

# Annual Report 2019

# People and Work annual report 2019

## Foreword

I am pleased to introduce People and Work's annual report for 2019. People and Work is a small and ambitious charity that seeks to understand and tackle social and economic disparities and to promote education as a tool to reduce inequalities. The last year has been challenging but, despite the many uncertainties facing our organisation and the communities and organisations we work with, people pulled together, showing their determination to make a positive impact on local lives (as highlighted below and throughout this report).

Through our What We Say project, young people from the Rhondda developed research and analytical skills, which they used to explore issues of importance to them. As well as developing skills and deepening awareness of local problems, the project has facilitated paid and voluntary employment and influenced young people's future choices. Our work to support exercise, health, and fitness in the Rhondda has continued, extending opportunities for people of all ages to get involved in, and enjoy, sport—from walking rugby for older people to a group fitness challenge for young people, our Play It Again Sport (PIAS) project creates opportunities for everyone to get moving. As the need for digital skills has continued to expand, so too has our Appending Rhondda project, which creates opportunities for young people to grow their digital skills and confidence in a supportive environment with access to industry expertise. The project has helped IT teaching staff to understand better how to engage young people as well as leading to paid employment for six young people.

In addition to our project work, we were commissioned to deliver research and evaluate projects for several organisations, including two large-scale projects for Welsh Government—one evaluating the refreshed autism strategy for Wales and the other looking at the employment and skills support needs of refugees and asylum seekers in Wales. We have also continued our commitment to

increasing the capacity of the Welsh voluntary sector, through Talwrn, a network that provides skill development and peer-to-peer support for its members.

We know that People and Work helps people and communities succeed. We want to build on our successes so far and create more opportunities for people to develop skills for their future, and for communities to feel well, be active, and have the leadership capacity needed to address local challenges.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rosa Robinson', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Rosa Robinson

Chair, Board of Trustees

## Objectives and activities

The charity's objects are the advancement of 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; additionally, to promote education in all matters related to community organisations.

People and Work seeks to make a difference through two core functions:

- to promote the value of education and learning (for all age groups) as a tool for tackling inequalities and promoting employment, through a programme of community-based action research projects; and
- to undertake 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.

People and Work's self-generated action research work is funded through charitable trusts and funds. Earned income comes from commissioned research and evaluation work done for the public and voluntary sectors. Any surplus earned through the research and evaluation contracts goes into action research work that aims to build understanding of effective ways to tackle the causes and effects of poverty, especially in relation to education, health and employment outcomes.

## Achievements and performance

### Research and Evaluation work

The two largest pieces of work done by the research team this last year were both for the Welsh Government:

- We completed an evaluation of the refreshed autism strategy for Wales and the development of an integrated autism service in each health authority area. Autism impacts on all aspects of a person's life, including employment, and the evaluation drew directly from the experiences of autistic people and their families on the support that they could access<sup>1</sup>
- We completed research into the employment and skills support needs of refugees and asylum seekers in Wales. This involved interviewing over 450 refugees and asylum seekers living in Wales. Sixteen refugees were employed and trained to help with the interviewing. The research will inform how support is structured in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-05/evaluation-of-the-integrated-autism-service-and-the-autism-spectrum-disorder-strategic-action-plan-final.pdf>; <https://llyw.cymru/gwerthusiad-gwasanaeth-awtistiaeth-integredig-cynllun-gweithredu-strategol-anhwyldeaur-sbectrwm-awtistig-terfynol>

The research team has also worked with voluntary organisations to provide evaluations that help develop their capacity to make a real and sustainable difference. We are providing evaluation support to Credu Carers, Disability Powys, Age Concern Powys, Citizen's Advice Bureau Powys, RVS (partners in the Connected Generations project); Spectacle Theatre; Community Music Wales; the Building Communities Trust (Invest Local programme); and SOVA.

In addition to our research and evaluation work with the voluntary and community sectors People and Work have continued to convene Talwrn, an informal group of voluntary sector leaders from across Wales. Talwrn members meet regularly to share learning from each other's work, provide support and critical challenge and work to build capacity in the Welsh voluntary sector. Talwrn also offers peer review support for organisations seeking to raise funding from charitable trusts and foundations. This year Talwrn published a series of papers written by members on some of the key issues impacting on the Welsh voluntary sector<sup>2</sup>.

