

Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations

# Annual Impact Report

2022-23



Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations  
Cymdeithas Mudiadau Gwirfoddol Gwent

I Gymunedau, gyda Chymunedau | For Communities, With Communities

# Contents

- Foreword by Chair 3
- Statement of Financial Activities 4/5
- Statement of Financial Position 6
- Blaenau Gwent 7
- Caerphilly 10
- Monmouthshire 13
- Newport 16
- Gwent-wide 19
- Corporate Services 19
- Engagement & Influencing 21
- The Year at a Glance 22

### GAVO's Bankers

NatWest Bank, High Street, Newport, NP20 1GG.

### GAVO's Solicitors

Morgan, Denton & Jones, Ground Floor, Park House, Greyfriars Road, Cardiff, CF10 3FA.

### GAVO's Auditors

Walter Hunter & Co., 24 Bridge Street, Newport, NP20 4SF.

### GAVO's Registered Office

Room G2 Beechwood House, Beechwood Park, Christchurch Road, Newport, NP19 8AJ.



**GAVO is the longest-standing and largest County Voluntary Council (CVC) in Wales. GAVO represents the Third Sector at local, regional & national levels and is the infrastructure support organisation for the Third Sector in Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire and Newport.**

GAVO's role is set out in Welsh Government's Third Sector Scheme 2014 as:

- Enabling other Third Sector organisations to grow and develop;
- Supporting individual volunteers and collective voluntary action;
- Promoting good and safe governance across the Third Sector;
- Supporting Public Service design and delivery;

■ Providing voice and representation for the wider sector; and

■ Sharing good practice and innovation.

In addition to this Core Framework, GAVO has significant experience in developing and delivering projects and programmes which are a response to identified unmet community need, through collaborative approaches and partnership working.

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# Foreword by the GAVO Chair

Welcome to the GAVO Annual Impact Report for 2022/23



**During 2022-23 GAVO has seen how the sector has adapted to the 'new' way of working post pandemic. The work by the GAVO Officers has continued and has increased as groups get back to working with their communities.**

The GAVO Strategic Plan 2022-2025 was launched at the last GAVO AGM and during the year Trustees and staff have worked to put strategy into action. The organisation is committed to ensuring that the third sector is supported, through its Mission Statement, Aims and Values.

The GAVO regional offices are now well established in Blaenau Gwent (Innovation Centre, Ebbw Vale), Caerphilly (Cherry Tree House, Oakdale), Monmouthshire (Sessions House, Usk) and Newport (Beechwood House, Newport).

GAVO continue to represent the sector on a variety of strategic partnerships, including the Gwent Public Service Board (PSB) and Regional Partnership Board for health. Information gathered at the Gwent PSB is passed through to each area via GAVO Forums, GAVO local committees and local partnership meetings, this ensures that the sector is regularly informed of emerging priorities across Gwent.

GAVO continues to be part of Third Sector Support Wales (TSSW), Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) and ensures that the four pillars (volunteering, sustainable funding, governance and engagement and influencing) are at the forefront of GAVO's working practices.

It would be remiss of me as Chair of GAVO not to acknowledge the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II during the year and the impact felt by so many across our communities. The involvement of the Queen's Representative, the Lord Lieutenant of Gwent,

our President, at our Volunteering Awards provided an opportunity to acknowledge her passing and welcome King Charles III appropriately. We also sadly lost our Marketing and Communications Officer in the Autumn, a great shock to staff and Trustees alike and our thoughts are with his family.

Moving into the next financial year, I know that the GAVO Board, the officers and partners will continue to support our communities to the best of their ability. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the GAVO Board, Staff and special thanks goes to the third sector organisations, partners and community groups for your support over this period.

GAVO continues to work in partnership with both the statutory and private sector, whose response has again been exemplary, allowing the third sector to adapt to different and new ways of working. Continue to support your communities and GAVO will continue to support you.

**Edward Watts** MBE DL  
Chair

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# Statement of Financial Activities

(including income and expenditure account) For Year Ended 31st March 2023

	31.03.23					31.03.22				
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total from continuing operations £			Discontinued operations £	Total Funds £	Total from continuing operations £	Discontinued operations £	Total Funds £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS</b>										
Charitable activities	1,059,093	3,332,331	2,695,617			1,695,807	4,391,424	3,682,411	0	3,683,411
Other trading activities	0	0	0			0	0	2,775	0	2,775
Investment income	7,327	0	7,327			0	7,327	137	0	137
Other income	88,789	0	88,789			0	88,789	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,155,209</b>	<b>3,332,331</b>	<b>2,791,733</b>			<b>1,695,807</b>	<b>4,487,540</b>	<b>3,686,323</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,686,323</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>										
Charitable activities	879,373	2,925,523	2,109,089			1,695,807	3,804,896	3,612,184	0	3,612,184
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>879,373</b>	<b>2,925,523</b>	<b>2,109,089</b>			<b>1,695,807</b>	<b>3,804,896</b>	<b>3,612,184</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,612,184</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>275,836</b>	<b>406,808</b>	<b>682,644</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>682,644</b>	<b>74,139</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>74,139</b>
Transfers between funds	175,617	(175,617)	0			0	0	0	0	0
<b>Net Movements in Funds</b>	<b>451,453</b>	<b>231,191</b>	<b>682,644</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>682,644</b>	<b>74,139</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>74,139</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>										
Total funds brought forward	1,001,907		1,001,907			0	1,001,907	927,768	0	927,768
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>1,453,360</b>	<b>231,191</b>	<b>1,684,551</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>1,684,551</b>	<b>1,001,907</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,001,907</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.  
The charity has ceased the employment support activity, and this is shown as a discontinued operation.

