

My First and Lasting Impression of North Wales PPA

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My first, and lasting impression of North Wales PPA was that it enabled and supported parents in a very practical way.

When my son was two the Harlech Playgroup was on its way out as our basement meeting place grew mould during its unused summer months. The old primary school was being moved to a brand new location and we were fortunate in persuading the local authorities to section off part of the old school for exclusive Playgroup use – complete with little loos.

For several years the Group was run and staffed only by the parents. As it became more successful a supervisor was employed, but always assisted by parents on a rota basis. It was great to see parents growing in confidence – often reassured by the evidence that their child was not the only ‘terrible two’.

I went to Gwynedd PPA meetings and one day a new Chairman was needed – I only asked a question (fatal as we all now know!) and of course became the new Gwynedd PPA Chairman. I was excited and terrified by the new responsibility and promptly rushed out to buy a book on how to chair meetings!

I was fortunate in having a wonderful example to follow. Ivy Webster had been Gwynedd Chairman before me – and became Wales Chairman. She had this knack for discovering which agenda item was the most important; she then quietly sped through the other items enabling maximum time for everyone to express their opinions on the prime subject.

When the North Wales Association was formed it quickly became a place where like minds could meet and enjoy each other's company (and food). I felt that some members thought it rather indulgent but I personally found it a great help in re-generating enthusiasm.

I'm sure my PPA experience gave me the confidence to start up Guiding in Harlech. My twin daughters were Brownies but there were no Guides to move up to.

Unfortunately, involvement in PPA Wales Region and Guides Cymru overlapped for several years and one day I realised that I was committed to a meeting at Guide HQ in Llandinam – whilst on the same day I was due to chair the PPA Business Committee in Wrexham! Fortunately, one of them cancelled.