



emmaus

South Wales

working together to end homelessness



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Emmaus receives £97,000 to survive lockdown

We were delighted to be awarded £97,550 from the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) to help ensure the vital support we offer to our formerly homeless companions could continue amid the coronavirus outbreak and lockdown.

The majority of the funds we need to survive are generated by selling donated items in our Bridgend, Maesteg and Porthcawl shops. While our shops were temporarily closed, we faced a 90% reduction in income.

The grant is being used to pay core salaries, along with meeting companion costs during the pandemic.

A home, a job, a purpose.

Emmaus South Wales supports formerly homeless men and women to regain control of their lives.

Companions, as residents at Emmaus South Wales are known, stay in our community for as long as they need to and there is no pressure for them to move on until they feel ready. During their time with us, they get the support they need, as well as meaningful work experience in one of social enterprises, funded training and an opportunity to regroup and take control of their lives.

Our community is supported by four shops in the South Wales area that are staffed by a full-time management team, volunteers and placements, as well as our other social enterprises such as house clearing.

Our largest shop is the Superstore in Bridgend, which stocks a range of furniture, clothing and new mattresses, along with bric-a-brac and other preloved items. We also have shops in Porthcawl, Maesteg and another high street shop in Bridgend.



Record-breaking reopening for Emmaus

On Tuesday 21 July, we opened our two Bridgend shops - the Tremains Superstore and our Caroline Street shop - after a 17-week closure and achieved record sales and a high volume of donations.

Mark, one of our companions, was in our Caroline Street shop the day it opened and said:

"Re-opening the shop was fantastic. Everyone had a few nerves before we opened because we were unsure how busy the high street would be. After the first few hours, we settled into it and customers began complimenting us on how good the shops looks. It felt like we were back to normal, albeit at a safe distance."

Having been closed for more than four months, we expected that people would be slow to return to our Bridgend Superstore and high street shop on Caroline Street, but that was not the case. We saw a 16% increase in sales compared with the same week last year, with a few days less trading due to reduced opening hours.

We would like to thank all of our customers. It was lovely to see lots of familiar faces, and plenty of new ones visit our shops. Our COVID-19 precautions are working well. Everyone is wearing face masks, sanitising their hands when they enter, and observing social distancing and the one-way way systems in place.



Julie's trustee story

I have been a trustee at Emmaus South Wales since 2017 and Chair of the Board since April 2019.

When I found out what Emmaus does to help people get back on their feet, I was reminded of a situation I had found myself in 12 years before.

I was a Finance Director for a law firm with a good salary and my own home. When I decided to set up my own accountancy business, I didn't really have any savings and left my job without any clients.

I moved in with my now husband around the same time as starting my business but kept the mortgage on my own house too. Three weeks after moving in, and three months after starting my business, he fell

fell from scaffolding in a serious accident.

He was in hospital for eight weeks, broke his back and his feet, and couldn't stand for three months. Mentally, the recovery from that kind of accident was difficult, and I tried to shield him financially because he had lost all his income which meant his bills weren't getting paid.

Suddenly, I was in situation where I had very little money coming in and two houses to pay for. My husband and I talk about this time often and neither of us really know how we managed to get through without losing everything. If just one thing had been different, like the mortgage company or our creditors saying no to new terms, then the whole situation

would have folded on us.

That's why Emmaus really resonated with me as a charity to become a trustee for.

Losing everything can happen to anyone. When we are in bad situations, it's so easy for it to spiral into something worse, whether it started with a relationship breakdown, losing a job, or anything else.

If someone becomes homeless, they need a sense of security. How is anyone supposed to piece their life back together when they don't even know if they'll have a bed the next week?

Emmaus gives people that security and the opportunity to rebuild their life and that's what really appealed to me.

Reusable

Throughout lockdown, our companions took to the sewing machines to create washable three-layer face masks using donated clothing and fabrics.

Receiving funding from the Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO) allowed us to purchase additional sewing machines and haberdashery equipment for our companions to use and allowed us to really scale up the project - making approximately 100 masks every week.

