



Coping with Covid-19

Our response to the Coronavirus pandemic in Wales



Croeso / Welcome

This is the story of how Community Foundation Wales has responded to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on communities across Wales.

What started as a news story about a health scare on the other side of the world, quickly escalated and has since affected every area of our lives, bringing tragedy for families across Wales and a trail of social and economic carnage.

At Community Foundation Wales, we see part of our role as helping communities to respond to emergency or crisis. While we have done that in the past in the case of local incidents, this is the first time that we have had to move at such scale to bring vital support to people all over Wales.

This report brings together what we have seen and what we have learned. It is a story of resilience and strong human spirit, a real strength here in Wales.

The response from our supporters has been incredible; moving quickly to ensure funding was available. Our team worked hard to distribute grants quickly to groups working with the most vulnerable communities. Of particular note has been our brilliant partnership with National Emergencies Trust.

This report only captures part of the story as, sadly, the pandemic is still with us. Our report focuses on the period from March 2020 to December 2020.

We now have hope that an end is in sight, but this must not detract from the desperate need for support that is still around us.

We will continue to support people across Wales through this dreadful time. We hope this report helps highlight the great work being carried out across the country and that it motivates you to continue to assist us to do more.

On behalf of everyone at Community Foundation Wales, thank you to all who have supported us through this devastating period.

Diolch o galon.

Richard Williams

Chief Executive, Community Foundation Wales



Key moments

20 Mar
2020

Wales Coronavirus Resilience appeal launched with

£200,000

Over
£4 million

given from the National Emergencies Trust UK appeal to the Wales Coronavirus Resilience Fund to distribute in Wales

27 Mar
2020

First grants
from the Wales Coronavirus Resilience fund awarded

Wales Coronavirus Resilience Fund boosted by generous donations in the first month from

**Waterloo Foundation
Admiral
Track 2000**

Dal dy Dir,

a Welsh group funded through the Wales Coronavirus Resilience Fund, were interviewed by

**HRH Duke of
Cambridge**

4 Apr
2020

Wales Coronavirus Resilience Appeal reaches

£1 million
in donations

7 Jul
2020

More than

£2 million

in grants given out

Welsh language charity single

Dwylo Dros y Môr

was released with a share of the proceeds going to the Wales Coronavirus Resilience Fund

28 Jan
2021

Over

£4.9 million

awarded in grants

How we responded

Just weeks after Welsh communities were devastated by widespread flooding, we were hit by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Many people in Wales were already suffering, not just physically and/or mentally due to ill health, but also economically and socially.

The pandemic brought new and increased challenges as lockdown was announced, businesses had to close their doors, workers struggled to make ends meet having been furloughed or laid off and isolation became the 'norm' for everyone.



Rising to the challenge



The Welsh third sector rose to the challenge with speed and agility, with local community groups coming together to create community task forces and Covid-19 response teams to support the most vulnerable members of their communities.

To ensure the best possible support for people in Wales, Community Foundation Wales partnered with the National Emergencies Trust (NET), on their UK-wide appeal, attracting donations from individuals and corporates.

We launched our 'Wales Coronavirus Resilience Fund' on 23rd March 2020 for grassroots, community groups and charities working hard to adapt their service to support those most vulnerable to the impact of the virus.

We worked with Welsh Government and WCVA, National Lottery Community Fund, Moondance Foundation and other funders to share and learn. We worked together to avoid duplication and to

highlight gaps and shared information on fraudulent applications or where we were seeing changes. It was vital that the Welsh Third Sector could easily identify the funder/s that best suited their needs.

