

# Supporting Community Action Fund Round 8

## Community Warm Spaces Fund



### Impact Report 2024 - 2025



**Photo of Cyngor Cymuned Clydau's  
Warm Room Sessions Project**



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

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**Report Author: Lorna Livock, PAVS Funding Development Officer**  
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## **1. Project Detail and Context**

The **Supporting Community Action Fund (SCAF)** is a fund distribution mechanism developed and managed by Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS) to enable a range of funding sources to be distributed to the sector in Pembrokeshire.

This report covers SCAF Round 8 delivery in 2024/ 25 which was launched in September 2024.

Through SCAF Round 8 PAVS worked in partnership with Pembrokeshire County Council to deliver Welsh Government funding to support groups addressing local need.

### ➤ **Round 8 – Community Warm Spaces Fund**

Round 8 combined the Small Grants for Carers Small Groups 24/25 (£15,750), Welsh Government's Regional Integration Fund (RIF); (a) Stronger Communities programme 24/25 (£40,500) & (b) RIF Loneliness & Isolation Funding (£23,400) giving a total pot of **£79,650.00 for distribution.**

A further amount was made available by Pembrokeshire County Council, from the Welsh Government Cost of Living Discretionary Fund. This was allocated to projects which had submitted applications to the original SCAF 8 deadline and could not be supported due to the demand in excess of the funding available.

**Round 8 provided up to 100% of project revenue costs** (may include minor items of equipment relating to the overall project, up to 10% of the grant request) **to a maximum value of £3,500 for eligible activity.**

**Community Warm Spaces Fund themes: –**

Projects are invited with the following priorities:

- **Addressing loneliness & social isolation** e.g. enabling people to connect with each other & participate in community based activities and provision of food/ refreshments
- **Providing a Warm Community Space** bringing people together for information, support and advice e.g. providing activities, food & cost of living support
- **Supporting unpaid carers** e.g. ways to help unpaid carers take a break, ensuring unpaid carers can access information & support they need and provision of food/ refreshments
- **Improving mental & physical health and wellbeing** e.g. using green spaces to improve wellbeing, increasing range of green prescribing opportunities, exercise & dance classes

*Extract from Application Pack*

Initial SCAF rounds focused on helping groups respond to the challenges of COVID-19, moving on to support the post-covid recovery and revival before offering funds to support those facing the cost-of-living crisis and more recently to support projects providing warm and welcoming community spaces, a focus continued in Round 8.

## **Oversight**

The multi-agency Keep Warm, Keep Well Steering Group continues to meet and make key decisions on the use of funding to support people with cost-of-living crisis in Pembrokeshire. The group is facilitated and chaired by PAVS, and reports to the Pembrokeshire PSB's Poverty Officer Working Group which includes key decisions makers from the Local Authority, Health Board and voluntary sector.

## **2. Scheme Promotion and Uptake**

Application packs were distributed to previous applicants and through other PAVS funding sources and in response to direct requests. For ease of access, packs were also available to download from PAVS' Funding Advice Service Padlet and the PAVS website.

The grant scheme was promoted via PAVS' Funding Advice Service Padlet, the Funding Wales funding search facility, PAVS' website, social media presence, newsletters and various networks such as the Community Buildings Forum. PAVS also used the Local Authority list of Town and Community Councils to make sure that eligible applicants were aware of this funding.

PAVS completed eligibility checks on all applications received. This ensured that applicants met fund requirements regards organisational structure, bank account, permissions, and the level of detail on the application form.

Applications were assessed by a multi-agency panel, with representatives of Pembrokeshire County Council's Commissioning Team and Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services drawing on this valuable community knowledge. The Panel Meeting was held on **24<sup>th</sup> October 2024**. The high volume of strong applications received led to the panel deciding to part-fund projects enabling more to be supported.

Projects had a potential 5 month delivery window up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. For comparison Round 7 timescales had enabled a 9 month delivery window.

The later confirmation of funding availability and the smaller funding pot compared to Round 7 2023/24 – gave a shorter delivery window and a reduced upper limit of £3,500 (compared to £5,000 for R7). However a track record of existing delivery meant that demand for this funding and project achievements remained high.

The level of submissions received represented an incredible amount of work and commitment from the sector as well as demonstrating the need for this funding. The work completed by PAVS to process applications and take them to the assessment panel was significant. Most applying were entirely volunteer run organisations, showing a significant volunteer input from inception.