## PhD research

People and Work is committed to supporting young people in Wales to develop their potential. In pursuing this we have been supporting two PhD candidates over the last few years, both of whom have been researching issues linked to past participants in People and Work projects. Jack Watkins' PhD looked at aspiration and its role in shaping the lives of young people, drawing on the experiences and reflections of people who had been involved with People and Work over the last twenty or more years.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://talwrn.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Talwrn-papers.pdf>

People and Work have part funded an ESRC supported PhD candidate, Rhiannon Morgan, at Cardiff University. Rhiannon has interviewed some young people we worked with up to ten years ago to look at place and its influence on young people's lives.

## Project Work

Most of People and Work's community work is focused on a 10-year place based strategy to work in the two Rhondda Valleys, working with local people's passion for Rhondda to support leadership in the community. The first phase of our work in Rhondda came to an end in 2018 and we have been taking stock, looking at impacts, and thinking about the next stage.

### The What We Say project

This project, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, supported young people to explore issues that are important to them. 145 young people from Rhondda, and a few more from Cardiff, worked on investigations that ranged from racism, gender, mental health, the impacts of dementia, to growing up LGBTQ+ in Rhondda.

- *I didn't really know much about the topic and issues until we conducted some research. I didn't realise how different life actually was for older women but now I do realise, and it has changed my perspective completely.*
- (young woman involved in looking at how life has changed for women in the Rhondda over the last century)

The young people developed new skills to help them analyse a large amount of information and understand what it meant. For example, one group explored views about, and experiences of, racism from different communities with over

900 children and young people and 70 adults. Other young people looked at understanding mental health issues and interviewed 237 eleven-twelve year olds and 32 sixteen to seventeen year olds in their school, with some of their peers following this work up with a more targeted exploration of mental health and males (adults and young people).

- *Now we have given our opinions and findings, adults may have been inspired to start new projects including young people, focussing on mental health*
- (young people who looked at mental health in their school)

The young people worked with senior policy leads in Rhondda Cynon Taf, mental health services, primary healthcare professionals and Welsh Government. They made recommendations to schools, policy makers and communities on, for example, how to tackle racism, putting a focus on whole family work as a way of tackling the way racist attitudes are handed down through families; on how schools can work with families to better understand the causes and symptoms of mental health problems and support wellbeing in schools; and recorded the lived experience of young people who are LGBT+ in Rhondda. The impact of the work has been directly felt by the young people – some have become volunteers, six have found employment from their involvement and others have talked about how the work has helped them to think about their future, influencing choices.

- *It was a good experience and I learnt a lot about healthy living*
- *It allowed me to gain a better understanding of how to stay positive and encouraging your peers even when it's hard*
- *It definitely helped me because in the future I will be able to work with others in a team project*

## Play It Again Sport



### **c.150 children from 7 schools in a summer multi-sports festival**

We have developed a holistic approach to exercise, health and fitness over the last few years in Rhondda, with support from the Rank Foundation. Work has included supporting Walking Rugby for older people (helping to set up three groups); supporting some young mothers to develop a rugby based fitness group of 3-6 year olds; running a Challenge Champions project (with funding from Children in Need) that takes a group of young people through a fitness programme to achieve a group challenge. We have developed and supported sports festivals for primary school children across Rhondda involving 10 schools and c.800 children using a couple of local sports facilities.

A young trainee employed through the Rank Foundation's Aspire programme raised concerns about how some of his community found the cost of sports gear a real barrier to getting involved in exercise. He had the brilliant idea of asking local people to donate clothes and boots that they no longer use so that these could be given, or sold for a small price, to people in Rhondda. After a few false

starts, Play it Again Sport (PIAS), a sports gear recycling social enterprise, started working with Too Good To Waste, a Rhondda based household goods recycling social enterprise. A big donation from a sports club helped to raise awareness of the enterprise and, in 2018, it has taken over £11,000.



### **Upper Rhondda Colliers walking rugby in Treherbert Park**

Profits have been used to support exercise opportunities in Rhondda including funding for walking rugby, inter-school sports festivals and supporting work experience volunteers from the local school. PIAS has also provided free items to local sports teams (e.g. training bibs for a football team) and individuals (e.g. shoes to a primary school child following a teacher referral). PIAS given an award for being an ‘Outstanding Social Enterprise’ by the Wales Sustainable Academy in 2018 and has just secured £10k funding from Rank’s Profit for Good initiative (with the promise of more match funding if the social enterprise continues to increase its profits). From March 2019 PIAS started to trade in new job-lot sports goods and made a good return on investment in just three months, selling thousands of sports clothes in Rhondda.

In 2019 PIAS secured a grant from the Rank Foundation’s Profit for Good programme which will help to fund business development and marketing work. It has also secured funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to pay for a business manager for 3 years to fully test the viability of the business and work with local people to develop capacity for it to be run as an independent social enterprise in the future.

