



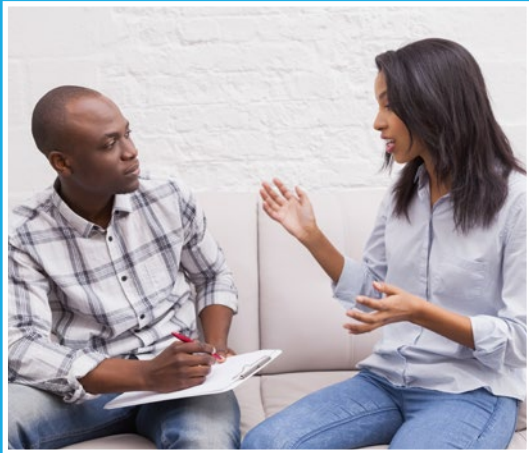
Local Area Coordination in Swansea

Impact Report 2022

**Supporting people to stay
strong through friends,
family and community**

local area
coordination[®]
Swansea





Introduction

Local Area Coordination is about people and the communities in which they live. It's about understanding, celebrating and nurturing the strengths, aspirations, valued contribution, choices and rights of all people in our communities and the power, connections and possibilities of the communities in which they live.

In 2022 we celebrated the first complete year of a full team and of full county coverage, meaning that for the first time every community in Swansea had access to a Local Area Coordinator.

Our coproduced recruitment process, in which local people take part in choosing their Local Area Coordinator has been very successful, resulting in a team of 23 highly experienced, creative and motivated colleagues.

This report goes some way to illustrating the huge impact this team has had during 2022 in the lives of the 1830 people in Swansea to whom they were introduced, many of whom were facing significant challenges. The team made more informal contact with nearly 5000 more residents*. The alongside role of the local Area Coordinator has enabled increases in confidence, resilience, connection and contribution and has delayed - and in some cases removed - the need for formal services in these people's lives.

Through this strength based role the team have contributed to the corporate well-being objective of "Tackling poverty so that every person in Swansea can achieve their potential".

The following pages set out some of the highlights of the year:

**Contact through face to face, phone conversations and attendance at groups or community meetings.*

What Is Local Area Coordination?

Local Area Coordination (LAC) recognises the power of taking time to get to know people, families and the wonderful connections, resources and opportunities within local communities and is a key component in the successful delivery of the Social Services and Well-Being Act, and the Ageing Well Plan.

The Local Area Coordination Vision is that:

“All people live in welcoming communities that provide friendship, mutual support, equity and opportunities for everyone”.

This powerful vision is the ambition for an international movement to develop a long term, evidence-based, capacity-building approach for working alongside people of all ages and backgrounds in our communities.

We work towards this vision through the Local Area Coordination Charter:

“Develop partnerships with individuals and families as they build and pursue their goals and dreams for a good life and with local communities to strengthen their capacity to include all people including those at risk of exclusion, as valued citizens”.

The Purpose of LAC:

“Local Area Coordinators work to increase the capacity and resilience of individuals, families, communities and service systems and to decrease the demand for and reliance on formal services and funding, wherever possible.”



Alongside People

Examples of Positive Outcomes Achieved Through Following the Principles of Local Area Coordination.

Local Area Coordinators walk alongside people, whilst they identify and work towards their own version of a good life.



1830 people introduced to a Local Area Coordinator in 2022.

Georgia misses the sea air. She also misses walking and chatting with other people. She has been increasingly isolated due to Covid, her failing eye sight and other health concerns. But, together with Seren, her Local Area Coordinator, she **builds her confidence** to the point of joining a walking group in her community. And once again, she is **active, connected and enjoying** her life. [Click here](#) for the full story.

Eric is 83 years old and struggles with multi health conditions on a daily basis. When introduced to Dom, the Local Area Coordinator, his health was limiting his ability to stay independent and this was causing Eric some distress. Dom was able to **connect him up with a number of individuals in his community** who were able to offer practical support in the short term, until Eric felt stronger again. As things started to get better for Eric, Dom ensured he had access to the right aide so that he could start to regain his independence again. Eric now enjoys a much fuller life, is enjoying his hobbies, and is able to look after himself again. [Click here](#) for the full story.

