



THE RADYR AND MORGANSTOWN ASSOCIATION



GENERAL MEETING

Via Zoom on Monday 16th August 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: David Silver (Chair), Nick Hawkins (Secretary), David Cargill (Treasurer), Eric Blackwell, Ian Thomas, Cllr Clive Morgan, and 20 members.

Apologies: Tom Evans (Vice-Chair), Allan Cook, Moy Lewis and Lady Helen Lloyd Jones

Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everyone to another Zoom meeting, especially our friends from the Llandaff Society and the Llandaff 50+ Group who had joined us for this meeting.

Ruth Marks: 'Volunteering makes a world of difference'

The Chairman introduced Ruth. Another Radyr resident, Ruth Marks is Chief Executive of Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), the national membership body for voluntary organisations in Wales. An experienced charity sector activist and leader, she has led RNIB Cymru and Chwarae Teg and an independent review into health regulation in Wales. Ruth was the first Older People's Commissioner in the world establishing the independent office and used her statutory powers to review health care for older people; producing the report "Dignified Care". She was awarded the MBE in 2007 for services to welfare to work.

Ruth started her presentation by saying just how dear the topic was to her. Volunteering is all about getting involved, having fun, making a difference and raising money for good causes. She put the voluntary sector in Wales into context. According to WCVA statistics, there are currently 49K active voluntary organisations in Wales, of which 6.6K are registered charities. Over 1M people regularly volunteer - a unique aspect of our community. Interestingly, Wales is the only part of the UK that has a 'third sector' scheme recognised by Government. The WCVA supports that sector, promoting volunteering, supporting good governance, considering the sustainability of funding and also influencing and engaging with local, Welsh and UK Governments.

Ruth touched on charities as employers. No less than 10% of the Welsh workforce are employed in the charity sector, with the largest numbers being in health and care then the arts and cultural industries. She also mentioned the key role that charity trustees have in providing focus and control over their activities.

Looking locally, she noted that the R&M Community is well served by voluntary bodies, many of them charities, with volunteers of all ages supporting a number of causes. Apart from the Association itself, she highlighted the Radyr Scouts Group and the Guides - excellent examples of young people getting involved. That is so important. Looking in the latest edition of the Radyr Chain, she noted both the announcement of the forthcoming September Festival (raising money for Tenovus Cancer Care) and also environmental activities - such as concern for hedgehogs. There is a lot going on, including litter picking, preserving canals and rivers and of course global sustainability. She noted a sign outside Radyr Library advertising 'Wild World Heroes' - which is a link between the World Wildlife Fund and the Reading Agency; a demonstration of the way charities can share objectives to mutual benefit.

Ruth highlighted some of the opportunities and challenges faced by volunteers and charities over the past year - not least having to move activities on-line. She mentioned the local Remembrance Sunday service, when charities and organisations come together to pay their respects. Veterans' charities are hugely important - Wales has a high rate of pensioner poverty and charities can help. Turning to youth involvement, she was delighted to see the display outside Radyr Primary (and the painted pebbles below) which chimes with voluntary activity themes - environment, fun, safe and inclusive. It is great to see children simply saying 'thank you'.

Who gets involved, and why? Many people volunteer when they retire, which is great. Some want to continue to be connected with something they did during their work or professional lives whilst others want to do something completely different. We need to attract and retain younger people and people from every background and experience - everyone has something to offer. Ruth highlighted a conversation she had had with a Red Cross volunteer at the National Eisteddfod a little

while ago. She had been a nurse and wanted to continue doing something after retiring as she recognised she needed new companionship and direction. She was asked to join the Red Cross and it had given her a new lease of life. The key parts of the story are that, if you are involved, ask someone else to join you and, if you are not involved, ask someone if you can join them. But, whichever way round it is, be welcoming and encouraging; don't make assumptions about time and resources.

In her final slide, Ruth asked some questions. Do you volunteer and what is your experience? She encouraged everyone to consider doing so and asked people to talk about their experiences. For people who might like to get involved and wanted to research opportunities, she mentioned two websites - www.volunteering-wales.net and www.wcva.cymru. She was also willing to be contacted personally (rmarks@wcva.cymru).

