

Meet the Speakers

Chair – Derith Powell MBE

Derith Powell, having worked at all levels within the field of community development in Wales for over four decades, is currently enjoying a combination of roles.

Most recently this includes establishing Hadu Newid Associates (an asset-based Community Development consultancy), while maintaining other personal and professional interests, which include providing direct support to local groups and strategic oversight to national organisations, including BCT.

Prior to this she worked as the leader of Community Development Cymru, and Director of Amman Valley Enterprise and served on national and UK wide bodies.

Her contribution to tackling poverty and social exclusion and community development learning and training was recognised in 2003 when she was awarded an MBE. Derith is a trustee of BCT.

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Keynote Speakers

Neil McInroy, Chief Executive, Centre for Local Economic Strategy (CLES)

A leading commentator on economic development and public policy, Neil has featured in Local Government Chronicle's annual top 50 most influential people in local government. He has been involved in public sector policy and delivery for over 25 years.

Neil has collaborated with a broad range of local, regional and national governments and agencies across UK and in Europe, Asia, US and Australasia. His particular skills are in strategic policy, local economic and social research, analysis and development; research methodologies and facilitation.

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Chris Johnes, Chief Executive, Building Communities Trust (BCT)

Chris has many years of experience as a leader in the not-for-profit sector, with a commitment to social justice and promoting public voices in decision-making.

His previous role was a Director of Oxfam UK's Poverty Programme, where he led the charity's high-profile campaigning work on food poverty, as well as strategic development, partnership building and fundraising.

Before this he was Head of Oxfam Cymru, significantly expanding Oxfam's anti-poverty programme, campaigning on global issues around climate change and aid, and extending Oxfam's influence among Welsh Government and civil society. (cont...)

Chris's most extensive work in supporting communities in Wales came in his role as national Coordinator of the Communities First Support Network (CFSN) where for seven years he led a partnership of eight organisations providing support to Communities First partnership and social enterprises across all parts of Wales.

He has also worked at the National Assembly for Wales, and worked in two community development charities in South Africa. He currently chairs Hub Cymru Africa.

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Dr Sarah Lloyd-Jones, Director, People and Work

Dr Sarah Lloyd-Jones is the director of People and Work, an independent Welsh charity set up over thirty years ago to promote learning and research as key tools in supporting people to access work. It works through undertaking evaluation and research work for the public and third sector, and running its own community-based action-research projects. Sarah is currently working with partners in the voluntary sector to develop an area-based approach to work with communities, and on Talwrn, an all-Wales network of voluntary organisations seeking to develop capacity within the voluntary sector, and attract new resources into Welsh communities.

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Ben Cottam, Head of External Affairs, Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)

Ben Cottam is head of External Affairs at the Federation of Small Businesses in Wales and in that capacity heads-up the organisation's Parliamentary office in Wales. He joined the FSB from accountancy body ACCA where he served as head of ACCA Cymru. However, he has previously worked for the FSB, having held the Policy Manager role at FSB Wales earlier in his career.

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Tim Peppin, Director of Regeneration and Sustainable Development, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)

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Workshops

Developing Community Wealth

Sel Williams, Cwmni Bro Ffestiniog

Sel Williams was brought up in the Conwy Valley and has worked at different times as a labourer, research scientist, schoolteacher and lecturer at y Coleg Normal and the University in Bangor. He has a background in teaching, research and writing in the fields of Biology, Philosophy, Economics and Community Development. (cont...)

Over a period of forty years he has gained considerable experience of developing higher education and community courses which have been Welsh in nature, delivered in both Welsh and English. He has now retired from full-time work but continues to teach part-time as a tutor at Bangor University.

He has practical experience in the field of community development over a period of some fifty years. Currently he is a director of several community enterprises, nationally, and locally in the Ffestiniog area where he lives. These local ventures include the community hotel, Y Pengwern in Llan Ffestiniog, and Cwmni Bro Ffestiniog which is a network of social enterprises in the Ffestiniog area.

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Ceri Cunnington: Cwmni Cymunedol Bro Ffestiniog

Ceri has 10 years experience of working with and developing community projects through Bowydd and Rhiw Communities First - first as a development officer and then as Coordinator. He was one of the founders of Antur Stiniog back in 2007, and was central in securing over £1.2million for the development of bike trails and outdoor activities. He worked as a development officer for GISDA Cyf supporting young people, and now working for Cwmni Cymunedol Bro Ffestiniog. His interests include walking, music, culture and heritage. "It's not what divides us that's important, but what unites us".

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Councillor Matthew Brown, Preston City Council

Councillor Matthew Brown from Preston City Council has been at the forefront of Community Wealth Building activities in partnership with CLES that has become widely known as "The Preston Model".

