



# ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES 2023/24



Dear Sir/Madam,

Just to bring to your attention that two of your Staff members through their due diligence and Care may have Saved my mother's life

My mother developed an infection in her Scar from her recent gall bladder operation which is located and hidden by her right breast. This could have so easily been missed, but these two outstanding ladies by their due diligence identified the infection and brought it to our attention. This could and would have so easily ended up as Sepsis

The whole team are all outstanding and exemplary in their work. They are always upbeat and have a smile on their faces. My mother so looks forward to their visits and instantly lifts her mood. They have a huge impact on her wellbeing and put the feel good factor back in her life.

I can't stress enough how important these Support Workers are in the improvement of not only the lives of patients/clients but also to the immediate families who care for them.

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- *Os ydych chi angen yr adroddiad yma mewn iaith neu fformat arall, ffoniwch ni ar 01766 771000 neu e-bostiwch [Cydraddoldeb@gwynedd.llyw.cymru](mailto:Cydraddoldeb@gwynedd.llyw.cymru)*
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- *إذا أردت هذا التقرير بلغة أو تنسيق (شكل) بديل، فيرجى الاتصال بنا على ٠١٧٦٦ ٧٧١٠٠٠ أو البريد الإلكتروني [Equality@gwynedd.llyw.cymru](mailto:Equality@gwynedd.llyw.cymru)*

**\*\*In order to protect the privacy of individuals, we have changed names in the stories that appear in this report\*\***

# AN OVERVIEW OF THE PAST YEAR...

<p><b>4,488</b> <math>\Downarrow</math><sub>70</sub></p> <p>ADULT CONTACTS</p> 	<p><b>7,230</b> <math>\Uparrow</math><sub>55</sub></p> <p>CHILDREN'S REFERRALS</p> 	<p><b>5,576</b> <math>\Uparrow</math><sub>11</sub></p> <p>MENTAL HEALTH REFERRALS</p> 
<p>NUMBER RECEIVING A TELECARE SERVICE (31.03.24)</p> <p><b>1,647</b> <math>\Downarrow</math><sub>16</sub></p> 	<p>NUMBER RECEIVING DIRECT PAYMENTS (MARCH 2024)</p> <p><b>232</b> <math>\Uparrow</math><sub>24</sub></p> <p><small>*15% of the individuals who receive services from the Adults Department, receive it through direct payments</small></p> 	<p><b>281</b> CHILDREN IN CARE (<math>\Leftarrow</math> NO CHANGE)</p> <p><small>*14 are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)</small></p> 
<p>THE NUMBER OF HOURS OF HOME CARE THAT IS PROVIDED PER WEEK ....</p> <p><b>8,782</b> <math>\Downarrow</math><sub>696</sub></p> 	<p>...BUT, WE ARE STILL LOOKING TO PROVIDE</p> <p><b>950</b> <math>\Downarrow</math><sub>213</sub> HOURS A WEEK</p> 	<p>NUMBER OF OLDER PEOPLE IN A RESIDENTIAL OR NURSING HOME (31.03.24)</p> <p><b>803</b> <math>\Uparrow</math><sub>21</sub></p> 
<p><b>97%</b> <math>\Uparrow</math><sub>2%</sub></p> <p>OF CASE CONFERENCES WHERE THE CHILD'S VOICE / OPINION WAS HEARD</p> 	<p><b>94%</b> <math>\Uparrow</math><sub>3%</sub></p> <p>OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING REFERRALS RESPONDED TO WITHIN 7 DAYS</p>	<p>NUMBER OF CARERS ASSESSED</p> <p><b>255</b> <math>\Uparrow</math><sub>45</sub></p> 
<p><b>160</b> <math>\Uparrow</math><sub>39</sub></p> <p>YOUNG CARERS RECEIVING SUPPORT</p> 	<p><b>79%</b> <math>\Downarrow</math><sub>5%</sub></p> <p>OF CHILD PROTECTION REFERRALS THAT WERE RESPONDED TO WITHIN THE STATUTORY PERIOD</p>	<p>NUMBER OF ADULTS WHO HAVE A CARE PLAN (31.03.24)</p> <p><b>2,346</b> <math>\Downarrow</math><sub>124</sub></p> 

# Celebrating successes...

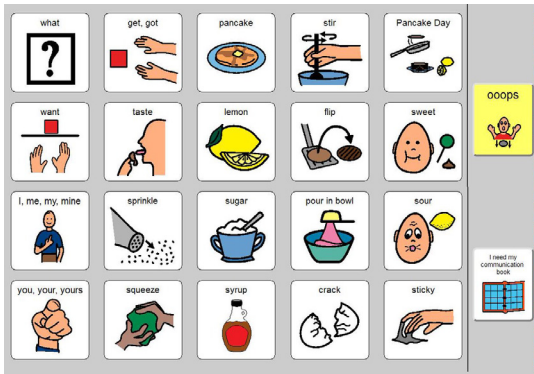
This busy year has been full of challenges, and yet, it is great to be able to celebrate successes and recognise our workforce's hard and good work:

## The trailblazing Youth Justice Service

The Emrallt Team's pioneering work with children and young people who display harmful and inappropriate sexual behaviour, was recognised at an international conference in Cardiff in **August**.

The team, established in 2019, focuses on early intervention and collaborates with various professionals to provide essential training and guidance. To date, over **1,100** practitioners have been trained and Team Emrallt is the first ever to provide this type of service fully bilingual.

## Boardmaker Software in Gwynedd Libraries



Cyngor Gwynedd's Library Service worked with the Children's Department to ensure additional provision for those with autistic spectrum conditions, learning disabilities and speech disorders. .

Since **November** families have had access to Boardmaker software which enables the creation of custom picture communication leaflets (PCS) in Caernarfon, Porthmadog and Dolgellau libraries.

## Collaborating with GISDA to support young people experiencing homelessness

In partnership with the GISDA charity, the Council is supporting a project to renovate the former Natwest building in Caernarfon to provide multipurpose accommodation and a centre for vulnerable young people. 'Lle Da' was officially opened in **January** and consists of four flats, a café, a training centre and space for various activities.

The project is a vital step forward in our efforts to support young people experiencing homelessness in Gwynedd, and an excellent example of how a Local Authority, Government and a third sector organisation can work together to optimise their resources and expertise.





James and Audrey, Home Sharing Scheme

## Gwynedd marks first success of the Home Sharing Scheme

In **February**, Audrey and James' story was shared, both having met through Gwynedd's Home Sharing Scheme. The Scheme helps to address housing challenges by connecting those who need support, with those seeking affordable housing.

*“ James is such good company and helps me around the house. He cooks wonderful meals and helps with my shopping and does some gardening. Having James here gives me such peace of mind and companionship. ”*

Audrey (Home Sharing Scheme)

## Submission of the Age Friendly accreditation application

Throughout the year the Council worked towards achieving an Age Friendly accreditation, including raising awareness, collaborating with partners, engaging with communities and prioritising accessibility and inclusivity in services. Gwynedd's official application to become a member of the Age Friendly Cities and Communities network was submitted in **March**.

# ...and acknowledging the challenges

There is always room to improve, and there are significant challenges facing social services nationally and in Gwynedd.

### Recruitment

The challenges of recruiting an adequate workforce for the provision of effective care to meet the need remain. The cost increase due to inflation, as well as the rise in demand and higher number of complex cases adversely affected social services' budgets during the year, hindering the Council's ability to plan long-term.

### WCCIS

Other significant risks also face social services. Demographic changes bring recurrent and increasing challenges, and in terms of social services procedures the WCCIS computer system will be brought to a halt at the end of 2025. The timetable to establish a new system poses a significant challenge.

### Legal proceedings

There were also cases during the year of crimes against children. Whilst legal proceedings and the courts are doing their work, it is important to consistently learn from these incidents through reviews, and improve services to ensure the safety of those who are most vulnerable in the community.

# CONTEXT: LEADERSHIP, WORKFORCE, FUNDING AND MORE THAN JUST WORDS







## Leadership

Efforts throughout the year aimed to bridge the gap between the Adults, Health and Well-being Department and the Children and Supporting Families Department. With changes afoot to establish a National Office for care services in Wales and a new commissioning framework, it was an ideal time to revisit internal structures.