# Statement of Financial Position

For Year Ended 31st March 2023

	31.03.23		31.03.22
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets		0	350,000
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Debtors	740,608		327,130
Cash at bank and in hand	1,491,060		1,314,084
	<b>2,231,668</b>		<b>1,641,214</b>
<b>CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>536,410</b>		<b>972,511</b>
<b>Net current assets</b>		1,695,258	668,703
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<b>1,695,258</b>	<b>1,018,703</b>
<b>PROVISIONS</b>			
Pensions & similar obligations		10,707	16,796
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>1,684,551</b>	<b>1,001,907</b>
<b>FUNDS OF THE CHARITY</b>			
Pensions deficit recovery funds		0	(16,796)
Restricted funds		231,191	0
Unrestricted funds		1,453,360	1,018,703
<b>Total charity funds</b>		<b>1,684,551</b>	<b>1,001,907</b>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime. These financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 15th November 2023, and are signed on behalf of the Board by: Mr E. Watts MBE DL, Trustee.

The regional approach to delivering GAVO service is now well embedded, having changed from thematic teams in 2021-22. The locality offices are now providing a base for staff in each county although they spend much of their time out in communities working with groups and volunteers and increasingly with partners. GAVO retains the core team of Community Development, Volunteering and Health & Wellbeing in each county, led by a designated Regional Strategic Lead Officer with a specialism in one of those three areas of work. Additional projects vary county by county and the following narrative report highlights the work in each area, reflecting the development of the regional approach.



## Blaenau Gwent

forefront of welcoming numerous new Ukrainian families. The Officer has also been part of the grant making Warm Hub Panel and Household Discretionary Grant steering group. Our Officer, as Regional Strategic Lead, has represented GAVO at a Strategic level in BG, particularly instrumental in discussions related to the United Kingdom's Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) allocation for Blaenau Gwent and aiding organisations to identifying and pursue potential funding opportunities for the third sector.

### Volunteering:

During the year, GAVO introduced a new Volunteering Officer into the team, receiving a warm reception from both the GAVO Team and the communities we serve. Officers have forged new connections with organisations while maintaining strong relationships with existing groups. They have actively collaborated with the Department of Working Pensions (DWP) in BG to facilitate the integration of volunteers into employment.

Notably, there has been a noticeable surge in young individuals signing up for Volunteering Wales in BG. Officers have made Volunteering a focal point of events in BG, including Volunteering fairs held at colleges, Local Authority venues, and employment-related events, among others.

Over the course of the year, there has been an increased interest in volunteering, with referrals coming from organisations such as Careers Wales, Disability Can Do, Aberbeeg Community Centre, and the Park Run Group.

The successful distribution of the Cash 4 U grant in the area has fostered positive relationships. Officers have also established strong connections with local groups and councillors, benefiting events like Volunteer's Week and the GAVO awards, while raising awareness of initiatives such as the Cash 4 U grant.

### Community Development:

Funding remains a primary focus for Development within BG. As expected, the demand for both governance and funding support grew during the year and it was unfortunate that the temporary additional Development Officer left in the Summer for a permanent post. During the year a number of "Meet the Funder" events were held online in conjunction with other areas and as part of the TSSW Wales offer.

Our Officer has played a pivotal role in the Blaenau Gwent Ukrainian Support Group. Notably, Blaenau Gwent has been at the



The Volunteering Awards were reinstated as a face to face event in the Autumn 2022 at Llanhilleth Institute and was very successful. Hosted by the GAVO Chair and attended by the Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, and invited dignitaries the event celebrated the amazing resilience of volunteers in Blaenau Gwent over the pandemic period.

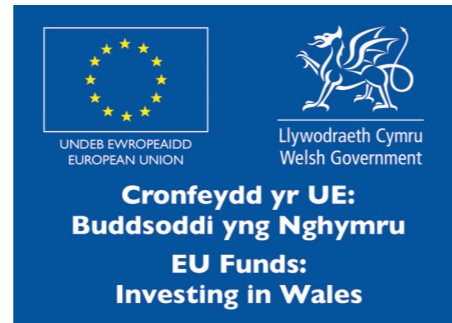
**Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Partnership Project:**

In the past year, we appointed a new Health, Social Care, and Wellbeing Partnership Officer in BG following the retirement of the previous long standing Officer.

This Officer has been instrumental in establishing new links across the area, engaging with partners, ABUHB, and various other projects and groups. The Officer has been providing the sector with a weekly information update, highlighting sector activities and focusing on Health and Wellbeing services available in the area.

These updates have proven invaluable to communities and organisations and have been further shared by General Practitioners in BG. Collaboratively, our Officer has agreed to conduct a joint mapping exercise of BG with ABUHB Place Based Care/IWN during the year, a valuable resource for prevention and individual support beyond the ABUHB scope. Our Officer has also met with Public Health and ABUHB to discuss new projects related to healthy living and introduced them to groups willing to engage in these discussions. This collaborative effort extends into Caerphilly and demonstrates the strength of working relationships between counties.

Moreover, our Officer has successfully distributed £11,000 in funding for third sector services to provide information sessions and £37,500 from the Regional Integration Fund through the Regional Partnership Board. Our Officer has also engaged with Health and Economics experts at Swansea University to explore the benefits of Social Prescribing and develop a means of quantifying the monetary value of third sector services, a resource Health Economics experts at the University are scheduled to visit BG to further explore this initiative and discuss how GAVO can effectively incorporate this approach into its work.



**Communities for Work/Plus 2022/23**

GAVO continued to deliver the Welsh Government and European Funded Community Employability Programmes across Blaenau Gwent in partnership with the DWP during the year, ensuring that those who face most disadvantage to accessing employment were given the support and financial help to reduce barriers to employment and seek work.

