

Pembrokeshire Church Leaders Urged to Help Rebuild Broken Lives

Emmanuel Christian Centre, Haverfordwest, played host to more than 15+ church leaders from across Pembrokeshire last week (11 May), brought together by Christian relief and development agency Tearfund in a new initiative called 'Rebuilding Broken Lives'.

The aim of the session was to equip the local church leaders and encourage the Church to reach out and help people in their local communities. Local church leaders were challenged to consider spending time and energy working hard to put justice at the heart of their faith.

This was the fourth of a series of briefings for church leaders across Wales led by Tearfund's Manager for Wales, Sion Meredith, Rev Hywel Meredydd, Chair of Tearfund in Wales and Andrew Cowley of Tearfund's England Team.

Tearfund's Chief Executive, Mathew Frost, said, "Tearfund has always believed that the local church is a crucial player in rebuilding the lives of the world's poorest people. Jesus taught us to love our neighbour and when Christians get out and do this, God transforms communities - materially, relationally and spiritually."

Tenby-based Tearfund volunteer, Sharron Hardwick, who attended the event, said, "The local church in Wales has supported the work of Tearfund for over 30 years and now Tearfund wants to return the favour by equipping local churches to reach out to those on their own doorstep. This is a great idea and I hope many more church leaders in Pembrokeshire will consider 'rebuilding broken lives' by joining forces with Tearfund.

She added, "One of Tearfund's UK partners, Christians Against Poverty, who now have 35 church based centres across the UK, are an example of how the Church can help people cope with every day problems such as debt."

"We live in a broken world, families suffer under oppressive regimes, children are homeless, water is polluted, poverty prevails and greed is rife," says Sharron Hardwick. "It is usually the world's most vulnerable people who suffer the most. Sometimes we might feel all hope is gone. But this is where charities like Tearfund are vital."

Tearfund is known for its work supporting partners overseas in poor countries. Their main aims are to combat poverty, deal with disasters, prevent disease and help people to live better lives, free from hunger, debt and oppression. Tearfund is interested in the whole person, not only do they want to bring practical help; they want to give people hope through the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Leaders present were: Phyllis Duffett - Deer Park, Tenby, Rev.Dr.John Plessis - Anglican Church Curate, working in 11 Haverfordwest churches; David & Sylvia Meanwell - Johnston Baptist Church; Ifor & Penny Williams - Broadhaven Baptist Church; Rev John Lewis - St.Brynach's; Rev Anne Rendell - Sutton Baptist church; Rev Bill Lewis - Church of Wales Hubberston - Hakin; John Bennett- Llanrhian & Llanhywel Churches; Sally Harries, Carol & John Smith, Paul Smethurst, and Rev.John & Cherrie Welsby, all from Emmanuel Christian Centre. Others present were Tearfund volunteers Ann and Francis Maull and Tearfund volunteer media officer, Sharron Hardwick

