

Dear Claire and Andreas,

Please find a supportive statement about our collaborative work with Awen.

1. Why Awen's work is of value to them and why they think we are important to the area

Between The Trees festival first began a very productive and impacting collaboration around 4 years ago.

We met with Andreas Van Wyk / Awen Trust and quickly realised that our values and aims aligned :

Equality and Diversity is prioritised and particularly the empowerment of small groups and stakeholders who would otherwise not have a voice would, in fact, be able to create greater impact and reach to their target demographics and crucially new demographics.

Together we enable creative expression in the form of film making, spoken word, dance, art and positive intervention talks for good health as well as providing a safe space for all to express their ideas and take part in these activities.

Andrews Van Wyk and Awen Trust have proven to be beneficial stakeholders and we value this collaboration very much. Andreas has worked with us to create high calibre films whereby we promote the work of both Awen and individual small makers such as eg Sion Llewellyn and Nigel Mason. Both producing artisan crafted works and without Andreas informing us of their links locally we would not have known about them.

We have attended "The Gordon Farmer" book launch and were absolutely thrilled to hear the stories from the artist and author himself. One of the most moving films that we have experienced over

the past 4 years, has been the film about the Coal miners who talked about their own experiences with the transition from communities underground and how resilience was created by Awen through on line meetings during covid.

The testimonies of the miners, about how the individual hardships of decades, the closure of the mines and how that subsequently affected the small valleys communities is something that is a moving tribute and statement for perpetuity.

Collaboration with Awen has brought us in touch with community groups eg Lads and Dads, Mens Shed and the new Baby box scheme. We give the space, the time slots and promotion of the work so that the groups can both network, present their own work but also have access to scientific research which could feed into their own organisations operations. Eg Well-being Area this year featured talks about Permaculture and Womens' journalling.

This links very well with circular economy principles in the first instance, addressing the cost of living crisis by growing food locally and with the ability for women to express themselves artistically by learning new methods like collage and creative writing for well-being.

Although BCBC is one of the lowest BCBs in Wales for welsh language speakers, BTT encourages Welsh language artists and performers. We also promote the use of incidental welsh at the event and one of the feedbacks we had was " It is great for our children to play amongst non-welsh speakers but also to hear other children playing and chatting in welsh and making new friends"

It cannot be overstated the impact that event have on mental health, whether people are trying new to them therapies or for their children " Managing anxiety in your children, a creative toolbox" or with Y NYTH a space for attendees can gather and chat or share music , a poem or just their thoughts and feelings, Awen Trust created and curated this area in 2022 and this is one the the

comments received " My son is a severely autistic, non verbal teenager. His favourite place in the whole festival was The Nest/ Y Nyth. He found it peaceful, calming and that space for him was somewhere he felt mindful and relaxed, beautiful made and in the very centre of the immersion with nature, whilst hundreds of people were also with on the site, for him, this was his "Happy Place". Andreas Awen enabled that.

2. Why they would support ACW investment in Awen to enable us to reach more people as a result

The ACW should continue to support AT with funding. So that Awen can support us and work in collaboration with them and have a greater impact and reach on the people of Bridgend, traders, charities and CICs, musicians traders and makers to create high-quality, meaningful creative experiences and beyond.

We believe in the ethics and values of this organisation and that is why we are very pleased to invest our time, effort, resources and space for Awen Trust.

Kind regards/ Cofion Cynnes

Dawn Wood

Co Director

Between The Trees Ltd.

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