



SAMARITANS

Bridgend

**Annual Report
and
Accounts
April 2020 - March 2021**

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Bridgend Samaritans

| | |
|--|--|
| Registered Charity Number: | 1170848 |
| Registered Address: | Bridgend Samaritans, 2 Green Street, Bridgend, CF31 1HF |
| Website: | www.samaritans.org/bridgend |
| The Trustees of Bridgend Samaritans as at 31st March 2021: | |
| Director & Chair of Trustees: | Ms. C. Pearcey |
| Secretary: | Mrs. M. Thalayasingam |
| Treasurer: | Miss C. Wellings |
| Trustees | Mrs. J.L. Griffiths Mr. A. Marshall Mrs. W. Xerri |
| Bankers: | Lloyds Bank plc, East Ham Branch |
| Independent Examiner: | Mr. P. Whiting |
| Solicitors: | David & Snape |

Call us: 116 123
0808 164 0123 – Welsh language line

Write to us: Freepost RSRB-KKBY-CYJK,
Chris,
PO. Box 90 90,
Stirling,
FK8 2SA

Email us: jo@samaritans.org

Visit Bridgend Branch: 2 Green Street
Bridgend
CF31 1HF

Objectives

Samaritans provide completely confidential emotional support 24 hours a day every day by telephone, face to face, e-mail, letter and text and outside our branches at festivals, prisons, hospitals, schools, workplaces and with the homeless through a network of 201 branches in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Our purpose is to:

enable persons who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those who may be at risk of suicide, to receive confidential emotional support at any time of the day or night from appropriately trained Samaritans in order to improve their emotional health and to reduce the incidence of suicidal feelings; and

promote a better understanding in society of suicide, suicidal behaviour and the value of expressing feelings which may otherwise lead to suicide or impaired emotional health.

This is reflected in Samaritans Mission, Vision and Values statements.



Our vision



Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy, and our vision is that fewer people die by suicide.

Our mission



To be there for anyone who needs someone. To give people ways to cope and be there for others. And to campaign to make suicide prevention a priority.

Our values



Listening

Exploring feelings alleviates distress and helps people to reach a better understanding of their situation and the options open to them.

Confidentiality

If people feel safe, they are more likely to be open about their feelings.

Non-judgmental

We want people to be able to talk to us without fear of prejudice or rejection.

People making their own decisions

We believe that people have the right to find their own solution and that telling people what to do takes responsibility away from them.

Human contact

Giving people time, undivided attention and empathy meets a fundamental emotional need and reduces distress and despair.

Report from the Branch Director

It is again with great pleasure that I write this, my second annual report. What can I say about 2020 that hasn't already been said by many? What a year!

We held our AGM in 2020 remotely, and although this is not normally our first choice, it did allow many people some extra flexibility to attend, where they may normally have missed through various other commitments. Plus, we were able to record and share it on our website so that many, many others could view at their leisure. So, here we are again!

At Bridgend we have made many adjustments to ensure the safety and well-being of our volunteers and although a third of our listeners were shielding, we still managed to maintain a consistent circa 80% of our agreed shifts.

It has been a very challenging time for our fundraising team. However, we are very lucky indeed to have received, and continue to receive, very generous donations from existing and new donors. We were also fortunate enough to receive a BAVO grant which helped us ensure each of our volunteers received a personal use headset and to increase cleaning by an extra two cleans per week, to ensure the branch was kept fully clean and hygienic. We were able to apply for a Supporting Samaritans Covid-19 grant from Samaritans Central Charity and we were successful in obtaining funds to help us set up our training room as an extra listening room, with two additional listening stations. It has also allowed us to provide some relaxation features for volunteers including a new fold-up bed and an extra coffee room, within Abbie's room (lovingly named after a previous volunteer who sadly passed away a few years ago).

All through the challenges that the pandemic threw at us, we saw the number of potential volunteer applications soar across the UK and we were lucky enough to see a marked increase in Bridgend too. The new recruitment journey had already been earmarked for implementation mid-2020, so we were able to trigger this off early enough to affect our numbers positively and you will see the numbers in the Recruitment update section of this report.

We have grown and maintained the number of our listening volunteers to well over 100. Recognition and thanks needs to be handed to the Selection, Training, and Mentoring teams for helping us achieve this. The current level of active listeners has made it simpler both for the Rota Secretary and the Leadership team to ensure we fulfil our shift requirements. Retention of membership, however, whilst a significant improvement has been made, still remains a focus for my directorship.

Bridgend has always been a flagship for Samaritans with our outreach work, offering a strong presence both locally and in support of national events across Wales. Unfortunately, this halted for the duration of the pandemic. We are now pleased to see signs that we will be restarting activities as soon as 'freedom day' allows.

The Welsh Language Line has been running smoothly with regular evening shifts across Wales, of which Bridgend is proud to be a part of. I thank the Welsh speakers for their efforts and for keeping the Welsh Language Line shifts open at Bridgend.

I am proud to be a member of this branch. Volunteers' whose dedication and generous donation of time has enabled us to grow the amount of support we are able to offer our callers and we now look forward to the ever-evolving services we provide to our callers with Bridgend about to play our part in the online chat service to ensure callers have many channels in which they can speak to a Samaritan.

My final thanks are to our donors, supporters and of course each and every volunteer for all that they do and to my team of deputy directors whose support has meant that I can continue to work full-time, keep my family happy, and has helped to ensure the continuing success of the branch. Without their support I would have been unable to undertake my role. It's surprising to think that my directorship now only has one more year before I hand to the next team!



Structure, Governance and Management

Samaritans is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It was incorporated as a company on 11th April 1963, having been founded by Prebendary Dr. Chad Varah on 2nd November 1953.

In addition to the charitable company, the organisation as a whole includes 201 Samaritan branches, including Bridgend, operating in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. The branches are either incorporated charities affiliated to Samaritans, each of which is a separate charitable organisation, or are part of Samaritans Central Charity.

