



**CEREBRAL  
PALSY** CYMRU

# Annual Review 2020/2021



# We are Cerebral Palsy Cymru.

Our mission is to improve the quality of life of all children in Wales living with cerebral palsy.

Our values as a charity are always at the heart of what we do.



To ensure families are at the heart of our organisation

To work in **partnership** with families and community teams

To work with the highest levels of integrity



To deliver the **highest quality** in everything we do

# Chairman's message

I would like to begin this review of the year by saying how deeply proud I and my fellow Trustees are of everything that Cerebral Palsy Cymru has achieved in 2020/21, despite the immense challenges that it has faced.

The year 2020/21 will of course go down in history as the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in the UK – a year that impacted the lives of so many and continues to do so.

We moved to a new and bigger children's centre thanks to significant grant funding from the Moondance Foundation and Welsh Government.

The Coronavirus crisis presented the charity with unprecedented difficulties, epitomised by the fact that even though we ended the year in a stable position, we lost almost 50% of the income we had expected to receive.

In addition, despite closing our premises for a period of time, the charity continued to provide services for children and families throughout the most critical heights of the pandemic.

This loss of income led us to quickly re-evaluate our circumstances, take steps to limit expenditure and maximise new and all viable income streams. This included making use of the Government's furlough scheme.



The fundraising report, written by our Head of Income Generation, demonstrates how our friends and supporters were crucial to our stability during this time.

2020/21 will also be remembered as the year that the charity underwent a significant transformational change. Rebranding from Bobath Children's Therapy Centre Wales to Cerebral Palsy Cymru made sure that families who needed our services, more than ever, were able to find us more easily.

I would once again like to pay tribute to our fantastic, dedicated members of staff and volunteers for their tireless contribution and determination to ensure that we continued to provide our specialist services to families across Wales living with cerebral palsy during these uniquely challenging times.

At the time of writing, the pandemic challenges persist but we are confident that Cerebral Palsy Cymru will prevail with your continued and much valued support.



**J Frank Holmes**  
Chairman



# Centre Director's message

At Cerebral Palsy Cymru activity and change always happen at pace, but the rate of change and progress from April 2020 to March 2021 was extraordinary even by our standards. To an already challenging agenda, the Coronavirus pandemic was added.

We decided due to commitments already made, and an increased need for families to be able to find us during lockdown, that it was important to go ahead with our plans to move premises; renovate our new building; and rebrand the organisation, despite the added logistical and financial challenges. Each of our teams stepped up to the challenge.

Overnight, the therapy team converted to a virtual therapy model. The therapists set up treatment spaces in their homes to make virtual sessions as effective as possible and a true intervention, at a time when services for our families were extremely limited due to healthcare professionals working in paediatric neurodisability being redeployed.

As the pandemic progressed the need for hands on face-to-face therapy increased and gradually, with individual risk assessments, and clear processes in place for safety, we have developed flexible delivery of face to face and virtual therapy.



We have taken the positives from this experience, and will continue to integrate elements of this model when designing future therapy interventions.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our colleagues in the community therapy teams who hosted some of our therapy sessions during the refurbishment of our new children's centre when we were without a permanent residence, and to Bethel Baptist Church and St Joseph's Hospital who hosted us to ensure there was no interruption to our therapy services whilst we waited for the building work at our new children's centre to be completed.

Our Family Support Coordinator, Glenys, was also integral to our therapy and delivery of our services during this challenging time. Being able to provide advice and support to all our families who needed it throughout the pandemic is something we are extremely proud of as a charity.

As one mum said to Glenys after a family support session,  
*"Lockdown has been extremely difficult, with no therapy in the community, and no time away from each other to rest. It has potentially been the most difficult time we have ever experienced as a family, but Cerebral Palsy Cymru has given us something to focus on when all hope was gone."*



This is why it was vital that we continued to provide our services to our families despite the challenges of the pandemic, we knew they were needed more than ever.

Our Finance and Operations team were essential in navigating the constant change that the pandemic presented us with, and they worked extremely hard to provide frequent alterations in policy and infrastructure that each change demanded. They led on the move from our old building and the transformation of our new children's centre, whilst constantly working in the background to provide the urgent financial information our crisis management required.

They also supported our staffing restructure and the related redundancy processes, as sadly the financial challenges of the pandemic saw us lose valued friends and colleagues from the organisation. These were difficult decisions to make and we wish our former colleagues all the best for the future

Our Retail team have experienced the rollercoaster of shop closures, furlough, reopening and regulation changes and we made the difficult decision to permanently close our furniture shop and warehouse. I am pleased to say however that our four remaining charity shops have quickly restored their vital contribution to our income.



