

Theatr
Clwyd

impact & activity

Flintshire | Headline Report



📷 Backstage during *Robin Hood* (2022)



Theatr Clwyd is one of the UK's leading cultural organisations. We create acclaimed and award-winning shows that both bring significant audiences to our home in Flintshire, but also tour in Wales and beyond.

As equally important are our community and creative engagement programmes which, in **Arts & Health, Civic Responsibility** and **Social Care**, we are industry-leading and held as exemplars of good practice.

We take our responsibility to Flintshire incredibly seriously - our organisation is an **economic driver**, a source of **civic pride**, a **cultural resource**, an **educational hub** and much more. As such our organisation belongs to every person and every community in our county - from Flint and Connahs Quay, to Buckley and Shotton - without exception **we are for everyone**.

Our mission is to serve our communities in making the world a happier place, one moment at a time.

Liam Evans-Ford
Executive Director & Joint CEO

Kate Wasserberg
Artistic Director & Joint CEO



53,208 free tickets
to our communities*



2,600 children
having music lessons
in Flintshire each week



2 million people
have attended a Theatr
Clwyd event around the UK*



5,000+ tickets
sold for our Family Festival
at Wepre Park in 2022



39% from Flintshire
we serve local audience
and drive tourism



8,000+ kids
have a school visit to come
see our panto



LGBTQIA+
we run a specific group to
support young people



50+ new plays
by Welsh playwrights
since 2017



📷 Summer Hubs for at risk young people during the Covid pandemic (2020)

The creative passion, energy and commitment of Theatr Clwyd to engage and support children is refreshing and inspiring.

We have developed a strong partnership with Theatr Clwyd that centres on an inclusive and adaptive approach to working with the children and young people supported by Social Services. The ethos and approach is far from a traditional ‘service’ and ‘place’ based approach. The Theatre takes a wholly unique approach to their community based work, listening to what children and young people want, and co-producing activities with them. Activities take place in community settings as well as opening and handing over Theatre spaces to our children, often adapting them to ensure inclusive access to all. Our young people have been involved in creative writing, story-telling, acting, combat skills, fashion design, singing, song writing, learning and playing music instruments and most importantly we have seen children develop positive childhood memories based on laughter, friendship, and mutual support. The shared experience has created a ‘micro’ family where young people are supporting and encouraging each other.

The programmes run by the Theatre really break down barriers, reach out, engage and enable young people to contribute their ideas and skills.

They not only enhance the confidence and experience of children and young people but they are expanding their future aspirations. We have a young person, who is looked after, who is now firmly sighted on becoming a fashion designer.

In Social Services we have seen children develop and flourish through their involvement with the Theatre, sometimes the steps may seem small but we know they are huge leaps for the individual child.

One young person has been able to tell his social worker what is important to him and the support he feels he needs by using a puppet show. This was inspired by his involvement with the Theatre, before this he did not contribute to his assessment, but now has found a way to communicate his feelings and aspirations to help us support him and his development. The possibilities of supporting our community are vast and matched by the unique ambition and creativity of the Theatre to be inclusive of all parts of our local community.


Craig Macleod

Head of Social Services at Flintshire County Council



Theatr
Clwyd

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Social Care

We work with partner organisations including **Flintshire County Council Social Services** and **PACT** (Police And Community Together) to deliver a range of acclaimed projects that combine social care, civic pride, personal responsibility and health & wellbeing for the most disadvantaged in our society.

Key Takeaways

- **We work with social services on a referral basis** to provide holiday hubs for the most vulnerable young people in Flintshire - referrals have increased year-on-year.
- Over 130 young people now attend our **weekly sessions with bursaries**, learning new skills and gaining confidence and social skills. 40% receive transport bursaries.
- Our bespoke programme for young people about the major issue of consent has been seen by over **1,200** individuals. Our long-running Justice in a Day programme addresses anti-social behaviours and the consequences of crime - reaching over 1,400 people since 2022.



Consent

This transformative project uses dynamic interactive theatre to educate young individuals about consent.

Through practical scenarios and open discussions, it equips them with essential skills for respectful and effective communication.



Summer Hubs

We worked with children aged 7 to 16 - mostly from areas of social deprivation and low educational attainment - with emotional needs (incl. high anxiety), disabilities (incl. autism), or excluded from mainstream education, providing respite for carers and developing trust and communication and social skills



Justice In A Day

This vital initiative collaborates with the police and courts for proactive crime prevention.

Through early intervention programs, it educates young people on the consequences of criminal behavior, fostering understanding and deterring illegal activities.

