

Dysynni D^ogs

2022 FORECAST SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT REPORT

*"Nice to socialise with
like-minded people i.e.
dog lovers!"*



Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	5
1.0 Introduction	6
2.0 Purpose, Scope & Audience	7
3.0 Background & Context.....	8
4.0 Social Return on Investment (SROI) Framework	14
5.0 Stakeholder Engagement.....	17
6.0 Project Inputs.....	21
7.0 Outputs, Outcomes & Evidence.....	26
8.0 Valuing Outcomes.....	35
9.0 Establishing Impact	40
10.0 SROI Results	42
11.0 Sensitivity Analysis	43
12.0 Conclusion and key findings.....	44
13.0 Recommendations	45
14.0 Appendices.....	46
Appendix 1 - Dysynni Dogs Theory of Change	47

Executive Summary

The project was analysed using the Social Return on Investment (SROI) framework to understand the total value created for individuals who were referred to the project. The results demonstrate that significant value is created through the project.

THE RESULT OF £4.02 INDICATES THAT FOR EACH £1 OF VALUE INVESTED, £4.02 OF SOCIAL VALUE IS CREATED.

The purpose of this report is not just to demonstrate the social value of Friends of Dysynni Dogs activities, but also to provide the information by which improvements to service delivery are made possible. The measurement of social value should always be part of the ability to manage and make even more impact in the lives of members and other important stakeholders. With the grant from the Winter Pressure Fund, distributed and managed by Mantell Gwynedd, Dysynni Dogs have been able to upgrade their training equipment and in turn has enhanced the social impact of the Powerful Paws project. The outcomes experienced by the members of the Powerful Paws project includes a reduced **feeling of isolation / loneliness, improved mental well-being** and **improved physical health**.

The outcomes identified in the report have a positive link to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 'Healthier Wales' well-being goal, keeping in line of the vision of the Welsh Government and The Future Generations Commission in Wales. Furthermore, the Friends of Dysynni Dogs activities and impact on the members help alleviate some of the loneliness needs of the people of Gwynedd that were identified in the North Wales population needs assessment report published in April 2022.



Dysynni Dogs



86%
OF MEMBERS
EXPERIENCE A
POSITIVE CHANGE
IN THEIR MENTAL
HEALTH



86%
OF MEMBERS
FEEL LESS
ISOLATED AND
ALONE



76%
OF MEMBERS
EXPERIENCE AN
IMPROVEMENT IN
THEIR PHYSICAL
HEALTH



**£4.02
SROI**

THE OUTCOMES
EXPERIENCED BY THE
MEMBERS HAVE A
POSITIVE
CORRELATION WITH
THE 'HEALTHIER
WALES' WELL-BEING
GOAL OF THE FUTURE
GENERATIONS
(WALES) ACT 2015.



*Yn cefnogi grwpiau gwirfoddol a chymunedol
Supporting voluntary and community groups*



Acknowledgements

This report would not be possible without involving key stakeholders who helped us understand what had changed in their lives because of The Friends of Dysynni Dogs activities. We would like to thank the members for giving their time to attend the focus group and interviews and also in completing the survey.

We would also like to thank the Sally and team of volunteers for all of their input and support in writing this SROI report. Their energy and enthusiasm for the work that they do is evident.

Social Value Cymru team at Mantell Gwynedd

1.0 Introduction

This Social Return on Investment (SROI) forecast report will analyse the value of the Powerful Paws project delivered by The Friends of Dysynni Dogs between January 2022 – December 2022. The impact of the projects on the members will be considered but also on any other key stakeholders.

Through engaging with members receiving the service, Dysynni Dogs staff and volunteers and by examining information and data available, appropriate estimations have been made supported by secondary evidence.

The report will initially set out the background of the organisation and their services, followed by a discussion of the Social Return on Investment framework. The SROI results will then be discussed in detail in order to demonstrate the 'story of change' and value created for key stakeholders.



2.0 Purpose, Scope & Audience

2.1 Purpose and scope

The primary purpose of this report is to demonstrate the value of Dysynni Dogs Powerful Paws projects activities to the members, but also to provide the information by which improvements to service delivery are made possible by providing recommendations. The measurement of social value should always be part of the ability to manage and create even more impact in the lives of members and other important stakeholders.

2.3 Audience

This report has been prepared for both internal and external audiences. This report will demonstrate the Social Value and impact created by Dysynni Dogs in the lives of their members. This allows the Dysynni Dogs management team to understand what outcomes are most important for the members and support them to manage their impact. Funders and commissioners will also learn and understand the value created from their investment and the impacts of any additional investment of funding in the future.

3.0 Background & Context

Welsh Government, through the Health and Social Care Department, approached Third Sector Support Wales (TSSW) to help them work with and communicate to the sector the pressures that were being felt particularly in the care sector. From the conversations held and evidence provided WG agreed to distribute £1.5m of funding to the voluntary sector through TSSW so that a range of local provision could be provided to help alleviate some of the pressures being felt. The Winter Pressures Fund (WPF) was then established.

The Friends of Dysynni Dogs was one of 15 organisations supported by the WPF. Organisations supported in Gwynedd included, Maesgeirchen Partnership, Maesgeirchen Show Zone, Menter Ty'n Llan, Antur Adelhaearn, Wild Elements, Menter Llŷn, Snowdonia Donkeys, Friends of Dysynni Dogs, Royal Voluntary Service, TGP Cymru, Canolfan Felin Fach, Cyfeillion Croesor, Cwmni'r Frân Wen, Bethesda Athletic Juniors, Galeri Caernarfon and Porthi Pawb.

The purpose of the WPF was to provide funding to organisations working at a local community scale in Wales to help to alleviate pressures, create additional capacity/activities, or extend existing activities where other funds are running out. WPF priorities is to help projects supporting;

- Mental health
- Physical health
- Fuel poverty
- Community transport
- Food poverty

The Friends of Dysynni Dogs were able to buy improved and lighter training equipment made out of aluminium with the grant funding. The majority of the old training equipment was made of wood and difficult for members to carry and move around.

The equipment purchased with the Winter Pressure Fund includes;

- Aluminium A frame & see saw
- 6 jumps & 24 pairs of cups
- 5m tunnel & 4 sandbags
- Timing set
- Padded long jump
- Solar light

3.1 Key Organisation(s) and the need for the service.

Dysynni Dogs is a voluntary, not for profit dog training club based in Fairbourne, Gwynedd. They offer classes in obedience, agility, scent work, and canine conditioning. They also provide one to one behavioural training, dog walking and a letting out service, full or part day doggy day-care and training plans.

3.2 Project(s)Outline

The Powerful Paws project aims outlined in the grant application were to:

- Improve the physical health and mental wellbeing of members by promoting and encouraging active and healthy lifestyles.
- Improve the environment by promoting responsible dog ownership and encouraging the wider community to become responsible dog owners.
- Develop members' confidence and skills in training dogs in agility to the best standard possible and to organise and take part in competitions and displays of our work.

- Develop members' confidence and skills to a level at which they can compete with the best.
- Provide both local community and the wider community with somewhere to go and something to do.
- Opportunities for all to meet and socialise outdoors at a local site in a rural community where such opportunities are limited.

