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Torfaen Community & Volunteer Awards 2021

*Saturday 2nd October 2021
Pontypool Active Living Centre*

Welcome

We are honored, tonight, to have with us dignitaries who support our celebration, the Lord-Lieutenant of Gwent, the Gwent High Sheriff, Lynne Neagle MS, Nick Thomas-Symonds MP, those who have given their time to bring together this celebration, and those who we are celebrating, and to be representing all the people in Torfaen who give their time selflessly for their communities.

Our partners and sponsors are also thanked and welcomed here to be with us this evening.

Tonight, we celebrate and recognise a very worthy number of members of our communities, who have voluntarily chosen to undertake a service or duty and, by doing so, have made a difference to our communities in Torfaen. We also recognise that there are many more individuals and organisations behind the scenes doing big things.

Whether it be helping provide for the homeless, making sure our youth in the community have proper mentors, volunteering in schools, keeping arts and our history alive in our communities, standing up for causes you believe in, helping a friend or neighbour, being a mover, a shaker, and a motivator, teaching a child how to throw a ball or building back homes, they have all made a difference. It does not matter how great or how small, a difference is made to our communities through voluntary work, and during a time of crisis, where we witnessed a positive upsurge of community kindness demonstrated by the large numbers of people voluntarily supporting their family, friends, neighbors, and communities, going the extra mile to help others!

Tonight, is our way of saying a BIG Thank You to all our finalists, not forgetting all those who were nominated - everyone is a worthy winner.



Aimi



Anne



About our Hosts



@_SeanHolley

Sean Holley

Sean is a former rugby player having played for Maesteg RFC and Aberavon RFC. His playing career was ended at the age of 24, upon then he studied the sport, and became the head coach for Gloucester RFC and of the Ospreys, and was also appointed as a Welsh coach for the Summer tour of 2009.

He now works regularly not only for the BBC and Nation but also for BT Sport, Talksport and Sky Sports and is an Ambassador for the charity Rugby For Heroes as well as the Velindre Cancer Centre.

Patrick Downes

Patrick is the Communications Lead for Torfaen Voluntary Alliance, and has over 25 years' experience of radio in South Wales, having worked for Red Dragon FM & Capital Gold in Cardiff, Valleys Radio in Ebbw Vale, and is now a volunteer at Bro Radio in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Part of his work with TVA is this event this evening, and the podcast, the Word From The Third, for third sector organisations across Torfaen to have a different way of promoting their activities.



@ImPatrickDownes

Lord-Lieutenant of Gwent, Brigadier Robert Aitken, CBE

The Lord Lieutenant is Her Majesty The Queen's representative in Gwent and his first and foremost duty is to uphold the dignity of the Crown.

Brigadier Aitken was appointed by Her Majesty the Queen as Lord-Lieutenant of Gwent in March 2016. Previously he was Deputy Lieutenant of Gwent and has lived in Gwent since childhood.

Following a choral scholarship to Oxford, Brigadier Aitken was commissioned in the Royal Regiment of Wales. He had a distinguished military career lasting 34 years during which time he was awarded a CBE.



#TorfaenSaysThanks

Order of Ceremony

6:30 **Arrival**

7:00 **Welcome Speech**

Lord-Lieutenant of Gwent, Brigadier Robert Aitken, CBE

7:05 **Video Presentations**

A word from our Sponsors

Torfaen Community & Volunteer Awards 2021

7:10 **Your hosts, Sean Holley & Patrick Downes**

Sports Volunteer of the Year

Trustee of the Year

Young Volunteer Of The Year

Personal Journey Award

COVID19 Response Hero

Refresher Break

8:20 **Welcome Back**

Business of the Year

Environmental Volunteer of the Year

Health Volunteer of the Year

Adult Volunteer of The Year

Heart of the Community Award

9:15 **Closing & Followed by Photos with Finalists & Sponsors**

9.30 Indian Cuisine followed by Music and Dancing

12:00 **Home Time - *Travel Safe!***

Timings Approximate

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Sports Volunteer of the Year

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Torfaen
Leisure Trust
Ymddiriedolaeth
Hamdden Torfaen



Matthew Cummins

Matt is the Chairman of the Torfaen Tigers Rugby League club and shows great dedication arranging everything from sponsorship to player and coach recruitment. He has been the driving force behind the club's recent expansion to include Wheelchair and Women's teams.