Case Study: Summer Hubs



“The two-week summer hub would appear to activate some important psychological processes that are essential for development and healing.”

Dr Steve Noone (Bangor University)

Theatr Clwyd’s ‘Summer Hubs’ project worked with 53 vulnerable young people, aged 7 to 16 - predominantly from areas of high social deprivation and low educational attainment - with significant emotional needs (incl. high anxiety, depression), disabilities (incl. autism), or excluded from mainstream education. All the participants have social workers and have systemic experience of failure causing complex emotional, motivational and social scarring, and extremely challenging behavioural traits.

***“My daughter is very very very socially anxious.
It’s very hard to get her involved”***

Participant Parent

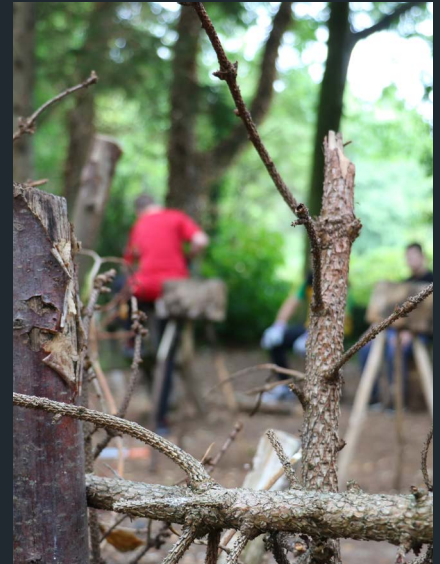
The two-week project – run alongside experienced and knowledgeable social workers from Flintshire County Council was expanded in 2023 due to an unprecedented number of referrals. Providing respite and bespoke care it recognises that mainstream education can struggle with a lack of capacity and specialists to help repair participant’s eroded trust in adults.

The project creates positive role models and provide focused emotional and social support in a safe environment where positive attainment and success can be used to be both motivating and emotionally transformational.

“It has made a massive difference to my daughters overall mental health”

Participant Parent

Run by 30 cross-discipline artists (including actors, dancers and musicians) from Theatr Clwyd at the semi-rural Northop Campus of Wrexham University the door-to-door service includes transport is provided by local taxi company and begins, daily, with communal breakfast. Many participants have an unstable home-life, so the two daily meals create stability, healthy-eating and social skills.



Our process begins with exploratory discussion - honestly sharing thoughts, feelings and emotions - discovering participant's values and interests. This exploratory phase is vital in guiding how sessions develop organically. Inclusive team-building games follow, creating a safe space, without division or competition - there are no elimination games, instead a focus on collaboration, eye-contact, and importantly laughter.

“It’s been a godsend for us. It gives us a much needed break!”

Participant Guardian



Emerging themes and personal values are then workshopped to ensure that the ‘creation outcome’ is wholly driven by the participant. This ownership is vital in building trust, focused engagement and also pride. The regular group sharing of ideas helps to develop inter-social skills and confidence. A broad palette of artforms are introduced - participants will try drama, dance, music and visual arts - as we search for the spark of interest and skill that all participants have, but may not know about or be confident enough to explore.

While outcomes included a short film, script writing and performance, they are not the primary objective - the process in creating positive moment of success, trust and inclusion is the driving force for enabling new skills, confidence, as well as, challengingly, disclosures.

The project is the most challenging Theatr Clwyd has ever run. Challenging behaviours, from tipping paint onto a carpet to physical and emotional aggression is a daily part of the process. However this boundary pushing behaviour, and the second chances that are given are vital in creating a trusting and safe environment for young people whose existence can be exclusionary and on the edge of society at times.

“We are grateful to the theatre for the role they have played in working with us to support our community”

Craig Macleod | Flintshire County Council Social Services

A comparable pre-pandemic project had an estimated Social Return On Investment of every £1 invested in the project returned approximately £8.80 of social value (Theatr Clwyd SROI study).





Music Education

Theatr Clwyd Music is the leading provider of music education in Flintshire delivering music experiences to **over 2,600 participants every week** both in primary and secondary schools. The establishment of this provision ensured that there would continue to be high-quality, affordable musical education in Flintshire when the service was at risk.

Key Takeaways

- **430 hours of music tuition each week** is delivered across Flintshire
- **Over 2,600 pupils** each week learn with us
- **40% of our learners are learning entirely for free** through the ambitious *First Experiences* programme
- The school receiving the most hours of weekly tuition is **Flint High**
- We are investing in local people, building a **sustainable, affordable** service.



Music Lessons

We employ **32 professional musicians** who teach in **95 schools in Flintshire**.

