



Extending our reach and impact



About us

Time to Change Wales is the first national campaign to end the stigma and discrimination experienced by people living with mental health conditions. We started our journey back in 2012 and since then have brought about considerable change in public attitudes in Wales.

Our work is grounded in the belief that nobody in Wales should have to experience mental health stigma regardless of their race, ethnicity or socio-economic status.

Our unique position as a social movement has allowed us to mobilise hundreds of individuals, employers and communities across Wales to come together as a collective voice against stigma. Building our reputation and footprint across Wales over the years, Time to Change Wales has strategically positioned itself to lead public dialogue around mental health stigma to shape policy, practice and change behaviours.

Time to Change Wales is funded by **Welsh Government** and delivered by **Adferiad** and **Mind Cymru**.

About this report

This impact report reflects our work between 2022-2025 where we've particularly focussed on deeper engagement with diverse communities across Wales as well as those impacted by poverty and deprivation. Together with our Champions, Employers and Partners we have made considerable progress over three years and this report aims to summarise this impact and some of our key achievements throughout this journey.

Acknowledgements

Time to Change Wales would like to acknowledge all who have engaged and participated in the programme over the last three years and beyond. Within this report, we have endeavoured to capture, celebrate and acknowledge the collective contribution made in tackling mental health stigma in Wales but no report can truly capture nor quantify the significant progress made on the ground. The tireless efforts across workplaces, communities and services have all contributed towards positive behavioural change witnessed within society in Wales and that in some of the most marginalised communities. As this programme draws to a close this year, a heartfelt thank you is owed to all of our Champions and supporters, without their dedication, passion and commitment Time to Change Wales would not have been able to deliver its mission.

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Foreword

by Sue Northcott

I'm so proud to be part of the work done by Time to Change Wales, but more than that I'm incredibly grateful. My life has been changed so much for the better.

The years before I became a TtCW Champion in 2013 weren't only dark because of mental ill health, I lived in fear. Fear that I'd be 'found out' and lose everything, including my children. The stigma surrounding mental illness was immense, and discrimination really went on. Stigma and discrimination undermine you. You believe the stories being told. You hide away. You don't seek help when you need it. You are ashamed and in a deepening spiral.

What TtCW does is unique. It actively challenges stigma and discrimination, not just with wonderful resources like short films, adverts, posters and flyers, it overturns prejudice by harnessing the power of lived experience. And over the last three years, TtCW has dedicated real efforts in extending its reach into more diverse communities including those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. This work has awoken conversations which may never have taken place before and ignited a spark of speaking up and sharing experiences.

Training and supporting Champions to explore their stories is empowering. Some Champions will man stalls, others may blog or vlog, some will give talks. These people are the human face of mental illness. They are just people, living ordinary lives, studying, holding down jobs, bringing up families, going to the shops, supporting their team. But TtCW has enabled them to uncover a superpower, because when they share their stories three things happen. That individual is now in control of the narrative, the story no longer has power over them. Those hearing the stories, especially those with no personal experience of poor mental health, begin to realise the immense positive potential of individuals who are too often viewed as a problem, and to understand the unnecessary barriers that society places in their path. Then there are those who hear the stories and see themselves reflected there. Often it will be the first time that they have realised that they are not alone. For me, this has always been the most striking part of sharing my journey. You see lives changing in front of you.

All of this can only be achieved with the encouragement and support of the TtCW staff, and the camaraderie of the TtCW Champion's Community. Sadly, despite the amazing progress made over the years, the evidence captured by Time to Change Wales earlier this year shows that stigma and discrimination still exists and is still having a devastating impact on lives. The work of TtCW and its Champions is needed just as much today as it was when I found my place with them.

Please celebrate the wonderful achievements highlighted in this report, and join us in the ongoing fight to allow all with mental health problems, their families and carers, to live their best possible lives, and to contribute fully to their communities. We all have a part to play in the fights against mental health stigma so that everyone, regardless of race, class or place in society in Wales feels heard and accepted.

Sue Northcott
Time to Change Wales
Champion

"Sadly, despite the amazing progress made over the years, the evidence captured by Time to Change Wales earlier this year shows that stigma and discrimination still exists and is still having a devastating impact on lives."



Introduction

by Lowri Wyn Jones, Programme Manager

We entered Phase 4 as the world emerged from the Covid-19 Pandemic, a period which no doubt changed us all forever with many of us at the time still reeling from its effects.