From early May 2024, the Business Unit for Social Services, including the Commissioning Team will report directly to the Director of Social Services. This ensures efficient operation across both departments, allowing for a clearer focus on the issues that directly affect service provision.

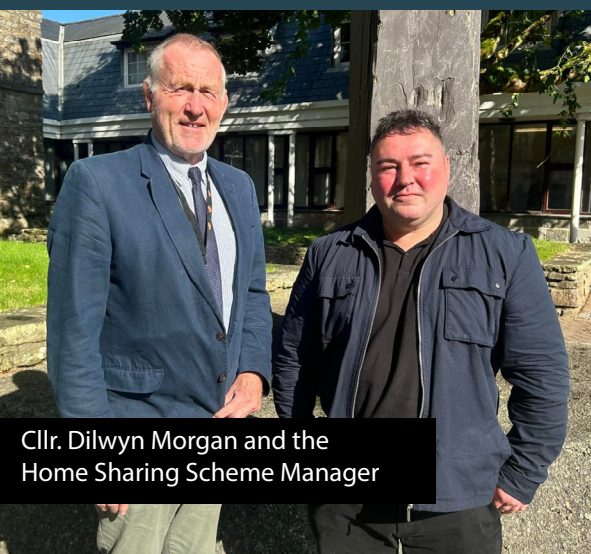
Since the 1990s there has been a move towards Care Managers and to transform social services into a method of assessing for and providing care. More recently, and specifically since the introduction of the Social Services and Well-being Act in 2014, there has been a development in social work and occupational therapy, seeing them as interventions in their own right. One of the Director's aims is to promote professionalism in the field and to ensure that the right officers have the correct qualifications in the future.

The Director met with the Head of the Adults and the Children's Department every two months to address national policy issues, risks and celebrate successes. During 2024/25 a Social Services Management Team is planned, bringing together the managers of both

<p><b>1,505</b></p> <p>NUMBER OF STAFF EMPLOYED IN THE SOCIAL SERVICES</p> 	<p>NET BUDGET OF THE ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING DEPARTMENT</p> <p><b>£81M</b></p> 
<p>NET BUDGET OF THE CHILDREN AND FAMILY SUPPORT DEPARTMENT</p> <p><b>£23M</b></p> 	<p>EXPENDITURE OVER THE 2023/24 BUDGET</p> <p><b>£6.5M</b></p> 
<p>NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ASKED THROUGH THE "ASK THE DIRECTOR" SYSTEM</p> <p><b>62</b></p> 	<p>NUMBER ATTENDED "THANK YOU" SESSIONS FOR CARERS (SEPT-OCT 2023)</p> <p><b>181</b></p> 

departments to address common challenges.

Political governance within the Council has remained robust over the past year, offering clear support and effective scrutiny. The departmental performance challenge structure is stable, with ongoing efforts to improve transparency and accuracy in reporting performance data.



Cllr. Dilwyn Morgan and the Home Sharing Scheme Manager



Cllr. Elin Walker with the Head of the Children's Department and the Families First Team

## Workforce

The year has not been without its challenges and the hard work by the workforce, often under very difficult circumstances, is appreciated. Gwynedd is very fortunate to have an excellent workforce and their dedication was highlighted when the Director and Cabinet Members visited social work teams, home-carers and residential homes across the county.

The aim during the year has been to improve communication with staff members, and an 'Ask the Director' process for receiving and responding to anonymous questions was put in place. Work was also started on co-drafting a charter for domiciliary carers. Regular meetings with Community Resources Teams (who are the local teams of social workers, occupational therapists and social work practitioners responsible for the care of older people) have also been crucial.

While the number of vacancies remain similar to last year, attracting and retaining a workforce continue to be significant barriers.

Ongoing recruitment drives have been undertaken across the county to try to meet the challenge faced today, and several open days were held across the county in conjunction with local colleges.

*“ This helped me decide that I want to be an occupational therapist. I learnt many new things and it made me keen to work in this medical field in the future.”*

Attendee at a workshop for occupational therapists at Coleg Llandrillo Menai, Dolgellau

## Care Academy

The Council is also looking to try and tackle recruitment barriers with the introduction of a Care Academy. The scheme will be an exciting development, offering a career path in social care - from managerial positions to specialist roles such as social workers, occupational therapists or nursing. Everyone who passes through the academy will gain valuable cross-sector experience.

The scheme will be funded from April 2024, and it is hoped that the academy will welcome its first trainees early in 2024/25.

## Salaries and a career path

There has been a national demand for a pay structure for social workers that reflects the system used for teachers. Despite the urgency highlighted in a recent report on the development of a National Care Service, progress slowed down.

In Gwynedd, social workers and occupational therapists have historically earned less than their counterparts across Wales, pushing experienced professionals to look for better offers nearby.

Following engagement with the workforce, the Task and Finish Group proposed two new pay scales starting in June 2024 – one for newly qualified workers and an extra scale for a lead role.

This change will bring Gwynedd's pay to be more on par with the Health Board and other local authorities, aiming to retain valued staff and stabilise the workforce.



The Director of Social Services in a thank you session for carers

Head of the Adult Department in a thank you session for carers



## Financial Resources

The 2023/24 revenue budget shows that Gwynedd's social services are responsible for a gross budget of **£127 million**, underlining its role as a cornerstone of the local economy.

Nevertheless, it has not been an easy year financially and as expected, the cost-of-living crisis, inflation and unexpected costs such as higher fees for external nursing homes and out-of-county residential placements for vulnerable children has put a strain on both departments' budgets.

By the end of the financial year the Adults Department was spending **£3.8M** above its budget (net **£81M**) and the Children's Department was spending an additional **£2.5M** (**£23M** net).

In addition to the above challenges, the need to make further savings was seen in the budgets and both departments prepared and worked to realise multi-million pound savings.

In the second part of the financial year social services further prepared for budget cuts for the 2024/25 year.

## More than just words

When receiving care or health services, communicating in your first language is essential, not optional, and the Active Offer to provide services in Welsh without asking was undertaken on all occasions. The More than Just Words group meets monthly to promote the bilingualism of the workforce, amend forms, remind providers of their duty to use bilingual public statements, and adjust the wording of external care services contracts to ensure compliance.

There are recruitment barriers, specifically when trying to attract Welsh-speaking occupational therapists and domiciliary carers. Challenges were also highlighted in the ability to work bilingually when working with partners, and a project was initiated with Canolfan Bedwyr to consider translation memory systems to facilitate multi-agency working.

The Council collaborated with academics and regional groups to refine bilingual service practices. Upcoming efforts will include producing a range of educational videos and participating in PhD research to deepen understanding of the effects of Welsh-language care services.

## Research: Llechen Lân (A Clean Slate)

*In June 2023, the Llechen Lân project team began meeting to conduct comprehensive research to disclose the actual cost of providing adult services, setting the stage for strategic planning over the next 10-20 years.*

*Local, county, national and international data was analysed, including census details, budgets and population projections. The research findings point to an urgent need to change: it indicates that our current social care models are unsustainable bearing in mind the changing demographics and increased demand due to the rise in the over-65 population.*








*There will be further action and planning early in 2024/25 to respond to the challenge faced.*



Dementia Day, June 2023  
(Picture by Ian Smith)

# PEOPLE: VOICE AND CONTROL



 <p><b>37</b></p> <p>0 INDIVIDUALS WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY IN PAID WORK</p>	 <p><b>97%</b></p> <p>OF CASE CONFERENCES WHERE THE CHILD'S VOICE / OPINION WAS HEARD</p>	<p>NUMBER OF CHILDREN RECEIVING THE SUPPORT OF THE TROBWyNT TEAM (FEBRUARY 2024)</p>  <p><b>63</b></p>	<p>NUMBER RECEIVING A HOME CARE SERVICE (MARCH 2024)</p> <p><b>841</b></p> 
<p>NUMBER RECEIVING DIRECT PAYMENTS (MARCH 2024)</p> <p><b>232</b></p> 	<p>NUMBER RECEIVING A TELECARE SERVICE (31.03.24)</p> <p><b>1,647</b></p> 	<p><b>100%</b></p> <p>HAD A GOOD EXPERIENCE WITH THE SUPPORT THEY RECEIVED FROM THE LLWYBRAU LLESIAI TEAM (QUARTER 4)</p>	<p>NUMBER WAITING FOR A HOME CARE SERVICE (MARCH 2024)</p> <p><b>128</b></p> 

## What went well?

Residents are central to social services in Gwynedd. It is important to ensure that the provision we offer has been co-created and co-produced to respond to the needs of individuals.

