



**Cynhadledd Genedlaethol  
Awtistiaeth Cymru  
Hyrwyddo Lles Awtistig  
National Autism Wales Conference  
Promoting Autistic Wellbeing**

# **Conference Documentation**



**3rd April 2019  
Liberty Stadium, Swansea**

Follow us on  **@ASDinfoWales**  
and join in the conference discussion at **#promotingautisticwellbeing**

[www.ASDinfoWales.org.uk/NAWC2019](http://www.ASDinfoWales.org.uk/NAWC2019)

## Foreword

I am delighted that after many months of planning, the first National Autism Wales Conference – Promoting Autistic Wellbeing is taking place as part of World Autism Awareness Week. The conference is a response to feedback from autistic people across Wales that they felt “invisible” as far as key events go for them as a community.

A group of autistic people, parents and carers, third sector partners and health and social care professionals have worked together to produce an event which we hope will provide delegates with some practical and useful information for day to day wellbeing.

We also hope it will be an enjoyable day for you.



**Cllr Huw David,**  
Spokesperson for Health and Social Care,  
Welsh Local Government Association

Public Health Wales promotes wellbeing across many strands of its work and I am so pleased to support this important event to promote wellbeing for people with autism.

Emotional, physical and social wellbeing are significant to all of us and this Conference is a really positive opportunity for people to share their experiences and hints and tips for daily living.

I am particularly pleased that many of the speakers and workshop leads have lived experience of autism and combined with partners across academia, health, social care and the third sector delivering their perspectives, I am certain you will all have a very productive and valuable Conference.



**Tracey Cooper,**  
Chief Executive,  
Public Health Wales



## Promoting Autistic Wellbeing Conference Wednesday 3 April 2019

TIME	ITEM	WHO / NOTES
09:15 – 10:00	Registration	Welcome and Support team Desk on 1st floor
10.00 – 10.05	Plenary and Welcome by the Chairs	Gerraint Jones-Griffiths, Lead Ambassador, Engage to Change All Wales People First Amara Tamblyn, Student
10:05 – 10:15	Minister for Health and Social Services, Welsh Government	Vaughan Gething AM
10:15 – 10:45	Keynote Speaker “The Winding Road of Wellbeing: postcards from my journey”	Emma Durman, Director, Outside
10:50 – 11:35	Workshop Session One	Workshop rooms as detailed in separate document
11:35 – 11:55	Refreshment Break	
12:00 – 12:45	Workshop Session Two	Workshop rooms as detailed in separate document
12:45 – 13:45	Lunch	
13:45 – 13:50	Plenary Welcome Back by the Chairs	Gerraint Jones-Griffiths, Lead Ambassador, Engage to Change All Wales People First Amara Tamblyn, Student
13:50 – 14:00	WLGA Spokesperson for Health and Social Care	Cllr Huw David, WLGA Spokesperson
14:00 – 14:30	Keynote Speaker “My Journey into Actor”	Jules Robertson, Actor
14:35 – 15:20	Workshop Session Three	Workshop rooms as detailed in separate document
15:25 – 16:10	Workshop Session Four	Workshop rooms as detailed in separate document
16:15 – 16:25	Closing remarks by the Chairs	Gerraint Jones-Griffiths, Lead Ambassador, Engage to Change All Wales People First Amara Tamblyn, Student
16:30	Conference ends	

## General Information

### Mobile Phones

As a courtesy to speakers and fellow attendees, please ensure that mobile phones are either switched off or turned to silent mode when in conference sessions, including workshops.

### Refreshments and Lunch

Refreshments and lunch are available at the dedicated catering points. If you have a special diet, please identify yourself to a member of the catering staff or a member of the Welcome and Support Team and they will direct you to the appropriate area for your meal.

### Evaluation Forms

These will be circulated towards the close of the conference, could you take the time to complete the form and return to the Welcome and Support Team reception desk on the first floor.

### Queries

If you have any queries during your time at the event, please visit the Welcome and Support team desk and our staff will be happy to help. The Welcome and Support Team staff are wearing green sashes and will be pleased to assist you.

### Lost Property

If you have mislaid any personal belongings, please notify us at the Welcome and Support Team desk on the first floor.

The organisers (WLG/ PHW) cannot accept any liability for loss, theft, damage or delay resulting from the loss of theft of any item of property belonging to participants (whether, speaker, delegate, guest or other attendee). Participants agree that it is their responsibility to have adequate insurance to cover all such eventualities.

### Badges

Please wear your badge at all times as a courtesy to other delegates and as a security check for the organisers. Should you mislay your badge, please come to the Welcome and Support Team desk for a replacement.

### Security

In the interests of security, please keep your personal belongings at all all times. Please do not leave your delegate pack in the conference rooms, as we cannot give you a replacement, should it go missing.

## Autism Aware Adjustments / Information

### Communication Badges

These will be made available when you register or at any time during the conference. These allow you to indicate how you would like to interact with other delegates. We will ask other delegates to respect the badges but please be aware that we cannot enforce this.

### Sensory Room

There will be a sensory room available on the first floor in the Vetch Field Lounge near the Welcome and Support Desk throughout the conference where you can take "time out" and relax with various pieces of sensory equipment.

### Quiet Room

There will be a quiet room available on the third floor which will be signposted. If you think you might need the quiet room during the day, you can ask a member of the Welcome and Support Team to show you where it is so that you can find it more easily when you need it.

### Calm Down Room

There will be a room available on the third floor which will be signposted should you need a space in which to make a noise and be calm. If you think you might need the calm down room during the day, you can ask a member of the Welcome and Support Team to show you where it is, so that you can find it more easily when you need it.