## **SCAF ROUND 8 - SUMMARY**

**55 applications submitted requesting £157,479.06**

**43 projects awarded £112,329.31**

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**£79,650.00 awarded to 38 projects at panel meeting**  
**Further £33,679.31 awarded to 25 groups on panel shortlist**  
*20 received additional amounts*  
*5 new groups supported*

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**12 unsuccessful funding requests**

***\*\* One group declined the initial offer of £1,000 as the project could not proceed at this reduced allocation. They went on to accept a further offer of the full amount applied for, when further funding became available in December 2024.***

## Funded Projects List - SCAF Round 8 - Warm Community Spaces Fund

Ref No:	Name of group	Project Summary
SCAF8-01	ACTS West Wales	3 x weekly warm room session. Cups & plates, Kettle. Additional administration in house at 3 centres. Cleaning, consumables, promotion. Food, entertainment, utility contribution
SCAF8-02	Amroth and District Community Association	Film licenses and purchase, food and drink for film showings. Tuition fees for children and adult craft days. Hall hire fees and ink and paper for publicity materials.
SCAF8-03	Angle Village Hall	Seasonal and themed event, workshops. Publicity materials. Utilities and hall hire cost. Insurance tuition fees and refreshments for all sessions.
SCAF8-06	Canolfan Hermon	22 weekly warm rooms providing hot foot. Organisations to visit, advise on range of topics to benefit people over winter.
SCAF8-08	Canolfan Llwynhirion Brynberian	10 evening events, hall hire, marketing and printing, purchase games.
SCAF8-09	Capel Bedyddwyr Star	hall hire 16 weeks warm room, cleaning, utilities, cleaning, catering fees, volunteer expenses
SCAF8-11	Cwm Arian Renewable Energy	Warmth & Wellbeing activity craft workshops x12 tackling isolation in older people. Funding for workshop leaders, materials, refreshments, rental promotion & printing. Project Co-Ordinator hrs as match funding
SCAF8-12	Carew Wesley Methodist Chapel	19 x weekly social afternoons to share a meal, activities, speakers, exercise and warmth. Run similar for last two winters run by volunteers. Funding for utilities, refreshments & lunches, vol expenses, craft materials , venue costs.
SCAF8-14	Clynderwen Community Hall	Clunderwen Clwb Croeso - 12 x warm room with lunch and activities. Funding for venue costs, refreshments, craft materials & games , promotion, kitchen equipment costs
SCAF8-15	CPD Crymych	Volunteer led weekly community warm room , serving food for the community. Utilities, promotion, Subsidised meals, kitchen use, cleaner, insurance, volunteer expenses
SCAF8-16	Cwm Gwaun Community Council	Xmas Dinner for pensioners, Hire vestry for school, wkly warm space and Welsh natter Funding for caterers for Xmas meal, Vestry hire, utilities. Refreshments & cleaning



SCAF8-17	Dinas Wellbeing Hub	Building on Warm Rooms activities 2023, funding for hire of venue & facilities and food costs
SCAF8-18	Fishguard & Goodwick Young Persons Trust	Food & Fun for Free- providing meals & activities for young people 5 days a week, building on last year. Funding for utilities, insurance & rent.
SCAF8-20	Hook Community Forum	22 warm room sessions , Volunteer led , providing a meal, activities, entertainment , exercise etc. Funding for venue hire, vol expenses, food, urns, hygiene training & activities
SCAF8-21	Hope Pembrokeshire	Warm Room Activities including Soup Saturday and Playgroup Provision
SCAF8-22	Hubberston & Hakin Friendship Club	Warm Room Activities for the Friendship Club
SCAF8-23	Lampeter Velfrey Com Playing Fields	Warm Room Social events activities and mother & toddler and coffee mornings
SCAF8-24	Letterston Memorial Hall	LMH Community Day Project; lunch club and related activities
SCAF8-25	Llanddewi Velfrey Village Hall	Welcome Warm Spaces Project & linking w surrounding communities
SCAF8-26	Llanrhian Community Council	Connected Community Project, Winter Warmers Scheme expanding current activities, offering new one & some food
SCAF8-27	Llanteg Village Hall	Social Wellbeing; maintain warm rooms with additional food and 3 specific events
SCAF8-29	Martletwy Community Council	Martletwy Community Carer's Support Group - for 22 sessions of a weekly group
SCAF8-31	Milford Youth Matters	Milford Youth Matters Drop In Facility offering around 60 sessions and increase activities
SCAF8-32	Nantucket CIO	Men's breakfast project offering 6 monthly sessions and growing the membership of the current group
SCAF8-33	Narberth & District Community & Sports Association	Supported Community Facilities Narberth project offering free 'warm' spaces and activity facilities at Bloomfield House Community Centre
SCAF8-34	Newport Community Forum	Pampering sessions (X 5) for unpaid carers – inc. easy exercise to music through winter months & Carers Group gatherings in a warm space
SCAF8-35	Newport Memorial Hall	Soup and a movie project to enhance the previous project and offer 15 weeks of sessions