### Children's Services

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) recently praised the Children's Services for prioritising children's voices and experiences in decisions regarding safety.

The teams work closely with families to understand their challenges and work with parents to improve their situations. This approach helps prevent placing children in care unnecessarily.

*“ Thank you for everything. I'm not sure I would be the person I am today without you there to guide me and listen to me and teach me all the things I now know. Thank you again for everything. ”*

Parent (Support by Trobwynt Team)

*“ You're like a mother I never had – you listen to me and keep to your word. ”*

Child (Support by Trobwynt Team)

### Learning Disabilities Service

Learning Disabilities Services staff members invest time to understand each person's needs and interests, focusing on individual objectives, whether this is online safety, managing budgets, personal hygiene, or job opportunities.

By continually listening to users' interests, staff find ways to include them in existing community activities or start new groups where necessary. The Llwybrau Llesiant (Well-being Pathway) Team organises activities ranging from cinema trips, pub karaoke nights, to golf competitions and a boccia league – all led by the voice of the individuals.

The number of individuals on the work opportunity pathway increased significantly from **58** in April 2023 to **99** by March 2024. There are now **37** individuals in paid work, with contracts in place with local businesses and Town and Community Councils.

Positive feedback was received about helping people to reconnect with the community, make friends, and learn new skills following the pandemic. Participants praise the team's willingness to accept suggestions, highlighting results that include improved physical and emotional well-being, reduced anxiety and a very strong sense of community.



Tidying-up the area, work for Caernarfon Town Council



## Age-friendly Gwynedd

The Adults Department also organised forums to listen to and hear the voices of older adults across the county, whilst working towards the Gwynedd Age-Friendly accreditation.

As Gwynedd is a vast geographical area, many methods were trialled including local forums where information was shared and where individuals were heard. As well as organising forums, staff also attended meetings with established groups to have a conversation and discussion with attendees.

## What could be improved?

### Providing Services for older people

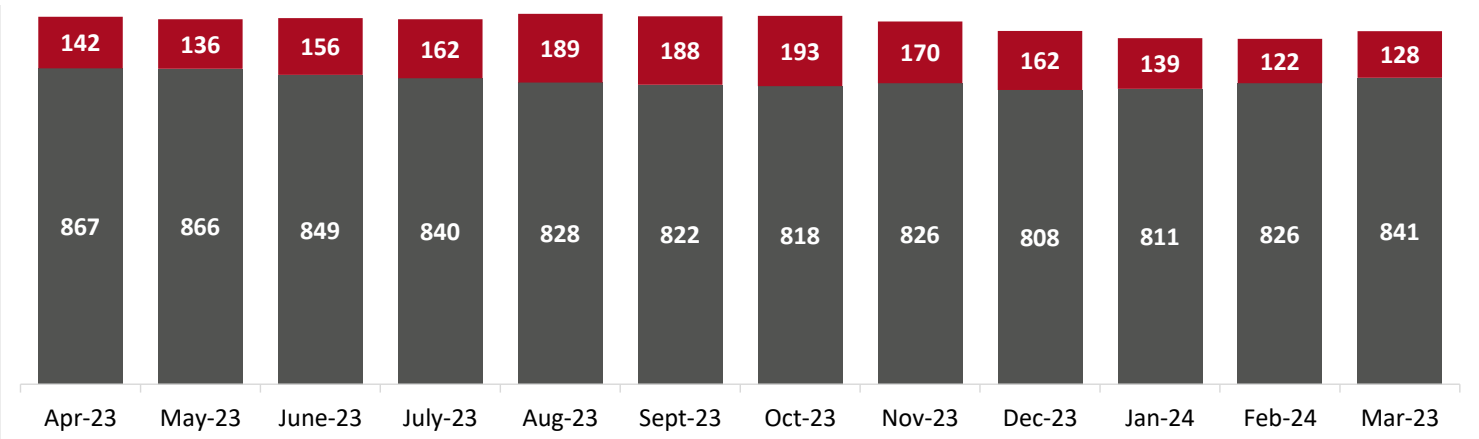
Gwynedd relies more on home care and residential homes for older people than other Welsh counties, while underutilising direct payments, technology and community-based approaches. As a result, there is a workforce shortage, significant overspending on statutory services, and a risk that individuals are prevented from living as independently as possible and unable to manage their care.

On average **8,782 hours** of domiciliary care were provided per week during 2023/24. This is a staggering figure and is worth celebrating.

On the other hand, we have waiting lists and we cannot provide **950 hours** a week. While there has been a reduction in the number waiting for care compared to 2022/23 and the trend is moving in the right direction, progress in this area of work been slower than expected.

Despite the intention, social workers and occupational therapists do not have the resources they need in order to work based on strengths every time. They cannot provide services in innovative ways unless there are different services available for them to refer to. In view of the demographic challenges social services has to move away from traditional methods and build confidence in providing care in an alternative manner. Further steps must be taken urgently to tackle barriers to using alternative services and reduce the strain on the home care waiting list.

**Number of individuals receiving home care (grey) and number on the waiting list for home care (red)**



## What difference was made?

### Tomos' Story

Tomos, a man in his 70s who lives with dementia, maintains good physical health, enjoys the outdoors and values his independence. He enjoys his daily walks, but as his dementia worsened he started to go missing.

After being referred to social services by his wife, a social worker recommended technology-assisted care. Within days, Tomos received a GPS 'Buddi' device to wear around his neck, and his wife received guidance on using the app and the website.

The device allowed the family to track Tomos' whereabouts in emergencies or when he strayed from his normal route. It enabled Tomos to remain independent while minimising risks and easing family concerns.

The Buddi device also lets Tomos call for help if he needed, connecting him directly to Galw Gofal staff. They could assist him without involving the emergency services, saving significant public resources.



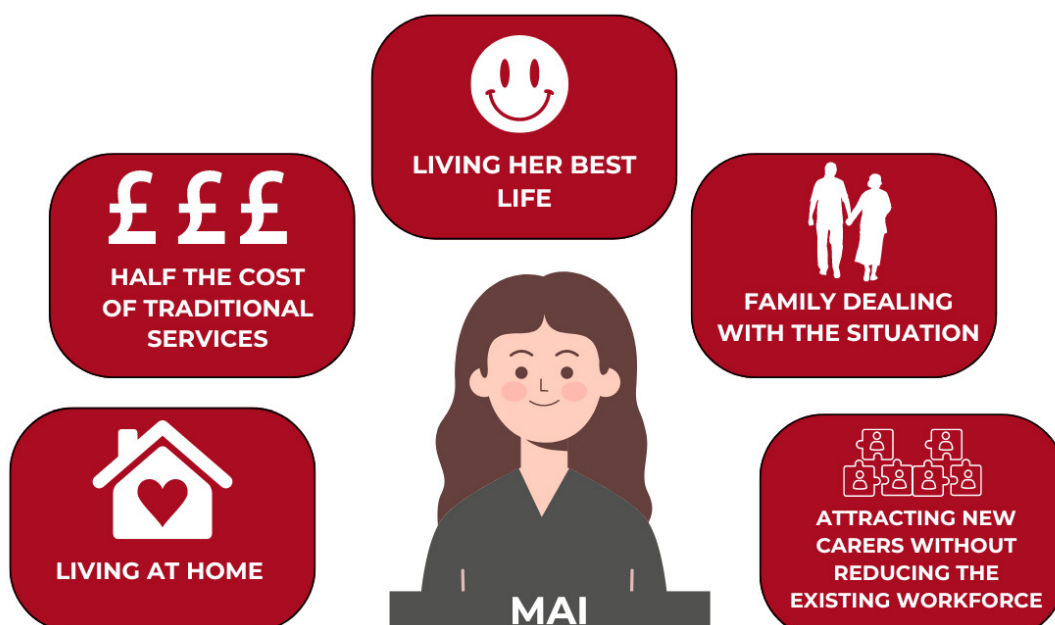
### Mai's Story

Mai, a 67-year-old woman who lives at home with her husband, is living with dementia.