Participants of each programme are provided with intensive one to one mentoring through a personal development plan and are supported with a dedicated Community Employment Mentor who is able to access training, work placements, interviews and ultimately job opportunities in partnership with local providers and employers.

During the financial year 2021/22 Engagements were **473** and job outcomes were **274**.

In partnership with Blaenau Gwent Youth Services, Blaenau Gwent regeneration Team and DWP we organised the Find your Future careers event on the 6th November 2022 at Ebbw Vale Leisure centre the aim of the day was to inform people of employment opportunities there is available in the local and surrounding area, what support can be accessed when looking for work and training.

**206**  
people attended  
on the day

**54**  
employers / partners /  
agencies attended



As part of the support that we provide, Academies in various sectors are available to participants, taking through a journey of training, work experience placements and interviews in a specific sector which have included:

- Construction
- Health and Social Care

- Hospitality
- Teaching Assistant

In addition, we are able to offer, unique to programme participants, direct support into Mental Health through MIND support and support from CAB. While both these services are available, through Service Level Agreements, we are able to offer a direct referral into the services which means that participants do not have to go through the process of waiting lists.

The CAB project has only been implemented in the last quarter of the year. During the year there have been some excellent outcomes for people who have accessed this support which include:-

**During the course of this year we have supported 95 clients with 495 issues. The statistics show these issues vary with the top five issues being benefits, universal credit, energy, debt and housing. A total of £87,074 financial gains for 74 of our participants has been secured as a result of the support given.**

However, this financial year was the last year for delivery on the CfW programme in line with the UK exit from Europe. Although the programme had been previously extended notification of closure was received during the year and as the year concluded redundancy discussions were taking place and the TUPE transfer of the remaining Welsh Government funded CfW+ team to Blaenau Gwent CBC was being confirmed. A small team remaining for six months to close the programme. GAVO is sad to see such a successful programme finish and hope it will be equally as successful for the people of Blaenau Gwent in its new guise. We wish all the staff good luck for the future.



**Good News Story**

**This participant was referred via the job centre in August when he had just finished a kick start position in a charity shop. He completed the position from start to finish but it made him realise that he definitely didn't want to choose retail as a career path.**

He discussed that he found the work repetitive and didn't have enough customer interaction. He wanted a job that would be more of a challenge to him, a job that wasn't repetitive and he could interact with people daily. We discussed his skills and attributes and how much of a sensitive and careering nature he had. After many weeks we had narrowed the options down to Care or nursery nurse work.

The participant had changed his name by deed poll so had no photographic ID or proof of national insurance in his name. We needed to get ID sorted before he could seek any employment. A barrier fund was submitted for a provisional license and a request for

proof of national insurance was submitted.

The mentor arranged for the participant to speak with BGCBC early years' team and BGCBC care so he could understand the job roles a little more to make a final decision on his career path. After doing this exercise the participant decided it was definitely a Care Career he wanted to pursue. The mentor and participant started working on his CV to make it reflect his caring nature.

He was also enrolled onto several online care courses so he could gain more knowledge and understanding. We then submitted an application to BGCBC for a care apprenticeship. His application was

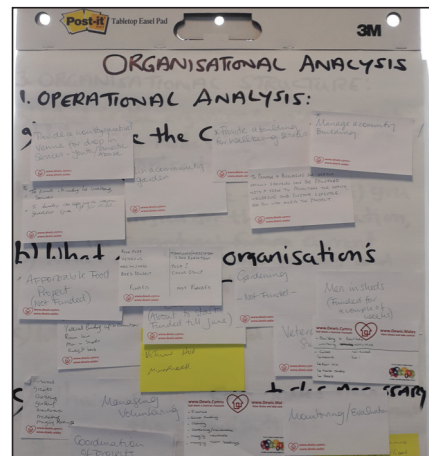
successful so the participant and mentor worked on interview techniques and etiquette. We did many mock interviews until the participant was prepared and a barrier fund was submitted for interview clothes. The participant attended the interview and was successful. He noted that the mock interviews definitely prepared him for the questions asked. The participant had to attend several training days and also needed a DBS completed which was paid for using the barrier fund. A barrier request was also submitted and approved for a bike and equipment for the participant to attend employment. The participant started employment on the 28th November and is really enjoying his new job role.

*The participant wrote: Communities for work helped me above and beyond. Without them I would never have got the job I wanted or afforded the ID I needed. They also supported me to purchase a bike to allow me to get to work. I am very grateful.*



# Caerphilly

The team continue to collaborate with the evolving PSB structures in Caerphilly to ensure third sector organisations are embedded in local priorities, having taken the lead on Volunteering under the previous Well-Being Plan, with this initiative set to conclude on March 31, 2023.

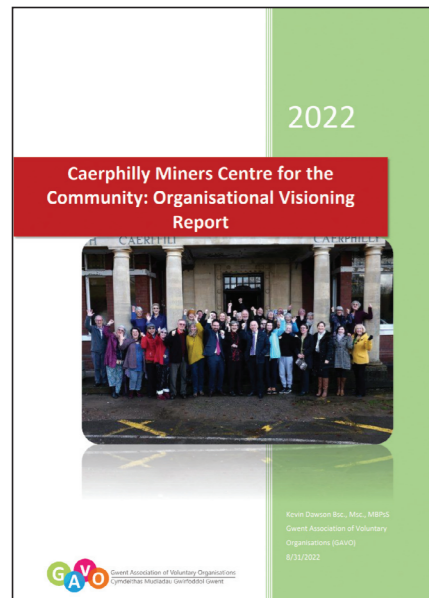


### Community Development:

Over the past year, our Officers have provided ongoing support to organisations across the sector, offering guidance on funding, sustainability, and governance. Specific Organisational Development Workshops tailored to the Third Sector have been conducted, where our staff work closely with Directors, Trustees, or Committee Members to help identify and address issues within their community organisations.