Simon Weaver

Simon encourages and welcomes people of all abilities to train at the Torfaen Warriors Amateur Boxing Club. He is an inspiration to others even taking boxers around the UK and Europe to compete. Simon runs the boxing the gym at a huge cost to himself.



Gareth Baldwin

Gareth started as a player when the Walking Rugby Team was first established and then stepped up as a coach a year later. He is very dedicated to the team both on and off the pitch, supporting them to improve their skills or using his humour to keep everyone focused.

About our Sponsor

We are proud to host a diverse range of activities within our venues which include health, fitness and many other sports.

In addition to providing multi-purpose centres, the Trust also has staff dedicated to providing specialist projects relating to healthy lifestyles.

We aim to get more local people active, and we carefully balance our social ethos and commercial aspirations to maintain, invest and develop a wide range of quality sport and leisure services for our customers.

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Trustee of the Year

Proudly Sponsored by



Louise Woodgate

Louise works hard as a trustee at the Helping Caring Team charity, from applying for grants to coordinating other volunteers. Her behind the scenes work has helped many in Torfaen with food parcels, furniture and emotional support.

Daniel Crandon

Despite a busy work life, Dan has provided High Street Fitness unwavering support and time. Whilst holding the position as Secretary at the trust, he has no issues getting stuck in and doing what needs to be done. His contribution has been above and beyond.



Denise Strange

Denise has supported TRAC2 for many years through her various volunteer roles. She is dedicated and committed to improving lives at both ground and strategic level. She is selfless and believes that it is equally as important to roll up your sleeves and make change yourself.



About our Sponsor

Pro Steel Engineering is a Pontypool-based steel specialist company operating across the UK and internationally.

The company is renowned for safely delivering high-profile work, including collaborative projects like the London Olympic Stadium Transformation and ICC Wales' 22 tonne steel Welsh dragon.

With a roster including stadiums, bridges and railways to name a few, Pro Steel makes it its business to exceed all expectations to the highest level with health and safety being paramount.

01291 424949 - info@prosteelengineering.co.uk

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Young Volunteer of the Year

Proudly Sponsored by



Maisy Evans

Maisy has just concluded two years as a Welsh Youth Parliament Member for Torfaen, during this time Maisy listened to young people to hear what issues are affecting them. She currently holds a high-profile role on the Torfaen Public Service Board where she brings a young person's perspective.

Kieran Saunders

Kieran volunteers at the Cwmbran Centre for Young People, engaging with young people in activities at the 'Junior Drop In' sessions. Kieran volunteered throughout the pandemic offering support to staff and young people by helping create care, activity, and education packs.



Bryony Powell

11 year old Bryony has been a volunteer with the World Heritage Youth Ambassadors for over a year. She has supported many projects in the community and her biggest achievement was helping to provide 150 Wellbeing packs to vulnerable families in Blaenavon during Lockdown.



About our Sponsor

The uddr app was born to support the small and medium sized businesses at the very heart of our local communities. That's why we created a simple, innovative, and cost-effective solution to help those local businesses get seen.

As the fastest growing local service app in the UK, it's clear that local people want to support local businesses.

The uddr app provides 100s of local trades & services all in one place - simply send an instant message for quotes and bookings.

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Personal Journey Award

Proudly Sponsored by



Chloe Goddard

Chloe is a young mum who volunteers weekly at Torfaen Youth Service's Young Parents Project. Chloe supports in organising and planning the programme with support from Youth Workers. Through her volunteering she has been encouraged to further her schooling.

