



Finding answers to making change possible

Our purpose and values

People and Work finds answers to make change possible. We support individuals, communities and society in Wales to make positive change happen. In particular, we focus on the transformational role that education and learning have for people and for the economy, services and society.

People and Work Objects

(A) To advance education by carrying out and/or assisting in carrying out research and study into social and economic problems, for the benefit of the general public.

(B) To promote education in all matters related to community organisations.

Education and learning allows people to make choices, and it makes change possible. People and Work sees education and learning as the most powerful tools available to people, organisations and society for tackling inequalities and promoting employment.

What we do

People and Work makes a difference:

- through a programme of community based action research projects that builds understanding of effective ways to tackle poverty; and
- through commissioned research and evaluation work for the public and third sectors in Wales, addressing inequalities in areas such as education (formal and informal), health and employment.

Any surplus earned through the research and evaluation contracts goes into supporting our action research work, which is primarily funded by charitable trusts and foundations.

Our achievements and performance

Action research work

We have supported nearly four hundred people this year in education, learning and skills programmes. We have also worked with more than sixty voluntary and community organisations, ten education providers (including universities, colleges and schools), and a range of funders, in order to explore and develop the capacity and skills needed to tackle poverty in communities in Wales. Our core premise remains that education and learning empowers people, and good work – whether paid or voluntary – helps people to develop the independence, self efficacy and, ultimately, the income needed to move out of poverty.

Glyncoch – a learning community

In 2004 we identified a need to develop the focus we had on supporting individuals to include a greater emphasis on the families and the communities they live in. In 2005 we were invited by Glyncoch Communities First to help them think about how to tackle low educational achievement in the community and between 2008 and 2015 Glyncoch became a key focus for our action-research work. Working in partnership with Glyncoch Regeneration and others, we ran a group of projects, discussed below, which were all focused on developing the role of education and learning in the community.

- Build It Glyncoch (2008-2013 supported by the *Rank Foundation*), a built environment skills development programme that targeted young people who had left school with no, or few, qualifications. The project worked with over 100 young people and adults, bringing them back into mainstream learning (further education college) while undertaking improvement projects in the community. Two of those involved in the project now teach others in college and community settings.

- Chance to Learn (2008-2015 supported by the *Esmée Fairbairn Foundation*) – this adult learning support programme worked with over 300 local people to develop a demand-led programme of community learning, backed up with a strong support infrastructure that helps people to sustain their involvement in learning, even when they progress to college or university. Over 1000 accreditations for learning were achieved by local people.
- Dynamic Communities (2012-2015 supported by *Comic Relief*) – worked with over 300 people from Glyncoch and the Rhondda using sports and physical activity as a tool for community members to develop the skills and experience they need to run their own activities.
- School Focused Communities (2009-2015 supported by the *Paul Hamlyn Foundation*) was a cohort project working with 43 young people from Glyncoch as they progressed through secondary school and into post-16 learning. The project worked with the young people, their families, their school and their community. School attendance and attainment improved over the life of the project and the majority of young people progressed into further education, apprenticeships, employment, training or university.

Having all these programmes working in one community has provided the scope for multiple family engagements. In addition, People and Work has worked very closely with the Communities First and Glyncoch Regeneration teams, providing a ‘critical friend’ role and sharing our base with their staff and volunteers. A community wide survey (with almost 500 individual replies) conducted in 2014 indicated a considerable increase in appreciation for, and engagement with, education and employment within Glyncoch.

Building new alliances for change

Stronger Rhondda Gryfach (#strongerrhondda #rhonddagryfach)

People and Work learned a great deal from the work in Glyncoch and in 2015 began working with partners on a wider, area based approach supporting people to gain more from learning opportunities. Over forty voluntary organisations and community groups have contributed to planning a Rhondda wide cooperative approach to developing better opportunities and support for young people and their families.

As part of Stronger Rhondda Gryfach People and Work has set up three new projects:

- Dynamic Young Communities (2015-2018 supported by the *Rank Foundation*) working with young people in the Rhondda to develop health and fitness activities, including sports and especially rugby. So far 48 young people have qualified as sports leaders and are putting volunteer time into developing new sports and fitness activities.
- Appening Rhondda (2015-2018 supported by *Moondance Foundation*) is a coding and app development project in the Rhondda which recruits young people to develop and market new community based apps for mobile phones and tablets (see boxed text).
- What We Say (2016-2019 supported by *Esmée Fairbairn Foundation*) is a new project that will support young people in the Rhondda to explore issues and develop information about the things that are important to them. The young people will be supported to investigate opportunities that are available (for example, in education and employment), how and why things happen to young people and how information can help to empower people.

Appening Rhondda

This is a partnership project between the Arts Factory, Big Click (part of Penrhys Partnership) and People and Work. During the first year, the app development leader became employed by Candlhat, a private IT and facilities business with strong Rhondda roots. Following consultation with project partners, this has allowed a really interesting partnership to develop with a business that can also offer work experience and employment opportunities to young people. The project aims to enable young people to develop coding skills (it supports coding clubs, including one in a local special school), but also to take an idea from a basic concept put forward by a client, through to the completed app and marketing strategy. Three apps have been developed so far – one for a local radio station (GTFM), one for a fitness dvd produced by Team Pink (girls rugby), and one that provides a quiz on the political infrastructure in Wales. The fourth app for the first year of this project will be part of a First World War history project in June at Tonypanydy College – Rhondda Remembers.

