

Time Out for Carers Fund Impact Report 2024/2025



**Photo image of The VC Gallery
Unpaid Carers Outings Project**



**Fund delivered by
Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services
in collaboration with key partners & colleagues from
Pembrokeshire County Council**

Report Sections

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1. Project Detail

This report covers the second year of delivering the **Time Out for Carers Fund** through **Round 2** during the 2024/ 2025 financial year. The Fund offered small grants to voluntary community sector, social enterprises & Town/ Community Councils for projects increasing the availability and accessibility of short personalised breaks for all unpaid carers in Pembrokeshire and encouraging creative ideas to support carers to take breaks from caring.

An **unpaid carers** is “anyone, of any age who provides unpaid care and support to a relative, friend or neighbour who is disabled, physically or mentally ill, or affected by substance misuse. Unpaid Carers are the single largest provider of care to people with support needs in our communities, and they save the NHS and Social Services millions of pounds a year” (Source: Welsh Government, 2013).

Grants of up to £4,000 for up to 100% of project revenue costs for projects offering short breaks for unpaid carers in Pembrokeshire. This may include minor items of equipment relating to the overall project (up to the value of £500).

Short breaks are;

“Any break, which strengthens and/or sustains informal caring relationships and enhances the wellbeing of carers and the people they support. This may be achieved through a service, an activity or an item.”

“associated with a shift in focus from supporting unpaid carers in their caring role to improving quality of life for both the unpaid carer and the person they support, potentially including a break taken together.”

**Carers Trust Wales ‘What a Difference a Break Makes’ Report
(Nick Andrews & Diane Seddon, 2021)**

The Fund wishes to support projects providing personalised, flexible and responsive short break options, that reflect the diversity of the carer population. Funded projects will offer creative break options in the local community & communities of interest as well as nurturing the development of peer support.

(Extract from the Guidance Notes)

The grant was managed by Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS) in partnership with Pembrokeshire County Council and funded through Welsh Government.

All applicants;

- Showed funding was for activity and short breaks taking place in Pembrokeshire
- Considered how they support unpaid carers around some of the barriers to accessing short breaks and be able to signpost carers to information as needed
- Targeted those carers most in need e.g. those caring for 50 plus hours a week, those without current access to a short break and those with complex needs and those caring for them
- Spent funds by 14th March 2025

The Fund supported projects with the following **outcomes**:

- Improved wellbeing for carers and those they care for
- Greater resilience of carers and improved ability to sustain the caring relationship
- Increased capacity to deliver preventative, responsive breaks for carers

Applicants were encouraged to consider how their project reflected the 12 Key Principles set out in the “What a Difference a Break Makes” research. These principles underpinned and guided the funding allocations. The full report is linked here; <https://carers.org/downloads/wales-pdfs/carers-trust-road-to-respite-report.pdf>.

A total of **£42,750** was awarded by the Time out For Carers Fund, funded by some of Pembrokeshire County Council’s Welsh Government Short Breaks Funding allocation.

Applications for funding supported new activity **and** expansions of existing activity.

Please note: all application documents are available from PAVS including the full application pack, guidance notes and monitoring forms.

2. Scheme Promotion

PAVS launched the Time Out for Carers Fund in June 2024. Application packs were sent to PAVS mailing lists including the active and engaged Funding email circulation list. Packs were available to download from PAVS’ Funding Advice Service Padlet.

The grant scheme was promoted via PAVS’ Funding Advice Service Padlet, on the Funding Wales funding search website, PAVS’ website, social media, newsletters and various networks. It was also promoted through the Carers Provider Forum in Pembrokeshire and through PAVS networks.

The application deadline was **Monday 15th July 2024**. Applications received were processed by PAVS and checks carried out to ensure applicants met the fund eligibility.

A multi-agency panel meeting took place with representatives of Pembrokeshire County Council’s Commissioning Team and Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services bringing a range of valuable knowledge to the process. The panel met virtually which has been found to work well as a way of assessing the applications.

