

SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

& 2023/24 Priorities



Contents

Section 1	Introduction
Section 2	Director's Summary of Performance
Section 3	How are People Shaping our Services?
Section 4	Promoting and Improving the Well-being of Those We Help
	Children and Young People
	Older People
	General Health Needs, Physical Impairment and Sensory Loss
	Learning Disabilities
	Autism
	Mental Health (adults)
	Carers
	Safeguarding
Section 5	How We Do What We Do
	Our Workforce and How We Support their Professional Roles
	Our Financial Resources and How We Plan For the Future
	Our Partnership Working, Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance and Accountability
Section 6	Come and Join Our Team
Section 7	Accessing Further Information and Key Documents
	Glossary of Terms
Appendix 1	Contextual data and National Performance measures

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 evaluate our performance against last year's improvement priorities and outline our priorities for next year.

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

The standards are set out below:

People	
NQS 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.
NQS 1.2	Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled, well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision.
Prevention	
NQS 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.
NQS 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 & Integration	
NQS 3.1	Effective partnerships are in place to commission and deliver fully integrated, high quality, sustainable outcomes for people.
NQS 3.2	People are encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as equal partners.
Well-Being	
NQS 4.1	People are protected and safeguarded from abuse and neglect, and any other types of harm.
NQS 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.

In preparing this report, we have followed the same approach as last year, reflecting the headings from the North Wales Population Needs Assessment 2022 and under each heading we will demonstrate:

- What we had planned to do last year and how we have succeeded,
- What difference this made to the outcomes for well-being of people, and
- What our priority objectives are for next year.
- Any lessons learnt from the work carried out during last year.

Section 2 Director's Summary of Performance

Welcome to this year's Annual Social Services Report.

We have over the past year continued to positively support our most vulnerable residents to have a voice, and control over their own lives, reach their potential and live well in their communities.

Flintshire County Council's Corporate values are:

<i>Compassion, empathetic and kind</i> <i>Dignified and Respectful</i> <i>Resilient and Resourceful</i> <i>Energetic and Enthusiastic</i> <i>Empowering and Motivated, Down to earth, Personable and Non-Judgemental.</i>

Flintshire County Council's Corporate values are reflected throughout the delivery of our services by our committed Social Care Workforce, who remain dedicated to improving well-being through meaningful joint working with our residents, their families, our commissioned providers and partners to build our resilient and resourceful community.

We have highlighted below just some of our key successes from last year:

- Children's residential services have seen significant development with its two small group homes and the completion of building work on two four bed properties, one of which has emergency accommodation.

- Our Early Years and Family Support web page has been developed as part of the Flintshire County Council website, and is to be launched April 23.
- The Draft Early Years Strategy has been consulted on and is also due for launch April 2023.
- A new team, DART, has been set up by Flintshire Social Services to support citizens in hospital and beyond. DART is the social care link between hospital and the community, and we aim to make the move as smooth as possible for people.
- In September 2022, Empowering Parents Empowering Communities (EPEC) successfully delivered its third cohort of Parent Group Leader training.
- We have increased the number of approved general foster carers and connected persons.
- The number of Micro-carers has increased with an additional 9 people setting up Micro-Enterprises in Flintshire this year, bringing the total number of Micro-Carers set-up since the pilot launch to 31.
- A Project Board has been established and identified key actions to implement the Dementia Strategy for Flintshire.
- Planning work has progressed on an upcoming development of a new residential care home in Flint, offering residential care of the highest quality with state of the art facilities across 4 floors.
- Flintshire has continued to lead the North East Wales Community Equipment Service. The provision of community equipment is essential for promoting the independence of people with disabilities of all ages.
- Properties at Larchway, Sandycroft and Glan y Morfa, Connah's Quay have been refurbished to support people with physical disabilities. Flintshire now has three units available to support people in urgent need of accommodation.
- We have continued to explore different ways of using direct payments with a focus on strength and resilience, to help families use their direct payments in creative and resourceful ways.
- The Project SEARCH programme for adults with learning disabilities and autism over 25 was launched with 7 interns undertaking work placements.
- The Young Carers ID card has been launched successfully, working in partnership with young carers.
- Next Steps mental health service ran their advanced volunteering programme, with all learners completing the course and awarded with a Level 1 Certificate in Personal & Social Education.
- The Mental Health Services group, Life Warriors, has become peer-run.
- The North Wales Integrated Autism Service (NWIAS) were successful in bidding for additional monies of £148,000 from the WLGA and have used this to purchase 120 assessments to reduce the waiting list across North Wales.
- The Autism team have planned, delivered, and attended events to raise awareness and provide support to Autistic Individuals and their families.



This year has seen the appointment of a new Senior Head of Adult Services, Janet Bellis following the retirement of Susie Lunt. Flintshire has received a legacy of great work from Susie who spent most of her working life at Flintshire and developed many first rate services through her determination to improve the lives of the people we support.

Susie was passionate about the importance of good care for the people we look after, and is admired and respected by our Councillors Colleagues, Welsh Government Ministers and Civil Servants, regional and national colleagues and by all the staff team in Flintshire.

We wish Susie all the very best for the future and welcome Janet to her new role.



From both myself, and Councillor Christine Jones, my colleague Cabinet Member for Social Services and Flintshire Deputy leader, we express our sincere gratitude to our staff for their commitment in providing such excellent services in what continue to be very pressured times to the citizens of Flintshire. This was particularly evident during the heavy snow fall in March of this year, when despite the treacherous conditions, their tremendous effort and proactive planning meant that services continued with as little disruption as possible. Our residents were supported to stay safe, whilst our staff also maintained effective communication and information sharing on a daily basis.

We wish to thank our staff and all of our stakeholders for their dedication and professionalism shown towards our very positive working relationships, and their innovative approaches to developing our Services.



[Photo- Neil Ayling

Section 3

How are People Shaping our Service?

It is a Priority that the voices of people are heard and that we learn from them. In Flintshire, we remain in regular contact with our stakeholders and work closely with them to develop our service in line with the needs of our residents.

The Contracts and Commissioning Team continue to facilitate regular meetings with Residential care, Domiciliary care and Supported Living providers. These meetings are a valuable arena for sharing information and networking, as they are attended by colleagues from the Environmental Health Team, Health and Safety Officers and BCUHB Officers.

Progress for Providers

An example of the Council delivering on the values of its local people is Flintshire County Council's Progress for Providers Programme which evidences and rewards person-centred care and practice. The scheme won a Social Care Accolade award for excellent outcomes for people of all ages by investing in the training and development of staff.



Staff members of Plas Yr Ywen Extra Care scheme holding their recently acquired Silver award certificate from Progress for Providers.

'This is a great achievement for quite a newly established team and I am very proud of what they have accomplished and of the standards of care they provide each and every day to the people in their care.'

Volunteering in Social Care



Flintshire Local Voluntary Council
Cyngor Gwirfoddol Lleol Sir Fflint

Flintshire Local Voluntary Council ([FLVC](#)) have continued to develop the Volunteering in Social Care project in partnership with Flintshire County Council.

FLVC have provided support with recruiting volunteers for Flintshire Care Homes and links have been made with Coleg Cambria to encourage Level 2 and 3, year one Health & Social Care students to engage with their community and to support Flintshire Care Homes with Volunteering to complete their placements. Coleg Cambria Student placements took place in May, with five Care Home providers accommodating students, following which a student is now employed at Sycamore Lodge.

“I completed 40 hours of volunteering, my duties included: making drinks, talking to residents and painting nails. What I enjoyed most about volunteering at Sycamore Lodge was getting to meet all the residents”

In April 2022, FLVC hosted a Volunteer Recruitment and Community Engagement Event in collaboration with Flintshire County Council’s Age Well 50+ Community Team at the Jade Jones Pavilion in Flint. 13 community groups and organisations were in attendance, which enabled lots of networking and volunteer recruitment to take place.

