

the agoriadcyf news magazine

insight

summer edition
2009

Helping people with disadvantages to achieve independence through employment
Rhoi help llaw i bobl dan anfantaits ddod yn annibynnol drwy weithio

AGORIAD LEADER



Tom Jones
Chairman

It seems like yesterday

Some 17 years ago we formed Agoriad Cyf to help local people who, for various reasons through disadvantage, were finding difficulty in contributing to the local community by employment or social interaction. During this period I've been involved as Chairman and Trustee and it is a matter of some pride to all of us at Agoriad to see the development of the range of

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Cerist is the purest mineral water from the mountains of Snowdonia.

DŴR CERIST CYF

Cerist Water was established 20 years ago at Lawr Cae, Dinas Mawddwy, some eight miles due South of Dolgellau. Since it's beginning as a business to today Cerist has been recognised as an official EEC mineral water source.

The superb quality and purity of the water is well-known and its low mineral content is suitable for low sodium diets. The water is extracted from certified organic land and bottled at source within the Snowdonia National Park.

As part of our policy of developing true Social Enterprise projects Agoriad has taken over the business and formed Dŵr Cerist Cyf. The objective is to develop Dŵr Cerist as a major "mineral water brand" in Mid and North Wales while providing opportunities to create

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It seems like yesterday

services we offer - services with a true social consciousness.

Agoriad is now a proven and recognised provider of employment services and training. We promote the very real contribution that less advantaged people make in employment and to their communities by providing job and social training courses, coaching, mentoring and advice to both employers and employees.

Our teams seek the best opportunities for the people we help, and match these with friendly and non-invasive training and after-placement mentoring. We do everything to create a hassle-free path into work for our Clients and over the years it has been very rewarding to see how many we have helped into a more constructive and happier future.

From a small beginning we have expanded our areas of operation to the Counties of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbigh, Flint and Wrexham with regional offices in Pwllheli and Dolgellau now supporting our main Bangor Office.

In this issue of our magazine we introduce our latest Social Enterprise project - Dŵr Cerist Cyf. Cerist Water was established as a business in 1989 at Llawr Cae, Dinas Mawddwy when it gained recognition as an official EEC Mineral Water Source. It's still mineral water is particularly pure and is extracted and bottled from a source unchanged for hundreds if not thousands of years. Earlier this year Agoriad acquired the business

and we have plans to establish the product throughout North Wales. I am so pleased with the opportunities it provides our Clients to gain work experience and employment as we expand its operation. It is a great Agoriad concept, a business that delivers a local product from Snowdonia, employs local people and provides a ready-made business environment for the people we help to be part of a team. That is creating a truly Social Enterprise business.

I must also mention the continuing success of Caffi Coed y Brenin in Bethesda - another local success story providing services to its local community and opportunities for employment for disadvantaged people. It's success story has encouraged the takeover of the Café and catering facilities at Llys Llewelyn at Aberffraw on Anglesey - again a chance to encourage local people and visitors alike to enjoy a community experience and for our Clients to gain valuable work experience and employment.

A big thanks to all our business friends who over the years have provided so much vision and help to allow less advantaged people to become part of their employment communities: to all at Agoriad as we aim to continue to expand the chances and choices for the people we exist to help, and most importantly to our Clients who show time and time again the spirit and determination to get ahead in Society "no matter what". It is a privilege for us to help them in any way.



NEW SALES REPRESENTATIVE FOR DŴR CERIST

Hazel Jones from Chwilog, is the new sales representative for Dŵr Cerist.

"My role is to rekindle old acquaintances, rejuvenate sales and promote and establish new sales throughout Mid and North Wales.

The response I've had from former customers of Dŵr Cerist has been enormous, with orders far exceeding expectations. It's been an absolute pleasure to meet the customers and hope that with their help, Dŵr Cerist will be one of the leading brand names throughout Wales".

Conrad from Spar, Y Maes, Pwllheli:

"We pride ourselves on being able to offer our customers only the very best Welsh products."

