

## Thriving Communities Objective

### RCT Community Resilience Hubs – Progress Highlights 2020-2021

- At the early stages of development RCT Cabinet made a commitment to the development of up to 10 Community Hubs.
- The developments in RCT have not only concerned themselves with the Children's Zone Pilot
- Covid-19 hastened those developments.
- From the outset of the pandemic the Community Support Steering Group in RCT has been the lynch pin for responding to resident needs and organisational challenge. Full reports for all activities undertaken by RCTCBC can be made available.
- These strategic partnerships identified local community response members 'placed' in each of the 7 Community Resilience Hubs. Attached is the current virtual multi agency team list soon to be updated to include Adult Services and Health colleagues
- The Community Development Team – RCT Together establishment was increased - ICF and RCTCBC - to respond to resident requests and now focusses attention on the development of Community Neighbourhood Networks. Attached is the current RCT Together staffing structure and Multi agency Community Resilience Hub Virtual Teams (Appendix A)
- Case studies are available for all periods.
- During 2019-2020 the Community Development Team secured circa £150,000 additional external revenue funding to respond to resident needs, utilised to build resilience and included £35,000 for capital investment in community projects.
- The Children's Zone pilot evaluation is in final draft and due for publication shortly after sharing with Ministers, this closes the pilot activity.
- As part of the CTM Protect response RCT have been part of the WG Self Isolation support pilot and an evaluation of this is available on request.
- Covid-19 has fundamentally changed the way we work, the response of communities, third and voluntary sector organisations has allowed adult services to sustain support to the NHS and respond to those of high need.
- Covid-19 has changed attitudes within our communities with people more willing it seems to help other people.

### Plans for 2021-22 include:

- Bringing into the virtual teams in Community Resilience Hubs - Health and adult Service presence – agreed in principle, individual contact details tbc
- An accessible resident survey asking residents to identify 3 things they'd like to see more of and 3 things they'd like to see less of is available to all RCT residents and is being widely publicised. <http://inform/en/news/2021/june/rctresidentssurvey.aspx>. The results will be shared with neighbourhood networks, alongside National data reports.
- The Community Development Web page has been made more user friendly – inviting contact and making asking for support more accessible. [RCT Together | Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council \(rctcbc.gov.uk\)](https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk)
- An RCTCBC application for the UK Community Renewal Fund has been submitted to UK Government if approved will provide financial support to the endeavours of the neighbourhood Networks and their identified and agreed priorities. Total Project value of £613,265.25 of which £75,848.48 will be available for Capital Investment.

## Key risks

- The development of a UK National Social Prescribing Framework approach by health may well undermine the fledgling development and collaborative endeavour of local communities/the community response.
- The need to secure longer term financial investment for the Community Resilience Hub/developments is critical if the positive progress it to be maintained and residents and Community Groups t continue to receive support. To date for example critical team members have just 12-month employment contracts funded by ICF and

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## Merthyr Tydfil Community Zone

### Summary of Progress

In Merthyr Tydfil, the County Borough Council continues to be the lead stakeholder, with Merthyr Valleys Homes as the anchor organisation to develop the pilot community Hub, key partners include voluntary and third sector organisations such as Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil and 3 G's Development Trust which has created a community hub facility that offers a space for community members to meet up friends and family, access and use IT facilities, access services and support such as Health Visitors, Parenting Team, Early Language Development, Communities for Work and Communities for Work Plus, Youth Support, South Wales Police, the Youth Club and Barnardo's.

A Hub and Spoke approach has been developed which annually maps the services and provision in the vicinity. The Hub 'spokes' include a local Flying Start childcare facility, 3 Gs Arts & Media Studio, local schools, the Foodbank and a number of active third sector groups such as Gurnos Men's Group and the PHAB Club. Links to specialist drop-in provision in and across Merthyr Tydfil, which includes housing tenancy support, smoking cessation, drug and alcohol support and employment and careers support.

