

CLC Newsletter

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2025!

We wanted to share something with you in January to get our momentum going for the year ahead and we hope to develop into a style that we're all happy with and feel comfortable influencing in the coming months.

For January, however, we have chosen a theme.

This month people have celebrated **International Day of Education**. We have also heard some inspiring stories within CLC related to learning and achievements, so it seems fitting that we share these with you and celebrate **'Education'**, as we see it in Community Lives!

To start us off we have this list of hashtags related to International Day of Education, which suggests that education does not just sit in a box somewhere 'over there' that we tap into every now and then; it's about life, it's about rights, it's about gaining awareness and knowledge, which can lead to better choices and much more...Education Is All Around Us!

#InternationalDayOfEducation #EducationForAll #LearningForLife
#EducationalEquality #GlobalEducation #TeachersMatter
#EducationMatters #EmpowerThroughEducation #EducationGoals
#QualityEducation #EducationForPeace #InclusiveEducation
#EducationInspires #TeachTheFuture #EducationalDevelopment
#LearningNeverStops #EducationDay #RightToEducation
#FutureOfEducation #EducationLeads #InspiringEducators
#EducationFirst #WorldEducation #LearningIsPower
#EducationDrivesChange #EducationWorldwide
#EducateAndEmpower #TeachingImpact #EducationDay2025
#KnowledgeIsPower #EveryDayIsASchoolDay

The stories you are about to read will hopefully reflect on how Education touches our lives and working roles in different ways and at different times in CLC - we will share individual stories, staff achievements, department updates and CEO reflections.

We also have a new Share Your Song feature! Are you up for building a CLC playlist?

We hope you enjoy, and we'd love to hear from you with any suggestions, ideas or future contributions!

For more information on International Day of Education please click on the links below:
International Day of Education | Awareness Days,¹

¹<https://awareness-days.co.uk/awareness-day/international-day-of-education/2025-01-24/>

<https://www.peopleslibrary.co.uk/post/a-day-of-education-a-decade-of-change>

Rick's Reflections

The Consortium learning, changing, and serving

Education is a great theme for this first of many newsletters. Education is a theme central to our organisation's purpose – supporting people to live the lives they choose.

Education – 'a process that prepares us, or others, for a mature life' (dictionary.com) - for us to be successful this is happening around us all the time

- The people we support must gain the knowledge, experience, skills, and confidence to live this successful, happy, safe, and fulfilling life – thus our personal planning and support processes are at their heart as much about education as support
- We as staff must perfect our skills and our characters so that we are what people need as they change and grow, we must also continually learn how to cooperate successfully with each other so that what we do is successful.
- As an organisation we must also adapt and change so that we stay in a useful stable place as an employer, as a supporter, and as an important player in the communities that we serve.

This is all about the education, learning and adaptation necessary so that we can all maximise our wellbeing and our value to others.

It is great to see some of these 'learning' stories being told in this first newsletter for 2025 – a good place to start.

#LearningIsPower #EducationDrivesChange #EducationWorldwide #EducateAndEmpower



Sharran's learning journey...

For those of us who know Sharran, it is of no surprise that she has a busy social life with the weekly classes and groups she attends. Sharran is very popular in her local community and is always willing to share her experiences, especially if it helps others.

When Sharran and I spoke recently, she told me she had had a tough day at her group. At first, I thought something bad had happened but when I asked more questions, she told me she had been learning! I then understood...

Sharran attends a class every Monday to practice her Maths and English. She enjoys the classes but also says they can be hard and challenging at times. Out of the two subjects she prefers Maths but says she will keep on trying with English. Sharran is due to receive her certificates soon which shows she is doing well and has only been studying for 10 weeks so far! When I asked if she'd continue, she said yes, she'd like to.

Sharran told me that her early years in school were not easy, she didn't know as a young person that she had a learning disability and looking back now she realises she needed more support. However, Sharran likes to look forward and to make things better for herself and to inspire others. Sharran appreciates the one-to-one support she is getting now and can see how this quality 1-1 support is helping her to learn better:

"It's not easy but I'm taking small steps, and I get good feedback, I'm happy".