3.3 Establishing the need

The majority of the Dysynni Dogs members are over the age of 50, and many joined the organisation in 2020 as a way to deal with loneliness during lockdown, and to have a safe space to go with their dogs to train and exercise together. The service offered by Dysynni Dogs was vital for many, as will be highlighted in this section of the report, older people in Wales on average do not exercise enough on a weekly basis since the pandemic outbreak, as reported by Sports Wales survey in October 2020.¹

On March 11, 2022, the World Health Organisation declared that the coronavirus outbreak was a global pandemic (World Health Organisation, 2020)². The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted significantly on people's mental health. A study by (Talevi, Valentina Socci, & Carnaghi, 2020)³ reported in their findings that pandemics and epidemics can cause stress, fear, loneliness, boredom, frustration and in the most serve cases anxiety induced insomnia. Further, those with underlying mental health problems such as hoarding and/or obsessive-compulsive disorder before Covid-19 outbreak were at higher risk of further mental health

¹ <https://www.sport.wales/comres-research/comres-survey-2-october-2020/>

² World Health Organisation . (2020). *Coronavirus confirmed as pandemic*. World Health Organisation .

³ Talevi, D., Valentina Socci, M. C., & Carnaghi, G. (2020). *Mental health outcomes of the CoViD-19 pandemic*.

problems (Chatterjee & Malathesh Barikar, 2020)⁴. Many people suffered with isolation, anxiety, depression and harmful alcohol and drug use during the lockdown period (Kumar & Nayar, 2021)⁵. Figures by the UK Government shows an increase of people in the general population suffering with their mental health, from 20.8% in early 2020 to 24.5% in late 2021⁶ as a direct result of the pandemic. The impact of the Covid-19 on the general population mental health in Wales is greater than the UK average. In a report by Cardiff University Wales Fiscal Analysis⁷ 28.1% (up from 24% in 2019-2020) of people were suffering with their mental health during 2020-2021 as the country went in and out of lockdown and the added stress out social distancing and other restrictions (Rodríguez, 2021)⁸. Furthermore, 38.8% those who are classed as clinically extremely vulnerable in Wales have experienced negative mental health over the past two years, as reported by (Public Health Wales , 2021)⁹, especially feeling lonely and isolated. The campaign to end loneliness group highlighted key stats for loneliness and older people¹⁰;

- The number of over-50s experiencing loneliness is set to reach two million by 2025/6. This compares to around 1.4 million in 2016/7 – a 49% increase in 10 years
- Half a million older people go at least five or six days a week without seeing or speaking to anyone at all
- Well over half (59%) of those aged 85 and over and 38% of those aged 75 to 84 live alone

⁴ Chatterjee, S., Malathesh Barikar, C., & and Mukherjee, A. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on pre-existing mental health problems. *Asian journal of psychiatry*, 102071.

⁵ Kumar, A., & Nayar, K. R. (2021). COVID 19 and its mental health consequences. *Journal of Mental Health*, 30(1), 1-2.

⁶<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-mental-health-and-wellbeing-surveillance-report/2-important-findings-so-far>

⁷ https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/2533762/COVID-19-Mental-health-FINAL-08-07-2021.pdf

⁸ , J. (2021). *Covid-19 in Wales: the mental health and wellbeing impact*. Cardiff: Cardiff University .

⁹ Public Health Wales . (2021). *The impact on levels of health care use and mental health of the clinically extremely vulnerable*. Cardiff: Public Health Wales.

¹⁰ <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/the-facts-on-loneliness/>

- Two fifths of all older people (about 3.9 million) say that the television is their main company

The North Wales Population Needs Assessment report published in April 2022 reported that around 10% of over 65s are experiencing chronic loneliness at any one time, with the number expected to rise in the future, with 59% of older people living alone (northwalescollaborative, 2022)¹¹. Furthermore, the report also found that only 1 in 4 people in north Wales over the age of 55 are physically active, meaning they regularly exercise over 30 minutes every week. There is a strong link between increased participation in physical activity and improving the mental well-being of the people involved, especially in self-confident and self-esteem, as reported by (Biddle, 2016)¹².

¹¹ northwalescollaborative. (2022). *North Wales Local Population Needs Assessment*.

¹² Biddle, S. (2016). Physical activity and mental health: evidence is growing. *World Psychiatry, 15*(2), 176-177.

Case study

Member A is a lady in her 70s who has been a member of Dysynni Dogs for a long time. Member A discussed how she would have trouble moving the old training equipment which was over 10 years old and falling apart. The old training equipment was made of wood and very heavy to handle. Some of the old equipment was lost to a storm and the grant provided by Mantell Gwynedd helped The Friends of Dysynni Dogs buy new and lighter training equipment. Now members can move the new equipment more freely by themselves, whereas with the older equipment it took at least 2 to members to move.

Member A says, "I can do more with this equipment by myself, I don't have to rely on others to help me anymore". The result of having the new training equipment means member A no longer struggles to lift the equipment therefore **improving their physical health** and not having to rely on others helps members **mental well-being**.

"Our equipment was quite old and heavy to handle, so when some of the equipment was lost in the storm, we seized the opportunity to purchase better and lighter equipment with the help of the grant."

"The new equipment is much better – safer and lighter, so that we can arrange for people to train on their own as well as in a group. This helps a lot with confidence."

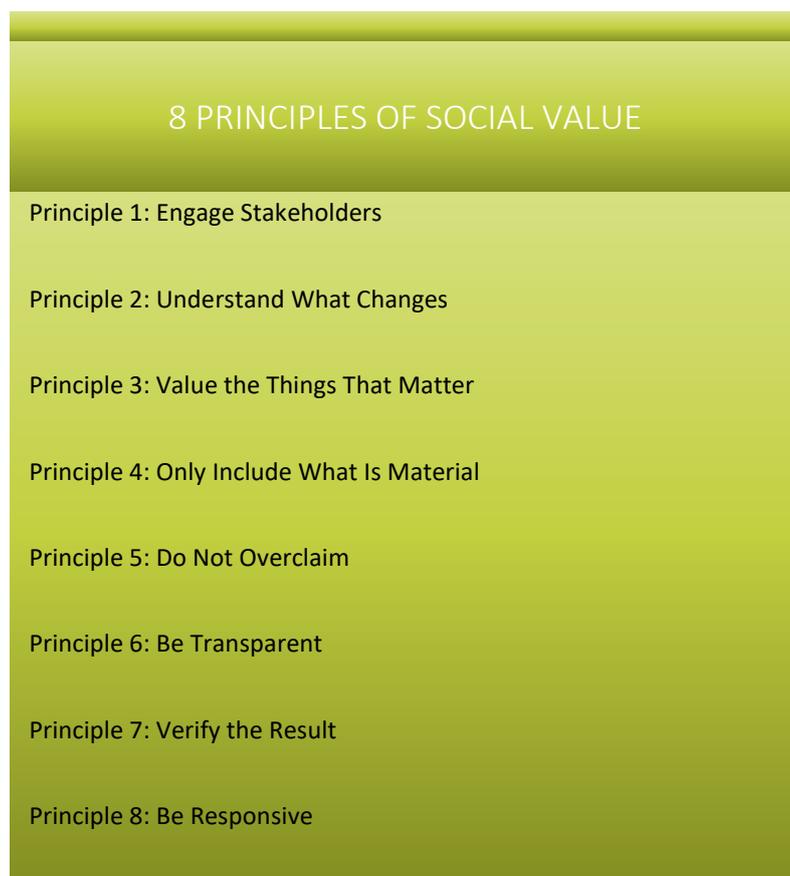
4.0 Social Return on Investment (SROI) Framework

By explicitly asking those stakeholders with the greatest experience of an activity, SROI can quantify and ultimately monetise impacts so they can be compared to the costs of producing them. This does not mean that SROI can generate an ‘actual’ value of change, but by monetising the value of stakeholders’ outcomes from a range of sources it is able to provide an evaluation of projects that changes the way value is accounted for – one that considers economic, social and environmental impacts. Social Value UK (2014) ¹³states;

‘SROI seeks to include the values of people that are often excluded from markets in the same terms as used in markets, that is money, in order to give people a voice in resource allocation decisions’

Based on eight principles, SROI explicitly uses the experiences of those that have, or will experience changes in their lives as the basis for evaluative or forecasted analysis. Figure 1 outlines the Principles of Social Value.