“Great preparation, relaxing and informal. Spoke to lots of people and networked face to face, very useful and so important”.

If you are interested in volunteering, please call us on 01352 744000 or email volunteers@flvc.org.uk.

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, means so much more than just the words we use. It brings a sense of belonging, a 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. The residents of Marleyfield Care Home have particularly enjoyed their visits from pupils from Westwood Primary School who have been chatting, reading and singing in Welsh to them.

Developing our Early Years Website

Following consultation with Parents and Carers which highlighted a need for a central source of information, we have worked with these groups to develop the Early Years and Family Support website, with our phase 1 launch due in April 2023.

Our joint working is continuing, and we are now seeking their views on barriers to engagement and how we can best reach our communities. Following on from this, we will, together, focus on the voice of the child. This work will help to inform planning for a Parent Voice Network, ensuring that parents and children are recognised as key stakeholders and have an opportunity to be involved in the planning of services.

Climate change strategy



We recognise that the climate crisis is a hugely important issue facing not just our residents, but the wider community, our environment and our wildlife.

In February 2022, Flintshire County Council prepared its first [Flintshire Climate Change Strategy](#). This strategy and action plan sets out our initial route map towards a net zero carbon Council by 2030; it's a live document that will evolve as our understanding of how we can combat the impacts of climate change evolves.

By working through these goals, we will make a positive contribution to tackling climate change and support Welsh Government's aim to be a net zero carbon nation by 2050.

We can only achieve the aims of net zero carbon by engaging and working with our residents, communities and businesses.

Some of our communities face challenges that we can help to ease by reducing fuel poverty, promoting green spaces for well-being, and developing green skills and job opportunities.

Flintshire County Council has invested in energy reduction measures and renewable energy schemes for a number of years, and this strategy sets the scene for our future aspirations in tackling climate change and to create a more resilient and net zero carbon Flintshire.

“The little things we do today can make a difference tomorrow” .

L, aged 8

Investment from the Welsh Government has also been used to purchase 3 new Renault Zoe all electric cars for our three Domiciliary Care localities. The cars are based in Llys Gwenffrwd, Croes Atti and Marleyfield House and are being used everyday to deliver home care across Flintshire in a sustainable way.

Section 4

Promoting and Improving the Well-being of those we help

Children and Young People

Early years NQS 2.2

Flintshire has taken on the lead role for the Regional Early Years Integration and Transformation collaboration which commenced March 2022. Working closely with Local Authority leads, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Public Health team and the North Wales Social Care and Well-being Services Improvement Collaborative, this integration and transformation work will create the foundation for the Early Years Strategy in Flintshire and support our vision of 'For all children to have the best start in life', bringing together shared learning.

The continued work programme will include priorities such as the expansion of Flying Start, increased eligibility to the Childcare Offer for parents in training, a focus on quality childcare and sufficient places, early childhood development, the impacts on children born during the pandemic, particularly speech, language and communication, and development of the volunteer parenting programmes; Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities.

The development of a Parents Champion Scheme offering an opportunity for volunteer Parent Champions to work in their local communities to share information with other parents and signpost to local services. A communications team has been developed, bringing together representatives from each area of the Early Years and Family Support Service to develop a communications strategy and plan. This includes looking at how we communicate key messages and engage with parents, services and professionals across communication streams, e.g social media, website, outreach, online drop-in sessions, parent champions. This group also works closely with the Regional Communications group.

Family Information Service: NQS 3.2

The Family Information Service has seen a sustained increase in the volume of enquiries from both members of the public and from professionals supporting families. Our trained staff process requests and provide tailored responses, offering a specific set of information suited to needs and best outcomes. The online database resource, [Dewis](#), provides access to information online and during out of office hours.

Summer of fun 2022 NQS 3.1

The Flintshire Summer of Fun 2022 Scheme ran from 1st July 2022 to 30th September 2022. Its purpose was to support children and young people’s recovery from the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, by providing all children and young people aged 0 – 25 in Wales with the opportunity to access free activities aimed at supporting their development and well-being.

Building upon the successes from the 2021 Scheme, a wide variety of activities were made available to include art, crafts, forest schools, sporting and reading activities, parent and toddler groups, all of which offered an invaluable opportunity for the children, young people and their families who took part to have fun. It also enabled the organisations involved to develop innovative opportunities and ways of working together beyond the Summer Scheme.

The positive impact that the 2022 scheme has had is apparent from the direct feedback received from those involved:

“Thank you so much. S has had such a wonderful summer with the events. You have all been wonderful”.



Fostering NQS 4.2

Since April 2022, the number of approved foster carers and carers undergoing an assessment has increased. The Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) service has also grown in strength with an increase in the number of SGOs in place, and families receiving support.

Mocking Bird NQS 2.2

The Mockingbird family model which replicates an extended family in constellations of 6-10 fostering households continues to develop and grow; with plans to launch a fourth constellation in late 2023.

Foster bear NQS 3.1

The Foster Bear campaign is a fostering recruitment campaign which aims to raise awareness of local authority fostering and outline the urgency to recruit more foster carers in Flintshire. It was launched in January 2023, in association with local schools to improve awareness of fostering in the wider community.



Foster Bear is part of the fostering team and is joining primary schools across Flintshire to take part in daily activities with the children in class. Children will be given the opportunity to take Foster Bear home for a weekend during which they will look after and care for the bear. They will also receive a Foster Bear Booklet full of fun activities to do in class and to record their weekend adventures.

Children's families will also have the opportunity to participate in this campaign by sharing photos and stories on social media of how Foster Bear has adapted to life with their new family, using the hashtag #fosterbear.

Raising awareness: NQS 1.2

Members of the Foster Wales Flintshire team were out in full force at the 2022 Mold Food Festival which attracts thousands of people from across the county and North Wales.

The purpose of attending the festival in September was to not only raise awareness of the fostering service but to be part of the community and support a fantastic event.



Empowering Parents Empowering Communities NQS 3.2

Over the past year, Empowering Parents Empowering Communities (EPEC) has grown from strength to strength. In September 2022, we delivered our third cohort of Parent Group Leader training, with five parents completing the training and gaining their certification and Agored Accreditation.

Being a Parent groups (aimed at parents across the whole of Flintshire who have at least one child aged 2-7 years) have been delivered in local primary schools, community centres and in Family Centres. The groups have taken place both during the day and evenings, face to face and on Zoom to facilitate access to the sessions by as many parents in Flintshire as possible.

In 2022, the EPEC team undertook 'Train the Trainer' training for a new group called Baby and Us, aimed at parents with children aged 0 – 1 years. In May 2022, the first Baby and Us group was facilitated by the volunteer Parent Group Leaders who had completed their training which was delivered by the EPEC coordinator. To date, three Baby and Us groups have been successfully facilitated. A total of 21 parents have attended across these three groups. Feedback from the groups has been fantastic:

"I have gained so much more confidence in being a mum. Practical advice and support that I can go back to in the future".

We now proudly have 14 Volunteer Parent Group Leaders within our project. They are an incredible asset to the project and their passion and dedication add exceptional value to these parenting groups, freely accessible to all across Flintshire.

Children's Advocacy NQS 1.1

The Children's Advocacy Services currently being delivered are meeting the needs of the North Wales population.

The service has been reviewed and is being developed through recommissioning, and building Parent advocacy following a successful pilot scheme funded by the Welsh Government.

Development of the new children's homes NQS 4.1

This year has been a busy time for our Children's Residential Service. We have two small group homes, one of which has been supporting children since April 2022. These homes can accommodate up to two children who are siblings.

In October 2022, the refurbishment of two other larger properties was completed, both of which can take up to 4 children at any time and there is an emergency provision attached to one of the homes.

A care agency has been supporting a child in two of our homes and this is going well. We are currently recruiting Children's Residential Workers for the homes. As the new team members come on board, we have a plan in place on how we take over the care and support from the agency in the best way to support the children through the transition.



