

**Carmarthenshire
Association of
Voluntary
Services**



**Annual Report
2024 - 2025**

Contents	Page
● Board and Staff	3
● Foreword and Welcome	4
● About CAVS	5
● Key Achievements	6
● CAVS Membership	7
● Good Governance	8
● Sustainable Funding	9
● Volunteering	10
● Engagement and Influencing	13
● CAVS Projects	17
● Health & Wellbeing	18
● How CAVS Can Help	19



Board of Trustees and Staff

Board of Trustees

Ann Davies MP	-	Llanarthne Village Hall
Peter Loughran	-	Age Cymru Dyfed
Janice Morgan	-	Foothold Cymru
Jonathan Williams	-	CETMA
Andre McPherson	-	Llanelli Mind
Jayne Pritchard	-	Carmarthenshire County Council Representative (Observer)

Staff

Marie Mitchell	-	Chief Officer
Alud Jones	-	Volunteering Officer
Louise Morgan	-	Business Operations Co-ordinator
Sandra Williams	-	Business Operations Officer
Tom Haskett	-	Business Operations Assistant
Michael Jonas	-	Development Support Officer (seconded from 01.05.24 to 31.01.25 as Growing Third Sector Organisations Governance Capacity Building Officer)
Jamie Horton	-	Community Volunteering Development Officer
Owen Griffiths	-	LocalMotion Collaboration and Change Manager (until 31.01.25)
Alex Nicholas	-	Carmarthenshire Food Network Officer (until 28.06.24)
James Sanders	-	Social Enterprise Development Officer, Catalysts for Care
Alison James	-	Growing Third Sector Organisations Co-ordinator
Andy Fair	-	Growing Third Sector Organisations Training Officer
Lee Pearce	-	Growing Third Sector Organisations Volunteering Capacity Building Officer
Michael Rees	-	Growing Third Sector Organisations Governance Capacity Building Officer (until 19.04.24)
Paul Allchurch	-	Growing Third Sector Organisations Volunteer Mentoring Officer



Foreword and Welcome

Joint Foreword and Welcome

CAVS Chief Officer, **Marie Mitchell** and CAVS Chair **Ann Davies MP**



It is once again a pleasure to present CAVS' Annual Report. Following several difficult years for both CAVS and the third sector in Carmarthenshire during Covid-19 and the cost of living crisis, 2024-25 saw our office and services returning to full capacity. We began our recovery in 2023-24 when we slowly re-started face to face services including renting out our meeting rooms and welcoming new tenants and staff to The Mount.

The CAVS team continued to support the sector, returning to the office with network meetings being delivered in a variety of ways – virtually, hybrid and in person. The CAVS AGM in January 2025 was a hybrid event at The Mount utilising our new equipment which enables all our meeting rooms to be used for hybrid meetings.

We have continued to work closely with strategic partners and our work with fellow County Voluntary Councils and Wales Council for Voluntary Action has continued. We work under the four pillars of Engagement and Influencing, Volunteering, Good Governance and Sustainable Funding, as part of Third Sector Support Wales, a network of support organisations for the whole of the third sector in Wales.

Thank you to our fantastic, dedicated team of staff both old and new who have continued to deliver and support the third sector in Carmarthenshire with a wide range of needs. We hope you enjoy our Annual Report, it provides a snapshot of what we have achieved during the year and we hope you are inspired by the wealth and breadth of services provided by CAVS from our core functions through to our projects. As we look towards the future, we can celebrate the third sector in Carmarthenshire, highlighting how important the sector is.

To find out more about what we do, please visit our website cavs.org.uk where you can also discover more about our free membership scheme and how you can become involved in our work.



CAVS is the County Voluntary Council for Carmarthenshire

The Objects of the Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services are:

“to promote all, or any of the Charitable purposes, or those which now, or hereafter may be deemed by law to be charitable for the benefit of the community in Wales with particular preference for the county of Carmarthenshire, through the medium of both English and Welsh.”