Cooperation and capacity building

A key focus for People and Work from 2015 is to help to build cooperation across and within sectors in order to develop capacity in Wales for tackling poverty. With support from *the Tudor Trust* we have been able to build new alliances and collaborations. Our focus on the role of community organisations in promoting education and learning has enabled us to reach a new set of partners and interested groups including school improvement services, Teach First, academics (for example hosting education department students from Cardiff Metropolitan University on placement, and jointly sponsoring an ESRC PhD student with Cardiff University) and new community groups. These new networks and links allow People and Work to test out and share the learning from our work with those best placed to promote its impact.

Talwrn

In 2015 we brought together **Talwrn**, a group of twelve voluntary sector organisations from across Wales that all work to address the causes and impacts of poverty with people and communities. With support from the *Garfield Weston Foundation* and *The Rank Foundation*, Talwrn is exploring models of how to build capacity in the voluntary sector, including peer-review of funding applications, mutual support to bring more money into Wales, sharing skills and knowledge and disseminating thinking locally amongst new 'Talwrns'. For more information, visit talwrn.org.uk.

Research and evaluation work

- **Ethnicity and poverty:** People and Work were involved in a multi-partner piece of research on poverty and ethnicity in Wales for JRF (available at <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/poverty-and-ethnicity-wales>) and collaborated on the JRF Viewpoint 'Breaking the links between poverty and ethnicity in Wales' (available at <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/breaking-links-between-poverty-and-ethnicity-wales>). People and Work also undertook research for the Welsh Government on the minority ethnic achievement grant.

- Meeting **additional needs**: People and Work have continued to undertake work on how people with additional needs are supported in education, work and society. This has included:
 - The [Outcome Evaluation of the Autistic Spectrum Disorder Strategic Action Plan](#) for the Welsh Government;
 - [Workforce planning for specialist SEN services](#), for the Welsh Government;
 - [A study of the skills of the school workforce in relation to SEN](#); for the Welsh Government;
 - A study to inform the development of new speech, language and communication strategy for Wales, for the Welsh Government (forthcoming); and
 - A Market Position Statement for the Complex Needs, Transitions and Vulnerable Persons project for the Mid and West Wales Health and Social Care Regional Collaborative.

- **Post-16 transition and learning**: People and Work have undertaken several studies focused upon young people's transitions into further education, including
 - [A study into transitions from school for young people with special educational needs](#) for the Welsh Government;
 - a study of effective practice in relation to lead working as part of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, and
 - a review of progression planning in further education, for the Welsh Government (forthcoming).

- **Youth organisations and young people's participation**: People and Work have led research into the role of [national youth councils in youth policy making](#) as part of the [Erasmus + Better Strategies for Youth: Youth for Better Strategies project](#) and a review of the social value of youth organisations, for the European Youth Forum (forthcoming).

The People:

Trustees and Board Members:

The People Unit has a board of eight trustees that meets monthly. Trustees continue to guide and support the Unit's work and form a stable backbone to its development. Trustees are: Judith Jones (Chairperson); Archie McAffer (Vice-Chairperson); Philip Watkins (Treasurer); Hugh Edney; Jan Huyton; Lee McPherson; Gordon Davies; and Rosa Robinson.

Staff:

Dr Sarah Lloyd Jones continues to lead People and Work. The research team is lead by Dr Duncan Holtom with Rhodri Bowen MSc., senior researcher. Jack Watkins works as a researcher for one day a week.

The action research programme team is led by James Hall MPhil. Mark Hutton is the project worker on Dynamic Young Communities, working with Steffan Rees, a trainee funded through the *Rank Foundation* Gapper programme. Andrea Williams is the project worker for the What We Say project.

In January 2015 the Unit employed Rhiannon Bowen as an intern, with funding from the *Rank Foundation*. Rhiannon made a significant contribution to Stronger Rhondda Gryfach, producing a well researched baseline paper¹ to underpin the new work. In January 2016 a new intern, Hibah Iqbal, was appointed, again with funding from the *Rank Foundation*. Hibah is providing research support to voluntary organisations through Stronger Rhondda Gryfach and Talwrn to build the quality of their work and funding bids.

Plans for the future

During 2015 staff and Trustees, with support from Pilotlight, reviewed the charity and its communication strategy. It was decided to drop the 'Unit' from the name in common usage, as this caused confusion sometimes. In 2016 we will also be launching a new website and improving the ways we communicate findings from our work.

¹ <http://www.slideshare.net/peopleandworkunit/stronger-rhondda-gryfach-baseline-paper>

A key focus for the coming year is to develop the area based work with partners in the Rhondda. The aim is to make the sum of the action greater than its parts – that we have a greater impact on outcomes for young people by working together than we could in our individual work

Finances

Accounts examined by Dorrell Oliver Ltd show in the 12 months to December 2015 the People and Work had:

Income:	£362,949
Expenditure:	£350,213
Fund Balance:	£222,665

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