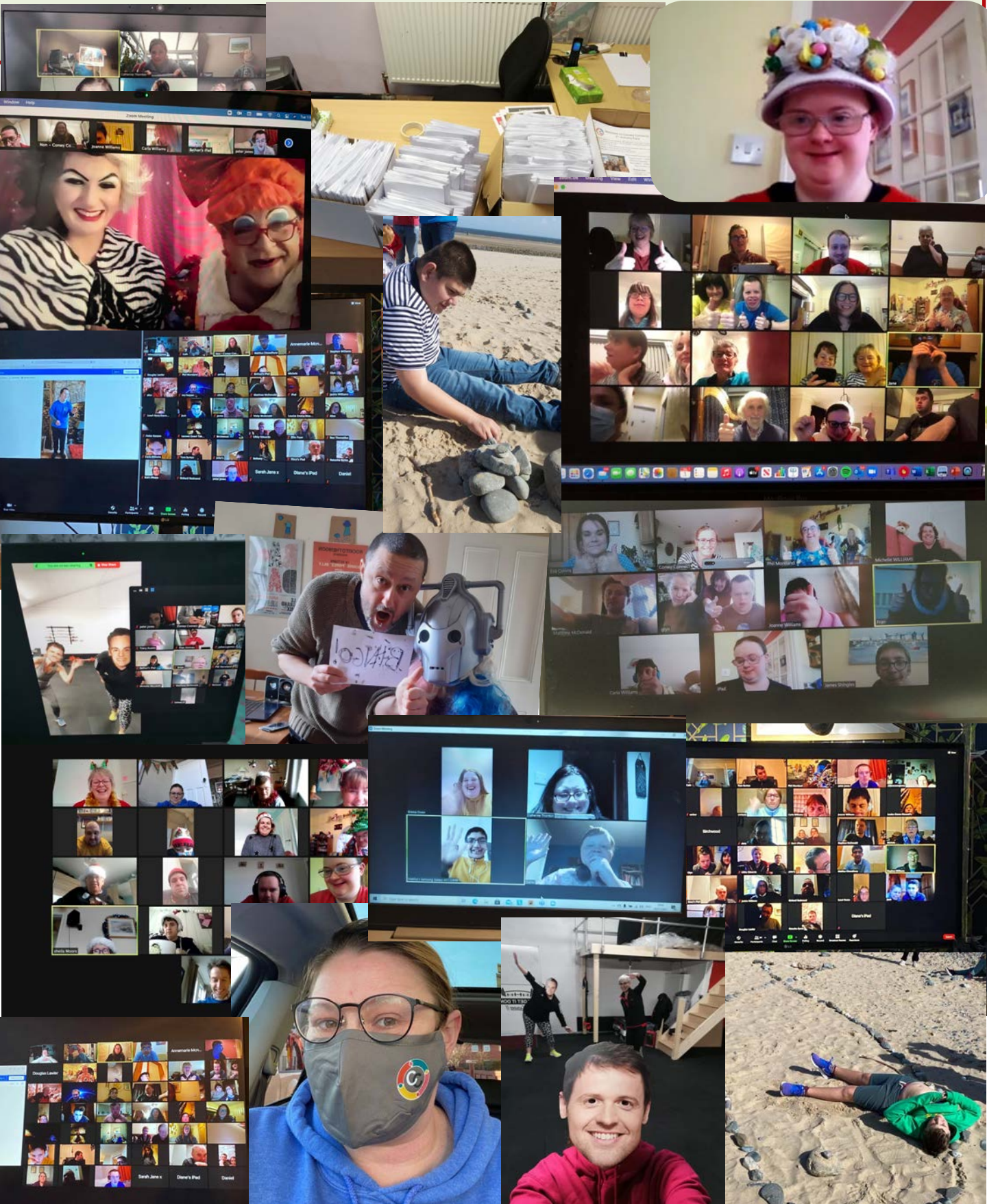




Charity Number  
1172199

# Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities

Annual Report 2020/2021





# Our Mission Statement and Aims

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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.

