



**Bridgend County Borough Council**  
**Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr**

**SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING DIRECTORATE**

**Director of Social Services Annual Report**  
**2019/20 & 2020/21**

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# Director's Introduction



## A year like no other!

This is my first annual report as Corporate Director of Social Services and Wellbeing in Bridgend, having commenced working in the County Borough in October 2020. What a time to come into post! I must start by paying a huge tribute to my predecessor, Susan Cooper, who was corporate director for most of the period covered by this report. Strong value driven leadership over many years meant that I am in the fortunate position of building on many strengths, and in some areas leading edge practice, which have made such a positive difference to the lives of the people of Bridgend County Borough. The Bridgend Social Services and Wellbeing team are experienced, professional, highly motivated and importantly have the right value base. We are here to do what matters to the people we work with and for. Our workforce at all levels have risen to every considerable challenge which the last year has presented us with.

The production of an annual report to the Council is one of the most important statutory duties of a Director of Social Services. The Director must set out a clear and evidenced analysis of the effectiveness of social services, highlighting what we have done well and what we could do better, and the most significant risks we face. Social services is a large and important part of any Council's business. A significant proportion of Bridgend County Borough Council's (the Council) budget is invested in the services which support the most vulnerable children, families, adults and carers. The Council is responsible for assessing needs, safeguarding and protecting people as well as providing or securing services for children and adults with care and support needs. The Council is a corporate parent to a growing number of children and care experienced adults. The Council works with partners to establish a wide range of preventative and well-being approaches as well as social care services. Preventative services and community groups, clubs and assets mean many children and adults with care and support needs are able to live well and all do what matters to them in their own lives, often without accessing social care services even if they are at risk of needing to.

This report covers the period April 2019 to March 2021. The Covid-19 pandemic dominated all aspects of life from March 2020 onwards. Social services and wellbeing has been fundamental to the public services response to the virus in Bridgend, keeping people as safe, well and as connected as possible in the most extreme of circumstances. Whilst this report is a statutory report on the effectiveness of social services it acknowledges that only through 'exceptional partnership', the phrase used by CIW in their quality assurance check in April 2021, can we impact as we need to on people's life.

This report acknowledges the immense impact of the whole Council, our partners in BAVO, Shared Regulatory Services, Public Health Wales, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region, our cultural and leisure partners; Halo and Awen, and the whole social care sector- including our foster and connected person family carers, our care homes, supported living providers, domiciliary care providers. We are stronger together in supporting the most vulnerable children and adults in Bridgend. It is been humbling and a privilege to work with such committed partners.

Whilst all of our lives have been impacted so significantly by the public health crisis we have lived through, the lives of people with care and support needs, their family and friend carers, have been impacted more; many have shielded from the virus and have not had access for long periods of time to the services that matter to them. The medium and longer term impacts on physical and mental health are only now starting to be understood. However, amongst all these challenges, there have been many, many positives with new relationships formed, creative and innovative solutions developed, and the value of social care more widely understood by all in society.

Social care, and the impact it has on people's lives, has been celebrated as never before during the pandemic. We have the opportunity to build on this positivity, whilst acknowledging and planning for the significant challenges that are arising in the short, medium and longer term as a consequence of the crisis. We anticipated, and already are seeing an increased need for social care services. We are seeing the impact of the extended lockdown on our most vulnerable children and families, as well as adults with care and support needs.

Covid-19 impacted disproportionately on the people and communities of Bridgend and our most vulnerable people. Bridgend's care home residents were particularly badly effected at the height of the pandemic. Many people lost family and friends they loved and cared for to this awful virus. We tragically lost people who we had worked with in social care for many years. We have worked through our Social Care Workforce Development Team to support the whole social care sector in Bridgend to grieve for the losses we have experienced, working in partnership with Cruise. We have also worked within the Council to ensure our directly employed workforce have had access to the support and counselling they need. We know these needs will be ongoing, and are continuing to support workforce wellbeing, as the delayed impact of what we lived and worked through becomes apparent.

# Director's Introduction (cont...)

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Inequalities in outcomes were exacerbated by the pandemic. People with mental ill-health, disabilities, people who are older and frailer were more vulnerable to the impact of the virus and the lockdowns. The impact on family carers has been considerable. In meeting with carers recently some experiences were heart-rending and will drive what we do going forward. The work across the whole Council, and with partners, to mitigate these impacts has never been more important. We have worked with the Carers Trust South East Wales to ensure there is 24/7 helpline support for carers, and used grant funding flexibly so carers can access whatever they need to make a positive difference to enable them to continue their caring responsibilities. The third sector response, supported by the Council, has been phenomenal. 4444 people were supported by BAVO to access the support they needed. Many people needing some information, advice and assistance were not previously known to social services and had their needs effectively met without needing to access services on an ongoing basis.



# BAVO

Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations  
Cymdeithas Sefydliadau Gwirfoddol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr



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## How we operated during the pandemic

We worked closely with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) throughout the pandemic to ensure they were assured and advised of how we were working, and adapting our operating models, to comply with Welsh Government guidance, and tiers of restrictions, whilst continuing to safeguard, protect and deliver essential services. Face to face service delivery continued throughout the pandemic in social care – care homes, supported living, domiciliary care direct payment Personal Assistants, children protection investigations, Mental Health Act assessments.

We developed and constantly risk assessed our operating models for adult and children's services in accordance with the Welsh Government tiers of restriction. Risk assessments meant at some tiers of restriction, services operated digitally as the risk to public health of spreading the virus was too great. In children's services, when risk mitigations were robust enough to enable us to do so, we carried out face to face visits to children and families in respect of child protection, and to our care experienced children and foster carers. A difficult area was contact between parents and care experienced children and we worked closely to Welsh Government guidance to enable face to face contact to resume as soon as risk mitigations allowed.

.In adult services our day opportunities operated at reduced numbers and with extensive risk mitigations, when tiers of restriction allowed. At other times the public health risks were too high and our day services staff supported people to be occupied and engaged in their own homes, including our supported living settings. Adult social workers worked closely with other professional colleagues to minimise the number of people who visited care homes and other vulnerable settings, and kept in touch with people in a way which best suited them; which for many individuals was via the telephone. Assessments of people's best interest under the Mental Capacity Act was a challenging area of work, given the restrictions on professionals visiting care homes. We have worked to address delays in carrying out this essential safeguarding work as tiers of restriction have reduced.

## How well we have performed

Despite the challenges we have faced during the pandemic, there has continued to be a focus on improving performance. The following are highlights of our improvements against the key measures:

### Children's Services:

- Assessment timescales – 2019/20 74% ; 2020/21) 96.5%
- Visits – Child Protection 2019/20 80% ; 2020/21 92%
- Care Experienced Children 2019/20 84% ; 2020/21 89%
- Placements in independent residential – 13 (2014) to 6 at 31.03.21 of which all 6 are in Bridgend neighbouring LAs (RCT and NPT).
- Unregulated placements:-
  - 6 children in 9 placements (2018/19)
  - 3 children in 6 placements (2019/20)
  - 0 (2020/21)
- Number of Care Experienced Children – there has been a small decrease in the number of children looked after, but positively a more significant decrease (7%) in the number of children looked after who live away from family or close family connections. This is set out in the table below:

	Q4 31/03/20	Q1 30/06/20	Q2 30/09/20	Q3 31/12/20	Q4 31/03/21
Total Care Experienced Children (CEC) Population	394	391	396	392	390
Number of CEC living with Relative/ Friend	88	87	83	89	88
Number of CEC living with their parents on a care order (PWP)	66	66	63	68	80
Number of UASC	2	1	1	1	0
CEC Population minus PWP/Relative/ Friend, UASC	238	237	249	234	222

## Adult Services:

During 2020/21 there were:-

- 4408 contacts to Adult Social Care, of which 1299 were provided advice and assistance.
- 1974 people aged 65+ were referred to CRT services which is 9% less than the same period last year.
- 123 packages of enablement were completed between 01/04/2020 & 28/02/2021 of which:-
  - 49.09% required no ongoing care
  - 32.42% required a reduction in the support required
  - 10.27% required a similar level of support
- 4450 assessments were completed which is 9% less than in 2019/20
- 2388 reviews were completed which is 12% less than in 2019/20
- There were 288 contacts to social services relating to carers and 213 carers assessments (41.5% below same period last year).
- As at 31st March, there were 2274 Adults with a Care and Support/Treatment plan. This is a reduction when compared to 31st March 2020 when there were 2437





## How we have continued to develop services

Despite the immense challenges of the pandemic, SSWB we have continued to progress key service developments and improvements, although the pace of remodelling work, and in some cases the direction of that work, has been impacted. Key developments which have been progressed:

### Children's Services:

- Launch of outcomes model of social work practice in children's services in October 2020
- Refreshed early help and permanence strategy and action plan to safely reduce numbers of children looked after
- More integrated working to progress edge of care services with Education & Family Support:
  - Connecting Families
  - Rapid response service
  - Baby in Mind which won a Social Care accolade in November 2020
  - IFSS
  - Family group conferencing
  - Reflect
  - MAPPS which is being recommissioned regionally
- Enhancing foster care support, connected persons developments and consulting with special guardians on new financial support for them. We have implemented new arrangements with regional partners to recruit foster carers and recruiting more specialist transitional foster carers is progressing.
- Remodelling residential care provision is continuing and our learning and progressive practice it represents is an area other local authorities are seeking to learn from.

## : Adult Services:

- Extended multi disciplinary approaches in cluster teams – community psychiatric nurses, district nurses, OT, other therapists, pharmacist and technicians now all work together to support 'Mrs Jones'
- Using direct payments innovatively and creatively
- Supporting carers through 24/7 telephone support and flexible grants which can be used to support what matters to them
- Growing innovation with 3<sup>rd</sup> sector to protect the most vulnerable and prevent escalation of needs through local area co-ordination and community connectors
- Modernising care at home through electronic call monitoring, building on the many positives in the recent CIW regulatory inspection
- Modernising the way care at home is commissioned, embedding learning from the pandemic around flexible, outcome focussed approaches
- Investing in the care home sector, building support around care homes from
- User led day opportunities and supported living remodelling is progressing and learning from the pandemic is supporting people to be even more connected to their own communities.
- ARC and the wellbeing mental health retreat demonstrating the importance of intervening as early as possible for people experiencing mental ill health and distress.

### : How well our regulator has said we have performed

CIW continued essential regulatory work during the pandemic. One of the Council's children's homes was categorised as a 'service of concern' in August 2020. Extensive work was undertaken to address the concerns of the regulator, including securing behaviour analysis as part of our team, and in October 2020, CIW advised they were assured that the progress made meant that this status could be de-escalated.

At the height of the pandemic in November 2021, a full regulatory inspection was undertaken of the Council's domiciliary care services. Whilst noting a small number of improvements, this inspection was very positive reflection on the service. Highlighting the positive feedback from people using the service, inspectors reported that everyone they spoke with was complimentary of the care staff and felt they provided a service that met their needs. They praised the clear management structure, the good support and development opportunities for staff, and the positive feedback from staff who said they felt valued and supported. Noting the additional challenges during the coronavirus pandemic, inspectors said people receiving care and support told them they were confident in having care workers coming into their homes because they were careful with hygiene practices. Inspectors also praised the detailed and recorded care plans.

In April 2021, CIW carried out an assurance check of how well we had ensured the safety and well-being of people who use or may need to use services, the safety of services they access and the safety and well-being of people who work in services. The key lines of enquiry were focused on the four principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. We have aligned our findings to the four principles: People - Voice and Control, Prevention, Well-being, Partnerships and Integration.

Overall, CIW reported that " The local authority had made clear its strategic and operational intent to support vulnerable young people, adults and carers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic (the pandemic).

Leaders have maintained a line of sight on the changing COVID-19 landscape, resulting in clear plans and innovative practice/responses to address the challenges presented. Leaders and senior managers continue to keep under review what is working well and different ways of working because of the pandemic, which they intend to take forward.”

Importantly:” Overall, in adults services we found an outcome-focused approach was embedded in practice, this supported coproduction and identification of personal outcomes. People’s views were sought and their voices heard. Matters relating to consent, advocacy, mental capacity and best interests were routinely considered at an early stage in the engagement process.”

In children’s services, CIW found:-

*“Practitioners and independent reviewing officers (IROs) presented as having an understanding of the circumstances and experiences of the children and families they were working with. We found more varied practice in relation to co-production and seeking and or recording the voice of the child. Confirmation regarding the active offer of advocacy was contained in the files viewed. Co-production, particularly in the context of engagement, identification of personal outcomes, risks, and provision of services to achieve positive change required some improvement. The local authority is aware of the need to further embed practice, which is strength based and outcome focused and work is currently underway to address this.”*

### The most significant risks we face going forward

Recovery and renewal plans are being developed across many sectors including social care. The Council is well-placed to continue to improve and address the many challenges social services and wellbeing face in Bridgend, with strong corporate and whole Council political leadership as we well as the strength in depth of our workforce and partnership arrangements. In order to continue to improve, an open and transparent culture and practice is fundamental, so we understand, manage and mitigate the challenges and risks we face. The 3 most significant are:

The capacity and demand we need to have in place in a timely way to meet the increasing needs for adult social care as we continue to manage the Covid pandemic and the impact of the first 2 waves of the virus on people's need for care and support. The impact of long-Covid, the extended period of shielding on people's physical and mental health and the impact of delays to NHS treatments are all increasing the need for adult social care. We have put in place short, medium and long term actions including the recommissioning of care and support at home to address the issues we are facing. Fundamental, we need to secure a high quality, well supported and valued social care frontline workforce across the whole sector which is at the heart of our workforce priority.

The risk to effective safeguarding of our most vulnerable children and adults has been a feature of the Council's corporate risk register for a number of years. The Council has well established mechanisms to ensure compliance with statutory responsibilities. In the last year Cabinet has approved a revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy. Bridgend is an active member of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Safeguarding Board and has its own operational safeguarding board with partners and active management of caseloads. All meetings of the Corporate Management Board (CMB) and of Cabinet/CMB have a standing item. During the pandemic, the Regional Safeguarding Board operated a gold, silver and bronze structure to manage safeguarding risks and multi-agency safeguarding arrangements continued to operate as effectively as possible. The impact of the pandemic on the safety and wellbeing of the most vulnerable as we move through the recovery phase is still being understood including: the long term effect of children not being in school or seeing friends and family, increased social isolation and mental health issues, increased risks linked to substance misuse, domestic abuse, suicide/self harm and the significant impact in our care homes. As statutory officer for safeguarding, I will need to review, consolidate and strengthen safeguarding resources within the Council to ensure that resilience is maximised, standards of practice are high and that there is an embedded culture of learning and review.

CIW highlighted our plans to fully embed strength based practice in children's services. At the heart of good practice is good social work and continuity of work through strong relationships between skilled professionals and the children and families we work with. Bridgend, as many Council's are, is experiencing challenges in recruiting child protection social workers into our safeguarding teams

We are focussed on retaining the excellent and committed social workers we have, and addressing in an evidence based way the recruitment challenges we face through clear plans. We are committed to developing career pathways and know that people who have already worked in Bridgend and are supported by us to undertake their social work qualification, stay here. We are seconding 8 of our colleagues to the social work degree course in 2021 meaning within 3 years we be able to meet our own needs through our workforce planning.

Social services and wellbeing in Bridgend is cost effective, we have low number of independent residential placements for children and have made significant savings as a consequence of supporting people to do what matters, and developing preventative services, which has reduced the need for statutory services. However, the service pressures we are experiencing post Covid, and the need to address our workforce challenges, have financial consequences which present a challenge to the Council given the many pressures in other services and the underlying service financial deficits. The services which are so important to people are underpinned by significant short term grant funding which presents a risk in terms of sustainability.

## Looking to the future

Moving forward, there are many positive developments to build upon. We have a clear vision for Social Services and Wellbeing in Bridgend and the difference we can make for our people in Bridgend by:-

*...doing what matters for all the Jones' through:-*

***Keeping people well, connected and addressing health inequalities***

***Seamless locality based well-being, primary and community health and social care for all population groups***

***Organising all our services in extended primary and community service clusters***

***Understanding and mitigating risks, and safeguarding people's safety independence and wellbeing***

We recognise that we will always be on a journey of continuous improvement and that some of our priorities and plans have had to be adjusted as we understand more about the impact of the pandemic. Cabinet approved a very clear 5 year plan for Social Services and Wellbeing in September 2020 and in delivering the priorities from that plan we are being flexible to ensure we meet emerging needs evident from the Covid recovery. We have refreshed our strategic priorities. Everything we do will strongly reflect the voice, choice and increasingly control of the people we work with and for.

When measuring success, we hold ourselves to account in respect of performance measures but also qualitative reviews of people's experience and what is important to all of us when we need advice, assistance and support.

These are the principles we measure against:-

- No wrong door to accessing what we need
- Timely response
- No unnecessary handoffs to other services
- Our needs are met with the least intensive intervention and do not have to escalate to a higher level in order to receive the right support
- Our strengths, capabilities, aspirations and dreams are important and understood, and we are supported to overcome the challenges we may experience in doing what is important to us.

