

JULY - AUGUST 2024

# WELSH GERMAN EXCHANGE FINAL REPORT

# 2024



# IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SPORTKREISJUGEND REMS MURR



# FOREWORD



**GRANT POINER**

Chief Executive Officer  
Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales

*“We’ve had the pleasure of hosting our long-term partners, Sportkreisjugend Rems Murr, here in Wales. After more than 20 years of partnership, it remains a true delight to welcome them back.*

*Our time together was filled with excitement and a packed schedule. The young people were given numerous opportunities to immerse themselves in Welsh life. They enjoyed the breath-taking landscapes, took part in a Welsh culture festival, and visited iconic cities like St David’s and Cardiff.*

*In addition to exploring Wales, the programme was rich with games and activities, fostering friendships and creating lasting memories that the young people will cherish for years to come.”*

*“It was an absolute privilege to work on this year’s Welsh-German Exchange 2024. Once again, we can’t thank our partners enough for their hard work, dedication and openness to share their lives and culture with us. Not to mention their skills in the kitchen!*

*We were so fortunate to have such a great group of young people that made, what could have been a long 12 days, an absolute joy.*

*It was so rewarding to see the young people, staff and volunteers develop such positive relationships. They all mixed so well, and I was really proud to see the young people grow in confidence, skills and personally throughout the exchange.*

*The exchange remains one of my absolute highlights of the year.”*



**ETHAN RICHARDS**

Youth Worker (International)  
Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales

# FUNDERS AND QUOTE



We were delighted that the Welsh Government Taith funding was able to support this youth exchange.

The Welsh Government's Taith funding programme supports international learning and exchange opportunities for students, educators, and institutions in Wales. It aims to enhance global education partnerships and provide funding for travel, study, and training abroad, promoting skills development and cultural exchange.

For young people, the Taith funding programme provides opportunities to experience new cultures and chances to travel they may never have without it. It helps them develop new skills, broaden their cultural understanding, and gain valuable experiences that enhance their education and future career prospects.

Taith funding from the Welsh Government has been instrumental in providing opportunities for young people to connect internationally and experience new cultures. Through this support, we were able to host a successful exchange with our German partners in Wales, fostering cross-cultural understanding and personal growth. The funding enabled us to offer enriching experiences that expanded horizons and empowered young people, highlighting the value of global learning and collaboration.

*"Youth Exchange opportunities are some of the most valuable youth work experiences that I have been a part of.*

*Young people are able to build confidence and self esteem in an environment where they feel safe to express themselves.*

*One of my favourite memories is of a young person who was too nervous to introduce himself on day one, but by the end had built his self confidence to do a speech in front of the entire group.*

*Youth Exchanges can be life changing and I am always so happy to be a part of them."*



**JESS LLOYD**

BGC Wales Trustee and Club Leader (Llwynypia BGC)



# WELSH CULTURE

A huge part of having the Youth Exchange in Wales is that we get to show off our beautiful country and our rich culture. Informally, this is done through building relationships and learning from each others experiences. We were also able to visit a Welsh Festival, Calan Awst, and visit St Davids. It was a great chance to show off our history and culture

