

**YMDDIRIEDOLAETH  
GOFALWYR**

Gogledd Cymru  
Gwasanaethau Gofal Croesffyrdd

**CARERS  
TRUST**

North Wales  
Crossroads Care Services

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

**FOR  
CARERS  
AND THE  
PEOPLE  
THEY  
SUPPORT**

DELIVERING SERVICES IN:

ANGLESEY  
CEREDIGION  
CONWY  
DENBIGHSHIRE  
FLINTSHIRE  
GWYNEDD  
WREXHAM

Quinton Hazell Enterprise Parc  
Glan y Wern Road, Colwyn Bay,  
Conwy, LL28 5BS

Charity Registration Number: 1119142  
Company Registration Number: 6205600  
CIW Registration Number: WO30001450



Cyngor Sir  
**CEREDIGION**  
County Council



CYNGOR  
*Sir Ddinbych*  
**Denbighshire**  
COUNTY COUNCIL



CYNGOR SIR  
**YNYS MńN**  
**ISLE OF ANGLESEY**  
COUNTY COUNCIL



CYNGOR  
**Sir y Fflint**  
**Flintshire**  
COUNTY COUNCIL



**wrexham**  
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIR  
wrecsam

## MESSAGES FROM CHAIR AND CEO

### **RITA JONES - CHAIR (2014-present)**

I reflect on a very difficult year which has brought heartbreak and additional hardship to so many families in North Wales. I would like to express my deep appreciation to everyone involved with Carers Trust North Wales for coping in these challenging times and for keeping our organisation functioning, enabling us to continue to offer support to unpaid carers. I also thank the local authorities for a continuous supply of PPE for our staff, and the BCUHB who supported us throughout by providing LFT kits, allowing our CSWs to work more safely in the community.



I also thank fellow Trustees for their unrelenting support throughout the pandemic. It has made us work differently as a Board but no less effectively. Our quarterly Boards and Sub-Committees now take place via on-line methods, and it has been surprising to me how we have adapted so quickly and so well to these new digital meetings.

I look forward to the next 12 months which I hope will see Covid cases reducing, and a return to more normal routines and services.

### **ALISON JONES - CEO (2012-present)**

As our Chair has said above, the year was a different one than we ever could have imagined, with much of it being spent in lockdown. I would like to thank the management team and office staff, who continued to work tirelessly to support carers, albeit in a slightly different way, and also the wonderful CSW's who faced the challenges of Covid head on and continued to offer support to those unpaid carers who really needed it during these difficult times.



The trustees remained as hard working and as committed to the organisation as ever and were supportive of our different ways of delivering services this year. As we slowly emerge from the pandemic and look to the future, it is with the hope that we can continue to offer unpaid carers across North Wales and Ceredigion our emotional and practical support to help them to take small steps back into the outside world and reconnect with their local community. We look forward to a brighter future post lockdown.

## THE YEAR OF THE COVID PANDEMIC

2020-21 has been an unprecedented year and the challenges which Carers Trust North Wales faced were completely unforeseen. However, despite the difficulties, the year also offered many opportunities which we will highlight in this Annual Report.

The Organisation had to rely on its innovation and resilience to continue to support unpaid carers during this time, and crucially had to depend on the loyalty and dedication of its outstanding workforce.

We are so proud that our Carer Support Workers willingly went above and beyond their duty, putting carers' services first and foremost, and we are immensely grateful to all our key workers who continued to work and provide essential services to carers and cared-for across North Wales

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, management and office team, and all our unpaid carers and cared for:



You are our heroes

## CARER SUPPORT THROUGH COVID

When lockdown was enforced by the Government at the end of March 2020, our first concern was to all the unpaid carers we support.

We contacted all our service users across North Wales to see if they wanted to continue with their carer breaks. Our Carer Support Workers were ready and willing to carry on working in the community and were equipped with full PPE adhering to all WG guidelines. Wherever it was needed, we continued to provide care.

Understandably, to minimise risk, some people did not want our CSWs to visit, so we were able to help out in other ways, eg with shopping calls, trips to the chemist to collect prescriptions, and telephone support.

Some carers, however, desperately needed even more support than before. Their usual services were cancelled and their families were unable to visit. Without their routine support mechanisms in place such as day care, support groups or friends and family popping round, some carers felt they were on their knees and unable to cope. We were extremely grateful that our local authorities were so supportive at this time, and they agreed to fund extra services to our vulnerable carers living in the community wherever it was needed.

