

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Social Services



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Mae fersiwn Gymraeg o'r adroddiad hwn ar gael.
If you would like a copy of this report in your own language or
in an alternative format such as large print, braille or on tape,
please contact **01352 703020**.

This report has been designed by:

DOUBLECLIC <

A CREATIVE SOCIAL FIRM
CWMNI CYMDEITHASOL CREADIGOL

Introduction

This Social Services Annual Report is prepared under the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, both of which place a statutory requirement on the Council to report annually on its Social Services functions.

The focus of this legislation is on well-being, and our report summarises the key things that we are doing in Flintshire to support our most vulnerable residents. It describes our challenges, provides our stakeholders with a picture of how we have performed and improved over the last year, and sets out our priorities for the coming year.

Stakeholders include the people using our services, our staff, elected members, the general public, our partners, regulators and Welsh Government. Engagement with stakeholders is fundamental to what we do and informs the development of our services and future plans.

In the report, we assess our performance against each of the four areas in the Performance Improvement Framework – People, Prevention, Partnership and Integration, and Well-being.

In each area we will evaluate:

- 1. What do we know about the quality and impact of what we are doing?**
- 2. How do we know? e.g. what evidence from research, engagement and the metrics are we using to inform this assessment?**
- 3. What are we doing well and how can we do better? What are our priorities for improvement, particularly over the coming year.**
- 4. What progress did we make on the areas for improvement identified in last year's report? What difference did we make?**

The work described in the report links to the national Quality Standards, which set out Welsh Government's expectations for the quality of support that local authorities must be providing.

The standards are set out below.

The Quality Standards

People

- 1.1** All people are equal partners who have voice, choice and control over their lives and are able to achieve what matters to them.
- 1.2** Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled, well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision.

Prevention

2.1 The need for care and support is minimised and the escalation of need is prevented, whilst ensuring that the best possible outcomes for people are achieved.

2.2 Resilience within our communities is promoted and people are supported to fulfil their potential by actively encouraging and supporting people who need care and support, including carers, to learn, develop and participate in society.

Partnerships and Integration

3.1 Effective partnerships are in place to commission and deliver fully integrated, high quality, sustainable outcomes for people.

3.2 People are encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as equal partners.

Well-Being

4.1 People are protected and safeguarded from abuse and neglect, and any other types of harm.

4.2 People are supported to actively manage their well-being and make their own informed decisions so that they are able to achieve their full potential and live independently for as long as possible.

There are instances where the work described in this report relates to multiple quality standards, however this will be detailed in the area most appropriate.



Director's Summary of Performance

Welcome to the 2023/24 Annual Social Services Report.

This year, despite the challenges we have faced, we have continued to positively support our most vulnerable residents to have voice, choice, and control over their own lives, reach their potential and live well in their communities.

In November 2023, CIW (Care Inspectorate Wales) undertook a full **Performance Evaluation Inspection of Adults' and Children's services**. This was the first full inspection the portfolio has received in over eight years and provided us with an opportunity to showcase the creative and innovative practice undertaken here in Flintshire.

The report has been published and the findings are largely positive, inspectors identified good work and practice across all services and thanked everyone involved for such a warm welcome and the positive input they experienced.

We consider the report to be a good and positive reflection of the ongoing hard work, commitment and dedication that staff give to their roles on a daily basis, and something we should all be very proud of.

To read the full report please [click here](#).

We are very proud to have had four finalists in this years' [Social Care Wales' Accolades Awards](#).

The Accolades recognise, celebrate, and share notable work in social care and childcare, play and early years in Wales.



Flintshire Finalists

Category: Building Bright Futures for Children and Families
Finalist: Child to Adult Team (C2A)

Category: Effective Leadership Award
Finalist: Sandra Stacey, Marleyfield House Care Home Manager

Category: Working in Partnership
Finalist: Micro-Care
Finalist: North Wales Together: Learning Disability Transformation Programme

The awards ceremony was held in Cardiff on 25 April 2024, Sandra Stacey won the Effective Leadership Award, with the remaining nominees being highly commended finalists.

Congratulations to all involved for this outstanding achievement.

Developing our **in-house services and capital projects** continue to be a key focus for Flintshire and this is evident in our successes this year, and priorities moving forward into 2024/25.

Some of the other highlights of 2023/24 include:

- **Foster carer** recruitment has been active this year, with four new general foster carers approved and a further eight connected person carers.
- Four of our five new **Children's Residential Homes** have now been registered with CIW. One of the homes includes a Multi Systemic Therapy (MST) model which is the first of its kind in Wales.
- The **Progression Service** has expanded and now also includes a full-time Social Worker dedicated to working with neurodiverse individuals aged 16-18.
- Coleg Cambria held a very successful **Reverse Jobs Fair**, with support from Next Steps, HfT and Deeside Business Forum, to support individuals with disabilities into work.
- This year **Project SEARCH** offered two programmes and became the first Project SEARCH in the UK to offer a dedicated programme for adults aged over 25.
- North Wales Integrated Autism Service (**NWIAS**) have been very proactive this year promoting the service at a number of events throughout the region. Training has been carried out with ASNEW on Autism and Communication Skills and training is also being offered to Advocacy providers.
- The final design plans for **Tŷ Croes Atti** have been approved and construction work is well underway. To increase capacity for step down care within our in-house provision, 12 step-down **Discharge to Recover and Assess** (D2RA) beds have been agreed at Tŷ Croes Atti, which will increase the provision across Flintshire from its current level of 16 to a total of 28.
- The design concept for the **Maes Gwern** has evolved to incorporate areas to enable health services and therapies to be delivered at the new site, in addition to the learning disability, mental health, and autism support services, to create an **integrated social services and health hub**.
- This year has been hugely successful for the **Micro-Care** project. 14 new enterprises have been established, taking the total up to 45, and Flintshire are now able to commission support from Micro-Carers.
- A **Dementia Project Board** has been established to implement the Flintshire Dementia Strategy. The board includes representation from Social Care, Health and third sector partners. The board has worked collaboratively to oversee a number of positive initiatives this year to engage with individuals impacted by dementia.
- We have successfully recommissioned our **Advocacy Services** to ensure individuals are able to understand and communicate their care and support needs and make and/or challenge decisions about their care. The service has also been extended to include specialist advocacy provision for people with autism.

- The **Flying Start** programme has been enhanced to offer all two-year-olds part time childcare. To help support the need for additional **childcare** places, the Phase 1 Childcare Capital Programme was completed March 2024, with eight new builds and one refurbishment.
- The **Well-being and Recovery Team** are now fully operational and delivering excellent outcomes and the accommodation support element has also been launched. The service is proving very successful, and the feedback received has been positive.
- 25 providers across residential, domiciliary and extra care, have now achieved one of three awards (Bronze, Silver and Gold) through our **Progress for Providers** programme.
- Uptake continues to increase for our **Young Carers ID Card** with more than 400 young carers now registered.
- The Pen-Pal project has been set up to allow **carers** the opportunity to communicate with other carers internationally, to share ideas and provide peer support.



Neil Ayling
Chief Officer, Social Services



Craig Macleod
Senior Manager, Children's Services

“

“This will be Neil Ayling’s final full Director’s Annual report as he is retiring in July. We would like to thank Neil for his valued service over the last 13 years and want to wish him all the best for his retirement. We are excited to announce Senior Manager for Children Services, Craig Macleod will be our new Chief Officer for Social Services. Craig has a wealth of knowledge and many years of experience within social care, and we look forward to welcoming him to the Chief Officer Team.”



*Clr Christine Jones
Deputy Leader of the Council
and Cabinet Member for Social Services*

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Context

Leadership

Who We Are

Elected Members represent the residents of Flintshire and play an important part in the governance of the Council, including agreeing the Council's priorities and approving policies to deliver continuous improvement. Flintshire Council has 67 Elected Members who represent their ward interests and participate in full Council meetings to oversee the performance of all aspects of the Council. One Member is chosen by the Leader to represent each portfolio area, these are known as Cabinet Members, and together with the Leader and Deputy Leaders, Chief Executive Officer and Chief Officers, they form the Council's Cabinet.

How We Make Decisions

Each Cabinet Member is supported by Overview and Scrutiny Committees, and for Social Services this is the Social and Health Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Because of the close working relationship with the Education and Youth Portfolio, the Council also holds joint Social and Health Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings, to discuss services for children and young people that cut across both Social Services and Education.



The Council Leader, Deputy Leaders, and Cabinet Member for Social Services are also involved in the Social Services work programme through the Social Services Programme Board, and the Cabinet Member also attends the Social Services Management Team meetings.

The officers of the Council are led by the Chief Executive Officer who is supported by Chief Officers responsible for each of the portfolio areas. The Chief Officer for Social Services has the statutory ‘Director of Social Services’ role. The Council’s structural arrangements for both members and officers are clearly laid out. The constitution details how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures that are followed to make sure that these decisions are efficient, transparent, and accountable to local people.

The Council also has its own internal governance through a system of internal audit. The outcomes of audits are monitored by the Audit Committee and officers can be called to give evidence to the committee should concerns be raised regarding their service areas.

Workforce

Flintshire Recruitment

Recruitment across the social care sector is a challenge nationally, however Flintshire has a number of creative initiatives in place to help drive recruitment. Flintshire commissioned Creed Communications Ltd to undertake a 3-month marketing campaign for social work and occupational therapy recruitment between May and August 2023.

To prepare for the campaign, key stakeholders were interviewed to understand Flintshire’s unique selling points as an employer and to inform the messaging framework. The Council opted for a recruitment message of ‘A Breath of Fresh Air’ as a focal point.



During the campaign the adverts were seen 550,000 times across various platforms and clicked on 7,000 times. Around 2,000 then clicked to search for jobs on Flintshire’s website.

Following on from the campaign’s success, Flintshire has now brought the initiative in-house and launched their own [‘A Breath of Fresh Air’](#) website and [Social Services Recruitment](#) webpage.

A film was created celebrating the achievements of Social Services to be shown at the Workforce Development Team’s award ceremony. The film is entitled [‘Social Services – A Breath of Fresh Air’](#) to link in with the existing campaign and continues to be used as a recruitment aid.

A task group has also been established to look at new and innovative ways to attract applicants for Home Care Worker posts, and a recruitment event was held in March 2024 with more work planned in 2024/25.

Flintshire has signed up to the Guaranteed Interview Scheme for individuals who have completed the Taster to Care or Introduction to Social Care. The Taster to Care programme, which was funded up to the end of March 2024, gave individuals a chance to experience working in the care sector first hand through training and a 4-week placement.

The WeCare campaign continues to promote the care sector throughout Wales. Flintshire is an active member of the North Wales Regional WeCare group, working closely with local schools and colleges as part of the regional ambassador programme.