Bruce from Dwyfor Rabbit Farm and Animal Park:

"We wanted to offer our customers a locally sourced, good quality mineral water, and we found it in Dŵr Cerist."

DŴR CERIST CYF

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New branding for our new delivery fleet of vans.

employment for our Clients within the vocational areas of production, marketing and distribution. To date, a total of seven individuals with learning difficulties are involved in the day-to-day running of the business and our managers are delighted with their contribution to the team.

Cerist Water is available by direct order online at www.dwrcerist.com or by our order line at 01341 421440 (Sioned or Eryl).

Agoriad Chief Executive Arthur Beechey:

"We are very excited about the future prospects of Dŵr Cerist; not only have we seen local communities and retailers react positively to the new branding and delivery routes, but we have also seen an appreciation of the work opportunities Agoriad presents to individuals classed as disadvantaged in the workplace.

As we increase turnover we increase these opportunities; this is on the back of a superb local quality product, well-presented and delivered to any outlet that offers mineral water at a competitive price. Thanks to all our wholesale customers - new and old."



Some of our Cerist team at Dinas Mawddwy.



Bottling in progress... lots more wonderfully pure Cerist Water.



Labelling the new Cerist brand on 5ltr bottles at our Dinas Mawddwy bottling plant.

**Are you finding difficulty in getting employment opportunities, or are you an employer looking to fill a position and willing to offer a work placement opportunity?
Please call us to arrange for one of our Employment Officers to contact you.**



01248 361392



I have worked for Agoriad for almost ten years. My work has varied during this time but for the past few years I have been working as Agoriad's Training Coordinator. My main role is to develop and deliver training courses for various client groups. At present, I am working primarily with the Skilbuild groups.

ALWEN PARRINGTON JONES

The first thing I did this morning was check my e-mails. I was awaiting a reply from Careers Wales as I had sent a request for our Skilbuild clients to be re-endorsed for a further 13 weeks. The average length of the course is 26 weeks, during which each client is expected to complete various Awards and Certificates as well as participate in a work placement. A date was set for us to meet in order to carry this out.

I then photocopied worksheets for the Skilbuild group for the day. The group are currently working towards their ASDAN Workright award as well as learning about general vocational skills. During the day I carried out progress reviews with the group members individually - these must be filled in monthly. It was an opportunity to discuss suitable work placements in order to contact employers in order to arrange these for the coming weeks.

When the group had left I needed to take an individual to buy suitable clothing for his work placement. I had set up a placement for him at Penrhyn Castle for which he did not have the necessary footwear and Agoriad had agreed to help him with this.

Following this I had a meeting with an individual who has been referred to Agoriad for the next Skilbuild course in September. He came along with various family members in order to get an outline of what the course involves and information on how Agoriad would be able to assist him with bus training as he is unable to travel independently at present.

The final thing to do was to reply to any telephone messages and check my emails before logging off for the day.

25 NOT OUT FOR CAFFI COED Y BRENIN

Manager Karen Aston is really excited about the developments at Caffi Coed y Brenin, Bethesda as 2009 is not only the year that it has had a complete refurbishment but it's also the 25th anniversary of the café.

In addition to a full time member of staff and one part time, plus her 8 Agoriad clients, Karen is seeing the business grow and has plans for the future to gain even more customers as well as her regulars - some come in every day for their coffee and cakes amidst the friendly atmosphere of the café.

Just by looking at the front of the café, there is an obvious change with bright new 'Caffi' images on the window and the well known 'Agoriad' logo too. The refurbishment has involved not only the customer area but also a newly equipped kitchen. The café area is now bright and airy with natural wood floors and furniture, and toning walls. The new tablecloths also follow



Karen Aston (Manager) and Susan Pritchard with 'Caffi Chocolate Éclairs'.

the colour scheme with circles in brown, russet and coffee colours.

