

# YMCA Neath Newsletter

Welcome to the first newsletter of the year! We're excited to share some fantastic updates and achievements made possible with the support of our community. From initiatives driven by your generosity to exciting collaborations and acknowledgments, here's what we've been up to in the past few months...

## Community Matters

With thanks to the invaluable assistance from the Community Matters Fund, we've been able to distribute 200 warm packs to those in need, offering comfort and support during the colder months. We were able to provide a warm space at the YMCA where visitors were welcome to free refreshments and board games.



As part of our 'Love and Leftovers' project, our kitchen has undergone a much-needed makeover. With a new oven, flooring, and support from Hubbub plus the NPT Food Poverty Grant, our kitchen is now better equipped to open our community pantry and cafe. Watch this space!



A heartfelt thank you to the Tai Tarian ESR team and Lighting Solutions for their generous donation of £100 worth of goods to our pantry, further supporting our efforts to combat food insecurity within our community.

We're thrilled to announce that our JustGiving page has reached an impressive milestone, totalling £2,501! Your contributions make a real difference in helping us continue our vital work - Thank you.

## Tesco Stronger Starts Community Vote

We're thrilled to announce that we have placed first in the Tesco Stronger Starts Community Vote! The funds received will be instrumental in sustaining our Men's Den, ensuring it continues to be a welcoming space for all.

# Stronger Starts



## Garden Transformation

Thanks to funding from 4 The Region, we've been able to create an outdoor space where we can grow our own produce. Volunteers, along with the Marauders Mens Health, have dedicated their time and effort to transform this space in to a thriving resource for our community.



## Community Action Day

Are you interested in gardening? Want to spend time outdoors? Join our volunteers on Friday 26th April at 10am. We need help with jet washing paths, planting seeds, building storage boxes and raised beds, painting benches and sheds, general cleaning. Food and refreshments provided - all welcome!





### 'Under the Scope'

As part of LGBTQIA+ History month we hosted LGBTQIA+ History Night 'Under the Scope,' held in partnership with Fast Track Swansea Bay, QueerTawe, SwanScene, Safer Neath Port Talbot and NPT Pride. With presentations on HIV services and testing plus queer welsh stories and various information stalls the event was a great success.

Please keep an eye on our social media for future events.

### Community Reds

We were delighted to attend the opening of the Community Reds Briton Ferry Education Hub, where we had the pleasure of meeting Dewi the Dragon and engaging with our community in a vibrant and welcoming space.



### Digital Alliance

Our Friendship Circle had a visit from Digital Alliance who spoke about the services they provide around all things digital. We believe that digital inclusion is crucial for individuals of all ages. The YMCA holds a computer club every Wednesday 10:00am for those who need digital support.



### Educ8

We welcomed Wendy from Educ8 to the No Limits Ladies group, where members took part in the crafts provided and enjoyed a buffet.



It's been a busy few months for our Judo Club!

### Coaching Excellence

We're thrilled to announce that Meriel East, Ian East, Elis East, and Adam Cardy recently completed the Level One Judo Coaching Course offered by the Welsh Judo Association.

Congratulations to our dedicated volunteers for their commitment to enhancing their skills and knowledge to better serve our club and its members.



### National and International Representation

Our members have been making waves beyond the borders of our club, proudly representing Wales and showcasing their talent on various platforms:

Elis East and Macsen Jenkins participated in Welsh squad training in Carmarthen.

Dominic Hewitt embarked on a Judo weekend in France.

Macsen Jenkins proudly competed for Wales at the British Schools Championships in Sheffield.



### Regional and Local Success

Closer to home, our Judoka have been achieving remarkable success and recognition:

Harley Collins displayed outstanding skill and determination, earning a well-deserved silver medal at the Gendros Red Belt Rumble.

Macsen Jenkins received silver and Elis Evans bronze at the Welsh Schools Championships in Cardiff, a testament to their dedication and hard work.

### Community Engagement

We recently had the pleasure of visiting the Imperial Judo Club for a joint training session, fostering connections and exchanging knowledge with fellow Judo enthusiasts.



We would like to congratulate our very own Sensei Ian Cady who has recently been awarded with a well-deserved Neath Town Council Citizenship Award. Nominated by Cllr Jan Lockyer this recognition is a testament to Ian's outstanding contribution and dedication to the YMCA for the last 37 years. Sensei Ian Cady has not only been a martial arts instructor but a mentor and guide to countless individuals within our community. His commitment to creating a positive and nurturing environment has played a pivotal role in shaping our Judo Club!



### YMCA Baby Bank

Our Vice Chairman Joanna Jenkins had the pleasure of visiting Neath Mother's Union to give a talk about YMCA Neath Baby Bank. Thank you to the kind ladies who knitted and donated a Moses basket filled with blankets that we can now pass on to visitors of the baby bank.

### 143rd Good Friday Breakfast

In 1876 the first public breakfast in connection with YMCA Neath was given at the British Schools, Queen Street, Neath when nearly 300 people were seated. YMCA Neath has maintained this tradition (possibly now a unique event in England and Wales) with only six years being missed during the 1940s, when the event was suspended. This was our 143rd celebration. Special thanks to Pastor Lynn Maddocks for his inspiring words, and to soloist Gracie Marks and pianist Bethan Marks. We would also like to thank Pauline and her team for their hard work, we couldn't do it without you.



## YMCA Charity Shop

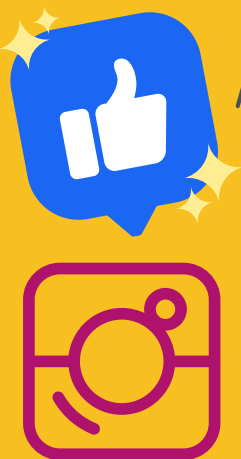
We're incredibly proud to highlight the impactful work of the YMCA Charity Shop, located here at the YMCA. Managed by our volunteer Pam and fuelled by generous donations, in the months spanning January to March the shop has raised an impressive £1,136!

This vital fundraising not only aids in supporting the various activities and initiatives held at the YMCA but also serves to support members of our community. Offering a wide array of low-cost items including clothes, shoes, bags and homeware for just 50p - books, DVDs, and essentials such as school uniform provided free of charge, the shop stands as a testament to our commitment to serving and uplifting our community. Thank you all.



Together, we've achieved remarkable milestones and made a positive impact on the lives of those around us. As we say to good bye to the past year we look forward to the adventures and challenges that 2024 holds for us all. With your continued support and involvement, we are confident that we will have a bright and promising future for our YMCA.

Thank you, and let's make 2024 our best year yet!



*Follow us on social media!*  
*@YMCANeath*

### Upcoming events:

Summer Fayre  
Wednesday 14th August  
11:00 - 1:00pm  
Stalls and refreshments  
FREE ENTRY