

Case Study

Feedback - Impact of Attending Activities in the Community

Over the past year I have attended a number of different events organised by Cardiff Well-being Support Service.

Before outlining the activities, I have joined I will explain a little about my personal circumstances that led to my becoming involved.

Firstly, in my late sixties my health is declining significantly, I have diabetes and had two major operations. I cannot drive, my eyes are failing, and my mobility is intermittent. This means that my leisure options are severely limited.

I used to be the carer for my house-bound wife which dominated my entire life. When she died nearly sixteen months ago this left me in a very vulnerable situation. I had broken ties with all my former friends and former workmates because of being tied to my home. I knew that isolation and depression were a very real threat and that I needed to make a positive step to get out into the wider community for the good of both my physical and mental health.

I was told of a coach trip to the National Botanical Gardens of Wales by someone who used the well-being service. I rang Jane Clements and was welcomed to join the group. It was a really lovely day out to somewhere I had never been before and was never likely to go to on my own. I really liked the company and camaraderie of the other people in the VEST minibus and was instantly interested in joining them in other activities.

Since that time, I have been on numerous walks with the group, these have taken me around Cardiff to Grangetown, Trelai, Llanederyn, Roath Park, Alexandria Gardens and the National Museum - all of which I have enjoyed greatly.

I have also attended weekly gatherings at The Powerhouse in Llanederyn where we play simple board games. To working people who live in established families this might not sound much, but to someone who lives alone it is actually a very important part of the week.

As it happens, I have introduced a couple of my friends to the group as well as making friendships with a number of the people who were existing members. From this we have informed each other of a range of other community activities in Cardiff and most weeks will be involved in something that has not actually been planned by the Well-being team but has evolved from the catalyst they provided.

So, much to my surprise, I now find that the Well-being activities have become an important part of my new life as a widower. They have positively encouraged me to get out of my house and engage with the wider community. I feel greatly indebted to them and firmly believe that they play a hugely important role in supporting those who for whatever reason find themselves on the fringes of what could be considered the mainstream of society.