Micro-Care



Flintshire’s Micro-Care Project is a groundbreaking approach to support people or small business to deliver care and well-being services in the area. Micro-Care has strengthened the local care market by offering a different option for care and support, and by bringing a new source of people into the care market. This year Flintshire has taken advantage of the potential of Micro-Care by utilising it in directly commissioned packages.

Staff Support and Professional Development

As inspectors noted during Flintshire’s Performance Evaluation Inspection, there is a stable and experienced Senior

Management Team in place across Adults’ and Children’s Services providing continuity of leadership. Leaders are accessible, approachable, supportive, and overall, ensure practitioners have the right training and skills. Flintshire has a comprehensive supervision policy and practitioners benefit from regular supervision.

Flintshire’s Workforce Development Team maintain a high standard of training opportunities and offer planned and responsive approaches to supporting the training and development needs of the social care workforce. The team support social work students, staff to undertake AMHP (Approved Mental Health Professional) and Pre-AMHP courses, and also support the Practice Educator Award, thus offering our Social Workers continued professional development and supporting career progression.

Financial Resources

The **2022/23** budget for Social Services was set at £99.873m, which includes the Children’s Services element of £12.281m from the ‘Out of County’ budget. In **2023/24**, the budget included additional budget for service pressures of £10.073m and provided service efficiencies of £0.283m.

For **2024/25** the Social Services budget is set at £106.121m, which includes £13.795m for the Children’s Services element of the ‘Out of County’ budget. This budget includes service pressures of £5.766m and provided service efficiencies of £7.272m.

Performance Assessment

People

- **All people are equal partners who have voice, choice and control over their lives and are able to achieve what matters to them.**
- **Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision.**

Pride of Flintshire

Pride of Flintshire took place in June 2023. This event celebrates the achievements of our children looked after, including an award ceremony hosted by the young people themselves, and a range of fun activities for children of all ages.

The event is organised and hosted by Flintshire **Young Voices Speak Out** participation group.



The group offers children looked after in Flintshire the chance to have their voices heard, to contribute to developments of the service, give their feedback on policies and procedures within the local authority and attend the Children’s Services Forum.

The group welcomes guest speakers including the Police, Looked After Children’s Nurses and Housing. The group also have a number of days out throughout the year.



“I really enjoy the group, I feel my voice is heard.”

“I enjoy meeting other young people in the same position I am.”

“I feel supported by the whole group and the staff.”



Direct Payments - Local, Regional and National Developments



Over the past 12 months Flintshire County Council have continued to play a significant role in the development of direct payments initiatives in Wales. Enabling people to pool their funding creatively to improve outcomes, efficiencies, prevent decline and empower people to work together and build improved resilience.

Flintshire's Personal Assistant Recruitment Portal continues to be the only example in Wales. Welsh Government have approached Flintshire and funded its extension to other local authorities, and the team are currently supporting Denbighshire to embed the platform into their systems and practice.

Flintshire's direct payment webpages continue to be developed, alongside a range of direct payments resources, public information literature, films, web resources, and safe recruitment processes. Flintshire has given permission for a number of local authorities to adopt the format of the webpages, and resources are shared and available for the benefit of other local authorities in Wales.

Most recently, a bilingual animated [public information film](#) has been produced by the team, and permission has been granted to

Gwent County Council to adopt this for their benefit.

Working in partnership with the NW LD Transformation Project, a range of information and tools have been developed to improve understanding of direct payments and their possibilities for adults with learning disabilities.

Flintshire are leading on the development of direct payments to support unpaid carers, working in partnership with citizens and local and national carers' organisations. The Direct Payments Support Service continues to develop its local services in response to statutory responsibilities and is accepted as a leading example of direct payments support in Wales. The team have been invited to talk at national conferences and are currently considering utilising I.T to improve opportunities for co-production. Data sets are being developed to both improve and inform how we do things, and this information is shared at a national level.

The Direct Payments Team Manager is Deputy Chair of the All-Wales Direct Payments Forum, taking a lead on the development of direct payments policy and practice nationally. They are also supporting with a national review into the Personal Assistant workforce in Wales, initiated by Welsh Government on behalf of the Social Care Fair Work Forum. Along with supporting Welsh Government around the wording for the Health and Social Care Bill in relation to direct payments for health care and supporting BCUHB (Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board) to pilot Individual User Trusts.

For more information on direct payments please [click here](#).

Mwy na Geiriau

As a local authority, we recognise that we have a responsibility and a duty as a community leader to promote, support and safeguard the Welsh language for the benefit of present and future generations. Being able to offer services to our most vulnerable residents in their own language, extends far beyond just the words we use, it brings a sense of belonging, connection, familiarity, safety, trust and so much more.

Over the past year, many Welsh language celebrations and activities have taken place with the help and support of our community. As part of their 'GOLUD' scheme, the Presbyterian Church of Wales have produced a CD of Welsh medium hymns and readings to support those living with dementia, and this has been shared with our residential care homes.

Throughout the year Welsh medium schools continue to visit care homes to sing and perform for residents in Welsh. As part of this year's [Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam](#) programme of events for St David's Day, pupils from local schools visited Llys Eleanor, Llys Raddington and Croes Atti to sing, entertain and share the celebrations with residents. The team at Y Dderwen Children's Home, also supported the Welsh language and cultural diversity by celebrating St David's Day.

As an employer, Flintshire County Council have embarked on a project to ensure all employees complete their language skills assessment, and, with our colleagues from Iaith, have developed and delivered a new programme called 'Welsh Matters for Everyone', with a follow on for managers called 'Welsh Matters for Managers'. The aim of the programmes is to demonstrate the



importance of using the language in the workplace and how to encourage others to do so.

Our Workforce Development Team continue to support the ‘Mwy na Geiriau’ strategic framework and offer staff attending training and completing qualifications or traineeships, the opportunity to access training, workbooks and resources in Welsh, where available. Welsh language assessments are offered to learners at initial assessment, and the ‘Mwy na Geiriau’ framework and ‘Active Offer’ is included in the taught sessions of both health & social care students and social work trainees, in partnership with the North Wales universities.

For employees Flintshire also:

- Encourage attendance at Welsh language training and continue to release employees to attend training.
- Offer Welsh language taster sessions through Coleg Cambria for employees who do not have any Welsh language skills, (two-hour sessions for a six-week period).
- Offer Paned a Sgwrs weekly sessions to provide an opportunity to speak and practice Welsh language skills within an informal and supportive environment during worktime.
- Identify employees who do not have any Welsh language skills, to ensure they complete the [Cymraeg Gwaith/Work Welsh](#) e-learning taster course provided by the National Centre for Learning Welsh.

Celebrating Social Care academic achievements

In October 2023, staff from across Flintshire Social Services celebrated their academic success at a special awards ceremony. Council employees, together with independent care provider employees, were rewarded for their achievements at the event.

A wide range of educational awards were celebrated including QCF Health & Social Care, Social Work, Occupational Therapy (OT), as well as other professionally recognised qualifications.





“I was so pleased to have been at the ceremony and to present so many awards to our successful candidates, they were all well deserved. These awards are recognition of their hard work, and I would like to congratulate everyone on their achievements.”

*Councillor Christine Jones
Cabinet Member for Social Services*



Workforce Development Team

This year has been very busy for our Workforce Development Team. In addition to the awards ceremony, the team have been working hard to ensure we achieve the priorities set for the year, whilst also supporting business as usual.

The team continues to maintain a high standard of available training opportunities for our social care workforce, including carers and the independent sector. Consistently offering high quality and quality assured training courses, through a variety of delivery methods, they also work closely with [FLVC](#) (Flintshire Local Voluntary Council) and [NEWCIS](#) (North East Wales Carers Information Service) to ensure our third sector partners regularly receive information on what is available.

Some of the achievements of the Workforce Development Team in 2023/2024:

Between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024, the team have supported:

- **3,493** individuals through the delivery of **334** courses, across the social care sector workforce.
- **36** learners to become certificated for the Health & Social Care Core qualification and **1** for the Practice Level 2 qualification. With a further **53** learners currently completing the Level 2 Core, Level 2 Practice, Level 3 Practice or Award in Dementia Level 2.

- **37** social work trainees through their traineeship (Open University and Wrexham students).
- **4** staff undertaking the 4-year part time OT traineeship via Wrexham university.
- **9** Flintshire Social Workers undertaking the Consolidation Award with Bangor university.
- **4** staff undertaking the AMHP and Pre AMHP courses.
- **6** staff members undertaking the Practice Educator Award.

Feedback on training courses:

- 1220 forms have been completed and returned.
- 88% of those said that the course had improved their knowledge.
- 97% rated the course 4+.
- 97% rated course delivery 4+.
- 97% fully met the training objectives.
- 96% fully met their personal objectives.

Safeguarding

- Promoted the corporate e-learning package for Safeguarding. 906 (80.01%) of social services staff completed the module in 2023/24.
- Delivered regular safeguarding training to more than 70 staff working for independent and voluntary sector agencies.
- Continued to promote the All-Wales e-learning available via Learning@Wales and Social Care Wales website.

National Safeguarding Standards

- Delivered presentations to support and raise awareness of the national safeguarding standards.
- Developed a safeguarding training programme (due to be finalised April 2024), to ensure Flintshire Social Services are offering training adequately aligned to the safeguarding standards.

Digital Skills

- Further improved the digital skills of the workforce through offering digital skills and awareness courses.
- Advertised the training courses offered by Digital Communities Wales through Coleg Cambria.

- Actively promoted [Flintshire's Digital Hub](#) - a team member currently volunteers as a member of the Digital Squad.
- The team are members of the regional and Digital Communication groups, chaired by Digital Communities Wales.
- Sessions held include Digital tools for translation, Digital tools for dementia, Digital smart speakers - How to use a digital smart speaker to enhance health and well-being.

Other areas

- Developed the **North Wales Local Family Justice Board Training sub-group**. Membership across partner agencies has been secured and meetings are taking place.
- Continued to support the ongoing work around **recruitment and retention** of social care staff by offering quality training, together with support for qualifications and traineeships, ensuring that staff feel confident in their roles and continued professional development.
- Continued to support the **WeCare campaign** and attended the Eisteddfod to support the recruitment agenda.
- Established a rolling programme of training for Flintshire's Learning Disability Services on Positive Behaviour Techniques (**RESPECT**), delivered by qualified and accredited in-house staff. In 2023/24, 28 staff completed this training and a further 10 staff completed a refresher course.

- Supported staff to access a 12-week foundation programme as an introduction into the work of an OT at Wrexham University. Supported staff interested in progressing into the role of Social Worker, by offering a series of foundation modules via the Open University.
- Supported the work undertaken by the **Early Years Pathfinder**. Working towards a skilled and confident workforce, and a training and competency-based development plan for roles within the early years system, which has strengthened co-production and effective use of resources.

WeCare Wales



This year Flintshire represented [WeCare Wales](#) at careers events in Plas Derwen, Holywell, Elfed High School, Buckley, and Hawarden High School. We are also recruiting more WeCare ambassadors, to be able to reach more young people and educate them about the different career options and progression opportunities within the sector.