Summer opening hours are 9am to 3pm and the day starts with Breakfast (which is served all day), then onto the coffee and a selection of cakes - all freshly baked in the café. The lunchtime customers have a huge choice of snacks - toasties, sandwiches, filled jacket potatoes and various 'mains and specials' from fish to lasagne, salads, omelettes and the vegetarian spicy beanburgers. There is a discount for pensioners and special meals for children - something to suit everyone.

Thursday is the day when Karen entices her customers in for a special lunch - a main meal and pudding for just £5! During the cooler months, this will be a Roast Dinner and Hot Pudding and in hotter weather, a salad

and cake instead. This proves very popular with regulars and visitors alike. Once a month there is a Summer Cream Tea with sandwiches, scones with jam and cream and a selection of other cakes ranging from fresh cream éclairs to fairy cakes.

As a qualified Confectioner, Karen is busy with special occasion cakes for weddings, birthdays & christenings and the Café also makes buffets "to go" for organisations such as the Swimming Pool in Bangor and the Environmental Agency and the Probation Service and a local roofing insulation company has regular meetings with a buffet in the function room above the Café.

It is a very exciting time for the whole team at Caffi Coed y Brenin.

Contact number for bookings: 01248 602550

VOLUNTEERING WORK IN VIETNAM

Rhys Mann - Employment Officer



I have been lucky enough to have another opportunity in 2009 to carry out further volunteering work, this time in the beautiful country of Vietnam.

Although Vietnam has now been at peace for many years, effects from war continue to haunt not only the adult population of this beautiful country but also its' children. I have had the opportunity to work in institutions caring for children and young people affected by Agent Orange and also in community clinics looking after mentally disabled children. The work was somewhat varied dependent on the institution; however typical examples of jobs and tasks included -assisting local staff in providing rehabilitation exercises and therapist treatments for children, playing with children and entertaining/educating them with games, music, arts and other exercises, helping to develop fundraising initiatives to ensure ongoing funding for these institutions, and teaching English to local staff.

Whilst in Saigon I travelled to work at 9am by bus and finished at around 1pm when we had the opportunity to have some lunch before catching the number 5 bus to the second orphanage which started at 2pm and finished at around 5pm. The orphanages looked after 600 children in total. During the evenings we had some free time so I was given the opportunity to wander around Saigon and take in some of its culture and history, and to also sample the local cuisine.

The work was somewhat different to my role at Agoriad although it has taught me many things about various disabilities which I can hopefully learn from and implement into my day-to-day work within our company.

I was glad to see how organized the orphanages were and although I was very sad to leave I was at peace to know that the children were in capable and caring hands.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time volunteering and hopefully will be able to carry out further activities in 2010.

RACE FOR LIFE 2009

Phyllis has done it again this year and her first words were - can't wait for next year now!

The Agoriad team pulled together on the day and over £300 pounds sponsorship was raised for Cancer Research. This is the third year of entry for Agoriad who have entered a team every year since it started in Caernarfon and again we were blessed with a dry day for the 5k coastal walk. The walkers and runners make a spectacular sight streaming along the Forry as they all took the chance to walk with friends and enjoy the emotional experience and remember those who had been affected by cancer. The money Phyllis and the team collected will be used to help more people survive in the future and, as Phyllis says, apart from the dinner afterwards the best thing was having a nice walk with her friends from work and collecting over £300 pounds in sponsorship money. She is hoping to raise even more at next years' event.



'Walk' of Life participants Alwen (not in the picture), Sarah, Eluned, Phyllis and Karen at the finish.

FEEL GOOD FRIDAY FOR DAVID

Maen Alaw is in Penmaenmawr and offers community resources, including craft and art sessions, youth club, drumming and pottery.

With an Open Day looming in the summer the managers at Maen Alaw and Cwmni Penllan recognised that they had a major job on their hands to refurbish the interior ready for visitors.

Up stepped David (not his real name) who with his painting and decorating skills was more than willing to give his time voluntarily to the cause.