### New Technology



#### Game Expo October 2018 – 10 players on 5 screens

According to a range of sources within the digital technology, educational and public sectors, South Wales is the second fastest growing digital industry area outside London.<sup>3</sup> The universities in the area, business and government are collaborating in a review of the sector<sup>4</sup> which will point out some of the specific

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<sup>3</sup> <https://technation.io/insights/report-2018/cardiff/>; <https://www.uktech.news/tech-hubs/wales/tech-in-wales-the-2017-roundup-20180104>; <http://hrnews.co.uk/south-wales-fast-becoming-uk-tech-hub-digital-jobs-see-regional-boom/>; <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/view/1381453-national-software-academy-expands>

<sup>4</sup> Cf. <http://www.uniswales.ac.uk/media/Unis-Wales-response-to-digital-innovation-review-20181102.pdf> and also the work of Tech Nation, a digital technology network and research organisation (which states that there are now 45,000 employed in the sector in Wales and this is growing all the time): <https://technation.io/about-us/national-network/wales/>

requirements regarding future skills needed and areas of growth. TechNation reports that there has been a growth of 1000 jobs in the area between 2014 and 2017. Cardiff University Computer Science department has told us that only a few years ago they had to work hard to find placements in industry for computer studies students. Now companies queue at their door to find quality students for placements and jobs. The expansion of Cardiff University's Software Academy in Newport and the development of their STEM Ambassador programme to promote STEM subjects among young people in schools and colleges (encouraging a greater local take up of computer science as well as other science, technology, engineering and maths subjects) is testament to the growth of digital industries in South Wales. On the other hand, there are few fully trained, degree qualified, computer science teachers in the area and the university has told us they sometimes experience difficulty accessing young level people via schools and colleges.

We recognised, with partners, the importance of new technology for the Welsh economy and the interest that many young people have in acquiring skills in this field. With support from the Moondance Foundation we set up Appening Rhondda, a project that offers young people the opportunity to produce an App, write code and develop games.

Appening Rhondda was born out of the realisation that there is a pool of Rhondda young people passionate about the digital sector who were not getting the chance to develop their passion via education or work experience opportunities.

Over the last three years Appening Rhondda has introduced Rhondda young people to skills, experience and employment in new technology. It has captured existing interests and helped young people understand how they could use those interests to shape a future career. The project has provided local role models, people who are earning an income from doing a job they love. Six of the

project participants have gone into employment in new technology themselves. It has supported people who teach IT – including staff of Coleg y Cymoedd who attended their own Game Jam with the project – with an insight into how to engage young people more effectively. It has also provided a model of how locally driven activities that are very demanding, offer access to real expertise and intensive skill development can attract young people from the poorest communities.

*“I loved learning how to create my own app and how to market it. We met with the client and got to see what it would be like when I am older. It was great working with professional developers and being treated like an adult. This week has given me knowledge of what I want to do in the future.”* participant

Since Appening Rhondda started in July 2015, there have been:

- 16 events (App weeks, Game Jam weekends & Game Expos)
- 140 applicants
- 90 participants in App weeks/Game Jams
- 90 participants in 2 Game Expos
- 105 additional college students engaged through talks
- 6 participants into employment
- 2 participants into university
- 4 Rhondda Code Clubs set up and 1 school club supported to develop coding skills, involving over 60 young people
- Three and a half years of private, public and third sector partnership with 3 businesses, 2 universities, 7 charities, 6 schools, 1 FE college, 1 library
- c.400 young people engaged in total

*'I can't believe Apps like this are made in the Rhondda!'*

*'I wasn't expecting to meet a real client.'*

*'This app could really help a lot of people.'*

#### Comments from participants

At the core of People and Work's place based mission is the belief that everyone in Rhondda should have an opportunity to flourish (in education, employment and wellbeing), irrespective of their background or the area where they live. We have been working in Rhondda for over twenty years with the deliberate intention of working with local people's passions, ambitions and dreams.

With support from Pen y Cymoedd we employed a local young person to help us establish and support code clubs in the community and in schools. Six code clubs were established. James Hall from People and Work approached colleagues from Cardiff University who supported the Game Expos in August and October 2018. The University has been awarded funding to create a STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) Ambassador scheme to promote the importance of STEM subjects in educational and community settings. They offered six weeks of mentoring and support in coding to three Rhondda community code clubs as well as helping to support an individual in each code club to become a 'digital coding champion' who can take the lead once the STEM Ambassadors have moved on to another location.