Samaritans is governed by a **Board of Trustees** of between 10 and 15 members, a majority of whom must be volunteers in Samaritans branches. The Board is supported by both staff and volunteers serving as Regional Directors, Regional Officers and Functional Leads.

The Trustees are also directors of the company and are appointed by the Nominations Committee - apart from the Chair, who is appointed by the Board of Trustees, following an appointment process overseen by the Nominations Committee.

Trustees can serve a maximum of six years, or up to eight years in the case of a Chair who has already served as a Trustee. The Board meets at least four times a year.

Regional Councils, comprising of the Branch Director and Regional Director from each region, advise and guide the board.

Although the Trustees are responsible for directing the affairs of the charity, much of the day-to-day operational activity is delegated to staff at Samaritans Central Charity (SCC), led by our **Executive Leadership Team**.



Statement of Trustees Responsibilities

Bridgend Samaritans Branch Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period.

In preparing those accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statement on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in existence.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees on 21st June 2021

C. Wellings Treasurer

C. Pearcey Director

Bridgend Samaritans

2 Green Street

Bridgend

CF31 1HF

Income and Expenditure

| | 2020/21 | | | 2019/20 | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|
| <u>Income</u> | <u>Unrestricted</u> | <u>Designated</u> | <u>Restricted</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| Fundraising | 28,800 | - | 1,000 | 29,808 | 23,287 |
| Bank interest | 62 | - | - | 62 | 301 |
| | 28,870 | - | - | 29,870 | 23,588 |
| <u>Cost of Generating Funds.</u> | | | | | |
| Fund Raising Cost | 548 | - | - | 548 | 929 |
| Net Income Resources | 28,322 | - | 1,000 | 29,322 | 22,659 |
| <u>Expenditure</u> | | | | | |
| Advertising | - | | | - | 62 |
| Publicity | 698 | | | 698 | 1,123 |
| Utilities | 2,032 | | | 2,032 | 1,962 |
| Insurance | 1,978 | | | 1,978 | 1,992 |
| Travel/Mileage | 1,861 | | | 1,861 | 3,661 |
| Subsistence | - | | | - | 381 |
| Volunteer Care | 234 | | | 234 | 1,171 |
| Training | - | | | - | 280 |
| Printing & Photocopying | 280 | | | 280 | 554 |
| Postage & Carriage | 170 | | | 170 | 129 |
| Office Stationery | - | | | - | 415 |
| Telephone & Broadband | 1,639 | | | 1,639 | 1,716 |
| Office Equipment & Supplies | 2,753 | | 1,000 | 3,753 | 4,643 |
| Restricted funds Expended | - | | | - | - |
| Premises Expenses | 1,300 | | | 1,300 | 1,249 |
| Cleaning | 3,198 | | | 3,198 | 1,526 |
| Vehicle Expenses | 644 | | | 644 | 391 |
| Refurbishment | - | | | - | - |
| Memberships | 35 | | | 35 | 70 |
| Branch Contributions | 8,394 | | | 8,394 | 3,786 |
| Depreciation | - | | | - | 246 |
| | 25,216 | | 1,000 | 26,216 | 25,357 |
| Surplus/Deficit for year | 3,106 | | - | 3,106 | -2,698 |

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2021

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <u>Fixed Assets</u> | <u>2021</u> | <u>2020</u> |
| Property | 38,094 | 38,094 |
| Van | 24,823 | 24,823 |
| Stairlift | 1,225 | 1,225 |
| Less depreciation | <u>-26,048</u> | <u>-26,048</u> |
| | 38,094 | 38,094 |
| <u>Current Assets</u> | | |
| CCLA Investment Account | 47,253 | 47,197 |
| Deposit Account | 32,468 | 25,018 |
| Current Account | 1,748 | 1,455 |
| Sundry Debtors | - | - |
| Prepayments | <u>978</u> | <u>1,099</u> |
| Sub Total | 82,447 | 74,769 |
| <u>Less Current Liability</u> | | |
| Sundry Creditors | 2,318 | 2,217 |
| Accruals | <u>8,911</u> | <u>4,440</u> |
| | 11,229 | 6,657 |
| <u>Net Assets</u> | <u>109,312</u> | <u>106,206</u> |
| <u>Unrestricted Funds</u> | | |
| Open Balance | 101,206 | 103,904 |
| Less Funds to Designated | - | - |
| Add Funds from Designated | - | - |
| Add Funds from Restricted | - | - |
| Year's Result | <u>3,106</u> | <u>-2,698</u> |
| Closing Balance | 104,312 | 101,206 |
| <u>Designated Funds</u> | | |
| Opening Balance | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| Funds from Unrestricted | - | - |
| Less Funds Expended | - | - |
| Closing Balance | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| <u>Restricted Funds</u> | | |
| Opening Balance | - | - |
| Receipts | 1,000 | - |
| Funds Released to Unrestricted | - | - |
| Less funds Expended | <u>-1,000</u> | <u>-</u> |
| Closing Balance | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> |
| | <u>109,312</u> | <u>106,206</u> |

These Financial Statements were approved and signed by the members of the committee on 21st June 2021.

C Pearcey (Director)

C Wellings (Treasurer)

Notes to the Accounts

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of Preparation

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The financial statement followed the guidelines of the revised Statement of Recommended Practice for Accounting Charities, effective from 1st January 2015 (the Charities SORP FRSSE version) and uses applicable Accounting Standards.

Fund Accounting

General Funds are unrestricted funds that are available for use, at the discretion of the Trustees, in furtherance of the objectives of the charity and have not been designated for other purposes. Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. Restricted funds are funds that are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donor.

Incoming Resources

All incoming resources are included only when deposited in the charity's bank accounts.

Resources Expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to that category. Fundraising costs are those costs incurred in seeking voluntary contributions.