The management team have been working hard to develop all the documentation, processes and procedures necessary for the homes. Planning and arranging the training and development for the service has also been completed. Apart from the legal requirements needed, a vast amount of work has also gone in to preparing the houses to look and feel like homes, in preparation for children to move in.

As part of this new service, our staff and managers have been busy building new relationships with local communities and local service providers.

A model of care has been identified to support the children and young people who will be living in the homes.

Arosfa NQS 3.1

Arosfa Disability Service provides long term and short term residential breaks for young people with profound disabilities. It gives young people an opportunity to spend time away from home, preparing them for future independent living and an opportunity to socialise outside of school with friends in a new environment. It provides an opportunity for parents and carers to also have a break and spend quality time with other family members and friends. This provision for some families is crucial in keeping families together.

This year, the staff and young people it supports have had lots of fun celebrating its 10th Anniversary.





2023/4 PRIORITIES

- 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 are able to reach their full potential.
- Deliver a programme of registered Children’s Homes to help avoid the need for residential placements outside Flintshire.
- Continue to develop the Special Guardianship service to reduce the need to for children and young people to remain looked after.
- Develop childcare expansion and seamless childcare provision across programs.
- Develop the priorities set out in the Early Years Strategy.

Older People

DART NQS 2.2

The Discharge Assessment and Recovery Team (DART) is a new team that has been set up by Flintshire Social Services to support citizens in hospital and beyond. It aims to improve outcomes for Flintshire citizens when they have been admitted into hospital and to support them when they leave. The team works closely with colleagues in local acute hospitals and associated community hospitals across the region, and with the Continuing Health Care Team.

DART's work starts when citizens are admitted into hospital. The team keep in contact with hospital staff about a person's progress, to find out what matters to them and act promptly if help is needed when they are ready to move on from the acute setting.

DART is the social care link between hospital and the community, and we aim to make the move as smooth as possible for people. Our team of Social Workers, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists and Technical Instructors work together with health colleagues, using a Welsh Government guidance framework to determine the best pathway of care for citizens and to move people towards independence.

Some people can go home from hospital without any extra help, some need more support at home to remain as independent as possible, and others need a short spell of residential care in a care home before they can go home. This residential care can be provided either in an independent care home or in one of the local authority's care homes, including our purpose built "step-down" resource, Elm. The framework also makes provision for people where more complex care is needed, including long-term care home placements.

"Whatever the level of social care need, DART makes arrangements to support people who are ready to leave hospital so that they can be as independent as possible, as soon as possible. We work closely with other teams in health, social care and across the council and we are looking forward to growing these relationships as DART develops."

Micro-Care NQS 1.1

The Micro-Care project was started as a pilot in 2019 as a way of strengthening the social care market and diversify the career options within social care, by supporting people to set-up as their own micro-enterprise within the sector. Since then, the project has continued to grow with an additional 9 enterprises setup in Flintshire this year, taking the current number delivering care to 31.

A major achievement for the project this year has been the council directly purchasing services from a Micro-Carer for the first time. To be able to be commissioned, Micro-Carers have to pass a "Quality Framework" which requires them to demonstrate the resources and ability to deliver safe social care services on behalf of the council. The ability to commission directly with Micro-Carers provides us with additional resource to use in addressing gaps in social care support.



The project has also expanded into supporting the “Warm Welcome” offer by Flintshire County Council. 4 Micro-Carers supported the various hubs to ensure that people were able to keep warm during the cost of living crisis, but also reduce isolation and have a chance to take part in well-being activities;

The team has also supported a Micro-Care enterprise to set-up as a day service for older people with dementia. The day service provides an active model of day service, focusing on meaningful activity aimed at promoting and sustaining independence, while at the same time supporting people to do the things they enjoy.

“My Mother has dementia and having this workshop twice a week helps us greatly and allows us some time to ourselves. She enjoys the day and all the activities N provides helps my mother with her wellbeing. I hope in the future she’ll be able to attend more which will of course help all of us”.

We actively engage with Micro-Care providers on a one-to-one basis, along with holding network meetings.

We will continue to strengthen our links with other organisations, public sector agencies, and third sector to promote the project, while also increasing our advertising reach both in the community and digitally.

To find out more about becoming a Micro-Carer or to look for a service visit <https://www.careatflintshire.co.uk/en/Micro-care/Welcome.aspx> or email micro-care@flintshire.gov.uk



Dementia NQS 3.2

The [Flintshire Dementia Strategy](#) was developed in 2021 in consultation with people living with dementia, their carers and those who work with them. The priorities being implemented are to:

- Help people to reduce or delay the risk of developing dementia and to recognise the symptoms of dementia.
- Improve the support and information provided to people before, during and after an assessment and diagnosis of dementia.
- Provide person-centred care and support services to help people with dementia to live well, at home or close to home.
- Provide support to carers and families, including advice, respite, and to help build strong support networks with other people with lived experience.
- Develop dementia friendly and supportive communities for people living with dementia and their carers and families.
- Enable people with lived experience of dementia to have a leading voice in the development of supportive services and communities.

Health and Social Care services provide person-centred support to people living with dementia in their own homes and in residential and extra care settings.



The North East Wales Carers Information Service ([NEWCIS](#)) have continued to work closely with Social Services and Health Board teams to provide a key role in supporting people in the community.

Dementia friendly community groups and memory cafes provide a friendly and supportive environment for people living with dementia and their carers to meet locally to enjoy social interaction, share information and experiences. This helps to build strong friendships and support networks.



At the start of January 2023, a new Dementia Centre opened at Greenfield Enterprise Centre under the management of third sector service partner Carers Trust. Social Services and Health colleagues are working closely with Carers Trust to provide initial support and information for people recently diagnosed with dementia and their carers. This is contributing to the implementation of a regional Memory Assessment Service in North Wales, aligned to the new All Wales Standards for Dementia Pathways of Care.

The Flintshire Dementia Strategy priorities will be reviewed and updated collaboratively in 2023 to ensure that people living with dementia, and their carers and families continue to receive the information and support that is most important to them.

[World Health Organisation's Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities](#)

[NQS 2.2](#)

The Welsh Government (WG) launched a 'Strategy for an Ageing Society' in October 2021. This strategy provides a vision for Wales to be an age friendly nation - supporting people of all ages to live and age well and to participate in their community.

To support this vision, WG has invited all local authorities to apply for membership of the WHO global network. Flintshire County Council's Cabinet, on Thursday, 23 February 2023, approved a proposal for the Council to submit an application for membership of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities.

In Flintshire, there is a long-standing commitment to developing age-friendly communities, demonstrated when the Council signed the Dublin Declaration in 2014, underlining its commitment for Flintshire to become age-friendly. The Flintshire Public Services Board prioritised the continued development of age-friendly public services and communities in the [Well-being Plan for Flintshire](#). This will involve making positive changes to the following aspects of community life, which the WHO define as 'Age-Friendly Domains':

- Outdoor space and public buildings
- Transport
- Housing
- Social participation
- Respect and social inclusion
- Civic participation and employment
- Communication and information
- Community support and health services.

Flintshire's Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Well-being, Councillor Christine Jones, said:

"I fully support this proposal as membership will provide a number of positive impacts and will show our commitment to supporting, valuing and celebrating

our ageing population. It will also provide an opportunity to share best practice ideas and resources with other network members.”

“Significant progress has been made over a number of years to build age and dementia friendly communities in Flintshire. This includes the establishment of community cafes, supporting community action groups, improving information sharing, and developing intergenerational projects and digital inclusion initiatives.”

This work will provide opportunities for older people to have a voice in shaping age-friendly communities and services.

Marleyfield House NQS 2.1

The 32 bed expansion and refurbishment works at Marleyfield House in Buckley was formally opened this year by MS for Health and Social Care, Eluned Morgan. The opening was an opportunity for residents as well as staff, past and present, to celebrate the excellent care that the facility enables care staff to deliver. The event recognised how valuing the well-being of individuals and providing a high quality building for people to live and recover in following a period in hospital can have a significant impact and make a substantial difference to the well-being and life satisfaction of people who come to stay there.