Flintshire is also registered with the Guaranteed Interview Scheme for individuals who complete WeCare Wales' Introduction to Social Care course.

2024/25 Priorities

- ✓ **Direct payments: lead on direct payments initiatives at a National Level**
- ✓ **Flintshire County Council to sign the pledge and adopt Welsh Government's '[Corporate Parenting Charter: A Promise for Wales](#)'. To fully support the principles and promises set out in the Charter, and ensure our Children Looked After receive the highest standard of care and support.**
- ✓ **Pilot the workforce development skills matrix to ensure staff deliver quality and effective services. To include speech, language and communication, parenting, childcare and transformation as a minimum (Early Years & Family Support).**
- ✓ **Support the implementation of the All-Wales safeguarding standards through delivery of a training programme which aligns to the competency groups within the national training framework.**
- ✓ **Continue to support the Digital Strategy by supporting the improvement of digital skills of our workforce.**
- ✓ **Maintain a high standard of available training and development opportunities for our social care workforce, including carers and the independent sector.**
- ✓ **Work with our regional partners, ensuring Flintshire are involved in the implementation of policies and training offers.**
- ✓ **Support the implementation of training and information from identified areas through the Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) process and CIW Inspection.**
- ✓ **Support the WeCare Campaign and the work around recruitment and retention of social care staff.**
- ✓ **We will remain committed to supporting the 'Mwy na Geiriau' strategic framework by ensuring we are able to offer training and resources bilingually when required.**
- ✓ **Support staff and students with a pathway into social work and occupational therapy.**
- ✓ **Continue to deliver the Health & Social Care Core Level 2 and 3 Practice qualifications via our assessment centre, providing necessary qualifications for our support staff working in Adult Services.**
- ✓ **We will continue to work with universities and support trainee Social Workers through their 3-year traineeship and offer help to our occupational therapy staff undertaking their traineeship.**
- ✓ **We will continue to support both social work qualifying training, and post qualifying training in Wales, including the first 3-years framework requirements for all post-qualifying Social Workers new into roles.**

Prevention

- **The need for care and support is minimised and the escalation of need is prevented whilst ensuring that the best outcomes for people are achieved.**
- **Resilience within communities is promoted and people are supported to fulfil their potential by actively supporting people who need care and/or support including carers to learn develop and participate in society.**

Early Years and Childcare

In line with the local authority statutory duty to ensure sufficient childcare places in Flintshire, several key initiatives are progressing, as well as the development of Welsh Government programmes.

The Flying Start programme has been enhanced to offer all 2-year-olds part time childcare. This is a phased expansion, Phase 1 has been implemented and Phase 2 is currently being rolled out across Flintshire based on Welsh Government criteria,



with an additional 23 children for 2024-2025. We are continuing to work towards seamless pathways for 2-year-old childcare, 3-year-old childcare offer, and early pre-school education provision, as well as ensuring the quality of childcare, for children with additional needs or vulnerability.

To help support the need for additional childcare places, and to create seamless pathways for children between childcare and education, the Phase 1 Childcare Capital programme was completed in March 2024. With eight new builds and one refurbishment, it is operating alongside the Phase 2 Childcare Capital Programme. In collaboration with Education and the childcare sector, addressing the needs in the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, four Business Cases were submitted to Welsh Government for 2022-2025, and two have begun their feasibility survey. The new modular buildings will create an additional 50-60 additional childcare places available in Flintshire.

The Small Capital Grant from Welsh Government continues into 2024-25, and has been an extremely successful programme, making a difference to the childcare environment across Flintshire.

Work is ongoing towards the development of a national, regional, and local approach to Early Years Transformation, so that all our children aged 0-7 have the best possible start in life and can reach their full potential.

There has been significant benefit and system change due to partnership collaboration locally, regionally, and nationally, which is benefiting families. The work to date, including piloting and

testing innovative practice, will support Welsh Government in making further policy decisions across the sectors and spectrum of need, to ensure effective outcomes for all children and longer-term health and well-being outcomes.

Flintshire will work with a small advisory group from across Wales to progress thinking and policy direction at a national level.

A draft Early Years Strategy has been completed. However, following notification of the closure of the Early Years Pathfinder funding, this is due to be reviewed by the Flintshire Early Years Board and Regional Partnership in 2024 to agree the way forward, including the prioritisation of existing projects, for example, parent and infant relationships, Brain Story and resilience.

The priorities set out in the Early Years Strategy have been developed and the strategic direction is planned in accordance with 4 workstreams:

1. Evidence Based Interventions, Identifying Needs and Achieving Outcomes

We aim to achieve wide collective ownership of the strategy and vision, for all children to have the best start in life. Work around the population data is developing and a baseline established. Areas being explored are shared information between the region, local authority and health, for example live birth data. A clearer understanding of the early years' population and the Nesta Cymru report has been helpful to enhance our business intelligence and support key areas of work, such as the Flying

Start expansion. Work is progressing towards a clear narrative of child outcomes at key life course points, such as birth, entry to learning and entry to school, and for vulnerable and complex needs population groups.

2. Workforce Planning and Practice Development

The Workforce Strategy for early years is near completion and is planned to be finalised in April 2024. Working in collaboration with the University of Oxford, the ‘Brain Story’ has been piloted and tested across all regions in North Wales. Evaluation information was presented to the Early Years Integration and Transformation regional meeting in January 2024. The evaluation was well received, and the training will be expanded upon over the next year.

3. Creating Accessible and Inclusive Services, Co-production, and Service User Engagement

Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities (EPEC) the parent volunteer programme is still delivering a high level of positive feedback for the core programmes. An additional autism module was piloted between September 2023 – March 2024, which showed increased confidence in parenting, improved relationships and stronger parent networks established as peer support.

Parent Champions commenced with a small number of volunteers trained to deliver parents’ information in their local community. This will help to centralise information for the public and allow for a more effective approach to signposting information.

The inclusion and engagement framework continues to develop, to ensure the voice of the child and parent influences the system. One of the big successes developed with parents is the new [Early Year and Childcare webpage](#), working with Health and their development of Best Start Hub.

4. Integrated Pathways and Transition Points

There are several Task and Finish Groups working towards further developing the system, for example, a pre-school pathway working group has been established to create seamless pathways through childcare to education, and to ensure children with needs are supported on this journey. Some of this work has now moved into business as usual due to its positive impact, for example speech and language within Education, and Video Interactive Guidance and Circle of Security working with CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).



**Gwasanaeth Blynyddoedd Cynnar
a Chefnogi Teuluoedd**
**Early Years and Family
Support Service**

Special Guardianship Service

The Special Guardianship Service has continued to develop this year, staff capacity has increased and there has been an increase in the demand for SGO's (Special Guardianship Order's) via Children's First Contact Team.

There have been a number of developments in the service including:

- A Special Guardianship Support Group has been launched online.
- The first support group coffee morning and walk has been held which was a success, moving forward these will be held 3 monthly.
- [SGO webpage](#) has been created on the Council's website, which is easily accessible and contains a contact form which directs queries to a dedicated SGO inbox.
- Newsletters are now sent out to all Special Guardians three times a year, which helps open communication when the team are no longer supporting.
- Regular information is sent out using the SGO support inbox, to signpost individuals to relevant events, activities, and support within the local area.
- Nurturing attachments training, including training on online safety, is being run every 3 months for Special Guardians.

- Educating colleagues around Special Guardianship to help enable an SGO to be identified earlier and reduce the number of Children Looked After.
- Working closely with [AKFA Cymru](#) (Association for Fostering, Kinship and Adoption) to develop SGO support services across Wales.

Multi Systemic Therapy



[Multi Systemic Therapy](#) (MST) is a short-term, intensive way of working with families when the young person in the family is getting in trouble at school, at home or with the police.

The MST Team has worked with 134 families across Flintshire and Wrexham since May 2020. From 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 the team closed 45 families completing full treatment. During this period, 93.33% of the young people remained at home, 80% were in education, employment, or training and 91.11% had no new arrests.



“The therapist is a legend, she has helped this family, so amazingly I can’t give any more words for what she does. She is incredible.”

“I just wanted to say a little thank you to the whole MST team. My life has completely changed. Making me feel empowered and helped me to deal with difficult situations.”



Expansion of the Progression Team

The Progression Model continues to be expanded across services to promote people’s independence skills and to support them to achieve their personal outcomes.

The Progression Team is being strengthened to enable a focus on employment with additional posts being created, to enable the team to expand the service offering for employment and work opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Since January 2024, there is a full-time Social Worker dedicated to working with neurodiverse individuals aged 16-18, ensuring support and guidance is provided to enable the individual to be independent of formal support going forward. The Social Worker links in with the IAS (Integrated Autism Service) team and other local services to ensure the individual is aware of all support available in their area. They have developed networks to enable collaborative working to ensure individuals are able to achieve what matters most to them. The support is measured using the Bench Marking Assessment form devised by the Progression Service, which tracks progression made from entering the service (benchmark) over a 6–12-month period and can be used as a visual aid that both the Social Worker and individual complete together.

A further development is the appointment of a Supported Employment Co-ordinator in March 2024, funded by the Transformation Grant. They will be working with the Learning Disability Team, contributing to the review process to identify opportunities for those who express an interest in paid employment.

Project SEARCH



Project SEARCH is an international internship programme for individuals with learning disabilities, neurodiversity and/or autism. Flintshire County Council has proudly supported the project since its launch in 2019 in partnership with [HfT](#), and more recently BCUHB.

The last 12 months have been an exciting time for the local Project SEARCH programme in terms of innovation and development of the local service offering. Within Flintshire, the programme expanded to offer two distinct programmes and became the first Project SEARCH scheme in the UK to offer a dedicated programme for adults aged over 25. The expansion of the local service offering to running two schemes has proven to be a real success and has resulted in two graduation ceremonies being held for students to celebrate completing their internships with their family and friends.

“

“Being with Project Search and working with Workforce Development has been a lovely experience for me to get ready for going into a real working environment”

”

Dylan is an intern from Project Search who worked with Flintshire’s Workforce Development Team on one of his rotations.



“

“Project SEARCH really highlights the skills and talent of our local young people. In Flintshire we are committed to ensuring everyone has the opportunity to work, earn a wage, develop their skills and be part of the community.”

”

*Councillor Christine Jones
Cabinet Member for Social Services*





Supporting Individuals with Disabilities into Work

A partnership between Flintshire County Council, HfT and Deeside Business Forum has been formed to support individuals with mental health issues, neurodiversity and learning disabilities, to secure paid employment in their local community.

In February 2024, a reverse jobs fair was held at Coleg Cambria, with support from Next Steps and HfT. The event was well attended by over 50 individuals and organisations. Following on from the event, one individual has been approached regarding paid employment, and another individual is setting up their own business with support from Big Ideas Wales. As a result of the event's success, Next steps and HfT are planning to organise another Reverse Jobs Fair in October 2024.