SCAF8-36	Neyland CIC	Warm Wednesday sessions for people in Neyland and the surrounding areas, 3 hrs a week for 20 weeks
SCAF8-37	Pater Hall Community Trust	Warm Rooms project with activities & food for older people
SCAF8-38	Pembroke Dock Heritage Trust	Winter meeting place - offering a warm rooms project for groups using the centre offering 24 sessions at the centre benefiting approx. 100 people
SCAF8-39	Pembrokeshire People First	15 x Weekly Thursday Wellbeing Group including Hot food & Drink
SCAF8-43	Regency Hall Community Centre	13 x bi-weekly Sessions to provide warmth, food, company and support for those that are vulnerable in the surrounding area
SCAF8-44	Simpson Cross Activities Group	Winter warm space to expand social gathering workshops & events
SCAF8-45	Solva Community Council	'Solva Warm Spaces' Weekly events which focus on different themes
SCAF8-46	South Ridgeway Community Association	Weekly Friday Lunchtime Warm Space for 3 hours x 12 weeks in total
SCAF8-47	St Johns Community Hall	To extend existing Warm Room on a Wednesday, to provide a small lunch once a Month on a Saturday, to fund a group on Mondays of disabled clients plus carers
SCAF8-48	St Patricks Community Hall	29 x weekly warm room sessions
SCAF8-49	St Vincent de Paul Society	'Clwb Cynefin' - Weekly warm room open every Thursday from 11.00 am to 3.00 pm
SCAF8-50	Tea Dewi	Weekly & monthly activities and warm space provided through 3 groups
SCAF8-51	The Friday Venue	17 x Weekly warm room sessions at the Community Café
SCAF8-53	The VC Gallery	The VC Art of Soup' 18 x Art sessions 18 x Cookery Sessions
SCAF8-54	Cyngor Cymuned Clydau	8 (1-2 per month) x Warm Room Spaces at the Clydau Centre or Bwlchygroes Community Hall
SCAF8-55	Maenclochog Community Council	To provide various warm room spaces over the Winter.

## Hook Community Forum



## Canolfan Llywnihirion Brynberian



## Tea Dewi Carers Support Group



## Hubberston and Hakin Friendship Club





### 3. Key Outputs and Beneficiaries

Many groups provided very thorough feedback and reflection on the successes, challenges and learnings from their projects. Whilst most projects returned qualitative and financial evaluation forms on completion of projects, forms were submitted with some variation in the level of detail.

In the monitoring report all groups reported that their project was a success.

The output data provided here is based on the returned forms.

From a fund management perspective, the chasing up of returns, checking returns and collating this information to be used meaningfully for this report represented a significant amount of work completed by PAVS.

*At Round 8, all projects returned their full evaluation, apart from one project.*

*The output data is based on the returned evaluations. The group which did not return monitoring forms was notified that this must be returned prior to consideration of applications for future rounds of this fund.*

#### **Round 8 Community Warm Spaces Fund Priorities/ Themes**

All applicants were asked to show how their projects met at least one of four Fund themes. Most projects met at least two of these themes, with a good number meeting three, 19 projects met all four themes.

##### **➤ Addressing Loneliness & Isolation**

**37** projects told us that they positively impacted on loneliness and isolation.

##### **➤ Providing a Warm Community Space**

**37** projects told us that they provided a warm community space

##### **➤ Supporting unpaid carers**

**19** projects told us that they supported unpaid carers.

##### **➤ Improving Mental/Physical health and wellbeing**

**36** projects told us that they improved mental/ physical health and wellbeing

In Round 8 most funded projects contributed to Providing a Warm Community Space priority offering some continuity on from the funding allocated in Round 6 & 7.