Emma Milner

Emma is a passionate volunteer, full of energy, vigor and drive who supports the importance of a not-for-profit health centre based around fitness. She was prepared to give 100% in supporting the running and day to day operations at High Street Fitness in the position of Core Volunteer, but also in her change of life.



Nicola Deacon

Nicky was initially a member of the Zest for life group, through her journey in the group she gained many skills and confidence to become part of the volunteer team at Age Connects Torfaen. Nicky's role as Volunteer is to help support staff and she provides support and assistance to members throughout the sessions.



About our Sponsor

The Police and Crime Commissioner is responsible for representing the people of Gwent and making sure the service provided by the police is efficient and effective.

The Commissioner holds the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of local policing and is responsible for setting and updating a police and crime plan.

Every year the Commissioner sets the force budget and the local council tax policing precept, and regularly engages with the public to ensure that the voices of communities are heard.

Visit www.gwent.pcc.police.uk to find out more and sign up for the weekly EBulletin

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COVID-19 Response Hero

Proudly Sponsored by

CAPITAL VALLEY
PLASTICS & RECYCLING



Sabrina Cresswell

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Sabrina has built Tasty not Wasty CIC from the ground up, responding to the issue of food insecurity. She was working solely for several months before gaining volunteers to support her cause, hundreds of families across Torfaen have benefitted from the food that Tasty not Wasty have saved from going to landfill.

Sight Cymru

As the pandemic hit, Sight Cymru quickly adapted to ensure they were still able to support people with sight loss despite being in lockdown. A ring around service was put into place and during the height of the pandemic over 1,000 calls a week were being made to people with sight loss to ensure they were getting the support needed.



Anthony Pursell

Tony volunteered with Citizens Advice Torfaen throughout the pandemic and the restrictions that have been imposed. He continued to provide advice, and support over the phone. He gave clients vital advice, signposting them to other sources of information.

About our Sponsor

We are one of the leading manufacturers of recycled Damp-Proof membranes and Courses which is used to prevent moisture from entering a new building. A closed loop product as the membrane stays in the building for the lifetime and doesn't go back into the environment.

0% of our products are made from 100% recycled Polythene which is collected from various sources locally and across the UK.

We have started a plastic collection service in which we set up local businesses, schools and organisations as collection points, provide them with a free collection service, the education needed about the plastic we accept and do not, provide signage, leaflets and bags to start collecting.

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Business of the Year

Proudly Sponsored by



Victoria English Wellbeing

Victoria designed a 'Resilient Me' programme which has been adopted by young people in Torfaen's Youth Forum. She worked with the forum to decide how this course could be delivered virtually during the height of the pandemic. The course develops empathy, understanding and a sense of belonging amongst its participants.

Team Kotecha Dance Fitness

Claire Kotecha set up Team Kotecha Dance Fitness. This has grown and become a fantastic team who are not just a team but a family who support each other in good times and bad times. Claire has done many fundraisers to support different charities and people in need.



Age Connects Torfaen

Age Connects Torfaen supported the most vulnerable in our community and helped to keep them safe, well and reassured that help was at hand. They provided lots of activities from prescription pick up, meal delivery, activities in the home, choir sessions, weekly phone calls and a access to benefits information.

About our Sponsor

Looking for office space?

Mamhilad Park Estate is a thriving business park in a fantastic location on the border of Torfaen and Monmouthshire, with space available on highly competitive and flexible terms.

A range of facilities and workspaces are available with over 300,000 sq/ft of high-quality offices and 600,000 sq/ft of industrial and warehousing space.

With over 150 different organisations based on site there really is something for everyone and plenty of opportunity to network.

The café on the park is also very popular along with the on-site gym and nursery. With immediate access off the A4042, there is also free car parking available.

Visit www.mamhilad.com or call 01495 367 051 to find out more.