Music lessons enhance a child's cognitive skills, foster creativity and promote discipline. Learning an instrument improves academic performance and emotional well-being.



Ensembles

Over **100 young people** play in our musical ensembles cultivating teamwork, communication and hard work.

Ensembles foster social skills, boost self-esteem, and provide a sense of accomplishment, enriching a child's development.



Schools

Our music lessons are for everyone with prices from **as little as £4.70** a lesson.

Music lessons in schools contribute to a well-rounded education, promoting working together, self-expression, and emotional intelligence.



A hub, a comfort, a haven.

Austerity has bitten hard in the last decade; local authorities are now given less to deal with more; theatres have had to become places of refuge and inspiration for those who may never see a play there. Show young people that a theatre is theirs to play in and they will make sure it continues.

Flintshire and Clwyd have identified a need here, and done something about it in a celebratory and sustainable way.

Lockdown has been hard for children and for carers. A bit of help can go a long way. I'm particularly pleased at the plans for continuation.

Sam West

on the *Hearts From The Arts* programme

“Today [name redacted] asked when the sessions would end - she was worried because she said she wasn’t sure how she would cope without it. She said we’ve all become a family, I plan my week around the sessions, I don’t want them to end”

Arts From The Armchair | Participant

“Mum really enjoyed herself today - it was beautiful to see her singing and smiling - she doesn’t talk much now so today was great”

Arts From The Armchair | Carer



Health & Wellbeing



Engagement with the arts is crucial for holistic well-being. Whether through visual arts, music, or performance, it promotes emotional expression, reduces stress, fosters creativity, and enhances cognitive function, contributing significantly to mental and emotional health.

Key Takeaways

- **Pwer** is a long-running partnership with the Flintshire Youth Provision Team, a weekly session working with 19 of the most vulnerable young people in the county
- **NHS referral partnership** includes groups for people living with **Dementia or Alzheimer's** and sessions using dance and music for people living with Parkinson's.
- Our *Arts From The Armchair* programme brings people living with dementia and early on-set memory loss and their carers together to take part in fun workshops, away from a clinical setting to **stimulate cognitive muscles**.



Arts From The Armchair

One of our longest established NHS referral programmes for those with early onset memory loss. Uses drama, music, poetry, creative writing and games for cognitive maintenance and team building as well as supporting carers.



Dance For Parkinsons

A therapeutic dance session designed to improve core strength, posture and aid co-ordination.

“you know with Parkinson's our faces aren't always able to be so expressive, but it's been so lovely to see everyone smiling”



Pwr

A project that originated from approaching a small group of girls who were displaying anti-social behaviour on the streets of Mold. The project grew alongside Flintshire social workers, providing a safe space that has enabled child protection and lowered disruptive behaviours.





Life Long Learning

The arts are a vital tool in education and learning - both for enhancing the curriculum and providing an access-point to other subjects, but also for developing creativity and innovation skills that are vital drivers for the UK economy. Crucially they also help build life-skills - from communications to providing escapism to enable a healthy work/life balance.

Key Takeaways

- We run an **extensive work experience programme** for years 10 & 11. Highlights include workshops with our costume, lighting, marketing and development teams and curated sessions with BAD WOLF (makers of *Doctor Who*) to explore careers in TV & film.
- We created a **major Schools Creative Festival** with Flintshire primary schools marking Flintshire's celebrated Japanese Youth Exchange culminating in performances in Wepre Park.
- We partnered with Reaching Wider touring *Bright Sparks* (see below), an interactive workshop **working in 14 schools in areas of deprivation**, performing to over 650 pupils.



Schools Panto

Many young people's first experience of theatre. We keep our schools prices low to ensure that **over 8,000 young people** can have a Christmas treat each year. A recording of the show is also shared in Flintshire care homes and regional NHS centres & hospitals.



Family Arts Festival

Our annual family festival is heavily subsidised to bring high-quality arts experiences to children aged 0 - 12 across Flintshire. In 2022 the festival was held over two days in Wepre Park, selling **over 5,000 tickets** with the average cost of each ticket **just £2.74**.



Bright Sparks

A STEM driven, performance workshop, works in primary schools to develop and increase the aspirations of young people in socially and economically disadvantaged areas.

Experienced by **over 3,600 young people**.



📷 Immersive family show *The Snow Queen*



Being born and raised in Flintshire, Theatr Clwyd has always played a huge part in my life from an early age.