This felt like as good of a time as any to put our ambitious anti-stigma plans for Phase 4 into action, setting a new precedent of how we were going to deliver anti-stigma work in Wales. In readiness for this new phase, nestled between Phases 3 and 4, we were granted an extension year which provided us with the opportunity to reflect on the work we were doing and who was truly benefitting from it. This period provided us with additional time to identify and start to connect with new audiences, engage with in-depth listening exercises to develop a programme shaped around their needs.

We were given a clear mandate from our funder at Welsh Government, that this phase of the programme was to serve those who hadn't benefitted previously from a national anti-stigma programme whilst also maintaining a degree of engagement with our long-standing audiences.

Phase 4 compared to previous phases has felt different; a departure from familiar ways of working and stepping out of our usual comfort zones. We connected with new communities and listened to new perspectives changing the way we view stigma within society. We welcomed new team members whose expertise we felt were aligned to the ambitions we wanted to achieve as a team. We've navigated difficult conversations, and this has been in many ways both exciting and exhilarating.

At the heart of this work is lived experience and social contact – providing a safe platform for those of us who experience(d) mental health issues. Collectively, our Champions have played a vital role in being the human face of mental health experiences whilst also challenging stereotypes towards creating a more compassionate and tolerant society.

This report highlights the tangible strides we've made in breaking down mental health stigma across communities in Wales uncovering stories of immense courage and finding a way forward. However, what we must always remember is that behind the statistics, testimonies, and insights are people living real lives which sadly continue to be impacted by stigma, exclusion and barriers. As you read through the report, I urge you to consider your own role on this journey. The responsibility sits with all of us to challenge stigma and help build safe spaces where individuals feel they can ask for help free of shame and judgement. Building on the solid foundations which the Time to Change Wales programme and its allies has created over the past decade and more, we hope that this legacy will continue to gather pace across society and systems in Wales.

“The responsibility sits with all of us to challenge stigma and help build safe spaces where individuals feel they can ask for help free of shame and judgement.”

Lowri Wyn Jones
Programme Manager,
Time to Change Wales



Liam, Time to Change Wales Champion



Phase 4 allowed us the capacity and the confidence to reach out to some of Wales' most marginalised communities to open up a dialogue about mental health stigma within new communities and settings.

Central to this work was the recruitment of a Partnership Officer to the team who was able to draw on her existing personal and professional networks providing us with a valuable inroad into new communities. Considerable time was then invested in building relationships during the first year of Phase 4 and we began to see this work slowly bearing fruit one year on. As part of this process, our identity as a programme also underwent a rigorous review from reviewing our language and tone of voice, to replacing imagery and messaging to be more representative and accessible.



Top. Naila, Time to Change Wales Champion.

Above. Campaign materials featuring our new photography and updated messaging.

We mustn't underestimate the time and dedication required to build up trusted relationships with communities as well as the importance of taking a step back to listen and to learn about different cultures in the context of mental health discourse. Since then, we've engaged countless individuals, organisations, community and faith groups in our work, expanding our reach and widening participation in anti-stigma activity. We've been able to co-create events and discussions serving minority ethnic communities delivered alongside trusted grassroots and community services on the ground. We also saw ourselves appearing at new events across Wales including MELA, the Minority Ethnic Communities Health Fair and hosted our own Eid celebration event with our diversity partners in 2023.

Since April 2022, we've trained and welcomed 34 new Champions from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds allowing us to better represent and reflect the experiences of the diverse communities in Wales. In 2024 we signed up our first Mosque to the Time to Change Wales Pledge following several months of working together. We are proud of the work we have achieved in this area, but our work is by no means done.

"We urge all of you working with diverse communities in Wales to build upon the momentum we've created, ensuring that the voices, needs, and aspirations of minority ethnic communities remain at the heart of future anti-stigma initiatives."

Time to Change Wales

Our work with Champions

“I became a Time to Change Wales Champion because I believe in the campaign’s ability to drive meaningful change in my community. Challenging mental health stigma is crucial, especially for those of us with lived experience who also face the added burdens of racism and discrimination as members of ethnic minority communities.”

Hajra
TtCW Champion

75

new Champions brought on board between 2022-25

27

new Champions from minority ethnic backgrounds



35

new Champions experiencing poverty



42

lived experience blogs



285

Champions trained in total



78

exhibition stands run over the last three years



90%

of Champions say being involved in TtCW has had a positive impact on them personally

137

anti-stigma talks delivered by Champions



Champion testimonies

We asked our Champions what they value most of being a volunteer for Time to Change Wales



Paul

There are many health campaigns out there, but none quite like Time to Change Wales. This campaign uniquely places the voices of those of us with lived experience at its core, using our stories to drive meaningful change. It is a great honour to be part of such a movement. Every time I gave my talk, it allowed me to be true to myself, which I know will make a positive difference.