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Environmental Volunteer of the Year

Proudly Sponsored by



Richard Davies



Richard has been volunteering now for many years, and has recently began an Eco Warriors of Bran group. Every week they go out litter picking the local areas and clear out the woodlands, and brook areas removing debris, litter and fly tipping to enable out beautiful areas of woodland to breathe again. Richard has also been clearing ancient grounds with local history.

Chris Partridge

Chris volunteers at the Henllys Local Nature Reserve. He spends hours of his own time caring for this place to improve it as a site of natural interest. His knowledge and skills have made such a change over many years which have improved access for users of the reserve. He applies for grants to fund the initiatives and works tirelessly to maintain the reserve.



Ron Ford



Ron has been litter picking the Borough for many years and has not stopped especially through lockdown. He has been actively supporting others helping with equipment and encouraging and recruiting other volunteers. He goes out daily to clear rubbish and litter and is on a mission to make the Borough a clean place.

About our Sponsor

Created in 2007, Melin Homes is a not-for-profit social landlord serving communities in Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Newport, Monmouthshire and Powys. We own and manage over 4,000 homes across these five local authorities in South-East Wales.

Melin exists to create opportunities for people and communities to thrive. We have strong values and an excellent staff team, providing high quality social housing to those who need it. We support people within their homes and actively provide money, energy, and employment advice alongside support for both renting and buying properties.

We are more than just property and our residents are at the centre of all that we do. We have a fresh and dynamic outlook and our intention is to make a positive difference in each and every one of our communities.

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Health Volunteer of the Year

Proudly Sponsored by



Alan Hiatt



Alan has been volunteering for over five years on Hafan Deg Older Adult Mental Health Ward at Ty Siriol Unit in County Hospital. He has been working at least four days every week supporting the ward staff with activities for patients. He has raised over ten thousand pounds fundraising for the ward over the years to provide various items for the ward

Georgina James

Georgina has constantly supported so many women within the community and further since before, during the height of the pandemic and now, in both physical and most importantly mental health. She has created in person and an online fitness platform that has inspired so many to get fitter and healthier.



Abi Edwards



Abi became a member of Torfaen Young People's Forum shortly after the first lockdown was announced, when all face-to-face meetings had ceased. Not letting this virtual shift hold her back she swiftly became an active member of the group, sharing her ideas and getting involved with activities.

About our Sponsor

Croesyceiliog & Llanyrafon Community Council is very proud of the way in which local groups & volunteers have supported residents during these unprecedented times.

The Community Council is pleased to be a sponsor of
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Adult Volunteer of the Year

Proudly Sponsored by



Stephen Manning



Stephen and Giving Hope Torfaen volunteers have been on the front lines of the pandemic, helping those who didn't know where else to turn during a particularly difficult time. He has kept children in clothes while parents were furloughed, organised a uniform drive for local schools and built a community on Facebook.

Janette Smith

Janette is a volunteer at Thornhill Community Centre and has dedicated over 15 years of her life to improving the lives of others from the local area. Jan has been a key figure as a member of Hafod Community group. Jan was also instrumental in the establishment of Cosy Kitchen this has now been going for over 12 years and continues to provide hot healthy meals for low cost every week for around 20 plus people.



Dave Mynot



Dave has run the Pontypool dementia group for approximately 12 years on a voluntary basis. provides weekly activities which include singers, musicians, quizzes, guest speakers to mention a few. Dave also arranges trips to local venues for afternoon teas & meals. Aside from the activities, he also provides emotional support, information and guidance to the members which is hugely valued by people.

About our Sponsor

Travis Perkins is one of the largest suppliers of building materials to the UK's building and construction industry and are proud to have helped build Britain for over 200 years.

During the COVID pandemic we have been a key business in maintaining Britain dry, safe, and warm and deemed an Essential service.

Within Torfaen area we have several branches, one such is Pontypool which has a partnership with Bron Afon Housing Association who along with supplying goods we support them with social value projects in the community.