Engagement approaches and activities have been, and continue to be rolled out to establish priorities and regularly refreshed in relation to specific areas of work, including working with services to maintain and promote their offer over the pandemic, and develop online approaches, and working with the partners and youth group to respond to the needs of the community during Covid, delivering on a community environmental projects, and in collaboration with Merthyr Valley Homes the roll out of a community consultation survey with to establish community needs during Covid,

### Covid-19 Pandemic Response

Within context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Gurnos Hub has played a substantial role in terms of response with improved collaborative working opportunities the sharing of resources and co-ordination with key partners.

The challenges of the pandemic have been immense, and the Hub facility closed to comply with COVID guidelines under the 'community venue' guidance. However, throughout the pandemic services have been reviewed and wherever possible developed to be delivered online. This online approach has been very successful with the Hub offer of information, advice and assistance model being maintained virtually, via the Calon Las Facebook and twitter pages.

With increasing engagement numbers 'hits' every week, with over 500 follows. Residents having up to date information on support, services and signposting such as employment services, food bank and housing support. Online courses have been promoted and community competitions such as Xmas art, wreath making and delivery of selection boxes

have been rolled out. This has been very successfully with resident feedback indicating it has been a lifeline.

During September to November 2020 Community consultation was rolled out virtually to ascertain needs especially around health and wellbeing; Responses analysed illustrate the need reach more residents and use of social media, with work ongoing to link in with organisations who refurbish laptops;

Via the commissioning model with Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil, the IAA/Community Development Officer has had opportunities to access funding and roll out support and wellbeing packs to community resident and worked collaboratively with the Youth Services to develop wellbeing packs for vulnerable resident and young people.

All stakeholders housed in the Hub have maintained their service offer, with either face to face or support that has been developed virtually, with participants and residents offered one to one online appointment and support. Under strict COVID guidelines, the Health service offer of baby weighing and immunisation has been maintained where guidance has allowed, and via an appointment basis.

The co-located services as part of the Families First and Flying Start offer have been working centrally with the local authority as part of the vulnerable learner's panel- providing a virtual model of sharing key worker updates and tracking the most vulnerable children and young people in the area and across Merthyr. This has included home visits under the statutory services and where COVID allowed some face to face visits (outside)

Ongoing conversations with work being carried out to analyse and ascertain community needs and priorities. A Hub Operations group is in place to review WG guidance and develop new processes and system for the new facility such as include policies and procedures for COVID compliance when it is open to the public.

During spikes in COVID cases, The Hub has hosted a Covid testing facility and distribution of LFT kits

## **Financial Investment and Future Plans**

Through investment, and using the WG Legacy Grant to target support within the pilot via employing a part-time strategic lead officer and commissioned approach with third sector organisation to provide a Community Development and Information and Advice (IAA) officer. This grant investment has continued for 2021-22, however, with the WG review of the Legacy grant it is unclear if this commitment will continue beyond 2022.

Through further investment the local authority secured ICF investment to refurbish the Hub building and provide better IAA facilities. This refurbishment has been further developed, with the local authority securing a large scale 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools grant investment in 2019 creating a larger and quality facility with increased space for IAA and community café. The facility is near completion, and with WG guidance, ongoing discussions are taking place to re-opening and resume the face to face service, albeit reduced.

Longer term commitment to develop and submit a three-year application to the Big Lottery was submitted December 2020 by Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil (VAMT) who led on the proposal, Resilient Gurnos. The proposal set out its intend how it would build on the progress and investment made, especially at this important juncture of Calon Las to raise its profile, involve the community and provide the leadership needed to support individuals and groups to engage with confidence in the aftermath of the pandemic. However, unfortunately the bid was not approved, so sourcing alternative funds is a key priority for the steering group going forward.

