

Conwy Social Care Annual Report 2021-2022

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**Sir Conwy, yr amgylchedd iawn i fod yn ddiogel,
yn iach ac yn annibynnol**

**Conwy County, the right environment to be safe,
healthy and independent**

Introduction

Welcome to Conwy's annual report for Social Services, which reflects on how we have performed during 2021-22 and highlights our priorities for 2022-23. The report demonstrates how we have promoted wellbeing and accounted for the delivery of wellbeing standards. We report on areas of new development, and revisit what we said we'd do in the last annual report, rather than trying to capture *all* areas of our work. The annual report is a requirement for every local authority in Wales and aligns to the eight national quality standards of wellbeing outcomes.



All people are equal partners who have voice, choice and control over their lives and are able to achieve what matters to them



Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled, well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision



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



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



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



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



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



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

What we said we'd do

Here we'll look back on the areas of work we set out to achieve during 2021-22, and provide an update on what actually happened.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) pilot

Last year we talked about the upcoming MASH pilot, where officers from Social Care, Health, and North Wales Police work together to safeguard adults and children in Conwy. The pilot was launched in June 2021, processing adult safeguarding reports only at first, with children's reports following in November.

We are already seeing the benefits of working in a multi-disciplinary way, with joint working offering:

- Better informed decision-making due to combined knowledge of each agency.
- A 'bigger picture' approach, ensuring that when reports for individuals at risk are received, all factors have been taken into consideration during screening process.
- Fewer delays, which would previously occur when decisions were made in isolation, or information was incomplete.
- More effective and efficient ways of working.
- Identification of repeat concerns which may previously have gone unnoticed for longer.

In the future we would like to increase our face to face co-location in the office, specifically allowing the North Wales Police Researcher to work alongside Local Authority colleagues to facilitate information-sharing. As we enter Phase Two of the pilot we hope to welcome other agencies, and plan to link in with Education, the Youth Justice Service and Health to establish what contributions they can make to the MASH.

Implementation of Mind of My Own app

In last year's report we told you about our plans to introduce the Mind of My Own app which allows children and young people to have their say and have their voices heard (in addition to other channels of communication). The app was launched in 2021 for children and young people who come into contact with our services. The apps can be used on a smartphone, tablet or PC/laptop. Children as young as three are able to use the apps and children and young people can either be supported to use them or continue on their own. Figures suggest that there is good usage of the app and we are already seeing improved outcomes, for example, improved engagement with children and young people who are looked after, increased communication channels to assess child safety, and more modern and preferred methods of engagement.

What were the challenges?

The main challenges have centred on promoting usage of the apps within a broad age group of children and young people, and ensuring that the apps support our work with children and families in strengthening the voice of the child. Since June 2021 however, we have seen a steady rise in the numbers of children and staff members who use the apps.



What's next?

We are planning training sessions which will commence shortly. To raise further awareness amongst staff, we have created an intranet page to find out more about Mind of My Own, complete with links for staff to book onto a training session. We have signed up to the Mind of My Own initiative for two years, and hope to evaluate its effectiveness in that time.

Centralisation of absence inputting by the Staffing Hub

Last time we told you about the implementation of the Staffing Hub as a response to the need to capture staff data, particularly staff absence rates, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The creation of the Staffing Hub was to ensure that we had sufficient cover to provide frontline services in the event of an outbreak. Over a year on since its implementation, the Staffing Hub has been adopted as 'business as usual' and has been integrated into the Workforce Business Support team workload. This team is now responsible for inputting all staff absences from across the whole service.

Accessing bank staff to provide additional support

The Covid-19 pandemic created an urgent and unforeseen shortage of care workers within care homes across North Wales. As part of a memorandum of understanding with BCUHB, it was agreed that BCUHB bank staff would be deployed to support care homes. Conwy acted as a lead local authority for North Wales in working with BCUHB to establish these arrangements.

What's next?

We are working towards the development of a regional social care agency which incorporates BCUHB bank staff. This would help to mitigate staff shortages in any future crisis situations, and provide resilience to the workforce. We are continuing to meet with our colleagues

in BCUHB to work on an options paper for the Regional Workforce Board, and this will be presented at an up-coming meeting of the Board.

Adopting new Welsh Government Code of Practice and Performance Management Framework

We previously told you about the new Welsh Government Code of Practice and Performance Management Framework. Both the new Code and Performance Framework have been implemented since April 2020. The framework includes a new set of statutory national performance metrics, replacing our previous indicators. We are required to report on these metrics on an annual basis to Welsh Government. In the last twelve months, we have done a lot of work to ensure that our client management system is able to capture and report on the information required. Our main areas of work have focused on building the required reports to extract the information and ensuring accuracy of our data. We have also liaised with Welsh Government where further clarification or guidance has been needed.

The new Performance Management Framework has now been embedded into our business processes as business as usual. We continue to run reports for the new metrics on a frequent basis to ensure data accuracy and monitor performance at a local level.

Children's Services Development Project

We have previously spoken about the purpose of the Children's Services Development Project. The aim is to implement changes to ensure a safe, effective and financially sustainable service. The project plan focuses on four themes:

- Workforce and practice
- Reducing the rising numbers of Looked After Children
- Capacity to de-escalate children with complex needs

- LAC placement sufficiency, quality, stability and support

Workforce and Practice

In the area of Workforce and Practice, there has been progress on a number of the work streams, including commencement of our Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub. We will focus on these areas separately later in the report. We have implemented the new Fostering Team model and the Connected Persons Team. The team are fully in place and are delivering the remodelled service. We expect the outcome of this service development to see fewer of the children who live with family or connected persons being subject to Care Orders.

Reducing the number of looked after children

In reducing the rising numbers of Looked After Children, we have developed a Reunification Policy. The policy highlights the importance of ensuring, where appropriate, a child being reunited with their family, and details where this should be considered. The policy has been produced and is in consultation due to a number of national policy changes.

Enhanced foster placement sufficiency is an authority priority. Regionally there is a reduction in the number of people expressing an interest in fostering. [New regional branding](#) was created by Foster Wales in September 2021 which included a TV campaign. We are awaiting the impact of this national campaign, whilst continuing our own marketing campaign.

Capacity to de-escalate children with complex needs

We have developed the Strengthening Families Service for Complex Needs and Edge of Care. The team is fully in place and delivering the remodelled service. We expect that more families will receive timely

interventions and therefore, strengthen their resilience and develop their own solutions.

We have implemented the Step Up/Step Down Therapeutic Support Model for Complex Needs. An external play therapist has also been recruited on a temporary basis until March 2022. There are a number of expected outcomes, such as the creation of a learning and development programme for social workers and carers, and upskilling social workers in using therapeutic approaches.



Looked After Children placement sufficiency, quality, stability and support

Despite initial delays to the project, the team continues to work with the most complex children and their families across Conwy and Denbighshire, with a view to preventing long-term accommodation, and keeping families together.

We are aiming to increase 'move on' accommodation options for care leavers. Analysis is currently being conducted to identify the number of places in the accommodation provision we have as an Authority that are: (a) available for 16 and 17 year olds (care leavers and those who present as being young homeless) and the number occupied by LAC (b) available for 18-25 year olds, and of those, how many are occupied by care leavers. A working document has been created for all young people aged 16-18 years, considering the current housing situation and future housing needs. This will be reviewed quarterly.

Single Person Accommodation Units

In our last report we touched upon the lack of accommodation for young people in university to live in during the holidays, as well as a lack of respite accommodation for 'When I am Ready' placements. The lack of appropriate accommodation can lead to bed and breakfast stays. We linked in with Cartrefi Conwy to be part of their Passive Housing Scheme which is made up of eight single-person accommodation units. The Personal Advisor Team trialled one unit.

The POD is now part of our accommodation options available to care leavers who require accommodation and support.

We currently have a young person in the pod that was previously living in an emergency B&B. Living in the B&B impacted upon their mental health due to the challenges of completing everyday tasks such as cooking. The young person loves the POD and feels that having somewhere to cook and live without disturbance (such as noise) has really helped improve

their mental health and wellbeing. The young person has had the ability to focus on engaging with services such as Occupational Therapy.



What are the challenges?

During the early phases of the project we faced challenges related to ensuring the correct licenses were in place as this is the first project of its kind undertaken within the Vulnerable People Service.

Due to the design of the POD, we had to incorporate some elements such as not drilling or making holes in the walls as this would compromise the efficiency and sustainability of the POD.

There has also been some balancing required in terms of demand and schedules. For example, the young person in the POD has been allocated a new flat for May 2022 with a view that we have a young person returning from university in June 2022.

What's next?

We will continue to review the Vulnerable People Accommodation Strategy. The service will continue to look at innovative ways to meet accommodation needs and work in collaboration with different organisations. For example, we are currently working on a collaborative project with Disability Services and North Wales Housing in Llanrwst. A one bedroom flat has been allocated to the Vulnerable People Service within the Llanrwst School disability project.

Relaunching the allotment service

In last year's report we told you about improvements to the allotment service which has been running for some time within the Vulnerable People Service. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and a series of lockdowns, the service had to halt group work, allowing the support workers to develop the service.

During this last year, the Intervention and Support Workers within the Vulnerable People Team have worked really hard to maintain the allotments and ensure that they offer a safe space for the individuals that use them. At times the allotments have had to be closed to individuals due to Covid-19. We have completed a risk assessment and reviewed this continuously alongside government guidance.

The allotments have recently reopened and we currently have four individuals visiting regularly and using the allotment to support their mental and physical wellbeing.

What are the challenges?

The biggest challenge has been the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions regarding face-to-face contact. This has prevented individuals from being able to attend their allotments and Vulnerable People staff have been maintaining them in the interim.

What's next?

We will continue to review our risk assessments in line with government guidance. The allotments will be fully reopened, and the Mental Wellness Team will start to use them as part of their therapeutic work with individuals.

We are looking forward to planning some healthy eating cooking sessions with individuals, using food grown at the allotments!



Director's Summary of Performance

Welcome to the Director's report, looking back on 2021/22. We are slowly and steadily emerging from a state of emergency planning and lifting our heads towards 2022/23 and an ambitious programme of work.

We have a range of challenges that have emerged over the last year and continue to affect us. Staffing is a pressure across all services areas, which mirrors the effects seen across the UK. There are considerable efforts focusing on recruitment and retention of the workforce, and I want to pay particular thanks to the Workforce Team who have worked hard to develop innovative ways of attracting people to key posts.

Some of the highlight areas in this report include the development of our Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub. This is a great example of the efficient use of resources, focused on co-location and partnership working. We are really seeing the benefits of timely and effective safeguarding decision-making at the point of access to services.

The Disability Service has by now a very well-deserved reputation for delivering quality services with a person-centred and holistic philosophy. We are branching this approach out to our Family Centres and really hope to see the benefit of dedicated Disability Family Workers going forwards.

The Community Wellbeing Service has been a lifeline to many individuals throughout the pandemic, and whilst there has been a mixed response to an online offer, we are pleased to be offering a full programme of face to face sessions.

We have received support for a number of Dementia Support Workers and they have been invaluable in targeting early help and support for those affected by Dementia. This complements the vast range of services we offer in the Older People's Community Teams.

Overall a successful year, and we are looking forward to developing our much-needed range of accommodation options. The supply of good quality placements, especially for children, is needed urgently and we are keen to develop our own suite of residential care provision.

I want to say a huge thank you to staff for their continued resilience and dedication to Social Care in Conwy. It really is testament to their positive attitude and willingness to think outside of the box that gives us such a good reputation.

Jenny

Jenny Williams
Strategic Director of Social Care and Education Services
Conwy County Borough Council



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How are people shaping our services?

Surveys and Consultations

We've continued to request feedback from people who receive care and support from us so that we can monitor our performance and improve services where needed. This year, due to our continued focus on responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, we didn't conduct the annual citizen survey, however, you will find examples of other surveys and consultations throughout this report.



Complaints and compliments about our services

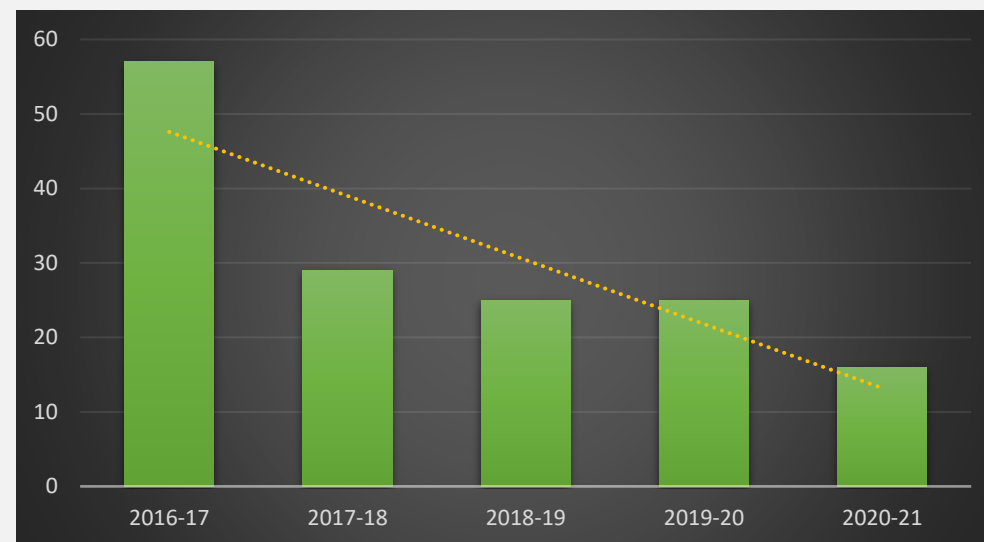
These provide us with direct feedback from people who receive our services, and their families. They highlight areas where we are doing well,

and also where we can improve our practices. Receiving a complaint means that we can:

- Acknowledge them quickly when we make mistakes
- Put them right and apologise where appropriate
- Ensure we learn lessons from complaints

Due to the way we report on complaints and compliments in social care, we are providing you with a summary of our performance from 2020-21.

In total we received 16 formal complaints into the Social Services Department during 2020-21. These are complaints (Stage 1 and Stage 2) received and concluded within the reporting year. The number represents a decrease on the previous year, and follows the trend of declining complaints over the last five years across both children's and adults' services.



It is likely that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has had an effect on the number of complaints made by individuals, as there has been a larger decrease in formal complaints than the average over the last three years.

As a department we always strive to resolve complaints at Stage 1 (local resolution), where it has not been possible to reach an agreement informally. During 2020-21, 14 out of the 16 complaints were resolved at Stage 1.

There is a financial impact of appointing independent investigators to complete the Stage 2 process of a complaint. During 2020-21 we spent £4,710, and this figure includes sums paid to complainants, either as agreed with the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales, or for other reasons relating to the complaints process.

In terms of timescales, all Stage 1 complaints were acknowledged within two working days (100% compliance) and 11 were completed within the 15 working day deadline (78.6% compliance). One out of the two Stage 2 complaints were completed within the 25 working day deadline (50% compliance).

69% of complaints were received by family members, and most were regarding a lack of communication from us, as well as issues around the care and support they received, and financial concerns. Further work will be undertaken in relation to classifying the themes in order to analyse trends over time, and examine any recurring themes going forward. Complaints from citizens provide us with valuable information on how to improve our services. Formal action plans are developed from recommendations from a Stage 2 Investigation, or from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. We receive many compliments on the services we deliver over the course of the year, and 2020-21 was no exception. Our adults' services received 139 compliments, 82 of these for the Older People Service. Children's services received 41, the majority for the Family Support & Intervention Service.

Can I just say the warmth and care the team have shown us has been overwhelming. In a time of when we have and still do have complete bewilderment, sadness and insecurity, we have been blown away with the sincerity and kindness to our family.



People

Quality Standard 1: All people are equal partners who have voice, choice and control over their lives and are able to achieve what matters to them

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (DoLS)

The DoLS team have maintained 'a business as usual' approach and assessments have continued during the pandemic. Both the Best Interest Assessors (BIA) and care homes adapted their practice to facilitate remote assessments when face-to-face meetings were not feasible.

There are also fundamental changes due to occur, with the transition from Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards to the new Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS), which was originally planned to take place in April 2022. LPS were introduced in the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 to replace the DoLS system, and have been designed to put the rights and wishes of those people at the centre of all decision-making on deprivation of liberty. Mainly due to the impact of the pandemic, the implementation date has been pushed back, and a twelve-week public consultation period will be launched later in the year.

However, we continue to prepare for the changes to the system and have utilised additional Welsh Government funding to:

- Purchase Codes of Practice for the Mental Capacity Act for Care Homes and Practitioners
- Extend the administration hours of the team to ensure our waiting list is up to date and the process is managed as effectively as possible

- Deliver a training programme for Children's and Adults' Social Workers to refresh and gain a solid understanding of Mental Capacity, which is going to be fundamental in applying the LPS going forward.
- Create additional hours of BIA time to manage the current DoLS assessments in readiness to transition to the new system.

What are the challenges?

The key challenges were maintaining DoLS authorisations during the pandemic, when care homes and other settings were stretched in their ability to deliver their core function. There were obviously logistic challenges in terms of engaging the care homes, creating the infrastructure and implementing the use of remote technology to undertake assessments.

Additionally, trying to plan and prepare for the transition to the LPS, with limited information regarding the level of change, the codes of practice or even a clear implementation date was a key challenge.

What's next?

The team will continue to manage the DoLS process and manage the backlog of cases to continue to prepare for the forthcoming transition to the LPS system and ensure that we respond as rapidly and effectively as possible once the new implementation programme has been laid out.

Supporting People with Disabilities

The Disability Service is a lifespan service which works with any person who has a long term disability which affects their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. The service is responsible for carrying out assessments under the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act as well as the delivery of direct care services through our in-house provision.

During 2021-2022 we have continued to work proactively and creatively with our partners in the independent and third sector to deliver high quality front line services to people eligible for managed care and support. This takes place in an environment where Covid-19 remains a significant

issue, and the availability of staff in the sector is impacted to the extent that we cannot always broker the care and support needed. In such cases we have worked with our partners and with the individuals and their families to ensure that they are safeguarded from harm. In relation to Occupational Therapy services we have commissioned over 96 manual handling assessments with an independent provider.