Depreciation

Assets costing under £1,000 have been expended in the year of purchase as they have been deemed minor in nature. All assets, other than property, being depreciated on a straight line basis at 20% per year.

Taxation

The Bridgend Samaritans is a registered charity and is therefore potentially exempt from taxation of its income and gains to the extent that they fall within section 505 of the Income & Corporation Taxes Act 1998 and section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992. No tax charge has arisen this year.

2. Description of Reserves

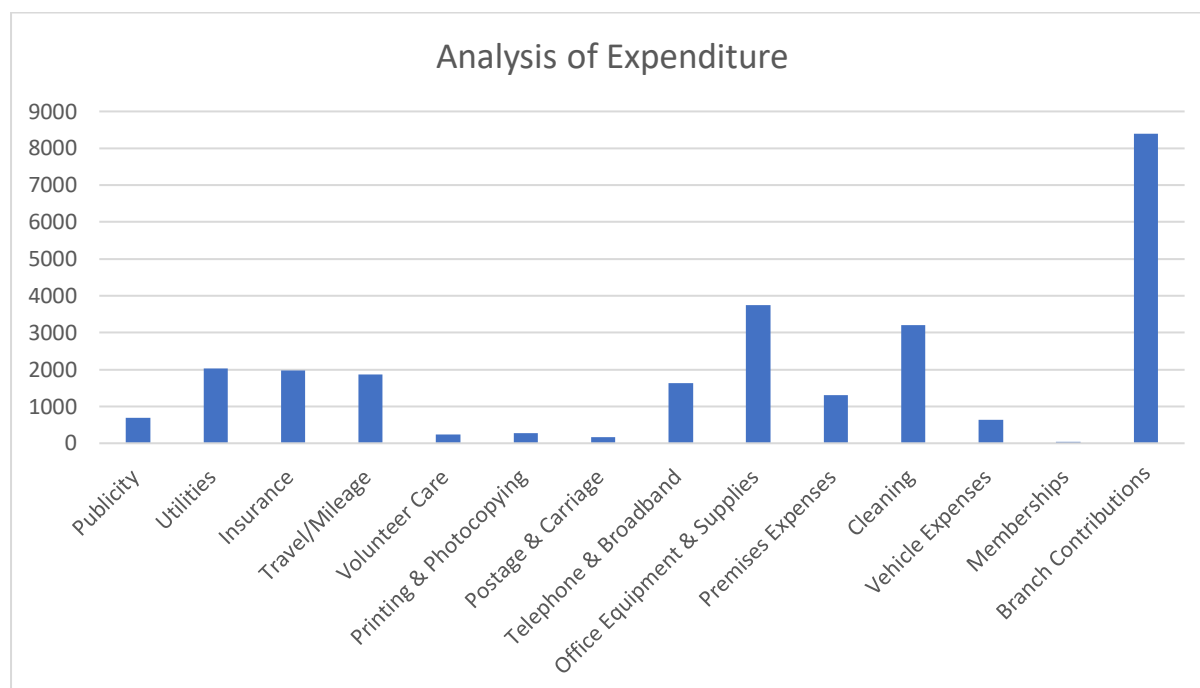
| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| General Funds: | Fund held available for ordinary purposes of the charity. Included in the General Fund is £38,094 which is invested in the charity's fixed assets and, therefore, not available for other purposes. |
| Designated Fund: | This comprises the funds that have been set aside for the purpose of property maintenance costs of £5,000 which is held in the Investment Account. |
| Reserve Level: | The balance in the General Fund at 31st March 2021 that is available for use is £66,218 and it represents the equivalent of approximately 2½ years forecast expenditure. |

Analysis of Fundraising

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Donations Received | 10704 |
| Grant - Samaritans | 7496 |
| Statutory Bodies | 4525 |
| Collection Boxes | 2829 |
| Philanthropic Organisations | 2000 |
| Grants | 1000 |
| Sponsorship | 394 |
| Sale of Christmas Cards | 289 |
| Amazon Smile | 166 |
| Churches | 160 |
| Talks & Awareness | 87 |
| Paypal Giving Fund | 80 |
| In Memory - Funeral donations | 50 |
| Fayres & Events | 18 |
| Give As you live | 10 |
| Total for the year | £29,808 |

Our thanks this year are extended to all individuals and local organisations who have donated money to Bridgend Samaritans to help us continue to run the branch in these difficult times.

We especially extend our thanks to Jan Watson who, as usual, has done an exceptional job raising funds through the collection boxes places in various shops through the Bridgend area. This work continued throughout 2020 despite the Covid pandemic.



Financial Review

This year is the fourth year of reporting for Bridgend Samaritans CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation), and as such the figures shown above relate only to the new charity.

The unincorporated Bridgend Samaritans charity account retains a £100 as agreed.

It was decided at the committee meeting on 14th February 2019 that we would retain £5,000 in the designated fund to cover any unexpected building maintenance.

The trustees have agreed to keep the amount at £5,000 for this year.

This year we have made a surplus of £3,106, this is partly due to receiving grants from BAVO and a Supporting Samaritans Covid-19 grant from Samaritans Central Charity to help support the running costs during an unusual and very difficult year. Without this much needed funding, income would have been down significantly, and we would have had to dip into our reserves to keep running.

High reserves have also meant that we have paid an higher amount in Branch Contribution, which enables Samaritans as a whole to offer the best services to our callers. The balance sheet remains strong, and the cash balances will continue to be monitored during the coming year to ensure that all returns are being maximised.

We have invested in headsets for all our listening volunteers with matched funding of £1,000 from BAVO and we also received a grant from Samaritans main branch of £7,496 so that we can continue to do what we do without jeopardising the future of Samaritans Bridgend.

Unfortunately Covid-19 and the subsequent lock downs of the whole country has meant even more need and demand for the Samaritans as we continue in these uncertain times.

