



26th Annual Report



April 2014 to March 2015

24 Walter Road, Swansea, SA1 5NN

Telephone 01792 646640

Email: Debbie.Chegwen@communitylives.co.uk

Website: www.communitylives.co.uk





The Consortium is a non-profit making organisation which exists to support disabled people **to live the lives they choose** in the communities of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.

The people it supports, their families, and the staff employed to support them are encouraged to work very closely using their skills and abilities so that the things that matter to these people occur reliably and safely in their lives.

Most of these people have worked together for a very long time and have very long established relationships.



The people we support are encouraged to become as independent as possible but also to work together with people around them to support each other and to develop the events and activities that make their lives better.

People increasingly organize their lives through 8 support networks which are made up people who get support who know each other well, and a team of staff and managers who are responsible for making sure that people get the personal care and support that they need.

The content of our Annual report this year has been mostly written with members of our networks and thus it describes the highlights of their past year and what they are going to do to make things better in the future.

Our Annual General Meeting in October 2015 will reflect this because Network members are coming to present their year and their hopes and ideas for the future.

For the Consortium as a whole this past year has been both challenging and rewarding. We have had further cuts to our funding while we have still continued to provide the same levels of support. This is becoming a significant challenge that will only grow into the coming years.

However, we are still finding ways of becoming more person centred and helping the people we support to take more control of the organisation and their lives.

Time 2 Meet is run by people that receive support. It helps people to build stronger social lives by sharing skills interests and time. In the last year members have spent over 5332 hours organising groups and events, and nearly 8997 hours enjoying activities together.



Through organising a wide range of activities and events members are building strong relationships with each other and a wide range of local people. Thus they are increasingly able to act together to make the things that they want happen in the communities and services around them.

The Networks have built on this work, they have worked hard to understand what matters to the people supported as individuals and what they have in common as members of the Network.

They then helped these people to start making these things happen in their lives.





In April 2015 Network 1 supported 30 people who mostly live in West of Swansea who received 2264 hours of support per week, it employed about 80 people.



Over the past year we have been involved in all sorts of activities and meetings that were important to us. We have done this as individuals, as a group, as a whole network and we have worked hard to support Time 2 Meet.

There have been:

Network parties where we have all met together to have a good time.



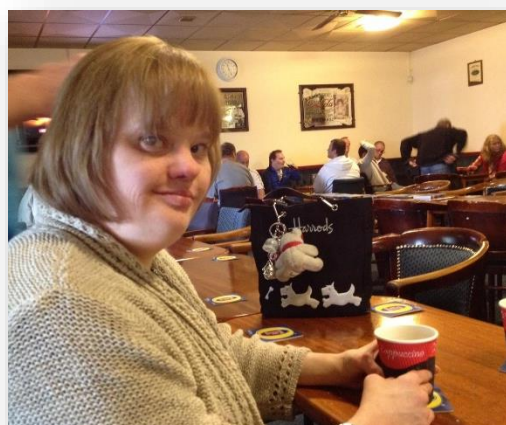
Holidays and days out

-  There have been lots of holidays taken to Blackpool, Tenby, Devon, as well as some of us have gone on bus tours.
-  Days out to theme parks, museums, race courses, and nature reserves.



Coffee morning in Gorseinon

We have a really good time on a Friday morning where some of us organise a coffee morning in Brighton road, it's a real place to catch up with old friends and meet new ones.



The 'Admin group'

This year on Wednesdays we have set up the 'Admin Group' through Time 2 Meet. This group put news and information about activities and events on our website, and plans activities and events with members. We have learnt how to work well with each other as well as practical skills like emailing.



Our days

With Day Services days reducing we are looking towards creating more opportunities through Time 2 Meet, as well using our common interests to meet, share resources like staffing and other financial costs, and build friendships.

It is very important that staff support us with activities in our own homes as well as the community. For one of us this includes being an active Daniel O'Donnell fan club member.

We are in the process of developing new support plans so that we can develop new skills in our lives like building on our communication, developing opportunities to fulfil our goals and aspirations.

Developments in our Network.

We are really pleased that we will have tenants moving in together who will be part of Network 1; it's going to be exciting to welcome new friends and staff into the network.