## **Our 8 highest priorities for Social Services and Wellbeing in Bridgend in 2021/22 are:-**

- 1) Ensure the rights of the people we work with and for drive everything we do through enhancing participation, engagement and involvement in every aspect of our work. This will include the development of a new strategy for Care Experienced Children which reflects what is important to them from the Council and partners as corporate parents.
- 2) Lead the whole social care workforce in Bridgend to ensure a motivated, engaged and supported workforce, ensuring that Bridgend can retain and recruit the a workforce with the right values as well as skills to make a difference to the lives of people with care and support needs. In achieving this priority we commit to taking the necessary actions to address the challenges we face in retaining and recruiting children's social workers and addressing the challenges we face in recruiting care workers in the Council and across the social care sector..
- 3) Commission strength based, outcome focussed, flexible social care services which are value for money and sustainable, including: the recommissioning of quality, sustainable care and support at home services for adults, a market stability plan for adult care homes, the continued remodelling and development of accommodation, care and support services for children and young people,

- 3) *cont.*...the development of an accommodation, care and support strategy for older people, and the continued development of community based supported living and day opportunities for people with learning disabilities.
- 4) To lead safeguarding and protection of children and adults at risk in Bridgend, implementing the new Corporate Safeguarding Policy across the Council, and working with partners in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Safeguarding Board to ensure the lessons from child and adult practice reviews are learned and embedded in the way we work.
- 5) To strategically lead integrated health, social care and wellbeing with Cwm Taf Morgannwg Bridgend Integrated Locality Group, ensuring there are service and financial sustainability plans for delivering an optimal, community cluster model to care and support people through a 'team around the person' which ensures multi disciplinary teams work together with care providers and third sector partners to support people to remain as independent as possible in their homes and communities.
- 6) Build on the considerable success on third sector support to the vulnerable during the pandemic to develop alternative delivery models which achieve sustainable community development and resilient, connected communities.
- 7) To continue to develop strength based practice in adult and children's services so practitioners are supported through a systemic framework for understanding personal and community strengths, working expertly with people to resolve challenges using their own capabilities and resources.
- 8) To 'shift the balance of care' working closely with preventative services in Education and Family Support and Wellbeing, and in so doing provide the right set of evidence based interventions and opportunities which will reduce the number of people who can only live the lives they want to live through accessing statutory social care services. We will evidence progress in this area through safely reducing the number of children who are care experienced and safely reducing the number of adults who can only live safely in a registered care home setting..

We will evaluate our success against 8 priorities in next years annual report.



## Final Reflections – 'A Tribute to our Workforce'

Any social services department is as good and effective as the workforce who deliver, plan, commission, support, manage and lead those services. Social Services and Wellbeing services have demonstrated we are well placed for future challenges not only by the way we responded to the COVID-19 crisis but by our performance improvements and service developments.



Most importantly here is evidence when we get things right we are actively transforming lives, supporting children and young people to live in Bridgend and reducing admission to care homes for adults. There are fantastic examples of innovation and transformation – particularly in the areas of early help and prevention for adults and children, remodelling children's accommodation care and support, and our adult integrated teams.

Our workforce is our greatest strength. The value we place on every one of them and what they have achieved is incalculable. Our focus on workforce wellbeing and growing the future generations of our workforce is the highest priority as we move forward. The future is not without risk and challenge – we are particularly challenged by retaining, recruiting, supporting, and developing children's social workers and care workers for adults and children's. We are committed as a Council, with strong corporate and political as well as service leadership, to tackling these challenges.



I would like to conclude my first report by thanking everyone across Bridgend partners and social care sector who are so compassionate in their values and passionate about the actions needed to improve outcomes for the people we work with and alongside. I know through corporate and political leadership, commitment and professionalism of the workforce, the resilience and creativity of providers, and the strength of partnerships and people we are well placed for the future.

**Claire Marchant**

**Corporate Director of Social Services and Wellbeing**

***We are committed to practice, service development and delivery being driven by people who's lives they impact on***

***The rights of children and adults should be evident in all we do***

In the last 2 years we have worked to ensure we involve people in our key service developments. Here are some examples of how we have done that:

- 1) A comprehensive engagement exercise took place with children who live now, or who had lived previously, in the Council's residential homes for children so they could shape and inform the new accommodation, care and support we were planning. Following feedback received (detailed below) we are making sure our future plans reflect what they tell us makes the difference to their lives:
  - Improved WIFI really matters to our young people and we are addressing this in all our settings. Our Council Head of ICT has even personally come into one of our care homes late at night to sort out a Wifi problem – as any (corporate) parent would do for their own child!
  - Young people helped us develop the specification for additional accommodation options for young people aged over 16. They were part of the design of the Supported Accommodation specification and had were fully involved in the tender process, facilitating their own tender evaluation panel.
  - Our new residential home plans include en-suite bathrooms for children who live their to have access to individual bathroom facilities. We consulted further with young people residing in Maple Tree House (MTH) who reviewed the initial design plans and asked for a bath to be fitted in addition to en-suite bathrooms. This was incorporated into the final design.

- 2) People First Bridgend, our peer led partners for people with learning disabilities, are leading consultation and engagement with individuals to support the re-commissioning of Supported Living services. The feedback from individuals will drive the content of the specifications that providers will respond to. Engagement in this last year has been undertaken in both face-to-face meetings, and also in a 'virtual' format during times when restrictions were in place due to Covid. People with learning disabilities have become very effective at using Zoom!
- 3) We often have a low response to surveys so during June and July 2021 the Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing attended a number of focus group meetings to understand people's experiences during the last year. These took place across a range of service areas including:- a disability focus group facilitated by Bridgend People First, a Health Social Care and Wellbeing focus group facilitated by BAVO, a focus group of young care experienced individuals facilitated by the 16 Plus team, and a focus group of carers supported by a range of partner organisations. Some specific discussions were also held about support received during the COVID 19 pandemic.

A number of themes came out of the focus groups:-

- Care experienced young people reported that they knew who to contact if they needed support and were reasonably happy with this support.
- Young people felt supported around progression to suitable accommodation.
- In terms of things we could do better; more regular face to face contact was identified, and more focus on work opportunities and not just on education.
- Third sector partners were not always very clear on who to contact within the Council.
- A number of other partners reported strong working relationships between themselves and Council services and reported good communication from the service during the pandemic.



*He is like  
my safety net*



*“ Relationships are good and communities benefitted ”*

- In terms of going forward third sectors partners would like the collaborative work to continue and further development of a hybrid approach with more variety of options for individuals to continue.
- Partner's felt that prevention work has developed and made real changes to people's lives especially around immediate responses and interventions.
- Building on the success of some of the creative solutions implemented during the pandemic, some people saw the opportunity for more community support and less need for people to come into services such as day opportunities.
- Although there is a recognised strength of working together they highlighted that resilience is needed going forward to continue to support independence for individuals

*“ The whole department worked well... it was seamless ”*

- Some members of the disability focus group expressed some concern about communication from the service; the correct form of communication being used for individuals with needs, information advice and assistance for individuals who do not have eligible needs not always being provided, or of only being given information about their own circumstances when they ask for it and not routinely.
- There were reports of good involvement of individuals relating to choices for their future accommodation and independence, and also the way they choose to live their lives.
- Some individuals reported receiving assistance during lockdown to improve their confidence levels and of developing more independent skills.

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“*Consultation with service users in Bridgend is really good*”

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- There were reports of good involvement of individuals relating to choices for their future accommodation and independence, and also the way they choose to live their lives.
- Some individuals reported receiving assistance during lockdown to improve their confidence levels and of developing more independent skills.
- 75 % of the group indicated they were happy with the service they had received from social care over the last year and 25% indicated that they were not so happy.

*The staff have been fantastic during lockdown!*

*I learned a lot of new skills*

- Carers in Bridgend indicated that information advice and assistance and contact details for support to carers could be made more accessible
- In respect of support to carers; consideration of a more joined up approach across both the Council departments but also with partner organisations in order to support carers more effectively
- Carers felt that the flexible grant scheme in the last year had been transformative for them, supporting small purchases such as an ipad or subscription to Netflix which had enabled them to continue to care. They asked that we continue to develop processes around Direct Payments accessibility; to ensure that flexible support for carers when they need it is provided.

*The work around super agers has been outstanding. Supporting people who had been isolated and afraid to go out for a long time in a safe socially distanced way*



**Comisiwn  
Bevan  
Commission**

**Bevan Exemplars 2020**

**Bridgend County Borough Council**

Super-Agers

Developing a community owned and operated model of doorstep physical activity for older people to reduce isolation, whilst improving physical and mental wellbeing across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board footprint in collaboration with cross sector partners from Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil.

- They asked that we continue to develop work around carers assessments and active offer of advocacy as this works better in some service areas than others.

## Prevention and Wellbeing

3

**Promoting and improving the wellbeing of those we help**

**Quality Standard 1 - Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve**

## What we did

- Local community coordinators were deployed in areas of deprivation in the Ogmore, Garw and Llynfi Valleys



- 5 Community navigators employed by BAVO to help connect people to local support and to provide information, advice and assistance.
- Representatives of community groups including parent carers of children and young people with disabilities / additional needs brought together and supported to collaborate as the new Bridgend Inclusive Network Group (BING).



## How well did we do

- Bridgend had the third highest volunteer step up in Wales and 4444 people were supported in the community; 446 volunteers were trained and deployed. There was support for 2993 prescriptions, 225 food security needs and 1126 shielding checks made
- 94% of presenting needs were able to be met within the third sector with 77 third sector organisations working together
- BING are now a stand alone network, securing their own resources and developing relevant opportunities. A range of other community led groups and opportunities are developing.

## What are we doing next

- Continue to develop our “Building Resilient Communities” programme and work with the third sector to create community networks that support people in their communities.

**Bridgend Carers Wellbeing Service**  
Date: 2020/21  
Funding: Bridgend County Borough Council



**Feedback**  
*"I know I've said it a million times...thank you so much for the support you've given me...it finally feels like what I do as a carer is being recognised."*

**Demographics**  
Number of information requests received/ resolved: by age, gender and location of those referred to groups/organisations and the nature of information required: **2198 individual contacts**  
Female: **1012**  
Male: **553**  
Age range (of contacts)  
**19-25: 3%**  
**26-34: 6%**  
**35-54: 18%**  
**55-64: 38%**  
**65+: 22%**  
Unknown: **13%**

**Assessments**  
**412** Initial 'what matters' conversations  
**326** receiving IAA and signposting  
**96** full assessment requests passed to Common Access Point Team

**423**  
Number of referrals, direct and indirect, received for the period

**Source of referrals:**  
BCBC Adult Services/other BCBC teams = 221  
Bridgend Carers Centre = 47  
Other partner organisations = 18  
Self-referral = 127  
Unknown = 10

**Carers supported**  
**1,206** Cumulative numbers (unique individuals) supported via the service (including carers grants)  
**632** previously unidentified (new) carers receiving support (including carers grants)



## Quality Standard 2 - Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

### What we did

- Delivered the National Exercise Referral Scheme in partnership with Halo, Public Health Wales and CTM Health Board, expanding the chronic condition pathways
- Launched the Super Agers physical wellbeing programme for older adults .An “active at home” resource was created and distributed to older adults with telephone mentoring support for some including people with a sensory impairment and digital exclusion.



- Worked with BAVO and Age Cymru to develop an inter-generational befriending approach building on previous work and including pen-friend opportunities as part of the “Friend in Need” programme

## How well did we do

- Exercise referral developed 1:1 support and mentoring support for people with stroke, cancer, falls, pulmonary rehab needs. Through the digital offer there were 7039 contacts and 7643 live views,
- Super Agers supported 132 local people and 200 home activity packs were distributed. This programme has been recognised as a Bevan Exemplar.
- BAVO have received 229 referrals for befriending and 145 people have been able to be supported by 102 volunteers at a time when new approaches have been needed to be used



## What are we doing next

- Continue to work with our communities and partners to develop innovative opportunities that can support community Covid recovery.

## Quality Standard 3 – Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

### What we did

- We delivered a new school holiday activity hub programme for ‘looked after’ children and young people who were potential safeguarding concerns support 50 young people/ households.
- A new carers wellbeing service was commissioned via Carers Trust South East Wales following extensive engagement with carers to co-design the type and range of support that was felt to be needed
- A partnership approach to ‘Falls prevention’ and postural stability has developed between health, social care and the third sector as a cross sector network in recognition that prevention of falls is possible.

### **THIS IS HOW THE EXERCISES HELPED PEOPLE JUST LIKE YOU...**

*“I haven’t been able to walk properly for 15 years, so what I’m learning now has really pushed me forward. My family see a big difference. I feel well, whereas I hadn’t felt well for years!”.*

**(Mary, aged 73)**



## How well did we do

- Building on the initial mobilisation of the Carers Wellbeing services 1206 carers were supported in 2020/21 with 412 'What Matters' conversations, and 336 carers receiving information, advice and assistance ( IAA ) and signposting
- 20 partners worked together on the activity hub programme to make it a success including 65 hours of provision and 21 home support packs were provided supporting 41 children..
- 7 partners are now engaged in the Falls Network and working collaboratively. An innovative mobile falls programme was developed by Halo in 2019 – 20 and further developed in 20/21



Ithaglen bartneriaeth ar gyfer gweithredu ar y cyd ar draws Cymru ac yn Ewrop

A partnership programme for collaborative action across Wales and in Europe



## What are we doing next

- Aim to work more collaboratively and across sectors to create safe and supportive opportunities that help meet the needs of vulnerable groups within our communities..

## Quality Standard 4. Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society

### What we did

- We launched a programme with Wales Co-operative Centre, supported by ICF, to connect carers to support or enhance their support networks
- Working with Awen we developed social prescribing programmes including Stronger Together Bridgend and Creative @ Home
- We worked with Awen to enhance the reach of the library service and expand the support available for people who were more vulnerable including delivery of resources to peoples homes and access to digital resources for people not able to attend venues



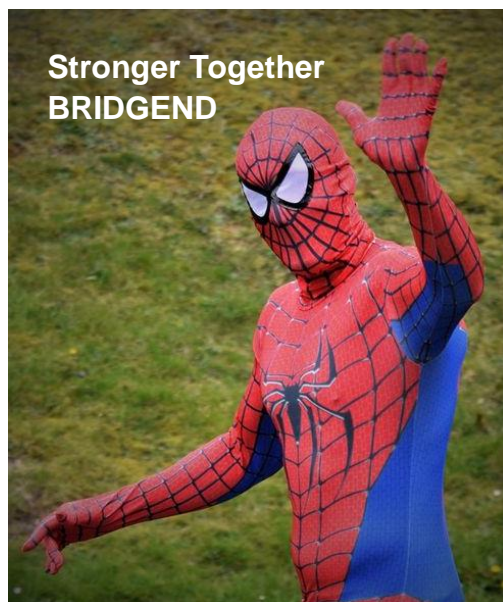
Llyfrgelloedd  
Libraries



Wales Co-operative Centre  
Canolfan Cydweithredol Cymru

## How well did we do

- Wales Co-Op linked with 60 organisations including community groups and town and community councils to raise the profile of the need to understand and support carer wellbeing.
- Stronger Together Bridgend has stimulated a range of creative ,community based activity and information sharing with over 2000 weekly hits.
- The new 'books on wheels' service is more agile and supported 3036 home visits to vulnerable people and issued 15226 resources in 2020/21. Awen have invested in digital resources with 89413 issues (30% increase)



*The Awen home delivery service has proved a life line to so many people during the pandemic. Participants in the scheme eagerly anticipate the visits these wonderful people make in the area*



## What are we doing next

- Continuing to work with partners on developing new community opportunities and social prescribing pathways as part of a regional approach led by CTM health board.

## Quality Standard 5 - Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy, domestic, family and personal relationships

### What we did

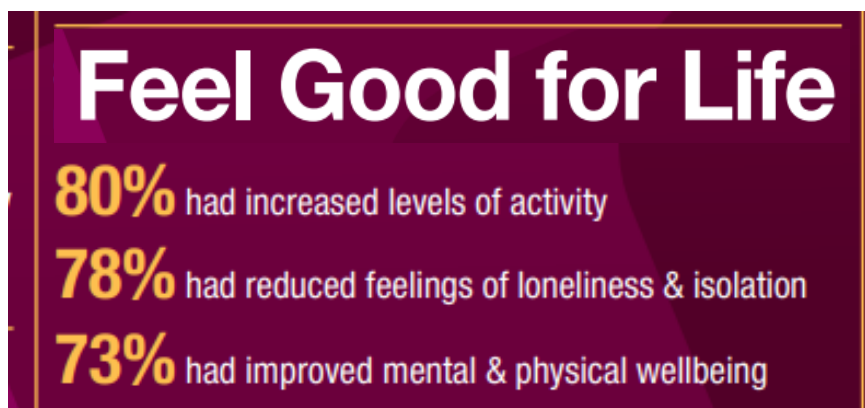
- The 'Feel Good for Life' programme for people living with dementia, cognitive impairment and carers was developed in 2019/20 and expanded, supporting 100 beneficiaries and creating a digital offer also.
- The Discovery Days play based respite programme supported 45 households and developed new ways of supporting young people with disabilities in 2020/21 recognising pressures on families.
- The Carers Wellbeing services provided bespoke support for local carers continuing remotely but with 24 hour support and providing information, advice and assistance to alleviate concerns or identify support needs during the pandemic.





## How well did we do

- 'Feel Good for Life' programme that received the Community Leisure UK national award in 2019-20. Going forward, a digital offer has been developed with lottery and charitable support helping 39 people and providing ipads/ data.
- A total of 10 'keep in touch' videos were created by staff for young people with disabilities and 33 zoom sessions were delivered in addition to the school holiday family opportunities were delivered.
- Carers Trust South East Wales by making the 24 hour support available reported 2198 contacts being made including work taken forward with 632 new unidentified carers receiving support including carers grants.



## What are we doing next

- Further develop opportunities that meet the needs of carers and cared for by involving them in the design of community based services and opportunities.

## Quality Standard 6 - Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic wellbeing, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets needs

- The prevention and wellbeing services has been supporting 3 children's care home settings to improve spaces and connect young people to community opportunities. A new Family Engagement Programme supported by Sport Wales and Welsh Government has also been progressed.