This approach acknowledges the systemic failure of the predominant corporate capitalist model which became amplified following the financial crash and accompanying austerity of the last 10 years.

Taking inspiration from successful economic alternatives both here and overseas the work in Preston seeks to democratise its local economy by applying different strategies to create and retain wealth for individuals and businesses within the community.

At the centre of this has been the work with CLES involving "anchor institutions" which has repatriated tens of millions of pounds to organisations within the Preston and Lancashire economies. Other ideas are being implemented including public pension investment in the local economy, energy democracy, living wage policies, community banking, credit union expansion and the expansion of the cooperative economy.

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Supporting Resilient Localities

Sarah Stone, Executive Director for Wales, Samaritans

Sarah Stone took up her position with Samaritans in August 2013. Before joining Samaritans Sarah was Deputy Older People's Commissioner for Wales and before that was Director of Policy and Public Affairs for Age Concern Cymru.

As Deputy Commissioner Sarah played a key role in creating strategy and in supporting the Older Peoples Commissioner in designing and leading the Older People's Commission as an organisation.

At Age Concern Cymru Sarah led the work to ensure that issues affecting older people had the attention of politicians and policy makers and were high on the agenda of the National Assembly for Wales. She also worked for Mencap, assisting parents and carers of people with learning disabilities so that their voices would be heard in the planning of support services.

Sarah has an MSc in Social Policy from Bristol University and is an Honorary Research Fellow in the College of Medicine at Swansea University.

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Bryn Jones – Penparcau Community Forum

Bryn is the Forum Co-ordinator which has recently registered as a Charity. He has over 18 years' experience as a local Community Councillor in Borth and over 10 years' experience of working for the Arts Council of Wales, including being the Arts for All Lottery Officer for Mid & West Wales region for 8 years, and the Inclusion and Participation Officer working on ACW's Arts & Health Strategy and Community Arts programme. Prior to this he worked for over 13 years utilising the creative arts within the Mental Health Unit in Aberystwyth.

He was the Communities First Co-ordinator for Penparcau & West Aberystwyth, managing community development staff, volunteers and being the secretariat to the Communities First Partnership Board. Bryn has extensive knowledge of community development, participation and inclusion, fundraising, community engagement and specifically within Penparcau. In recognition of his work, Bryn was awarded an Honorary Bachelor of Arts Degree from Aberystwyth University in 2015.

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Dave Horton, Action in Caerau and Ely (ACE)

Dave Horton is a qualified youth and community worker with 20 years' experience in communities in Cardiff and Cape Town.

While employed under the Welsh Government's Communities First programme he worked with colleagues and local people to set up ACE – Action in Caerau and Ely, a community-owned organisation with over 1000 members located in West Cardiff. ACE bases its work on Asset Based Community Development and co-production principles, meaning that all activity attempts to engage local people as equal partners. The organisation has gone from strength to strength and faces a bright future after Communities First has finished. (cont...)

ACE is an active and paid up member of Citizens Cymru (a community organising alliance) for whom Dave is currently acting as co-chair. He also sits on the advisory committee for the Co-production Network for Wales. He recently completed an MSc in Community Regeneration and lives with his family in Caerau, Cardiff.

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Anchor Institutions

Matthew Jackson, Deputy Chief Executive, Centre for Local Economic Strategy (CLES)

Matthew's role sits across all the activities of CLES. This means developing, bidding for, and delivering new and exciting research projects; servicing the CLES membership base; and representing the organisation through speaking at events. Matthew is particularly involved in CLES' work around community wealth building and is currently working in 11 cities across Europe.

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Jonathan Morris, Tai Tarian

Jonathan works for Tai Tarian housing association in Neath Port Talbot. After starting his professional career in law, Jonathan became interested in the growing movement of Local Authorities transferring their council housing to new community owned housing associations. He began work, with others, on strategies and policies tools to capture the investment raised by transfer, ensuring that the investment remains within the local community. This led to working within the Welsh Government's i2i team. i2i was set up to support Local Authorities and RSLs to achieve WHQS and maximise the opportunities for local community regeneration. The project has helped the sector secure around £2billion of additional investment in housing and its Can Do Toolkits are now widely used by housing and regeneration organisations. Jonathan returned to his home town of Port Talbot to take a leading role in establishing Tai Tarian and to put policy into practice.

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Foundational Economy

Ian Thomas, Welcome to Our Woods

Ian is the lead officer on the Natural Resources Wales and Big Lottery initiated social forestry project, Welcome to our Woods. He is also a working director at the not for profit company WTOW Ltd. For some years has been a member of the Llys y Geodwig (Voice of the Woodlands in Wales) volunteer board. He is also currently overseeing the construction phase of the Cwm Saebren micro hydro scheme in Treherbert.