GAVO has actively supported organisations looking to acquire key community assets, such as shops and sports facilities, as part of the Councils' asset transfer plans. In addition, Development Officers organised the first One Beat Event in three years, extremely well-received for being back face-to-face. The Third Sector bulletin remains a vital source of information for the sector, providing updates on Caerphilly's happenings and promoting valuable links with contact information.

Staff have also established collaborations with Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil, showcasing effective practices and cooperation with other CVCs and overlapping organisations. Furthermore, our Officer authored a paper titled 'Toward a Psychosocial Model of Community Well-being Development: Realising the Marmot Principle of Healthy and Sustainable Communities,' which has been



circulated within GAVO, ABUHB, and WCVA. A short report titled 'Sustaining the Voluntary Sector in the Current Economic Climate: An Overview of GAVO Community Services' was also produced to highlight GAVO's services and contributions to community well-being development. These efforts provide a valuable platform for GAVO staff to positively apply their experience and knowledge for the sector's benefit. Additionally, our Officers have supported the Caerphilly Cares staff team with the distribution of Welcoming Spaces funds and with the roll out of SPF funded training for volunteers.

### Volunteering:

Regarding Volunteering, our staff have collaborated with their youth counterparts to participate in numerous College Wellbeing events, promoting Volunteering opportunities while assisting students in finding suitable options. These events serve as excellent opportunities to engage with partnering organisations.

GAVO has also supported partners with their Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives, notably Caerphilly County Borough Council's Programme, which has facilitated the connection of 15 staff members with tasks such as painting raised beds, fencing, and preparing plots for Taraggan Educational Gardens. This collaboration between the Third Sector and the Private Sector is always a positive development. Our Officer has worked closely with Volunteering Matters to explore business engagement and foster collaborative



efforts, with GAVO Volunteering offering insights into best practices and volunteering.

The Volunteering Officer has also supported organisations seeking volunteers for food-related initiatives. Corporate social responsibility has been a primary focus, with our Officer working with Target Financial Services to involve staff in various activities related to the food poverty agenda, establishing connections with local groups.

Our Officer has also engaged with numerous organisations, all with a focus on Food Poverty, the outdoors, and Mental Well-being, aligning with the work related to the Wellbeing Agenda and Marmot Principles. This collaborative approach permeates the organisation and benefits the Sector as a whole.

The Caerphilly Volunteering Awards returned this year in partnership with Caerphilly CBC including the Mayor's Civic Award and the High Sheriff's Award.

The Officer has also supported the Caerphilly Cares staff team and the distribution of Welcoming Spaces funds. This year's tree planting initiative involved 141 volunteers



from Business, the Third Sector, ONS, BEIS, and local residents and was visited by the Senedd Minister for Climate Change, Julie James MS. GAVO staff from all departments actively participated to ensure the event's success.





**Early Language Programme:**

Our Early Language Programme has continued to provide support to families regarding early language development, funded by Families First in Caerphilly. During the year, the team secured funding from Families First underspend to extend Let's Splash sessions in leisure centre pools, enabling families attending Let's Talk with your Baby courses to participate in two monthly pool sessions.

These sessions have proven highly successful, with many families experiencing leisure centre pools with their babies for the first time. Additionally, the play in the parks session in



Rhymney attracted over 130 children and adults in July. The Early Language project secured funding for additional

first aid sessions for families, addressing concerns related to choking during weaning. Staff also attended and supported the PlaNet event in November, promoting the project's work and the key partner, the Parent Network.



**Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Partnership Project:**

Our Officers continue to provide support to organisations focusing on Health and Social Care. During the year, our Health, Social Care, and Wellbeing Partnership Officer reignited Integrated Wellbeing Partnership meetings, crucial for bringing partners together to ensure collaborative efforts.

These meetings involve GAVO, ABUHB, and various Caerphilly Council departments and have proven highly productive in fostering better relationships. In conjunction with the Integrated Wellbeing Networks and Dewis, our

staff have created a new Wellbeing initiative called Cwtsh, building on the success of Cwtsh activities.

GAVO has also introduced information bursts to inform the community about local activities in their area, and work is underway on a strategy to promote community involvement in wellbeing under a unified Cwtsh brand. This brand will encompass activity guides, localised wellbeing sessions, monthly coffee mornings, and Wellbeing friends/volunteers.

One of our key priorities has been Women's Health, where staff have collaborated closely with the Integrated Wellbeing Network and Community Connectors to

enhance support around women's health. Another significant development is the creation of the Accelerated Cluster Development (ACD), with our staff actively participating in discussions related to the new setup with NCNs this month. Furthermore, GAVO staff organised a Caerphilly-wide Women's Wellbeing event in Risca Library, featuring support and advice organisations, workshops, activities, and live music. GAVO has been invited to organise a similar event for Men's health in 2024/25.

**Participatory Budgeting:**

In Quarter 4 of 2022/23, GAVO was asked to lead on Participatory Budgeting in the area. Progress has been made in collaboration with partners in Aneurin Bevan Health Board and Caerphilly County Borough Council, with plans to distribute funding in 2023/24, and 24/25 throughout the Integrated Wellbeing Network Areas.

A Service Level Agreement, accompanied by Terms of Reference and the establishment of steering group and operational group to support the roll out of the programme was being developed at the end of quarter 4.

Updates on the progress of this initiative will be provided in next year's Impact Report.