#Figure 1 – The Principles of Social Value¹⁴



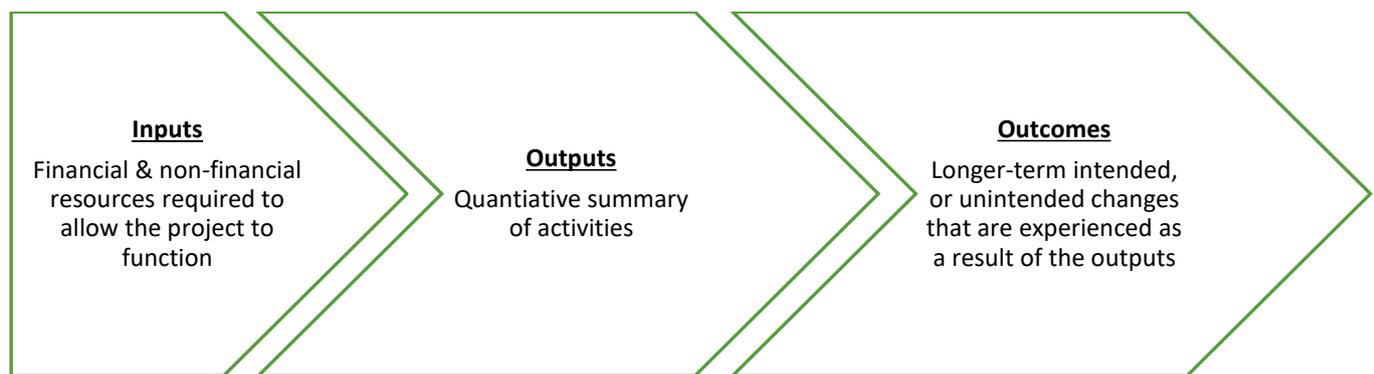
¹³ Social Value UK.

www.socialvalueuk.org

¹⁴ <https://www.socialvalueint.org/principles>

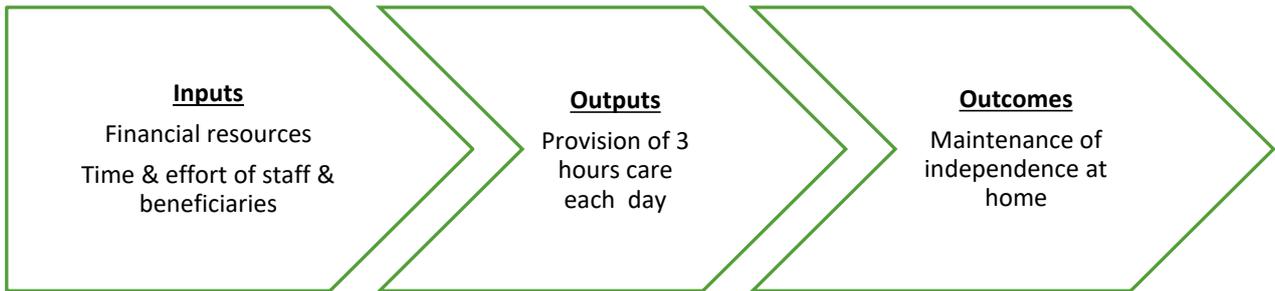
The guiding Principles ensure that *how* value is accounted for remains paramount. To ensure a consistent approach is used, chains of change are constructed for each material stakeholder explaining the cause-and-effect relationships that ultimately create measurable outcomes. These chains of change create the overall Value Map (attached separately as appendix 2), and these stories of change are equally as important as the result of analysis. In fact, SROI is best thought of as a story of change with both quantitative and qualitative evidence attached to it. Figure 2 summarises the different elements for each chain of change included within the SROI analysis (before the impact of outcomes is calculated).

FIGURE 2 – OUTLINE OF THE CHAIN OF CHANGE



SROI is an outcomes-measurement approach, and only when outcomes are measured is it possible to understand if meaningful changes are happening for stakeholders. To illustrate this idea, figure 3 displays a brief chain of change for a domiciliary care programme to assist people to remain in their own home - only by measuring the final outcome, is it possible to understand the impact of the care-programme.

FIGURE 3 - EXAMPLE CHAIN OF CHANGE



As will be discussed at the point of analysis, SROI also incorporates accepted accounting principles such as deadweight and attribution to measure the final impact of activities that are a result of each activity or intervention. Importantly, SROI can capture positive and negative changes, and where appropriate these can also be projected forwards to reflect the longer-term nature of some impacts. Any projected impacts are appropriately discounted using the Treasury’s discount rate (currently 3.5%). The formula used to calculate the final SROI is;

$$\text{SROI} = \frac{\text{Net present value of benefits}}{\text{Value of inputs}}$$

So, a result of £4:1 indicates that for each £1 invested, £4 of social value is created

Overall, SROI can create an understanding of the value of activities relative to the costs of creating them. It is not intended to reflect market values, rather it is a means to provide a voice to those material stakeholders and outcomes that have been traditionally marginalised or ignored. Only by measuring outcomes are organisations able to not only demonstrate their impact but also importantly improve them. This thereby strengthens accountability to those to which they are responsible, which in the third sector is fundamentally the key beneficiaries of services.

5.0 Stakeholder Engagement

Including stakeholders is the fundamental requirement of SROI. Without the involvement of key stakeholders, there is no validity in the results – only through active engagement can we understand actual or forecasted changes in their lives. Only then can SROI value those that matter most.

To understand what is important for an analysis, the concept of materiality is employed. This concept is also used in conventional accounting and means that SROI focuses on the most important stakeholders, and their most important outcomes, based on the concepts of relevance and significance (see figure 4). The former identifies if an outcome is important to stakeholders, and the latter identifies the relative value of changes. Initially, for the forecast of Dysynni Dogs, a range of stakeholders were identified as either influencing or being affected by the project – table 2 highlights each stakeholder, identifying if they were considered material or not for inclusion within the SROI analysis. Table 3 below shows the number and type of stakeholder engagement conducted for the analysis.