## Plenary Sessions

### Conference Chairs - Biographies

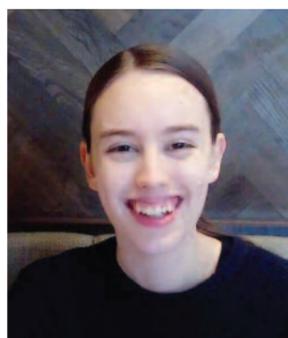


#### Gerraint Jones-Griffiths

Gerraint is 22 years old and has volunteered for the Blaenau Gwent Disabled Swimming Club and won a number of medals in local Paralympic games for the club. In the 2012 Holly's Ball – a ceremony for autistic people who have had outstanding achievements in their lives – Gerraint came runner up out of 700 people with autism in Wales.

In 2011-2015 he was voted to be a Caerphilly Youth Forum Cabinet member. As the Environment chair he held a campaign in Caerphilly Borough to stop smoking in parks. The Campaign POP (Protect Our Parks) was passed as a Council motion and, apart from Powys Council, Caerphilly is the only Council to stop smoking in parks.

In November 2018, Engage to Change nominated Gerraint for the Welsh Learning Disability Awards in the Breaking Down Barriers category, and he won it – an achievement he feels highly honoured to have had. Engage to Change is an employment project to help get young people between the ages of 16-25 with autism and/or a learning disability into paid employment. Gerraint was the Engage to Change Administrator from 2016-2018 and is the current Lead Ambassador.



#### Amara Tamblyn

Amara is a 19-year-old undergraduate Law student who was diagnosed with autism at the age of four. She has spoken at the Ceredigion Autism Conference and has featured in two short documentaries by ASDinfoWales. In her spare time, she likes to read books, play squash and play video games, and is also a proud Adult Fan of LEGO and car enthusiast.

Furthermore, Amara frequently participates in mooted competitions, representing her university, and is also a student ambassador there.

## Speakers



#### Vaughan Gething AM

Vaughan Gething, the Minister for Health and Social Services, was born in Zambia and brought up in Dorset. He was educated at Aberystwyth and Cardiff universities, and now lives in his constituency with his wife Michelle.

Vaughan was a solicitor and former partner at Thompsons. He is a member of the GMB and Unite unions, and was the youngest ever President of the TUC in Wales. He has previously served as a county councillor and school governor. He has also been a community service volunteer – supporting and caring for a student with cerebral palsy - and is former president of NUS Wales.

Between 1999 and 2001, Vaughan worked as a researcher to former Assembly Members Val Feld and Lorraine Barrett. Between 1999 and 2001, Vaughan was the chair of Right to Vote – a cross-party project to encourage greater participation from black minority ethnic communities in Welsh public life.



#### Emma Durman

Emma Durman is a late diagnosed Autistic woman with an Autistic daughter. She is currently in her final year of a Masters in Autism and Related Conditions. Emma writes a blog called Autism Tinted Glasses and has had several articles published by The Mighty.

Emma is co-director of Outside, a local training and consultancy company specialising in Autism and other neurodiverse conditions. Outside develop and deliver bespoke training to families and professionals, and have recently won a Welsh Housing Award for their partnership with mi-space, a specialist contractor, for their development of a training module focused on Autism in Social Housing.

Emma utilises both her personal and professional perspectives to develop and deliver unique content relating to Autism and is extremely passionate about reducing the societal barriers Autistic people face. Emma is also currently a UK co-ordinator on an Erasmus+ project focusing on Autism and employment.

## Speakers



### Councillor Huw David

Councillor Huw David was elected as the Leader of Bridgend County Borough Council in October 2016, having served as the Deputy Leader with special responsibility for education since 2015 and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People since 2012. He chairs Bridgend's Cabinet Committee for Corporate Parenting, is also the statutory lead member for Children and Young People and is a member of the Bridgend Care Partnership.

Clr David is the spokesperson for Health and Social Care for the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), which includes autism. Through this national role he is a member of the Together for Children and Young People (T4CYP) Expert Reference Group, Improving Outcomes for Children Steering Group and the National Adoption Service Governance Board.



### Jules Robertson

Julius Robertson has a National Diploma in Performance Making from Access All Areas and the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

A regular face on the BBC's *Holby City*, playing hospital porter Jason Haynes, his cheeky character has warmed the hearts of the UK since 2015.

Prior to this he has worked on many short film projects including, *Air* (dir Trevor Gittings), *Steve*

*Martin and Me* (dir Owen Parry, Ana Godinho de Matos, Alex Covell) and *Mad Cows* Feature Film, (dir Sara Sugarman).

Theatre credits include *The Misfit Analysis* (dir Nick Llewellyn/ Access all Areas), Gameshow presenter for Edinburgh run and UK tour, Stand-Up comedy showcase, ten-minute original sketch (Dir Robert Hitchmough), *In the Loop*, *Playing On* Theatre Group at the Roundhouse Theatre Chalk Farm (dir Jim Pope), and achieved the "Jack Petchy" award for Best Actor.

Jules would like to thank the BBC for casting an autistic character – they don't need Dustin Hoffman to pretend to be the Rain man. The next step is to cast us just as actors, without labels. Why not an autistic actor as James Bond?... Although he was probably autistic anyway.

## Workshops - Morning Sessions

### 1 : Autism and Eating – tackling eating difficulties in autism

*Dr Jacinta Tan, Consultant Child Psychiatrist, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board*

Eating disorders and other problems with eating and food intake are disproportionately common in autism. This will be an interactive workshop. Dr Jacinta Tan will explain the range of eating difficulties including eating disorders; the reasons people with autism might encounter eating difficulties; and help people to develop a problem-solving approach to eating difficulties they or others might have.