## **Strategic and Long Term**

Future plans depend on strategic funding (from WG) to continue or extend support for the Children's First model and doing so in a more structured manner that does not compete with funding for other more targeted agendas. The longer-term strategic commitment to the approach and roll out across Merthyr is unclear given the pressure on resources and desire to evidence impact of the approach.

At the moment, investment remains whilst WG Legacy grant is available and further development is dependent on collaborative grant applications or partners contributing towards the agenda – which has been a challenge to date. There is a reliance on the securing of external funding by almost all partners in order to continue or begin contributing to this approach, which is seen as over and above existing service offers e.g the recent Big Lottery application.

With no large-scale financial investment, the success of the Hub remains reliant on 'good will' of stakeholders, and with the funding model being short term, resources can be limited and commitment sporadic.

There is a need to strengthen the impetus on Health/Public Services to align with Community Hub/Zone developments, so there is a clear focus on localised services that reduce barriers especially in respect of health provision in local areas so that families don't have to worry about the cost of travel to hospital appointments such as speech and language or worry about childcare arrangements.

There will be continued reviews of how to have better integration of approaches across services and sectors within a cluster model.

APPENDIX A

**Community Development Team Staff Structure**

Syd Dennis  
Service Manager

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## Community Resilience Centres

### 7 Community Resilience Centres

- Open 9am-5pm Monday to Friday

<https://forms.rctcbc.gov.uk/en/Web/coronavirusvulnerableperson/AskThirdParty>

Please use this single form or call 01443 425020, to request assistance, and please note this is a public facing form and can be completed by anyone at any time.

- All Multi-disciplinary team and key workers to abide current national guidelines
- Supported by Multi-Agency Core Steering Group
- Any safeguarding issues contact **MASH 01443 742940**

### Community Development Team Lead Officers

- Debra Hanney – Senior Community Development Officer– 07880044520  
[debra.hanney@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk](mailto:debra.hanney@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk)
- Dean Emson - Senior Community Development Officer– 07854334683  
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- Lynne Williams - Senior Community Development Officer– 07799131971 [Lynne.Williams@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Lynne.Williams@rctcbc.gov.uk)

### **Additional Information**

- **DWP/JCP**  
<https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus/>
- **Alzheimers Society – Dementia Connect (V)**  
<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/referralform>  
Your referral code is ALZ-00932  
[Dementia.connect@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:Dementia.connect@alzheimers.org.uk)  
0333 150 3456
- **New Horizons (V) – Mental Health and Well-being helpline**  
01685 – 881113  
[info@newhorizons-mentalhealth.co.uk](mailto:info@newhorizons-mentalhealth.co.uk)  
Mon – Fri 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- **British Red Cross**

If you're feeling lonely or worried, finding it difficult to access food or medication, or are concerned about someone else, we can provide support. Call our free and confidential coronavirus support line on 0808 196 3651 to chat to a friendly British Red Cross volunteer. They can:

- help with practical information and advice
- give you emotional support
- connect you with support in your area.

The phone line is open daily from 10am to 6pm.

Phone: 0808 196 3651 Free and confidential

For more information please visit:

[redcross.org.uk/coronavirus-support-line](http://redcross.org.uk/coronavirus-support-line)

Centre	Co-ordinator and Partners	Response Team
<p><b><u>Garth Olwg Life Long Learning Centre</u></b> Off St. Illtyd's Road, Church Village, Pontypridd, CF38 1RQ</p> <p>01443 425020</p>	<p><b>RCTCBC</b></p>	<p>Lucy Lloyd – Community Co-ordinator Contact – 07786523803 <a href="mailto:Lucy.lloyd@rctcbc.gov.uk">Lucy.lloyd@rctcbc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Clair Ruddock – Community Development Officer 07786523652 <a href="mailto:Clair.ruddock@rctcbc.gov.uk">Clair.ruddock@rctcbc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Welsh Language - Ianto Phillips</p>
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	<p><b>Citizens Advice (V)</b></p>	<p>Lead – Mike Simons (07375417818)</p>