*“ With the high number of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma experienced by the group, we understandably witness behaviours in the programme. In some cases, it is challenge enough just for a young person to get out of the car and make that initial engagement with the programme. However, we saw repeat engagement from participants who were not thought by their social worker to enjoy or stay on the programme. The difference in participant's ability to emotionally regulate and interact socially was noted from the first week to the last. ”*

- Through our partnership with Awen, supported employment opportunities at B-Leaf and Wood B have been continued and restarted when restrictions have permitted
- Our partnership with Carers Trust South East Wales has ensured that local carers have benefitted from the Welsh Government carers support fund and other resources.

## How well did we do

- Prevention and Wellbeing staff co-designing outdoor space and developing activities with young people at Sunnybank, Harwood House and maple tree and integrating wellbeing opportunities with social care professionals.
- There were 54 trainees supported in the B-Leaf and Wood-B programmes in 2019/20 and positively 53 retained during 2020/21. Awen ensured that 31 trainees continued to attend during the pandemic to ease pressure on households and reduce need for other support.
- Over 5 rounds of Carers investments 290 awards were made to carers across Bridgend totalling 29k. Across 10 identified local authority areas Bridgend secured 22% of awards to support carers locally.

## What are we doing next

- Working with partners and targeting investment to expand the range of opportunities that are available and the support that is needed by more vulnerable groups.

## Childrens Social Care

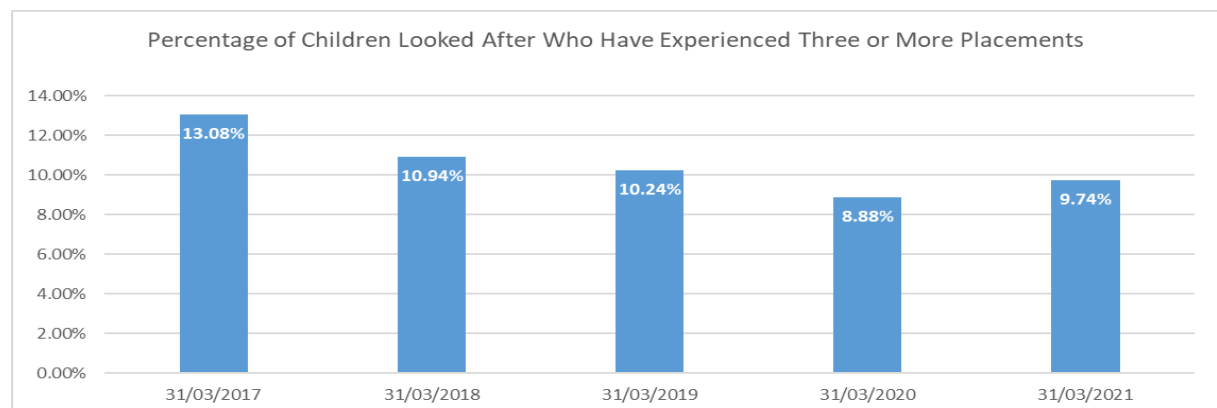
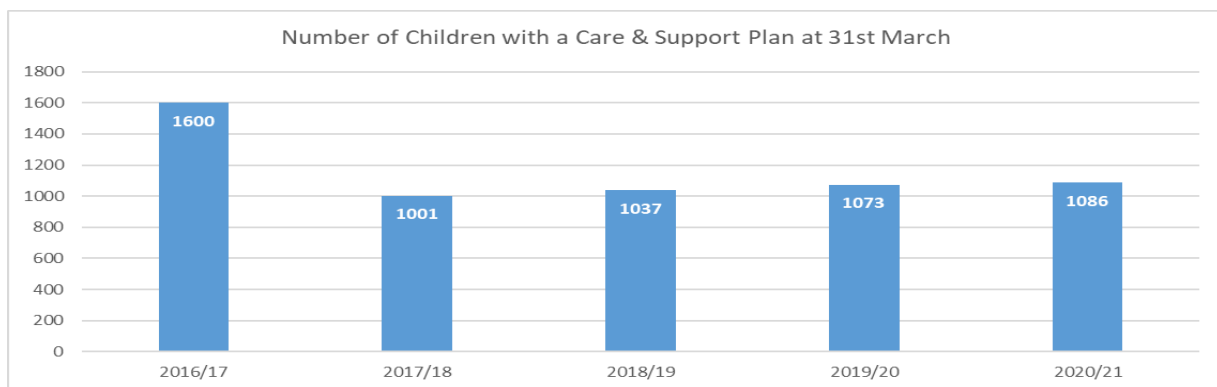
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**Promoting and improving the wellbeing of those we help**

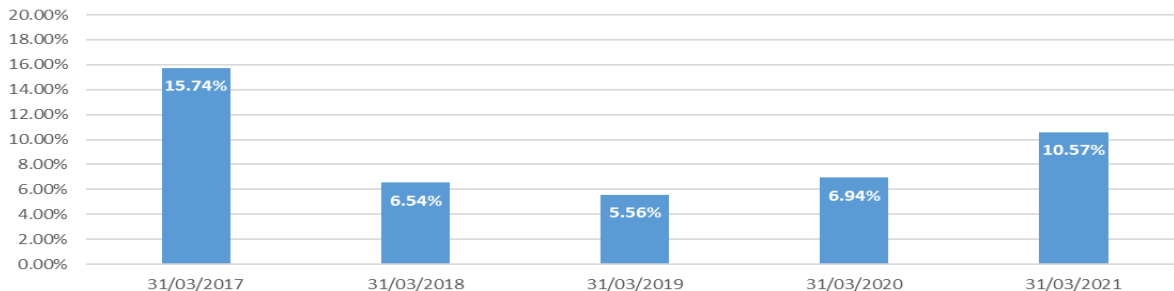
## Quality Standard 1 - Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve

### What we did

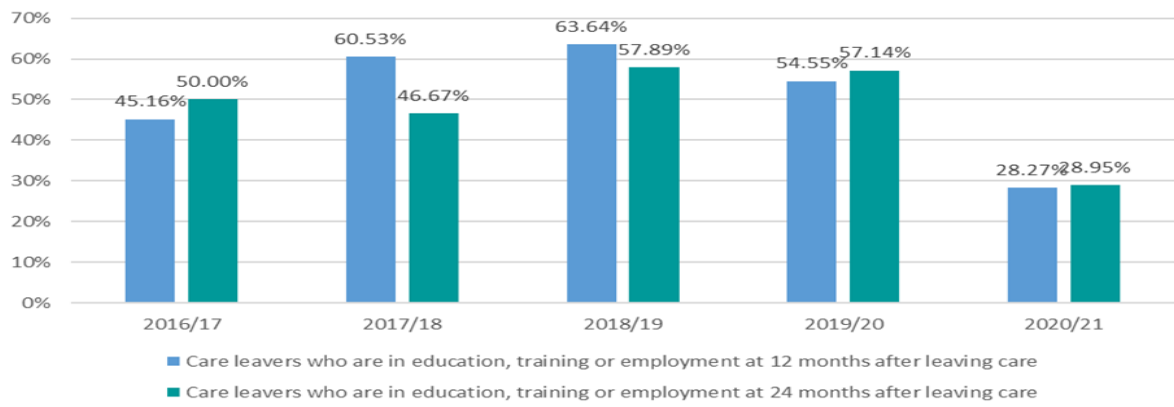
- Launched the outcomes framework with a focus on strength based practice in Childrens social care.
- Social work teams now work in ways where they focus on the wishes and feelings of the child and work jointly together with families in developing long term plans for long terms family future as long as this is in the child's best interests.
- Created a corporate parenting and participation officer post to promote the achievement of the same positive outcomes for care experienced children that every good parent would want for their own children, addressing the areas where outcomes are not as they should be; in education and accommodation for example.



Percentage of Children Looked After Who Have Experienced One or More Changes of School



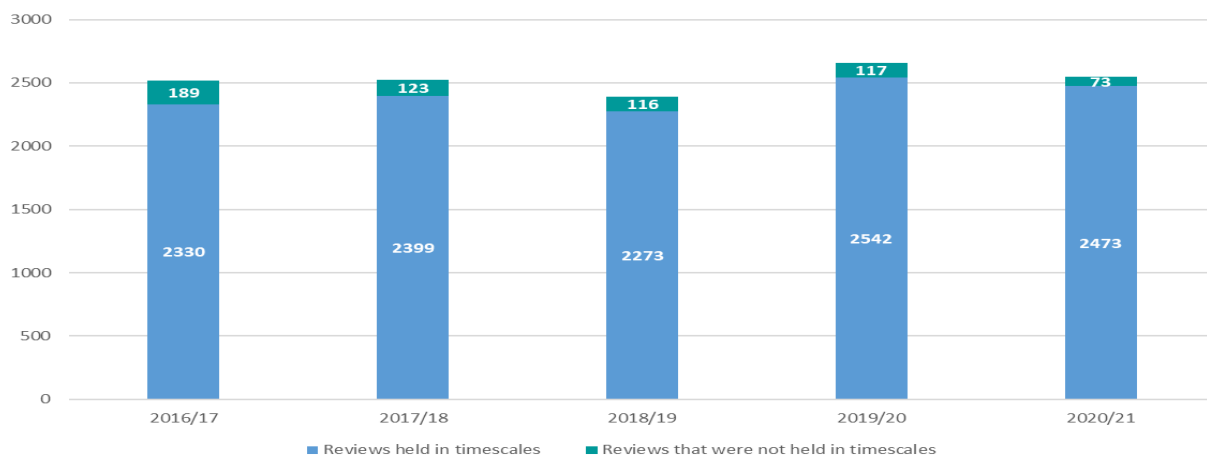
Percentage of Care Leavers who are in Education, Training or Employment



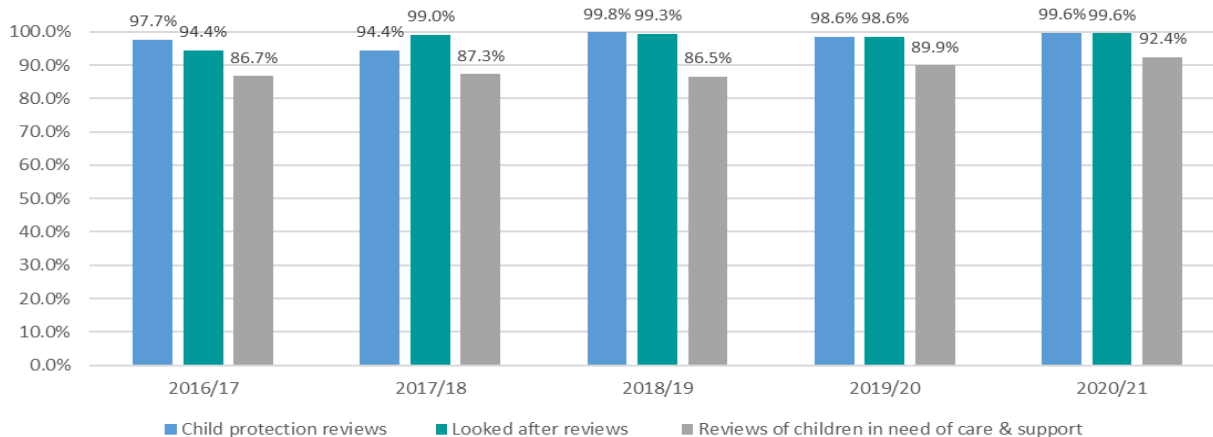
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
The number of care experienced children and care leavers (aged 16+) engaged in an apprenticeship programme	4	7	6

	2019/20	2020/21
The percentage of care leavers who experience homelessness during the year within 12 months of leaving care	18.42%	17.14%

Number of All Reviews of Care and Support Plans Undertaken During the Year



Percentage of Reviews Completed in Timescales



*“I just wanted to let you know the GAL was singing the SW’s praises in his evidence. He made the following comments: “Really good social worker, “I just wanted to let you know the GAL was singing the SW’s praises in his evidence. He made the following comments: “Really good social worker, competent does not go halfway there. She has carried out meticulous assessments and undertaken brilliant direct work with the children. She has worked hard at establishing a relationship with both the children and their parents. It has been a benefit to this family to have been allocated her to the case”. Thought I would pass on the comments as they don’t get said enough*





*X's work was a model of how social work should be – approaching a case with an open mind.*



## What we are doing next

- Established a work stream of our new strategic programme focusing on embedding strength based/outcome focussed practice, with operational managers leading the change in culture/new ways of working, and ensuring we continually support and equip new and existing staff to work in this way.
- Appoint our corporate parenting and participation officer

## Quality Standard 2 - Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being

### What we did

- Recognised that we needed to improve integrated working for children with continuing care needs and, as a region, commissioned IPC Oxford Brookes University to review the existing collaborative arrangements between health and social care when planning care and support packages for children and young people with complex needs.
- Reviewed our early help and permanence strategy together with the Education and Family Support Directorate, to ensure that children, young people and their families are offered the right help at the right time to promote their wellbeing at the earliest opportunity.

Some of the key achievements in Early Help services are:-

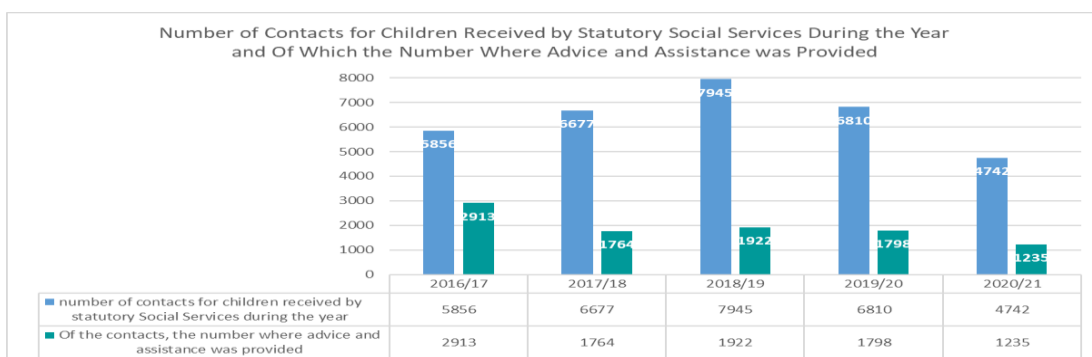
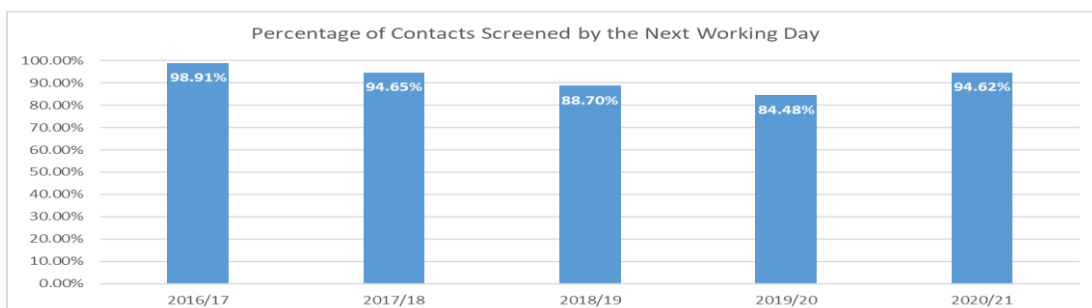
- In 2019-20, the Baby in Mind service worked alongside 18 families with 83% of babies supported by the team being able to remain safely within the family home. In November 2020, this service won a national Social Care Wales Accolade award in recognition of its pioneering work.