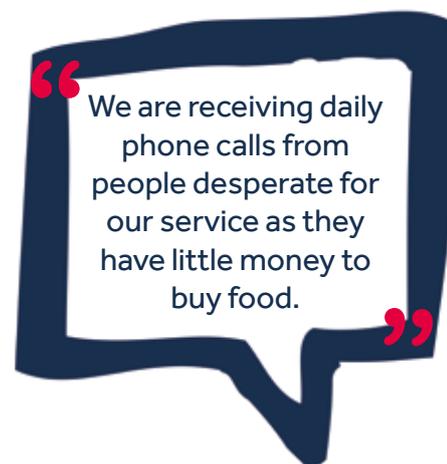
Listening to the needs of Wales

To ensure we were cognisant of the challenges groups were facing we ran a survey during the first few weeks of the pandemic.

The groups that responded reported on average a **62%** rise in demand for support.

Food and essential supplies for families on low incomes was one of the biggest needs.

29% of all grants given went to projects tackling food poverty and food delivery to vulnerable people.

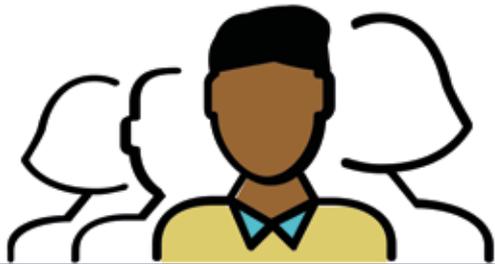


The survey also highlighted the struggles for groups that were usually self-sufficient with strong income from fundraising events and charity shops. For these organisations, income fell to zero overnight as charity shops closed and all events were cancelled.

What was, pre-Coronavirus, seen as a huge strength was now their biggest weakness. We funded a number of these groups with a grant to support core costs to enable services to continue to those that require care or support at such a critical time in their lives.



Highlighting inequalities



8%

has gone to groups led by or focussed on the needs of BAME communities in Wales.

The Black Lives Matter campaign in May 2020 drew attention to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) cultures and highlighted the significant impact that Coronavirus was having on their lives.

We had already reached out to this sector, offering grants to help groups communicate the Government messages to save lives via leaflet drops, phone calls and online support.

We will be building on this and continuing to work with these groups to improve our understanding and representation of diverse cultures.

Looking towards the future

In September we adapted our funding to address the change in focus we were seeing in applications.

We closed our Wales Coronavirus Resilience Fund to open our Respond and Recover Fund.

This new fund continued to be available to organisations delivering emergency response in local lockdown areas for example but was also available to organisations focused on recovering from the crisis to develop self-sufficiency and resilience, on solutions rather than on symptoms.



As we move into a new year we will build on the learning we have gained over recent years and especially during the last 12 months, to champion multi-year and core funding support for grassroots organisations who have proved themselves to be vital during this crisis.

This year would have been even more challenging without them.

We thank all of these organisations for what they have done and look forward to working with them during the coming weeks, months and years as they continue to provide a better future for their communities and for Wales.

Who we have supported



Race Council Cymru

Young beneficiary

"There is a virus out there stopping people from going to work and actually doing what they do on a daily basis. For example, people like me that would be in school right now, there is homework that the school has given on laptops for students to do. I don't have the chance to have a laptop or electronic devices like this to use.

Thank you to the funders for this laptop they have given me to use and learn during the pandemic. Thank you so much and I hope people see your good work."

Dal Dy Dir Powys

Dal Dy Dir received a grant to adapt their service during the pandemic to continue supporting marginalised groups and families with disabilities.



Cymru Creations Tredegar

Cymru Creations used their grant to adapt from delivering community media projects to delivering food and medicine to the most vulnerable in their community.



Summit Good

Josh Pike, Director

"The grant from Community Foundation Wales' Coronavirus Resilience Fund has enabled us to pay all our staff and buy veg for fifty more households over the coming months.

It is an amazing support to us so thank you very much."





Welsh Womens Aid

Sara Kirkpatrick, CEO

"The world has been radically altered by Covid-19 but it hasn't replaced the violence against women and girls, the harm caused by domestic abuse and sexual violence.

We are supporting our members to be responsive, to offer their service in new ways and to recognise the additional barriers that these unpredictable times have presented.

By giving us this grant, you do more than financial relief. You enable safety and support to continue unhindered in these unprecedented times."