Marvin is a young man who has experienced lots of difficult times in his life. After moving to a new town he started to feel lonely, not knowing anyone and spent much of his time on his own. Following the death of his foster mother Marvin's situation quickly got worse. He felt the only support and person he could trust had now gone. Marvin was introduced to Anne, the Local Area Coordinator at a time when he was experiencing frequent low moods and felt totally isolated. While Anne walked alongside him, Marvin was able to start to make some changes. Anne introduced him to the Roots Foundation who support care leavers and Marvin was able to start thinking about the future again. Roots offered him support with his finances and a safe place he could start to **connect with others**. [Click here](#) for the full story.

Dan, the Local Area Coordinator, was initially introduced to **Mervyn's** wife Carys, who was living with dementia. It became evident that Carys had a great team of professionals around her offering her support. However, Mervyn was increasingly struggling as Carys' full time carer. With so many people involved in Carys' care, and the focus being on his wife, Mervyn had felt forgotten and a 'ghost in his own home'. Dan was able to walk alongside Mervyn, helped him **access information that was important for him to better understand** the things that were happening, and **gave him choice and control again**. Dan was also able to help coordinate the many professionals entering his home and supported **Mervyn to have his own voice heard**. [Click here](#) for the full story.

Alongside People

Quotes from people who have had a Local Area Coordinator alongside them

Each Local Area Coordinator is walking alongside around 50 people at any one time

“I feel a whole lot better with someone on my side... I’m side-lined and **sometimes feel like a ghost in my own home. You have come in and changed that, Dan, and I will be forever grateful.**”

“I couldn’t have even made it to court today without you giving me the strength and confidence to attend. **You believed in me and now I need to believe in myself.**”

“I’ve never met anyone who’s so easy to talk to and understand **completely what I’m saying.**”

“Seren is lovely - it’s made such a difference to my life, I used to go months without going out at all and **now I go out weekly and it’s really improved my life.**”

“Joe has helped me **find positives in my daily life** and helped me realise I am able to socialise.”

“You have restored my **faith in humanity** and given me a life line.”

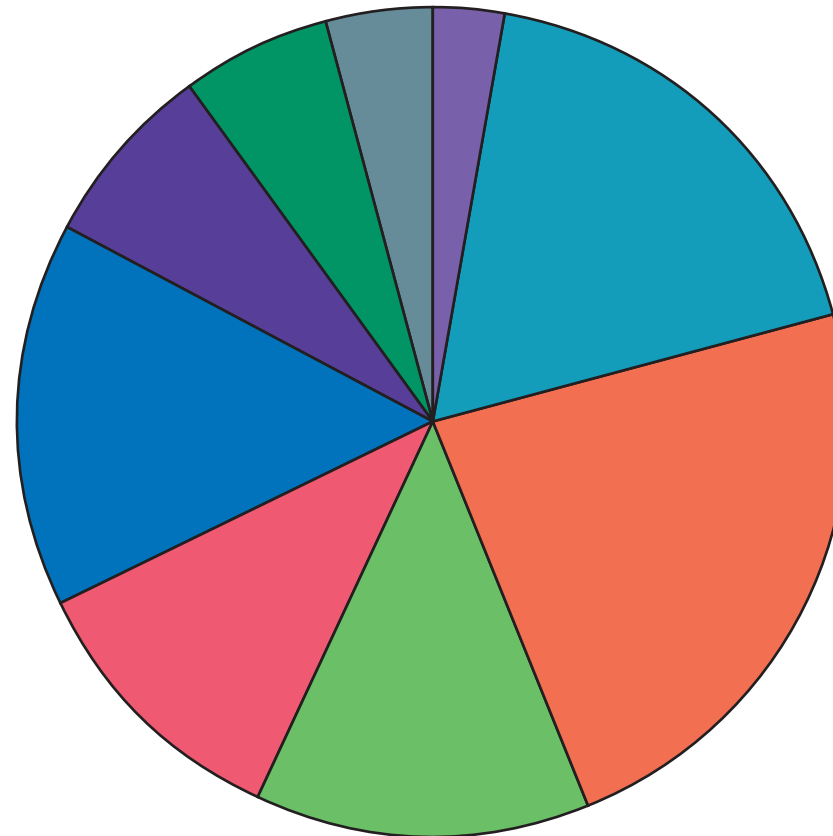
“If you had not been around Bri (to help me through my crisis) **I would have done something stupid!!**”

“I’ve been thinking how long I’ve struggled for, it’s been years and thanks to your help **I can actually feel things changing for the better.** I was scared of not being able to change the things I could not deal with on my own. But having you to talk to has been so helpful to me and you have never judged me. I’m still scared of quite a few things but I have hope now I’ll get there.”