Ethical

When someone comes to Emmaus, we provide opportunities to learn new skills by working in our shops or through specialised projects such as upcycling. This has always been an important part of our charity and goes a long way to help rebuild their self-esteem and confidence.



Face masks

Made entirely from donated materials!

Face masks are available to purchase from our Tremains Road Superstore and our Caroline Stree shop.

Masks cost £6 each and all funds generated from sales goes towards our work.





Goodbye to our Cowbridge shop

Our charity shop located on the high street in Cowbridge is now permanently closed after five years.

Our Cowbridge shop opened in 2015 and became well known amongst locals for its friendly and welcoming atmosphere and wide range of secondhand treasures for sale. Here at Emmaus South Wales, we would like to thank our extremely committed and passionate team of staff, companions and volunteers who really helped to make our Cowbridge shop a wonderful place to visit and thank all of our customers and people who donated items over the past five years.

Cowbridge residents can still donate items to us by booking a collection online or calling 01656 750829. We would love to see Cowbridge customers in our other shops too:

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I really enjoyed volunteering in the Cowbridge shop because companions, staff, customers and other volunteers are so friendly. It's definitely the best place I've volunteered.

Our other shops:

Tremains Superstore: Tremains Road Bridgend CF31 1TZ

Bridgend Town Centre: 6 Caroline Street, Bridgend CF31 1DQ

Maesteg: 140 Commercial Street, Maesteg CF34 9DW

Porthcawl: 36-38 New Road, Porthcawl CF36 5DN

eBay: www.ebaystores.co.uk/Emmaus-South-Wales

Rob's Volunteer story



I'm from North Cornelly and started volunteering at Emmaus South Wales in February 2020. Prior to volunteering, I spent seven years as a full-time traffic warden for the council but took a year sabbatical due to depression and anxiety. As I started to get myself better, I began volunteering at Sue Ryder before discovering that Emmaus South Wales had vacancies.

At Emmaus, I first started working in the Porthcawl shop before moving over to the Maesteg shop. I volunteer wherever Emmaus needs me, and I normally do till work, sorting the clothing donations or just general helping out – I'm happy to do anything.

I love volunteering at Emmaus because you meet people with the same ethics and all the staff members, companions and other volunteers are extremely welcoming and friendly. Working alongside the companions, who are all being supported by Emmaus South Wales, is brilliant too.

One of the main things I've taken from the role so far is building my confidence. It's nice to have that interaction with so many new people coming into the shops. The more you interact, the better you get at it. I also love seeing the regular customers come back, it's one of my favourite things.

I can see myself volunteering at Emmaus South Wales for the foreseeable future. For anyone thinking about volunteering at Emmaus, I'd say go for it. It's an enjoyable place to volunteer and a great opportunity to make new friends. If you are someone like me that hasn't socialised in a while, it can really do you the world of good.





Volunteer with us

We couldn't do what we do without our fantastic volunteers and offer a number of rewarding voluntary positions within the Emmaus South Wales community and charity shops. You will work alongside our companions and staff to support our work, giving you the opportunity to meet new people and contribute directly to the success of our charity. If you would like to become a volunteer in our community please email info@emmaussouthwales.org.uk. We have the following roles available:

Sales Assistant

Community cook

Face mask production

PAT testing

Warehouse sorting

Bike Maintenance

community gardener

Fundraising

Community housekeeping

Community Assistant

Cleaner





Supporting us means we can continue to help those who need it most.

From donating goods to volunteering, there are many ways you can support us to support formerly homeless men and women.

Shop

Social enterprise is key to the success of our community and helps us to support people rebuild their lives following homelessness. We have four shops across the county selling quality second-hand furniture, household goods, clothing, and much more.

Donate

We accept donations of pre-loved items that are in good condition to sell in our shop and help fund our community home.

Book a free collection within the Bridgend area on our website or drop off bagged donations at our Tremains Superstore.

House clearance

We provide professional and affordable house clearance services for both domestic and commercial properties.

For a free quote, contact us on 01656 750829 (select option 1 and then superstore).

Don't forget:

Gift Aid your monetary or item donation and make it worth 25% more to us! Ask a member of our team for a Gift Aid form to sign up.

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