Making a difference is very important to me, as it encompasses everything I do, and being a Champion allows me to do just that. Going from corridors of pain to the journey of hope reinforces my passion for tackling social justice and the inequality of mental health.

“This journey has given me the courage to share my story and better manage my mental health, particularly in ethnic minority communities, and for that, I will always be grateful for the campaign.”

Hajra
TtCW Champion



Syeda

It has been great to have become a Time to Change Wales Champion with lived experience of mental health stigma and discrimination. As a South Asian woman, we face many taboos and discrimination. Mental health is not understood properly in our communities, and people are embarrassed or scared of asking for help for fear of criticism and judgement or not being understood. So, it has been great that Time to Change Wales provided the opportunity to hold stalls and speak to ethnic minority people, especially my Bangladeshi community, about mental health, overcoming stigma and barriers and understanding and getting help for their poor mental health or any serious mental illnesses.

It was also valuable to distribute informative leaflets on tackling mental health stigma in languages like Bengali, Hindi, and Urdu, as many women in the community may be struggling with issues like PTSD, depression, or the loss of a family member due to domestic violence but are unable to understand English. Providing these resources in their native languages makes the information more accessible and supportive for them.



Bafra

Since moving to Wales, it has been nice to join Time to Change Wales as a Champion. It has given me a sense of belonging and being part of a community. The message of Time to Change Wales resonated with me, and the importance of getting people to understand and change negative mindsets towards people going through difficult mental health issues. It's a sensitive topic many people like to avoid. I became a volunteer with lived experience so that I can share the message and make others understand that nobody needs to struggle on their own; it is not shameful, and there is help out there.

Within the large Kurdish community in Wales where I belong, I wanted to raise awareness, and it was heartening to see that the Time to Change Wales leaflets were also translated into Kurdish Sorani, and that people could take them away and read them in their own time or give them to someone who didn't understand English. I enjoyed holding the stalls, talking to people about mental health, and normalising those conversations.

Participating in Time to Change Wales events and stalls has been a truly rewarding experience for me. It serves as a reminder that we all face stresses in life and may experience challenges with our mental health at some point, highlighting the importance of offering support and help to one another.

243

pledged organisations in total



39

new employers signed to the pledge



82%

of pledged employers said that they have seen a positive difference in their workplace as a result of the pledge



272

further Employee Champions trained

17,092

more employees reached in Wales

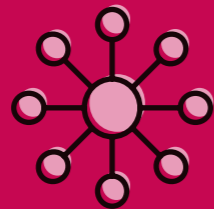


93%

of line managers feel more equipped to support staff with mental health difficulties

7

networking events delivered



Our impact at work

During Phase 4, we've brought on board 39 further Welsh employers in signing the pledge and stepping up to tackle stigma at work.

Our focus in this phase has been to continue to target employers and sectors who haven't typically engaged with us. We also redoubled our efforts to bring on board more diverse employers representing different communities in Wales. These include Bangladeshi Women's Association, African Community Centre, Chinese in Wales, and the Kurdish All Wales Association. Our investment in developing trust and relationships with different ethnic groups in Wales has now borne fruit where our anti-stigma messaging at work is extended across cultural and linguistic boundaries. Earlier this year we surveyed our employers asking them what the impact of being involved in the Time to Change Wales pledge has been?

To continue the momentum with employers after signing the pledge we delivered quarterly employer networking events both in person and online. These events bring together often very diverse types of employers but all having a common purpose of wanting to make things better for their staff and volunteers. They provide unique opportunities to hear from other case study employers, to share best practice and come away inspired to try new ideas within their own organisations.

In 2024 and in response to employers telling us that they would welcome refresh sessions on the pledge we designed and developed a suite of three one-hour employer masterclasses designed to be delivered virtually, normally during lunchtimes. These were launched in the autumn last year and have been very well-received by employers.



Above. Former First Minister for Wales, Mark Drakeford, visiting one of our exhibition stalls.

Left. Signing of the pledge with the African Community Centre.

Health and social care training

Our Health and Social care training has been perhaps one of Time to Change Wales' most notable achievements during this phase.

