



VISION 21 | CHANGING LIVES

v21.org.uk

V21 A year in review. 2024/25



November 2025

Welcome

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2024/25:

Welcome to Vision 21's annual report for the year ended 31st March 2025, the report concentrates on Vision 21's performance in 2024/25 and what we did.

A Message from our Chair: This has been a year of challenges and changes. We reported in the 2023/24 Annual report the very sudden, sad and unexpected death in April 2024 of our long-standing Chair of the Board of Trustees, Alan Pursell.

I was deeply honoured and privileged to be elected to succeed Alan Pursell as the new Chair of the Board of Trustees in May 2024.

Several significant issues needed to be addressed in 2024/25.

The first issue was the need to recruit additional Trustees to the Board of Trustees.

In January 2025, V21 was extremely fortunate to be able to recruit 2 outstanding trustees to the Board. They are Christobel Tweedie and Sian Wilkins who have extensive experience in finance, governance and administration. Both spent the early part of 2025 getting to know the organisation, the projects, and our amazing Trainees.

Christobel and Sian were confirmed as Trustees in April 2025, and I have no doubt that they will make a very long and significant contribution to the success of V21.

The second challenge V21 faced in 2024/5 involved the increase in National Insurance contributions and other financial measures introduced by the new Government.

As with all challenges faced by V21, the SMT and Trustees are working together to ensure that these challenges are met and accommodated to ensure that V21 thrives into the future.

Continued:

V21 is a remarkable and unique organisation, with committed and imaginative staff, who work to enhance the lives of our Trainees. I would like to offer a very special thank you to all the staff for their professionalism and dedication in making V21 such an amazing organisation.

It has been a pleasure and inspiration for me to visit all the projects, talk to Trainees, and hear their stories of how V21 has improved and enhanced their lives. Those who get to know it well, how it works, and what it achieves for Trainees are amazed and astounded by what they achieve.

I would like to offer a thank you to all Trustees. V21 is truly blessed to have such outstanding, experienced, and committed individuals who have contributed significantly to the success of V21.

To everyone who has played a part, I offer my deepest thanks. Your support has made a deep impact on the lives of our Trainees, their families, and everyone associated with us.

Michael Winter
V21 Chair

Everyone deserves kindness & respect

A message from the CEO

I've been privileged to work with this remarkable organisation for 15 years, and for the past five, I've had the honour of serving as its CEO. In that time, I've seen us weather challenges and celebrate incredible successes. Through it all, our staff and trainees have shown an extraordinary ability to adapt, support one another, and move forward together.

Vision 21 began in 1986 with a simple but powerful belief: everyone deserves kindness and respect, especially those who may have rarely experienced either. It started when one man recognised the injustice in how some people, no different from anyone else, were treated. He imagined a place where they would be welcomed, valued, and supported to pursue their aspirations. That place became Vision 21.

Our mission is to support life-changing opportunities,

Our mission is to support life-changing opportunities, and we do, not only for those we directly support, but for everyone involved: staff, trainees, and volunteers alike. Vision 21 transforms lives across the board. Everyone who becomes part of our community carries forward the original vision from 1986; a vision built on kindness, respect, value, trust, and, above all, a true sense of belonging.

Over the past year, we've strengthened that sense of belonging by delivering more than 20,000 sessions across sixteen projects in four local authorities. Our partnerships with these dedicated local authorities remain vital in helping us reach those who need support most, and this year was no exception.

To everyone who contributed, whether through donations, time, or energy, thank you. Your support has made a real difference.

A special thank you also goes to our committed Trustees. Your dedication has been instrumental in shaping Vision 21 into the inspiring organisation it is today.

Challenges will come, as they always do. But we will face them as we always have—together, guided by the same powerful vision that began it all.

With hope and excitement, we look forward to an even brighter future.

Wayne

Transition

Every year, V21 participates in transition events across Wales, typically meeting inspiring individuals in ALN schools or colleges. These events are always enjoyable and great for networking with other third-sector organisations. However, they don't fully capture the unique experience of a V21 project.