“Thanks for all your support Cerri. You’ve really helped mum to **integrate back into the community** to improve her quality of life.”

Statistics

Where introductions to Local Area Coordinators came from



Social Services 18%

Health Services 15%

Community** 13%

From Person
Themselves 11%

Housing 7%

Third Sector Orgs 6%

DWP & Employability 4%

Other Local Area
Coordinators 3%

Other* 23%

* Other includes: Police, Fire Service, Schools, Faith communities, other council teams, etc.

** Community includes family, friends and neighbours

FACEBOOK
Page Likes



23,515

FACEBOOK
Page Followers

21,533

Statistics

With some of the walking alongside relationships the person is able to self report the positive changes that they've been able to make through the Local Area Coordinators involvement. These are based on the Social Services and Wellbeing Act outcomes.



126 - stories written with people who have been walking alongside a Coordinator outlining the positive impact and the changes that the person has been able to make.

843 - have more local knowledge.

248 - more able to share their gifts and skills with their community.

514 - an increase confidence in their future.

988 - feel better informed & able to make decisions.

4,472 positive changes reported by people in 2022

532 - are more connected & engaged in local community.

444 - improved relationships & social networks.

419 - more in control of their health and wellbeing

484 - more in control of their lives.

Alongside Swansea's Communities

Local Area Coordinators are accessible points of contacts in Swansea's communities, providing information and links between groups, activities and people.



“As a Partnership we feel privileged to have the expertise and support of our Local Area Coordinator to guide us in our work to support the local community. We have worked alongside the Local Area Coordination team since they were first introduced to Pontarddulais and there is a very clear need for this very important role and we look forward to continuing our collaborative work long into the future.”

Catherine Evans, on behalf of the Pontarddulais Partnership

“[Rachael and Anne,] with both your support for the Gorseinon Visually Impaired group at the Institute this year we have bounced back in numbers and activities.”

Mike Davies

“People facing inequality, isolation, exclusion, at risk of crisis and seeking support and services, community initiatives wanting local support, ideas needing discussion and projects needing direction were given a unifying, trusted, accessible figure who acted with clear purpose, always serving the interests of those around her.”

An article about Local Area Coordination in a local newsletter

“ [Emma has been] connecting like-minded leaders and organisations with each other... when I started a discussion in Cwmbwrla about providing a warm spaces network this winter... Emma was, predictably, the first person to support me... Her good relationships with local community centres and organisations opened doors for me that moved this project forward swiftly... good things happen in this part of Swansea because Emma works tirelessly to understand, support and connect like-minded people in ways that improve as many lives as possible.”

David Jones, Director, The People’s Library

“ We are currently starting a ‘One Bont’ ethos... With the assistance of Joseph, I know we will continue to attract people who simply want to make a difference in the community. We have started to realise that we can no longer wait to be spoon fed in our communities, but [we] must sit up and make a difference.”

Rev N Jason Beynon, Pastor, Bont Elim Community Church

“ I simply couldn’t operate without you, Sally-Anne! You are my first port of call whenever anything happens. You have helped the community come together and have linked up a fantastic network within Clydach. We all now come together and draw on each others resources which is great.”

Belinda, Clydach Men’s Shed

Alongside Elected Members

The relationship with our County, Town and Community Councillors is a vital one and working together in complimentary roles enables us to maximise support for local people.



“ [Local Area Coordinators] work tirelessly within our communities... they are always available... Their knowledge and understanding of issues within the community is second to none.”

Cllr Kevin Griffiths

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“ I would like... to thank Seren for all the work she does in my Bishopston Ward... she is approachable and is always prepared to help people, a view shared by local people... It is a pleasure to work with Seren and be assured, she is making a difference.”