We would like to thank all our donors who have continued to support us as much as they are able to, so that we can continue the support that is needed even more so than ever.

This is my second year as Treasurer and although it has been a strange and challenging one I look forward to more years ahead with Samaritans Bridgend Branch.

Caroline Wellings – Treasurer

Independent Examiners Report

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Bridgend Samaritans CIO (Charity no. 1170848)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

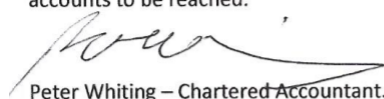
I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

 20/6/21
Peter Whiting – Chartered Accountant.

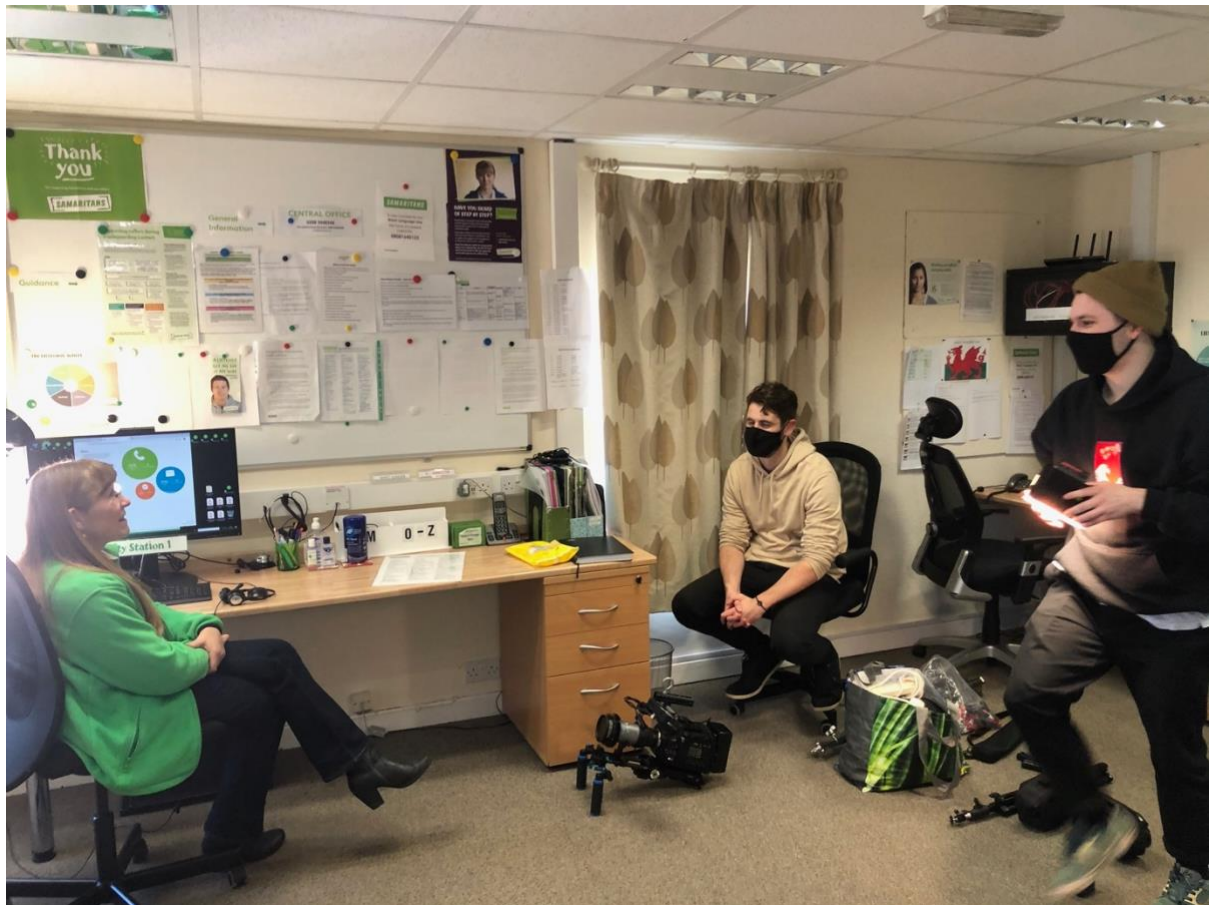
Thaw Cottage, City, Cowbridge

The Role of the Volunteer

The role of the general volunteer is as a Listening Volunteer who talks to anyone that calls, emails or visits our Samaritans branch and via our Outreach programme within the local community.

On 31st March 2021 our branch consisted of 116 volunteers, of whom 64 were listeners, 23 new volunteers in training, 13 support volunteers and we had 16 volunteers off rota, primarily due to the pandemic. All our Samaritan roles are carried out using volunteers, we have no paid staff.

Each listening volunteer agrees to do a minimum of 2.75 hours per week including one weekend and one overnight duty each month.