Table Detailing the 13 Funded Projects - Round 2

Ref No	Group	Funded Project	Amount Approved
ToFC-24-02-01	Wellmama CIC	'Wellbeing Wednesdays', regular sessions tending the Community Gardens & 'Wellbeing Weekend' with various activities	£3,958.00
ToFC-24-02-02	Adams Bucketful of Hope	Extra day per week care facility for patients with Cancer to provide breaks for their Carers	£4,000.00
ToFC-24-02-03	Redberth Croft CIC	Conservation at the Croft' supports mental and physical health through tailored activities and community engagement.	£4,000.00
ToFC-24-02-04	Hubberston & Hakin Community Centre	Carers information provision, self-help groups, coffee bar drop in, group activities and social gatherings	£3,216.00
ToFC-24-02-05	Havard Riding Stables CIC	Supporting adult and young carers living in Pembrokeshire with an interest in spending time doing different, rewarding activities with horses including riding	£4,000.00
ToFC-24-02-06	Pobl Tir Mor CIC	Carers Rewards Pembrokeshire' - working with Pembrokeshire tourism providers to offer a selection of breaks to unpaid carers during quieter winter months	£4,000.00
ToFC-24-02-07	Tenby Town Council	Relaxed film showing short break opportunities at the De Valence, Tenby	£1,984.20
ToFC-24-02-08	East Gate Creative Hwb CIC	Creative Workshops for Unpaid Carers	£3,915.64
ToFC-24-02-09	The VC Gallery	Unpaid Carers Outings	£2,676.16
ToFC-24-02-10	Y Ffilltir Sgwâr CBC	Break for Carers	£2,000.00
ToFC-24-02-11	Carers Trust Crossroads West Wales	Time Together Project	£4,000.00
ToFC-24-02-12	CPD Crymych Cyf	Young carers – Time for Sports	£3,000.00
ToFC-24-02-13	Hermon Community Resource Centre	Bi-monthly `care and share` meeting at Canolfan Hermon - Offering various craft or arts based sessions/or to use time for own tasks	£2,000.00
		Total Funding Allocation	£42,750.00

3. Fund Outputs

Following the end of project delivery funded projects completed two monitoring forms; a Finance Report form and a Monitoring Report Form. Groups were asked to return these within three weeks of their final project delivery date (31st March 2025).

All funded groups completed the required monitoring forms.

Each funded project contributed to one or more of the Fund Outcomes and demonstrated a contribution to these in their application. The potential for proposed projects to achieve these outcomes formed part of the panel decision to support each project.

In their monitoring projects achieved the following Fund outcomes;

- all 13 projects contributed to the **improved wellbeing for carers and those they care for** outcome.
- 12 projects contributed to the **greater resilience of carers and improved ability to sustain the caring relationship** outcome
- And 10 projects felt that they met the outcome of **increased capacity to deliver preventative, responsive breaks for carers**

As part of this monitoring, groups gave detailed figures for a series of outputs. These related to some of the key figures required by Welsh Government reporting and also felt to be of a valuable measure of the project successes.

- Total no. of carers supported by this project & as a subset of the total no. of adult carers & the total no. of young carers
- Gender of carers supported
- No. of carers supported in age groups
- No of breaks provided (counting each individual break from caring provided including where a carer accesses more than one break
- No. of carers reporting a good experience as a result of the project
- No. of carers reporting that the project has supported them to maintain or improve their health & wellbeing
- No. of carers reporting they would like to access this type of break again
- No. of people in receipt of care directly benefitting from the Project
- (For projects with an option for the cared for person to also attend, or where the Project is funding replacement care)
- No. of people in receipt of care indirectly benefitting from the Project (i.e. the person in receipt of care did not attend the break with the carer but may indirectly benefit as a result of the carer coming back refreshed from a break)

Groups were also asked to circulate a template about a survey of the unpaid carers engaging in their projects as part of an independent survey being carried out by Carers Trust Wales. Carers' participation in this was entirely optional but it was highlighted that feedback would help the evaluation of this funding and inform potential future delivery of services and opportunities. Any carers completing the first survey were also sent two further surveys directly by Carers Trust Wales following their short breaks.

