levels of fitness from beginner to advanced.

**Please check out our Facebook page for up to date information.**



## Sugarcraft

Well done to all our sugar crafters who have completed their first 10 week course.

In partnership with the WEA the sugarcraft course runs every Friday morning in Trinity Chapel, Merthyr Vale and the participants have made sugarcraft models including Olaf ( the snowman from Frozen) along with Halloween and Christmas edible cake decorations.

Mel Williams, participant said "I am really enjoying attending the class. I first started because I wanted to make a first birthday cake for my son but after attending the class I've started making cakes for family and friends. We've made loads of models in class and my favourite has been the poinsettia's which I'll be making for all the Christmas cakes"

If you are interested in joining the class, please contact **Claire Williams** on **(01443) 690178**





# Newsletter

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## Money Management

Communities First have partnered up with Citizen's Advice to deliver fun interactive workshops designed to teach primary school aged children about budgeting and money management.

In November Troedyrhiw Primary pupils took part in budgeting games and activities which helped them learn about the importance of using a budget and saving money.

They came up with lots of great ways to save money and enjoyed taking part in blind taste tests to see if they could tell the difference between budget and premium priced snacks. **We hope to deliver sessions in all the cluster schools during the next couple of months.**



## Meet The Team

**Ken Long** 01443 690178  
Cluster Manager ken.long@vamt.net

**Hannah Mills** 07809 330534  
Prosperous Lead Officer hannah.mills@vamt.net

**Claire Williams** 07809 330528  
Learning Lead Officer claire.williams@vamt.net

**Rachel Thomas** 07809 330525  
Health Lead Officer rachel.thomas@vamt.net

**Amy Jones** 07809 330529  
Community Inclusion Officer amy.jones@vamt.net

**Kendra Tarplee** 07909 330523  
Primary Family Support Worker kendra.tarplee@vamt.net

**Beth Evans** 01443 690178  
Family Key Liaison Officer bethan.evans@vamt.net

**Bethan Morgan** 01443 690178  
Performance & Monitoring Officer bethan.morgan@vamt.net

**Maria Roberts** 01443 690178  
Administration & Finance Officer maria.roberts@vamt.net

## Contact Details

Communities First Office  
Tram Road  
Rear of Wesley Place  
Merthyr Vale CF48 4RS

Telephone Number: **01443 690178**

Facebook: **South Cluster Communities First**

Twitter: **@C1stSouth**

Website: **www.cfmerthyrsouth.org.uk**

If you would like any further information on Communities First and our activities, what we do and how we could help you, then complete the slip below and return to: **Communities First Office, Tram Road, Rear of Wesley Place, Merthyr Vale, CF48 4RS**

Forename: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*I would like information on the following: (please tick)*

Health & Nutrition

Learning

Basic Skills

Money Advice

Employability

Business Advice