### 3.1 Key Outputs

This section provided information around key outputs supported by the SCAF projects extracted from the reports received. The overall total no. of people benefitting from activity provided by funded projects was **4,266**.

It is worth noting that figures are only one reflection and not directly comparable between groups delivering such different projects whilst still offering a valuable measure of the scale of overall delivery and impact made across the county.

## Fund Outputs

	No Ppl Benefitted	No of Vols	Vol hours	Additional Funds	No of Warm Space Sessions Provided	No of Hot Meals	No. of Warm Space sessions attended
<b>Round 8 2024/ 2025</b>	4,266	542	16,733	£18,971.11	1,408	13,592	21,958

Figures give a snapshot of the volume of activity, including menu planning, shopping, organising of volunteers, coordination of cooking, planning of activities and huge amount of time that went into these projects.

Groups reflected the extent of work enabled in the Warm Community Spaces by recording “Total number of Warm Space sessions attended” showing attendance at multiple sessions, with the total of **21,958** recording every attendance at a community space (no. of people attending sessions *multiplied by* the no. of sessions attended).

The quantitative data must be viewed alongside the more individual impact reports which give a fuller sense of the breadth of benefit.

## 3.2 Beneficiaries

In line with the Regional Integration Fund priorities contributing towards Round 8, applicants explained how projects focused on more vulnerable individuals and ensuring that delivery was inclusive.

As explained in the Application Guidance;

*Applications are particularly encouraged from groups supporting vulnerable individuals including (but not limited to):*

- Unpaid carers / young carers
- Older people
- Children and young people
- People with learning disabilities
- People living with dementia
- People with physical disabilities
- People with mental health issues
- Gender equality

Delivery was tailored by funded projects to meet the needs of these specific beneficiary groups.

Here are some of the ways in which this was achieved.

- ❖ **Inclusive Outreach & Accessible Venues:** Many initiatives focused on attracting diverse groups, including children, older adults, and those with mobility challenges. Promotion was done through local schools, social media, word-of-mouth, and community networks (e.g., churches, carers' groups). Events and venues were made accessible with wheelchair ramps, accessible furniture, and handrails. For example, some halls provided ramps, large tables, and thermal curtains to ensure comfort and accessibility.
- ❖ **Intergenerational Engagement:** Activities like quiz nights, social events, and communal meals fostered interaction between various age groups. Younger and older generations mingled, helping to reduce social isolation, particularly among older individuals. Events were also tailored to specific needs, such as accessible seating for individuals with disabilities, dementia-friendly features, and support for both the elderly and children.
- ❖ **Support for Diverse Needs:** Delivery was adapted for people with physical, mental, and cognitive challenges. This included providing sensory-friendly environments, tailored communication methods (e.g., easy-read materials), and support from volunteers. Some venues offered quiet spaces for individuals needing a break, and flexible seating arrangements were used to ensure comfort.
- ❖ **Specialised Activities:** Workshops and activities were designed to meet the needs of specific groups. For example, workshops focusing on gender equality featured female practitioners in male-dominated fields, encouraging women to participate. Special sessions were held for children, dementia patients, and veterans, with activities tailored to these groups (e.g., historic conversations, choirs, wartime remembrance).
- ❖ **Volunteer Support & Community Building:** Volunteers played a key role in facilitating participation, providing one-on-one support, and helping individuals feel included. Volunteers also helped with practical tasks like offering a waitress service, sharing lifts, or running events like "Souper Saturday," which aimed to create a welcoming, inclusive environment for all attendees.
- ❖ **Flexible and Person-Centred Delivery:** The sessions were often structured to be predictable and low-pressure, which was especially important for those with learning disabilities, neurodivergence, or dementia. Tailored support was offered, such as personalized roles in group activities (e.g., art, cooking) or flexible attendance policies, allowing participants to engage at their own pace.
- ❖ **Support for Carers:** Groups provided respite for unpaid carers by ensuring their loved ones were well-cared for in parallel with activities. Special cafes or memory sessions allowed carers a break while still being involved. Some

initiatives also catered directly to the needs of carers, providing information on available support services.

