

**Together
we can make
change that
saves lives**



Samaritans Cymru
Impact Report 2017/18
#SamaritansCymruImpact

SAMARITANS

CYMRU

In memory of Carol Fradd



This Impact Report is dedicated to Carol Fradd.

Carol sadly passed away on 5 May 2018. She was a Samaritans listening volunteer in Wales for 11 years and held various roles during that time, including Regional Partnerships Officer for Wales and the Marches, Functional Lead for Education for the UK and Ireland and Samaritans Cymru Board member.

In 2017, she became Branch Director at Newport and Gwent Samaritans, a role that she approached with her usual energy and enthusiasm. In particular, she was a passionate advocate for improving emotional health education in schools in Wales and we are immensely proud of her contribution to the Assembly inquiry into the emotional and mental health of children and young people in Wales in January 2018.

“Carol was a dedicated volunteer and a true inspiration to so many at Samaritans. She cared deeply about Samaritans and our callers and she always strived to make a real difference in all her work.

All of us who had the privilege of knowing her will greatly miss her drive, commitment, passion and humour; she was an absolute pleasure to work alongside.”

Ana Laing, Chair of Samaritans Cymru Board

About Samaritans

Our vision is that fewer people die by suicide

Offering emotional support

We support anyone who needs us, round the clock, 365 days a year, through our 201 branches across the UK and Republic of Ireland.

We offer people a safe place to talk any time they like, in their own way, about whatever's getting to them. We also offer our service in Welsh through our Welsh Language Line which is open 7 days a week.

Working in partnership

We work with other organisations, agencies and experts to achieve our vision.

Our partnership work includes:

- **The Rail Industry Suicide Prevention Programme (RISPP)** – a partnership between Samaritans, Network Rail and British Transport Police.
- **Our work in prisons** – we work with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), Scottish Prison Service (SPS), Irish Prison Service (IPS) and Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) on suicide prevention through our Listener Scheme.
- **Our work in schools** – we work with schools to support young people through our teaching resources and our suicide response service.

Reaching out

We specifically reach out to high risk groups and communities, such as military personnel, veterans, young people, men and those living in areas of deprivation.

Training

Each year, we deliver training to hundreds of organisations and workplaces. Our award-winning training team delivers our 'Managing Suicidal Contacts' course to rail staff and other networks across the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

Influencing public policy

We strive to influence policy and legislation across the UK and Republic of Ireland. We play a major role in the development of national suicide prevention strategies and are members of each nation's national suicide prevention advisory group.

Media influencing

Research shows there is a strong link between depictions of suicide in the media and suicidal behaviour imitating those depictions. We monitor news reporting of suicide daily and contact editors to request changes if we have significant concerns over the content. Much of this work is done through our Media Guidelines for Reporting Suicide, which were first published in 1994 and have been regularly updated. We also work with programme makers to advise on scripts and content for news, drama and documentaries and provide educational training to media outlets.

Welcome

In 2017, 360 people died by suicide in Wales; this is around 3 times higher than the number killed in road accidents

Suicide rates are 2 to 3 times higher in the most deprived areas compared to the most affluent

Men aged 40–44 have the highest suicide rate in Wales

The latest statistics for Wales show that 360 people took their own life in 2017. 77% of these were men and 23% were women. The male suicide rate is more than three times higher than the female rate.

In Wales, suicide is a major public health issue but significantly, it's also a major inequality issue. Living in poverty or being socially isolated increases an individual's risk of suicidal behaviour. Many of those who work with high-risk groups in Wales are acutely aware of the situation and are eager to reach out and help those who are struggling to cope. At Samaritans, we are proud to work with these partners to try and reach high-risk groups and raise awareness of the risk factors connected with suicidal behaviour.

Effective suicide prevention in Wales relies on multi-agency and cross-governmental action and the complex nature of suicide means that it in order to address it, action needs to be taken by a range of organisations and agencies. Our work on socioeconomic disadvantage and suicide in 2018 has highlighted this more than ever before. People experiencing emotional distress

and suicidal behaviour continue to present at clinical settings such as A&E or their local GP surgery. However, our work with partners and stakeholders, shows that frequently, people present in community settings such as foodbanks, jobcentres and banks, and to frontline services, such as Police and Fire and Rescue. Only 1 in 3 people who die by suicide have been in contact with mental health services in the year before their death. It is crucial we provide basic training to staff who are often supporting the most vulnerable people in our society. It is not necessary to be an expert in suicide prevention to be able to respond compassionately to distress and make a difference. Suicide prevention training should form a major part of local suicide prevention and it is one of the most effective ways in which we can reach the many people experiencing emotional distress in Wales.

