

Canolfan Antioch Centre. Yr Eglwys yn y Gymuned



"The aim of a Christian social order is the fullest possible development of individual personality in the widest and deepest possible fellowship." William Temple, Christianity and the Social Order (1942).

Yn 1996 gwnatwyd ni brodyr hen ffatri "Choose Life" daeth Rhagen Ader C'yrfaer ac Alcohol Antioch'n gyn ymweithio ag Alcohol Antioch'n gyntaf yn 1997. Mae'n darparu lle i bob un sy'n gael problemau gyda'r alcohol a'r hysbysu. Mae'n gysylltu a phobl sy'n gael problemau gyda'r alcohol a'r hysbysu. Mae'n gysylltu a phobl sy'n gael problemau gyda'r alcohol a'r hysbysu.

DYLANWADU AR STRATEGAETH I EUENCTID - YN EICH ARDAL CHI

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THE CHURCHES' HOUSING COALITION OF WALES

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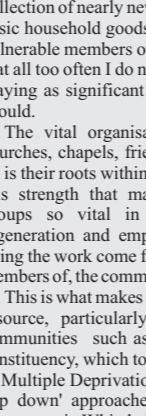
THE CHURCHES IN OUR COMMUNITIES

I mean no criticism of the countless thousands of committed Christians who give up hours of their skills, time and cash to the activities of Mothers Unions, the Boys Brigades, Church Mission Societies and outreach activities such as soup runs or the collection of nearly new clothing, furniture and basic household goods for the most needy and vulnerable members of our society, when I say that all too often I do not believe we succeed in playing as significant a role as we could and should.

The vital organisational strength of our churches, chapels, friendship societies and so on is their roots within local communities. It is this strength that makes our church based groups so vital in terms of community regeneration and empowerment the people doing the work come from, and are themselves members of, the community.

This is what makes our churches such a vital resource, particularly in severely deprived communities such as Rhyl West in my own constituency, which tops the Assembly's Index of Multiple Deprivation. We know that the old 'top-down' approaches that assume that the bureaukrat in Whitehall, Cardiff, or even in the local Council knows best have failed.

That is the strength of local congregations. Their weakness lies in the lack of skills or access to skills and expertise that can help to untap their real potential as a positive force for gain to their communities.



Ann Jones

Canolfan Antioch Centre. Church In The Community

In 1996 we purchased a 17,000sq ft disused factory and have been renovating it ever since. It now houses a very wide variety of projects at the very heart of local community life. A situation where local people would come to us for help perhaps, or because we were providing something they actually wanted to do or be a part of.

We found the key ingredient was when God married the need of people in our area with vision in the heart of someone in the church.

"Choose Life" Antioch's Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Programme, was born out of the vision of Alan Andrews, himself a former heroin addict and ex-offender. Canolfan Antioch Centre provides a meeting place where those with drug and alcohol problems can receive advice, support and counselling. The ministry also reaches into prisons and connects with addicts where they are in police stations, hospital or court!

In response to the need for children and youth facilities Crazy Maisies Fun Station was opened in 1997.

In grant funding jargon Crazy Maisies is a Community Enterprise project, and the project also includes a Nearly New shop. This sells inexpensive children's clothing and baby equipment. It provides a source of income to local families, by enabling them to recoup some of the cost of barely used items by selling them through the shop agency. It also employs 4 full time and 4 part time staff.

Grant funding for two part-time Antioch family workers has led to a range of parenting classes being offered at the centre. Working in partnership with Surestart, NCH and health visitors, these have ranged from, "Living with Teenagers", and "Dads'R'Us" classes to the "Incredible Years Parenting Class" and a young mum's support group.

Another project that attracted grant funding is the refurbishment of one complete wing of the building into a youth and children's centre. This is on target to open in September and will house children's clubs and youth work with a difference... "Mission Music", the outreach café already running, very literally plays to the strengths of Antioch's Youth and Childrens director, Ann O'Hare. Mission music is born out of the desire to give local youngsters the opportunity to express their own creative flare by making their own music!

Canolfan Antioch Centre actually houses a variety of businesses in it's small business units. A rent free start up period helps potential business men, and women, take the plunge to realise their dream.

SO what about the future? Well, as long as God continues to place vision in church members hearts, the projects will continue.

Elizabeth Watkins
Antioch Leadership Team Llanelli.

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