- ❖ **Social Interaction & Reducing Isolation:** The emphasis was on creating spaces where people could meet others, share stories, and build relationships. Efforts were made to promote a sense of belonging, including seating arrangements designed to encourage conversation and interaction, especially for those who might feel socially isolated.

Overall, a combination of tailored activities, accessible venues, volunteer support, and a community-focused approach ensured that everyone felt included, supported, and welcomed.

The various approaches outlined above illustrate ways that projects ensured that they remained inclusive, to enable the projects to best reach these target audiences. This offered learning for delivery and around reducing potential barriers to participation for projects.

## Volunteers & Volunteer Hours

More than 542 volunteers were involved in delivering the R8 projects and activities.

The final monitoring reports returned to PAVS reflect an incredible level of volunteer time contributed to projects funded with over 16,733 hours of volunteer time contributed to Round 8 projects.

**Every single funded project** had some volunteer involvement, which when costed at the National Living Wage hourly rate of £12.21 equates to a value of **£204,309.93**. This is an astonishing figure that goes some way to putting a notional value on the incredible volunteer involvement in these projects.

- ❖ Most funded projects were **significantly resourced by volunteers**
- ❖ Volunteers were vital to project delivery

These figures are one way of reflecting the huge efforts, resourceful approaches and value of the impressive volunteer input. The added value contributed alongside the grants awarded evidences the ability of the third sector to resourcefully “grow” a small grant. Volunteers were an integral part of the delivery, often benefiting from their involvement in these projects but also themselves needing support and co-ordination as part of the project delivery.





## Llanrhian Community Council - Winter Warmer's Scheme



## VC Gallery The Art of Soup project



## Pembrokeshire People First - Thursday Wellbeing Group



## 4. Special Moments and Overcoming Challenges

This section of the report is a selection of feedback from groups in response to the question on the monitoring form asking funded projects to identify special moments:

Due to the volume of application supported these are a selection of those provided, all completed reports are held by PAVS.

### Round 8 Community Warm Spaces Fund - Special moments

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>The most positive aspect is the new friendships amongst our customers. Letterston is a large village with new housing estates and this hub provides a place to come along and make new friends.</b></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>People sharing their caring experiences and sharing advice about how to manage the caring role and reduce any stresses</b></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>We have 10 volunteers and it is their main role (with the exception of kitchen volunteers) to make everyone welcome.</b></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>There are many examples of a new comers, who feeling lonely following a new move/bereavement/ new baby came to the café and within weeks had made a set of new friends. This does not only apply to the elderly but to young people too.</b></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>A participant with complex needs who had previously struggled to engage in group activities began attending weekly with their support worker. Initially quiet and withdrawn, they gradually started joining in with simple group tasks. His support worker shared: “It’s the first time I’ve seen him smile in a group setting. He is building up trust and confidence every week.”</b></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Another member, who lives alone and describes herself as “very lonely”, began attending both morning and afternoon sessions. She told us: “Before this I had no reason to leave the house. Now I’ve made two real friends and we meet up outside of the group.”</b></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Volunteers also benefitted. One neurodivergent volunteer built enough confidence through their role to apply for a part-time job – something that she’s never considered before.</b></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>These moments show the real impact of a warm, inclusive space. Not just meeting basic needs like food and warmth, but in helping build lives, friendships and self-worth.</b></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>One gentleman, attends with a support worker. He will sometimes engage in a game of dominoes and enjoyed making paper aeroplanes. Though he appears quiet in the session, feedback from his wife was that he was a different man after attending. He would tell her all about the people and what activities everyone was doing, he was always keen to come again.</b></li></ul>



○ The hot meal sees me through, I won't need to cook this evening and it's nice to be in the company of others.
○ Another area worth highlighting is J's ability to try new things and gain new experiences. Through his involvement with the service, he was given the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities and embrace new experiences.
○ It's nice to have conversation with others in similar situations to myself.
○ Providing a room to enable Tender Nest to operate a weekly women's grief healing circle programme on behalf of LiSS.
○ I have met some lovely people and made new friends I shall miss it when it ends"
○ You don't know how much of a god send this has been to me, just to have somewhere away from the house to come each week"
○ I am really going to miss this each week, I have enjoyed the games and being with others"
○ A homeless gentleman has been reticent to come to the breakfast but is very excited to attend the event that the men have organised. His engagements over the event have brought him into our coffee shop more regularly and as a result he has started to engage with our community garden project. Given his background and experience, this is perfect for him and will greatly help his mental health.