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	<b>Trading Standards (V)</b>	Lead – Kathryn Davies (07384910509) Buddy – Gary Lewis (07384910518)
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- V = Virtual working – is available by 'phone or email, and has the facility to work from home



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	<b>Citizens Advice (V)</b>	Lead – Gareth Evans (07487826221) <a href="mailto:Gareth.evans@carct.org.uk">Gareth.evans@carct.org.uk</a>
	<b>Trivallis (V)</b>	Lead – Alix Howells <a href="mailto:alix.howells@trivallis.co.uk">alix.howells@trivallis.co.uk</a>
	<b>Foodbank (V)</b>	Lead – Cleide Correia (07427537437)
	<b>Public Health and Protection (V)</b>	Lead – Gary Black (07944446505) EHO – Kelly Snare
	<b>Trading Standards (V)</b>	Lead – Beverley Scane (07384910516) Buddy – Gary Lewis (07384910518)
	<b>Age Connects (V)</b>	Michelle Evans (07833568222) Information and advice team via <a href="mailto:information@acmorgannwg.org.uk">information@acmorgannwg.org.uk</a> Monday – Friday cover only at present
	<b>Cynon Taf Housing</b>	Lead - TBC
	<b>Cwm Taf Care &amp; Repair</b>	01443 755696 <a href="mailto:enquiries@cwmtafcr.org.uk">enquiries@cwmtafcr.org.uk</a> 38-39 Duffryn Street Ferndale RCT CF43 4ER
	<b>Rhondda Housing Association (V)</b>	Lead – Simone Devinett (07834482016) simone.devinett@rhawales.com

		Buddy – Leigh Caveney (01443 424268) <a href="mailto:leigh.caveney@rhawales.com">leigh.caveney@rhawales.com</a>
	<b>Newydd Housing (V)</b>	Lead - Rachel Honey-Jones (0776 0756027) <a href="mailto:rachel.honey-jones@newydd.co.uk">rachel.honey-jones@newydd.co.uk</a> Buddy – Lisa Voyle (07501466690) <a href="mailto:Lisa.Voyle@newydd.co.uk">Lisa.Voyle@newydd.co.uk</a>
	<b>Resilient Families (V)</b>	Lead - Rachel Hawkins <a href="mailto:Rachel.g.hawkins@rctcbc.gov.uk">Rachel.g.hawkins@rctcbc.gov.uk</a>

<b>Centre</b>	<b>Co-ordinator and Partners</b>	<b>Response Team</b>
<p><b><u>Llys Cadwyn</u></b></p> <p>1 Llys Cadwyn, Taff St, Pontypridd, RCT, CF37 4TH</p> <p>Tel: – 01443 425020</p>	<b>RCTCBC</b>	<p>Neal David – Community Co-ordinator Officer Contact - 07557480777 <a href="mailto:Neal.David@rctcbc.gov.uk">Neal.David@rctcbc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Clair Ruddock – Community Development Officer Contact - 07786523652 <a href="mailto:Clair.ruddock@rctcbc.gov.uk">Clair.ruddock@rctcbc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Welsh Language – Ffion Parrington/Ian Cottrell</p>
	<b>Interlink (V)</b>	Lead - Karen Powell (07580869970)
	<b>DWP/JCP (V)</b>	Lead - Sian Davies (07717456659)
	<b>Citizens Advice (V)</b>	Lead – Mike Simons (07375417818) <a href="mailto:Michael.Simons@carct.org.uk">Michael.Simons@carct.org.uk</a>
	<b>Trivallis (V)</b>	Lead – Alix Howells <a href="mailto:alix.howells@trivallis.co.uk">alix.howells@trivallis.co.uk</a>