Through the Pathways to Work and Work Preparation programmes David met with the manager Barry who established that David's skills were exactly what they needed. Initially David was concerned that while he had the necessary skills it was a while since he'd applied them in the workplace but Barry was positive that he could build up his hours over three months in time for the opening. Barry's faith in David was well-founded, and he applied his plastering, surface preparation, painting, glossing, plumbing and woodwork skills to great effect and his hard work and dedication resulted in the complete refurbishment of Maen Alaw in good time for the Open Day.

David readily admits that he was nervous at first about building up his hours at the centre but now says it's the best thing he's ever done and his confidence has gone through the roof. He has received many enquiries from the community of Penmaenmawr who've seen his work and asked for his business card.

In the future David is considering becoming self-employed as a Painter and Decorator or applying for opportunities in Conwy Council as a handyman or for roles in housing maintenance. Through Pathways to Work David is able to gain continuing support and ultimately reach his goal of independence from the benefits system.



Sarah with Barry Morris (Cwmni Penllan Manager) at Maen Alaw.

"David worked in a voluntary capacity under the Pathways/Work Preparation Scheme for 15 weeks. He transformed the appearance of the building by decorating the entrance hallways, corridors, kitchen and conveniences. Although he worked on his own he was able to remain motivated throughout his time here."

"David was always pleasant, flexible and willing to help in anything that was asked of him. He got on well with the management and volunteers alike and has been a true asset to Maen Alaw."

"We wish him well in the future. The partnership working between Agoriad, WCVA, Cwmni Penllan, The Feel Good Friday Contract and Conwy Council Health Eating Programme proved to be very effective and we appreciate the direction and review process that Agoriad brought through Work Preparation. Agoriad created a soft stepping stone for David into work which was exactly what he needed."



Mark at the Pwllheli store with Andrew Cambell, the Assistant Manager.

STUDENTS PRESENT BUSINESS IDEAS

As part of their coursework for the HND in Hospitality Management based in Bangor, students were asked to respond to a brief provided by Caffi Coed y Brenin and come up with a business plan that included their ideas for updating the interior, new menus, business accounts, and an operations and marketing plan.

The students were then invited to present their ideas to members of the Caffi Coed y Brenin Board of Trustees, the café Manager Karen Aston, and the Chief Executive of Agoriad Cyf., Arthur Beechey.

Arthur Beechey said: "We were most impressed with the professional standard of the presentations and with the thoroughness of the business plans presented. The students have produced realistic and achievable plans for the café to develop and without doubt the plans were well-researched and considerate of the factors affecting enterprises. They have provided solutions and ideas to develop the café as a social enterprise which are innovative and practical. It was a privilege to work with a group who were so motivated and a credit to both themselves and Coleg Menai."

Hospitality, Catering and Tourism Programme Area Manager, Frances Davies said: "The students worked very hard on this project and the results were exceptional. We were very pleased to work with Caffi Coed y Brenin on this project and hope that they will be able to use some of the students' ideas in the future."

MARK IS A SUCCESS AT THE CO-OP

Mark Taylor started his employment with the Co-Op at Porthmadog, and had become a popular member of staff with his colleagues and store customers. He then moved over to the Pwllheli store due to the closure of the Porthmadog store.

The news that the shop was closing came as quite a shock to all concerned. When the news was announced, Agoriad immediately set about the negotiating of a re-location for Mark to another Co-Operative store within the area. With a positive attitude being taken by the Human Resources section at Co-Operative, Mark was offered an alternative in Pwllheli. This was considered suitable due to the regularity of public transport from Beddgelert (Mark's home) to Pwllheli and as Mark had a good knowledge of Pwllheli due to his time spent in the town with the Agoriad 'Skillbuild' group.

Mark has continued to grow his skills base within the Co-Op and works mostly on the dairy section of the store, carrying out varying tasks ranging from stock replenishing and rotation to price checking.

Agoriad continues to support Mark by carrying out regular reviews at the workplace and Mark enjoys his work and his contribution within the store has made him a valuable team member.