Sharran is also about to embark on Art Therapy classes to learn more about anxiety and the tools that can help, and we wish her all the best with this learning journey!

#RightToEducation #InclusiveEducation #LearningNeverStops

If you'd like to share a personal learning experience or achievement of someone you support, or of your own, please email Emma @ emma.shears@communitylives.org²

²<mailto:emma.shears@communitylives.org>



Carly's achievement!

#EducationGoals #EducationalDevelopment #LearningIsPower

Carly Lloyd, one of our inspiring Locality Support Managers, has reached great heights in her Health and Social Care studies this year. Carly was recently nominated by her tutors for **'Social Care Apprentice of the Year'** and only went on to win it! Carly will be receiving her award next month at a celebratory ceremony at the Swansea.com Stadium, which will be a posh affair honouring the hard work people put into their qualifications and learning journeys.

Carly was awarded this for her completion of her Level 3; not only passing the course but finishing way ahead of time! When Carly was asked what her drive was to finish this early, she simply said, *"I want to start my Level 4 qualification and get my cap and gown"* Carly has been working full-time and studying whilst also being a mum and partner, family member and friend (that's a lot!), especially when the course involves exams, assignments, reflective practice, and observations – not an easy journey to say the least!
(#IDontKnowHowSheDoesIt.)

As mentioned in the Introduction of this newsletter, more formal education can touch our lives at different times and with different intensity and to understand what this has meant for Carly and her tutors, is best explained by them:



1 - **Carly** – “I really enjoyed meeting new people and making more friendships, it was nice to be able to support each other and encourage others in the class when they found things difficult”.

Gower College Tutor, Joanne Dix - "Carly was always conscientious in her approach and ensured that all work was completed on time. Carly balances a demanding job role with raising her small son and has managed to complete college work alongside this, completing this well before the estimated end date. Carly is always positive and has a happy approachable manner which was evident during observations within her workplace practice, both with the individuals she supports and staff, while always ensuring a professional approach.

Carly has expressed that she wishes to complete the level 4 professional practice, which she is more than capable of achieving and her name has been put forward for this.

As a tutor/assessor, I look for dedication, good work ethic, good communication and a willingness to engage with both the program and me, while having a pleasant and approachable manner"

Gower College Tutor, Vanessa Powell - "Carly has truly been an inspirational learner her bubbly nature brought pleasure to the classroom sessions. She motivated, nurtured and supported fellow learners through classroom sessions. Her determination was faultless as she set her goal to ensure all learners achieved their core qualification through her gestures of kindness, nothing was too much trouble for her, bringing happiness and laughter to Jubilee Court. Carly in her role as Temporary Locality Support Manager is now encouraging and supporting staff to attend the college to gain their qualification, she is a fantastic

example for the college of what learning really means as Carly has nearly finished the Practice part of her Qualification and plans to start her Management qualification in January. Carly deserves this nomination and recognition; I am so proud to nominate her for her outstanding kindness to others and commitment to learning.

It is lovely to see learners achieve their qualifications we are all looking forward to her special evening"

Carly is also training to become a Co-Production Champion for CLC: Co-production Network for Wales³ if you'd like more information on this please contact emma.shears@communitylives.org⁴

Also, if you'd like to pass on a well-deserved congratulations to Carly please do so on: carly.lloyd@communitylives.org⁵ and why not copy in rosanna.graham@communitylives.org⁶ as well!

#TeachTheFuture #EducationInspires #EducationDrivesChange

Learning and Development

#TeachTheFuture #EducationForAll #QualityEducation

Our Learning and Development Team work hard, week in and week out, to help staff receive the training and support they need to undertake their role as effectively as possible. This includes a thorough and comprehensive induction programme, individual training and learning needs and refresher courses.