In 2019 Appening Rhondda secured a grant from Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund to further develop the code club model and build capacity within the Rhondda to embrace new technology. This work involves developing the central role of James Hall – our project manager – in 'joining the dots', bringing together

education, community, business and social interests and stakeholders to focus on how they can work together to support young people in new technology. A further grant from the Moondance Foundation will allow a strand of the work to focus on young women and new technology.

## Stronger Rhondda

We are continuing to work with local people and community based organisations in Rhondda to support local leadership and activities. We are supporting people who have set up sports and fitness activities; people running code clubs; and people who want to create their own social support structures.

In 2019 we received a grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation to underpin our work with local communities in Rhondda. This work will enable us develop ways to build self sustaining activities and support local leadership. Our new project Llechi, Glo a Chefn Gwlad – Slate, Coal and Countryside will add a focus on the foundation economy and how this can be developed with a place based approach, will add to this work as well.

## Working across Wales

People and Work continue to convene Talwrn, an informal network of voluntary sector leaders from across Wales. The group meet quarterly and focuses on peer support and building capacity within the Welsh voluntary sector. People are very welcome to join the group and can do so by contacting Sarah Lloyd-Jones.

We intend to build on our place based work by focusing on supporting community leaders to develop the skills, confidence and resources they need to make changes in their community. We will continue to work in Rhondda but are also working with eight organisations across Wales to spotlight how place based work can encourage and nurture community leaders and how communities can help to shape the foundational economy. This new project – called Llechi, Glo a Chefn Gwlad/ Slate, Coal and Countryside will support people who are passionate about their place and have powerful ideas about how to make it thrive.

## The people and work at People and Work

The real strength of People and Work lies in the people who are involved with it – whether staff, trustees, partners, project participants or community members who support us.

Hibah Iqbal has worked with us for the last three years, and is moving on in September 2019. She will be greatly missed. Below, Hibah sums up our year in her own special way -

It's been an eventful year at People and Work HQ,  
Here's a poem to summarise what we've been up to!

While we've had a few financial fluctuations,  
We've done more than our fair share of research and evaluations.  
Notably, on the refreshed autism strategy and the development of an IAS,

In each health authority area and support people could access.  
We interviewed 450 refugees and asylum seekers living in Wales,  
To investigate their employment and skills support need details.

We've continued to work with a number of voluntary organisations,  
Not only to develop their capacity but help strengthen their foundations.  
Credu Carers and Spectacle theatre but to name a few,  
And Invest Local should be done by the time I'm forty-two...

The work of Talwrn continues through meetings and a series of papers,  
On third sector issues in a world of public sector skyscrapers.  
We've also supported two PhDs over the last few years,  
On participants in past projects- their aspirations and fears.  
What We Say offered young people in Rhondda the space,  
To carry out their own research into problems that they face.  
From racism, gender, mental health and LGBT issues,  
It's about more than just listening and reaching for the tissues.

Play It Again Sport has gone from strength to strength,  
With support from Rank Foundation at only an arm's length.  
Joining forces with the social enterprise Too Good To Waste,  
And Delboy of the Rhondda was very well placed.  
We might not know where PIAS will be tomorrow,  
But look forward to seeing how big it can grow.

And of course, Appening Rhondda has achieved a fair bit,  
Since it started in 2015 the Game Jams have been a hit.  
The outcomes achieved have been more than anecdotal,  
400 young people have been engaged in total.

We even migrated offices from Tabbs in Porth,  
To Treorchy where the project side will be henceforth.  
Andrea and Mark may have gone but we gained young Jay,  
Who recently became a father, back in May!  
Ellis and Celia also moved on but everything's still on track,

And we're certainly very happy to have our trustee Jan back!  
Hopefully this poem has been enough to join a few dots,  
It's definitely a challenge when we've done lots and lots!  
Last but not least, dare I forget the most important thing,  
Far bigger than anything, that Brexit could bring.  
The biggest news to share since last Winter...

Is our newest arrival; the fancy new scanner and printer!

## Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and does not have any share capital.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, in 2019 are:

Rosa Robinson (Chair)

Archie McCaffer (Vice chair)

Phil Watkins (Treasurer)

Gordon Davies

Jan Huyton

Christala Sophocleous

Ged McHugh

## Finances

**Income:** income in 2018 (calendar year) was £295,891 of which 29% came from grants and the rest from earned income from work with the public and voluntary sectors.

**Expenditure:** we spent £369,149 of which less than 3% went on support and Governance costs. The higher expenditure than income was because grants paid in 2017 were carried over to 2018.