

# Swansea Public Services Board Annual Report 2021/22



Gwasanaeth Tân Ac Achub  
Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru  
Mid and West Wales  
Fire and Rescue Service

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## Message from Swansea PSB

It has been 4 years since Swansea Public Services Board published our first Local Well-being Plan in May 2018.

This Report aims to highlight not only the progress made towards the ‘Swansea we Want’ but also to reflect on how we have applied the sustainable development principle’s ways of working and how we might better work towards well-being in the future.

Our first year of operation focused on research to understand Swansea’s challenges and opportunities, while the second year concentrated on planning and prioritising areas where collectively we could make the biggest difference. Last year the report focused on progress and delivery, this year, 2021/22 has included us undertaking a local well-being assessment in readiness to think about planning for preparing the well being plan and objective setting.

While we have achieved a great deal in our 4 years of delivery, Swansea PSB is not complacent and will continue to innovate and seek new ways to improve Swansea’s well-being both today and for future generations. The next year will be spent planning to address what our well-being assessment told us about well-being in Swansea with a view to reviewing and setting our Well-being Objectives and the steps to meet them over the next 4 years. This will be a partnership effort and we will listen to local people and consult and engage with stakeholders during this process. The outcome from this work will be set out in our new Well-being Plan where we will continue our efforts to improve the well-being of all the people in Swansea for both today and for future generations.



**Cllr Andrea Lewis**  
**PSB Chair**



**Roger Thomas**  
**Vice-Chair**

# Our Vision and Local Well-being Objectives

## Swansea PSB - The story so far

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 created Public Services Boards so that local organisations could work together to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of their area by contributing to the achievement of Wales's Well-being Goals.

In 2016, the Public Services Board (PSB) started a conversation about well-being in Swansea. We carried out an Assessment of Local Well-being to understand what matters most to communities. The Assessment told us that for many reasons Swansea is a great place to live but that we need to work harder together to make sure everyone can live well, benefit from and be proud of Swansea.

Using information from the Assessment and by listening to people, in 2018, Swansea Public Services Board developed a Local Well-being Plan. This identified our four Well-Being Objectives and a cross-cutting action.

This report aims to provide an update on the progress we have made towards meeting our objectives in 21/22, highlight the areas of work that has happened since the implementation of the Well-being plan, the lessons learnt, our future ambitions and how we are working together to make this happen.

## Our Vision

In Swansea, we believe in the rights of every person. Our vision is to work together to make Swansea a place which is prosperous, where our natural environment is appreciated and maintained and where every person can have the best start in life, get a good job, live well, age well and have every opportunity to be healthy, happy, safe and the best they can be.

To achieve our vision we have prioritised four Local Well-being Objectives. We hope that by focusing our collective efforts, we can make the biggest difference by working together.

## Our Local Well-being objectives for 2040

Our four key long term areas of work are prioritised below



**Early Years** – To ensure that children have the best start in life to be the best that they can be.

**Live Well, Age Well** – To make Swansea a great place to live well and age well.

**Working with Nature** - To improve health, enhance biodiversity and reduce our carbon footprint.

**Strong Communities** – To build strong communities with a sense of pride and belonging.

In addition, our cross cutting action for change underpins each of the local well-being objectives.

**Sharing for Swansea** – To work towards integrated public services in Swansea by sharing resources assets and expertise, in order to develop a common language and make every contact count.

This is being developed through Objective Leads working together to identify where resources, assets and expertise can be shared as part of the development of the Objectives. For example, a Critical Incident Group (CIG) for the High Street was formed and agencies took the lead in their specific knowledge areas; the partnership has extended beyond the statutory partners to support and assist in terms of assets, resources and expertise. For example, the police lead on communications as well as

anti-social behaviour and criminality. Barod and Womens Aid take a multiagency approach to tackling Violence and substance misuse.

Public service hubs are being developed to co-locate and co-produce public services to ensure they are accessible in one place and develop a common language, ensuring that every contact counts and that multiple queries are dealt with in one place at first point of contact.

## The Way We Work - Governance

### The Sustainable Development Principle

Swansea PSB is committed to acting in a manner which seeks to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

We do this by ensuring every decision we make or action we take considers the sustainable development principle's five ways of working.



**Long term:** The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.



**Prevention:** How to act to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.



**Integration:** Considering how public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.



**Collaboration:** Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of that body itself) that could help the body meet its well-being objectives.



**Involvement:** The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body services.

### *The National Well-being Goals*

We aim to make our actions deliver as much value as possible by ensuring we look for multiple outcomes in all we do. By ensuring we think about each of the national Well-being Goals below we maximise our contribution to the Wales We Want.



Goal	Description of the Goal
<b>A prosperous Wales</b>	An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including action on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
<b>A resilient Wales</b>	A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).
<b>A healthier Wales</b>	A society in which people's physical and mental wellbeing is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
<b>A more equal Wales</b>	A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).
<b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b>	Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
<b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b>	A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
<b>A globally responsible Wales</b>	A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic , social, environmental and cultural well-being of wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

## Our Commitments

In addition, all Swansea PSB Partners have signed up to a set of commitments. These commitments are below and go beyond the legal duties that the different organisations have and are reviewed taking account of advice from Wales' Commissioners.

## Healthy City Status

Swansea is part of the Healthy Cities network promoting good health and addressing health inequality in our communities.

## **Children and Young People's Rights (UNCRC)**

The Board is committed to making sure that services have a positive effect on children and young people in Swansea and have embedded the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into the way we set our policies.

## **First 1000 Days Collaborative**

Swansea Public Services Board has joined the First 1000 Days collaborative, which supports families throughout pregnancy and the first two years of life.

## **Early Years Transformation Integration – Pathfinder**

Swansea Public Service board has committed to working with Welsh Government to explore the early years systems to better support families in order to help all families to enjoy a healthy happy life: to thrive and to prosper.

## **Age Friendly Cities and Communities**

The Board endorses the principles and actions set out in the Dublin Declaration on Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe.

## **Good Practice in Public Engagement**

The Board endorses the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales and will follow them in all engagement and consultation. The Board is committed to engaging people who are interested in improving local well-being in the development of both the Well-being Assessment and the Well-being Plan and will strive to reflect the diversity of the population when doing so.

## **Participation of Children and Young People**

The Board is committed to the principles of the National Standards for Children and Young People's Participation.

## **Armed Forces Community Covenant**

The Board is committed to the Armed Forces Community Covenant and to nurturing understanding and awareness amongst the public of the issues affecting the armed forces community.

## **Convention on Biological Diversity**

The Board is committed to delivering the principles of the Convention on Biological Diversity as set out in the adopted Swansea Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2005.

## **One Public Sector**

The Board is committed to a culture that cuts across organisational boundaries and sectors. Where everyone involved in the delivery of public services in Wales is part of this common endeavour, sharing common values and working together for the benefit of the people of Wales





### **Swansea as a Human Rights City**

Swansea Public Services Board supports the development of a Human Rights City approach in Swansea.

Swansea Council in partnership with Swansea's PSB are working towards declaring Swansea a Human Rights City in December 2022. It is our aim to create a city where everyone is equal. To empower people to understand their rights and respect the rights of others. We want to ensure all people, especially those marginalised and socially vulnerable, are fully able to take part in the decision making, policy development and implementation processes that affect them. This will create a fairer, vibrant, diverse and safer city for all. A steering group was established in September 2021 consisting of a representative from each PSB organisation to drive this ambition, chaired by Cllr Louise Gibbard.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2021, Human Rights Day, Swansea's Public Service Board publically declared their intention to become a Human Rights City. They made a commitment to;

- Engage our communities and those we serve in the realisation of their human rights.
- Build on work which is already taking place across the city informed by a commitment to human rights and social justice.
- Make human rights the foundation of our service planning and delivery.
- Recognise human rights as fundamental to our policies and our actions individually or collectively.

Extensive engagement has taken place across Swansea to share the ambition and to gain support. We have spoken to community groups, established networks and forums, children and young people in schools, charity and business leaders across the city and county to share the aim of becoming a Human Rights City and to understand what matters to the residents of Swansea. In October, we launched a survey to learn about what residents and visitors of Swansea think the priorities should be when becoming a Human Rights City and to capture a baseline awareness of Human Rights knowledge and awareness in the City.

A PSB Partnership Forum event took place in November 2021 with the focus of Human Rights City. Over 60 representatives from private, public and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations who operate across Swansea took part, including representatives from different services within Swansea Council. We facilitated open discussions relating to the emerging priorities taken from the survey on how all organisations can work together to realise the aim of becoming a Human Rights City and to explore the challenges in terms of Human Rights.

An action plan is being developed, to be initiated post declaration of Human Rights City status, where we will focus on the priorities that emerged from the engagement. Work is on-going to establish what programmes, initiatives and policies already exists in each PSB organisation across Swansea in relation to each priority. Future work will involve identifying any gaps in the services provided.

In the meantime, work is currently being undertaken to raise Human Rights awareness. Senior Management in all the Public Service Board partners and Heads of Service within the Local Authority will be undertaking Human Rights training provided by the British Institute of Human Rights in September 2022, to enable organisations and services to use a Human Rights based approach when developing policies and programmes that puts the individual at the centre. We are also developing a 'Rights in Your Pocket' guide. This pocket guide details what rights residents have under the Human Rights Act and what it means to them in their day-to-day lives and why they are important. This guide will be distributed to the public, through libraries, community halls, work places and it will be sent to community leaders and established networks and forums across the city to disseminate through their own networks.

## How we work as a Public Services Board

The limitations of the previous PSB governance structure were recognised and a Governance Review was undertaken to address this. The Review also took on board advice from the Future Generations Commissioner and a new Governance structure was put in place. The new Governance arrangements embraces sustainable ways of working and places the delivery of the Well-being Objectives at the heart of what the PSB is trying to do to make a difference.

