

# YMDDIRIEDOLAETH GOFALWYR

Gogledd Cymru  
Gwasanaethau Gofal Croesffyrdd

# CARERS TRUST

North Wales  
Crossroads Care Services

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

FOR  
CARERS  
AND THE  
PEOPLE  
THEY  
SUPPORT

DELIVERING SERVICES IN:

ANGLESEY  
CEREDIGION  
CONWY  
DENBIGHSHIRE  
FLINTSHIRE  
GWYNEDD  
WREXHAM

Quinton Hazell Enterprise Parc  
Glan y Wern Road, Colwyn Bay,  
Conwy, LL28 5BS

Charity Registration Number: 1119142  
Company Registration Number: 6205600  
CIW Registration Number: WO30001450



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Betsi Cadwaladr  
University Health Board



## MESSAGES FROM CHAIR AND CEO

### RITA JONES - CHAIR (2014-present)

It is with great sadness this year that I write my last AGM report for Carers Trust North Wales. Having been involved with Flintshire Crossroads since 1980 when I helped to set up the first Crossroads scheme in Wales, I have reluctantly decided to step down from the Board.



Supporting unpaid carers in their caring role has been very close to my heart throughout my career and into retirement. I have seen so many changes over the years, but I am very pleased that CTNW has remained a sustainable organisation and has been able to adhere to its core aim of providing quality services to unpaid carers in North Wales.

I am, as always, so grateful for the support I have had over the years from fellow Trustees who have given up their time freely to help guide the organisation and advise the Management Team in all that they do. 2023-24 has been another busy year for the Team, providing new initiatives such as the Short Breaks project and developing the Dementia Centres across North Wales (please see write-ups later in the Report), whilst also continuing to provide the vital 1-1 respite services in carers' own homes. Our CEO continues to seek out funding opportunities wherever possible which will benefit both carers and cared-for.

2024-25 is already proving to be another demanding year with challenges ahead, and I wish CTNW continued success in all that they do. I know that the Board of Trustees has a wealth of skills and experience to continue the invaluable work which is carried out on a day to day basis, and I leave the organisation knowing that it is in very safe hands.

My final and biggest thanks are to the Carer Support Workers who always give a 100% and who make such a difference to the people they support.

### ALISON JONES - CEO (2012-present)

As we come to the end of another year I am reflecting on both the way our services have evolved and also how we still hold unpaid carers at the core of our offer. I am grateful for the support I continue to receive from the Board of Trustees. I will feel the loss of our current chair, Rita Jones, on her retirement as her presence has been a constant since I began working for the organisation at Flintshire Crossroads in 2004.

I extend thanks to our small and efficient office team and lastly our wonderful Carer Support Workers on whom our reputation rests.



## CORE SERVICES

BY KAREN ALLEN—REGISTERED CARE MANAGER

Our main service is providing respite services to unpaid carers in their own homes, taking care of the person they care for whilst they have a well-earned break to recharge their batteries. Some carers are unable to leave their own homes unless they have replacement care in place, and so our support is invaluable in these cases.

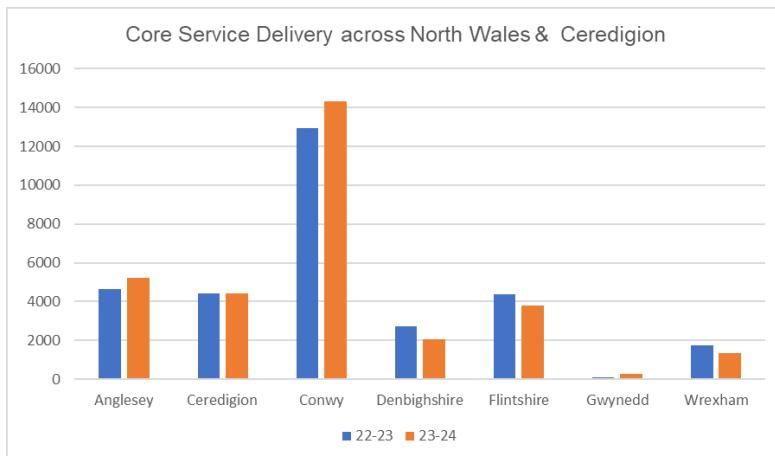
Our Carer Support Workers (CSWs) are all highly trained and can take over the role of the unpaid carer for a few hours, providing a safe and trusted environment for the cared-for. Our CSWs provide practical and emotional support, they can provide personal care, help with food preparation, and with permission, can take the cared-for for trips out.