## **Who we work with**

Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities works with a wide range of people including;

People with a learning disability

Parents

Carers

Statutory organisations

Voluntary organisations

Interested individuals and organisations



# Introduction from our Chair

## Introduction from our Chairperson

Hello everyone and welcome to the annual report for Conwy Connect for April 2020 to April 2021.

Covid 19 started to be a big problem for us all last March 2020 when we went into the first lockdown. As you know this was the first of three lockdowns, including one over last Christmas. This one was very hard for many people who could not get together with family and friends. Things have got a little better in 2021, but we are still feeling the effects of Covid. Let's hope things get better soon.



I am pleased to report that the team at Conwy Connect has made lots of changes to activities and events. With help from funders, we have been able to expand online activities of all sorts. Members have been able to join in online quizzes, discos and chat groups. All these activities have been very popular and have brought in new members.

My personal highlights of 2020-2021 were

- the Makaton choir (again!)
- the involvement of members in developing new ideas for online contacts with other members
- the development of employment opportunities for members in health advocacy.

These were all new for 2020 to 2021 and are very interesting developments. Check out the information about all our activities in this annual report.

The Trustees meet every two months or so 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 – if you would like to help.

A big thank you to all our wonderful funders. Without your support we couldn't provide our services. We know these services are very much appreciated by members and their families and carers. We hope you will be amazed at the range of activities described in this report.

Best wishes to all  
Janet Byatt



# Our Trustees

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## **Members**

Fran Holmes

Richard Redmond

Roy Hepper

## **Parents/Carers**

Janet Byatt

Yvonne Davies

Jacqui Caldwell

Alex Fryer

## **Statutory Services**

Eleri Roberts

Claire Davies

Ruth Wyn Williams

## **Voluntary Organisations**

Caroline Downie – PSS



# Thank you to our funders





# Welcome from our Chief Officer

## Catherine Thornton Chief Officer



Hello and welcome to Conwy Connects Annual Report for 2020/2021. Reflecting on this year was an emotional experience. 2020/2021 was a challenging year for everyone. We saw everything change in the blink of an eye. We were uprooted from our usual routines, groups, friends and families. Many of us celebrated special occasions on zoom or in gardens 2 meters away from our loved ones.

“You are on mute” became a sentence we said many times a day and “What's the Code?” took over from “What are the disco dates?” in our messages through Facebook, What's app and Emails.

I am so very proud of our organization and its members on how they coped with such a difficult year. The staff team at Conwy Connect went above and beyond to ensure our members had something to do, or someone to talk to.

Our services quickly diversified as we entered the first lockdown and we as a team focused on how we could support the members through this new and sometimes scary experience.

Many of our members were enthusiastic to learn new digital skills that were essential in lockdown they in turn began to support their peers to be able to connect. It was amazing to see.

We recognize being digitally connected isn't something everyone enjoys, so we made sure we sent out activity packs for the people that couldn't connect to use digitally.

A massive big thank you to all that supported us.



