



Creating the Spark

Creu Conwy Newsletter, Summer 2023



Welcome to our latest edition of the Creu Conwy newsletter which provides an update on our work to deliver Conwy's Culture Strategy since Christmas 2022.

We have been busy developing projects and securing nearly £600,000 in funding to support the rolling out of the strategy.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our partners for their continued support and collaboration.

Creu Conwy Ifanc



An award of Arts Council Wales Create funding and a CCG (Welsh Government Children & Communities) grant have enabled us to build on the success of Young Creatives – a programme that offers a range of artist-led group sessions for 0 – 25 year olds. Last year, 330 sessions were held which were attended by 4756 participants. This year we are developing the programme under the Creu Conwy Ifanc banner with a focus on rural outreach and working with communities and Health and Social Care partners to reach children, young people and families who might not otherwise get a chance to access these creative opportunities. To find out more visit: [Conwy Culture | Creu Conwy Ifanc](#)

Following on from the pilot Winter Sounds festival, Creu Conwy Ifanc will also support home-grown talent through a programme of training and mentoring for young people with an interest in the music industry. These new-found skills will be put in to practice through a co-produced Winter Sounds music event early next year.



Partnership working at the heart of Creu Conwy

As the governance model for the strategy matures, each of the new cross-sector 'Town Teams' based in Abergele, Colwyn Bay, Conwy, Llandudno and Llanrwst are developing their own identities that reflect local need. Priorities emerging include a young writers group to amplify the voices of young people, building on events programmes, coordinating communications and accessing additional funding through collective funding bids to build capacity and support a shared vision.

Strategic Partnership and Conwy Town Team member Rev Eryl Parry from Bro-Celynnin Ministry Area shared her experience:

'Being a part of Creu Conwy has helped us to build collegiate relationships and explore much more fully the potential for cultural activity than if we were working alone. Some of the arts projects like hosting an installation for Heritage Open Days and the Winter Sounds festival (in two medieval churches) exemplified the new creative partnerships made possible through this wider initiative.

Through the Conwy Town Team as the shared vision and plans evolve we're already seeing more opportunities for collaboration and working together – as an example we were able to connect with the beautiful Pensychnant Conservation Centre who kindly hosted one of our 'Worship in the Wild' events earlier this year'.



The Amdani! Conwy launch took place at the end of May – the project is now live and actively recruiting volunteers, offering training opportunities and supporting organisations to host opportunities!

Over the next two years, Amdani! will recruit 300 volunteers to support cultural activities and events across the county. We would encourage all our partners to take advantage of this opportunity to grow the county's volunteering base and to help promote the project widely amongst your networks.

If you'd like to find out more about the project visit: [Conwy Culture | Amdani! Conwy](#)



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd / This document is also available in Welsh



Culture for Recovery and Wellbeing

With the challenging economic landscape wellbeing has become central to the mission of Creu Conwy. Over the winter months we saw our libraries, cultural and community venues step up as warm hubs – offering safe and welcoming spaces for people to connect and spend time. This has paved the way for strengthening networks and links with our community and health and social care partners and opening up opportunities for people who might not normally have access to the benefits of cultural participation..

Exciting plans are in place to pilot a new Recovery College* in Colwyn Bay Library. The project is being led by Conwy’s Mental Wellness Team, who are partnering with Conwy Mind. The Recovery College is a learning-led approach that supports people to increase their understanding of the mental health challenges they are experiencing and take control by self-managing their symptoms. An important part of this process is for people to identify interests and activities they enjoy, co-producing their personal pathway to better health and wellbeing.

The Recovery College aligns with opportunities created through a new Tape Community Music project who are basing their outreach office at Colwyn Bay Library. Funded through Arts Council Wales’ Connect and Flourish scheme Below the Waves will use a co-produced film script to inspire a series of supported, creative workshop opportunities and pioneer a new approach to measuring social impact. The creative outputs from the workshops will shape a co-produced feature film and also form a touring exhibition that will share learnings around social impact models and celebrate people’s work.

*To find out more about the Recovery College model please follow this [link](#)

Future Generations Changemaker 100

Creu Conwy lead and Section Head for Culture, Libraries and Information Helen Goddard was nominated as one of [Wales’ Changemakers 100](#). The outgoing Future Generations Commissioner for Wales Sophie Howe wanted to mark her term and the first 7 years of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) by celebrating what has been achieved and taking a snapshot of the thousands of people on the ground who are championing the Act and making it more than a piece of legislation.



‘Helen is dedicated to ensuring cultural well-being is reflected in the Conwy County Borough Council’s approach and decisions. She has demonstrated the importance of celebrating heritage and culture when putting in place measures to reduce regional inequalities, including isolation and deprivation.’

Looking Ahead

With the input of the Amdani project and through the current focus of our culture and libraries teams on Anti-Racist and LGBTQ+ issues, there are a number of projects coming on stream that will enable Creu Conwy to open up access and collaboration around culture and heritage in the coming months.

Funding has been secured from the Association of Independent Museums and further financial support is being sought through Shared Prosperity Funding to allow the re-interpretation of heritage, archive and library collections in collaboration with people with lived experience, and to help us start working towards making our cultural venues more accessible for disabled people under the Social Model of Disability.

Open Doors

Cadw’s annual celebration of Wales’ built heritage takes place throughout September. Historic sites across Wales open their doors for free and offer activities to the public.



Conwy County’s 2022 Open Doors programme offered something for everyone; an invitation to visit National

Trust’s Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant; the opportunity to contribute to a collective piece of textile art at St Grwst’s Church, Llanrwst, an evening of music and storytelling at St. Mary’s Church in Caerhun – and much more.

This year we’re inviting ideas for activities and events – if anyone would like to discuss before registering then feel free to get in touch, or to register as a participating venue directly with Cadw please follow this [link](#)

Welsh Language

A recommendation that came from the development of the strategy was to increase the visibility of the Welsh Language in Conwy – enriching the cultural experience for visitors and strengthening sense of place for communities.

Further work led by Menter Iaith has led to the development of a Welsh Language toolkit for tourism and hospitality businesses – it’s now live and can be downloaded [here](#).

We’ll be working with the Welsh Language Forum to inform, drive and embed the Welsh Language elements of the delivery plan.

Cymraeg

Brilliant Basics Fund

We have been awarded £65,000 from Welsh Government’s Brilliant Basics Fund to create destination signage across the county. The development of the installations will be artist and community-led taking inspiration from the Welsh language, local sayings and sense of place. The project will be delivered between now and March 2025.

UK Shared Prosperity Conwy

The Key Fund is now open for applications, please follow this [link](#) for more information.



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To find out more and explore collaboration opportunities don’t hesitate to get in touch with the Creu Conwy team.



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