“Helping a person will not necessarily change the world, but it can change the world for that person”

Anonymous

Our work over the last two years has focused specifically on high-risk groups, such as young people, men, those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage and those in the criminal justice system. We influence both policy and practice and provide a direct service to the public in a range of ways including through our telephone service and outreach into communities. We could not achieve this without our wonderful volunteers who freely give so much time and dedication to our organisation. In Wales, we have a strong team of 600 volunteers who manage and deliver our emotional support service and reach out in to their local communities. This kind of local expertise is vital and we need to act at community level to make sure the most effective ways of reducing suicide are in place right across Wales.

Above all, we believe that suicide is preventable and there are actions we can take individually

and collectively to reduce it. We hope our 2017/18 Impact Report demonstrates how important prevention and early intervention are and how we are working across Wales to make sure our message is heard. Whoever we are, as members of the public, from those involved with schools, to those involved with prisons, from job centres to A&E, we all have a responsibility to do all we can to prevent suicide. Sometimes this can be as simple as showing compassion to those experiencing distress. Compassion can change and save lives. We should never underestimate the power of listening and human empathy, both of which are core values of Samaritans. We must continue to encourage help-seeking behaviour. We should challenge the stigma which surrounds the expression of emotional distress. Everyone has moments in life where they struggle to cope and if given the time and space, people can often find a way through their problems.



Sarah Stone

Sarah Stone
Executive Director for Wales



Ana Laing

Ana Laing
Chair of Samaritans Cymru Board
and Trustee for Wales

Wales data

For the period 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018, figures for emotional support offered by Welsh branches was as follows:

- We answered **176,865 calls for help** – this equates to 1 call every 3 minutes.
- The primary concerns raised by callers were based on loneliness and isolation, family, mental health problems, physical health and illness and relationship problems.
- Thanks to an increase in volunteers, we **extended the opening hours of our Welsh Language Line** from 28 to 49 hours a week.
- Branches organised and ran **509 outreach events** where volunteers interacted with an estimated 21,000 people.
- We have a total of **601 volunteers in Wales**; 500 of these are listening volunteers and 101 are support volunteers who work in areas such as fundraising, publicity and outreach.
- Volunteers at branches in Wales gave **36,582 hours and over £500,000 of their time**, based on the ONS median hourly rate of pay, to supporting people experiencing emotional distress.
- Branches in Wales have continued to **build valuable partnerships** in their communities. These include; the police service, fire and rescue, schools and colleges, Network Rail, Arriva Trains Wales, National Offender Management Service (NOMS), foodbanks, job centres and local suicide and self-harm forums.



**1 CALL
EVERY
3 MINUTES**

**WELSH LANGUAGE LINE
OPENING TIMES EXTENDED**



**101
SUPPORT
VOLUNTEERS**

**601
LISTENING
VOLUNTEERS**

Developing and shaping policy in Wales

Ruth Sutherland, CEO Samaritans, Sarah Stone, Executive Director for Wales. John Griffiths AM, Jenni McCartney, Chair of Samaritans and Christopher Mill, Samaritans Cymru Board Member at the launch of *Dying from Inequality – Finding a way forward for Wales* in the Senedd, Cardiff



Children and Young People in Wales

Since the launch of our teaching resource, DEAL (Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening), and welcoming the Donaldson report in Wales, we have worked on several important policy areas relating to the emotional and mental health of children and young people.

We have called for basic emotional and mental health training in Initial Teacher Training (ITT), alongside mental health awareness training for all existing staff. Most significantly, we have called for the statutory inclusion of emotional and mental health education on the curriculum. We believe the new curriculum offers the opportunity to introduce a new culture and support the mental wellbeing of the whole school community, contributing to mental health reform. This message has received significant support and coverage in the policy and media arenas.