**GAVO continues to collaborate with our PSB partners within the Programme Board and local Well-being Plan structure. This partnership is expected to continue after the implementation of the Gwent PSB structure to identify and deliver against local priorities. GAVO is working to ensure the work of third sector organisations is incorporated in delivery mechanisms. Due to long term staff absence the team have had to be flexible to fill gaps over the year and run without the support of a Regional Lead.**



**Community Development:**

Development support remains in high demand across the area, with a focus on financial sustainability and governance. Monmouthshire's sector stands out due to its vibrancy, with a strong emphasis on community engagement. GAVO Officers have played a pivotal role in supporting various new training opportunities developed as part of the online offering of Be Community Plus.

This has significantly benefited the area, and the allocation of funding via GAVO has eased access to small equipment items, reducing barriers and expediting project progress throughout the year.



**Volunteering:**

Our Volunteering Officers have been actively forming partnerships with community groups, the Local Authority, and numerous third sector organisations. Staff members have embraced the TogetherWORKS initiative, gaining insights into the community and its dynamics. The Cash4U youth-led fund has proven invaluable, enabling staff to reach a diverse range of projects and groups eager to involve youth in volunteering and participation.



The latest Monmouth Community Action Network (CAN) event garnered an impressive turnout, allowing

Officers to connect with proactive community members. GAVO's social media presence continues to thrive, with high engagement levels observed throughout the year. Our Volunteering Officers have joined forces with Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) Be Community, Cwtsh Angels, and the Melville Centre for the Arts to plan a training and networking day for volunteers, aptly named Workshop Wednesday for Volunteers.

This event has fostered positive relationships among all involved. Staff conducted three short training sessions, providing attendees with the opportunity to select one course while also gathering valuable input on volunteer needs and how GAVO could offer enhanced support in the future. Hashtags like #Opportunityoftheweek

and #TipTuesday have proven effective in expanding our reach on social media, a notable achievement for the Team. For the Volunteering Team, the delivery of the youth-led Cash4U fund celebrated the invaluable contributions of young people within the community.

Additionally, our engagement with Job Centre Plus has resulted in GAVO establishing a monthly presence in Monmouthshire Job Centres. During the year, GAVO Officers were pleased to have their youth volunteer winner attend a Westminster Christmas carol concert as a guest of the Lord Lieutenant.

Our Young Volunteer winner and parent had a truly memorable experience at the concert, attended by King Charles and various other members of the Royal family.



**Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Partnership Project:**

Our Officers have continued their support for organisations with a focus on Health, Social Care, and Wellbeing.

A new staff member joined the area during the year. Staff members have actively participated in assessing applications for the 'You Decide' grants scheme in the Monmouth area. Our Officer has engaged with staff from Monmouthshire County Council's (MCC) 'My Day My Life' service, which supports people with learning disabilities, to discuss the benefits and challenges of community-based support.

Our Officer encouraged a visit to Mencap Chepstow to witness the development of their centre, offering skills and training as part of a social model. Moreover, our Officer has collaborated with Gwent Police to learn about 'Spot The Signs' training aimed at addressing the exploitation of vulnerable individuals. A training session is scheduled with the Wellbeing Network in January to raise awareness.

During the year, our H&SC Officer underwent training to become a mentor in 'Collaborative Communication' approaches, a valuable skill in supporting Wellbeing project staff. Our Officer also attended a DEEP (Developing Evidence Enriched Practice) session with Swansea University, representing the sector and providing input

for a Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection of Social Services. Furthermore, they worked with MCC Communities and Social Justice team to organise local cost of living summits, aimed at finding ways to assist people who are facing difficulties during this period.

**Wellbeing Links:**

The Wellbeing Links Team has been active for a year, making concerted efforts to engage all General Practitioner (GP) surgeries in the county and raise awareness of potential patient benefits.

Positive feedback from surgery staff and individuals who have benefited from the service has supported our evaluation and facilitated discussions with NCN leads, Primary Care, and MCC regarding future investment in the approach. The Monmouthshire Wellbeing Network continues to grow, with monthly meetings proving to be a valuable platform for support services in the county.

**Positive feedback from surgery staff and individuals who have benefited from the service has supported our evaluation and facilitated discussions with NCN leads, Primary Care, and MCC regarding future investment in the approach**

It offers an opportunity for community-facing workers to connect with peers in similar roles and build relationships, improving communication between organisations and increasing engagement, as staff members know who to contact for information or referrals. The Wellbeing Links project has garnered positive feedback from ABUHB and MCC, generating interest from the wider Gwent area.

The project continues to raise awareness among surgery staff to reach individuals who may benefit, such as those struggling with stress, anxiety, or depression due to environmental factors like housing, finances, relationships, loneliness, etc.



**Monmouthshire Carers:**

Our new Carers Officer commenced their role during the year, with a primary focus on engaging with carers and establishing contact with various support groups, charities, and Monmouthshire council contacts.

These connections are expected to support both the Officer and, more importantly, the carers in the upcoming year. A number of carer's activities took place including a train trip at Blaenavon, and coach trips to Westonbirt Arboretum.

In support of Monmouthshire Carers, our Officer hosted two New Year's Luncheons at the Monmouthshire Golf Club on consecutive days. These events provided attendees with the opportunity to take a brief respite from their caregiving responsibilities for a couple of hours, greatly benefiting them as individuals.

The Newsletter continues to reach over 1000 carers, and the autumnal trip to Weston successfully took place, receiving positive feedback.



**TogetherWORKS:**

TogetherWORKS is a collaborative project between Monmouthshire CC and GAVO with a range of partners including Monmouthshire Housing Association. It has been a rewarding experience for staff, enabling them to immerse themselves in the community and gain valuable insights whilst targeting support where it is most needed through activities such as Games and Grub night for families, community fridge, craft and friendship groups as well as hosting support services.

group "Friends of TogetherWORKS" has also been set up.