Figure 4 – Materiality principle

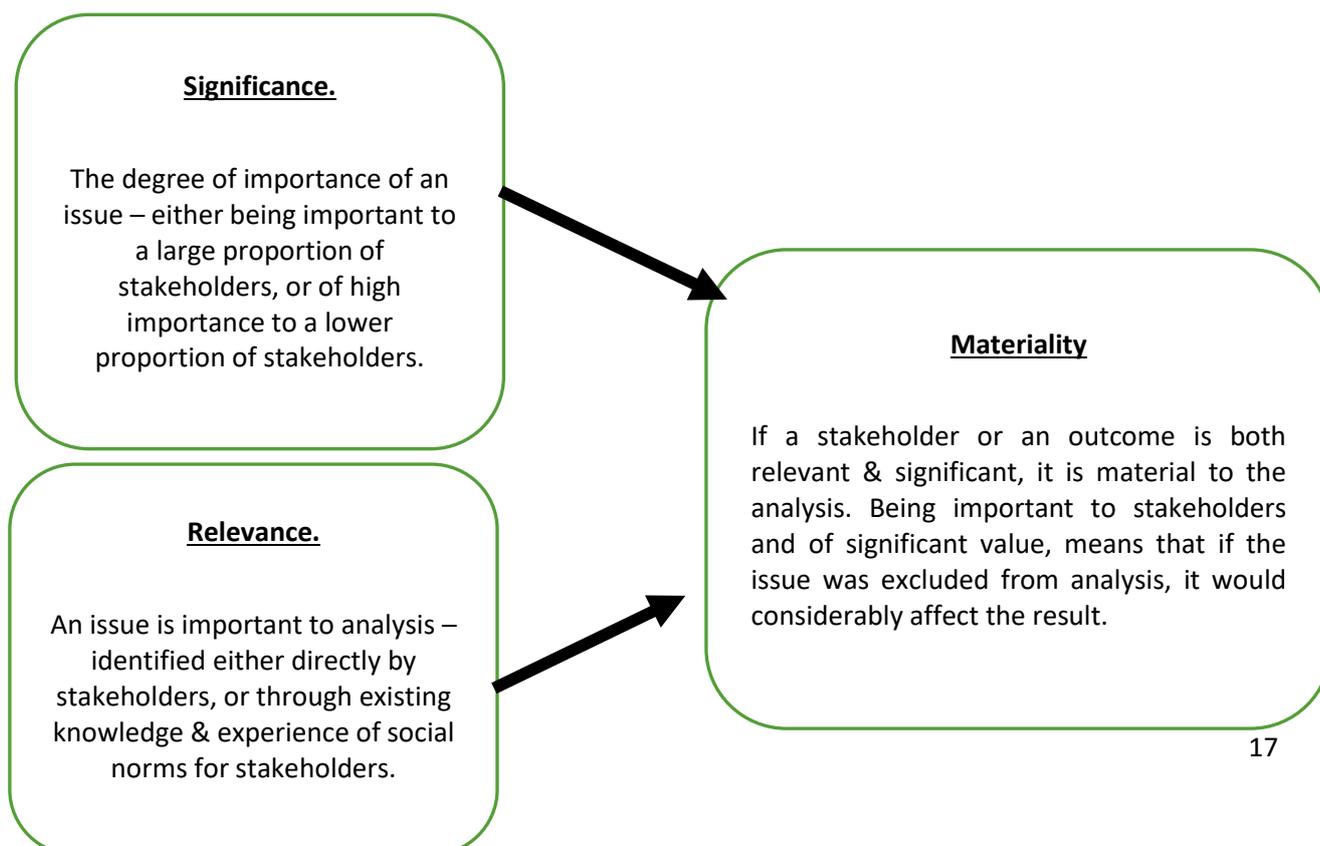


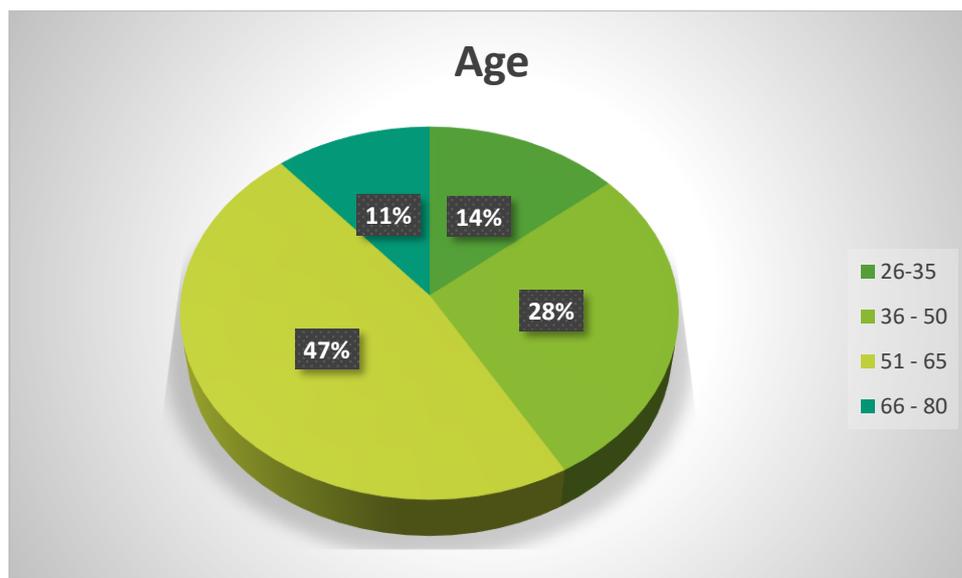
Table 2 – Stakeholder List & Materiality

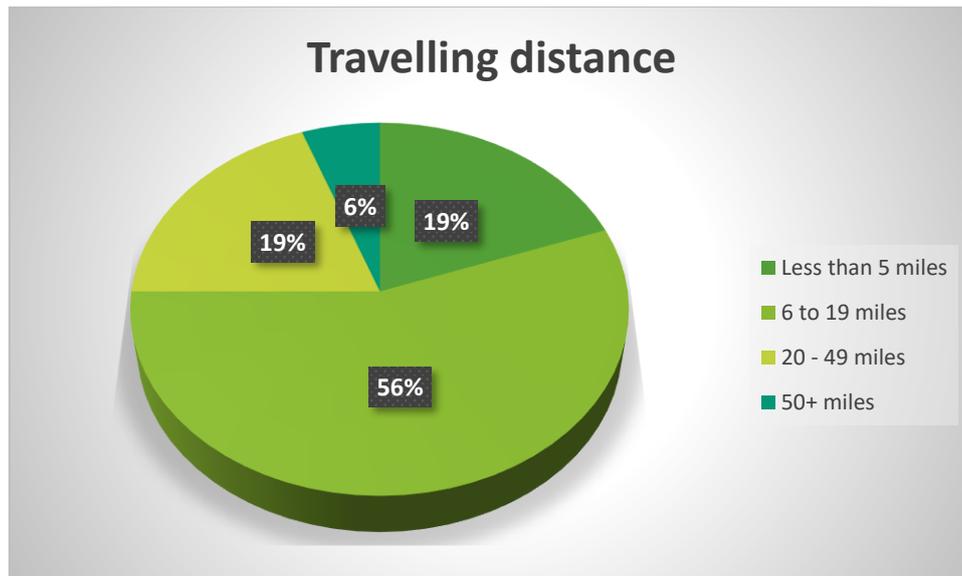
Stakeholder	Material stakeholder?	Explanation
Dysynni Dogs staff	No	Without the staff, the project would not function the same. The staff skills and expertise is crucial to the success of the project. Although not experiencing and material outcomes themselves, without the staff, the members would not experience their material outcomes.
Dysynni Dogs members	Yes	They are the main beneficiaries of the project, and they experience material outcomes by attending the sessions.
Dysynni Dogs volunteers	Yes	Without the time they contribute to the project, the project would not function the same. Also, at the volunteers are also members, they also experience material outcomes.
Mantell Gwynedd	No	Mantell Gwynedd provided the grant, all the material outcomes identified in the report are experienced by the members and volunteers of Dysynni Dogs
Local statutory services	No	Given the characteristics of the members and the outcomes they experience, Dysynni Dogs activities will possibly reduce the demand on local statutory services i.e., local health board and social services

Potential subgroup of stakeholder

It is important to acknowledge that not all participants are the same. Understanding that different characteristics have an impact on the data can help us to manage and inform decision making. Consideration is therefore given to the different characteristics below. All the data included in the charts below are taken from the sample from the surveys and therefore actual demographic data for the whole group would vary. In the survey sample, all individuals who responded were all female and all are members of Dysynni Dogs. Therefore, it may be possible to segment the group by age, or if the distance travelled to Dysynni may make an impact on possible outcomes experienced.

MEMBERS





Having identified the material stakeholders for analysis, Table 3 highlights the size of the population, the sample size engaged with and the method of engagement. An initial scope meeting was undertaken with Dysynni Dogs management in February 2022 to identify the key stakeholders and which projects were going to be included in the analysis. Once there was agreement on what activities to focus on, a stakeholder engagement plan was put in place with various methods of engagement undertaken for the different projects (please see table 3).