In 2017, we called for a short debate in the Assembly Plenary which would focus on this area. The topic 'Developing Emotional Resilience in our Children and Young People' was indeed debated and highlighted as an important policy area for the National Assembly. Following this, the Children, Young People and Education Committee of the Assembly launched an inquiry into the Emotional and Mental Health of Children and Young People. We provided written and oral evidence for this inquiry and strongly welcomed the final report *Mind Over Matter* and its recommendations. We took part in a panel at the launch event in which we highlighted the relevance of our Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening resource (DEAL) and of whole school awareness raising around emotional wellbeing.

Suicide and Poverty

In February 2018, we launched our latest report *Dying from Inequality – Finding a way forward for Wales* which builds on UK Samaritans research and highlights the link between poverty and suicide. The report was launched in the Senedd in Cardiff Bay and sponsored by John Griffiths AM.

Our report sets out 10 recommendations, including a call for Welsh Government to set out a Wales Poverty Strategy. We also called for better public information to support financial literacy and help to reduce unmanageable debt, better support for those bereaved by suicide and a call for specific investment in community groups to tackle loneliness and isolation. We have received widespread and notable support for this report and we know many people are working hard to raise awareness of this link. This report has formed the basis for our policy action plan for Wales, with one outcome being our creation of a 'Working with Compassion' toolkit. The toolkit encourages and equips frontline services and sectors to act compassionately when dealing with customers, clients or service users who are experiencing emotional distress. We launched it on World Suicide Prevention Day 2018.

SAMARITANS CYMRU

Working with Compassion
A Toolkit for Wales

Helping people in Wales develop compassionate approaches at work. Compassion can change and save lives.

View or download at samaritans.org/wales

Gweithio gyda Thosturi
Pecyn Cymorth i Gymru

Yn helpu pobl yng Nghymru i ddatblygu ymagweddau tosturiol yn y gwaith. Gall tosturi newid ac achub bywydau.

I'w weld neu ei lawrlwytho, ewch samaritans.org/wales

#WorkingWithCompassion #GweithioGydaThosturi



Susan Francis, South Wales Valleys Samaritans Project Officer, Sarah Stone, Executive Director for Wales and Emma Gooding, Policy and Communications Officer giving evidence to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

Loneliness and Isolation

We have worked hard to raise awareness of the links between loneliness and isolation and suicidal behaviour. Loneliness and isolation can have a serious impact on physical and mental health and is a risk factor for suicidal behaviour and suicide; it is one of the most common reasons that people call our helpline in the UK. We have also worked to highlight the different groups affected by loneliness and those at risk, such as young people, men and older people.

We welcomed the National Assembly consultation on loneliness and isolation in Wales and provided written and oral evidence to link this major public health issue to suicide. In addition to this, we were pleased to hear that in response to the evidence it received on the links between loneliness, isolation and mental health, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee of the Assembly would be launching an inquiry into Suicide Prevention in Wales. We have since welcomed the recommendations of the Committee report and have been encouraged by the Welsh Government's commitment to addressing loneliness and isolation as a national priority. We look forward to contributing to the Welsh Government consultation on a cross-government strategy on loneliness and isolation.

Suicide Prevention

In August 2017, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee released their forward work programme, with 'Suicide Prevention' being its top priority. We strongly welcomed this focus and have been encouraged by their work. The Committee conducted an inquiry into suicide prevention to which we provided written and oral evidence. We were able to highlight the importance of access to talking therapies, the need for compassionate care and we continued to lobby for compulsory emotional health lessons in schools. We were grateful to all branches in Wales who provided us with local input and hope our collective evidence has helped to shape future policy.

We welcomed the recommendations made in the midpoint review of Talk to Me 2, the suicide and self-harm prevention strategy for Wales 2015-20. As contributors to this review and as members of the National Advisory Group to Welsh Government on Suicide and Self Harm, we are particularly encouraged to see the reference to our report on socioeconomic disadvantage and suicidal behaviour and the longer-term objective that the impact of socioeconomic inequalities on suicide and self-harm should be acknowledged and addressed across strategies and initiatives.