The objectives of this workshop will be to: explain why eating difficulties are common in autism; explore the features of eating difficulties in autism; suggest a practical approach to eating difficulties in autism; and help participants to problem solve around particular difficulties.

### 2 : Getting on Well: into middle age and beyond

*Cos Michael, Autism & Ageing Consultant*

There is no template for being autistic. We are all different, and over the years each of us has developed our own lifestyle, habits, interests and relationships. But autistic people face physical, mental and emotional issues throughout life, which can create problems as we get older. This workshop aims to address some of the challenges to health and wellbeing we may experience as we age.

The workshop will begin with a presentation, summarising some of the health and wellbeing issues we face as a result of growing older as autistic people. Followed by a discussion about keeping mentally and physically fit, in order to enjoy life to the maximum.

### 3 : Improving Alcohol Support for People with Autism

*Andrew Misell, Director for Wales at Alcohol Change UK and Professor Mark Brosnan, Bath University*

Although people with autism are no more likely to overuse alcohol than anyone else, when they do, they may find it more difficult to manage, and may have difficulties getting the support they need. Research by the Centre for Applied Autism Research (CAAR) at the University of Bath in 2018 found that: almost half of drinkers with autism say they would not seek support for an alcohol problem; barriers to support noted by autistic drinkers include going somewhere unfamiliar, worrying they won't be understood, and being in a crowded or chaotic place; most alcohol service providers have received no specific knowledge or skills sessions on autism during their training; and that treatment outcomes are reported by alcohol services as being relatively poor for most autistic clients compared with other client groups.

Join this workshop to help the research team find ways to make alcohol support services more autism-friendly.

## Workshops - Morning Sessions

### 4 : Interpersonal Empowerment: practical tips to improve your relationships

*Dr Freya Spicer-White, Principal Clinical Psychologist,  
North Wales Integrated Autism Service*

This workshop aims to help attendees to identify their interpersonal/relationship needs and goals and to help attendees figure out what gets in the way or goes wrong in their current relationships. It aims to help attendees learn strategies to make and keep relationships going.

Interpersonal skills are crucial because the way people communicate with others has a huge impact on the quality of their relationships; autistic individuals can often struggle with how they communicate so it's not surprising their interpersonal relationships can also be a struggle and source of stress. The quality of the relationships in people's lives can have a significant influence on their well-being, self-esteem and self-confidence. This workshop will be based around the Dialectical Behavioural Therapy Interpersonal Effectiveness module and focus on some practical strategies that attendees can learn and then try in their own relationships. Each participant will receive a handout that will cover the information in the workshop and where to look for further information. There will be some opportunities for group discussion and sharing experiences.

Individuals can choose how much they wish to participate; there will be no small group work or role play.

### 5 : Thriving at University

*Sara Hounsell and Gemma Price, Specialist Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC)  
Practitioner and Advisors, Swansea University*

Going to University can be a very positive experience; a chance to learn more about a subject you love, to develop skills and knowledge that might eventually become part of your working life. For many new students it's a great opportunity to meet new people and try new things that are 'out of their comfort zone'. For some new students it can also be a challenging time of change, transition and anxiety. Knowing what to expect when you start your study can be very helpful. It can help reduce anxiety, and help you get the best out of your time there.

This seminar will focus on the kind of support you can access as a University student through: reasonable adjustments (Equality Act 2010); Disabled Students Allowance (DSA); and pastoral/mental health support that can be provided in-house by the University (this can vary). The facilitator will also cover: why it can be important to have a diagnosis before you go, and why it is helpful to disclose your diagnosis when you apply; the different learning and teaching styles at University; how you can prepare yourself for going to University; and why coming to University can work as a two-step process.

## Workshops - Morning Sessions

### 6 : Let's Keep Moving! – physical activity and autism

*Ospreys in the Community, Swansea City Community Foundation,  
and Disability Sport Wales*

*\*appropriate clothing will need to be worn for this workshop.*

This is a practical workshop. There will be an opportunity to hear briefly how physical activity can really help with wellbeing and some hints and tips to incorporate fitness into your daily routine, as well as the social wellbeing benefits of participation.

Come and meet some of the Swansea City Community Trust and Ospreys Community Foundation teams to try out different physical activities.

For the rugby fans attending the conference, there will be a "tackle o' meter" which measures how hard you can tackle, as well as some passing activities and even an obstacle course. For football enthusiasts, there will be a "speed shot" machine for you to try, which measures the velocity of your shot on goal. Further opportunities to try out some other physical activities on the day. Individuals may choose how much they wish to participate in the session.

### 7 : Gentle Flow Yoga

*Huriyah Sisuvie, Yoga Instructor*

*\*the sessions will be suitable for complete beginners and advanced participants.*

*\*participants wearing dresses/skirts will need to bring appropriate clothing to wear underneath.*

Embrace a moment of quietness with gentle yoga stretches. Relax on a mat or in a chair as you learn deep breathing to help calm your mind and body.

## Workshops - Afternoon Sessions

### 8 : An Autistic Guide to Creativity

*Rhi Lloyd-Williams, Writer and poet*

The objectives of this workshop will be to: dispel the myth that autistic people are not creative; put creative autism in historical context (autism as innovator and inventor); broaden the definition of creativity, focusing on invention, pattern-thinking, problem-solving, hyper-focus (e.g. coding is a creative pursuit too); explore the benefits to health and well-being; focus on the process and not what is produced; and explore their creativity.

