



**VOLUNTARY ACTION
MERTHYR TYDFIL
GWEITHREDU GWIRFODDOL
MERTHYR TUDFUL**

Annual Report 2018-19



MISSION STATEMENT

To increase the extent, quality and impact of voluntary action in the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil by supporting, representing and assisting Third Sector organisations and volunteering.

Effecting change by enhancing well-being of individuals, organisations and communities.

VISION

- To be the centre of excellence in Merthyr Tydfil for the provision of services to organisations and individuals involved with the Third Sector and volunteering.
- To create a healthy community by helping to develop organisations to meet their needs, maximizing volunteering opportunities and sharing our mission with all stakeholders.



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www.vamt.net



Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil
Volunteer Centre Merthyr Tydfil



@VAMTtweets
@VAMTvolunteer
@CwmTafCC



Cefnogi Trydydd
Sector **Cymru**

Third Sector
Support **Wales**



Gwirfoddoli Cymru
Volunteering Wales



Charity Registration Number 1118403
Company Registration Number 6058360

FOREWORD BY THE CHAIR AND CHIEF OFFICER

We are pleased to introduce the twenty-second Annual Report of Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil.

This was a very challenging year for VAMT in financial terms. The accumulated effect of reductions in core funding over the past ten years and the ending of two substantial projects in March 2018 meant that the VAMT Board of Trustees had to make some very difficult decisions. They resolved to reduce costs which would achieve financial balance for 2019/20. In addition to freezing of staff pay and reducing staff expenses, it was also necessary to reduce core staff costs which resulted in two long standing members of staff taking voluntary redundancy. Inevitably, this has resulted in a reduction of capacity to provide VAMT core functions.

However, VAMT continues to support our members and customer satisfaction remains high. Despite reductions in staff capacity, demand continues for our core services, that is, volunteering support, governance support and funding support. Our partners have continued to fund the Community Coordinators and a range of grant schemes from the Welsh Government Integrated Care Fund. Our networking role continues on both a local and regional basis with local networks and events continuing to be well supported.

VAMT continues to collaborate with Interlink and work together on regional activity such as the Public Service Board, the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being Act, the aforementioned community coordinators project and grant schemes. VAMT has led on implementing the "Tackling Loneliness and Isolation" objective in the Cwm Taf Wellbeing Plan. Regional work will develop further as the region grows to include Bridgend in 2019/20.

We were delighted to support the development of the new Gurnos Community Zone initiative and look forward to its development into next year.

As Chair and Chief Officer we are committed to ensuring that we remain an effective organisation. We can only achieve this with a committed team of trustees and staff. We thank them for their support and hard work.

Finally, we must take the opportunity to thank the main funders of VAMT for their continued support; namely the Welsh Government, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board. Also, thanks to Wales Council for Voluntary Action for their continued support.

**Anne Roberts,
Chair**



**Ian Davy,
Chief Officer**



FACTS AND FIGURES

Total number of instances of advice/support for organisations/stakeholders

344

Number of volunteers supported

72

Number of Third Sector organisations provided with direct advice/support

107

Total number of instances of advice/support to third sector organisations

174

Number of Third Sector organisations referred to specialist support

1

Amount of funding received by Third Sector organisations following support

£140,371

37
projects received grants via VAMT totalling

£181,674

Number of participants at forums and events organised by VAMT

561

Number of participants at training courses provided

74

Total membership

285

HIGHLIGHTS

Aim 1 - Enable third sector organisations to deliver services, improve in all aspects of their work and become resilient

- Detailed **Governance support** has been provided to 12 organisations on issues such as constitutional matters, asset transfer, financial accounting. Three of those required specific support on becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). One organisation required extensive support in response to concerns on governance, safeguarding and financial matters and a comprehensive report and recommendations were made to the charity's trustees