Registered Charity No. 1062144

Company Limited by Guarantee 3348742

CAVS is part of Third Sector Support Wales

Third Sector Support Wales is a network of support organisations for the Third Sector in Wales. Our shared goal is to enable the Third Sector and volunteers across Wales to contribute fully to individual and community well-being, now and for the future.



Registered Office

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CAVS website: cavs.org.uk

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Key Achievements 2024-25

Good Governance

Number of organisations supported with direct advice and information



Volunteering

Number of volunteers supported to enter into a volunteering opportunity



Engagement and Influencing

Number of attendees at partnerships/forums/networks/events facilitated



Sustainable Funding

Amount of funding awarded to organisations following support from CAVS



Number of interactions with organisations and members of the public



Learning and Development

Number of participants on training courses



CAVS Membership

Advocacy West Wales	Cartrefi Cymru	Llandoverly Youth & Community Centre	Radio Glangwili
Age Cymru Dyfed	CDAS (Carmarthen Domestic Abuse Services)	Llanelli LGBTQ+ Support Group	Ramblers Cymru
Antioch Christian Centre	Cerebra	Llanelli Mind	Really Pro Ltd
Antur Cymru	CETMA	Llanelli Rural Council	Reconnecting Carmarthenshire CIC
Arts Care Gofal Celf	Citizens Advice Carmarthenshire	Llanelli Town Council	Represent Us Rural Ltd
Arts Council of Wales	Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Clubs	Llanerch Community Group	RNID
Arts4Wellbeing	Coed Lleol Small Woods	Llanfynydd Village Society	Sandy Bear Children's Bereavement Charity
Awaydays	Coleg Ty'r Eithin / Ruskin Mill Trust	Llansawel Recreation Field & Hall	Shelter Cymru
BAROD	CRUSE Bereavement Support	Llanybydder Family Centre	South Cefncaeau Family Centre (Ty Enfys)
BAROD CIC	Cymru Versus Arthritis	Llyfrau Llafar Cymru	Stori
Boys' and Girls' Clubs of Wales	Cymryd Rhan – Taking Part	Mama Creatives	Stroke Association
Bro Myrddin Bowls Club	Diverse Cymru	Many Tears Animal Rescue	The Black Mountain Centre
Brynamman Lido Limited	Elidyr Communities Trust	Menter Bro Dinefwr	The Hangout
Cafe Group Trallwm Hall	Ferryside Lifeboat	Menter Gorllewin Sir Gâr	The Old Mill Foundation
Calan DVS	Ferryside Social Enterprise Group (FSEG)	Mess Up The Mess Theatre Ltd	Threshold DAS Ltd
Ystradowen Community Centre	Five Roads and District Village Hall and Park Association	MS Society Cymru	Tir Coed
Care & Repair Carmarthenshire	Foothold Cymru	Myddfai Community Hall & Visitor Centre	Trallwm Area Community Hall
Carers Trust Crossroads West Wales	GABS VI Bowls	National Botanic Garden of Wales	Tuesday Visually Impaired Club
Carmarthen Arts	Goleudy Housing & Support Limited	Neuadd Bro Fana / Ffarmers Village Hall	Tumble Lindy Hop Jive
Carmarthen Mind	Greyhound Rescue Wales	Neuadd Gymunedol Talog	Tŷ Hafan Children's Hospice
Carmarthen School of Gymnastics Ltd	Gwili Railway	New Pathways	Tywi Gateway Trust
Carmarthen Shopmobility	Gwynfe Community Hall Association	Papyrus	United Counties Agricultural & Hunters Society
Carmarthen Stroke Club	Heart of Wales Line Traveller's Association	Pembrokeshire Mind	Wales Council for Deaf People
Carmarthen Together	HUTS Workshop	Pencader Family Centre	West Wales Rivers Trust
Carmarthen U3A	Kidwelly Town Council	Pencader Improvement & Development Association (PIDA)	West Wales Woods
Carmarthen Youth Project (Dr Mz)	Legacy in the Community	Peniel Community Association	Wildfowl and Wetlands Llanelli Centre
Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society	Llamau	People Speak Up	WSSP
Carmarthenshire Federation of Women's Institutes	Llanarthne Village Hall	Plant Dewi	WWAMH
Carmarthenshire People First	Llanboidy Market Hall & Reading Room	Pontyates Welfare Association	Yr Ardd CIC
Carmarthenshire Young Farmers Clubs	Llandoverly Town Council	Popham Kidney Support	

