

## GAVO MONMOUTHSHIRE VOLUNTEER ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2011

# THEY'VE BEEN AT IT AGAIN!

What would we do without volunteers? Well, one thing is certain, without them the world (and Monmouthshire!) would be a much more difficult place to live in! We all recognise the fact and, once again, GAVO was honoured to celebrate the work of these unsung heroes at their achievement awards celebration evening at the Glen Yr Afon House Hotel in Usk.

A packed audience, which included honoured guests, sponsors and, of course, the volunteers, enjoyed a wonderful evening expertly compered by the lovely Shirley Bassey, sorry, Hughes. It is Shirley's third year in succession of compering the event, and in Monmouthshire Shirley is as well known and well loved as the famous Shirley Bassey.

Every winner received a framed certificate and cheque with different personalities making the presentations.

### **The winners were:**

*Service in the Community - Individual  
Presented by Simon Boyle, H.M. Lord Lieutenant of Gwent*



**Derek Jones** managed the Annual Poppy appeal and is also involved with Monmouth Civic Society, the Friends of Monmouth Cemetery, Monmouth History Society, the Photographic Club etc. A quiet man who has done so much for Monmouth.

*Service in the Community – Group  
Presented by Simon Boyle, H.M. Lord Lieutenant of Gwent*

We must try and keep alive some of the old customs and traditions of Monmouthshire and this year's winners are doing just that!

**The Widders Border Morris Dance Side** were formed 10 years ago and perform 'dance-outs' at schools, hospitals and festivals, and have also represented Wales in competitions in France, Germany and Italy.



*Environment – Individual Award  
Presented by Dick Cole, Chairman of Monmouthshire Greenweb*



As well as being Chair of Monmouth Transition group, **Haydn Cullen-Jones** volunteered to work with the Bridges Youth Committee when they were selected to take part in the WAG Climate Change Challenge. He has helped the group with suggestions for energy saving ideas and during Climate Week he visited schools with 'energy bikes' which demonstrate how much pedal power is needed to run domestic appliances.

**Monmouthshire Meadows Group** has around 100 members who work to conserve and restore flower rich grasslands in the county. These volunteers have some 500 acres of grassland between them and, as well as having ecologists and botanists in their midst, have received grants to purchase equipment to make their tasks easier.



**Nikki Gauler and Grace Bailey** are Millennium volunteers at Rogiet Youth Club and also assist with the Junior Youth Club. They have both achieved their Introduction to Youth Work OCN, and also offer their time with numerous other projects at the club. Nicky and Grace weren't able to attend the

evening, so the awards were accepted on their behalf by Hannah Jones, Monmouthshire Youth Service.

*Communities First - Individual Volunteer  
Presented by Cllr Brian Hood, Chairman of Monmouthshire County Council*

**Chelsea Nugent** has been volunteering at the Communities First Resource Centre in Abergavenny for a number of years and attends the CF Partnership Board where she represents young people and the Youth Tooth Forum.



*Communities First – Group  
Presented by Cllr Brian Hood, Chairman of Monmouthshire County Council*



**Community Matters** is a group which runs a diverse range of projects in Abergavenny, including running trips to such places as St Fagans, Ogmore Vale etc, and organising fundraising events such as monthly car boot sales. They also help run the Resource Centre and maintain the community garden.

*Caring in the Community*  
*Presented by Simon Burch, Chief Officer, Health and Social Care,*  
*Monmouthshire County Council*

**Irene Parry** has volunteered for 468 days in the past 3 years, working directly with women who have had, or were experiencing domestic abuse. Originally, Irene was involved as a trustee, but recognised that her passion lay in supporting women at court appearances, appointments with solicitors etc.



She has decided to retire and the project felt that this award is a fitting way of saying 'thank you' for her contribution to the lives of vulnerable women and children in Monmouthshire.

*Caring in the Community – Group Award*  
*Presented by Andy Keep, Chief Officer, Children and Young People,*  
*Monmouthshire County Council*



Based at Chepstow Community Hospital, the **Chepstow Stroke Experience Group** is an eclectic band who meet once a week with one issue in common – they are all stroke survivors. They spend many hours with new stroke victims, helping them to adjust

mentally to their new health situation. They also raise funds, and have helped raise funds to purchase new equipment for the hospital's physiotherapy unit.

*Individual Young Volunteer – Under 25 Award  
Presented by Superintendent Mark Sutton, Heddlu Gwent Police*

## Owen Bramman

**Lewis** volunteers at Office Services in Abergavenny where he helps people, who have learning or mental health illness issues, train in the workplace. He also teaches students how to film and edit their own films.



*Young Volunteer - Under 25 Group Award  
Presented by Superintendent Mark Sutton, Heddlu Gwent Police*



## Bridges Youth

**Committee** is a group of 14-18 year olds who have worked hard to reduce Bridges Community Centre's carbon footprint. They have helped source and fit a range of carbon saving gadgets and designed posters to encourage carbon saving ideas. During Climate Week, they promoted Earth Hour where everyone was encouraged to turn off their lights at a specific time on a specific day.

*Volunteer – Over 25 Individual Award  
Presented by Jennifer Render – Director of GAVO*

**Mike Jones** was referred to the Acorn Garden Project at the Overmonnow Learning Centre in Monmouth to gain work experience to enhance his future employment prospects. Over time, his skills have progressed and the garden is much improved. They are now able to grow and sell more produce.



*Volunteer – Over 25 Group  
Presented by Mike Harbinson, Chairman of GAVO*



**The League of Friends**, Nevill Hall is a group mainly made up of ladies who give their time to run the coffee shop in the outpatients waiting room, and manage the help/welcome desk. The cost of food and beverages in the coffee shop is kept to a minimum and the profits made provide much needed equipment in the hospital and, in a typical year, this can be well over £50k!

*Assistant Director's Award*  
*Presented by Glenda Genner, Assistant Director, GAVO Monmouthshire*

**Wilfred Wilsher** is always available to help in his community of Portskewett. He was a councillor for 30 years with Portskewett and Sudbrook Community Council; 25 years as a Governor at Chepstow Primary School and a Youth Leader at Caldicot Methodist Church. He has also been involved in many other local groups, too many to list!



There were, of course, runners up in most categories, and many, many volunteers were nominated, which made the judging of the competition very difficult. Well done everyone!

The staff at GAVO Monmouthshire are delighted that so many people turned up on the evening, and are most grateful to the staff at the Glen Yr Afon House Hotel for their excellent service and support. They would also like to thank the sponsors, without whom the competition would have been much, much more difficult.

***Sponsors were:***

*Abergavenny Town Council*  
*Caerwent Community Council*  
*Caldicot Town Council*  
*Communities First*  
*Heddlu Gwent Police*  
*Llantilio Pertholey Community Council*  
*Mabey Bridge*  
*Monmouthshire County Council*  
*Monmouth Greenweb*