



AVOW

Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham

Impact Report 2022/2023

Introduction

From AVOW Chief Officer,
Dawn Roberts-McCabe
and Chair, Peter Howell



Peter and I are pleased to bring you AVOW's Impact Report for 2022/23. I joined AVOW as Chief Officer early in 2022, just as the world was emerging from Covid and a number of prolonged lockdowns. Along with my appointment following my predecessor's long tenure, 2022/23 was largely a year of reopening, rebuilding and restructuring.

During the year, I am delighted to say that AVOW became a Real Living Wage employer and we provided a 5% uplift to staff wages at the start of the year.

The principal funding source for AVOW remains the Infrastructure Core Grant from Welsh Government, which is administered by Wales Council for Voluntary Action. During the year, we also received funding from Grants

for Distribution, to help mitigate food poverty. There are various other grants and service level agreements with Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, as well as other funders.

A major piece of work in 2022/23, and one that I am proud of, was partnering with Cadwyn Clwyd to apply for funding from WCBC's Shared Prosperity Funds, so that we could offer a key fund to community and voluntary organisations, whose projects did not meet the £250,000 threshold of the original funding.

The following pages highlight some of our key achievements and demonstrate the impact that AVOW has on the area it represents.

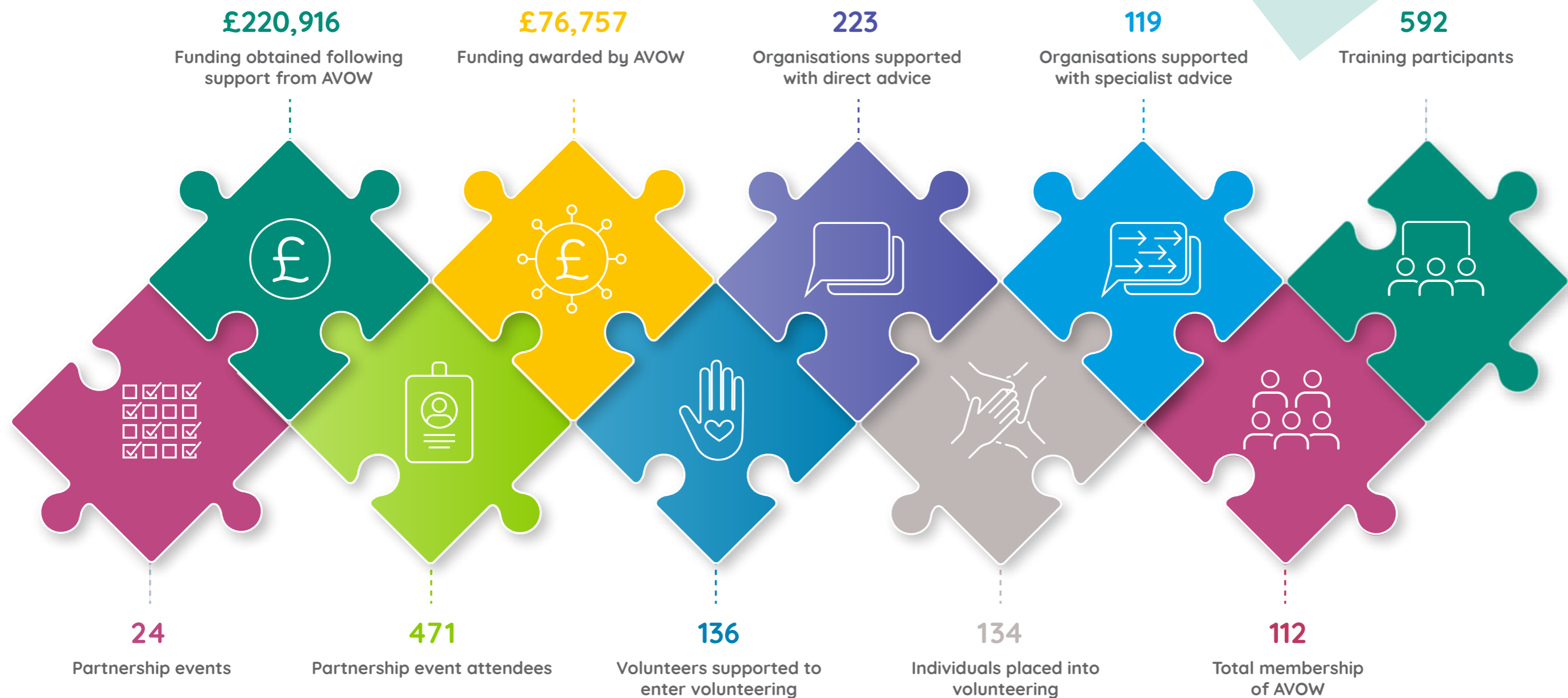
“The AVOW vision is... the voluntary and community sectors achieving their missions for the benefit of the community within the County Borough of Wrexham.”