Rhi Lloyd-Williams, a poet and playwright who is currently touring her play 'The Duck', as well as working as Poet in Residence for the Arts Council funded, neurodiverse project 'Neither Use Nor Ornament', will begin the workshop by introducing herself and how she is creative – the practical and the impractical. She will then provide a history of autistic creatives before discussing autism and creativity; the advantages of problem-solving, hyper-focus, a clear interest, pattern-thinking, how creativity can be a form of stimming. The facilitator will also discuss the health advantages of creativity – self-soothing, mindfulness, recognising emotions, sharing emotions. She will also discuss overcoming problems with perfectionism, and will end the workshop with a short poetry reading.

There will also be 5-10minutes of encouraged participation in this workshop, where each individual will be given a single sheet of blank square paper and a pen and the opportunity to use it creatively – for example, write, draw, doodle, fold it, tear it. The individual will then have the opportunity to explain to everyone what they did and why, and they may also discuss how it affected their feelings in order to show that creativity is a way to let emotions out in a safe way, and to recognise feelings for those with alexythmia.

### 9 : Autism and Employment

*Gareth Tarrant, Operations Manager, The Autism Directory*

In this workshop, the facilitator will: look at current research, and examples of autism and employment; introduce findings from the autism directory, the helpline and our employment programs; introduce the ASDinfoWales employment resources; and engage in group discussion regarding reasonable adjustments in the work place.

We will explore employment and the barriers facing the autistic community on the pathway to employment. Here we will look at current trends the Autism Directory are experiencing from our Helpline and our employment program. 30% of all calls to the directory are employment related and we have supported over 100 autistic adults on our employment program. We will reference the ASDinfoWales web-site employment resources and explain how to access and use them.

## Workshops - Afternoon Sessions

### Autism and Employment - continued

We talk about the reasonable adjustments and how the staff at the Autism Directory where 70% of the team are autistic have developed a bank of reasonable adjustments that are practical and easy for any employer to implement. We will then offer the floor to the delegates to engage with us and share their experiences of work and help to develop their own reasonable adjustments.

### 10 : Skills for Life and Getting Things Done

*Lucy Wells, Highly Specialist Occupational Therapist, Cardiff & Vale Integrated Autism Service*

Lucy Wells' workshop will aim to: acknowledge that many autistic adults struggle with initiation, organising time, planning, prioritising and decision-making; share some ideas about things that other autistic adults have found helpful in getting things done; give information about other resources and help which people can access after the conference.

This workshop will focus on practical ways for autistic people to plan their time more effectively and compensate for difficulties with initiation, organisation, and decision-making. It will be a presentation with practical examples and demonstration of various tools for participants to have a look at and try if they want. Those attending will be able to participate as much or as little as they want and have the option of completing some simple tasks during the workshop. There will be no pressure on participants to talk but they will be given the chance to talk and ask questions if they want to.

### 11 : Digital Technology – the Pros and Cons

*Professor Phil Reed, Department of Psychology, Swansea University*

This workshop will provide an overview of how wellbeing can be enhanced by digital technology (like apps), and also of some of the potential harms that can come from using this technology. It will outline some of the ways in which digital technology has been used to help those with Autism. Highlighting some common apps used by many with Autism to help improve their wellbeing, especially in the areas of daily organisation and stress reduction. It will examine the evidence that such technology works, and whether there are particular types of people who benefit.

However, the presentation will also highlight some of the pitfalls of using digital technology, especially in terms of its psychological impacts, and cover the symptoms associated with over-use of digital technology – commonly called 'internet addiction'. It will examine the evidence that these problems occur for people with Autism who over-use this technology, and suggest ways in which the possible harms of using digital technology can be limited.

## Workshops - Afternoon Sessions

### 12 : Managing Anxiety including Embracing Safe Stim

*Emma Durman, Director, Autside*

Anxiety can be a significant issue for Autistic people. Sensory issues, social differences, and the impact of living in a world that isn't designed for our neurotype along with many other factors can cause anxiety to become overwhelming and even debilitating. This workshop aims to look at the causes and impacts of anxiety and equip you with strategies to reduce anxiety and manage it when it occurs. There will be a specific focus on how finding your safe 'stims' (self-stimulatory/regulatory behaviours) can be an important and effective outlet for coping with anxiety. In this workshop, the facilitator will question why anxiety occurs so often in Autistic people, she will also discuss sensory issues and meltdown/shutdown and Fight, Flight or Freeze scenarios.

In the first half of the workshop, whilst covering the topic of Managing Anxiety, the facilitator will discuss: using intense interests; tailored mindfulness; positive visualisations; managing expectations; preparation and planning; and adapting communication. In the Embracing Safe Stimming half of the workshop, the facilitator will discuss the use of: body brushing; deep pressure; stim toys; and chewelry.

### 13 : Let's Keep Moving! – physical activity and autism

*Ospreys in the Community, Swansea City Community Foundation, and Disability Sport Wales*

*\*appropriate clothing will need to be worn for this workshop.*

This is a practical workshop. There will be an opportunity to hear briefly how physical activity can really help with wellbeing and some hints and tips to incorporate fitness into your daily routine, as well as the social wellbeing benefits of participation.

Come and meet some of the Swansea City Community Trust and Ospreys Community Foundation teams to try out different physical activities.

For the rugby fans attending the conference, there will be a "tackle o' meter" which measures how hard you can tackle, as well as some passing activities and even an obstacle course. For football enthusiasts, there will be a "speed shot" machine for you to try, which measures the velocity of your shot on goal. Further opportunities to try out some other physical activities on the day. Individuals may choose how much they wish to participate in the session.

## Workshop Speakers - Biographies



### Dr Jacinta Tan

Dr Jacinta Tan is a research psychiatrist and medical ethicist. A multidisciplinary academic with degrees in Philosophy and Psychology, Child Health and Sociology, Jacinta spent many years researching mental capacity in anorexia nervosa at the University of Oxford.