I finish with the Fundraising team who have been truly exceptional in replacing lost income and transforming our income streams. They ensured no opportunities were missed and that we ended a challenging year in a safe and stable financial position, prepared to face the ongoing challenges of 2021/22.

I can honestly say each member of our team has worked exceptionally hard and fulfilled a vital role. They deserve a huge thanks and I know they are motivated by the difference we make for our families and their children.

I finish with another huge thanks to our supporters who have been with us on this unprecedented journey.

Cerebral Palsy Cymru was started by families for families and has developed and grown thanks to the support of the wider Wales community.

It is said it takes a village to raise a child, but we need the efforts of a country to provide for children and families living with cerebral palsy.



**Jenny Carroll MA MCSP PGC(HE)**  
Centre Director





**626** Specialist therapy sessions were delivered to children across Wales, both virtually and face-to-face.



**257** Babies and children were treated and seen by us across 2020/21.

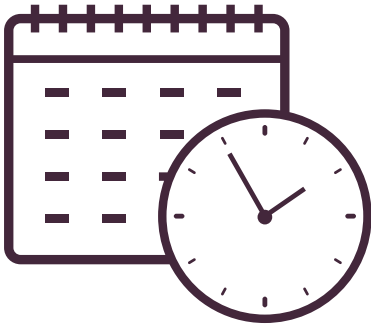


**48** New babies were referred to our specialist early intervention service 'Better Start, Better Future.'



**138** Family support sessions also took place in addition to therapy sessions to provide families with emotional support and practical advice.





# A look back on our year.

## April

We started providing our vital therapy virtually to ensure families could continue to access our services despite lockdown.



## May

Our new identity and brand were launched on 25th May, transforming us into Cerebral Palsy Cymru.

## August

The 'eat out to help out' scheme was launched, and we were thrilled to support our friends at Mowgli Street Food Cardiff.

## September

Preparations were underway for Cerebral Palsy Awareness Month (CPAM) - our first as Cerebral Palsy Cymru.



## December

Our virtual Carol Concert took place, featuring Bonnie Tyler, Matthew Rhys, Lucy Own, Max Boyce, and our very own staff choir!



## January

We were able to provide therapy to children within their local communities via outreach sessions despite the second national lockdown.

## June

The first face-to-face therapy session, since the country went into lockdown, took place at our Therapy Centre.

## July

Our charity shops gradually reopened, thanks to the success of our Donation Station.



## October

Lots of our families and supporters took part in The 7 Challenge, raising £7,997 for us across the month!

## November

We sold and moved out of our old home on Park Road. The renovation project on our new home in Llanishen also began.

## February

St Joseph's Hospital donated use of their facilities so we could offer face-to-face therapy to our families.



## March

Bethel Baptist Church also provided us with space for therapy as we waited for the renovation of our new home to be completed.

# Therapy update

In this extraordinary year, the weeks leading up to the beginning of 2020/21, saw our therapy team re-organising appointments to try and see as many children as we safely could, and as soon as the national lockdown was announced and we knew we were unable to see children face to face, we converted our services to deliver sessions virtually.

It was a steep learning curve for us all! However, parents and therapists rose to the challenge of a new way of working, complete with problematic WiFi, failing webcams, and, very occasionally, children who did not like being on-screen. As we continued to deliver therapy services, despite being unable to leave our homes, we were fortunate that this new way of delivering therapy allowed us to invite and include our NHS colleagues whenever they were available; thus continuing our collaborative working partnership with local NHS teams.

During the early stages of the pandemic, we had written to our NHS colleagues to let them know that we were continuing to provide our essential services, and we were happy and available to take referrals for babies and children who needed our services. We also wrote to all our current families to reassure them that we were still there for them and that they could contact us if they needed any additional input or support during these unprecedented times, as we knew that lockdown may disproportionately impact them and their children.

At the same time, we had to make the decision to furlough some of our therapy team, leaving a core team of therapists to carry out the therapy sessions virtually. This was an extremely difficult time for all the team, both those on furlough and those who continued to provide our essential services.



As restrictions began to lift after the first lockdown, we began to offer a hybrid therapy service, a mixture of face-to-face and/or virtual sessions, informed by individual risk assessments.

There have been many advantages to providing our therapy service virtually; it reduces travel time for families and gives a greater opportunity for NHS community colleagues to attend, benefitting the families and strengthening our connections. It also helps families become more confident carrying out therapy themselves at home in their daily life.