Core highlights

AVOW 2022-23 Core Highlights

AVOW records all interactions, funding support, grants distribution, training and events on a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. Our statistics are shared with Third Sector Support Wales (TSSW) which in turn reports the overall findings to Welsh Government. AVOW's key performance indicators for 2022-23 are as follows:





Engagement

AVOW development officers provide a wide range of outreach support in the form of funding advice surgeries, support sessions, networking events and community training sessions online. In addition, AVOW engages with stakeholders at many levels.

Championing the community

As champions of the community, the third sector should always play a major part in the way that strategies and services are developed. Throughout the year, AVOW actively engaged with many public service organisations to ensure that the voice and views of the third sector were represented to strategic partnerships and considered within consultations. While many meetings during 2022/23 continued to take place on digital platforms, this has resulted in higher attendance rates, ensuring that the third sector views have been heard by the widest possible audience.

Working with Wrexham County Borough Council

AVOW enjoys a strong relationship with its local authority, Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC). The Chief Officer has regular meetings with the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive Officer to discuss issues facing the third sector as well as find synergies between the council and third sector initiatives.

Keeping it social

AVOW's social media presence continues to grow year-on-year. The organisation is active on many popular social media platforms including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram. AVOW also started a project to develop a new www.avow.org website in 2022/23.

Community

In addition to its governance advice service, AVOW successfully tendered for two additional Cadwyn Clwyd Leader funded projects. Awarded with 30% in-kind match funding required, the funds were allocated to support community buildings.



Reset, Resume, Rebound project

The Reset, Resume, Rebound project, otherwise known as the 3Rs project, was designed to assist rural community buildings to reopen post-Covid.

Reset: ensured that building operators were confident in providing a sustainable place/space for users, and that those users had confidence in using the space

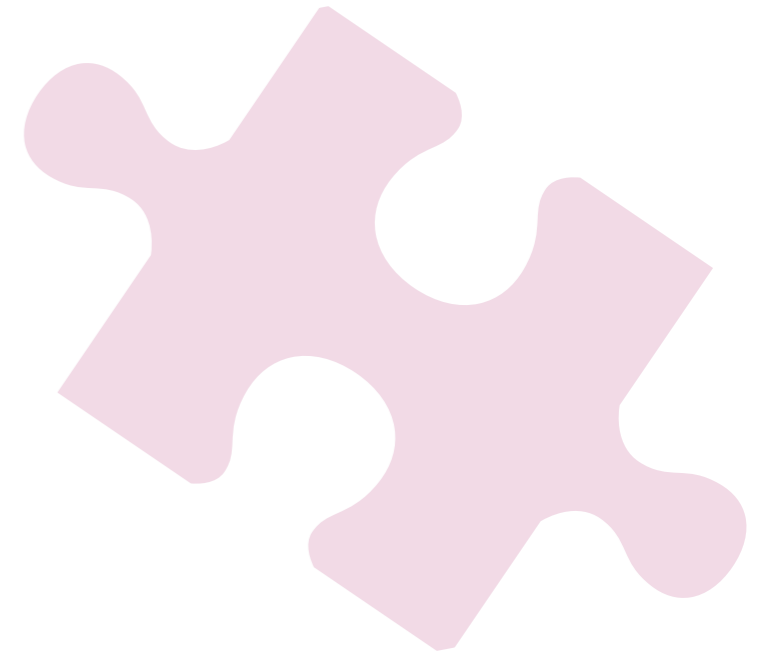
Resume: this element of the project was designed to reestablish previously well-attended activities, as well as develop some new and innovative undertakings

