



**Annual Report
2017 - 2018**

**Action in
Caerau & Ely**



ace

Action in Caerau & Ely
Gweithredu yng Nghaerau a Threlái

Our Ambitions For Our Community Through Our Own Efforts



Chair's Report

After Communities First: We're planning to stay!

When ACE set out six years ago, with the modest but unlikely goal of continuing after the government's Communities First funding eventually stopped, we had no idea how we were going to achieve it. But we were determined to end the previous cycle of short-term projects run by outside agencies with short-term benefits for Ely and Caerau.

Today ACE is a charity still totally rooted in the area, and delivering what is almost certainly the longest surviving community development initiative Ely and Caerau have seen.

Our new Strategic Plan for 2018 to 2021 retains the absolute commitment to working not for, but with local people. Practical projects are continuing to support residents to tackle disadvantages which limit their opportunities – unemployment, low wages, poor physical or mental health, limited skills and qualifications, and lack of facilities.

It may not seem a big deal to say we're still doing the great work we have always done. Yet it's a remarkable achievement. The end of Communities First would always mean the withdrawal of by far our largest single source of income, and threaten us with losing our

highly skilled and committed workforce. But meticulous planning, a fanatical programme of fundraising, and new income-generating activities helped us to avoid the disastrous cutbacks last April, as we originally feared. In the end, we kept most of our staff, and almost all our previous activities were ingeniously either preserved within ACE or, in one case, transferred to Cardiff council.

Remarkably, ACE's growth has actually accelerated in the past six months as we have been released from the obsessively narrow Communities First constraints on project activities, staffing, spending and reporting. The imperative of self-reliance has led to improved financial systems and business management, and more effective roles for senior workers. Recent months have seen fundraising records broken, most notably by the award of £500,000 over three years under the Big Lotteries Helping Working Families programme, and £200,000 over four years from the Moondance Foundation to contribute to the CAER Hidden Hillfort Project. Meanwhile volunteering, especially in our community garden and nearly new shop, is thriving. ACE's local and national reputation is growing exponentially. Crucial

support from the Charities Aid Foundation has equipped staff to engage in constructive long-term planning, to focus on essential income-generating activities, and to introduce new systems for realistically evaluating progress. We would have earned none of these opportunities without support from residents and politicians, and of course all the marvellous people at the Dusty. It's hard to praise highly enough the loyalty and skills of our staff team, the enthusiasm and hard work of our volunteers and the vigilance and generosity of our board. It's been a joy to work with them.

There are still many hurdles ahead – such as delivering on the promise of our training and consultancy support enterprises, realising the demanding CAER Hidden Hillfort Project, expanding volunteering activities, and funding urgent refurbishment work at the Dusty Forge. From now on grants will not come so easily, and earning trading income will certainly be tough. But who could have imagined two or three years ago that we would even be talking today about such extraordinary future challenges?

*Mel Witherden,
Chair, November 2018*

ACE – a year of change and a plan for the future!

An introduction to ACE

ACE – Action in Caerau and Ely is a community organisation located in West Cardiff. We have over 1000 local members, many of whom are active contributors to local community development and regeneration efforts. We are very proud that over half our staff team live in Ely and Caerau and many projects and activities are run with or by volunteers. We manage three community buildings and deliver a range of community based activities that help people, many of which you will read about in this annual report.

Developing a ‘theory of change’

2017-2018 has been a pivotal year for ACE. The Welsh Government’s Communities First programme, a crucial source of funding and support for ACE, closed in March 2018. At the end of 2017 we were fortunate to secure a two year grant and consultancy support from the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) under their Resilience programme. This has helped us build on strong foundations to ensure our sustainability for a bright future. We have taken this resource, and our new-found independence, as an opportunity to re-visit some fundamental questions including ‘What is ACE for?’ ‘What are we trying to achieve?’ and ‘How will we create change?’ We have sought to generate a vision that is shared by members, trustees, staff, volunteers and key partners through participatory workshops and much discussion and debate! The largest, and most exciting, of these was the Theory of Change workshop held on 2nd November 2017 at the Dusty Forge, with over 35 participants collaborating to agree the following purpose and role for ACE:

ACE will work with communities to achieve lasting positive change for an equal and just Cardiff by:

- Mobilising local people behind a shared vision
- Co-producing services and activities that make use of assets and meet needs
- Driving positive social change, making our communities fairer and more inclusive
- Securing income and maximising community assets for sustainability and community resilience
- Working closely with private, public and third sector organisations to secure the benefits of their resources for our communities

ACE will nurture and develop local assets and opportunities to meet needs through the following types of projects, activities and services:



Theory of Change at Dusty Forge, Nov 2017.

- Community support, including crisis support and personal finance help
- Health and well-being work, including mental health support and training
- Training and support for the unemployed
- Work with children, young people and families
- Community-led activity
- Heritage, arts and culture activities
- Social enterprise and local economic development
- Community and citywide influencing and campaigning.

How we choose to work is as important to us as what we actually do. We are committed to working with local people as full participants in the design and delivery of projects, services and activities. We experience and treat our community not primarily as a problem needing solving, but as a vibrant network of communities that has many assets and opportunities which have been undervalued and ignored – these include skills, knowledge, experience, social networks, good will, buildings, land, resources, culture and heritage. These commitments mean we are strongly influenced by the theories and practices of ‘Asset Based Community Development’ and ‘Co-production’.



