



Our  
**Ambitions**  
for our  
**Community**  
through our own  
**Efforts**



**Annual Report**  
**2014-2015**





# Introduction

## from the chair

This was another successful year for ACE, and we remain on schedule to achieve our objectives as set out in our strategic plan. We remain focused and determined to achieve our ultimate aim of becoming an organisation that supports the people of Caerau and Ely, and is financially sustainable.

We have been excited to make our new home at such an iconic Ely building as The Dusty Forge. This has given us the opportunity to develop new volunteering opportunities and a range of new projects, including Cardiff's first Men's Shed, which you can read about on page 5.

The CAER Heritage Project goes from strength to strength and has the potential to become a really very special long term project for the area. ACE has also seen the continued success of the Big Lottery funded Community Ambassador Project, which has supported local people to influence a range of health services.

We continue to maintain an excellent reputation for our delivery of Communities First and have delivered some

really significant results in this area. Our website gives a full overview, but notable results are presented colourfully on page 7!

The Board recognises the hard work and dedication of all our staff in managing the services and projects that we provide across Cardiff West and we also know that none of this is achievable without the help and support of our many volunteers. The Board would also like to thank all of the organisations who provided financial, administrative or voluntary support; with their help we have continued to deliver projects across Cardiff West. We offer sincere thanks to staff, volunteers, supporters and friends.

Looking to the future we feel nothing but positive about the future of ACE as an organisation able to influence positive change. As a Board, staff and voluntary team we are united in our passion for seeing Ely and Caerau be a place where people feel proud to be a part of the community and we know that this grows with every project we run.

## ACE board of directors 2014-2015

The board of directors is elected by the membership. We are grateful to the following people who have served during 2014-15:

**Cassie Bodington** (Chair) runs a local business and lived in Caerau for several years.

**Nigel Jones** (Vice Chair) is a solicitor specialising in commercial and property law.

**Jean O'Keefe** (Treasurer) lives in Caerau. She sits on the Timeplace steering group.

**Valerie Allen** lives in Ely. She leads the Mill Park Community Project.

**Barbara Cuddihy** lives in Caerau and is a committed volunteer.

**Gareth Pierce** manages the Ely & Caerau Community Hub.

**Anne O'Regan** lives in Caerau. She volunteers with Age Connects and Families Need Fathers/Both Parents Matter.

**Sue Leader** lives in Ely. She is a local activist and branch secretary for Unite Community.

**Pete Sullivan** lives in Ely. He chairs the Ely Garden Villagers community group.

**Cheryl Hughes** lives in Ely. She set up the Ely Community Mothers group.

**Gloria Yates** lives in Ely. She leads Age Concern's Healthy, Wealthy and Wise project.

**Chris Gauci** recently finished as Community Education Officer at North Ely Youth Centre.

*Chris Gauci and Valerie Allen resigned their posts during 2015. Pete Sullivan, Cheryl Hughes and Jean O'Keefe, as the three longest serving members, will be standing down at the 2015 AGM. Jean O'Keefe will be standing for re-election.*

## ACE Staff team

**Nicola Brydon**

*Community Focus Schools Officer*

**Hazel Cryer**

*Health and Wellbeing Coordinator*

**Carey Davies**

*Community Participation Officer / Play Development Officer*

**Taela-Mae Davies**

*Community Participation Officer / Community Development Coordinator*

**Becki Donaldson**

*Family Learning Officer*

**Julie Evans**

*Admin Assistant*

**Denise Farrant**

*Community Health Officer (Healthy Eating and Physical Activity)*

**Sam Froud-Powell**

*Community Energy Officer*

**John Hallett**

*Cluster Manager*

**Sam Holt**

*Community Health Officer (Community Growing)*

**Dave Horton**

*ACE Development Manager / Community Development Coordinator*

**Donna Hurley**

*Adult Community Learning Officer*

**Helena Jones**

*Community Development Worker (Community Ambassador Project)*

**Lindsay Jones**

*Communities4Work Advisor*

**Corey McDevitt**

*Assistant Energy Advisor*

**Ruth McDonald**

*Federation Schools and Community Learning Coordinator*

**Simon Murray**

*Youth Employment Mentor*

**Michelle Powell**

*Deputy Cluster Manager / Enterprise Coordinator*

**Fiona Robinson**

*Programme Administrator / Office Manager*

**Hasan Roop**

*Finance Officer*

**Tazmin Rowe-Anthony**

*Communication and Monitoring Officer*

**Nerys Sheehan**

*Assistant Development Worker*

**Carly Whelpley**

*Community Wellbeing Officer*

# ACE

## vision, beliefs and objectives

**ACE's VISION** is of a happy and healthy community characterised by co-operation, equality and social justice. We believe that everyone who lives in our community has something unique to contribute. Our 750 members actively participate in turning this vision into a reality.