To address this, we launched our own open days, starting at the V21 Garden Nursery. Visitors experienced firsthand what working in the project feels like, got the chance to ask questions and enjoyed cake and biscuits. Those who took part even got to take home plants they had potted up themselves.

What we did...

Providing a Place

Trainee Placements

Year after year, our top priority remains providing high-quality learning opportunities for as many individuals with additional learning needs as possible. This year was no different.

We delivered over 20,000 learning sessions across 16 projects, partnering with four local authorities. Each session was filled with laughter and learning, creating an environment that not only supports but actively celebrates diversity.

Giving a Voice

Trainee Forum

The trainee forum plays a crucial role at V21 by giving trainees a voice in shaping the organisation's direction. We started small, with three representatives from different areas at our Fieldway site and horticulture. We later added three more from Sbectrwm, also from various project areas. While still in its early stages, the forum aims to guide V21's future and eventually engage more broadly with the wider learning



V21 PROJECTS

Giving a Choice

V21 Garden Nursery @ Heath

The Garden Nursery has experienced significant growth this year, excuse the pun, with sales increasing by £9,000. They sold 546 hanging baskets and planters, up from 412 last year which is a 32.5% jump.

The project was also commissioned by the Coal Exchange Hotel to revamp the exterior planters of the historic building with top-quality plants, giving it a stunning new look.

V21 Gardening @ Fairwater

Over the past five years, this project has transformed remarkably. From simply maintaining control during the pandemic, it has blossomed (sorry) into a peaceful and vibrant space, though it remains a hive of activity.

This year, Beth and her team introduced new product lines such as bug hotels and Christmas items including upcycled reindeer, Christmas Gonsks, and smaller fairy houses. They also supported V21 Woodwork @ Heath by producing medium-sized fairy houses. While historically sales were modest, this year the project sold over £7,500 worth of items. Additionally, the project opened its doors to the public for the annual Open Garden scheme, raising funds for the National Garden Scheme and other UK charities.



V21 PROJECTS

V21 Life Skills @ Fairwater

In 2023/24, V21 partnered with Cardiff Social Services to pilot a Life Skills project in the Annexe at Sbectrwm. Although the start was slow with some challenges to overcome, the project's valuable work in teaching independence led us to extend the pilot to June 2026. There are still a few issues to iron out with Cardiff, but these are expected to be manageable.



V21 Woodwork @ Barry

Last year, this project underwent a major transformation with the arrival of Richard, a fantastic new staff member. Together with trainees, he redesigned the workspace for greater efficiency and productivity. New tools and equipment were also introduced and well-utilised.

Since Richard joined, the team has created a bespoke mirror frame for the Vulcan Hotel at Saint Fagans, crafted set props for a secret TV production, and built recycling storage units designed to fit new Cardiff recycling bags. Though trainee recruitment struggled early in the year, by year's end the project was full.



V21 PROJECTS

V21 Woodwork @ Heath

This project has become essential in supporting the Cardiff Parks Department's maintenance of city parks. Many benches you see across the city have been refurbished here by the trainees. They also restored several pirate-themed benches, including cannons and skull-and-crossbones for Cardiff Council and they now sit proudly in the park behind Llanrumney Hall, former home of the pirate Captain Morgan. Wait, there's more! Recently, they completed a commission for Jaguar Land Rover, producing twenty display boxes. Nick aims to continue expanding the variety of work to help trainees develop new skills while honing existing ones.

V21 Cafe @ Fairwater

This project continues to grow year after year. Gill and her team went above and beyond their targets, achieving incredible results with their sales of coffee, tea, and homemade cakes! Just how impressive were they? Together, they served 4,512 cups of coffee, 3,333 cups of tea, and 1,774 cakes baked by Gill and the trainees, including 787 brownies (mostly sold to me!) and 420 cupcakes.



V21 Catering @ Caerphilly

Though our work is never done for accolades, it's rewarding when recognised. Andrew and his team at Caerphilly were runners-up in the "Most Innovative Social Enterprise" awards by GAVO. The event was a wonderful celebration and a chance to showcase what V21 does.