- Published four copies of **Inform magazine**



- VAMT website had 5,968 users visit the site and 13,282 page views. VAMT Twitter @VAMTtweets has 1,725 followers. In the year there were 141 new followers and 350 mentions. VAMT Facebook has 396 followers/likes and there were 175 posts published
- Published 154 posts on the **VAMT News Blog** - there were 1,882 users and 3,203 page views
- Administered the **Community Capacity Grant Scheme** which was promoted across the membership of both VAMT and Interlink. 50 applications were received. Nine projects were awarded funding totalling £90,445. In addition, a specific project for carers was awarded £12,328

- Administered new **grants scheme for autism related projects** with seven projects awarded a total of £68,521

- Contributed to a Cwm Taf wide bid to Welsh Government for **ICF Dementia funding**. Two complementary components were proposed for third sector delivery - a specific Coordinator with outline responsibilities for developing Dementia Friendly Communities and also a grant scheme (administered by VAMT) to introduce new projects to respond to unmet need. Regarding the Coordinator, discussions were held with relevant third sector partners and a lead organisation, Gofal, was appointed

- Supported a new Cwm Taf **ICF Capital Investment** bid to Welsh Government. A range of third sector schemes were included, and subsequently approved for support. The total value was £100,000 but unfortunately Welsh Government would not provide the funding in advance, so the projects were unable to proceed. Representations have been made to attempt to rectify this situation

- Secured £100,000 ICF funding for **Befriending Services**. Four organisations were supported, RVS, Volunteering Matters, Valleys Kids and Age Connects Morgannwg. In addition, £10,000 of additional funding was secured to enable the **British Red Cross Positive Steps** service to continue without disruption, and they have since achieved sustainable funding for the project via an alternative source

- Delivered **training** courses on Safeguarding, Better Bids, First Aid and Health and Safety

- Assessed applications for **TSSW Landfill Tax grant scheme** for the two bidding rounds during the year

- Big Lottery Fund** held monthly surgeries at VAMT which were well attended and designed to increase the number and quality of applications from Merthyr Tydfil

- New **TSSW Funding Wales** portal is up and running and has been promoted to the third sector

Crystal Trophy Awards



Reconnect 50 • 1st place



Fit and Fed • 3rd place



Rhondda Housing Association • 2nd place

- Established the **Merthyr Tydfil Food Poverty Alliance** following an approach by the South Wales Food Poverty Network. All local social landlords, Merthyr Tydfil CBC and Cwm Taf University Health Board were involved and a workshop with Food Sense was held with 12 organisations represented
- Supported the **Merthyr Tydfil Community Trust** who awarded small grants totalling £3,180 to 11 local organisations. VAMT acted as the secretariat for the Trust. In October, VAMT staff undertook to organise a fundraiser in their own time and raised almost £1,200 for the Trust
- Involved in delivering the **Cwm Taf Crystal Trophy Awards** which recognises the contribution to well-being by third sector organisations. This process culminates in an awards ceremony and three organisations received monetary prizes totalling £2,250, with the overall winner also receiving a "crystal" trophy
- Collaborated with Interlink in facilitating the **Cwm Taf Social Value Network**. The July event focussed on loneliness and isolation and the December event on children and young people
- Supported the **Funders Fayre** organised by the MP and the AM in Merthyr Tydfil. There were 7 direct enquiries at the event which were followed up
- Hosted a **Volunteering Wales** Roadshow to promote the revised grants scheme on behalf of the Cwm Taf region. 20 organisations attended to receive information with regard to making applications to the fund
- Supported an organisation to **develop their financial systems** and assisted with grant application budgets. They have since applied for substantive grants to develop a range of successful projects for young people
- Supported two organisations in producing their **annual accounts**
- Day to day **financial support** provided to two organisations on a formal contractual basis
- Delivered a **Digital Support Project** that concluded in March. A total of 25 groups engaged in this project across Merthyr Tydfil and RCT. The project evaluation told us that groups most valued the one to one handholding support. Two groups were supported with registering on the Just Giving website and following support one youth club has been successful in gaining £4371 funding