We base our efforts on the following **BELIEFS**:

- Local people know their community best
- Everyone has something unique to contribute
- Everyone's contribution should be valued equally
- Poverty should not be accepted as a fact of life
- Social injustice should be challenged and changed

Our objectives are described in our 5 year Strategic Plan (available at [www.aceplace.org](http://www.aceplace.org)):

### Objectives for the community:

- To create individual opportunities for residents through community development activity
- To tackle poverty by creating employment and building the local economy
- To improve the quality of life for residents of Ely and Caerau generally by enhancing the environment, improving facilities and fostering partnership and coproduction

### Organisational objectives:

- To progressively reduce our dependency on grants and to become financially sustainable in the long term by

operating a strategy for diversifying and maximising our sources of income

- To design, operate and monitor policies and procedures which ensure high standards of governance and management, financial propriety and personnel management
- To design and operate an effective Promotions Strategy



*Local young people use art to express their hopes for their community*

## ACE Membership



*ACE members share hands on skills*

Anyone who lives in, or has an interest in, Ely and Caerau, and who supports the aims of the organisation, can become a member. There is no charge.

When you join ACE you automatically become a member of Timeplace too, which means you can earn time credits for your efforts in the community. Members who are over 18 can vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and can put themselves forward for election to the board of directors. Every registered member receives an invitation to the AGM with information on making nominations to the board.

All members are asked to make the following pledge:

I will...

**A**ct with others to help make Ely and Caerau an ace place to live

**C**are for the streets and parks and places we share as a community

**E**ncourage my family, friends and neighbours to do the same

Visit our website or contact us for more information and for a membership application form.



**ACE**

## Achievements 2014-2015



**W**e have made great strides towards our objectives this year. Key achievements include the following:

- We continue to have an excellent reputation for our delivery of the Welsh Government's Communities First programme. (See Pages 6 and 7 for more info).
- Our Big Lottery funded Community Ambassador Project has gone from strength to strength. One high profile example of success has seen participants helping the NHS to re-design their direct phone line service. (More info on page 9).
- We have been delighted to see our Timeplace scheme acting as the basis for a roll-out of time credits across Cardiff. (See page 11).
- At the beginning of 2015 ACE moved into our new home at the Dusty Forge. The building has rapidly become a thriving centre for all sorts of community led activity. (See page 5 for more info).
- We were pleased to support our friends in Pentrebanne to take on the management of their local community centre, Pentrebanne Zone.
- The completion and adoption of our 5 year strategic plan in June 2014 has given us a sense of purpose and direction.
- Our communications team designed a vibrant new website which was launched in the summer of 2015.
- We were privileged to share our experiences with a number of other communities through the provision of training and consultancy services.

## Future plans

- Development of Our Place: Dusty Forge into a thriving hub of community led activity
- Launch of a new community café and healthy takeaway service
- Expansion of ACE's energy advice and support services
- Development of the CAER Heritage Project into a major regeneration project with Cardiff University
- Creation of further social enterprise activities that create volunteering and work opportunities whilst providing income for ACE development
- Provision of training and advice to other organisations developing similar work

## Volunteering with **ACE**

**L**ocal people are at the heart of everything ACE does and there are all sorts of ways that community members are getting involved. All volunteers receive time credits for their efforts. Many of them describe a range of additional benefits including increased confidence, new friends, a more positive view of their community, and increased skills.

For more information on volunteering please contact the **ACE** team (Contact details at the back).



# Welcome to our place



*Preparing the building for a new future*

*Staff and volunteers outside their new home at Dusty Forge*

In March 2015 ACE stepped in to save Dusty Forge, an iconic Ely landmark which was facing an uncertain future due to cuts in council services. Since then the “Dusty” has been given a new lease of life with a new name, “**Our Place: Dusty Forge**”. Many of you will have noticed that the building has been given its first lick of paint for many years and now has distinctive ACE-green shutters!

