



Cronfa Gymunedol Fferm Wynt  
**PEN Y CYMOEDD**  
Wind Farm Community Fund CIC

IMPACT REPORT

# 2016-2018

OUR FIRST TWO YEARS

# INTRODUCTION

In December 2016 the Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm Community Fund opened for business, offering a new, substantial source of funding across four Valleys. Prior to the launch, Wind Farm operators Vattenfall had consulted widely, gathering local ideas. The £1.8 million a year index linked Fund will run until 2043 and will invest in the priorities identified by local communities.

## **Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm Community Fund CIC**

4 Venture Wales Building, Depot Road  
Aberdare, Rhondda Cynon Taff, CF44 8DL

01685 878785

[enquiries@penycymoeddcic.cymru](mailto:enquiries@penycymoeddcic.cymru)

[f](#) @penycymoedd [t](#) @PyCCommunity

From the outset, the new Directors of the Fund were inspired by the wealth of ideas generated locally and we are determined to develop a strategic approach that builds on the amazing assets and strengths of our communities to make real and lasting difference. We have continued to reach out and have been delighted by the welcome we've been given and the huge interest shown.

Amongst the strengths of the Fund is our ability to support businesses as well as community organisations; to take a long-term approach as well as meeting immediate needs; to stimulate creativity and innovation and to collaborate with others to maximise our impact.

It is still early days, and we will evolve further, but we hope that our first two years – reflected in this report – have set the tone for the future. Here we tell the story of some of the projects that have been awarded grants and the people who have made them happen. We hope you enjoy reading it and that it offers food for thought.

We would like to thank Vattenfall – and all of you – for your support, energy and creativity.

**Marc Phillips**, Chair

**Barbara Anglezarke**, Executive Director

February 2019



# ABOUT THE COMMUNITY FUND

## Pen y Cymoedd Wind Energy Project

Developed and managed by European energy company Vattenfall, Pen y Cymoedd is currently the largest onshore wind farm in England and Wales – its 76 turbines have been generating enough power for 188,000 homes since September 2017. Vattenfall has been involved in energy generation for over 100 years, and the company's overarching aim now is to make fossil fuel free living possible within one generation.

The wind farm is situated on Welsh Government land, managed by Natural Resources Wales. Of the £400 million investment to build the Project, 52% went to businesses in Wales, securing work for more than 1,000 workers. Today, a 23-strong Operations and Maintenance Team is based at Hwb Pen y Cymoedd on the wind farm site. The Community Fund continues to work closely with Vattenfall staff and very much appreciates their enthusiastic support.

## Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm Community Fund

The Community Fund has been integral to the development of the wind farm from the start as part of Vattenfall's long-term commitment to the communities hosting the turbines. At £1.8m a year, it is currently the largest such fund in the UK. Although initially established by Vattenfall, the Fund has its own Board of directors and is independent of the wind farm operation.

Following extensive community and stakeholder consultation, Vattenfall summarised all the wide-ranging priorities identified in a Prospectus – published on our website:

**[www.penycymoeddcic.cymru](http://www.penycymoeddcic.cymru)**

The Prospectus summarises all potential actions and developments under nine key themes:



**Local Jobs and the Economy**



**Transport and Connections**



**Health and Wellbeing**



**Safety and Housing**



**Community Spaces**



**Environment**



**Tourism**



**Culture**



**Schools and Training**

There are currently two grant streams supporting delivery of these priorities (full details on our website) – available to community organisations and businesses:

**Micro Fund:** 11% of the total Fund available each year – normally one-off grants up to £5,000 – two rounds each year.

**Vision Fund:** 79% of the total Fund available each year – grants over £5,000.

In order to ensure that funds are available well into the future and recycled for others to draw on, we are investigating the possibility of offering other types of funding such as repayable grants and loans.

Up to 10% of the total Fund pot is available to cover operational costs.