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Heart of the Community

Proudly Sponsored by



Trussell Trust Foodbank (Eastern Valley)

Trussell Trust Foodbank Pontypool is an inspirational organisation run by volunteers and supports everyone throughout Torfaen. Their food parcel service has been lifesaving to many and without which, thousands of children would go hungry.

Blaenavon RFC Minis & Juniors

Blaenavon RFC Minis & Juniors were established in August 2017, there are a huge number of volunteers and parents who give up so much of their time and effort and commitment into supporting the club.



Volunteer Caseworkers, Disability Advice Project

Disability Advice Project relies on a wonderful team of Volunteer Caseworkers who give up their time to help disabled people with everything from benefit claims to home adaptations and care plans. During the pandemic they have gone above and beyond to continue offering advice and support to clients.



About our Sponsor

Bron Afon is a not-for-profit social enterprise, registered social landlord and community mutual organisation.

We manage and maintain over 8,000 homes across Torfaen. At the heart of everything we do every day is our passion for delivering excellent high-quality services to our customers.

Linked closely to this is our commitment to promoting and supporting vibrant, sustainable, safe, clean, and healthy communities that people feel proud to live in.

Our ambition is to create flourishing communities in our part of Wales, where everyone has a quality home to live in and where people who need it are supported and encouraged.

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Thank you to our other sponsors

As one of Wales' top performing colleges, Coleg Gwent is an inclusive and diverse FE college with 5 campuses in Usk, Ebbw Vale, Crosskeys, Newport and Cwmbran. Offering full-time, part-time, higher-education, e-learning and apprenticeship qualifications, their courses cater for all levels.



Thousands join Coleg Gwent each year and enjoy high-quality teaching, extensive support, extra-curricular activities and excellent outcomes. Expert tutors and industry-standard facilities mean learners develop the skills required for their chosen career path.

This combined with strong industry links and employer partnerships helps Coleg Gwent develop the curriculum of the future and address skill shortages. Learn more at www.colegwent.ac.uk.

Based in Pontypool, Freight Logistics Solutions is a digital freight forwarding company that provides transport solutions and EU customs for over 500 customers across the UK. with access to over 50,000 vehicles across the UK & Europe, FLS deliver operational excellence 24/7



FLS specialise in offering commercial transport logistics and supply chain management through our unique expertise in the movement and alliance of freight across the UK, Europe and Worldwide.

We created this business through sector need and our passion for quality solutions that are technology-driven, personality backed and take care of our customers' needs, improve quality, and reduce costs.

Voyage of Hope Therapy Services is a children's counselling provider based in Gwent. We are currently active in various organisations and schools in Torfaen and beyond. This includes providing one-to-one and group Play Therapy sessions for children, young people and families.



We also support carers and professionals with Supervision and Reflective Practice, First Aid for Mental Health courses and bespoke training. We pride ourselves in the safe spaces we provide for children to heal, build stronger positive relationships, and express themselves.

Our play therapists are registered with the British Association of Play Therapists, DBS checked, and qualified to Masters Level.

Pontypool Community Council plans and works closely with communities and organisations who live and work here. 21 elected councillors and Council staff work hard to provide services and representation so that quality of life for local people is improved, now and for future generations.

The Council provides services including events (Party in the Park, Christmas Cavalcade, art, poetry, photo and other competitions), youth services, notice boards, benches, litter/doggy bins and flowers, public toilets and CCTV.



The Council promotes Pontypool and provides environmental and other grants for groups, sports teams and others. It is delighted to sponsor these Community Volunteer Awards.

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Thank you to our other sponsors

Orbits IT are a provider of IT Support and services to organisations throughout South Wales, the Midlands and South West.

Built on honesty, reliability, and technical expertise, Orbits IT puts the focus back on customer service and trust in the IT sector.



Working with more than 250 SMEs, charities and public sector organisations since 2010, Orbits IT are proactive, respond quickly, and advise freely and honestly. Always on-hand to provide strategies and solutions to improve productivity and to support expansion.