Aim 2 - Strengthen representation and influence of third sector organisations

- Held a **"Round Table with Dawn Bowden AM"** which was attended by 21 participants. The event specifically for the third sector kicked off Dawn Bowden's research into local health and social care services. She presented her findings to the VAMT AGM in November which she did as a launch of her draft report. It was very well received by the audience
- Facilitated four meetings of the **Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Forum** which were attended by 101 attendees
- Facilitated two meetings of the **Children and Young Peoples Voluntary Organisations Forum** with 26 attendees
- Developed the **Health & Wellbeing Forum** as a merger of the previous CYPVOF and Health, Social Care & Wellbeing Forum. The first meeting of the new Forum was held in December and two meetings have been held attended by 41 participants
- Co-facilitated the **50+ Forum** in April with Merthyr Tydfil CBC. VAMT organised the speakers and information stands for the event. Over 80 people attended the event which was a platform for dialogue with council and cabinet members who were present. Similarly, VAMT co-facilitated the September, December and March events with similar numbers in attendance
- Delivered **Dementia Friends** sessions to 181 people. They have received their certificates from the Alzheimer's Society
- Organised an engagement event for the Third Sector on the **Merthyr Tydfil Tackling Poverty Strategy**. There were 31 participants and written responses made to Merthyr Tydfil CBC



- Organised an event for the **Environment and Green Spaces Network** which focussed on the proposals for the Valleys Regional Park and was attended by 15 participants
- Organised an event called **"Strategy Schmategy"** in response to third sector organisations telling VAMT that they were not fully aware of various public sector strategies and partnership arrangements on a local and regional basis. 29 people attended the event
- Organised a **"Conversation on Caring"** event to re-establish a platform for engaging with carers and/or providers of carers services. 15 people attended, representing, carers, organisations and statutory partners. From this event a **Cwm Taf Carers Provider Forum** has been established with some funding from Cwm Taf UHB to support the Forum
- Led on the **"Tackling Loneliness and Isolation"** objective in the Cwm Taf Wellbeing Plan which reports directly to the Cwm Taf Public Service Board (PSB). The first meeting of a **Loneliness and Isolation Reference Group** was held in September and attended by 24 participants. A survey was launched following this meeting and 58 responses were received. A second meeting of the Group was attended by 24 participants who heard feedback from the survey, evidence from research, as well as participating in a workshop on developing proposals. Following this, a report was prepared which summarised the evidence, success factors and recommendations for presentation to both the PSB and the Social Services and Wellbeing Partnership. The three main recommendations are being progressed, that is, developing a shared strategic approach to social prescribing, improving befriending services and developing community run support



Aim 3 - Enhance volunteering and wellbeing through participation and community action

- Interviewed 72 potential **volunteers**. This is less than in previous years and can be attributed to the reduction in staff capacity and that the Department of Work and Pensions issued a contract to another provider which resulted in losing VAMTs direct relationship with the Job Centre Plus customers. However, renewed contact with the Job Centre was made towards the end of the year



- 134 individuals from Merthyr Tydfil have directly registered on the **Volunteering Wales** website during the year

- Supported 16 organisations directly with **volunteer recruitment** issues
- Supported 11 organisations with issues of **good practice in volunteering**
- Worked with the Merthyr Tydfil Borough Wide Youth Forum to deliver the **Youth Led Grants Scheme**. Nine projects were awarded a total of £8,000
- A **Volunteering Fair** was held at Merthyr Tydfil College. Over 20 organisations attended, with a large number of enquiries from college students, staff and members of the public
- Two outreach events were held as part of **Volunteers Week**, one at EE and the other at the Welsh Government offices in Merthyr Tydfil
- VAMT and Interlink continued to host a **team of five Community Coordinators** who support older people to access community services in order to maintain their independence and enhance well-being. Four of the Coordinators are locality based and one is focused on primary care settings across Merthyr Tydfil and RCT. During the year they:
 - ◆ **signposted** 310 individuals to third sector services
 - ◆ developed and distributed **12 monthly bulletins** to over 1000 contacts