Unlike quantitative methods, qualitative interviewing does not have a statistical method for identifying the relevant number of interviews that must be conducted. Rather, it is important to conduct enough until a point of saturation is reached – this is the stage at which no new information is being revealed.

Table 3 – Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder	Population size	Method of engagement
Dysynni Dogs	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 virtual meetings over zoom • 1 face to face meeting
Members	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 in-person interviews • 2 focus groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 focus group with 5 members - 1 focus group with 6 members • 42 surveys completed (54% sample size)

6.0 Project Inputs

This section of the report describes the necessary inputs from multiple stakeholders. Some inputs are financial, whereas others are not – yet where possible inputs are monetised. Without the necessary complement of inputs from various material stakeholders the project would not be possible, a full breakdown of total monetised inputs is highlighted in table 6.

6.1 Dysynni Dogs members

Dysynni Dogs Powerful Paws is primary funded by members paying for the service on a per session basis, with the sessions costing between costing £5 - £7 per session, per person. The sessions are held on a weekly basis for 48 weeks of the year. To adhere is the principle of not overclaiming, the financial input for the sessions was costed at £7 per person for everyone, as there was not a definitive answer of how many members were paying £5 per session and how many were paying £7 per session during discussion in the stakeholder engagement process.

During the discussion with the stakeholders, they noted there was a variation of how many sessions per week the members were attending, with the majority of members attending the

sessions once or twice a week. To calculate the total financial input, it was decided to use the sample size from the survey data to estimate and forecast the total cost for all 80 members for 48 weeks, a breakdown of the figures can be seen in table 4. Please note these figures are projections only given the report is a SROI forecast.

- 20 members or 47.61% of total sample size said they attend a session once a week, this converts to 38 people for the whole group. 38 members x 1 session per week x 48 weeks = **£12,768**
- 11 members or 26.19% of total sample size said they attend a session twice a week, this converts to 21 people for the whole group. 21 members x 2 session per week x 48 weeks = **£14,112**
- 6 members or 14.28% of total sample size said they attend a session 3 times a week, this convert to 11 people for the whole group. 11 members x 3 session per week x 48 weeks = **£11,048**
- 5 members or 11.9% of total sample size said they attend the monthly sessions only; this converts to 10 people for the whole group. 10 members x 1 session per month x 11 month = **£770**

Total estimated financial inputs for Dysynni Dogs members to attend sessions = £38,738 (based on sample of data)

Table 4 – Forecasted financial costs of sessions

Sessions per week	Total (out of 42)	% Of sample size	Total group size (out of 80)
Once a week	20	47.61	38
Twice a week	11	26.19	21
3 times a week	6	14.28	11
Attend the monthly session only	5	11.9	10
Total	42	100%	80

Another financial input needed to consider for the members is the cost of travelling to the sessions, while also considering how many sessions the members attend on average per week. Total miles estimated to be the higher figure in each bracket to avoid not overclaiming and all figures doubled for a round trip. For example, if a member travelled between 6-19 miles to the session, that trip was calculated as 38 miles (taking the higher figure in the bracket and doubling for a round trip). Total financial input for travel expenses projected to be £31,488 (based on data from the sample size) for all 80 members for 48 weeks. A full breakdown can be seen in table 5 of the number of members average travel x the number of sessions attended per week. The cost per mile is valued at £0.45p per miles this is the standard rate for travel costs as per HMRC guidelines for cars and vans¹⁵.

Table 5 – Members estimated travel expenses

Miles	Once a week	Twice a week	3 times a week	Monthly sessions only	Not often
<5		4	2	1	
6 - 19.	11	7	3	1	2
20 - 49	4		1	1	2
50+				3	
Miles	Once a week	Twice a week	3 times a week	Monthly sessions only	
<5		3840	2880	110	
6 - 19.	20064	1909	16416	1254	
20 - 49	18816		14112	3234	
50+				3300	
Total projections	38880	1909	30528	4488	69974
				45p per mile	31,488

¹⁵<https://www.gov.uk/expenses-and-benefits-business-travel-mileage>

6.2 Dysynni Dogs volunteers

The time given by the volunteers to support the project is also important to consider. The support the to arrange open days, training sessions and monthly sessions.

There are 10 volunteers who regularly support the project throughout the year, working on an average 20 hours in total between them every week combined. A total of 960 hours worked between all for the year to support the project. To avoid over-claiming this report will value their time in line with April 2022 living wage rate of £9.50 set by the Government¹⁶.

10 volunteers x £9.50 per hour x 20 hours x 48 weeks = £9,980 total value of volunteer time

With the support of the volunteers, members of the Powerful Paws projects can take part in competitions across the country, an element of the project that is important to members (as can be seen in the theory of change in appendix 1). Without the support of the volunteers, this may not be possible, therefore the time they give to the project can be seen as vital to the success of the project now and going forward into the future.

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/minimum-wage-rates-for-2022>

6.3 Mantell Gwynedd

Mantell Gwynedd provide the grant, managed by Dysynni Dogs paid for the new training equipment. Total financial input of Mantell Gwynedd for the grant =£4,195

Table 6 - Total monetised inputs

Stakeholder	Financial input	Non-financial inputs	Cost per stakeholder
Members	£70,226	Time and willingness to travel to the training field at Y Ganoflan Bryncrug.	
Volunteers	£9,120	Time and willingness to engage and help with setting up the training sessions and competition preparations.	
Mantell Gwynedd	£4,195		
Total monetised inputs - £83,541			Cost per stakeholder =£1,044

7.0 Outputs, Outcomes & Evidence

It is only by measuring outcomes that we can be sure that activities are effective in terms of what matters most to the members of The Friends of Dysynni Dogs Powerful Paws Project. By conducting the focus groups with members, then a follow up survey, we were able to identify the changes to members lives through the work done by Dysynni Dogs.

The immediate outputs for the Powerful Paws project is the number of people engaging with the project. The Friends Dysynni Dogs have 80 members who regularly attend the weekly and monthly training sessions. The training sessions are held multiple times a week depending on the need/want of the members. The Powerful Paws project runs for 48 weeks throughout the year, with some of the members also competing in national competitions such as Crufts if they choose to do so.

“Braf cael bod yn rhan o grŵp cyfeillgar sydd bob amser yn barod i roi gymorth gyda cŵn a unrhyw beth arall. Diolch!”

“Nice to be a part of a friendly group who are always willing to help with dogs and anything else. Thanks!”

Improved mental well-being

Members were able to deal with their initial anxiety of covid restrictions and having something to look forward to every week and meeting new people. Through attending the sessions, members were able to make new friends and therefore able to socialise more with other people in the local community through a shared hobby. Building on the friendships created members

*in turn felt less anxious to participate in outdoor activities and therefore expressed **an improvement in their mental well-being** as a result.*

“Continue to help me socialise, make friends and be part of the community”

Members discussed in the focus groups how their overall mental well-being had improved since joining The Friends of Dysynni Dogs. Being able to socialise with others in the community with a shared interest of dog training and companionship had been a “joy to be a part of”. Even when not taking part in the training sessions members still make their way to the field to see their friends and there is a strong feeling of belonging to a community. The main objective of the project is to provide a safe space for dog training; however, this has developed into a project that means much more to the members both individually and collectively. During the Covid restrictions, many of the usual facilities for dog walking weren’t possible during lockdowns and this presented a challenge for the members. This is where having the field in Brynchrug has helped the members, during lockdowns they no longer had to think and stress about where they could take their dogs, where both members and their dogs were safe at all times.

