



**COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**

2023-24

**IMPACT
REPORT**



Thank you for taking the time to read our 2023/24 Impact Report which gives an overview of the positive difference the charity has made in Cardiff City FC communities over the past 12 months.



As the official charity of Cardiff City FC we want a future where everyone in our communities achieves their full potential. At the heart of our mission is the belief that football clubs can inspire hope, passion, and a sense of belonging. Working together the club, the Community Foundation, and our communities can achieve great things.

During the year, we continued to provide services which contributed to our three long-term outcomes; improving health and wellbeing, supporting learning and skills, and building stronger communities. We adopted a more place-based approach to service delivery, focussing our efforts within specific communities. This approach contributed to a record year for engagement and social impact as we strengthened connections with local partners and responded directly to local need.

In Primary Education, we used the power of football to support children to learn, be active and develop crucial life skills. Moving into Secondary Education, our programmes equipped young people with the tools they need to succeed as they progress through the education system and into early adulthood. Our Further and Higher Education programmes nurtured the wellbeing of young people by providing them with educational studies, training, and employment opportunities in a supportive environment.

Our youth outreach project created safer and more inclusive communities by offering free football sessions and personal development pathways for young people. Our Bluebirds Community projects extended support to the wider Cardiff City communities, promoting wellbeing and fostering a sense of belonging through initiatives such as FIT Bluebirds, the 1927 Club, and our Armed Forces Veterans Hub.

Like many other third sector organisations, the charity experienced rising demand for services during a period of increased costs and reducing income. The charity used some of its reserves to address short term reductions in funding and explore opportunities for service development.

Now, more than ever, people need our support. If you know somebody that could benefit from our services, let them know about us. If your organisation could partner with us to deliver a programme that changes lives, get in touch. If you're inspired by what you read in this report, please share our story with your network.

With your support, we can work towards building a better future for our communities.

**Gavin Hawkey,
Foundation Director**

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ABOUT US

Cardiff City FC Community Foundation is the official charity of Cardiff City Football Club.

Our vision is for people in our communities to achieve their full potential. Our mission is to use the inspiration of Cardiff City FC to change lives and transform communities.

We tackle inequalities and overcome barriers by helping people to lead healthier more active lifestyles, supporting learning & skills, and build stronger communities.

Together, we're changing the game.



OUR SOCIAL VALUE



Estimated social impact value



Mental & Physical Health

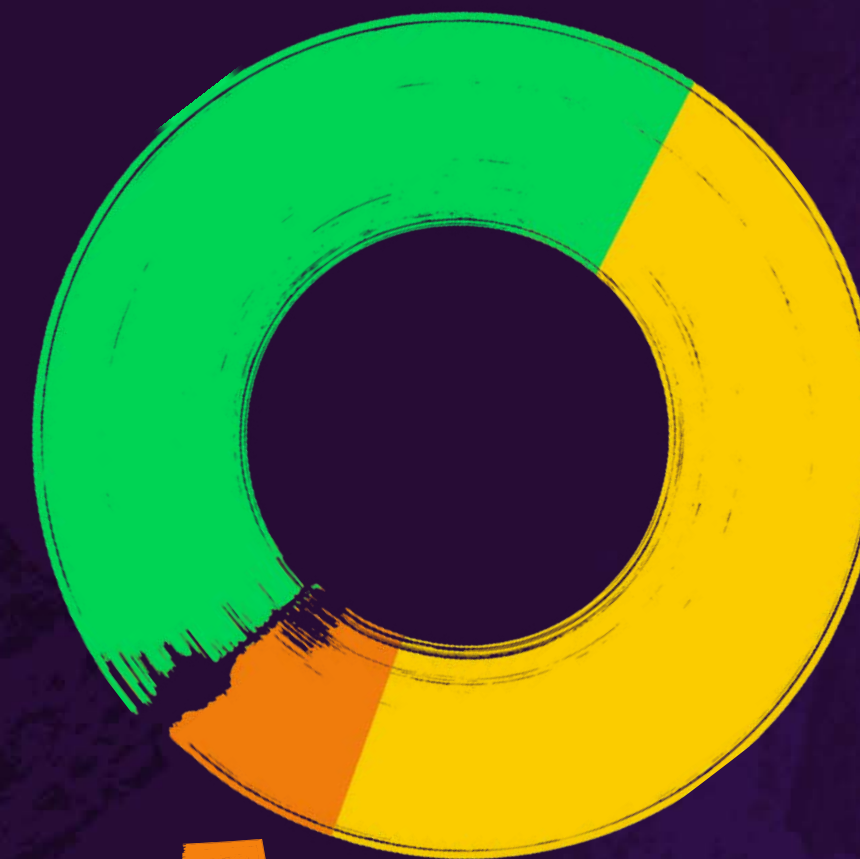
£15.5 MILLION

Social/Community Outcomes

£15.5 MILLION

Education, Training & Employment

£2.4 MILLION



*Estimated social value for the 2023/24 season. Independent research commissioned by EFL, using elements of the UEFA Social Return on Investment model, and other valuing techniques developed by the social research company Substance.