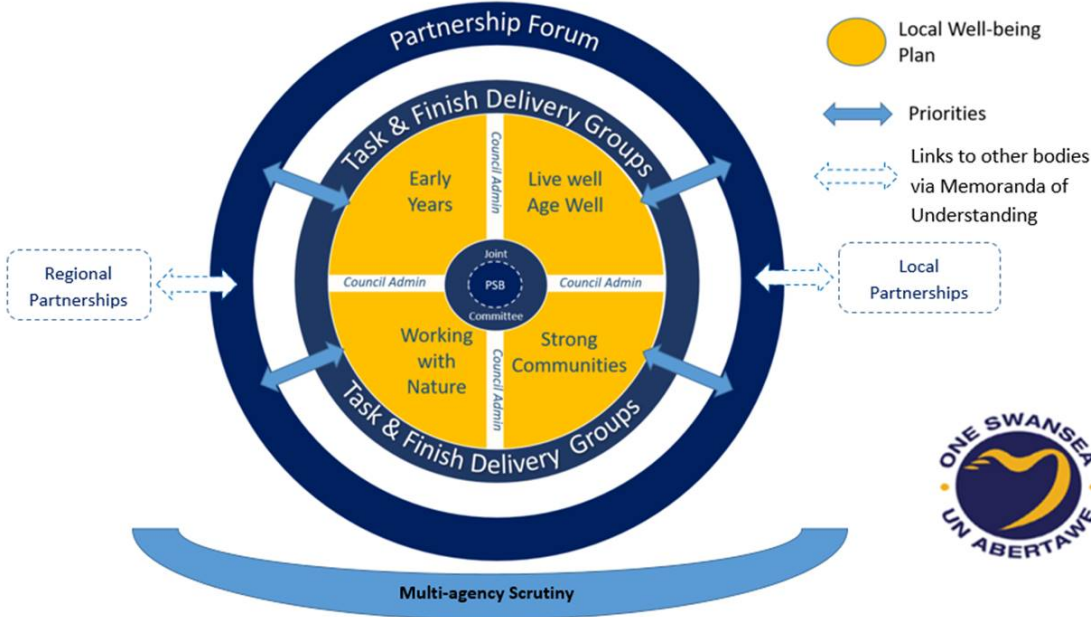
The key principle of the review was that the work of the PSB is a core part rather than an addition to the existing work of its members. All levels of organisational staff should see PSB priorities as part of their day job not an additional responsibility although there is always a challenge managing limited resources.

The Statutory PSB members along with the wider Core Group proposed that the PSB benefit from a streamlined governance process with a new focus on delivery objectives as the driver of the PSB. This provides an opportunity to focus the PSB on making a difference by shifting the emphasis to the Objective Delivery Groups. Involvement can be more meaningful and involve a wider range of partners through the creation of a Partnership Forum. Task and finish groups were formed in response to need and draw on the skills and expertise of the Partnership Forum organisations.

Decision making governance is expedited at a strategic level via a Joint Committee consisting of the PSB Statutory members and invited participants. This group provides

advocacy and support at a strategic level for issues raised by PSB partners through the Objective delivery groups each of which are co-ordinated and facilitated by a statutory member. The PSB Joint Committee meetings are held bi-monthly and the Partnership Forums take place every 6 months.

However, it is unfortunate that we have been unable to hold our Partnership Forums as often as we would have liked due to COVID-19; but we did hold a virtual Partnership Event in November 2021 and we are in the planning stage of hosting another Partnership event over the next coming months.



Whilst Swansea PSB has consciously sought to improve how we involve “usual suspects” there is still scope to include a wider stakeholder audience and opportunities to further involve the public more regularly moving forward.

Regional Working takes place via joint meetings between Swansea and Neath Port Talbot PSBs.

## Swansea's Local Well-being

This chapter of the report summarises the latest situation in Swansea and recent local trends in a selection of the National Indicators (Welsh Government) using the latest published statistics, and other developments in measuring well-being over the latest year.

The analysis below relates to differing time periods, including both before the COVID-19 pandemic (from March 2020) and afterwards – an inevitable result of the processes and systems for surveys and statistical data collection.

The same National Indicator measures included in the previous Annual Report are highlighted in the analysis below:

- The **healthy life expectancy gap** between the most and least deprived areas in Swansea (2010-14) was 21.9 years for males (Wales 18.7) and 16.3 years for females (Wales 18.2). Since 2005-09, the gaps have slightly reduced for males in Swansea (from 22.4 years), but increased for females (from 15.0). There have been no recent updates to the 2010-14 data at a local level. *(National Indicator 2)*
- 10.8% of adults in Swansea reported fewer than two (of the five) healthy **lifestyle behaviours** (Wales 10.0%) (National Survey for Wales / NSW data, 2018-20). Swansea is currently lower than the Welsh average for smoking and drinking (above guidelines), but better than the Welsh average on healthy weight. Measures of eating fruit and vegetables and physical activity are equal for Swansea and Wales. This NSW data has not been updated (at a PSB/LA level) since the last Annual Report. However, 2020-21 data at a Health Board area level indicates that 7.0% of adults in Swansea Bay have fewer than two healthy lifestyle behaviours (Wales 7.4%). *(NI 3)*
- **Air quality** in Swansea, as measured by annual average levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) pollution exposure, has continued to improve; falling from 13.1 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2009 to 9.9 in 2019 (modelled data – pollutants per cubic metre of air). However, average NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in Wales are lower (9.2 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2019). There have been no updates to this national dataset since the previous Annual Report. *(NI 4)*
- In 2019-20, an estimated 14.1% of people aged 16+ living in households in Swansea live in **material deprivation** (that is, cannot afford particular goods and activities that are typical in society at a given point in time); above the Wales average (12.9%) but decreasing from 20.6% in 2017-18. However these are (national) survey-based estimates so short-term changes at a local level should be viewed with caution. Equivalent data for 2020-21 was not published due to the pandemic, with several of the questions asked as part of this measure affected by legal restrictions introduced in response to COVID-19 – which meant that estimates of material deprivation would not be comparable with previous years. *(NI 19)*

- 82.0% of adults in Swansea were moderately or very satisfied with their jobs in 2019-20 (Wales 82.1%), falling from 85.2% in 2017-18. Employed respondents are asked to rate their **job satisfaction** on a scale from 0 to 10, and this includes those that answered 6 or above. This data from the NSW has not been updated since the last Annual Report. (NI 20)
- In 2020-21, 54% of adults in Swansea **felt safe** (Wales 68%). Respondents were asked how safe they felt after dark at home, walking in the local area, and travelling (on a five point scale). Those that responded either 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' to all three questions were coded by the National Survey as 'feeling safe'. The Swansea figure has decreased sharply since the question was last asked in the survey (2018-19: 76%), although 95% confidence intervals in 2020-21 range from approx. 44% to 63%. (NI 25)
- In the National Survey 2020-21, 62% of people aged 16+ in Swansea agreed with all three statements related to **community cohesion** (Wales 69%): people agreeing that they belong to the area; people from different backgrounds get on well together; people treat each other with respect. The Swansea figures for the individual statements were 77%, 81% and 81% respectively, with the Swansea figure for 'belonging' the furthest below the Wales average (83%). (NI 27)
- **Volunteering** is undertaken by 28.5% of people aged 16+ in Swansea in 2019-20 (slightly below the Wales average of 26.1%). These figures reflect people who stated that they currently (at time of survey) give their time for free (formally and informally) to help a list of clubs or organisations. As with several other National Survey indicators included here (for 2019-20), this figure predates the coronavirus pandemic. The 2021-22 National Survey results suggest that 29% of adults volunteer in Wales; however local data on this topic has not been updated since the last Annual Report. (NI 28)
- The National Survey also includes a set of six questions to assess levels of **loneliness**, calculated using the De Jong Gierveld Loneliness scale. Based on these, 14.2.0% of people aged 16+ in Swansea (12.5% in Wales) were found to be lonely in 2020-21; slightly lower than in 2019-20 (17.0% in Swansea, 15.4% in Wales). (NI 30)
- The number of households for whom homelessness was successfully prevented for at least 6 months, as a rate per 10,000 households, is also a National Indicator (NI 34). During 2020-21 the rate for Swansea was 59.3 per 10,000 households, down from 74.0 in 2019-20 (Wales: 34.8 in 2020-21; 49.3 in 2019-20). The pandemic has had a negative impact on the Council's ability to prevent homelessness. However, Swansea still compares favourably with the rest of Wales. In October 2019, during the National Annual Rough Sleepers Count (2 weekly count), there were an estimated 37 rough sleepers in Swansea, within a Wales total of 405. The annual national count has not taken place during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, during the pandemic Swansea has successfully responded to the WG "No-one Left Out Approach", which has ensured that anyone sleeping rough has been provided with temporary accommodation. This has dramatically reduced rough sleeping in Swansea. The nightly average of people sleeping rough in May 2022 was 7.

During the last year there have been a number of publication updates related to the local measurement of well-being in Wales:

- In September 2021, Welsh Government published their latest annual *Well-being of Wales* report, with National Indicators updated where possible. A number of additions and revisions to National Indicators (which now total 50) were confirmed in December 2021, via the publication of the response to the *Shaping Wales' Future* consultation and confirmation of an initial set of eight identified National Milestones for some of the indicators.
- In October 2021, as part of their Measuring National Well-being (MNW) programme, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) published *Personal Well-being in the UK, 2020-21* – containing estimates of life satisfaction, feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile, happiness and anxiety from UK to local authority level, using data from ONS' Annual Population Survey. On all four measures, Swansea mean scores are slightly lower than the Wales and UK averages for 2020-21. Locally and nationally, average ratings of well-being have deteriorated across all indicators in the year ending March 2021, during a period that took place entirely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data Cymru's *Thriving Places Wales* tool measures the relative prevalence of conditions for well-being and quality of life at a local authority level in Wales, using a wide range of indicators (currently 55) across three 'domains' of well-being. In the latest index (2021), Swansea has better conditions for well-being than the Wales average in the 'Sustainability' and (especially) 'Equality' domains, but is lower than the Welsh average in the 'Local Conditions' domain.

Much of the local focus and partner resource around well-being measurement during 2021-22 has been on Swansea's second Assessment of Local Well-being, which needs to be completed and published in May 2022 to meet legislative requirements. The document will provide an assessment of the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in Swansea and will be used to inform the next local Well-being Plan in May 2023.



## **Cross Cutting theme- Housing**

Housing has been identified as a cross cutting theme in Swansea's Well-being Plan. Safe and secure housing is fundamental to the well-being of individuals and the wider community and an essential element in achieving the well-being of future generations. Without a secure, affordable home it is difficult for people to progress in other areas of their lives including employment, education, training, health and family life.

