



# Age Alliance Wales

*working together to support older people in Wales*

*cydweithio i gefnogi pobl hŷn yng Nghymru*

Winter 2017/18

## Progress on the “React to the Act” Report

Following the research carried out earlier in 2017, both the full and summary reports on the experiences of older people in Wales following the introduction of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 have been issued, and can be downloaded via the home page of the AAW website.

The summary report has already been widely distributed, including emailing copies to Assembly Members. A coffee morning was also held at the Senedd, offering AMs the opportunity to meet with the AAW steering group and discuss the report further.

The full report, which has very recently been finalised, will be sent to AMs, and others, during the New Year, and already appears on the AAW website.

We have also written to David Clayton, Head of Protection and Advocacy at Welsh Government, setting out the key issues identified in the summary report. He responded positively, saying his own findings very much mirrored those of the report, and confirming he has made arrangements to meet with Welsh Government officials to discuss the findings of the AAW, Age Cymru and Carers Wales reports. Furthermore, he confirmed he will later be in touch with AAW,

with a view to continue to work with us in order to drive improvement in both user experience and the delivery of services.

This does not mean that there is no more to do, of course. In order to build on the report an update will be produced in readiness for the 2018 annual conference. This will involve producing and analyzing two surveys, the first seeking the opinions of operational staff of Age Alliance Wales member organisations with a knowledge of commissioning practices (accessible online, at [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AAW03](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AAW03) or [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AAW02](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AAW02) for the Welsh language version), and the second aimed at local authority staff with responsibility for, or knowledge of, the commissioning of social services for older people. This can be found at [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AAW04](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AAW04) or alternatively [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AAW01](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AAW01) if a Welsh language version is preferred.

You are urged to pass on details of these surveys to any individuals you feel should be able to offer an opinion. In addition to informing the annual conference it is hoped the details gathered will be available in time for AAW’s potential meeting with the NHS chief executives in February (dependent upon their agenda setting), so if you are able to complete the survey a sooner response would be really appreciated.

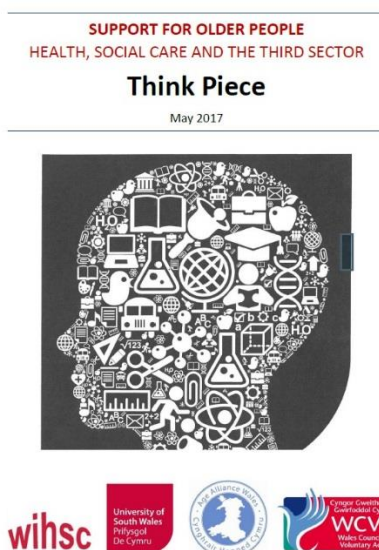
## Completion of the WISHC discussion paper

In May 2017 the Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care (WIHSC), working in partnership with Age Alliance Wales and the WCVA, issued a 'Think Piece' report reflecting on the role of the third sector in supporting older people's health and care needs and how relationships within the sector need to develop in order to meet the rising challenge of ageing.

That paper (which again is on the AAW website) was followed by a second phase of work, which included two further round-table meetings involving the contributors to the document, a number of other leaders from the sector and senior colleagues from Welsh Government. This culminated in a second report, *Support for Older People in Wales - Health, Social Care and the Third Sector: A Discussion Paper*.

This document provides a 20-point summary of the key matters that arose in the discussion process, structured around three areas: *Funding, Current Relationships and The Future*.

Again, the report is available in both Welsh and English on the AAW website, as well as being sent to media contacts across Wales. Further, it is envisaged an article will soon be produced for the Bevan Foundation, for inclusion on their website and newsletter.



## Working with the WAO

AAW's Jeff Hawkins and Rebecca Woolley met with Nick Sullivan of the Wales Audit Office during October, discussing the WAO's review of the implementation of the Social Service and Well-being Act. As lead officer, Nick confirmed that he is keen to ensure the WAO engages with both service users and relevant organisations, including AAW and its member organisations.

There was particular interest in the problems individuals face accessing social care, the appropriateness of referrals to third sector agencies, the problems around advocacy services and third sector involvement in local decision making on RPBs. However, it was not just these matters which will come under the scrutiny of the WAO: AAW was told there will be consideration of the whole of the service users' experience, from the initial point of contact onwards, as well as an evaluation of the effectiveness of the finance invested in addressing users' requirements, and whether this money could be spent more appropriately.