In April 2015 Network 2 supported 34 people who live in west of Swansea who together received 2251 hours of support per week, it also employed about 88 people.

Richard, Robert and Peter have developed their small farm on the Loughor estuary even further. They have purchased a polytunnel and grown lots of vegetables and flowers all from seed. They have also made the vegetable plot much bigger this year and have successfully grown potatoes, carrots and green beans. During the Time 2 Meet summer fete they sold some of their pots and hanging baskets.



Three other people from the Network have also been helping to grow food on their land. Jobs undertaken included planting seeds and watering, weeding, laying bark to make paths, feeding the chickens and ducks and also collecting the eggs.

Andrew has regularly collected eggs and vegetables and then taken them home with him and used these to make himself lunch. Richard, Robert and Peter are always looking for more people to help because there is always more to do.



With their agreement the whole Network has hosted 'get togethers' at the farm, they have been lucky through the summer and had BBQ's outside in their beautiful gardens.

Sean, Paul and Andrew who live together in Gorseinon have started a regular pool night, this has been very popular. There is a prize for the winner and also a buffet for all who attend.

Rebecca who is a regular member of the Admin Group has now started to work at the Consortium offices as part of the information team and is enjoying this.



Lots of people within Network 2 attend the Time 2 Meet walking group and have said they enjoy making new friends and it also helps to keep them fit and healthy.

Some of these events have encouraged people to stretch their personal skills; Carol now attends the coffee morning in Gorseinon independently, she catches 2 buses to get there. She says she has met up with some old friends that she hasn't seen for a while and also enjoys stopping at Roma's for lunch.

In the coming year people in Network 2 are also looking forward to be able to use the multi-sensory room and other facilities at the local special needs service in the evenings and weekends through an arrangement that will be managed by Time 2 Meet members.

The network has discussed the changes that all networks are making to save money in 2015, most people said making sure they had access to regular staff to support them was most important. Some people did not agree with the introduction of the food policy which stops staff being able to share food with tenants but understood that the money saved would help to give support staff a pay rise which is very important.



In April 2015 Network 3 supported 27 people who live in central and east Swansea who together received 2033 hours of support per week, it also employed about 83 people.

We have had a busy year. We have had four new people starting to be supported in the network. We have also recruited a number of new staff. Some people have also reduced their days in day centres.

The beginning of the year we had a network party in the Tree tops which everyone enjoyed. We all got dressed up and had a three course meal with a disco afterwards. This was followed by an afternoon tea to discuss the things that matter to us and how we can make them happen.



As a result, some of us formed a committee to look for a venue to set up a Lunch Club in partnership with Time 2 Meet to take place every Wednesday.

Four people who live together in central Swansea and their staff team have worked really hard in setting this up. The group now meets on Wednesday morning at a church in Manselton who cater for the club for a small fee with lunch and teas and coffee.

There are now a variety of different activities network members are involved in including a Knitting group in which we make blankets which are sent to 3rd world countries.

There are also Arts and crafts made by network members that they sold at the Time 2 Meet Summer fete together with cakes that people had made. We are hoping to use this money to organise a trip that network members will want to organise.

Members are now making ornaments ready for Christmas.

As a result of this developing relationship between Lunch club and the church where it is based Avril made a window decoration for the Church Harvest festival which looked brilliant.

One of our members took part in the Race for Life this year with two of her team.



Our plans for next year are to continue to build on the Time to meet activities in our Lunch Club so that they give even greater opportunities for members to meet each other and organise the things that they want.

We are looking forward to joining a swimming group, and some of our network are looking forward to using a multi-sensory room in the evenings and on weekends.



In April 2015 Network 4 supported 35 people who live in the Swansea area who together received 2817 hours of support per week, it also employed about 106 people.

We have formed a Network Committee to help involve all its members in the running of the Network. The members include the people we support and staff.



Network members like to get together regularly and have celebrated with a Christmas party and a Summer ball and have a Halloween ball coming up in the Autumn.

Some of the people we support have taken on more responsibility with Time 2 Meet. Andrea organises a jewellery class; opens the venue and locks it up once it is finished.