To keep on top of this is a mighty task and they do it so well, with great enthusiasm and commitment to delivering the best up-to-date information they can. I recently received induction training, I was so impressed with the content and delivery, and I enjoyed learning with others throughout the organisation who have different roles to mine.

We also have our Operational team training staff in certain areas, PBM lead, as well as our Senior Management Team and CEO. So quite a breadth of tutors and mentors to influence and share knowledge and experiences. I think we are very lucky!

Here are a few words from Rosanna...

There have been a few things happening in the world of Learning & Development from new courses being made available, to over 50 of you currently attending college to achieve your qualification.

³<https://copronet.wales/>

⁴<mailto:emma.shears@communitylives.org>

⁵<mailto:carly.lloyd@communitylives.org>

⁶<mailto:rosanna.graham@communitylives.org>

A couple of the new courses being made available are **Recording and Reporting** and **Welsh Language** - but as you know we are giving this a test run and the interest was high, so that was nice to see, and we now have this booked in.

We are planning to **increase the learning resources available to you** that you can use when you wish to, and those resources will mostly be a combination of documents and links that you can reference that will help you carry out your role but also potentially help you with any other additional learning needs.

There has also been an extra surprise that Carly Lloyd from Network 6 has been awarded '**Apprentice of the Year**' by Gower College Swansea and has been invited to a Ceremony to celebrate this achievement. Well done Carly on this achievement.

We are always open to suggestions and ideas that can support you to achieve your goals and aspirations, so please let us know how we can support you.

Email: trainingdepartment@communitylives.org⁷

#TeachersMatter #EducationalDevelopment #EducateAndEmpower



⁷<mailto:trainingdepartment@communitylives.org>

Dates for the Diary

Here are some events happening in the next couple of weeks...



Recruitment Day

We will be at **Workways Port Talbot**
on 11th February 2025 from 9:00-17:00
(The Work Station, Water Street, Port Talbot SA12 6LF)

Pop by to speak to us and learn about what we do and what we can offer you!

Who we are

We are a non-profit making organisation that supports disabled people to live the lives that they choose in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot in South Wales. We work with people so that they can have lives which as far as possible are social, local and in their own control.

Why work for us

Career and personal development including paid training and ongoing learning and support throughout. Benefits of savings, discounts and EAP access. Additional annual leave after five years. Refer a friend joining bonus scheme.

Apply online



Scan the QR code or visit our website



www.communitylives.co.uk | 01792 646640

BETTER TOGETHER

drive
YOUR LIFE. YOUR WAY.

Community Lives Consortium
Supporting people to live the life they choose

RESTARTING
MONDAY 3RD FEBRUARY
NPT CHOIR
MONDAY'S 3PM - 5PM
OUR LADY OF MARGAM CHURCH
63 MARGAM ROAD, PORT TALBOT,
SA13 2HR
ONLY £5, INCLUDING REFRESHMENTS
CONTACT VICKY FOR MORE INFORMATION
VickyVrettos@drive-wales.org.uk

Tuesday Group in Margam

Every Tuesday at Our Lady of Margam Church 11am -1pm

Weekly session of Arts and Crafts

Cost £5.00

Coffee and Cake included

Locality and Network Change Team meetings have started back in January and February, we look forward to hearing about the good things happening in people's lives and what people would like to achieve going forward!

If there is something you'd like to advertise in our February Newsletter, please let us know:

emma.shears@communitylives.org⁸ rosanna.graham@communitylives.org⁹

⁸<mailto:emma.shears@communitylives.org>

⁹<mailto:rosanna.graham@communitylives.org>

Ideas and Suggestions

Would you like to contribute to our monthly newsletter? This could be a regular column, a specific topic or achievement that you'd like to share, a video or podcast. If so, please let us know by emailing either one of us:

emma.shears@communitylives.org¹⁰

rick.wilson@communitylives.org¹¹

rosanna.graham@communitylives.org¹²

andrew.cannon@communitylives.org¹³

Share your song

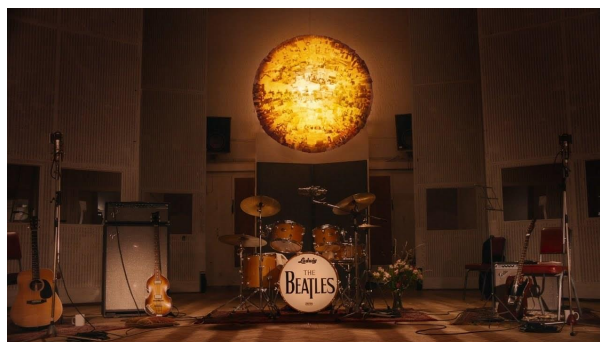
We'd love to get a CLC Playlist together and we would love to know what your favourite song is, and why?

To start us off, the contributors to this newsletter have shared theirs:



<https://youtu.be/YJ9E8EqNGps>

2 - Rick: "Right now it is Mama by Cam Cole (the busker in Ted Lasso), I get obsessed with songs for a while and play them to death!"



¹⁰<mailto:emma.shears@communitylives.org>

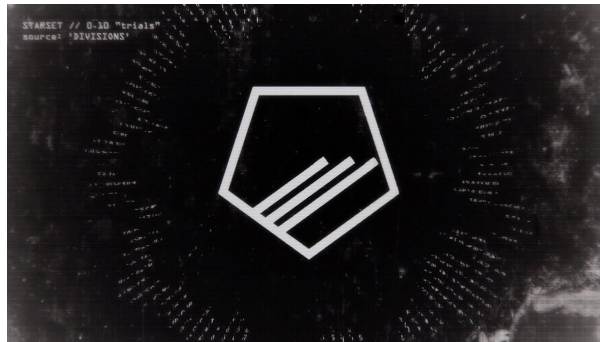
¹¹<mailto:rick.wilson@communitylives.org>

¹²<mailto:rosanna.graham@communitylives.org>

¹³<mailto:andrew.cannon@communitylives.org>

<https://youtu.be/KQetemT1sWc>

3 - **Emma:** "Here Comes the Sun" by The Beatles. This is my favourite 'go-to' song, it always lifts my mood and spirit and there's something very simple and beautiful about the melody!"



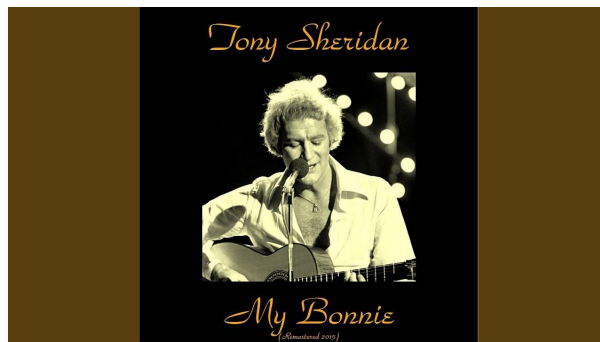
<https://youtu.be/0dG9pXeOqT0>

4 - **Rosanna:** "Trials by Starset, this is one of many of my favourites but this song gives me strength at times when things sometimes feel tough"



<https://youtu.be/xOycyChBLMA>

5 - **Andrew:** "The Sparrow by Mastodon, one of my fav songs with a simple lyric: 'Pursue happiness with diligence'..."



<https://youtu.be/660aY6RF3tq>

6 - **Sharran:** "My Bonnie lies over the ocean, this reminds me of my Mum" Editor note: This is the Tony Sheridan and The Beat Brothers version but there are many others



<https://youtu.be/ulbXvaE39wM>

7 - *Carly*: "Hold on by Wilson Phillips it's a powerful song and I love it, I think it's something everyone can relate to"

If you have a song you would like to share in the next newsletter, please email Emma
emma.shears@communitylives.org¹⁴

Thank you for reading, until next time



8 - Newsletter written by Emma Shears, Rick Wilson & Rosanna Graham. Design and layout by Andrew Cannon.

¹⁴<mailto:emma.shears@communitylives.org>