Alongside our day to day operational activities we have continued to develop our services. We have supported people to move into Ysgol Maelgwn Disability flats, and initial feedback is positive:

It's nice to have my own space, I like to spend time with the other people who live here too. I am able to do things for myself, I can do it in my own time, it's more relaxing, not as stressful as where I lived before.

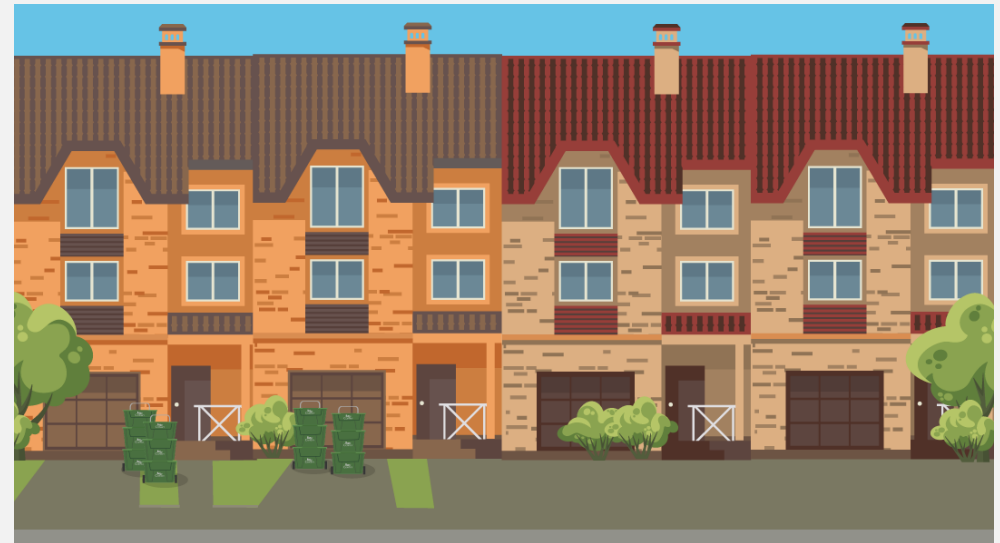
Service User

We are pleased she got a flat, we wanted to see her blossom and have that level of independence.

Parents

What's next?

Our accommodation planning strategic group are continuing to work with our Housing partners to source additional accommodation to deliver new supported living services. This year, in partnership with First Choice Housing, we will have delivered an additional single person scheme for an individual with very complex needs and challenging behaviour, who has been living in temporary accommodation. We are also working with Clwyd Alun Housing Association to deliver three flats for vulnerable people and disabled people in Llanrwst.



Local Integrated Family Team (LIFT)

The LIFT is an early intervention, multi-agency specialist team who use evidence-based practice to support families who are struggling with managing challenging and/or harmful behaviour at home. The aim of the LIFT is to support families:

- experiencing difficulties with managing challenging and harmful behaviour
- to understand the functions of the challenging behaviour
- to understand the triggers which instigate the potential behaviour
- to develop and help implement a positive behavioural or sensory plan
- to develop peer support networks and access training through collaborative sessions

A reduction in challenging behaviours is likely to enable children and young people to engage positively with peers and adults, supporting good

self-esteem and confidence, and reducing the likelihood of emotional health disorders.

The LIFT acts as a source of information for families about techniques, tools, activities, groups and organisations that may help them, as well as providing consultation, training and support to both families and other professionals.

During the period April to December 2021, the team dealt with a total of 184 referrals (highlighting the demand for support with managing challenging behaviour).

What were the challenges?

It was challenging embarking on a brand new project and team during the Covid-19 pandemic. It was difficult to connect fellow team members and service users. There were also challenges involved with the development of a multi-agency team with different organisational structures and working methods coming together as a cohesive unit.

There are also complexities around supporting families with managing challenging behaviour as, for the most part, this is not a stand-alone issue within the family. Families can also struggle with trauma, poverty, mental health problems and substance misuse. We adopt a 'no wrong door' approach which prevents families from being 'bounced' between services.

What's next?

The LIFT has made a strong start and the team will continue to build upon their progress to date, developing the service and making sure it is embedded in the social care infrastructure. Children and young people will be more able to manage social and emotional developmental milestones and achieve the educational attainment expected, in keeping with their age and ability.



Quality Standard 2: Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled, well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision

Supporting our Workforce

As part of our workforce recruitment and retention, Conwy is a member of the Bangor University MA in Social Work partnership. As part of this, each academic year we host 16 social work students. To enable this, we require our social workers to train to become Practice Educators. In the last eighteen months we have trained an additional ten social workers to act as Practice Educators. As a result, social work students have benefitted from an increased variety of placements on offer.



We are also proud to offer the Conwy Social Work Traineeship. This is available to employees to support them to become qualified social

workers via the BA in Social Work offered by the Open University. The scheme pays for all course fees and the trainee retains their substantive post and salary for the duration of their studies.

What are the challenges?

The most recent data available to us states that across Wales 9% of posts in Adult Services were reported as vacant, and 13% of posts in Children's Services are vacant. This indicates that workforce recruitment and retention is a national issue and not exclusive to any particular Local Authority. The same data suggests that a third of all vacant social work posts are filled by newly qualified social workers.

Ensuring that Looked After Children are supported in school

This year we asked schools in Conwy to take part in a survey to ensure that they have a designated officer for LAC and that staff at the settings have received training in various topics and strategies. Schools were able to declare how many of their children are in care from within and outside of the county, how many are adopted and how many are subject to a Special Guardianship Order. The results have provided a snapshot of how effectively we are able to support Looked After Children at school, and where there are gaps in staff training and development. We will continue to work with schools to ensure that Looked After Children receive any additional support they need, and that school staff have the knowledge and confidence to support the children in our care with the necessary understanding and awareness.

Monitoring the quality of our in-house services

In order to ensure that our in-house domiciliary services are the best they can be, we once again asked for feedback from the colleagues who work within those teams, as well as those who commission us or work alongside us in Social Services and the Health Board. We have received some very positive scores and comments, demonstrating the high quality

of the services we provide to vulnerable people in Conwy, and the strengths and dedication within our staff teams. Here is a flavour of the feedback we received.

Stakeholders and internal customers of our in-house disability domiciliary service were asked to rate the team on a series of elements. 100% of respondents stated that our staff are competent and able to meet the needs of the individuals we support. As a result, 100% also agreed that we enable those individuals to achieve their personal outcomes. We received high scores across the board and comments from respondents outline the value they place on the service.

They will adapt their support to meet the individuals' needs, offer a range of activities...to support those with the most challenging needs and always go above and beyond to assist in crisis situations. Their use of person-centred approaches as well as active support and positive behaviour is excellent.

The best interests of the service users are central to staff. This is demonstrated by their application of support for each individual they support.



Similar questions were asked about our Older People in-house domiciliary team to colleagues working within the Local Authority, Local Health Board and Housing Association. Again, all respondents agreed that our staff are competent and respond promptly and appropriately to concerns about individuals accessing the service. 100% stated that Reablement and End of Life services meet the needs of the individuals who use them.

The team are amazing in every way, in the rural communities they are an absolute lifeline. I think the skills, dedication and support this team provides to our citizens has been amazing through this pandemic.

The true skills and dedication of all these teams has shone through during this pandemic. I feel CCBC should be immensely proud.

We were given more average scores for how we provide or share information about our services in this area, so this is something we can look to improve in the coming months. Additional comments acknowledged that the teams have been stretched to their limits over the past few months, with demand often outstripping their capacity.

With Llys Elian our sole in-house residential setting for older people, we asked for feedback on the service it provides to people in Conwy who are living with dementia. We received responses from colleagues within the Authority and Local Health Board. 100% rated us good or very good when responding to queries in a timely and courteous manner and responding promptly and appropriately to concerns about individuals who access the service. All respondents agreed that long-term residential and respite care delivered at Llys Elian enables residents to meet their personal outcomes.

We asked what the setting does well and were told that:

The service provided is very personalised to the individual. Knowledge about dementia care and the interaction...with the service users within placement is good. We would benefit from having more placements like Llys Elian where we have access to respite, day care services and short-term/long-term placements.

Llys Elian have been a dream to work with..... They have an exceptional relationship with their residents, speaking Welsh when needed. The home is always very clean and welcoming.....and [they] strive for the best outcomes for their residents.

As well as approaching colleagues in other teams and organisations for their feedback, we asked our staff how they feel about the teams they work in and the service they provide.

Staff from the Disability Service were unanimous in feeling that they listen to the individuals they support and ensure they have rights and choices.

We give options and person-centred care. We adapt our approach so that the person we are supporting understands so they can make their own choices. We promote their independence and encourage them to learn how to support themselves.

93% agreed that they support individuals to live fulfilled lives, supporting their health and wellbeing. Some felt that Covid restrictions had placed limitations on face to face and group work, and looked forward to being able to increase the offer to individuals as the rules are relaxed.

100% of respondents felt that they support individuals to stay safe, and the additional comments demonstrate how much work goes into getting to know vulnerable individuals and enabling them to risk-assess their own

activities and increase their awareness of situations that may put them in danger.

We work closely with service users so we are aware of individual vulnerabilities. Once these have been identified we can work towards supporting them to gain further knowledge of how to stay safe in whichever area they require, e.g. prompting them to lock doors each evening, finding the safest route to access the local shop, using pedestrian crossings when walking to the bus, access to staff phone numbers, etc.

90% of staff from the Older People in-house domiciliary teams rated their service as good or excellent, with supporting comments demonstrating professionalism and pride in this specialist function. Some note the pressures of demand and staff shortages, but there is a definite theme of working together for the benefit of the service users.

I feel given current pressures and demands the team I work in have gone above and beyond in their roles to ensure high quality person-centred care is delivered.

100% of respondents felt that their contribution at work makes a difference to the individuals they support, and a great deal of job satisfaction is derived from supporting them to independence.

I feel I have made a difference to someone's day when I leave work. Gaining the person's trust so that they can share any problems or concerns with me is something that I try to do.

Staff based at Llys Elian were also asked about their experiences. 92% rated the setting good or excellent, and again, 100% felt that they make a difference to the residents' lives. Staff are proud to work at Llys Elian, with management who support them in their roles.

I work very hard to make sure I provide good high quality care



Youth Justice Service

The Youth Justice Service is a multi-agency partnership between Conwy and Denbighshire with a statutory responsibility for providing intervention and support for young people and their families. Our prevention team works at an early stage to prevent antisocial behaviour and entry into the criminal justice system.

In the past twelve months, there has been lots of activity within the service, including a HMI inspection which we talk about later in the report. For example, in recent weeks our young people have taken part in a pilot Junior Attendance Centre (JAC). The aim of the JAC is to focus on young people with interactive and educational sessions in topics that will support them with their future aspirations. Young people have taken part in

boxing and constructive leisure activities to promote physical and mental wellbeing.

We have delivered awareness sessions in schools on topics such as knife crime and exploitation. We have also responded to increased risk and need in target areas such as Colwyn Bay, working preventatively to reduce the anti-social activity which has been compounded by a return to post-pandemic normality.

We are now providing weekly football sessions with the local community and recently had over 20 young people attend. The sessions offer exercise and provide an interest that diverts individuals away from anti-social activity and criminality, providing purpose and meaning.



Prevention

Quality standard 3: 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

How we purchase and deliver services for older people.

In last year's report we informed you of the Older People's Transformation Project, to improve the delivery of domiciliary care services in Conwy. The purpose of this is to:

- Ensure that individuals receive a modernised, flexible, person-centred service.
- Align service delivery with changes in Social Care legislation and regulation
- Adapt to the recruitment and retention challenges encountered by the domiciliary care market.
- Ensure that professional services are working together in a consistent manner and joined up approach
- To future-proof the service for predicted increased demand

Since the last update, a number of consultation activities have taken place to inform what changes need to be made. These have included the following:

- We've looked at lessons from the models that other authorities have put in place, and learned how important it is to ensure that a gradual approach is taken when making change.

- We've undertaken a pilot of working in an outcome-focused way with 50 individuals who receive domiciliary care.
- We learned that Conwy's business processes didn't provide the flexibility needed for this new way of working and how important a consistent approach is.
- We've consulted with 450 individuals out of 700 currently receiving domiciliary care services via a survey. 95.2% of those who responded were satisfied or very satisfied with the care that they currently receive. Of those who were dissatisfied, a number of the reasons related to time and consistency, which has been incorporated in the flexibility of the new model, and in training.
- We held a 'meet the buyer' event for providers to explain the purpose of the changes that we're making. We proposed three different options for feedback, and held one-to-one meetings for further consultation.
- We've engaged with operational staff, practitioners, Community Resource Teams and all other teams that are part of the process, such as Quality Standards and Assurance, Sundry Debtors and Financial Assessment. We've included their feedback in the new model, whether it's a change to an IT system or finding a better solution to answer the types of queries that individuals phone us about most.
- We've also consulted with key managers at BCUHB and Members to gain their feedback on the changes we're making.

Please see the [Looking forward to 2022-23 and beyond section](#) for more details on the project as we move into the new financial year.

Gaining feedback from people who receive our services

As part of the project to modernise how we purchase and deliver services for older people, we asked for some feedback from people who receive care and support at home, and unpaid carers who are receiving care and

support. Respondents were receiving anything from 1 hour to 56 hours of direct support per week; this could be delivered by our in-house teams, or by external care agencies commissioned by us. Overall, feedback was extremely positive, with 94% of respondents stating that they were satisfied with the care and support they had been receiving. People appreciate consistency in care delivery, with the same team or individuals visiting at set times, and the impact is felt when carers change or call timings and duration are not as expected.

In terms of helping people to attain personal outcomes, 95% of respondents stated that the care and support they receive does help them to achieve what matters to them.

Without carers I would be bed bound

Respondents appreciate that the care support they receive helps them to remain in their own homes and enjoy a degree of independence which otherwise wouldn't be possible. Informal carers are able to take time out of their caring duties with the knowledge that their loved one is in good hands.

Having the care and support allows me the freedom to unwind and relax knowing my husband is being cared for.

Informal carer

We asked what people would change about the service if they could, and several themes emerged around:

- Support workers being able to spend more time on the call and not having to rush to the next client.
- More flexibility around the times and duration of calls.
- Seeing the same support workers on a consistent basis.
- The age, skills and experience of support workers in their role.

- Respite arrangements, as many informal carers would appreciate more time to themselves.

This engagement exercise has been extremely valuable and will help us to make decisions on how we deliver services in the future, as part of the wider project.



Older People Services – Staffing Challenges

Our Older People Service coordinates care and support from five Community Resource Teams located in Llanfairfechan, Llandudno, Llanrwst, Colwyn Bay and Abergele. Our assessment and domiciliary services continued to operate as normal throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, with assessments carried out virtually to ensure staff and public safety. However, the demand now placed on the service is unprecedented, and we are struggling to handle the number of cases

open to us, especially where they are complex and require the intervention and oversight of a Qualified Social Worker. At the time of writing we have 320 unallocated cases, and this can partly be put down to individuals not wanting to approach us for help during the pandemic and instead attempting to manage their own needs. Many individuals have now reached crisis point and require urgent support; had the pandemic not prevented them from accessing informal support networks and family, many cases would not have escalated to such high levels of need. Our teams are therefore dealing with increasing numbers of crisis cases and navigating the obstacles of commissioning care packages.

The staffing crisis within Social Care has been well documented in the media, and Conwy is no exception. Within our Social Work teams we have been making use of locum and agency staff to absorb some of the workload demand, but due to the expense involved, this isn't our favoured option. Our external partners are struggling to recruit and retain staff, and as a result have had to hand back care packages which they cannot deliver. These have been absorbed by our in-house teams, who are experiencing their own difficulties in recruiting staff.

What's next?

We hope to be able to recruit to some targeted roles within the Social Work and Reablement teams to help combat waiting lists and support the increased demand in the community. The national [We Care](#) recruitment campaign aims to raise the profile of Social Care as a rewarding career choice, whether that be with the Local Authority or with a private provider. As well as hoping to capitalise on the national campaign, we are being proactive in our approach to recruitment and retention within Social Care, focusing on three key areas:

Conwy Social Work Traineeships

- A programme was introduced in 2009 to address social work recruitment challenges through a 'grow your own' approach.

- Trainees remain in their substantive post and gain their qualification via the Open University.
- For the first two years of the programme we supported two employees per year. In the third year we increased financial support for the programme to raise the number of trainees to three per year.
- In recognition of the increased recruitment difficulties, resulting in intensified pressure on existing staffing resources, we'll be offering five social work traineeship places in 2022.

Social Work students and newly-qualified social workers

- Conwy is a tri-partner of the Bangor University MA in Social Work course, therefore twice a year we host students. Recognising the pressures on our existing pool of Practice Educators we have invested heavily in supporting experienced social workers to undertake the Practice Educators accredited award.
- Within the tri-partnership we have hosted workshops with our social workers and Bangor University to make amendments to the teaching content on the MA course. This is to ensure that social work students' theoretical models of social work and their practice is aligned to current best practice in social work.
- Social Care Wales data evidences that a third of appointed social workers are newly qualified. As such, staff are required to complete the First Three Years in Practice Framework (Social Care Wales). Our Practice Coordinator takes a lead role in supporting both the new employee and their manager through the framework, including completion of 'Consolidation Continued Professional Education and Learning'.

Supporting recruitment to the Social Care sector in Conwy

- We have resourced a new service, WeCareWales.Conwy to support people into employment across the care sector, with a new Community Employment Mentor post to support it.
- The service works closely with the Conwy Employment Hub to ensure that the Social Care sector benefits from Welsh Government employment programmes.
- We are collaborating with Coleg Llandrillo and Social Care employers to coordinate Health and Social Care student work placements.