Volunteering Fair at Merthyr Tydfil College

- ◆ delivered **71 presentations** to 261 individuals
- ◆ delivered **11 flu myth busting** sessions to community groups
- ◆ delivered **6 cervical screening** awareness sessions providing information to nearly 70 people
- ◆ supported on a weekly basis the **"Virtual Ward Round"** - providing referral and signposting for patients as part of a multi-disciplinary team. 46% of patients were referred or signposted to a third sector organisation
- ◆ supported/developed **17 new community initiatives**
- ◆ referred **121 people into training programmes**, Dementia Friends sessions, first aid, food hygiene
- Supported the **Gurnos Community Zone** implementation. Involved in the planning and delivery of community consultation meeting held in October. VAMT is a member of the new Implementation Group and employed an Information & Advice Officer to be based at the Community Hub from January. In a short time the officer has supported 9 individuals with direct advice/information and brokered four new third sector organisations into the Community Hub to provide advice and information on a regular basis

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

(INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019

	2019			2018
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
Income				
Donations and legacies	-	-	-	2,000
Income from charitable activities:				
Grants and contracts	18 7,328	498,676	686,004	1,340,531
Management fees	45,024	7,493	52,517	76,023
Income from other trading activities:				
Rent and accommodation income	59,502	-	59,502	62,060
Telephone and postage recharged	2,753	-	2,753	4,507
Training & financial income	17,109	-	17,109	14,714
Investment income	2,218	-	2,218	1,699
Other income	3,246	-	3,246	17,109
Total income	317,180	506,169	823,349	1,518,643
Expenditure				
Expenditure on charitable activities	374,849	639,247	1,014,096	1,701,796
Total Expenditure	374,849	639,247	1,014,096	1,701,796
Net (Expenditure)/ Income for the Year	(57,669)	(133,078)	(190,747)	(183,153)
Transfers between Funds	2,722	(2,722)	-	-
Net Movement in Funds	(54,947)	(135,800)	(190,747)	(183,153)
Funds Brought Forward	594,802	177,624	772,426	955,579
Funds Carried Forward	539,855	41,824	581,679	772,426

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2019

	2019	2018
	£	£
Fixed Assets		
Tangible fixed assets	261,838	282,125
Current Assets		
Debtors	105,209	244,333
Cash at bank and in hand	370,195	558,910
	475,404	803,243
Liabilities:		
Amounts falling due within one year	155,563	312,942
Net Current Assets	319,841	490,301
Net Assets	581,679	772,426
Funds		
Unrestricted income funds	539,855	594,802
Restricted income funds	41,824	177,624
Total Funds	581,679	772,426

BOARD AND STAFF MEMBERS

Board Members

Anne Roberts	Chair
Helen Thomas	Vice Chair
Paul Gray	Treasurer
Brian Lewis	(until 16th November 2018 then co-opted 4th February 2019)
Nicola Mahoney	
Maria Thomas	(until 23rd July 2018)
Huw Williams	(until 16th November 2018)
Ruth Hopkins	
Mark Ward	
Kayleigh Nor-Val	(from 16th November 2018)
Michelle Jones	(from 16th November 2018)
Amber Lewis	(from 16th November 2018)
Suzanne Davies	(co-opted from 23rd July 2018)

Staff Members

Alison Harris	Third Sector Officer (until May 2018)
Carol Hindley	Administration and Finance Manager
Claire Williams	Community Coordinator (from September 2018)
Deanne Rebane	Community Coordinator
Elaine James	Community Co-ordinator (until July 2018)
Frances Barry	Volunteering Officer (until July 2018)
Frances Barry	Digital Inclusion Officer Cwm Taf (from July 2018)
Hilary Edwards	Senior Development Officer
Ian Davy	Chief Officer
Karen Foley	Volunteering Officer (until May 2018)
Laura Johnson	Administration and Finance Officer
Laura Johnson	Volunteering Officer (from September 2018)
Lisa Toghill	Digital Inclusion Officer Cwm Taf (until May 2018)
Sharon Richards	Health and Well Being Manager
Susan Broad	Clerical Assistant (until February 2019)

Volunteers

Craig Hill
Susan Broad
Lisa Matthews