We have been providing this type of service for over 40 years, and it is still the main focus of our work. We have found that supporting carers who have a high level of caring responsibilities, eg providing over 50 hours of care every week, with a regular break can help prevent crisis and can keep people at home together for longer.

We are commissioned for this type of break in various different ways across North Wales and Ceredigion. Local Authorities can commission these services, and carers can contact their local council to see how to access respite support.

The Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board also funds us to provide replacement care/sitting services for carers who are experiencing ill health and need some extra support to help look after their cared-for, or to enable them to attend an appointment if they are unable to leave their family member on their own.

In 2023-24 our core services were delivered as follows (with comparisons to year before):



## CORE SERVICES (continued)

As can be seen from the graph overleaf, our service delivery in Conwy is high. Contributing factors include an ageing population as a lot of people retire to the area, and we are also fortunate to have a substantial funding agreement with Conwy Borough County Council which enables us to retain staff on guaranteed hours. In other areas of North Wales we're commissioned on a brokerage arrangement which makes it more difficult to estimate service levels from month to month which then affects recruitment. We have a limited service in Gwynedd at the moment but this is an area we would like to develop more.

In an endeavour to find out what impact our respite services have on unpaid carers, we send out customer surveys each year. 2023-24 feedback was very positive, with the following being noted:

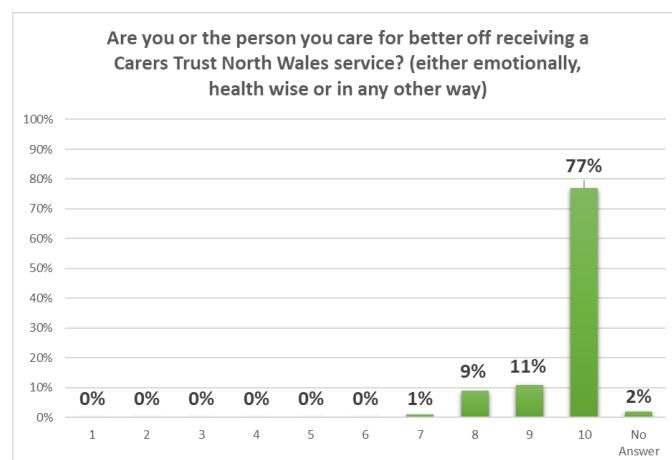
### Extract from Independent Evaluation Report:

*In conclusion .... There are sadly many carers within the service who struggle to cope on a day to day basis and are desperately clinging on in need of higher level support. The work done by Carers Trust North Wales is the tip of the iceberg in terms of the need for carer support across North Wales and is frustratingly constrained and hampered by limited financial resources.*

*The ability and commitment of Carers Trust staff is without question, if any Local Authority or indeed WG needed evidence of "need", they need look no further than the service user feedback of 2023-24.*

### Results from our 2023-24 survey:

**When asked, all carers responded that they felt better after receiving a sitting service to help them in their caring role**



Whilst we continue to strive to provide respite services to carers, we have also needed to look for other funding opportunities to remain a viable and financially sustainable organisation. We always ensure that any grants or contracts we apply for will be of benefit to unpaid carers, ensuring that our ethos of supporting carers and offering worthwhile services is foremost in our minds. These projects are highlighted in the following pages.

## CARERS SUPPORT FUND



Our Wellbeing Team, funded by Welsh Government's Carer Support Fund, has had a busy year supporting carers in all counties across North Wales. The Team consists of three Wellbeing Officers—Bryan who works in the East, Kate who covers central areas, and Manon who works in the West. They have been able to provide carers with information and advice, help with form filling, and help to access grants. They have been able to put people in touch with other services which are available in their local areas. The Team work in the community and can offer home visits too. We also have a Parent Carer Wellbeing Officer who works in the Conwy area and she helps families and children, providing practical and emotional support. She can provide 1-1 support to children, and also facilitates groups.

The Carers Support Fund also enables unpaid carers to apply for grants to ease financial difficulties. Individual grants are available for food shopping, white goods, household items, and IT equipment, and any other requests which carers can show would be beneficial to them. Each individual grant can be for up to £300 per carer.

The Wellbeing Service and Carers Grants is funded to the end of March 2025, but as the initiative has been so successful and so well received by carers, it is hoped that WG will announce that the funding will be ongoing.

**In the last 12 months, under the Carers Support Fund, Carers Trust North Wales granted the following to unpaid carers in North Wales:**

**190**  
**individual**  
**grants**  
**to carers**

**£54,800**  
**distributed**  
**directly to**  
**carers**

## SHORT BREAKS FOR CARERS



In January 2023, we applied for funding to Carers Trust Wales, the National Co-ordinating Body for Welsh Government's newly commissioned £9m Short Breaks Scheme for carers. In March we found out we had been successful with our proposal and were awarded £88k to roll out our project at the beginning of the next financial year.