Marleyfield House resident with a therapy dog that visits on every 2 weeks. The residents enjoy these visit and looking forward to them.



“It was a real pleasure to welcome the Minister and to be able to show her our fabulous facility in Buckley. It was also fantastic to meet many of the residents who have made Marleyfield their home. This reaffirms the Council’s commitment to investing money in critical services. I am proud that Flintshire County Council continues to support our most vulnerable residents. “

Flintshire County Council’s Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Wellbeing, Councillor Christine Jones

“...this redevelopment shows the commitment to improving services, helping people leave hospital and help vulnerable people to live independently whilst still being supported.” Eluned Morgan MS

Croes Atti Newydd NQS 3.1



Work has been continuing at pace to design a new residential care home in Flint. The site that previously housed the community hospital on Cornist Road has been identified as a site in which a 56 bedroom residential care home can be situated. This facility will replace the current facility Croes Atti on Prince of Wales Avenue with a modernised, state of the art facility that will take our learning and experience of the expansion at Marleyfield in Buckley and develop this even further to provide exceptional services to older people in Flint and the surrounding areas. Similar to Marleyfield, This development will be operated in partnership with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. The project is currently scheduled to begin on site in September 2023 and will be completed and opened in the spring of 2025.

2023/4 PRIORITIES

- Provide additional placements for step down care within our in-house provision (Croes Atti Newydd).
- Continue to grow the Micro-care market, including access to commissioned care packages.
- Continue to grow our in-house homecare service to support more people to live at home, utilising a rolling scheme of recruitment.
- Establish a Dementia Strategy Implementation Group, to include representation from people with lived experience.
- To award a contract for adults advocacy, joint with WCBC.

General Health Needs, Physical Impairment and Sensory Loss

Accommodation to support people with physical disabilities. NQS 4.1

Properties at Larchway, Sandycroft and Glan y Morfa, Connah's Quay have been refurbished to support people with physical disabilities. We now have three units available to support people in urgent need of accommodation. Recent need has included young people, a family with a disabled child, people with physical disabilities and those recovering from substance misuse. These properties provide a better alternative to hotel accommodation and reduces the spend in housing on such facilities.

Community Support Initiative NQS 3.1

The Community Support Initiative is a group of organisations that have been operating in Flintshire since 2018. This year has been an opportunity to begin to understand how the needs of people living with a disability have changed over recent years, whilst continuing to deliver services. This has included some changes to the way that services have been delivered in order to meet the immediate needs of individuals, taking into account the current economic challenges that are affecting the local population. The year going forward will be an opportunity to look in earnest at how we change the delivery of services to meet the current and medium term needs of individuals living with a disability in the community and ensure that Flintshire are able to deliver meaningful and beneficial services to those living with a disability.

Community Equipment NQS 3.1

Flintshire are the host authority and lead partner of the North Wales Community Equipment Service.

The provision of community equipment is essential for promoting the independence of people with disabilities of all ages. Over the past 12 months, the service has received 21,000 referrals from over 500 referrers.

The service has responded to 100% of its requests for urgent equipment within the 1 day national response standard from April to September 2022 and 100% of its requests within the 7 day response standard.

The percentage of equipment reused is 94% (against a standard of 70%) for April to June 2022, and 93% for June to September 2022.

2023/4 PRIORITIES

- Direct payments: lead on direct payments initiatives at a National Level.
- Support people with disabilities to find and remain in paid employment.
- Signposting individuals to third sector and social prescribing.
- Promote referrals to the exercise referrals scheme.
- Develop short-term emergency accommodation for people who find themselves homeless or in need of accommodation urgently.
- Explore joint commissioning of community disability and sensory loss services.

Learning Disabilities

Learning Disability Services with Hft NQS 3.1

The partnership with Hft for the delivery of services for people with learning disabilities has continued evolve and innovate throughout the 2022/23 year. Hft provide services for people with learning disabilities and mental health support needs on behalf of the Council, delivered both at the Hwb Cyfle day centre, and a variety of other service settings that deliver a diverse range of day and work opportunities.

As part of the evolution within learning disability services and partnership working, Hft assumed the operational management of the Growing Places service in July 2022. Growing Places was previously a mental health work opportunities service but now provides support to individuals with Learning Disabilities and mental health support needs. The transition ran very smoothly, and the service has formed a close partnership with the Tri Ffordd horticultural day service.

Project search NQS 2.2

Project SEARCH is a supported employment programme which supports young people with learning disabilities into employment. When Covid-19 prevented the interns from going out into their work placements, they decided to use their time in a creative way and set to work thinking about how they could help people understand neurodiversity. The interns developed a training package to raise awareness of neurodiversity in the workplace, and the benefits to businesses when they work with people from neurodiverse communities.

On 17th May, two training sessions were delivered to staff from Social Services. The session covered learning disabilities, autism and dyspraxia. The feedback from the session has been overwhelmingly positive, and the interns' lived experience really brought the subject to life.

Project Search is the first internship programme for adults over 25 with learning disabilities in the UK and is being operated in partnership with Clwyd Alyn Housing Association as the host business. 7 interns are currently participating in the over 25's programme and are currently undertaking their first of three work placements ('rotations') which commenced in September.



Interns and staff celebrating the graduation of their 2022 cohort of interns who have successfully completed the life-changing Project SEARCH transition to work programme in Flintshire.

Hft have also employed a former Project SEARCH intern as a Supported Employment Advocate who will assist with marketing, linking in with employers and collating stakeholder feedback.

Maes Gwern NQS 3.2

There are plans to develop a new modern building in the Maes Gwern area of Mold to provide an integrated service hub that will involve relocating the current Tri Ffordd and Growing Places work service opportunities. The new facility will provide additional capacity to support more individuals than is possible at the current service locations and offers the scope to also provide services at the site to individuals with complex autism support needs.

The design concept for the new facility has been progressing since autumn 2022 and the programme remains on schedule with construction planned to commence in the summer of 2023.



[Caffi Dai](#) [NQS 2.2](#)

The café operating from Rowley's Drive, Shotton was renamed Caffi Dai and following an extensive refurbishment was relaunched in the summer of 2022. The relaunch has proved very successful and the sales have increased to where they were prior to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

[Supported Living](#) [NQS 1.1](#)

The Learning Disability Social Work team have been refocusing and refreshing their use of person-centred practice. Further training and input from people using the service will improve their creative skills in ensuring people with learning disabilities take part in interactions with us in a meaningful way. For some people, paper based systems of assessments and reviews are not the most appropriate, so we will be encouraging people to participate in ways which they can maximise their voice, so they might be supported to put together videos, live performance, music and any other way people choose to express themselves.

[Theatr Seren](#) [NQS 1.1](#)

Theatr Seren is a local performing arts group created by a group of people with learning disabilities, with help from their Social Worker and Hft.

In October 2022, through discussions with our service users and staff, it became apparent that logistics, cost and availability were proving a barrier for people who clearly had an interest and passion in performing arts. Steps were taken therefore to set up a performing arts group locally. A project leader was found, who has decades of experience working within

this sector, along with a venue for the group. The aim of the group is to support our service users who otherwise would not have access to a group that would give them the opportunity to be involved in something bespoke and that mattered to them.

The collaborative work has been a massive success and the group is now a long-term independent group that has formed its own company called Theatr Seren. Currently there are fourteen adults with learning disabilities involved in Theatr Seren.

The group have learnt various theatre techniques including fight scenes for their slapstick scenes in 'Alys' and have worked on developing the physicalisation of their characters so that they are also acting with their bodies and not just the words.

The group have fun playing and enjoying improvisation work that has opened up and celebrated the group's unique creativity. Theatr Seren ended 2022 with a performance of Alice in Wonderland which was well received and attended by over 60 people.

'It has helped me to build my confidence and meeting new people is fun and getting to know them as part of the team is good.'