During the pandemic period, it became clear that the family needed extra support to meet her care needs. They found a personal assistant called Carol, who started by providing seven hours of support a week through direct payments. Over time, this support has increased to over 30 hours per week.

Carol assists in many ways, such as taking Mai shopping, on day trips, and visiting her friends. Carol now feels like a family member, and both have developed a very close relationship.

Mai's weekly Direct Payments are **£488.70**, while the cost of moving into a dementia care home would be **£855.75** per week.



## What progress was made against the promises stated in last year's report?

Last year's promises	Progress
Draft a communication and engagement plan across the care field	<p>In November, an engagement exercise was held with service users and the public in order to find the best ways to communicate and share information. Based on their recommendations, a comprehensive Communications Plan was produced to be implemented in 2024/25.</p> <p>Forums for older people continue to be popular and successful. To ensure participation across the wide area of Gwynedd, a number of local events will be held to listen to the voices of older residents.</p>
Supporting our residents through the process of digital transformation and ensure that technology is used to its full potential.	<p>Around 30% of analogue packages have transitioned to digital packages and the work is accelerating. It is expected that all cases will have transferred by the end of 2024, ahead of the digital transition in January 2027.</p> <p>With rapidly developing technology, social services are trialling a number of innovative tools including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASK Sarah, an online occupational therapy tool;</li> <li>• VENDLET beds for turning individuals during the night;</li> <li>• Sensor mats that alert families when a vulnerable person leaves the house;</li> <li>• GPS systems to wear around the neck such as Buddi;</li> <li>• A device in the house to track changes in mobility to monitor a person's well-being.</li> </ul>
Revisiting the way we support the care provision process through direct payments	<p>The direct payment support service provided by an external company was terminated, and three members of staff have transferred to the Council.</p> <p>The percentage of the department's services that are provided through direct payments increased during the period, from 13% to 15%. This is lower than what was hoped.</p>

## 2024/25 Promises









The Council will:

- Look at what prevents workers from increasing their use of direct payments, offering them to individuals under their care.
- Make sure that we are aware of developments in the field of technology and robotics and can offer these as a solution to care needs.
- Develop and provide an occupational therapy tool service, ASK Sarah, so that it is available on the Council's website.
- Develop a directory of community-based activities for people of all ages through Dewis Cymru, starting with two pilot areas, Bangor and Dolgellau.

A full list of strategic priorities for next year can be found at: [A Caring Gwynedd](#)

# PREVENTION



<p>NUMBER OF CARERS ASSESSED</p> <p><b>255</b></p> 	<p><b>284</b></p> <p>RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM DEMENTIA ACTIF</p> 	<p>NUMBER OF CHILDREN RECEIVING SHORT BREAK SUPPORT THROUGH AMSER NI (DERWEN)</p> <p><b>44*</b></p> <p>*quarter 4 (Jan-Mar 24)</p> 	<p>THE NUMBER OF "HELP WITH LIVING COSTS" EVENTS HELD</p> <p><b>68*</b></p> <p>*quarter 4 (Jan-Mar 24)</p> 
<p><b>160</b></p> <p>YOUNG CARERS RECEIVING SUPPORT</p> 	<p><b>53*</b></p> <p>RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM THE RAP SERVICE (REPATRIATION AND PREVENTION)</p> <p>*quarter 4 (Jan-Mar 24)</p> 	<p><b>9,420*</b></p> <p>VISITS TO THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE HUBS</p> <p>*quarter 4 (Jan-Mar 24)</p> 	<p><b>£480,225</b></p> <p>TOTAL AMOUNT OF EXTRA INCOME CLAIMED FOR THE RESIDENTS OF GWYNEDD THROUGH CITIZENS ADVICE</p> 

## What went well?

Investing in preventative measures in the community can create a more sustainable social care model and reduce the need for statutory services. Several preventative projects are funded through the Regional Integration Fund (RIF) and the work is vital for protecting the health and well-being of residents.

### Dementia Actif

Dementia Actif Gwynedd provides a programme that offers support to persons living with Dementia and their carers. The service continues to go from strength to strength, with nearly 300 receiving support in 2023/24.

Through a mix of light physical exercise activities and an opportunity to build new relationships the service offers vital support to prevent decline. With dementia rates rising, ongoing support is essential to prevent decline.

*“ I wouldn't see or talk to anyone all day if I didn't attend the sessions ”*

Dementia Actif attendee

### Supporting people hubs

Over the past year, several community hubs have been supported across the county, to provide local aid and assistance. The hubs, in collaboration with partners in the area, adapt to meet specific community needs. For example:

- A regular 'quarry supper' to bring people of all ages together to tackle isolation and poverty is hosted by **Partneriaeth Ogwen in Bethesda**.
- Clwb Seiont offers day activities for older people at **Hwb Porthi Dre in Caernarfon**, supported by the **Yr Orsaf hub at Penygroes** and the local Community Resources Team. The provision includes transportation arrangements.
- **Felin Fach in Pwllheli** and **Maes Ni in Maesgeirchen, Bangor**, provide counselling sessions for those struggling to cope due to addiction and mental health issues.

*“ He now has somewhere to go on a daily basis, and he has breakfast here 3 days a week and we are able to support him with daily tasks, give him mental health support or liaise with his solicitor.*

*We have also managed to get his appointments in the building, so for example if someone from the Housing authority needs to meet him, they will meet him here.* ”

Daughter of Attendee at Clwb Seiont





## RAP Service (Repatriation and Prevention)

Preventative investment can save money in the long-run. The main reason for the overspend in the Children's Department this year were the costly out-of-county placements for children in care with complex needs.

Gwynedd's RAP (Rehousing and Prevention) Service offers intensive intervention to support foster parents and carers to manage challenging behaviour and ensure stable placements, avoiding the need to move a vulnerable child far from their community, friends and family. See Beca's story on the next page which highlights the importance of this invaluable service.

## What could be improved?

### More support for unpaid carers

Unpaid carers provide the vast majority of care and support for vulnerable, disabled and unwell individuals in our society and, therefore, they save significant costs for statutory services every year. However, caring for a loved one brings tremendous emotional strain, and the cost-of-living crisis and shortage of employed carers have exacerbated their situation.

It must be asked whether social services are doing enough to support unpaid carers, and the answer is simple: no. Recognising this, steps must be taken to improve the situation.

More work is needed to understand the needs, identify hidden carers, and provide timely and meaningful support to avoid emergencies and enable them to continue caring for longer. The aim is to share information in an accessible and consistent manner, provide breaks for carers across the county, and increase understanding on how to maximise direct payments to pay for respite.

There are undoubtedly examples of good carer support work and services need to build upon this. For example, the success of the work of the Young Carers Officer is noted, who, in conjunction with Action for Children, raises the profile of young carers and maintains a network that continuously listens to the voices of young carers and co-produces solutions with them and on their behalf, for services such as respite.

In addition, projects such as Amser Ni, a part of the Derwen service, help parents of children with complex needs, by ensuring that they get short breaks through a variety of day activities and periods in residential units, such as Hafan y Sêr. Due to the increase in demand, however, the service is unable to offer the full provision to all of those who need it.

*“ Having a link to you guys is always a comfort as I know there's always help there for her ”*  
Parent (Support by Amser Ni and Derwen)

More attention must be paid to the challenges faced by unpaid carers and the impact on their health and well-being. The intention is to increase support for carers by providing resources, respite care, financial support, and recognition, which are essential for sustaining their efforts and improving the effectiveness of the social care system.



Some of Dementia Actif Gwynedd's activities

## What difference was made?

### Beca's story

Beca, 9 years old, was struggling to cope in foster care, and her behaviour caused her first placement to break down completely. A new foster home was found, and Gwynedd RAP (Repatriation and Prevention) Service intervened to prevent another breakdown.