V21 Catering @ Nantyglo

In our two Extra Care Schemes, we always strive to engage tenants in celebrations throughout the year. This included Valentine's Day meals, Easter events, and a special visit from an Elvis impersonator for American Independence Day, a fun excuse to bring the King of Rock 'n' Roll to the Blaenau Gwent Valleys! Maxine and her team did a fantastic job organising the day, and the tenants had a great time.

V21 PROJECTS

V21 Cafe @ Rookwood

This year has brought many challenges for the project, with significant changes taking place at Rookwood Hospital. Despite this, Tracy and her trainees have done a fantastic job keeping everyone well-fed and in smiling.

V21 Sbectrwm Centre @ Fairwater

This building is a true labour of love. V21 has long aimed to become greener and more energy-efficient, not just to save costs but to care for our planet. Thanks to a Wolfson Foundation grant, we installed 47 solar panels this year, helping reduce electricity costs and our carbon footprint.

The hall was refurbished with new furniture, automatic blinds, fresh decoration, and more efficient radiators that genuinely heat the space.

After years of discussion, we finally opened the building to the public on weekends. Cross-project teamwork saw the café and garden staff collaborate to welcome customers during summer months. We will look to build on this great start in the years to come.



V21 Pottery @ Fairwater

The Pottery team installed a new kiln to replace the aging Falcon bisque kiln, allowing us to meet the high demand for our handmade ceramics. We also refurbished the kitchenette to better support the team.

With Jenny moving full-time to Crafts 2, we had staffing gaps to fill. After a thorough recruitment process with 12 shortlisted candidates, we're excited to welcome Elen in April 2025. She brings extensive ceramics and teaching experience.

In the new year, we were recommissioned by Cardiff and Vale Partnership Trust to create 200 awards for Excellence in Care 2025. A massive task that our trainees handled brilliantly.

V21 Crafts @ Fairwater

Building on the success of linocut printed cards, the team worked closely with senior management to secure funding for further developing printmaking. Sue and Jessie are excited to start phase two with an intensive screen printing course at The Printheaus, Chapter Arts Centre.

Embracing digital art tools, they've produced fully digital card designs, including a bespoke Christmas card by trainee Louis for V21 Chair Michael. They also completed an exciting commission for wedding invitations for Vicky, daughter of our V21 Café Fairwater project leader, Gill.



V21 PROJECTS

V21 Crafts 2 @ Fairwater

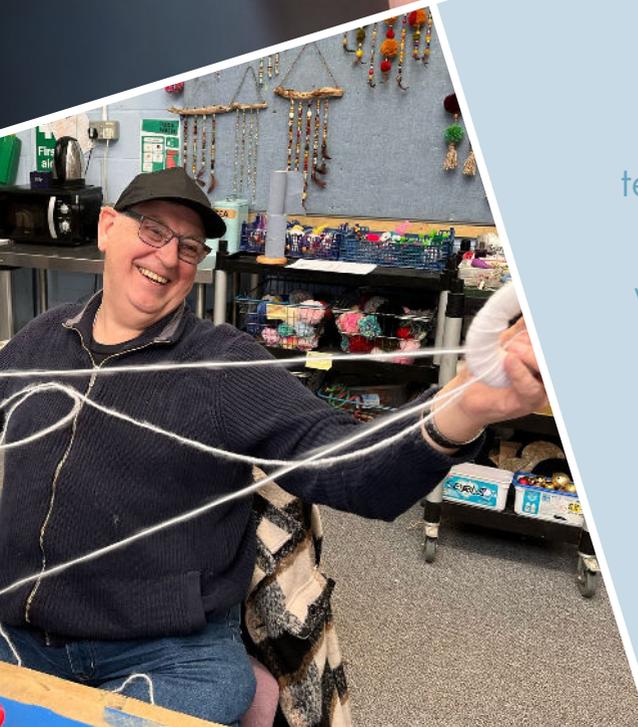
Now open full-time, trainees create resin earrings, batik bags, and shibori scarves Monday through Friday. The latest project development involves making household items and gifts from 'Jesmonite,' a resin made from gypsum, acrylic, and water.