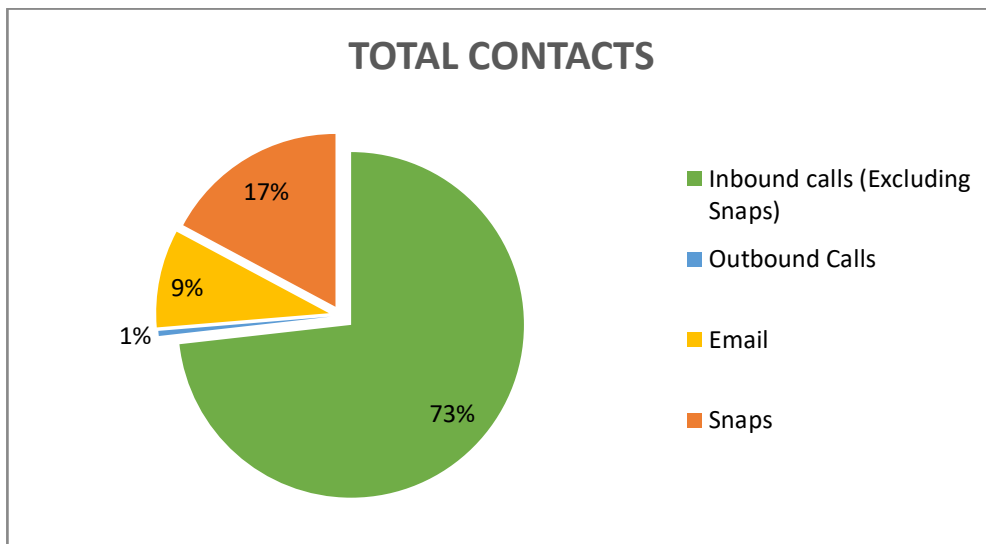


Filming the Welsh Language Samaritan S4C TV advert

Statistics

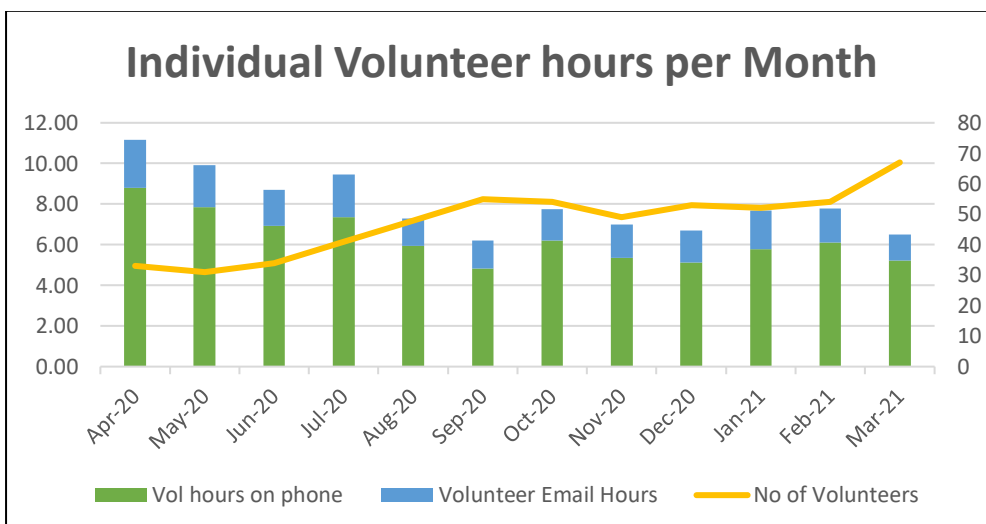
The statistics in this report cover the 12 month period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 and are collected from the official Samaritans reporting systems, supplemented by additional information contained in the eLog.

During the period the branch received 16,220 contacts from callers. This includes 14,789 phone calls and 1,431 emails. Due to Covid-19 all our face-to-face contacts were suspended. Throughout the year our average of 48 listening volunteers spent 3,469 hours on the phone.



The majority of the callers were offered emotional support, but 2,760 callers made ‘snap’ calls, where the contact was less than 10 seconds. Where the gender of contacts could be determined 42.9% percent identified as male, 52.8% percent identified as female and 0.6% identified as transgender. The gender of a caller was unable to be determined in 3.7% of callers.

The breakdown of hours spent on each service is shown below. In the early months of lockdown many volunteers were unavailable due to shielding, but the remaining volunteers increased their hours substantially to fill in the gaps in our rota. The reduction in March 2021 is due to a large recruitment of new volunteers in training, so not yet answering calls.



Caller Support

What do we mean by Caller Support? Caller Support is the “department” within every branch that makes sure, from the moment a caller first makes contact with Samaritans, the support we provide encompasses all aspects of our service.

The support we offer callers is in line with Samaritans’ Mission, Vision and Values, but also very much depends on that caller's individual needs. An example is a Samaritan Plan, this is a plan of support, agreed upon between our branch and the caller. The Plan is designed to give the best possible support to a caller who may need more consistent contact, often during a very distressing time. A Samaritan Plan is also a fantastic example of communication and cross working from the Caller Support Team to the wider branch. Obviously, the caller is at the heart of the Plan, but Leaders, Volunteers, Deputies, and the Regional Caller Support Officer all work together to make sure the caller's experience is maintained at a consistently high standard.

Other important Caller Support tasks are quality checking emails and on occasions limiting the service we offer a caller who is abusing the service. The latter is not taken lightly but keeping lines available for callers in need is vitally important.

I joined the Caller Support team as Deputy Director in July 2019. The Caller Support team remains a team of four, but other important contributors to caller support are Leaders, other Deputies, the branch statistician, and the Branch Prison Support Officer. All the members of the team have continued to work to ensure that our callers receive the best service on the telephone and via emails and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for all their support and the hard work during this year.

Each member of the dedicated Caller Support team has access to Caller Support on the E-log, and The Forum via Samaritans Net. The latter enables us to share confidential caller information with other Branches across the UK. As a team, we share the Caller Support tasks, and offer support to each other regarding the management of callers.

During 2019 to 2020 I have attended all but one Leaders’ meetings. I am always happy to offer updates and support to the Branch regarding callers of concern, and adjustments to Caller Support regulations. Similarly, if training needs arise, the Team can suggest ideas to the Ongoing Training team. For example, our next training may be email skills, with the objective of keeping the quality of our written word service to a consistently high standard.

These educational sessions promoting best practice and keeps our service current for all active listeners within the branch

Due to the Covid lockdown, there have been two remote Caller Support Regional Meetings, which I did attend.

Helen, Deputy Director for Caller Support

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

At the start of 2020 an introduction to the EDI agenda had been delivered to the branch during which people were introduced to the reasons we have the agenda using the example of unconscious bias as a practical example of what people could do as individuals to start thinking about this issue.