Samaritans – in the community

Andy Thomas, route managing director for Network Rail in Wales and Borders with Charlotte Spear, PCSO for British Transport Police



Supporting the Rail Industry

In 2010, Samaritans formed a partnership with Network Rail and we have been working together with the British Transport Police and the wider rail industry to deliver a programme to prevent suicides on the railway and to support those affected by them. Since 2010, we have trained over 500 rail staff in Wales through our Managing Suicidal Contacts course.

In Wales, this work with the rail industry focusses on seven key areas:

1. Engaging the rail industry in suicide prevention and support activities;
2. Reaching out to those most at risk;
3. Suicide prevention training;
4. Supporting people affected by a traumatic incident;
5. Support at stations following a suicide;
6. Working with the media to encourage responsible reporting of rail suicides;
7. Working with police and health services.

2017/18 figures for the Wales Network Rail route:

- We have trained **120** rail staff on our Managing Suicidal Contacts course.
- We have trained an additional **18** rail staff on our Trauma Support training course.
- We have held **26** outreach events at Wales stations.
- We have installed Samaritans posters at all rail locations of concern.

Supporting schools

Samaritans in Wales supports schools, college communities and other youth settings in a variety of ways:

- We offer our free online teaching resources (DEAL – Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening).
- We provide talks given by our volunteers.
- We support schools and colleges in the planning and implementation of a postvention response in the aftermath of an attempted or suspected suicide (Our Step by Step service).

In collaboration with the Healthy Schools Team in Cardiff, we supported a DEAL pilot in Cardiff for the 2016/17 academic year. This pilot supported five schools in Cardiff to implement the DEAL programme into their curriculum. This pilot was evaluated in 2017 and showed very promising results. We are pleased there is an increasing awareness of DEAL as an emotional health programme for schools in Wales.

Pupils Views on Deal

- 79% of pupils said they would recommend DEAL to others.

“I now understand how to look after my emotional health, and I am a lot better at recognising when other people need help because of their emotional health.”



Supporting Prisons

The Listener Scheme started in HMP Swansea in 1991 and now operates in nearly every prison in the UK and Wales. The Listener Scheme is a peer support service, that aims to reduce suicide and self-harm in prisons. Samaritans volunteers select, train and support prisoners to become Listeners, who in turn provide confidential, emotional support to their fellow inmates who are struggling to cope.

In 2017, Listeners in Wales responded to more than **2,100** requests for emotional support from fellow inmates. The new prison in Wrexham, HMP Berwyn, opened at the end of February 2017 with a Listener Scheme in place from day one. Supported by volunteers from four branches, the Listener Scheme has continued to support the prison's growing population. In 2017-2018, the Welsh Language Helpline also received over **550** calls from HMP Berwyn.



The Welsh Language

Samaritans have a Welsh Language Scheme, approved by the Welsh Language Commissioner in 2014.

We have a dedicated Welsh Language line which was first set up in 2010 to help Welsh speakers who needed emotional support. Samaritans volunteers have worked to increase the level of support available. The Welsh Language support line had previously been open 28 hours a week but has now been increased to 49 hours.

We also extended our correspondence service so that it is available in Welsh. This service means anyone who needs emotional support in Welsh can send a Freepost letter, which some find to be a more personal, thought-provoking way to get their feelings across.

We have promoted our Welsh Language emotional support service through targeted campaigns during the National Eisteddfod for Wales and St David's Day in partnership with Network Rail.



The South Wales Valleys Project

In 2015, we launched our South Wales Valleys Pilot Project. The project sought to reduce emotional distress and lower the risk of suicide in the Valleys by increasing access to the Samaritans emotional support service and encouraging help-seeking behaviour. We had no branch located in the South Wales Valleys area and it had been a long-standing ambition to establish a presence there.

The pilot project succeeded in recruiting volunteers and in establishing a volunteer structure and in 2018, Samaritans agreed to continue the work of the project and to establish a permanent presence in the Valleys. South Wales Valleys Samaritans (SWVS) continues to develop and to deliver outreach and awareness-raising activities. We have provided emotional support in a wide-range of community settings including; custody suites, hospitals, pharmacies, job centres, foodbanks and through 'Feet on the Street', night-time shifts which offer the public emotional support in busy areas in Merthyr Tydfil and Aberdare. We also supported a major fundraising event called Mathewfest. Family and friends of Mathew Harvey, a young man who had recently taken his own life in Torfaen were keen to raise money for South Wales Valleys Samaritans whilst raising awareness of male

suicide and our emotional support service in their area. This was a very positive way of engaging with a local community during a tragic time.