# Your Conwy Connect Team



Catherine Thornton  
Chief Officer



Paul Carter  
Health Improvement  
Officer



Non Lederle  
Deputy/Moving on  
Solution Officer



Michele Pipe  
Engagement Officer



Chris Spree  
Planning for the  
Future Officer



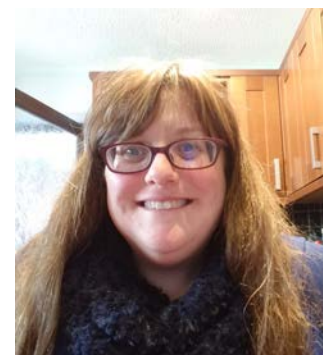
Helen Kenyon  
Freelance Worker



Delyth Lloyd Williams  
Family Support  
Officer



Shell Williams  
MOS Coordinator



Annemarie Mcnally  
Family Transition Officer



Eva Collins  
Freelance Worker



# Health Improvement Service



**I am Paul Carter**

**I am the Health Improvement Officer for Conwy Connect**

**My job is about health**

**I try to help people with problems about health care**

**I try to tell people about how to keep healthy**

**I try to tell people about the health support they can get**

**I tell people about annual health checks**

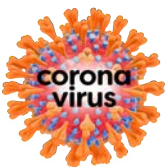


## What have I been doing?

**I have been doing lots of things**

**It has been a strange year because of Coronavirus**

**Here are some of the things I have been doing -**



**People with Learning Disabilities and people with Autism can go for a car ride**



**Some people need to go on car rides to help them relax**

**People with learning disabilities can go on a car ride to relax**



**People with autism can go on a car ride to relax**

**Making sure everyone has the latest Easy Read info about Coronavirus**

**Sometimes I have made my own Easy Read info**

**This is a leaflet I made about going for a drive in lockdown**





# Health Improvement Service



I made an Easy Read leaflet about going to the doctors and going into hospital

It was about how things are different because of Coronavirus

The Betsi Cadwaladr Learning Disability Acute Liaison Team helped me with it



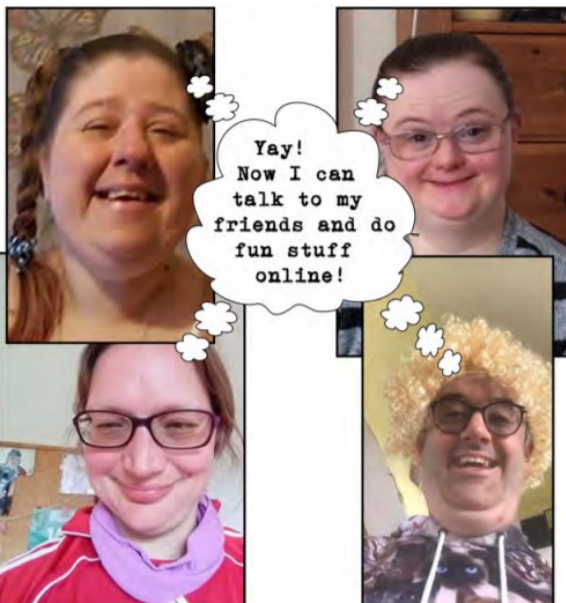
I did a Zoom meeting for our members every week

Sometimes we talked about our favourite things

Sometimes we talked about health

Sometimes we just had a chat

This was all good for people's mental health during Coronavirus



With lots of help from members, I put together a photo story

It was in What Matters Magazine

It told people about our new Zoom groups

It was important to tell people this, because lockdown was happening

It was a new way for people to see their friends



# Health Improvement Service



I set up a YouTube channel called Conwy Connect television (or CCTV for short)

It is so we can make videos to tell people about important things

This is to give people another way of hearing about things from Conwy Connect



Members made a video with me to tell people about Conwy Connect TV



I use Conwy Connect TV to tell people about health things

Phillip made a film with me

It says how going to hospitals and doctors is different because of Coronavirus



I put together a health page for our Lockdown Activity Packs



Non Lederle and all the Conwy Connect staff team put the packs together



Conwy Connect sent them out to our members

My pages told people about what exercise they could do and how to stay healthy in lockdown



# Health Improvement Service



**GIG**  
CYMRU  
**NHS**  
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Betsi Cadwaladr  
University Health Board

**I supported our members to talk to Megan Vickery from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board**



**Megan wanted to ask our members what they thought about local health care**

**I organised a Zoom meeting and invited members**

**I helped them to understand the questions Megan was asking**

**I did a health challenge for some of our members**

 **Conwy Connect 'Be Good To Yourself' Challenge**

<b>Level 1</b> See the back for instructions	<b>20+ mins walk?</b> 	<b>Fruit?</b> 
<b>Monday</b>		