The '[EmployAbility Hub](#)' has also been launched on the Deeside Business Forum website, which lists all the supported individuals who are seeking paid employment.

“Thank you for holding an event like this. It is very inspirational, and I really hope for them to get hired! Or start their own businesses with their expertise and talents.”

Next Steps

Next Steps ran a career planning course in partnership with Adult Learning Wales in May 2023. The course covered career options, how to write a CV, what to wear for interview and an action plan on the steps to take to be ready for employment.

Next Steps worked with the Deeside Business Forum and Kings Academy to provide the learners with work experience and 'real life' interview practice. Eight learners started the course and six completed it, gaining an Award in Work Related Education qualification.

Outcomes for those individuals included:

- 2 individuals secured paid employment.
- 1 individual is working towards becoming self-employed.

- 1 individual started an accountancy training course.
- 2 individuals started volunteering to gain experience, structure and routine to their week, both are now actively seeking paid employment.

Supporting Carers

Unpaid carers are a vital source of care and support for many individuals throughout Flintshire, relieving the pressure on formal care services significantly. The valuable impact of unpaid carers to individuals and communities in Flintshire cannot be underestimated.



Young Carers

Engagement and uptake for our [Young Carer ID Card](#) continues to increase, with more than 400 young carers now registered with the scheme across Flintshire.

Work is also ongoing with colleagues in Education to increase awareness of young carers within schools through an accreditation scheme of training sessions for staff and links with NEWCIS. Ensuring they are able to identify young carers and support them with their education and any further support needs they might have. Not only is awareness being raised amongst staff in schools, but also throughout the school community with pupils learning about young carers, what some of their responsibilities could entail and what they can do to support each other. This awareness raising has been very successful, and this year the pupils at the Alun School in Mold voted to support NEWCIS Young Carers as their charity of the year. The money raised by the school will be spent on additional tuition for those who feel they need it leading up to their exams.

Breaks for Carers

The range of options available through our award winning 'Bridging the Gap' scheme are now larger than ever, ensuring carers have the choice and control for a break that matters to them and meets their outcomes. Building on the success of 'Bridging the Gap', Flintshire launched a programme of direct payments for carers, in partnership with NEWCIS. Since the launch of the new scheme, we have seen an incredibly positive response with 48 carers being supported so far.

Carers reported that the direct payment scheme contributed positively towards their well-being and that of the cared for. Carers felt that they were able to sustain their caring role and maintain supporting their cared for to continue living at home. Our partner organisations have also shown great interest in the scheme and are feeding back that the carers they support believe this would be a significant help to them. Internally our Social Workers are seeing the incredible benefits of supporting carers to be creative in sourcing the support they need to sustain their caring role.

Since the scheme began, it is evident the ability for the carer to be creative in finding solutions to meet their outcomes, are far more cost and resource effective than the prescribed solutions available.

The 'Amser' Scheme has enabled us to support our third sector partners with applications for funding to deliver a number of different options for our carers to access breaks, ranging from hotel breaks to a meal out, or even a hobby that can be pursued from home.

Our young carers have been able to access camping trips and wilderness activities. The new 'Break Shop' created by young carers, provides items such as games and sports equipment to use at the group, and then take home to play with siblings and other family members.

Cost of Living Crisis

To support carers with heating costs, NEWCIS has a number of Winter Warm boxes available which include radiator reflectors, window film and items of warm clothing and fleece blankets.

NEWCIS has also gained funding to buy electric throws, which helps to keep the heating turned down.

Courses are being arranged with Scottish Power and Citizens Advice Flintshire which will support carers with high energy costs. The courses look at energy saving methods and the financial help that is available to carers. Carers attending previous sessions advised the courses were very beneficial. Carers told us they learnt a lot and it would help them to reduce their bills in the future.

International Network of Carers

The pen-pal project has been created to allow carers the opportunity to communicate, share ideas, collaborate, provide peer support and respite opportunities. The project has got off to a great start, with carers being matched with centres in Cheshire, Scotland, Australia and America. Carers are matched by age and interest, and we have received 51 referrals since we began in August 2023. Carers have requested some groups be held over zoom, so they can chat about their different areas and see each other face to face.

Re-commissioning of our Carer's Services for 2025 onwards

Work is in progress to review our current commissioned services to understand what is working and where there may be gaps we need to fill to support our carers. We are working to ensure what will be commissioned is co-produced with carers themselves, ensuring that they have input into the services available.

2024/25 Priorities

- ✓ Continue to grow our in-house fostering service to support more children looked after.
- ✓ Continue to develop the Special Guardianship Service to reduce the need for children and young people to remain looked after.
- ✓ Develop childcare expansion and seamless childcare provision across programs. Achieve the childcare expansion target set by Welsh Government for the 2-year-old phase, Flying Start, Flying Start Outreach and 3–4-year-old childcare and additional support and continue the childcare capital programmes.
- ✓ Develop a national, regional, and local approach to Early Years Transformation so that all our children ages 0-7 have the best possible start in life and are able to reach their full potential.
- ✓ To include a regional approach to early years brain science through simple messages, metaphors, storytelling, and training - Oxford Brain Story.
- ✓ Pilot an evidence-based volunteer information provision to increase access and availability of information to support families and provide early intervention and prevention.
- ✓ Utilise the progression model as a way of promoting people's independence skills.
- ✓ Continue to expand the service offering for employment opportunities for disabled people.
- ✓ Progress the newly formed partnership with Deeside Industrial Park which aims to bring employment opportunities for vulnerable people within Social Services.
- ✓ Continue to meet the demands of young people with learning disabilities for accommodation.
- ✓ Further development of our work to support young carers in their role, including but not limited to: further development of the Young Carers ID Card, focus on respite and breaks for young carers, engagement with education colleagues and schools, engagement with businesses and communities across Flintshire, support with training and education opportunities.
- ✓ Continue to investigate and expand creative respite solutions to meet the needs of carers in bespoke and unique ways.

Partnership and Integration

- **Effective partnerships are in place to commission and fully deliver fully integrated, high quality sustainable outcomes for people.**
- **People are encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as equal partners.**

Welsh Government Officers Visit Flintshire

In November 2023, Flintshire had a great opportunity to showcase just a few of the innovative practices and projects we are all very proud of when we received a visit from Albert Heaney CBE, Chief Social Care Officer for Wales, and Taryn Stephens, Deputy Director Improvement, Social Services and Integration Directorate at Welsh Government.

Albert and Taryn visited Marleyfield House Care Home where they met Foster Bear and learnt about the Mockingbird project in Fostering. Albert and Taryn also had a tour of Cyflawni at Marleyfield House, learnt about D2RA pathways and were given a virtual tour of the plans for we have in place for Tŷ Croes Atti,

our new care home in Flint to replace the existing Croes Atti Care Home.

Two Flintshire Micro-Carers, Rachel Jones and Yvette Mallalieu were also present to share with Albert and Taryn their experiences of being Micro-Carers and how they support Flintshire residents and their families.





Tŷ Croes Atti Care Home

Flintshire County Council have approved the final design plans for a new 56-bedroom residential care home in Flint, which is being built on the site of the former Flint Cottage Hospital. Construction work is well underway, and we anticipate the development will be completed by the end of May 2025.

The project involves the relocation and expansion of the current 31 bed care home in Flint to the new site. Working in partnership with BCUHB, the facility will provide integrated social care and health care services and offer residential care of the highest

quality using state of the art facilities across four floors. One of these floors will provide D2RA support to approximately 12 residents at any one time, providing short term care that supports the reablement and recovery of residents following a period in hospital or other identified needs.

The project has a value of approximately £18 million and has received just over £11 million in funding via the Welsh Government's Integration and Rebalancing Capital Fund (IRCF) and Housing with Care Fund (HCF) capital programmes. The remaining funds are being provided by Flintshire County Council's capital programme.

“

“It is great to be delivering these services to our Flintshire residents. We are really proud of the innovation in Flintshire and the continued investment to the development in Flintshire’s Services.”

”

*Councillor Christine Jones
Cabinet Member for Social Services*



Maes Gwern Integrated Social Services and Health Hub

The development of Maes Gwern will see the existing supported employment projects at Tri Ffordd in Bretton, and Growing Places in Shotton, relocate to Mold. The original design concept for the Maes Gwern hub has progressed to include areas to enable health services and therapies to be delivered at the site, to create an integrated social services and health hub.

The business case for Welsh Government Integration and Rebalancing Care Fund (IRCF) was reconsidered and received conditional approval in September, with Ministerial approval for the full amount of funding requested (£2.9 million) being received in November 2023. The remaining £1.8 million will be funded from the Council’s capital programme. The RIBA Stage 4 design has been completed and construction is due to start in April 2024.

The new purpose-built facility will provide sustainable, high-quality services, working in partnership with HfT and BCUHB, to provide health services and therapies, in addition to learning disability, mental health and autism support services. The build for the project is estimated to be 12-months and the projected opening date for the facility is April 2025.

Flintshire receives membership from the World Health Organisation



Flintshire has received the accolade of becoming a member of the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities. Established by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2010, the Age-friendly network connects cities, communities, and organisations across the world with a shared vision of making their communities a great place to grow older.

Flintshire joins more than 1,400 cities, counties, and communities across 51 countries around the world in being recognised as working to improve the age-friendliness in their area. As the second community in Wales to achieve membership, along with the city of Cardiff, this supports Welsh Government’s vision for Wales to be an age friendly nation, where people of all ages are supported to live and age well and can participate in their community.

For more information about ‘Age Friendly Flintshire’, please [click here](#).

Flintshire Dementia Strategy and Dementia Project Board

Flintshire County Council, supported by BCUHB, developed a Dementia Strategy for Flintshire in 2020. An update was published in November 2021 which can be accessed on [Flintshire's website](#), along with a range of information about support services and community activities for people living with dementia and their carers.

The Flintshire Strategy is aligned to the [North Wales Dementia Strategy](#) and [All Wales Dementia Care Pathway of Standards](#). A Dementia Project Board has been established to implement this strategy. The Board includes representation from Social Care, Health and third sector service partners, who work collaboratively to engage with people impacted by dementia, to ensure that local needs and priorities are met and that communities are inclusive and supportive. The Board has overseen a number of positive initiatives and projects in the last year. These include:

- A new North Wales Dementia Friendly Community scheme.
- A community listening campaign and community engagement event in Mold.
- Person centred support provided by the Dementia Support Workers, Social Workers, and Occupational Therapists.
- Specialist workers across Social Services and Health working to share skills to support younger people with dementia, and those with an early onset diagnosis.

- Support to unpaid carers and engagement with communities, led by NEWCIS.
- Dedicated dementia lead within the Workforce Development Team, developing the knowledge and expertise of Social Services staff and care provider teams.