Governance Support

CAVS offered support to a wide range of community groups, voluntary organisations, charities and community centres to help them start up and run their organisations effectively and follow good governance practices.

Trustee training was provided to Boards to strengthen understanding of their responsibilities and duties, and address queries on their situations, governing documents, policies and best practice.



We provided direct information and guidance on:

- ✓ choosing the right legal structure and governing document, developing charitable objects or community benefit purposes
- ✓ registering as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with the Charity Commission or as a Community Interest Company (CIC) with Companies House
- ✓ attracting new trustees to increase diversity and performance
- ✓ increasing resilience by planning income diversification strategies to reduce grant reliance
- ✓ the TSSW Knowledge Hub, resulting in new sign-ups by organisations in Carmarthenshire
- ✓ trusteeship
- ✓ model constitutions for a small charity, CIO or CIC
- ✓ safeguarding, risk management, EDI, data protection/GDPR, insurance
- ✓ succession planning
- ✓ financial management
- ✓ hall hire agreements
- ✓ conflict resolution amongst trustees and wider community groups
- ✓ policy development
- ✓ monitoring social impact
- ✓ winding-up and related issues



Sustainable Funding

Funding Support

CAVS aims to support organisations to secure and generate the resources they need to grow, survive and be sustainable.

During 2024-25 CAVS supported many organisations seeking funding, offering bespoke support both in person and virtually, to enable them to secure funding. We disseminated information on new funds directly to special interest groups and via CAVS website, networks and social media.

Amount of funding awarded to organisations following support from CAVS



£120,000



- £ Provided direct information and guidance to individuals, groups and organisations on funding opportunities
- £ Provided feedback on draft funding applications to strengthen them
- £ Provided feedback for national schemes
- £ Provided the CAVS Funding Padlet for easy access to the most relevant new funds
- £ Provided grant assessments

Supporting Organisations

We continue to support organisations to involve volunteers in their daily activities. Volunteers, and prospective volunteers, have seen a shift in priorities, along with a desire for greater flexibility. This in turn has meant that organisations must become adaptable in order to provide the flexible volunteering opportunities now demanded by their audience.

During the year, we met up with a number of organisations to highlight ways we could work together to support their specific projects. We are able to offer on-going guidance and support with recruitment and good practice in involving volunteers, as well as support to use the Volunteering Wales platform.

We also have an on-line training course, Managing Volunteers, on our learning portal, which is free to access and has proved to be a useful overview, especially for Volunteer Co-ordinators who are new to the role, or those who are facing a specific challenge.

Volunteering Wales:

The latest iteration of the Volunteering Wales website continues to grow from strength to strength, gathering momentum with many organisations now using the site to promote their volunteering opportunities. The number of individual members continues to grow, along with the number of active volunteering opportunities.

Number of volunteers who have signed up to a volunteering opportunity



14

Number of volunteers supported to enter into a volunteering opportunity



115

Supporting Volunteers

Our work with potential volunteers is very varied and based on individual need. By giving information and support about volunteering placements, appropriate to the individual's skills, personal development needs and interests, we aim to match the volunteer with an appropriate placement organisation. We have been able to effectively support many volunteers through email and telephone contact and in person, thus ensuring that our reach is inclusive, regardless of the individual circumstances of the potential volunteer.

CAVS' on-line portal houses the full range of inter-active volunteer training courses such as Preparing to Volunteer, Volunteering for you (Volunteering towards Employment), Confidentiality, Confidence and Staying Safe.