It is envisaged that the WAO's report will be published during the 2019/20 financial year. However in order for this to be done they would also like AAW to help in identifying groups and individuals for research at some point in the future. We will provide further information when it should become available.

## Parliamentary Review panel

Victoria Lloyd has attended the Stakeholder Forum meetings for the Parliamentary Review of Health and Social Care in Wales on behalf of AAW, ( we have also provided written evidence from Stroke Association Wales, RVS and the Red Cross) following calls for information on models of care during the late summer.

The panel is now nearing its final conclusions and the report is due to be published during early 2018. They are also currently considering publishing the supporting evidence on models of care on the Parliamentary Review website, including the evidence AAW members provided, which will potentially appear in the New Year.

## National Third Sector members of RPBs

Following a meeting of third sector members of Regional partnership Boards, Jeff Hawkins, Chair of AAW and member of Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan RPB, wrote to RPB Chairs across Wales to raise concerns around the lack of adequate inclusion of third sector reps in RPBs. We also took the opportunity to welcome Rebecca Evans' announcement (in her previous role) regarding pooled budgets in relation to care homes and her expectation for there to be seven pooled budgets rather than twenty two.

The letter has also been shared with the Older People's Commissioner's office and Chris Stevens of the Welsh Government's Partnership and Integration Division. So far we have received a small number of written responses, as well as telephone calls directly to Jeff, so the letter would seem to have had the desired impact.

Also, we have sent details of all RPB reps to Chris Stevens, Head of Partnership and Integration Branch at Social Services and Integration Directorate (who attended the Regional Partnership Board National Third Sector Representatives meeting of 12 October), to allow him to provide them with a copy of a letter he sent to Regional Implementation Leads regarding social value organisations, the third sector RPB representatives' experience of working as part of a partnership and the challenges this can present. As such, there appears to be a steady progression in this area.

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### Brief extras:

- AAW members are due to meet with the Infrastructure Core Group of WCVA and CVCs during January 2018, to discuss the potential to develop the ongoing relationship with CVCs.
- A letter has been sent to Sophie Howe, the Future Generations Commissioner, asking to meet to discuss the role of the Alliance and offer her the opportunity to meet AAW

members on a regular basis into the future. So far we have received no response, however.

- The public launch of Project 360° took place on 7 December at Memo Arts Centre, Barry. A number of AAW members took the opportunity to set out stalls giving information on their services, which were well received by all who attended.



- We have been in correspondence with the Ministerial office of Huw Irranca-Davies, seeking a meeting to discuss AAW's "React to the act" report. He has agreed to meet the steering group in late January – further information will be made available in the next newsletter.
- Jeff Hawkins and Chris Jones met with Nick Selwyn, Head of Commercial Policy and Delivery at Value Wales, during September. Nick had agreed to address a range of matters at this meeting: clarification and information on the "supplier feedback service", information on registration on the Welsh Government's Sell2Wales website, guidance on updated procurement regulations and reserved contracts, and perhaps most importantly training on procurement specifically aimed at the third sector. We are awaiting his response, and will provide further information when it becomes available.

## Older People's Commissioner

AAW members recently met with Sarah Rochira, the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, updating her on the work of the Alliance and raising points of concern and interest, many regarding activities around the Social Services and Well-being Act. Some key points made were:

1 - The realities arising from the act are not meeting initial expectations

2 - There is an ongoing lack of advocacy provision across Wales, with it being noted that advocacy is rarely, if ever, mentioned at Regional Partnership Boards. When it is raised by third sector representatives, members are being told it's a social service issue and not a matter for the RPBs. It was, however, confirmed that the Commissioner's office will begin further work on the issue of advocacy imminently, including seeking the opinions of professionals in the field.

This work will not only consider the SSWBA and its requirements, but other matters such as rights to advocacy under the Mental Health Act and associated issues around capacity.

3 - "What Matters" conversations are not happening as originally anticipated

4 - Local authority Information and Advice Services are still seen as problematic in many parts of Wales, with the call centre approach being particularly worrying, particularly given the difficulties in obtaining details of their effectiveness and the nature of the data collection (only data on outputs is generally available, rather than being outcome focussed). Issues surrounding inappropriate referrals to AAW members were also discussed, including the issue of individuals having to be "bounced back" when members find the needs of those referred to them are greater than they originally believed.