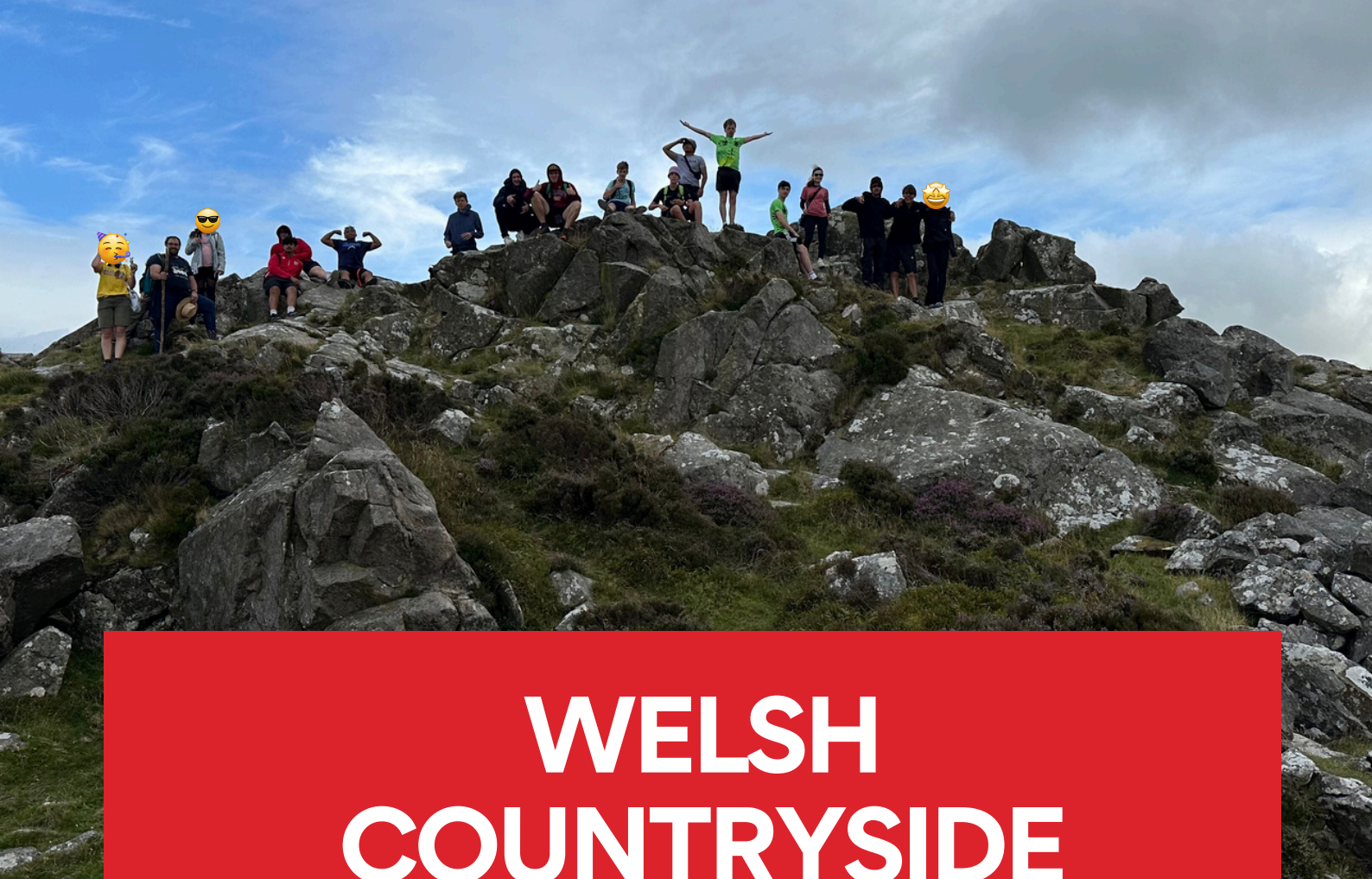
## \* Lily, 17 - Welsh Young Person

*“My absolute favourite has to be the Calan Awst festival. That evening made me feel so much more connected to my Welsh heritage, it was truly beautiful to hear the Welsh singing whilst sitting down on the grass and surrounded by Celtic roundhouses from the Iron Age. It was very wholesome in that sense. The fire performance was just as spectacular and I’m grateful that we also got to speak to someone who worked there to learn more about the history and ask any questions we had.”*



## ELISE BURGESS, BGC WALES YOUTH WORKER

*“The opportunity to show off Welsh Culture is vital to the success of the Exchange. It not only helps our German partners understand our culture, but also helps Welsh young people rediscover their own Welsh identity. By having Welsh culture intentionally ingrained into the exchange, it helps the young people to develop a deeper understanding and connection to what it means to be Welsh.”*