The Chairman thanked Ruth and invited comments and contributions from the attendees. Personally, he noted that many local R&M organisations were getting older and were struggling to recruit new members. This contrasted with the ease by which our local school governing bodies could recruit members from interested parents. This is not the case in the rest of Cardiff where there are many vacancies. What was the best way of getting new people involved? Ruth said that she thought the key way was to start conversations in person and on social media to find out what people actually want to do. Set up local chats and activities. Talk to the schools. Another key aspect was starting people's involvement at a low level. People must not think there are going to be threats to their time. Capture volunteers early and get them to stay involved.

In other discussions, people gave their experiences of being involved, and getting others involved, and encouraging everyone to give of their best. The importance of trustees was also stressed in the way that they can contribute to the growth and governance of charities via knowledge of processes, finance etc. There are many opportunities - but the responsibilities need to be taken seriously.

In conclusion, Ruth said that getting people involved in volunteering was all about having conversations. R&M was full of people rich in experience and resources. Volunteering is an opportunity to share that - particularly with younger people - and have a rewarding experience in doing so.

At the end of the talk, the Chairman again thanked Ruth for leading such an interesting session.

Minutes of the last meeting (28th June 2021) and matters arising

The minutes were accepted as a true record. There were no matters arising not covered by the current agenda.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that so far this year the Association had raised about £3K for charity, of which £2278 had gone to Tenovus Cancer Care. Unrestricted funds now stood at £8071, a very satisfactory position. He noted that funds would be needed for the forthcoming Festival.

There were no questions.

Festival September 2021

The Chairman reported on the Festival. The Welsh Government had moved the country to Covid 'level 0' but restrictions remained. The Association has to take health and safety very seriously so the decision had, reluctantly, been taken to cancel the previously planned indoor events - of concerts etc. However, he hoped that the just published Festival programme still contained something for everyone. He summarised the various events, starting with a revival of the 'Summer Show' in Morganstown Village Hall on 11th September and ending with the Tenovus Walk and Tea on 26th September. Copies of the Festival Programme had been distributed in Radyr Chain and were available in shops. Full details were also in the Festival website www.rmfestival.org.uk. He hoped everyone would enjoy the Festival and buy lots of draw tickets in support of Tenovus Cancer Care.

Planning

Ian Thomas reported that the Association had responded to the first round of consultations of the Cardiff LDP (the draft vision) - the return can be viewed in the planning section of the Associations' website. (*Secretary's note:* <https://radyr.org.uk/rmassociation/local-planning/ldp/>). The planning application for the new bridge at Gelynis Farm had been passed, albeit with a large number of

caveats - notably the provision of 'a suitable traffic management plan'. Transport for Wales (TfW) had organised a 'drop in session' on Wednesday, 8th September from 2-7pm at Morganstown Village Hall. Whilst welcoming that, Ian noted that TfW had not been at all active in liaising with the Association and we had a lot of questions outstanding.

Ian also warned about road works. From 23rd August it will not be possible to drive directly to Taffs Well Station from Radyr due to the construction of a new railway line. It will be possible to get there by road, but only by a circuitous route.

David Cargill highlighted the inadequate design of the junction between Heol Isaf and the Llantrisant Road and also the dangerous construction of the roundabout by the nearby garage. A petition had been raised about these concerns which had so far received 283 signatures. Full details are in Radyr Chain.

Christmas Lighting, 3rd December 2021

The Chairman noted that planning was starting for the Christmas lighting event in and around Station Road. The Community Council was organising the wider event but the Association would be arranging the usual stalls, with Santa in his sleigh. Headway, the Association's next sponsored charity, would be arranging the switch-on of the lights by a suitable celebrity.

Any other business

Green Bins. It was noted that most (but not all) green bins had now been collected, after nearly a week's delay. There would be no further collections in August. Collections would start again in the autumn and be monthly. There has been no mention yet of the winter schedule when garden bin collections normally cease. The Association was asking for specific information. When available, it would be placed on the Association's website and on social media.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Monday, 22nd November starting at 19.30, venue to be confirmed, when there will be a speaker from Headway.