

The Social Activities Project is funded by the City of Cardiff Council and meets the principles of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act as well as the priorities of Cardiff County Council's strategic plans:

- **Citizen directed support**
- **Improving people's health and wellbeing**
- **Promoting greater choice and control**
- **Partnership working and the co production of support services**
- **Encouraging participation which enables people to become equal and active members of the community**

### Interesting in volunteering?

email: [volunteer@mirus-wales.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@mirus-wales.org.uk)

website: <http://www.mirus-wales.org.uk/jobs/volunteers/>

Telephone: 02920 236 216

Mobile: 07725216385

**Would you, or someone you know, like to join one of social groups?**

Contact us on 02920 236216

#### Head Office

Unit 5, Cleeve House Lambourne Crescent, Llanishen, Cardiff CF14 5GP

Tel: 02920 236216 email: [admin@mirus-wales.org.uk](mailto:admin@mirus-wales.org.uk)

[www.mirus-wales.org.uk](http://www.mirus-wales.org.uk)



## Social Activities project 2015/16

The Social Activities Project has been supporting vulnerable people in Cardiff for 10 years – helping them build their circles of support, increase their independence, improve their social inclusion and reduce their dependence on paid support.





Janice with Steven

## 10 years on ... one year's highlights

Here's 10 of the many reasons why the knowledge we have, the skills we offer, the time we spend and the help we provide all come down to one thing ultimately... the difference we make.

## REASON 1 Janice sums it up... 'I'm in control'

We talked to Janice to ask her what she thinks of the volunteer programme which forms part of our Social Activities Project.

Janice has been a regular of the Social Activities Project for many years – and always comes dressed up with a love for matching jewellery, eye-catching accessories and nail varnish.

She said:

"I like to see everyone – they are my friends. My favourite thing to do is go out for meals. I chop and change what I eat."

Asked why she likes coming to the clubs, she says:

"I look forward to it. Otherwise I'd be in my flat on my own watching the soaps. When I meet people, I always tell them about the group. I'd rather go out than stay in."



## REASON 2

### The numbers add up... Community based support

We have 11 volunteers, support 34 people and provide more than 570 hours of volunteering with more volunteers expressing an interest for the future. Last year, we ran a total of 59 social activity events bringing people together on average more than once a week. Without the support of volunteers, people would not have had the opportunity to participate in activities.

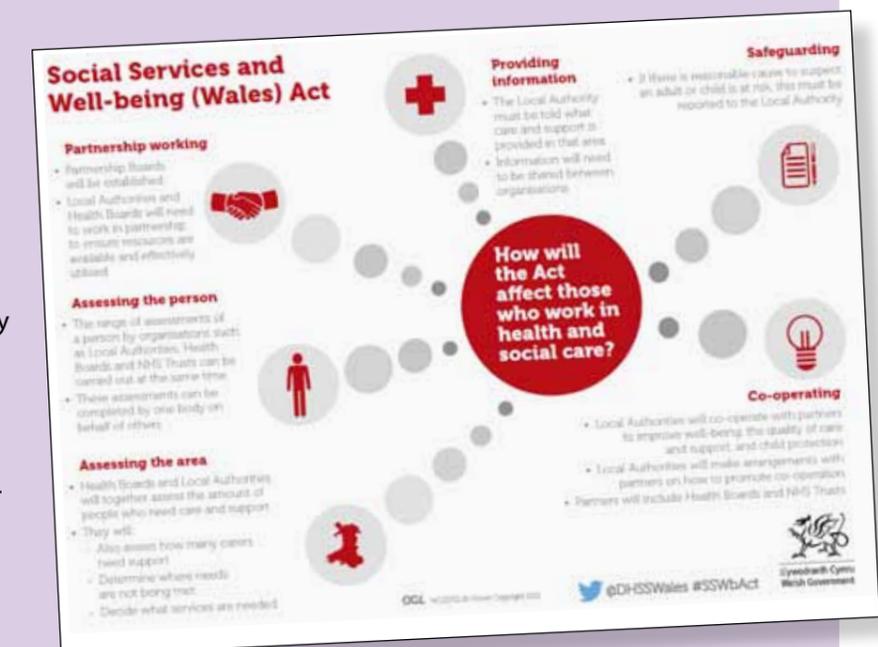
The numbers add up and the benefits are many: the Social Activities Project extends a person's social circle beyond close friends and family; it gives people the chance to go to different places and be stimulated by new environments; it adds value to the traditional model of paid support; and it enables people to create friendships in a relaxed environment while all the time building confidence and independence in a very natural way.