During the year, we developed two training courses, which were delivered virtually to all therapists, therapy technicians and students who work with children with cerebral palsy in Wales. The first course was aimed at newly qualified therapists, therapy technicians and students, the second course was targeted at more experienced therapists. Sharing our knowledge and skills is an essential part of what we do at Cerebral Palsy Cymru. Delivering online, more easily accessible courses and training has highlighted to us the advantages of embracing the new digital world, and plans are in place to develop further online courses.

Despite the challenges that the Coronavirus pandemic has presented, the importance of early referrals to our specialist baby programme 'Better Start, Better Future' has been highlighted. We had 48 new babies referred to our services from April 2020 – March 2021 and I am so pleased that we were able to support these families and provide our essential early intervention service to those babies and give them the best possible start in life.



**Therese Millar**  
Therapy Team Manager



# Aoife's Story

Roisin, Aoife's mum, shares her story about how her family benefited from receiving virtual therapy at home throughout the pandemic.

My daughter Aoife, age 6, was referred to Cerebral Palsy Cymru when she was around 16 months old and since then we have been attending therapy sessions there at least once or twice a year.

As a baby, Aoife was quite fractious and unhappy and didn't take well to being handled by other people, especially health professionals.

The first block of therapy sessions she received at Cerebral Palsy Cymru were hard work for her, but despite Aoife's anxiety (and ours!), we learnt some amazing techniques and ways to support her general physical development. We developed a really positive relationship with the staff at Cerebral Palsy Cymru and each therapy session provided us with more skills to support Aoife's development.

Then Covid-19 came along, and, like the rest of the world, we went in to lockdown. Aoife received a shielding letter, and we took that as an opportunity to utilise the time to intensify the therapy that we could give her at home. Whilst we saw improvements in her balance, speech, and communication, Aoife was very aware of what was going on around her and often displayed her frustration at not being able to physically achieve what her brain wanted her to do.

When we were offered virtual therapy sessions in December 2020, it was initially difficult to decide what to focus on during the sessions. After a very long chat with one of her therapists, we came to the decision to support some self-skills as well as general physio and hip position.



The first session went really well - we were lucky to have equipment and items at home that came in handy, and the therapists were really innovative with their suggestions on what items we could use that were to hand at home.

It was our second session which really brought home the benefit of virtual sessions for us. We set Aoife up at my desk for a snack and were able to support her in eating a full yoghurt pot and some finger food. She beamed with pride the entire session. You could really see how happy it made her to have that independence. We've continued building these skills and Aoife loves snack time and self-feeding, I think partly because of the mess she gets in!

Lockdown has been incredibly difficult at times and whilst we recognised the importance of the work we did during the first lockdown with Aoife, having virtual sessions in December opened up a new avenue of skill-building which we wouldn't have necessarily achieved by physically visiting the centre.

Having Aoife in her own home, comfortable with her surroundings and not rushing to make an appointment time made such a huge difference in the general vibe of the sessions - they seemed more intimate and personal.

The support that Cerebral Palsy Cymru has given us over the years has been invaluable - we can't thank them enough.



# Fundraising update

As a charity which usually receives ca. 80% of its income from fundraising and retail, the Coronavirus pandemic has had a devastating effect on our finances.

In April 2020, with our charity shops closed, fundraising events, challenges and community activities halted as well as charitable foundations and businesses themselves facing huge uncertainty, we lost 70% of the income expected for that month which we had predicted with confidence just a few months before. Whilst the challenges were immense, we focused our attentions quickly on a crisis appeal and were delighted to join charities up and down the country for the virtual 2.6 Challenge which took place in lieu of the London Marathon.

Thanks to the emergency funding we received from Welsh Government, administered by the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, and crisis grants from supporters including the Moondance Foundation, Community Foundation Wales, the Waterloo and Neumark Foundations, Global Make Some Noise, National Lottery Community Fund and Children in Need and businesses such as Slater and Gordon, Western Power Distribution, Admiral, Harding Evans, Hugh James, Mowgli Street Food, St Joseph's Hospital, and The Royal Mint, we were able to maintain the services and support that were desperately needed by children and families living with cerebral palsy across Wales.

Additional contributions in the form of PPE from MSS Group, Business in the Community Cymru, Brynteg School, and St Joseph's Hospital were also appreciated at a time when every penny, in terms of income but also expenditure, counted.





We were thrilled to re-open our retail operation in line with restrictions in June, beginning with three incredibly successful weekends of an innovative socially distanced 'drive through Donation Station' at our new children's centre before the refurbishment began.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a special thanks to the staff and volunteers in our retail team. Thanks to you, charity retail continues to be a critical part of our income, and of course does so much more too in terms of crucial cause awareness and community engagement.

We will also be forever grateful for the support we received from so many of you as funders and donors during these exceptionally challenging times.