Staff hosted a successful open day at TogetherWORKS during Quarter 2, coinciding with the project's first anniversary. The celebrations were informative, positive, and offered an opportunity for GAVO staff to collaborate with new projects and visitors.

At the end of December 2022 we were pleased to have confirmation that TogetherWORKS would be funded from the SPF funding until March 2025.

This enabled further developments to be planned for the forthcoming year. A support



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# Newport

GAVO has played a crucial role in the Right Skills action area until 31st March 2023 as part of the One Newport Well-being Plan priorities. Our active engagement within the PSB structures continues as we adapt to changes linked to the Gwent PSB.



at the Neon, featuring speakers from organisations like the Lottery, Community Foundation Wales, and Citizens Advice Bureau Newport.

Our Newport Officer has also contributed to

our online presence by creating their first blog on the New GAVO website, along with experimenting with Microsoft Feedback forms and a walkthrough video explaining the Funding Wales Platform, which has garnered positive feedback.

Our engagement extends to meeting with Newport partners, Senedd Members, the Police and Crime Commissioner, and councillors, expanding our reach into harder-to-reach areas of Newport communities.

We believe that engagement is essential, as highlighted during our community walk with Maindee Unlimited.

We've also supported POBL in overseeing the Pill Masterplan, reinforcing our commitment to Newport's development.



### Volunteering:

Throughout the year, our Volunteering Officers actively contributed to a local authority survey aimed at a focus group of 700 members of the public across Newport. This initiative provided valuable insights into people's perceptions of volunteering and their experiences, helping us better understand the motivations of volunteers and how to harness their skills effectively.

The Cash 4 U panels have resulted in funding for youth activities, while our continued collaboration with universities, such as the 'Experience Works' event at the University of South Wales, promotes the benefits of volunteering and available opportunities in Newport. We've also fostered partnerships



between local LGBTQ+ communities in Newport and Media Academy Cymru, providing a safe and fun environment for LGBTQ+ community promotion and involvement.

Volunteering Officers organised a community litter pick in March, in collaboration with Microsoft and Girl Guiding Newport, exemplifying their dedication to community engagement. Additionally, the Officer has met with the Strategic Communications Lead at NCC to align their support and social media efforts with the Newport Volunteering team.

Building relationships remains a priority, and we've engaged with Business in The Community (BiTC) to explore innovative programs targeting socially and economically deprived areas, a potential positive collaboration with a lasting impact.

The Volunteering Awards took place at the Lysaght Institute, the first time in person since the pandemic.



We're actively involved in events such as the Digital development day, hosted in collaboration with CWMPAS under their Digital for the Third Sector Programme.

Our Development Officer is a strong advocate for the well-being targets in the PSB consultation organised by Newport Council, underlining the significant role of GAVO and third sector providers in achieving these goals.

The Newport Team hosted the first in-person Newport Third Sector Forum for a long time

### Community Development:

Our Development Officer provides ongoing support to numerous groups in Newport, focusing on governance, empowerment, and securing funding. Administering the Warm Hubs Grants and facilitating Participatory budgeting events across the region, we've proudly awarded over £300K to community groups.

Our guidance has empowered these groups, enabling their growth. Notably, several charities and social enterprises, such as Newport Yemeni Community Association (NYCA) and the Newport Sisters Circle, have successfully secured medium to large grant funding from sources such as the Lottery and the Welsh Government Community Facilities programme.



**Health, Social Care, and Wellbeing Partnership Project:**

Our Health, Social Care, and Wellbeing Partnership Officer have played a pivotal role in populating the Integrated Medium Term Plan for ABUHB, incorporating the Marmot Principles. The Officer has actively supported various events, including Dementia awareness events with Museum Wales, the EYST conference, planning the Armed Forces Day, and discussions with Diabetes UK about developing Living Well courses in Newport.

As the representative for GAVO at the Welsh Government (WG) steering group, our Officer has raised awareness about new easy read booklets on Continuing Healthcare and the Continuing Healthcare and Direct Payment working group, emphasising proposed changes to social care legislation and the CHC Framework. We've also contributed to the redesigning of the Older People's Pathway and Frailty, as well as discussions around the cost of living and winter pressures planning.

Our Officer has facilitated the collaboration between our Health and Social Care and Volunteering teams to develop training modules with Volunteering Matters to support organisations in upskilling volunteers, thus promoting synergy across GAVO.



**Food Sustainability Project:**

The GAVO Third Sector Food Sustainability Project Officer provides invaluable support, guidance, funding, and networking

opportunities to food providers, distributors, and growers across Newport.

Over the year, we've secured £100k of food grants and £44k of Warm Hubs funding, actively promoting and processing these grants for the benefit of our communities.

Feedback is crucial, and we've provided detailed feedback to grant applicants to ensure their bids meet required standards. A Third

Sector Food Provider Network meeting was held, fostering promising links between network members and promoting collaboration. We aim to facilitate better communication between network groups through a chat app.

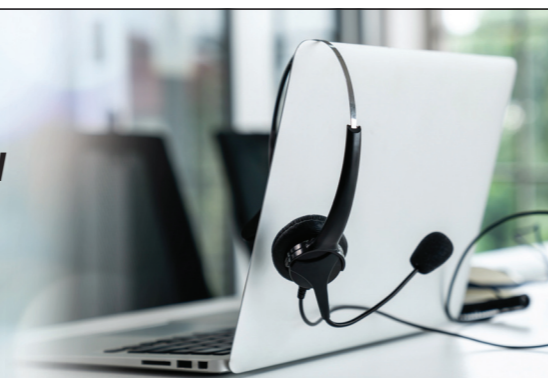
Our successful bid to WG for the Food Partnership fund ensures the continuation of the Newport Sustainable food activity, setting an example of best practice that could be replicated in other areas of Wales.