The Council's Housing Service, working with partners, has an important role to assist in the delivery of the Local Well-Being Objectives for Swansea. The Housing Service ensures its strategic approach clearly links with the Local Well-being Objectives. The Service has contributed to the work and aims of the PSB over the last 12 months in applying the five ways of working and contributing to the national well-being goals.

In 2021/ 2022, the Housing Service has launched three new strategies which have their contribution to both the Council's well-being objectives and local well-being objectives at the core.

- The Housing Estate Management Strategy 2021-25
- The Housing Rents Management Strategy 2022-26
- The Housing Support Programme Strategy 2022-26

These strategies embed the five ways of working:

**Long term** - The Housing Service focuses on helping households to secure long term, sustainable accommodation appropriate for their needs and maintain their tenancies through effective support. This includes addressing and preventing rough sleeping, which is done through a collaborative approach with third sector partners local RSLs, the Police, Probation and Health. There is a strong emphasis on assisting Council tenants to sustain their tenancies long-term, supporting building sustainable communities. A proactive approach is taken wherever possible to prevent problems from getting worse or stop them from happening, such as organising rubbish amnesties on estates.

**Prevention** Through its strategic approaches Housing Services place emphasis on early intervention and prevention of problems including rent arrears early intervention and prevention of homelessness. The Service has adopted a psychologically informed approach to service delivery which is having beneficial impacts through significant reductions in evictions from Council accommodation and better engagement with homelessness services from hard to reach groups.

**Integration** – Many PSB partners also work together on joint strategies such as the Housing Support Grant Strategy and the developing West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Health, Housing and Social Care Strategy ensuring contradictions are avoided and complementary working achieved.



**Collaboration** - The Public Services Board works in collaboration with both the Housing Service, Health, Housing and Social Care Forum, Regional Housing Partnership, amongst others.

**Involvement** – Tenant participation and involvement is a crucial part of the delivery of housing services. Tenants have a key role to play in shaping the future direction of the Housing Service. Tenants views help to inform continuous improvements and ensure services are delivered efficiently and cost effectively. The views of specific groups of service users are routinely sought when developing new strategies and services.

### **A prosperous Wales**

Investment in affordable housing, which includes social housing, has significant economic impacts, which include creating jobs, providing large multiplier effects in the local economy and creating markets for new technologies including modern methods of construction, sustainable building methods and new energy efficiency approaches.

### **A resilient Wales**

Affordable, safe, secure housing that is suitable for an individual's needs is fundamental to the wellbeing and resilience of individuals and the wider community and an essential element in achieving the well-being of future generations. Well designed, energy efficient, affordable housing contributes to the resilience of Swansea and Wales by supporting communities and reducing vulnerability to economic, environmental risks and stresses.

### **A healthier Wales**

Housing conditions can influence physical health; a warm and dry house can improve general health outcomes and specifically reduce respiratory conditions. People with disabilities and the elderly require housing that is suitable for their long term needs to ensure they can remain living independently for as long as possible. However, housing also has a huge influence on mental health and well-being – as affordability and security are essential to wellbeing, as well as the physical components. For example, children living in crowded homes are more likely to be stressed, anxious and depressed, have poorer physical health, and attain less well at school.

### **A more equal Wales**

Poverty and low income prevents people from accessing the full range of housing choices and can make housing costs hard to sustain. The Housing Service is a key contributor to the anti-poverty agenda through a wide range of activities, including the provision of council housing as a safe, secure and affordable option for households, the development of new affordable housing to meet needs, improving conditions in the private rented sector, preventing and tackling homelessness, providing disabled facilities grants to enable people to live at home independently for longer. The Housing Service also provides a Furnished Tenancies Scheme which in 2022 was changed to a choice based scheme to ensure it is affordable for those tenants who are not in receipt of benefit. The choice based scheme allows tenants to choose from a menu of options thereby making it more affordable and reducing waste.

## Future intentions

- Overall the key service priority for Housing is to invest to improve housing and build more energy efficient Council homes and support the building of affordable housing to help meet housing need, reduce fuel bills, regenerate estates and bring wider economic and employment benefits. Achievement of this will require Housing to work closely in partnership with key organisations represented within the PSB. Explore ways to increase the number of one bedroom flats and adapted and accessible properties across the city via acquisitions and working with partners to help meet demand.
- Reduce levels of single people and families in temporary accommodation.
- Continue joint partnership working with the voluntary sector and other local organisations/partners to help individuals and families access support and good quality affordable housing.
- Contribute to the proposed regional Housing Adaptations Strategic Framework (including developing a local Housing Adaptations Planning Group).
- Continue to reduce the number of empty properties in the private sector through a combination of advice, support, housing financial assistance and enforcement.

# Progress towards Our Local Well-being Objectives

## Early Years



To ensure that children have the best start in life to be the best that they can be.

**Lead** – This work is co-ordinated by the Early Years Steering Group and led by Swansea University Health Board.

### Partners/ Stakeholders Involved

Early Years Partnership	Early Years Steering Group	Swansea Council- Education	Flying Start Link Teachers/Foundation Phase Strategic Lead
Public Health Wales	Early Intervention Services	Childcare sector/ Family Information Service	Swansea Bay University Health Board
Primary Care Early Years Pilot	Healthy Pre School Scheme	Active Young People Team	Jig-So service
Early Years Progression Officer	Early Learning and Language Development Team	Health Visiting	University Wales Trinity Saint David
Families, Community groups	Flying Start childcare settings	Midwifery	

## Overview of work within Early Years

### Jig-so

It is well recognised that families, especially young families, need a wide range of support in order to tackle and reduce health and social inequalities. Jig-so ensures that families are supported before birth and throughout early childhood, which is key to a babies future life chances.

Providing support in the first 1001 days ensures that any gaps in provision are filled during the antenatal and postnatal period. Providing a core programme of support enables parents/caregivers to build their knowledge and skills that builds confidence, enable them to feel supported, feel less stressed and prepare them for the changes ahead. This contributes to the well-being goals as when parents have improved well-being, they have healthier pregnancies, less complicated births and healthier babies.

Jigsaw builds parental confidence, resilience and aspirational thinking by using a varied toolkit of resources during home and group settings. It provides education and support for parents on brain development, focusing on how to tackle the cycle of Adverse Childhood Experiences, reflection on and identification of different parenting styles, the importance of meeting Children's needs, positive communication, support with relationships and the impact of living with conflict on a child's well-being, and provision of a holistic service to improve responsiveness and sensitivity between parents and infants.



Jig-so works collaboratively with a number of agencies and professionals. We continue to build and maintain relationships with many services and ensure we provide all the families we support the opportunity to express their views on how the service is designed and delivered.

Working collaboratively as a multi-agency team ensures that there is a high level of communication between staff and that a team is created around the families we support. The aim of the service long term is to build on the strengths, skills and knowledge of the family to help them be healthy, grow and thrive for the future. Empowering families to identify and take the steps needed in achieving their short term well-being goals, will encourage the motivation needed to achieve their long term goals.

Jig-so have ensured a more prosperous Wales by preventing problems from worsening, building family resilience and increasing the health of the family to lessen the long term costs to the Authority and Country.

Our intensive midwifery service has worked towards a healthier Wales by promoting breastfeeding and reducing smoking in expectant mothers.

We provide parent and toddler groups within local settings that are easily accessible and help to reduce social isolation. As a team we create a culture where values and positive behaviours are modelled. We ensure that there is open and honest communication between us and our families, work together to achieve shared goals, value real life experiences to improve shared decision making, find out what matters to the family and tailor approaches to individual needs. We ensure that we acknowledge and actively listen to the voice of our families, ensure trust and respect each other to achieve the best outcomes in order to improve the mental health and well-being of parents.

**The areas of work that has taken place since last year include:**

- Born into care pilot – Taking on board the draft guidance and implementing new ways of working to ensure the well-being of the family when a child is taken into care.
- Reflect team development – Expanding the team in order to meet the needs of families where children have been adopted or live with someone else under a Special Guardianship order. Two year ongoing support to parents to facilitate change.
- Develop links with the Neo Natal unit, Singleton Hospital to aid joined up working and promote better communication when children are born too early or are sick.
- Parent Advocacy Network training and facilitating parent cafes.
- Brazelton Newborn Observational training to ensure all staff members are trained in explaining the baby's cues which enables increased responsiveness and better attachments.

**Our intentions are for coming year ahead include:**

- continuing to be a part of the Born into Care pilot;
- to develop the Reflect project supporting parents who have had children removed from their care;
- develop Jig-so parent run and parent café's;
- continue to provide opportunities for families, their children and their wider family groups to grow up together, healthier, happier and more optimistic.

**Early Years Transformation Integration – Pathfinder**

The consideration of the seven well-being goals is paramount to the focus of the early years transformation and integration (also known as Pathfinder) work.

We conducted a service mapping exercise in 2019, looking at the support offered to families from conception to age 7 across four domains: Childcare and Play, Family Support, Education and Health. Following this, we extended the learning and undertook a Vanguard Systems Review of all early years services that support these domains and ages. A major element of this review was to undertake “What matters conversations” with service users themselves and to also undertake extensive exploration of real life lived experiences of transitions between services. This process embedded our work with a future generations mind-set. Our continued learning will be to work with the Early Intervention Foundation and consider how integrated our systems are by using the Early Years Maternity Maturity Matrix (EYMMM) as a vehicle to better understand this. Our future plans for this are to undertake public consultation to discuss the findings from our workshops with professionals.

By continuing to examine the early years landscape via the lens of transformation, we are actively considering how to better integrate our services and how to better collaborate between agencies. By its very nature, the early years work is preventative, looking to support children to be the best that they can be across all of their journeys. Likewise, the long term ambitions of supporting children from birth is a long term project, and the impact from this will hopefully be felt for many years. At the heart of what we have done is to involve people, from professionals through to the public. We have asked over 300 mums what their experiences of Breastfeeding were so we could better inform the decisions being made around breast feeding support. We have also consulted with service users around the exploration of what an early years front door would look like; again, with a view to better understand the direction of travel that we need to take. Our work in examining the early years system supports the Well-being Objectives as they lie at the heart of all that we do.

Integration projects that are part of our wider transformation work, such as the “Improving Access to Speech, Language and Communication support” (SLC) work demonstrates that the 5 ways of working principles are embedded in our culture. This project is a multi-agency team, working to combine agencies such as education, ALN support, Speech Therapy, private childcare and Flying Start childcare, with a view to ensuring that all children have better access to SLC support across Swansea.

