



# Conwy Connect Annual Report 2018-2019





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# Our Mission Statement and Aims

Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities is a charity that promotes the rights of people with learning disabilities in North Wales.

What do we do?

- Offer independent information and advice on learning disability services
- Provide opportunities for members to meet, exchange information, increase choice through our open meetings, events and newsletters
- Increase and extend opportunities for active, meaningful involvement through consultation
- Provide person centred facilitation to enable participation and involvement
- Provide a voice to raise views and concerns to policy makers
  - Take part in the planning of learning disability services



# Our Trustees

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## Service Users

Jason Rowson  
Richard Redmond  
Roy Hepper  
Shayna Harris

## Parents/Carers

Janet Byatt  
Yvonne Davies  
John Caldwell

## Statutory Services

Eleri Roberts  
Amy Jones  
Ruth Wyn Williams

## Voluntary Organisations

Caroline Downie – PSS



# Chairpersons Report

This past year has seen a lot of success for Conwy Connect. All services have continued, with great support from members, volunteers, parents, carers and Conwy Connect staff.

There has been a big improvement in our communication, with a [revised website](#) and a new image for the 'What Matters?' newsletter. [If you haven't seen these, do check them out. There is lots of information in the website \[www.conwy-connect.org.uk\]\(http://www.conwy-connect.org.uk\).](#) You can find back copies of 'What Matters?' on the website too.



The Trustees meet every two months and check out how things are going at Conwy Connect. They look at all aspects of Conwy Connect including the finances, funding for future development, and staffing. We have a good range of Trustees but we do need some more, particularly parents and carers. Please contact Cath Thornton – 01492 536486 – if you would like to help.

[A big thank you to all our wonderful funders.](#) Without your support we couldn't provide our services. And we are actively thinking about expanding our services, to reach out to people living in rural areas, as well as younger people.

The Conwy Connect office is now getting rather small for the numbers of people coming in and out, so we hope that this year will see some improvements.

All the best  
Janet Byatt



# Chief Officers Report

Time goes so fast and I am pleased to be Presenting the 2018-2019 Annual Report.

This year we continued to deliver our Engagement, Health Improvement and Connect Buddies and an extension to the planning for the future service. Our overall funding has increased this year. The new edition of the Parents Say project and the Easy Read service.



We have seen growth and diversification within our services along with strengthening our core activities.

I have continued to manage the staff and overall activities of Conwy Connect under the direction of the Conwy Connect trustees.

Consultation work has continued on the theme of future planning around accommodation.

We have seen the Moving on Solutions (MOS) group continue to develop more activities, such as cooking lessons, dance sessions and climbing sessions.

We hope you enjoy this Annual Report, which gives you the full flavour of our current services, showing our achievements over the past year.

These services continue with the help of the dedicated volunteers and staff of Conwy Connect.

Here is to another exciting year at Conwy Connect for learning disabilities .