We talk in detail about our workforce plans later in the report, however in short we'll be looking to:

- Focus on staff health and wellbeing as we recover from the pandemic, including retention and sharing best practice.
- Deliver a refreshed workforce strategy that incorporates learning from the pandemic.
- Embrace new, more productive ways of working that create opportunities for staff to work flexibly.
- Explore the pressures created by workload volume across the department.
- Promote social care as a career field of choice.



Quality Standard 4: 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

Providing practical and emotional support for carers

Welsh Government's Strategy for Unpaid Carers prioritises the need to support life alongside caring, which includes the need to provide the opportunity to take breaks in order to support carers' resilience and their ability to maintain their caring role. Following the Covid restrictions during 2020-21, the Welsh Government Carers Respite Grant for 2021-22 aimed to prioritise support for the increased demand for day centres and more traditional sitting services, whilst also encouraging more innovative models of delivering respite short breaks.

We worked with our third sector carer organisations so that they could enhance their offers to carers, to meet the aims of the grant and emphasising the need to be flexible, and needs-led.

This included additional funding for established sitting services and children's respite, to support the provision of an increased number of hours. Additionally, a number of flexible and innovative projects were funded.

Credu provide support for young carers, and were able to extend their provision of respite support in more flexible ways according to young carers' own preferences and circumstances. For some, this meant a greater opportunity to engage in collective family respite, accessing

activities together as a group, and creating opportunities for valuable shared time together. For others, this may have meant funding to access individual pursuits that the young carers find beneficial to their personal wellbeing.



Hafal provide support for carers of people with mental ill-health, providing carer assessments and individual support. Throughout the pandemic the need for low-level counselling to help support carers with personal stresses and anxieties has escalated, and a six-week programme was funded, along with wellbeing days and events, according to carers' own

needs. Opportunities to enhance peer support were also achieved via some development of the North Wales Clic web resources.

Carers Outreach support around 1000 carers within Conwy in a wide range of ways, from information provision, emotional support, home visits, low level advocacy, individual and group support and emergency planning.

Through the additional carer respite funding, their offer was enhanced to be able to offer person-centred respite, focused on the needs of individual carers. This may include additional access to traditional breaks like sitting services, family days out, and holidays and weekends away. Recognising that a “short break” can mean different things to different people, the funding was used flexibly to purchase items such as outdoor furniture, tablets, exercise equipment and memberships to clubs such as gyms, golf, or any other form of exercise that carers identify as being beneficial to their wellbeing.

The new Carers Trust dementia centre was also able to extend provision of their ‘Hafan Ni’ group sessions by offering an additional 22 weekly sessions (5 hour sessions) per week from October to March. This regular social interaction is a preventative service, and can provide regular stimulation which can delay a deterioration in the cared for’s mental health and improve the health and wellbeing of the carer. These regular breaks can mean the difference between a carer managing in their caring role or hitting a crisis point.

What were the challenges?

Ongoing Covid precautions were clearly a concern, with providers carefully risk-assessing their activities to mitigate risk. As is often the case with short-term grant funding, timing can be an issue due to factoring in finalising guidance from Welsh Government, engaging with providers, allowing time for Welsh Government to approve plans, and providers reaching out to people to maximise take-up of the offer; all this needs to take place within the boundaries of the current financial year.

What’s next?

Short breaks for carers will always be a priority in our overall carers strategy, as they significantly affect carer resilience. We will also consider the need to move towards more flexible and personalised respite care offers; a continued funding commitment for short breaks would help to ensure this vital priority for carers can be met.

Conwy Family Centres

Despite the ups and downs of Covid restrictions, this year has provided some exciting new opportunities for the Family Support Teams and Family Centres in the five areas of Conwy.

Alongside the usual day-to-day groups and tailored one-to-one support we provide for families, we have been able to develop new activities in response to local needs. Here are some examples:

- We have started a new weekly teenage parents group in the east of Conwy. This has given them confidence in how to look after their babies, and helped them meet and make friends with other young people in a similar situation.
- We have run joint drop-ins with the Youth Service in the north area, which have helped us identify young people at risk of exploitation. We have put on information sessions for parents in the central area to help them keep their children safe.
- We have been able to engage with a hard-to-reach group of parents in a parenting course in Kinmel Bay through working in partnership with the Family Liaison Worker in the school.
- We have established a new baby group, where there has been a ‘baby boom’ in a very rural area, through engaging them in a baby massage course, which now has a focus on wellbeing and

peer support.

- We have built stronger relationships with schools in the central area, often supporting schools to engage families, and have restarted face-to-face and virtual drop-ins in schools.
- We have re-established the daily drop-ins rotating around the west area of Conwy, and have added a *stay and play* element to help engage families.
- During Safeguarding Week, we launched a new information hub for families and communities to raise awareness and prevent Child Sexual Abuse.



- The Assistant Family Worker role has been key to help the teams re-engage families in group activities and increase capacity to provide outreach activities and information, advice and assistance.

- School-readiness is an emerging theme as a result of the pandemic. We worked with partners from BCUHB to launch [new child development resources and video clips](#) for parents and carers of pre-school children.

Families have told us that the one-to-one support they have had through their Family Workers has made a truly positive difference:

I feel I now have the confidence to move forward in my life thanks to the Family Centre and my support worker.

The support we have received has been fantastic. This is all very new to us, and we wouldn't have known where to start with all the things that are available. Our son has started a playgroup as well with the help from our worker, which has helped him so much.

The new Disability Family Worker role has proved to be invaluable. This is a joint venture with Disabilities Services, and sits within the Family Centre teams. The role was evaluated by a researcher in Bangor University this year, and we plan to secure funding to recruit to this role for each of the five areas of Conwy. An example of the group and peer support opportunities is a new 'Let's Get Sensory' group, which provides a friendly and comfortable environment for neuro diverse families.

One family interviewed for the research said:

You feel like you're failing. This role... I wouldn't lie, I do wish it had been there two years ago. Cos who knows what the outcome might be now - it might be much different... Without sounding so dramatic, she's almost saved me



What were the challenges?

It has been challenging to maintain engagement with families through various restrictions, some of which were an additional barrier to already vulnerable individuals. We have found creative solutions in response to this.

What's next?

We're looking forward to being able to put on more group and multi-agency activities in Colwyn Bay as we open up our new family centre, Canolfan Ffordd Douglas, incorporating green principles such as air source heating and solar panels.

Following consultation in 2018 we used a combination of Conwy Capital, Flying Start Capital Funding and the Integrated Care Fund (ICF) to

develop a Victorian school in the centre of Colwyn Bay (Central Area). We moved into the building during February and March 2022, and now benefit from the following facilities:

- A fully disabled toilet and shower wet room with hoist
- An activity room with hoist
- A crèche
- Multi-agency meeting and consultation rooms
- A kitchen for group work and café-style activities
- Multi-agency work spaces

The Deputy Minister for Social Services, Julie Morgan MS, paid a visit to the site in March 2022. Photo shows (from left): Bradley Wignall and Glyn Parry, Property Consultants commissioned to manage the building project; Helen Lawson, Flying Start Childcare Partnership Support Manager; Cllr Cheryl Carlisle; Deputy Minister for Social Services, Julie Morgan MS; Anne Forsberg, Team Manager Central Family Support; and Jenny Williams, Strategic Director of Social Care & Education.



We are engaging with services that can support families and use our new space, and already these have included; Youth Service; Libraries and Culture; Domestic Abuse service, and some third sector organisations.



Next year also brings exciting new developments in Eryl Wen, the Family Centre in Llandudno, which is currently being refurbished. Work started in February 2022, and is planned to be complete by July 2022. Works include making better use of the space for groups and courses, opening out to the garden area more, and additional rooms for families to meet with various services and family workers, and additional parking.

Autism Code of Practice

Autism is a lifelong condition which presents a wide spectrum of need. On average 1 in 100 people in the UK have a diagnosis of ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder). 40% of people who have a learning disability also have autism. In Conwy, that represents approximately 1,250 people.

The first Autism Strategic Action Plan, first published in 2008, created a local authority infrastructure which was supported by funding from the Welsh Government. Each of the 22 Welsh local authority areas has an autism local action plan which is developed, implemented and reviewed by a local stakeholder group. In addition, each local authority has an ASD Lead Officer. The ASD Lead Officer's role is central to the delivery of autism services at a local level by bringing together professionals to work collaboratively in local authority areas as well as providing a local point of contact for both autistic people and families/carers seeking support.

The current ASD Lead Officer in Conwy is the Disability Service Manager, whose service spans both children and adult services.

The ASD Lead Officer has a wide range of roles and responsibilities some of which include increasing awareness, knowledge, acceptance and understanding of autism among the public, and across public, private and voluntary services. The role also includes:

- Working with local authority training departments to identify any staff training needs.
- Ensuring that practitioners carrying out needs assessments and assessing an autistic individual's eligibility for social care support has sufficient knowledge and skills to understand the impact of autism.
- Signposting parents and autistic individuals to appropriate support.

In addition to the role of the ASD Lead Officer, Conwy has developed a Code of Practice on the delivery of Autism Services. The Code of Practice clearly sets out the duties and responsibilities on the Social Care service to support individuals with autism and their families.

Community Wellbeing sessions

The Community Wellbeing team have provided a wide range of both virtual and in-person sessions during the reporting period. Online

provision included exercise sessions, cultural activities, such as arts and crafts, wellbeing sessions to support people with their mental health, and some really helpful information sharing sessions. Between April 2021 and January 2022 the team offered over 20 different topics, including:

- Line dancing and Bollywood dancing
- Singing
- A regular monthly self-care session in partnership with Cartrefi Conwy
- Seated exercise and yoga
- Preparing for Winter sessions, in partnership with Welfare Rights and Groundwork for Wales
- Stepping Out With Confidence course
- Food is Fuel sessions
- Astronomy
- Internet Security, in partnership with Digital Communities Wales

Once Welsh Government guidance permitted the team to deliver in-person sessions, we arranged a variety of walks across the county in areas such as Llanrwst, Llandudno, Kinnel Bay, Llanfairfechan, and Colwyn Bay. In addition, we set up physical exercise programmes, including Seated Qigong, Zumba Gold, and Tai Chi.

Between April and January we delivered 111 sessions which were attended by 800 individuals. We have included some case studies in this report to demonstrate how impactful these have been.

What were the challenges?

- Not all individuals with access to a digital devices were confident enough to use them in order to access our online sessions. We responded by setting up an over-the-phone digital support service to help anyone who was struggling.
- Reacting to changes in government guidance at times resulted in some in-person sessions being cancelled, and the team needing

to respond quickly to increase online provision to ensure a good variety of wellbeing sessions were still available.

- Planning of in-person sessions took longer as the team needed to ensure that all protocols were in place, and that all planned activities were thoroughly risk-assessed for the safety of all those attending.
- In order to adhere to social distancing guidelines, all in-person sessions were advertised as booking only, and a limit set on the number of people able to attend. Where possible, additional sessions were arranged for those which were oversubscribed, in order to accommodate as many people as possible.



What's next?

New online sessions are planned for the rest of the reporting period, including Posture Alignment, Strictly Fitsteps, Pilates, and Singing for Lung Health.

New in-person sessions will include historical walks in Conwy, Deganwy, Colwyn Bay, and Rhos on Sea. We'll be holding reminiscence sessions for people living with dementia, and their carers. We'll be *Singing for Fun* in Llanrwst, *Having a Natter* in Rhos on Sea, enjoying a team walk from Trefriw to Llanrwst and a Biodiversity Walk in Llandudno. For St David's day we made peg dolls at the Llandudno Museum.



Case Study: Tai Chi in the Park

A lady in her 70s saw an advert on Facebook for our free sessions in Pentre Mawr Park and thought it would help with her restricted mobility following a hip replacement. She also suffered from a range of respiratory

problems and had been shielding during the Covid-19 pandemic. One of our Community Wellbeing Officers kept in communication with the lady throughout the course to check on her welfare and to share information on any other relevant groups and courses.

Osteoarthritis and respiratory problems can be quite debilitating, however these can be helped with movement and having a purpose. The Qigong class offers both, alongside controlled breathing techniques. The sessions have also helped her to increase her social circle, and she has enrolled on the next six-week indoor Tai Chi course. The lady has provided us with some feedback on her experience and the benefits of joining the class:

I thoroughly enjoyed it, it was absolutely brilliant and really relaxing! It benefited me mentally and physically but also socially. I have made new friends. From the original group in the park, we have met up for coffee, we have spoken to others who would also like to meet up for coffee. I felt energised and positive after each session. I seriously think that if more people who have pain or are lonely should reach out and join this type of group it would be really so beneficial to them. Thank you!

It was so lovely meeting new people and I have learned a lot. I hope we can have some more sessions like this. It made such a difference to my life.

Case Study: Zoom Sessions

A lady in her 60s has struggled with various health issues, including high anxiety and depression. Her husband also has health issues, and recently a close relative has been diagnosed with dementia; both feel very worried and anxious.

The reduction in community-based activities and groups due to Covid-19 exacerbated her mental health and anxiety issues and reduced the number of opportunities for social interaction.

One of our Community Wellbeing Officers kept the lady informed about suitable sessions as they became available. As a result she signed up to a number of online activities. She also received digital support in order to become more confident using Zoom.

The regular sessions gave the lady a positive focus and she experienced less anxiety. She knew that the sessions would be taking place, regardless of the weather, and this gave her something positive to look forward to without getting anxious that it might be cancelled. Her social circle increased as she met new people in the group and kept in touch with some of them after the course came to an end. Encouraged by one of her new friends, she got back to sewing and also started painting flowers, something she finds very relaxing.

Carers Week activities

As part of National Carers Week the Community Wellbeing Team and Carers team arranged two sessions for carers, an in-person walk along the promenade in Llandudno and a virtual self-care session via Zoom.

Both sessions were positively received, with one lady who joined us on the walk saying that:

It was so nice being able to walk with others, especially people who cared for their loved ones like me.....we had lots in common to talk about.

Another lady who came said that she had really enjoyed being able to do something with her Mum whilst having the company of others, and at the end stayed to chat and have coffee with one of the other ladies, which was nice to see.

Over the past six months, over 40 carers have attended a range of online and in-person sessions organised by the Community Wellbeing Team.



What are the challenges?

Again, not all individuals with access to a digital device were confident enough to use it in order to access the online session; the Community Wellbeing Team offered over-the-phone support to enable carers to participate.

What's next?

The Community Wellbeing Team continue to support carers with their ongoing programme of activities, both online and in person.

New sessions for carers currently being planned by the team include:

- Bringing back the Virtual Dementia Bus to Conwy on 2 August 2022.
- Getting Back Out There sessions for carers of those living with dementia.
- Making a Fidget Cuff session for carers and those living with dementia, in partnership with the Llandudno Museum.

Summer of Fun and Winter of Wellbeing activities

Summer of Fun ran from 1 July until 30 September 2021 and provided a range of free leisure, recreational, sporting and cultural activities for

children and young people aged 0-25 to help support their social, emotional, physical and mental wellbeing.

The event had three main objectives:

- Supporting fun and the opportunity for children and young people to express themselves through play.
- Community-based interactive, creative and play-based initiatives for all ages.
- Providing opportunities for children and young people to play with friends and peers.

In Conwy, 29 projects were offered through a variety of third sector organisations, private providers and through various Council services, including Social Care, Education, Libraries, Leisure, and Youth Services.



A wide range of activities were offered, including outdoor adventure sessions, indoor fitness activities, play sessions for 3-11 year olds, activities for foster children, family activity sessions for children with learning disabilities, golf and other sporting activities in rural locations. We offered inflatable sports sessions, outdoor cooking, tennis, arts and

crafts, Lego play sessions, yoga, ski centre activities, stone balancing and land art, science workshops and much more.

In total, 1,959 attendances were recorded across all sessions. The feedback from children, young people, parents and staff members was very positive, highlighting the important benefits that these activities have made towards families, particularly following Covid-19 restrictions.

Thank you for the opportunity to do the summer of fun. The kids and parents have had a blast. It's been lovely to see friendships grow through the activities and families try different activities they never would have thought possible.

Staff member from Conwy Connect

In relation to the various art and culture activities for families we received some positive comments:

Awesome time!

Little boy really enjoyed, thank you.

My children loved it.

Great couple of hours' fun.

My children loved it, they had a great afternoon, diolch yn fawr.

Participants

We had good positive feedback from parents in general but I think it was because they were just glad to get out and about after a tough few months and were really appreciative of all the creative activities. The same goes for our facilitators as many freelancers hadn't been working so were really happy to get back out and deliver some brilliant sessions.

Staff member from CCBC

What were the challenges?

Additional funding was provided to run a similar programme of activities under the name 'Winter of Wellbeing' from October 2021 and over the winter period. The Welsh Government grant guidance was finalised in December and so this presented some challenges in confirming the programme agenda to ensure all activities would be within the grant criteria.

In order to create a varied programme of activities for various age groups and abilities we needed to work with many partners to reach potential providers who could contribute to this programme of activity, whilst ensuring variety and good distribution of offers across the county.

Other challenges experienced by the providers included marketing, in order to publicise their events to maximise take-up.

What's next?

We now have a more established database of providers to draw on for future programmes, together with valuable information about which activities were in high demand. We also have feedback from children and their families which will help influence decision-making when creating programmes of activities in the future.

Dementia Services: Dementia Support Workers

Intermediate Care Funding has afforded us the opportunity to increase the number of staff we can dedicate to dementia support in Conwy and to this end we have appointed five dementia support workers to support each one of our five Community Resource Teams (CRTs).

These individuals accept referrals from any member of the Multi-Disciplinary Team. There is no formal eligibility criteria for their services and they have a lot of autonomy. This makes the role quite unique through the flexibility of how an individual living with dementia and their informal carers are supported. The support offered is not determined by time and task, nor is it time-limited, instead it focuses on the outcomes identified. Within some families they are the lynchpin that keeps everything on an even keel.



The Dementia Support Workers have a good knowledge of what support and community activities are available in their local area, enabling and encouraging individuals to remain involved and be a part of their own community, to achieve 'what matters to them' and to live well with their dementia. They also have links with other organisations within the local community such as the Alzheimer's Association, Carers Trust, Men's Sheds and with wellbeing events and activities. They are also able to set up community groups when a gap is identified, such as a *Knit and Stitch* group established in our rural area CRT.