'I enjoy the dancing, making new friends and also making my costume as well as having a good time as a group.'

Together Learning Disability Programme: Seamless Services for people with learning disabilities NQS 3.1

The Together Learning Disability Programme is a partnership involving the social care departments of the six local authorities in North Wales and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. The project aims to co-produce services with people with learning disabilities and their parents and carers. The scheme was shortlisted for a 2022 Social Services Accolade Award.

The project aims to support people and organisations to ensure that people with learning disabilities are able to live a great life. In 2022, [The Life After School: the onward journey of young people with learning disabilities in North Wales research report and good practice guide](#) was launched in supporting people with a learning disability to have the same chances as everyone else, especially after they leave School.

2023/4 PRIORITIES

- Continue to expand the Progression Model across services to people with physical disabilities and other service areas promoting people's independence skills to support them to achieve their personal outcomes.
- 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.
- Develop the relocation of the Tri Ffordd supported employment project to Maes Gwern in Mold, which will also incorporate other service offerings (mental health & autism support services) at an integrated service hub.
- Continue to expand the service offering for employment opportunities for disabled people.

Autism



We have throughout the year continued to meet our duties under the Welsh Government Code of Practice on the delivery of Autism Services, and to host the North Wales Integrated Autism Service (NWIAS) on behalf of the region and health Board.

NQS 3.1

The Code of Practice sets out what autistic people, their parents and carers can expect from public services in Wales. Autistic people were extensively involved in the consultation process and continue to shape the services we develop. Welsh Government have also published Guidance to accompany the code and both can be found here:

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdfversions/2021/3/3/1616575869/code-practicedelivery-autism-services-impact-assessment>.

In response to the Code of Practice, Flintshire have developed a Local Implementation plan and our staff have been dedicated and creative in their efforts to raise awareness, share information and provide support for autistic individuals, their families and support networks.



Our Information events have been well attended and offered an invaluable opportunity to meet new friends and share information. The NWIAS Team have also attended two large county shows, the Denbigh and Flint Show and the Meirioneth County Show, which was well attended, being the first one for three years. The NWIAS information stand was very busy.

Many people took the opportunity to speak to link workers there to offer help and advice on Autism.

The year began with a view to longer term planning to promote the team and the support we can give to the autistic community who do not already receive services. We had previously delivered all services online due to the challenges of COVID-19 and have now gone back out to community working directly with the public. We also run a lively Facebook page that advertises all events throughout the year.

We planned and delivered three major events in the Ramada Hotel in Wrexham, The Celtic Royal Hotel in Caernarfon and the Imperial Hotel in Llandudno. A range of providers attended these events to support autistic individuals and more than 120 members of the public attended each event.

Our team continues to hold coffee mornings and information hubs throughout North Wales in all six counties to support Autistic Individuals and their families. We are able to direct people to the correct services for financial advocacy, employment training skills, voluntary work opportunities and other such activities. We also work with adults on skills for empowerment such as dealing with anxiety, sleep, problem solving, forming routines and coping strategies, amongst others.

We have also run five Understanding Autism groups during the year to support adults who have been newly diagnosed to equip with coping skills and a greater understanding of what autism means to each person individually. In June 2022, we ran a successful and well attended Teenlife Group for parents supporting teenage children and this was well received.

We have also delivered training to external bodies such as [Advocacy Services North East Wales](#) (ASNEW) on effective communication with autistic individuals.

Flintshire's [Autism website pages](#) aim to bring together a range of information into one place to signpost people to the right information and support. The team is working hard to continue to update this as we develop and learn more about local support. There are links to the website [Autism Wales](#). This is one of the resources which helps the National Autism Team achieve their aim to improve the lives of autistic people in Wales, and offers a wide range of sources of information, and free downloadable resources that have been developed with autistic people, parents/carers, and professionals from across Wales.



2023/4 PRIORITIES

- Increase skills around autism with respect to advocacy.

- Autism training to continue to be offered to Advocacy providers - contracts in future will detail expectations around skills and knowledge in supporting autistic people.
- Develop integrated work opportunities services for individuals with autism, learning disabilities and mental health support needs.

Mental Health

Flintshire's Mental Health Service use the 'recovery approach' to support people to improve their well-being by living well independently, to join in with social and leisure activities, be employed and take part in volunteering or education.

Well-being Programme NQS 4.2

Flintshire's Learning for Recovery and Well-being Programme is a multi-agency developed initiative which promotes learning and social activities that are accessible locally to anyone in Flintshire struggling with their mental health and/or their carers.



It is aimed to improve an individual's well-being through meeting new friends, developing confidence and learning new skills.



Each year, Flintshire County Council's mental health support services work together to provide lunch on Christmas Day for individuals who find themselves on their own on what can be one of the most difficult and lonely times of the year. For many years, we have been touched by the generosity of the local communities who have helped out in some way and this year was no exception. Mold and Buckley round table advertised that they would be providing lunch on Christmas Day in Mold and Buckley and kindly agreed to help us out. Mental Health Support Services staff supported over 10 individuals on the day to attend venues in Mold and Buckley where they were provided with a fantastic 3 course meal and a gift to take home. There were lots of smiles and laughter during the day and a brilliant time enjoyed by all.

[Next Steps](#) [NQS 3.1](#)

Next Steps provides support and guidance for people to enter education, training, voluntary work and employment. They can also support people to stay in work if already employed. The Next Steps team works closely with other organisations such as Job Centre Plus, Careers Wales, FLVC's volunteer centre and local universities and colleges.

Next Steps are now running their advanced volunteering programme as a step up from the one they ran last year. The course ran from May – July 2022. All 7 learners completed the course and were awarded their certificate. This year, they were awarded a Level 1 Certificate in Personal & Social Education.

Next Steps are also currently developing a pilot employability programme with HFT and Deeside Business Forum. This aims to provide employment for individuals within the Deeside Industrial Park. As part of this programme, Next Steps have developed their volunteering course to include employability skills and the new course will start in April 2023. There are currently 9 individuals interested in completing the course.

[Life Warriors](#) [NQS 1.1](#)

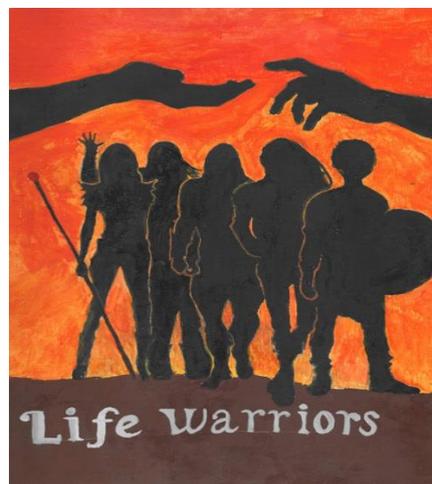
Life Warriors is a peer-led therapeutic support group for people with a diagnosis of, or people who identify with the characteristics of 'personality disorder' (PD). It was a priority for this year for The Life Warriors to become more peer run. This is now happening, with members

taking key roles within the group such as chair, vice-chair, time-keeper and event organiser. The group is also taking lead roles in welcoming new members with staff support, introducing them to the group. The group meets weekly online, and creates a space where people feel heard and supported by peers with lived experiences. The experience of feeling understood often for the first time has often been transformative for group members.

The group's impact is created by the open, honest, non-judgmental space it offers its members: It's just being able to talk honestly, about how you're actually feeling.

This was the first thing that's actually helped me...it's helped me because there are other people in my situation that understand. My confidence has grown tremendously".

"For me, I've not been aggressive since joining the group and that was quite a regular thing for me before. And because I've been more stable, I've been able to get a job. My whole frame of mind is just changed. I think there should be more of these groups...the community feel you get. It's such a simple thing and it's changed our lives"



[Social Links joining forces with Mind and Aura](#) [NQS 3.1](#)

The Mental Health team have joined up with MIND and Aura to deliver one of our drop-in services in the local library. Having this collaborative approach has not only enabled us to provide a more diverse range of activities, but also made it more accessible, and enables individuals to take advantage of the resources and groups already being held at the venue. Funding has also been granted to use the session as part of the warm hub scheme, enabling us to provide hot meals during the group.