The point was made that this subject would become part of the on-going branch management agenda and these briefings were the start of the process.

Then Covid arrived and everybody's time and effort had to be diverted into keeping the service operating safely.

Whilst this was happening an EDI action plan for next year has been produced that includes monitoring the workforce, creating a working group and inviting volunteers to complete the EDI module in the Learning Centre. In the next year we hope to start working through this plan and ensuring that Bridgend branch fulfils its part in the delivery of this.

Our Diversity and Equality Policy is to:

- ensure that we recruit and retain the very best volunteers and staff from a wide variety of sources.
- value our volunteers and staff and the differences between them
- harness those differences to improve our service to callers
- promote diversity and equality in a proactive way to underpin our service to the callers
- ensure that all our Policies, Procedures and working practices are free from any form of unlawful or unfair discrimination

In carrying this out we will:

- eliminate any harassment or unjustifiable discrimination against anyone for any reason, including their race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, sex or sexual orientation, working pattern, marital status, gender reassignment, disability, age, political opinion or family status
- ensure the effectiveness of the policy by making it encompass all areas of our work
- ensure that we make every effort to achieve equality of access to all sites used by Samaritans
- ask branches to regularly review their activities in the light of the need to achieve the Diversity and Equality Policy
- display the Policy on all premises and sites used by Samaritans

Michael, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Officer

Leaders

The hard work, commitment and dedication from our amazing team of Leaders at Bridgend Branch has, once again, been both amazing and invaluable during the past year.

Our Branch Leaders are responsible for every shift that takes place both inside our brick branch in the town and every outreach session that takes place outside of our branch and we could not be there for our callers or run our branch without them.

We currently have 22 amazing Leaders covering 31 weekly shifts. The amount of shifts taking place in the branch has grown recently so there are continuously more and more shifts to lead. Our Leaders work tirelessly to:

- make sure that every shift has a Leader in charge of the shift including in the middle of the night
- reach out to volunteers to ensure that all our shifts are filled (or the branch has to close)
- keep themselves up to date with everything that's happening in the branch and in the wider Samaritan community
- ensure that help, support and information is provided to our listening volunteers from the start to the end of each shift and that they are at the end of the telephone to immediately respond to anything that the volunteer may need
- take a debrief from volunteers at the end of the shift, helping them to leave the branch with a clear mind, or at least as clear as possible.

The Leaders team continue to have a close partnership with our Caller Support Team in the branch. They attend all of the Leaders meetings to support Leaders with the latest knowledge of our callers and the partnership has worked extremely well.

This past year has been a very challenging year for our Leaders who have had to provide additional help and support to ensure that our shifts stay open and that the environment is safe at all times for our volunteers, during such a difficult and worrying time for all.

I would therefore like to say an extra special thank you to the Bridgend Branch Leader Team who are enthusiastic, helpful and supportive and always – without exception – go the extra mile for our charity, our branch, our volunteers and for our callers. They make my job as Deputy Director a piece of cake! Thanks to all – we wouldn't have a branch without you!

Gemma, Deputy Director for Leaders

Outreach

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Samaritans were forced into introducing restrictions to our face-to-face activities and this has obviously impacted on our outreach work during the year. What little we have managed to do is outlined in below.

In the past, Bridgend has undertaken a great variety of outreach work and we will resume once restrictions have been lifted. This outreach work enables us to provide emotional support and raise awareness of our services directly in our local community. This is often achieved by working in partnership with other organisations and we are grateful to all of them for their continued support and look forward to working with them again soon.

To give an idea of the extent of the usual work we do, last year we delivered just over a 1,000 volunteer-hours and made contact with over 9,000 individuals. Outreach activities are usually in addition to volunteers' listening shifts in branch and it can often involve long days and much preparation beforehand. What we achieve would not be possible without our volunteers ongoing support, commitment and enthusiasm for outreach work.

The outreach activities and events usually supported by the Bridgend team are outlined below. This will hopefully give a view of the range of work usually included.

Outreach Activities

Our usual outreach activities are listed below.

I. Princess of Wales Hospital

We have a partnership agreement with the Princess of Wales hospital. Outreach volunteers go to the hospital on alternate Wednesday mornings. Our volunteers are there to provide emotional support and raise awareness about Samaritans to patients, visitors, carers and hospital staff.

Vicky co-ordinates our work with the Princess of Wales hospital.

II. Feet on the Street

There is a regular presence every other Saturday in Bridgend town centre between 21:00hrs and midnight. Our volunteers raise awareness and engage with people who frequent the local public houses and nightclubs.

Vicky co-ordinates our Feet on the Street activity.

III. Police Custody Suite South Wales Police

The Bridgend branch has a formal arrangement with South Wales Police and has a small, dedicated team of volunteers who provide support for detainees and staff in the Custody Suite in Bridgend.

We work on a Sunday evening every three weeks and are welcomed and well supported by the custody staff on duty.

IV. Network Rail Partnership

We support the partnership between Samaritans and Network Rail by providing support when needed following an incident and undertake awareness raising activities at local stations.

V. Crucial Crew

Crucial Crew is an educational scheme aimed at year 7 pupils. It is a multi-agency approach that aims to teach the pupils how to stay safe and the Samaritans is one of the agencies involved. Our team of volunteers who work in schools, led by Paul, undertake this work across a number of local authority areas.

VI. Schools and Colleges

We attend Freshers' Fairs and deliver emotional support presentations to students in schools and colleges.

VII. Other Organisations

We work with a range of organisations supporting events, delivering talks about Samaritans and delivering Compassion in the Workplace presentations.

VIII. Agricultural Shows

We have a presence at local agricultural shows.

Work Undertaken This Year

I. Branch Van

The busiest 'member' of the outreach team this year was the branch van! It popped up at a number of venues in the area during the year to help us raise awareness.