Mervyn has decided to make a contribution cleaning up his local area. He has made a film about his experiences which can be seen on the Consortium's you tube channel.





Some of the network members who live in separate properties also share holidays which means they can share the expense of extra staff support and have fun at the same time.

Four young women who moved in together in Summer 2014 purchased their own vehicles to enable them to get out and about. They now enjoy Time 2 Meet activities, going to pubs; restaurants; gardens; lady's nights; cinema and visiting relatives to name a few things. Sometimes these activities are not planned they go on impulse and thoroughly enjoy themselves.



We are very pleased that two ladies in our network also celebrated their 70th birthdays this year.

Our Network plans for the coming year are to support the people we support and staff through the restructuring process which we have had to put in place to manage the cuts in funding in 2015.

As we move towards the future we are looking to develop the committee's role within the network, we will continue to build relationships within our teams and into the larger community. This will help us to have more discussion with the people we support to assist them to achieving their personal goals.

In April 2015 Network 5 supported 30 people who live in Pontardawe, Neath, Briton Ferry, Aberavon and Margam areas who together received 2384 hours of support per week, it also employed about 90 people.

Our Network remains very active and sociable place to live and work. Once again we have had a very busy year especially around social events and we are planning even more for 2016. These are some of the things our network members have done together or on their own with staff support so far this year.



I suppose we are also very lucky that we know each other quite well because we have lived in the same location and with the same people for many years and a lot of staff have been with us for some time as well.

Time 2 Meet plays a big part in our lives and we have organised groups like our Coffee Morning on Thursdays, Bingo on Tuesdays and Arts and Crafts on Fridays. These groups are all run by our members.

We have met together twice to discuss the things that matter to us. In these events we decided on things we would do together to make our lives better, and then we shared food together.



It was also good to see a lot of us celebrate our birthdays by being able to invite our friends around for BBQ's and some of us were also able to celebrate with family and friends at our local favourite watering hole.

Other events that happened throughout the year was the MacMillan Coffee Morning which was organised by people in Britton Ferry and Pontardawe.

Network members have also organised together a range of trips and events, including our X Factor night at the Four Winds in Aberavon where we danced the night away with a real X Factor contestant. The other highlight was our trip to Noah's Ark which we all really enjoyed. Many thanks to Jamie for organising this day with us.



We have also been able to create our own Network Newsletter and also a Network calendar to help us share information and events with each other.

We have produced a video of our year that you can see on the Consortium's you tube channel; we hope that you like it.



In April 2015 Network 6 supported 36 people who live in Neath and Port Talbot who together received 2241 hours of support per week, it also employed about 80 people.

In October 2014 the people we support in Network 6 all attended a What Matters to Me Event in the Four Winds. Everyone had produced posters of 'What Mattered to Them' and discussed the types of things that they could do together to make their lives and support better.



Ideas we came up with varied from how we could more easily share lifts to whether we could organise our own X factor event. Rick the Chief Executive of the Consortium told everyone that he would come along and sing if they organised that ...this went down very well with everyone!! (We haven't forgotten Rick).



From this we formed a committee of the people we support supported by staff to plan events they want to arrange. This committee has been successful and trips have been organised to a range of places.

People who receive support have been central to organising these, including taking responsibility for collecting and managing the money collected to make them happen.

Discussions about lift sharing have also taken place. One person spoke to their social worker in Social Services about using their transport to offer lifts to others that haven't got transport. This has meant that no one is excluded from getting to things they want to be involved in.

One group of people sharing a home have had a bar built in their activity room which they decorated themselves, this has become one of the most important rooms in their house.



Sarah who had lived for many years in a shared house with 24 hour support spent much of this year planning her wedding, and making arrangements to move into her own home with her husband. Her team worked intensively with her to prepare for living with just drop in support and how to respond to the changes that a much more independent life creates.

Also in the early part of the year we will be completing the restructuring of our network team which we all feel will be positive. We are going back to teams of staff focused on small groups of tenants who live together. This means the people we support have the same faces coming in to support them and they will know them well.



In April 2015 Network 7 supported 61 people who live in Swansea who get drop in support, and 14 people who get 24-hour support, together they received 1526 hours of support per week, the Network also employed about 69 people.