Beca's challenging behaviour stemmed from her desire to return home. She began attending therapy sessions, providing a safe space where Beca could build trust, explore her thoughts and feelings.



Beca gradually accepted the support. Over time she gained insight into her emotions, family relationships, and the confusion surrounding her move from home.

Her creative drawing during sessions helped her to better understand and express herself, allowing her to see varying degrees of happiness despite the challenges.

Beca attended **41 sessions over 18 months**, gaining confidence and learning how to manage her emotions. She settled in her placement, later returning home to her parents' home. With continued support Beca and her family are thriving.

### Ella's story

Ella is a Parent Carers Support Officer who discusses her work in setting up and hosting an unpaid carers support group meeting at Hwb Porthi Dre in Caernarfon:

“

*The carers felt at ease and immediately relaxed there. We were made to feel so welcome. I was able to use their kitchen to make tea and coffee and one of the staff brought us a tray of homemade cakes. The carers also had the option of having lunch there, which was homemade soup. It was great to see the carers being looked after in this way as they all had such busy and challenging lives.*

*It was lovely to see the carers chatting to each other and sharing stories and information about local activities. The carers were in very similar situations with their caring roles, and were able to understand and relate to each other.*

*This event exceeded expectations. The carers who originally attended have already formed friendships and will continue to support each other outside of the group. Such support is vital for unpaid carers who can often feel isolated.*

*[My message is] Don't be afraid to start small and keep trying new things. We feel that this group will go from strength to strength. We would love to see more carers benefit from this support in locations across Gwynedd.*

”

## What progress was made against the promises stated in last year's report?

Last year's promises	Progress
Adopt a Poverty Alleviation and Prevention Plan and evaluate the existing network of Helping People Hubs and expand into further areas.	<p>A comprehensive programme of work was put in place to meet the challenges of poverty which included financial support for food banks, the administration of emergency fuel vouchers, implementing a menstrual dignity scheme, and a series of community events and training on understanding the nature of Gwynedd's poverty. Two Well-being Champions have been appointed, and a series of weekly drop-in sessions in the Siopau Gwynedd have been planned for the year.</p> <p>An evaluation of the hubs was carried out. The main challenge is to ensure that provision is available in all areas, and we have been able to establish a Collaboration Agreement for the Dolgellau and Tywyn area. Further work is needed in Porthmadog and the Dyffryn Peris Area, which continues to be without a hub.</p>
Lead on a Carers Plan to ensure we identify, recognise and support the invaluable work unpaid carers across Gwynedd do.	<p>The partners who provide support to unpaid carers in Gwynedd were identified and the booklet '<a href="#">Looking after Someone</a>' was reviewed as one way of ensuring that information is available in one place.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the provision is very dependent on grant money. Drawing up a county Carers Plan that addresses the need, but is also affordable, will be a tremendous challenge. Following the priorities of the <a href="#">Welsh Government's unpaid Carers Strategy</a>, the Council will carefully weigh the financial risks and the risks to the welfare of individuals when planning for the future.</p>
Make full use of day and respite care services, and look at possible options to remodel the provision in the Ffestiniog and Eifionydd areas.	<p>Post pandemic there has been an opportunity to rethink the way daycare is delivered to Gwynedd residents, moving away from services based on disability, age, and a specific building or centre, and to look at opportunities for individuals to regain community connections.</p> <p>The development of community hubs across the county have led to opportunities for collaboration at a very local level. This has started in a few places already, for example, Porthi Dre in Caernarfon. The intention is to develop the model in order to provide a consistent service across the county including a service for those who live in rural areas.</p> <p>In November 2023 a report was presented to the <a href="#">Care Scrutiny Committee</a>, and it was agreed to carry out a full review of the day care provision and present a further options paper. This will be implemented soon in 2024/25.</p>

## 2024/25 Promises

The Council will:

- Undertake a full review of daycare services across the county.
- Do further work to ensure that the direct payment system is effective, accessible and easy to use by all.
- Further develop the offer to unpaid carers to ensure that all carers have the appropriate opportunities for work, leisure and training.
- Looking at establishing new hubs in the areas that remain unsupported.

A full list of strategic priorities for next year can be found at: [A Caring Gwynedd](#)

# PARTNERSHIPS



“With the cost of living crisis continuing to bite, working together to mitigate the impact of poverty on the Gwynedd residents is essential. The Supporting People Program is a priority for the Cabinet, with every Department contributing - from Finance to the Highways Department.



However, the Council does not have all the answers and I would like to emphasize how important it is to collaborate with third sector and voluntary organisations. The last period has certainly shown that we can do so much more together - from hosting cost of living events to opening up ‘warm welcome’ spaces for anyone to come to in for shade, a chat or a cuppa.”

**Cllr. Nia Jeffreys, Deputy Leader of Gwynedd Council speaking at the Citizens Advice annual meeting, November 2023**

## What went well?

Ensuring effective social services requires close collaboration between public services, the third sector, community groups, businesses and care providers. By breaking down silos between the sectors, fragmented services can be reduced, resulting in more cohesive and efficient care, while also saving resources.

### The Third Sector

The partnership with Mantell Gwynedd and groups which are part of the Third Sector Liaison Group has been vital for sharing resources and best practice and over the past year. The relationship with local groups through the work of community hubs also deepened.

Feedback from Partners highlighted that inconsistency in the Council's funding and grants arrangements was creating frustration. Over the next year this will be addressed in conjunction with Mantell Gwynedd, by looking at the funding and commissioning approach across Council departments. There is no choice but to do this considering the current financial climate, and it will also be a means of making the most of procurement arrangements in order to support the sector more effectively.

### Social Enterprises and Audit Wales' Report

The Social Services and Well-being Act (2014) mandates local authorities to promote social enterprises to provide care, support, and preventive services.

In late 2022, Audit Wales released a national report, "**Social Enterprises - A Missed Opportunity**," highlighting that Councils could do more to enhance the impact of social enterprises, achieve better value for money, and improve community services. The report does however highlight that Gwynedd, along with three other Welsh counties, as 'Social Enterprise Places' - areas where social business activity thrives, and there's a strong commitment to the sector.

The Council promoted many enterprises during 2023/24. Under the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act (2023), the Council also adopted the "Social Value Measures" in its Corporate Procurement Framework during the year. Cyngor Gwynedd has long prioritised keeping the benefit local, piloting a new framework even before the act's introduction.

As part of the ongoing Rebalancing of Care and Support national programme, there is further work to be done to extract social value from procurement agreements benefiting older people and other supported groups. The recommendations in the Audit Wales report will continue to be addressed to ensure that social enterprises are promoted.

### Collaborating on housing projects

Work with Social Housing Associations, the Council's Housing and Property Department and the Health Board on innovative developments continued during the year.



Artist impression of the Penyberth, Penrhos development (Picture by ClwydAlyn)

In order to address the urgent need for nursing care provision in Pen Llŷn, the work of preparing a case for building a new home on the Penyberth site, in Penrhos, to replace the one closed in 2020, continued. ClwydAlyn which is developing the wider site, agreed to transfer two acres of land for this purpose. Also, after some delay, the Canolfan Lleu project was recommenced. The purpose of the scheme is to introduce a health and well-being hub in Penygroes, in collaboration with Grŵp Cynefin and local partners. The site would include a residential home and extra care housing for the residents of the area.

Whilst recognising that both schemes are ambitious, they are vital. Further work is needed to secure the appropriate financial resources, but it is encouraging that the partners are working together with the vision of providing care and housing that are suitable for the needs of Gwynedd residents. It will be necessary to look at further developments of this type, especially in the South of the county, where finding suitable land is a challenge.