CVON (Carmarthenshire Volunteer Organisers' Network)

CAVS hosts CVON (Carmarthenshire Volunteer Organisers' Network) meetings. This successful network is an information session for Volunteer Co-ordinators and supports over 200 third sector groups in the county. The network offers an opportunity to share best practice in all areas of volunteer management and governance through discussions, information sharing, workshops and guest speakers as well as including CAVS and Volunteer Centre updates at each meeting.



Volunteering - Community Volunteering Development Officer

CAVS was commissioned to employ a Community Volunteering Development Officer to work with the Connecting Carmarthenshire Preventative Services Project, which is led by Nacro in the North and West of the County and Pobl in the Llanelli, Amman and Gwendraeth areas.

The leads and partners - Adferiad, Age Cymru Dyfed, Mencap, Mind Carmarthen and The Wallich - commenced in April 2023 and all worked to delay the need for health and social care, support people to live at home, support people to be part of their community, support people in their caring role, prevent hospital admissions, prevent homelessness and prevent loneliness and isolation.

This Carmarthenshire County Council commissioned 'wrap around' service also included the need to achieve their strategic vision by establishing, enabling and promoting volunteering initiatives, being innovative and forward thinking.

The Community Volunteering Development Officer has undertaken a wide range of work to support the project including:

- Supporting partners
- Social media campaigns
- Provision of volunteering resources
- Volunteers' Week 40th Anniversary Celebrations
- Christmas Advent Calendar
- Development of a Volunteer Passport



Engagement and Influencing

Networks

Health and Well-being Network

A network for third sector organisations to share information on what's happening in health and well-being and to collaborate to make a difference to people's lives across Carmarthenshire. The Network has offered opportunities to link up with wider colleagues, to consider policy and practice and the best way to support groups.

Carmarthenshire Food Network

The aim of the Carmarthenshire Food Network (CFN) is to bring together people from across the food system to connect, share and support each other. The Network is made up of individuals, community groups, businesses and organisations with an interest in good food for all.



Number of attendees at partnerships/
forums/networks/events facilitated



290

CVON - Carmarthenshire Volunteer Organisers' Network

A network for people working with volunteers in the voluntary and statutory sector throughout Carmarthenshire. The purpose of CVON is to assist in the provision and development of an effective volunteering service in Carmarthenshire. Organisations have an opportunity to discuss problems, share experiences and ideas, learn about each other's work and receive information about current volunteering issues.

Engagement and Influencing

Joint working

During 2024-25, CAVS continued to work closely with statutory partners to ensure that the voice of the sector was heard in the county. Feedback to the sector was through our networks and through CAVS website and social media.

CAVS' Chief Officer sat on the Public Services Board.

Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan 2023-28

The second Carmarthenshire Wellbeing Plan has been produced since the introduction of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Act requires public sector bodies to come together as PSBs for their local areas.

The Local Well-being Plan sets out how we will work together to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of our county for the next five years. It builds on a detailed Well-being Assessment which collates data and evidence and also involvement activity with communities and stakeholders across our county.

The Local Well-being Plan 2023-2028 includes the following Wellbeing Objectives:

- Ensuring a sustainable economy and fair employment
- Improving well-being and reducing health inequalities
- Responding to the climate and nature emergencies
- Tackling poverty and its impacts
- Helping to create bilingual, safe and diverse communities



We also worked with a wide range of partners and partnerships, including:

- Healthier Carmarthenshire Planning Group
- Carmarthenshire County Council
- Carmarthenshire Integrated Services Board
- Pentre Awel
- Cross Hands Health and Well-being Centre
- Hywel Dda University Health Board
- Public Health Wales
- (Hywel Dda) Stakeholder Reference Group
- University of Wales Trinity Saint David
- Regional Preventions Board
- West Wales Care Partnership

Sharing information

The CAVS website and social media were used to share the latest news of developments in the public sector, details of consultations, campaigns, public engagement events and information from partners and third sector organisations with the aim of raising awareness and encouraging and promoting active involvement with local issues and concerns.