Our Goals

Together, we have identified the following **organisational objectives**:

Objective 1

Create an increasingly sustainable organisation

Objective 2

Deliver services that make use of assets and meet needs

Objective 3

Invest in, and help support and sustain existing work with volunteer and community groups

Objective 4

Build partnerships and utilise others' capacity

Objective 5

Continue to diversify and increase the level of income streams

Objective 6

Build capacity, developing new opportunities for work

Objective 7

Build capacity through buildings and space

ACE Strategic Plan 2018-21

ACE's success so far is a result of hard work backed up with a strong 5 year strategic plan that carried us from 2013 to 2018. Building on this experience, we have used our theory of change to develop a new strategic plan which will cover the three year period from 2018 to 2021. The plan provides aims and objectives that support our vision to work with communities to achieve lasting and positive change, and to become a sustainable organisation - here for years to come.

Our objectives are deliberately broad, they all cascade into relevant projects and activities, and support ACE's key aim to create **'Vibrant, equal and resilient communities for all, where people find fulfilment in themselves, each other, and the place where they live'**. An annually updated **Operational Plan** ensures that staff and volunteers have clear **Work Plans** linked to ACE's wider organisational aims and supporting our objectives.

Learning from our experiences (monitoring and evaluation)

It is crucial that we gather information that tells us whether or not our Theory of Change, Strategic Plan and day-to-day activities are effective in meeting our aims and objectives and fulfilling our vision. In the past, this 'monitoring and evaluation' work has been heavily influenced by the requirements of the Welsh Government. We have taken the opportunity to design a new approach that puts organisational learning at its heart. We want everyone involved in ACE - staff, volunteers, trustees, members, participants and partners - to be reflecting on our experiences together, to be identifying what works (and what doesn't!) and to be getting better at what we do. We will use the following approaches to put people's experiences at the heart of our learning:

- **Online surveys, promoted through social media.** These will seek basic information from a large and diverse group of people regarding their experiences of engagement with ACE. Did they feel welcome and valued? What changed for them as a result? Will they come back? Some of you may have responded to one of these already. If not, we'd encourage

you to do so! - <http://bit.ly/ACECommunitySurvey>

- **The collection of 'Most Significant Change' stories.** A handful of personal stories of change will be collected by trained story collectors. These will explore, in detail and in their own words, what has changed for people as a result of their involvement with ACE. These stories will be discussed amongst panels of participants, staff, volunteers and partners, allowing a collaborative approach to learning and to understanding the significance of each story for how ACE works and how we could work better. *You will see some early examples of these transformational stories in the*

pages of this report.

- **Project specific interviews and surveys.** These will collect demographic information and feedback related to specific projects. They will be particularly useful in meeting the monitoring and evaluation requirements of project funders and will be designed specifically to meet these needs.

The collaborative learning from these approaches will be used to review and update the Theory of Change and Strategic plan and to make changes to our practice where necessary. We are looking forward to becoming an organisation with learning and development at its heart.



Garden Party, Dusty Forge, 2018.

Hard work, achievement & looking forward

ACE's future is incredibly exciting, we are a community led charity which has a plan, purpose, and a fantastic group of volunteers, trustees and staff. During our first 5 years of operation ACE has added over £5 million to the local economy across Cardiff West, whilst a large proportion of this income was a result of the Welsh Government Communities First programme, over £2 million has been gained through social enterprise, grant applications and fundraising.

ACE is now a charity standing in its own right, working with residents to see meaningful change across

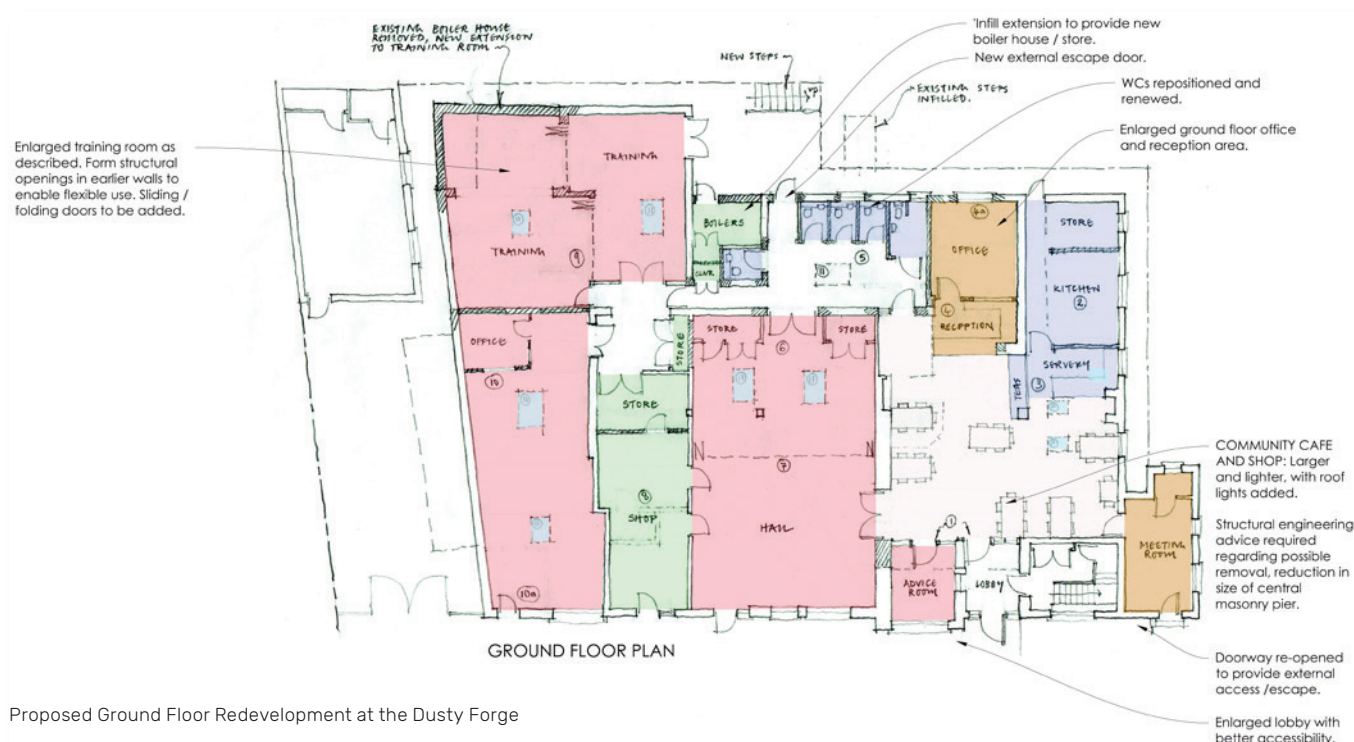
communities. This is a huge achievement which continues to address an unfair 'stigma' attached to Ely and Caerau, something residents of Ely and Caerau can be really proud of.