OUR REACH **x**

23/24 Participant Attendance

147,657

Total Attendances

22/23 120,607 **↑ 22%**

13,861

Unique Participants

22/23 11,544 **↑ 20%**

Participant Demographic

65%

Male

35%

Female

15%

Ethnically Diverse Communities

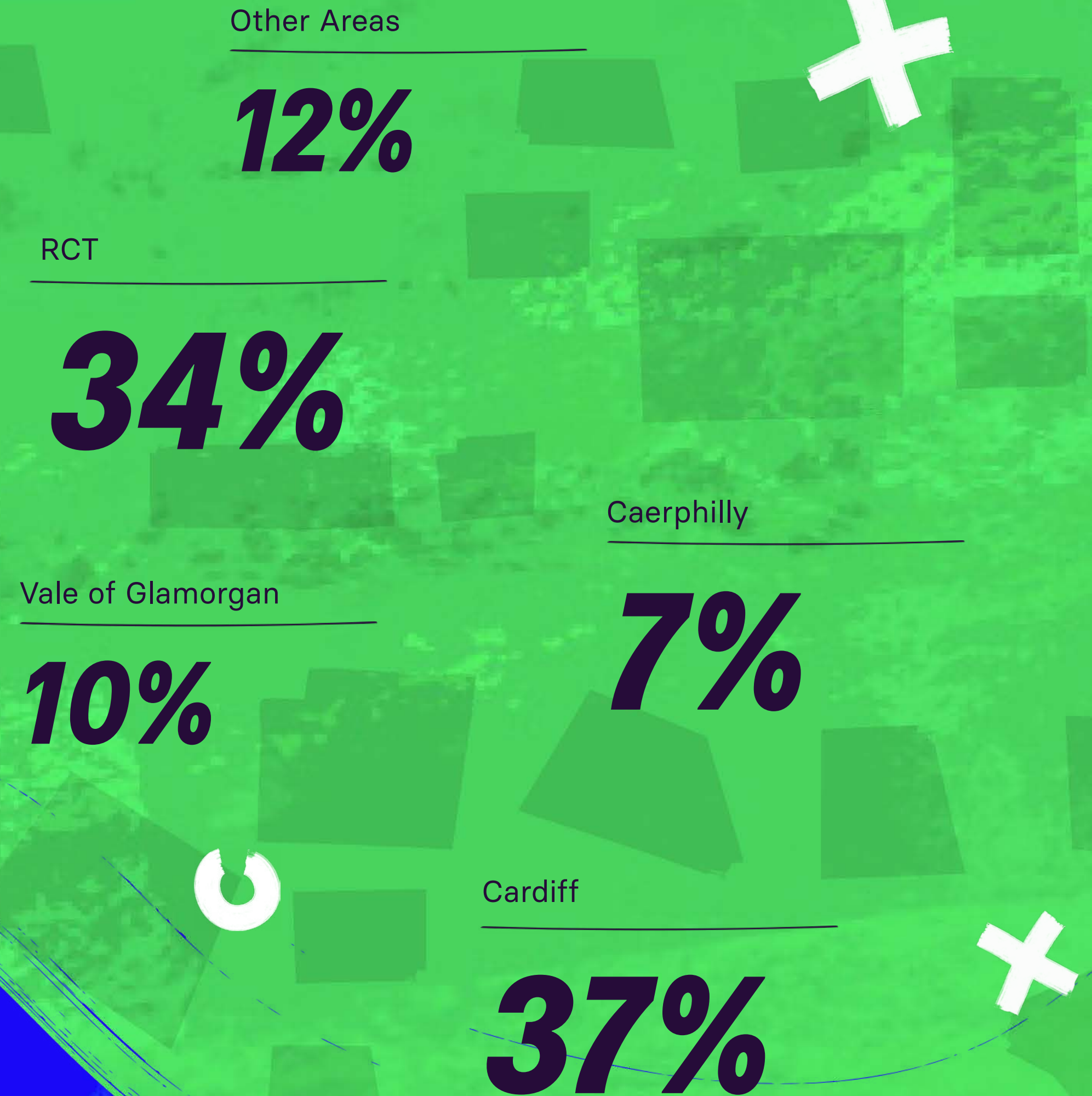
10%

Disability

WHERE WE WORK

In total, we delivered 9,619 sessions in 2023/24, an increase from 8,395 sessions in 2022/23. These sessions were held at 131 school and community venues.