**£1,800,000**



# PEN Y CYMOEDD WIND FARM COMMUNITY FUND CIC

The Fund is managed by an independent, locally accountable Community Interest Company with a Board of six non-executive Directors, who are legally responsible for all investment decisions and delivery of the Strategy.

## Strategy and priorities

Our Strategy sets out how we will support delivery of the broad ideas and aspirations captured in the Prospectus. It helps to guide our decision making and prioritise activities for the coming years. This strategy is by no means set in stone and will be revised and adapted as needed to reflect changing circumstances and the progress that is being made.

**Vision:** the community's vision set out within the Prospectus is that in 2040 and beyond, the Pen y Cymoedd area is a dynamic, exciting, vibrant place to live and work.

**Our Mission:** our role is to do all we can to make the community's vision a reality – using the resources we have, to sustain and enhance the economic, social, cultural and environmental assets of the area of benefit.

## Priorities and Values – we aim to:

1. Identify and raise awareness of opportunities and potential – people and ideas – encouraging discussion and shared learning.
2. Help to raise aspirations – fostering the development of a can-do attitude.
3. Help to build capacity – to develop ideas and take action.
4. Invest in economic opportunities, retaining assets in the local area – people, money, infrastructure.
5. Sustain and develop community infrastructure – things that need to be in place to be able to live in the area.
6. Improve connectivity and connect communities.
7. Develop the CIC as a long-term investor in the area.



**Marc Phillips**  
(Chair)



**Mair Gwynant**  
(Treasurer)



# STRATEGY



**Professor  
Donna Mead**



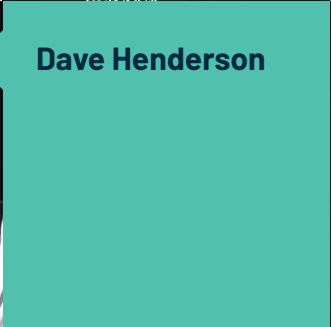
**Bob Chapman**



All were appointed following an open recruitment process in June 2016 and can serve a maximum of two three-year terms. We will be looking to appoint new members gradually over the next few years to ensure continuity as original Directors stand down. The recruitment process will again be transparent and open and well-publicised and will ensure that Board membership reflects the make-up of our communities.



**Dave Henderson**



**Glenn Bowen**



# PRIORITIES

Day to day management of the Community Fund is undertaken by our Staff Team of two:



**Barbara Anglezarke**  
(Executive Director)



**Kate Breeze**  
(Programme Administrator)

# FUND AREA OF BENEFIT

The Fund's area of benefit covers the upper reaches of the Neath, Afan, Rhondda and Cynon Valleys – the main communities are shown on the map.