[Intensive Support Team](#) [NQS 4.2](#)

The Intensive Support Team work with people who have many difficulties or who need higher levels of support to have the confidence to live safely in their homes. The team provides one-to-one support to people who may be at risk of losing their homes, who have never lived on their own before or who are returning to the community after a long time in hospital or some other care setting.

The team have recently worked alongside Flintshire County Council's Housing department, Social Services and Community Mental Health Team, to support an individual with a diagnosis

of ASD and ADHD, to move into supported living, with a view to him living independently in the near future when he has built on his skills and confidence:

“Everyone has been amazing helping me like this. The housing people were nice because they knew I needed to move. The Intensive Support Team came with me to the new house helped me move all my stuff into my new place and are talking to all the other people to sort things out (Clwyd Alyn, Children’s Social Services, and the Community Mental Health Team), because that is what they do and I am now very happy in my new place. Everyone is saying I will be living independently in no time and I believe them”.

Community Living Team NQS 2.2

Similarly within Community Living Team, support started with a lady in May 2022. Her identified goal was to be able to leave her house to go into her back garden, and to build confidence in doing this, as she was unable to even touch the handle on the door. Support was provided twice per week. In less than a year, she has been able to leave the home, go to shops and to her daughter’s for Christmas and she has a new goal of attending her daughter’s hen do and Wedding later this year, and also wants to start using public transport so she can get to her daughter’s independently.

The care coordinator in the Community Mental Health Team passed on their appreciation and compliments to the staff and was amazed at the progress that has been made and in this time frame.

The future of Growing Places NQS 2.1

Growing Places offers work activities for people with a mental health issue, referred by their Care Coordinator, and provides an opportunity to engage employment coaches with a background in horticulture. The work activities include a gardening service in the local community, garden furniture restoration and office skills. The aim of the project is to support and encourage people back into work routines which enables them to learn new skills and move on to employment or further training opportunities.

Our successful partnership with HFT has extended to enable HFT to manage Growing Places, extend their volunteer policy, and will also allow for combined use of horticultural resources with the Tri Ffordd project, and further opportunities when they move site to a new and exciting location in Mold.



2023/4 PRIORITIES

- 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.
- Working in partnership with the Community Mental Health Team and Social Services Mental Health Support Service to develop clear pathways for individuals needing access to Mental Health services, and a sustainable model for the future.
- Complete a review of Community Mental Health provision and define a model for the future.
- Work with Housing to fund a small team of people to support individuals with low level Mental health problems to improve their housing.
- Support workers in Mental Health Services to cope with increased demand alongside health.
- Develop support for people with Mental Health problems in their needs for accommodation.

Carers

Young carers ID card NQS 2.2



Engagement NQS 3.2

We have developed an interactive presentation for professionals in our local schools about Young Carers, and the support that they may need over and above that of their peers. The engagement with schools has not only enabled professionals to identify Young Carers in their classes, but also equipped them with tools and skills to be able to support them. Through this work, the number of referrals to the North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS) for further support for Young Carers has increased significantly. The referrals to NEWCIS enables the Young Carer to access a vast range of additional care and support. We are seeing a really positive response to the work we are doing with our schools here in Flintshire, with staff and pupils proactively seeking to support each other. For example, we have supported the Alun in Mold to set up a Young Carer's Group within the school and they are already starting to run drop-ins. Additionally, the Alun have voted for NEWCIS Young Carers to be their charity of the year and we are looking forward to working with them across the next 12 months to develop our links further.

Supporting Young Carers NQS 2.1

We have listened to our Young Carers and introduced new ways of helping them with their concerns about the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. This includes developing a quarterly "shop" (at no cost to the Young Carer) with a different theme each quarter. Through this initiative we have been able to provide school equipment, toiletries, fleece Oodles, blankets, hats and gloves, sanitary products, sun cream and gardening items including seeds which has enabled our Young Carers to grow their own herbs and vegetables. The shop has proved really popular with our groups.

Summer of Fun NQS 2.2

Our Young carers enjoyed a diverse range of activities as part of the Summer of Fun 2022 Scheme, at which they made lots of new friends and widened their support networks.

"Thank you so much for yesterday's zoo trip. B had the biggest smile on her face when she came through the door and hasn't stopped talking about it. She's made up she made some new friends on the trip too which she finds difficult. You're all amazing!!!! X"



“I worry she misses out, or gets held back, by my illness, especially since COVID and the lockdowns. It has been utterly wonderful and joyous to see her attending these events this summer, making new friends, getting to try new experiences I couldn't take her to and seeing her happiness and self-confidence grow! Truly grateful for these opportunities for her”

“Thank you very much for giving these opportunities to them as it allows a day away from the day-to-day stresses of caring for a family member. Xx

Developing the Direct Payment offer for Carers **NQS 3.2**

The Flintshire County Council Direct Payment Team have been working alongside NEWCIS to develop and expand the offer of Direct Payments for Carers in their own right. Direct Payment offers the recipient the opportunity to access the care and support that they need in a way that is personalised to their own needs. The number of people who are accessing support through a Direct Payment is increasing and we are seeing ever more imaginative and innovative ways that this support is being used.

Daffodils **NQS 2.2**

Daffodils is a 3rd sector organisation that provides recreational activities and planned trips for parent carers of children and young people with physical or mental disabilities and their families, to enjoy time together. Their activities seek to integrate families into the local community, create friendships and a sense of belonging, reduce isolation, offer peer support opportunities, and improve overall mental well-being, improving their quality of life.

Daffodils ran over 150 activities and events in the last year such leisure centre activities like swimming and tenpin bowling, well-being walks and lunches in the surrounding areas, art and craft workshops, soft play sessions and a weekly youth club. Across the Summer holidays, their largest event saw 60 families, (over 200 individuals) enjoy a trip to Greenwood Forest Park.

On a daily basis they provide face to face and telephone support for on a wide range of topics.

Carers Strategy Group **NQS 3.1**

The Flintshire Carers Strategy Group is a forum for organisations who represent Carers from both the Statutory and third sector. The group has a key role in helping to shape relevant local, regional and national strategies for the development of services and legislation for carers.

Work has been undertaken to redevelop, revitalise and refocus the group this year. Membership has been expanded to include more organisations. Representatives from Flintshire County Council Education Portfolio and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

are now among the active members, and we are seeing the positive impact of collaborating across organisations to drive improvements for carers.

2023/4 PRIORITIES

- 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.
- Work to develop new ways for Carers to access a break from their caring responsibilities.
- Cost of Living – A scheme of workshops, groups and resources aimed at supporting our carers through the cost-of-living crisis.
- Work to develop an international network of Carers and Carers Centres to communicate, share ideas, collaborate, provide peer support and respite opportunities.
- Begin the process of looking at the recommissioning of our carers services for 2025 onwards.

Safeguarding

NQS 4.1



The safety and well-being of children and adults is one of the Council's major priorities and we all have a responsibility to keep children and adults free from harm and report any concerns.

Safeguarding covers modern slavery, sexual abuse, financial abuse, neglect and radicalisation.

It is of paramount importance that we recognise signs of potential abuse and know how to make a report.

Your call can make a difference!

Explore the North Wales Regional Safeguarding Board Website

<https://www.northwalessafeguardingboard.wales/> *and find out more about safeguarding issues.*

National Safeguarding Week

In November 2022, National Safeguarding Week was launched. Working with partners from local councils, health, the emergency services, third sector and others, Safeguarding Boards throughout Wales we have been raising everyone's awareness of what safeguarding means and the many situations in which it can arise.

Safeguarding Week is a useful reminder that we all have our part to play in keeping people safe – safeguarding is everybody's business! It's important that we all know the signs of potential abuse and know how to report it.