# WELSH COUNTRYSIDE

We were also able to show off the outstanding natural beauty of Wales while on the Exchange. Spending our time between Pembrokeshire and Bridgend, we were in fantastic locations. The German Group, being from the South Side of Germany, were thrilled to spend time on our outstanding beaches and coast line. The group also enjoyed a small hike within the beautiful Welsh landscape to enjoy some stunning views, which also is a great way to improve wellbeing! The beach days were also a brilliant way for the young people to build strong relationships. We even got to play some Rugby on the beach!

*“We have so much natural beauty that we are proud to be able to share with the German group. It was a great way for the young people to appreciate what they had and connect to Wales’ incredible landscape.”*

 **Dean - BGC Wales Youth Worker**



# COASTSTEERING

Abby, 17 \*

One of the highlights of the exchange was coaststeering, in the beautiful Moylegrove in Cardigan. The young people enjoyed the activity, and was a lot of fun for all.

Coasteering involves exploring the coastline through swimming and climbing which was really enjoyable. The best part was being able to climb up the rocks and jump into the water. Some jumps being over 120 ft!

The group encouraged and supported each other throughout the activity, displaying their teamwork skills which was wonderful to witness.

We had great feedback from young people about how much they enjoyed this activity.

It was a beautiful spot, on a beautiful day. The German group also shared how much they enjoyed it.

\* Jake, 16

*"My favourite activity was 100% coaststeering. It just felt amazing to jump off the cliffs into the water!"*

*"I think my favourite activity was coaststeering because it was my first time trying it so it was a really good experience to try something new. I had a lot of fun swimming through the caves even if I kept falling and jumping off the rocks. It was really fun overall and would definitely do it again."*



# TEAM BUILDING

An important part of the Exchange is facilitating games and activities that allow young people to build friendships and make memories. Through team games, performances, bushcraft and their free time, we make sure all young people are included and challenge themselves to try something new. Taking part in these activities such as these form memories to last a lifetime! The group we had this year were brilliant, and were such a delight to have. They all got involved and mixed so well. We are confident their friendships will last longer than the 12 days of the exchange.

**\* Gethyn, 14**

*"Making new friends was one of my favourite memories from this trip!"*

**Amani, 15 \***

*"I am still in contact with most people from both Wales and Germany."*



# QUOTES



**CHELSIE, LEADER**

*"It is honestly the best time and you'll never forget the bonds you make with the young people and staff."*



**RAYYA, YOUNG LEADER**

*"One of the best experiences and opportunity I have ever had! Loved learning things about another culture."*



**KAITLYN, 15**

*"When being on the exchange we have been challenged and pushed to our best ability, because of this I have become more independent and confident doing things."*



**COREY, 17**

*"A very exciting and amazing exchange. It was class!"*



**ANDREW, 14**

*"I think it's improved my confidence around people and it was a great experience."*



**JEN, 15**

*"Memories that last a lifetime from only 2 weeks, 100% worth it."*



# ALBERCHT NESSNER AWARD



## ETHAN AND FABI

PARTICIPANTS AND WINNERS OF THE 2024 ALBERCHT NEISSNER AWARD

This award celebrates personal development and the ethos of the exchange, in honour of Albi, who was one of the founders of the exchange.