The project, which we call *Amser Ni / Me Time* enables carers to take a break from their caring role in a variety of different ways. The Scheme has been designed so that the funding can be used as flexibly as possible. This has given us the opportunity to consult with carers on what breaks would be the most important to them, both on an individual basis or for a group day out. Our focus was to ensure that unpaid carers could have their own choice on what they would like to do, and they didn't hold back, coming up with a range of ideas for group activities. Here are some of the things we have been able to arrange over the year:

- A Trip to Erddig Castle
- A Trip to Llanberis
- Afternoon Tea
- Workshops—Christmas wreath-making & daffodil planting
- Cookery sessions for young carers
- Christmas Dinner
- 90 tickets to the pantomime for children and families

*'Thank you for a day  
full of laughter,  
friendship and kind-  
ness xx'*

*'Let's do it again'*

*'Just what I needed  
and at a time when  
my stress levels are  
high'*



## SHORT BREAKS (continued)

For carers applying for individual breaks, we put a short, straightforward application process in place stressing that the panel would consider ANY type of break. Carers could choose to either do something on their own or with friends and family, or have a break with the person they care for. If they opted for a break on their own, we were able to make sure arrangements were in place to look after the person they care for. A lot of carers applied for meals out or cinema trips with the family, other applications were for trips away including going to Devon for the weekend, staying at Haven, festival tickets, school residential trips etc. It was lovely when we started receiving postcards and holiday pictures from all over the UK!

The project also enabled us to fund an additional Hafan Ni Day at our Dementia Centre in Colwyn Bay. Hafan Ni is a club for people with Dementia who come and spend the day together in the Centre, allowing their carers have some time to themselves.

The Short Breaks Scheme has been a very positive initiative, enabling us to provide co-produced and person-centred breaks to carers. Carers have been empowered to ask for things they actually want to do, and we have been able to say 'YES' to so many varied requests. We have been successful in applying for continuation funding for 2024-25, so are looking forward to facilitating many more



**Any unpaid carer of any age caring for a family member, friend or neighbour is eligible to apply for a short break, so call us on 01492 542212 to request an application form.**

(we do have to limit carers to one application over a 12 month period to reach as many carers as possible)



## MEMORY SUPPORT PATHWAY—DEMENTIA CENTRES

BY TOBY FAGAN—DEMENTIA SERVICE LEAD

Our Dementia Centre Service which is part of the regional Dementia North Wales Memory Support Pathway has continued to develop over the last 12 months. Six Centres are now established in North Wales, one in each Local Authority area, with some satellite hubs in more rural areas.



We have expanded services during the year and have introduced hairdressing, chiropody and dental sessions (this may vary per Centre), and we now produce monthly diaries of 'What's On in your local Centre' which we publicise via Facebook and our website. Our weekly Taith Ni groups (a group for people with Dementia and which also gives carers a chance to come together separately for peer support) are as popular as ever and dates/time are also included in our 'What's On' pages. At the end of March 2024, the Dementia North Wales Memory Support Pathway reached it's two year anniversary. We are looking forward to all partners involved in the Pathway (Alzheimers Society, Carers Outreach, NEWCIS, and us) coming together to not only celebrate the achievement but to discuss ways of improving and developing the Pathway collaboratively over the next 12 months.



A highlight of the year was attending the National Eisteddfod on the Llyn Peninsula in August 2023. We were able to talk to a lot of carers and raise awareness of what the Pathway can offer to people with Dementia and their families.

At our stall Ffion Travis, CTNW, and Kerry Owen, Alzheimers Society, were delighted to chat with Rhun Ap Iorwerth, Leader of Plaid Cymru (opposite) to let him know what services are available in North Wales.



In January 2024, Gwenno Davies, our Dementia Service Lead, sadly decided to retire. She joined the Dementia Service in 2016, and has been a driving force in developing the service over the years working closely with people with dementia and their carers to deliver the type of support they were asking for. She will be hugely missed, but we wish her every happiness in her well-earned retirement.

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES

BY EVIE ROBERTS—CHILDREN'S CO-ORDINATOR

During the year we had several regularly occurring groups such as craft club, games night, cookery club and a monthly swimming session. These are always popular and are held at the Centre in Mochdre.

We also had lots of one-off special events such as prize bingo which was fantastic! We had a hall full of families, a raffle and extra games to win prizes.