Find out more at www.orbitsit.co.uk or call us on 02920 003 313

We were established as a not-for-profit, a charity based and operate in Pontypool, Wales 2019 and offer a range of services that include a state-of-the-art gym facility along with access to quality PTs and rehabilitation professionals.

Adding to this will be the downstairs area in the facility hosts an education room/functional fitness room, café area and other social business events.



We also include mental health drop-in facilities and support will aim to train all our volunteers and PTs in Mental Health First Aid.

The 100 Voices are a group of Melin residents who volunteer their time to improve the services that residents receive. They do this via email, telephone or face to face.



They help shape the services that residents receive by providing feedback and collaborating with staff from all departments to scrutinise services.

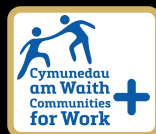
Within the Voices is a Communities Group who work with Melin's Communities Team to support Melin residents through grant funding and community activities and also with community groups and agencies for the benefit of residents.

The strapline for the 100 Voices is "Be part of the Conversation."

The Communities for Work Plus project provides effective and friendly employability support to the residents of Torfaen.

Many of the people we help across Torfaen benefit from a bespoke package of support that includes:

Training & employment opportunities (including self-employment advice), Funding for training, clothing, travel, equipment & childcare 1:1 specialist mentoring & intensive support to discuss and help remove barriers to employment.



If you or anyone you know could benefit from our support, please get in touch. Email us directly on cfwplus@torfaen.gov.uk

For more information please go to our Facebook page:
[@cfwplustorfaen](https://www.facebook.com/cfwplustorfaen)

#TorfaenSaysThanks

Thank You

The concept of hosting a celebration event came from a small number of representatives from Torfaen Voluntary Alliance, Torfaen CBC, and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, where there was an undoubted agreements that we needed to highlight and give thanks for the contribution that community groups, volunteers, organisations, and local businesses bring to the communities throughout Torfaen.

Anne Evans, Torfaen Voluntary Alliance
Aimi Morris, Torfaen Voluntary Alliance
Victoria Crocker, Torfaen Voluntary Alliance
Dave Congreve, Torfaen County Borough Council
Cllr Fiona Cross, Torfaen County Borough Council
Emma Davies-McIntosh, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

We were fortunate to secure additional support to enable the vision to grow through access to their expertise, business contacts and balloon skills!;

Lydia Parry, Bron Afon Community Housing
Caroline Morgan, Melin Homes
Angharad Collins, Torfaen Leisure Trust

Not to forget the core Team at TVA: Callum Jones, Clare Taylor, Patrick Downes, Thomas Boor, all of whom have slept, ate and breathed the planning of this event to ensure it is a complete success - you can rest now!

Special thanks to Torfaen Leisure Trust for providing the great venue free of charge

Our 2021 Judges

To assess each application that we received, we developed a great panel of independent people who represented all areas. Their job was tough, but they did it!

Matt Jones, TVA Board Trustee & Welsh Water Financial Director
Anthony Hunt, Leader of Torfaen County Borough Council
Katija Dew, ABuHB Trustee, Third Sector Member
Alan Brunt, CEO Bron Afon Community Housing
John Harris, Former Gold Paralympian
Phillip Alderman Esq, Gwent High Sheriff
Elliot Ormond, Torfaen Member of Youth Parliament



Sponsors

BIG Thank you to all of our sponsors, who without hesitation agreed to support these awards, bring it to life and make it a true celebration.



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HIGH STREET
FITNESS



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Keep Us Safe!

Our goal was to celebrate the great achievements of those who volunteer their time selflessly to support their communities, and to do so with the wellbeing of those attending, through taking certain precautions to safeguard your health during this evening.

Lateral Flow Tests have been provided by ABuHB and will be available on your departure, and we ask that you take one and encourage you to complete a test on day 2 and day 8 following the event. Guidance is included within the packs.

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