A key achievement of the South Wales Valleys Project was its valuable partnership with South Wales Police, through their work with Merthyr Bridewell police station:

- They provide confidential emotional support to individuals while they are in custody.
- Individuals in custody are offered a call to Samaritans and a call from Samaritans when they leave, along with our publicity materials.
- Over 60 Custody Sergeants have received training to raise awareness of the scheme and understanding of Samaritans service.
- Our awareness posters have been spray-painted on the walls of all 42 cells to remind detainees that they do not have to be alone.

A dedicated news feature was aired in February 2017 as part of Channel Four News. The partnership and news coverage has sparked discussion across the UK and South Wales Police are now continuing to discuss similar partnerships. Swansea, Bridgend and Newport Samaritans are now conducting shifts in their local Custody Suites.

We would like to thank The Waterloo Foundation for generously supporting this innovative programme.

“The work undertaken by the Valleys Project is inspiring. Their dedicated volunteers are successfully reaching out to communities in areas of high socioeconomic deprivation, who do not traditionally contact Samaritans.”

Samaritans Branch Visitor, 2018

National events



The National Eisteddfod for Wales

Volunteers from branches right across Wales have represented Samaritans at the National Eisteddfod for Wales in Abergavenny and Cardiff. Both events have provided us with an important opportunity to promote our Welsh Language emotional support service.

Pride Cymru

Volunteers from Wales branches have taken part in Pride Cymru for 2017/18 along with the parade that takes place in Cardiff City Centre. We have used our presence at Pride Cymru to make sure everyone in Wales, including the LGBTQIA+ community, knows we are there for them.

“As a patron for Pride Cymru and supporter of Samaritans in Wales, I’m really pleased that Samaritans volunteers are attending this year’s event to raise awareness of their emotional support service among the LGBTQIA+ Community of Wales. Being true to yourself is so important and you can always be yourself with Samaritans who are there to support everyone across Wales.”

Nigel Owens MBE

Cardiff Half Marathon

In 2017, we took part in our first ever Cardiff Half Marathon as a Samaritans Wales Team. The team was made up of staff, volunteers and supporters. The marathon was a great success with lots of fundraising and awareness raised for Samaritans in Wales – we signed up for 2018 in a flash!

Compassionate Mental Health

For 2017/18, we have chaired and taken part in three Compassionate Mental Health conferences. These gatherings focus on moving towards a more co-productive, psychosocial approach to thinking about mental health and designing and delivering services. They also have a strong focus on building community and connection.

Hay Festival 2018

We were delighted to be involved in the Hay Festival as part of a panel discussing men and suicide. The event, which was called ‘Men and Suicide: Making sense and building resilience’, discussed how men may be vulnerable and how communities may rise to the challenge of male suicide.



Samaritans Cymru – in the media

Samaritans publishes *Media Guidelines for Reporting Suicide* and provides a comprehensive media advice service for journalists and programme makers to support safe and informative coverage of suicide and self-harm.

Research has consistently shown links between certain types of media coverage of suicide and increases in suicidal behaviour among vulnerable people.

In Wales, we have continued to work with the press and media to encourage safe and responsible reporting. We have advised on news content, scripts and programmes within the Wales context.

In 2017, we visited the ITV Wales head office to provide Media Guidelines for Reporting Suicide training to journalists, correspondents and staff. The training session was a great success with over twenty staff in attendance, including the Deputy Head of News.

Targeted advertising

Using targeted advertising for emotional support and volunteering in 2017/18, we aimed to reach a wider audience of men, specifically in areas with higher suicide rates. We received high praise for both our Petrol Pump and Kwik Fit campaigns and were nominated for an Ad Media Targeted Campaigns Award for the latter.



Our branches – key achievements

In 2017, we were glad to welcome Joanna Emerson as the new Regional Director for Wales and the Marches.