Jacinta is particularly proud to be the founder and convenor of the Welsh Eating Disorder Research Development Group since 2012, and also the Law and Ethics of Anorexia Nervosa – Values in Practice (LEAN-ViP) network of the Collaborating Centre for Values Based Practice in Health and Social Care since 2017. She is also a founder editor and now Senior Editor for the Biomed Central open access journal Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health. She works with NHS clinicians, researchers, the third sector, patients, and carers to develop research for eating disorders and values based practice. She has just completed the Eating Disorder Service Review for Wales. Her vision as the sole eating disorder clinical academic in Wales is to co-develop interdisciplinary eating disorder and ethics research together with patients, families, other clinicians and academic partners, which examines issues at the coalface of treatment and thereby directly improves healthcare for eating disorders across the lifespan in Wales.



### Cos Michael

Cos Michael was diagnosed as autistic at 50 years old and found there was almost no research or information about autism and older adulthood. So she began advocating to improve knowledge about autism and ageing. For some years, Cos led the NAS's Autism and Ageing workstream, winning the Autism Professionals Award for Outstanding Adult Services, 2014.

Since becoming freelance, she is often invited to speak in public, presenting on ageing in the UK and abroad, including to the UNCPD. She is a consultant on the Autism Spectrum, Adulthood and Ageing project: and researcher on Improving the Health of Older Autistic People project, both at Newcastle University, as well as working on research projects in Edinburgh and London. Cos also provides training around autistic ageing, health and wellbeing.

## Workshop Speakers - Biographies

### Cos Michael . . . continued

In 2016 she wrote an editorial for the journal "Autism", "Why we need research about autism and ageing"; and co-wrote a chapter "Listen to the experts: autistic adults tell us what they need", in "Autism Spectrum Disorder in Mid and Later Life". Ed: Scott Wright.

In the past, Cos has worked at the BBC, the National Sound Archive and in the theatre. She has a BSc Social Anthropology

Autism Age Website: <http://www.autismage.com>



### Andrew Misell

Andrew Misell is Director for Wales at Alcohol Change UK and has led the development of the charity's work in Wales since 2009. Prior to that he was with Diabetes UK for 10 years, supporting people with diabetes to make their views known to decision-makers. He has also been a Senior Researcher with the Liberal Democrat group in the National Assembly for Wales.

He is a great believer in not telling grown-ups what to do. In his spare time, he is the horseracing correspondent of the Welsh-language current affairs magazine 'Barn'.



### Mark Brosnan

Mark Brosnan is Professor of Psychology at the University of Bath and is Director of the Centre for Applied Autism Research (CAAR: [go.bath.ac.uk/caar](http://go.bath.ac.uk/caar)). Professor Brosnan's research focusses upon supporting autistic strengths, specifically in reasoning and learning, as well as co-developing digital technologies with the autistic community.

Professor Brosnan has a highly inclusive approach to research and practice which is applied to real world issues. Annually, CAAR run an autism summer school ([go.bath.ac.uk/ubass](http://go.bath.ac.uk/ubass)) for autistic people thinking of going to university, and an autism employment school ([go.bath.ac.uk/bessa](http://go.bath.ac.uk/bessa)) for autistic students seeking employment. Professor Brosnan's recent projects include how to make educational services as well as health and clinical services more autism-friendly. A particular focus of this is the provision of alcohol-related services.

## Workshop Speakers - Biographies



### Freya Spicer-White

Throughout her career, Freya Spicer-White has predominantly worked within the field of neurodiversity and has always believed that how an individual understands themselves, and the reasonable adaptations that others can make, are crucial to that individual's wellbeing and positive mental health. Since qualifying as a Clinical Psychologist from the North Wales programme in

Bangor in 2012, Freya has worked within North Wales, first within Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services as part of the assessment team who completed Autism and ADHD assessments.

She then became Clinical Lead for the North East Wales Neurodevelopmental Team and helped set up and develop this new service. In the Neurodevelopmental team, Freya worked alongside a multi-disciplinary team of professionals conducting assessments and delivering interventions for parents of and children/young people with ASD, ADHD and other Neurodevelopmental differences. She is currently working as a Principal Clinical Psychologist within the North Wales Integrated Autism Service, assessing adults and delivering interventions to adults and parents of autistic children.



### Sara Hounsell and Gemma Price

As Specialist ASC Practitioners & Advisers at Swansea University Sara Hounsell and Gemma Price work with students on the Autism Spectrum to support them on their journey through University life. This includes setting up support through

reasonable adjustments and coordinating support allocated through Disabled Student Allowance. Working closely with academic departments is key, as is providing support and problem solving advice to the students they Case Manage. Initial screening and onward referral for diagnosis is an important part of the role as is the coordination the Eureka social group, and orientation programme provided through the ASC service. It's an interesting, challenging, and diverse role.

Gemma has worked in the field of autism for over 10 years across social care, education and healthcare. These experiences led to the completion of the MSc in Autism and related conditions. Prior to working at Swansea University Gemma worked in a specialist college for young people with a diagnosis of ASC for 5 years as Education lead. This role allowed her to develop the skills required to ensure young people with ASC access education through the

## Workshop Speakers - Biographies

### Sara Hounsell and Gemma Price . . . *continued*

removal of barriers, widening access and a holistic approach to the education programmes offered. Gemma strongly values the importance of social skills, independence skills, emotional awareness and mental wellbeing alongside effective transition planning.

Gemma has worked with children from the age of 2 years up to adults celebrating their 80th birthday. Alongside her role at Swansea University Gemma delivers parents seminars across South and West Wales on topics such as puberty, behaviour and sensory considerations.