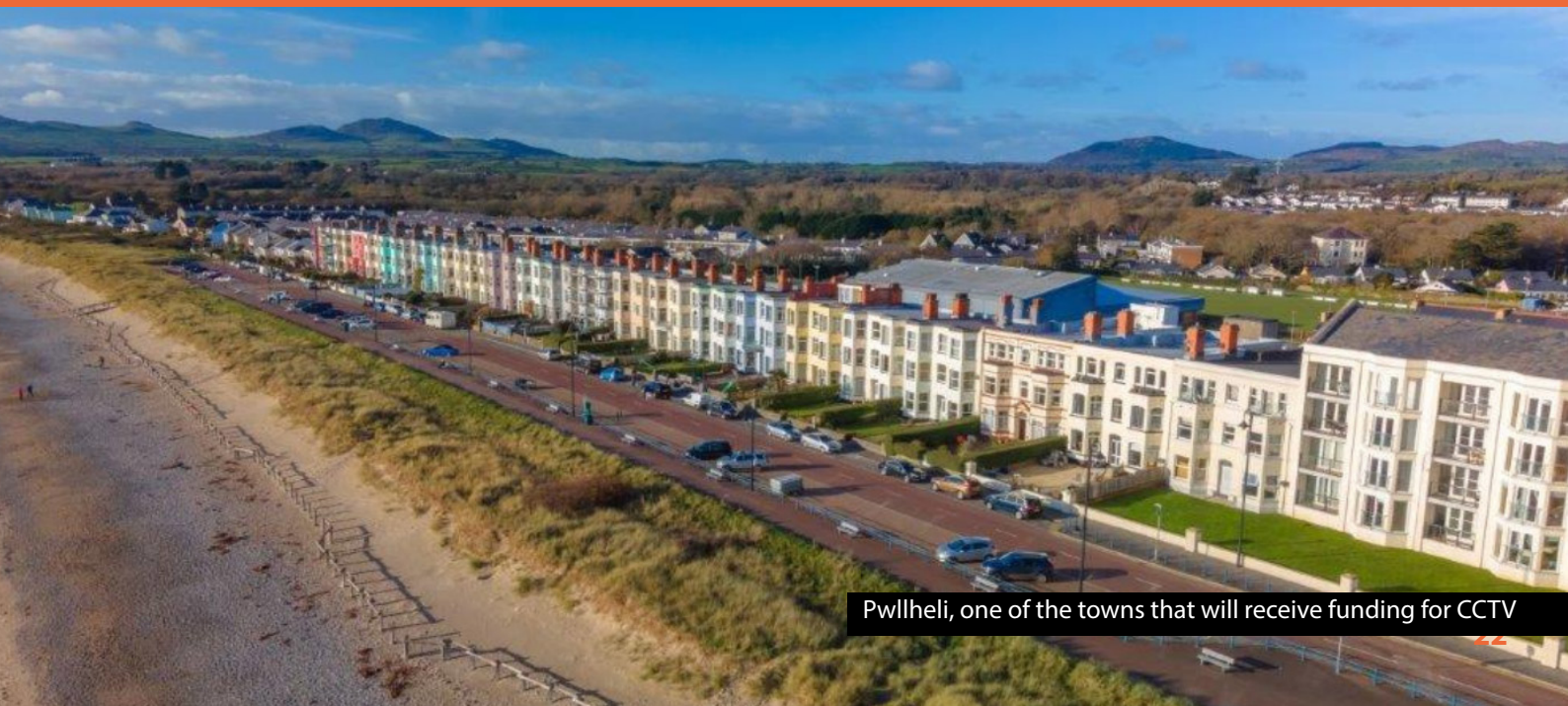
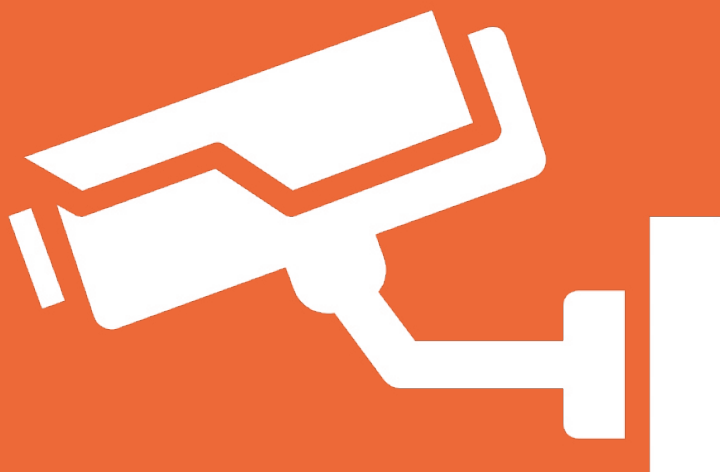
Within the Council, collaboration between social services and the Housing and Property Department has continued. A Project Officer has been appointed and during 2024/25 they will produce an assessment of the current supported and care housing situation, and of the potential accommodation options available to address the need for older people, people with a disability and children over the next 20 years.

## Community Safety

Collaborating with partners continued through regional and sub-regional boards. Recently, through the Community Safety Partnership, the Council worked with North Wales Police and Community and Town Councils to try to tackle increasing anti-social behavior in certain areas.

With Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) grant funding, additional CCTV will be installed in Pwllheli, Bangor and on Cricieth High Street during 2024/25.

The Director of Social Services also convenes a Public Spaces Group : Protective Security and Preparedness in accordance with the national guidelines. This is a group that brings together a number of organisations, including Coleg Llandrillo Menai, the Counter Terrorism Police, Snowdonia National Park and Bangor University in order to improve and support the readiness to protect and safeguard in public locations in Gwynedd.



Pwllheli, one of the towns that will receive funding for CCTV

## What could be improved?

### Working with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

To strengthen relationships and build trust for integrated procedures, more capacity is needed. The Health Board and social services face significant pressures, often diverting focus to urgent and immediate issues.

Despite some successful efforts such as the Community Resource Team in Bangor, where co-locating in a space with community nurses and health therapists has simplified communication, and the joint appointment of an Occupational Therapy Team Leader, progress has been slow so far.

Practical barriers remain. Co-location of social work and health teams is preferred but is challenging due to space constraints and geographical challenges, and different data systems across Local Authorities, Health Boards and Mental Health teams impede integration.

In September 2023, the Community Resource Teams Development Board was reconvened, which is co-chaired by West Area Director Betsi Cadwaladr and Gwynedd's Director of Social Services, in order to set a strategic direction. The intention is to appoint a project manager early in May 2024, so that the work can be accelerated and prioritised.

### WCCIS System

The Council's current data system, WCCIS, comes to an end in early 2025, and a significant amount of work will be required to acquire a new system, transfer data and then train staff. The issue was raised as a significant corporate risk due to the tight schedule.

To address the risk, the Council will work together with other local authorities, the Regional Partnership Board, Health and Digital Care Wales (DHCW), the Welsh Local Government Association to procure a new system.

## What difference was made?

### Glesni's story

**Rather than responding to crime and incidents only after they have occurred, North Wales Police Problem Solving Partnerships encourage agencies to work together in order to get to the root of causes. The hope is to develop joint solutions and reduce the number of public safety problems.**

Glesni, a 90-year-old woman with dementia, regularly telephoned the police. Within five months she rang the Police emergency number **467 times**. The calls amounted to **2,826 minutes** or just over **47 hours** of staff time talking to Glesni on the phone. These calls did not require a police response, but demanded the attention of the emergency lines and the time of the call handlers. There was consideration from the multi-disciplinary team for Glesni to go into a specialist residential home, but she didn't want this.

Working together, the Council and the Police set about to try and better understand Glesni's needs. Following an assessment of her home by a social worker, it was realised that the house phone was at her bedside and on seeing this first thing when she woke up she immediately set about calling 999.

The phone was removed and other security measures were put in place, resulting in a reduction in the number of calls to emergency services. Glesni managed to stay at home, in accordance with her wish, for around an additional 6 months.