- The Progress for Providers accreditation programme for care providers supporting people living with dementia.
- Investment in promotion of North Wales Police Service's 'Herbert Protocol', helping to support the service to locate missing persons who are living with dementia.
- Community-based therapy services, working in close collaboration with Social Services to provide post diagnosis support.
- Memory Support Pathways and the Flintshire Dementia Centre, delivering positive outcomes for pre and post diagnosis support to people living with dementia and unpaid carers and families.
- Additional equipment and resources provided, including dementia friendly radio sets and robotic therapy pets for extra care tenants and care home residents.

Micro-Care

2023/24 has been a hugely successful year for the Micro-Care project in Flintshire. 14 new Micro-Enterprises have been established, taking the overall number of providers delivering social care and support up to 45. These Micro-Carers have supported around 200 people in Flintshire across the last financial year, and with a new cohort of businesses coming through, this number is expected to grow.

Flintshire has supported a Micro-Care provider to setup as a day service for people with dementia in the community, running out of two separate locations to cater for demand in different areas. 14 people now attend this service, providing valuable respite services and outcome focused interventions for people with dementia in Flintshire.

A major step for Micro-Care has been the ability to commission the enterprises to deliver personal care for those most in need. This has worked successfully, with 5 Micro-Carers being commissioned in Flintshire across the year. The outcomes from these services have been exceptional, with Micro-Carers being able to deliver flexible services that adapt to an individual's outcomes.

This year we celebrated the positive work undertaken by Micro-Care at a celebration event attended by over 40 people, the majority being Micro-Carers and individuals they support. The Council were able to express their gratitude and hear about the positive work undertaken in the community, and the successes people have made from setting up their own micro-enterprises.



The project was also nominated for a Social Care Wales Accolade award and shortlisted as a finalist. Many Micro-Carers met the judges and portrayed passionately the value of Micro-Care as part of the social care sector and what it has meant to them personally. We are very proud that Micro-Care has gained recognition as a highly commended finalist.

To find more about becoming a Micro-Carer, or to find more about services they offer, please [click here](#).



Progress for Providers

Progress for Providers is an accreditation programme that sets out clear expectations about the delivery of individualised care for residential and domiciliary care providers in Flintshire. It uses person-centred tools and practices to help staff teams change the way they support people and engage with families. Progress for Providers promotes staff development and enables people receiving care and support to have more choice and control by focussing on what matters most to them.

Having embedded these tools in their service delivery, 25 providers have achieved one of three awards (Bronze, Silver and Gold). Providers have also been adapting the tools to work for

them and find they are learning more about the individuals they support, allowing them to provide better care.

Examples of the impact from working with Progress for Providers:

The Oaks (Silver) has fully embraced the tools, and by working with family to understand the life history of the people they support, are able to bring to life the person they were previously, and not simply seeing who they are now. They also utilise the Decision-Making Agreement, which contains lots of person-centred and detailed information around decisions that are important to people and how they would like to be involved in those decisions, ensuring they feel in control of their life.

Castell Ventures (Silver) support residents with learning disabilities and have adapted their recruitment strategy to include the One Page Profile. By asking each candidate to complete a profile before their interview, they can ensure there will be compatibility between the successful candidate and the individuals they will be supporting.

Wellfield (Gold) have displayed outstanding documentation and it is evident that person centred care is a priority for the home. It is embedded into practice and documentation and appears to be at the heart of everything they do.

Plas Yr Ywen (Gold) have fully embedded Progress for Providers into their services, for example, a tenant had a stroke in 2016 which left them with cognitive difficulties including significant communication issues and trouble with word finding. The tenant likes to complete jigsaws but was getting frustrated because they couldn't recall which staff member had supported them. From completing the learning log and reflecting on what worked well and what didn't work well, a team member suggested putting the mini profiles with staff names and photographs in the tenant's apartment to help remind them. It is also important for the tenant to have their hair styled after a shower, meaning it is important the person who supports with the shower is capable and confident in styling hair. This person-centred, important information is captured on the matching support tool.

Marleyfield House (Gold) not only does the Progress for Providers programme have an impact on the care and well-being of residents, but staff members can also benefit from the use of the person-centred tools. For example, Marleyfield House supports a diverse level of care needs ranging from residential, reablement, short term care and residents living with dementia.

Using the 4 plus 1 Questions tool, management were able to ascertain that for residents living with dementia, or a dementia related illness, it is vital that staff need to be supported with more knowledge at the early stages, to prevent misinterpretation of the effects of dementia, and see the person not the illness. To support staff members, a Dementia Training File was introduced with easy-to-follow guidelines provided by the Alzheimer's Society, to assist with supporting residents and families on the main forms of dementia, along with end-of-life care. Team meetings, group discussions and reflective practices continue to be held to implement the guidance.

To see the full list of providers achieving these awards [click here](#).

Advocacy Services

Our advocacy services have been re-tendered from January 2024. We have joined with Wrexham County Borough Council as part of this tender process to create a new North-East Wales advocacy offer. Previously there were two providers in Flintshire, and an alternative in Wrexham, and feedback was that accessing advocacy could at times be confusing. Now people looking for advocacy support can call one provider for all services, [Advocacy Services North-East Wales](#) (ASNEW). The new sub-regional service is still in its infancy but has already supported 163 advocacy cases in its first quarter.

We have also re-tendered our Self Advocacy project and [Advance Brighter Futures](#) now deliver this in Flintshire and Wrexham. This has given the opportunity for a fresh new look at how services empower people to advocate for themselves

and prevent the need to seek statutory advocacy support in the future. Advance Brighter Futures have set out to re-evaluate the existing provision in Flintshire and codesign and relaunch a brand-new service in April 2024.

Disability and Sensory Loss Services

Following a successful tender exercise, Flintshire, in partnership with Wrexham Council, have retendered the sensory support services with [Vision Support](#) and [DSN](#). The services will be delivered on a sub-regional footprint to offer efficiencies and better capacity management in the area. The new contracts are due to start on the 1st of May 2024, and we are looking forward to working together with both Wrexham and partners in providing a high-quality service.

Autism Services

North Wales Integrated Autism Service ([NWIAS](#)) has been very active this year, promoting the service and ensuring individuals with autism in North Wales get the support they need. NWIAS now have a regular programme of advice hubs in all six counties of North Wales. These are run on a monthly basis in public venues which facilitate access to information and support. The team also run post assessment support in terms of six-week support groups to enable neurodivergent individuals to gain coping skills.

Promotional days have been held at Ewloe Sports and Social Club, Flintshire, The Imperial Hotel, Llandudno and Oriel House Hotel, St Asaph, which have been successful in attracting more than 350 people. 71 organisations were showcased at these events who were able to offer support to attendees,



both individuals and families. There were also opportunities for networking between organisations and all events have been well received. More events are planned for 2024/2025 in Anglesey and Wrexham. NWIAS also had a stall at the Flint and Denbigh show which attracted more than 80 personal enquiries, enabling us to reach even more individuals.

Training has been carried out with ASNEW on Autism Awareness and Communication Skills, and NWIAS actively promote Autism Wales' online learning on this subject which has led to increased publicity and access for both professionals and the public. Training is also offered to advocacy providers and contracts now detail expectations around skills and knowledge in supporting autistic people.

NWIAS has been successful in obtaining Welsh Government funding through their Neurodiverse Improvement programme to fund additional autism spectrum disorder (ASD) assessments to reduce the waiting list which stood at 21 months.

NWIAS has undertaken research in conjunction with Bangor University in relation to customer satisfaction, and together with specialist staff in Flintshire Council, have developed an online survey satisfaction tool. This tool is used to monitor the performance of the service and will be reviewed on a quarterly basis to improve performance. The team also ensure they receive regular feedback for groupwork that is carried out, to be able to continue to co-produce the courses to ensure inclusion with the autistic community.

NWIAS has also developed a new consultation model for professionals requesting input from the service, to develop professional autism practice and to assist in case management of autistic adults. This has been well received and the team have been able to support the Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT), the Eating Disorder Service and Substance Misuse Services to develop practice in relation to autism assessments. The clinicians also participate in multiagency meetings to give advice in relation to complex casework.

Mental Health Services

During 2023/24, Social Services have further developed preventative and early intervention services for people struggling with their mental well-being in an effort to avoid the need for statutory services. In addition to commissioning support from FLVC for social prescribing services within the CMHT, the Well-being and Recovery Team now have three Social Workers providing the following services:

- Children and Families Well-being Worker – this role offers information and guidance to people who are struggling

with their mental well-being and have dependents who are children. Parents can be signposted to mental health resources in the Flintshire area.

- Adults Well-being Worker – this role offers information and guidance to people who are struggling with their mental well-being and may be having difficulties finding the support they need. They are based in the Flint Library Hub on Fridays between 12pm and 2pm. This worker also works in conjunction with [NEWMind](#) to facilitate a peer led support group for those experiencing issues associated with personality disorder. This was included as an example of good practice in a recent ITV Wales documentary.
- Well-being Accommodation Support Worker - this role provides support to people who are struggling with their mental well-being and may be at risk of losing their homes as a result.

In September 2023 the Well-being and Recovery Team launched its Accommodation Support element, which consists of one Social Worker and two Support Workers. This new team was developed using Housing Support Grant funding to respond to the housing issues being experienced by people with lower-level mental health problems and/or substance misuse issues. Difficulties include financial problems leading to non-payment of rent, relationship breakdowns leading to homelessness, hoarding behaviours, and a range of other housing needs. Staff in the housing departments felt they lacked knowledge and expertise in working with people with mental health and substance misuse issues and were finding it difficult to address housing problems where these were the underlying causes.

The Well-being Accommodation Support Team has been set up using agreed processes with housing teams, and referrals can be made by any individual or professional via the Flintshire Housing Gateway website.

The feedback from the project has been positive, communication between the Well-being and Recovery Team and the Housing Solutions Team has been good and they have embedded themselves well.

The number of referrals has tripled from 12 units of support to 47, which has resulted in individuals being able to access mental health services who previously would have not been able to. The addition of the Well-being and Recovery team has meant that individuals have benefited from a Social Worker's input to ensure they are referred to and access the relevant services. Individuals are now receiving professional advice and assistance from a specialist team.

Housing Solutions Officers have fed back that individuals are engaging well with the Well-being and Recovery Workers. The waiting list for support from mental health services within HSG has decreased, and the Well-being and Recovery Team currently have 35 cases between them.

For more information about the Mental Health Services available please [click here](#).