Thank you all for helping to keep Cerebral Palsy Cymru safe.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to maintain and hopefully grow our unique, vital services for children and families who have been amongst the most vulnerable and severely affected in our society by the direct, indirect and ongoing effects of the pandemic.

**Because we know.  
Together we can make a difference.**

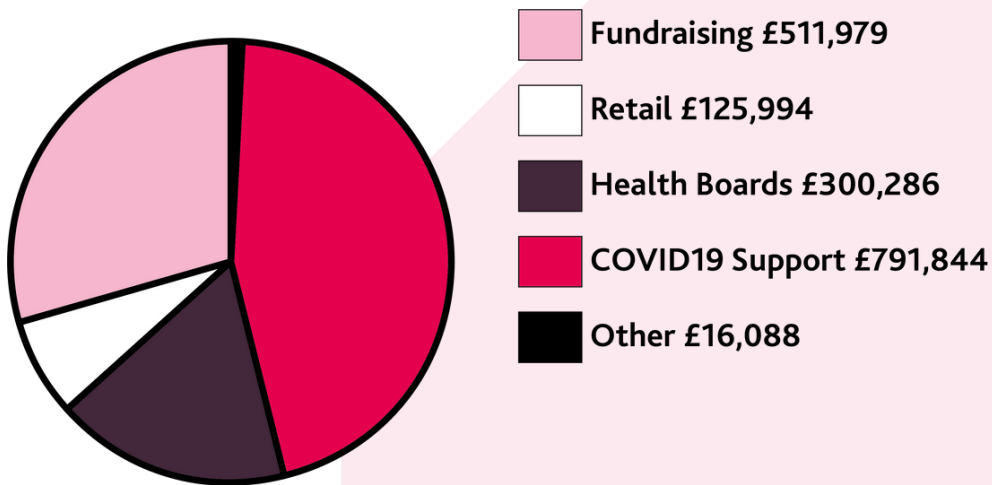


**Rachel Morgan**  
Head of Income Generation

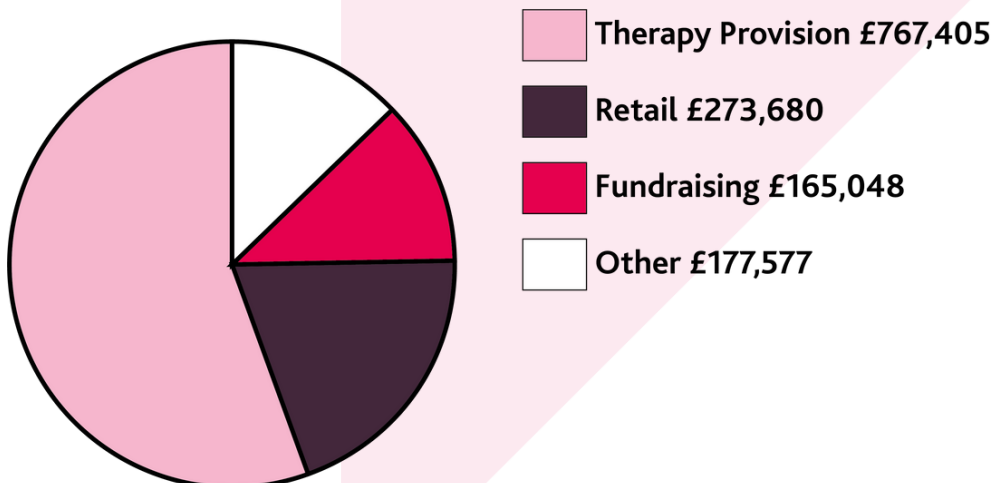


# Breakdown of income / expenditure

Income £1,746,191



Expenditure £1,383,710



In addition to the income above, we were fortunate to have income in previous years which was given to cover expenses in this financial year and have drawn on the relevant reserves to cover this.

**Thank you.  
Diolch.**

To each and every person who has helped us make a life-changing difference this year to children and families across Wales living with cerebral palsy.

[cerebralpalsycymru.org/donate-to-help](http://cerebralpalsycymru.org/donate-to-help)



**"I only stumbled across Cerebral Palsy Cymru whilst frantically googling for services in our area one evening - there had to be something out there for children like Cora, and I was very happy to find that there was!**

**From day one we have felt like part of the Cerebral Palsy Cymru family, and we have not looked back. Everyone we have met has been so supportive and helpful to us, we couldn't have wished for more."**

*Jennifer, Cora's mum.*



**Because we know.  
Together we can  
make a difference.**

**Cerebral Palsy Cymru**

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Limited Company Number: 02691690

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