Our Carer Support Workers gave confidence to carers and families by always visiting in PPE, by sanitising all the equipment they used in people's homes and by keeping a social distance wherever possible. Our staff all took regular bi-weekly LFT tests, and as far as we possibly could, we kept the same CSW visiting the same families to minimise the number of people they were seeing. As already mentioned by our Chair, we thank the Local Authorities for providing all the PPE we needed and continue to need; and the BCUHB for delivering ample supplies of LFT self-testing kits.

As the vaccination programme gathered speed at the start of 2021, this gave additional assurance to carers, and slowly those who had been struggling on their own during the first and second Covid waves, decided that they would like to resume service again.

The pandemic has been particularly hard-hitting for unpaid carers. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has shown that the majority of unpaid carers were worried (or very worried) about the effects the pandemic was having on their life, and found that more unpaid carers than non-carers indicated that Coronavirus had affected: life events (eg weddings/funerals), work, access to healthcare and treatment for non-Coronavirus-related issues, health, caring responsibilities, and access to groceries, medication and essentials.

# 27,783

hours' of 1-1 care delivered  
in the last 12 months

## GOFALWYR CEREDIGION CARERS

In Ceredigion, our service is growing steadily. We work in conjunction with Ceredigion Council, Credu and Carers Trust Crossroads West Wales (CTCWW). This is a comprehensive service for carers, with Credu providing information and advice whilst CTNW and CTCWW provide the practical support to carers. This is our second year of working in Ceredigion and, despite the pandemic, we have expanded services and extended our reach. We look forward to continuing to grow with our partners during the next 12 months.



Cyngor Sir  
**CEREDIGION**  
County Council



**YMDIRIEDOLAETH  
GOFALWYR**  
Croesffyrdd  
Gorllewin Cymru

**CARERS  
TRUST**  
Crossroads  
West Wales

## GRANTS FOR CARERS

Over the year our management team spent their time thinking about extra ways we could support during pandemic, in addition to respite care. The news reports were extremely worrying and there seemed to be no end in sight when normal service could resume. Our CEO and Registered Care Manager put their efforts into researching additional grants to help ease hardships being experienced in the community. They spent hours applying to numerous organisations and grant givers across Wales and the UK. As a result of their unrelenting efforts, they were successful in raising a staggering:

# £249,612

This amount was distributed to carers and their families in North Wales mostly in the form of grants for white goods, furniture, IT equipment, wellbeing hampers, and groceries. This list was not exhaustive and applications were also considered for other essential items or services. We are immensely grateful to all those organisations who supported us, and are overwhelmed by their generosity. See overleaf to see what a huge difference this made at a time when it was especially needed.



CARER SUPPORT THROUGH COVID



*'Receiving this has meant a great deal to our family, It means we can keep in touch with family who live in Ireland via video call. Thank you for your kindness'*

*'We only had a small under the counter fridge which was failing and spoiling food that we could ill afford to waste and we were having to keep vegetables in the outside shed. The new fridge is fantastic, and has room for a full shop. I am delighted.'*



Covid-19  
**EMERGENCY FUND**



*'Thank you so much for the grant towards getting our vehicle back on the road after the MOT lapsed and it hadn't been serviced for 3 years. This is especially beneficial to my mam who cannot even go on the bus now. It is also of great benefit to me in my carer role to know she can be taken door to door, safe and shielded in her own vehicle. She is on the high risk Covid register and has been shielding. We have had an extremely hard and heart-breaking year and feel blessed by some support in the midst of shocking events.'*



*'I was awarded a washing machine. When I was told that I was eligible, I actually cried. Having a family and one daughter with special needs, washing had mounted up, doing small items by hand and having to take bin bags full to family was a struggle.'*

Over  
**700 GRANTS**  
distributed to unpaid carers

## DEMENTIA SUPPORT THROUGH COVID

Our Dementia Support Service was also heavily impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic. BCUHB Memory clinics had to suspend appointments and, as a result, referrals to our service were very much reduced.

During the months of April to June, some of our Dementia Co-ordinators were furloughed, and a reduced Taith Ni (group support) was offered via Zoom. The on-line sessions were a new way to get together and it kept people in contact with each other to allow vital peer support to continue. The Facebook page was also active with shared information and postings of support.