For future work, we are looking at ensuring that all children are better supported in a preventative way with their Speech Language and Communication needs. We have reshaped the family support services following a review, and by listening to what matters to families. The new Early Years Early Help Hubs are based in 5 community hubs across Swansea, with a view to taking the services to the people. The early years front door collaboration between the Family Information Service and the new Single Point of Contact will better support our vision of a “seamless journey” for families. The family support model being trialled in Llŵchwr will look to better support families in a preventative way, giving greater access to Health visiting services, following a recognition of the need in the area. As part of the Early Years Maternity Maturity Matrix work, we are planning on a system for engagement with service users to support our transformation vision.

## **Our intentions are for coming year ahead**

- continue to explore how to better integrate our services and create a seamless early years system via the Early Years Maternity Maturity Matrix;
- to support the projects outlined in the early years business plan to help deliver collaborative, preventative and integrated services with a view to giving every child the best start in life, supporting our PSB ambition and delivering on the 7 Well-being topics;
- we are linking with the Maternity Voices partnership to ensure that real life, lived experience is at the heart of shaping the transformation of services that support families across Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.

## **Joint work with Public Health Wales – Delivery of Healthy Pre-School Award and Gold Snack Award**

The Healthy pre-school scheme ambitions are to help provide healthy environments and enable children to make healthy choices as they progress through the life stages. This links well to the well-being goals of a more resilient and healthy Wales.

Early Years Childcare teams continued to deliver childcare during the pandemic, because of this, adaptations were needed for the delivery of many routines and practices in childcare to help to reduce the spread of infection. In some cases this meant that children saw limited options to enable them to make their own choices during snack times, choice of activities etc.

As restrictions lift, more Early Years settings have now adopted self pouring stations for access to water during the day. Rolling snack offers children a wider window to choose when they are ready to sit and eat snack. During snack time children are provided with snack options that they can prepare themselves.

To enable settings to reintroduce food preparation resources were purchased e.g. Children's dog knives, chopping boards, water containers with tap, milk jugs to keep milk cool and mirrors to promote self-care corners.

Promotion of children's rights in the early years, access to water/milk free choice and child initiated play etc. Pocket book of rights – for young children books have been purchased for the workforce to use and refer to, using appropriate language about access to water etc. with young children. Settings continue to offer a nutritious meals and snacks and have worked towards reviewing their standards over recent months. Training around the importance of food for young children were delivered.

Settings have routinely used their outdoor spaces, the pandemic saw settings utilising their outdoor provision more frequently and also used this as an opportunity to improve their outdoor space for children.



## **Our intentions are for coming year ahead**

- Continuation of the delivery of HSPSS and Gold Snack Award.
- Delivery of the obesity grant to enable settings to deliver nutritious meals and snacks, promote extended hours of time outside.

## **Early Years Early Help (EYEH)**

Over the past year the Early Years Early Help (EYEH) team has undertaken a staff consultation and restructure to ensure that the delivery of services meets the needs of the early years and the Well-being of Future Generations Act. This is complemented by the way that Swansea Council provides its services in terms of meeting people's needs early on by providing them with access to the right support to ensure resilience is built early on and families are equipped to support their children now and into the future.

- The principles of the way the EYEH team work are embedded within the 5 ways of working. Families are involved and lead on all of the decisions made with regards their support. The aims of the interventions are focused on preventing needs from escalating, whilst building on skills that enable families to continue their journeys of parenthood independently without the aid of services to support.
- Building skills in families early on, empowering them and building on their strengths ensures they are in the best place possible to contribute to achieving the wider national well-being goals.

We constantly review feedback from service users and undertake quality assurance processes to make sure we are a service fit for the now and into the future. During the pandemic the team needed to be responsive to its users' needs in very creative and new ways of working; these have been continued into the 'as is' model of delivery. For example, the use of virtual support by using Teams and social media for interactions, plus using open spaces to deliver sessions as opposed to homes or small rooms.

- New sessions have been developed incorporating play as the tool for delivery.
- Staff have undergone new training on areas/themes that have been identified as new or growing areas of support such as calmer stories, potty training and family links.

## **Our intentions are for coming year ahead**

- The vision for the coming year is to embed delivery and continue to upskill and support the newly recruited staff.

## **Early Years Additional Learning Needs (ALN)**

The Early Years ALN Support and Inclusion Team has worked incredibly hard to ensure there is equity in terms of access to both early identification of and appropriate provision for all children who may be experiencing development delay or ALN in the Early Years. A considerable amount of work has taken place to ensure the effective implementation of the ALNET Act from September 2021.

The team has increased in size with officers from both the Early Years Programmes Team and the Education Authority, allowing collaborative working to achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

We recognised that the service needed to broaden its reach to ensure equity for all Early Years children. In order for this to have long term, sustainable impact, we invested within the service to employ two Early Years Support and Inclusion Workers (one previously trialled through Pathfinder). This allowed us to forward plan with stakeholders what the service needed to look like and how it would develop over time.

The Education Department have implemented effective systems to ensure the Statutory duties of the Local Authority in relation to ALNET are adhered to, with robust processes in place to ensure children who have ALN - and therefore require an Individual Development Plan - are identified in a timely manner. Person centred practice underpins this process, with all services involved with the child's care coming together with the family to plan for the needs of the child. This includes representatives from the receiving school, in order to ensure effective transition. Designated Coordinators have been employed by the authority to lead on and coordinate this process.

We also regularly consult stakeholders, such as Childcare providers and Health Visitors, about the service and use this information to improve.

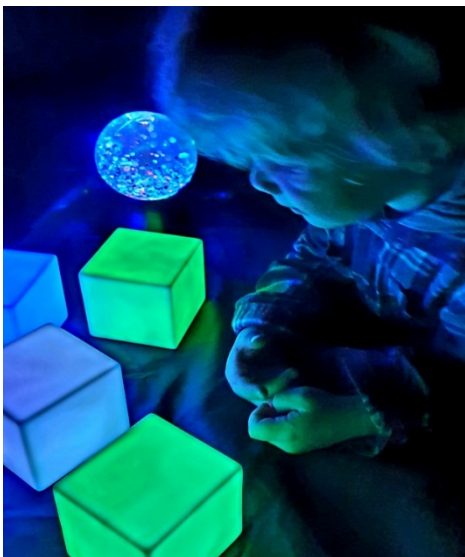
### **The areas of work that has taken place since last year**

- Amalgamation of all previous referral processes into one, meaning all children have equal access to provision and support. The Early Years ALN and Inclusion Panel has expanded its membership, ensuring representation from Early Years Programmes Team, SALT, Specialist Health Visitors, Educational Psychologists, Third Sector and Childcare. Multi-agency planning takes place during these meeting to ensure children have timely access to appropriate provision.
- The team now offers advice to all childcare providers and Health Visitors within the Authority via a telephone consultation service and complete direct visits to providers to support them with developing inclusive provisions as well as targeted intervention packages. This allows for all those in the childcare sector to have access to support advice and strategies for children in their care who have ALN, learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

- We have also developed a robust suite of training courses that is being delivered to all childcare providers, focussing on increased inclusivity and ensuring providers have the necessary skill base to meet a variety of needs.
- Utilising grant monies to further develop the universal provision of childcare setting through the purchase of resources to promote inclusivity.
- Utilising grant monies to develop accessible outdoor spaces for childcare providers.
- Purchase of inclusive environments equipment / resources and accompanying advice for all registered childcare provision. Settings were offered a choice of a variety of resource packs targeting a specific area of development and resources were purchased and provided; feedback has been positive.
- Grant funding (CDF) was utilised to develop accessibility of a childcare provider's outdoor provision, to accommodate a child who was non-mobile. EY ALN Support and Inclusion Worker along with an Advisory Teacher worked directly with the setting to identify ways in which the outdoor environment could be improved. Soft flooring and floor level climbing resources were purchased to ensure the child could access outdoor activities alongside their peers, whilst also developing gross motor skills. Since the introduction of this equipment and increased opportunities to mobilise, the child has since taken their first steps.

### **Inclusive resources**

*"Thank you so much for our resource box it is set up and running in our quiet space and has been well received by our children"*



*Just to say thank you SO much for the amazing inclusive environment resources you delivered on Friday. The children are absolutely loving them. The dark sensory tent and lights have been used for so many hours today I think I may need new batteries already!"*

### **Outdoor provision:**

*"Look how fabulous this looks and it has made such a difference to the child already"  
Thank you for your support in sorting it for us"*



**Our intentions are for coming year ahead**

- To continue to work with providers to increase the skill base in meeting the needs of children with ALN, development delay and/or disabilities.
- To develop more targeted / needs specific training to build on the universal training currently offered.
- To broaden the number of settings we are currently working with, targeting those settings that are harder to reach.
- To work collaboratively with SALT to co-produce training regarding augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) for providers and parents.

**Balanceability work**

It is recognised that more children and young people are less likely to use a bike to travel around local areas. Some children aren't skilled in using a bike when opportunities are provided to access cycle proficiency courses.

Opportunities made available due to the delivery of the Child Development Fund and the HSPSS Obesity Grant:

- Liaised with Education to ensure all nursery and reception staff including childcare settings were made aware of the training and the benefits of receiving the resources for their children in their care.
- Established suitable sized resources for up to 5 children to use per setting.
- Liaised with Active Young People to promote community led provision.
- Resources delivered to settings following training of staff

## Child Development Funding (CDF) – Balanceability Training/Resources

CDF has allowed both childcare settings and schools to come together in their delivery of the balance bike programme. Children transitioning from childcare into school or using a mixture of both during the day will have shared experiences of using balance bike equipment. Children have benefited from strengthening their core muscles, coordination skills and developing skills to adapt to riding and adjusting their stride and length of distance travelled.

With cycling on the decline amongst children and young people, parents and staff are encouraged to understand the importance of cycling and using the outdoors more frequently. Local community groups have also benefited, with the Active Young Offer team developing opportunities for parents of children in the early years to experience using the bikes in a safe environment.