### *A sample of Special Moments recorded by groups*

### Overcoming Challenges

Groups reported on challenges faced in delivering their intended activities and also explained some creative responses to meet those challenges, some which would influence a forward direction for the group beyond the project.

Some of the challenges that groups experienced were;

- ❖ **Time & Budget Constraints:** Groups struggled with managing funding within short timeframes, leading to budget overspends or underspends. For example, entertainment budgets were underspent because attendees preferred informal socializing over scheduled events. Additionally, fluctuating utility costs and increasing charges for running facilities added pressure to maintain activities.
- ❖ **Attracting participants** to events was challenging, especially for certain demographics like elderly people or carers who were reluctant to leave their loved ones. Some events had poor attendance or low engagement, especially with drop-in sessions, making it hard to plan adequately for meals and resources.

- ❖ **Staffing:** Staff changes, periods of illness and maintaining ratios led to occasional cancellations. Volunteer management was a challenge, with demands of setup and takedown. Recruiting additional volunteers helped.
- ❖ **Logistical & Operational:** Organizing events with fluctuating attendance, unpredictable weather (e.g., power outages), and limited facilities posed logistical problems. For example, the kitchen's basic facilities limited the ability to prepare meals onsite for large groups, and many events had to be rescheduled or relocated due to external disruptions (e.g., storms).
- ❖ **Workshop & Activity Engagement:** Keeping attendance consistent, particularly for free / low-cost sessions. People often did not commit to free events, leading to last-minute cancellations. Choosing activities that appealed to all participants, while ensuring inclusivity for those with diverse needs (e.g., sensory-friendly or dementia-friendly activities), was a challenge.
- ❖ **Planning & Resource Management:** Events with variable attendance made it hard to predict food quantities and avoid waste. The groups had to adapt by offering flexible menus, freezing leftovers, and outsourcing catering when necessary. Additionally, the unpredictability of attendance led to difficulties in balancing resources and meeting demand without over-preparing.
- ❖ **Cultural & Social Barriers:** Some reluctance from younger families or different demographics to engage with activities, highlighting a challenge to engage a some participants. Finding activities that appealed to everyone, from the elderly to younger families, while overcoming generational and social barriers, was key.
- ❖ **Health & Wellbeing of Volunteers:** Managing volunteer burnout, especially during winter months to ensure wellbeing of those involved. Efforts made to address this with flexible schedules and ensuring that all felt appreciated, however the workload during busy periods was often overwhelming.
- ❖ **Facility Limitations:** Some venues with restricted parking or inadequate heating systems, limited attendance. Volunteers also had to navigate issues while ensuring attendees were still able to participate comfortably.

Groups arrived at proactive solutions to issues often reframing the challenges as opportunities to adjust projects to better deliver planned activity through adaptability, flexible planning and creative problem-solving.

There was significant learning for many of the funded projects leading to greater confidence and learning for future delivery.



## 5. Key Achievements and Differences Made

Funded organisations provided reflections on some key achievements and examples of good practice differences which they made by the projects delivered.

**Here is a selection of the feedback provided;**

### Creating Safe, Consistent Spaces

- Provided daily warm spaces from November to March.
- Ensured cleanliness, safety, and good hygiene.
- Created emotionally safe environments, especially for those living alone or with specific support needs.

### Food as a Tool for Connection

- Delivered 900+ free meals to young people and many hot meals to adults, fostering routine and connection.
- Used co-production approaches (e.g. asking for meal and activity preferences) to increase participation.
- Offered free food draws to reduce stigma and encourage donations to the food bank.

### Enhanced Community Engagement and Visibility

- Shift from one-off hall use (e.g. parties) to ongoing, meaningful community participation.
- Improved outreach via Facebook, Instagram, newsletters, and upcoming website presence.
- Hosting events that reached new or previously isolated groups (e.g. men's groups, neurodivergent adults, unpaid carers).

### Innovation in Delivery

- Free room hire incubated new activities like portraiture, meditation, and retro dancing.
- Used surplus food from retailers to reduce waste and costs.
- Demonstrated flexibility, adapting event times (e.g. evening slots for working carers) and formats based on community feedback.

### Collaborative Working and Partnerships

- Collaborated with organisations like Canolfan Hermon, Tender Nest, and local food suppliers.
- Established new links (e.g. Pembrokeshire Hub, Baby Bank) and support groups for unpaid carers and women.
- Local councillors and professionals attended events, offering informal advice and support.