## REASON 3

### A real part of the bigger picture... What matters to you matters to us

The principles that underpin the project are totally in line with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act. We're focusing on organising activities which foster good health and well-being:

- encouraging people to be more active, to take greater responsibility and have more choice and control
- seeking to actively support people who otherwise might be excluded due to ill health, disability, frailty or lack of confidence
- providing carers with a break
- offering citizen directed outcomes based support



## REASON 4 In Paul's words... a chance to flourish

Paul has been a volunteer with the project for more than six years and has actually volunteered in the sector for 12 years.

It's totally different to his day job providing him with, in his words, "a chance to experience another side of life."

He explains: "Being a volunteer allows me to witness and be a part of something very special but very natural. The clubs level the playing field for people – it allows everyone to be treated the same. We are all friends together on a night out – there's no line drawn and no differentiation between anyone who comes."

“

"I see people flourish at the clubs. They become their own person and their personality shines through. It's a setting which is not clinical but well managed and certainly not over managed – that's what makes it special. We are all left to be grown-ups together. It has that much value that I think it's a lifeline for some people."

## REASON 5 A father's perspective... encouraging independence

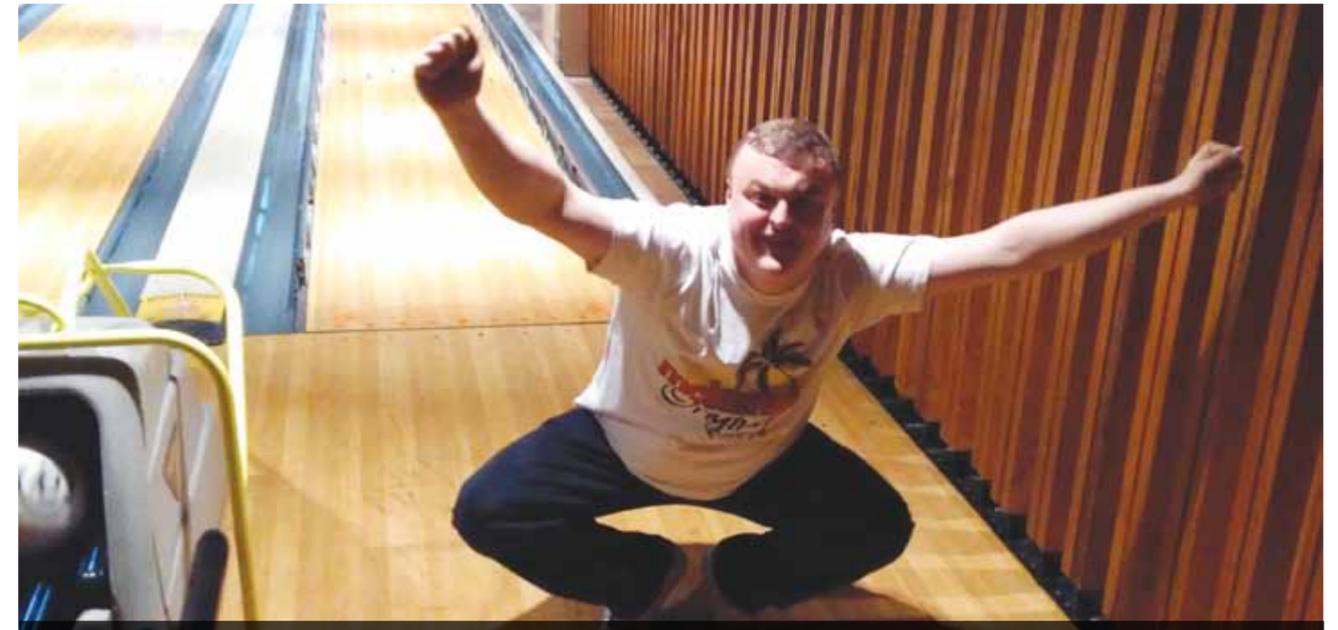
“

He said: "I ask Adam if he'd like to go out for a curry – which I know is his favourite – and he says no thanks because I'm a fuddy-duddy! The thing is I'm family and a different generation. He's got the same right to go out with real friends as everyone else and that's how he sees the people at the club."