Sara has worked in the field of Autism for over 20 years, with children and adults, and their families. She initially worked in challenging behaviour services, for the NHS and SCOPE.

Prior to her role at Swansea University she worked for the National Autistic Society (NAS Cymru) for 10 years; working with families to develop, deliver and coordinate the NAS help! Post Diagnostic Support Programme in Wales. Sara held the role of National Coordinator (Cymru) during her time at NAS Cymru, working with the Welsh Assembly and other agencies throughout Wales to promote partnership working, raise awareness and contribute to strategic development.

Sara also worked for North Yorkshire County Council, as Principle officer Autism (1998-2001), developing an in-county strategy to develop / coordinate services for adults with ASC; playing a key role in training / development and coordinating a social group for adults.

Sara firmly believes as Dr Stephen Shore states, "if you have met one person with Autism, you have met one person with Autism." She continues to learn something new every day and enjoys working with such an interesting and diverse group of students.



### Huriyah Sisuvie

Huriyah Sisuvie is yoga instructor from N.Y. State, USA. She is currently living in Swansea.

Her life is dedicated to helping people with additional needs and carers. Huriyah's yoga sessions often focus on relaxation, visualization, face yoga to reverse aging, and self-expression. She aspires to teach people the art of living a courageous life through yoga, fitness and healthy lifestyle choices.

## Workshop Speakers - Biographies



### Rhi Lloyd-Williams

Rhi was born and raised on a hill-farm in mid-Wales and studied English Literature at Southampton University. She has a particular interest in the psychology and patterns of communication. She was diagnosed with Autism in 2015 and since then has been writing about her experiences at AutistRhi.com, her articles have been published across the world and translated into five languages.

Rhi is also a poet and playwright and is currently touring her play 'The Duck', as well as working as Poet in Residence for the Arts Council funded, neurodiverse project 'Neither Use Nor Ornament' which is exhibiting in Oxford throughout April. She was longlisted for The New Welsh Review essay competition in 2018 for her collection, 'The Wrong Kind of Happiness', about finding contentment on the spectrum.

She sees her writing as her 'impractical creativity' and everything else she does as the practical sort. Rhi describes creativity as a need, not a want; from crochet to DIY to doodling and pattern-finding, creativity is an essential part of humanity that is so often pushed to one side and forgotten.

She lives in the wilds of West Wales with her husband and five children.



### Gareth Tarrant

Gareth has 15 years experience in the Autism field.

Gareth started off as a support worker and teaching assistant in a residential college in Wales supporting adults in the community and education.

Gareth spent the next 9 years working in schools and FE colleges in Northampton and Brighton as a behavioural therapist.

Gareth is now the Operations manager at The Autism Directory charity which supports the autism and autistic communities across the areas of diagnosis, education, benefits and employment.

Gareth Runs the successful employment program which is funded through the DWP and has supported over 100 autistic adults (some awaiting diagnosis) over the last 18 months.

## Workshop Speakers - Biographies



### Lucy Wells

Lucy Wells has worked as an Occupational Therapist since 2004 and started out in Adult Mental Health Services in Sheffield where she got to know lots of service users with autism. Lucy could see that autism had a huge impact on people's day-to-day functioning and their needs were not being met by mainstream mental health services. Therefore, she started to seek out training and knowledge about autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions. In 2010 she completed training in Sensory Integration, and in 2013 received an MSc in Clinical Research and completed a research study about adults with ADHD. At this time, she also encouraged and supported adults in Sheffield to push for services and wrote a business case for a specialist Autism Occupational Therapy role.

Eventually, in 2014 Lucy became part of the new Sheffield Adult Autism & Neuro-developmental Service, establishing a new role as an Occupational Therapist for adults with autism. This was her dream job but then her partner got a job in Cardiff and she had to face the prospect of moving on. Amazingly, at this time the new Cardiff & Vale Integrated Autism Service were looking for an Occupational Therapist for their brand new service; and Lucy couldn't believe her luck! She took up her new post in September 2017. She continues to love her work and feels they are establishing a great new service here in Wales. She is also enjoying exploring the Welsh countryside and settling in to her new home.

## Workshop Speakers - Biographies



### Professor Phil Reed

Professor Phil Reed obtained a D.Phil. from the University of York, held a Research Fellowship at the University of Oxford, and a Readership in Learning and Behaviour at University College London, before taking a University Chair in Psychology at Swansea University.

Phil's broad research interests include: Learning and Behaviour; Autism and Educational Interventions; and Psychology and Medicine, including Internet Addiction and Uro/Gynaecological Health. Phil has written several books (recently, *Interventions for Autism: Evidence for Educational and Clinical Practice*), published over 260 papers, and been invited to present his work at many international conferences. Phil has presented his work on Autism, and in Women's Health, to the National Assembly for Wales, and was awarded the 'Medal of the President of the Republic' of Italy in 2016 for scientific contribution to society.

Phil appears regularly in the media and has been featured on: Science Channel's 'Through the Wormhole with Morgan Freeman', BBC's 'Charlotte Church: Inside my Brain', 'ITV Wales', 'BBC Wales', and 'BBC Radio Wales'. There have been several radio specials on Phil's Internet Addiction research on syndicated US radio shows (Richie Allen; Katherine Albrecht), and features in Time Magazine, Cosmopolitan, The Sunday Times, The Daily Mail, and locally in the Swansea Evening Post, and the Western Mail.

## Core Sponsors

### Welsh Local Government Association

The WLGA's primary purposes are to promote a better local government, its reputation and to support authorities in the development of policies and priorities which will improve public service and democracy.