The branch van parked at Nathaniel Cars on Bridgend Industrial Estate to help promote our service during the Covid-19 pandemic

We were very fortunate in September to be given the opportunity by Mr Wayne Griffiths, of Nathaniel Car Sales, to park the van in their prime forecourt spot for a week. This helped us mark World Suicide Prevention Day and raise awareness.

II. Bridgend College

This year Bridgend College had a digi Freshers' Fair and we supplied them digital information for their website; a box of posters, pens and literature to distribute to their students; and resources for their lecturers.

III. Talks and Presentations

Through the use of Zoom we delivered a talk about the Samaritans to a local Women's Institute and a Wellbeing presentation for the Friday Night Lecture team in Atlantic College.

Outreach Future

We are committed to resuming our outreach work as soon as it is permissible and safe to do so. So, if you are interested in finding out more about our outreach work, please get in touch with the Deputy Director for Outreach to see what we can do.

Penny, Deputy Director for Outreach



SAMARITANS
Bridgend

We need volunteers to help light up the night

People often need us in the middle of the night when they have nowhere to else to turn.

Volunteer for us 
To find out more and apply, visit
samaritans.org/bridgend


Samaritans branches

Bridgend Samaritans is a registered charity.

Prison Listening

The Samaritans provide emotional support to prisoners in two key ways:

- (i) Samaritans in branches talk to prisoners who phone us;
- (ii) by operating the Listener scheme inside prisons.

The Samaritans also provide confidential help and emotional support to prison staff and to prisoners' families. This support is free to access and is available every day and every night, every day of the year.

As part of the Samaritans' activities to support to prisoners, we have a special scheme called Listeners. The Listeners are prisoners who have been selected and trained by the Samaritans to enable them to act as "the Samaritans" inside the prison to provide confidential emotional support to their fellow prisoners.

Supporting prisoners is important. People in prison are ten times more likely to commit suicide than people in the general population.

At Bridgend Samaritans we have a small, dedicated Branch Prison Support Team that supports our local prison, HMP Parc. HMP Parc is a male prison for about 1700 inmates. It is a private prison run on behalf of the Prison Service by G4S. We generally have around 20 trained Listeners in Parc who provide face-to-face confidential emotional support to their fellow prisoners around the clock. Our Listener Scheme does save lives and the support our Branch gives to HMP Parc means we can continue to help prisoners who are desperate and despairing without judging them. Our Branch is very grateful for the support we receive from the Management and Safer Custody staff at HMP Parc for our Listener Scheme.

Throughout the past year we have all been affected by the covid-19 pandemic and the various lockdown restrictions that have made our lives difficult. It has been particularly tough inside our prisons. Prisoners have spent months being kept confined in their cells for 23 hours per day. Prisoners have not been able to enjoy face-to-face visits with their family and friends and their work and education opportunities inside prison have been stopped or restricted.

Covid-19 restrictions meant that our Branch Prison Team had to suspend our regular weekly support meetings inside HMP Parc in March 2020 and these weekly meetings are still suspended. Lockdown conditions inside the prison over the year 2020/2021 have meant that Listeners could not always move around the prison to provide face-to-face emotional support. Lockdowns also meant we had to curtail our Listener training sessions in 2020. We had to find other ways to provide support – for Listeners, for prisoners, for prison staff and for prisoners' families.

For HMP Parc, we achieved this extra support through a weekly newsletter to our Listeners and a twice-weekly dedicated Listener Support Phonenumber. We worked closely with prison staff to ensure that all prisoners were regularly reminded about the free confidential phone service to the Samaritans from their in-cell phones. Samaritans Branches across the UK & ROI reported significant increases in the number of phone-calls received from prisoners as they struggled to cope with the isolation and tough prison regimes caused by covid-19.

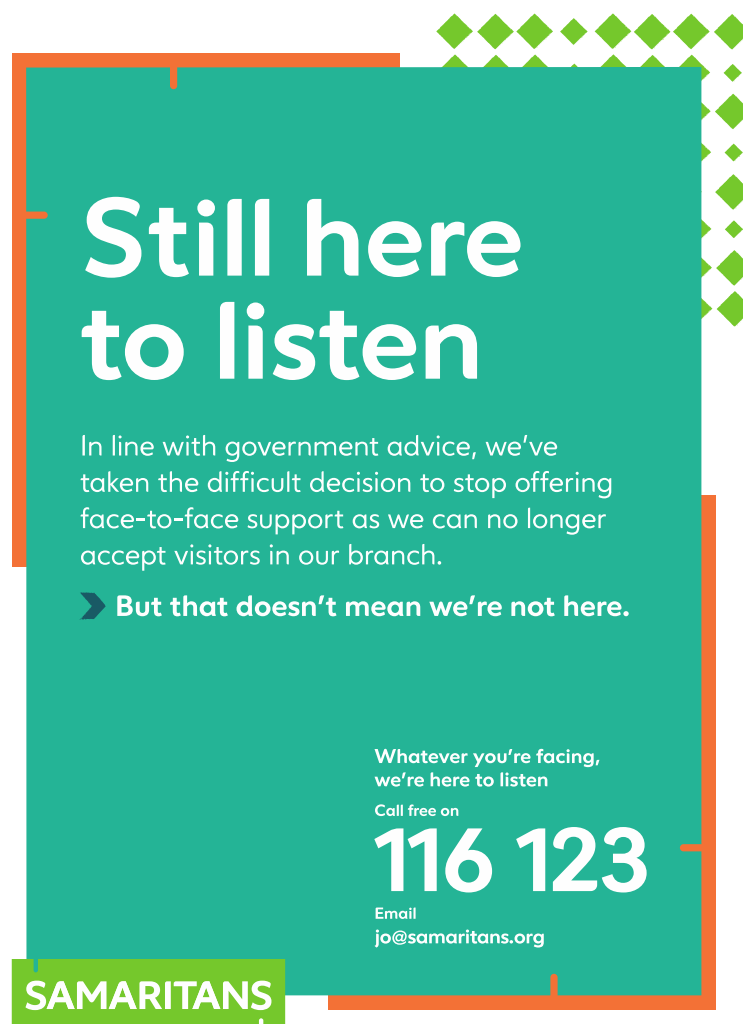
As an example of how much the phones calls from prisons to the Samaritans has increased during the pandemic, in December 2020 the Samaritans took over 35,000 calls from prisoners. This level of calls is nearly 15% of the total answered calls the Samaritans answered that month.