Morrison Primary School commented;

*“We were extremely grateful and excited upon the delivery of our Balanceability bikes..The children are in the infant Specialist Teaching Facility and majority having Autism Spectrum Disorder. As a result, a few of the children were very hesitant and reluctant to allow a member of staff to place the helmet on their heads. Therefore, over a couple of sessions we allowed the children to explore the helmets, touching/feeling and holding them until they became used to them. After a while we were successful in placing the helmets on all of the children's heads and fastening them*

*At this stage some of the children in class are confident using the balanceability bike and others are just starting to feel confident with an adult supporting them.*

*We are excited to see all of the children progress throughout the scheme.*

*Thank you once more for the brilliant resources and excellent training!”*

Childminder Swansea commented;

*Oh my goodness... I have never been so excited to receive such a wonderful delivery. This absolutely fantastic equipment has made our PE sessions so much fun! The children in my care have enjoyed learning to use the balance bikes, climbing along the stepping stones trail and using all the other fabulous equipment in so many ways. We've had balancing bean bag races, throwing rings onto cones, obstacle courses, balancing on one foot, the list is endless! These children have had loads of fun learning and keeping active.*

*I've watched a child learn to use a balance bike, then within a few months he had so much confidence that he climbed onto a pedal bike and off he went. No issues whatsoever.Amazing!*

*These resources have been a real game changer.*

*Very grateful indeed. Thank you!*

## **Intentions are for coming year ahead?**

- Repeat the delivery of training and resources for new settings and school via CDF.

## **Vanguard Systems Thinking review**

We engaged with over 40 professionals to examine the early years system over 6 days. The sessions also included listening to groups of service users to understand their real life lived experience, following real life families journeys through midwifery, Health Visiting and into Education services, and to have 'What matters' conversations. All with a view to better understand the needs of families and how best the early years system can transform to meet those needs. The work is collaborative, integrated, preventative, and hopes to be co-produced. The vision of the transformation group is that;

*“ Childcare, Play, and Family Support services are integrated, and provide a seamless pathway that is proportionate to the needs of children, young people and families, from conception until age 7.”*

Following the recommendations from this work, we undertook a review of the entry point for all early years services.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 identifies that showing care and thought about healthcare strategies can have an impact in reducing health and social inequalities which in turn improves the as the act states improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

In 2021, the Health Boards Wellbeing Objectives were refreshed. In support of this, they committed to collaborate with communities and partners to give every child the best start in life echoing our local well-being objective.

In order for Health Board staff to be aware of the Well-being Future Generations Act and the Health Boards' objectives it was recognised that links, clear communications and engagement are key. As such, dedicated time has been allocated from the Health Boards' Communications Team for development of a Communication and Engagement Plan. This plan has sought to increase the profile of sustainability across the Health Board as well as share innovative projects and good news with partners. This has in turn supported better working together to identify and deliver projects driven by our passionate staff. Examples include;

## **Bed Poverty / Health Inequality**

Welsh Child Poverty Strategy estimates that 1 in 3 children in Wales live in poverty. Bed poverty, is a term that refers to families and children within our locality who are sleeping on floors or cushions as a result of not having their own bed. The Health Board had surplus beds in the field hospitals that were ideal for use.

A small working group of staff from the Health Board, local authorities and charities led the work. And Health Board Senior Management responded by ensuring they received appropriate approvals to proceed as quickly as possible.

The Health Board was not in a position to identify the most vulnerable children in our communities and as such worked with Swansea & Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Services, and Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Councils who identified front line workers such as teachers, social workers, homeless workers who were able to identify those in greatest need.

The working group co-ordinated the logistics, involving partners on how together we would distribute the beds to those in greatest need. It was agreed to launch an intranet campaign involving staff in donating bedding as people unable to purchase a bed would unlikely be able to afford the bedding to go with it.

The project worked closely with Welsh Government who were very supportive. Swansea Bay Health Board had a total of 595 emergency beds and other health boards in Wales too had similar numbers so replicating the project across the whole of Wales would make a significant difference to the lives of many more people. With Welsh Government and Health Board approvals the beds were donated at no cost to those in greatest need in our communities.

### **Project benefits**

Making good on an opportunity to make a positive difference to the lives of many Swansea Bay residents facing adversity and also refugees arriving here for sanctuary.

Research has shown that disadvantaged children are already 18 months educationally behind their peers. Lack of sleep, due to not having a bed leads to poor concentration levels and lower educational attainment, which in the long term only widens the inequalities gap that exists within our community.

The impact of Adverse Childhood Experience's (ACEs) are well understood to be a barrier to giving children the best start in life and the opportunity to achieve their potential. The Health Board along with partners played a part in preventing childhood adversity and mitigating its impact alongside individuals and members of our communities.

### **Milk Bank**

A milk bank has been set up as part of the first hub in Wales to help ill or premature babies and, over time, mothers facing feeding difficulties. The new milk bank hub, based in Singleton Hospital, Swansea, is supplying human milk to babies being cared for in hospital, with much of the milk being donated by Welsh mothers.



Until now, hospitals in Wales had received donor milk directly from milk banks in England. Having a milk hub based locally will also allow more women from Wales to donate their milk to help support mothers and babies who need it.

Donor milk can help ill or premature babies in supporting their feeding, growth and development and in preventing complications, while also supporting mothers who need time to establish their own milk supply.

As the milk hub begins operating to its full capacity, babies across south Wales will be able to receive milk from the hub in Singleton Hospital, as it will supply donor milk to the other health boards in South Wales.



*Pictured: The freezers at the milk hub in Singleton Hospital*

Each donor goes through a screening process, which includes questionnaires and blood tests to rule out any infections. They then provide at least two litres of milk over 10 weeks, which is then pasteurised, before being frozen and stored ready to be given to babies.

Blood Bikes Wales, a charity that provides a free courier service to the NHS, had previously been transporting donor milk from England to Singleton Hospital for babies in need. The charity will continue to deliver the supplies to Swansea and to each of the health board regions in Wales to make it easier for mothers and babies to receive the donor milk.

### **Wellness Centre**

A collaboration between the Health Board and Coastal Housing Group to develop a primary care facility that houses GP's, community health and specialist services in a modern, purpose-built environment. It seeks to support well-being and ill-health

prevention in the widest sense, pulling together a range of health and well-being services under one roof, making it easier for people to access the care and support they need in a joined-up way. This initiative embeds the foundational economy principles.

### **Community Supported Agriculture: Morriston**

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) initiatives are partnerships between farmers and consumers in which the responsibilities, risks and rewards of farming are shared. Swansea Bay University Health Board became involved after discovering that Swansea's Food Poverty Network was looking for opportunities to establish further CSAs across a wider area of the city. The Health Board owned land at Morriston Hospital, one section was unsuitable for future healthcare development however it was ideal to grow crops upon.



The aim was to develop the site to grow organic crops for our local population that will improve their health and wellbeing, reducing the inequalities in health gap that exists within our communities.

One of the project objectives is for the Health Board to support the foundational economy by providing gainful employment and training opportunities. Additionally, the local population will have access to locally grown organic vegetables that will help improve their physical and mental health.

The CSA will offer social prescribing, volunteering and training opportunities for our patients, service users, staff and the local community, thereby improving mental health and wellbeing in the broadest sense. Working together with the Local Authority and schools in the area as part of the Healthy Schools initiative, teaching children about food and where it comes from.

The Health Board has approached Public Health Wales and Swansea University to work with them to evaluate the success of the programme

### **Housing & Early years**

As part of the commitment set out in the Estate Management Strategy, the Housing Service continues to work with partners and the Play Team to support the delivery of additional play facilities on council housing estates to help increase the play opportunities for children wherever possible, including a new play area created in Penlan during 2021/22.

# Live Well, Age Well



To make Swansea a great place to live well and age well.

**Lead** – This work is co-ordinated by the Live Well, Age Well working group and led by Swansea Council.

**Partners/ Stakeholders Involved**

Swansea Bay University Health Board	People 50+ within the Ageing Well Network	Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service
West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board	Swansea Council	Housing Associations
Swansea University	South Wales Police	Third Sector and Voluntary Sector
Children and young people engagement vis schools and community settings	Public engagement via Parent Carer Forum	Public engagement via Co-production Forum

Communication is ongoing through our forum work with citizens and through our Live Well Age Well partners.

Representatives from the 3 other PSB objectives are members/participants of the “Children’s Rights Network” & “Ageing Well Steering Group” where membership of both was reviewed in July 2021.

There is a link to the Early Years Objective to ensure there is a seamless approach and pathway across the age ranges and links have been made with the Stronger Communities objective to understand the similarities between the two objectives to avoid duplication.

As we all reflect on the focus of the objectives going forward we need to make sure there are strong links and understanding between the objectives as they are congruent

The original areas of focus within the PSB “Live Well, Age Well” Objective remain unchanged and will be reviewed as part of the new well-being assessment:

- **Culture Change** - To start a debate across generations about what it means to live and age well and develop a campaign based on the feedback
- **Innovative approaches to health and social care** – Supporting dementia Friendly Communities and maximising existing approaches and exploring evidence-based approaches to end of life care
- **Community based approaches** – Exploring a range of initiatives to tackle social isolation and build personal resilience across PSB and voluntary sector
- **Innovative housing and technology** – To explore options for people with additional care needs that help them remain independent at home.
- **Making every contact count** – The development and sharing of joint messages and resources that support people remain safe and independent in their homes.

The Live Well Age Objective aims to make Swansea a great place to live and age well, where people are supported to be safe, healthy, independent and resilient in order for them to reach their full potential.

To achieve this we need to develop approaches and services which support independence and resilience across communities, moving away from a service delivery model and changing the relationship between public and services.

It is important we ask and understand what matters to individuals and what would help to build confident, healthy and resilient communities.

### **Overview of work within Live Well, Age Well Objective:**

Supporting people's rights throughout COVID 19 has never been so important. Evidence demonstrates how the pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities and impacted on rights with citizens being pushed into poverty, an observed widening of inequalities and worsening mental health especially for the vulnerable.

To effectively recover from the pandemic, adapting how we all live and work has been required, emphasising the importance of even greater partnership working across all sectors in order to support people to continue to access essential services and address issues of well-being during an unprecedented period. Much progress has been made against many of the ‘steps’ outlined in the Well-being Plan as demonstrated below.

## **Culture change:**

During the last 12 months, a substantial amount of work has been undertaken to continue to embed a continuous approach to human rights across the life stages, ensuring that all people have opportunities to access and enjoy their rights from the moment they are born and throughout their life course.