Ian is Adam's step dad. He's nearly 70 and believes the clubs' volunteers provide a social life for Adam that he can't.

Ian is the first to say that he is over protective of Adam. He added:

"I feel he is in safe hands and that's important to me. I can walk away knowing he is well looked after without being too formal. They are genuinely nice people."



## REASON 6 Getting up, out and active... fostering good health and wellbeing

It's no secret that being active is good for all of us; the Social Activities Project supports people's health and wellbeing by enabling them to get involved in all sorts of activities and events. Through the winter, the most-loved night out of choice (and they always do the choosing not us!) is bowling. In the summer, it's days out and

about enjoying fresh air and the better weather. It's an area of the programme we're committed to developing further. Currently, we've done everything from rock climbing to indoor surfing. These activities coupled with boat trips around Cardiff Bay and days out to the beach means that everyone is getting their fair share of Vitamin D!

## REASON 7 Alison's thinking... a real alternative to paid support

Alison is one of our newest volunteers and has signed up to support at a club once a week.

She said: "I'd reached a time in my life when I knew I could give a few hours a week to something extra. I did a sleepover for charity and enjoyed it so much that I thought I'd look in to volunteering. I wasn't sure what would suit me so did some research online and found the **mirus** Social Activities Project.

"To be honest, I didn't know if I'd be any good but I thought it would be nice for me and nice for them."

Alison was looking for something that would fit in with her full time job and home life and would be manageable so that she could sign up for the long term.

She said: "Already I can see the benefits. When you go out for a curry or a drink, it's just a nice way to spend the evening. The time flies, everyone's welcoming and friendly and it's not like 'work' at all."



Alison with Peter

## REASON 8

### It works for David!

David is originally from Northampton but now lives in Cardiff. It's good that that he has as much access as possible to a social circle as his family are still in the East Midlands. David is 29 and at an age where being socially active like his peers is really important.

David – who loves to chat and interact – said:

“This is the way I meet new people – it’s nice to meet new people. I’ve been coming a long time. Everyone gets on with everyone. I know everyone here and that’s why I always come.”

Asked if he could sum up the ‘Tuesday Club’ in one word, he said “Fabulous!” – and then because he’s a chatty sort, he added: “Well, it works for me!”



## REASON 9 A typical night...

### Another opportunity to increase our independence

A typical night may seem ordinary but that’s where we’ve found the extraordinary actually lies. It’s often chatting with friends in the pub, sharing a laugh over dinner or enjoying the latest film in the cinema with good company. Doing the very ‘ordinary’ things that many of us take for granted is not a privilege – it’s a right. Without the Social Activities Project, there is much less chance of someone sharing a joke with a friend over a nice meal ...they are more likely to spend a night at home eating alone. They are much less likely to get out to see a new film in the cinema and will more likely spend another night in front of the TV.



## REASON 10

### It’s not what we think, but what people tell us that is important...

“

“I like work and some people talk to me there but I look forward to the group because I like meeting up with friends. Even if there is only a small group it’s still nice to get to do things together.”

“I love meeting up with everyone. I don’t get to do anything else in the week. I go to college some days but at home I just sit in my room. If it wasn’t for this group I wouldn’t meet any friends.”

“I attend the groups because it’s nice to be involved with the community. Without having this group I wouldn’t go out in the evenings unless it was with my family and they don’t always like to go out in the night.”

“I like coming to the group because it’s fun. I’m 35 and live on my own so if it wasn’t for this group I would only see people when I go to work.”

“Since coming to this group I’ve met people and have a new best mate. I came to the group because I was told I could meet people on my own and that’s what has happened.”

”