Looking forward, through careful planning, creative thinking and community based delivery we will build on this success. ACE will enable community action through the direct provision of services, the development of community assets and social enterprise. We will access funding to support our work, and will work with people,

community groups, organisations and businesses, directing our resources in a sustainable and effective manner.

Please read through this report and get excited about what has happened, and what will happen in the future. Of course, do also think about how you could be part of ACE's ongoing journey – **our ambitions for our community through our own efforts.**

John Hallett (ACE Director) and Dave Horton (ACE Development Manager), October 2018



Proposed Ground Floor Redevelopment at the Dusty Forge

Improvements at Ourplace: Dusty Forge

Known as a pub for many years, the Dusty Forge now has a vibrant existence as a community space which hosts a team of ACE volunteers and staff, an expanding garden, a training centre, arts workshop, community shop and a community hall used by volunteer groups, partners and community members. As I write this the main hall is full of children and parents enjoying a spooky Halloween Party!

Looking forward, the Dusty is in urgent need of modernisation. The current building comprises at its core an historic inn (circa 1905) and a

variety of later structures which have been added over the last century or so as the building has been adapted for its changing uses. The ad-hoc way the changes have taken place have resulted in a building with a complicated layout. Its construction and 'fit-out' is now in a poor condition.

Over the past year ACE has been working hard to develop plans that will improve the Dusty – with proposals for new toilets, a new heating system, renewal of drainage, improved natural daylight, a redesigned downstairs to make better use of space, and improved access for anyone who

wants to use the building, to name a few. The project will enable us to preserve and celebrate developments to date, whilst creating a modern facility that provides full access, and an environment designed to support a wide range of co-produced activity for many years to come.

Our next challenge is to raise the money for the upgrade which the Dusty so badly needs.

For further information, please contact ACE on 02920 003132.

Stories of change – peoples' lives transformed

Most Significant Change (MSC)

ACE are developing a new way of evaluating our projects called Most Significant Change (MSC). This enables some of the people involved with ACE projects to tell their "story of change", which are then recorded in an interview and used for evaluation. MSC is different to traditional ways of evaluation as those involved can choose to talk about the changes which have been most important to them.

Part of the story collected, is about what we did at ACE that helped the change happen. This enables us to learn how we can improve and develop our work. The extract below is from Gareth, who has recently given us his story of change. Gareth received help from Nerys Sheehan (ACE Community Support programme) with benefits issues).

What it was like before?

I got a brain injury, I've had two mini strokes and I suffer with short term memory loss. I do so many things that I don't need to do or wasn't intending to do! I found Nerys, I calls her my angel because I would be dead by now if it wasn't for her. Because I suffer from mental problems and was suicidal.

When I first met Nerys I was at the end of my tether. I can't fill forms, got to the point where they would come through the door and I would just tear them up and put them in the bin. I applied for PIP, and then they suspended my money for 6 months. They wouldn't even speak to me on the phone I phoned up [DWP] and said "why have you stopped my money?", they said "we are assessing you" I said "you have already assessed me" and that was it, they just hung the phone up! I was living on peanuts, I'd buy my food (not much of it), buy the gas and electric, pay the water, pay my rent and then have no money left. So I thought this is no good. I was totally negative about everything, it was just crushing my head and I wanted to be out of it.

I was always a worker, I used to do two full time jobs, 132 hours a week driving a truck and then worked for Safeways in the nights. I loved it. My missis didn't like it, God Bless her she's gone now. Got to do what you got to do, you've got to be responsible when you've got kids.

What caused the change:

I sat down and had a chat with Nerys about my problems, that was very helpful it was brilliant, maybe relaxing my mind more than anything, putting my mind at rest. When I saw her again, some time after that she just said "right we'll sort that out now I've got some more information" and from then on she did everything for me. She was absolutely fab.

You can tell when you are talking to her she gives a damn, she cares. Most people in the government you go in and they sit there until you've finished speaking, but don't take anything in, you get no response in writing or anything like that. It doesn't seem to mean anything to them. Until I came up here I didn't realise that there were real helpful people about.