Groups were also asked to complete an Ethnic Groups form showing numbers supported by projects.

Fund Outputs Table;

TOTALS	Total no. of carers supported	As a subset total no. of adult carers supported	As a subset total no. of young carers supported	No. of breaks provided	No. reporting good experience as result of project	No. reporting positive benefits to wellbeing	No. reported wishing to access this break again
	272	251	21	854	215	177	256

The fund outputs achieved by projects demonstrate a significant impact on the target beneficiary group.

A minimum of **£13,614.26 of additional funding** was contributed towards supported projects from a mix of other funding sources – including donations of room space, gifts in kind and groups’ own fundraising efforts. It is commonly recognised that being successful with one application can improve chances with other funders.

Around **183 hours of volunteering** were contributed to delivered projects to enable them to take place. This represents a significant additional contribution to the projects and their successful delivery and a human resource which will have been supported and developed by each project.

Due to the relatively quick turnaround between end of project and the deadline for returning monitoring reports the feedback provided reflects more immediate outcomes. Longer term impacts and outcomes will also be experienced by the carers who took part in funded projects and for the groups delivering the projects impacting future delivery. Groups reported some anticipated longer term impacts as part of their feedback.

The qualitative feedback provided in the Monitoring Report Form is reflected in the remaining sections of this report.

4. Special Moments

In addition to the Special Moments appearing on the photo pages of this report, the following are some of the responses to the question on the monitoring form asking funded projects to;

“Provide ‘Special Moments’ from carers to illustrate the difference made by this Project, including feedback on benefits and positive contributions to health and wellbeing”

“I felt so held in the listening circle.” “The listening or sharing circles were full of honest, heartfelt stories. I felt deeply touched by them.” “It was such a beautiful, nurturing experience.” “I feel connected to myself again.” “I experienced goosebumps in the roundhouse during the grief circle.” “The grief circles are exactly what I needed.

Wellmama CIC

“I felt much better after the session and can face problems now”. I find it difficult to make things but with Anita’s help I can”. “Current situation is excellent”.

“I enjoy everything we do”. “The activities are great”.

Adams Bucketful of Hope

“Taking my mind off everyday responsibilities but also sharing experience with other carers and Mena who has a vast knowledge to share regarding neurodivergence which really helps. Also met community connector Mia” “Meeting up with other carers. Doing crafts that I haven’t done since school (a long time ago) and re-engaging with paints. I loved it all” “Clear instruction, lovely space, good food and drink, plenty of materials” “I enjoyed learning some new skills, getting creative with the clay and incorporating the leaves, greenery etc. I also enjoyed meeting new people in similar situations, social aspect and talking together. Def recommend” “I love the way the leaves / flowers / seeds imprinted on the clay and the 3D effect it has as well, really interesting” “Very different techniques and material, the teaching and atmosphere in the workshops” “I enjoyed meeting new people, having chat, learning new craft, good sense of wellbeing and sense of achievement of finished product” “I’m surprised by how amazing my piece of pottery is, how amazing our teacher Mena is, thanks to Karen for supporting us” “I feel less invisible” “I just wanted to say thanks so much for such a wonderful, inspiring evening. Special thanks to Angie, Mena and the lady who cooked up the feast! I decided to roast chickpeas as a result and gonna make some vegan cheese” “It was so fun and the food and company was so lovely. Such a great process!”

East Gate Creative Hwb CIC

I had an excellent afternoon, make sure to let me know when the next one will be on.

Tenby Town Council

...the space offered more than just a place to be, it provided a sense of connection and normality. As one of them said, *"It's so nice to have somewhere to come [and meet friends]."* Moments like these highlight the value of community-led spaces where people feel seen, supported, heard and uplifted, even in the midst of difficult times.

JR – Caredig Assisted Living Resident

"Its really nice in here, its not like we imagined. The people are normal, not what we expected at all!"

N - Caredig Assisted Living Resident

"Thank you for helping me [get a free hearing test and encouraging the RNID to register the Community Care Hub as a recognised hearing support centre]."