Jenny, Jessie, and the team worked with local maker Gemma from "Lark Design Make" to learn the techniques needed for production. The first products, including trinket trays and tealight holders, debuted successfully at the Cardiff Christmas Market.



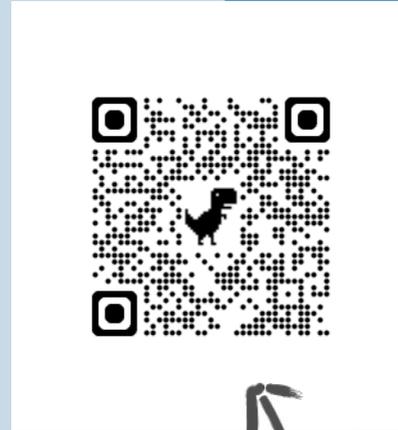
V21 Crafts @ Barry

Continuing to transform waste into art, the Barry team pushed boundaries by creating pom-pom creatures from donated wool and papier-mâché sculptures and planters from milk cartons and wastepaper. Their sales at the 2024 Cardiff Christmas Market were the highest yet.



V21 Technology @ Heath

This year, our technology project has made great strides, particularly in social media and animation. We've seen some fantastic TikTok content showcasing the creativity and skills of both trainees and staff, one video even reached over 14,000 views! With Lucy and Molly now part of the team, we're excited to see this platform continue to grow. Scan the QR code to view the viral V21 TikTok. :)



V21 Office Skills @ Heath

The trainees in this project are developing their customer service skills and doing an excellent job representing V21 on a daily basis. They've quickly adapted to our new telephone system and have taken the lead in keeping staff updated on all things admin-related. In addition, they're collaborating with the Technology project to design marketing posters for our in-house events.



V21 Reception Skills @ Fairwater

One of V21's newer projects, and one we wish we had started years ago, is based in the main office at Sbectrwrm. Here, trainees take on the vital role of running our front-of-house operations. Tasks include answering telephone enquiries, welcoming visitors, and ensuring the centre runs smoothly. Through this work, they strengthen their communication and problem-solving skills, learn how to prioritise tasks, and develop outstanding customer service abilities.



Volunteering

Over the years, we've been fortunate to have such a dedicated and generous group of volunteers supporting Vision 21. From our regular weekly volunteers to those who join us through education, training placements, or as part of corporate teams, every single person has made a real difference.

This year alone, we hosted a variety of student placements: 6 college work experience students from local colleges, 4 social work undergraduates from Cardiff Met, and 4 Art Psychotherapy postgraduates from USW. While they were with us, they had the chance to learn from our trainees and staff and left with a much stronger understanding of what people with learning disabilities can achieve. That experience is so valuable for anyone going into social care or health-related roles, and it's something we're really proud to support.

At the moment, we have 34 regular volunteers giving up their time every week across our projects. Their support means so much to both the staff and our trainees. They bring fresh energy, a willingness to learn, and often share their own experiences and skills, which adds so much to what we do.

We also want to say a big thank you to the corporate volunteers from Admiral Group and BT Group, who've been amazing in helping us look after and improve the V21 Sbectrwm Community Garden. They've taken time away from their desks to get stuck into all sorts of garden tasks!

We feel so fortunate to be surrounded by such kind and committed people. On behalf of the Board, staff, and trainees, thank you! We're looking forward to continuing all the brilliant work we've started together.



Celebrating Together

New Events

We aim to host as many celebration events as possible each year, and this time we added two exciting new ones: a Summer Ball and an Inclusive Santa's Grotto. The Summer Ball saw trainees dressed in their finest suits and gowns, dancing the night away to live music.

The Inclusive Santa's Grotto brought festive magic for both young and old, creating a warm and welcoming holiday experience for everyone. Both events were hugely successful in their own ways, but they had one thing in common, everyone left with a smile on their face.