What it was like after:

The biggest change is that I'm still alive. I did try to kill myself. It was my own bad carpentry that saved my life! I now get ESA and PIP and I can pay my bills. Most things have got better, some things haven't altered, but that is nobody's fault just my brain! My outlook on life is better, I'm more positive now and I was negative.

We are planning to collect 30 stories from people involved in different ACE projects before the end of the year and if successful, will start to use the MSC approach more widely.



Community Health workshop, Sept 2018.

ACE Health review

This year has seen the handover of several key projects from ACE to the community, in response to the ending of Communities First funding. Although the loss of funding and staff has been difficult for ACE, the response from the community has been very positive, with local volunteers and groups taking on the delivery of two growing clubs, the fruit and veg co-op, and the mental well-being group 'Retreat' (previously The Getaway).

The end of Communities First funding has provided a valuable opportunity for staff to re-design and re-focus work based on local need and community-led ideas. The Theory of Change workshop in November 2017 provided invaluable information which has helped to shape a fundraising strategy for work going forward. In 2017 ACE were successful in winning a contract to deliver mental health support in East Cardiff and this work started in early 2018. Staff are now delivering one-to-one guided self-help to patients referred by a mental health nurse, as well as the

two courses, 'Stress Control' and 'ACTION for Living', which are open for anyone to attend. Feedback from people accessing all aspects of the service has been very positive, with comments including 'Easy to understand information, brilliant tutors, warm and friendly atmosphere' and 'Fantastic! I have found the service extremely helpful'. In May 2017 the ACE Health Team started delivering a patient engagement and participation pilot for the South West Cardiff Primary Care Cluster, supporting patients from local GP Practices to have more of a voice in the work of the Cluster. Work during 2017-18 included engagement 'pop-ups' at GP Practices to recruit patients to the project, a series of formal and informal workshops to explore the issues of most importance and relevance to local patients, and two surveys to gather patients' opinions on specific issues. A total of 159 people were engaged during this first year of the project and 5 key project ideas were put forward by patients from the local surgeries, to be taken forward during year two of the project.

Hazel Cryer (ACE Community Health Coordinator)

ACE - Supporting the local community

ACE's Community Support Programme is continuing to support some of the most vulnerable members of our community, through building positive trusted relationships with people accessing our services. We believe our person-centred and holistic approach is key to effectively tackling people's underlying issues.

This year our work has been funded through grants from the Scottish Power Peoples' Trust and NatWest Skills and Opportunities Fund, which have enabled us to extend our reach across the city and focus on supporting people in fuel and food poverty, and building financial skills and confidence. Our services include regular drop-ins providing information and advice on benefits, budgeting, and reducing energy costs, home visits and workshops with groups.

We have maintained our strong partnership with Cardiff Food Bank and developed our outreach programme further by providing a new drop-in service at Boomerang Cardiff, a charity providing essential

household items to struggling families. We are also working to provide budgeting support to Remploy clients at their office in the city centre.

Some of our outcomes this year include providing support to 347 fuel poor and vulnerable households, enabling them to reduce energy and water bills, and obtaining essential household items for 19 families through accessing grants. Through carrying out benefit entitlement checks and support for benefit applications, we have enabled vulnerable households to increase their annual household income by an estimated £101,417.

Incomes increased by £100,000

This work wouldn't have been possible without our committed team of volunteers and we would like to take this opportunity to thank Doug, Amanda and Linzi for their support. We are now able to offer placement opportunities, with Linzi being our first official placement student. Linzi is undertaking her Advice and Guidance

qualification through the St Giles Trust and we are excited to be supporting her through her journey.

We would also like to thank Michaela, Arthur and Natasha for their tireless efforts in the Community Clothes Bank. This volunteer led service is often the first point of contact for some of the more vulnerable community members who then find themselves accessing the wider support project as a result of the kindness they are shown in the shop. We have supported the volunteers to take on additional surplus food collections and now offer fresh food daily provided by Greggs, Lidl, Tesco and Waitrose.

With funding for our project now always a challenge, we are committed to exploring different ways of working to sustain the project to ensure we can continue to provide effective services that help build the strength and resilience of our community.

Sam Froud-Powell (ACE Community Support Coordinator)



CAER Heritage 'Hidden Hillfort Project'

From Left: Al Murrey presenting award to Viv Thomas, Dave Wyatt and Dave Horton.

Since June 2017 we have been working towards the submission of our second-stage application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the 'Hidden Hillfort Project'. This will build on the huge success of CAER Heritage to date, bringing together local people with ACE, Cardiff University and other partners to co-ordinate a program of research, curation and infrastructural development. The project promises to provide life-changing opportunities for local people involved whilst helping reveal the extraordinary Caerau Hillfort, and the communities of Caerau and Ely, to the wider world. Plans include the creation of a Community Heritage Centre and heritage trails with multi-platform

interpretation, alongside a myriad of learning and creativity opportunities.

Over the last fifteen months, more than 2,000 participants and 200 volunteers have contributed alongside major partner organisations (including Cardiff University, Cardiff Council, National Museum Wales, Cardiff West Community High School and Cardiff Story Museum) to help develop the detailed plans and proposals. These include the architectural plans for the Community Heritage Centre (designed through a series of creative workshops with local people), scheduled monument consents, a conservation and management plan for the hillfort, and a detailed business plan outlining

the project's sustainability in the long term. Considerable match funding has also been obtained from Cardiff University, the Moondance Foundation, First Campus, Wales and West Housing Association and the Cardiff Archaeological Society.