We have a big network. Getting people together to help them to make connections and create common interests is important.

To help this we have organised 3 events:

- 🏠 A summer fun day where we sold cakes we had made and played bingo.
- 🏠 A Halloween event, where we all shared our What Matters to Us posters so we could see the things we like, and the things we wanted to organise together – as well as dressing up and having a good time.
- 🏠 The Christmas disco was held in the Samlet Club people dressed up brought food and had a good time.

These events have helped tenants and staff to get to know each other better, as a result members have shared staff for holidays to enable people to go on holiday that could not have gone on their own.

We are also pleased this year that a number of staff have completed the QCF programme so that they have developed their knowledge, experience and have gained a qualification.



A number of network members have taken steps to greater independence.

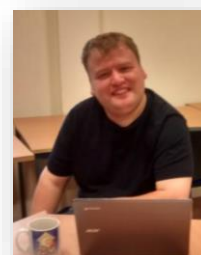
- 🏠 Marie has taken more control of her own independence and now has minimal support.
- 🏠 Adam has moved from a staff supported house to living in his own flat with drop in support. He has developed his skills and now takes his own medication which has enabled him to arrange to go away on holiday and trips on his own.
- 🏠 William passed the first part of his driving assessment and is looking forward to some driving lessons in the near future, then hopefully go onto passing his driving test with help and support.
- 🏠 Rhian enjoyed her first independent night away at the Towers where she enjoyed delicious food and a show.



Network members have played a big part in Time 2 Meet. Adam hosted a night as part of 'Come Dine with Me' and has been a long standing member of the walking group. He is now a qualified walking group leader.



The Time 2 Meet Admin group has 6 members from our network including Phillip, Craig and Gary. They are really enjoying putting their skills to good use and planning activities and events.





In April 2015 Network 8 supported 12 people who live in shared houses, and 11 people who receive intensive day time support or respite support, together they received 1813 hours of support. The network also includes the Workshop and Maintenance service which ensures that tenants homes are well maintained, this also includes 12 people we support who are employed delivering this service to other tenants. The Network also employed 77 people.

Many of the people we support have complex behavioural needs and this can impact on their ability to access mainstream services and facilities in their local community so support from staff is tailored to each person so that they can access some of these services.

All the people in our network receive a high level of clinical input and Positive Behaviour Support Plans are developed by network members (wherever possible) and a multi-disciplinary team which supports them.

Where people get support to live in shared properties, we provide opportunities to learn and develop new skills and to have new opportunities for leisure including holidays that they may not have had before. For some people this has included surfing and rock climbing.



Michael has moved on from helping to walk dogs at a local animal rescue centre to caring for the animals and cleaning out their kennels/cages and ensuring their bedding is changed. He has really enjoyed this, it has offered him focus and helped to calm him when he is anxious.



Our respite and day service serves 11 people who live with their families. The day service base helps people access the community as well as opportunities for gardening, cooking and art & craft sessions. Its semi-rural location means that it is safe and potentially relaxing however it is close to shops and amenities.

The respite service provides a homely environment for people who use it while offering a much needed break for many of their relatives.

People have got greater confidence and independence through the year, however some have and also faced some difficult times such as dealing with the loss of parents or siblings.

The social storyboards that we have used to support them through bereavements or other transitions in their lives have helped them to communicate with us and enabled them to express their feelings in a way that feels safer.



The workshop is an important part of our network. People can learn skills and trades such as carpentry and painting and decorating and also art and craft designs. It is a vibrant team where the qualified tradesmen, support staff and network members work together to serve the wider tenant group.

In the future we want to look at how we support our network members to integrate with both the other Consortium networks and the wider community. As a lot of our members have autistic spectrum disorders we have to consider environment and location before moving forward. We are considering using Woodlands base on evenings and weekends for get-togethers and as a base for activities such as a walking group to explore the local area.




We support people who need extra support and social care to live successful lives in the communities of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.




Our shared purpose is

 **To support people to live the life they choose.**


By the end of March 2015:


 We were supporting 265 people; there were 11 empty tenancies in shared properties where we are providing housing support.



 These people received on average 17,847 hours of support each week alongside a range of other services such as; support to manage their money, support to look after their home, and advice and guidance to them and their team to maximise their choice and independence.