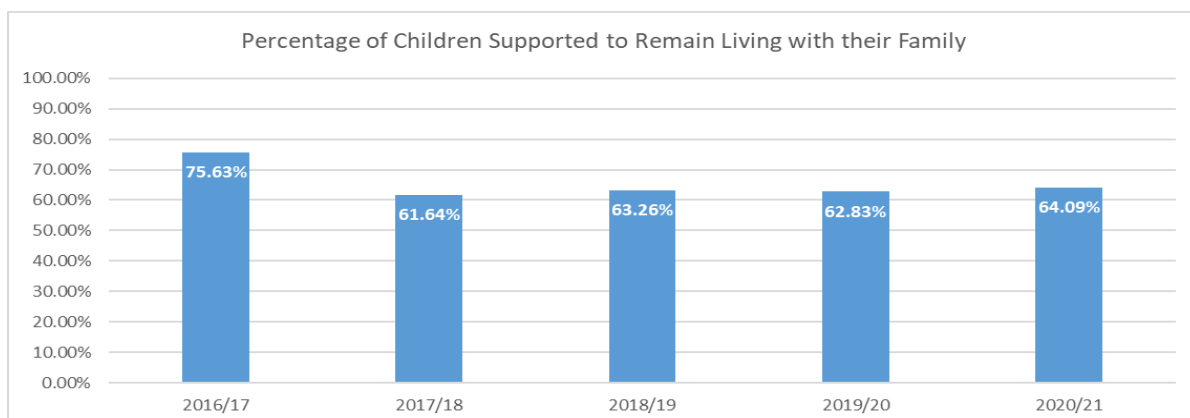
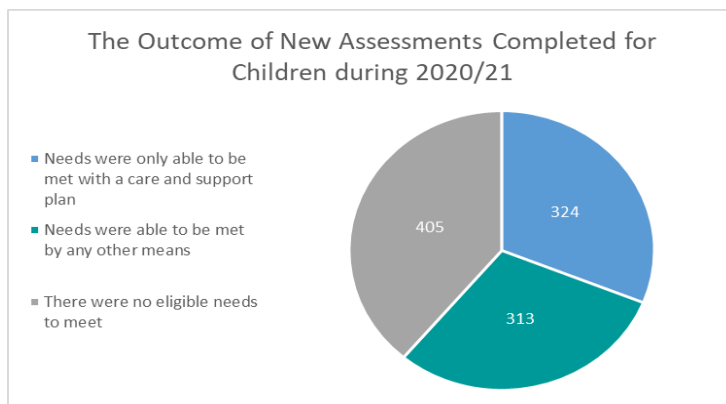
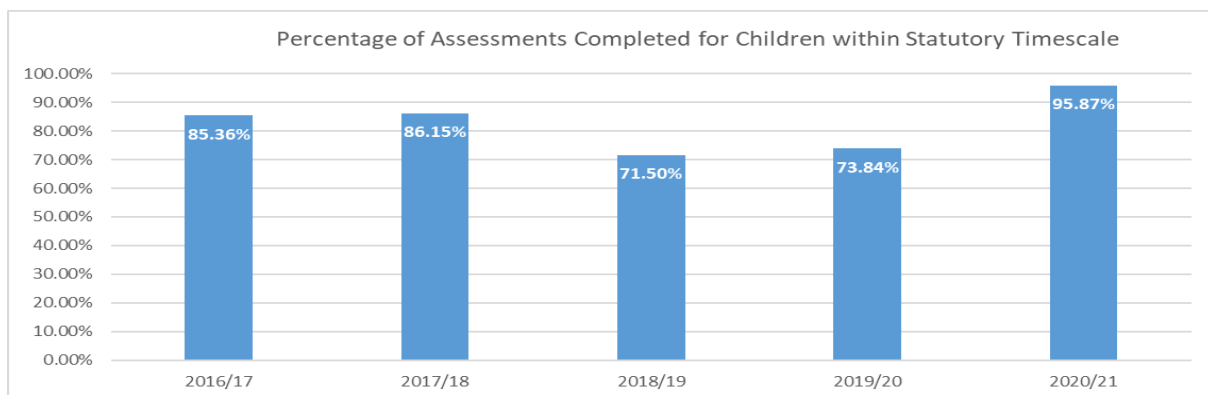
- In 2020-21, the Baby in Mind Service worked with 29 families. 86% of the babies were supported to remain in the family home and of the 4 babies who were placed in the care of the local authority, three have since returned to the care of their parents.
- In 2019/20 Connecting Families offered edge of care support to 59 families consisting of 115 children in 2019-20. Of these children, 93% were supported to remain at home with their families. An additional 8 children were referred to the service for placement support with 100% remaining with their carers.
- In 2020-21, Connecting Families provided support to a total 178 children. 153 children were referred for edge of care support with 92.7% remaining out of care. 25 children were referred for placement support with 100% remaining in their existing placements.
- In 2019/20 Rapid Response supported 159 children in 2019-20. Of those children referred, 157 received edge of care support with 96% of children supported to remain safely at home. 2 children received placement support with 50% remaining in the placement.
- In 2020-21, Rapid Response provided edge of care support to 166 children with 96% remaining at home with their families. 100% of the three children referred for placement support were able to remain in their existing placements.
- 11 children were referred to the Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) in 2019-20 for edge of care support with 64% being supported to remain safely in the care of their families. One child was referred for placement support and has remained at home.
- In 2020-21, 22 children were referred to the service for edge of care support with 96% remaining at home. 6 children were referred for placement support with 100% remaining in their placement.

- Recognised the need to improve mental health and emotional well-being for young people by working in partnership to deliver an integrated approach to Children and Young People Emotional and Mental Health Support. We are developing a regional strategy that will describe our commitment to implement the NEST framework and whole schools approach.
- Advocacy for children and young people in Bridgend is provided through a regional contract to deliver the National Approach to Statutory Advocacy, as prescribed by Welsh Government. The contract for Bridgend transferred from the Western Bay region into the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019. The service provider in Bridgend remained in place, namely Tros Gynnal Plant. This continuity of provider ensured that all ongoing advocacy cases at the point of contract transfer were maintained with existing advocates
- Continued to work to increase the number of children and young people receiving an offer of advocacy to ensure their voices are heard and well-being is promoted.

## How well did we do

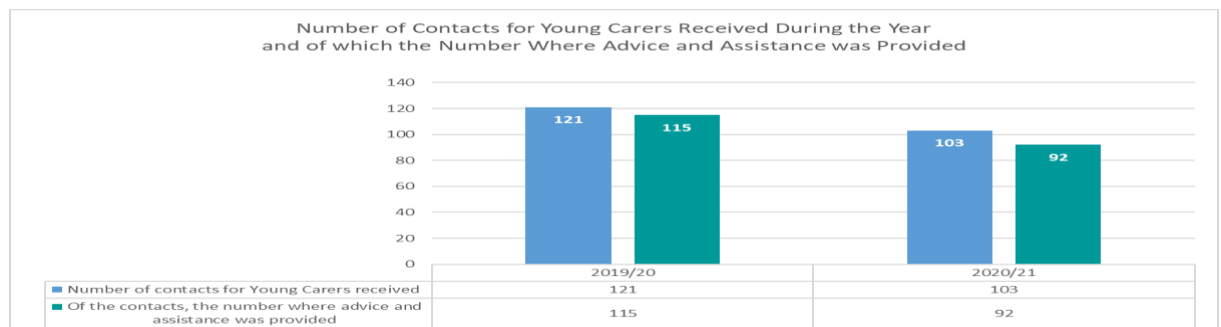
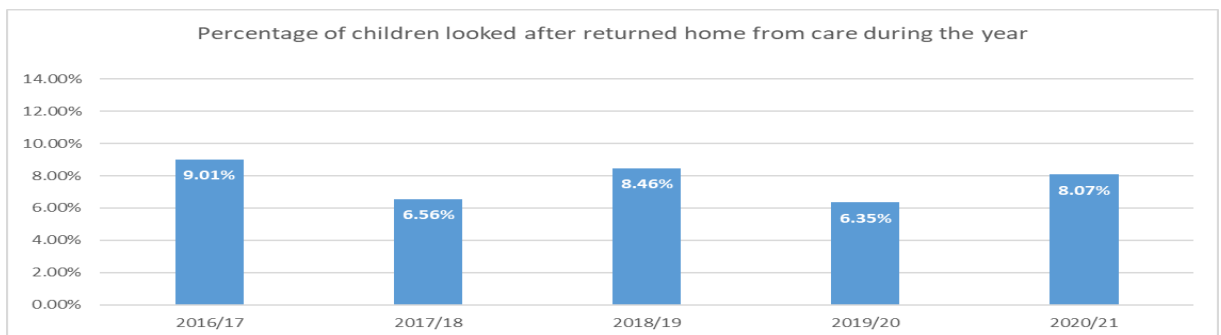
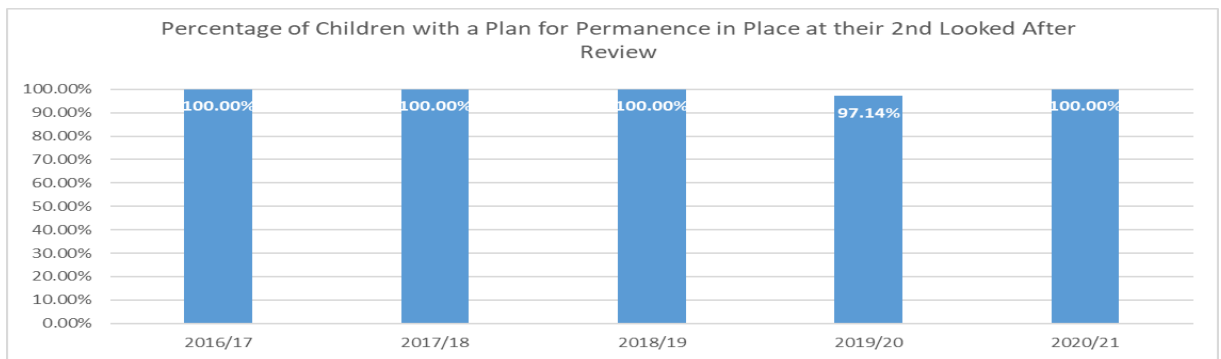


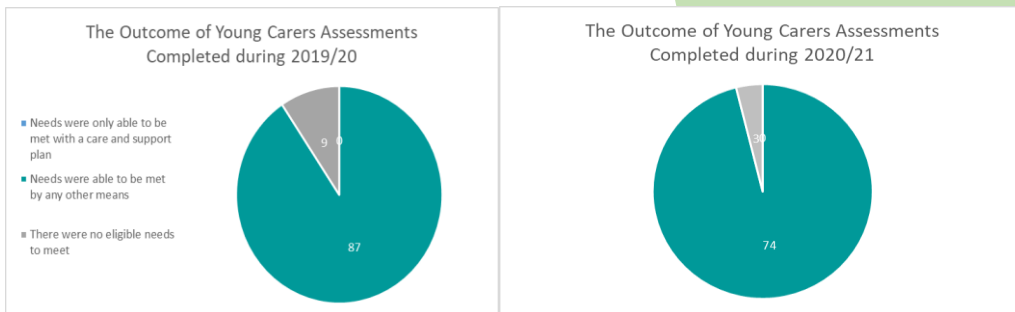
	2020/21
The total number of new assessments completed for Children during the year	1042
Percentage of new assessments undertaken using the language of choice	100%



	2020/21
Number of 'Active Offers' of advocacy for children during the year	41
Number of children where an Independent Professional Advocate was provided	34

Issue-Based Advocacy cases remained at a strong level of delivery with 192 cases opened in the year supporting children and young people with an Independent Professional Advocate. Changes to contact approaches were made during lockdown periods and the provider adapted well to supporting children and young people using online and digital communications.





	2019/20	2020/21
Number of new assessments completed for young carers during the year.	96	77
Percentage of assessments undertaken using the language of choice	100.00%	100.00%

## What we are doing next

- Finalise and implement a joint pathway/operating model for continuing care arrangements.
- Finalise the regional mental health strategy and implement a local delivery plan with colleagues from Health, and Education/Family Support.
- Commission a regional MAPSS (Multi Agency Placement Support Service) to deliver therapeutic interventions to care experienced children and those placed for adoption.

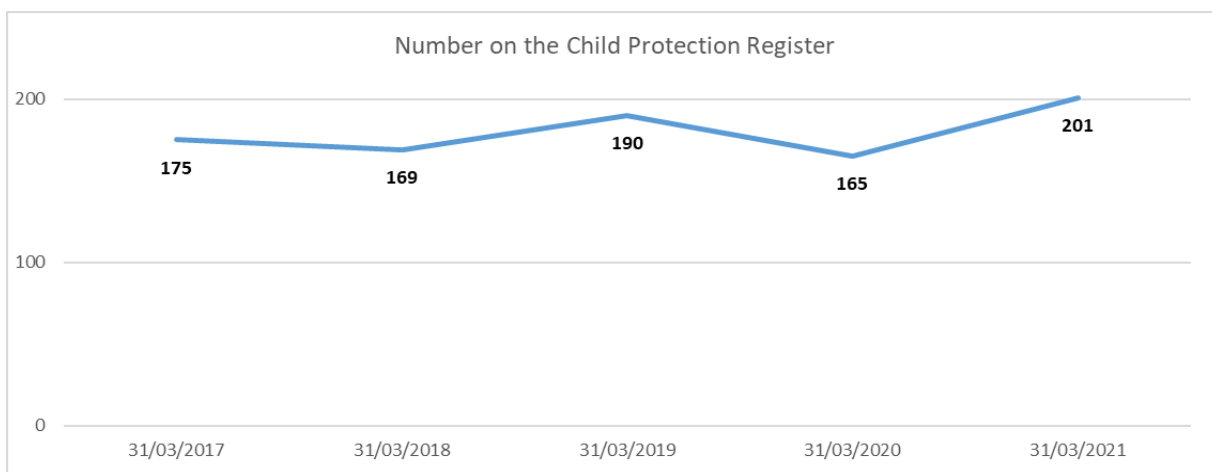
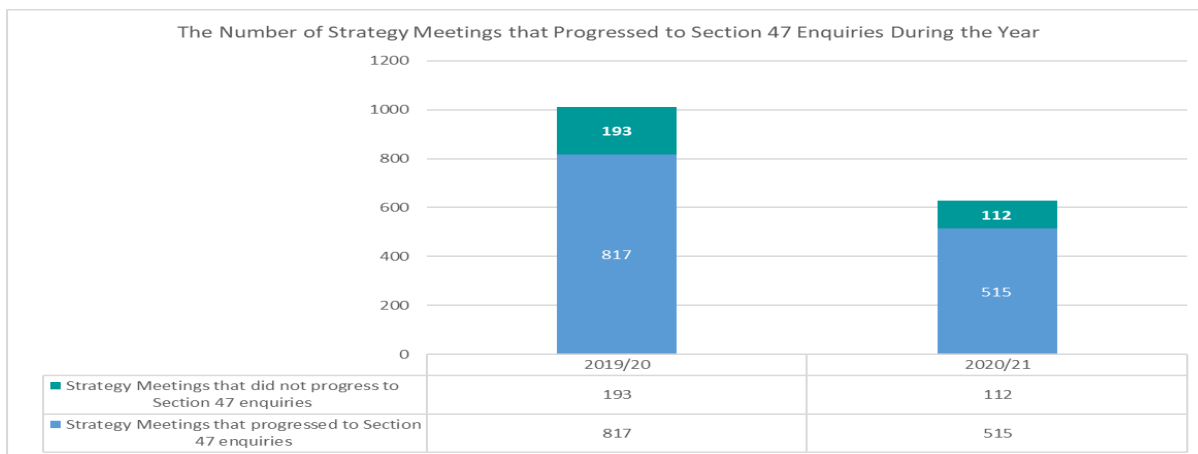
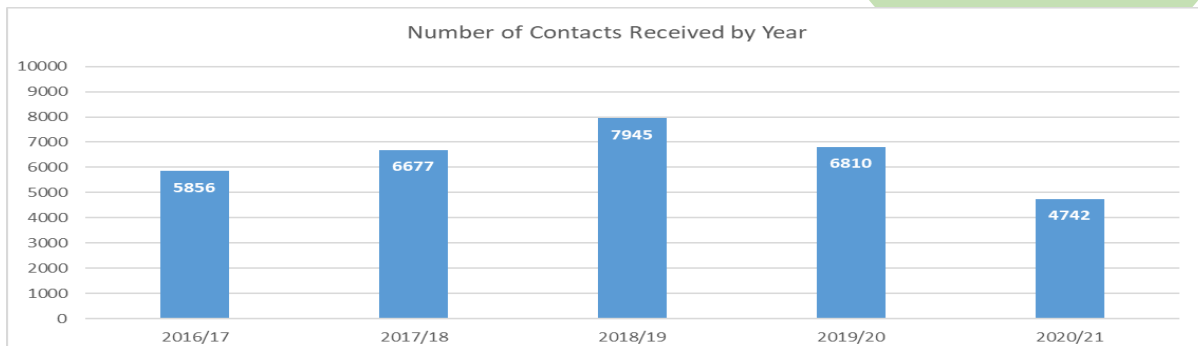
## Quality Standard 3 - Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

### What we did

- Finalised and implemented our MASH performance management framework with partner agencies.
- The Bridgend MASH Quality Assurance Performance quarterly and annual report card is now fully operational and reports multi agency partner performance indicators into the MASH Operational board and the Executive board who scrutinise the Data. There is also an opportunity for partners to review the data relating to their partners within the MASH and to consider emerging themes and trends. The QA information is also presented to the Regional Safeguarding Board.
- Created a quality assurance officer post across the Directorate.
- Launched the new 'Wales Safeguarding Procedures' in partnership with Welsh Government and Cwm Taff Morgannwg Regional Safeguarding Board with the safeguarding training module being mandatory for all staff.
- Reviewed the Corporate Safeguarding policy and created a corporate safeguarding officer post to oversee and support Directorates in its implementation.

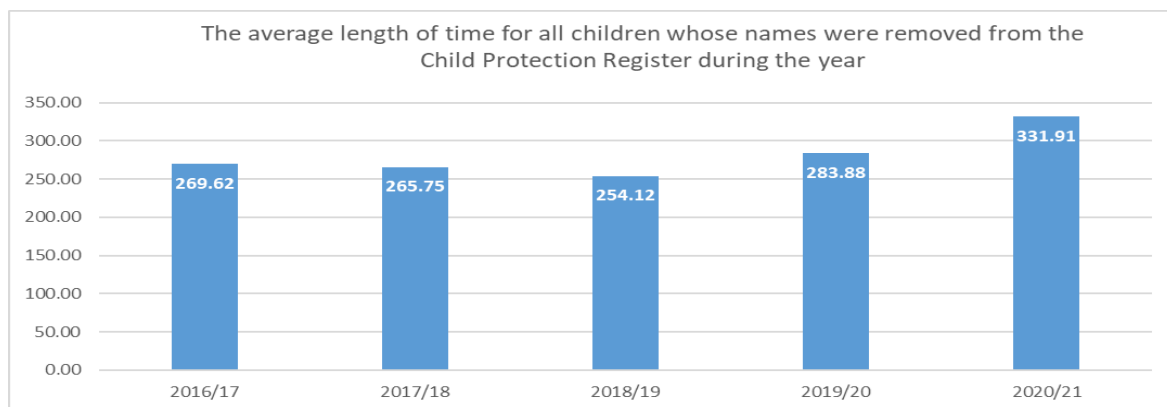
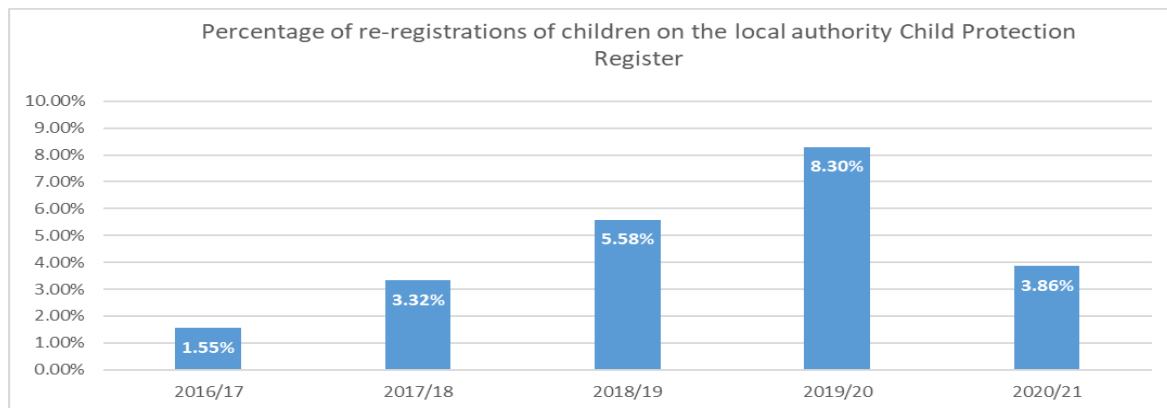


## How well did we do



The total number of children placed on the Child Protection Register during 2020/21 under the category of:

	Age					Total
	Under 1	1 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 15	16 - 18	
Neglect	16	18	25	14	3	76
Physical abuse	3	6	5	6	3	23
Sexual abuse	0	1	3	6	1	11
Emotional abuse	16	19	23	20	3	81
Financial abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neglect and physical abuse	6	3	1	1	1	12
Physical and sexual abuse	0	0	0	2	0	2
Neglect and sexual abuse	1	0	1	0	0	2
Neglect, physical and sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>207</b>





	2020/21
The total number of reports of children who go missing during the year	296
The total number of children who go missing during the year	99

## What we are doing next

- Appoint the corporate safeguarding officer and fully embed the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy by March 2022 to ensure an effective approach to implementation across the Council.
- Appoint the quality assurance officer who will be pivotal in ensuring we embed our Quality Assurance Framework to ensure that children, families and adults benefit from the highest possible standard of service within resources
- Implement the Public Law working group recommendations to achieve best practice in child protection and family justice systems.