2024/25 Priorities

- ✓ **Provide additional placements for step down care within our in-house provision (Tŷ Croes Atti).**
- ✓ **Support the building of a new hub for the relocation of Tri Ffordd supported employment project to Maes Gwern in Mold.**
- ✓ **Continue to grow the Micro-Care market, including access to commissioned care packages.**
- ✓ **Pilot an evidence-based volunteer parenting programme, offering parents an opportunity for peer-to-peer support and to test whether volunteer services are as effective as paid services.**
- ✓ **Investigate how to identify and connect with more carers, make our services more visible and accessible and raise awareness of carers in the local community.**
- ✓ **Recommissioning of carers services to begin in April 2025.**

Well-being

- People are protected and safeguarded from abuse and neglect and any other types of harm.
- People are supported to actively manage their well-being and make their own decisions so that they are able to achieve their full potential and live independently for as long as possible.

Fostering

Foster Bear Campaign Success Story

The Foster Bear campaign was launched in January 2023 in collaboration with Primary Schools across Flintshire to raise awareness of local authority fostering and outline the urgency to recruit more foster carers in the county.

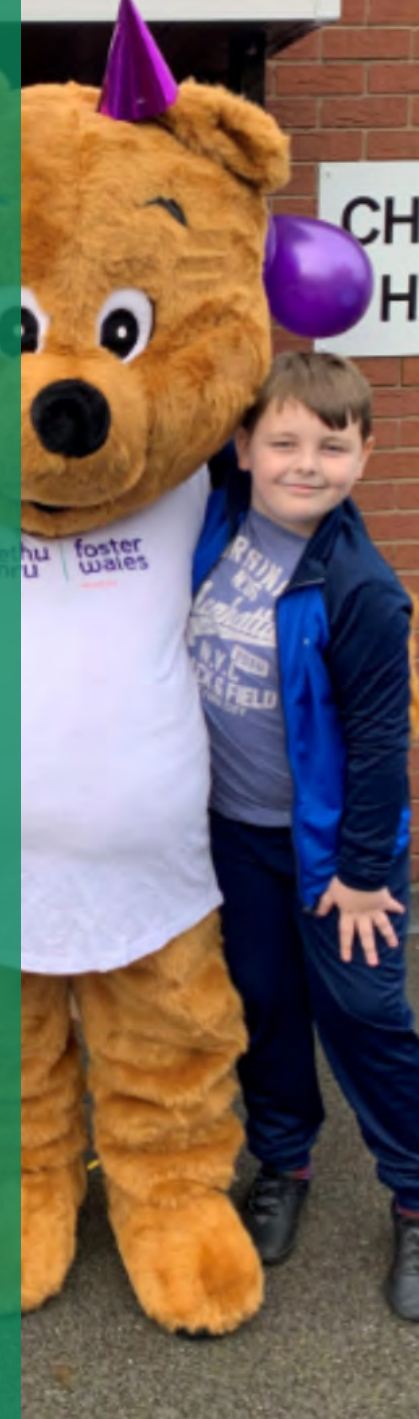
So far, thirteen primary schools have welcomed Foster Bear into their classrooms, and children are given an activity pack that contains a Foster Bear teddy and activity book to take home. The campaign educates children and their families about local authority fostering and the benefits of children looked after staying local.

“

“We have always thought about fostering then along came Foster Bear from our daughter’s school. Our daughter took great care of Foster Bear, and it came everywhere with us. It was a great message to send.”

”

Craig and Clare were the first new foster carers to sign up after their daughter brought foster bear home.





Foster Bear's First Birthday

[Foster Wales Flintshire](#) hosted a very special birthday party in February 2024, to celebrate a year since the launch of their innovative Foster Bear campaign. Local foster carers and children were invited to attend the party to play games, create crafts and celebrate Foster Bear's first birthday.

“

“Foster Bear is a fantastic way of getting the message out in Flintshire that fostering is such an important and rewarding role, that everyday people in our communities can take on and have such a huge positive impact on the lives of young people.”

”

Neil Ayling
Chief Officer, Social Services
Flintshire County Council





Raising Awareness

In support of the Foster Wales national campaign ‘Bring Something to the Table’, the Flintshire Foster Wales Team were at Broughton Shopping Park on a number of dates throughout January and February to raise awareness, educate people about fostering with Flintshire, and answer any questions.

Mockingbird

The Mockingbird programme replicates an extended family in constellations of 6-10 fostering households, led by a Hub Home Carer and Liaison Worker. The constellation community offers vital peer support and guidance alongside social activities and sleepovers, to strengthen relationships and permanence for children and young people. There are currently three constellations in Flintshire, all of which are going well with lovely friendships and relationships.

This year we have seen multiple instances of foster carers increasing their capacity, either from respite carer to fulltime, or from one placement to two placements, due to the confidence they have gained from the Mockingbird programme. Another positive outcome that we have experienced this year is a case where a child who would have been placed in an out of county residential placement, has been able to stay in foster care in Flintshire alongside their siblings.

Children’s Residential Homes

Flintshire’s commitment to developing a programme of Children’s homes to help avoid the need for residential placements outside of the county is ongoing. Over the last 12 months, we have been successful in registering four of our five new Children’s Residential Homes with CIW. The team in Tŷ Nyth have opened a model of Multi Systemic Therapy, Family Integrated Treatment, Integrated Treatment Model (MST FIT ITM), which is an evidence-based model that is widely used throughout America and is the first of its kind in Wales. The team have regular monitoring meetings with the consultants from MST, have clear documentation in place to support with the quality of

the service delivery, and the home's Responsible Individual visits regularly to complete monitoring visits, in line with the regulation requirements.

In December 2023, the team celebrated the first young person moving back to live with their family full time. The young person had been in care for 9 years, has now finished the full programme, been closed to the MST FIT team, and continues to live together with family. Following on from this success, another young person has since moved home to family and another young person is currently in the programme.

The team members within the service have supported Children's Services with emergency situations, and have supported young people in their family homes, within Flintshire's emergency provision, as well as within other properties in the local community.

The teams have been embedding evidence based therapeutic approaches within all the homes, and further training is booked this year which will support the development of this. There is a psychologist working closely with the service which has been key in supporting the workforce to develop their skills, improving practice, and understanding the young people and how we can best support them.

Long-term Accommodation for Young People with Learning Disabilities

Flintshire continues its work to meet the demands of accommodation for young people with learning disabilities. Progress is ongoing and good links have been made with the Housing Associations.



Throughout the homes there have been many fun days celebrating different events, all the team members join in with the children and young people to ensure that they create memories and experiences for all the individuals they support.

Short-term Emergency Accommodation

Flintshire now have four properties available to support people who find themselves homeless, or in need of accommodation urgently. The most recent addition is a bedsit which has been used to accommodate a young person with autism who was at risk of homelessness.

The Progression Service have supported this young person to engage in the community locally and visit another supported living establishment to build natural friendships. As a result, the young person feels they can live independent of a formal package of support and are being supported to find long term accommodation in the area as they wish to continue building on the networks and friendships they have made.

Llys Jasmine 10th Anniversary (Extra Care)

Llys Jasmine tenants and staff celebrated the scheme's 10-year anniversary in October 2023. Llys Jasmine was the second extra care scheme opened by Flintshire County Council. To date Flintshire has developed 4 extra care schemes across the county, offering enhanced housing and support services to enable individuals to remain in the community for longer. Across the 4 schemes, there are 239 apartments, including 30 specially adapted for people living with dementia.



Plas Yr Yrwen celebrating the King's coronation



Llys Jasmine 10th Anniversary celebrations



Tenants from Llys Eleanor enjoying one of their regular trips out



Plas Yr Ywen (Extra Care) Official Opening

Plas Yr Ywen’s official opening took place in September 2023. We were honoured to have First Minister, Mark Drakeford, open the scheme and the event was well-attended by residents, staff, Councillors, and the local Mayor.

Homecare Services

Flintshire continues to utilise a rolling scheme of recruitment to grow our in-house homecare service to support more people to live well at home, however, recruitment across social care continues to be a challenge. To rise to this challenge, the homecare service has a designated task team looking at new and innovative ways to attract applicants to the service, and a recruitment event was held in March 2024. This work is ongoing and will support the service to grow and expand the offering to people living in our communities.

The teams’ fleet of all-electrical cars have doubled this year. They now have six Renault Zoe’s, enabling the service to deliver home care across the county in a sustainable way and help support Flintshire’s [Climate Change Strategy](#).





Flintshire Learning for Well-being Programme

The [Flintshire Learning for Well-being Programme](#) is a partnership between Flintshire County Council and several partners, providing free courses to anyone aged over 18 living in Flintshire who are struggling with their mental well-being and/or their carers.

The programme brochure details all the activities and courses available and is accessible online or as a paper copy. Leaflets are now being distributed to 50 venues, an increase from 24 venues in 2022/23, and includes a QR code which links directly

to the Flintshire Learning for Well-being website. The addition of the QR code has also resulted in an increase of engagement on social media.

Feedback questionnaires are completed after each session to assess the quality and impact of the courses. Discussions and social media engagement also help inform what courses may need to be added to the brochure. New sessions such as graffiti and outdoor activities including paddleboarding and archery, have been successful in engaging more young people and it is planned to include more of these activities in the brochure going forward.

“

“Attending SAFE was a turning point for me. It helped me to be where I am now, attend a full-time job and helping others.”

“Absolutely loved it. Brilliantly explained and a wealth of knowledge. Such a wonderfully empowering activity. Thank you so much.”

“Thank you for a lovely informative session with lots of good ideas in a kind welcoming atmosphere.”

”



Flintshire Learning for Well-being Programme - 10th Anniversary Event

In October 2023 the programme celebrated its 10th Anniversary with a networking and information sharing event at Flint Library.

The event was a great success with 10 partners attending, including [KIM Inspire](#), [North-East Wales MIND](#), [Aura](#), [Advance Brighter Futures](#), Social Services Well-being Team, SAFE and [FLVC](#). The Well-being volunteers provided taster sessions of some of the courses on offer, including floristry, sugar craft and Dungeons and Dragons, and the Photography and Watercolour courses displayed some of the amazing work they have produced. The Well-being & Recovery Social Workers were also on hand to offer advice and guidance. Over 60 people attended the event, many of whom had not heard about this service before.

Due to feedback received from the event, it is planned to hold an annual event every October, to showcase the brochure and the courses and activities that are on offer.

National Exercise Referral Scheme

The National Exercise Referral Scheme ([NERS](#)) is an evidenced based health intervention funded by Welsh Government. The scheme incorporates physical activity and behavioural change, to support individuals to make healthier lifestyle choices to improve their health and well-being.

Flintshire's Occupational Therapy and Single Point of Access (SPOA) Teams continue to refer individuals to scheme as appropriate.

NERS continues to be promoted amongst relevant practitioners within the service to maintain awareness and ensure the benefits of the scheme continue to be accessed by eligible individuals.

Signposting Individuals to Third Sector and Social Prescribing

Formal arrangements with FLVC have increased social prescribing capacity, and a regular surgery is also held in Deeside offering advice and information.