### Tackling Isolation and Mental Wellbeing

- Activities like “Warm Wednesdays” specifically addressed loneliness and mental health, especially for those who live alone.
- Supportive, chat-friendly environments were valued more than structured sessions in some cases.

### Volunteer Development and Inclusion

- Built a larger, more flexible volunteer pool to reduce individual burden.
  - Included young volunteers (e.g. Welsh Baccalaureate students) and those with unseen disabilities, fostering learning and inclusion.
- Streamlined volunteer roles to ensure smooth operations and a welcoming environment.

### Inclusive and Tailored Activities

- Delivered themed events, “Girls Night,” games tournaments, and accessible group sessions.
- Included activities based on participant-led planning and interest surveys.
- Continued groups like the History Memory group even during winter closure periods.

These practices reflect a strong commitment to **inclusion, wellbeing, sustainability, and community voice**, with evidence of **positive social impact** and scalable models for future work.





## Amroth and District Community Association



## Llanddewi Velfrey Village Association



## South Ridgeway Community Association





## 6. Future Delivery

Funded projects detailed the following potential **key impacts and learnings for future delivery**;

### 1. Stronger Focus on Engagement and Inclusion

- Recognised need to **reach a broader audience**, beyond the current core attendees
- **More active listening** and participant feedback to shape future programming.
- Desire to **diversify participation**, particularly among younger people and underrepresented groups

### 2. Food as a Central Engagement Tool

- Shared meals proved highly effective in **building community** and reducing isolation
- Future plans include monthly suppers (including summer barbecues), subsidised hot meals as part of wellbeing support, strengthened links with local food suppliers and expanded food provision as a **core winter activity**

### 3. Rethinking Delivery Formats

- Events during **existing warm spaces** or drop-ins were more effective than standalone sessions
- Preference for **relaxed, informal environments** for information sharing
- Future delivery will include; more guest speakers, flexible, **monthly sessions** in some areas, dedicated social time separate from structured workshops

### 4. Practical Adjustments to Improve Access and Planning

- Some groups plan to hold events on **weekends** to reach working-age carers, encourage **pre-booking** for better planning, explore **alternative venues** with better facilities (e.g. kitchens, parking), adjust communication methods to **increase awareness and understanding** of event benefits

### 5. Volunteer and Resource Development

- Volunteers will be supported to take on **expanded roles**
- Investment in **equipment and games** has created opportunities for **new social activities** (e.g. dominoes, whist drives)

## 6. Financial and Logistical Considerations

- Cost of utilities and food are ongoing concerns; some groups plan to shop around for best value, encourage **donations** and fundraisers & seek **future funding** with clearer start dates for better budgeting

## 7. Positive Reinforcement of Community Value

- The project **validated the importance** of warm, welcoming spaces for: wellbeing and mental health, reducing loneliness & providing routine and structure
- Some groups will now offer **year-round activities**, not just in winter

## 6. Conclusions

Round 8 of the Supporting Community Action Fund showcased strong engagement from the third sector, with many grass-roots volunteer-run groups applying for funding to address community needs. The high volume of applications reflected both the demand for support and the commitment of community organisations to deliver impactful projects.

PAVS' Third Sector Support Team provided valuable assistance, particularly for less experienced groups, offering guidance to build the capacity of applicants. The application process was designed to be accessible, with "light touch" forms and thorough checks to ensure best practices in financial management. As Fund Manager, PAVS Officer time was also spent checking and inputting monitoring returns from funded projects to enable this report to be written.

The Fund had a significant impact across Pembrokeshire, addressing winter pressures and cost-of-living challenges, with many projects achieving lasting benefits for individuals and communities. With some projects continuing at a reduced capacity, the delivery experience gained will help groups secure future support.

Overall, the report highlights the effectiveness of locally administered, flexible small grants in meeting community needs and positions the Supporting Community Action Fund as a valuable model for future funding initiatives.

As this Fund Impact Report was completed, PAVS was pleased to receive confirmation of a further round of SCAF funding for 2025 – 26 Autumn/ Winter delivery. Details to be shared on the PAVS website ([link here](#)).

(Fund paperwork available on request from PAVS, including Application Form, Guidance Notes & Monitoring Forms)