Supporting individuals and their informal carers to access training was identified as a key objective of the role, and this has proven to be very important, especially as spouses find their role changing within a relationship to that of a care giver, often in later life. As an example, families have been supported to access the virtual dementia experience on the travelling Dementia Bus.

They have provided support to individuals during formal assessment, during the safeguarding process and at memory clinic appointments. This has proven to be, at times, key to achieving a positive outcome for people.

The role is also key in supporting the carers as well as the individual; their support has been valued and has proven to be a success as the support worker has been able to form a respected and trusted relationship with the individual and their wider family.

By supporting carers to acknowledge the good work they are doing and increasing their confidence, we make a difference in how they feel about their caring role.

The Dementia Worker has access to technology which can support people to remain independent in their own homes. They are able to loan equipment such as an iPad and Alexa, allowing time to assess the benefits to the individual.

What were the challenges?

The temporary nature of the funding made the initial recruitment into the posts challenging but as this has now changed to recurrent funding, we have been able to make the five posts permanent.

As involvement of the Dementia Workers has become valued to individuals, their informal carers and the CRT, they are sometimes not able to withdraw their support, therefore they are unable to take on new referrals. Through joint working, utilising technology, and working with the third sector and the community to source alternative support, we have been able to resolve the problem.

Technology can assist individuals to live independently and well with their dementia, for example GPS, Alexa devices, and digital clocks. Unfortunately many individuals do not have WI-FI access at home to benefit from tablets etc. and this can be a barrier to accessing many services which could relieve some of the carer stress.

What's next?

To continuously improve and develop the service we ask individuals and their carers to complete quality monitoring forms from which we can learn and improve.

Feedback received from members of the CRT suggest that the Dementia Workers have become integral team members, and being accessible by all has worked well, especially the fact that they are autonomous with no eligibility criteria.

As this has been a new concept and job role within Conwy we have had to learn as each new challenge presented itself.

Case Study

Our involvement with X and her husband provides routine and consistency. This helps her as she prefers things to be done in routine and to be at the centre of her care. Her husband, and primary carer,

needs the support, and he values my visits. He appreciates that I am there to support and to signpost, as he finds life in general to be hard. X has a range of complex medical needs and I have supported her, and her husband by facilitating appointments with them.

X's dementia is very challenging, and makes her dependant on her husband. I am able to provide emotional and practical help and support for them both, which has helped to avoid carer breakdown and the need for any social care interventions so far.

Dementia Services: Dementia Support Team

Intermediate Care Funding has also enabled us to test the concept of a more flexible approach to delivering care and support in the community for people living with dementia, and their carers.

The Dementia Support Team, comprises of eight support workers who provide flexible, personalised outreach support using a “team around the individual” approach from first diagnosis, enabling people to live well with dementia, within their own homes. This includes adults with early onset dementia, including those with learning disabilities, and is provided bilingually according to the choice and preference of those using the service. The team provides an element of community navigation (signposting to other services) and advocacy support for people with dementia and their carers. The team is also skilled and competent to deliver delegated healthcare duties, e.g. taking blood samples. The team acts as a key point of contact for families, to help them navigate the complex health and social care system.

Flexibility is key; workers will respond to need and don't provide support according to rotas. They provide extra support for those where traditional domiciliary care is failing, and more flexible support is needed to maintain independence.

The team has enabled people living with dementia to maintain their independence and remain at home, avoiding unnecessary admissions to hospital or residential care, and delaying the need for such services. They have also reduced delays when someone is due to be discharged from hospital. Within the local context, this means a reduction in incidences of Delayed Transfer of Care from the psychiatric hospital, with reduced use of out of area placements, thus reducing disruption and distress for families and with associated savings in placement costs. It is anticipated that this more effective support for carers of people with dementia will impact positively on carer resilience and reduce crises.

What were the challenges?

Again, the temporary nature of ICF funding has made recruiting to the team extremely challenging, and we have never been able to appoint into every position.

The past two years has impacted severely upon our plans to trial a more flexible service at our Elderly Mentally Ill residential home (Llys Elian) and link it with the work of this team. We had hoped the team could access overnight and day respite at Llys Elian as needs escalate, but due to Covid restrictions across the care home sector, we have not been able to progress this at all. Regardless of this, the team itself has had a positive impact on some individuals' lives.

What's next?

We have recently been advised that funding will be recurring, and this will hopefully help with recruitment issues into the service. We also anticipate that, as Covid restrictions are relaxed, that we can progress with the plans to enhance the links the team has with the services currently provided at Llys Elian, which in turn, will help inform the future service delivery model provided here.

Bwthyn Y Ddôl

As part of the regional vision for seamlessly locality based services and in response to “A Healthier Wales”, the Peripatetic Multi-Disciplinary Team and Assessment Centre, Bwthyn y Ddôl is a key transformation project for the central area of North Wales undertaken with Conwy County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council and BCUHB.

The multi-disciplinary team is a short-term (12 week) multi-professional therapeutic assessment and intervention team. At the end of the 12 weeks there is a detailed formulation for the family and the referring agencies. The team work collaboratively with the families to understand their child and create positive change in the way families function with a goal to;

- The child/children to remain at home safely.
- The child/children to return home or to a family members home safely.
- To help inform and guide appropriate alternative plan for the child/children when returning home is not appropriate.

All while enabling parents to transform their parenting skills in order to meet the needs of their children.

Management data and interviews with parents suggested that once a referral had been accepted, the Bwthyn Y Ddôl team were able to respond within a matter of days. A rapid response was vital in many cases, as family care was at the point of breakdown or had already broken down.

In the period from April to December 2021, the team has delivered 69 consultations, 189 evidenced-based interventions, and a total of 878 weeks of care avoided.

What were the challenges?

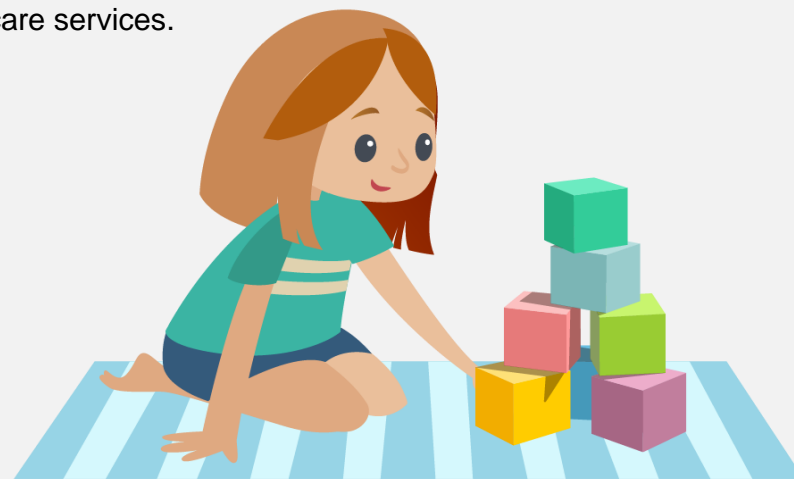
The Covid-19 pandemic has caused disruption to the service due to the risk assessments preventing face to face consultations, along with cancelled appointments due to staff and family members needing to self-isolate.

The planned Children’s Residential Assessment Centre (Bwthyn Y Ddôl) is an integral part of the Multi-Disciplinary Team model. The build has been delayed and is now expected to be operational in the summer of 2023.

What’s next?

The provision of the Children’s Residential assessment Centre (Bwthyn Y Ddôl) is an integral part of the MDT model and an interim Centre is being sought to provide an interim assessment Centre, until the construction is completed.

The team have started well. The model of care is embedded with multi-agency working at its heart and there are promising indications that children, young people and families are beginning to experience positive changes in their lives. The MDT will continue to develop their skills and deliver interventions to cohorts of children, young people and their families who had not been well catered for in the existing system of health and social care services.



Partnerships & Integration

Quality Standard 5: Effective partnerships are in place to commission and deliver fully integrated, high quality, sustainable outcomes for people

Supporting Conwy's residential homes throughout the pandemic and beyond

We have continued to provide a vital channel of communication between care homes and the Local Authority, Health Board and other agencies. With the Covid-related pressures on care homes continuing during 2021-22, we have provided support to them on a regular basis and fostered a culture of information-sharing. We hope to develop that support further in 2022 by extending it to other types of provider.

Quality-assuring our commissioned services

The new Regional Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) for Commissioned Services has been set up with the aim of driving excellence with our commissioned services across North Wales. All stakeholders, including the six Local Authorities, the Police, CIW and BCUHB will 'commit to work together to achieve the best outcomes for individuals in receipt of commissioned services'. The QAF is underpinned by key principles which will:

- Ensure that provider services are safe, personal, effective and continuously improving.
- Ensure the right quality mechanisms are in place so that standards of care are described and effectively demonstrated.

- Ensure that quality outcomes are monitored and reviewed, and action is taken if the quality of a service is found to be compromised.
- Establish a governance structure to monitor quality and safety including the analysis of personalised care, effectiveness and safety.
- Use patient and family feedback to inform the quality agenda along with complaints and concerns.
- Support the Sector by ensuring the provision of timely access to clinical multi-disciplinary and organisational team support.
- Support providers to innovate and deliver evidence-based practice to continuously improve.
- Ensure that we put individuals at the centre of care planning and delivery.
- Ensure effective communication and engagement through a wide range of accessible mediums both digital, social media, teleconferencing and events.

A partnership approach to commissioning older people's services

The project that we are undertaking to review and modernise the commissioning process around older people's services is a multi-disciplinary approach. Its success will depend upon the contributions of various teams, both internal and external. The challenges facing the domiciliary care sector have been well documented over the years, and have been worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 requires us to adopt an outcome-focused and person-centred approach to care commissioning and delivery. At the moment we are still basing it on time and task, and we are aware that an outcome-focused approach will require a culture shift across the sector.

Our providers are facing challenges around recruitment and retention and this is affecting their ability to deliver the care packages we need to commission from them. With the number of people over the age of 65 expected to rise in Conwy over the foreseeable future, we can expect demand for older people's services to increase too, along with the number of complex cases.

We will be looking at simplifying the processes we use to bill individuals for the services they receive, and how we conduct financial transactions with our providers. Our aim is to introduce:

- More flexible care packages which take into account what matters to the individual and how they wish to achieve their personal outcomes.
- Locality-based brokerage of care packages.
- A more streamlined invoicing process with our providers.
- Consistent delivery of outcome-focused care.

These new initiatives will provide more security for our providers and support better working conditions for staff recruitment and retention. We will work *together* with our commissioned providers as partners, ensuring that our services are modernised, efficient, and help vulnerable individuals in Conwy to remain in their own homes for as long as possible.



Community Services Transformation Programme

The Community Services Transformation Programme was established in 2019 to continue the development of the established Community Resource Teams (CRT). The programme was funded through the Integrated Care Fund (ICF) and a Transformation grant.

The first phase of the Transformation Programme was to identify and provide evidence of the organisational and systemic barriers that were constraining further integration between Health and Social Care services. Through a number of interconnected work streams the programme will inform a plan for the longer-term development and sustainability of CRT areas and deliver on the vision for integration and place-based care, as set out in A Healthier Wales.

What we plan to do

There are six themed work streams:

- To understand the whole of the Health and Social Care systems to get a complete and intelligent picture of demand, capacity, flow and cost.
- To develop a competency-based workforce strategy that is designed to meet the ambition for seamless models of care.
- To develop and deliver a programme of engagement, allowing citizens, carers and communities to share their experiences and take an active part in shaping future services.
- Through consultation and case audit, analyse the effectiveness of our current ways of working, identifying good practice and the elements of redesign needed to support new seamless models of care.
- Establish an integrated Health and Social Care management entity that will create the conditions in which the community resources of Health, Social Care, Third Sector partners and the

local community can work together to meet and support needs and improve health and wellbeing (to include digital transformation and co-location).

- Agree a service model and framework for integrated care delivery that is focused on the person, considers important aspects of their lives, their goals, and what matters to them.



What have been the main achievements in implementing the programme?

The six themed work streams are reaching their conclusion and findings are now being collated to inform the next stages of the transformational plan for change. The key achievements of the programme are:

- Insights into the Health and Social Care systems that provide a picture of system constraints, demand, capacity, flow and cost.

- A cultural assessment and appreciative enquiry of partners and direct services to evaluate readiness for change and appetite for partnership working.
- An accountability framework and role template for Care Coordinators, Integrated Health and Social Care Support Workers and Administrators.
- Insights into the experiences of citizens, carers and communities to ensure their voice is heard and influences the shaping of future services.
- A method of multi-agency case audit has been devised to analyse the effectiveness of our current ways of working, identifying good practice and the elements of redesign needed to support new seamless models of care.
- Integrated Health and Social Care localities have been formed with members from Health, including primary care, Social Care and the Third Sector. These locality bodies will plan for local leadership, governance, commissioning and the deployment of resources.
- A leadership development programme for senior leaders focused on leading change, collaborative and relational practice skills.
- The programme team are utilising Office 365 and assessing how it can support integrated team working.

Continuing to support the development of the CRTs

- We will be facilitating workshops to complete a maturity matrix, which will inform the development of action plans.
- We'll be coordinating the CRT Focus Group meetings
- All CRTs are now co-located

- The National Development Team for Inclusion will provide workshops for Conwy CRT staff to take stock and consider how the team is working, the experience of the last two years, and how things have changed or improved moving forward.
- A rotation of occupational Therapists from the Health Board is to be introduced to support continuous professional development.

What were the challenges?

The ongoing demand for services to respond to the pandemic has continued to constrain workforce and manager capacity throughout the duration of the programme which has impacted on planned activities and the extent of engagement. Also, getting information governance agreements into place delayed the start of some elements of cross-matching data.

What's next?

The findings of the first phase of the programme are being collated and will inform the plans for change and resourcing its implementation by means of the new Regional Integration Fund.

Feedback from our Community Resource Teams

The Community Resource Team (CRT) model allows for co-location of colleagues from Social Care, Health and the Voluntary Sector at five locality offices across the county. We once again asked team members how they felt the partnership was working, especially in light of the fact that Covid restrictions have prevented a physical presence in the office for many.

In total, 59 individuals responded to the survey, 78% of whom work for Social Care. 76% of respondents stated that they were happy or fairly happy about working within the CRT, and additional comments suggested that, even with Covid restrictions in place, there is still the ability to forge good working relationships across the organisations.

Happy to have access to the team and utilise the contacts and knowledge of different members that can be specific to my role. Also having access to individuals and teams to ask advice or request help.

However, working from home due to the pandemic has, for some people, affected the ability of the CRT to function as a cohesive team.

Due to the current pandemic and working from home, it's been difficult to fully work within the CRT ethos.

59% of respondents were positive about the ability of the CRT to facilitate and improve their own learning and knowledge of other professions/services, with only 7% stating that there was no benefit at all.

74% of respondents agreed that collaborative working within the CRT has improved the service for citizens, with many feeling that working together streamlines the process and promotes access to services which may have otherwise been overlooked.

I have become more aware of services within the wider CRT such as the Family centre and Pharmacy, and how we can work together in a preventative manner.

Thanks to shared knowledge and expertise between the professionals, citizens can learn about and access support and community provision conducive to wellbeing, all of which impacts [positively] on the levels of hospitalisation and necessity for extra care.

It speeds up referrals. Information can be exchanged more quickly between services and relayed back to citizens and can create a smoother flow of care and services which can be very helpful, particularly when health and wellbeing are at stake.

When asked about whether the Community Resource Teams support each other, there was a mixed response, with 39% agreeing that this happens some of the time. There were a couple of reasons for this, namely the separation brought about by working from home, and the feeling of there being less support within the business support sphere, than between practitioners. There is certainly some work to be done in this area once more regular attendance at the office resumes, but where respondents offered further comment, many were positive.

Undoubtedly there is a great level of mutual/collective support.

We asked the team members how they felt about working in the CRT going forward, and 62% stated that they felt positive or very positive about it. There is acknowledgement that there are improvements to be made around IT provision for seamless working, but many feel that the CRT is merely an official title to an already-established method of working. Working in the office when it is safe to do so will increase opportunities for collaboration and shared visits, as well as allowing the organic communication which takes place in a shared setting.

Working within a CRT is a very important aspect of my role. Working alongside the CRT has been especially important since working from home. I feel that good communication with the CRT has remained in place and in turn provided individuals I support with a good service. I am happy about working within a CRT in the future and feel it is an essential part of my job.

The potential of the CRTs is yet to be fully realised, but it is most definitely moving in the right direction

Developing our Occupational Therapy teams

As previously mentioned, we would like to support the continuous professional development of our Occupational Therapist teams at the CRTs and have looked more closely at three areas for development:

Recruitment and retention of OTs

Individual organisational recruitment strategies have led to a competitive approach to recruit OTs within each organisation in North Wales. An integrated workforce development plan in relation to recruitment and retention of newly qualified BCUHB, Conwy CBC and Denbighshire County Council Occupational Therapists is required and is now an urgent priority.

Conwy CBC and Denbighshire CC currently do not have equal access to newly qualified OT graduates from Glyndŵr University. Having equal access to new OT graduates will be essential going forward to recruit to vacant posts in the CRT. BCUHB have offered to include a Local Authority placement as part of the BCUHB Band 5 OT rotation in Conwy and Denbighshire CRTs. Including a social care placement as part of the BCUHB Band 5 rotation will provide newly qualified OTs an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills in Local Authority settings. Having knowledge of social care settings is essential to apply for a post with a Local Authority.

The hope is that Conwy and Denbighshire Councils will commit financial and supervisory resources to ensure new OT graduates employed by BCUHB gain experience of working in Local Authority settings.

Integrated training for BCUHB and Local Authority OTs

At present each organisation commissions training providers to meet the professional requirements of OTs in each establishment. However, several areas of professional practice overlap between the different organisations, such as manual handling. Having an integrated training

plan would avoid unnecessary handovers, silo working and promote more efficient use of OT resources in the CRTs.