As part of plans to support recovery out of COVID, attention turned to co-producing fit for purpose, inclusive mechanisms to engage people of all ages, making specific efforts to ensure those who would traditionally be marginalised from civic participation can engage. For example, those who possess protected characteristics and/or have additional needs, lack confidence, or do not wish to commit to formal elected positions but equally have a right to have their voice heard in decisions, service changes and city plans are included.

Engagement and participation has continued to be a central feature of Swansea's work to embed rights-based approaches. Partnership approaches to becoming a Human Rights City, embedding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and realising rights for people 50+ to live well and age well in Swansea have all presented mechanisms that enable meaningful listening to people affected by decisions that are made, helping to drive forward cultural change.

## **Embedding Human Rights through "The Right Way" Approach:**

Work has begun to map the common themes and differences within National strategy relating to children & young people as well as those citizens 50+ to understand what a "City for all" looks like. This includes taking themes from the Older Person's Commissioners "Leave No-one Behind" report, National Strategy for an "Ageing Society", the UNCRC call for evidence, Coronavirus and Me Survey and feedback from citizens to establish a common framework underpinned by Human Rights.

Swansea's Children's Rights Scheme, adopted in 2014, has been redeveloped and refreshed, ensuring that it complements the 'Right Way', a principled approach that is being embedded nationally. This plan incorporates National Principles for a Rights Based Approach to Children and takes account of extensive work with several hundred children, young people and practitioners on what a new Scheme could look like.

The Welsh Government strategy for an "Ageing Society" also highlights 'The Right Way' principled approach to rights as a framework for embedding human rights in supporting older people in Wales. The potential of a draft Charter for Citizen 50+ has been explored, which could encourage Council departments to pledge to achieve the tangible tasks required to embed right-based practice within this field of work.

Work is also being done to map the 8 domains of an Age Friendly city, the key themes from Leave No-One Behind, the Strategy for an Ageing Society against the 5 principles of The Right Way in an action plan. This would help when reporting our progress on each so we are recognising how fulfilling each maximises opportunities for Citizens 50+ to access and enjoy their rights. It also offers a smart way to bring together many

components of what is regarded to successfully drive forward the Ageing Well agenda locally.

## Participation with Citizens across the Age Range



### Listening to Children & Young People:

In Swansea, meaningful and inclusive opportunities for children and young people to be heard in decisions that affect them is a priority. Since 2014, the county mechanism to ensure this has been called the Big Conversation, offering opportunities for nearly 10,000 children and young people aged 5-25 years to engage and to be heard.

The Pandemic meant that thought had to be given to how and where we engage with children and young people in this new and unprecedented time of working. Engagement with 328 children, young people, families, practitioners and data was undertaken between April-September 2020 to understand what good involvement may now look like. Two distinct areas of work have been undertaken in 2021/22 to act on feedback:

1. *Review and refresh of Swansea's Children and Young People's Rights Scheme, including SMART and robust methods for measuring and evidencing its impact on the lives of children;*

A draft Scheme was co-produced and underwent a period of further consultation during June-August 21. Each principle was agreed as the right principle, with strong feedback emphasizing the need for robust, measurable performance indicators to support them.

Since the launch of the revised Children and Young People's Rights Scheme on Universal Children's Day in November 2021, working on bringing people together to determine performance indicators for what making rights a reality looks like in practice, and how we measure that, has been priority.

30 members of Swansea's Children's Rights Network came together in January 2022 to begin the process of co-production, drafting indicators based around the 5 principles of our agreed rights based approach. Two working groups have continued the process of production (one that focusses on Participation and Empowerment, and one that focusses on Embedding, Accountability and Equality). Simultaneous to this, work has been undertaken to facilitate sessions with 233 children and young people from 11 schools to determine what action they think the Council should take and what the measurements look like. All children predominately chose to focus on Equality & Non-Discrimination or Participation as their principles of choice. This work has been used by Children's Rights Network members to inform the development of performance indicators of the UNCRC Action Plan.

The information has also been submitted on behalf of children to the Human Rights City consultation as a way of informing that work.

2. *Further development of fit for purpose, meaningful and inclusive mechanisms that engage children and young people aged 0-18 in decisions that affect them:*

As a result of consultation with children, young people and families in 2020, the following priorities were set as work that would constitute the work of the 'county-wide forum' in Swansea:

- Involving young people in politics
- Ensuring LGBTQ+ equality
- Listening to collective learner voice
- Protecting the safety of young women in public spaces
- Protecting the environment and green spaces
- Listening to quiet voices
- Supporting disabled children to be heard

It has been important to recognise that forum mechanisms form only one part of listening. The embedding of children's human rights as part of our commitment to the UNCRC requires a partnership approach to engagement and involvement. The effort of departments to adapt and change to continue to work with children and young people has been significant and effective.

**Involving young people in politics:**

A tender has been awarded to Swansea MAD who have worked with 30 Secondary school pupils from YGG BrynTawe and YGG Gwyr to develop a social media video promoting votes at 16, changes in law enabling young people to vote, voting as a democratic right and information about how to register to vote. 'Your Vote, Your Future' is being used as a promotional tool in the lead up to local elections and is available to view at. <https://www.swanseamad.com/vote/>.

Votes at 16 Ambassador recruitment has taken place with 19 ambassadors having been successfully recruited from 10 secondary schools. The ambassadors' role has been to promote and encourage their peers to register to vote for the forthcoming elections. Ambassadors have been supported in schools and youth settings to promote votes at 16 and registration to vote. The Votes at 16 Ambassadors project is a collaborative project between Democratic Services, the Partnership and Involvement Team and secondary schools.

A resource pack has been developed with young people to support ambassadors to encourage registration to vote amongst their peers, including posters, promotional material, opportunities to register in votes during school time, assembly sessions, lesson plans for schools to use and 'your vote matters' badges for pupils. We have also acquired 'ambassador' pin badges and pens for our ambassadors, and enough for senior council officers to wear to promote young people's right to vote in the forthcoming elections.

Registration and vote at 16 changes posters have also been designed to be shared and promoted in city centre locations, and community buildings. 27 public, private and



third sector organisations agree to take posters and promote the change in Law within the City.



### **Swansea Neath Port Talbot Junior Safeguarding Board: Ensuring LGBTQ+ Equality**

26 young people from Swansea have been working in partnership with young people from Neath Port Talbot as members of the Western Bay Junior Safeguarding Board to develop a LGBTQ+ resource pack for schools. 'Equali-tea' is a pack raising awareness of LGBTQ+ issues faced by young people locally, based on the issues raised by young people themselves, and consists of LGBTQ+ history quizzes, teapot conversation starters, and scribble pads which allow young people to discuss LGBTQ+ issues faced in school, in the family and in the community.

'Equali-tea' packs have been distributed to all secondary schools in NPT and Swansea and the Partnership and Involvement Team has facilitated teaching of the pack in two Secondary Schools who have requested support. This has amounted to teaching of Equali-Tea to over 180 pupils in this quarter.

The Junior Safeguarding Board made up of 23 young people have also facilitated 3 sessions on the pack with senior decision makers – 1) with CMET in Swansea (particularly the working group of the Board who are looking at equality and non-discrimination), 2) with NPT Corporate Parenting Board, and 3) with Western Bay Children's Safeguarding Board. Each session was deemed highly successful by adult participants.

Plans to extend use of the Equali-tea pack in schools need to be established, e.g. wider awareness to secondary schools of the pack, and potential extension to primary schools (based on requests from primary school children).

An extension of this work has resulted in working with young people and the Swansea LGBT Forum to consider ways to promote the Council as an Ally organisation. Materials such as pin badges and tote bags to represent Ally-ship that can be distributed to staff and members of the public at outreach events have been sourced. This work is in partnership with our relevant Councillor Champion and Cabinet member



### Listening to collective learner voice

A Pupil Voice Professional Learning Community (of secondary school teachers and pupils) has come together to work with pupils to develop ‘A pupil voice manifesto’. Learners have been working hard to determine issues important to them and produce a manifesto for senior decision makers in Swansea to respond to and act upon in the coming months. This work is led by Bishopston Comprehensive and supported by the Partnership and Involvement Team.

### Protecting the safety of young women in public spaces

In the aftermath of Sarah Everard and Sabina Nessa, safety of young women in public spaces has become an emergent issue for young people in Swansea.

37 Young people have taken part in local conversations facilitated by Swansea Council, South Wales Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner to explore how young people feel about the safety of young women locally. These conversations have included understanding the issues from a young women’s perspective, but sessions have also been held specifically for young men as part of White Ribbon Day and the ‘All Men Can’ campaign. Feedback has been presented to a regional forum, where young people were able to discuss their issues with officials such as the Police and Crime Commissioner and Children’s Commissioner with a view to agree actions and bring about change.

Building on this work, the Partnership and Involvement Team, in partnership with Sports Development are working together to launch the first ‘Us Girls’ session specifically aimed at 14-18 year old women. This session forms part of the wider Us Girls project but is uniquely dedicated at older girls and will focus on personal safety. The half-day session will be split into three sections and is proposed to take place during Whitsun:

- A sports taster session (based on issues raised about young women’s specific opportunities to exercise);
- Specialist JUDO session (based on request for tools for personal safety and self-defence), and;

- A consultation session where we will further explore our findings from our young women's safety work to identify next steps. For example, an opportunity has arisen to link with park lives to facilitate specific young women's couch to 5k sessions (similar to the health walks) where Park Lives/Sports Development/Partnership and Involvement Team can facilitate safe and dedicated running sessions for young women – the consultation can provide a space to see if this is still wanted, and if so where/ times.

### **Listening to the voices of disabled children and young people**

A new pilot project has begun in Ysgol Pen Y Bryn where all staff have undertaken INSET training on what it means to embed a principled approach to children's rights into their new curriculum.

Work has begun with pupils and staff to map existing good rights practice, and areas for development, from which a 5 point-plan for embedding rights will be co-produced by teachers, governors, parents and pupils.

This work has contributed to the development of a national resource that support schools to fulfil their commitment to rights outlined in the Curriculum and Assessment Act and Additional Learning Needs Act, i.e. to promote knowledge of the UNCRC, as well as to understand the principles of the UNCRPD to support pupils with ALN and/or who are disabled. This work is a partnership piece of work with the Education service, Partneriaeth and the Children's Commissioner's Office for Wales.