Cllr Lyndon Jones

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“ 2022 was quite the year as a newly elected Councillor in the new ward of Pontlliw & Tircoed. It was lovely to meet Joe on several occasions... It was fantastic to have Joe’s support and as we both get to know the groups and community exciting times!”

Cllr Victoria Holland

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“The Local Area Coordinator service has been major asset to the Cwmbwrla ward. Emma has acted as an important facilitator, coordinator and a go-to for advice and support... She has worked with local councillors in supporting local community groups including Circus Eruption, Men’s Shed, the St John’s Day Service and local churches and was also involved in helping to plan the warm centres we have in the area. She has added real value to our community.”

Cllr Peter Black

“As Lord Mayor I have been visiting many community based organisations throughout the City and County and had the pleasure of meeting other LACs, who, from what I have witnessed and heard, have made themselves really indispensable to the community responses to the pressures many people are facing.”

Lord Mayor - Cllr Mike Day

“Hi Dom I just wanted to let you know that you’re doing a fantastic job in the area and making a big difference in our community – keep up the good work.”

Cllr Hazel Morris

“Donna the Local Area Coordinator has contributed greatly to our community in Gowerton by her communication skills, her ability to match people with situations and her friendly approachable manner. She is an asset to my work as a Councillor and our regular conversations are both informative and sharing.”

Cllr Sue Jones

Alongside Council Teams

Partnership Working

Local Area Coordinators work alongside their council colleagues to best support the citizens of Swansea.



“I have been working closely with Beth, LAC for Clase, Caermawr and Llangyfelach. [Alongside BH] we set out an action plan of how we would guide BH into becoming more self-confident, and ultimately tackle things on his own. Over time BH’s confidence grew massively... to the point as he is now delivering art classes to different groups, from ‘Men Sheds’, Dementia Support groups, and hopefully in the early part of 2023 we’ll be able to offer support and help BH open a stall in Swansea Market, selling his artwork and offering art lessons on a 1:1 basis. Beth, BH and myself have regular contact, meeting at least once a month to progressively move forward and achieve BH’s ultimate goal and becoming self-employed.”

Martin Smith, Communities 4 Work

“The Direct Payment Support Team and the Local Area Coordination Team work closely together for the benefit of the people we support. The positive dynamic between the Team members over the past year has led to the delivery of some really powerful and innovative work. By working in partnership we have supported the ‘Recruit Local’ campaign – promoting the recruitment of local people to help local people.

“Working together we capitalise on all available possible avenues to explore with citizens to support them to achieve true voice, choice and control over their lives.

Inter – team work and communication has proven to be life changing.”

Richard Davies, Direct Payment Support Team Strategic Manager

“The Local Area Coordinator has been instrumental in referring local residents to Cultural Services and promoting opportunities for community engagement. This partnership approach has provided individuals with the chance to join the committee at Dyfatty Community Centre and re-develop the community garden.”

Gemma Bevan, Community Initiative Coordinator

“I have had clear and consistent communication with [the Local Area Coordinator] throughout the time that we have been working together on this case and others, and he always makes himself available for our network meetings... It has reassured me knowing that we are working holistically to support the family and that Dominic is able to continue support, following EHH closure.”

Louise Ridsdale, Early Help Hub

Alongside Council Teams

Welfare Rights

“Since September 2020, [Welfare Rights Advisors attached to the Local Area Coordination team’s] work has raised over £150,000 in back payments and overpayments written off. In addition, Local Area Coordination clients are receiving over £4,000 per week in ongoing benefit payments as a result of our interventions. Research has shown that increasing Benefit income sustains local communities as claimants spend more money locally.

“There is no doubt that the intervention of LAC and Welfare Rights is a key preventative measure that eases pressures on other services and reduces crisis intervention.”

Sheila Curran, Welfare Rights Advisor

Lola’s Story tells us of Beth, the Local Area Coordinator, being introduced to Lola who was living in deep anxiety that was affecting all areas of her and her children’s lives. She was in serious financial hardship and didn’t know which way to turn for help. Beth was able to introduce her to Sheila at the Welfare Rights Team in Swansea Council. This is where Lola’s story starts to change for the better. With extensive support from both Beth and Sheila, Lola is now able to start planning for her future. [Click here](#) for the full story.

