



Under Embargo until 00:01 5 August 2019

Wales needs charities now more than ever

WCVA Chief Executive Ruth Marks has today highlighted the increasing importance of charities in tackling the big issues facing society, as WCVA launches the new Welsh Charity Awards to inspire more people to get involved and make a difference.

‘Charities and voluntary organisations in Wales change lives every day,’ says Ruth Marks, ‘and Wales need them now more than ever.’

‘However, to meet the challenges that our society is facing today, we also need to come together to make a bigger difference.’

‘Brexit, climate change, loneliness and isolation, inequality, stubborn poverty and financial uncertainty - none of these are issues that we can address alone.’

The Welsh Charity Awards will showcase the incredible and diverse impact that these groups have, using their stories to show what’s possible and spur people to come together to make a bigger difference.

‘As concern mounts about communities feeling disempowered,’ says Ruth, ‘we should take time to recognise and celebrate the fact that people in Wales continue to come together voluntarily to make a real difference. We’ve never needed them more than we do now.’

Wales has countless examples of voluntary organisations and volunteers at the forefront of making change:

- Flintshire’s REFURBS have transformed the reuse, repair and recycling of waste whilst providing employment for those furthest from the job market

- Young people in ABMyouth in South Wales have worked voluntarily with NHS staff to create real positive change for young people's health care in their local hospitals
- Volunteers in Llangrannog have set up Gŵyl Nôl a Mlan – a local festival that attracts over 8000 visitors and makes a huge contribution to the local economy

These are just a sample of some of Wales' unsung heroes and the Welsh Charity Awards will tell their story to the world.

The Welsh Charity Awards will be launched today at the National Eisteddfod in Llanrwst, a celebration of Welsh culture and language made possible each year thanks to hundreds of volunteers. Many charities rely on the support and selfless commitment of volunteers and the awards will also have categories to give well deserved recognition to individuals and groups of volunteers.

LET'S MAKE A BIGGER DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

At the Eisteddfod today WCVA will also be marking the start of a new chapter rallying around a new sense of purpose to make sure voluntary organisations in Wales are ready to tackle the challenges society faces head on.

'In Wales people have always come together voluntarily, not for money or because the law tells them to, but because they want to make a difference,' says Ruth Marks. 'Those people have shaped the Wales we live in today.

'But to tackle the big issues facing our society we need to come together, organise and look ahead to prepare for the future.

'That's where we come in. WCVA exists to enable voluntary organisations to make a bigger difference together.'

Over the coming months WCVA will be using this new purpose as a call to arms not just to bring together charities and voluntary groups but to inspire business and public bodies to offer their support so we can all make a bigger difference and build a better future.

For more information, **please contact Simon Dowling on 07796115762.**

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The Welsh Charity Awards will be launched at 2pm on Monday 5 August 2019 at WCVA's tent at the National Eisteddfod in Llanrwst. The launch event will invite the many charity employees and volunteers at the Eisteddfod to gather for a fun 'awards ceremony'. Attendees will hear briefly about the awards and WCVA's new

purpose, eat cake, drink 'bubbly' and have the opportunity to take some photos with a range of awards props. For access get in touch.

- The awards will recognise and celebrate the fantastic contribution charities, community groups, not-for-profits and volunteers make to Wales. From befrienders dropping in to visit their older neighbour each week, to organisations campaigning for nation-wide equality, the awards highlight and champion the positive difference we can make to each other's lives.
- WCVA will be using #WelshCharityAwards and #GwobrauElusennauCymru on social media.
- Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) is the national membership body for voluntary organisations in Wales. We exist to enable voluntary organisations in Wales to make a bigger difference together.
- WCVA is proud to be part of a partnership with County Voluntary Councils (CVCs) providing support to voluntary organisations across Wales.

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