New Staff

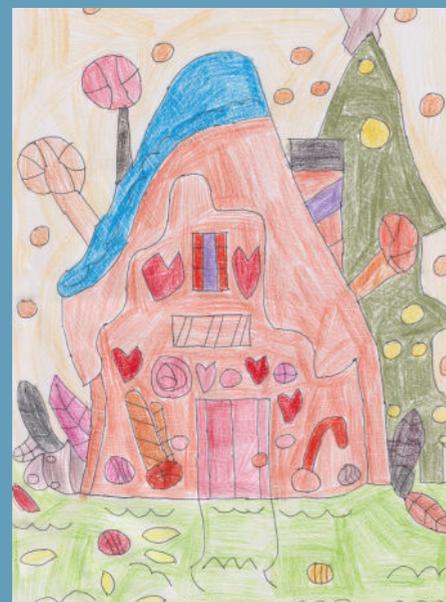
This year, Technology welcomed two new team members. Lucy Jones joined us new to the organisation, bringing extensive experience in tech-based learning activities, including multimedia, creative design, and social media content.

Molly, who has worked part-time at our Caerphilly project for many years, brought with her lots of experience supporting people with learning disabilities and helping them thrive daily.



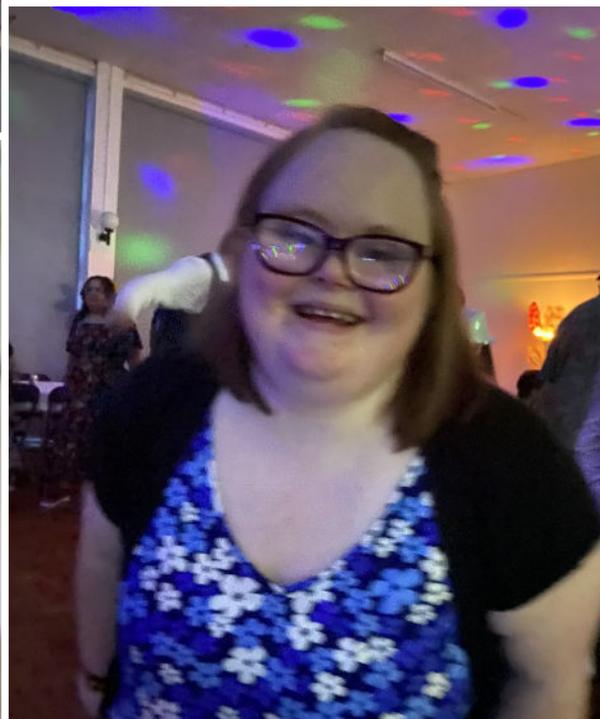
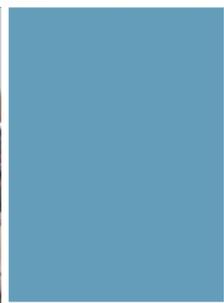
Christmas Card Competition Winner

This year's winner of the V21 Christmas Card Competition was Lewis Pithers. His design featured a wonderful, hand drawn candy house set against a Christmas tree backdrop with candy snow gently falling. Brilliant!





Photo's from some of this year's events, our first V21 End of Summer Ball, and Santa's Grotto Christmas 2024.



Moving forward.

In the next 12 months we are looking to develop:

Exploring Different Art Mediums

Sue and Jessie are looking to introduce screen printing to the trainees' skill set. This will not only expand the range of items the Crafts project can create and sell but also add a fresh dimension to their card designs.

More V21 Open Days

Next year, we'll be throwing our project doors wide open once again for anyone curious to see what we're all about. Expect plenty of cake, lots of laughs, and a whole lot of fun!

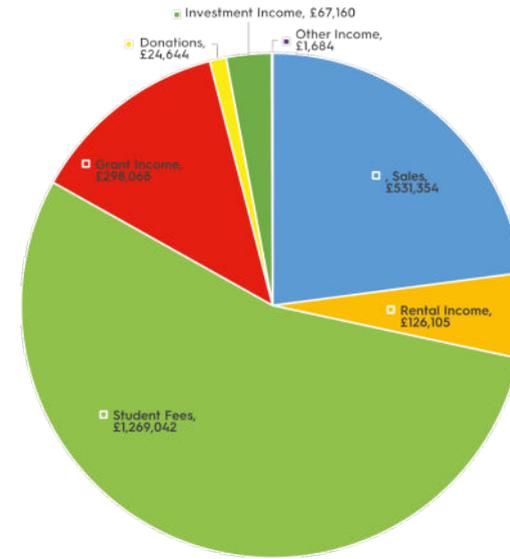
Upgrade Our Security

Plans are underway to enhance security at both Sbectrwm and Fieldway. Upgrades will include CCTV and new intruder alarms, all accessible remotely for added peace of mind.

