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association

CYMDEITHAS CLUDIANT CYMUNEDOL



Dolen Teifi Community Transport Collaborative Communities Project

Being a member of a community group, society or local club can often give people a sense of belonging. By coming together to take part in activities or attend days out, being a member of a community group gives people with similar interests the opportunity to come together, spend time with one another and enjoy each-others company.

For many people, though, participation in a local community group means much more than just meeting up with some acquaintances once a week. For many, especially those who are lonely, rurally isolated and don't have access to transport, being a member of a community group can be a life-line, providing an opportunity to meet and chat with friends, have some company and take part in opportunities they enjoy doing with other people.

Recognising that there has been a lack of affordable and accessible community transport in West Wales, and building upon previous experiences of developing and delivering group transport, **Dolen Teifi Community Transport, working in partnership with the Connecting Communities in Wales team, Pembrokeshire Association of Community Transport Organisations (PACTO) and Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisations (CAVO) came together in 2018 to develop an application for funding to support groups to travel together and access social opportunities in an inclusive and accessible way.**

By enabling more community groups to travel together to access social opportunities, outings and meetings, the project's aim was to make a significant difference to improving the quality of life of individual community members by reducing loneliness and isolation and promoting wellbeing.

In 2019 the 'Collaborative Communities' project was given approval for funding with an investment of £199,000 secured through the Welsh Government's Cooperation & Supply Chain Development Scheme.

The project has enabled Dolen Teifi to set up transport services in communities where there is significant need for community transport such as in Llandysul and Llanybydder. Over three years, the project will deliver 10,000 passenger journeys. 500 volunteer driver hours will be committed to ensuring community groups can travel together to the places they love, and a further 100 hours of development work will be

provided to support other community transport operators in West Wales develop their own group transport services – building a stronger network of community transport services across the region.

The project has already had a huge impact in the community. Organisations such as the Scouts, sporting groups, mental health groups, ex-armed forces groups, young farmer's groups, as well as housing associations, sheltered housing providers and Age Cymru branches, have all benefited from being able to access affordable and accessible transport. The diverse nature of these groups means that the project supports a wide-ranging cross section of the community - from young children and their parents to older people and disabled people.

Another positive impact of the project has been reducing many hundreds of individual car journeys and having a positive environmental impact through helping people travel together. Over the next two years, the project will support more and more community groups across West Wales to access accessible minibus transport, helping them reach the people and places they love. The project will also address 'hotspots' in West Wales where we know there's significant demand for community transport, helping our members reach the communities where the need is greatest.

About Connecting Communities in Wales

The Connecting Communities in Wales project is run by the Community Transport Association and funded through the Welsh Government Rural Communities Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government, and aims to support community transport in Wales through creating new partnerships, bringing funding into the sector and creating new transport networks.

You can find out more about Connecting Communities in Wales at ctauk.org/CCIW.