Infoengine

CAVS worked with other CVCs to continue to develop and promote **Infoengine** as a primary source of online information about third sector services across Carmarthenshire and Wales.

Infoengine provides an easy way for third sector organisations to have a web presence and promote their services online.

Engagement and Influencing—Third Sector Resources

CAVS

cavs.org.uk



TSSW

thirdsectorsupport.wales



Volunteering Wales

volunteering-wales.net



Free resources designed to help you stay informed, improve your knowledge and connect with others.

Register your voluntary organisation and volunteer vacancies. Search for opportunities.

Infoengine

infoengine.cymru



Funding Wales

funding.cymru



Infoengine is the directory of third sector services in Wales. Register your service or find services in your community.

Find funding for your charity or community group using our free online search engine.

Growing Third Sector Organisations

The Growing Third Sector Organisations project began in March 2024. Over the last year the project has had a number of positive impacts on third sector organisations and volunteers in Carmarthenshire.

The project has delivered bespoke support that provided organisations with a wraparound support system to enable them to be more confident, develop their services as well as be more resilient. Being able to provide lengthy sessions with organisations resulted in a positive impact, with organisations being successful with charity and community interest company applications. Having the time to listen to the individual needs of organisations has also allowed us to target the support to what they need to be able to move forward strategically and operationally.



LocalMotion Caerfyrddin



LocalMotion Caerfyrddin was based with CAVS until December 2024. A new programme of socially-engaged work was launched to address the key framing question: what if the oldest town in Wales could model a radical future for everyone? The aim of the UK-wide project is to look at how to tackle the root causes of social, environmental and economic inequality. Each place has developed its own unique approach based on two years of consultation and project delivery, and CAVS was at the heart of this.

In September 2024, we launched a radical, new local assembly through a call out to local people, open to those who live and work in Carmarthen. The assembly's thirteen members participate in the programme and direct our local work, alongside other groups or parts of the project. This collection of groups is known as the ecology of the project, in the understanding that these groups collaborate, overlap and work towards common goals, and that an ecology is a live culture, which needs care and hosting.

What is unique about our approach in Carmarthen, compared with other hubs in the UK, is that creativity and culture is at the heart of what we are developing. This means that when we model, host or lead an activity in or around a topic like climate or economics, we use creativity, food and other activities to create an empowering and creative space. Making spaces democratic, accessible and welcoming is critical in this practice of place making and imagining a radical future.



Health & Well-being

Health and Wellbeing activity during the year covered a broad range of work including:

- Pentre Awel
- Cross Hands Health and Wellbeing Centre
- Regional Preventions Board
- Carmarthenshire Preventions Board
- Supporting Commissioned Services
- Third Sector Health and Wellbeing Forum



Catalysts for Care
SOCIAL ENTERPRISES CARMARTHENSHIRE

The project supported 57 social enterprises in Carmarthenshire, together with the organisations already being supported. Whilst all being health and wellbeing related social enterprises, the subject area varied a lot, including:

- Tai Chi in the community
- Death lounges and support for death planning
- Alternative education and wellbeing
- Food and wellbeing
- Domestic abuse services
- Youth social enterprise
- Lindy hop
- Podcasts
- Being safe

Other work undertaken included working with the Pentre Awel Wellness Hub Group, supporting groups and events in Llanelli and St Clears and the development of a Social Enterprise Training Course.

How CAVS Can Help



Funding Support

Support to develop your funding strategy



Funding

Access to CAVS grant funding opportunities



Learning and Development

Enhancing knowledge and skills



Governance Support

Ask advice on running your organisation



Volunteering Support

Support recruiting and managing volunteers



Networks

Access to our third sector network meetings



News

Opportunities to share news and events across our community



Discounts

Members get discounted rates on rooms, equipment, and training



Get Heard

CAVS will represent your voice with local sector bodies in Carmarthenshire



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