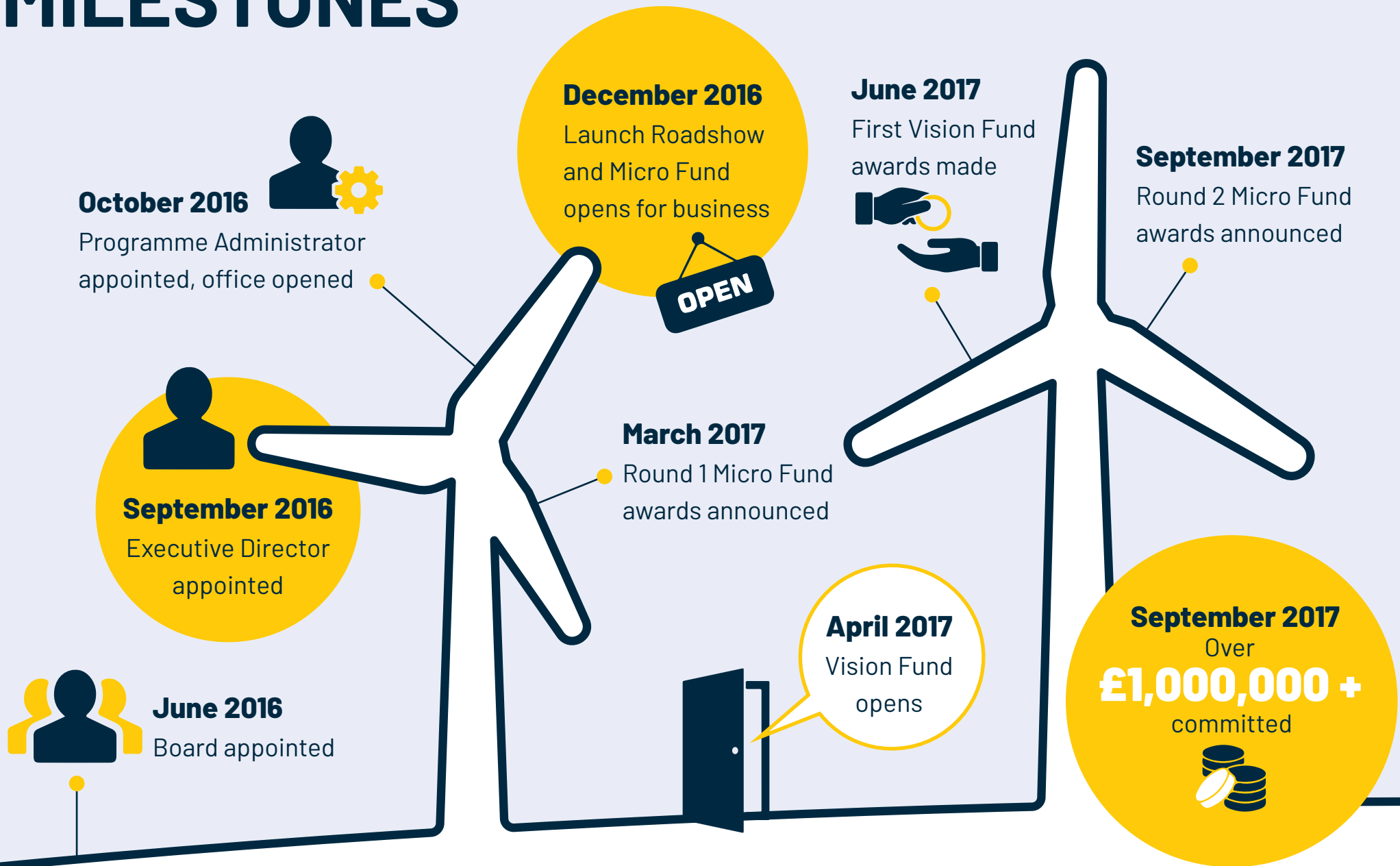




Cefn Rhigos  
Rhigos  
Penderyn  
Hirwaun  
Llwydcoed  
Penywaun  
Trecynon  
Cwmdare  
Aberdare  
Cwmbach  
Aberaman  
Cefnpennar  
Abercwmboi  
Cwmaman  
Maerdy  
Blaenrhondda  
Blaencwm  
Tynewydd  
Treherbert  
Ynyswen  
Ferndale  
Treorchy  
Pentre  
Cwmparc

Applicants can be based outside this area – they need to explain clearly how their proposals will benefit people living in the Fund communities.

# MILESTONES



**March 2018**

Round 3 Micro Fund awards announced

**March 2018**  
Over  
**£2,000,000 +**  
committed



**July 2018**  
Over  
**£3,000,000 +**  
committed



**September 2018**

Round 4 Micro Fund awards announced

**November 2018**  
Over  
**£4,000,000 +**  
committed



**November 2017**

Wavehill appointed as Monitoring & Evaluation Consultants



**May 2018**

Supporting Communities Team appointed - partnership with Interlink and NPT CVS



# WAYS OF WORKING

Writing a funding application probably isn't top of anyone's list of fun things to do but we do our best to make the process as pain-free as we can – and we always welcome and act on feedback to make improvements.

