

The Go Girls Project

Launched in 2013, Go Girls is a partnership between Charter Housing and Bron Afon Community Housing. The project increases the confidence and self-esteem of young women aged 15-25 years and encourages the development of self-respect and belief in themselves and their abilities. Through issue based workshops and monthly support meetings, Go Girls raises awareness, empowers young women and builds their resilience enabling them to cope better with life's challenges.



The Go Girls is about sharing ideas and thoughts of what it is like to be a young woman in Wales, aiming to develop a strong sense of identity, respect and pride.

“Empowering women from a young age is very important to us,” said Abbie Clifford, of Go Girls. “The young people come to Go Girls from all walks of life, often with little confidence and low self-esteem. They come together, supported by Charter and Bron Afon, to have a voice and make a difference on issues that affect them personally, whether that be equality, domestic abuse or personal well-being. Our goal is for the girls to make strong bonds and support each other to campaign for issues they feel strongly about and to have a collective voice as strong and independent women.”

Since its creation five years ago, Go Girls has supported more than 200 young women across Gwent. Starting with taster sessions, the girls meet fortnightly and work up to organising campaigns and events that promote ideas of gender equality, safer relationships and health and well-being.

Go Girls has worked alongside the Gwent Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence team on various projects, most recently hosting an event geared around the Welsh Government's #thisisme campaign for International Women's Day at the Riverfront Theatre in Newport. The event aimed to challenge gender norms and encourage attendees to give their views on gender inequality and stereotypes, which were then shared in a presentation at the end of the day.

Ms Clifford continued: "Some of the responses we get from these events are really enlightening. For some people, talking about gender inequality is second nature, but others find it very challenging. We relish that challenge because it's that type of discussion that can lead to positive change down the line.

"One of our most successful events was a Forum Theatre piece around domestic abuse, where we allowed the audience to stop what was happening at any time and see what would have happened if they had taken action earlier. It was really successful as it meant the audience could see first-hand the serious issue of domestic abuse and were able to engage in a creative way, which we feel is far more effective.

"I'm proud to be a part of Go Girls and to have seen it go from strength to strength over the last five years. Supporting the #thisisme campaign at the event in Newport was exciting for all of us as we are keen to drive social change and encourage people to #livefearfree.

"We look forward to continuing the fight against gender inequality and providing young women across the region with a voice, to go on and enjoy their lives, doing whatever they want to do."

A young member of the Go Girls group added: "All people should be free to live the life they want to without discrimination and without fear, no matter their age, gender, nationality or sexuality. This is why me and the other girls who participate in the Go Girls project love the idea of the #thisisme campaign. I hope that in the months and years to come that we can move forward and live our lives happily and freely, doing whatever we choose."

#thisisme is part of the Welsh Government's larger 'Live Fear Free' campaign, providing information and advice for people affected by sexual violence, domestic abuse and violence against women. Find out more: livefearfree.gov.wales/thisisme