Reshape: the third phase of the project was to help the building operators diversify income and ensure that community buildings are sustainable long into the future.

AVOW provided a range of support on good governance, applying for funding and much more to community organisations and community buildings, as well as support to individuals seeking to establish new organisations.

Resilience project

The 3Rs project was completed in August 2022, and due to its success, AVOW was granted additional funding for a follow-on programme, called the Resilience project. This initiative supported community members and buildings with the provision of further training, governance advice and guidance, as well as green energy advice and installation of defibrillators in the communities.



Funding

As well as its own Make a Difference grant, AVOW has also distributed funding on behalf of Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC), Welsh Government and City of Culture.

£30,000 funding from Moondance and other funding streams supported the creation of an Accessibility Development Officer role to work with Shopmobility, and enabled 'winter warm spaces' to be provided at Little Sunflowers, The Land, Shopmobility and Gwersyllt Hub.

The Young Influencers panel (manned by 14-25 year olds) awarded over £8,000 of Youth Led Grant funding to young people to develop and deliver projects that increase youth volunteering opportunities and benefit the wider community.

- Over £76,000 awarded by AVOW
- Grants were to combat food poverty, loneliness and isolation
- 73 organisations have been supported with direct advice...
- ...leading to them securing over £220,000 of funding

Volunteering

Volunteers' Week 1-7 June 2022

Held nationally, Volunteers' Week is an opportunity to thank volunteers for their contribution throughout the year. The Volunteer Centre arranged a celebration held at Ty Pawb, to present certificates to volunteers, and enable them to network with organisations operating in Wrexham.

gofod3

gofod3 took place at the end of June 2022 and the Volunteer Centre helped to facilitate the Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) presentation, which was attended by 35 people.

Quarterly networking

Held quarterly, the TSSW Volunteer Practitioner Network meetings provide Volunteer Centres throughout Wales the opportunity to share information, experiences and best practices.

- 72 new volunteer voluntary organisations
- 79 new individual volunteers
- 85 new opportunities on AVOW's Volunteer Opportunities register
- Quarterly networking meetings for all AVOW networks reaching more than 100 third sector participants



Projects

Special projects

Shopmobility: The AVOW Wrexham Shopmobility service operates from Wrexham bus station hiring out scooters and wheelchairs. Since reopening after Covid it has been open for two days a week and simultaneously was also used as a Warm Space during winter, funded by Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC).

Wrexham Community Lottery:

Working with Gatherwell, AVOW created and launched the lottery in 2021, supporting over 40 local good causes. Ticket holders can win up to £25,000 as well as support a local cause, which keeps 50% of ticket sales.

Since its inception, AVOW has received £3,708 and local causes have received £16,227.

AVOW
£3,708

Local Causes
£16,227



Local projects

Little Sunflowers Childcare Centre, Plas Madoc:

AVOW Board of Trustees oversees the Little Sunflowers Childcare Centre (LSCC). The centre offers childcare provision from age 2 to 4 through a number of programmes. £2,376 was received from Funded Early Education's Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards programme. This is designed to raise standards in emotional, learning, and physical needs.

Additional Child Support: Funding from the Early Years Pupil Development Grant gave 15 families additional support to encourage parents' direct participation in their child's mental wellbeing, physical development and active participation in developing their child's speech, language and communication skills.