We hope that BCUHB, Conwy CBC and Denbighshire CC managers agree to develop an integrated training plan for BCUHB and Local Authority OTs working in the Community Resource Teams.

Areas of overlap between the Health Board and Local Authorities

There are significant areas of overlap between the teams, however different organisational cultures and processes have ensured that there has been little discussion between practitioners about what roles and responsibilities could be shared. For example, a person in need of review following a hospital discharge or a major adaptation will be seen by a BCUHB OT or a Local Authority OT on the basis of organisational funding responsibilities. This operational criteria does not take account of the available OT resources in each CRT and the capacity of those resources to respond in a timely manner.

We hope that managers across the Health Board and Local Authorities agree to review existing professional competence documents and develop an integrated professional competence framework for OTs working in the Community Resource Teams.

Bron y Nant respite facility

We are progressing with work to deliver the new services to be delivered at Bron y Nant Disability Respite Centre and Complex Care day Resource Unit in 2022-23. This is a significant piece of work, involving a number of officers from within the Disability Service, our partners in Health and across the department. Once open, the resource will offer improved purpose-built accommodation for people having respite services in Conwy.

As part of the development we plan to work with a social enterprise to deliver a café and shop on site. This will not only provide employment

opportunities for people in the local community, but will also provide work experience for disabled people. The service will form part of our local strategy to improve access to employment for disabled people.

Additional Welsh Government funding

Welsh Government have made additional funds available to Local Authorities to relieve the financial burdens imposed by the pandemic. In terms of social care the Hardship Fund allowed for additional costs for continued support for in-house and commissioned adult social care provision across domiciliary care, residential care and supported living. It also allowed us to support providers to address market stability pressures such as 'voids' and unpredictable or emergency expenses across the sector. In Conwy we have claimed £4.3 million for social services, almost half of which was paid to care homes and domiciliary care providers via uplifts in care fees.

The Recovery Fund was allocated to us to help the social care sector meet the ongoing pandemic-related challenges, with money set aside for extending the carers support fund, tackling loneliness in older people, investing in the social care workforce's wellbeing, and in residential services for care-experienced children. Conwy's allocation was £2.4 million, with £800K spent on independent placements for children, £890K on care providers and £703K on day services, transport, IT, equipment, Direct Payments, training, and more.

What were the challenges?

Allocating Hardship and Recovery funds to the independent sector has been a time-consuming process where applications were encouraged and received from care providers who had experienced unexpected additional costs directly related to the Covid pandemic.

What's next?

The funding ends on 31 March 2022 as we move out of Covid response mode. We have fees paid to the care sector, taking account of financial constraints upon the Local Authority alongside the increased costs of

delivering care in the current climate. All fees will increase from 1 April 2022 and will incorporate the real living wage being paid to staff. At the same time we are contributing to the national discussion and white paper around rebalancing care and support in Wales.



Quality Standard 6: People are encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as equal partners

Gaining feedback on our Family Centre support

We asked individuals who receive support from our Family Centres for feedback on their experiences. At the time of writing 77 people have completed our survey during 2021-22 to share their views. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

Really couldn't have asked for a better family worker and am so happy and pleased with the progress we've made as a family

- 93% of respondents agreed that the team contacted them within one week of receiving their details.
- 100% of respondents felt that team were friendly, honest, respectful and professional.
- 96% felt that they were listened to by the team and were able to work together with us on different areas of family life.
- 90% of respondents felt able to move on with their lives with confidence, knowing that the Family centre team were there to help if they needed it.

Very friendly, made me feel at ease and was able to give an open, honest, supportive relationship with myself and my children

I feel I now have the confidence to move forward in my life thanks to the Family Centre and my support worker

We will continue to gain feedback on our performance to develop and improve our services still further.



Eryl Wen Family Centre

We consulted with individuals who access our Eryl Wen Family Centre in Llandudno, as well as professionals and other individuals who work with us. Respondents felt that the location of the site was convenient for them, and a part of their community, and the consensus was that Eryl Wen should continue to house the Llandudno-based Family Centre. Work has started on building improvements and these should continue into 2022-23 to provide the best possible space and facilities for families who visit us there. We will keep you posted on progress.

Feedback on our domiciliary care service for older people

We run an ongoing survey to give people receiving a reablement service the opportunity to feed back on their experience. The service provides six

weeks of intensive support to individuals who have returned home from a hospital stay, or who are recovering from illness or an accident. The aim is to help individuals to regain independence and confidence in their own homes, to the point where services can then be ceased or reduced, according to ongoing need. During 2021-22 people who benefited from the service were asked a series of questions about the care and support they received.

- 96% agreed that they, their family, friends and social worker were involved in agreeing and planning their support.
- 97% told us that their expectations of the service were met.
- 92% respondents felt that we agreed their outcomes with them at the start of the service.
- 90% agreed that they had met their personal outcomes at the end of the period of intervention.
- Everyone who expressed cultural or religious wishes were provided for (38%), with the remaining 62% not applicable.
- 99% felt that the support they received was flexible, for example around times and duration.
- 90% agreed that the support received was consistent, that is, the same team of staff providing support.
- 100% of respondents felt that the support they received enabled them to do as much as they could for themselves.
- 100% felt that our staff were pleasant, kind and courteous.
- 15% of respondents would have valued another type of support as part of the package, including shopping, cleaning, laundry and more time to chat.

Absolutely above and beyond. The team were amazing, so lovely with my Mum....

Beyond my expectation, everyone was so kind, caring and helpful. Also very encouraging; I honestly couldn't praise the team highly enough.

The ladies were so respectful to us whilst in our home, plus communicated what they had done and were so understanding of what we were going through.

Feedback from the friends and family of Llys Elian residents

In February 2022 we contacted family, carers and friends of people who live in Llys Elian to obtain their views on the service their loved ones receive there. We received 28 responses to our survey and the scores and comments were overwhelmingly positive.

All respondents rated the care and support as good or excellent:

I feel the team give all they have got towards the residents. They take the time to chat and calm them when needed.

The care received has made an immeasurable difference to the health and well-being of my relative.

Llys Elian is an exceptional place with amazing staff and a wonderful ethos and approach.

Asked what was good about living there, respondents talked about the homely and cheerful environment, friendly staff, and the quality of the care, food and activities:

Care, empathy and support for my Mum, along with fantastic food and activities...an outstanding establishment! Well done to all at LE!

We were pleased to see that 100% of respondents would recommend Llys Elian to a friend or relative:

When all is said and done I think it's one of the best run homes in the area.

I would recommend Llys Elian over and over again.

It was clear from the additional comments that Covid restrictions with regard to care home visits has been a tough experience for many residents and their families, and they are looking forward to spending more quality time with their loved ones in the coming months.

Feedback on our Community Wellbeing activities

In May 2021 we asked individuals over the age of 50 and the people who support them to tell us what activities they would like to access, either online, or in their local community, to support their health and wellbeing. In all, 77 people responded to us, from across the county; here's a flavour of what they told us.

Llandudno and surrounding area

- Top 3 activities: exercise, arts and crafts, stress management/wellbeing courses
- Most popular request: walks

- Preferred days to attend: Tuesday-Thursday
- Preferred time to attend: afternoons
- Preferred frequency: 100% wanted weekly sessions

Llanfairfechan and surrounding area

- Top 3 activities: exercise, arts and crafts, gardening
- Most popular request: pilates and yoga
- Preferred days to attend: Wednesday
- Preferred time to attend: evenings
- Preferred frequency: 100% wanted weekly sessions

Rural area

- Top 3 activities: exercise, arts and crafts, nature sessions
- Most popular request: walks and yoga
- Preferred days to attend: Monday and Thursday
- Preferred time to attend: afternoons and evenings
- Preferred frequency: 77% wanted weekly sessions

Colwyn Bay and surrounding area

- Top 3 activities: exercise, arts and crafts, dancing
- Most popular request: walks and yoga
- Preferred days to attend: Monday and Wednesday
- Preferred time to attend: mornings
- Preferred frequency: 93% wanted weekly sessions

Abergele and surrounding area

- Top 3 activities: exercise, arts and crafts, singing
- Most popular request: walks and yoga
- Preferred days to attend: Wednesday and Friday
- Preferred time to attend: afternoons
- Preferred frequency: 87% wanted weekly sessions

We asked people about online sessions, which would not be dependent on where they live.

- Top 3 activities: exercise, including exercise for stress management, arts and crafts, stress management/wellbeing courses
- Most popular request: yoga, knitting/crochet
- Preferred days to attend: Wednesday
- Preferred time to attend: evenings
- Preferred frequency: 93% wanted weekly sessions



16% of respondents said they would be interested in attending activities delivered through the medium of Welsh. Wednesday and Friday

evenings were the most popular days for sessions in the community, with 92% wanting weekly sessions. For online sessions Wednesday and Thursday afternoons/evenings were preferable, with 100% opting for weekly sessions.

People were willing to pay for sessions, with 20% happy to pay between £8 and £12. The barriers most respondents mentioned that would prevent them from attending any session would be a lack of confidence, anxiety and Covid.

This invaluable feedback will allow us to plan sessions for the future, in line with what people want and need, to increase their health and wellbeing.

Engaging with people who use our commissioned services

Despite our continued focus on delivering services within the constraints posed by Covid-19, we have been able to conduct a number of engagement exercises with individuals who access our services during 2021-22. Here is a flavour of the feedback we have received from them.

In September 2021 we spent time with four individuals who live at a care home for adults with learning disabilities, ASD or mental health issues. We asked them what it was like to live there, and how they like to spend their time.

Three of the residents made use of an iPad provided by the Local Authority to keep in touch with their families during lockdown. All had received visitors when able, including children and grandchildren when it was safe to do so. All created e-mail addresses to exchange photos with their families.

In terms of activities, the residents stated that they enjoy things like puzzle books, reading magazines, and baking cakes. One likes birds and has an aviary, and another had just started Slimming World and, with the help of the staff, was trying to cook some recipes.

The residents eat together and create a weekly menu, each of them choosing one of the evening meals each week. Favourites include sausages, curry, and fish and chips.

The gentlemen love football and are fans of Blackpool Football Club. Some staff recently took them for a day trip to Blackpool to have a tour of the club. Through our conversations with the residents we learnt about many more activities and outings that they enjoyed.

During November 2021 we spoke with 21 individuals (or their representative) who receive care and support at home from an agency. Interviews were conducted over the phone and we asked for their views on the relationship with and the service from the provider.

- 95% of respondents rated the service they received good or very good.
- 86% agreed that they received their service from a consistent, regular staff team.
- 100% received services in their preferred language.
- 98% felt that the support staff were kind, respectful and courteous.
- 38% agreed that their support worker arrived on time, with 48% stating that this was sometimes the case.
- All seemed happy that their views, wishes and preferences were taken into account by the support staff and service provider, although some may have felt nervous about asking for something different in case their support was taken away.
- 60% agreed that the service provider was flexible in terms of visit times and duration, understanding the pressures on the support staff to keep to their work schedule.
- 71% were satisfied or very satisfied with the service they received, however 19% were very unsatisfied.

Many of the comments made by the participants were concerning the amount of time spent on calls; many wanted the support workers to spend more time with them, and for a consistent team to visit them at the pre-arranged time.

I don't mind a half hour variation but we are frightened to go out and have a life in case we miss a call

...the time is what it is, the carer has told me that I have been squashed in between two other calls

Mental Wellness Team

Over the past year we have successfully transitioned to the Mental Wellness Team, improving the impact of poor mental wellbeing to Conwy residents. The development of the Mental Wellness Team was in response to what people were telling us about mental health services.

Current data is demonstrating that there has been a 40% increase in the demand for Mental Health services both across Health and Social Care. Within the Mental Wellness Team we work to the ethos of 'No Wrong Door' so it doesn't matter what service an individual contacts, we will assist to get that person to the right place.

Wellbeing is a core factor in the delivery of the Mental Wellness Team. Currently we are working to develop green spaces, a Recovery College, hubs both in person and virtual and looking at other ways that we can work at a grass root level, through our work we have seen how much communities have to offer, and it isn't always about adding more, it is about seeing what is out there and bringing awareness to existing services.

Case Study

A lady in her 20s was forced to leave her professional career due to her mental health issues, which consequently caused a loss of purpose as well as the job she had worked hard to achieve.

She was supported by Primary Care with her diagnosis and medication. The Mental Wellness team supported her to improve her self-esteem and home environment as well as signposting her to advice on benefits and budgeting.

Following that support she is now living independently, expresses improved sense of wellness and wellbeing, has not required any further referrals for clinical interventions and has greatly reduced the risk of needing hospitalisation. Most importantly she has hope for the future.

What's next?

In the next year we will expand the team and the recruitment process is underway to appoint an Approved Mental Health Practitioner (AMHP). This is a specialist professional role. We will also be appointing a Section 117 Social Worker whose role will be to support the aftercare process of individuals who have been hospitalised under the Mental Health Act and subsequently discharged from hospital.

Utilising funding from the Area Integrated Service Board (AISB), we are recruiting an additional Intervention Worker and Community Support Worker who will provide a period of short-term, intensive support designed to help individuals in a structured, person led, recovery focused way to prevent crisis where possible and facilitating the individual to regain stability.

We have been successful in securing a small pot of funding from the UK Community Recovery Fund to support production work that we were undertaking before the Covid-19 pandemic.

Care Leaver Week

Care Leaver Week occurs every year in October. This is the first year that Conwy have joined in the celebrations. In order to do this we liaised with various activity centres and local businesses to offer experiences for our young people and their own children. Some of the tickets below were donated to the team by the Family Centres. Below is a list of the activities and experiences that were on offer:

- Wendy Couling Magical Worlds in a Box - Mixed Media 3D Session
- Create a Mixed Media shadow box assemblage, creating your own stories using a range of layering collage techniques
- Adventure Parc Snowdonia
- Ninja Assault course
- People Surf Lagoon surf lesson
- Surf Lagoon paddle boarding
- Staffing and mileage
- Welsh Mountain Zoo
- Climbing sessions
- Cinema tickets
- Aspire fitness
- North Wales Active Ltd Gorge scrambling
- Climbing & Abseiling
- CCBC allotment Pumpkin carving sessions
- Llandudno ski slope
- Sugar Den, Abergele Arts and crafts café
- Leisure centres



Care Leavers Website

In addition, we also launched a new care leaver website:

<http://www.smallstepsbigfuture.wales/>

The website is currently managed by the Personal Advisor Team and contains easily accessible information around benefits, health, identity, education and training, what's going on locally and lots more. The website also includes videos showing young people how to make a meal and safely undertake DIY tasks.

During Care Leaver Week we used the website to promote daily themes. Here is the schedule from the week:

- Money Monday: We shared information about benefits and grants. Anything and everything money related.
- No take out Tuesday: This was about promoting healthy eating, eating on a budget, meal planning, and meal preparation. This included information on food safety courses.
- Wellbeing Wednesday: This covered a huge range of advice and ideas such as meditation, walking ideas and outdoor pursuits.
- Be true to you Thursday: This is about each individual care leaver celebrating themselves, what they've been through and what they've achieved.
- Fix it Friday: We shared B&Q links and videos showing some basic DIY tips.

What's next?

We will be planning to celebrate Care Leaver Week again this year. We will begin to plan much earlier in the process. If Covid-19 restrictions are eased, we are hoping that we will be able to meet our care leavers face to face during this year's celebrations.



Wellbeing

Quality Standard 7: People are protected and safeguarded from abuse and neglect, and any other types of harm

Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation

We have implemented changes to how we undertake Section 47 child protection investigations meaning that they now take place over a longer period of time. This allows us to gather information gradually and build a relationship built on trust with the victim to enable them to disclose their experiences in their own time. Previously we might have carried out a single visit and not taken any further action if no disclosure was made at that visit.

The Conwy Action Plan continues to work in line with the Welsh Government Action Plan, Preventing and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse. The topic of Healthy Relationships is included and we work with partners in Education Services to ensure that schools include information around healthy relationships as part of the pupils' personal development syllabus.

What were the challenges?

Keeping the momentum going and ensuring that all involved continue to disseminate information and changes in practice.

What's next?

In March 2022 we introduced Assessment Intervention Moving on training which is focused on the assessment of the young person and their family around concerns, risks and strengths of the young person across four key domains: sexual and non-sexual behaviours, development, family, and environment, considering both static and

dynamic factors. This training will be offered to multi-agency practice leads, which will assist in the formulation of a referral pathway for Harmful Sexual Behaviours. The training offered to practitioners will then be facilitated by practice leads to all practitioners in social care during 2022.

Preventative work at our Family Centres

There has been continued focus on how we, and our partner agencies, can identify and support children at risk of exploitation throughout 2021-22. Our well established Family Centres who offer advice, guidance and support to families have been raising awareness of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) and have developed a [new information hub](#) on our website to provide information, advice and support to children and young people, parents, carers and people in the community.

All five centres developed practice lead roles for those staff members who have taken part in 'train the trainer' sessions delivered by the Lucy Faithful Foundation. This enables them to run Parents Protect courses with their teams and parents around child sexual abuse and internet safety awareness.



The Family Centres have also established a multi-agency forum to discuss children who they believe are at risk of becoming exploited, with a clear link to children's services to ensure that the most appropriate level of intervention is put in place. The Centres also launched a social media campaign on internet safety to promote our [new web content](#) for children, young people, and their families. Topics include setting up parental controls, using safe search engines, using social media and online gaming. Care Inspectorate Wales, in their Assurance Check of June 2021 stated that:

The local authority has designed an internet safety page focusing on supporting parents about risks and safety for children using the internet. This is an important piece of work given concern about this during the pandemic.

The Youth Justice Service are working collaboratively with the Family Centres in order to produce a pathway for the lower tier of criminal exploitation to implement early intervention. This process is also a mechanism to implement effective safeguarding processes, such as the need to escalate to children's services for safeguarding investigations as and when required.