**A highlight was hosting a Newport-focused Infant Mental Health webinar, with excellent feedback from attendees**

**Parent Participation Project:**

The Participation Officer, though no longer with GAVO, contributed significantly during the year. We initiated the pilot of the Classroom/Early Years versions of Circle of Security and engaged with Coleg Gwent about the new Additional Learning Needs Bill. Our Officer also collaborated with NCC to address the implications of the cost of living crisis and played a pivotal role in organising the Families Love Newport event.

A highlight was hosting a Newport-focused Infant Mental Health webinar, with excellent feedback from attendees. Although funding for this project has ended, the legacy and learning will continue to benefit GAVO.



**Gwent-Wide Projects**



**Thriving & Surviving**  
Dealing with life after cancer

**Challenges To Thriving**

- Cancer and the Effects of Treatment
- Cancer & Relationships
- Pain
- Stress & Anxiety
- Living with Uncertainty
- Difficult Emotions/ Depression
- Body Changes
- Tiredness

Topics covered include:

- Ways to deal with problems of difficult emotions due to uncertainty
- Using exercise for staying healthy, flexible & strong.
- Looking at making decision about treatment
- Ways to talk about cancer with family, friends and health professionals.
- Healthy eating, setting goals and relationships.

**Forthcoming Virtual Course:**  
Wednesday 26th October on Zoom at 1:30 pm-3:30pm

Currently our courses are being delivered virtually, until we can return to community centres. All EPP courses are led by trained tutors, who live with a health condition or care for someone with a health condition. For more info or to book a place on a course, contact the EPP Team via Email: jules.godden@gavo.org.uk

Find us on Facebook to keep up-to-date with new courses etc. Search: education programme for patients or @EPPGOWENT on Twitter

**Looking After Me & You - Carers Course**

**Free Carers Course**

Are you interested in joining a virtual group for a 6 week course to support you in your caring role? All from the comfort of your own home?

**6 week course on Zoom**  
Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October – 2<sup>nd</sup> DECEMBER  
1:30 Pm – 3:30 pm

Currently these courses are being delivered virtually. All EPP courses are led by trained tutors, who live with a health condition or care for someone with a health condition. For more info or to book a place on a course, jules.godden@gavo.org.uk

Find us on Facebook to keep up-to-date with new courses etc. Search: education programme for patients or @EPPGOWENT on Twitter

**Education Programme for Patients:**

EPP Cymru continues to offer self-management health and well-being courses and workshops for individuals living with health conditions or caring for someone with a health condition. Our team comprises coordinators and volunteer tutors, individuals with personal experience in health conditions, ensuring empathy and understanding.

Throughout the year, we've promoted our courses and interacted with various partners. Notably, we've engaged with organisations like Disability Can Do and Fibromyalgia UK. Additionally, we've met with United Welsh connect officers and Compassionate

Communities officers, exploring opportunities for collaboration and course delivery.

Our national engagement has also been notable, with our staff attending national coordinators' meetings and supporting Cardiff coordinators with successful working models. We continue to receive direct referrals from General Practitioners, delivering a range of courses accessible via our online portals.

For more information about GAVO and our work, please refer to our 2022/23 Impact Report and visit our website at <https://www.gavo.org.uk/>.

**Corporate Services**

The Corporate team provide a range of services to support GAVO to deliver services linked to the core TSSW role as well as supporting the range of additional project based staff across GAVO.

The Personal Assistant to The CEO and Chair has continued providing Secretariat for CEO and Chair and in addition to this, during the quarter has organised the GAVO Governance meetings with Trustees. These include the Local Committee meetings, Newport Third Sector Partnership meeting, GAVO Operational Plan and Corporate team catch ups.

**IT and Marketing**

The IT Officer has an ongoing role to support staff with their IT issues and progress GAVO's implementation of its IT Strategy.

The Officer has also introduced a new Website and has supported staff across GAVO to have more interaction with the site and learn to post their own articles and news items.

Our new Communications and Marketing Officer was proactive in getting to grips with the branding and current communication channels, actively meeting staff, Teams and projects to look at improving printed materials to make them more accessible.

The Officer drafted a new Communications Plan as an appendix to the Operational Plan. He supported the Volunteering Team with Volunteers Week in June and with the build up to the Volunteering Awards in the Autumn. Staff were saddened to lose the Officer in the Autumn to a long standing illness.

The role remained vacant and the IT Officer has undertaken some additional work to fill the gap.



**Human Resources:**

The HR team fully embedded the use of the PeopleHR system during the year, with it being the main landing point for GAVO staff in respect of time management, leave, employee absence details which allows us to produce monthly absence reports for Trustees.

The PeopleHR system also enables the storage and access to all GAVO policies through the system. The Corporate review of policies has been ongoing throughout the year to ensure compliance with legislation. HR staff have supported the transactional process of the ending of the CFW project in its current form, e.g. sending letters confirming ending of programme and collating data, dealing with redundancy and, at the end of the reporting period, the confirmed transfer of staff to Blaenau Gwent CBC. The HR team have been integral to supporting staff training and development.

Attendance at/completion of mandatory staff training is improving, as detailed below;

- GDPR - 89% completed
- EDI - 92% completed
- Safeguarding - 92% completed

The Staff survey was re-circulated again to all employees in March. SMT with HR will look to gather feedback for updating Trustees in the future. The HR Team also support the Staff Forum. The HR Officer undertook the work around the IIP Review reporting a 67% response to the IIP staff survey, with largely positive results and improvements suggested being built into the Operational Plan.