The project team has been working hard to meet the application deadline of 30th November for a decision from the Heritage Lottery Fund in March 2019. If successful, we very much look forward to working with local people to turn our ambitions into a reality from April 2019.

We were delighted that in November 2017 the CAER Heritage Project was awarded the Times Higher Education Award for Outstanding contribution to the local community. This is a huge achievement and a testament to the hard work of staff and volunteers.

Olly Davis (Archaeological and Project Director, CAER Heritage Project)



Citizens Cymru



Citizens Cymru Wales Assembly, May 2017.

Founded in October 2014, Citizens Cymru Wales builds diverse alliances of communities organising for power, social justice and the common good. ACE is one of 14 member organisations which include churches, schools, mosques, unions and other civil society organisations. We all have the following in common:

- **Deep roots** in our communities
- An interest in developing people to become **effective community leaders**
- A vision for greater **social justice**
- A willingness to turn that vision into **action for the common good**
- A hunger for **change** which local people can see, taste or touch.

We are non-partisan, but we promote greater democratic participation in public life. Our broad-based



ACE Arts – 'Breaking the Mould' & CAER Studio project

ACE continues to offer a vibrant and diverse range of opportunities for creative expression through ACE Arts, seeking to promote, nurture and celebrate local artistic talent whilst increasing opportunities for people to access the tremendous therapeutic benefits associated with creative activities. Over the past year ACE Arts has gone from strength to strength, welcoming new community members to our core Breaking the Mould group and collaborating with several other exciting organisations and artists. Our ACE artists have continued to deliver some fantastic regular creative workshops and outreach workshops, in collaboration with the Grow Well project run by partners Grow Cardiff. Our work has been "taken on tour" to the RHS show at Cardiff castle, PRIDE Cymru, and with the Cardiff People First group. The Dusty Community Garden celebration event in July attracted around 120 people and included 8 stalls and activities run

by invited community organisations. This was the perfect opportunity for Breaking the Mould artists to show off their talent!

The project is having a significantly positive impact on the well-being of our participants, who continue to thrive. We now have a permanent "outdoor gallery" of artwork in the Dusty Community Garden, displaying an eclectic mix of wire sculpture, ceramics, poetry, textiles, wall hangers, mosaic, weaving, willow and mural work, all hand-made by ACE Arts community members. After a call out for local artists, 7 community artists also displayed their work in the main hall gallery, which was for some an opportunity to display work publicly for the first time. Student work from Cardiff West Community High School was also shown at the event created for our CAER Studio Art Prize launched earlier this year, and was displayed as part

of the Youth Voice exhibition at St Fagans Museum.

CAER Studio is a collective of artists working under the ACE Arts programme in collaboration with the CAER Heritage Project, aiming to use art to share our community's amazing history. So far the team have produced 6 heritage themed products co-produced with community members, funded 5 artist commissions, printed 10,000 copies of the CAER Times newspaper, and launched our website and online shop (www.caerstudio.com). By the end of the year we will have delivered over 30 public workshops and events, created an installation for the brand new Cardiff West Community High School building, held two public exhibitions and run a large projection event and stall in the centre of town! We continue to gain positive feedback and coverage from both Breaking the Mould and CAER Studio. We are excited about the future plans for ACE Arts which include the further development of the Dusty Forge as a community art gallery, enabling local artists to go public with their excellent work!

Nic Parsons (ACE Arts Coordinator)



community organising method helps ordinary people to get a seat at the table with those in power and negotiate for change on the local issues they care about. Over the past year, ACE have been involved in action on the following issues:

- **Campaigns for a real living wage** (Citizens Cymru Wales have helped negotiate £15 million of

extra wages for Welsh workers since 2014)

- **Local community safety.** Pushing Cardiff Council for safer parking arrangements outside a local primary school
- **Ensuring a welcome for refugee families.** Arranging community events at the Dusty Forge that build friendships and trust between local people and refugees.

On 2nd May 2017 Cardiff members of Citizens Cymru Wales organised an accountability assembly that brought together leaders from the main parties standing in the Council elections on 4th May. Over 200 members listened to the four leaders present their vision for Cardiff, before asking them to work with us on key issues if elected. This has led to follow up meetings and further action for change. This kind of democratic engagement and



accountability is what Citizens Cymru Wales is all about. We are currently training more staff and volunteers in community organising skills so we can build on this crucial aspect of ACE's work over the next few years.

You can find out more at www.citizensuk.org/cymru



Dusty Forge Community Garden – Grow Well and Billy Bees Green Fingers

The Dusty Forge's gardens have been transformed over the last year by an incredible group of volunteers from across 3 community projects. In Spring expect to see the verges teeming with daffodils and tulips our trademark 10ft sunflowers bringing colour late into October. The new relaxation garden tucked away beyond the car park is sprawling with wildflowers, humming with bees, while willow dragonflies patrol the newly built wildlife pond.

A huge variety of food can be found throughout the year in the Dusty garden growing spaces – cucumbers, courgettes and tomatoes have made an intoxicating jungle of the new polytunnel. While potatoes, beans, spinach, carrots, beetroots and big gem lettuces have all made their way to the community shop in abundance. The closer you look the more you will find. Clay creatures lie calmly tucked away, canvas prints and miniature roundhouses expertly made by the Breaking the Mould art group.