“I was walking alongside a retired couple who had been declared bankrupt several years ago. Both individuals are registered disabled and were experiencing mental ill health as a result of their financial situation. They also had an energy supplier debt they were unable to afford to repay, and were receiving weekly letters threatening further action. After walking alongside the couple for several weeks and getting to know them, the gentleman felt comfortable in discussing his financial situation with me and disclosing his debt in detail. This was very upsetting and challenging for him, but with emotional support and reassurance he spoke openly and it was obvious how much stress and worry their finances were causing.

There were a few indicators that the couple were not in receipt of the full benefit allowance they would be entitled to, so I took the relevant details and referred to the Welfare Rights Team. They made almost immediate contact with the gentleman and within a month they had their monthly income increased with Pension Credit and Attendance Allowance, and they have created and have been able to pay off their energy debt in full. The couple are much happier and are now and are able to pay to have help around the home.”

Sarah, Local Area Coordinator

Dan tells us the story of Vienna, and her battle with the Welfare System that could have easily ended in a grave situation. With ongoing support from Sheila Curran, our Team’s Welfare Benefits Advisor, a significant and life changing result was. [Click here](#) for the full story.

Alongside Organisations & Their Staff

Local Area Coordinators work with organisations that support the residents of Swansea.



“The Local Area Coordinator has had a real positive impact on the Penlan community and our school. The relationship between him and the school will continue to be a vital tool in supporting the vulnerable in our community. Particularly as social challenges are likely to increase in the near future.”

Steve Brown, Headteacher, Clwyd Community Primary School

“[Dan and I] have worked with a few local vulnerable people in the area and Dan has never failed to impress. Local residents have also thanked me for putting them into contact with Dan as he does fab work.”

Nicholas @ South Wales Police

“The Local Area Coordinator helped my client to get back out into the community and was very helpful to give advice about what services are available for them in the local area.”

Becca @ Hafan Cymru

“ Cerri has been an incredible referral to the well-being centre, supporting the centre and encouraging exceptionally vulnerable individuals to access the services available to them. Without Cerri these individuals may never get the support from our service. The changes I’ve observed with the people Cerri supports have been amazing, they are unrecognisable in some cases. She is an invaluable lifeline to the most vulnerable in our society.”

Emma - Swansea Wellbeing Centre / Yoga

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“ “Since working with the local area coordinators on behalf of my tenants, I have found the coordinators to be very approachable, friendly, supportive, and knowledgeable. They have a good knowledge of activities in their area and within Swansea.”

Marian @ Caredig

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“ “Local Area Coordination...has proven to be invaluable in introducing me to local counsellors and community organisations that seek to promote inclusion and community cohesion. We have since worked together on several projects ranging from providing practical support throughout the pandemic, organising community events post pandemic, and promoting community engagement.”

Rev. Ian Drew-Jones, St. Michael’s Church

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Alongside Organisations & Their Staff

Jac Lewis Foundation case study



“The Local area coordinators are a fantastic asset and a great addition to the wellbeing hub, they are a great network of information and access to resources that is delivered with a smile. So many of the people who attend the hub have had their lives touched in a positive way. I think it’s a fantastic service and they can always be relied upon to help, or they know someone who can. It’s quite clear that a lot of the clients have only had the confidence to attend because one of them meets them at the door and walks them in or because they have heard positive things from a LAC who has already earned their trust.”

**Matt Evans, Business Services Manager,
Jac Lewis Foundation**

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“The mental health hub at the Swansea.com stadium, which is run by the Jac Lewis Foundation, has become a regular feature of my Fridays in work as it is such a fantastic place for me to invite people that I am walking alongside to. I will regularly see upwards of 5 people from my “patch” in Morriston whom I have invited – and my record is 9 people in 1 day! Sian, who was one of the people I was introduced to started attending the hub in April and became such a welcoming regular face in the group that she wanted to set up a separate coffee afternoon for those who attended the hub as an extra way of people getting together. Sian had business cards printed ready and we were at the stage where we were about to launch the group when she sadly passed away. In the last months of her life, it quickly became the highlight of Sian’s week, and it gave her a fresh focus and a dream of starting something to “give back” what she had been enjoying.