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Dafydd Meurig, Chair, Partneriaeth Ogwen

Dafydd Meurig is a county councillor in Gwynedd and chair of Partneriaeth Ogwen – a social enterprise working for the benefit of the economy, society and communities of Dyffryn Ogwen. Partneriaeth Ogwen's aim is to promote and develop projects which regenerate and reinforce the economy and community of Dyffryn Ogwen.

Partneriaeth Ogwen is funded by Bethesda, Llanllechid and Llandygai Community Councils and shows enterprise and innovation through collaboration.

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Local Business

Joshua Miles, Policy Manager, Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)

Joshua Miles is the Policy Manager for the Federation of Small Businesses Wales. He studied at Cardiff University and the Institut D'Etudes Politiques Bordeaux and holds an MSc Econ in Public Policy. Since graduation Josh worked for a Member of Parliament, at the public affairs consultancy Positif Politics and for FSB Wales. After a period working for the Construction Industry Training Board over the last two years Josh returned to work for FSB Wales late last year.

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Ceri and Aled Roberts, Delwedd

Delwedd is a web design company based in Caernarfon. The company was founded in 1998 by Michael Roberts and is now run by his daughter Ceri Roberts and his son Aled Roberts. Specialising in creating professional and successful websites at affordable and competitive prices, they offer a range of services to fulfil the business needs of all their clients. They are currently responsible for nearly four hundred live websites across a variety of sectors.

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Neil Blockley, Little Inspirations

Neil is Commercial Director of Little Inspirations, an award-winning day nursery with four locations across South Wales.

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Social Care

Jenny O'Hara Jakeway, Credu Connecting Carers

Jenny is CEO for Credu Connecting Carers; a movement in Mid and North Wales that is building support for young Carers and Adult Carers using asset-focused, person-centred approaches, along with community building approaches.

Jenny came across the the concept of 'community building' as a student and, from then on, she was interested in finding ways of supporting communities to be inclusive, to accommodate a multitude of voices and to shape their own future. (cont...)

In the South Wales Valleys, she worked along side community members and service providers to come together to coproduce health, educational and employment outcomes, reduction in crime rates, and improvements to the physical environment. Amazed by what people around her achieved through co productive approaches that begin with what matters to citizens in communities, Jenny is working to apply the same principles to facilitate positive outcomes with carers of all ages.

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Lyndsey Campbell-Williams

Lyndsey currently manages the Community Voice Portfolio Project at Medrwn Môn on Anglesey and previously worked as a Partnership Co-ordinator on the Communities First Programme in Holyhead (2003-2011).

Lyndsey has been involved in establishing the Building Communities Model in Seiriol area, covering the South East area of the Island. The project had been running for four years and has been successful in engaging residents, Town and Community Councillors, Elected Members and Public Service Providers in developing a model of co-production that is currently being replicated as a model of best practice across Anglesey.

Through her work on the Community Voice project, Lyndsey has also worked with Anglesey County Council to develop a Joint Engagement and Consultation Board as a platform for ensuring meaningful discussions with communities about local services, as well as creating a three tier approach to involving communities in local decision-making, creating new solutions and pushing boundaries in designing services to suit their needs in line with the principles of the Future Generations and Social Services and Wellbeing Wales Legislation.

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Turnaround Towns

Hosted by WCVA

Russell Todd, Manager of WCVA's Communities First Support Service; Peter Davies, Chair

WCVA is the national membership organisation for the third sector in Wales. Our vision is for the third sector and volunteering to thrive and improve well-being for all. We aim to achieve this by influencing, connecting and enabling.

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Gina Wilson, Senior Policy and Development Officer, Carnegie UK Trust

Gina joined the Trust in 2014, bringing more than a decade of experience in developing projects, public affairs and research. She currently focuses on the development of innovative practice, partnerships and communications for the Trust.

Previously, Gina coordinated the development and national rollout of the Scottish Government's 'No Knives, Better Lives' (NKBL) initiative, based at YouthLink Scotland. This youth engagement, education and social marketing programme has demonstrably contributed to positive change in policy, practice and partnership working in relation to violence reduction. (cont...)

She has held various policy, public affairs, research and tutoring posts in the voluntary and higher education sectors, and worked for an MSP during the first term of the devolved Scottish Parliament.

Gina volunteers within the criminal justice system and also serves as a member of the Children's Panel, the largest legal tribunal in Scotland, making vital decisions to help improve the lives of vulnerable children and young people.

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