Before any proposal is submitted, we encourage discussion with our friendly (and small!) staff team – Kate and Barbara. This helps us to understand what's planned, answer process questions, deal with eligibility issues etc. Potential applicants can book slots at informal advice sessions held regularly throughout the Fund's area of benefit – publicised on our website, via social media and posters in community venues.

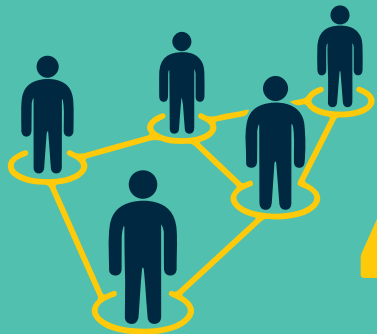
We aim to work with applicants in a supportive and helpful way – we know that for some people the process can be daunting. Staff don't make award decisions – Board members do that – so Kate and Barbara can offer a helping hand.

We apply the following principles to our assessment processes: **Respect for applicants, Openness, Being Proportionate and Fairness.**

A grant award to Neath Port Talbot CVS and Interlink has brought in an additional resource – the Fund now has a dedicated Supporting Communities Team providing community development support. Skilled staff ensure that Community Fund applicants and grant recipients receive additional hands-on guidance and are signposted to further specialist services when that's needed. The team will also help to bring groups together across county and community boundaries, identifying and promoting opportunities to work together.



Getting out and about and meeting people is really important to us. Over our first two years, we:



HELD

42

ADVICE SESSIONS IN **28** DIFFERENT COMMUNITY VENUES ACROSS THE FUND AREA - SOMETIMES TEAMING UP WITH OTHER FUNDERS SUCH AS BIG LOTTERY TO MAKE SESSIONS MORE USEFUL FOR POTENTIAL APPLICANTS

MET

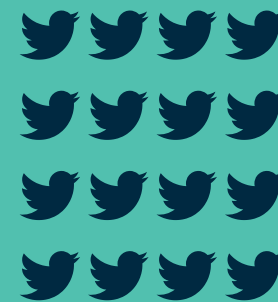
365

INDIVIDUAL GROUPS AND BUSINESSES

ATTENDED

4

FUNDING FAYRES



SECURED MORE THAN

300

TWITTER FOLLOWERS

SECURED MORE THAN

340



FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS - OUR AVERAGE POST HAS **96** LIKES AND IS SHARED **12** TIMES

The Fund Website [www.pencymoedd.cymru](http://www.pencymoedd.cymru) is also full of information: you can find details of projects funded, the grant programmes themselves, who Board members and staff are - along with advice and guidance notes for applicants.

# GRANT APPORTIONMENT

A full list of all grants awarded can be found on our website.

## Headline figures 1: Grants 2016 – 2018

PAY 178 GRANTS AWARDED

£4,018,017

FOUR MILLION, EIGHTEEN THOUSAND  
AND SEVENTEEN POUNDS

A further **£3.7 million**  
brought in as match funding



**Smallest Grant: £280.00** – Rhondda Civic Society

**Largest Grant: £491,869** – St. Elvan's Community Heritage Project

**31 Awards** to Businesses – **£312,914**

**147 Awards** to Community Groups – **£3,705,103**



## Vision Fund

- **45** full applications received
- **63** preliminary expressions of interest received
- Total grants requested: **£20,345,491**
- **33** Vision Fund grants awarded, totalling **£3,554,839**
- A further **£4,150,049** brought in as match funding