Members of the Communities First team have supported Youth Service staff at Dusty Forge for over 6 years, helping launch and run the construction skills training workshop. Since then the centre has developed a focus on supporting community members of all ages in preparing for, and accessing, employment. We continue this work and are able to offer support with CVs, access to training opportunities, and links with employers across Cardiff. We are working with arts charity People Around Here to bring a distinctive new creative edge to our traditional construction skills courses! (see page 10 for details).

We provide a number of Communities First funded services from the building including: Debt and benefit information and support, help to reduce energy costs (through advice, home visits, provision of energy saving devices etc), and provision of affordable food for those in crisis. You can see how important these services are, and how many people access them, on page 7.

In keeping with our ethos, community members have been at the heart of developments at Our Place: Dusty Forge. Volunteers have been helping out with reception



*ACE staff and volunteers make plans for 'Our Place Community Cafe'*

duties, maintenance and building management, and with welcoming and supporting visitors to our advice and support services. The Getaway project, a local mental health and wellbeing group, meet on Thursdays in the main hall.

Our new home provides an exciting opportunity for local people to be involved in the planning and running of new projects. Our Place Community Café will serve healthy, affordable food both in a café setting and as a take-away service. We are also excited to be working with Cardiff Men in Sheds to launch Cardiff's first shed. We are extremely grateful to Willmott Dixon for providing a full renovation of the old bookies at Dusty Forge for free. The project will be launched in January 2016 and will provide space for people to come together and work on practical projects that will benefit the community. You can find out more at [www.cardiffmeninsheds.org](http://www.cardiffmeninsheds.org)





## Communities First -

### ACE, delivering community shaped outcomes in our community

ACE took on the delivery of the Welsh Government Communities First programme in February 2013. Now delivering across Ely, Caerau, Fairwater and Pentrebanе a team of 18 staff deliver a broad range of projects and activities in partnership with partner organisations and importantly community members and groups. ACE has worked with 6747 participants with work focusing on three themes of work – Healthy, Learning and Prosperous Communities.

Key successes include the training and employment of 103 community members, and 1186 people financially better off.

The Learning team worked with 2594 community members - with 303 adults earning one of more qualification, 353 parents reporting that they felt more positive supporting their children and 934 children improving their academic performance.

The Health team worked successfully with a number of community run groups - seeing 1369 people making healthier choices and 645 people reporting they felt more positive and confident to improve their lives.

Perhaps most exciting was the 7193 people who reported being more involved in the communities of Ely/Caerau and Fairwater/Pentrebanе through 11730



volunteer hours in activities such as the Timeplace and community group projects.

For further details about Communities First delivery in Cardiff West please contact the ACE office.

## Project Case Study

### 'Less is more' - community rewards for energy saving



Sam and volunteer, Veronica, with energy saving devices!

ACE has been developing innovative community-based approaches to reducing energy demand through the "Less is More project". With support from Western Power Distribution (WPD) and Ofgem's Low Carbon Networks fund, ACE worked in partnership with Severn Wye Energy Agency to help residents in 350 properties in Ely save energy and money. The project enabled us to monitor

their electricity use with data from a local substation displayed on the project's website. This information was also used by WPD to provide a cash reward of just under £4,000 for the efforts made by residents in reducing electricity consumption. Demand reductions were achieved by working with local volunteers and community members to produce a monthly newsletter with energy saving tips, pop up advice stalls and campaigns on themes such as washing at lower temperatures.

The residents involved decided to spend their reward on energy saving devices to help achieve even greater savings, and we have been working with a team of volunteers to provide free home energy saving packs. So far we have provided 60 households with the packs and plan to give out a further 100 over the next few months. This project has enabled ACE to engage with people at particular risk of fuel poverty, groups such as people with disabilities, who would not otherwise have accessed our energy advice services.

In addition to giving out packs, we also provided one-to-one support to ensure residents are not paying too much for energy and are accessing schemes such as Warm Home Discount (a £140 saving for eligible households). A key learning is that providing immediate help through free energy saving packs combined with one-to-one support sessions helps build trust and supports engagement with energy issues. ACE are building on the outcomes of this project to support more local initiatives in other areas of Cardiff West, encouraging residents to take control of their energy costs through simple, no-cost actions.