Help Harlech

Harlech

Help Harlech received a grant to support the daily need for its services and allow for the purchase of PPE equipment for its volunteers, to protect them on their frequent delivery runs.



Bike to the Future

Powys

Bike to the Future's grant helped them to use their electric assist cargo bike to distribute food and vegetable bags in the local community.



Oasis Cardiff

Morrison, Volunteer

"I left Sudan when I was 18 years of age due to the war that had broken out. The journey was really difficult.

I was with my friend and he got killed on the way. Losing my friend was so hard and the things I have been through during the journey is something you can barely forget in your mind.

Oasis helped me rebuild myself, it's like home for me. I am so grateful to be able to repay back the community for what they have done for me."



Thank you

In March 2020, the country ground to a halt.

The team at Community Foundation Wales moved quickly to establish remote working to ensure we could continue to do our jobs, at a time when the support of funders was needed the most.

How would we survive as a foundation without the ability to go out and speak with potential donors or professional advisers? How would we hold events to demonstrate our work to supporters and to encourage them to engage with us to build a stronger, more robust country, at a time when connections were at their weakest?



The launch of the Wales Coronavirus Resilience Fund happened within a week, set up with some of our own funding that had been redirected to this new cause. Waterloo Foundation quickly added to the pot, followed by Admiral, Welsh Water, and other individual major donors.

We launched an appeal, which saw hundreds of smaller donations come in from members of the public as everyone became acutely aware of the crisis unfolding within their own communities.

The fund was designed to provide speedy, effective relief to local groups that needed support without delay, to help them to continue providing the much needed services to the most vulnerable in society. These types of small, grass roots organisations are best placed to help their local community because they know the people and understand the challenges facing them.

As lockdown eased, our Coronavirus Resilience Fund pivoted to the Respond and Recover Fund, recognising that for many organisations funding requirements had changed, and there was now the need to move on to find 'a new normal'.

This fund aims to support groups as they address the challenges of recovering; ensuring they can help their beneficiaries in the right way as well as providing support for their trustees, staff teams and volunteers.

The lesson we have learned over the past year is that in the midst of chaos and uncertainty, a community that is connected is a community that can survive. These connections, forged by a desire to see something good happen out of a crisis, have provided vital support to the most vulnerable in our society.

The team at Community Foundation Wales can never take enough time in our daily responsibilities to fully express our gratitude to our generous donors, who made the work of this fund possible.

Your commitment and willingness to join us in making Wales a better place now, and for future generations, is truly appreciated.

As part of the Wales Coronavirus Resilience Fund, we worked closely with the National Emergencies Trust to deliver over £4 million of funding across Wales.



Community Foundation Wales would like to thank everyone who has donated to the Wales Coronavirus Resilience Fund, with special thanks to:

- The Gareth Griffiths Fund
- Neumark Foundation



What comes next?

What this report makes clear is that as an organisation we have not stood still when it comes to answering the hard questions posed by the pandemic.

When we launched the fund in March 2020, we had no idea that over the course of a year we would generate enough donations from individuals, corporates and statutory funding to make over £5 million of grants to the communities and groups that needed help the most.

The generosity of donors so far has been astounding, but the problems faced by the third sector, and those they support, are not going away – if anything, they are compounding.

We know of projects like Brighter Futures in Rhyl who needed a grant of £18,430 to employ staff to restart their youth activities, providing various means of support from healthy eating guidance to volunteering opportunities within the community.

Star Hub Community Gardening Association in Cardiff were applying for funding to help them to develop an existing community garden in Cardiff, allowing them to grow more produce, enable volunteers to gain skills and improve their mental health.

These projects, and more groups like these, are still in need of urgent funding to ensure they can keep supporting their communities through the pandemic and beyond.

It is our sincere hope that this report will encourage other supporters to consider how they can play a part in ensuring Wales' most vulnerable communities receive the help they desperately need to recover from the enormous impact of this pandemic.

Your support is needed now, more than ever.



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