The friendships built through the project and the increasing socialising that comes with it means the members feel valued while having fun. Many of the members were not able to socialise with others during covid lockdowns thus having a negative impact on their mental health (Niedzwiedz, 2021)¹⁷.

¹⁷ Niedzwiedz, C. L. (2021). Mental health and health behaviours before and during the initial phase of the COVID-19 lockdown: longitudinal analyses of the UK Household. *J Epidemiol Community Health*,75(3) 223-231

“Dwi’n falch iawn o fod wedi dod ar draws cwmuned cŵn dysynni.”

“I am very pleased to come across the Dysynni Dogs community”

One of the goals of the Dysynni Dogs project is to ‘support our members mental well-being by giving them opportunities to meet likeminded people’. From the survey result, **86%** of participants in the sample size who responded experienced a positive change in their mental well-being by attending the training sessions, with a distance travelled of **58%** (level of change experienced by the participants, the higher the number, the greater the impact on the participant.) Therefore ‘quite a lot of change’ was experienced on average by the participants for improved mental well-being. As 86% of the sample size had experienced positive change, 69 members were included in the value map for this outcome.

“Carrying on with the fun activities and the sense of community engendered by meeting up with likeminded people.”

Reduced isolation and loneliness

*Many members mentioned how they felt isolated and lonely during the national Covid-19 lockdowns. Being able to attend the sessions with the trainer and building trust within the group helped with their anxiety. Being able to meet new people and building friendships meant they wanted to attend more sessions. By attending sessions on a regular basis, members were able to socialise more with people during lockdown while social distancing. As a result, **members felt less isolated and alone.***

“This was the only place where I was having a conversation in person.”

During the focus groups many of the members mentioned how they felt isolated and lonely during the national lockdowns. Being able to attend the sessions with Dysynni Dogs meant they saw other people on a regular basis in a covid safe environment, and therefore they felt less isolated and lonely. According to (Dahlberg, 2021) ¹⁸ increased loneliness especially in older people was one of the biggest shift in people lives because of the pandemic, with many people needing social support during times of crises as a coping mechanism (Saltzman, 2020)¹⁹ and with over a third of people in the UK feeling lonely during the pandemic (Li, 2020)²⁰ this was a great challenge for everyone at the time. Being able to see other members and socialise with others helped the members cope and reduced their isolation and loneliness, and in turn help their mental well-being, connecting to the first outcome identified ‘improved mental health’.

“As a community group of all ages there is genuine support to individuals when needed and people pull together to provide any help. As a person living in my own hundreds of miles from my family The Friends of Dysynni Dogs have become my extended family.”

From the survey result, **86%** participants in the sample size who responded experienced positive change in reducing their isolation and loneliness by attending the classes, with a distance travelled of **63%** (level of change experienced by the participants, the higher the

¹⁸ Dahlberg, L. (2021). "Loneliness during the COVID-19 pandemic.". *Aging & mental health*, 25(7), 1161-1164.

¹⁹ Saltzman, L. Y. (2020). Loneliness, isolation, and social support factors in post-COVID-19 mental health. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 55-57.

²⁰ Li, L. Z. (2020). Prevalence and predictors of general psychiatric disorders and loneliness during COVID-19 in the United Kingdom. *Psychiatry research*, 113-267.

number, the greater the impact on the participant. Therefore 'quite a lot of change' was experienced on average by the participants for improved mental well-being. As 86% of the sample size had experienced positive change, 69 participants were included in the value map for this outcome.

It's a good mix of positive people. It's nice to mix socially with people from different backgrounds, ages, and Welsh language speakers. And brilliant for the dogs to socialise and learn good behaviour too!

Improved physical health

*During national lockdowns with added restrictions members explained how they had limited places to visit and train with their dogs. Being able visit the field and having the improved training equipment bought with the grant meant members had more opportunities to train with their dogs. As an effect of being able to attend more training sessions members gained more skills, and in turn increasing their self-confidence to train their dogs for competitions. As a result, members felt an **improvement in their overall physical health.***

Being able to attend the training session on a regular basis means the members are more physically active as a result. Being a dog owner has many physical benefits, going on regular walks with a dog can help reduce cardiovascular problems as well as other health benefits (Epping, 2011)²¹. Also, as Dysynni Dogs were able to buy new lighter equipment with the grant,

²¹ Epping, J. N. (2011). "Dog ownership and dog walking to promote physical activity and health in patients.". *Current sports medicine reports*, 10(4), 224-227.

members are now able to access and move the equipment more freely by themselves. With the older equipment, it would take two members to set up because they were heavy wood. This means the older members can be more involved and feel better 'I can do more with this equipment by myself, I don't have to rely on others to help me anymore'.

"I'm not normally a physical fitness person and wouldn't go to a gym; but taking the dog for a walk and having the motivation to come here to exercise without realizing it is a great joy."

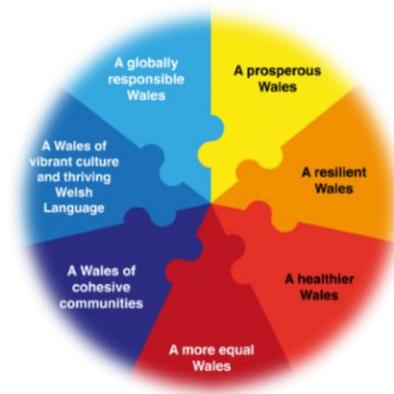
From the survey result, **76%** participants in the sample size who responded experienced positive change in their physical health by attending the classes, with a distance travelled of **50%** (level of change experienced by the participants, the higher the number, the greater the impact on the participant. Therefore 'quite a lot of change' was experienced on average by the participants for improved physical health. As 76% of the sample size had experienced positive change, 61 participants were included in the value map for this outcome.

"I have a recorder on my wrist and my normal 2k steps will jump up to 12k on a day like this."

How do the outcomes link to the Well-being of Future Generations

(Wales) Act 2015 goals.

The Act's fundamental purpose requires public, private and third sector organisations to work differently, and to do so we need to identify the important things that need to be measured and managed. The Act is about promoting and improving the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the people in Wales through promoting sustainable development and well-being duty.



The outcomes experience by the members has a positive link with the 'Healthier Wales' well-being goal of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The definition of Healthier Wales is *"A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefits future health are understood"*



²². All outcomes identified as material outcomes for the members, improved mental well-being, reduced isolation & loneliness and improved physical health are in line with the definition and therefore in line with goals of the legislation and Welsh Government vision for the people of Wales.

²² <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-10/well-being-future-generations-wales-act-2015-the-essentials-2021.pdf>

What could be better?

Stakeholders were given the opportunity to say about any negative changes or if they felt anything could be better. Although the feedback was all highly positive, the organisation recognises that there is always room for improvement and that it is vitally important to listen and be as responsive as possible to the voice of the stakeholder.

“Indoor area so we can continue in the winter”

During the stakeholder engagement process many of the members did state they were very satisfied with the service provided by Dysynni Dogs, hence the positive outcomes experienced by the members. However, some members did mention ways the service could be improved. The winter months are difficult for the members to be able to train with their dogs, with reduced daylight being the biggest challenge. Another factor to consider is the weather during the winter months, with challenging conditions between late September and early February in particular. These factors mean the members may have to miss some of the training sessions in the winter or aren't able to fully interact with the sessions during this time. These are factors that Dysynni Dogs are not able to manage of course being an outdoor based project, however, they could take action to help reduce the impact of these negative factors. An indoor space to train during winter or provide better lighting in the form of floodlights so that members are able to train later during the day in winter would improve the service and potentially provide greater social value of the members. This does of course depend on the financial resources available to the project moving forward and the members understand this.