C&S – Acceptance

"Thank you for making us feel welcome."

The most magical moments were the spontaneous bursts of laughter, which became more frequent as we gradually eliminated the barriers that once stood in the way.

Y Filltir Sgwâr CBC

All carers stated that they would return if held again next year.

Enjoyable and gave Cared for an interesting session. Able to chat and discuss issues, Appreciated help available. All enjoyed lunch, Gave some as take away- chance of carers not having to cook a meal and relieve pressure a little

Hermon Community Resource Centre

Through the Time Together Project, we were able to make a profound difference in the life of a carer struggling under the weight of her responsibilities. This carer was referred in a state of emotional and physical exhaustion. She was the sole carer for her father, in his nineties and living with advanced dementia. In addition, she was grieving the recent loss of her mother and sister. Managing her own chronic health conditions, she felt completely depleted and described herself as being "at breaking point", struggling to balance her role as a carer with her own well-being.

One of the most heartbreaking aspects of her situation was the strain it placed on her marriage. Having only been married for a few years, she and her husband had little time to focus on their relationship, leaving her feeling isolated and disconnected. She expressed that a short break could be life-changing—not just as a chance to rest, but also to reconnect with her husband and regain some sense of balance. We supported her in applying for a Time Together grant, for a one-night stay in a hotel in mid-Wales. When we contacted her with the outcome, her relief and gratitude were overwhelming. She shared that simply having something to look forward to gave her a sense of hope and emotional uplift, helping her to cope with her daily challenges.

This case highlights the invaluable impact of the Time Together Project.

Carers Trust Crossroads West Wales

5. Fund Outcomes

The Time Out for Carers Fund is a positive example of a small revenue fund delivered from inception to completion in a relatively short timeframe, with just under 7.5 months of delivery, providing impactful and documented benefits to the applicant organisations, their beneficiaries and the communities where projects took place.

For this second year it was positive that groups had a longer lead-in time compared to Round 1. Future rounds would benefit from any further extension if fund are confirmed in sufficient time. This is of especial importance for a revenue fund, factoring in project start, allowing longer delivery and benefit from the projects.

The longer delivery window and the opportunity to build on initial round delivery resulted in a greater volume of applications received at R2.

What Worked Well / Good Practice

Positives reported by funded projects included;

- ❖ **Restorative and Supportive Space:** Participants appreciated a safe, judgment-free environment encouraging connection and emotional well-being.
- ❖ **Strong Group Bonding:** Smaller group size fostered sociability and close relationships
- ❖ **Empowering Carers:** Carers felt valued and supported, with many continuing activities independently and even offering services to others. Some offered to help with other activities outside the sessions offered.
- ❖ **High Demand & Positive Impact:** There was a strong uptake of services highlighting the need for personalised support.
- ❖ **Flexible and Person-Centred Approach:** Carers could choose how they used their breaks, making the experience more meaningful and supportive. Offering something for the cared for person as well.
- ❖ **Workshops and Activities:** High-quality sessions led to deep engagement, learning and creative expression and a reason to get involved
- ❖ **Strong Partnerships and Outreach:** Collaborations with health, social care, and community groups helped reach hidden and high-need carers. Working with tourism providers.
- ❖ **Integrated Support Services:** Links with existing services ensured broader support and ease of access to resources.
- ❖ **Expanded Reach:** Projects engaged carers previously unknown to groups.
- ❖ **Use of Local Resources:** Local craftspeople and support groups enriched the experience and expanded carers' access to help.
- ❖ **Positive Social Impact:** Participants experienced a renewed sense of purpose, laughter, peer support and active engagement in sessions.

Challenges

Challenges for groups included;

Scheduling & Attendance:

- ❖ Achieving the right balance between time for rest and activity during retreats.
- ❖ Last-minute cancellations and non-attendance despite interest & transport offers.
- ❖ Weather-dependent activities led to logistical issues & dropouts.
- ❖ Carers' availability varied due to their responsibilities, leaving some sessions under-attended.