## Micro Fund

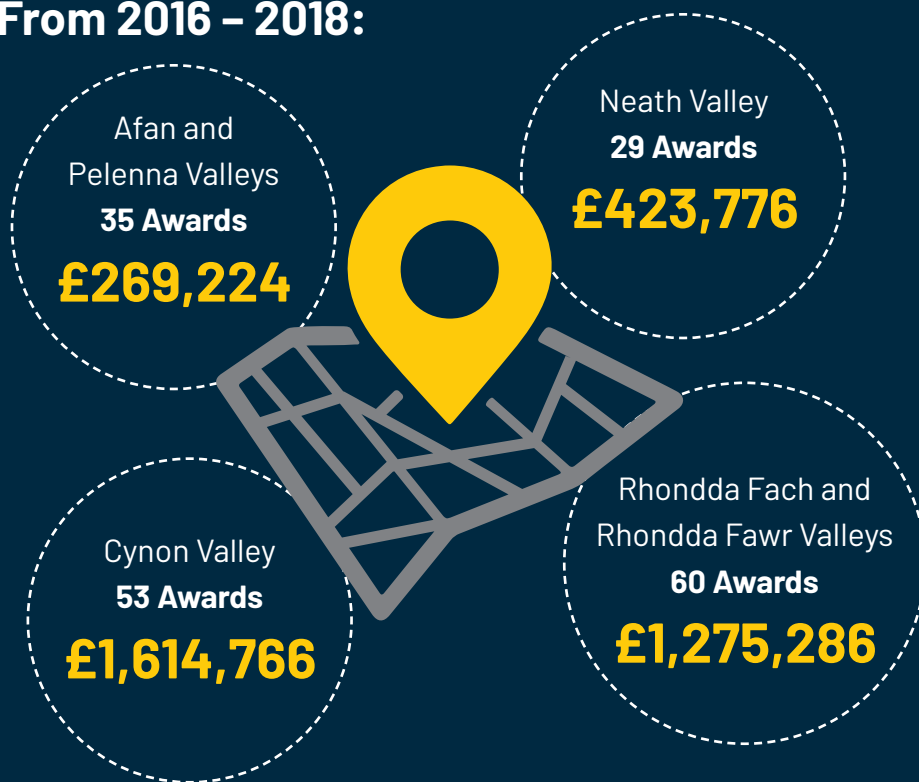
- **344** applications received, requesting a total of **£1,173,206**
- **145** grants awarded (22 Business and 123 Community), totalling **£463,178**
- A further **£1,668,803** brought in as match funding – so a total of **£2,131,981** invested in projects and activities



## Geographical Spread

Over its 25-year lifespan, the Fund aims to ensure that all areas benefit equitably. In the first two years, our bigger towns have attracted larger grants for projects that were well developed and ready to go. Over the years to come, we look forward to working further with communities throughout the Fund area on a range of exciting projects.

### From 2016 – 2018:



A further grant to Neath Port Talbot CVS and Interlink (**£434,965 over five years**) enables the work of the Supporting Communities Team across the whole Fund area.

## Jobs

### Jobs Created (brand new jobs)



### Jobs Safeguarded = 9

(keeping people in work and developing opportunities).

### Skills Development Training = 15

(these include sports coaching qualifications and Duke of Edinburgh Leaders' training).

## Business Start-ups and Development

We have supported seven new start-ups and have helped 14 businesses to grow – from chocolatiers, organic soap makers and florists to cafés, window cleaners, furniture businesses and campsites.



# CASE STUDIES

These are just a few of the 178 projects we've been able to help so far – it's been really challenging to choose which to include here! You can read about other exciting initiatives on our website.

## Women in business

Many of our business grants have been awarded to enterprising women – setting up or developing their ventures. These include:

### Afan Vale Chocolates, Cymer

Micro Fund Business Grant £3,250



Based in the Upper Afan Valley, the business produces hand-made luxury chocolates, sourcing ingredients locally where possible, and aspiring to “stand out as a company that produces the tastiest chocolates, offering a

unique product that is desirable to anyone who wants top quality chocolates for all occasions”. The grant funded essential equipment to enable production capacity to double. “Being able to purchase these has resulted in less stress, larger production volume and less wasted stock – our production capacity has more than doubled and our customer base is expanding.”