Safeguarding Week 2022 is an opportunity for organisations to come together to raise awareness of important safeguarding issues. The theme this year is "Professional Curiosity".

The Hate Crime Awareness Week aimed to raise awareness and understanding of the impact that hate crime has on individual victims. It encourages victims and bystanders to report hate crime to help stop it and create a safer Wales. It also sends a message to perpetrators that their hate hurts everyone, including themselves, as they could be prosecuted for a crime which would have a detrimental effect on their lives.

Safeguarding of adults and children

The safeguarding team attends Multi-agency meetings on a weekly basis, as well as holding regular discussions with the police, to ensure that the correct agencies are in place to support these vulnerable individuals.

Liberty Protection Safeguards

Flintshire have responded to the UK consultation on proposed changes to the Mental Capacity Act 2005 Code of Practice and implementation, and, to the Welsh consultation on new regulations which will support the implementation of liberty protection safeguards (LPS). Both consultations closed on the 14 July 2022, and the responses to the consultations reviewed. Implementation has been delayed. In the meantime, the Council remains committed to protecting the rights of those who lack mental capacity under the current DoLS system, and will ensure that that these rights are protected ahead of any future implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards.

Corporate safeguarding e-learning package

We continue to promote the corporate safeguarding e-learning package to Social Services staff, as well as face to face and virtual training sessions. Virtual training is also offered to our third sector partners. The All-Wales e-learning package has been widely circulated and encouraged to our third sector partners also.

2023/4 PRIORITIES

- Promote the corporate e-learning package.
- Explore the recommissioning of advocacy services on a regional basis.

Section 5

a) Workforce

This year has been an incredibly busy year for us, as a team and we'd like to share with you some of our achievements, together with some of our planned activities for 2023/24.

During 2022/23 we delivered 407 training sessions, offering a total of 9,933 places to employees, carers, unpaid carers and volunteers working across Flintshire social care settings, including those in domiciliary care, independent and the voluntary sector. This was an increase of over 70 courses delivered compared to last year with almost treble the number of places being offered, reflecting the growth and movement across the sector.

Several new training courses were developed by our Training & Workforce Development officers which included 'Values' and 'Dignity at Work – creating a positive working environment'. These sessions are delivered as part of a rolling programme.

We developed and facilitated a series of Induction sessions for new staff joining Social Services which were supported by senior managers.

We piloted out of hours training for some of our shorter courses, offering training during evenings, ensuring that our carers, personal assistants and volunteers were able to access training outside of core hours and extending accessibility.

Supporting the Dementia Strategy, we delivered training around Dementia Awareness, Dementia Interpreters, Stages of Dementia, Jewels in Dementia and delivery of 8 in-house Dementia Friends sessions. We are pleased to now have 35 new Dementia Friends in place following these sessions.

Children's Residential staff were supported through the development of a bespoke training matrix and plan. Links to the Training Hub are now in place with licences available for staff to

continue their Continuous Personal Development (CPD) through numerous courses on offer, as well as accessing those available via Workforce Development Team (WDT).

We helped implement the national Autism Code of Practice through having ensured e-learning modules are available and accessible via Learning Pool and for those non-FCC staff via Autism Wales.

We improved links with the North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS) offering training and information on carers' needs and assessments.

We continued to arrange licences for our foster carers to access role specific training to enhance and support their roles.

We helped to increase the digital skills of our workforce, enabling them to learn using appropriate technology. Working in partnership with Digital Communities Wales, we offered training as well as promotion of the Flintshire Digital Hub.

In partnership with Communities For Work, we held 3 'Pathway to Social Care' programmes offering core training to individuals who are unemployed. The programme is designed to help provide delegates with the initial skills and training needed to become a care/support worker. At the end of each course, delegates are made aware of job opportunities in the social care sector, and several have been successfully employed following this programme over the last few years.

We worked with Children and Adults Social Services team managers to review and strengthen our 12-week Induction Programme for Newly Qualified Social Workers. This has recently been revised following feedback from those who attended a recent programme.

We supported our newly established Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) Service by working towards the national IAA framework requirements around qualifications and relevant training for front line workers.

We increased our numbers of student social workers across Adults and Children's services. In 2021, we offered 4 social work traineeships to Flintshire employees. In 2022, we were able to increase this offer to 10 traineeship places, so currently have 9 first year trainees (one withdrawal).

We offered 4 places to social work staff undertaking Pre-AMHP (Approved Mental Health Practitioner) qualification with 2 going ahead and 2 withdrawing. There are 3 staff undertaking the AMHP Award with Glyndwr University.

There are 8 social work staff currently completing the Practice Assessor Award.

We have offered places on both the Team Manager Development Programme and Aspirant Middle Manager Programme with staff currently undertaking both qualifications.

We continued 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.

Our assessment centre team continued to provide support to staff working in Adults services: Older People, Mental Health, Learning Disabilities, Residential and Domiciliary care to undertake the necessary Health & Social Care Core, Level 2 and 3 Practice qualifications. Many staff have been certificated for the Core since that start of the qualification and are due to continue to the Practice level 2 qualification.

Our assessor team worked closely with City & Guilds, WJEC, Qualifications Wales, keeping up with changes in qualifications and assessment methods. A new cohort of learners will be inducted in June 2023, with a start date of July where an additional 18 new learners will be taken on. A further cohort is planned later in the year.

The assessor team also supported learners to undertake the Dementia level 2 Award via a rolling programme.

Working relationships strengthened with Coleg Cambria who provide support for managers with the level 4/5 Professional Practice and Preparing for Leadership and Management qualifications.

We continued to work closely with the regional Quality Assessment Framework (QAF) group in partnership with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), reviewing the current training and educational support in place across North Wales, working collaboratively developing robust modern education and training packages and ensuring equitable access to education and training for our commissioned services.

We developed a bespoke training programme for our new senior social work colleagues which will run over the next 12 months as a rolling programme.

Our very positive working relationships with our independent and in-house services ensures that our residents receive the service they need at all times. An example of this was the commendable reaction of our staff to ensure continuation of services in the treacherous snowy conditions. Street Scene were also able to source 4X4 vehicles which enabled our staff to continue to provide Home care in those areas which were badly affected.



2023/4 PRIORITIES

- Support the implementation of the national safeguarding standards and development of a training programme which aligns to the competency groups within the national training framework.
- Further improve the digital skills of our workforce.
- Develop and Chair the North Wales Local Family Justice Board Training sub-group.
- Continue to support the We Care 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.
- Maintain a high standard of available training opportunities for our social care workforce, including carers and the independent sector.
- 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 roll out a programme of training on Positive Behaviour Techniques (RESPECT) across our Learning Disability Services via four in-house qualified and accredited staff. 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.
- Social Services continue to increase in-house provision across the various categories of care.

b) Our Financial Resources and How we Plan for the Future

Regional Integration Fund (RIF)

The Regional Integration Fund (RIF) replaced the previous Integrated Care Fund (ICF) revenue programme in April 2022. This 5-year Welsh Government funding programme also aligns closely with the regional transformation programmes for Community Services, Mental Health Services, Children and Young People, Learning Disabilities and the Integrated Autism Service.

The RIF programme will continue to support the delivery of integrated care projects and services, promoting close collaboration between Social Care, Health and Third Sector partners. The RIF programme is underpinned by the fundamental principles within the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act, and structured using the following six models of integrated care which aim to meet the needs of priority population groups:

- Place-based care – Prevention and community coordination.
- Place-based care – complex care closer to home.
- Promoting good emotional health and well-being.
- Preventing children entering care and supporting children to remain with their families.
- Home from hospital.
- Accommodation-based solutions.

The RIF revenue programme will be supported by two new Capital Funding programmes to invest in the delivery of new and improved integrated service buildings across Wales. These are the Housing With Care Fund for accommodation-based projects; and the Integration and Rebalancing Care Fund for integrated service hubs and rebalancing the care market.