83% of our sessions were delivered in the 50% most deprived areas in Wales (77% in 2022/23). 69% of sessions were held in in the top 30% most deprived areas (60% in 2022/23).



HAT-TRICK OF GOALS



Our Hat-Trick of Goals form the cornerstone of our work, driving everything we do. They are embedded into all our work and at every stage of development.

At Cardiff City FC Community Foundation, we harness the power of football and Cardiff City FC to achieve three interconnected goals:

#1 Improving Health & Wellbeing

#2 Supporting Learning & Skills

#3 Building Stronger Communities

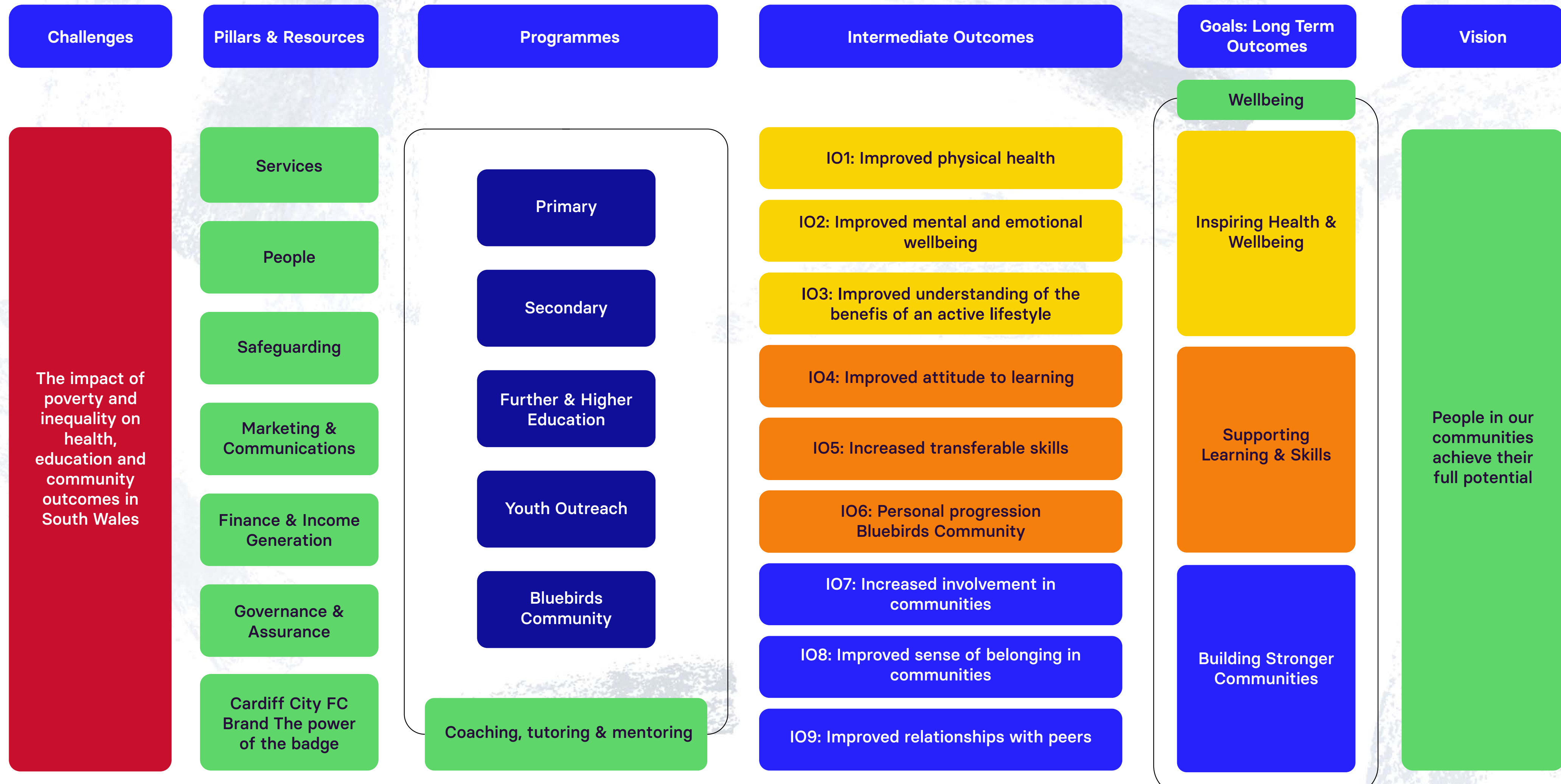
THEORY OF CHANGE

Our Theory of Change visualises the change we are seeking to make, and the steps involved in making that change.