The idea was born during lockdown when evidence was showing a worrying prevalence of stigma experienced within healthcare settings in Wales. Time to Change Wales felt that it had a clear role to play in this, so we brought together staff from two Welsh Health boards to co-develop a new and bespoke training initiative. What we shared between us was a common vision to work towards more compassionate cultures where staff and patients don't experience mental health stigma.

The training was anchored around the powerful digital stories and scenarios featuring Champions talking candidly about their experiences of stigma within healthcare services. We piloted the training in September 2021 and since then have gone on to train over 1,300 staff across two health boards. The feedback received for this training has been unanimously positive with 96% of participants saying they would recommend it to other colleagues.

"The collaboration with Time to Change Wales has been transformative to our work at SBUHB. It has allowed staff the opportunity to reflect on their current practice regarding their interactions with both patients and colleagues in a supportive and safe environment. The powerful testimonies included as part of the training has no doubt made an impact and opened a dialogue about what works and where changes can be made to ensure people experience the best possible service with the health board.

It complements our other initiatives to support the mental health of our staff and is in line with the Values and People Strategy of SBUHB and it's 10-year vision of becoming a High-Quality Organisation."

Dr Debbie Rees Adams

Consultant Clinical Psychologist
University Health Board, Swansea Bay

1369

NHS staff
trained



9.3/10

The rating given
for our training
programme



60

training sessions
delivered



100%

of trainees rated the
trainer's knowledge
on the topic as good
or very good

94%

of trainees felt more
confident in effectively
supporting patients
in a non-stigmatising
way after attending the
training (up from 53%)

99%

rate the trainer's
presentation and
delivery skills as
good or very good





Phase 4 saw us launch our first four-nation campaign tackling shame.

Launched in March 2024, and re-launched in 2025, *If It's Okay* was a joint marketing campaign from the UK Anti-Stigma Alliance, designed to highlight the shame associated with mental illness. Our UK polling in 2024 revealed that 51 per cent of people across the UK believe that there is still a great deal of shame associated with mental illness.

This joint marketing campaign ran across Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England by members of the Anti-Stigma Alliance: SeeMe in Scotland, Inspire in Northern Ireland, Time to Change in Wales and Mind in England.

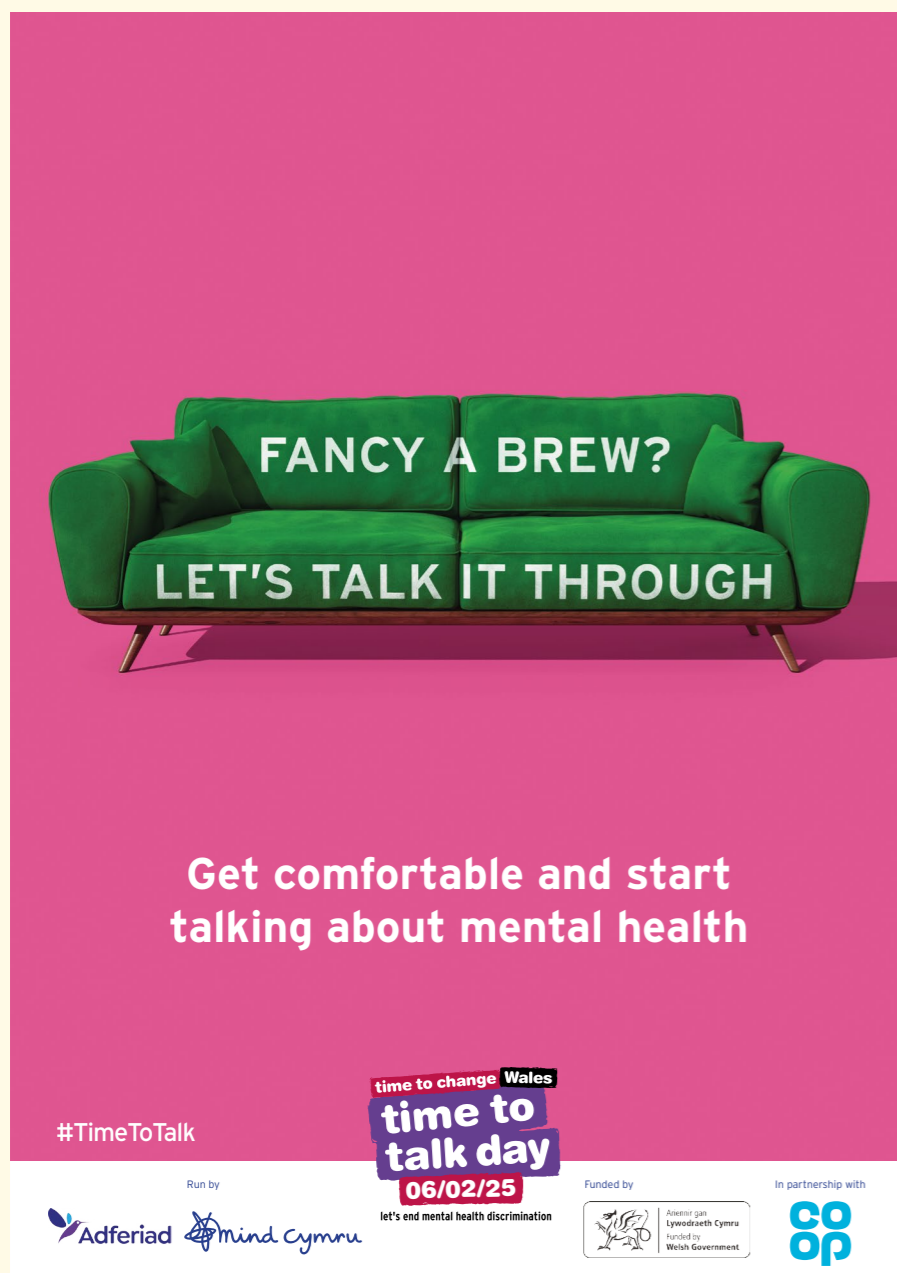
Left. Time to Change Wales Champion, Natalie, at the launch of the *If It's Okay* campaign.