2024/25 Priorities

- ✓ **Implement the 'Effective Child Protection' practice model and embed into practice within Children's Services, over a 3-year programme.**
- ✓ **Launch and begin the implementation of the NSPCC neglect-graded profile tool (GCP2), to support with identifying and appropriately managing risks relating to neglect.**
- ✓ **Continue to grow our in-house homecare service to support more people to live at home, utilising a rolling scheme of recruitment.**
- ✓ **Continue to look at new resources to support carers with the pressures due to the increase in cost of living.**
- ✓ **Explore opportunities to support carers from ethnic minority backgrounds.**
- ✓ **Support people to achieve their mental well-being outcomes by promoting personal and community well-being through open access courses delivered by the Learning Partnership.**

Other Information

Inspections and reviews



Adults' and Children's Services Performance Evaluation Inspection

From 27 November to 8 December 2023, CIW visited Flintshire Social Services to undertake a full, routine Performance Evaluation Inspection (PEI) of both Adults' and Children's Services. The purpose of the inspection was to review the local authority's performance in exercising its social services duties and functions in line with legislation.

Inspectors identified good work and practice across all services and thanked everyone involved for such a warm welcome.

The inspectors summarised their findings as follows:

- There is a stable and experienced Senior Management Team in place across both services providing continuity of leadership.
- Partner agencies, providers and stakeholders told us that leaders are visible and there are good relationships at a senior level with open communication.
- Practitioners also stated leaders are accessible, approachable, and supportive, and overall, ensure practitioners have the right training and skills. A few practitioners (16%) from Children's Services who responded to the staff survey noted the leadership and culture within the local authority needed to improve, although (86%) said they were well-supported by managers. Similarly, practitioners (91%) from Adults' Services who responded to the staff survey also stated they were well supported by managers.
- There are procedures in place to induct new staff members, although at times they would benefit from increased pastoral support. It is acknowledged that a new face-to-face social work collective has been set-up to offer peer support to all Social Workers across Children's and Adults' services.
- Practitioners clearly know the people they support very well. In response to a survey by CIW, many people said they felt respected and listened to by practitioners.

- Recruitment and retention of social care practitioners is a national challenge across Wales. The local authority continues to work hard on strategies to support continued recruitment and retention of staff. Examples include commissioning a communications agency to promote working for the local authority and increasing capacity in the Workforce Development Team.
- The recent restructure across both services is acknowledged and has potential to provide more resilience, opportunities for greater support and oversight, as well as career progression. A few practitioners across both services felt the consultation about changes in structure had not adequately considered practitioner's views and had impacted their morale as it did not benefit everyone.
- The local authority is well sighted on market stability in its area and the needs of its population. There are examples of the local authority implementing successful strategic plans in response to identified need and the lack of certain support services in its area. This has been achieved by working in partnership with BCUHB and other relevant partners to develop innovative services with significant capital investment. Examples include Marleyfield Care Home and Tŷ Nyth Children's Care Home.
- The local authority has a comprehensive supervision policy. Practitioners benefit from regular supervisions, although the practice and standard of recording is inconsistent. The best supervision records focus on reflective practice and professional development. In other examples, more reflection on practice, and an improved focus on professional curiosity, outcomes and staff well-being is required.
- The local authority benefits from good corporate and political support. There is a focus on ensuring statutory duties are met. Senior leaders, managers and politicians recognise significant action and resource is required to ensure the local authority's ability to deliver statutory safeguarding responsibilities. As a result, the local authority commissioned two managed care agency teams in Children's Services to provide additional capacity. This is impacting positively on the outcomes for children and families.

The full report is available on [CIW website](#).

Flintshire Fostering Service Inspection

In addition to the inspection of Adults' and Children's Services, there was also a separate CIW inspection of Flintshire Fostering Services from 27 November to 01 December 2023.

The inspection planned to:

- Focus on the extent to which the service is complying with the required regulations set out within The Regulated Fostering Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2019, and The Local Authority Fostering Services (Wales) Regulations 2018.
- Consider the outcomes for children who use Flintshire Foster Service.

The inspectors summarised their findings as follows:

“The local authority fostering service is provided with sufficient care, competence, and skill, having regard to the statement of purpose. The fostering service provides foster placements for children who are looked after by the local authority and provides on-going support to foster carers. The fostering service provides the assessment of general foster carers and connected foster carers. A designated manager and a senior manager who is also the Responsible Individual oversees the fostering service.

The fostering service has a staff team who are competent, committed and have the skills and knowledge to meet the requirements of the service. Staff retention is good, and staff feel supported. The local authority targets the recruitment of foster carers appropriately and is committed to increasing the number of foster carers.

Children receive care from foster carers who are supported by the fostering service to promote and improve well-being outcomes. Children’s health and educational needs are prioritised, they have access to a wide range of resources. Foster carers have access to the Mockingbird initiative for support, advice, and guidance. External agencies provide advice and support to children and foster carers to develop relationships and attachments.”

The full report is available on [CIW website](#).

Llys Gwenffrwd Residential Home Inspection

Llys Gwenffrwd is a local authority run, 30 bed residential care home in Holywell. The home received an inspection from CIW on 31 August 2023. The inspector gave positive feedback about the quality-of-life resident’s experience, as well as the systems and processes operated by the manager and staff.





The inspectors summarised their findings as follows:

“People live in a service which is homely and welcoming. There are plenty of spaces to sit and relax. There is a calm, relaxed atmosphere, and people are supported by well-trained staff who know them well. People are encouraged to contribute their views to the running of the home, and their views are taken seriously. There is a range of activities on offer, and these are personalised to people’s individual preferences. Care staff are supported by a management team which is approachable and responsive to their needs.”

The full report is available on [CIW website](#).

Hafod Short-Term Care Inspection

Hafod is a local authority owned short-term care service, offering respite care for people and their carers. CIW completed an inspection of the service on 15 February 2024 and a summary of the inspector’s findings are below:

People feel happy at Hafod and families expressed how good the service is. One gentleman packs his bags two weeks in advance and many people refer to it as going on holiday. Staff are comfortable in their role and there was lots of positive feedback about the staff team. People can bring in items from home and there is a warm, homely feeling to Hafod. There was evidence of lots of activities on offer. Personal plans, daily notes and positive behaviour support plans are all excellent, and as a result people feel safe that staff are able to meet the needs of the individuals who stay there. Medication is well managed, and the medication assessment charts were completed to a high standard. There were some lovely photos on the walls of the activities that people partake in (although they do need an update).

Whilst Hafod doesn’t carry out a full fire drill practice, the inspector felt there was a good understanding of fire safety, legionella and asbestos care. Recruitment had been positive, the systems allowed for safe recruiting and DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) checks were all in place. The training matrix had been updated recently and was of a high standard, however there were a couple of certificates missing from training that had been completed. Staff felt they were well supported by their manager and really enjoyed the role. Appraisals were also up to date.

The full report is available on [CIW website](#).

Complaints and representations

Flintshire Social Services, as endorsed by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, has a robust complaints procedure in place. We welcome complaints and want to ensure individuals, carers and families are listened to, their views acted upon, and they receive a timely and open response. We work hard to resolve problems as soon as they arise, and advocacy is actively promoted.

Complaints across Social Services, both Adults and Children, are relatively consistent year on year, with increases in the number of complaints one year and a fall in number the next. In terms of themes and trends, complaints received can be broadly categorised as follows:

- **Dignity** - Where there are concerns about an individual's personal care and appearance, and the possible impacts any shortcomings may have upon that individual.
- **Communication** - The way in which we keep individuals and families involved, informed, and updated about our work.
- **Quality of Care** - Issues regarding an individual's care, be it residential, domiciliary, respite or foster care.
- **Timeliness** - Our decision making in terms of offering and providing care and support, and the length of time taken to source packages of care.

- **Disagreements** - When individuals and families challenge or appeal our decisions or involvement, or they believe there is a lack of action about issues they are raising.
- **Financial Charges** - Disputes involving how we have reached decisions to charge for care and support, and the amounts applied.
- **Process** - Where we haven't adhered to the process, or our paperwork may be missing important information.
- **Staff** - Whereby our involvement or interactions have been misperceived or misunderstood, or questions raised about our professional conduct with people.
- **Contact** - Issues regarding child and family contact arrangements as ordered by the Court.

All complaints made are scrutinised and used to improve services as part of a 'lessons learnt' process. In terms of learning we have:

- Revised existing information leaflets relating to charges, and reminded staff the importance of recording discussions about charges they have with individuals and families.
- A project underway whereby each child with care and support needs will have their own individual case record, and therefore moving us away from the 'lead child' approach.

Referencing other sources of information

Modernising our systems

Flintshire are keen to maximise opportunities to develop and modernise our electronic systems.

Social Care Finance System

The new social care finance system, ContrOCC, is now live for both Adults and Children. Payments to care providers, client charging and payments to clients for social care services, are now being processed through ContrOCC.

Provider Portal

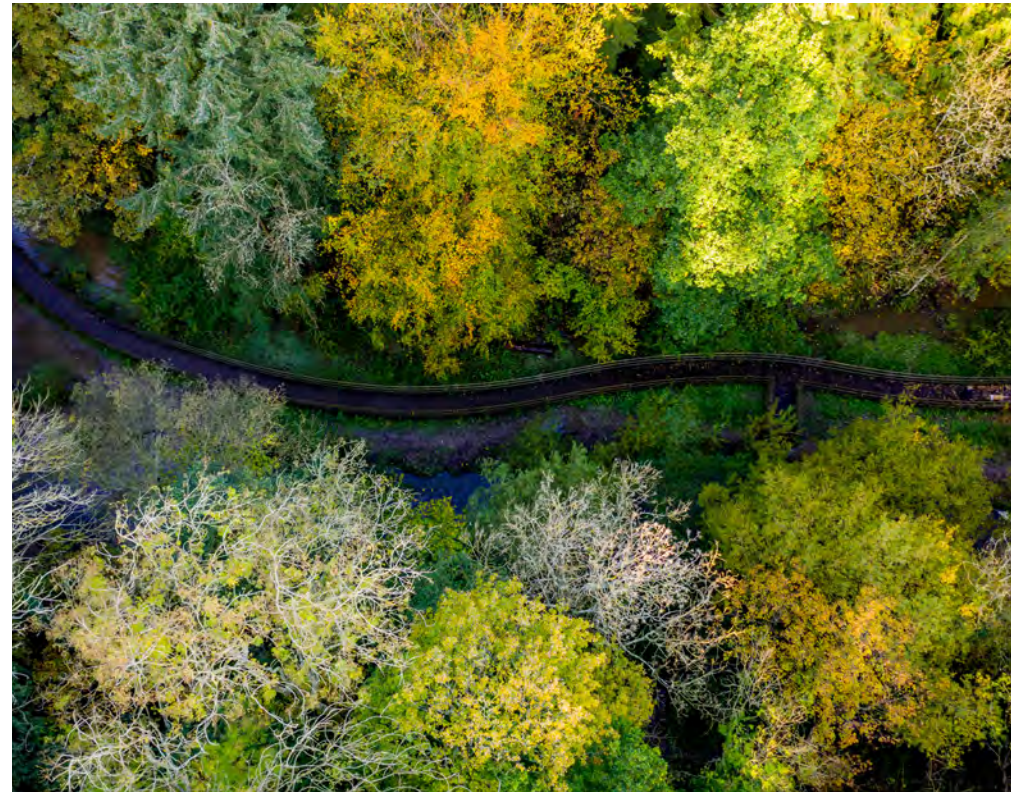
The delivery of a 'Provider Portal' to external providers and foster carers is planned to commence mid-April 2024. We are aiming to sign up as many providers as possible to allow them to view payments, raise invoices, submit actuals and notify us of any changes through the portal. This functionality aims to improve accessibility for providers, but also to reduce the resource required within Social Services to handle such work.