A training course facilitated by the Child Sexual Abuse Centre of Excellence ran from September 2020 until March 2021 and was attended by individuals from partner agencies such as North Wales Police, Health, Education, the Vulnerable People Team, and Youth Justice Service. The course provided information relating to research and data analysis, and there were guest speakers who work in different areas of CSA with both victims and perpetrators. Information was also shared regarding the requirements of assessments, supporting victims, working with and supporting non-abusing parents, and assessing and working with perpetrators.

This is a difficult and highly sensitive subject, which at times, was overwhelming for the many participants on the course, however the

support from facilitators and each other was invaluable. The result is an enhanced ability within the Local Authority to respond with greater confidence to this area of child abuse.

Multi-Agency Child Sexual Abuse Forum (MACSAF)

As part of our CSA action plan we are focusing on raising awareness about CSA amongst parents, communities, and professionals through:

- Providing training and workforce development.
- Offering pathways for support, including for survivors.
- Making Conwy a safe place for people to talk about their concerns.
- Offering support and consultation for investigations.



The MACSAF is a multi-agency group, including the service leads who attended the six-month course we mentioned earlier, and some other key partners. The group meets every two months to:

- Hold and continue to add to a library of resources and tools.
- Foster collaboration between agencies, including social workers, the Police, solicitors, doctors, nurses and teachers.
- Keep up to date with research, information and support services
- Share information with our colleagues.
- Learn from practice.

The team will provide updates to colleagues twice a year in the form of a newsletter.

Child exploitation: a survivor's account

In December 2021 our Children's Fieldwork and Workforce Team commissioned Sammy Woodhouse, a survivor of the Rotherham Child Sexual Exploitation scandal, to provide a talk and Q&A session to help raise awareness around child exploitation.

Sammy was able to highlight how she was groomed as a teenager, including how it started, developed, and the control, aggression and threats used by her abusers. Sessions were available for young people, school staff and education-related professionals, parents, carers and family, and for other professionals based within social care, North Wales Police and BCUHB. Other slots were also donated to other organisations such as Barnardo's, Haven of Light, and the Lucy Faithful Foundation, and to the Children's Commissioner's Office and Welsh Government's Safeguarding Policy Manager. In all, around 230 people attended.

Although we are always striving to raise awareness of child exploitation, hearing from a survivor was much more impactful and, this time, the session wasn't restricted to professionals (who already have a level of

awareness). Delivering to young people, parents and carers helped to contribute to a contextualised safeguarding agenda, generating conversations about exploitation between themselves and their peers, family and friends.

We received positive feedback from all three sessions, and Sammy has now been contacted by other agencies and professionals to deliver similar talks, both in Conwy and the wider North Wales area.

Asked about what they would take away from the session, attendees provided the following insight:

It was very inspiring that Sammy was so brave and managed to talk about her experiences after everything she's gone through. I was so shocked that professionals [in Rotherham] let it continue to happen for so long and didn't take the concerns seriously.

The reality that Child Sexual Exploitation can happen to anyone, anywhere, given the right set of circumstances.

Read more about Sammy's story at <https://sammywoodhouse.com>

Strengthening Families Team

This year we have introduced an Early Intervention Multi-agency Panel and the Domestic Abuse Panel. Both Panels give practitioners a reflective space to talk about concerns they have with families they work with. They get advice and offers of support for families to prevent them needing to come into managed care services.

This service continues to develop specialist roles within the team and this year we have a dedicated worker to work with families during pregnancy to help them address any emerging safeguarding issues at an early stage.

What were the challenges?

Delivering intervention face to face has been challenging throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite this teams have continued to find innovative ways to engage with families by maximising the use of technology and outdoors spaces which Conwy offers.

Families have clearly been impacted by the pandemic in ways that we were unable to predict. There has been an increase in referrals for families at the point of breakdown and children with complex presentations of emotional distress. The team have worked tirelessly to support these families whilst also taking on some tasks and responsibilities of other teams to share the burden.

What's next?

This year we are introducing the Safe & Together Model across Conwy, This model is an evidenced-based new way of practice which improves outcomes for families impacted by Domestic Abuse.

Gaining feedback from children in our care

Every child in the care of the Local Authority must be allocated an Independent Reviewing Officer, whose role is to have oversight of a child's case and ensure that their interests are protected throughout their time in care. IROs must ensure that they:

- Promote the voice of the child
- Ensure that the child's care and support plan is up to date, effective, and appropriate to the child's needs
- Offer the child access to advocacy
- Monitor the Local Authority's activity as a Corporate Parent

Children have stated that the IROs should listen to them, make sure they are happy with their care and support plans, ensure their views are heard, and ensure that their plans are being delivered as they should be. IROs should be powerful enough to put things right, keeping in touch with each

child they support between review meetings, seeing the child on a one-to-one basis, and explaining important decisions.

In preparation for every child's review they are asked to give their views on where they live, who they spend time with, the team that supports them, and what matters to them. The IROs can then use this information to generate conversations about the child's wellbeing and progress in a way that is led by the child. Here's a flavour of what the children and young people have told us:

I feel happy with my foster carer and am enjoying all the things we are doing together.

Everything is going well and I am really enjoying my new Childcare apprenticeship.

I am happy with my bedroom because it is beautiful. I love having fun and eating yummy food, especially chocolate spread.

I want to be in foster care, my parents look after me and I have nice views and nice walks. I like the house and I have pets. It's the best where I live.

Safeguarding Week 2021 Events

Due to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions our Safeguarding Unit once again arranged online events to mark Safeguarding Week in November. Two identical sessions were offered to all Conwy Council staff comprising:

- Opening of Safeguarding Week by Councillor Cheryl Carlisle

- Safeguarding is Everybody's Business.
- Child Sexual abuse action plan and the launch of our new web pages.
- Raising safeguarding awareness around older people abuse.

In all, 54 members of staff attended the sessions from across the organisation, and the feedback they later provided was positive. They valued the event and were keen to share the information with their own teams.

The Safeguarding Unit also held the Children's Safeguarding Forum during Safeguarding Week, raising awareness and enhancing knowledge amongst management staff around various topics and identifying areas for further development. We talked about:

- The Strengthening Families Team's pre-birth processes and interventions, and their aim to reduce the number of babies removed from their families at birth in Conwy.
- An update from the Peri-Natal & Psychiatric Liaison Officer on how their service continues to grow, the tiers of involvement, and how they support a parent with their mental health.
- The North Wales Safeguarding Children's Board Protocol, which supports children and parents, is currently being revised. We identified the need for joined-up assessments, both for the parent who is experiencing mental health problems, and the needs of the child.
- Judicial Review & Public Law Reform Child Protection; updates were provided from the current task and finish groups who are ensuring that processes are brought up to date with the recommendations from this review.

- A case with a positive outcome, demonstrating how interventions had been successful and had assisted parents to make the necessary changes required to keep their family together.

Contextual Adult Safeguarding

Contextual safeguarding looks to all areas of a person at risk's life, including their home, family, peers, neighbourhood and contacts to gain a holistic view of the factors that place them at risk of harm.

We employed this method at an area of concern in Colwyn Bay, where adult safeguarding and anti-social behaviour issues had come to the fore. An exceptional strategy meeting was set up, and after several discussions it was agreed that a Contextual Safeguarding model should be adopted to effectively guide the multi-agency meeting and ensure clear actions were in place to support the defined area (as opposed to concentrating wholly on individual cases via the usual case management approach).



The meeting agreed the development of the following:

1. Clear terms of reference, GDPR criteria and resources to support the Contextual safeguarding model of working on the site.
2. A weekly multi-agency discussion meeting, bringing all partners together to ensure timely and effective sharing of information and joint working. This has resulted in matters being escalated and supported earlier in the process, ensuring that the right partners responded at the right time, and incidents being dealt with in an improved timely manner.
3. It has been agreed that a vacant flat on the site can be used as an interim drop-in interview facility so that individuals at the site can be seen outside of their own tenancy, ensure effective lone working and joint agency arrangements and make it easier for individuals to attend interviews and meetings.

What were the challenges?

- Ensuring that key partners were consistent in the activities undertaken around the Colwyn Bay site. For example, partners were concerned that police activity and attendance was inconsistent, however further discussion clarified that there was little criminal activity at the site and the majority of reporting was around safeguarding and anti-social behaviour concerns.
- Lack of alternative accommodation has resulted in the contextual safeguarding approach needing to be adopted, whilst move-on for several tenants on the site would alleviate much of the behaviours and concerns.

What's next?

Meetings will continue until such time that alternative accommodation can be sourced. The weekly meetings provide an effective task-centred approach to responding to current issues on the site.

Contextual Child/Young People Safeguarding

Two multi-agency Contextualised Exploitation forums will be set up to bring partner agencies together to discuss those young people who are vulnerable and at risk of exploitation. The aim of this forum is to bring multi-agency professionals together on a six to eight-week basis so that information can be shared to help reduce those who are vulnerable and/or at risk of all forms of exploitation in Conwy.

The forum aids an early identification, prevention and creation of disruption strategies, but also aids the sharing of information for people of concern open to Authorities or agencies where concerns already exist.

What are the current challenges?

- Keeping focused with multi agency partners, aiding the understanding of multi-agency partners, not reviewing casework, to discuss and consider prevention, disrupting when young people are associating with older young people and adults who are considered to be a risk.
- All meetings are held virtually, this is difficult with the amount of professionals sometimes involved and also mapping exercises online
- Neighbouring Local Authorities are holding similar forums and the sharing of cross county information in relation to young people and adults is vital.

What's next?

The forums will be launched in March 2022 to coincide with Child Exploitation day and will continue on a six to eight-week basis. We will review them after twelve months to consider the purpose, any positive outcomes and identify any emerging themes that may need to be addressed.

Modern Slavery case study

Following information received from North Wales Police and the National Modern Slavery Helpline in September 2021 we became aware of concerns that a private, newly-formed social care agency operating in the Conwy area were providing agency care workers who presented as being potential victims of modern slavery. In response to these concerns, full multi-agency strategy meetings were convened with key partners, including Health, North Wales Police, Care Inspectorate Wales and Denbighshire County Council. Initial meetings were covert and sensitive to the fact that any poorly timed enquiries or interventions would have jeopardised potential police enquiries and investigations. At this time the case continues to be under investigation by the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), so actions below highlight work undertaken to date by the Local Authority and its partners.

- Enquiries with providers and care homes of their use of the agency in question, initially via covert and sensitive means.
- Communication with all providers to remind them of their duties and being mindful of ensuring that safe recruitment practices are always followed when utilising agency staff.
- Maintained safeguarding oversight of care homes in the area to ensure that, as far as possible, residents were not placed at risk as a result of the agency staff who were providing care.
- Ensuring that Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub team colleagues were fully briefed and given pointers on how to gather specific safeguarding concerns in the initial phase.
- Partners working closely when the GLAA began their operations.
- Undertaking clear actions with support from the Vulnerable People Team to support and advise the victims in the case.
- Initiate and progress position of trust meetings.

- Undertaking a de-brief session to gather learning from the process.

What were the challenges?

- Ensuring that all partners were responding consistently to the severity of the concerns raised.
- Ensuring that a balance was struck between maintaining safe care within the care homes, whilst at the same time, having to retain a confidential and covert approach.
- Delegation of tasks and which organisation undertook the lead on specific tasks within the wider investigation.
- Identifying key social workers/teams to support the process i.e. Section 126 processes were completed by a specific team which placed extra pressure on them.

What's next?

We are awaiting completion and outcome of the GLAA investigation and anticipate learning from the de-brief outcomes meeting.

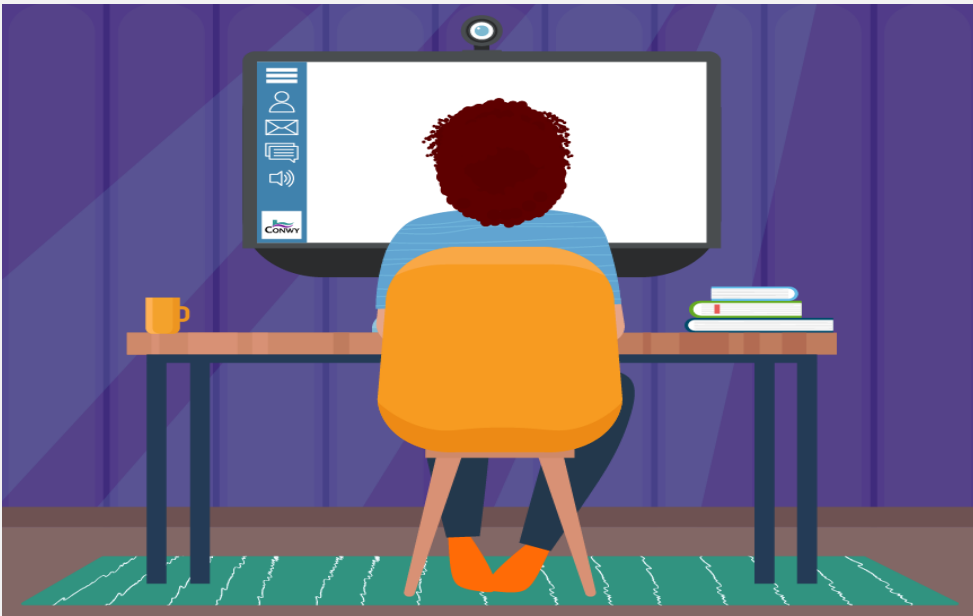
Preventing radicalisation

The Prevent strategy, published by the UK Government in 2011, is part of the overall counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The aim of the Prevent strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The strategy has three specific strategic objectives:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it.
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support.

- Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address.

The reporting year saw the launch of the three-year Prevent Strategy which is a framework that enables us to organise work in partnership to safeguard those vulnerable to radicalisation. During National Safeguarding Week in November 2021, we held a conference to raise awareness and understanding of the important work that is being undertaken under the umbrella of Contest and Prevent in Wales. We hosted a number of presenters including Professor Tracy Daszkiewicz, Deputy Director of Population Health & Wellbeing. She was pivotal in the response to the crisis which drew in multiple agencies, working around the clock to minimise harm and safeguard public health during the Novichok poisoning of Sergei and Yulia Skripal in Salisbury in 2018.



Quality Standard 8: 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

Dementia therapy cats

Over the last twelve months our Telecare Team have been providing some individuals with a Dementia Therapy Cat, purchased with ICF funding. The cats are realistic-looking, designed to bring comfort, companionship and fun for all. They purr just like a real cat, respond to touch, and even meow! We have received some excellent feedback from families and care homes who have said how much of a positive impact they've had on their loved ones' lives.

Case study

Mrs X had moved into a care home. She had always had cats but sadly could not bring hers with her. She was very anxious and unsettled in her new home, so the care home manager contacted Conwy Telecare.

Mrs X was given a Dementia Therapy Cat. The manager said that her face instantly lit up; she carries the cat everywhere and it has made a significant improvement to her wellbeing. Mrs X is more settled, less anxious and loves her new companion.

The cats have been very popular, so much so that many care homes in Conwy have purchased more to share between residents.



Construction of our new Disability Respite Centre and Bryn Euryn Nursery complex

The Bron y Nant build is progressing well, despite some weather-related delays in December, and at the time of writing, the basement super-structure is now in place. Work on the Bryn Euryn nursery site is ahead of schedule and it is expected that the windows and doors will be installed by the end of February. All this means that we still expect the resource to open on 19 August 2022, as planned.

Although we have experienced difficulties obtaining materials, which resulted in long lead times, we have mitigated this by utilising Local Authority storage space. By pre-ordering materials and planning ahead we have been able to save time and approximately £20,000 of costs to date.

A meet the buyer event is scheduled in February 2022 to generate interest in our exciting new shop and café.

We mentioned earlier on in the report that this is a complex project with four distinct work streams underway; site operation, disability respite, complex care, and work opportunities. All of these are being managed by an experienced project team, and spend on construction to date is £1.2m.

New Club for School Leavers

Within the Disabilities Services we identified a need to introduce a new club for young people of leaving school age due to high demand for that age range. We identified an opportunity to develop the skill sets for those young people who are transitioning into adulthood. Having held discussions with young people and staff supporting them, it was evident that they wanted to learn to cook and shop independently within a safe environment.

The club has started with five young people aged 17 and over, supported by three staff. A suitable venue was identified as Canolfan Marl in Llandudno Junction, due to the facilities available on site and its close proximity to supermarkets. Having spoken to families, Friday between 4:30pm-7:30pm was identified as a suitable slot, enabling young people attending to plan, shop for and cook their evening meal for that day as a group.

Young people were supported to decide as a group what they would cook in the evening. This simple activity incorporated listening skills, cooperation, and turn taking. Once a decision was made on what was to be cooked, we supported the group to create a shopping list, with the more able members of the group undertaking the task of writing the

shopping list each week. Staff supported the group around budgets to ensure the desired shopping list did not exceed the budget per session.



The young people prepared themselves to visit the local supermarket, each tasked with finding items on the shopping list. After the shopping trip, each young person was tasked with preparing the various elements of the meal. Whilst the meal was cooked the young people took part in listening to music, playing instruments, playing board games or generally just chatting with friends.

The confidence of the young people attending this group grew week on week, several young people commenting on how they now help at home with the meal. It could be seen that those young people who struggled initially with the simple tasks quickly became familiar with the routine and could complete more complex tasks as time went on.

Overall the group developed their road safety skills, money skills, confidence to be independent, social interaction and communication.

Supporting People to live independently

In last year's report we told you about the excellent progress that was being made at the time with the Maelgwn site in Llandudno Junction. The construction phase of the project has now been successfully completed and ready to accept new tenants. There is mix of accommodation available to individuals with different needs, for example, disabilities, care leavers and vulnerable people.

We have already been able to evidence the positive impact that this accommodation is having on people and their ability to live more independently. Here are a couple of case studies from Maelgwn:

Case study

An individual has moved from home for the first time into their own flat. The family had supported them to become independent in the home prior to their move.

The individual is very social and the move has allowed them to spend more time with their peers. They are expressing their views and opinions more and have taken up different interests and hobbies.

The biggest challenge for the family was the reduction in support needed from them, however they are still involved and play a part in her support. They now spend time together as family rather than playing the caring role.