## Quality Standard 4 - Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society

### What we did

- Finalised our transition service model and established our child disability and transition team.
- Responded to the need to provide support and a social life to our most vulnerable children and young people during the school holidays of 2020, and we established bespoke provision to achieve this. 20 days of activities were provided; supporting 39 young people, who were registered or classed as vulnerable, and with 259 visits over the four week period.



## How well did we do

Transition	2020/21
The number of people known to the Transition Team with a care and support plan at 31st March	104
The number of contacts received by the Transition Team during the year	11
Of the contacts, the number where advice and assistance was provided	10
Of the contacts, the percentage where advice and assistance was provided	90.91%
The number of assessments completed during the year	19
Of the assessments completed, how many went on to have a care and support plan	17
Of the assessments relating to children and young people aged 14 to 17, the percentage completed within statutory timescales	100.00%
The number of reviews of care and support plans that were due during the year	162
The number of reviews of care and support plans that were completed within the statutory timescales	160
Percentage of Reviews completed within the statutory timescales	98.77%

	2020/21
The total number of children with a care and support plan where needs are met through a Direct Payment at 31st March	113

## What we are doing next

- Co design a strategy for disabled children and their parents /carers



## Quality Standard 5 - Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

### What we did

Continued to seek to reduce the number of care experienced children, supporting them, where possible, to live with their families and where this is not possible achieve permanence at the earliest possible opportunity.

- Undertaken a restructure and agreed that a care experienced team will be established to ensure there is sufficient focus on ensuring care experienced children are supported to maintain positive personal relationships in permanent arrangements. We have created a new Team Manager & Senior Social Work post to support this change in structure

Reviewed and relaunched our overarching special guardianship policy in November 2020.

### How well did we do

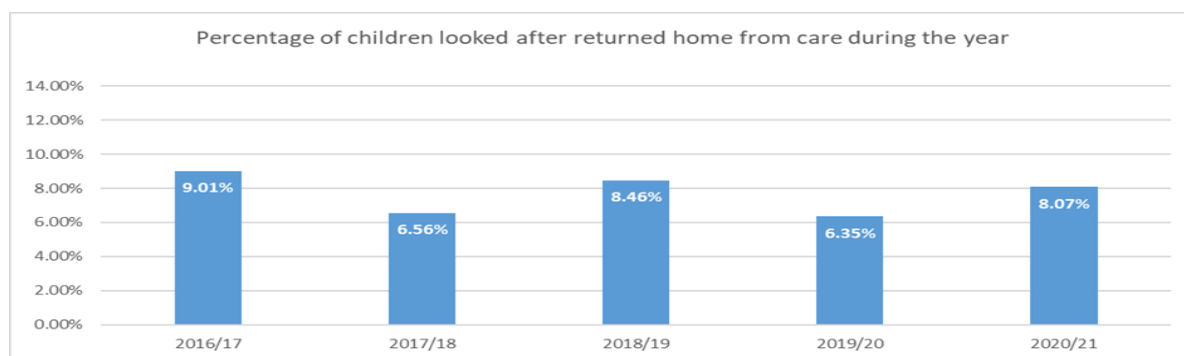
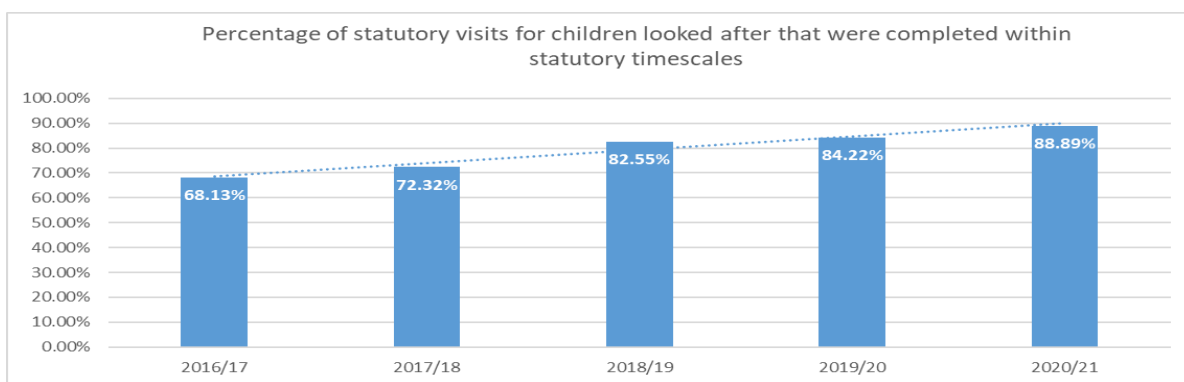
#### Numbers of Care Experienced Children

	31/03/2017	31/03/2018	31/03/2019	31/03/2020	31/03/2021
Total LAC Population	390	384	381	394	390
Number of Relative/Friend Placements	59	59	63	87	89
Number of PWP Placements	47	48	57	67	80
Number of UASC	0	0	0	2	0
LAC Population minus PWP, Relative/Friend, UASC	284	277	261	238	221

## Numbers of Care Experienced Children Placed Outside Authority

Number of Placements Outside Authority but in Wales	31/03/2017	31/03/2018	31/03/2019	31/03/2020	31/03/2021
Total LAC Population	99	94	88	101	90
LAC Population minus PWP, Relative/Friend, UASC	77	72	63	67	60

Number of Placements outside Wales	31/03/2017	31/03/2018	31/03/2019	31/03/2020	31/03/2021
Total LAC Population	4	4	7	10	14
LAC Population minus PWP, Relative/Friend, UASC	1	1	2	3	0



*“Progress was due mainly to the ‘excellent level of social worker support’ the parents had and he went on to say that the way that X has dealt with this case was ‘a model of social work involvement when attempting to secure the long term objective of keeping a child with its parents if possible and safe to do so.”*

# Childrens Social Care

## What we are doing next

- Our focus in 2021/22 will be on children and young people ceasing to be looked after and a key piece of Bridgend's reduction strategy action plan is to increase the revocation of Placement with parent placements, the number of Care Order discharges and the use of alternative orders such as Special Guardianship (SGO).
- Continue to promote the use of family group conferences and develop a culture where this approach is pivotal to our strengths based practice culture.
- Implement our care experienced children team in September 2021

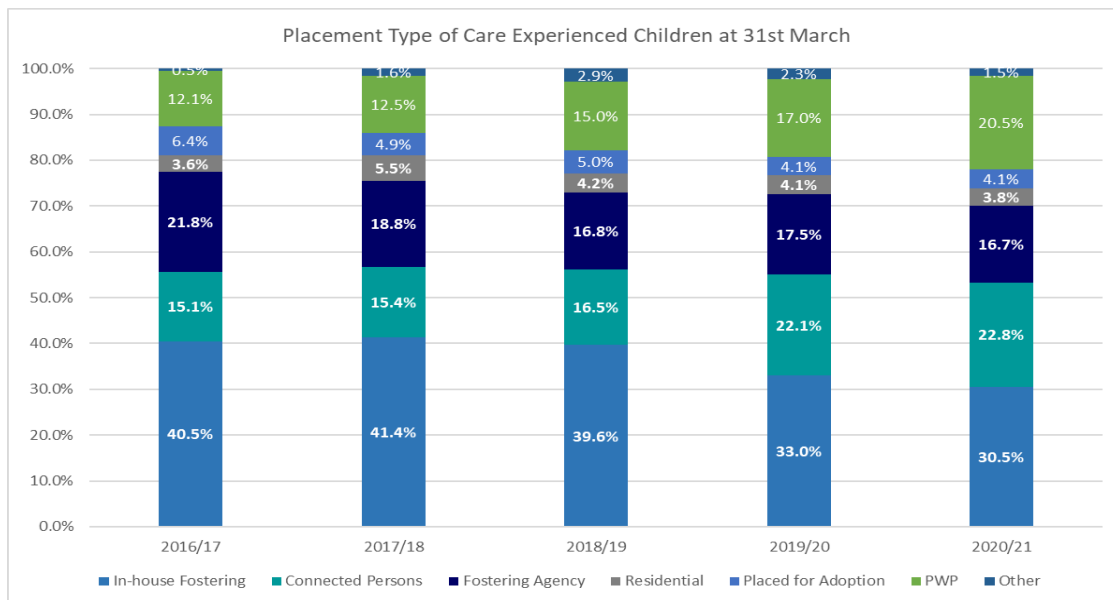
**Quality Standard 6 - Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.**

## What we did

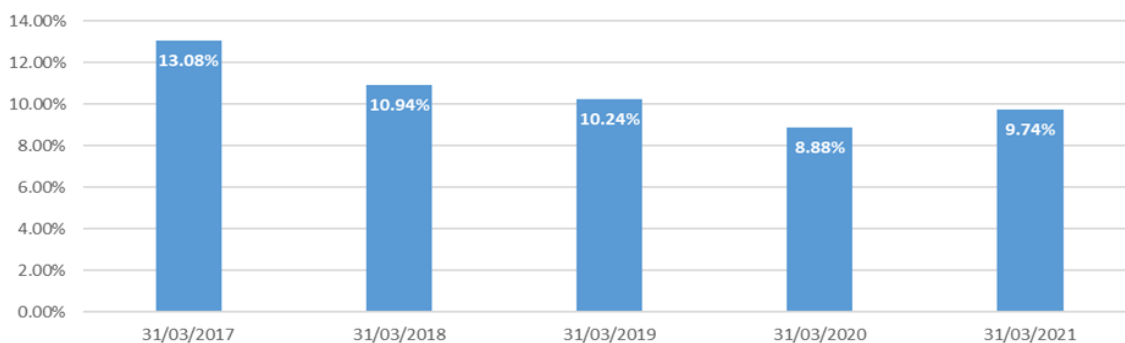
- Continued to embed the emergency and assessment model of residential provision in Maple Tree House (MTH).
- In April 2020 the model in MTH became more fully functional with the Behaviour Clinic being on-site to support the residential staff to develop a psychologically informed environment that focussed on providing an enriched activity programme and positive behaviour strategies and enabling complex assessments to be undertaken and therapeutic interventions identified.
- In February 2021 we appointed a permanent behaviour analyst who is a full time member of the staff team.
- Undertook a joint commissioning exercise with housing for an extended supported living service for care experienced young people who required support in transition as well as those who are experiencing homelessness. This commissioning exercise also involved Young People, who were part of the evaluation panel.

- Undertaken a review of our transitional foster carer scheme and a new (Draft) Transitional Foster Care Policy has been developed setting out the expectations of the role and also the support that is available. Specific, targeted recruitment recommenced in March 2021.
- Extended the training delivery plan to upskill general foster carers
- Undertaken consistent marketing and advertising campaigns for target areas where there may be identified gaps in provision – including face to face and online- to attract prospective carers.
- Worked collaboratively with our regional colleagues in RCT and MTCBC to develop a “Regional Front Door”.

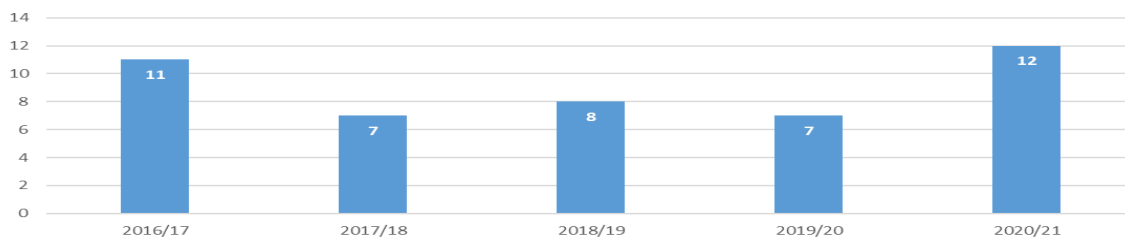
## How well did we do



Percentage of Children Looked After Who Have Experienced Three or More Placements



The Number of Young People Leaving Care who move into a 'When I am Ready' Placement



	2019/20	2020/21
Number of Children placed in Maple Tree House during the year	22	9
Number of Young People Placed in Supported Living Projects during the year	11	11

## General Foster Carers

	2019/20	2020/21
Number of initial enquiries to foster received	142	104
Number of initial home visits/initial assessments conducted	49	43
Number of fostering assessments commenced	14	27
Number of new General Foster Carers approved	8	16

## What we are doing next

- Move our existing service, Maple Tree House, to a purpose built provision.
- Recruit more transitional carers
- Relocate our placement and fostering team so that they are co -located in the new purpose built service.
- Launch our regional front door for prospective foster carers in April 2021.





## Adult Social Care

3

**Promoting and improving the wellbeing of those we help**

## QS1. Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve

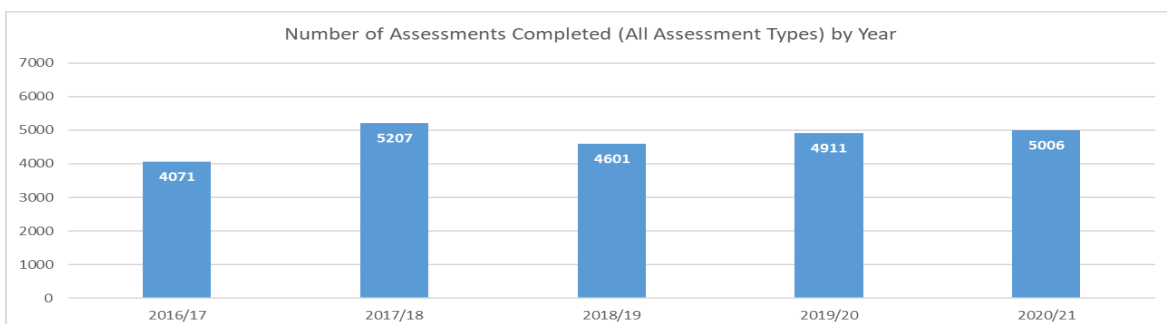
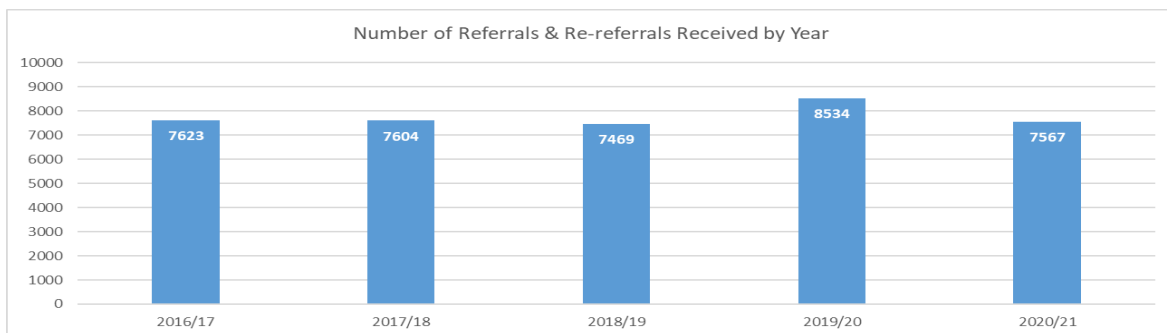
### What we did

- We are working with our people with learning disabilities to live their lives as they wish – our pictures below show how we are doing this! They are also driving the future provision of supported living and day opportunities and employment.
- The Bridgend Voice & Choice (BVC) advocacy service show a successful advocacy service being delivered enabling people's voices to be heard in all aspects of their lives.
- A reorganisation of mental health services was completed in December 2019 after discussions The Social Care And Recovery Team (SCART)
- Focussed on sustaining our 'what matters' model of social work during the pandemic. This work has been practitioner led and consolidated using action learning across teams throughout 2020/2021. We are improving the way we record and evidence people's outcomes in our assessments and care plans.
- Our Community Learning Disability Team and Mental Health Team have further developed their social work practice as part of the 'Sustaining social work initiative'. The strong focus on person centred planning and outcomes continues to develop and embed in day to day practice