“Our branches in Wales have continued to grow and develop in 2017/18 and I am very proud of their progress. They manage our emotional support service which is of course rewarding, but also very demanding at times. They manage this alongside crucial outreach and fundraising work in their local areas which requires great dedication. I would personally like to thank every volunteer in Wales for their brilliant work and look forward to seeing their continued success in the future.”



The Samaritans of Haverfordwest and Pembrokeshire

Pembrokeshire successfully extended hours of availability to callers by opening new shifts. They also held a major Sing for Samaritans event with Côr Dyfed Choir, one of the leading choirs in West Wales! The choir concert successfully raised lots of money and awareness for the branch.

The Samaritans of Rhyl and North East Wales

Rhyl has been one of the instrumental branches in increasing the hours of the Welsh Language Line. They have been working with HMP Berwyn and have helped to train Welsh-speaking prisoners to become Samaritans Listeners. They have become part of the North Wales Suicide and Self Harm Forum and have held various outreach events in local rail stations.





The Samaritans of Aberystwyth and Mid Wales

As a small branch, Aberystwyth have been focusing on volunteer recruitment and achieved great success. They ran outreach events at their local train station and successfully kept their branch open for 24 hours on July 24 as part of Samaritans 24/7 event. A brilliant volunteer from the branch was also interviewed for a Christmas Day programme for BBC Radio Wales. The interview focused on what it means to be a volunteer, particularly over the busy Christmas period and was part of the Connie Fisher show.

Bridgend Samaritans

Bridgend has been working in partnership with South Wales Police and providing emotional support to detainees in the local custody suite. They also attend the Princess of Wales Hospital and local food banks to provide emotional support to those in distress. The branch continues to provide outreach work in schools and has given talks on emotional health at Porthcawl and Treorchy Comprehensive. They have continued to deliver “Feet on the Street” outreach sessions in Bridgend Town Centre on certain weekends and have joined the Welsh Language Line for the first time.

Powys Samaritans

Powys had another successful year at the Royal Welsh Show and the Hay Festival. Their Samaritans charity shop is going from strength to strength, which is a huge benefit for the branch. A great deal of work has been carried out in local schools using our DEAL resource which has promoted emotional health education in schools throughout Powys. Training has been arranged for Custody Officers in Brecon Police Station, with a view to cascading it to other forces in the Dyfed Powys Police area. They also took part in the St David’s Day campaign at their local station, which promoted the Welsh Language emotional support service.

The Cardiff and District Samaritans

Cardiff have a newly formed education team which have been working hard over the last 12 months. They have been promoting our school resource, DEAL, and have delivered many awareness talks to schools in the area. They also have a newly formed fundraising team who have been out and about, from Cardiff train stations to Motorpoint Arena. Cardiff branch have represented Samaritans at the Eisteddfod and Pride Cymru.





Newport and Gwent Samaritans

In 2017, Newport branch celebrated their 50th Anniversary and show no signs of slowing down. During this period, the branch developed a partnership with Gwent police to provide emotional support to detainees in the custody suites. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding was attended by Jeff Cuthbert, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent and Assistant Chief Constable, Rhiannon Kirk and reported by BBC Wales News and by local press. Newport branch has also been working with South Wales Fire and Rescue to address signage at high-risk locations.

North West Wales Samaritans

Bangor Branch have also been instrumental in promoting the Welsh Language during this period. Volunteers from the branch have attended their local Approved Premises, formerly called a Bail Hostel, on a monthly basis to offer emotional support. They also attended a Sarah Millican show in Bangor to raise awareness of our services and fundraise for the branch.



Swansea Samaritans

Swansea Samaritans volunteer William Jenkins received a British Empire Medal for his involvement with Samaritans, which goes back more than 40 years – a brilliant achievement.

The branch work in partnership with the local bail hostel offering emotional support. The branch also attends the local custody suite to offer emotional support to detainees and are active members of mental health forums in Carmarthen, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea.

Swansea branch regularly provides talks about Samaritans work to other third sector organisations and regularly visit the DVLA to give talks to staff about Samaritans services. They have continued to provide emotional support to people via Links, an organisation who support veterans. They are also active members of the Suicide and Self Harm Forum for Mid and West Wales.

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