**Anita**, Afan Vale Chocolates

### Flowers by Kirsty

Micro Fund Business Grant £3,500



This floristry business on the main high street in Treorchy offers craft workshops in the shop itself and out in the community, as well as selling flowers for all occasions. To support the development of both the business and community

craft workshops, the grant covered the cost of a website, marketing campaign, a laptop and a part-time member of staff for six months. As well as this part time post, another full-time post has now been created. “We are passionate about teaching and involving people in craft activities – learning, creating, having fun and building confidence. There is high local demand for this from both schools and community centres. The grant has helped us to take out the workshops further and link in with lots of groups.”

**Kirsty**, Flowers by Kirsty



## The Tired Mama Collection

Vision Fund £23,065



An innovative and growing clothing brand (with English and Welsh ranges) aimed at tired mums and dads... and their babies! Set up a year ago and run until now from the applicant's home in Aberdulais (with the support of family and friends), the business had outgrown its attic

space. This grant has supported significant expansion, enabling the purchase of a dedicated workshop and the recruitment of two local part-time members of staff on flexible hours, structured around childcare. The plan is to promote sales in new outlets such as small shops, baby shows

and events and to hold stock, rather than make to order – reducing order fulfilment times and increasing direct sales to new customers. Tired Mama has a strong ethical policy, working only with responsible suppliers.

## Community groups

### Under the Sky – Growing and Learning, Glynneath Training Centre (GTC)

Vision Fund Grant:  
£194,258 over 4 years



GTC is community based and led – offering a wide range of activities and services and acting as a focal point for the local community.

This project is developing a community food movement – establishing a new food/growing partnership for the Upper Neath Valley. Partners include all local schools and nurseries, residential care homes, allotment groups and many more. Activities focus on developing knowledge, skills

and confidence, securing land for growing food locally and generally helping to build understanding of the health benefits of good food – uniting the community in physical exercise and social activity. It's hoped that new green enterprises will be developed as work progresses. The project offers many and varied volunteering opportunities, along with the chance to work towards accredited qualifications.

Two project officer posts have been created, along with a Horticultural Apprentice studying at NPT College. A Horticultural Trainee, supported by Elite Agency, has also joined the team.

## Cwmgwrach Boxing Club

**Micro Fund Grant: £3,226**



Established in November 2017, this Welsh Amateur Boxing Association affiliated Club is a community boxing gym and a social hub. It promotes the sport itself, as well as the overall health and well-being of all the people living in Cwmgwrach and the surrounding area. People are welcome just to call in for a cup of tea – they don't need to put gloves on! The venue is available for hire by other community groups too. Activities are affordable and accessible, encouraging fitness, discipline, friendship, fair play and respect for all. Its four qualified volunteer coaches

provide training sessions four nights a week for 80 members, aged eight – senior level, including 22 girls and women. In less than a year, the Club is proud to have its first Youth Welsh Novice Champion. The Micro Fund grant supported the purchase of essential start-up equipment – a ring, gloves, head guards etc. The Club has an impressive level of energy and commitment. They have already built a strong network with local schools, the Police, Community Council and groups of all kinds – and have the support of local businesses who provided in kind support for building repairs. “We are working to develop a Boxing Club that the community will be proud to be part of.”

**Leighton Collins**

## The Play Yard, Ynyswen

**Vision Fund Grant:  
£357,000 over 4 years**



Based in the former Burberry Factory, the Play Yard is Valleys Kids' exciting new social enterprise. The facility includes a large children's indoor play space, indoor sports on two five-a-side pitches, a fitness studio and a café, all under one roof with ample parking. The project is going from strength to strength and has exceeded some of its original targets – e.g. it was anticipated that six and a half jobs would be created and there are already 16. The range of activities offered is expanding all

the time and now includes: party packages; physical activity classes for toddlers and children, such as BeatBall and Parkour; holiday football camps in partnership with Cardiff City FC; weekly pre-school educational classes; Cariad Babi Stay & Play Playgroup; adult fitness classes such as Funky Pump and Circuit Training; over 50's Walking Football; 'Breast Foot Forward', a monthly Breast Cancer support group with 30 members; work experience and volunteer opportunities with accredited training such as Communication in Autism, First Aid, Foodwise In Pregnancy and Food Safety & Hygiene.

