

Helpforce Cymru

AUTUMN UPDATE 2020

This is a brief update to let you know what's been going on in recent months.



COVID 19 AND THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEERING

Research institutions are planning (and in some cases already understaking) research in order to better understand the community volunteer response that we saw and to ask questions about how to sustain and support this. We have been in touch with groups in Wales, Birmingham and Sheffield, to support their work with advice and information. You can read the first report, [Lessons from Lockdown](#), from the Mobilising Volunteers Effectively (MoVE) research which includes responses from Wales.

We delivered, jointly with Wales Centre for Public Policy, a short presentation at a virtual research conference of the Voluntary Sector Studies Network on the volunteer response to the pandemic in Wales. [Video recordings of conference sessions](#) are available. Our presentation drew upon analysis of volunteering themes identified from discussions over the first few months of Covid 19 and of volunteering case studies gathered from more than 50 organisations. We highlighted some preconditions for effective volunteer response: local knowledge, resourcefulness and flexibility, existing infrastructure and working relationships. The material is being reworked as a blog to be published shortly.

VOLUNTEERING TO SUPPORT THE NHS

We hosted an online event on **Volunteering to support the NHS – looking forward in the light of Covid 19**, attended by a mixed audience of about 60 people. We heard from three Health Boards who had taken differing approaches to volunteer involvement during the pandemic. The event highlighted the value of consistency and coordination of approach across a region and of good working relationships with CVCs and other partners. Managing the 'supply' of volunteers, in terms of numbers, skills and location,

with the need in terms of vacancies for agreed roles was a challenge. So, too was the need to adapt and fast track recruitment processes without compromising on safety. An [independent report](#) has been written and published and a blog will follow.

Helpforce has been working in England with NHS Trusts over several years now, piloting and evaluating volunteering interventions that may have a positive impact on patients, staff and care systems. The findings of these pilot studies to date have been pulled together in a report 'The impact of volunteering on the NHS' (to be published in November).

SHARING LOCAL STORIES

We have been working with the comms team for A Healthier Wales at Welsh Government and produced video case studies of two volunteering programmes, which illustrate some of the principles of [A Healthier Wales](#). A written case study accompanies each of them and includes more detail, including on the impact of coronavirus.

[Hear to Help case study and video](#) (Action on Hearing Loss)

[PIVOT case study and video](#) (Pembrokeshire Intermediate Voluntary Organisations Team)

A third video will highlight, in animation style, the varied and significant contribution of volunteers to health and care in Wales. This is still being finalised.

MAXIMISING THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING

Our [latest blog](#) looks at some of the positive practice that developed during the pandemic and explores how volunteering can help to deliver desired positive outcomes, such as the aspirations of the [Wellbeing of Future Generations Act](#) with its seven wellbeing goals and five ways of working.

Helpforce is working with Third Sector Support Wales (WCVA and 19 CVCs), Welsh Government and other partners to develop the potential of volunteering to support health and social care services in Wales.

Visit the [Helpforce Cymru web page](#)

Fiona Liddell Helpforce Cymru Manager, WCVA

fliddell@wcva.cymru 029 2043 1730 @FionaMLiddell