## ETHAN, 17

*"It had been a huge privilege to be chosen to receive the Albi award for the 2024 Welsh German youth exchange. The experience of the exchange itself created a positive and changing impact for me, it was my first exchange and comparing myself from the beginning with how I was at the end would be two different people, I had become a better and more open person. I had met a lot of new people who are now friends and went through a variety of different experiences learning new things. So, receiving the Albi award was really amazing and I am grateful. It had shown that going along with new experiences will build better character for myself and as for the influence to others. I thank the BGC for the fantastic opportunity."*

## RICHARD, PARENT

*"From my experience in dealing with the staff who organise these exchanges, and with what my daughter always tells me when she's back, I can't fault what you do or ask that you do anything different. My daughter has always been well cared and catered for of which I am very grateful."*

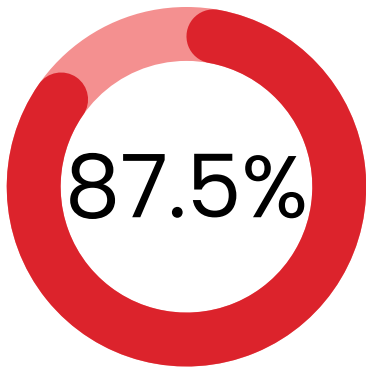
## BETH, PARENT

*"My son is more independent, and it has a positive impact on him as a person he is happier and more confident."*

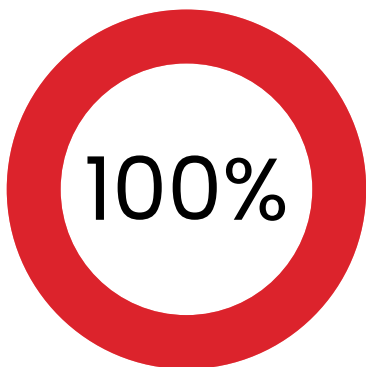
## MICHAEL AND MARIA, PARENTS

*"Fully enjoyed the exchange, unending stories with their experience and made new friends. It is very well organised and we cant thank you enough for having them both."*

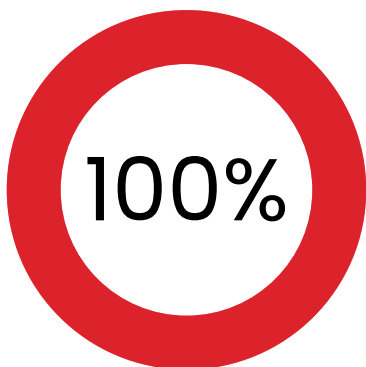
# STATISTICS



87.5% of the young people on Youth Exchange said they felt more confident since coming home from the Youth Exchange



100% of the young people on the Youth Exchange said that they were able to make new friends through the Exchange



100% of the young people on the Youth Exchange would like to get more involved with BGC Wales and with future Taith funded trips and opportunities

# IMPACT OF BEING A YOUNG LEADER

*“During the youth exchange, the BGC team was nothing short of incredible. From the very start, they went above and beyond to ensure that I felt supported, valued, and empowered throughout the entire experience. Their dedication was evident in every interaction, whether it was through their thoughtful guidance, their willingness to listen and address concerns, or their constant encouragement. They created an environment where I felt comfortable to step out of my comfort zone, try new things, and truly embrace the exchange experience.*

*Participating in the youth exchange as a young leader, I felt that I had the right amount of responsibility to ensure a balanced and enriching experience. The youth exchange provided opportunities for personal growth and leadership without overwhelming me. The team entrusted me with tasks that allowed me to develop my organisational and communication skills. At the same time, there was ample support from the team, ensuring that I had guidance when needed. This balance allowed me to fully engage in the youth exchange, making the experience both rewarding and manageable.”*



## LUKE YOUNG

Placement Student with Cardiff Metropolitan University completing his Youth and Community Work Degree



## KELINU TANTI

Young Leader and Volunteer with Bettws BGC

*“Participating in the youth exchange was a deeply rewarding experience that had a lasting impact on me. I not only had the chance to engage with different cultures and perspectives, but I also grew in confidence and truly came out of my shell. This exchange helped me push past my comfort zone and embrace new opportunities, which ultimately helped me grow as a young leader. I learned how to take initiative, communicate effectively, and collaborate with others. The friendships and relationships I built made it even more memorable, and the shared experiences made for a truly great time that I’ll carry with me for years to come.”*

# SOME OF OUR FAVOURITE PHOTOS