During lockdown, people were reluctant to have any visits at home. However, wherever needed, we were able to offer 1-1 support or help with shopping. We continued and increased our telephone support, providing information and advice which really helped those who felt they were on their own, with their own families unable to visit. We also spent time re-contacting people who had been referred over 12 months earlier to see if their circumstances had changed, and if they felt they needed anything from the service. We were also lucky to receive a grant from ICF to provide useful equipment to our service users to help them to live with Dementia.

As restrictions eased, the team reformed and referrals started to come through. People became more confident to have a home visit and the team were soon back to their busy workloads.

As the Welsh Government gradually began to allow people to meet up in 'bubbles', Gwenno Davies, our Project Lead, started to look at safe ways for our Taith Ni's to reconvene. We held a few groups in car parks, with people chatting from car boots in the open air, but Gwenno soon realised we needed a safe indoor venue as the weather was getting colder. She made contact with the Split Willow Hotel in Llanfairfechan, and explained the need for a Covid-safe base for the groups. The owners couldn't have been more supportive, and allowed us to use their rooms. The hotel was no longer open to the general public, and they assured us that we could be the sole users of the building. Gwenno arranged for people to meet up in bubbles, and the large rooms ensured that social distancing was not a problem. We were able to continue like this until December when unfortunately lockdown had to be re-enforced for the rest of the 2020-21 period.

Gwenno looks back on the year as a challenge, but felt the turning point which brought back hope to us all was the start of the vaccination programme, and she looks forward to normal service resuming as soon as possible.

## FINALISTS AGAIN

We were delighted that our Dementia Support Service was once again recognised externally at the prestigious 11th UK National Dementia Care Awards 2020 in the Best Dementia Team category.

This year the event was held on line, but we were thrilled to be part of it for the second year running.

Gwenno stated: *It's so nice to receive this recognition for a second year. I'm extremely proud of the team who have worked so hard over the past 5 years to make this service what it is, a vital and timely support to people and their families in North Wales at point of diagnosis'.*



## DEMENTIA SUPPORT SERVICE STATISTICS

**3,588**

Referrals over the last 5 years  
in North Wales

**602**

Referrals over the last 12  
months despite the pandemic

**114**

additional monthly telephone  
support hours

**728**

extra 1-1 hours delivered  
over the last 12 months



## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

As our Dementia Support service has evolved over the last 5 years, our members have been at the centre of our service development. At our Conference a year earlier in 2019, a clear vision emerged for Dementia Services in North Wales.

The message we were hearing was that as those living with Dementia progress from newly diagnosed to the moderate stages of dementia, there is a diminishing service coverage for those needs. During these moderate stages, there tends to be more dependence on carers and the stresses and strains of caring take on a different focus.

What people said they wanted was a 'Dementia Centre', a one stop shop and holistic approach to dementia care in a non-healthcare setting, a centre of excellence offering services to people throughout their Dementia journey.

We have listened and plans are now afoot to put this vision into practice .....

## SO WATCH THIS SPACE!

### DONATIONS

We were very fortunate that we still received donations and in memoriam bequeaths during the pandemic. We were so pleased that people were still thinking about us and making contributions despite the difficulties they were facing in their own lives. Unfortunately, we were unable to hold any events or fundraising activities this year, but despite this, our donations for the year were:

# £15,283

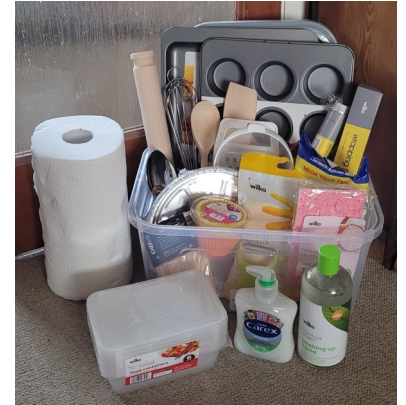
A huge thank you to each and every one of you who made a donation, no matter how big or small. All our donations are used to give extra support to unpaid carers, and all our donations are used locally, ie donations received in any county, are used to provide extra services in that county.