**Finance:**

The new Finance Manager started in quarter three to take on the role of finalising annual accounts with the auditor. Since settling into the role the Officer has implemented a new purchase order system, and has met with CMT and managers and project teams to discuss finance and budgets and develop more streamlined systems.

The Finance team supported the work towards closure of the C4W programme and at the end of the year focussed on the end of year finance processes and financial forecasting for Trustees for the new financial year.



# Engagement and Influencing

Stephen Tiley, CEO



**One of the four TSSW pillars of activity, alongside Good Governance, Sustainable Funding and Volunteering, all staff have a role to encourage the engagement of third sector organisations in local regional and national decision making and in influencing those decisions. However, at a more strategic level it is largely the Senior Management Team and Trustees that take on this role.**

**Third Sector Support Wales**

GAVO continues with its strong connections with TSSW Networks, which have proven to be very helpful in gaining information from a national perspective, helping to resolve problems whilst also promoting our work and the work of the sector in Gwent. These connections provide us, and the sector as a whole, with the crucial wider opportunity to connect with the national picture. It also allows us to have a voice when needed and learn from others across Wales.

We remain committed to a collaborative approach to national efforts, working closely with the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) and the other partner County Voluntary Councils (CVC). This collaboration involves being part of various committees and networks, such as the Third Sector Support Wales (TSSW) Executive, CVC Cymru, TSSW Safeguarding Board, and committees like the Volunteer Practitioner Network, Funding Network, and the Learning Steering Group, just to name a few. This national networks also allow us the opportunity to influence and engage between TSSW (of which GAVO is a member) and the Welsh Government. We maintain open communication with MPs, AMs, and Local Councilors, which has played a crucial role in shaping policies, laws and securing funding. These ongoing communications with these influencers will continue to be vital as we move forward.

**Gwent Public Service Board**

The Gwent Public Service Board (PSB) has been in play since 2021 and replaced the previous structure of all County Public Service Boards' (PSBs) meetings. Currently, regional support is provided through area Local Delivery Groups, and GAVO will continue to play a pivotal part and represent the third sector at both the regional and Gwent PSB levels. The focus of the Public Service Board and its key objectives are as follows:

- Create a fairer, more equal Gwent that includes everyone
- Protect our environment
- Work towards Gwent becoming a Marmot region

GAVO's involvement ensures that the third sector is firmly established in the upcoming Wellbeing Plans and actions. GAVO has also initiated the process of developing the Gwent Third Sector Partnership Agreement, which is set for approval in 2024/25. This new agreement will serve as the Governing Document for the Gwent PSB's working relationship and collaboration with the Third Sector in Gwent. For more information about the Gwent PSB and its plan, you can visit the Gwent PSB website at <http://www.gwentpsb.org/en/>

**Regional Partnership Board**

GAVO continues to play a pivotal role in the Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB) both at the board level, through representation by our Deputy CEO at the Leadership Group and many of the supporting structures that feed the overall Board. GAVO's involvement at all levels of these discussions has been of paramount importance to ensure that the third sector's role continues to be acknowledged and respected. Over the course of the year, we have also been a key player in monitoring the new funding scheme, the Regional Integration Fund (RIF), and have championed a review of Governance to ensure ease of access for the Third Sector. Moving forward, I see the Third Sector being a vital part of the Health and Social Care strategies around prevention and supporting discharge, so we will continue to support these and link the Sector where possible.

More information around the Regional Partnership Board and its plans can be found on its website which can be found at: <https://www.gwentrpw.wales/home>

## The Year at a Glance

Some of the headline figures from our activity recording system:



Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations  
Cymdeithas Mudiadau Gwirfoddol Gwent

- Individuals supported with Volunteering: 453
- Individuals placed into Volunteering: 151
- Organisations with Funding Awarded by GAVO:  
147 organisations received £427,123
- Organisations Supported with Funding Bids by GAVO:  
266 organisations were supported to successfully receive £2,193,911
- Organisations supported with direct advice:  
749 organisations contacted GAVO for advice 2,829 times
- There were 1200 opportunities for third sector organisations to be part of partnership meetings, forums and networks, and events
- GAVO has a total membership of 537

## Glossary

Throughout the document, organisations and projects have been referred to with initials, a glossary of these appears below:

<b>TSSW</b>	Third Sector Support Wales - The collective of Wales Council for Voluntary Action and 19 County Voluntary Councils across Wales
<b>C4W and C4W+, CEP</b>	Communities for Work, and Communities for Work Plus - Community Employability Programmes
<b>WCVA</b>	Wales Council for Voluntary Action, the umbrella body for the third sector across Wales
<b>County Voluntary Council</b>	Intermediary bodies supporting grass roots third sector organisations and volunteers at a county level
<b>DBS</b>	Disclosure and Barring Service checks for volunteers
<b>BGCBC</b>	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
<b>CCBC</b>	Caerphilly County Borough Council
<b>MCC or MonCC</b>	Monmouthshire County Council
<b>NCC</b>	Newport City Council
<b>ABuHB</b>	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
<b>RPB</b>	Regional Partnership Board
<b>PSB</b>	Public Services Board
<b>Marmot Principles</b>	From Prof. Michael Marmot's Report "Fair Society Healthy Lives" <a href="https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/">https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/</a>
<b>ICF</b>	Integrated Care Fund has now become RIF - Regional Integration Fund
<b>WG</b>	Welsh Government
<b>HSCWB</b>	Health Social Care and Well-being
<b>NCN</b>	Neighbourhood Care Network
<b>DWP</b>	Department of Work and Pensions
<b>WEFO</b>	Wales European Funding Office
<b>WLGA</b>	Welsh Local Government Association

@GAVOHQ for Third Sector news, events, funding, volunteering opportunities & more!

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