

# YMCA Neath Newsletter

January to March 2025

## WELCOME

As we step into another exciting year, we're grateful for the continued support of our community, volunteers and funders. The past few months have been filled with positive developments and we're thrilled to share our latest successes with you.

## GRANT UPDATES

Hubbub – The Lending Shed (£9,000): This funding will help us open The Lending Shed, enabling the community to borrow essential items and promoting a culture of sharing and sustainability.

Post Code Lottery Fund – LGBTQIA+ Adult Group (£10,000): This grant will support the continuation and development of our LGBTQIA+ Adult Group, providing a safe and inclusive space for connection and support.

National Lottery Community Fund – Friendship Circle (£12,050): This funding will enhance our Friendship Circle, offering more opportunities for social interaction and support to those experiencing loneliness and isolation.

NPT Food Poverty Grant (£3,200): We have secured funding to supply cleaning and hygiene products through our Community Pantry, ensuring those struggling with the cost of living have access to essential household items.

NPT Warm Space Grant: Join us on Fridays from 9:00 to 1:00pm for a warm, welcoming space where you can enjoy a hot drink, good company and support if needed.



## GYM IMPROVEMENTS

Clothworkers' Foundation (£40,000)  
A huge boost for our gym! Thanks to this generous capital funding, we will be upgrading our gym equipment, ensuring our members have access to a high-quality fitness facilities.



## COMMUNITY GARDEN

Our community garden has been buzzing with activity over the past few months! We were thrilled to receive further funding from 4 The Region, allowing us to purchase additional gardening equipment to support our volunteers. As part of our ongoing efforts to learn and grow, we also visited the FAN Community Garden to exchange ideas.

Thanks to funding from Neath Port Talbot Local Nature Partnership through the Welsh Government Local Places for Nature Scheme our living wall is now complete! It was a pleasure to welcome the biodiversity team to showcase the incredible work that has been done. This project has enhanced our green space and created a vibrant habitat for local wildlife.

We are also proud to announce that our dedicated volunteers' hard work and passion have been recognised with a CLA Award for the transformation of our garden.

This achievement is a testament to the incredible efforts of everyone involved, and we couldn't be prouder of how far our garden has come!





## LGBTQIA+ HISTORY TALK

YMCA Neath's LGBTQ+ History Night was an incredible evening of activism, social change and community celebration! Hosted by Jamie Jenkins of SwanScene, the event brought together inspiring speakers, engaging discussions and fantastic entertainment.



Attendees had the opportunity to hear from Vik, Chair of NPT Pride, Sarah Maslen from Fast Track Swansea Bay, Carla Adele Shepherd of Primavera, Brandon Gregory, Manager of Cardiff Dragons Football Club, and Rachel Ann-Lewis, blogger of Gay of Moonshine. The evening was rounded off with amazing live music from Alun and Scott.

With informative stalls, talks, entertainment and a buffet, the night was a fantastic opportunity for the community to come together, celebrate LGBTQ+ history and discuss ongoing activism.

A huge thank you to everyone who attended and supported the event, including Fast Track, NPT Pride and South Wales Police. Your support makes a real difference.

Funded by Swansea Bay Community Cohesion Fund.



## LGBTQIA+ YOUTH

It was a pleasure to welcome Sioned Williams MS and Andrew Jenkins to our LGBTQIA+ youth group at YMCA Neath. Their visit provided a fantastic opportunity for our young people to share their experiences, discuss important issues, and showcase the inclusive and supportive space we've created. We're grateful for their time, engagement, and encouragement in championing LGBTQIA+ youth and the work we do. It was an inspiring session and we look forward to continuing these important conversations in the future.



## JUDO SUCCESS

Our YMCA Neath Judo Club has had an incredible run of success recently, with our talented judoka achieving fantastic results in major competitions.

A huge congratulations to Elis Evans, who won a bronze medal at the prestigious British Schools Championships in Sheffield, an amazing achievement on a national stage.

At the Llanishen Dragon Academy competition, our team brought home multiple medals, with Jack Williams securing gold, while Matt Fury, Zac Thomas, Rhys Hickmott, Phil and Nathan Montague all earned bronze.

We are so proud of their hard work and dedication.



## CARPARK TRANSFORMATION

Our car park at YMCA Neath has undergone an incredible transformation thanks to Heidelberg Materials! Their support has helped resurface and improve the space, making it safer and more accessible. This upgrade not only enhances the appearance of our site but also ensures better facilities for visitors, staff and service users. A huge thank you to Heidelberg Materials for their generosity and commitment to supporting local organisations like ours.





## THANK YOU

Thank you to the Neath Trefoil Guild for their generous cheque donation to our Baby Bank! Your support will make a real difference to local families in need. Community kindness like this ensures that no parent has to face hardship alone. We are incredibly grateful for your generosity and continued support.

## 150TH CELEBRATIONS

As we prepare to celebrate YMCA Neath's 150th anniversary, we're looking back at the history of our organisation and the many lives it has touched over the years. To help us mark this special occasion, we're inviting past and present members, staff and the wider community to share their memories, stories and photos of their time at the YMCA. Whether you attended a club, played sports, volunteered or simply found a sense of belonging here, we'd love to hear from you! Your contributions will help us showcase YMCA Neath's rich history through our commemorative displays, social media campaign and anniversary events. If you have any photos or memories to share, please get in touch - we'd love to celebrate this milestone together!

surplus  
**167.77kg**  
food

volunteer  
**562**  
hours

Charity Shop  
**£672.82**  
raised

## BYE FOR NOW!

As always, we're incredibly grateful for the support of our community. Whether you're attending our events, volunteering, or simply spreading the word, you're helping to make a real difference. Be sure to follow us on social media and check our website for the latest news, upcoming activities, and ways to get involved. Together, we're building a stronger, more inclusive Neath for everyone. See you soon at YMCA Neath!



## Follow us on social media!

**YMCA**

Here for young people  
Here for communities  
Here for you

Yma i bobl ifanc  
Yma i gymunedau  
Yma i chi