The hub gets people out of their homes into a warm, welcoming environment where they can make friends and access a variety of helpful services (all in one place), should they want to. This is made easier by offering free tea and coffee, free lunch, and even a free taxi back and forth to their homes if needed.

I have managed to foster excellent working relationships with the counselling team and other service providers who regularly introduce me to people who attend the hub who are able to benefit from me explaining about Local Area Coordination, and then introducing them to their own Local Area Coordinator.

To this end, it truly has been a mutually beneficial and reciprocal relationship that continues to flourish.”

Byron, Local Area Coordinator

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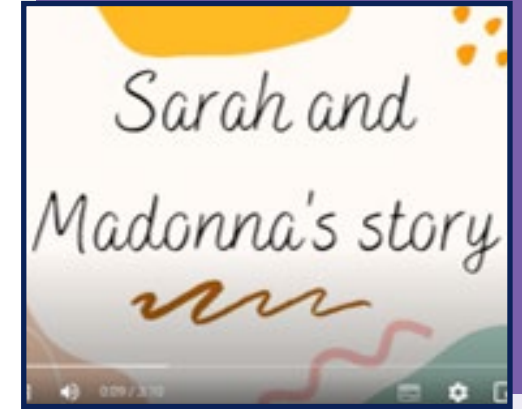
Video Stories



Debbie shares her journey of working alongside her Local Area Coordinator. She feels more in control of her life, feels more able to contribute to her community, feels hopeful about her future, and she feels a much bigger sense of belonging to her community. [Click here](#) for her story.



Leanne shares her journey of working alongside her Local Area Coordinator. She feels she has made positive changes for life, is more in control and is now living her vision of a good life. [Click here](#) for her story.

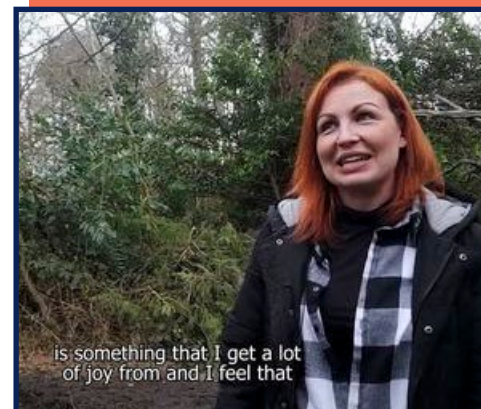


Sarah and Madonna's Story shows how people can reach out for help. [Click here](#) for their story.



Meet Cerri, our Local Area Coordinator for Hafod, Landore and Plasmarl. [Click here](#) for her story.

most people who come into contact with us are wanting to make change of some kind.



Meet Donna, our Local Area Coordinator for Cockett, Waunarwydd & Gowerton. [Click here](#) for her story.

is something that I get a lot of joy from and I feel that

National Reach

Local Area Coordination, Swansea is connected to a national network and the team have participated in a number of university evaluations; sharing learning and experiences across the UK.



“It has once again been a privilege and a pleasure to work closely with the fantastic Swansea Local Area Coordination team in 2022. Particular highlights for me this year included:

Having exciting conversations with other organisations across Wales about Local Area Coordination as a consequence of the positive promotion of the Local Area Coordination approach by the Swansea team.

The Swansea Local Area Coordination team are such a friendly, positive and talented team of practitioners who are so evidently committed to the Local Area Coordination principles and approach. They are deeply passionate about the people and communities of Swansea and it has been great to see the growing impact of their work this year. I look forward to another great year learning alongside them in 2023.”

Nick Sinclair, Director, Local Area Coordination Network

“The Swansea LAC team have been fantastic collaborators: The team have added huge value to the study, giving us great insights and access into Local Area Coordination in Swansea. We are still in the process of analysing our data, but Swansea’s contribution will undoubtedly play a significant role in the project’s overall findings and policy recommendations.”