“It would be nice to be weather-proof and floodlit”

CASE STUDY 2

Member 2 travels to the field at Brynchrug from Aberystwyth. They attend with their dog because “this is a haven for him and me to practice, have fun and to enjoy with friends”. They try to attend as many sessions as possible.

Member 2 mentioned that “It’s surprising how difficult it is to find somewhere where I can release the dog to run off a leash and learn through play and training”. Member 2 also stated that “It can be stressful when going out with my dog because some people become angry when the dog is playful or being inquisitive.” Being able to attend the sessions at Dysynni Dogs removes this worry, therefore, **improving their mental well-being.**

8.0 Valuing Outcomes

The difference of using SROI to other frameworks is that it places a monetary value on these outcomes. By using monetisation, it allows us to not only give the story of what is changed in people's lives but also allows us to put a value on these changes so we can compare costs and outcomes. This is not about putting a price on everything, but it allows us to demonstrate what impact the service has on other stakeholders and possible savings an intervention can create. It also goes beyond measuring and allows organisations to manage their activities to ensure the best possible impact is created for those that matter to them the most, the members.

Impacts of the projects

SROI analysis uses accepted accounting principles to calculate the overall impact of activities. Considering any deadweight, attribution, displacement, and drop-off factors, means that the SROI analysis will avoid over-claiming value that is not a result of Dysynni Dogs activities. The boxes below outline each of the impact factors.

Counterfactual

This asks the likelihood an outcome could have occurred without an activity taking place. So, for example if it is believed that there was a 10% chance that someone could have found work without a training programme, the value of that outcome is reduced by 10%.

Attribution

Considers what proportion of an outcome is created by other organisations/individuals, so can therefore not be legitimately claimed by the SROI analysis. For example, if external agencies also support someone receiving training, that organisation is responsible for creating some of the value, not just the training organisation.

Displacement

This asks if an outcome displaced similar outcomes elsewhere. This is not always a necessary impact measure yet must be considered. For example, if a project reduces criminal activity in one area, which results in increases in other locations, there is a need to consider the displaced outcomes.

Drop-off

Outcomes projected for more than one year must consider the drop-off rate. This is the rate at which the value attributable to the focus of the SROI analysis reduces. For example, an individual who gains employment training may in the first year of employment attribute all the value to the training organisation, but as they progress in their career less value belongs to the initial initiative owing to their new experiences.

8.1 Dysynni Dogs Members

There are a range of approaches to monetise outcomes including using financial proxies – that is using a market-based alternative as an approximation of a stakeholder’s value. However, some would argue that these do not represent the value that the stakeholder with experience of the change would attribute to it. Therefore, where possible, this analysis has applied the first SROI principle to involve stakeholders as much as possible. During the qualitative interviews and focus group, following an understanding of the changes and the outcomes gained, members were asked to rank and rate their outcomes. Therefore, they were asked to put their outcomes in order of importance, and then to rate their importance out of 10. In the quantitative data, members were also asked to confirm their importance of any changes in the survey. This is where we stopped with their involvement in valuing their outcomes and when it comes to placing a monetary value of their outcomes. As seen in Table 7, all outcomes were valued as being of high importance and should all be managed carefully in future.

Table 7 – valuing outcomes

Stakeholder group	Outcomes	Average Weighting
Members	Reduced isolation and loneliness (increased socialising)	9
	Improved mental well-being	8
	Improved physical health	7.5

The valuations for the outcomes identified to the members were taken from HACT’S Social Value Calculator²³ that identifies a range of well-being valuations. However, the data from the questionnaire results provided a distance travelled on how much change had been experienced, therefore a proportion of the wellbeing valuations were used accordingly.

Much consideration was given as to what best well-being valuation reflected the changes identified by the stakeholders. Firstly, we consider the Value Game, the value game identifies their material outcomes, and asks the stakeholders to prioritise, and subsequently value them against a list of goods or services available on the market to purchase. We asked members of one focus group to rank the outcomes identified in order of most importance to them, 6 members were present in the focus group. They ranked all as the same level of importance, they could not separate the outcomes, as all they outcomes were link together well, and they said could not experience one outcome without the other. The value game was not used in the second focus group; therefore, it was not possible to use the value game as a valuation method for this assessment.

Members explained being a part of Dysynni Dogs has increased the connection they had with others in the local community, and this had a positive impact on their lives. Therefore,

²³ <https://www.hact.org.uk/social-value-bank>

consideration was also given to use the well-being evaluation from HACT social value calculator. ENV1609 Feel belonging to a neighbourhood was used which has a value of £6,004 per individual as this was deemed most appropriate for forecasting Dysynni Dogs social impact. Following the principle of not over-claiming, we only took the amount of value that represents the amount of change. Therefore, we used the reduced isolation and loneliness outcome and the distance travelled of 63% to calculate the true value of change, giving a value of £3,782 per member. This value is our anchor value, and from here the weighting of the outcomes was then used. As Table 8 below shows how the distance travelled, and weighting was used in the value map.

Table 8 – Examples of Outcome Valuations

<i>Outcome</i>	Value	Identified value	Value of average distance travelled	Quantity of stakeholders experiencing outcome
<i>Improved mental well-being</i>	8.0	Used HACT well-being valuation ENV1609, belonging to a neighbourhood valued at £6,004 for unknown area for the outcome improved mental well-being . Took 58% of this value based on the distance travelled, therefore £3,362 per individual.	Taking the lowest point for our questionnaire scale – asking individuals to rate against measures (not applicable / no change =0%, little change = 12.5%, some change = 37.5%, quite a lot of change = 62.5%, a lot of change = 87.5%). The average movement was equal to 58%. Although based on a sample size the results were in line with the tone of focus group comments – this was cited as a significant change.	From the data sample, 86% of members experienced a positive change, therefore this represents 69 members.
<i>Reduced isolation and loneliness</i>	9	Used HACT well-being valuation ENV1609, belonging to a neighbourhood valued at £6,004 for unknown area for the outcome reduced isolation and loneliness . Took 63% of this value based on the distance travelled, therefore £3,782 per individual.	Taking the lowest point for our questionnaire scale – asking individuals to rate against measures (not applicable / no change =0%, little change = 12.5%, some change = 37.5%, quite a lot of change = 62.5%, a lot of change = 87.5%). The average movement was equal to 63%. Although based on a sample size the results were in line with the tone of focus group comments – this was cited as a significant change.	From the data sample, 86% of members experienced positive change, therefore this represents 69 members
<i>Improved physical health</i>	7.5	Used HACT well-being valuation ENV1609, belonging to a neighbourhood valued at £6,004 for unknown area for the outcome improved physical health . Took 50% of this value based on the distance travelled, therefore £3,152 per individual.	Taking the lowest point for our questionnaire scale – asking individuals to rate against measures (not applicable / no change =0%, little change = 12.5%, some change = 37.5%, quite a lot of change = 62.5%, a lot of change = 87.5%). The average movement was equal to 50%. Although based on a sample size the results were in line with the tone of focus group comments – this was cited as a significant change.	From the data sample, 76% of members experience positive change, therefore this represents 61 members.

9.0 Establishing Impact

To assess the overall value of Dysynni Dogs outcomes it is important to establish how much is specifically a result of the project. SROI applies accepted accounting principles to discount the value accordingly, by asking; what would have happened anyway (counterfactual)? What is the contribution of others (attribution)? Have the activities displaced value from elsewhere (displacement)? If an outcome is projected to last more than 1 year, what is the rate at which value created by a project reduces over future years (drop-off)? Applying these four measures creates an understanding of the total net value of the outcomes and helps to abide by the principle not to over-claim.

Each value discount principle was given a low, medium, and high discount rate, depending on the impact created by others.