Catherine Thornton



# Staff Team



Catherine Thornton  
Chief Officer



Paul Carter  
Health Improvement  
Officer



Non Lederle  
Moving on Solution  
Officer



Michele Pipe  
Parents Say Officer



Chris Spree  
Planning for the  
future Officer



Alison Fletcher  
Connect Buddies  
Officer



Celia Lewis  
Engagement Officer



Ben Williams  
Volunteer Officer



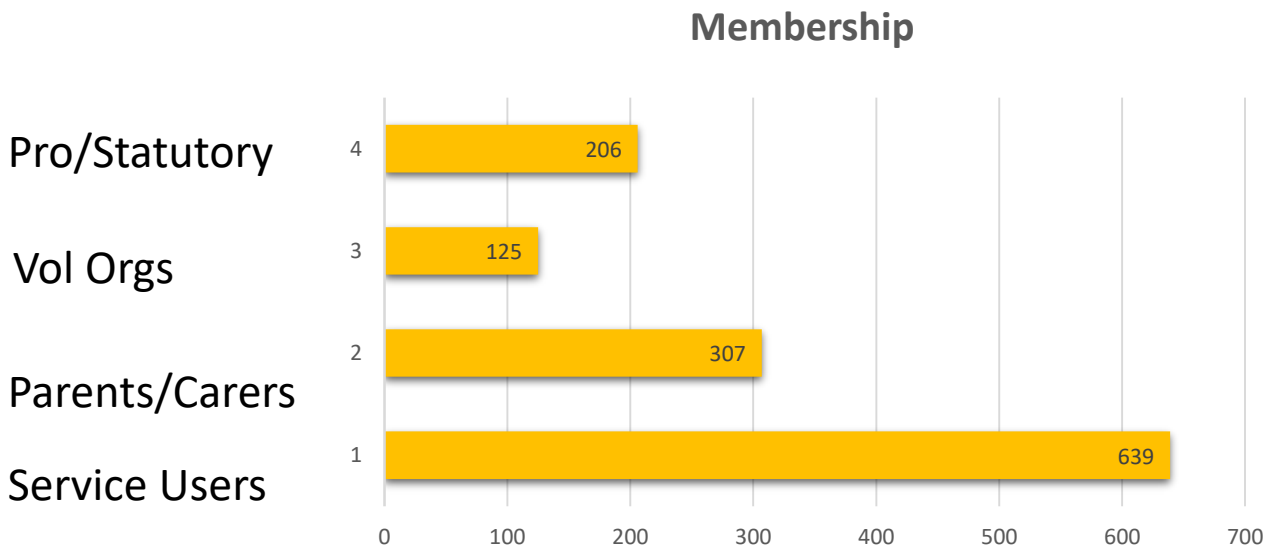
Shell Williams  
MOS Coordinator



# Membership

We are pleased to report that our membership has remained steady this last year with a total of 1357 people and organisations on our mailing list.

Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities has five main categories of membership as shown in the graph below.







# Newsletter & What Matters Magazine

This financial year we produced two newsletters and one What Matters magazine.

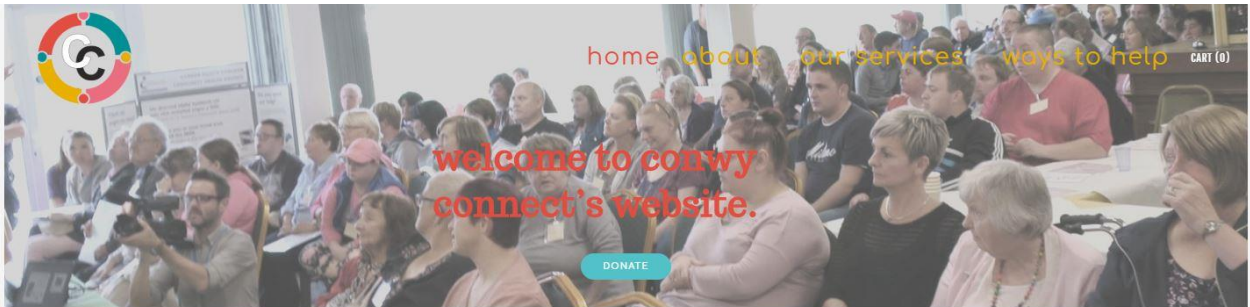


Thank you to all our volunteers who helped us mail out, you are simply the best.



# Social Media & Website

Our new website was launch in January



Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities was set up in 1997 to help promote the rights of people with a learning disability living within the County of Conwy in North Wales. Its aims include ensuring people have equality of choice and opportunity in the community they live in.



## Making a difference by

- Providing an essential link between all stakeholders whilst keeping members up to date of relevant changes in learning disability services.
- Informing members of any relevant changes in services.
- Providing information that increases choice.
- Breaking down barriers, encouraging and enabling people with a learning disability to have the right to a normal pattern of life.

We also help to 'CONNECT' people who are interested in the continued care and support of people with a learning disability.

And we continue to grow our presence online in all of the social media.





# Events

## Conwy Connects Annual General Meeting 2017-2018 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018

This was held on 21st November 2018 at Colwyn Bay Cricket Club 7.00pm - 9.00pm.

67 were in attendance.

We spoke about Relationships  
The Meeting included:

- Annual report and accounts
- Nominations were received and the committee was elected for 2018/19
- We showcased a video about Parents who support their children to have relationships.
- We also had a great discussion on how we can move things forward.





# Events

## LLOYDS BANK FOUNDATION England & Wales

Planning For the Future  
Service  
“Living Options”  
Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018

This was a drop in event that comprised of 10 different exhibitors. 35 members attended altogether.



Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018



*These 7 checks could save your life!*

Joining Paul was Nia Lederle from Betsi Cadwaladr who made the day a success with providing lots of information and a fun interactive quiz.

Over 30 members attended and enjoyed the day.