Social Value

Flintshire County Council is committed to delivering greater social value through the work that it does, this means getting greater benefits to Flintshire communities as a result of the Council's spending and activities.

The social value delivered for the first six months of 2022-23 is £3.156m.

The actual social value delivered has returned significant social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes locally to Flintshire.

Some of the key highlights recorded for *April-September 2022* include:

- Approximately £2.8m of local spend.
- 200 apprenticeship training weeks completed.
- 190 trainee training weeks completed.
- 135 staff volunteering hours donated to support local communities.
- 1,474 hours donated to support young people into employment.

The Council has recently commissioned the redevelopment of the existing Croes Atti Care Home in Flint which includes commitments to social value. As part of the contract, the successful contractor will be required to meet a number of ambitious social value targets including the provision of local employment, skills and training opportunities, increased local spend, minimising environmental impact and wider support for local communities.

Another contract which will include requirements for social value is the planned day and work opportunities service in Mold, which is expected to replace the existing Tri Ffordd facility.

The proposed developments are subject to on-going approval, though it is anticipated they will collectively deliver substantial amounts of social value.

5c) Our Partnership Working, Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance and Accountability

Who we are

Elected Members represent the residents of Flintshire and play an important part in the governance of the Council. They agree the Council's priorities and approve policies to deliver its 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 elected by their peers 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 Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Because of the close working relationship with the Education and Youth Portfolio, the Council also holds joint Health and Social Care and Education and Youth 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, which have continued virtually every month. 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.

Our partnership working

Flintshire has a strong record of partnership working, and in Section 4 we describe some of the services and initiatives that we have developed with other bodies and agencies. At the heart of our collaborative culture is the Flintshire Public Services Board. Established in April 2016, this statutory body is made up of senior leaders from public and voluntary sector organisations. It aims to ensure that statutory and third sector partners work together to manage shared priorities through collaboration, and these priorities are set out in the Assessment of Well-being in Flintshire 2022.

The North Wales Regional Partnership Board was also established in 2016 and has a membership representing statutory bodies, third sector partners, carers and users of services.

The Board works to enhance the integration, efficiency and effectiveness of outcomes-focused care and support services in North Wales and has been successful in its bid for a new Welsh Government fund made available to transform health and social care services in Wales.

The Council and Health Board continue to work closely together, with strategic meetings between the Chief Executives and Leaders taking place bi-annually. Many joint operational meetings happen throughout the year, including a six-monthly special scrutiny meeting where health colleagues are invited to attend and take questions from elected members.

Relationships with the voluntary sector continue to be strengthened by our involvement with the Voluntary Sector Compact. This three-way partnership between the Council, Health Board and voluntary sector facilitates mutual understanding in respect of roles and responsibilities and enables opportunities for partnership working to be fully utilised. Membership comprises the Chief Officer and Chair of Flintshire Local Voluntary Council, other voluntary sector members, the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council, and a Senior Manager from the Health Board.



Section 6

Come and work for us



It's a breath of fresh air!

When was the last time you thought about how refreshingly different your day had been? When did you last have a 'YES!' moment? You know, the breakthrough moments that

remind you why you chose Social Work or Occupational Therapy in the first place. These moments happen here and they change lives for the better.

Flintshire is a breath of fresh air in so many ways. From the stunning coastline to the towns, villages and hamlets that make up this fantastic county, you'll find yourself working at the heart of communities, with the support of a totally different mindset of colleagues. We're passionate about the difference we make to people's lives. And we do it by being different. We say no to ordinary, expected and traditional methods. We say yes to going against the grain, to innovative thinking. And to courageous attitudes. This freedom of thinking connects us as a team and connects us to opportunities to learn and develop our skills.

Take a breath. Make a difference.

We'd Love to hear from you:

<https://a-breath-of-fresh-air.co.uk/#apply>

Section 7

Accessing Further Information and Key Documents

Social Care Legislation & Information Links:

National Outcomes Framework for people who need care and support and carers who need support

<https://www.gov.wales/social-services-national-outcomes-framework>

Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016

<https://socialcare.wales/resources-guidance/information-and-learning-hub/regulation-and-inspection/overview>

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

<https://socialcare.wales/resources-guidance/information-and-learning-hub/sswbact/overview>

Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015

<https://www.futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf>

North Wales Population Needs Assessment

<https://www.northwalescollaborative.wales/north-wales-population-assessment/>

North Wales Safeguarding Board

<https://www.northwalessafeguardingboard.wales/>

An-Assessment-of-Well-being-in-Flintshire-2022

<https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Council-Democracy/Well-being-assessment-2022/An-Assessment-of-Well-being-in-Flintshire-2022.pdf>

Flintshire County Council's Key Strategic Documents Links:

Council Plan 2018-23

<https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-and-Democracy/Council-Plan.aspx>

Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018-2023

<https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Social-Services/Corporate-Parenting-Strategy.pdf>

Digital Flintshire 2017 – 2022

<https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Council-Democracy/Digital-Strategy/Digital-Flintshire-2021-EN.pdf>

Glossary of Terms

Advocacy

The act of speaking on the behalf of or in support of another person.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB)

The largest health organisation in Wales, with a budget of £1.3 billion and a workforce of over 17,000 staff. Providing primary, community, mental health and acute hospital services for the population of North 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.

Community Services Transformation Programme

A Welsh Government funded programme of work between the council, Health Board and Third Sector Partners to ensure that health and social care services for older people (in the first instance) are well co-ordinated, achieve what matters to individuals and provided as close to home as possible.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

Provide a legal framework that protects people living in care homes or hospitals who are vulnerable because of mental disorder and who lack the mental capacity to make decisions about their own accommodation and care needs.

Direct Payments

Give users money directly to pay for their own care, rather than the traditional route of a Local Government Authority providing care for them.

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.

HFT

Formerly known as Home Farm Trust. Flintshire County Council have commissioned HFT to deliver day services and work opportunities for people with learning disabilities in the county.

Integrated Care Fund (ICF)

A Welsh Government fund that “aims to drive and enable integrated working between Social Services, Health, Housing, the third and independent sectors”.

Appendix 1

Contextual data and National Performance measures

Adult Social Services

The number of new contacts for adults received by statutory Social Services during the year **9,214**

The number of new contacts for adults received by statutory social services during the year where advice or assistance was provided **6,862**

(The above figures include **996** contacts to statutory social services which resulted in advice & assistance from our social prescribing service)

No of new assessments completed during the year **6,609**

Percentage of assessments that went on to have a care and support plan to meet their outcomes **11%**

On the last day of the year we were helping **1,079** people over the age of 65 to live at home and **487** Older people in care homes

% of people with a package of support who had their care plan reviewed within timescales **72%**

No of people who completed a package of reablement during the year **194**

No of adult carers who were identified and referred to our carers service **1,944**

No of people who commissioned their own services through a direct payment **559**

No of adult safeguarding reports received during the year **895**

% of those which progressed to Section 126 enquiries which were completed within 7 days **88%**

No of cases waiting to be allocated for a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards assessment in Flintshire **259**

Children's Services

No of contacts received by statutory services between 1st of April 2022 and 31st of March 2023 **12,495**

No of those contacts who were provided with advice or assistance **9,301**

Total no of families that received information and support through the Early Help Hub **1,383**

No of children on the Flintshire Child Protection Register on the 31st of March 2023 **216**

% of initial child protection conferences and review conferences carried out within timescales

Initial Conferences **90%**

Review Conferences **99%**

% of children added to the register that were re-registered within 12 months of deregistration **12%**

Average time that children remained on the register **9.84** months

No of children with a care and support plan where needs were being met through a direct payment as of the 31st of March 2023 **106**

No of children / young people who have left care during the year **63**

No of new assessments completed during the year **2,206**

% of those who went on to have a care and support plan **18%**

% of those who had needs which could be met by any of means **65%**

% of those who had no eligible needs **16%**

No of children who were looked after in Flintshire on the 31st of March 2023 **246**