## Rhondda Netball Treorchy Expansion

### Micro Fund Grants:

Round 1 – £4,953 & Round 3 – £4,940



Established in 2016, Rhondda Netball works in partnership with schools, RCT CBC, Welsh Netball and Sport Wales in RCT to ensure that there is the same access to netball as there is for other popular sports. Before 2016, there was little provision for netball (or any other sport to equal the provision for boys). As soon as doors opened, over 200 young people signed up to play netball on a regular basis and there are now more than 1,500 weekly participants across RCT (mostly girls, though boys are welcome).

Rhondda Netball is now the largest female sport participation activity in Wales – contributing to all-important increased physical activity levels and well-being. Micro Fund grants have supported the significant expansion of provision in Treorchy for under 5's, 7's and 15's:

- 160 young people in Treorchy now play regularly.
- 3 volunteer coaches have obtained accredited qualifications.
- A competition structure in the Upper Rhondda Fawr is benefitting local primary schools.

Rhondda Netball has some high-level supporters: "It inspires the young girls to dream big, to set goals and to explore their own potential. I believe RN has great things in store in its future and I am proud to show my support to such a wonderful cause."

**Tanni Grey-Thompson**

## Cynon Valley Museum

### Vision Fund Grant:

£388,178 over 4 years



The Cynon Valley Museum Trust was established in 2015 as a result of a community led campaign to save the Valley's museum from closure. Although its doors were shut for a while, the Museum has successfully reopened, with management responsibility now fully handed over to the Trust by RCT CBC. The Vision Fund grant has been a crucial part of this, supporting three key posts – Manager, Communities Officer and Museum Co-ordinator – along with external signage and the redevelopment of internal activity and meeting spaces in the historic building.

These rooms are increasingly popular and are generating crucial income. The café provides a welcoming service for Museum visitors and again, brings in regular income for the Trust. Visitor numbers are up from 60 a week in mid-2017 to more than 400 a week now. Shop sales are also increasing.

As well as learning about the rich history and culture of the Cynon Valley, visitors also now take part in a programme of events such as the Steampunk Experium and Food Markets, along with craft fairs. Resources to engage with secondary schools and further and higher education providers in the area are also being developed.

**St. Elvan's Community Heritage Project**  
**Vision Fund Grant: £491,869 over 4 years**



St. Elvan's Church is an iconic landmark in the centre of Aberdare and has embarked on an ambitious project to re-invent itself for the 21st century and

beyond. The Vision Fund grant provided crucial match funding for the Community Heritage Project – unlocking a Heritage Lottery grant £786,700 as well as funding from Cadw and a range of other Trusts and Foundations. The project will involve the complete refurbishment of the church and the installation of a community heritage space to create a welcoming facility for all who live in and visit the Cynon Valley. New facilities will include a café and Tourism Information Centre, an arts and crafts area, an

exhibition area, additional rooms on mezzanine levels for community use and the provision of interactive history facilities. The Vision Fund will support the creation of a new Community Heritage Officer post, the recruitment and training of a volunteer team and the provision of work and educational placements. Welsh language and culture has a long and powerful history in the Valley and the project will highlight and celebrate this rich heritage. Work on the building is due to start in

spring 2019 and it's hoped that the new facility will be fully open in mid-2020.

“The Vision Fund award is fantastic news for our parish and the community. It is our mission through this project to give confidence to the wider community by re-ordering St Elvan's church and creating a vibrant hub that will serve and support people's needs both culturally and in practical terms.”  
**Father Robert Davies**, Vicar of Aberdare