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES THROUGH COVID

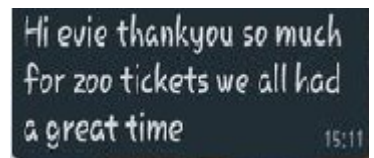


*'A hugely appreciative thanks to you for the awesome bag of goodies'*

Thanks to Conwy Borough Council, we received additional funds to help cheer up children and families during the pandemic. Evie Roberts, Children's Co-ordinator spent her time during lockdown delivering surprise parcels to doorsteps which were all gratefully received. There were craft hampers, cooking boxes, Halloween boxes, pamper hampers and colouring equipment, all of which went to help to relieve the boredom of being stuck indoors.



During lockdown, we were still able to help children on a 1-1 basis if families wanted us to continue, and this was really appreciated as a lot of other services had been withdrawn. One family wrote *'thank you for all your help, it has been great for him to be able to get out during lockdown and we really appreciate everything you have done'*.



In addition to this, once family 'bubbles' were slowly allowed to emerge from lockdown, we were able to provide tickets to families for activities in the summer holidays, including Colwyn Bay Zoo. Although children were unable to attend in their usual groups, individual families at least had the chance to enjoy lovely days out, and we received lots of messages of thanks. As soon as guidelines allowed, our craft groups resumed in Covid safe venues. It was great to see everyone back together again. There was a lot of catching up to do, and a lot of fun quickly picked up again from where it left off!

## STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

At the beginning of April, Administrator Shara Evans (below left) and Dementia Co-ordinators Toby Fagan (below centre) and Caighreine Mathie (below right) enrolled on a Level 3 Diploma in Customer Care. They have now all successfully completed the course and have passed with flying colours. In addition to this, Toby has also successfully completed a Level 2 Advocacy course and is looking forward to putting these skills into practice. We are very proud of their achievements.

In September CEO Alison Jones was accepted onto a part-time Masters degree course in Dementia Care with Hull University, and Lucy Jones (Business Support) also undertook a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership in a Health and Social Care setting.



## RETIREMENTS & GOODBYES

Over the last 12 months we were sorry to say goodbye to much loved members of staff who decided to retire after many years' dedicated service to Carers Trust North Wales:

Alison Fenton CSW in Anglesey  
 Meinir Jones CSW in Conwy  
 Sue Jones CSW in Flintshire  
 Sylvia Jones CSW in Conwy  
 Barbara Newman CSW in Conwy  
 Juliet Pritchard CSW in Gwynedd

We were also sorry to lose Sarah Allsop, Dementia Co-ordinator, who is now retraining as a mental health nurse; Isobel Evans, Dementia Support Worker, now working in Shrewsbury; and Christine Thomas who left to take on a new post in a residential home. We wish them all well in their new careers.

## AND FINALLY OVER TO YOU

as always, our last word is saved for the people using our services

*'The Service that Carers Trust North Wales provides is second to none, so happy with your service. Without it my wife and I would have real problems.'*

*'You are the only service that recognises that the carer exists and may actually need support.'*

*'I have nothing but the highest regard and respect for the staff who have coped so well in sometimes difficult circumstances.'*

*'The care we have received from Carers Trust North Wales all through Covid has been wonderful. Thank you all.'*

*'The impact from Covid has been significant, lack of support and services. If not for the help I received from Carers Trust North Wales, I would not have survived the pandemic.'*

*'Excellent service during a very difficult time.'*

*'Carers Trust has been a life-line to me in this very bad time'*

*'You are the most helpful carers. You go out of your way to help and I would like to thank you very much.'*

*'An invaluable service I just couldn't do without. It has made a huge difference to both me and my mum.'*

*'I don't think the community as a whole, and speaking for myself personally could do without the service you provide, and the pandemic has proved that, and more!'*

*'Before knowing of your service, I have had to cancel appointments on a regular basis. Now I can make hospital appointments and know I can make it with confidence.'*

*'The Carers Trust team have provided a great service to my son, and his brother and sister. He and the kids thoroughly enjoy everything that is organised ... and have formed a lovely relationship that will be cherished forever.'*

*'It has been very difficult, but Carers Trust throughout the pandemic has been untold help.'*

*'It gave me some respite to meet friends and to do shopping without rushing, and he has somebody else to talk to instead of just me.'*

*'The service was very reliable and efficient, very caring personnel.'*