Telecare - Staying innovative during the pandemic

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the Telecare team have continued to provide services and find innovative ways of keeping people independent and safeguarded through the use of technology. This has brought peace of mind to the families of service users to know that their loved ones are safe whilst remaining as independent as possible. Here

is a successful case study where the use of wearable technology has really made a difference.

Case study

Mr X is an elderly gentleman with dementia who lives with his wife in a rural village. He was very independent, but during the first lockdown his wife started to notice a slight change in his memory and he started to struggle to use public transport. To avoid his wife having to travel with him Mr X was referred to Conwy Telecare for an assessment by the Memory Clinic.



As Mr X had difficulty using a mobile phone it was agreed to try a Doro GPS watch. The watch was linked to his wife's mobile phone so that she could check where he was whilst she was back at work.

The watch provided some reassurance for both Mr and Mrs X. Mrs X was able to return to work knowing that should her husband go for a walk or catch the bus she would be able to locate him. Mr X was also very pleased to have a device that could easily contact his wife should he feel

unwell or forgetful. He now goes out for walks daily, which has improved his mental health and sense of independence.

It has made a huge difference to us both. I can work go to work without worrying about him too much, it has eased my anxiety

The benefits of a person-centred approach

By working closely with the individuals we support we can help them to get the best out of life and increase their independence and confidence. The case study below demonstrates how by taking the time to work with the individual's strengths, and at their preferred pace, real benefits can be realised.

Case study

X is a young woman in her 20's with a learning disability who is incredibly anxious throughout all aspects of her day. She communicates her anxieties via physical and verbal aggression and placing herself into dangerous situations. When she left school she started attending a new day service five days a week, which was tailored to her needs.

Before starting the day service we had to familiarise staff with X and her personal circumstances so the support staff worked with X in school for seven months to get to know her. Holistic personal plans were written, involving family, education, health, and existing support providers. The team approached the new service using a positive behaviour support approach. X verbally contributed her likes and dislikes, and transition plans were led by her.

We introduced new activities at a pace that suited X, and built upon these slowly. Her confidence has grown, and with this growth she now enjoys various activities including visiting lots of new places, shopping for herself, eating lunch in a café, and swimming in public swimming baths,

to name but a few. She has an incredible personality with a great sense of humour, which staff are seeing very day.

Following the success of Positive Behaviour Support we will be training all staff in this approach.



Support for a young man with visual impairment

Our Disabilities Service works very closely with rehabilitation officers from Vision Support to provide specialist support to individuals with visual impairment. The following case study demonstrates how identifying what matters to the individual can help to encourage independence and positive personal outcomes.

Case study

X is a teenager with autism, mobility issues, and severe visual impairment. He was referred to our service and we agreed outcomes which were important to him including moving around safely, going to college and maximising the residual vision he still has.

X received support to assess his walking skills, hearing and vision, as these would all affect his ability to move around independently. As well as supporting X, his family and college staff took part in sighted guide training so that they could help him when they were out and about together.

Further mobility training was tailored towards X walking from his home to college transport and back again at the end of the day, and being able to navigate around the areas at college he would need to visit. This increased his confidence and independence, and training has begun to introduce him to routes into town to visit shops and services.

We worked with X's mum to increase her confidence in his abilities and allay her fears of him being alone in the community. We've used technology such as the iOS 'Find my' app to allow mum to track X in real time, and have referred him to the Digital Inclusion Officer to support him and college staff in selecting accessible equipment. X is also getting the most out of his own technology and specialist low vision spectacles with our support.

Finally we are working with X's family to support them with their PIP application and housing status.

Increase in family group conferences

The Family Group Conference service (CWLWM) provided by Y Bont, is a family-led process where decisions, plans and arrangements are made for children who are in need or at risk. The FGCs can also be used for

family members, including children and young people, to agree on support and alternative carers to keep children with their own families.



This service has historically been funded through the core budget to support approximately 21 families a year. With additional funding from the Integrated Care Fund (ICF), we were able to increase the number of families supported by CWLWM to up to 40 families in the period of 2019 to 2021 and also provide training for staff. This meant that families received the service much earlier which helped to prevent escalation of need and children being taken into Local Authority care. With ICF funding coming to an end this year FGCs will continue, albeit with a smaller number of families.

How we do what we do

Ongoing support for our social work students

We are delighted to report that in 2021-2022 we have provided 30 placements for Social Work students and during the same period have employed four students upon graduating.

In supporting our student social workers, we regularly gain, listen and respond to student feedback. This ensures that they get the best experience with Conwy, leading to a positive outcome by the end of their placement. We also gain and respond to feedback from Practice Educators and On-Site Supervisors, and ensure that good practice and good ideas are shared and cascaded.

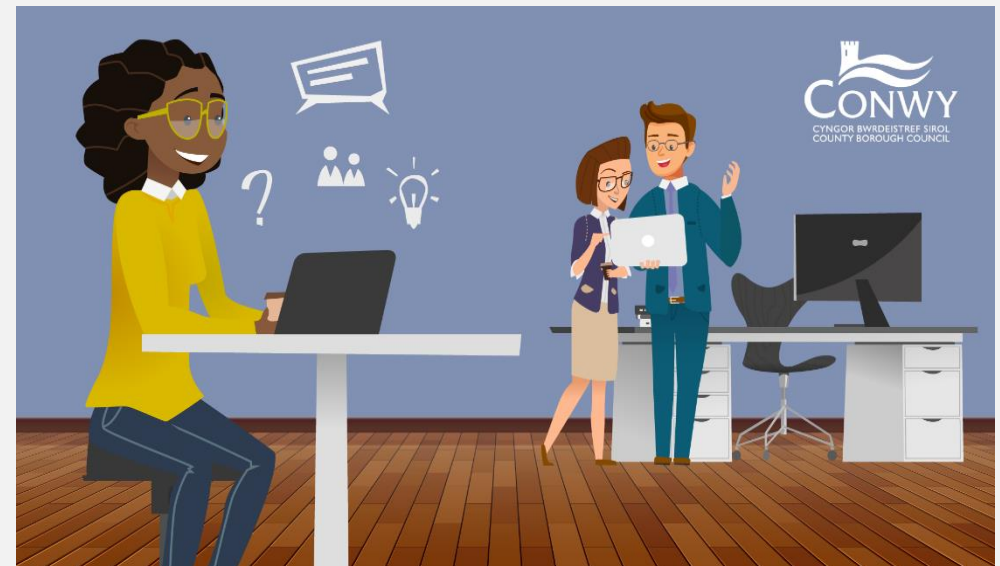
Feedback regarding holding regular support group sessions with students, as well as more formal student forums with guest speakers has been consistently constructive. They have valued the safe space to share concerns and dilemmas, to offload within a safe and non-judgmental environment, to realise that they are not alone in feeling certain strong emotions at times, and facing certain obstacles and challenges, e.g. home working, isolation, lack of motivation. They have appreciated meeting up with their peers, and gaining a wider perspective by comparing notes with fellow students from other Programmes. We have mainly students from the Bangor M.A. Programme, but it's proved very successful for the Open University (OU) internal trainees/students to join them in this group at the same level of training. They then go on to co-learn together during their first year in practice, leading on to the Consolidation Programme and Workshops.

Introducing a 'buddy' system of first year students matched with a second year student has also been a good source of support, and the OU trainees especially have appreciated this, as OU procedures are very specific. They have found it invaluable to be able to contact someone that

has gone through the exact same systems as them for guidance and information.

We have learnt by this year, now that we are almost two years into the pandemic, that providing extremely clear and up to date information to students is vital. The pandemic has changed the way in which we work and therefore we are unable to make promises of office working or face to face opportunities. This message has been introduced through our Practice Educators and On-Site Educators through pre-placement sessions with students.

We also gain Practice Educators' feedback regarding what has worked well and not so well. In the autumn we held a remote half-day workshop as a de-brief post placement, and also to look forward to this year's students and placements. Also, the focus was on getting the most out of remote supervision sessions as well as being more creative with remote learning opportunities and direct observations.



Social Care Employment Pathway

A programme has been implemented to equip unemployed candidates with the skills and knowledge needed to apply for social care jobs within the sector in Conwy. Staff from CCBC meet regularly with Job Centres, PACE and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to brief them about the programme and the needs of the sector. We work with candidates to:

- Learn about different job roles in social care.
- Learn the key skills and knowledge needed to work in social care.
- Provide taster sessions within social care settings.
- Provide job application support.
- Offer work experience placements to health and social care students.

Since establishing the service in December 2021 we have worked with 19 individuals and supported three into employment in the social care sector.

What were the challenges?

We've found that where individuals have no access to their own transport and technology, this can limit their employment opportunities. Individuals' confidence in using technology, and in their own abilities is also a factor. If someone has not been in employment for some time they may require extensive mentoring to support them through the employment process.

What's next?

We are reviewing options to increase our capacity to support potential recruits and employers even more. In addition, we are supporting the Regional Recruitment and Retention Task and Finish Group who are looking into the following areas to address the shortage of qualified and experienced Social Workers:

- National pay structure for social workers

- The high numbers of newly qualified social workers replacing experienced social workers that is not sustainable.
- Social Work qualification – university teaching falling short of core skills for practice.

We are also creating a communication and marketing plan to increase public awareness of the service.



Ongoing participation and consultation with people who access our services

Maintaining meaningful communication with individuals we support ensures that we have continued to monitor the quality of our services, despite the challenges posed by Covid restrictions over the past year. Here we detail some of the consultations we undertook with a variety of individuals in different settings.

Care home residents and their families

We consulted with younger people living in three care home settings to discuss the effects of lockdown, and how they were managing to overcome the difficulties they faced during the pandemic, including how they were supported to stay in touch with their families and friends.

We also consulted with families of older people residing in care homes to discuss ways of keeping connected, plus the effect of the pandemic on their relationships, views and feelings.

Allowing people to talk about their experiences informs the work we undertake in the future.

What were the challenges?

During this reporting year we could only engage with a small proportion of our care homes due to the difficulties they faced, but we continued to carry out this consultation work in order to gain views and talk to people and their families. Identifying new methods to support engagement was a challenge, however, the introduction of iPads across all Conwy care homes to facilitate face-to-face chats with family members was a great success. Also, some care homes invited family members to join in with social activities online, which they enjoyed.

What's next?

In 2022 we are planning further consultation work with residents in care home settings and their families now that the regulations allow for more face-to-face contact.

Dementia-Friendly status for Conwy County Borough Council

In 2021 we were recognised by the Alzheimer's Society for our efforts to become more dementia-friendly. This was the result of consistent engagement work undertaken with local communities, dementia groups and carers of people living with dementia. We created Dementia Champions across the Council, organised a Dementia Bus tour

throughout the county, and delivered regular Dementia Awareness sessions for Council staff and other staff groups.

What were the challenges?

During the pandemic community groups were unable to meet face-to-face, and opportunities for social activities for people living with dementia, such as dementia-friendly cinema screenings were reduced or cancelled.

What's next?

In 2022 we look forward to engaging with citizens and carers in Conwy to continue the work of raising awareness of dementia through the involvement of communities in Conwy.

Co-production with care leavers

Over the past twelve months the Personal advisor Team has looked to develop service delivery. In order to do this it has been important to include the young people themselves in the process. We have undertaken the following pieces of work:

- We sent out surveys to the young people for their thoughts on how we performed during the pandemic and lockdown, so asked what we did well, not so well, and what we should be doing going forward.
- We asked them how they think the Welsh Government St David's Day grant should be spent.
- We asked for their thoughts and wishes in terms of the development of a care leaver-specific website.
- We are currently in the bidding process for monies that will enable us to complete care leaver-specific research in collaboration with Bangor University and other North Wales Local authorities. We held two virtual care leaver events in order to ascertain the views and thoughts of the young people themselves in terms of the research topic.

We have had excellent responses to all of these work streams.

What were the challenges?

Not all the young people we work with want to engage with us and this can limit the quantity of responses. However, despite some young people not wanting to be involved, the responses we received were really positive and have given us things to be proud of and work towards.



What's next?

Co-production with the young people we work with is one of the fixed priority areas for the team and the plan is to strengthen this. What we would like is to develop a consistent, small sample of young people who are committed to assisting us in shaping the developments within the service.

Working in Partnership

We have been working closely with partners at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to develop a new Quality Assurance Framework and Memorandum of Understanding around intelligence sharing with regards to independent care homes and domiciliary care agencies. Monthly meetings have started where discussions can take place and appropriate and coordinated action plans developed. This has aided Conwy to support improvements with a number of care providers since April 2021.

Managing the budget and planning for the future

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the Council's strategic approach to the management of its finances and outlines some of the financial issues that will face the Council over the next four years.

The delivery of the strategy is dependent on the resources made available through Welsh Government (WG) settlements and on the success of the Council in aligning resources to its aims and priorities.

In 2021-22, the outturn for Social Services is projected to be within budget. For 2022-23, Social Services has, via the business case process, applied for, and been awarded, additional funding for anticipated increased cost pressures relating to Adult Social Care (£1,489k) and Children, Family and Safeguarding (£626k), as well as increases in costs associated with higher fees paid to independent providers of residential

and nursing care, domiciliary care and supported living (£3,500k). The department has also had to identify budget savings of £1,060k, but these savings are targeted so as to minimise the impact of front-line care provision.

Our partnership working, political and corporate leadership, governance and accountability

The Welsh Government's [Wellbeing of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) outlines a set of national outcomes and places a duty on public bodies to put sustainable development at the heart of decisions. This Act ensures that the environment, social, and economic considerations are central to decision-making.



In Conwy, we have incorporated these objectives into the [Conwy Corporate Plan](#). The seven goals and five ways of working are aligned to Conwy's eight Citizen Outcomes.

The Corporate Plan includes actions which are preventative, aims to work towards the longer term impact and are integrated in the consideration of how they contribute to the 7 Wellbeing Goals. The actions are also collaborative in terms of the focus on working closely with communities so they are involved in owning and working collectively to meet the Citizen Outcomes.



The Well-being of Future Generations Act also defines sustainable development in Wales as a mechanism for improving the economic,

social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. This promotes focus on considering what we do, how we do it and how we communicate. As a service we are contributing by reflecting on how we are applying the five ways of working through our six-monthly Service Performance Review process.

The [Social Services and Wellbeing Act \(Wales\) 2014](#) and [Code of Practice](#) set out a framework for measuring the progress that local authorities make against their duties under the Act as a whole. This process also enables local authorities to continuously improve services. As required by the Code of Practice, we have robust arrangements in place to collect and return data on statutory performance measures to Welsh Government on an annual basis. Measuring performance activity is done in line with each of the quality standards which focuses on people, partnership and integration and prevention.

Conwy has robust governance arrangements in place to support the effective management of Social Care. The Council has implemented a Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Council has appointed two Portfolio Holders who represent Children and Family Social Care and Adult Social Services and Leisure. We also submit various reports to Scrutiny Committee for review and challenge. In addition, we have a robust internal process for performance oversight and challenge. Meetings are held with our inspectorate throughout the year and we routinely and actively review our own practice to ensure continuous service improvement.

Regulation & Inspection

The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care Act (Wales) 2016 (RISCA) has changed how our services are inspected, how we improve the quality of care and support that we provide and regulation of our workforce. It places service quality and inspection at the heart of regulation; strengthening protection for those who need it and ensures that services deliver high quality care and support.

Since 2018, within Adults Services the commencement of registration for managers in the care home sector across Wales, under the new RISCA regulations took place. We have held a series of manager forums in preparation for the introduction of RISCA. We have also recently hosted Social Care Wales Registration workshops to support registration of the domiciliary care workforce. We have established a RISCA policy group that meets monthly in order to review policies required under the new regulations. We also host a joint Conwy Provider Training Group to promote workforce development and learning across the Sector.

Within the Looked After Children service area, Care Inspectorate Wales have published their National Overview Report in relation to care experienced children and young people, we participated in this review and we have looked at how we can improve how we work to improve experiences by using the key findings.

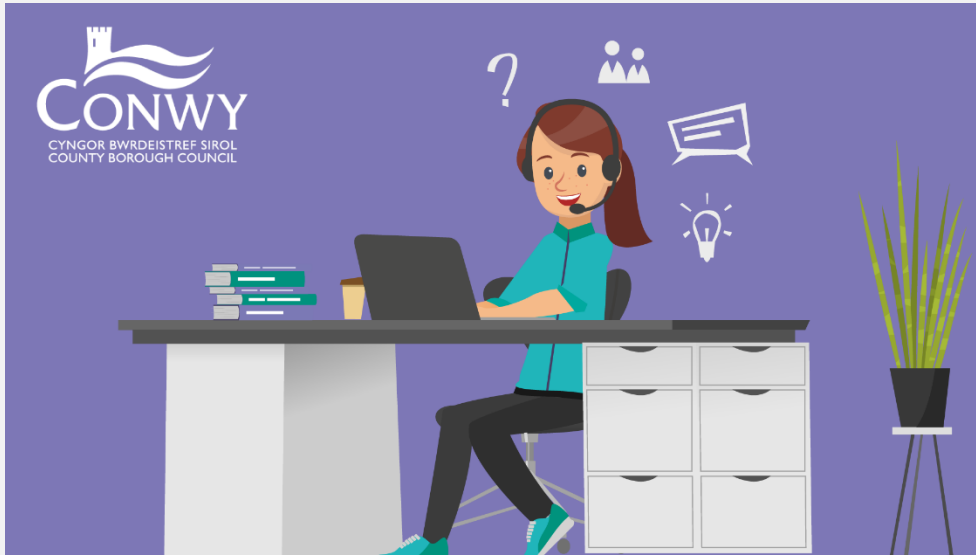
CIW Assurance Check

In June 2021 Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) conducted an Assurance Check to review how well Conwy Social Services are continuing to help and support adults and children, with a focus on safety and well-being. They assessed us against the four principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) act 2014, recording their judgements and findings against: Voice and control; Prevention; Well-being; Partnerships and integration. The report was extremely positive about the way that we responded to the pandemic and continued to support vulnerable individuals in Conwy. Highlights include:

- “People have a strong voice and control over the support they receive with practice focused on what matters to the individuals, the outcome they want to achieve, and how they can use their own strengths and resources to promote their well-being.”
- “Managers are engaged in quality assurance of work activities, and it was refreshing to see a clear approach to audit of casework and learning being disseminated.”