Communications and campaigns continued



Time to Talk Day

We've delivered three successful *Time to Talk Days* during Phase 4 widening the national conversation about mental health.



Top. Our Champions come together as part of *Time to Talk Day*.

Above. A poster from our *Time to Talk Day 2025*.

453,500

(estimate)

additional conversations generated by *Time To Talk Day* between 2022-24 in Wales

53%

of respondents in Wales did more talking about mental health in the two week period after the campaign

Room to Talk podcast and working with the media



Room to Talk

Phase 4 saw us launching our very own Podcast channel, *Room to Talk*, allowing us to create a new space to platform lived experience and get under the skin of mental health stigma. Since its launch in September 2023 we've published 8 podcast episodes featuring a diverse mix of guests exploring stigma from a range of perspectives including suicide prevention, community, culture and religion, fame shame and volunteering.

Working with the media

Phase 4 saw us appear on radio and television 6 times in total across both English and Welsh medium channels. We've also held a regular slot on Radio Cardiff.



Top. Hanna Yusuf, Podcast Host with Laura Moulding, podcast guest recording an episode of the *Room to Talk* podcast.

Above. Partnerships Officer Ismatara Begum giving an interview at Radio Cardiff with Ceri Stennett on suicide prevention and the importance of mental health awareness and support.

Partnerships home and away

In June 2024, we were offered the opportunity to attend a Global Anti-Stigma conference in Reykjavik, Iceland and present on different aspects of our programme.

The conference, organised by the World Psychiatric Organisation provided great networking opportunities for us as well as placing Wales on the map as a key player in tackling stigma worldwide.

We've benefitted from the connections made at this conference as well as those we hold through our membership in the Global Anti-Stigma Alliance, sharing best practice, programme ideas and research.

Below. UK-Alliance colleagues at the WPO conference in Reykjavik, Iceland, June 2024.



UK-Eire Anti-Stigma Alliance

Time to Change Wales has been the proud chair of this Alliance for several years, convening a forum of like-minded colleagues and programmes across the UK and Ireland. The Alliance provides the opportunity to hear updates about the different national contexts in relation to anti-stigma policy and programming. The forum has been an excellent source of information, inspiration and support to the work delivered in Wales, broadening our horizons and perspective, resulting in our work being enhanced through our collaboration.

We've highly valued the strong relationships built with its members over the years. We launched our first joint campaign in 2024 on the theme of shame.



"Inspire are proud to continue our relationship with the UK and Ireland Anti-Stigma Alliance. This partnership creates space for open conversations about our shared priorities and there is always learning from the experiences of the other nations' campaigns. It is invaluable – not least because of the reach and engagement it has provided for our collaborative work, such as our award winning *If it's Okay* campaign. It is inspiring to hear about the impact of the work in each nation, and the continued commitment to the ongoing fight against stigma and discrimination around mental ill health."