*There was recognition in the Problem Solving Partnerships Awards for the work: [Full Story](#)*

## What progress was made against the promises stated in last year's report?

Last years promises	Progress
Embed the new home care model ensuring that internal and external providers collaborate effectively with the wider communities.	<p>Whilst this scheme is ambitious and innovative, further work is needed to refine the model. Although improvement was seen, high waiting lists for home care continues, with external and internal care providers unable to meet demand, forcing prioritisation based on risk.</p> <p>The situation fluctuates and is inconsistent across the county. For example, currently there is ample provision in Dolgellau, but Tywyn is facing an acute shortage. Ongoing discussions with external providers seek to address this disparity.</p> <p>Investment in the Community Catalyst scheme to support individuals or groups to create micro-enterprises, particularly in underserved areas is important. In 2023/24, <b>4</b> care micro-initiatives were established, with a further <b>11</b> receiving initial support. These efforts aim to boost local and community home care, reduce pressure on providers, and increase access to direct payments.</p>
Develop the Penyborth site business case to develop nursing beds in conjunction with the Health Board.	<p>The planning application to redevelop part of the Penyborth site was approved in October 2023. During 2024/25 ClwydAlyn will begin the work of building new houses to replace the existing stock, which is now out of date.</p> <p>In the meantime, Cyngor Gwynedd and the Health Board are developing a business case for a new residential and nursing home on the site, to replace the one that closed in 2020. The business case is now being assessed by the Welsh Government.</p>
Aim to gain 'age friendly community' accreditation from the World Health Organisation to ensure residents of all ages can have a good life in their local community.	<p>An application was submitted on behalf of the whole county to become a member of the WHO Network of Age-Friendly Communities in March 2024. With people living longer and healthier lives, it is vital that we ensure that our communities are pleasant, safe and accessible to people as they age. The Council has already demonstrated its dedication to fostering age-friendly practices, listening to the voices of older people and appointing an Age Friendly Champion.</p> <p>Of course, this is not just a matter for the local authority and all the partners contributed to the application through workshops and meetings. The positive collaboration will continue into the future.</p>

## 2024/25 Promises

The Council will:






- Work with other local authorities, the Regional Partnership Board, Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW), and the Welsh Local Government Association to procure a new system for the collection and storage of social services data (WCCIS)
- Appoint, with the Health Board, a project manager to develop the Community Resource Teams.
- Continue to work with partners in the housing sector to expand the provision of extra care housing.
- Collaborate with Mantell Gwynedd in order to harmonize funding arrangements for the third sector.
- Look to invest in the Community Catalyst scheme to support the creation of more care micro-enterprises.

A full list of strategic priorities for next year can be found at: [A Caring Gwynedd](#)



# WELL-BEING



<p><b>281</b><sup>*</sup> CHILDREN IN CARE</p> <p>14 are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)</p> 	<p><b>79%</b></p> <p>OF CHILD PROTECTION REFERRALS THAT WERE RESPONDED TO WITHIN THE STATUTORY PERIOD</p>	<p><b>94%</b></p> <p>OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING REFERRALS RESPONDED TO WITHIN 7 DAYS</p>	<p><b>753</b></p> <p>OF ADULTS HAVE RECEIVED ADVICE AND SUPPORT FROM THE STATUTORY SOCIAL SERVICES</p> 
<p><b>248%</b><sup>*</sup></p> <p>INCREASE IN WORK RELATING TO PART 5 CASES IN 2023/24 COMPARED TO 2022/23</p> <p><small>*Number of meetings rather than number of cases</small></p>	<p><b>350</b> WAITING FOR A DOLS ASSESSMENT</p> 	<p><b>1,100</b></p> <p>ATTENDED TRAINING BY TEAM EMRALLT</p> 	<p><b>14</b><sup>*</sup> HAVE IMPROVED THEIR HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AFTER RECEIVING HELP FROM THE AUTISM SERVICE</p>  <p><small>*quarter 4 (Jan-Mar 24)</small></p>

## What went well?

Creating supportive environments, providing mental health resources, encouraging healthy lifestyles and ensuring social opportunities to avoid loneliness can promote good emotional health and well-being. This improves quality of life, prevents mental health issues, and helps individuals cope with challenges.

### Autism Service

Autistic people sometimes have trouble seeking the specialist support they need. Nationally, the growing demand for diagnoses has led to waiting lists of up to two years, leaving many at risk of falling through gaps in services. This can lead to emergencies and create a vulnerable situations for families.

In Gwynedd a new Autism Service was launched in 2023/24. The team provides information, advice and support (IAA) to help autistic individuals and their families make informed choices and access appropriate services. They work with Team Derwen to support young people diagnosed with autism, offering courses and workshops to develop independent living skills and a better understanding of autism.

Referrals have increased specifically for individuals aged 14-25, and support was put in place for this age group through the "Exploring My Autism" programme. In addition, support groups for parents and carers (known as "Siop Siarad") were held across the county, offering a platform to discuss concerns and connect with others facing similar challenges.

Despite the service only being in place for less than a year, there has been overwhelmingly positive feedback, with some families stating that their lives have changed.

*"I have changed so much as a person since starting to get help from you. I would go so far as to say that I don't know the person I was when I started.*

*I have learned to communicate with everyone around me and now understand myself and my obstacles better. I understand why I feel certain things, and what to do when I feel this way.*

Young person (Supported by the Gwynedd Autism Service)

### Gwynedd and Anglesey Youth Justice Service

Last year's report (March 2023) stated that "no young person from Gwynedd has been in prison or reprimanded since 2020". However, unfortunately, this has changed, and as of 31 March 2024 there is 1 young person in secure accommodation.

During 2023/24 an inspection of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Youth Justice Service was carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. Feedback on the service was very positive on the whole, whilst also suggesting methods to strengthen its governance.

The service supports children and young people who are at risk of offending or have offended, and several



Cllr Elin Walker with the Emrallt Team who accepted recognition at a conference in Cardiff



Lucy a Mareid, Gwynedd Autism Team (BBC Picture)

good practices are cited, including strong partnerships, staff support, and the involvement of children and parents in the planning of support.

The inspectors highlighted that offering access to a range of interventions strengthens the service, and specific references are made to the innovative work of the Emrallt Team, which gets to the root of problematic and harmful sexual behaviour, and the 'What's the Score?' substance misuse team.

Overall, the Service was rated 'Good,' although the rehabilitation policy and provision were rated 'Improvement Needed.' An Improvement Plan will be implemented in 2024/25 in collaboration with Anglesey.

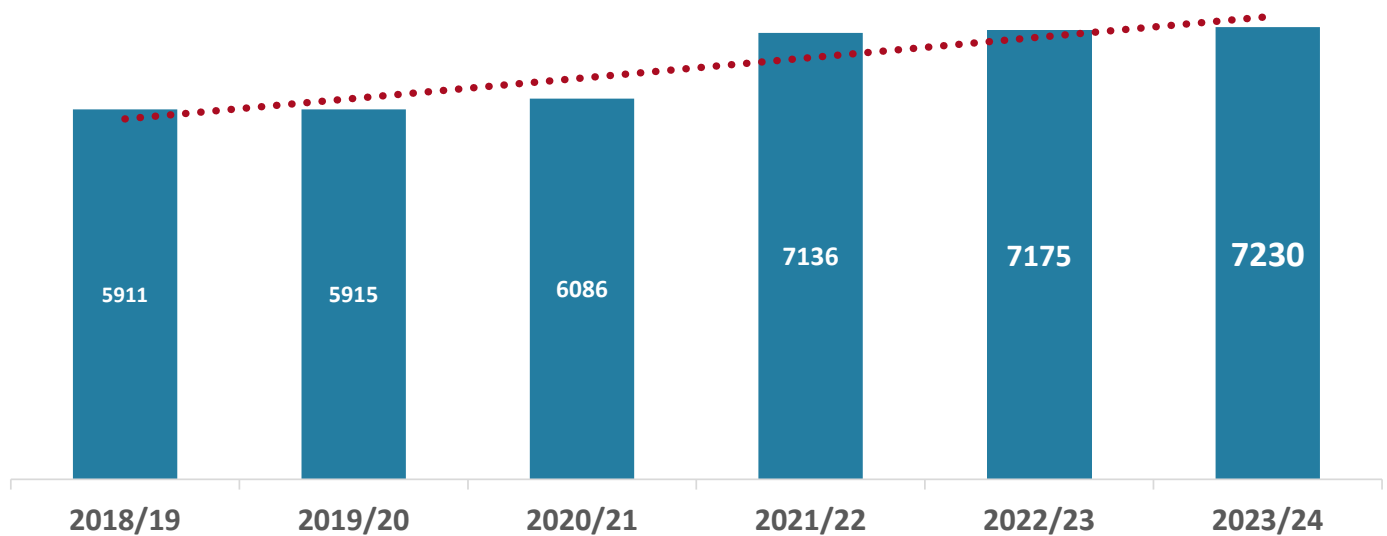
## What could be improved?