- “Providers spoke positively of the support they had received from the local authority during the pandemic. They valued the level of communication and the quality of the advice and support received.”

CIW will continue to monitor our performance through on-going performance evaluation meetings with Heads of Service and the Director.



Children’s home inspection

CIW visited our in-house children’s home, Glan yr Afon in November 2021 to undertake an unannounced inspection. They followed a plan to speak to the children, review several documents, inspect the environment, and review the leadership and management of the service.

The inspectors were satisfied that assessment and support for the young people, and support to develop independent living skills, is working well at the home. They also noted that the young people are able to express their views and opinions, and are encouraged and supported with their education, attending schools in Conwy. They commented that the home

environment is good, and there are regular opportunities for activities for the young people.

Since the inspection, a number of recommended improvements have been introduced within the setting, including health and safety recording, home policy revisions, and additional staff training to support the changing needs of young people.

Youth Justice Services Inspection

In April 2021 Conwy’s Youth Justice Service took part in a joint inspection of education, employment and training services in Youth Offending Teams (YOT) in England and Wales. The inspection was undertaken jointly by HM Inspectorate of Probation, Estyn and Ofsted, and included several Local Authorities from England.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic some inspections were undertaken remotely and others face to face, where restrictions allowed. Cases of children involved with YOTs were examined, along with post-court cases and out of court disposal cases. Meetings were held with staff, partners, and stakeholders, in addition to Estyn and Ofsted holding interviews with education providers.

The inspection was positive about Conwy’s operational performance, and the support and engagement offered and received by children and young people. It was also noted that children working with YOTs generally receive good quality education, training and employment works. Good examples of effective practice was gathered and these were readily definable in all YOTs inspected.

Following the inspection, we have implemented recommendations for improvement, such as around the area of leadership and governance and ensuring that management boards have more oversight. We are also ensuring that young people and their families have a say in shaping our service through engagement and participation.

More Than Just Words: Delivering the ‘Active Offer’

An ‘Active offer’ simply means providing a service in Welsh without someone having to ask for it. In 2016 Mark Drakeford (then Minister for Health and Social Services) stated that:

“Ensuring the safety, dignity and respect of Welsh speakers is at the heart of providing health and social services in Welsh. It is not just about complying with legal requirements and maintaining professional standards; it is also about improving the quality of care and meeting the language needs of people and providing good public services that focus on individuals.”

In Conwy we play our part in ensuring that the Active Offer is embedded in our culture, ensuring quality and safety for Welsh speakers in the county. Particularly important is ensuring that individuals who receive care and support from us are able to communicate with support staff in their language of choice.

Following CIW’s Assurance Check in June 2021 they reported that:

The local authority is proactive in its approach to the Welsh language ‘Active Offer’. At the beginning of the involvement information is captured on the individual’s preferred language. We found assessments conducted through the medium of Welsh and English in accordance with people’s wishes.

North Wales Population Assessment

The North Wales Population Assessment report is an assessment of the care and support needs of the population in North Wales, including the support needs of carers. It aims to improve our understanding of our population and how it might change over the coming years to help us provide better public services in the area. Created by the North Wales

Social Care and Wellbeing Services Improvement Collaborative, they review statistics, speak with communities and make use of a wide range of information collected by local councils, health services, charities and other organisations that provide services.

The report covers children and young people, older people, health, physical disability and sensory impairment, learning disabilities, mental health, carers, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, the secure estate, veterans, homelessness, and autistic spectrum disorder, providing key messages and recommendations around each topic based on the evidence gathered.

The current report was created in 2017, however a new report for 2022 will be published soon and will be available to view on [the Improvement Collaborative website](#).

Performance Management Framework

The new Welsh Government Performance Management Framework was implemented in April 2020, which includes a new set of performance targets and measures. These measures underpin all aspects of the work we do, by informing our management teams of progress, good practice and emerging trends. The purpose of these measures and targets, both at a national and local level is not just to monitor performance but also allows us to plan the delivery of our services going forward. As a result, we can proactively manage any potential issues, mitigate against risks, and use the information to drive our future services.

| Quality Standard 1 - All people are equal partners who have voice, choice and control over their lives and are able to achieve what matters to them. | | |
|---|---|------------------|
| Performance Indicator description | 2020-2021 | 2021-2022 |
| The total number of packages of reablement completed during the year (AD/010) | 770 | 749 |
| The number of contacts for adults received by statutory Social Services during the year (AD/001) | 5,639 | 5,571 |
| Quality Standard 2 – Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled, well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision. | | |
| The number of vacant posts that were advertised during the year | 113 Vacancy requests | 258 |
| The number of vacant posts which were successfully recruited to | 6 vacancies were not appointed to. 4 were covered by Agency workers. 40 vacancies are currently being recruited to. | 183 |
| Quality Standard 3 – 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. | | |
| The total number of children looked after who returned home during the year (CH/045) | 10 | 14 |
| The number of children looked after at 31st March who have had three or more placements during the year (CH/043) | 14 | 13 |
| The total number of initial Pathway Plans due to be completed during the year (CH/049) | Figures unavailable | 12 |
| Quality Standard 4 – 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. | | |
| The total number of children looked after on the 31st March who have experienced one or more changes of school during the year (excluding transitional arrangements, moves associated with adoption or moves home) (CH/044) | Figures unavailable | 9 |
| Quality Standard 5 – Effective partnerships are in place to commission and deliver fully integrated, high quality, sustainable outcomes for people. | | |
| The total number of children with a care and support plan at 31st March (CH/015) | 1,014 | 712 |
| The total number of children with a care and support plan where needs a met through a Direct Payment at 31st March (CH/016) | 106 | 60 |
| The number of adults with a care and support plan at 31st March (AD/012) | 3,026 | 4,336 |
| The total number of adults with a care and support plan where needs are met through a Direct Payment at 31st March (AD/013) | 186 | 141 |
| Quality Standard 6 – People are encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as equal partners. | | |
| The total number of care leavers in categories 2,3 and 4 who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in the 12 months since leaving care (CH/054a) | 17 | 8 |

| | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| The total number of care leavers in categories 2,3 and 4 who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in the 13 – 24 months since leaving care (CH/054b) | 26 | 26 |
| The total number of care leavers who experience homelessness during the year (As defined by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014) within 12 months of leaving care (CH/052) | 16 | 25 |
| Quality Standard 7 – People are protected and safeguarded from abuse and neglect, and any other types of harm. | | |
| The total number of enquiries completed within 7 days from the receipt of the reported alleged abuse (AD/024) | 79 | 114 |
| Of those children who were placed on the child protection register during the year, the number that has been previously registered under any category, at any time during the previous 12 months (CH/024) | 9 | 0 |
| The average length of time for all children who were on the CPR during the year (PMC28) | 247.58 days | 225.45 days |
| Quality Standard 8 – 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. | | |
| The number of young people leaving care who move into a 'When I am Ready' placement (CH/055) | 5 | 2 |
| The total number of young people during the year where a personal adviser was allocated as required - within 3 months if they become cat 1 or 4 see guidance (CH/051) | 28 | 10 |

Looking forward to 2022-23 and beyond

Finance & Commissioning Review project outcomes

In this report we reflected on the work of the Older People Transformation Project over the last twelve months. An important aspect of the project has been the consultation work and all the feedback we have gained from this.

The project has also been identified as a key strategic priority for Social Care over the next year. The aims of the project cover many aspects of improving domiciliary care primarily for the service user but also to ensure professionals are working in a joined up approach; address the recruitment and retention challenges faced by the sector; and future proof the service as demand is expected to increase.

In the next year we will focus on proposed changes we have outlined to improve the delivery of domiciliary care in Conwy. We are in the process of going through the different stages of scrutiny and approval for the model. Business processes are being updated and realigned in preparation and consultation with different stakeholders is ongoing. If proposals are approved, a gradual transition starting with new referrals to ensure minimal disruption to Conwy citizens, will begin 1st April 2022. We believe these changes will improve the quality of the service provided to individuals.

Opening our new Disability Respite Centre

The proposal to develop the site at Dinerth Road to provide a residential respite service for people with Disabilities alongside an improved Nursery with Café and shop was developed in 2017.

Since that time officers have worked to realise the plans, working with colleagues across the Council and with partners in the BCUHB. Plans were approved and funding secured, with work beginning on site last year. We are expecting the building to be completed at the end of the summer in 2022 and for services to become operational on-site in November 2022.



It is an exciting development which will provide equality of respite provision for people with disabilities. It will also enable us to work with Health to support people to remain living in the community, avoiding escalation of need through providing a wrap-around response at times of crisis.

The development on the lower site will enable an improved service offer to people with learning disabilities who wish to move closer to the world of employment. Partnering with a social enterprise and with the Council Employability Service we will provide work experience opportunities for people with a learning disability.

Bryn Euryn Nursery will offer an accessible service for customers and will continue to provide work opportunities for people with learning disabilities across the new site and Tan Lan Nurseries. Both the Nursery and

café/shop will form part of our new pathways to support people with a learning disability to move closer to employment.



Bwthyn y Ddôl children's assessment centre

Progress on our much-anticipated children's assessment centre has been hampered due to the construction company going into administration in July 2021. Due to the tight timescales and high risks involved, the Local Authority's Cabinet approved a mini-competition to find a replacement contractor from the pool of applicants to our initial procurement exercise. Only one company was in a position to take on the work, which is subject to tight timescales in terms of heavy groundworks and Welsh Government funding criteria. We are in talks with Welsh Government around additional funding to mitigate the costs incurred by the original construction company going into administration. Work will continue on the build throughout 2022-23 so we will update you on progress in the next annual report.

WCCIS

In last year's report we talked a lot about the implementation of our new client information system, called WCCIS. It went 'live' back in November 2020 and since then we have focused on embedding the new way of recording into day to day workloads across the service and providing ongoing training and support for our users.

What were the challenges?

As with any new IT system, there have been some technical issues along the way, and unfortunately we have experienced long periods of poor system performance. All issues have been escalated to the system supplier who, in conjunction with the national team, Digital Health Care Wales, have been working hard to resolve them. We have since seen an improvement in the stability and reliability of the system.

What's next?

We are planning to integrate WCCIS with a care scheduling system used within our Reablement service. We hope to go live with this integration over the next year following a period of testing.

We will continue to update WCCIS to reflect the changing needs of our teams, any recommendations received from Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), and statutory changes resulting from Welsh Government policy and guidance. As the primary working tool for our social care practitioners (and some of our partners) we remain engaged with and committed to improving their experience of working with WCCIS and continuing to build on their confidence and skills.

Dinerth Road development

The Dinerth Road Development Programme is a partnership between Conwy County Borough Council (CCBC), Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) and Grŵp Llandrillo Menai (GLLM), who are collaborating to establish a new Extra Care Housing Scheme and Health and Wellbeing provision at the site. This is a complex programme of work and much has been done during 2021-22 to firm up requirements and

identify procurement routes available to the Partnership to deliver the above development. 2022-23 will be an important year for the programme:

- During April 2022 we will complete the engagement with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to confirm their interest, and to understand their thoughts around the possible procurement routes;
- Between April 2022 and October 2022 the Project Team will be developing the detailed Technical Specification and standard procurement documents in preparation for the procurement exercise due to commence in January 2023, subject to relevant approvals;
- During the early summer months we will be looking to complete the purchase of the land at Dinerth Road from Welsh Government (subject to relevant approvals), a key milestone for the project;
- During late Spring/early Summer, BCUHB colleagues will be undertaking public engagement in respect of the intensive therapy service, the outcome of which will shape their revenue business case;
- Following the submission of the BCUHB Business Case in November 2022 we will seek approval through the democratic process for the preferred procurement route to be adopted for the development – this is scheduled to take place in December 2022;
- Subject to relevant approvals in December 2022 the programme will then begin the procurement process, anticipated to last between 8 – 12 months, depending on the procurement route adopted.

We will update you on how this exciting programme of work is progressing in next year's report.

Recovering from the impact of the Covid pandemic

We have recognised that whilst we continue to manage and respond to Covid-19, we also need to plan for “recovery”, addressing the impact on public health, service users, our staff and voluntary/community sector partners affected by restrictions and disruption during the pandemic; all whilst working with local communities to improve health and wellbeing.



A key priority for Conwy is ensuring continued investment in our staff and working collaboratively to improve the wellbeing of our workforce. Equally, our focus on workforce retention remains vital as we move forward.

Our workforce plans include a focus on:

- Staff health and wellbeing as we recover from the pandemic, with a specific focus on the physical and mental impact on staff, and ensuring safety and learning cultures.

- An agreed approach to further developing workforce-related elements alongside a review of all of our workforce planning assumptions.
- Delivering a refreshed workforce strategy that incorporates learning from the pandemic and the workforce implications of our recovery plan.
- Continuing work on retention and sharing best practice for staff health and wellbeing with inclusive safety cultures across all of our organisations and partners.
- Recruitment and retention within our Children and Families social work teams, which has been a particularly challenging area during the last two years.

The pandemic has required the need to think differently about how we deliver our commitment to individuals. Technology has been used more than ever before.

Services have risen to the challenge and adapted with creativity during the Covid-19 pandemic to protect staff and our citizens. It is important that we continue to build on these successes.

There continues to be risk related to demand, and workforce recruitment and retention, and we plan to build upon the benefits of Conwy's Workwise 2020 project which addresses how the Council operates now and in the future.

The vision for the project is to:

- Progress towards new, more productive ways of working that create opportunity and improved outcomes for all.
- Balance the vision above against the need for society and the economy to recover, whilst managing the risk.

- Build upon the beneficial ways of working which became apparent during lockdown, and ensure that these continue on a longer-term basis.
- Try to do things differently in the future to support carbon reduction, staff welfare, service delivery to the people we support and our efficiency as a department (and wider organisation).



Due to the pressures incurred by the Covid-19 pandemic and the recruitment crisis, we are also having to address the volume of work now faced by our staff. We will continue to work collaboratively on staff retention, sharing best practice and up-skilling our staff to promote health and wellbeing with a culture of safety across all of our organisations and partners. We need to:

- Ensure a sufficiently large, skilled, safe and focused workforce to promote the wellbeing of people
- Develop and implement a plan to attract, recruit and retain the social care workforce
- Support social care recovery planning

- Incorporate lessons learnt from new ways of working to design, develop and implement quality frameworks for teams

As part of its offer to staff, Conwy already provides a free-to-use counselling service to provide support with any work or personal matters. A suite of information-packed web pages on topics such as stress management, supporting individuals through periods of change, advice on alcohol and substance abuse and mental health are always just a few clicks away from every employee. In February 2022 we participated in the Time to Talk initiative, with a series of activities, information and talk sessions all aimed at improving our mental health. The full day included sessions on mental health myth busting, the benefits of walking in the countryside, volunteering opportunities, reading for mental health and menopause awareness sessions.



Regular opportunities with line managers for discussions around work and home commitments ensure that issues can be supported and resolved in a culture of openness and mutual respect.

Accessing further information and key documents

Director's Annual Report (previous years)

<https://conwysocialservicesannualreport.org.uk/>

Corporate Plan 2017-2022

<http://www.conwy.gov.uk/en/Council/Strategies-Plans-and-Policies/Corporate-Plan/Corporate-Plan-2017-2022.aspx>

How we commission services

<http://www.conwy.gov.uk/en/Resident/Social-Care-and-Wellbeing/Policies-Plans-and-Reports/How-we-Commission-Services.aspx>

Care Inspectorate Wales

<https://careinspectorate.wales/>

Social Care Wales

<https://socialcare.wales/>

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act

<https://gov.wales/well-being-of-future-generations-wales>

Conwy Family Centres

<https://www.conwy.gov.uk/en/Resident/Social-Care-and-Wellbeing/Children-and-families/Conwy-Family-Centres/Conwy-Family-Centres.aspx>

Corporate Safeguarding Policy

<http://www.conwy.gov.uk/en/Resident/Social-Care-and-Wellbeing/Im-worried-about-somebody/Corporate-Safeguarding-Policy.aspx>

North Wales Social Care and Well-being Services Improvement Collaborative

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

Measuring Social services performance: code of practice

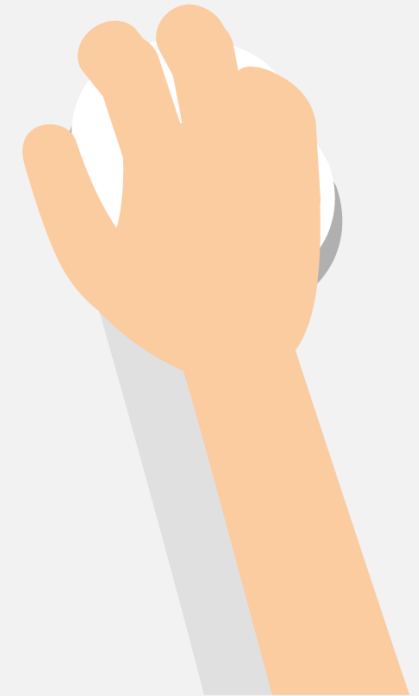
<https://gov.wales/measuring-social-services-performance-code-practice>

Wales Safeguarding Procedures

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

A Healthier Wales

<https://gov.wales/healthier-wales-long-term-plan-health-and-social-care>



Concerns about an individual

If you are aware of an individual who is at risk of abuse or who is being abused, it is very important that you inform the Council or the Police.

If the individual is in imminent danger, call the police immediately on 999. If they are not in imminent danger, call Social Services as soon as possible to share your concerns.

Reporting an adult at risk

Telephone: 0300 456 1111

Out of hours telephone: 0300 123 3079

E-mail: wellbeing@conwy.gov.uk

Visit our website: [Report an adult at risk](#)

Reporting a child at risk

If you wish to make an enquiry, or you are concerned about a child's safety please contact us:

Telephone: 01492 575 111

Out of hours telephone: 0300 123 3079

Visit our website: [Report a child at risk](#)