# ACE Communities First

Developing Communities and Creating Opportunities

## How much did we do?

**27**  
projects

Prosperity Health  
Community Learning

**6,747**  
individual participants



**2,267**  
sessions run



## How well did we do?



**11,730**  
volunteer hours



**21,652**  
outcomes achieved

**103**

people secured  
employment



more than  
**303**

people earned one or  
more qualifications

**1,186**

people  
financially  
better off



(benefit gains of **£136,022** and assisted  
clients to manage debt totalling **£594,460**)

**353**



parents more positive  
supporting their children

**645**



people reported feeling more positive  
and confident to improve their lives

**934**



children improved their  
academic performance



**1,369**

people are making healthier choices

**7,193**

people reported being  
more involved in their  
community through  
volunteering

## How is anybody better off?

2014/15 figures



Call us on  
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Email  
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Website  
[www.aceplace.org](http://www.aceplace.org)



Twitter  
[@elycaerau](https://twitter.com/elycaerau)







# Learning from the past to build a community for the future



*The annual archaeological excavation in full swing*

*The CAER Team welcome a local school!*



Established in 2011 in collaboration with Cardiff University, the CAER Heritage Project works closely with the communities of Caerau and Ely to explore the area's rich heritage, addressing challenges facing these communities through researching their past. During 2015, CAER heritage has gone from strength to strength, largely thanks to the amazing support and participation of local residents.

In the spring, local people and school pupils from Western federation schools undertook a geophysical survey of the castle ringwork at Caerau and uncovered evidence of a medieval hall there. During the summer, a community excavation discovered that the origins of Caerau and Ely date back 6,000 years. CAER Heritage's third major archaeological dig revealed previously

unknown evidence for a huge stone-age (Neolithic) causewayed enclosure underneath the massive Iron Age hillfort. It also uncovered the largest collection of early Neolithic pottery ever discovered in Wales, as well as animal bones, polished stone axes and flint tools, offering remarkable evidence of Cardiff's Stone Age origins. This year the dig involved more than 200 community volunteers as well as pupils

from five local schools who all worked alongside archaeologists from Cardiff University to be at the forefront of unearthing these amazing discoveries.

The CAER team, including project artist Paul Evans, have worked alongside local people and schoolchildren on a range of creative heritage projects. These include the co-production of an animated film, CAER HEDZ, which featured the voices of local volunteers and animation sequences made by schoolchildren from Michaelston Community College. During the autumn, twenty-four local pupils from Woodlands High and Glyn Derw worked together to explore art through the ages and develop a design based around their Iron Age and Roman heritage. Their fantastic designs will be transferred onto permanent outdoor table tennis tables that will be installed in the schools for all pupils to enjoy.

Twelve residents have undertaken post-excavation analysis of the pottery from the 2015 excavation as part of a free accredited course, while a free trip for local residents to visit the British Museum's 'Celts Art and Identity' exhibition in London will take place in December 2015. The CAER team have also secured match funding from Cardiff University to develop a large Heritage Lottery Fund grant to sustain the project over the longer term. Overall, it has been a good year for CAER Heritage!

You can follow the CAER Heritage Project at [www.caerheritageproject.com](http://www.caerheritageproject.com)  
You can view CAER HEDZ and other CAER Heritage films at [www.aceplace.org](http://www.aceplace.org)



*On site at Caerau's Iron Age hillfort*



# The Community Ambassador Project.



Sharing Information  
@ a Street Ace Session

The Community Ambassador Project is all about local people knowing about, having access to and influencing services that could help with physical & mental wellbeing. Community Ambassadors share information about local activities & services, they may then go on to volunteer locally and to attend CA meetings and meet service providers to influence services.

There are now 93 community members who have agreed to share information. 49 of these Community Ambassadors are involved in local groups or activities and 16 have gone on to influence local services. In one year the CA volunteers have contributed 961 volunteer hours.

## This year ambassadors have:

- Produced a community directory of local services and activities.
- Held events to highlight the Universal Credit Benefit Changes.
- Successfully campaigned with others to restore the No 12 bus service.
- Attended G.P Cluster meetings and Neighbourhood Partner meetings to represent local views
- Held events at local GP practices promoting help available for those with addictions.
- Ran voter registration workshops at community venues.
- Worked with the Alzheimer Society to run three 'Dementia Friend' training courses
- Worked with the Communities 1st team to put on a Mental Health First Aid course free for local people.
- Helped the NHS design a new telephone help line which will support Unscheduled Care (111 Project)
- Supported the Charity FNF Both Parents Matter with consultations on equality issues for men & boys
- Contributed to the NHS 10 year plan – Shaping our Future Wellbeing
- Contributed to Local Mental Health Partnership Board – Carer's Views