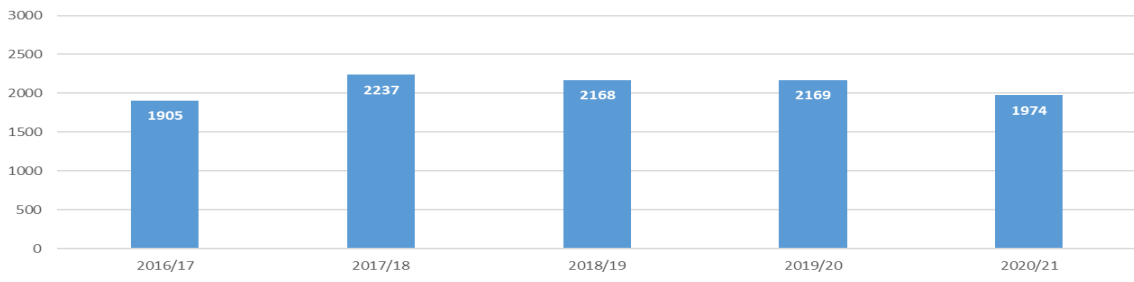


- Community Occupational Therapy services have been working with Housing to review and streamline the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) processes. Within Housing, there is now based a Community Occupational Therapist who is able to work closely with Architects and Building firms as DFG projects go live until project completion.
- In June 2019, the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership Board was advised by Welsh Government that their two transformation programme bids had been successful, securing £22.7 million for the two ambitious programmes of work. The Bridgend programme 'Accelerating the Pace of Change for Our Integrated Services (APCIS)' included three ambitions.
- The overarching aim of the Transformation Programme is to deliver fully accessible coordinated health and social care services seamlessly wrapped around the needs and preferences of individuals

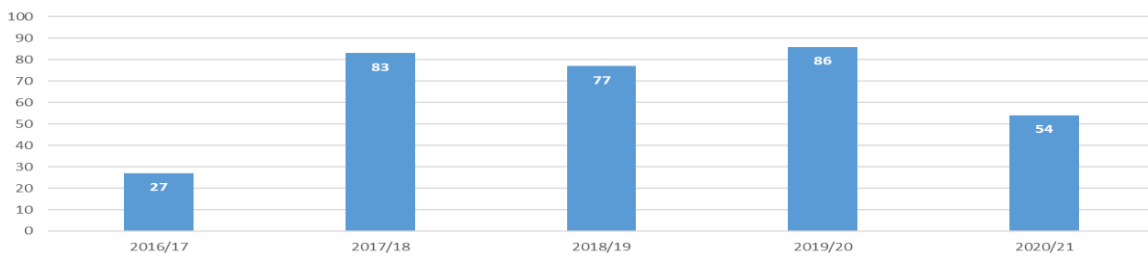
## How well did we do



Number of Referrals to the Community Resource Team (65+) by Year

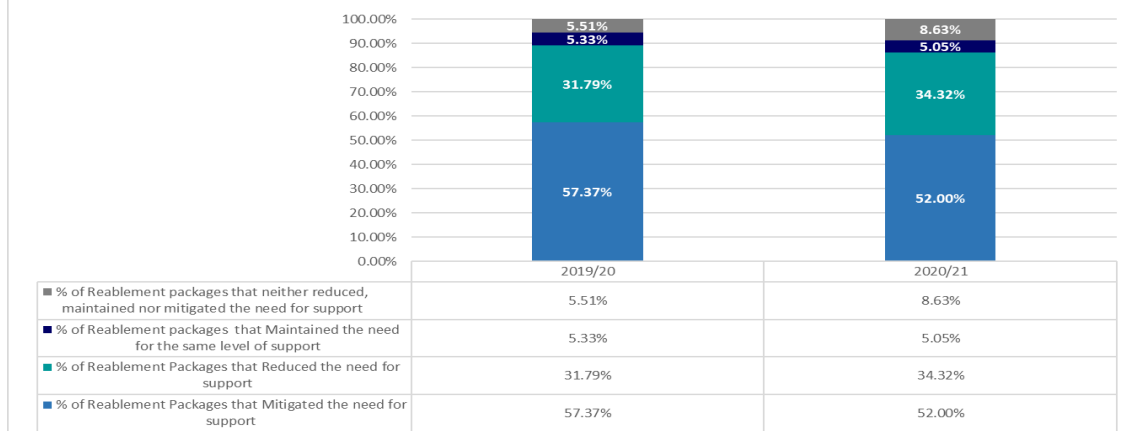


Number of Assessments Undertaken in the Secure Estate by Year

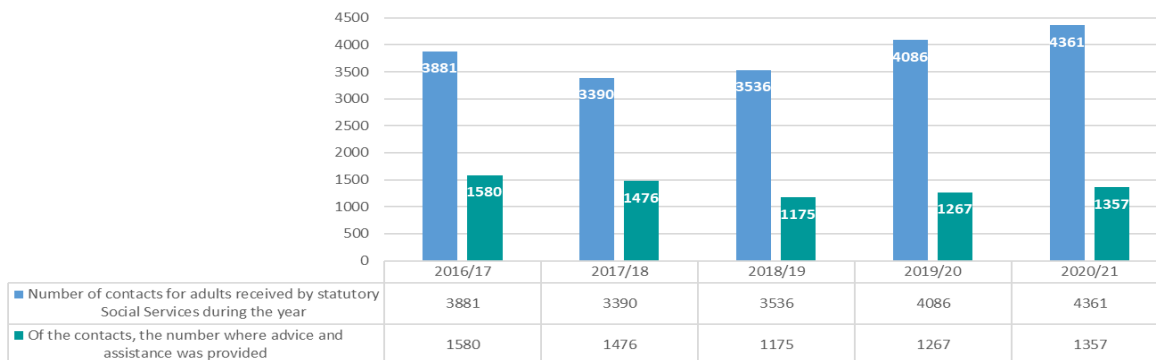


	2020/21
The total number of adults during the year where the need for an independent professional advocate was identified	52
The total number of adults during the year where the need for an independent professional advocate was identified, of those the total number where an Independent Advocate was provided	52

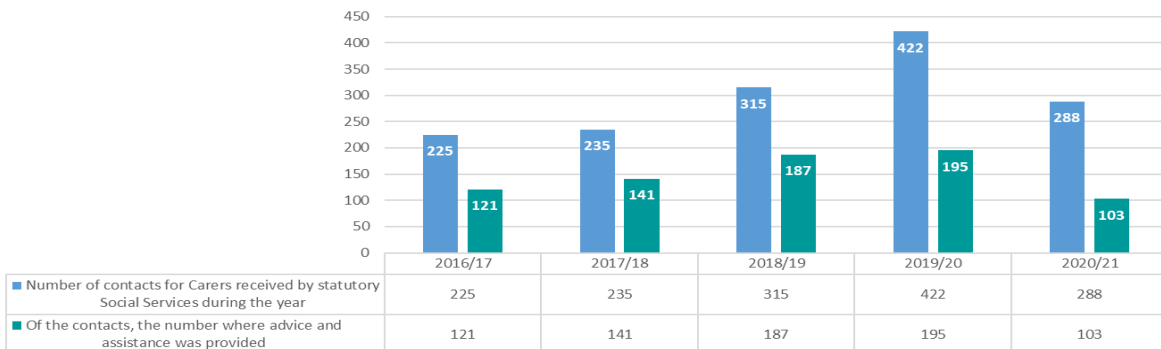
Completed Reablement Packages (%) by Outcome and Year



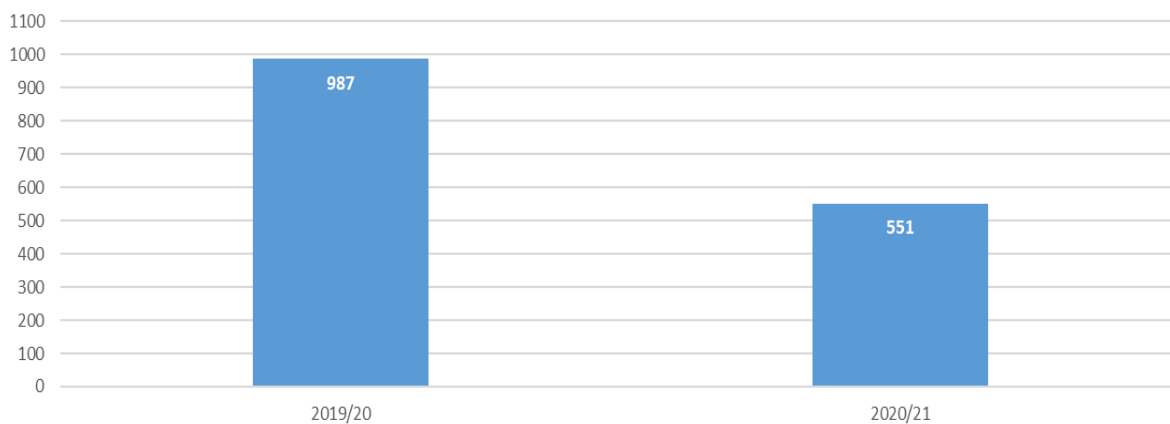
Number of Contacts for Adults Received by Statutory Social Services During the Year and Of Which the Number Where Advice and Assistance was Provided



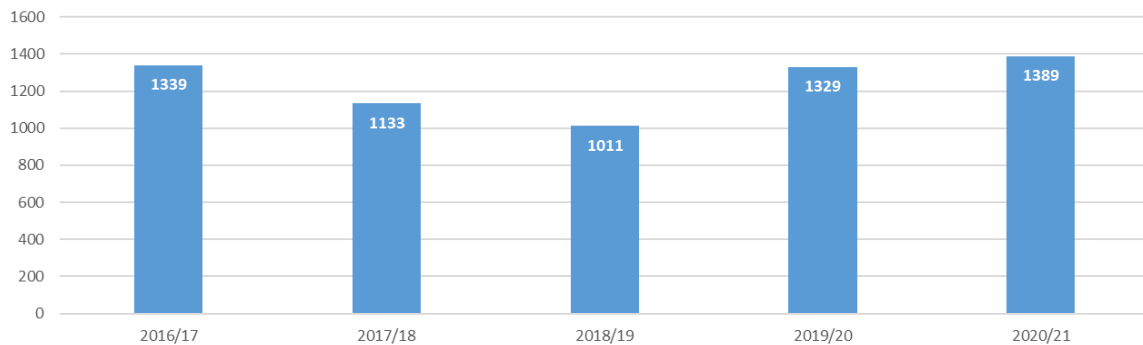
Number of Contacts for Carers Received by Statutory Social Services During the Year and Of Which the Number Where Advice and Assistance was Provided



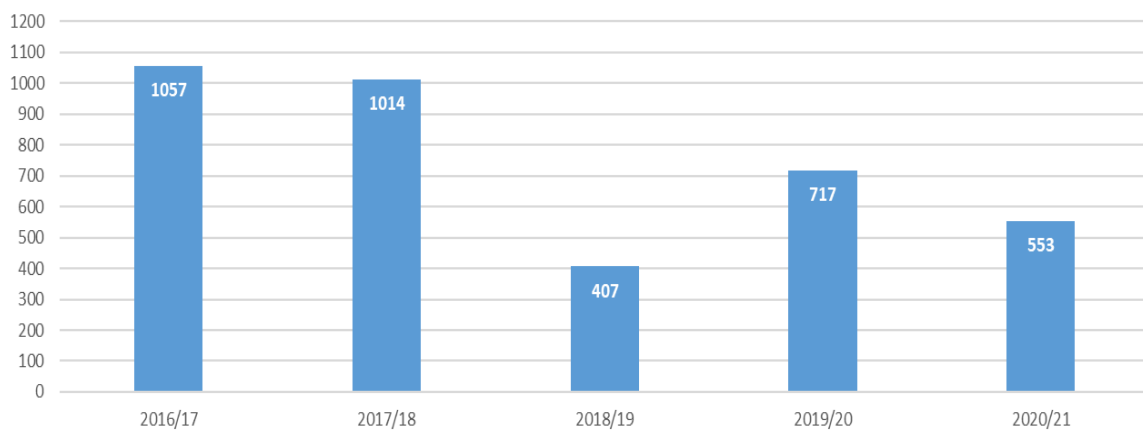
Number of Referrals to ARC by Year



Number of Referrals to Community Occupational Therapists by Year



Number of Community Occupational Therapist Assessments Completed by Year



## What are we doing next

- Following the outcome of the consultation with people in supported living accommodation, write the service specifications and recommission the services;
- •Strengthen our quality assurance processes to continuously review and improve how well we have implemented our strength based practice model;

- To continue to build strong relationships with community clusters to support people to receive seamless health and social care and access the support and services in the communities in which they live.



- Work with partners in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region to agree and implement an optimal model for community health, social care and wellbeing which takes the very best practice from across the region.
- Continue to develop the operating model for the Information, Advice and Assistance in Bridgend so people receive what they need in a timely, accessible way.
- Develop relationship based social work across adult services, ensuring there are no unnecessary handoffs between teams.
- Continue to train and develop our workforce in strength based practice.



*Mrs X thanked me for being there and for listening and reported “you have made me feel a 100 feet tall today” Thank you for everything*

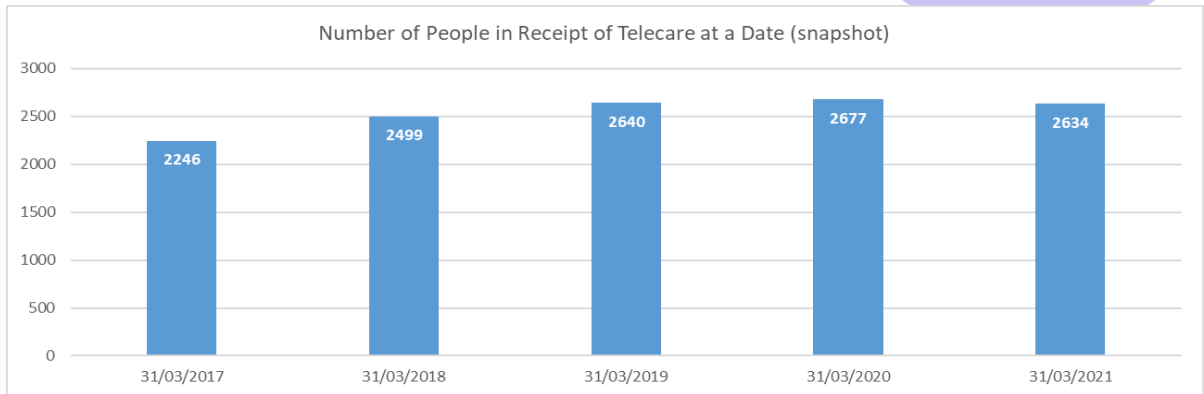


## Quality Standard 2 - Working with people and partners to protect and promote people’s physical and mental health and emotional well-being

### What we did

- Remodelling our care and support home services. The priorities have been:
  - Consulting with our workforce on a new staffing model
  - Accommodation for teams including investment in our Trem y Mor integrated resource centre
  - Electronic Scheduling System to improve service efficiency was implemented in June 2020

- The Telecare service continue to develop using new technologies to support people to remain as independent as possible.



- Our Acute Clinical Team is introducing Point Of Care (PoC) blood testing which is enabling the team to undertake clinical assessments at a person's home more quickly with no time delay to understand what treatments are needed.
- During the pandemic, the Council's directly provided care and support services have continued to operate their services as 'business as usual' whilst also managing the significant pressures experienced on a professional and personal level.
- Our priority has been to maintain and support the wellbeing and safety of all our people using services and staff, whilst delivering front line care and support to people living in residential accommodation, community settings and peoples own homes. We have continued to deliver care and support to all, according to their assessed needs.
- Individuals, families; staff and professionals have worked closely during the pandemic and have supported one and other throughout these challenging times. People's resilience and strength have enabled our services to continue delivering outcome focused and person centred care to the most vulnerable people who receive our services.



## Examples of what we have been doing include:-

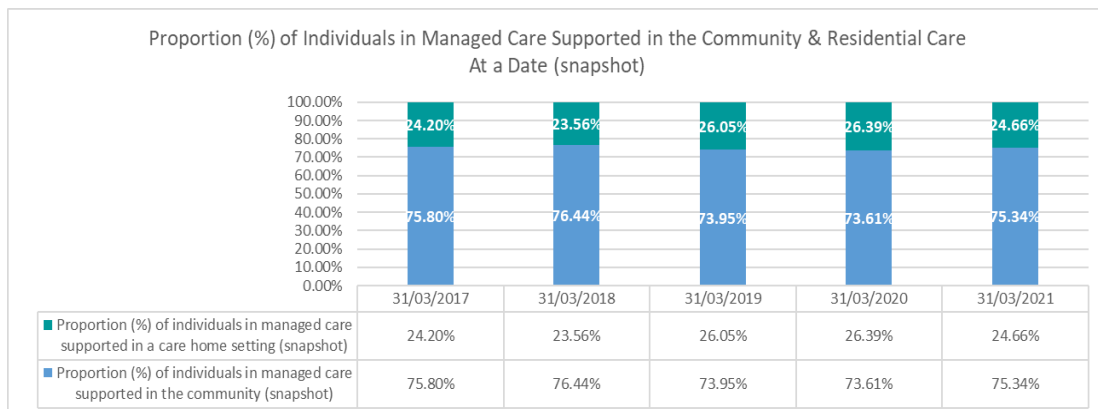
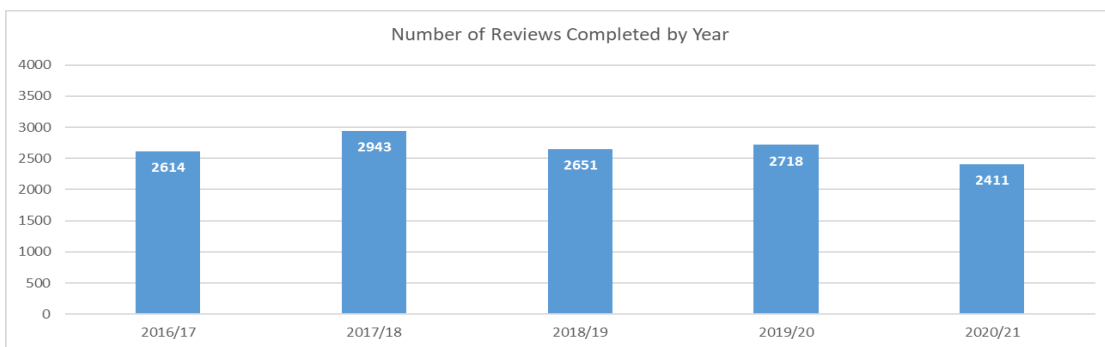
- Letters sent via email or post to families informing of the plans to re-connect Families/Friends including window and indoor visits
- Wellbeing telephone calls from management and staff with families and people receiving support in the community
- Keep in touch events organised between supported living houses
- Christmas party via Zoom with entertainment
- People supported to keep in touch with loved ones via 'what's App', telephone calls, face time, writing letters and enclosing a photo.
- Sending cards and personal gifts /photos during times of celebratory events such as VE Day, Easter, Christmas and family birthdays
- During the pandemic emergency services were visiting our Extra care schemes to clap for carers each week, sounding their horns and celebrating their appreciation and support.
- Support provided to families to allow essential visits to take place safely to be beside their loved ones at end of life.



- Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT's) are in place in each GP cluster network and work on the basis of who is best placed with the right skills and expertise to respond to the needs of individuals in communities. A co-ordinated plan is in place to take this work forward to the consolidation phase.
- During the pandemic social work teams continued to undertake some home visits and assessments and undertake safeguarding work, where visits were not possible regular telephone contact with individuals and families in terms of welfare continued throughout. The service has seen an increase in the level of need of people with care and support needs and an increased pressure on co-resident carers, which may result in services being required for individuals in need at an earlier stage in their journey.

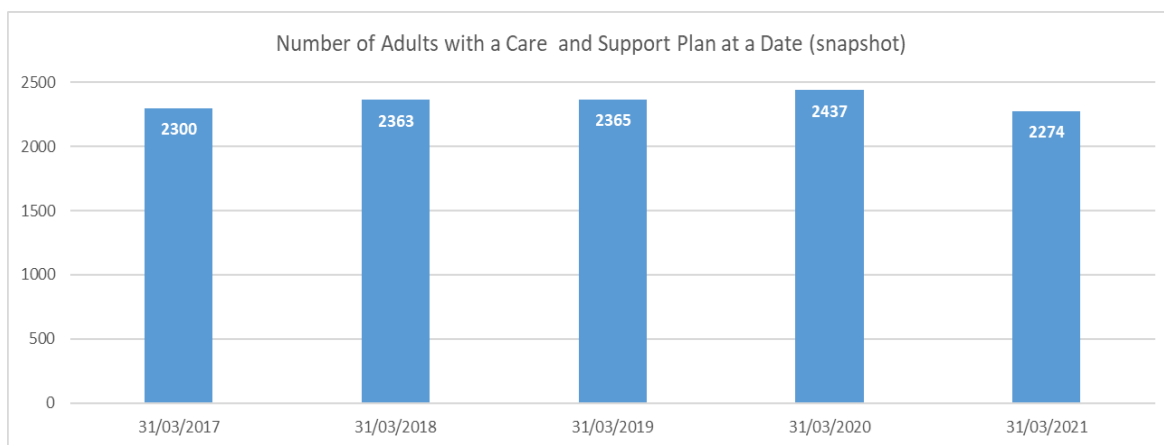
“ He thanked us for our continuing support and looks forward to the weekly conversations ”

## How well did we do

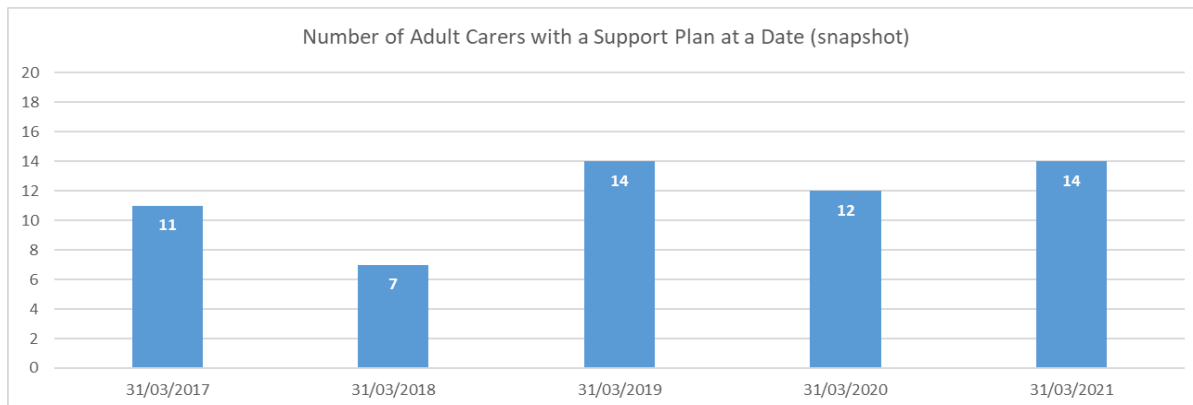


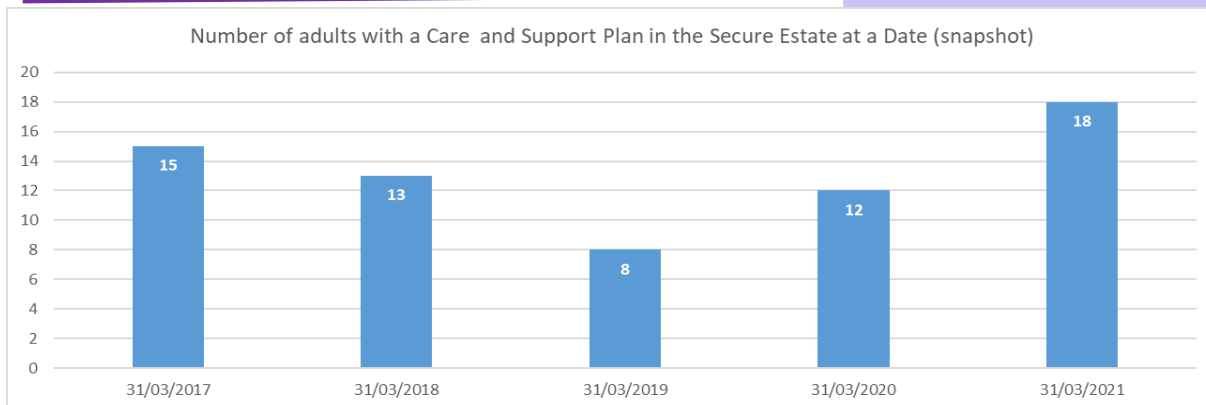
Numbers of Anticipatory Care Plans in place at a date (snapshot)	31/03/2021	
	112	
	2020/21	
	Number of New Starters to Service	Average Days Awaiting Service Commencement
Residential Care	232	4
Domiciliary Care	409	4
Day Care	44	5

Number of Adults with a Care and Support Plan at a Date (snapshot)



Number of Adult Carers with a Support Plan at a Date (snapshot)





## What are we doing next

- Develop our falls prevention services including developing a community falls pathway;
- Continuing to develop the use of assistive technology by project managing the transfer from analogue to a digital platform for Telecare;
- Continue to develop multidisciplinary working in the integrated cluster network teams working across primary and community services
- To ensure everyone has a contingency care/anticipatory care planning into manage care and support services;
- Development information advice and assistance so the roles of community hubs, our common Access Point and Corporate Contact Centre align
- Finalise a medication policy for care and support at home services.
- Full implementation of the care and support at home operating model.

*“This lady was feeling very fragile and tearful- after a what matters conversation she told me I have made her day and made her feel 100 times better and she couldn’ t thank me enough for listening and being so understanding- she said I turned her day from bad to good!*

*“Oh X a huge thanks for all your support. You have always been Incredibly kind and calm and have focussed on the best outcome while ensuring my parents felt involved. I will remain always in your debt. Huge thanks again*

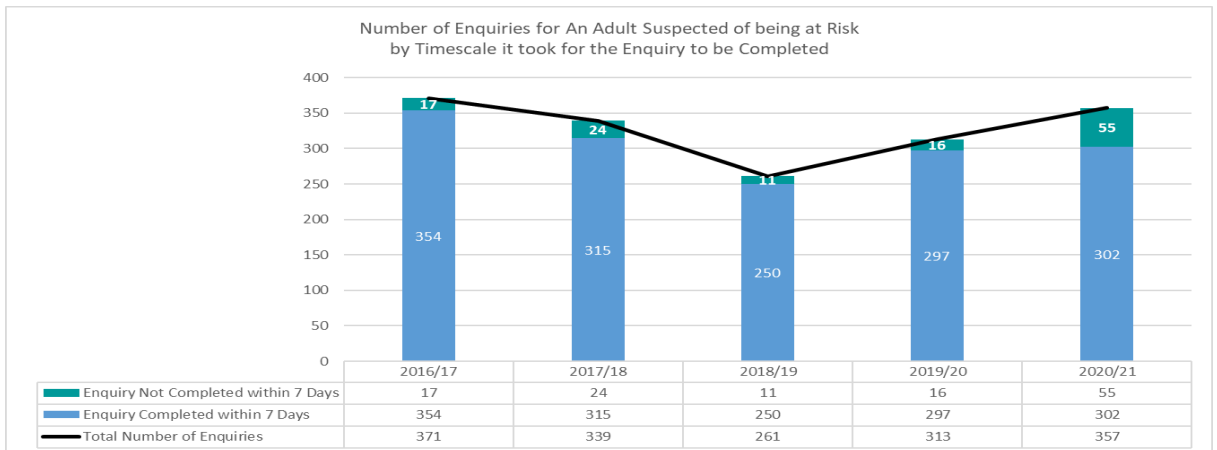
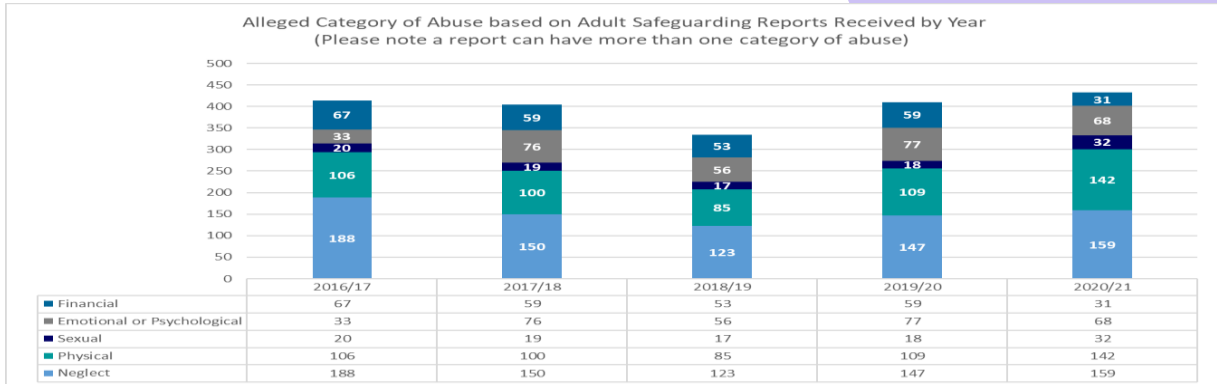
## Quality Standard 3 - Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

### What we did

- Worked through the statutory protocol for the closure of a registered care following a decision by the provider to retire. The process was dynamic as this was managed during Covid restrictions being in place. However, the process was concluded with all residents safely moving to new settings October 2020.
- At the start of the pandemic response an information-sharing portal was created for social care providers to access and contribute to. The portal provides information, regular updates, peer support, good practice exchange and generally an effective communication channel between all parties.
- During 2020, Contract Monitoring officers carried out weekly checking calls with providers, who also received weekly written updates from the care homes, providing a risk status, based on key Covid-19 related information, such as staff absences linked to Covid-19.
- Developed a process to help inform contingency planning arrangements and safeguarding actions in a multi agency way across the care home sector. This included bringing together the safeguarding statutory 'Escalating Concerns' processes and the public health led Covid Incident Management Team (IMT) meetings, ensuring that all actions to safeguard and protect residents were taken.
- December 2020 and January 2021 was a difficult time for Bridgend in light of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and outbreaks in care homes. At one point 14 of 19 independent/commissioned care homes and 4 Council Care homes had Covid cases and associated restrictions in place. This included all nursing homes in the County Borough.
- The Secure Estate Social Care Team is well established within Her Majesty's Prison Parc. The implementation of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, provided significant challenge in the delivery of social care to individual prisoners in 2019/20 but through close working with CIW and the delivery of care to continue and Cabinet approved contractual arrangements in 2020.

- Supported the implementation of assistive technology in the older person's wing of the prison.
- Families and individuals known to the service were contacted on a regular basis by phone and other methods throughout the lockdown period. Staff proactively managed welfare checks and essential visits took place throughout. Contact with carers has been an essential part of this process.
- Referrals were received and prioritised based on need and risk and risk assessed home visits were made to those who needed it.
- Staffing levels in directly provided services have been managed in a dynamic way as we had periods where a large number of absences due to Covid -19 and self-isolation. Staff worked flexibly, often agreeing to work additional hours and/or were re-deployed from day and respite services.
- As a result of day services buildings being closed, support has moved to being more individually based and at home with a range of bespoke services being developed for individuals.
- Support at home services continued as business as usual; however, some families chose to cancel their packages of care for a period of time at the beginning of lockdown, which has enabled the service to be more flexible; however, this changed throughout the year.
- Safeguarding continued business as usual via digital platforms. There was a significant reduction in the numbers of adult at risk referrals received and an increase in domestic violence referrals; these are dealt with through the MARAC process with partners. Regional and local safeguarding meetings continued and strengthened throughout 2020/2021.

## How well did we do



*“Last year could have been much worse if we hadn’t received the support from your team. Pleased with the efforts of our staff but without our collective coordinated efforts and understanding they would have been helpless in the face of the vicious virus.”*



*SJ - Carron Group*

## What we are doing next

- Prepare for the implementation of the Liberty Protection to ensure that all staff are trained and equipped to understand the new LPS by April 2022.

## Quality Standard 4 - Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society

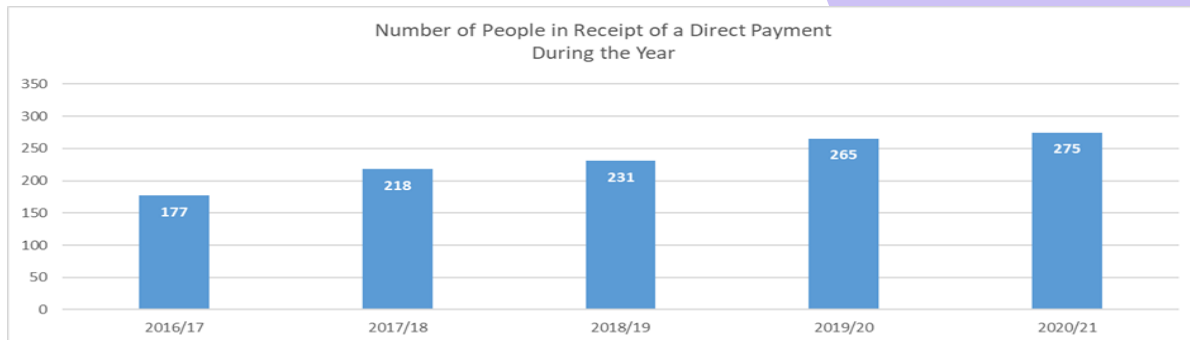
### What we did

- Our Social Care Workforce Development Team have supported a number of sessions to further consolidate the “What Matters” approach within the Community Resource Team service.
- Staff supervision and a programme of quality assurance audit are vital to evidence confidence in our systems and processes.
- An Information Brokerage post has been introduced in the Common Access Point via BAVO, working in the main as a point of contact and referral, for people who require further information on what is available in local communities in relation to community activities, groups, services and facilities, enabling appropriate signposting to third sector and community based support.
- Funding was approved to create Wellbeing Retreat in central Bridgend which is supporting people in crisis. Feedback to date is very positive.