# Events

**LLOYDS BANK FOUNDATION**   
England & Wales

## Planning For the Future Service "Keep on Planning" Wednesday 03<sup>rd</sup> October 2018

This was a fabulous day with interesting speakers, information was received about housing, and wills amongst other subjects. Over 30 members attended.



Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019



## Connect Buddies

Connect Buddies had a consultation event. Lots of great stuff to discuss, but needed a few more voices.



# Social Worth and Public Benefit

## Musical Mayhem

Was definitely the highlight of 2018 – March 2019. The sessions were very chilled and was great to see confidence grow. Some members renewed interest in instruments they already had, whilst others learnt new ones. The social benefit to our members and the musicians was huge.



## Cookery

The Rabbit Hole and Come and Cook both organised cookery sessions for us and were thoroughly enjoyed by all and the dishes by members, their friends and family.

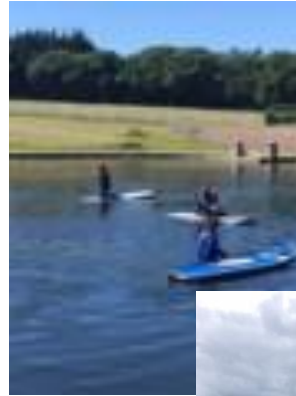




# Achievements

## Water sports

Those who participated embraced every activity and weather condition! Many overcame fears and pushed themselves. Was fantastic for us, Porth Eirias Water sports and volunteers to see.



## MOS Social Nights

Run by Eva, there is a regular group who attend. It is evident that they not only enjoy one another's company but Eva's too. We must be doing something right!



## Climbing

Our climbers have scaled new heights indoors and out. That smile is what it's all about.



# Achievements

Also fantastic that our regular activities are still popular.

## Venture Drama



## Picasso







# Friendship Group

Shell Williams with support from Non Lederle organised successful activities for the Friendship Group 2018/2019

The Events included:

- Trips with Vicky's Coaches, Llangollen, York and Caernarfon Welsh Highland Railway, Blackpool Illuminations, Manchester and Chester.
- Theatre trips to Shrek and Dick Whittington.
- Enjoyable Friendship walks.
- All enjoyed a party in the park.
- Bowling.
- Karaoke.





# Health Improvement service



- Gave talks on the importance of health checks to members at Canolfan Marl (18/04/18) and CLC Abergele (20/09/18) day services
- Health Screening Information Event May 18th 2018 with Public Health Wales
- 5 x Learning Disability and Autism Awareness training for medical students
- Delivered Learning Disability and Autism Awareness training for ambulance staff with Sonia Winley, Learning Disability Acute Liaison Nurse on 13/06/18
- Organised and hosted research interviews by Public Health Wales into Health Screening Experiences of people with Learning Disabilities
- Took part in Relationships task and finish group for Conwy Social Services on 09/01/19



# Easy Read Service

We introduced an easy read translation service in 2018-2019.

**Plan for Day Opportunities for Adults with a Learning Disability**

Day opportunities can be -

 Social Club

Going to a social club



Going to do activities

Activities are things like sports, art and making things



We can translate documents into easy read for you.

This is a special format using pictures, every day words and short sentences.

It is designed to make complicated documents easier for people with learning disabilities to understand.

In 2018-2019 we have given easy read advice and feedback to Public Health Wales and have translated a number of documents for Anglesey Council.

If you need a document, leaflet, poster or report translated into easy read, please get in touch for a quote.



# Planning for the Future

During the year:

At the end of the year:



Completed plans:	First Reviews:	On Hold:	Ready to start:
15	7	5	3
	Second Reviews:		
	3		

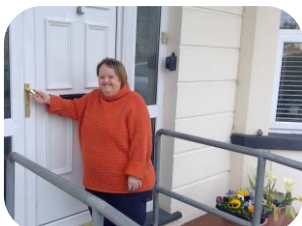
Since the Start of the Service:  
"Movers"



If I can do this, what's to stop you?



People have said:



"She's more independent & makes more of her own choices"





# Connect Buddies

Connect Buddies supports people to do the things they want to do, when they want to do them.



Volunteers and buddies are matched by their common interests.

The service is funded by the Gwynt y Mor Community Fund.

This year has seen the Connect Buddies staff team change.

Alison Fletcher remains in post as Coordinator on 10 hours/week.

Celia Lewis remains in post as Connect Buddies Officer on 10 hours/week.

Ben Williams joined the team as Volunteer Officer in September 2018.