Existing volunteers from Billy's Bees Green Fingers teamed up with The Grow Well project running every Monday afternoon to develop the garden space and provide a supportive environment for members of the community. The aim has been to provide regular times for volunteers to learn and grow and improve their health through spending time in the garden, physical exercise, healthy eating and being part of this supportive group. The team of volunteers

alongside those from the Lansdowne Surgery garden also designed and created a show garden that won a commendation at the Cardiff RHS Show 2018 a huge success for their hard work.

The Dusty Garden has supported Syrian refugees, individuals and their families with Alzheimer's, individuals with a wide variety of mental health issues who have found the garden a supporting, nurturing space to rebuild themselves and their confidence.

More exciting things planned for 2019 and there's an open invitation for people to join the volunteer group.



RHS Show April 2018.

ACE Community Shop



The Dusty Forge community shop and clothes bank is going from strength to strength, receiving food from Tesco, Lidl and Greggs, as well as clothes, toys, baby food/nappies and toiletries. Responding to requests from community members, they now provide pet food and supplies too.



The shop is open to anyone and aims to give practical help and be a place to find out what's happening in our community and get involved.

The shop is run by Natasha, Michaela and Arthur, who give huge amounts of their time to pick up donations, sort through and display stock and help community members. Food and clothes are available for an optional donation, and people using the shop have been very generous, giving either money or donations of unwanted clothes or household items to keep the shop running. The volunteers have big plans for the shop and they are working with ACE to develop a new community food club, or "Pantry", where members can choose healthy and affordable food for a small weekly donation.

The shop always needs more donations, which can be dropped off during opening hours Monday to Thursday, 10am – 4 pm.

The Dusty Shed

The Dusty Shed is part of the 'Men In Sheds' movement and provides a facility, predominantly but not exclusively, for older men with time on their hands to undertake practical tasks, most commonly woodwork, but in reality anything that they wish to turn their hand to. By doing so it encourages men to engage and get involved in their local community. We're about social connections and friendship building, sharing skills and knowledge, and having fun.



The Shed began at the beginning of 2016, working in what was the old betting office alongside the Dusty Forge. Through the generosity of local businesses, individuals and charities we have completely refurbished a semi derelict building into a functioning wood work shop.

The Shed has two official open days of Tuesday and Friday when we have a paid Development Officer on site. This is funded by the Public Health Lottery Trust through to 31st March 2019, and has seen an increase in interest from local men (and women) in what we are doing. The Shed is open on the other days with the men taking responsibility for ensuring everything is run properly. The Dusty Shed receives enquiries from across Cardiff by individuals, relatives of someone they think would benefit, and from organizations both from the public and charitable sector.

Shed volunteers have made a range of items through individual and group activities; from bird boxes, a Children's Castle, garden planters, toolboxes, wooden and acrylic pens and restoring old hand tools and furniture.

The Shed has secured funding from the YMCA of just under £2,000, which will go towards additional health and safety improvements since the initial building works in 2015. This will add additional socket points, electricity



Toolbox making in the Dusty Shed.

stop buttons points around the building, and a new vacuum, an air filtration system and some furniture/storage modifications.

Moving forward, the Shed volunteers are interested in making items for sale and are currently producing indoor Christmas Trees. There is currently a funding application to continue the work after March 2019, with a Craftperson/Tutor as well as the Development Officer. The Craftperson will help develop more structured learning objectives for volunteers as well as enhance the knowledge and expertise of the Shed volunteer group.

If this is something that appeals to you either as something you would like to come along to or get involved behind the scenes where we particularly need help please get in touch.

Diana Gardens Regeneration Project

After successful funding bids to Tesco Bags of Help and the Postcode Local Trust a part-time garden and volunteer coordinator started in September 2017. We have held three community meetings and weekly garden work sessions for most of the year. Cardiff Council's Community Ranger Service and Innovate Trust helped us with some much needed scrub clearance and it was all hands on deck as we manually installed a storage container on site in December! Keep Wales Tidy, Innovate Trust and

Cardiff Rivers Group have helped us clear rubbish, and RSPB kindly donated £250 for a skip, ahead of our first community engagement day on 22 Feb, 2018. RSPB and Buglife led bug-hunting, den-building and making bird-feeders (attended by 23 people). In April we held a barbeque, then a Butterfly event in August, attracting 40 people. Membership of the Facebook group has grown to 61 from about 20. As of the end of October 2018 there were 6 regular active volunteers and

local children recently joined a work session, picking up litter, which was really encouraging! Unfortunately, fly-tipping is still a problem. There is a huge quantity of historic waste to remove and more keeps appearing. We are gathering evidence to challenge the perpetrators. A joint funding bid to develop the garden and tackle fly-tipping with Keep Wales Tidy was submitted to the Landfill Disposal Tax Communities Fund in July, which was unsuccessful. However we received positive feedback, scored highly, and have been encouraged to re-submit an amended bid in January 2019. Other funding sources are being explored.

Follow our progress by joining our Facebook group 'Diana Garden Regeneration Project'

Sue Ansell (Community Garden Trainer & Volunteer Co-ordinator, Diana Gardens Regeneration Project)

Diana Gardens volunteers round up the rubbish!



ACE Community Events



Various community activities throughout 2018.

ACE continues to provide lots of fun community events that provide opportunities for people to come together, meet new people, and celebrate life in Ely and Caerau. It's been a really busy year again for us. We kicked off the New Year working in partnership with Love where you Live on an Ely Blitz Community Litter Pick. This was very successful, with 37 bags of rubbish removed from our streets.