It illustrates a common understanding of our Hat-Trick of goals and identifies the outcomes which must be in place for our goals to be achieved.



THEORY OF CHANGE



**IMPROVING
HEALTH &
WELLBEING**



IMPROVING HEALTH & WELLBEING

We want to help everyone lead a healthier, more active life and enhance wellbeing. We're committed to providing opportunities for people in our communities to live healthier and happier lives.

We know that there are varying levels of health inequalities within our communities and that these ongoing disparities in health outcomes require targeted interventions to address them. While progress is being made, challenges persist, especially in mental health and wellbeing among both adults and children.

Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach, focussing on the social factors influencing health that cultivates an inclusive environment for everyone.

From classrooms and school yards where our Head in the Game project develops children's interpersonal relationships and encourage positive attitudes, to our community programmes that help reduce social isolation and create safe spaces for people to come together, we create a sense of belonging that contributes to wellbeing.

We recognise the importance of amplifying our health messages to promote a strong culture of health and well-being across our communities, offering skills-based opportunities to ensure more people receive the support they need.



IMPROVING HEALTH & WELLBEING

During the year, and across all our programmes where 2,402 service users were surveyed:

86%

of service users reported feeling healthier both physically and mentally.

86%

of service users reported experiencing a positive enhancement in their mental and emotional wellbeing.

86%

of service users agreed that they now have an improved understanding of the benefits of an active lifestyle.

Case Study

EMPOWERING WOMEN



Cardiff City FC Community Foundation partnered with Women Connect First, a charity focused on empowering Black and Minority Ethnic women living in Cardiff, to create a women-only FIT Bluebirds session to offer a safe space for participants to get fit, make friends, and support each other's health.

FIT Bluebirds is a free 12-week health programme for people aged 35-65 who want to lose weight and live a more active life. Our team of personal trainers and coaches tailored the sessions to the group's interests and challenges, making the content both relevant and engaging. The all-female coaching team also helped participants feel comfortable throughout the programme.

Since the beginning of the programme, participants had made significant lifestyle improvements, including weight loss and increased physical activity. But what has truly stood out is the friendships that have blossomed between the women.

The programme provided more than just exercise and diet knowledge. It created a space for the women to connect, share, and grow together and beyond the exchange of advice and tips, they also traded empowerment. With one another's support, the group kept each other accountable.

The partnership between the Community Foundation and Women Connect First has proven to be a powerful example of how tailored, supportive collaboration can have lasting and meaningful impact on local communities. The Women Connect Plus sessions were delivered in partnership with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board.



I joined the FIT Bluebirds programme with two goals in mind: one for myself and one for my husband. For me, it was about fully recovering from the after-effects of an accident and rebuilding my muscle strength. For my husband, it was learning about a healthy diet to support his weight loss journey and how to create lasting healthy habits for both of us.

**Miho,
Women Connect First Member and
FIT Bluebirds Participant**



“

WHAT I LOVED MOST ABOUT THE SESSIONS WAS THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY. STARTING SOMETHING NEW ON YOUR OWN CAN BE TOUGH, BUT LEARNING AND GROWING ALONGSIDE OTHERS GAVE ME THE ENCOURAGEMENT I NEEDED TO STAY MOTIVATED.

Miho,
Women Connect First Member and FIT Bluebirds Participant



SUPPORTING LEARNING & SKILLS



SUPPORTING LEARNING & SKILLS

We're on a mission to make education and skills development accessible to all while having some fun with football along the way.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, we are still seeing the lingering effects of persistent absenteeism and reduced engagement, with mental health and anxiety continuing to be key factors in school absence rates. Through our continued work with education partners, we know that poor attendance and lack of engagement not only impact academic achievement but also have social and developmental implications for children's futures.

We see the value of integrated approaches to learning and wellbeing and recognise that these interconnected issues require interconnected approaches to tackle them.

We're here to support children and young people through their learning journey, working with established partners to provide the very best experiences from primary right the way through to further and higher education, in traditional education environments and our in our community.



At Cardiff City FC Community Foundation, we strive to create a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all backgrounds and abilities can unlock their full potential. Through the power of football, and our blended learning approach, our learners are building resilience and confidence needed to help them progress to university or employment.

**Matthew Pugh,
Education, Skills & Training Manager**



SUPPORTING LEARNING & SKILLS

During the year, and across all our programmes where 2,402 service users were surveyed:

86%

of service users noted an increase in their transferable skills such as confidence, problem solving & teamwork.

86%

of service users expressed having enhanced their attitude towards learning following participation in an educational activity with Cardiff City FC Community Foundation.