*'The community ambassadors have been involved in the 111 Project for some time and have played a significant role in influencing the design for the service... We plan to incorporate some of the feedback into our staff training programmes' – Jude Kay, 111 Project Manager*



NHS 111 Service Model Review



## Building pathways with People Around Here



*Perfecting the sculpture!*

### **A**rts charity People Around Here report on their partnership with ACE, and those concrete sheep!

People Around Here is a community arts charity, working across Cardiff since 2006 and now based at

Dusty Forge. This year we have partnered with ACE in some fantastic projects, funded by Arts Council Wales and Cardiff Council. Together we delivered the Momentum Project, to explore how a creative arts process could link with clear pathways to employment, equipping young people with specific 'industry' skills which would support careers in construction.

We worked with young people aged 16-24 to design, create, cast and decorate a range of concrete sheep that were placed in locations across Ely, Caerau and St Fagans. The sheep are now a popular feature of the community garden outside the Hub on Cowbridge Road. The

project was a great success, with 12 out of the 19 participants completing either an OCN, a CSCS Card, or both.

One participant said that the way in which the course integrated both practical construction skills and creative ingenuity opened her eyes to the way in which she experienced art. This student is now considering

furthering her education and taking up an art related course at university level.

Our partnership with ACE has been built on the sharing of resources, local knowledge and expertise. As an arts organisation we always work in partnership with as many different stakeholders as possible to maximise the community involvement and therefore the longevity and authenticity of the project.

As this partnership has developed, ACE has registered as a verifier for Agored Cymru. This means that we are now able to deliver more OCN programmes together with confidence in delivery.

In October we delivered the 'Connected Pathways' project together, using similar processes to enable a group of unemployed adults to create concrete sculptures which now form a path outside the hub.

We are now supporting the Getaway group in their application for funding to redesign the main hall and café areas at Our Place: Dusty Forge. We are also working with ACE on a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a new project focused on the heritage of WW1 in Ely and Caerau. We hope to continue to work more closely together over the coming year.



*Drawing up designs*

*Below: Making the mould*



*The final flock, in place at Ely & Caerau Hub*



# Timeplace takes the city!



The Timeplace time credit scheme has been central to ACE's approach. It allows us to place equal value on everyone's contributions, rewarding every hour given to the community with a time credit. The opportunities for spending these credits improve and increase each year, with recent new spend opportunities including Cardiff City Football Club and the Sherman Theatre. Over 1250 community members have earned time credits since 2011. 4078 credits have been earned in the last 6 months alone.

A recent evaluation carried out by partners Spice demonstrates the power of this alternative currency in Cardiff West:

- 87% of participants feel that they know people in their community better
- 54% stated that they were able to afford to do more things
- 50% have gained new skills
- 87% know more about services and support available to them
- 73% feel more able to influence what they're community is like
- 48% feel healthier
- 36% have visited a doctor less as a result of involvement in Timeplace

We are extremely excited to be supporting the development of time banking across Cardiff – the first citywide time bank in the world!



Young volunteers at the Hub community garden



Volunteers enjoy a well earned rest!

## Taela Mae Davies (ACE Participation Officer) shares the impact of Timeplace on one volunteer...

Caroline is a single mother of three girls, who had just gone through a relationship break down and was suffering with depression. She had reached the point where she needed her life to change (in her mind) if only for the children. She started to venture out and attended a few local litter picks, where as a family they started to earn Time Credits and got to find out about other ACE activities. During the summer Caroline's confidence grew. The family used their Time Credits at local spend activities led by the community groups who participate in the programme. She met new people and made new friends. They also went on several family trips with Time Credits. Caroline would not have been able to afford to

do any of these activities without Time Credits. This is Caroline's third summer being involved with ACE and to say she has gone from strength to strength would be an understatement. Caroline sits on the Time Credits steering committee; is a rep for the project attending many different groups to offer support and guidance; runs activities at community events; volunteers one day a week with ACE; attends many training sessions and has presented her story to professionals from across South Wales. It is safe to say Caroline is heading to great places and is a true inspiration to all that work with her. Caroline is very open about the place she has come from and the distance she has travelled. It wasn't an overnight transformation, but something she has managed through the help and support of her friends (new and old) and colleagues. Her story is one of a changed life.



**ACE**

would like to thank our partners



and our funders



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