**It asked people to do a walk and eat fruit every day**

**I posted it to people, then talked to them on Zoom about how to use it**

**Members did very well, and walked more and ate more fruit**



**I helped make health films for our members**

**The films were made by people at TAPE in Old Colwyn**

**One of the films was about health checks**

**Some of our members and The Learning Disability Acute Liaison Team helped too**

**We helped with the films by talking about them on Zoom**



# Health Improvement Service

**Sgrinio am oes  
Screening for life**

Zoom meeting for people with a learning disability and/or autism about -  
**Having a Smear Test**

For all women aged 25 to 64

**Friendly chat with Nia and Helen – find out why it might save your life**  
Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March 1pm – 2pm  
Meeting ID: 811 9078 9777 Passcode: 777640

[www.screeningforlife.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.screeningforlife.wales.nhs.uk)

**I worked with Nia Lederle from Public Health Wales**

**We organised an online event to tell female members about Smear Tests**

**Nia Lederle and Helen Kenyon did the event on Zoom**

**Helen works for Conwy Connect**

**Sgrinio am oes  
Screening for life**

Zoom meeting for women with a learning disability and/or autism about -  
**Being Breast Aware and Breast Screening**

For all women (and women over 50 for breast screening)

**Friendly chat with Nia and Helen – find out why it might save your life**  
Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April 1pm – 2pm  
Meeting ID: 834 7753 0945

Female parents, carers and support workers welcome

[www.screeningforlife.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.screeningforlife.wales.nhs.uk)

**I worked with Nia Lederle from Public Health Wales on another event**

**We organised an online event to tell female members about Breast Screening**

**Nia and Helen did the event on Zoom**

**I did not go to these events because they were about women’s health**



**We also did an event for parents and carers about screening**

**Nia told them about all the different kinds of health screening**

**This was on Zoom too**

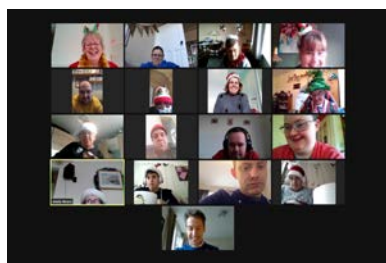
**I was the host for this event**



# Engagement Service

Well, 2020-2021 has been a very different year for Conwy Connect Engagement Service. We have had lots of changes - everyone has worked really hard to stay connected.

Funded by



From April 2020 the Forum meeting stopped meeting in person. This was because of the Pandemic and lockdown. Our monthly meeting started to meet every week for 1 hour. To meet up everyone had to learn how to use Zoom. It was quite hard at first but people learnt how to make things better.



The Conwy Connect forum What's app group has been a really good way for people to stay in touch. Also the Forum what's app group is a good way to pass on information. Members share news, cartoons, videos and photos of things they have been doing. Looking back we must have done a lot of eating as members shared many lovely photos of their meals!





# Engagement Service

From our Forum, the members vote for Representatives to go to other groups for them. We have had new Representatives and Deputies from January 2020.

Funded by



Bethan is our Conwy Rep and Carla is Deputy Rep of the North Wales Participation group (regional)



Richard is our Conwy Rep and Joanne is Deputy Rep for All Wales People First National Council



Shell is the North Wales Representative for the Learning Disability Ministeria Advisory Group



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

All these groups have been meeting during 2020-21 on Zoom.



# Denbighshire Planning for Future



My name is Delyth

I work in Denbighshire

I work with family carers to plan for the future

This report shows what I have been doing this year

Funded by



I meet up with family carers and listen to their story



Sometimes carers are tired

Sometimes they are sad



I keep meeting up with carers until we have finished what needs to be done

Sometimes this in in a Zoom meeting

Sometimes it is on the phone

Sometimes it is in a café



# Denbighshire Planning for Future

Funded by



Sometimes things are tricky and can take a long time.

Sometimes there is a lot to know.



Carers are experts at being carers,

They don't have time to be an expert at everything.

I try to help with this.



One way I help is by signposting.

This means that I tell carers about people who are experts at different things.

Then the carers can get help from these experts.



Sometimes these experts ask me about family carers.

I talk with them and we work together.

This means that everyone works together to help the family.



Sometimes one carer can help another carer.

This happened with two families this year.