93%

of service users expressed a growing interest in personal progressions, such as educational achievements, future career aspirations, and skill enhancement.

Case Study

GRACE'S STORY

In high school, Grace struggled with motivation to engage in her subjects and complete her work, resulting in a lack of routine and low self-esteem. Seeking a different path, Grace saw the Community Foundation as an opportunity to blend her love of football with studying.

Grace's journey with Cardiff City FC Community Foundation started in the BTEC Level 3 Sport programme. Now in her final year of the Foundation Degree in Community Football Coaching and Development, in partnership with the University of South Wales and EFL in the Community, Grace has excelled academically and become a true Community Hero.

Our foundation degree combines learning with practical experience, offering work placement opportunities to help equip students with essential skills in real-world environments.

Grace made a big impact during her work placement at St Cenydd Comprehensive School where she supported the delivery of our secondary education programme. By sharing her experiences and showing the resilience she developed with us, she formed strong, meaningful connections with the pupils.

Grace also worked alongside her studies to create a safe place for marginalised people in her community. Her empathy broke down barriers, making her a strong mentor and ambassador who reflects our values. Her hard work and progress earned her an EFL Community Champion nomination and gave her the opportunity to host our annual Impact Celebration at Cardiff City Stadium.





THE FOUNDATION HAS GIVEN ME THE COURAGE TO ALIGN MY PASSION FOR SPORT WITH MY FUTURE GOALS.

THROUGH OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW AND INSPIRE OTHERS USING FOOTBALL, I'VE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON CHILDREN IN MY LOCAL COMMUNITY.

Grace Snell,
Foundation Degree student



BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES



BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Football clubs are at the heart of communities, serving as vital hubs where the benefit extends beyond the pitch. We believe in the power of connection, and we're committed to creating opportunities for everyone to belong.

Our programmes use the unique appeal of Cardiff City FC, bringing people together through a shared passion for football and the club, where factors such as age, disability, faith, and ethnicity aren't barriers to participation.

We're creating inclusive opportunities for individuals to connect and participate, through stadium-friendly events, community partnerships, and targeted community sessions, we're facilitating interactions that help strengthen community cohesion, where everyone feels valued.

We pride ourselves on being a unifying force, leveraging the power of sport to bring diverse communities together and create an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and welcomed.



We are on a mission to connect and empower individuals of all ages and backgrounds, promoting a sense of belonging, leadership, and unity through the beautiful game, and building a stronger, more united community across Cardiff.

**Zac Lyndon-Jones,
Head of Community & Development**



BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

During the year, and across all our programmes where 2,402 service users were surveyed:

90%

of service users reported an improved sense of belonging in their community.

87%

of service users reported a significant improvement in their relationships with peers, highlighting our influence on social connections in the community.

87%

of service users stated they had experienced increased involvement in their communities, showing how our programmes engineer active and meaningful participation in the areas they serve.

Case Study

ZACK'S STORY

Zack is a 12-year-old boy who attends our Inclusive Kicks sessions in Merthyr. He faces mobility and developmental challenges and had recently undergone spinal surgery. Despite these obstacles, Zack has shown remarkable commitment and passion, attending our free inclusive football sessions every week.

Zack's mother, Nadine, shared the difficulties Zack faces due to his mobility barriers, making traditional football participation challenging. But our Inclusive Kicks programme provided a solution, enabling Zack to enjoy football at his own pace while gaining opportunities for personal development. Most importantly, the praise, support and encouragement from the coaches have also boosted Zack's confidence, contributing to his overall mental wellbeing.

Darren, Cardiff City FC Community Foundation Sports Coach, has strongly emphasised the sense of togetherness and belonging found within the group. The sessions have significantly helped build strong relationships among the participants, their families, and support workers.

These bonds also extend beyond the pitch, with group activities taking place outside of the sessions such as bowling, group meals, long weekend trips and the access our sensory room at Cardiff City Stadium to watch a Men's first-team game.

To honour his dedication, Zack was chosen as a mascot for the Men's first-team game against Rotherham United on Cardiff City FC Community Foundation Day 2023. Zack's engagement with our inclusive football provision highlights how football clubs have the power to inspire hope, passion, and a sense of belonging, giving children like Zack the chance to grow, overcome challenges and build strong, personal connections.

“

This group has been exactly what Zack and us as his parents have been looking for many years. It's a fantastic group with the most encouraging and supportive coaches that allow our children to be themselves while doing what they love at their own pace.

Zack looks forward to each session and has loved feeling part of a team. This group truly is the best!