Prof Joe Cook & Harriet Thiery, Principal Investigator and the Primary Researcher

“It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with the LAC team in Swansea around gathering and using evidence in evaluation, learning and development and in planning an in-person event in Swansea University in early 2023 around community capacity building. They have also been helpful to others through sharing their knowledge and expertise with other ‘community connectors’ in other parts of Wales who are a part of the DEEP network. They are research-minded, wise and kind and a credit to the local authority.”

Nick Andrews, Research and Practice Development Officer, Developing Evidence Enriched Practice

The Wider Reach of Local Area Coordination

Wellbeing of Future Generations Involvement Subgroup

We have been taking part in the Involvement subgroup of the Well-being of Future Generations Stakeholder Forum to reflect on our current practices and consider how we can deepen and improve our understanding and application of involvement within the five ways of working in the [Wellbeing of Future Generations Act](#)

We were able to contribute to a document that has been produced to help improve anyone's involvement practice:

[Wellbeing of Future Generations Culture Change Manual](#)

[Quick tips - Academi Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)

Moving Forward Money

A small grant of £500 was offered to community groups via Local Area Coordinators with only one criteria: to maximise the creativity and freedom for citizens to invest in their neighbourhoods via their connection with their Local Area Coordinator. The coordinator's involvement was minimal with local people taking the lead and the responsibility and the hope was that some of the projects would continue and become self sustaining.

You will see from the reports on each project how connections and friendships among people were made and have continued. The community capacity building and social value that has been generated far outweighs the initial financial outlay and once again justifies the trust placed in the community members and the value of investing in citizen-led ideas.

[Insert Link to report](#)

The team were asked to present about Local Area Coordination to several different audiences including:

Welsh Govt Community Based Care Community of Practice

ExChange Wales

Wellbeing of Future Generations Involvement Subgroup.

Powys Social Services SMT



Evaluations

We are currently involved with two academic evaluations:

1 In 2022 Swansea University was contracted by the Local Authority to carry out a summative academic evaluation of Local Area Coordination, following on from the formative evaluation completed back in 2015. The evaluation team have taken part in many interviews and focus groups and data has been collected, ready for publishing the report in Spring 2023.

2 The LAC National Network and partners from Hull and Sheffield universities are in the last stages of a 2yr research project funded by the National Inst for Health & Care Research (NIHR). This research project is the first comparative investigation of Local Area Coordination in England and Wales.

Called “Examining Impact of Local Area Coordination as a Preventative Intervention in Adult Social Care” the project is broadly looking at the pathways through social care and how Local Area Coordination presents an alternative to the traditional models. Swansea is part of that, as is Leicestershire, Derby and York. In 2022 the LAC team and some of the people they walk alongside took part in interviews and group work and the report is due in 2023.