My very first experience of live theatre was watching the legendary pantomime there, then as a teenager I joined the Clwyd Youth Theatre and now, I love to take my daughter there too. Theatr Clwyd really is the hub of our community. Not only does it give us access to award winning and high class theatre productions but its also a warm, welcoming and safe place for everyone.

I feel so lucky to have this place on my doorstep and it will always have a huge place in my heart.

Sian Gibson

Actor & Co-Creator of *Car Share*





Cultural Impact

Theatr Clwyd is the **biggest** and **most renowned** producing theatre in Wales. The **third biggest** client of Arts Council of Wales, we frequently win and are nominated for major awards – this year was UK Theatre’s Best Family Production for *Famous Five The Musical* (previous awards include Olivier Award for best Comedy, UK Theatre Award for Best New Musical, and 2021 UK Theatre of the Year).

Key Takeaways

Since 2016 we have:

- Had **over 2 million people** attend a Theatr Clwyd Event
 - Hosted **38.6% of audiences from Flintshire** with attendees from every ward in the county from Holywell through to Buckley, from Mold to Saltney.
 - Given **53,208 tickets** away for free to communities
 - Hosted over **335,190 people** at an arts event for £10 or less
 - Produced **67** new plays
 - **50 new plays** by Welsh playwrights
 - Over **800,000 people** have watched a Theatr Clwyd production across the UK
-



The Great Gatsby

An immersive show base in Mold, built in Flintshire, that ran for 3 months in 2023 after its run in the West End.



Milky Peaks

A new musical set in North Wales, made in Flintshire that toured nationally in 2022.



Fleabag

A Welsh-language adaptation, made in Flintshire, that had opened at the National Eisteddfod and then toured Wales.



***“I can’t believe how much there
is here and it’s so affordable
and feels so safe”***

Parent about Wepre Park
Family Arts Festival



In The Community

Flintshire covers an area of 640 sq miles - our aim is to engage as much of that area as possible - from central Shotton to Holywell. We work extensively throughout our communities - constantly reflecting and reevaluating our practice of how, and crucially where, we work.

Key Takeaways

- Our new Flintshire Six project **works in communities with limited access to the arts**, or with specific areas of social deprivation - we are currently working in Flint, Connah's Quay, Shotton, Buckley, Holywell/Greenfields and Mold.
- We run a group for **young people from LGBTQ+ community** in Flintshire. Providing a safe space, building a supportive community and exploring the hidden histories of their community
- We regularly work with all of the **refugee families in Flintshire** as one of only two theatres in Wales to receive 'sanctuary status'.



Flintshire Six

Our creative engagement teams have embedded themselves in communities, to learn about and find opportunities to share the arts and culture. We've run over 90+ sessions in 12 months with activities including flugelhorn lessons for ex-service personnel and first experiences of theatre seeing panto.



Caffi Isa

For 2024 we've transferred some of our family shows away from Mold and into the community hub in Mynydd Isa for low-cost family (tickets £5 or less). We're hoping to share these shows with other communities in Flintshire as part of touring work around the county.



Shoebox Appeal

Every year we run a shoebox appeal in response to specific needs identified by our outreach teams over the preceding year. The boxes range from hygiene essentials to practical art kits for children aged 5 - 7. The boxes are then delivered (in costume) by Theatr Clwyd's team.





Economic Impact

Theatr Clwyd has a huge positive economic impact for Flintshire and North Wales - as a major employer, tourist attraction and educational partner. On completion of the redeveloped building annual revenue will increase to £10m with a minimum of an additional 60 permanent jobs created locally.

Key Takeaways

- **2016/17:** Annual turnover was **£4.82m** with FCC's funding representing 19% of income.
Today: Turnover is **£7.2m** with FCC's funding representing 17% of income.
- **2016/17:** We employed 60 staff
Today: We currently employ 140 locally based staff
- Our annual economic impact (pre-capital project) was calculated as **£9.6m**
- For every £1 FCC funds Theatr Clwyd we generate another **£5.58 in turnover**
For every £1 FCC funds we generate another **£7.44 within the local economy**



Tourism

With the completion of our major redevelopment we are primed to become a key gateway attraction into Flintshire and North Wales. We expect an increase of £4m per year in economic impact with potential for more alongside the continued artistic success of the venue.



Investment

The quality of our work on stage and in the community has attracted over £39m investment to the FCC owned facility. Theatr Clwyd has now achieved the highest private fundraising of any arts project in Wales, raising over £4.5m (prev. best £2m).



Employer

The organisation is a major employer with over 140 staff performing nearly 70 distinct roles, as well as employing 400+ freelance creatives and performers each year (each bringing economic benefits to Flintshire).

Theatr Clwyd