**Nadine,
Zack's Mum**



Play Video
VISIT
MALAYSIA

“

ZACK TURNS UP EVERY WEEK, GIVES 100% AND ALWAYS HAS A SMILE ON HIS FACE DESPITE HIS CHALLENGES. HE IS A PLEASURE TO COACH AND IS VERY POPULAR WITHIN THE GROUP.

I HAVE SEEN HIM DEVELOP OVER THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS AND HAS SHOWN SO MUCH RESILIENCE AFTER HIS LAST OPERATION.

Darren Davies,
Cardiff City FC Community Sports Coach



Honourable mention: Premier League Community Captain

CHLOE'S STORY

This season provided a unique opportunity to reflect on the significant growth of our inclusive primary education provision and the positive impact of Premier League funding and Club community programmes within Cardiff City FC communities.

The Premier League Charitable Fund offered a chance to celebrate the inspiring journey of Chloe McBratney, a former beneficiary of the Foundation who is now a valued staff member.

Chloe was nominated as a Premier League Community Captain for her outstanding work in building strong connections within the additional learning needs (ALN) community and her contributions to the Premier League Primary Stars project, helping it grow into the valued provision it is today.

Community Captains are selected by clubs to recognise individuals who play a key role in Premier League-supported community programmes and are celebrated as part of the #MoreThanAGame campaign. Chloe was born with no sight and later diagnosed with bilateral optic nerve hypoplasia at 18 months, a condition that affects the optic discs and causes vision challenges. She has also been diagnosed with macular hypoplasia, which will gradually lead to further vision loss.

Chloe, with Guide Dog Emily, received her Community Captain armband from Bluebirds captain Joe Ralls and was honoured with a mural in Cardiff city centre, celebrating their impact on children and young people in the Cardiff City FC community.

From the choice of colours to the addition of a small 3D model installed at chest height, the mural symbolised that anything is possible, regardless of physical ability or disability.



Well done Chloe, our Community Champion! This well-deserved award is a testament to the positive impact you've made through your hard work in primary education, especially with young people with additional learning needs - and the positive influence you've had on our community.