Engagement & Outreach:

- ❖ Struggled to engage those most in need, especially hidden carers & those in rural areas.
- ❖ Mental and physical barriers to change among users adapting to new services
- ❖ Lower than expected engagement

Logistics & Accessibility:

- ❖ Insufficient wheelchair-accessible parking.
- ❖ Winter weather and dark evenings affected participation, especially for wheelchair users.

Operational Challenges:

- ❖ High demand put pressure on limited resources.
- ❖ Significant administrative workload in managing applications and carers micro grants.
- ❖ Difficulty coordinating team schedules and communication.
- ❖ Funding constraints vs. event planning and expectations.

Projects and Delivery Organisations showed adaptability and capacity to be flexible and find creative solutions including;

- Adjusting schedules
- Refining and making communication approaches more effective
- Designing workshops to be stand-alone relieving pressure on future attendance
- Applying the Kübler-Ross Change Curve to help depersonalize the process and fostered acceptance
- Staff acknowledged and maintained certain routines, inviting new participants to join existing practices rather than imposing change

These solutions illustrate groups proactively responding to challenges demonstrating their understanding of carers whilst maximising the benefit and reach of funded projects, alongside learning for future delivery.

"Over the course of the project the 5-7 unpaid carers involved in the co-production group have got to know each other and it has been lovely to see their confidence in the meetings develop. They have benefited through the process of helping other unpaid carers to experience a break from their caring responsibilities as well as through having a break themselves"



Pobl Tir Mor – Beach Wellbeing Day

"I thoroughly enjoy myself every time I visit, getting to reconnect with the land and animals and learn about how to better look after them has really put me in a much better place mentally. I leave feeling relaxed and rejuvenated and that feeling lasts when I get home and makes the experience of caring for my dad much easier for me and him. I am more chilled and happy and he has said he can really see a change in me. I'm really grateful for all my experiences at Redberth Croft and the kind, open people I have met and can't wait to see what the future holds"



Redberth Croft CIC Tree Planting Workshop



CPD Crymych Young Carers Time for Sports

Future Plans

Projects reported how they might apply learning from challenges for future potential projects or services for unpaid carers, setting out useful proposed solutions.

“Did you identify anything during the course of your Project that you would do differently in future?”

Lessons learned were grouped into themes and included;

Programme Design & Delivery:

- **Extend Retreat Duration:** More time between activities and longer sessions to allow rest and deeper engagement.
- **Refine Scheduling:** Avoid evening events due to low attendance; plan trips earlier in the season to give families time to arrange alternative care.
- **Flexible Formats:** Continue adapting activities (e.g., classic musicals) to suit diverse preferences. Opportunities to engage outside the sessions.
- **Staff Development:** Future models will include training in change management and user-led practices. Offer support for staff.
- **Volunteer Involvement:** Future projects will include volunteers from the outset for support and sustainability.

Accessibility & Logistics:

- **Improve Transport & Parking:** Use cones for priority disabled access; improve transport links for better accessibility.
- **Digital Solutions:** Introduce online applications and automated systems to reduce admin workload and increase efficiency.

Engagement & Communication:

- **Early & Ongoing Engagement:** Involve users, families, and professionals consistently through clear communication strategies.
- **Targeted Outreach:** Strengthen ties with GPs and community services to identify carers earlier.
- **Active Listening & Observation:** Helped tailor responses to real-time feedback and needs.
- **Encourage Open Discussion:** Helped participants try new things and feel supported.
- **Flexible, Person-Centred Approach:** Carers appreciated opportunities to connect outside structured activities.

Contingency Planning:

- **Indoor Backup Plans:** Design flexible alternatives for weather-dependent activities.
- **Gentle Reminders:** Continue sending text reminders to reduce missed sessions.

Environment & Space:

- **Room Layouts Matter:** Arrange spaces to encourage natural interaction and integration between user groups.

Most groups reported learning from project delivery which would feed directly into future projects in this field.