A case-study of this project is currently being developed to inform a National ALN toolkit showcasing best ALN rights based-practice. This will be hosted on the website of the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

### **Future Work:**

Based on agreements made at Full Council in the sign off of the Children and Young People's Rights Scheme, the following work remains outstanding and requires development:

- Quiet voices – work is required to understand and bring together stakeholders who can support the development of systems for those hardest to engage, whether that be due to an ability or access issue to current systems. Work is also required to extend current engagement mechanisms beyond the school setting and back into community settings as they reopen and recover from Covid-19.
- Listening to disabled children – work is required to bring together stakeholders to understand how we can better listen to the voice of disabled children, in an appropriate and meaningful way. Initial ad-hoc conversations have taken place with Parent Carers regarding potential for considering accessible information as a starting point, but this needs further thought and development.
- Climate and nature emergency – work is required to build and develop priorities with children and young people on their chosen priority, as well as linking into wider Council work that is already taking place in this area.

### **Engagement of children and young people in Human Rights City:**

Bespoke and specific support has been offered to ensure the voice of children and young people are included within the development of Swansea's work to become a Human Rights City. 138 children and young people have participated in sessions with the initiatives leading cabinet member to influence the priorities for embedding Human Rights across the city moving forward.

### **Engaging children and young people in Play**

#### **UNCRC Article 31– Right to Rest, Leisure & Play:**

The rights that form Article 31 continue to be seen as a vital area for consideration within Swansea due to play's essential role in the healthy development of every child & young person. If anything, opportunities to play, to meet up with friends and to have the time to be themselves, and rediscover themselves, has been more important than ever over the past year or so. Many essential play opportunities have been impacted by Covid-related lockdown, social distancing and a reduction of informal interaction within schools. Those responsible for developing play and addressing sufficiency have been keen to ensure that this impact is recognised and an effective response is put in place.

This year the Council has been responsible for conducting the 2022 Play Sufficiency Assessment. Consultation was an essential part of this process, which gave children and young people the opportunity to shape the future of their play opportunities in Swansea. Work included:

- Engaging with over 200 children and young people with the use of focus groups, meeting with school councils and interactive sessions to hear different ideas.
- Engaging with groups of young people such as the YMCA LGBTQ+ 'Good Vibes' youth club
- An online survey was carried out as some restrictions were still in place at the time of face-to-face consultation.
- Online play sufficiency workshops were held where parent/carers could come along and share their child's opinion on play where their child had an additional need. This supported additional engagement with children with additional needs via representative groups.
- The Council's investment in its play areas is a topic that many were happy to compliment, stating that it has provided children and young people with better play opportunities across Swansea.

Swansea's Play Network has continued to meet, albeit more on an informal and virtual basis, to discuss and respond to the impact on opportunities to play. This has ensured that all ages, needs, backgrounds and interests are considered, both in terms of current planning and in developing a 3 year action plan for Play Sufficiency that will consider and look to meet every child and young person's right to play.

### **Engaging children and young people in community cohesion:**

Prior to lockdown, a group of 60 young people from across Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, and Bridgend, who were aged between 11-18 met as part of a voluntary participation and engagement programme called 'School Swap'. The group came

together to discuss important issues and share their personal experiences, feelings and emotions on topics such as racism, religion, culture, and social backgrounds.

'Art In The City' aims to encourage an intergenerational and diverse group of people to work together in a community setting to discuss issues that affect them in the community relating to hate crime/hate incidents (mainly offensive graffiti). The group participates in facilitated discussions which have led to workshops supported by artists at Fresh Creative, These art works aim to celebrate diversity and encourage people to be respectful in our communities. Evaluations, pieces of work, detailed quotes, and art works that young people produced during the 'School Swap' workshops have been shared with Artists at Fresh Creative Co who were inspired to produce two vibrant murals that construction company Bouygues UK have displayed on Oxford Street Swansea. It is hoped that people will see these murals and feel connected to their local area as the messages promote peaceful and integrated communities.

### **Funding to support the rights of children and young people Summer of Fun and Winter of Wellbeing:**

Welsh Government provided £5million in the Summer of 2021 for local authorities to develop activities programmes from July 1st to the September 30th. The aim of the programme was to engage with children and young people between the ages 0-25 and provide opportunities that they would not have without this support. This was in response to children and young people missing out on so much over the past two years.

In Swansea over £400,000 was allocated to 83 projects from the local authority, third sector and public sector to provide a varied programme of activities including sports, physical activity, cultural, educational, arts and crafts, emotional health and wellbeing and youth provision, via a small grants process. This directly impacted on 10,000 individual attendees to projects in youth work, Child and Family, inclusion, ports and school activity provision.

Due to the success of the Summer of Fun Welsh Government also released funding for the Winter of Wellbeing. Again Swansea utilised a small grants process to allocate over £500,000 to 93 projects. In an end of project survey, in which 53 of the 93 projects responded, a reach of over 8,200 (with an average of 155 per project) was reported, indicating a total reach of 14,000 individuals attended projects in receipt of funding. 35 new provisions were funded in this round of funding.

### **Engaging Children and Young People in the review of Early Help Hubs and Youth Services:**

As part of a service restructure, a mini review of youth services was undertaken. As part of this, children across Swansea were engaged and permitted opportunity to feedback what they wanted their youth service to look like. This engagement also included staff and stakeholders. As a result of this, substantial further investment into the youth service has been granted. Early findings/feedback from young people indicated they want more provision. As a result of this all youth workers will be given the opportunity to increase their hours from 9 a week to 15, the Youth Hub

Development Officers will go full time and a new youth manager to oversee all of this work, is to be appointed.

### **Listening to people 50+:**

In Swansea, meaningful and inclusive opportunities for people aged 50+ to be heard in decisions that affect them remains a priority. The Pandemic meant that greater thought had to be given to how and where we engage the public in this new and unprecedented time of working. Engagement with people 50+ and practitioners was undertaken between July-September 2021 to understand what good Involvement may now look like and the emerging priorities to be addressed.

A formal consultations took place from August to September 2021 in relation to “Listening to People 50+” in Swansea, in order to identify barriers to engagement, preferred mechanisms to enable **all** to have a voice on issues that impact on their lives and identified priorities to make Swansea the best place to live and age well.

The consultation saw 236 participants complete the on-line survey and 200+ people aged 50+ were engaged in informal activity and discussions around improving engagement opportunities for people 50+ within community events and cuppa and chat sessions. Consultation findings concluded the need for informal and varied mechanisms held within the community to ensure an inclusive approach that meets the needs of participating individuals.

Within the “Listening to People 50+” consultation participants also identified that the key issues they wish to work on to make Swansea a better place to live are:

1. Transport
2. Social Isolation
3. Active Ageing
4. Services & Support
5. Digital Equality
6. Information & Communication
7. Improving Swansea

As a result of public feedback regular face to face engagement activities have been taking place since October 2021 on a weekly basis, to build relationships, reduce social isolation, share information and communicate opportunities to have a voice on issues that impact on the lives of people 50+ in Swansea.

**Recruitment of an Older Person’s Partnership & Involvement Officer:** This post was created and filled in July 2021 with the purpose to embed the UN Principles for Older Persons and ensure effective and inclusive mechanisms were in place to enable the participation and engagement of people aged 50+ yrs, in all decisions that affect their lives and ensure their views are heard and listened to. The officer in post has made huge progress in creating weekly engagement opportunities and facilitated a variety of mechanisms for services and organisations to connect with the community to improve accessibility of services, tackle loneliness and isolation and facilitate community initiatives directed by community members to enable people to live their best lives and age well.



## Informal engagement mechanisms for people 50+ Weekly Marina Walk:

The weekly Marina walks to encourage “Walk & talk” engagement opportunities commenced 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021 co-ordinated by Swansea Council “Partnership & Involvement Team” and supported by numerous partners and services. The walk and talk sessions welcomes participants 50+ and of mixed abilities. (The oldest participant so far has been a gentlemen aged 92 years of age).



Participant numbers have grown week on week and sessions are now catering for over 60 participants. The demand for such “talk & walk” sessions has seen additional support provided by partners and numerous Council Services to ensure a safe and meaningful opportunity for all. Whilst on the walk and at the follow up cuppa, participants are able to engage with Council Officers, Public Services and partner organisations etc... in order to better understand and access services and support if required.

## Weekly Tea & Chat:

The weekly free “Tea & Chat” sessions commenced Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021 at the Swigg in Swansea and offers participants a regular space to make new friends, build relationships, receive information about services, opportunities and support on offer, participate in local, regional and national consultations/service changes or planned developments with support from the associated service leads or organisations and have the ability to raise support needs and have assistance to complete paperwork or on-line forms via the “Partnership & Involvement Team” officers where necessary. (Weekly sessions see 40+ participants)

Sessions are run in partnership with Action For Elders, Freedom Leisure, Chinese Association For Wales and Caredig Housing Association etc...







**LGBT+ 50+ Engagement:**

The Partnership & Involvement Team worked with colleagues in Access to Services to facilitate a “Transgender Day of Remembrance” seminar where there were 42 attendees and a series of guest speakers.

Monthly Transgender meetings have been running at Glais Rugby Club in partnership with Tawe Butterflies where 40+ members at most meetings where a variety of initiatives and projects are developed.

In conjunction with Re-engage the “Partnership and Involvement Team” within Swansea Council facilitate a weekly 50+ LGBTQ “Tea & Chat” session at Coast Café in Swansea Marina, which commenced in February 21 and gives participants an opportunity to have a regular space to meet new friends, receive information about services, activities and support on offer and participate in having a voice on issues that impact on their lives.

**BAME 50+ Engagement:**

Swan Garden Christmas Event Dec 2021 – 45 attendees at an event with partner organisation Caerdig, Action for Elders & Swansea Council “Partnership & Involvement Team”.

**Community Events and Activities for People 50+:**

Events have included a Brangwyn Hall Christmas Dinner for 270 members of the public along with 13 partner organisations, a Christmas panto trip, Community first aid and

defib training, a **multi-cultural event** with members of the African Community at the Multi-Cultural Hub



**Copper Jack Boat** - Ten free boat trips have taken place since September 2021 with people aged 50+ and each trip has reached its capacity of 40 participants on board per trip. The boat departs from the Marina near the Swigg and travels up the river Tawe towards the Hafod with a guided history talk and plenty of opportunity for reminiscence over on-board refreshments.