The two families shared good ideas.







# Denbighshire Planning for Future



The carers I have worked with this year have wanted different things.

Some carers have wanted to help someone in their family find a house to live in.

Funded by



Some carers have wanted to help someone in their family find good support.



Some carers have wanted to help someone in their family make friends.



Whatever the plan is, it works best if everyone works together.

I help to make sure everyone listens to the family.

I help to tell the experts about the family.

It is a very busy job.



# Planning for the Future

Covid tried to stop us.....

.....Zoom was part of our answer

**Tuedays Morning Zoom Meeting**

Meeting ID: 843 6170 8093

Activity packs were also part of our answer.  
(With a little help from some friends!)



A special friend helped report to the Trustees.



We worked with Social Services  
to put on a Zoom event.  
(The event was held in May 2021)



Getting ready for Easter.



**SUCCESS!!**

We did plan with one young man  
He found a new place  
He moved, even during lockdown.





# Denbighshire Connect

Funded by



My name is Delyth

I used to work in Denbighshire Connect

I worked there from April 2020 to March 2021

This report shows what I did during that time



My work was in Denbighshire

My work was with family carers who lived in Denbighshire

During this time lots of places were closed

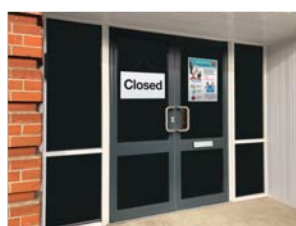
This was because of Covid 19

Everyone found different ways to work

Because everywhere was closed, I used Zoom meetings and Team meetings

I met carers in Zoom meetings and Team meetings

Sometimes this was in a group and sometimes it was just one person





# Denbighshire Connect

Funded by



Some carers liked Zoom meetings

Some carers liked to talk on the phone

I made sure they could choose what was best for them



For some carers, Covid 19 made things even harder

Carers work hard anyway

Some carers needed more help because of Covid 19



Carers wanted to know who could help them

Sometimes I could help them

Sometimes I could tell them who could help them

Sometimes another carer in the group could help them



These are some of the things the carers needed help with



# Denbighshire Connect



What activities can my family member do now ?

Funded by



Lots of family members joined in with Conwy Connect's online activities



Will my family member still be able to go to respite?



I helped carers talk to experts

The experts made it possible for some people to have respite



# Denbighshire Connect



Can I have help with forms and paperwork?

Sometimes I helped them

Usually I found an expert to help them

Funded by



Denbighshire Connect listened to carers

Denbighshire Connect worked with the carers and the experts

Some carers said Denbighshire Connect helped them



## Health and Well-Being Project

I was involved with the Health and Wellbeing sessions that began in October 2020. This course was delivered by the nurses from the Learning Disability Team. My role involved assisting the nurses with getting the members to the sessions each week, to listen to their feedback after the sessions and any concerns they may have had. I had regular contact with both the members and the nurses from the team.

Funded by



There were 4 blocks of 6 sessions, each of the blocks had an opportunity for 10 members and a facilitator to be involved. We covered topics that included Diet and Exercise, Friends and Relationships, Health checks and Keeping safe in the Community. Each of the members received a tablet if it was required, this encouraged the members to engage online and a Fitbit if needed.



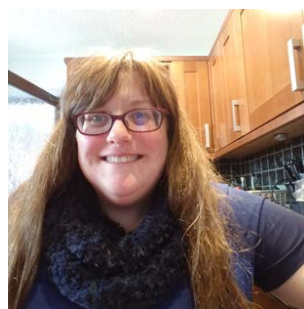
Eva Collins

All of the feedback from each of the members after the sessions was always positive and was so encouraging. Each member gained in confidence which over the weeks became apparent with engaging in the conversation more and more. It was something to look forward to each week as it was such an isolating time during lockdown for many of the members.

I feel very lucky to have had the opportunity to be a part of this course.



# Family Transition Service



Annemarie McNally

In this financial year Annemarie McNally was our Family Transition Officer her work included completing training to become a Support Planner/Broker.