## How well did we do



## What we are doing next

- To analyse the outcomes of the Information Brokerage post and consider if there are any opportunities for service improvement as this could improve the individuals' overall health and wellbeing and empowering them to remain independent for as long as possible in their home and community;
- Secure the continuation of a 'wellbeing retreat' which supports people in crisis;
- Agree operational policies and pathways for adult community mental health services;
- Develop of the multi-disciplinary working and operational policy for perinatal services;.
- Develop of 'closer to home' accommodation schemes for learning disability;
- Re-writing BCBC's case recording policy and guidance as another step in embedding outcomes focussed, strength based working in supporting staff to record in a way that evidences and references the approach in practice. We intend to link to Social Care Wales' document 'Friend not Foe' that is focused on improving the recording of outcomes

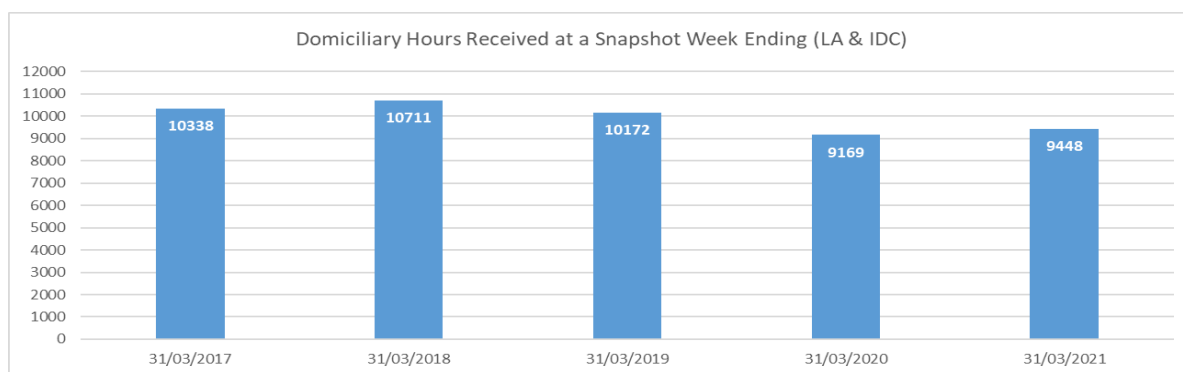


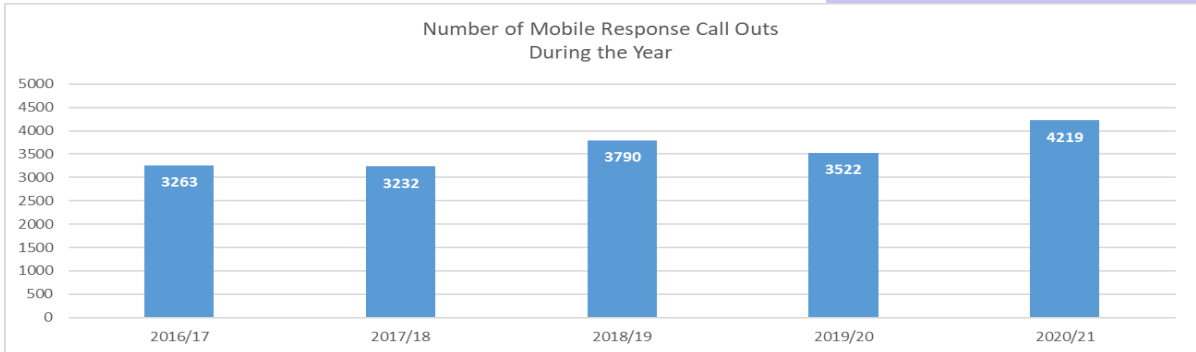
## Quality Standard 5 - Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

### What we did

- Made significant developments in our Homecare Remodelling plans, which has included introducing new technology (Electronic Call Monitoring system) for our internal homecare teams.
- This strongly links with the ongoing work within the Sustaining Social Work programme on preventative approaches and resilient community coordination, as well as the work on developing consistent and shared approaches across adult social care services.
- In 2019/20 we developed an ethos for our teams working in the Extra Care facilities; the principles of this approach are applicable across all adult social care services as they are focused on the uniqueness of individuals and their families. A workshop was held on “What is Extra in Extra Care?” in February 2020 to determine a shared vision with shared expectations in the delivery of care. The purpose and actions identified for priority include supporting all staff to respond to diversity being person centred and creating a sense of wellbeing.

### How well did we do





## What we are doing next

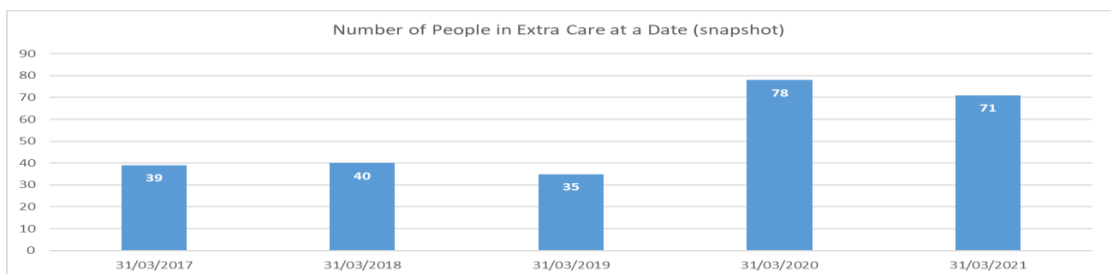
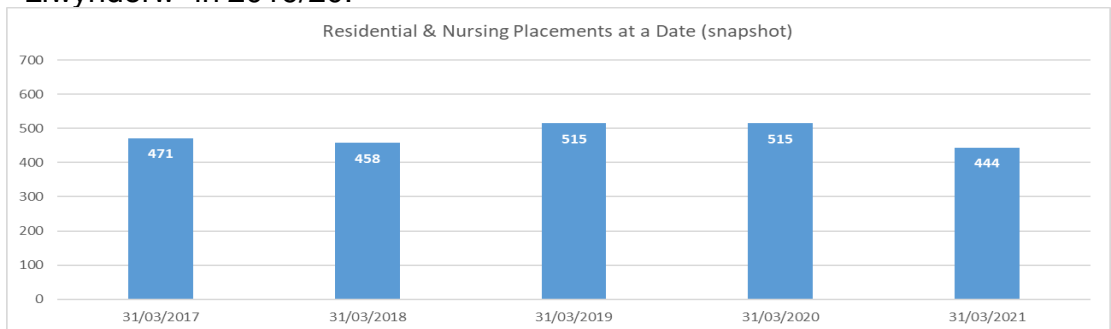
- Supporting recovery across the sectors we work with and using what we now know to inform our commissioning;
- Stepping up quality assurance and review; independent audits of case management have already been undertaken and plans are underway to undertake audit screening;
- Development of an integrated day opportunity service for older people with a focus on dementia.



## Quality Standard 6 - Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

### What we did

- Supported the domiciliary care workforce to meet their requirements for registration with Social Care Wales by April 2020.
- Opened the second of our two new Extra Care Housing schemes in Maesteg. The new tenants, as well as the residents of the residential unit, were successfully supported to move into their new homes in “Ty Llwynderw” in 2019/20.



- Continues to support the rollout of dementia supportive communities within the County Borough in partnership with the new University Health Board, Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO) and the Alzheimer’s Society. The realignment of the Community Dementia Service will support the work on delivering a dementia friendly agenda, ensuring excellent advice and information continues to be delivered to people and their families living with the impact of dementia and cognitive impairment.
- The Adult Placement Scheme which is run in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan council is flourishing.

# Adult Social Care

## How well did we do

- In 2020/21 Adult Social Care received 7,567 referrals (compared to 8,534 in 19/20, and 7469 in 18/20) during the year.
- The single point of contact was used by 1,866 adults, and 1,256 children for people to access information, advice and assistance.
- We supported 49 adults in our residential reablement unit during the year, of which 32 (65.3%) returned home to live.
- 269 more people received a Telecare package compared to 18/19 – with 2,679 people now in receipt of a Telecare package.

## What we are doing next

- We are developing an older persons' housing strategy and mapping accommodation needs for learning disabilities and mental health provision;
- We will continue to use direct payments innovatively and creatively as the new service is brought in house;
- We will complete the review of dementia services and work collaboratively to ensure there is appropriate service 'offers' to meet all the requirements for people living with dementia in Bridgend County Borough.

- Under quality standard 6 there were 3 inspections within the Directorate by the Care Inspectorate for Wales (CIW) during the 2 year period; 2 inspections were undertaken in the Childrens Residential Care Homes and 1 of the internal Domiciliary Care Services.
- The links to the reports relating to these inspections for Corporate Parenting and Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee can be found below:-
- <http://ballot/documents/s19947/04.09.19%20-%20CIW%20Inspection%20of%20Childrens%20Residential%20Services.pdf>
- <http://ballot/documents/s23157/2.%20Childrens%20Residential%20CIW%20Inspection%20and%20Action%20Plan.pdf>
- <https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s24554/CIW%20Inspection%20of%20Dom%20Care.pdf?LLL=0>
- CIW also undertook a quality assurance check of how well we safeguarded people during the pandemic in April 2021. This has not yet been published.

## **Our workforce and how we support their professional roles**

### **What we did in 19/20**

*We supported frontline social care workers to develop their skills including:*

- Training to promote enabling care across the domiciliary care sector
- Dementia care training for the adult domiciliary and residential care workforce
- Embedding the Brain, Behaviour, Attachment, Assessment, Resilience & Trauma (BBAART) model of practice across Childrens fostering and residential services.

*We delivered outcome focused care and support practice which included:*

- Collaborative Communication skills training
- Training on evidencing, recording, and measuring achievement against outcomes

*Post qualifying programmes for social work included:*

- Supporting newly qualified social workers via our First year in practice programme.
- Providing mentoring and assessment for social workers undertaking the Consolidation Programme.

## How well did we do

- 6471 learning activities were undertaken by staff, this figures includes attendances at in-person classroom based training, on-line events and e-learning.
- 36 staff completed the Health and Social Care Induction Framework award
- 55 social care staff achieved a health and social qualification at Level 2, 3 or 5.
- We provided 38 practice learning opportunities for social work students hosted by Bridgend.
- 12 social workers completed their Consolidation of practice, with seven continuing into 2021.

## What we did in 1920/21

- During 20/21, Covid-19 impacted on learning and development activity. Our priority was delivering essential training to ensure care and support was provided safely both for the social care worker and the person cared for. The Covid-19 pandemic has been a catalyst for change in the way learning and development is delivered and there has been a rapid shift towards remote digital learning techniques. This has provided a focus on the importance of supporting the workforce to access technologies needed to work and learn at any time and in any place. Investment has been made in developing on-line resources and virtual classroom learning and this has substituted for face-to-face for the staff who are working from home and who have access to ICT equipment.



- There has been a focus on balancing the existing requirements of the service whilst also considering the changing focus of practice. Some planned courses were postponed in favour of more bespoke training that supported our workforce during the pandemic. For example:-
  - Maintaining Professionalism in Lockdown – Promoting Resilience, Reflection and the Impact of Moral Injury
  - The Impact of Covid 19 on Domestic Abuse – Practical Strategies for Responding During the Crisis
  - Wellbeing Workshops for Managers. These workshops allowed for further reflection for team managers on their journey as individual people, and as team managers and leaders of practice.
  - Managing self and others. Supporting a social workers wellbeing by developing self-management skills.
  - Cruse Loss and Bereavement Workshops. These were aimed at supporting staff themselves, as well as supporting staff to offer support to individuals and families.
  - Supervision and supporting staff - workshops for managers to support their staff in supervision moving from the first year's experiences during the pandemic and considering recovery.
- We were able to deliver on some of our planned activities for example:-
  - We continued to drive forward our approach to outcome focused practice. Outcomes / Strengths based practice is embedded within all aspects of commissioned training and that which is delivered in house, including mandatory. Staff and managers have also been provided with additional tools and resources to embed our model within their service area.
  - Providing on-line resources and virtual delivery of training following the introduction of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

## How well did we do

- 5155 learning activities were undertaken by staff, this figure includes attendances at in-person classroom based training, on-line events and e-learning. This figure is under-reported as it has not been possible to record data on some external on-line events.
- 43 social care staff achieved a health and social qualification at Level 2, 3, 4 or 5. The level 4 qualification being a newly introduced award.
- 4 staff achieved the Training, Assessment and Quality Assurance Award (TAQA) enabling them to assess the competence of staff on accredited programmes of study, a further 8 aim to complete during 2021. Collectively they are supporting 23 learners with their health and social care qualification.
- We provided 27 practice learning opportunities (PLO) for social work students hosted by Bridgend. Numbers were lower than in previous years, mainly due to the impact of Covid on the numbers of individuals taking up places on social work degree programmes, also Universities social work programmes taking the decision to postpone PLO's until 2022.
- Social Workers in their first year of practice received a comprehensive induction, bespoke core training and individual mentoring (on-line). 9 social workers started their first year in practice in 2020. 8 remain and are on track to complete later in 2021.

During 2021 three managers have commenced the Team Manager Development Programme (TMDP) and one the Middle Manager Programme (MMDP) in 2020. Programmes had been suspended for 2020

## What are we doing next

### ➤ **Blended approach to learning**

Digital learning has proven successful and will continue to be a feature of a blended approach to learning to include use of self-directed learning, utilising on-line resources, virtual classrooms and face-to-face.

### ➤ **Growing our own - secondment scheme.**

In response to the challenges in recruitment of newly qualified social workers, we will be increasing the numbers of staff seconded on to social work degree programme for entry 2021.

### ➤ **Supervision**

Bridgend has undertaken an audit of supervision practice across the service and will be revising its supervision policy during 21/22. A package of training will accompany the launch of the revised supervision policy.

## **OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND HOW WE PLAN FOR THE FUTURE**

The net budget for the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate for 2020-21 was £73.263 million and the actual outturn was £72.289 million following, an under spend of £974,000. The outturn budget position was greatly supported by Covid hardship funding and other short term grant funding. Adult services in particular has underlying service deficits. The need for targeted early help and preventative services, as well as statutory adult and social care services, is predicted to rise following the Covid-19 as people's physical and mental health and wellbeing as we support the recovery of our people and communities. This will have financial resource implications which will need to be understood in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The end of year annual Social Services and Wellbeing financial summary can be found here in the Council Report outlining the revenue budget outturn for 2020/21:- [A:\ACRF 2020-21\Council report - June 2021 - Revenue Budget Outturn 2020-21.pdf](#)

## **OUR PARTNERSHIP WORKING, POLITICAL AND CORPORATE LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Council's Cabinet and the Corporate Management Board (CMB) continue to meet on a weekly basis which provides the opportunity to oversee the business of the Council, share the overall direction for the Council and make sure that we are promoting the One Council approach so that important issues such as the MTFs, safeguarding and transformation are on the agenda. In addition here are fortnightly meetings of Cross Directorate Heads of Service and fortnightly meetings of Cabinet Corporate Management Board (CCMB).

We have a simple vision for Bridgend County Borough Council, to 'always act as one Council working together to improve lives.'

The Corporate Plan is developed annually and there is a clear link to the annual Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate Business Plan which sets out the priorities for the directorate for the forthcoming year and is attached here for information.

The Service Development Plan A five year Strategic Vision for Social Services and Wellbeing 2020-2025 was developed in 2019/20 and was submitted for Cabinet approval on 15th September 2020.

The Plan builds on the previous ten year Commissioning Strategy for Adult Social Care and the Children's Social Care 'Vision into Action, Better Outcomes for Children, Young People and their Families' document and provides the strategic direction for Social Services and Wellbeing in Bridgend.

The Council takes its role as corporate parents seriously and the Cabinet has a Corporate Parenting Committee (one of two Cabinet Committees) that meets quarterly. The Cabinet Committee consists of all Cabinet members including the Leader and Deputy Leader plus representatives of all Groups and Corporate Parenting Champions appointed and representatives of every Overview and Scrutiny committee. It makes important policy decisions about the services and provision for care experienced children and care leavers. Overview and Scrutiny committees also consider policies and developments in Social Services and makes recommendations.

Links to all of the 2019-20 and 2020/21 Cabinet, Council, Corporate Parenting and Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports and minutes that relate to social care can be accessed. *Please find attached the link to all reports here:*

<https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories>

There is a quarterly corporate performance assessment (CPA) meeting which is attended by Cabinet, CMB, Scrutiny Chairs and Heads of Service. At this meeting, the Directors have to present their performance for the quarter which includes the budget position, performance against business plan actions and targets, sickness and progress against the MTFs and this is open to challenge from members of the board. Specifically, the CPA monitors the Council's improvement priorities and its commitments which are set out in the corporate plan, which can be accessed through the Council's website, please see link here:

Three times a year, the Corporate Director of Social Services and Wellbeing, with the two Heads of Service meet with all of the Directorate managers and this has continued virtually during the pandemic. This ensures open communication and updates on national, regional and local matters. It is important that staff feel part of this process and are able to contribute to the ongoing development of the service and also to recognise the hard work and achievements collectively and as individuals. The director also meets regularly with front line staff and carries out a number of service visits throughout the year.

Partnership working has been fundamental in the Bridgend Social Care response to the pandemic and safeguarding our most vulnerable citizens.

## Key to note is:

- Civil Contingencies Act emergency planning mechanisms have been operational and exercised through:
  - Council – gold, silver bronze
  - CTMUHB – gold, silver bronze
  - Regional Safeguarding Board – regional silver and bronze meetings
  - Local Resilience Forum, Incident Management Team (IMT) and subgroups
  - Escalating concerns and IMTs merged together around individual outbreaks in care homes
- Usual multi-agency governance continued in respect of the Regional Safeguarding Board, MASH Operational Group and Management Board, early help and safeguarding, Wales Safeguarding Procedures, Council, Cabinet (and committees) and scrutiny
- Working in partnerships with providers as ‘one social care sector’ in Bridgend has been essential to keep people safe. The Council’s Social Care Commissioning Team focussed on:
  - Implementing national initiatives - PPE distribution, WG Hardship Fund, Statutory Sickness Pay (SSP) scheme, Vaccination Programme roll-out to the independent sector, Social Care Recognition Scheme, Covid (LFD) testing programme
  - Bespoke local support - Information, support and guidance, information sharing portal, welfare checking calls, SitRep reporting, escalating concerns as a supportive mechanism, regional approaches and initiatives including the care home action plan following the rapid review of the initial impact on care homes, more frequent provider forums (weekly domiciliary care & monthly care homes)

- A real positive of the pandemic has been the impact of strong partnership working. The following are highlights:
  - Across the Council we worked together to a single essential services model
  - SSWB were part of CTMUHB gold, silver and bronze arrangements and we worked as one team with the Integrated Locality Team
  - BAVO and third sector led the support to the most vulnerable who were shielding and together with officer across the council and social care provided both a crisis response and ongoing essential support and connection
  - Public Health – locally and national were essential in supporting the assessment of risks in care homes and real time decision making
  - Shared Regulatory Services – public protection officers were critical in outbreak management and timely advice and support to the Council and providers
  - Enriched relationships within the new CTM region as the 3 LAs worked together to manage common issues and risks, for example the regional PPE distribution system
  - With people and communities who as ever are the experts in their own lives and know what works.