 We employed 760 staff of which 684 are directly delivering services to the people that we support.

 The people that we support have 8 different social landlords, some also have private landlords and two own their homes.



 We spent £15.3 million on our services.

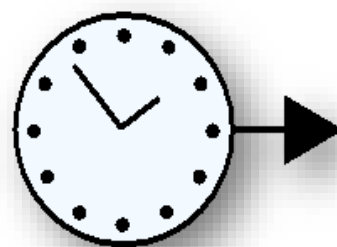
 Our staff sickness rate was 5.6%, and rate of turnover was 11%.

 98% of the 40 complaints made to us were resolved to the satisfaction of the person who made the complaint.



In the next year we will need to:

- 🏠 Maintain the quality of our support as we respond to pressure for further cuts to our budgets and cuts to services that people rely on.
- 🏠 Continue to make sure that the people we support are living the lives they want and that staff are fairly rewarded and well supported.



To do this we will:

- 🏠 Review and develop our new way of helping people to plan and record their lives. This helps them to express the things that matter to them as individuals.

This will also be the basis of our quality assurance system. We will combine this information to help network members to understand the things that matter to them, and decide what we can do differently so that people experience more of these things with the resources we have available.

- 🏠 We will complete the restructuring of our network management and staffing structure to help us make the cost savings we need to make in the year up until March 2016.
- 🏠 We will also work collaboratively with the people we support, their family members, other local agencies and the local authorities to find new ways to support people in the community.



This will be essential to ensure that people get quality support into the future with the declining financial resources available to us all. One of the things we will need to look at is how we support people at night where staff are asleep in their homes.

🏠 We will work to improve our conditions of service for our support staff. This is very important to make sure we can recruit and maintain enough high quality well motivated staff.

We will need to pay support workers more so that we comply with the National Living Wage in April 2016. This is a big issue for a large number of support organisations like us.

Similarly, we will need to resolve ongoing concerns affecting all support agencies that pay staff to sleep in people's homes at night.





Income and Expenditure?

Money from Local Authority Etc	£13,826,343
We spent on wages, charity activities	-£14,002,174
Total at the end of the year	-£175,381

What was our financial position on 31st March 2015?

Assets inc Buildings, Vehicles and Bank A\C's	£3,155,383
Money the Company is Owed (Grants etc)	£908,176
Money the Company Owes (PAYE, SWALEC Etc)	-£2,045,242
Leaving what the Company "owns"	£2,018,317

How is what we "own" made up?

Share Capital	£219
Restricted & Unrestricted Funds	£1,295,622
Income and Expenditure Reserve	£722,476
Total Capital and Funds	£2,018,317

- 🏠 The preceding figures are taken from the full audited financial statements of CLC for the period end 16th February 2015, approved by the CLC board on the 20th October 2015.
- 🏠 The auditors Haines Watts Wales LLP whose opinion was unqualified have confirmed that this summary is consistent with the full report. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the association.
- 🏠 For further information, the full accounts, auditor's report and the Board of Management's annual report should be consulted; copies of these can be obtained from Stephen Harrison - Director of Business and Finance.

We hope that you have found this report interesting and useful. Pictures contained in the report have been taken from our 'Start' newsletter. If you want further information about the Consortium or any of the things discussed here, please look at our website at www.communitylives.co.uk or contact Debbie Chegwen at our offices.

We would like to thank our Chairperson Janice Connick-Evans, our Co-Vice chairs Nicola Roberts and Linda Evans and our Board of Management, Frank Hounsell, Cliff Alden, Chris Edwards, Ann Gay, Stuart Harper, Chris Rowlands, Wendy Evans, and Pat Speakman for their hard work throughout this year.



We are sorry that Frank Hounsell and Chris Rowlands, both long standing Board members, have resigned in this year. We thank them for everything they have done and wish them all the best in the future.

We would also like to thank all of the people that we support their families and their supporters, all of our staff and managers, and our partners in other agencies in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot for their commitment, support and sometimes patience throughout this year.

www.communitylives.co.uk

24 Walter Rd, Swansea SA1 5NN

01792 646640