During February half term we held a family fun day at the Gospel Hall in Church Rd with the CAER Heritage team, raising awareness of the CAER Heritage Project.

Also in February we teamed up with the Cardiff Rivers Group to help them clean the river's edge around Hamadryad Park. This was an extremely cold day but everyone still got stuck in!!

The Easter holidays were a very busy time for us at the Dusty Forge, we were very lucky to be able to have a Theatre company come and perform Almost Always Muddy in the car park of the Dusty Forge. They performed 3 shows over 2 days, some people enjoyed it so much they came back to watch it twice!

Also during the Easter holidays we held a number of arts and crafts sessions where children could make their own Easter bonnet, followed by a parade after to show off the hats that they had made!

At Diana Gardens we had an open day for community members to come and look around and see how they could get involved with volunteering.

ACE attended the Ely Festival in force this year with activities and stalls provided by the Dusty Forge Community Clothes Bank, CAER Heritage Project, and CAER Studio.

The Pizza Forge ovens were fired up providing hundreds of pizzas to happy hungry festival goers. We all had a great day and the festival turn-out was fantastic. We're looking forward to next year!!!

We celebrated all the hard work our volunteers put into ACE and the Dusty Forge by hosting a celebration meal together.

October half term was a really busy time at the Dusty Forge, with a huge gathering of ghouls for Halloween at our Monsters Ball and some spooky arts and crafts!

Caroline Barr (ACE Ourplace Officer)





ACE Training and social enterprise

Tutors and participants undertaking Health and Safety training at the Dusty Forge.

For ACE Training this was a year of development, growth and a move towards sustainability. Existing partnerships have been nurtured and new partnerships have been harnessed across the city.

The Training team have honed their skills, introduced new team members and delivered to an exceptionally high standard. Their commitment to supporting learners through their training experience meant that 71% were successful in passing the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) Health, Safety and Environment Test, enabling them to gain their CSCS card (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) and subsequent employment in the construction industry.

In March ACE Training's contract with ACT was renewed. This means we are providing the Level 1 qualification for Health and Safety in a Construction Environment and the CSCS Card Scheme to the Department for Work and Pensions and Welsh Government

Communities for Work and PaCE programmes for a second year running.

A strong indication of ACE Training's growth and sustainability can be seen in the achievements between April and September of 2018-19. Learner numbers increased significantly and the income generated was up by 65% on the same period in the previous year. Partnerships have continued to develop, with Gofal, Cardiff Council Into Work Services, Cardiff Youth Services, Taff Housing, Remploy, Direct 2U, the Department for Work and Pensions and United Welsh all using ACE Training on a regular basis. ACE Training has also made important progress in the private sector market with 5 new commercial businesses accessing our training offer.

For a second year ACE Training has been inspected by both the British Safety Council and CITB (Construction Industry Training Board) – with no fault marks.

We are exceptionally proud of these achievements and especially proud of the hard work and dedication of our new team members, tutors Dave King and Paul Chappell and Training Support Officer Fiona McCormick. The project is a prime example of the kind of social enterprise activity that helps deliver on ACE's vision and aims whilst generating income to sustain the charity.

ACE Community Enterprises will be working to expand the Social Enterprise activity coming out of Ely and Caerau. An Enterprise Plan will set out how to increase the output of existing enterprise and will develop emerging ideas and put in to place models to take them forward.

Michelle Powell (ACE Business Development Manager)

Communities for Work

This year was ACE's last delivering the Welsh Government's Communities for Work programme. 2017-18 built on the successes of the previous year and yielded great results yet again, seeing the delivery in Cardiff achieving some

of the best outcomes across Wales. **Total figures for the programme up to February 2018 showed that ACE engaged 465 participants with 176 gaining employment.**

In March 2018 Cardiff Council decided that they would bring the programme in house, delivering across Cardiff through their Into Work Services.



Carl Meredith is Caerau born and bred! He runs a successful building company.

Jean O'Keefe lives in Caerau. She sits on the Timeplace steering group.

Anne O'Regan (Vice Chair) lives in Caerau. She volunteers with Age Connects and Families Need Fathers/Both Parents Matter.

Gareth Pierce manages the Ely & Caerau Community Hub.

Mel Witherden (Chair) is a retired third sector/charity consultant.

Gloria Yates (Vice Chair) lives in Ely. She recently retired from leading Age Concern's Healthy, Wealthy and Wise project.

Barbara Cuddihy resigned her post during 2017/18. We thank her for the significant contribution she has made to ACE during her time on the board.

ACE Board of Trustees 2017-2018

The board of trustees is elected by the membership. We are grateful to the following people who have served during 2017-2018:

Tracy Cazanave lives in Ely, is a local volunteer and helped establish the Getaway/Retreat community group.

Marian Dixie lives in Fairwater. She is an active local volunteer and has worked for the NHS for over 30 years.

Martin Hulland is the head teacher of Ely and Caerau's new secondary school, Cardiff West Community High School.