### Reviewing Children's Services cases

The number of referrals to children's services remained fairly consistent at **7,230** in 2023/24 (around **140 per week throughout the year**), compared to **7,175** last year. While this suggests that the numbers are stabilising after the COVID-19 period, it is not returning to pre-pandemic levels of **5,000-6,000**.

The service has been overwhelmed with more intense and complex cases. During 2024/25, trends affecting children's services need to be analysed further, so that we can make sure that the council respond to needs early enough.

**The rise in the number of referrals to children's services over the last 6 years**



### Mental Health Service

Although progress has been made in some areas, there are still gaps in the services provided to better support individuals with mental health needs. This year over **5,500** mental health referrals were received, which equates to over **100 per week throughout the year**.

Integration with the Health Board was deemed inadequate, prompting a change in the arrangement to better support social mental health needs. The new Service is scheduled to launch in May 2024, and will focus on timely responses to help individuals cope with their mental health challenges more effectively. The collaboration with the Health Board will continue, but they will look specifically at individuals with clinical mental health needs.

Concerns about the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) service continue, with some individuals waiting up to three years for assessments. As of March 2023, there were 350 individuals on the waiting list. A grant from the Senedd was used to commission an agency for additional assessments, with an internal audit report due in June 2024.

## Specialist Dementia Care

The growing demand for dementia care is challenging, and more needs to be done to ensure that the county's care homes cope with this growing concern. Despite investments in increasing the supply of specialist dementia beds, with numbers having more than doubled over the past five years, currently around **50** persons remain on waiting lists.



This underlines the need for continuous improvements in specialist dementia care to meet the growing demand. The Council will look at undertaking a review of all residential homes during 2024/25.

### What difference was made?

#### Martin's story

Martin receives support from the Mental Health Service. Here is a letter he sent to thank the service for its help, explaining the difference it made to his life:

*“ My name is Martin and I suffer from depression and severe anxiety. I find mixing with people stressful, and I can pick and take my hair out when stressed. I had no friends and only my sister as support. My life was lonely and the feeling of not having anyone who cared for me apart from my sister was overwhelming. I would sit in my house and listen to music on my own.*

*When I first joined the gardening group, I was also volunteering at a charity shop. The shop became too much for me to cope with as I was struggling with meeting people. When I stopped helping out there, I became very lonely. I carried on with the gardening group as we were a small group with no pressure put on us, I was encouraged to come and made to feel welcomed. Gardening took away my stress and the feeling that I was not doing a good job was gone, as we could see the plants growing.*

*Then I was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer and was told that I would only have a few years to live. The Group supported me during this time and would send texts to see how I was doing.*

*[The social worker] suggested I also joined the walking group to help strengthen me up and said that we would only do short walks to start with. Going out for these walks have enhanced my life no end. I enjoy going to new places, learning about different things, and making friends within the group. My consultant on Alaw ward has commented that the walks have strengthened my bones in my legs where some of the cancer is.*

*I went to a concert recently with another member of the group, which I had not done in years. We had food then went to the concert and later my sister came to collect me. The Group have encouraged me to follow my passion of learning how to play piano, and they will listen to me rattling on about it. Within the Group I feel safe, I can talk about my feelings and the staff have been such a support for me.*

*I hope to continue with the groups for as long as I can as I feel happy with the Group and for 2 days of the week, I have something to look forward to.*

”

## What progress was made against the promises stated in last year's report?

Last year's promises	Progress
Start the construction work to adapt the Dolfeurig Center in Dolgellau in order to support individuals with learning disabilities.	<p>The planning application for Dolfeurig was formally approved in November 2023.</p> <p>There was a delay while waiting for the National Park's final decision, however, at the time of compiling this report the Department was going out to a tender period. After appointing a contractor, work will begin on site, with the intention of completion by Summer 2025.</p>
Strengthening our quality assurance services to ensure adequate support for care providers to help them maintain a quality service for Gwynedd residents.	<p>Although no additional resource was received, the service saw progress as a result of modifying work arrangements within the team.</p> <p>Regular visits were made to monitor the county's care homes. A small number of homes were considered under the 'Increasing Concerns' category for various reasons, including a lack of management, documentation issues, and a lack of overview.</p> <p>The team is small and therefore the work has to be prioritised and it is not possible to visit every provision, especially in the home care services. Specific reports in that area are relied upon regarding the quality of care and its provision.</p>
Developing a residential provision for looked after children in small group homes.	<p>Some children in care with complex needs have to leave the county or Wales in order to receive the appropriate provision.</p> <p>Unfortunately during 2023/24 it was also necessary to use placements operating without registration (OWR) 5 young persons. Historically our use of unregistered placement arrangements has been very rare, and this increase now reflects the situation nationally, with most, if not all authorities forced to make such an arrangement available due to the lack of registered placements across the United Kingdom.</p> <p>There is therefore an urgent need for local provision in order to ensure an appropriate home for the children in the Council's care. In March 2024 the first property was bought in order to turn it into a small group home for up to two children. The plan is now to go ahead and appoint a manager early in 2024/25 with a view to opening the home before the end of the year. Work will also continue to look for another property or sites in order to develop more homes.</p>

## 2024/25 Promises

The Council will:

- Implement the Gwynedd and Mon Youth Justice Service Improvement Plan.
- Launch of the new Mental Health Service in May 2024.
- Appoint a contractor in order to start the construction work on the new Dolfeurig Center in Dolgellau.
- Open the first Small Group Home in the county, and look to develop more similar homes.

A full list of strategic priorities for next year can be found at: [A Caring Gwynedd](#)

# FURTHER INFORMATION

## Complaints and comments

Unfortunately, some cases arise when things go wrong and we fail not provide a service of the expected high standard. There is a statutory complaints procedure in place to ensure that feedback is received, in order to respond to any concerns so that we do not repeat mistakes.

See below a summary of the numbers of formal complaints for 2023/24:

	<b>Stage 1 Formal Complaint</b>	<b>Stage 2 Complaint</b> (Investigation by an Independent Investigator and an Independent Person)	<b>Ombudsman</b>
<b>Adults</b>	22	2	0
<b>Children</b>	13	4	0

The full annual complaints report will appear before the Care Scrutiny Committee in September 2024 and arrangements are now also in place to publish the complaints and comments reports on the website, so that they are readily available for anyone to read: [Yearly Complaints Report](#)

## Inspections and reviews

The close link with the Care Inspectorate for Wales (CIW), Estyn and Audit Wales continued during 2023/24, and the usual annual workshop session was held with representatives from the organisations.

CIW highlighted five main risks namely, the home care situation, a workforce plan to recruit and retain staff, increase in demand for services and complexity of needs, enough homes for looked after children and budgets. This annual report has already tried to detail what the Council has done and will do to address these risks.

CIW also published its report on the [Rapid Review of Child Protection Arrangements](#) (held with the service in March 2023) and the feedback was positive and showed the quality of the work carried out. The Well-being chapter also details the review carried out on the Youth Justice Service from Her Majesty's Probation Inspectorate. The full review can be read here: [Gwynedd and Anglesey Youth Justice Service Review](#)

There have also been cases during the year of crime against children and it is expected that reviews will be carried out through the Regional Safeguarding Board during 2024/25. It is important that as social services we constantly learn from the incidents and improve our services to ensure the safety of the most vulnerable in our society.

## Links to further information

This last section lists places to get more information about some of the things mentioned in this report.

- [Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28](#)
- [Cyngor Gwynedd Performance Report](#)
- [Compliments and Complaints procedure](#)
- [Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership](#)
- [Care Scrutiny Committee](#)
- [North Wales Regional Partnership Board](#)
- [North Wales Population Needs Assessment](#)
- [Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Service Board Well-being Plan](#)
- [Care Inspectorate Wales](#)
- [Dewis Cymru](#)