We regularly provided leaflets and pocket cards about the Samaritans and details of how to access our services for prison staff and we provided this information for prisoners' families through the Parc Supporting Families Unit.

This has been an unprecedented year for everyone. A huge "Thank you" goes out to everyone in our Branch Prison Team and to all the other Samaritan volunteers in Bridgend Branch who have been there to support prisoners, prison staff and prisoners' families throughout this tough and difficult year.

As an organisation, the Samaritans have been providing emotional support to prisoners since 1991. This means that in 2021 we will be marking 30 years of this service. Looking forwards, let us hope that during 2021 we can put the covid-19 pandemic behind us and celebrate this significant anniversary in style.

Grace, Branch Prison Support Co-ordinator



**Still here
to listen**

In line with government advice, we've taken the difficult decision to stop offering face-to-face support as we can no longer accept visitors in our branch.

➤ **But that doesn't mean we're not here.**

Whatever you're facing,
we're here to listen
Call free on
116 123
Email
jo@samaritans.org

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A registered charity

Recruitment and Selection

During the 2020-2021 year, four recruitment and selection events were held for prospective volunteers. We received a total of 116 incoming enquiries out of which:

| | |
|---|----|
| Selected and moved on to Core training | 39 |
| Withdrawals for a variety of reasons | 25 |
| Did not respond to emails & texts | 19 |
| Referred to other branches in Wales | 6 |
| Potential volunteers on waiting list | 27 |

The recruitment challenge is one which the Samaritans organisation as a whole has been working hard to address. A new pilot project was launched over 2 years ago via the main Samaritans website and it has proved very successful in attracting, selecting and retaining volunteers. Our main source for recruitment remains through the website at the Samaritans Volunteer and Recruitment Team at Samaritan Central Office and since the lockdown began numbers of applicants referred on to us has increased substantially at an average rate of two a week although there was a spike in January this year where it rose to 5 a week.

We are now also awaiting the arrival of a new automated system for the recruitment and training course processes called the Branch Management Tool which has been gradually rolled out across the UK & ROI and we in Bridgend are due to come on board with this new system at the end of April 2021. The system will handle a large percentage of the administration usually carried out by a couple of individuals in the branch which will be a huge relief as I personally have dealt with around 2,800 emails (incoming & outgoing) in connection with Selection, Recruitment, Reference and DBS checking alone over the past year.

I would like to thank all of our Recruitment & Selection Team for supporting the branch and embracing the new system of remotely interviewing and selecting potential volunteers and for being there right at the start of those potential volunteers' journey to become full listening volunteer members of Bridgend Samaritans.

Dave, Deputy Director for Recruitment & Selection and BSRA.



Training

Bridgend suitably rose to the Covid challenge and has delivered 3 cohorts of new volunteer training – now called CORE, all delivered 100% virtually using Zoom!

Whilst initially challenging this has now made us realise we can offer a combination of both face to face and remote/virtual training very successfully.

Core training for new volunteers:

This year the branch's small training team delivered:

- 90 hours of Core training to 3 Cohorts – 39, 40 and 41;
- 30 hours of Embedding training, the second part of initial Core training;
- 30 new Samaritans made it to the Operations Room in Bridgend.

The training team are a small team of very dedicated volunteers who give their time over and above their duties as listening volunteers. Bridgend are also lucky to have the support of trained Skills Practitioners and have been using remote skills sessions to help prepare our potential volunteers.

On-Going Training – now called Volunteer Development

This year we have seen online modules developed and volunteers completing updates.

Gabby, Deputy Director for Training



Volunteer Care and Support

The Volunteer Support team is a crucial part of the branch. Our main responsibility is essentially to support all volunteers within our branch. The current team consists of 10 people - Danny, Elise, Evan, Kate, Leah, Lois, Louise, Sid, Tina and myself Harriet.

Each member of the team supports between 8 – 10 volunteers. They regularly 'check in' for a catch up and chat. If in need, extra contact will be made if any concerns arise. For example, if one of our volunteers has received a difficult call as a listener, leader, etc. Also, extra support is given if they have any other worries going on in their personal lives. Confidentiality is adhered to within the team.

With the Covid-19 lockdown beginning in March 2019 it has been a particularly challenging time for many volunteers. The Volunteer Support team have pulled together to ensure contact and communication are a priority. We will endeavour to continue supporting all volunteers especially the ones returning to shifts after shielding. The 'buddy' system has worked marvellously well ensuring returning volunteers are welcomed, supported and guided.

Long Service Awards

The following are the long service certificates awarded to our volunteers from April 2020 – March 2021:

| | | |
|---------|---|----------|
| Imogen | - | 20 years |
| Andrew | - | 15 years |
| Caitlin | - | 15 years |
| Kate | - | 15 years |
| Mary | - | 15 years |
| Grace | - | 10 years |
| Dave | - | 5 years |
| Helen | - | 5 years |
| Lynne | - | 5 years |
| Michael | - | 5 years |
| Nigel | - | 5 years |
| Peter | - | 5 years |
| Poppy | - | 5 years |

On behalf of all at the branch, a much heartfelt 'THANK YOU'!! You are all incredible. We are so lucky to have you with us.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a massive "THANK YOU" to all of the Volunteer Support Team. It goes without saying I could not do this role without you.

Harriet, Deputy Director for Volunteer Support