

# LV20 update Spring 2018



**Our last newsletter to everyone in the Llynfi Valley told you about our work in summer 2016 ... now it's time to update you!**

Since the Public Health Wales Health Equity Audit report in 2013 that identified people living in the Llynfi Valley had **20 years less healthy life expectancy compared to the rest of Bridgend County Borough**, work with community groups, businesses, councillors, [ABMU Health Board](#), GP practices, [Public Health](#), [BAVO](#), [Bridgend County Borough Council](#), [Natural Resources Wales](#), Police, [Valleys to Coast](#) and residents, have helped to tackle concerns and highlight the good work that is taking place.

## So what have we done?

### Healthy lifestyles .....



#### Weight and nutrition

The [LV20 Project](#) has continued to work in partnership with the Digital Communities Programme and [Halo Leisure](#) to encourage people in the Llynfi Valley to take control of their own health and wellbeing through utilising technology to track their progress.

Following an initial trial with Halo Leisure and their national exercise referral unit, BAVO helped set up and launch Shedquarters Maesteg, where a group of five men over 50 were encouraged to keep a close eye on their physical and emotional health and wellbeing. Each week this small group met up and received expert advice from Halo Leisure, regarding the number of steps they took and new goals were set. Advice was also offered on nutrition and exercise.



Those who participated generally felt the project increased their confidence in using technology (85%) with 5% saying they still felt they needed help linking technology with their health and physical activity. Since then, Shedquarters has steadily grown to over 20 members and created a new ukulele and banjo band 'The Shed Heads'.

In January 2018, BAVO helped to launch the running panels at the Woodland, which will link to the cycle and dog trails.

## Sexual health

Our Sexual Health Group was successful in obtaining an ABMU Health Board Changing for the Better Grant, which enabled a youth health advice service to be delivered in two of the youth clubs in the Llynfi Valley. The group engaged young people in Noddfa and the Courthouse youth clubs, where they were given the opportunity to co-produce the health advice service they wanted to be delivered.

The group was also successful in gaining funding from the ABMU Large Grant Scheme, to offer a two year generic and wellbeing youth worker to work within the youth clubs to look at fitness and healthy eating.

Each week, approximately 45 young people have engaged with the projects, which have provided much needed prevention and wellbeing advice and support.

## Domestic abuse

During the [White Ribbon Campaigns](#) during November and December, Maesteg Town Council and elected members displayed the White Ribbon Flag for the first time. Shops, hairdressers and offices on Commercial Street made a pledge to support violence against women by displaying the White Ribbon in their windows. Publicity stands were also prominently displayed in key areas including Maesteg Tesco's and Bron-Y-Garn Surgery to raise awareness.

Our Domestic Abuse Steering Group also asked male orientated groups to raise awareness of the campaign and promote themselves as positive male role models against violence against women. A radio interview with Lee Jukes at Bridge FM was broadcast to promote this message which was accompanied by support from Caerau Men's Shed, Maesteg Men's Shed, Maesteg Celtic RFC, Caerau Dragons Boxing Club, Geagles Boxing Gym, Noddfa Youth Club, Tesco's Maesteg and Bron-Y-Garn surgery.

Throughout the last 18 months, LV20 has continued to raise awareness in primary and secondary schools in the area, encouraging young people to be aware of healthy relationships and the support and advice which is available to them.

Les Jones said: "The White Ribbon Campaign gave us the opportunity to support the call for an end to violence against women and to encourage other men to see themselves as role models for young people growing up now. If we can show our collective disapproval of violence, it may provide a new generation with a healthy positive image with which they can identify."

Any groups or organisations wishing to pledge support to the campaign for 2018 can obtain further information by contacting BAVO, T: 01656 810400 or by visiting [www.whiteribbon.org.uk](http://www.whiteribbon.org.uk)





# Physical environment .....



Santa Fun Runs were organised by LV20's Emotional and Wellbeing Group which focused on using the outdoors to improve physical and emotional wellbeing. Over 50 people turned up for Maesteg's first 'Llynfi Valley Santa Fun Run', a 5k course at Maesteg Welfare Park. There was a mix of runners on the day, from beginners to 5k group. One local family had three generations running, all of which had never run as far before!

In 2017, three category distances were mapped by Yr Hen Blwyf and *parkrun* enthusiast James Thomas. Local people were invited to come along to take part. All that was asked was an entrance fee and Christmas attire featuring a hat, an outfit or anything festive! Despite the torrential rain nearly 40 festive runners turned up and completed the 1, 3 or 5k run. Congratulations to all!

Llynfi Valley's *parkrun* was officially launched on Saturday 22 July 2017 and is now in its first year. Currently, the weekly Maesteg *parkrun* run has in excess of 777 runners registered, with 55 per week actively running and up to 29 local people registered to volunteer in different capacities.

It is widely known that exercise has a great impact on your physical health, combining this with the great outdoors also has a dramatic affect on your mental wellbeing. Not only can you take in the benefits of beautiful scenery, but evidence shows it improves your vitamin D, makes you happier, improves concentration and helps you better heal physically and mentally.

If you would like to take up running in the Llynfi Valley, search 'Yr Hen Blwyf – the old parish running club' or 'Maesteg *parkrun*' on Facebook



## Dementia Friendly communities

After our launch in 2016 to celebrate Maesteg as 'working towards a 'Dementia Friendly Community', work with different organisations has continued to take place to build awareness.



Along with shops and organisations within the town centre, the Fire Station, Maesteg Community Support Officers, the library, GP surgeries and Halo Leisure have all completed dementia awareness sessions.

A secondment partnership post from the Alzheimer's Society has been based at BAVO, with the aim to role out Dementia Friendly Communities in other areas of Bridgend County Borough.

A monthly Steering Group has now been formed to oversee the development and sustainability of the Llynfi Valley as a Dementia Friendly Community. The meeting also offers an opportunity for partnership working and people living with dementia within the community to attend.

A Memory Lane drop-in café in Duffryn Chapel, Bedw Street, Caerau is now running every Thursday from 1 – 3pm. The café is run by volunteers who want to help fight loneliness and gives the opportunity to meet other people, socialise and share experiences. Everyone is very welcome, for further details call John Hughes, T: 01656 731392.

Looking to the future, there are plans for the group to access funding to develop a gardening group for people living with dementia to take part.

If you would like to find out more about these meetings contact BAVO, T: 01656 810400 or E: [bavo@bavo.org.uk](mailto:bavo@bavo.org.uk)



**Get involved in LV20**  
**... we want to hear from you!**  
**Contact Kay, T: 01656 810400**  
**or E: [bavo@bavo.org.uk](mailto:bavo@bavo.org.uk)**