Homecare Rostering System

After a rigorous tender process, the procurement of a Staff Rostering system has been completed. The new system will enable the teams to provide greater efficiencies using the electronic rota system.

Case Management System

Procurement documentation to tender for a new Case Management System has been prepared and the tender is due to be issued in the coming months.



Contextual Data and National Performance Measures

01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Adult Social Services

9,458

No. of new contacts received by statutory services during the year.

14%

Percentage of assessments that went on to have a care and support plan to meet their outcomes.

6,944

No. of those new contacts who were provided with advice or assistance. (This figure includes **973** contacts to statutory social services which resulted in advice & assistance from our social prescribing service).

6,779

No. of new assessments completed during the year.

69%

Percentage of people with a package of support who had their care plan reviewed within timescales.

1,913

No. of adult carers who were identified and referred to our carers service.

90%

Percentage of those which progressed to Section 126 enquiries which were completed within 7 days.

On the last day of the year, we were helping **1,029** people over the age of **65** to live at home and **524** older people in care homes.

212

No. of people who completed a package of reablement during the year.

559

No. of people who commissioned their own services through a direct payment.

1,109

No. of adult safeguarding reports received during the year.

312

No. of cases waiting to be allocated for a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards assessment in Flintshire.

Children's Services

13,451

No. of contacts received by statutory services during the year.

1,074

No. of families that received information and support through the Early Help Hub.

170

No of children on the Flintshire Child Protection Register on the 31st of March 2024.



Percentage of children added to the register that were re-registered within 12 months of deregistration.

10,002

No. of those contacts who were provided with advice or assistance.

1,368

No. of families passed to the Information Assistance and Advice (IAA) service.



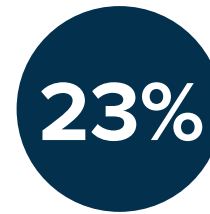
Percentage of initial child protection conferences and review conferences carried out within timescales.

10.26 months

Average time that children remained on the register.

98

No. of children/young people who have left care during the year.



Percentage of those who went on to have a care and support plan.



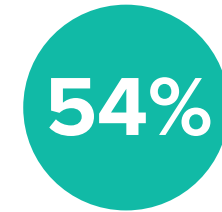
Percentage of those who had no eligible needs.

117

No. of children with a care and support plan where needs were being met through a direct payment as of the 31st of March 2024.

2,187

No. of new assessments completed during the year.



Percentage of those who had needs which could be met by any other means.

236

No. of children who were looked after in Flintshire on the 31st of March 2024.

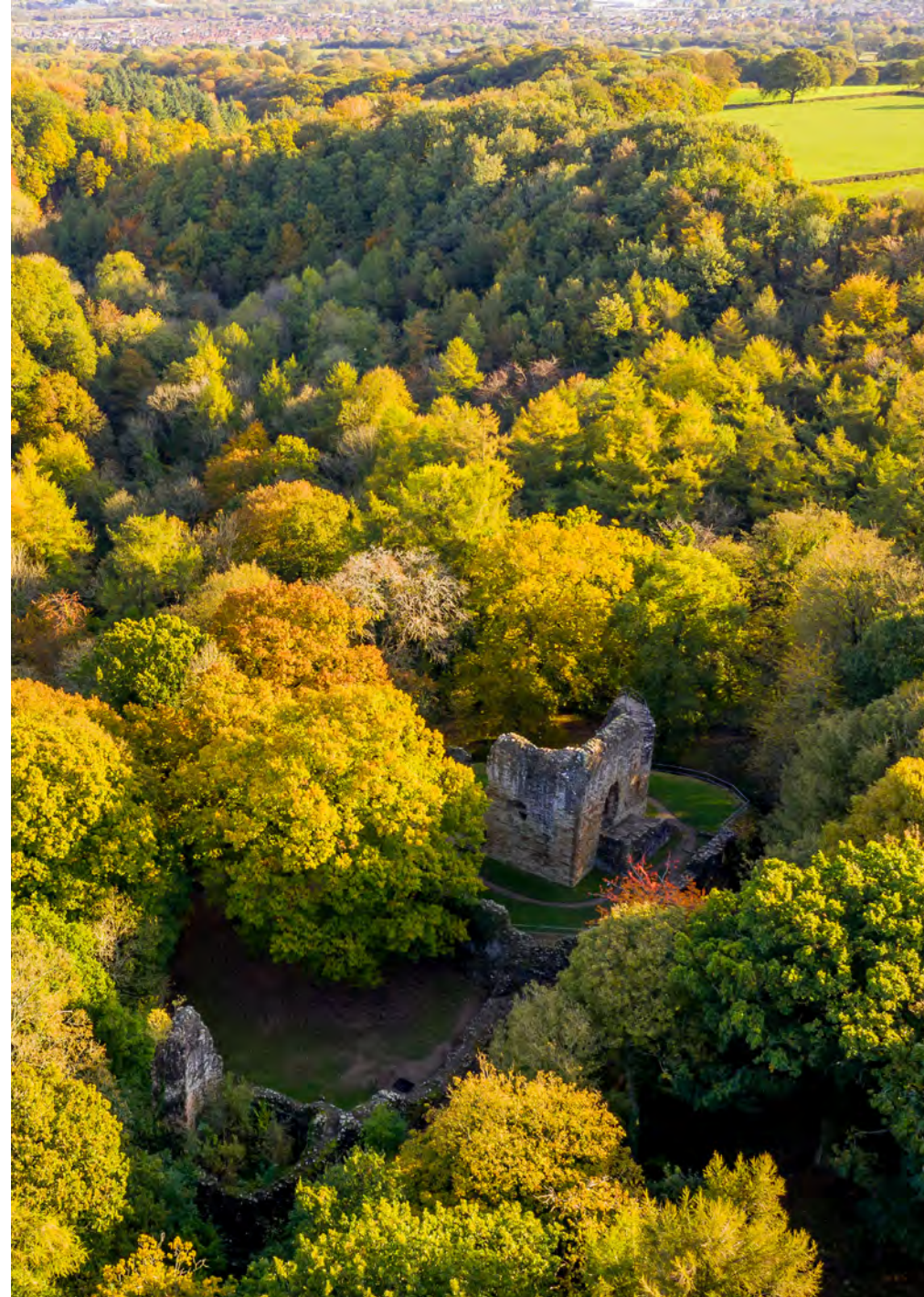
Accessing Further Information and Key Documents

Social Care Legislation & Information Links:

[The Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#)
[Regulation and Inspection of Social Care \(Wales\) Act 2016](#)
[The Well-being of Future Generations](#)
[North Wales Regional Partnership Board](#)
[North Wales Safeguarding Board](#)

Flintshire County Council's Key Strategies:

[Flintshire County Council - Council Plan](#)
[Flintshire Public Services Board - Well-Being Plan](#)
[Digital Strategy](#)
[Climate Change](#)



Glossary of Terms

Advocacy

Advocacy is taking action to help people say what they want, secure their rights, represent their interests, and obtain services they need.

Association for Fostering, Kinship and Adoption (AFKA) Cymru

AFKA Cymru promotes good practice across the breadth of permanency planning for children and young people.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

ASD is the medical name for autism.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB)

BCUHB is responsible for the delivery of health care services across the six counties of North Wales (Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham).

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

CIW are the independent regulator of social care and childcare in Wales. CIW register, inspect and take action to improve the quality and safety of services for the well-being of the people of Wales.

Children Looked After

A child is looked after by a local authority if a court has granted a Care Order to place a child in care, or a Council's Children's Services department has cared for the child for more than 24 hours.

Direct Payments

Direct payments are money from Flintshire Social Services made available to eligible people to enable them to arrange support and solutions that help meet assessed social care needs and agreed well-being outcomes.

Discharge to Recover and Assess (D2RA)

D2RA supports patients on discharge from hospital to receive intensive therapy led support to allow them to maximise their independence before returning home.

Extra Care

Housing designed with the needs of service users in mind that provides varying levels of support which is available on site and promotes independent living.

Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC)

The umbrella and support organisation for over 1200 voluntary and community groups based in Flintshire.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme

WeCare Wales' Guaranteed Interview Scheme allows individuals who have completed the Introduction to Social Care training, and previously Taster to Care, the opportunity to arrange interviews directly with registered employers.

HfT

Support people with learning disabilities to live with more independence and choice across the Flintshire area. Flintshire County Council have commissioned HfT to deliver day services and work opportunities for people with learning disabilities in the county.

Housing with Care Fund (HCF)

Capital funding from Welsh Government available to provide housing and accommodation for people with care and support needs.

Housing Support Grant (HSG)

Welsh Government funding to local authorities to spend on projects aimed at preventing homelessness and helping people to live in their own home or supported housing.

Integration and Rebalancing Capital Fund (IRCF)

Health and Social Care's IRCF is a new programme set up to directly support the Programme for Government (PfG) commitments of developing 50 integrated health and social care hubs and to support rebalancing the residential care market.

Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam

Supporting and promoting the Welsh language in Flintshire and Wrexham.

North-East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS)

NEWCIS is one of the largest providers of carer services in Wales.

North Wales Learning Disability Transformation Project (NW LD Transformation Project)

North Wales Together: Seamless Services for People with Learning Disabilities is one of four transformation projects in North Wales and is also known as the LD Transformation Project.

Regional Integration Fund (RIF)

Health and Social Care's RIF is a 5-year Welsh Government programme from April 2022 to March 2027 to help integrate health and care services.

Regional Partnership Board (RPB)

The North Wales RPB was established as part of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, to improve the well-being of the population and improve how health and care services are delivered. The RPB brings together health, social services, housing, the third sector and other partners to co-ordinate the continued transformation and integration of health, social care and well-being services across the region.

SAFE

SAFE is a self-advocacy course which has now changed its name to 'Hear My Voice'. The course is run by Advance Brighter Futures and helps individuals build their self-confidence and other skills.

Special Guardianship Order (SGO)

An SGO grants overriding parental responsibility for a child over a child's parents or others who have parental responsibility.