Additional Family Support: Many families in Plas Madoc have been directly impacted by the post-Covid cost of living crisis. Through grant funding from organisations, including Moondance and WCBC's Loneliness and Isolation Fund, LSCC has offered additional financial and emotional support to the parents and guardians of the enrolled children.



Play and Community Development team, Plas Madoc

AVOW's Play and Community Development team is funded through Invest Local, Children in Need and Families First to work in Plas Madoc providing a service for children, parents and adults of the community.

National Lottery Community Funds have been used to develop a new model of integrated Play and Community Development work, which builds on existing high-quality Play and Youth provision and extends AVOW's reach into the wider community.

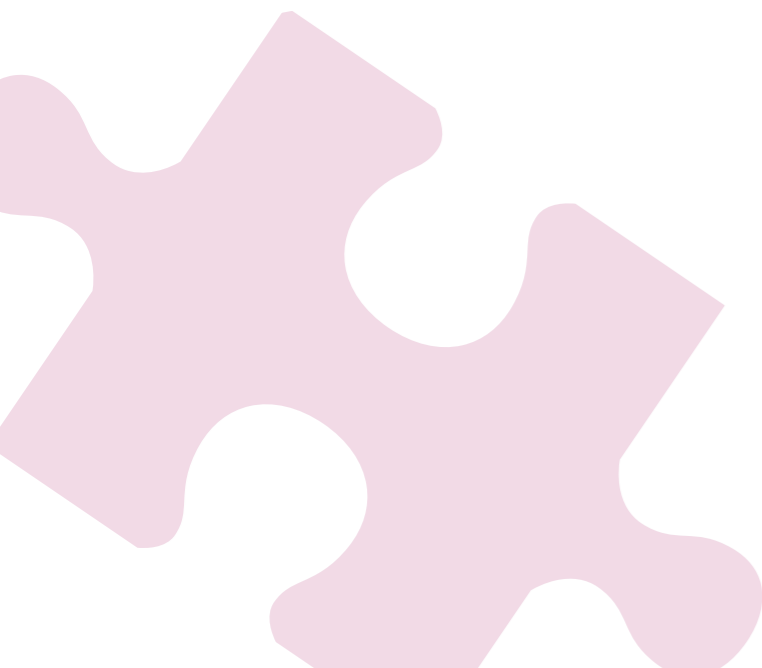
Volunteering at The Land: The Land, AVOW's junk playground, also offers volunteering opportunities for young people and adults within the community. This scheme aims to increase levels of aspiration and improve the life chances of adults and young people not in employment, education or training.

Other services for youth, families, and the wider community:

-  Youth activities: playschemes/street schemes, street football, youth club
-  1:1 work support for children with additional needs
-  Parental Support Kettle Club, Breakfast & Brews, Crafty Brew
-  The Pantry provides access to affordable food
-  Weekly drop-in meetings open to all community members
-  Over 50s: social support and activities for older residents
-  Environmental projects: Garden Gang and Plants Madoc
-  Volunteer scheme

Community Car Scheme

In early 2022, AVOW took delivery of two electric vehicles – a Nissan Leaf and a Nissan e-NV200, which is wheelchair accessible. This was made possible through funding from the Community Transport Association. The vehicles have since been transferred to We Are Plas Madoc (WAPM), which will run the project.



Financials in brief

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
Incoming resources from generated funds				
– Donations and legacies	1,140	1,087	2,227	2,157
– Investment Income-interest receivable	2,296		2,296	52
Income from charitable activities	341,124	593,319	934,443	1,295,941
Total income	344,560	594,406	938,966	1,298,150
EXPENDITURE				
Charitable activities	464,489	484,804	949,293	1,133,284
Total expenditure	464,489	484,804	949,293	1,133,284

The complete financial report is available within the Annual Report 2022/23.