Helen McCarthy lives in Ely and is a lead volunteer on the CAER Heritage Project

ACE Staff Team

Sue Ansell

Community Garden Trainer & Volunteer Co-ordinator

Mel Aver

Youth Support Worker

Caroline Barr

Our Place Officer

Hazel Cryer

Health and Wellbeing Coordinator

Olly Davis

Archaeological & Project Director, Hidden Hillfort

Becki Miller

Locality Project Lead Officer

Julie Evans

ACE Administrator

Denise Rahman

Mental health Assistant Practitioner

Sam Froud-Powell

Community Support Co-ordinator

John Hallett

Director

Dave Horton

ACE Development Manager

Kimberley Jones

CAER Development Officer

George Keane

Communications Officer & Dusty Shed Development Officer

Stacie Leek

Administration Assistant

Billy Mainprize

ACE Estates Assistant

Becky Matyus

Arts Co-ordinator

Nicola Parsons

Community Arts Development Officer

Michelle Powell

ACE Business Development Manager

Fiona McCormick

Training Support Officer

Hasan Roap

Finance Officer

Nerys Sheehan

Community Support Officer

Annamae Sullivan

Youth Support Worker

Carly Whelpley

Community Mental Health Officer

ACE Volunteers

Doug Stowell,
Rajinder Singh-Gill,
Diane Katy,
Lisa Twine,
Helen McCarthy,
Viv Thomas,

Cath Oakley,
Amanda Ward,
Amanda Fry,
Frankie Curtis,
Natasha Hayes,
Michaela Ward,

Arthur Brown,
Charlotte Granjon,
Chantelle Mitchell,
Moses,
Linzi Stone,
Sharon French,

Carl Thomas,
Amanda Cross,
Andrew Way,
Dave King,
Naomi Powell,
Richard Price,

Neil MacSorley,
Andy Power,
Clifford Ward,
Peter Collins,
Dylan Sutton,
Sue Ansell,

Doug Smith,
Peter Collins.

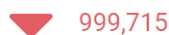
Plus many other volunteers who support ACE's work.

ACE Finance Report

Income & Expenditure



The amount of income received by ACE in 2017-18



The amount of expenditure by ACE in 2017-18



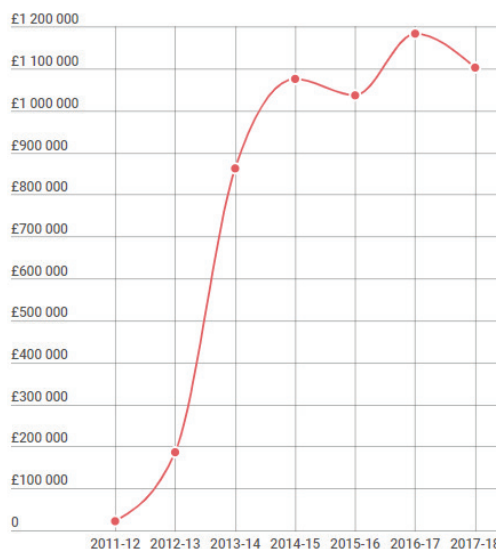
Number of of active projects in 2017-18

ACE received a total income of £1,102,978 in the 2017-18 financial year, majority of which was voluntary income such as donations and grants from government and other charitable foundations. Some of our biggest funders for the year included the Welsh Government, Heritage Lottery Fund and Cardiff Council. Of the above we spent £999,715 for the year.

ACE's income level has increased significantly year on year since becoming a charity in 2011. In 2011-12 ACE received £22,864, By 2014-15 and onwards, ACE's income exceeded £1m year on year.

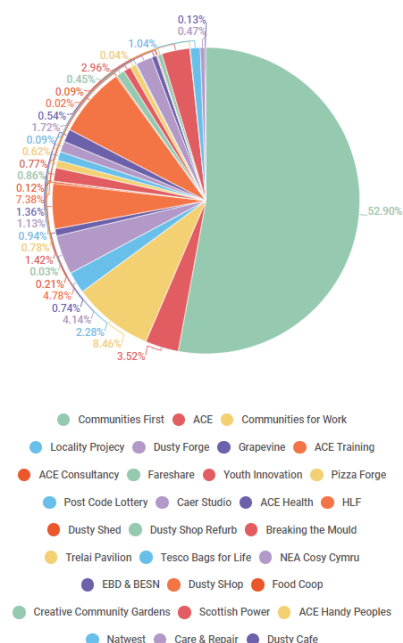
Income in 2017-18 was spread across 37 projects, delivering in Ely and Caerau and other communities in Cardiff. The biggest project was Communities First, which accounted for approx 53% of ACE's income (67% in 2016-17, 95% in 2013-14). Whilst this is a significant amount, more significant is ACE's success in following its strategic plan objective to diversify income streams

ACE Income 2011-2018



to address the announcement of the ending of the Communities First programme in 2017. During 2017-18 ACE received over £518,400 of non-CF income, self generating £147,749 via social enterprise such as rental, consultancy work and training, making good progress towards current and future plans.

Project Budgets 2017-18



ACE Projects



Thank you....

ACE would like to thank the following people for their contributions during the previous year:

The many **volunteers** who invest their time freely for the good of our community.

The **ACE staff team**, who continue to show real commitment to the cause and who regularly 'go the extra mile'.

Our **board of trustees** who work hard, in their own time, to steer the organisation towards a bright future.

Community groups and **partner organisations** who share our values and aims and who develop and deliver projects with us.

The growing group of **funders** who provide essential resources and support.

We look forward to continuing our work with you all!

Partners & Funders



Our Place: Dusty Forge,
460 Cowbridge Road West, Ely
Cardiff CF5 5BZ, Tel: 029 2000 3132

Email: info@aceplace.org
Website: www.aceplace.org
Facebook: ACE - Action in Caerau and Ely
Twitter: @elycaerau