LINDA'S CHANGES AT LLYS LLEWELYN TEA ROOMS

In the beautiful setting of Llys Llewelyn at Aberffraw there has been a big change for the team at the Tea Rooms. Linda Austin has now taken over the helm as Manager, guiding a team of 2 full time staff and 12 Agoriad clients and there is a great welcome there for a huge variety of customers.



*Linda with some of her team:
Phillip Hughes, Jean Williams, Linda & Eric Taylor.*

The day may start with breakfast for a walking club, then a varied and interesting lunch selection for new customers and returning holidaymakers. Tea, coffee and cakes morning and afternoon - even the local police drop in for a 'panad'! Celebration cakes are available to order and Linda's Bara Brith is a real treat. Wednesday is pensioners' luncheon day which has proved very popular.

In addition to the extensive daily service (9am - 5pm in the summer) there are also evening meals and the occasional BBQ on Friday and Saturday summer evenings. Just recently, there was a group of 50 for a Golden Anniversary celebration with a salmon buffet and quiches. It is an ideal venue for functions such as this as the Tea Rooms are fully-licensed.

"The 5th of July was a big event as we catered for 200 Councillors who, after a church service, proceeded to Bodedern School to enjoy a buffet made and served by team members from the Tea Rooms".

Another great event will be on 11th & 12th August. Linda has organised a stand & café at the Anglesey Show, serving sandwiches, cakes and light refreshments and promoting Agoriad - without which, Linda said she could not have achieved so much in such a short time.



Eric serving coffee.

agoriad online

SO MUCH MORE TO OFFER!

My name is Nia Wyn Lloyd and I am an Administration Officer for Agoriad Cyf, and I have been working here for over three years. I have a wide range of responsibilities, which includes the online administration of the Agoriad website.

The website is often the first impression given of the organisation and that's why it's important to have an attractive, informative and user-friendly presentation.

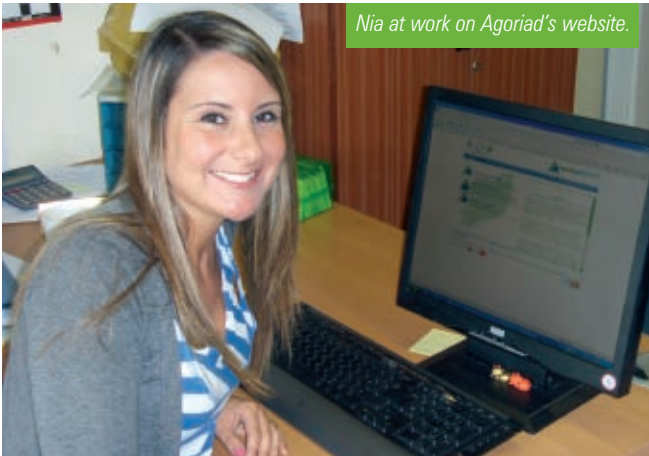
The new Agoriad Cyf website has all of the above and plenty

more to offer. Regularly updated, you will always be kept informed of the latest news and events within the organisation. All information is available in both the Welsh and English language and with it's easy to navigate browser, visiting the website couldn't be any easier!

The website includes an easy to access 'Courses and Services' section, which gives an introduction to all courses and explains what each course and service has to offer. Each course listed has an email contact, for those who prefer to discuss any queries or questions. You can send an email directly to the course tutor, or alternatively you can call the office for an informal chat.

Prospective employers will find the 'Working with Business' section helpful as it lists the benefits of working with Agoriad, and describes how we can help to achieve successful training and employment for our Clients and the contribution they can make to businesses.

Our Insight Magazine is also available online in the form of an e-book along with previous archived magazines. The magazine includes stories of placements, courses, events, training and much more! If you would like to receive our online e-magazine please email info@agoriad.org.uk



Nia at work on Agoriad's website.



Check out all the courses and the ways we can help on

www.agoriad.org.uk



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