	<b>Foodbank (V)</b>	Lead – Mandy Haydon-Hall (07411965958)
	<b>Public Health and Protection (V)</b>	Lead – Gary Black (07944446505) EHO – Kelly Snare
	<b>Trading Standards (V)</b>	Lead – Pamela Lewis (07896474931) personal mobile no. please do not share Buddy – Gary Lewis (07384910518)
	<b>Age Connects (V)</b>	Sharon Colcombe Information and advice team via <a href="mailto:information@acmorgannwg.org.uk">information@acmorgannwg.org.uk</a> Monday – Friday cover only at present
	<b>Cynon Taf Housing</b>	Lead - TBC
	<b>Cwm Taf Care &amp; Repair</b>	01443 755696 <a href="mailto:enquiries@cwmtafcr.org.uk">enquiries@cwmtafcr.org.uk</a> 38-39 Duffryn Street Ferndale RCT CF43 4ER
	<b>Rhondda Housing Association (V)</b>	Lead – Simone Devinett (07834482016) simone.devinett@rhawales.com Buddy – Leigh Caveney (01443 424268) <a href="mailto:leigh.caveney@rhawales.com">leigh.caveney@rhawales.com</a>

Centre	Co-ordinator and Partners	Response Team
<b><u>Llantrisant Library</u></b>	RCTCBC	Neal David – Community Co-ordinator Officer



<p>Llantrisant Leisure Centre, Southgate Park, Llantrisant, RCT, CF72 8DJ</p> <p>Tel: 01443 425020</p>		<p>Contact - 07557480777  <a href="mailto:Neal.David@rctcbc.gov.uk">Neal.David@rctcbc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Lucy Lloyd – Community Co-ordinator  Contact – 07786523803  <a href="mailto:Lucy.lloyd@rctcbc.gov.uk">Lucy.lloyd@rctcbc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Clair Ruddock – Community Development Officer  07786523652  <a href="mailto:Clair.ruddock@rctcbc.gov.uk">Clair.ruddock@rctcbc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Welsh Language – Miriam Jones/Ian Cottrell</p>
	<p><b>Interlink (V)</b></p>	<p>Lead - Robyn Hambrook: 07730 431859  <a href="mailto:rhambrook@interlinkrct.org.uk">rhambrook@interlinkrct.org.uk</a></p>
	<p><b>DWP/JCP (V)</b></p>	<p>Lead - Sian Davies (07717456659)</p>
	<p><b>Citizens Advice (V)</b></p>	<p>Lead – Mike Simons (07375417818)  <a href="mailto:Michael.Simons@carct.org.uk">Michael.Simons@carct.org.uk</a></p>
	<p><b>Trivallis (V)</b></p>	<p>Lead – Alix Howells  <a href="mailto:alix.howells@trivallis.co.uk">alix.howells@trivallis.co.uk</a></p>
	<p><b>Foodbank (V)</b></p>	<p>Lead – Andrew Butcher (07900557379)</p>
	<p><b>Public Health and Protection (V)</b></p>	<p>Lead – Gary Black (07944446505)  EHO – Kelly Snare</p>
	<p><b>Trading Standards (V)</b></p>	<p>Lead – Neil Arbery (07799132174)  Buddy – Gary Lewis (07384910518)</p>

	<b>Age Connects (V)</b>	Shelley Brookes (07534683910) Information and advice team via <a href="mailto:information@acmorgannwg.org.uk">information@acmorgannwg.org.uk</a>
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	<b>Cwm Taf Care &amp; Repair</b>	01443 755696 <a href="mailto:enquiries@cwmtafcr.org.uk">enquiries@cwmtafcr.org.uk</a> 38-39 Duffryn Street Ferndale RCT CF43 4ER
	<b>Rhondda Housing Association (V)</b>	Lead – Simone Devinett (07834482016) simone.devinett@rhawales.com Buddy – Leigh Caveney (01443 424268) <a href="mailto:leigh.caveney@rhawales.com">leigh.caveney@rhawales.com</a>