

# Age Alliance Wales

*working together to support older people in Wales.  
cydweithio i gefnogi pobl hŷn yng Nghymru.*



Welcome to the 18th Age Alliance Wales e-newsletter - November 2015

Where possible, briefings will be bi-monthly, so if you have an item you would like included in the next newsletter, please send it to Mal Andrews before March 1st.

## Age Alliance Wales Activity

### **AAW welcomes Sense Cymru as the 21st member of the Alliance.**

#### **Recent activity:**

AAW held planning meeting with in December with CEOs to discuss next steps for the alliance. During the meeting, members voiced serious concerns about the Welsh Government's management of the Sustainable Social Services Grant. This resulted in a paper detailing these concerns which 13 member organisation contributed to. The paper has been sent to the Minister for Health and Social Services. We have received a response from the WG and will be discussing points raised at a meeting with the Minister for health on 14<sup>th</sup> January.

#### **Dates for diary:**

**February 22nd:** AAW Chief Executive's meeting with Sarah Rochira (OPCW)  
2pm-4pm

**March 23rd:** AAW Chief Executive's summit 10am-1pm, Age Cymru

### RNIB Cymru

#### **Prioritise need, not waiting time targets urges RNIB Cymru**

Wales' largest sight loss charity RNIB Cymru has warned that people continue to be at risk of losing their sight unnecessarily because need is still not prioritised over waiting time targets.

One year ago RNIB Cymru research found that at least four people a month are losing their sight in Wales because of delayed and cancelled appointments.

One year on the warning echoes RNIB's report "Real patients coming to real harm" which found that the appointments system in the Welsh NHS is unable to cope with the demand.

An ageing population, new treatments and an increase in some underlying causes of sight loss, such as diabetes and obesity, have caused an increase in demand for ophthalmology services. Referral to Treatment Time ("RTT") targets means that priority is given to the first appointment. As a result patients who need follow up appointments and treatments often have to wait much longer than they should. In that time they can lose their sight irreversibly.

Ceri Jackson, Director of RNIB Cymru, said: "In March this year, the First Minister said that if anybody had lost their sight due to waiting times, it was "unacceptable".

"It is clear that the new Planned Care Board is driving change but I remain gravely concerned that not enough progress has been made. Patients continue to tell us how concerned they are about losing their sight because of their appointments being delayed or cancelled.

"The fact is that people are still losing their sight unnecessarily. All too often at RNIB we hear from patients navigating the system and feeling the impact of delays to their treatment.

"The number of cancelled and delayed appointments is far too high and we have no way of knowing just how many people have had those cancellations – and remain at risk either.

"Patients need to be informed of the risks to their sight if their appointments are delayed or cancelled – and often that is just not happening."

Contact: Elin Edwards; RNIB Cymru Communications Manager;  
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# Care and Repair Cymru

## Homes for Wales

Homes for Wales is a coalition led by Community Housing Cymru, Care & Repair Cymru, CIH Cymru, Shelter Cymru, Welsh Tenants, Home Builders Federation, Residential Landlords Association and RTPI Cymru. The campaign brings together those who believe everyone has a right to a decent affordable home to call their own and has been set up to ensure that housing is a key political issue in the National Assembly for Wales elections in May.

Homes for Wales is asking politicians to end the housing crisis and build a stronger Wales.

You can sign up to support the campaign on the website at [Homesfor.wales](http://Homesfor.wales) as well as downloading campaign resources such as logos, posters, postcards and explainer documents.

In order for Homes for Wales to be a success, we need everyone to create a big impact locally. We need you to lobby your local politicians and candidates to make sure that they're aware of the housing crisis in their constituency and the fact that housing needs to be a priority. Share your housing story far and wide, and ask your friends and families to share theirs too.

**Our showcase event for the campaign will take place from 1pm on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2016 – the Homes for Wales rally.** We'll meet at the Senedd in Cardiff Bay and will then march to the city centre for an event in the Hayes area of the city. This is our opportunity to show Wales that we're serious about ending the housing crisis.

To keep up to date with the campaign or if you have any questions, please email [homesforwales@chcymru.org.uk](mailto:homesforwales@chcymru.org.uk).

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# Royal Voluntary Service

## Care to Listen..Listen to care

A “Community Voice” project funded by the Big Lottery throughout Gwent. Working in partnership with residential care home providers, RVS place volunteers in care homes to talk to residents and their families to help identify ways in which provided by the care home can be tailored to meet their needs. RVS collect and collate evidence for change and share good practice within the residential care environment where older people say they still feel isolated.

Residents appreciate the time and look forward to the opportunity to talk and share memories with our volunteers through social activities and discussions. Families state they welcome the opportunity to “have their views listened to”. Care home managers and staff appreciate the opportunity to share and be part of the pilot project which is already creating much interest and raising the profile of Royal Voluntary Service. The Older Persons Commissioner referred to our project as being an example of good practice!



## Drink Wise Age Well:

This new service for Wales delivered by Royal Voluntary Service and based in Merthyr Tydfil is a UK wide initiative also being delivered in Northern Ireland, Sheffield, Devon and Glasgow funded via Big Lottery, as part of a consortium led by Addaction.

A newly recruited ” Building Resilience” staff team will focus on providing support to adults over 50 experiencing life transitions such as retirement or bereavement who may be at risk of increased alcohol use as a responsive coping mechanism.

Working closely with health, social care, voluntary organisations and community groups the team will raise awareness and deliver interventions to help prepare people for life transitions, stress management and relaxation techniques. This will include a volunteering community engagement programme of social activities and support networks. For further information please contact:

### **Drink Wise Age Well**

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