## Businesses

**Cedars Tearoom at Afan Park Visitor Centre**  
**Micro Fund Grant £5,000.00**



In 2016, Cedars took on management of the Visitor Centre at Afan Forest Visitor Park – world famous for its mountain biking and walking trails. The café makes the Centre an attractive destination for all visitors – cyclists or not – and it provides employment for local people. The grant supported the installation

of a new counter area, enabling the installation of more tables and seats and the fit-out of a meeting and function room available for hire. “We are working to redevelop the visitor centre to maximise the space available and are also redeveloping the kitchen and service area to allow an expanded menu to be served. We

have now employed two more-part time staff from the local area and hope to recruit more as our activities continue to expand. We have seen an increase in footfall in the café and received a lot of positive feedback from visitors.”  
**Jill Williams**, Cedars Tearoom

## Willow Springs Campsite, Afan Valley

**Vision Fund Grant:**  
**£66,143 over 2 years**



An eco-friendly, traditional campsite with ten pitches and a glamping Shepherd's Hut – along with llamas, pigs, ducks, geese, a dog and cat! With solar energy, a bio digester system for waste and natural spring water on site, there are no electric hook ups or generators; and visitors are encouraged to socialise around the fire pits. The grant supported the employment of site management staff and development of facilities – all in response to feedback received from campers. Future visitors to

Willow Springs will benefit from an eco-friendly laundry washing and drying room, mobile field shelters with midge screens, tables and benches, an upgraded reception area with tourist information and local produce for sale, and two new Camping Huts (dogs welcome!). The number of stays went up from 631 in 2017 to 1,090 in 2018 and the campsite now employs one full-time staff member, two part-time and three casual staff who come in when needed. The prize for the most intrepid visitors goes to the couple from Azerbaijan, who travelled on their bikes and public transport to get to Willow Springs. "The campsite has been non-stop over the 2018 summer, and the Huts have been a sensational hit, so much so, we've altered the specs on our Shepherds hut to run in a similar way to the huts."

**Marc Souter**, Campsite Owner

## Hot Jam

**Vision Fund Grant:**  
**£23,392 over 2 years**



Over the next two years, 4,000 young people aged three to fourteen in 30 schools across the Fund's area of benefit will be able to take part in a variety of music and song writing workshops – delivered in both Welsh and English. Professional musician and Hot Jam creator Andy Mulligan said, "We take a four-piece band (vocals, guitar, bass guitar, keyboards and drums) into schools to deliver exciting concerts and workshops across a wide variety of music genres – jazz, folk, pop and rock. Pupils can take part through singing,

percussion and movement and some are given the opportunity to play our instruments. Everyone learns what is involved in writing a song and improvising".

With music provision in schools reducing, this programme gives young people the opportunity to discover talents they didn't know they had and inspires others to take part in further music activities – hopefully boosting membership of choirs and bands in the years ahead. The project involves skills development, confidence building and awareness raising for young people, Welsh songs and musical traditions are part of the musical mix and local freelance artists are employed to deliver the workshop sessions.

# MONITORING AND EVALUATION

We manage the Community Fund on behalf of local communities and a lot of trust is placed in us to do that as well as we can.

To make sure that we are doing a good job, and constantly improving our service, we have appointed independent consultants, Wavehill, to monitor and evaluate our work over the next five years. They will look closely at:

- the impact and outcomes of Community Fund investments;
- delivery of the Community Vision set out in the Fund Prospectus; and
- the CIC's own working practice and effectiveness in support of these.

If you have applied for a Community Fund grant, successfully or unsuccessfully, you will be hearing from Wavehill! We very much welcome your honest feedback and will respond to all of it. Annual evaluation reports and actions taken as a result of recommendations will be published on our website.

## Thanks to supporters and partners

### Our heartfelt thanks to:

- all at Vattenfall – without whom none of this would be possible! Special thanks go to Rahel Jones and Emily Faull;
- the people and communities of the Fund area – for welcoming us so warmly and bringing such exciting projects forward;
- Officers and Members of Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC and Neath Port Talbot CBC – for all their help and support;
- Community and Town Councillors – for their support and spreading the word about the Fund;
- Interlink and Neath Port Talbot CVS – for their expertise and local knowledge, working with us so positively and supporting Fund applicants.