Low = 30%

Medium = 60%

High = 90%

9.1 Counterfactual

Counterfactual allows us to consider what would happen if the service wasn't available. There is always a possibility that the participants would have received the same outcomes through another activity or by accessing support elsewhere.

The Friends of Dysynni Dogs was set up because there was not a group in the local and surrounding area. Also, some members travel up to 50 miles (100 miles round trip) in some cases to attend the sessions with Dysynni Dogs, there may not this type of support available elsewhere in the south Gwynedd region, or that other services that are available may not meet the needs of the members for some reason. However, if the Dysynni Dogs service was not available, the members

would still experience some, if not all of the outcomes identified regardless. For example, the members would still need to take their dogs on regular walks on hence they would experience the physical health benefits as a result according to (Christian, 2013)²⁴. Therefore, to adhere to the principle of not overclaiming, all outcomes identified have a counterfactual level of 30%.

9.2 Attribution

Attribution allows us to recognise the contribution of others towards achieving outcomes. There is always a possibility that others will contribute towards any changes in people's lives such as family members or other organisations.

Attribution was set at 30% for all outcomes. Many of the members discussed how Dysynni Dogs was the primary reason they are experiencing the outcomes. It was considered to not apply any attribution as the feedback and data collected shows the outcomes are all because of Dysynni Dogs. Also, from the sample size 95% of the responses stated that the outcomes experienced because of Dysynni Dogs. 5% of the data sample did state that the outcomes were not due to attending the sessions. Therefore, to adhere to the principle of not over-claiming, applying a low level of attribution was sufficient while at the same time not under-claiming the value created by Dysynni Dogs.

9.3 Displacement

We need to consider if the outcomes displaced other outcomes elsewhere. For example, if we deal with criminal activity in one street, have we just moved the problem elsewhere? There was not displacement found when researching and writing the report, in line with the members comments and survey data.

²⁴ Christian, H. B. (2013). Encouraging dog walking for health promotion and disease prevention. *American journal of lifestyle medicine*, 12(3), 233-243.

9.4 Duration & Drop-off

It is difficult to truly know the length of duration for the outcomes experienced by the participants. During the focus groups and interviews when asked how long they think the changes and the impact of projects will last, many members said, 'for a long time'. Also, from the sample of data collected, 75% of responses stated that they foresee outcomes experience to last over 1 year minimum. Therefore, to avoid over-claiming the total of one year of duration was included for all outcomes.

10.0 SROI Results

This section of the report presents the overall results of the SROI analysis of Dysynni Dogs. Underpinning these results are the eight SROI principles which have carefully been applied to each area of this analysis. The results demonstrate the positive contribution that Dysynni Dogs makes through the dedication of staff and volunteers, to create positive change in the lives.

Table 9 displays the present value created for each of the included stakeholders who experienced material changes. The present value calculations take account of the 3.5% discount rate as suggested by the Treasury's Green Book for outcomes lasting more than one year.

Table 9 – SROI Headline Results

Total value created	£
Total present value	£335,780.60
Investment value	£83,541
Net present value (present value minus investment)	£252,240
Social Return on Investment	£4.02

11.0 Sensitivity Analysis

The results demonstrate highly significant value created by Dysynni Dogs projects and is based on application of the principles of the SROI framework. Although there are inherent assumptions within this analysis, consistent application of the principle not to over-claim leads to the potential undervaluing of some material outcomes based on issues such as duration of impact.

Conducting sensitivity analysis is designed to assess any assumptions that were included in the analysis. Testing one variable at a time such as quantity, duration, counterfactual, or drop-off allows for any issues that have a significant impact on the result to be identified. If any issue is deemed to have a material impact, this assumption should be both carefully considered and managed going forward. To test the assumptions within this analysis, a range of issues were altered to appreciate their impact. A summary of the results is presented in table 10.

From the sensitivity analysis table above, the social value evaluation can be estimated to be between £3.36 and up to £4.50 for every £1 invested. The assumptions used in the value map estimate the social value is £4.02.

Table 10 – Sensitivity Analysis Summary

Variable	Current assumption	Revised assumption	Revised SROI	Proportion of Change
Dysynni Dog members				
Improved mental well-being	Quantity: 69	Quantity: 30	£3.25	-19%
	Counterfactual: 30%	Counterfactual: 60%	£3.43	-14.5%
	Attribution: 30%	Attribution: 0%	£4.60	+13%
Reduced isolation & loneliness	Quantity: 69	Quantity: 50	£3.59	-10.5%
	Counterfactual: 30%	Counterfactual: 90%	£2.70	-32.7%
	Attribution: 30%	Attribution: 60%	£3.36	-16.3%
Improved physical health	Quantity: 61	Quantity: 80	£4.37	+8.9%
	Counterfactual: 30%	Counterfactual: 0%	£4.50	+10.9%
	Attribution: 30%	Attribution: 60%	£3.53	-12%

12.0 Conclusion and key findings

This report has demonstrated that Dysynni Dogs have created over 252,000 of value and for each £1 invested, £4.02 of value is created.

What that means in practical terms is that people's lives have been positively changed.

This report finds that The Friends of Dysynni Dogs Powerful Paws project is having a positive impact on the members, and the impact is forecasted to continue for the rest 2022. Having equipment that is fit for purpose ensures Dysynni Dogs can continue to support new and current members to have positive outcomes through their activities, and the equipment ensured they could do that in a safe way and reduce the possibility of injury. Through providing the members a safe space and place where they can socialise with other members in the local community, members are forecasted to experience positive changes in their mental well-being and physical well-being through attending the training sessions. Additionally, members feel less isolated and lone due to the community feeling created by the Powerful Paws project. Furthermore, the outcomes identified are in line with Well-being goals of Future Generations (Wales) 2015 Act 'Healthier Wales' goal.

Key findings:

- £4.02 Social Return on Investment
- 86% of members feel an improvement in their mental well-being
- 86% of members feel less isolated and alone
- 76% of members feel fitter and their physical health has improved
- The outcomes identified are in line with Well-being goals of Future Generations (Wales) 2015 Act 'Healthier Wales' goal.

13.0 Recommendations

Data collection

To realise how much change and impact the project is having on all stakeholders we need data to understand if there is any change, but also how much change, and whether there are differences in the needs of different individuals. It is therefore recommended that any continuation of this project, needs to invest the time and finances into ensuring suitable systems and processes are in place to measure social value, and to extend this to include other important stakeholders.

When such data is collected over a period, the potential to use the resultant information to better inform decision making is increased/maximised. Ultimately, this means that value is not just being measured, but it is being managed to improve the impacts of the project. With improved data collection it would also mean improved segmentation of the different stakeholder groups. Different segments will experience different outcomes and levels of change, having more data will enable a more thorough analysis and potentially uncover any support gaps in the project.

In this report, no characteristics were identified as having a significant impact on the amount of change, the weighting of outcomes or on counterfactual or attribution. Collecting baseline and review data over a period of time can help to identify if there are key insights as to where the most value is created, or most importantly if some stakeholders need further support.

Change of location during winter months

During the stakeholder engagement process many of the members we talk to discuss the difficulties of attending the sessions in the winter months. A number of factors contributing to this, including the winter weather conditions and reduced daylight. Therefore, it is recommended that the project look at indoor locations to hold the training sessions where possible. If the weather is bad on any particular day, the training sessions can still function as normal without the members having a reduced experience. Furthermore, it is recommended that the project looks at getting floodlights or any other

lighting equipment so that in the winter months when daylight is reduced members are still able to attend sessions late in the day.

14.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 –Theory of Change

Appendix 2 – Value map (separate to this document)

Appendix 1 - Dysynni Dogs Theory of Change