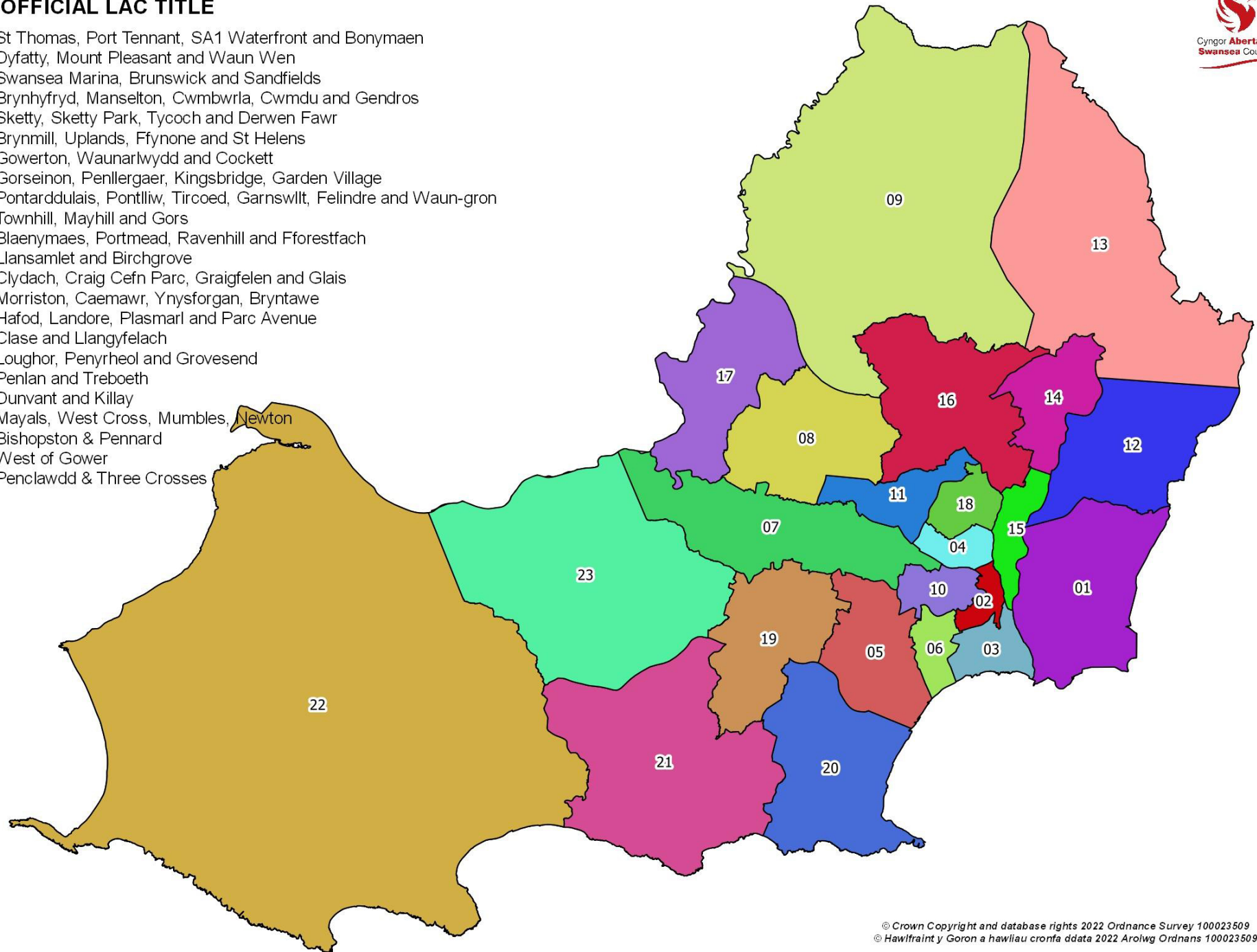
National Local Area Coordination Network

Swansea are members of the national network www.lacnetwork.com

Membership of the Network provides training and resources as well as a relational link with the Local Area Coordination teams in other areas of the UK.

MAP REF. OFFICIAL LAC TITLE

- Area 1 - St Thomas, Port Tennant, SA1 Waterfront and Bonymaen
- Area 2 - Dyfatty, Mount Pleasant and Waun Wen
- Area 3 - Swansea Marina, Brunswick and Sandfields
- Area 4 - Brynhyfryd, Manselton, Cwmbwrla, Cwmdu and Gendros
- Area 5 - Sketty, Sketty Park, Tycoch and Derwen Fawr
- Area 6 - Brynmill, Uplands, Ffynone and St Helens
- Area 7 - Gowerton, Waunarlwydd and Cockett
- Area 8 - Gorseinon, Penllergaer, Kingsbridge, Garden Village
- Area 9 - Pontarddulais, Pontlliw, Tircoed, Garnswllt, Felindre and Waun-gron
- Area 10 - Townhill, Mayhill and Gors
- Area 11 - Blaenymaes, Portmead, Ravenhill and Fforestfach
- Area 12 - Llansamlet and Birchgrove
- Area 13 - Clydach, Craig Cefn Parc, Graigfelen and Glais
- Area 14 - Morriston, Caemawr, Ynysforgan, Bryntawe
- Area 15 - Hafod, Landore, Plasmarl and Parc Avenue
- Area 16 - Clase and Llangyfelach
- Area 17 - Loughor, Penyrheol and Grovesend
- Area 18 - Penlan and Treboeth
- Area 19 - Dunvant and Killay
- Area 20 - Mayals, West Cross, Mumbles, Newton
- Area 21 - Bishopston & Pennard
- Area 22 - West of Gower
- Area 23 - Penclawdd & Three Crosses





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 Cyngor **Abertawe**
Swansea Council