Funded by



While we were in Lockdown for most of this financial year Annemarie Completed bids for grants. Kept in contact with the Family Centres and School liaisons with ALNCo.



She Attended School Reviews and MDT for some young people

She also hosted a weekly youth club online and weekly parent groups around transition.

Annemarie also sent out over 300 COVID Cards to people across North Wales





# Social Worth and Public Benefit



**Conwy Connect and the Magic Light Production company started theatre sessions on zoom.**



The sessions were so much fun, and the group created some fantastic shows. Have a look on YouTube.....



## Music

Gav has carried on with sessions on zoom. Our members have been so creative they have almost written an album!!!

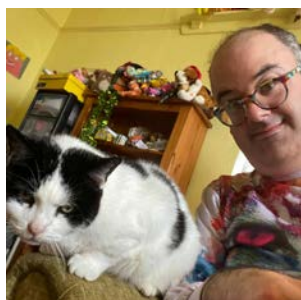


To thank Comic Relief for some funding the group wrote a song. Paste the link below in your browser to hear it.

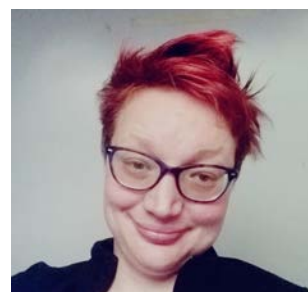
<https://fb.watch/4goF6uG10E/>



The local radio station also invited Fran and Phillip for an interview on their achievements. Well done both!!



We think Hayley the cat helps inspire Phillip.



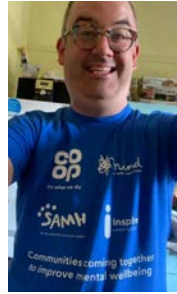
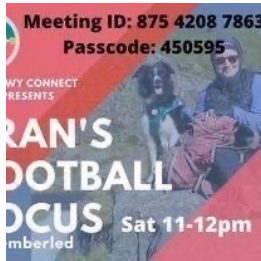




# Achievements

## Members

Our members have been empowered and run their own groups! We are so proud of them.



Phillip helped by delivering discos / chats as needed.



Bethan enjoyed leading a fitness session.

Fran led weekly football chats.

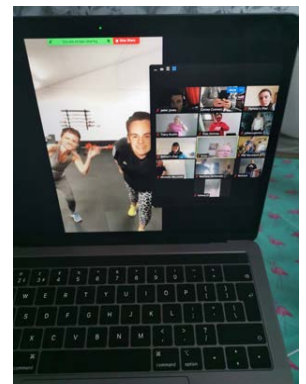
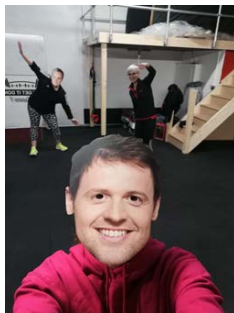
Shell became a quiz master



**Marathon**  
Our fabulous chief ran a virtual marathon and members dropped in throughout the day to offer support.

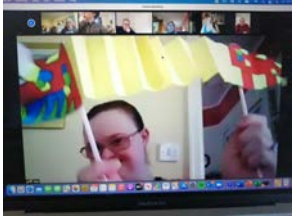


**Celebrities**  
Ant and Dec left Gwydyr castle to join our fitness class.





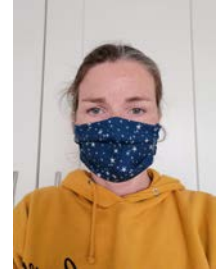
# Achievements



Celebrated Chinese New Year. Excellent dragon Cathy!!



Made Welsh cakes for St David's Day.



We showed you how to make face masks.

## Visits

We had socially distanced visits to see how people are.



## Little super stars

Smaller family members came on board and helped with activity packs.



## Volunteers

We had 2 musicians join Makaton choir. **Jamie** and **John**.



