

PRESS RELEASE

Vital services featured in WCVA's EU funding legacy film series shutting down due to funding shortfall

17 October 2022: For immediate release

On the 30th anniversary of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 October 2022), WCVA is publishing a series of legacy films showcasing the positive impact of EU funding on the voluntary sector in Wales. The films draw particular attention to the ways in which EU funding helped people furthest from the labour market and who now find themselves among the hardest hit by the cost-of-living crisis.

WCVA showcases employability support projects funded by the European Social Fund through the Welsh Government, which proved instrumental in helping to support over 35,000 people back into employment and the attainment of 150,000 new qualifications in Wales throughout the 2014-2020 funding programme.

With these EU funding streams now closing, and the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund failing to honour repeated commitments that these funds would be fully replaced, Wales faces a funding [shortfall of over £1.1bn](#). This will result in a devastating funding gap for the voluntary sector, as some of the people-centred programmes featured in WCVA's films have already been forced to close, are facing closure, or are at risk of slashing their services.

WCVA Chief Executive Ruth Marks says: 'These films showcase the expertise and dedication of hundreds of Welsh charities and voluntary organisations in affording vulnerable people with hope and opportunity.'

Unfortunately, we are at risk of losing this expertise because the UK Government's current plans mean funding will not be available in time to support the continuation of vital services for people in Wales.

'At a time when more and more households in Wales are forced to make the undignified choice of either eating a square meal or heating their home, at least one of the organisations that would have supported them – featured in our film series – has already been forced to shut its Welsh branch. Let there be no mistake that the closure of European schemes in Wales and the current arrangements made by UK Government will result in more services shutting down, and even more people plunged into poverty.'

WCVA's legacy film series showcases how EU funds have sustained the Welsh voluntary sector – and by extension some of the most vulnerable people in society.

[**Adferiad's Active Inclusion Project**](#) has supported people over 25-years-old struggling with mental health or substance misuse issues, by moving away from traditional methods, helping them make positive choices and building up their self-confidence.

Cobain has moved forward in his life through Adferiad's support and says: 'I had a lot of difficulty, because I suffer with severe anxiety and Asperger's Syndrome. Without Adferiad I don't think I would have had any chance of getting a job realistically.'

[**The Achieving Change Through Employment Project by Change Grow Live**](#) helped Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, and migrant people, into training, volunteering and employment. They were able to work with a high proportion of economically inactive Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and migrant women, by offering mentoring, volunteering placements, help in transferring existing qualifications to those recognised in the UK, rapid English fluency courses, advice on workers' rights and more.

Highly qualified Anusha from India comments: 'When I first came to the UK, I tried lots of things to get into my career, I tried a few things, and I

doubted myself. I've learnt so many things from Change Grow Live. It gives you more confidence. You can grow in your career.'

Unfortunately, the lack of available replacement funding has meant the programme has been shut down.

Chwarae Teg's Agile Nation 2 Programme is funded by the European Social Fund and has helped Wales' female workforce by improving business practices and creating a fairer workplace in Wales.

After attending one of Chwarae Teg's courses Dee says: 'The support I had from Chwarae Teg was amazing. It's had a really lasting impact on me; I'd say it has been a defining point in my career, it's been a turning point for me. I'm now definitely on the right path.'

Môn Communities Forward (Môn CF) has used EU funding to offer an innovative, flexible employment programme, including a 16-week employment project with an end goal of a permanent job.

David, one of the Programme's participants, says: 'Working with Môn CF helped me to find the courage to look for work and get ready for it. Places like Môn CF help people to find the encouragement they might have missed somewhere else in their life and find the courage to step forward.'

Ruth Marks continues: 'We don't want the voluntary sector's expertise to disappear along with European funding. The Welsh voluntary sector is uniquely placed to deliver positive employment and wellbeing outcomes for traditionally hard to reach groups, and we need to urgently plug this funding gap.'

You can view the films on WCVA's YouTube channel.

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For more information and interview bids, please contact Simon Dowling on 0300 111 0124 or Carys Mair Thomas on 07702 096704.

NOTES TO EDITORS

- Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) is the national membership body for voluntary organisations in Wales. We exist to enable voluntary organisations in Wales to make a bigger difference together. You can learn more here: www.wcva.cymru
- You can access the films on YouTube:
 - [Adferiad Recovery](#)
 - [Change Grow Live](#)
 - [Chwarae Teg](#)
 - [Môn CF](#)
- Learn more about the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, and its dignity theme [here](#)
- The Active Inclusion Fund is managed by WCVA, supported by funding from the European Social Fund. It aims to reduce economic inactivity in Wales and improve the employability of disadvantaged people

In order for us to promote the voluntary sector in Wales and update our press contacts about relevant news from WCVA your information is recorded on our database. Please read our privacy notice, available on WCVA's website, to find out how your information will be used, who can access it, the legal bases on which your information is held and your rights in relation to this information.

Registered Office - Head Office: One Canal Parade, Dumballs Road, Cardiff, CF10 5BF (Offices also at Rhyl and Aberystwyth)

Telephone: 0300 111 0124

Email: help@wcva.cymru

Wales Council for Voluntary Action

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