Michelle Howarth
Evidence & Impact Lead, Inspire

Attitudes to Mental Illness Report 2024

In 2024 we ran the third wave of the tracking survey to measure public attitudes to mental illness across Wales and the only national-scale insight on mental health related public attitudes as far as we know.

The 2024 report presents a stark picture for Wales with overall attitudes and behaviours towards people with a mental illness, as well as mental health-related knowledge, all having fallen in since 2021. As anticipated, men, those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those over 65-year-olds seem to hold more negative attitudes overall.

Despite this bleak picture, the report also shows some encouraging signs around people's willingness to discuss mental health with their employer, increasing from 23% in 2021 to 29% in 2024.

There has also been a significant increase in awareness of the Time to Change Wales programme, with over half of respondents (57%) recalling campaign adverts in 2024 compared to 48% in 2021, and 35% in 2019.

Overall, this report reaffirms that much work remains to be done and highlights the importance of continuing work to tackle stigma across all levels is vital to help reverse these worrying societal trends.

The full report can be accessed [here](#).

"This has been another great term for the UK and Ireland Anti-Stigma Alliance. By working together on joint campaigns, including *Time to Talk Day*, we reached more people in more places, and created a widespread four nation conversation. We shared resources, data and people's experiences to guide our thinking and projects, *If it's Okay* was a powerful four nation campaign, centring the power of diverse lived experience and calling for change.

Sharing learning on what works (or doesn't), saves us all valuable resources and time. There is no quick fix to tackling mental health stigma so to have a peer group and a space where you can have honest, open and at times challenging conversations is invaluable."

Wendy Halliday
Director, See Me



Beyond 2025: final words for the future

The Time to Change Wales programme has been pivotal in tackling stigma and discrimination associated with mental health across Wales.

Drawing from years of collaboration and expertise, TtCW has empowered individuals to seek help by challenging negative perceptions and self-stigma. Through innovative initiatives like the Champions programme, people with lived experience of mental health issues have shared their stories, fostering greater understanding, and breaking down barriers.

Stigma remains a significant barrier to accessing support, particularly for those with complex needs or experiencing social disadvantage. TtCW has highlighted the critical importance of addressing these inequalities, emphasising that mental health stigma is a public health issue, requiring a coordinated response from governments, local authorities, and health services.

The programme's success lies in its collaborative approach, leveraging international best practices while tailoring solutions to Wales. TtCW's legacy demonstrates that reducing stigma is essential to creating an inclusive society where everyone can access the support they need. We welcome the Welsh Government's commitment to continuing the progress made through embedding the work in the duties of the NHS and local authorities in Wales.

Alun Thomas
CEO Adferiad

TtCW's legacy demonstrates that reducing stigma is essential to creating an inclusive society where everyone can access the support they need."



Beyond 2025: final words for the future continued

The Time to Change Wales programme, launched in 2012, has been instrumental for over a decade in improving public understanding of mental health, in reducing stigma and discrimination, and in fostering a more supportive environment for individuals experiencing mental health challenges.

This programme has been built from years of partnership & collaboration, research, and knowledge exchange, within Wales, the UK and globally.

Most recently, our focus has been on tackling stigma in marginalised communities, growing trust through partnership with numerous community leaders, organisations, and faith groups to encourage people to seek help with their mental health without fear of judgment or discrimination. Marginalised communities often face compounded challenges, including socioeconomic disadvantages, discrimination, and limited access to healthcare resources, which can exacerbate mental health issues.

Additionally, marginalised groups may experience unique stressors, such as racial or ethnic discrimination, gender-based violence, or social exclusion, which can significantly impact mental health.

Tackling stigma can empower marginalised communities by fostering resilience, promoting healing, and enhancing community solidarity. It can also facilitate advocacy for better mental health resources and policies that are culturally relevant and accessible. Ultimately, addressing mental health stigma is essential for achieving health equity, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their background, can thrive and receive the mental health support they deserve.

There remains much to do to, we are incredibly proud of the programme's achievements, and we welcome the commitment from Welsh Government to build on the progress made by TtCW, and to further embed anti-stigma systemically within public bodies in Wales.

Sue O'Leary

Executive Director of Mind Cymru and Social Impact



“We welcome the commitment from Welsh Government to build on the progress made by TtCW, and to further embed anti-stigma systemically within public bodies in Wales.”

Find out more by visiting our website:
timetochangewales.org.uk