It represents the 22 local authorities in Wales with the 3 fire and rescue authorities and 3 national park authorities as associate members.

### Public Health Wales

Public Health Wales is the national public health agency in Wales and exists to protect and improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities for people in Wales. We are part of the NHS and report to the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport in the Welsh Government.



With a strong Board, 1,700 staff and a budget of £106 million, the organisation employs the majority of the specialist public health resource in Wales.

We provide advice, expertise and specialist services to Welsh Government (working across departments), the seven health boards, two NHS Trusts, 22 local authorities, other agencies and to the population of Wales.

We provide the public health knowledge, scientific expertise and intelligence to lead transformational change and to drive a focus on ensuring that we deliver tangible improvements in health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce health inequalities in Wales.

Health and local government are among the devolved areas in Wales and therefore, working nationally and locally, Public Health Wales has access to both policy levers and local delivery systems by working closely with our partners.

Each of the seven health boards in Wales employs a Director of Public Health who is supported by the critical mass of expertise employed by Public Health Wales at the local and community level and who, under an honorary contract, manages locally based Public Health Wales staff.

Public Health Wales, health boards and local authorities work closely together to promote public health in their areas and jointly identify and set the local strategic agenda in partnership with communities, housing, education, police, fire and rescue and the voluntary sector.



CLILC • WLGA

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buddiannau llywodraeth leol yng  
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**Representing, promoting, and  
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government in Wales**

[www.wlga.cymru](http://www.wlga.cymru)

[www.wlga.wales](http://www.wlga.wales)

# Study at Swansea...



Swansea University  
Prifysgol Abertawe

College of Human and Health Sciences  
Coleg y Gwyddorau Dynol ac Iechyd



## WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE'S LIVES...

The College of Human and Health Sciences at Swansea University draws together the disciplines of **health, nursing, midwifery, social care, social policy and psychology** to offer a wide range of courses that make a difference to people's lives and society as a whole.

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**UK TOP 30**

(The Times and Sunday Times, Good University Guide 2019)

**UK TOP 10**

**GRADUATE PROSPECTS**

(Distribution of Leavers from Higher Education 2018\*)

**3<sup>RD</sup> MOST AFFORDABLE**

**UK UNIVERSITY TOWN**

(TotallyMoney.com 2018\*)

**TEF Gold**

**Teaching Excellence Framework**

**UK TOP 5 STUDENT SATISFACTION**

(HQS 2018\*)

## YN GWNEUD GWAHANIAETH I FYWYDAU POBL...

Mae Coleg y Gwyddorau Dynol ac Iechyd ym Mhrifysgol Abertawe yn tynnu ynghyd disgyblaethau **iechyd, nyrsio, bydwreigiaeth, gofal cymdeithasol, polisi cymdeithasol a seicoleg** i gynnig ystod eang o gyrsgiau sy'n gwneud gwahaniaeth i fywydau pobl a chymdeithas yn gyfan gwbl.

Gwellwch eich gyrfa mewn amgylchedd cyffrous a deinamig gyda chymuned agos o fyfyrwyr a chyfleusterau o'r radd flaenaf.

[www.swansea.ac.uk/humanandhealthsciences/](http://www.swansea.ac.uk/humanandhealthsciences/)  
E: [study@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:study@swansea.ac.uk)



**30 UCHAF YN Y DU**

(The Times and Sunday Times, Canllaw Prifysgolion DA 2019)

**10 UCHAF YN Y DU**

**RHAGOLYGON GRADDEDIGION**

(Cymhwysedd Tueddwrn Addysg (Ueak) 2018\*)

**3ydd RHATAF YN Y DU**

**TREF BRIFYSOOL**

(TotallyMoney.com 2018\*)

**FfrhA Aur**

**Fframwaith Rhagoriaeth Addysgu**

**5 UCHAF YN Y DU BODDHAD MYFYRWYR**

(Anrhyng Canllawfodol Myfyrwyr 2018\*)

## Core Sponsors

### Swansea University

Swansea University is a research-led university that has been making a difference since 1920.

The University community thrives on exploration and discovery, and offers the right balance of excellent teaching and research, matched by an enviable quality of life.



Swansea University  
Prifysgol Abertawe

### Ospreys in the Community

Ospreys in the Community is a not for profit foundation that uses the power of sport and the Ospreys brand to empower people across our region to make positive life choices. Whilst sharing a strong relationship, and forming a key part of the Ospreys Strategy, Ospreys in the Community operates on an independent basis to the professional rugby organisation.

Working in conjunction with commercial partners, public sector bodies and third sector agencies to generate financial support and resources, our aim is to create a vibrant and sustainable Foundation that utilises the undoubted power of the Ospreys brand and players in a positive fashion, to harness social good and make an impact in communities and people's lives irrespective of age, ability or gender.

Despite being founded less than four years ago, OitC have already worked with over 100,000 people through a wide range of innovative programmes, contained within our four Strategic Themes; Education, Health, Sport, and Inclusion.

In 2018/19 Ospreys in the Community launched two new Inclusive Community Clubs. In line with the Welsh Rugby Union's Disability Strategy, the mixed ability clubs enable children, who traditionally haven't been able to join in, the opportunity to take part in our sport in a fun and inclusive environment.



## Core Sponsors

### The Swans Community Trust

As Swansea City AFC's registered charity, the Swans Community Trust is at the heart of the club and at the heart of our local communities.



S W A N S  
COMMUNITY TRUST

The Community Trust gives the Club the opportunity to work where we are needed – within South West Wales' communities.

It was set up to improve the lives of individuals and neighbourhoods from Bridgend to Haverfordwest – and everywhere in between! It does this through the delivery of year-round projects which are designed to have a very real and positive impact on people's lives.