# Connect Buddies

This year we have focused on:

- Recruiting Volunteers
- Matching buddies and volunteers
- Promoting the service
- Sourcing future funding



## Volunteers

In 2018-19 we recruited 28 volunteers.

How did we do this?

- We have focused our work on volunteer recruitment.
- We increased the profile of Connect Buddies and volunteering on social media.
- We actively promoted the service in the local area.



## Matching buddies and volunteers

11 buddies and volunteers are paired and are active

Connect Buddies remains committed to matching volunteers and Buddies with similar interests.

This means that we will only match people together if they 'get on' and want to spend time together.





# Connect Buddies

## Promoting the Service/Events

We have used a range of activities to promote the service

Presentation by Shayna Harris on Connect Buddies at 'Beyond Service Land', Learning Disability Wales, May 2018

Buddies yn Betws Music Festival July 2018

Connect Buddies Band Night January 2019


Carers events in Conwy

Health and Social Care Network events in Conwy and Denbighshire

Bowl and Burger March 2019



*Connect Buddies*  
- What's next?



Come and look at the past, present and future for Connect Buddies  
Fun, interactive workshops and discussion about friendship and relationships  
With lunch!

**When:** 20th March 2019  
10am-2.30pm  
**Where:** Colwyn Bay Cricket Club

We consulted members (Connect Buddies event 20 March 2019) about what they wanted from the Connect Buddies service.

The main request was for more social events and activities to meet friends and meet new people.



# Engagement Service

## Celia Lewis - Engagement Coordinator



The post of Engagement Co-ordinator is funded by Conwy County Borough Council. The purpose of the role is to help Service Users to become more involved in the decision making process for important things in their lives.

This could be to do with services provided by the council, work opportunities, accommodation, social activities or being part of planning processes and lots more besides.

### Connect Advocacy Group

Have had a successful year, with some of the members using their campaigning skills to lobby against local bus route changes. The Engagement Coordinator has continued to support the facilitation of this group.

### Regional Participation Group

Our reps have continued to attend the Regional Participation group in Llys Elian in Colwyn Bay. Our reps have been integral in implementing changes. The changes will ensure the regional group have a strong voice and are supported by a local organisation that will help them grow in the future.

### National Council

Celia has also supported our National Council Rep to attend National Council meetings in both North and South Wales.





# Disco

- Held 22 discos at Llandudno Junction Community Club 7.00pm - 9.30pm with an average of 69 members attending
- Produced, printed and widely circulated flyers advertising the dates to members
- Written to volunteers and circulated a rota to them
- Co-ordinated staff and volunteers
- Ensured the income is accounted for, invoices submitted and appropriate payments made
- Liaised with the Llandudno Junction Community Club Staff and DJ
- Ensured there is appropriate insurance in place
- Checked the Health & Safety Risk information is up to date





# Parents Say Project

Parents Say! Project ran from November 2018 to May 2019. My name is Michele Pipe and I worked for 1 day a week on the Parents Say! project. Funding for Parents Say! finished in May 2019. The project was a good idea, but it was hard to find parents with learning disabilities



Parents Say! was part of the Working Together with Parents Network.

It was funded by Esmee Fairbairn Foundation working with LDW



Parents Say! was set up to work in North Wales. It helped professionals find out best ways of working with parents with learning disabilities. We had Network meetings in Wrexham, Flintshire, Denbighshire and Conwy County.



# Parents Say Project

Parents Say! also set up a network for parents with learning disabilities themselves. We wanted parents in North Wales to share their stories about being mums and dads and to make support better for other parents in the future.



We also set up Coffee and Cake sessions in the 4 regions in North Wales. These were meetings for parents & professionals to come together.



Catherine Peer Mentor

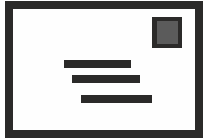


Debbie Peer Mentor

I found out a lot about parents with additional needs. I also interviewed to 2 parents – they told me about being a mum or dad



## Contact Details



**Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities**  
**Rear Annex**  
**7 Rhiw Road**  
**Colwyn Bay**  
**LL29 7TE**



**TEL/FAX: 01492 536486**



**Email: [Catherine@conwy-connect.org.uk](mailto:Catherine@conwy-connect.org.uk)**

**Website: [www.conwy-connect.org.uk](http://www.conwy-connect.org.uk)**



**Twitter: [@CC4LD](https://twitter.com/CC4LD)**



**<https://www.facebook.com/CC4LD>**