

Carmarthenshire Volunteer Organisers Network – CVON

Minutes

Tuesday 3rd March 2020 CAVS, The Mount, Carmarthen

Present –

1. Amy Maund	National Trust	
2. Jay Smith	Mess Up the Mess	
3. Meinir Evans	Menter Gorllewin Sir Gâr	
4. Sandra Hembery	Wales Air Ambulance	
5. Anne May	Tir Dewi	
6. Ian Williams	Radio Glangwili	
7. Abbi Steanson	Burns Pet Nutrition Foundation	
8. Nevil Williams	Radio BGM Llanelli	
9. Adam Hearn	West Wales Walking/Wellbeing	
10. Lois Morus	Menter Dinefwr	
11. Jane Hemmings	CAVS	jane.hemmings@cavs.org.uk
12. Eve Jones	DrMz	
13. Andy Fewhell Smith	Carers Trust Carmarthenshire	
14. Cindy Thomas	Elite Supported Employment	
15. Sarah Hall	WWT Llanelli	
16. Clive Poulton	Carms Disability Coalition for Action	
17. Sally Jones	Area 43	
18. Alud Owen Jones	CAVS	alud.jones@cavs.org.uk
19. Suzanne Samuel	Fusion	
20. Hayley Orton	The Prince's Trust	
21. Kate Evans	National Wool Museum	

1. Welcome & Introductions

Jane welcomed everybody to the meeting, and everyone introduced themselves, with opportunities to give some further information about their respective organisations. News included: National Wool Museum has a Community Get Together on 3rd June; Burns Pet Nutrition will soon be moving into new, purpose built premises; Menter Dinefwr have a new project with a new centre opening later in the year; Eve has recently joined DrMz as Youth Volunteering Officer, and Andy is new in post with Carers Trust; Area 43 have a new online counselling service; Fusion have been involved with a 5-week course for school children at the Wetlands Trust.

2. Apologies

Adele Jones (Dyfed Powys Police); Liz Davies (Great Dane Care); Gayle Harris (DrMz); Andrea Edwards (WWAMH)

3. Minutes of previous meeting

- It was agreed that the minutes of the last meeting, held on 8th October 2019, were a true and accurate record

4. Matters Arising

- With regards Cariad, who were previously providing defibrillators and associated training, Ian Williams reported being unable to contact them by email or phone.
- Anne (Tir Dewi) asked how various organisations organise and deliver volunteer training, particularly how to provide all the different training in different ways according to demand, e.g. some people prefer group sessions while some would rather have one-to-one training, and it isn't always practicable to wait until there is a large enough group of volunteers waiting to be trained. Online training was seen by many to be a good solution.

5. Presentation by Amy Maund, Volunteer Coordinator, National Trust

Amy is currently overseeing volunteer management at three National Trust properties, namely Dinefwr Park, Dolaucothi Gold Mine and Aberdulais Tin Mines. There are around 140 volunteers offering their time at Dinefwr and Dolaucothi alone. Nationally, NT employ approximately 10,000 staff but 62,000 volunteers, showing the extent of the reliance upon volunteers.

Although the Trust have in the past been awarded Investors in Volunteers, it is always a difficult task to keep engaging with current and prospective volunteers. The aim is to actively engage with volunteers, not just give them jobs to do.

Investing in Volunteers is a useful tool when working with volunteers, even if only to follow its principles, whether or not a charity intends to apply (and pay) for the standard.

6. Volunteer Centre Update

- **Upcoming Event:** Volunteering Wales website training, 18th March. Still a few spaces available, booking required. Morning session: 10-12; Afternoon: 1-3.
- A request was also made for organisations, where possible and appropriate, to use the Volunteering Wales platform, ensuring that anyone working with potential volunteers are able to access a comprehensive list of current volunteering opportunities rather than having to manually consult each organisation for each volunteer search. It would also be worthwhile forwarding a copy of any new volunteering opportunities to CAVS to maximise exposure.
- Jane has been working closely with the Public Service Board on a system to reward volunteering, along similar lines, but not as complex, as Investors in Volunteers, a way of promoting the attainment of various levels of volunteering.

7. Discussion Session – Volunteer Wellbeing

According to research conducted around how volunteering promotes health and wellbeing, the most disadvantaged people are the ones who stand to gain the most from volunteering. As organisations we need to look at how we can involve more of those who would benefit in this way.

Some suggestions: Burns Pet Nutrition Foundation have begun organising smaller, localised events (dog walks with volunteers), usually 1 staff member and up to 6 volunteers, where people get a chance to discuss any issues, give feedback etc. The aim is to visit each volunteer at least once a year, but in the interim discussions, feedback, comments can be made via Facebook group and peer mentoring. “Formal” annual reviews are still important, though, often bringing out the “bigger” issues.

Another idea: Tir Dewi have gatherings at volunteers’ homes, tea and cakes, moving around to different home each time. This is another opportunity for peer mentoring, discussion, feedback, in an informal setting.

Some other suggestions:

Use all the different tools at your disposal, e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp, volunteer awards and/or rewards, to acknowledge the volunteers’ efforts and achievements.

Use Volunteers Week resources, including ideas for promoting volunteer achievement.

Volunteer Code of Practice is another useful resource; Look at how we recognise the achievements of volunteers, e.g. badges, certificates; Look at whether opportunities can be made more accessible, perhaps breaking them up into smaller, more attainable roles, e.g. “Walk Buddies” who support the walk leaders and group leaders.

Set up an online forum (or Facebook page) where volunteers (and potential volunteers) can learn about the various roles on offer, express any concerns they may have (and hopefully have them allayed), and generally boost their confidence;

Taster Sessions can often encourage people to volunteer, whilst also ensuring that new recruits are more likely to choose a role which is right for them.

8. Discussion Topic for next meeting – Attracting more diverse Volunteers

Presentation for next meeting – Alud Jones to disseminate feedback from Volunteering Wales training.

9. Any Other Business

Clive Poulton asked about accessible walks in the county for people with various disabilities both physical and mental. Adam Hearn replied that walks used by his project will all be accessible, along with some suggestions for other walks. **Suggestion: use See Around Britain website to map accessible walks.**

10. Date and Time of next meetings:

Tuesday 07/07/2020 CAVS, The Mount, 18 Queen Street, Carmarthen, SA31 1JT

Tuesday 10/11/2020 Venue to be confirmed.