Fund Management Opportunities

From a Fund Management perspective it was pleasing to see a higher level of applications for Round 2, in response to the earlier launch, longer delivery window and understanding of Fund priorities by Round 1 successful applicants.

- ❖ Opportunity to build on the successful Round 1
- ❖ More requests for funding received; all 13 projects applying were supported. 4 received reduced funding offer of 50% - 75%
- ❖ Future rounds could build on the successes of Year 1 & 2, with any additions to lead in time allowing groups further project planning opportunities
- ❖ Opportunity for a quick turnaround fund delivery offering responsive short breaks for unpaid carers across the county
- ❖ Positive partnership working with the Local Authority Commissioning Team
- ❖ Enabling elements of continuation of tried and tested project activity alongside new project proposals – funders often driven to focus on supporting innovation only
- ❖ Strong and engaged sector applicants well-connected through the PAVS networks to information about funding opportunities
- ❖ Making this funding available to the sector where clear need is shown and impact achieved by small but impactful projects

Fund Management Challenges

- Balancing the lead in time from launch for the sector to enable design of projects whilst also allowing sufficient delivery time post deadline
- Fast turnaround on monitoring returns and therefore less impact of wider project benefits reported by funded improvements
- Getting the monitoring forms in on time for the wider reporting deadlines

Funded Group Responses

“What difference did your Project make?
What longer term differences do you anticipate
beyond the funding period?”

**Responses gathered shortly after project completion
illustrated extensive project impact!**



Improved Wellbeing & Resilience

- Carers reported reduced stress, reduced pressure, emotional relief and feeling more resilient in their roles.
- 100% of participants said they'd recommend the sessions to others.

Social Connection & Peer Support

- Created safe spaces where carers could share experiences, build friendships, and feel understood.
- Fostered social connections
- Built confidence and comfort to attend alone as sessions progressed
- Peer-to-peer support led to lasting emotional benefits and reduced isolation.

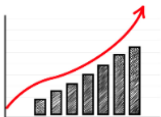


Respite Through Activities

Variety of engaging activities such as outdoor conservation, pottery, film screenings and sports. Offered breaks with the opportunity to absorb in a task or activity. Some carers continued creative hobbies at home, purchasing items to carry on what was learnt in sessions showing long-term impact.

Access to New Spaces & Opportunities

- Many explored new places for the first time in years.
- Activities gave them confidence to attend alone over time.



Sustainable Practices & Local Links

- Stronger ties formed with local CICs and support groups.
- Carers contributed to pottery projects to help fund future sessions.
- Established a foundation for ongoing, self-sustaining offerings.
- Sharing the model for this way of working.

Better Access to other services & support

- Carers were guided to register with GPs, apply for Carer Cards and access support services.
- Helped embed a culture of valuing self-care and seeking support.



A number of projects highlighted an improved understanding of the needs of carers and reported some level of future activities for carers.

Whilst the immediate differences reported show significant impact, most of the funded projects will make a longer-term difference to beneficiaries and also influence future developments and delivery for the funded groups.

6. Conclusions

The second year of funding through the Time Out for Carers Fund built on a positive initial foundation to expand the impact of the fund further.

The fund continued as a positive example of revenue funding promptly distributed to support immediate and significant benefits to unpaid carers.

Longer term benefits for unpaid carers in Pembrokeshire appear through this report and the fund outcomes were clearly achieved. The learning gained by organisations delivering projects will continue to benefit carers across the county.

Small community groups demonstrate resourcefulness to stretch funds a long way, using this opportunity as a catalyst for future plans, providing excellent value for money and maximising community resources and connections. Small funding pots achieve both immediate impact and opportunities for longer term community activity, action and ambition.

For PAVS the provision of small, accessible funding opportunities, delivered through open and transparent grant processes by positive multi-agency grant-making mechanisms, continues to be a priority.

As this year of delivery was concluded PAVS was pleased to receive confirmation of further Time out For Carers Fund funding for 2025/ 26.

Application Form, Guidance & Monitoring form all available from PAVS

Report written by Lorna Livock, PAVS Funding Development Officer

Report completed April 2025