5 - The needs of individuals still don't appear to be properly met in too many cases. There is a gap in service provision, which the third sector is expected to fill, sometimes unrealistically.

6 - Third sector representatives on Regional Partnership Boards have reported feeling

excluded, or at least not fully engaged. Whilst the rhetoric is good, this is not reflected in experience, and as such AAW has written to RPB chairs setting out its concerns, as noted elsewhere in this newsletter.

Discussions were also held regarding the integrated care fund. It was again felt that the third sector has been seen as a bit-part player, with little or no strategic involvement and little input into programme planning. Further, it was suggested that we should be in the position where numerous ICF programmes move to core funding, but there are few, if any, examples of programmes being scaled up or replicated.

Whilst the Commissioner felt that ICF had been successful to some level, in that it allowed some creativity to address issues, she questioned how much more successful it potentially could have been. She confirmed that she would use her influence to persuade the Assembly's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee to consider this issue.

Additionally, it was noted that Sarah Rochira will be stepping down as Commissioner on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2018, with a new Commissioner taking on the role on 3<sup>rd</sup> June. The Commissioner clarified that during her remaining time she had a number of things she wished to complete, including matters around advocacy, a review of care homes and I&A.

The Commissioner is also carrying out work on the safeguarding of older people in hospitals, which will result in either a report or advisory document. This will consider such matters as the duties of health boards to report safeguarding matters to local authorities and staff training, all based on the safeguarding principles within the Act.

The Commissioner also noted that, going forward, the Welsh Government's Prosperity For All strategy will be a key point of concern. She noted it will essentially absorb all other strategies, creating the potential for them to become "subsumed" and lost. As such, AAW members need to make sure we feed into the Prosperity For All groups. However, she further noted that

third sector involvement in Welsh Government consultations effectively means that government can claim to have properly consulted, and so validates what they later do or say: this point should be borne in mind when taking part in consultations, the Commissioner suggested.

## SSWBA stakeholder evaluation group

Chris Williams, the AAW Officer, has attended the SSWBA stakeholder evaluation group meetings this year, raising the views of Alliance members.

The report resulting from the formal evaluation of the SSWBA is due to be launched in August 2021 – before this there will be two major pieces of work to be carried out: The first is the formal evaluation itself. This is due to start in autumn of 2018, running for three years. However, the work will be carried out by a contractor which has yet to be identified. The second piece of work is “Measuring the Mountain”, which runs alongside the formal evaluation. This will involve identifying and questioning 2,000 “citizens” across Wales – we have been assured there will be a representative cross-section of individuals included in this study.

Several members of the evaluation group have expressed concern of the length of time this process is proposed to take. However, officials are adamant that the stipulated time is required, despite these concerns.

## New structure for AAW teleconferences

AAW members should have all, by now, been involved (or at least been invited to be involved) in teleconferences with members of the steering committee.

There have been a range of interesting and useful conversations held as a consequence of these meetings, including discussions around Carers Wales’ ‘Track the Act’ report, a document based on FOI requests to local authorities across

Wales and responses from 517 carers. The report broadly shows that delivery falls short of what people actually need. If required Claire Morgan, Director of Carers Wales, can provide members with a one-page synopsis of the recommendations made in the property

There have also been discussions of RVS’ ‘Positive Steps’ programme. The Positive Steps service was set up to assist people who are unable to access a package of care because they do not meet the eligibility criteria – and it is being found that the need for this programme is very high indeed, with demand outstripping the anticipated level. The crucial message is that there are lots of people in Wales who are living without any support despite their clear need.

Discussions have also taken place regarding the CVCs relationships with health boards and local authorities, and how they may at times be a barrier for other 3rd sector organisations rather than a strength. For example, it has been raised that such relationships may hinder the possibility of statutory services becoming aware of what other charities are doing, creating a massive potential for duplication. It has been suggested that the ‘Positive Steps’ project noted above is in such a position.

## New format for newsletters

You will have noticed that the format for newsletters has changed somewhat with this edition: rather than solely reflecting the activities of member organisations, it aims to show members what the Alliance itself is contributing.

If you have any suggestions about this format we would be more than happy to take them on board – please send your suggestions to [christopher.williams@agealliancewales.org.uk](mailto:christopher.williams@agealliancewales.org.uk)