Upgrade the Internet

In today's digital age, fast and reliable internet is essential. We are working with BT Openreach to secure high-speed internet at Sbectrwm, which will significantly improve the experience for both staff and visitors to the centre.

Income and expenditure 2024 /25

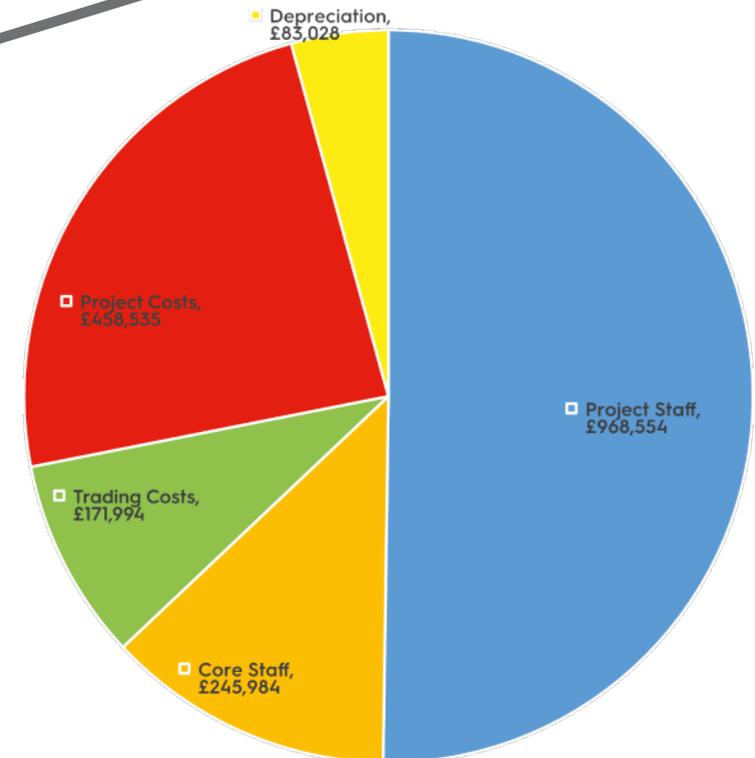


Income
£2,318,057

Build More Space for Selling and Marketing V21 at the Garden Nursery

Exciting plans are in motion to transform part of the Garden Nursery into a vibrant hub for all of V21's making and selling projects! This space will not only boost sales opportunities but also offer a brilliant way to showcase what we do and the passion behind our work.

Expenditure
£1,928,095



Thank

you

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has supported us this year and in previous years. We are consistently amazed by the kindness and generosity of our supporters and the individuals who contribute to making us the organisation we are.

Thank you to the volunteers who tirelessly dedicate themselves to supporting our projects and trainees. We also extend our thanks to our donors, funders, friends, and families. Lastly, we appreciate our wonderful staff and trainees for making the past 12 months as successful as possible.

While we don't have enough space to name everyone who has made an impact on V21 this year, we sincerely thank you all.

We would like to specifically thank the following for their support:

Donors

Alan Pursell – Legacy
Wolfson Foundation
James Phillips
Wayne Lewis
Easyfundraising &
Facebook Donors
OneLottery supporters

Continued Support

Cardiff City Council
Vale of Glamorgan Council
Newport City Council
Blaenau Gwent CBC
Caerphilly CBC

Contact us

Units 10-12 Fieldway
Maes Y Coed Road
Heath, Cardiff, CF14 4HY

 029 2062 1194  admin@v21.org.uk



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