

Dear Claire Cressy,

Over the past few years Foxtroy House have been fortunate to have been involved in Awen projects with Andre.

Through this work we have been able to share local celebrations in community centres. Residents have enjoyed a book launch of paintings created by a local Pontycymmer man. The experience was wonderful for the residents who were recognised by locals who were also attending. By bringing together people who want to share in their memories of old buildings, landmarks, poems and people of their area there is a connection which is stronger than the dementia they are living with.

Events have been offered to us some have been held in the care home, bringing the generations together. Our first event was a recording of us celebrating the Welsh language. We shared experiences of food, songs, crafts and traditions in Welsh language.

We have also been fortunate to welcome a gentleman who came to sing, sharing his song about getting old with the residents. Once the residents were sitting enjoying the music and other songs he entertained with there is always an opportunity to chat and reminisce.

Our experience of Awen is that it recognises the role of our elders and promotes connections through the generations. It is about remembering the stories, songs and traditions that existed for them and continue today.

We had a wonderful day when Andre invited in a story teller to share the Maid of Cefn Ydfa with both the residents and a group of school children. Along with this the children sang a welsh song to the residents who welcomed them all into our home. The event was able to have a lasting impression on both young, old and all involved. Awen's work is of great value, it is always professional and sensitively carried out. The events improve the health and well-being of the residents; bringing joy, reviving memories, and lifting their spirits. Whilst the residents are connecting with the visitors they are also connecting with each other and remembering events they experienced years ago. Experiencing this gives them a sense of belonging to their community.

It would be lovely to continue to have these cultural celebrations of a small few or more and bring groups together again. Covid 19 has had a big effect on the ability to have groups into the home. If more support was available to arrange events in the future it would be wonderful.

Kind regards,

Diana Purnell

Director/ RI

Foxtroy House, Tondu.