**Christine** who made dance and cookery videos for months!!



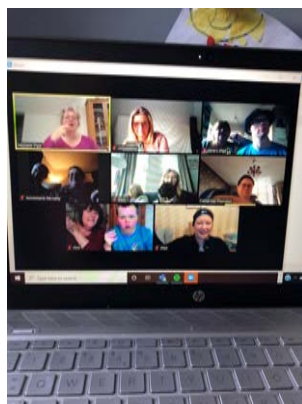
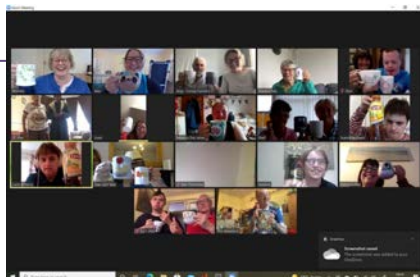
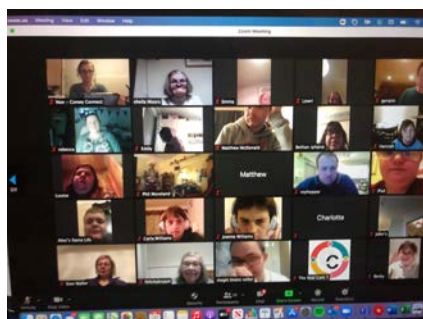
**Caroline** who did endless fitness sessions



# Regular Sessions

## The Team

Together we have delivered at least 1 if not 2 zoom sessions every day within a week of lockdown starting. Plus, have been accessible by phone / email or social media for the bulk of lockdown.



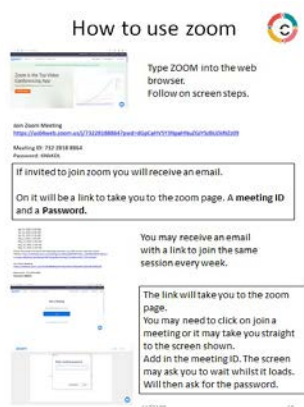
**Makaton** was challenging on zoom, but we all rose to the challenge, staff, members and support.



## Mail out

We also sent out over 2000 activity packs!! This was a big job as could only be completed by 2 staff members.

We included how to get on zoom so as many people could join us as possible.





# Bonus Groups

The youngsters were lucky enough to have an art session offered by **Conwy Culture Centre**



**Conwy Culture Centre** also provided some guided walks for our adult members who were able to venture out.



We held a Conwy Connect staff bakeoff. The jury is still out on the winner!!

We also did online cookery sessions.



We held online Karaoke and a regular disco.

We even held the most amazing **Talent Show**. That was the biggest **wow** ever, so impressed by everyone. Must be the best night of the year.



CONWY ID: 832 6596 4102 PASSWORD: 883058



# Funders



**C A M B R I A N**  
SAVINGS & LOANS  
Supporting Communities

**Cambrian** kindly funded one of our activity packs which was awesome.



## Comic Relief

Funded some Makaton and Foundation Musician music group plus an activity pack, art sessions, well being chat and bingo



Provided funding at the end of the year ready to carry Makaton forward to 2021

**Learning Disability Transformation Team** kindly funded Makaton Choir **and** also provided funds to allow Non to be trained. Non was accepted onto the Makaton tutor training course at the start of 2021. You will have to wait till the next AGM to find out if qualified!!!



If you would like to continue to support us into the next financial year join our lottery.



Conwy and Denbighshire councils have continued to support a wide variety of projects and craft packs for our budding artists.





# Funders

## North Wales Together

Provided funding for cookery sessions which were continued through lockdown with food drops off and recorded instructions.



## Integrated Care Fund



Provided funding for a range of social activities for youths and adults. This was diversified with permission during lockdown.

## Contact us



[Catherine@Conwy-Connect.org.uk](mailto:Catherine@Conwy-Connect.org.uk)



Rear Annex  
7 Rhiw Rd  
Colwyn Bay  
LL297TE



01492 536486

[Facebook.com/CC4LD](https://www.facebook.com/CC4LD)