**Luke Jenkins-Jones,
Primary Education Coordinator**

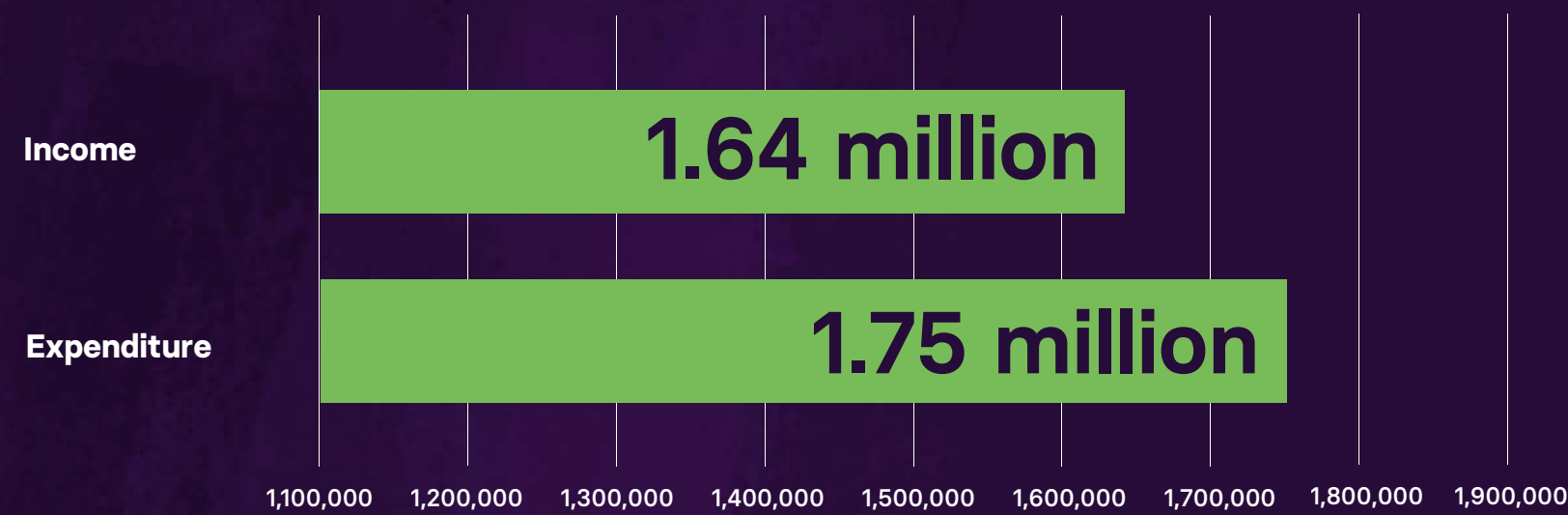


FINANCE

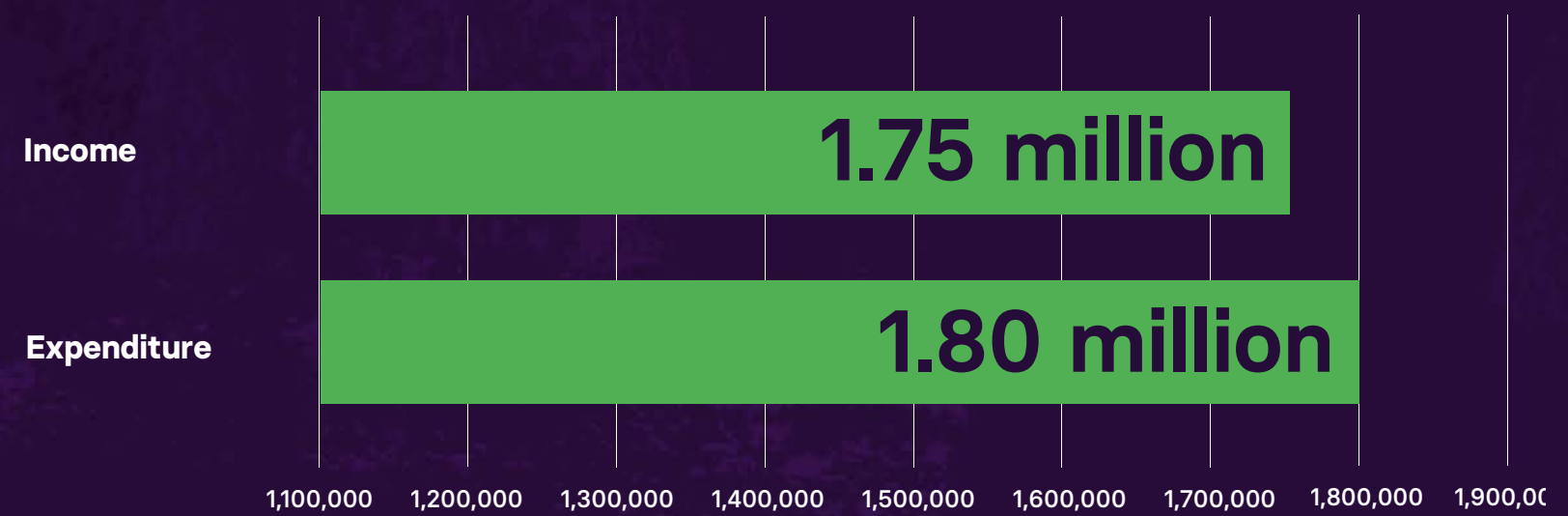


Total Income/Expenditure

2023/24

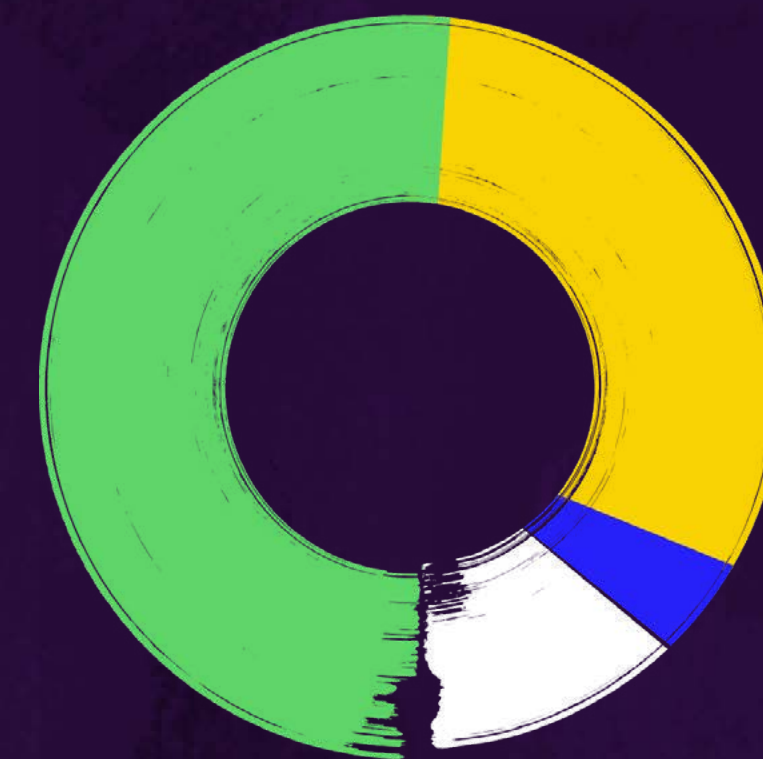


2022/23



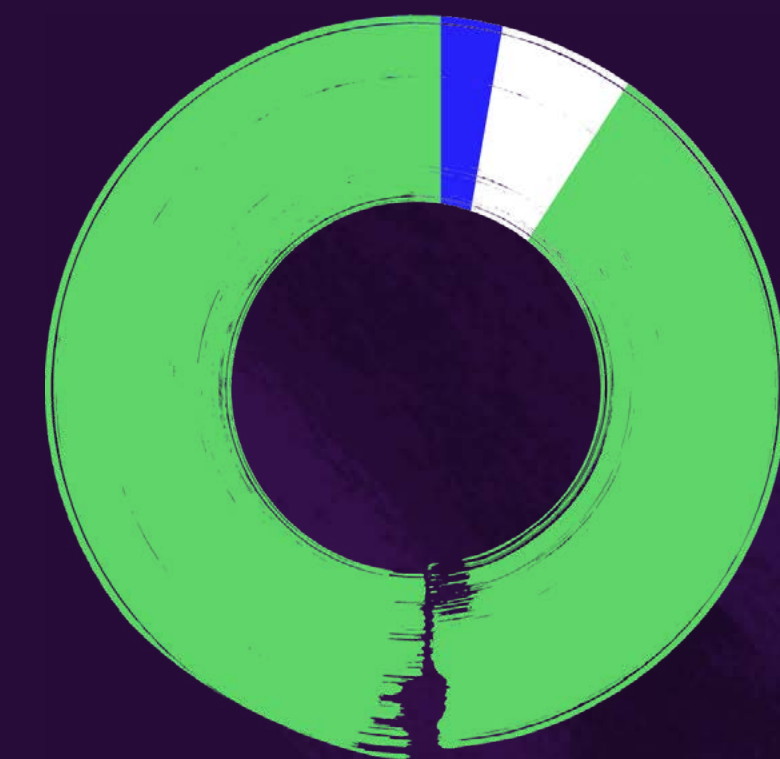
Where does our money come from?

2023/24



Where does our money go?

2023/24



*Unaudited accounts. Like many other third sector organisations, the charity experienced rising demand for services during a period of increased costs and reducing income. The charity used some of its reserves to address short term reductions in funding and explore opportunities for service development.



THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

This year, we've been able to make a real difference in our communities, thanks to the incredible generosity and commitment of our supporters. Your efforts have helped us deliver vital programmes to more people than ever before.

The rising cost of living has continued to affect many people, creating new challenges for households and communities alike. Despite these challenges, your generosity - whether through taking part in the very first Cardiff City Abseil Challenge or offering your expertise and resources - has made it possible for us to continue our work and reach those who need our support the most.

Over the past year, businesses have also played an important role in supporting us. Many have partnered with us to fund vital programmes, engage their teams, and make a meaningful impact in our communities. These partnerships have shown the power of collaboration and what we can achieve when we work together.

We're excited about what's ahead and the potential to make a bigger difference. But we can't do it without your continued support.