Since its inception in 2008, the charity has successfully developed a range of youth engagement, educational and employability projects which all have themes of health and inclusion embedded within them.

Through the delivery of its various projects the Community Trust aims to improve the life chances of its participants.

It does this primarily through its offering of enjoyable physical activity coupled with a varied programme of activity including projects which aim to increase literacy, develop business skills or overcome barriers to employment.

The Trust helps people improve their health and wellbeing by helping them develop confidence and valuable life skills.



## GET IN TOUCH

**ADDRESS:** Liberty Stadium, Landore, Swansea SA1 2FA

**TELEPHONE:** 01792 556 520

**CYFEIRIAD:** Stadiwm Liberty, Landore, Abertawe, SA1 2FA

**RHIF FFÔN:** 01792 556 520

**FACEBOOK/TWITTER:** @SwansCommunity

## Co-Sponsors

### Hacer Developments

Hacer Developments offers a full project management package from funding, design, planning permission consents, and completion.



With its headquarters in Swansea, Hacer Developments operates across England and Wales under the experienced leadership and direction of Carwyn Davies. Carwyn has over 20 years' experience of project management, delivering high quality commercial, residential and regeneration projects.

Hacer provides innovative transformative solutions to development challenges, taking the risk out of commercial residential and regeneration schemes for private and public sector clients by investing its own funds, and also using its particular expertise and experience in sourcing funding from property development grants. Indeed in a Welsh context Hacer are seen as the go-to company for delivering projects which require a property development grant, having undertaken a number of schemes and being well versed in the processes involved.

Working alongside local authorities, architects, engineers, solicitors, and top industry consultants, Hacer negotiates and solves complex and challenging legal, planning and on-site ground issues to bring a project seamlessly to completion on schedule.

*We are grateful to Hacer Developments for sponsoring the "Skills for Life: Getting Things Done" and the "Physical Activity & Autism - Let's Keep Moving" workshops.*

### Welsh Government

Welsh Government Social Services and Integration Directorate aims to promote, protect and improve the health and well-being of everyone in Wales.

They do this by delivering high quality health and social care services, including funding NHS Wales and setting a strategic framework for adult and children's social care services.

Where there are inequalities in health, they work across government to tackle the social, economic and environmental influences that affect health and well being.

*We are grateful to Welsh Government Social Services and Integration Directorate for sponsoring the "Improving Alcohol Support for People with Autism" workshop.*



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## Co-Sponsors

### The Autism Directory

The Autism Directory is a registered charity (no.1143855) working to support individuals and families living with autism at a grass roots level in the community.



We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to create a better and more independent life for themselves and we know that with the right support and resources this can be achieved.

Our services include a free helpline which discusses all things autism and approx. 50% of calls we receive a month are from autistic people. The helpline also supports people with PIP, DLA and diagnosis application.

Our online directory has over 7000 autism related listings helping people find the support they need.

We run employment programs in partnership with the DWP which has supported 30% of participants into employment.

TADLive (formally The Welsh Autism Show) is our flagship service which annually see's over 2000 registered visitors, who come to hear talks and seminars as well as see over 50 exhibitors who showcase their organisations, products and services to the autistic community. Over 70% of our staff team are autistic and form our think tank. Our think tank develops the services, resources and training materials that we deliver.

*We are grateful to The Autism Directory for sponsoring the "Autism and Employment" workshop.*

## National Autism Team



The National Autism Team is funded by the Welsh Government and hosted by the Welsh Local Government Association, working in partnership with Public Health Wales. The National Autism Team provides support and guidance in helping to improve the lives of autistic people across Wales and in improving services for autistic people and their parents and carers, as well as facilitating professional networks.

The team's four main work areas are: increasing awareness and understanding of autism; the development and promotion of resources for autistic people, parents and carers and professionals; delivering training and oversight and support of the seven regional Integrated Autism Services across Wales.

The team works closely with the Welsh Government, local ASD leads within local authorities and health boards, key stakeholders and advisory groups.

The team currently consists of:

- **Frances Rees**, Regional Autism Development Officer (West Wales)
- **Holly Roberts**, Interim National Research and Improvement Officer
- **Ieuan Rees**, Interim Project Administrative Assistant
- **Linda Pilgrim**, Administrative Support Office
- **Sara Harvey**, National Strategic Lead for Autism
- **Sioned Thomas**, Regional Autism Development Officer (North Wales)
- **Tracy Hinton**, National Autism Development Officer
- **Wendy Thomas**, National Professional Lead for Autism

## ASDinfoWales website [www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk](http://www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk)



Welsh Government Social Services and Integration Directorate aims to promote, protect and improve the health and well-being of everyone in Wales.

ASDinfoWales is the national website for Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) developed and maintained by the National Autism Team with our partners. Here you'll find information about Autistic Spectrum Disorders (including Autism and Asperger Syndrome), service details, training resources and updates on the implementation of the ASD Strategic Action Plan for Wales.

There are a range of easily accessible resources that can be shared with individuals with ASD, their family/carers and professionals working with children and adults with ASD.

There are resources aimed at developing skills amongst practitioners as well as those aimed at supporting parents and carers and those to assist individuals with an ASD. These include various learning Autism Aware certification schemes, post diagnostic guide books, films and resources.

The resources and the web-site have been developed through joint working with Local Authority ASD Leads and partners from health, education, third sector and key stakeholders including autistic people and parents and carers.

**Further information is available on our resources leaflet:**

[www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk/resource/ASDinfoWales\\_Resources-leaflet\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk/resource/ASDinfoWales_Resources-leaflet_ENG.pdf)

## Notes