Other events included a beach trip, a fun sports day, cinema trips, Bodnant gardens trip, Plas Newydd, Easter trail, Foel Farm and relaxing yoga. We also use local facilities such as soft play centres, which are great for the children to run off some steam!

Lastly, we put on two large events, Christmas and a summer fun day, both were a big hit, we even had Father Christmas join us and hand out selection boxes that were donated to us.

It was a busy year, and one that saw many happy faces, supported carers and friendships developed. We have lots of new children joining the groups as well as those who return for their favourite sessions.



## VOLUNTEERS

Our fantastic team of volunteers is growing across North Wales, and we are hugely grateful for all that they do. A lot of the volunteering work takes place in our six Dementia Centres, where they help out to make sure that everyone who comes along is put at ease and has an enjoyable visit. Our volunteers help to make people feel safe, engaged and less isolated by their Dementia.

Bertie, pictured opposite, is a popular member of our Volunteer Team. He is so good at being a volunteer, we bought him a little coat which he loves to proudly wear!

**If you're interested in voluntary work, please ring our Volunteer Co-ordinator on 01492 542212.**



## DONATIONS

Thank you so much to each and every person who sent a donation to help us in our work. This year we received a fabulous and much appreciated **£16,849.00** in total received across all counties.

We particularly thank:

**Rhosneigr Swimmers—for their New Years Day swim raising £1,150.00**

**Coleshill Lodge—raising £325.00**

**Maesdu Golf Club—raising £375**

**Rowen Carnival—raising £250.00**

**The Card Network—donating £200.00**

**David Joinson & Sons Quality Meats—raising £1,000 at their charity BBQ**

And thank you so much for all the In Memoriam donations we received over the year.

## GOODBYES & WELCOMES

We said some sad goodbyes in 2023-24, firstly to Shara Evans, our Administrator, who left us in October 2023, and then to Esther Sankey-Noor, our Finance Officer, leaving in November 2023. As we've already referred to, Gwenno Davies our Dementia Centre Lead made the decision to retire in January 2024, having successfully steered the Dementia Team through the transition of moving from the Dementia Support Service to becoming part of the Dementia North Wales Memory Support Pathway. We miss them all.

We welcomed Misty Roberts to the office team in January 2024, taking over from Shara as our Office Administrator. We were also delighted that Iona Davies and Louise Green joined our Dementia Team as Dementia Co-ordinators. Iona works from the Denbighshire Centre and Louise works in Wrexham.

Finally, Kathryn Elsmore has joined us as a Carer Support Worker and is providing valuable support to unpaid carers in the Flintshire/Denbigshire areas—thank you!

## INSPECTIONS

### ISO9001:

Over the last two years we have been looking at our management processes to ensure that our systems are in excellent shape to support the high quality services which we provide across North Wales. As part of this and to ensure quality across the board, we underwent an ISO9001 audit, an external national standard for quality assurance. We found that working towards this standard was an extremely helpful process enabling us to focus on what was needed organisationally to help us improve. After an on-site visit to our office in July 2023, we were delighted to be awarded the UKAS accredited Standard.



### CIW Inspection:

As well as an independent evaluation of our management processes, we were also inspected by the Care Inspectorate Wales in August 2023. The Care Inspectorate Wales are the independent regulator of social care and childcare in Wales. We were very pleased to receive a first class report on our care services, with no recommendations for improvement. To see our report in full, you can visit their website: [www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)



## AND FINALLY OVER TO YOU:

We always save the last word to you, here are a few of the comments and feedback we've received over the last 12 months:

- **'I don't feel like I'm on my own any more'.**
- **'I could not have survived without Carers Trust, they are such a big help to me. I can't thank them enough'.**
- **'Excellent Services'**
- **'We were not in a good place until we had the carers'**
- **'I don't know what I would have done without my Carer Support Workers, they go the extra mile and really do care about the person they are dealing with'**
- **'This service has been fantastic and a real lifeline'**
- **'I was able to rest, recover and be stress free'**
- **'That one a day a week I know you're coming, I sigh with relief.'**
- **'If it wasn't for you I don't think I could cope. I would not be able to leave the house at all.'**
- **'You made a big difference. I was able to play golf and my wife really enjoyed being with xxxxx talking and even singing to CDs'**
- **'Wonderful and very appreciated'**
- **'Extra hours always welcome'**
- **'The service was very reliable and efficient, very caring personnel'**
- **'So happy with your service'**
- **'Understanding of my husband's complex needs and his anxieties. Very professional'**