Refer to us

Do you know somebody that could benefit from our services? Let them know about us.

Share our story

Can you share our story with your network?
www.cardiffcityfcfoundation.org.uk

Partner with us

Could your organisation partner with us to deliver a programme that changes lives? Could your business join us as a Charity Partner to help support more people in our communities? Get in touch.

Support our goals

Would you like to donate? Or fundraise for us? Our team would love to hear from you.

FUTURE PLANS & PROGRESSION

#1

Placed Based Approach

We're adopting a place-based approach to increase our reach and impact. By focusing on specific areas and tailoring our support to respond to local need and working with partners, we aim to become more integrated part of the local eco-system.

#2

Education Pathways

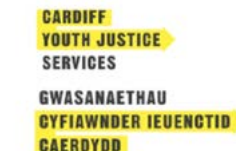
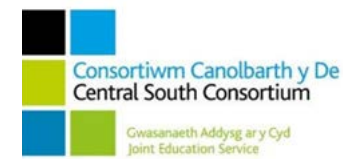
We're expanding education pathways to include our new Junior Apprenticeships for 14-16 year olds, more student places on our Further and Higher Education programmes and piloting Adult Learning courses through the power of football.

#3

Health Interventions

We're working alongside health system partners to help people start well, live well and age well. We're extending our ALN provision in primary schools and expanding access to our Sensory Room at Cardiff City Stadium. We're also widening access to FIT Bluebirds to help more people achieve a healthy weight.

PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS



KEY CONTACTS

Board of Trustees

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**COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**

**CHANGING LIVES,
TRANSFORMING
COMMUNITIES**