**Heart of Wales Line Joint Partnership with Transport For Wales & Community Rail** - A trial train journey arranged for 22 attendees and jointly organised by Swansea Council “Partnership & Involvement Team” with TFW & Community Rail ran in December 2021. Feedback was very positive and plans are in place to progress this project in 2022 with a variety of journeys on offer with refreshments and guided tours included at the final destination in hope that these pilots will encourage greater use of rail travel by people aged 50+.



## Chinese Calligraphy workshops



## Winter of Well-being Fund for People 50+:

Swansea Council “Partnership & Commissioning Team” co-ordinated a pilot “Winter of Well-being” fund for people 50+, where community projects could apply for up to £10,000 to provide activities, workshops or events that focussed on well-being, tackling social isolation and which encouraged older adults aged 50+ to re-engage in community activity post Covid. The fund was made available as part of our “Social Care Recovery Grant” and we launched an application process in January 2022 with funds available to cover activity throughout February and March 2022.

An overwhelming 56 applications were received for a total of £259,000 of funding. A funding panel was held to assess eligibility and a WOW 50+ funding total of £189,000 was granted to community groups, organisations and services across Swansea. The funds covered a vast spectrum of activity which included sports and physical activity, arts and crafts, community events, pilot projects, coffee mornings, yoga, tai chi, reflexology and purchase of equipment etc... Applicants are currently completing evaluations and positive feedback has been received throughout the process.

**Ageing Well Information Network:** Through the Ageing Well Information Network, Swansea Council’s Partnerships & Involvement Team continues to provide information to subscribers (People aged 50+, services and partner organisations etc.) regularly via Newsletters and update emails. The emails are sent out via Mailchimp. Having the mailing list on Mailchimp allows subscribers to access and update their contact information, or unsubscribe if they wish. Membership on the Ageing Well Information Network continues to grow with face to face engagement and has proved very beneficial when communicating “Whats On” information and opportunities to engage with partner organisations and services within the community.

Update emails continue to include a variety of information such as Coronavirus related information links, information on support services, on online courses and online activities / groups (including exercise classes) and survey links for consultation opportunities for example. Now that the pandemic restrictions have been eased the need to communicate opportunities to get back out in the community and engage with

services on a face to face basis has been hugely important and this information has not only been communicated on-line but also in hard copy via partners and within community buildings such as libraries, doctors surgery's and supermarkets.

### **Re-establishment of the Ageing Well Steering Group:**

The Ageing Well Steering Group was relaunched in July 2021 to respond to the developing Welsh Government "Ageing Society Strategy, which was formally launched in October 2021. Work has taken place to expand its membership to include community groups and individuals, service representation across Council directorates, representation from all members of the Public Services Board, third sector organisation and support groups as appropriate.

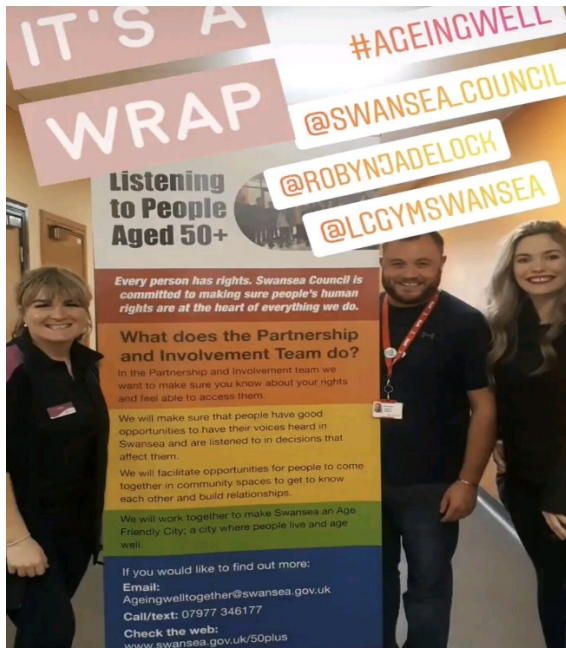
The Ageing Well Steering Group are working to take forward the feedback from the recent public consultation and will work in partnership to improve services, increase social participation, positively impact on social isolation, improve communication and information and co-ordinate multiple mechanisms to hear the voice of people 50+ in Swansea. The work of the Ageing Well Steering Group will form a local "Ageing Society Strategy for Swansea and contribute to the PSB commitment to work towards "Age Friendly City" recognition.

Current task groups include:

- Data sharing across services and partnerships to inform strategy development
- Improving Information & Communication to people 50+ (On-line & hard copy)
- Hoarding Services and Support

### **Ageing Well Networking Event:**

Older Persons Partnership & Involvement Officer of Swansea Council co-ordinated a large face to face "Ageing Well Networking Event" The event brought together 43 organisations, services and community groups who are members of the "Ageing Well Steering Group" and they hosted information stalls throughout the day. Freedom Leisure also provided taster sports and leisure opportunities from their "Active Older Adults Programme". The event was promoted widely to the public as an opportunity to re-connect with services post Covid and was visited by several hundred participants throughout the day.



**World Health Organisations “Age Friendly Cities”:** In November 2020, Swansea’s Public Service Board (PSB) met with the Older Person’s Commissioner where the PSB committed to Swansea working towards “Age Friendly City” status.

The Ageing Well Steering Group continue to map need informed by local people, current provision and opportunities to develop a Swansea “Ageing Society” strategy and action plan using “The Right Way” principled approach to rights and the eight domains within the “Age Friendly City” criteria, as a framework to join up work across the PSB and ensure implementation and measurement of impact is achievable in order to demonstrate the difference the strategy and action plan has on the day to day lives of people aged 50+.

**Community based approaches – Exploring a range of initiatives to tackle social isolation and build personal resilience across PSB and voluntary sector**

**Local Area Co-ordination Team (LAC Team):**

Local Area Coordination believes that ‘all people live in welcoming communities that provide friendship, mutual support, equity and opportunities for everyone’. The LAC Team can be introduced to anyone, for any reason and will walk alongside people as they identify and move towards their version of a good life. The LAC Team are embedded in communities as a single, accessible point of contact and therefore are in a position to listen to people in the community if they identify gaps or express an interest in establishing a community resource.

Over the past year and throughout the pandemic a major strength of the Local Area Co-ordination Team continued to be the connections and visibility developed in communities in Swansea. Ordinarily the team would foster relationships within the community, as well as with key community champions, the statutory sector, the business sector and the third sector.

While the pandemic restrictions were still in place the LAC Team continued communicating with key people who could provide support to those that may end up struggling. The network of informal street champions/ buddies, who fielded requests for help and support. (e.g. shopping support, food parcel drop offs, prescription pick-ups or welfare calls) has been invaluable and it is important that these connections are encouraged to continue. Once restrictions were lifted the team encouraged local groups or activities to re-emerge and adapt and meet indoors again, with confidence and safety.

During lockdown, most of the communication with people had been online or over the phone with outdoor, distanced, visits only when essential. This had sometimes impacted ability to build long term relationships with people but the team have been able to start meeting individuals outside and in third spaces, and the ability to meet face to face has significantly improved connections. It has also highlighted the many mental health challenges faced by a large number of people post lockdown.

The team continue to report on their outcomes by writing stories and sharing these with other colleagues and partners. The stories are real testimonies to the impact of the LAC relationship with the person but also celebrate the progress made by the person, almost always without relying on formal services.

## **Adult Social Care**

### **In-House Older People Day Services:**

Two In-house and two external Older People Day Services are now operational again and offering 4 days/5 days a week service. A number of service users have returned and there are new referrals coming through.

A meeting of professionals considers each case individually to recommend and agree the safest and most appropriate service for each person.

The community transport scheme managed by an In-house Day Service is supporting carers, continuing to offer shopping, prescription pick-ups and enabling people to get their Covid Spring booster. This is supporting people to manage at home and is linked to the Local Area Co-ordination to support the community too where there is a big sign up from local residents to help, many carers found this a vital service.

### **Adult Learning Disabilities Day Services**

Day services for people with a Learning Disability are all operating and moving back to pre-covid capacity on a phased and risk assessed basis. Staff continue to keep in contact with service users and families and have responded to requests for support and liaising with the Community Team Learning Disability. The day services, as well as providing a range of development and social activities and support, provide a much needed day respite service, and supporting the well-being of all.

Domiciliary care packages, direct payments and Ategi commissioned support service continue to be used as alternative day support.

The Flexible Support Service have now returned to supporting users living independently in the community. As well as support for daily living, and sign posting users to a range of support, social bubbles have been created to reduce social isolation.

### **Third Sector Compact Agreement**

Swansea Council continues to work in partnership with the third sector through our Compact Agreement which reflects joint working principles between Swansea Council, Swansea Council for Voluntary Services and the wider Third Sector to provide a robust and workable framework for ongoing dialogue between the Partners:

A number of Third Sector partners are currently commissioned through the Children and Communities grant, these include:

- Childcare and Play providers (Play and Childcare grants)
- Children's Centres
- Ethnic Youth Support Team
- Action For Children – Stepping Stones
- SNAP
- Buddies
- Topic House
- Employment Skills Providers
- Swansea Council for Voluntary Services

Throughout commissioning process, stakeholders, including partners and residents are engaged in the reviews to inform and coproduce service delivery. We continue to strive to improve this and further embed co-production and the voice of the third sector and our communities.

There is a strong relationship between public sector and Third Sector in Swansea and this ensures they are aligned at the early stages of service design and delivery. This is achieved in a number of ways as outlined above, but also undertake joint training in co-production and social value, for examples to maintain and develop shared learning and practices.

### **Loneliness and isolation fund – facilitated by SCVS**

Funding for year 1 was allocated in its entirety to Swansea Council for Voluntary Services who Swansea Council worked in partnership with to tackle issues surrounding loneliness and isolation. Through this funding the partnership has supported local organisations to continue to offer vital services to the communities they support that will enable them to lead, manage and develop work to meet existing and ongoing community needs.

Organisations have had to adapt and change over the last 20 months as well as developing new services specifically targeting those experiencing emotional and



social isolation and poor wellbeing resulting from their circumstances. Adding additional capacity further enabled organisations to seek additional funding to continue their activities into the future, acknowledging and adapting to future needs.

The organisations supported through this fund support particularly vulnerable and isolated communities and across a range of factors that impact on isolation, including but not limited to enabling people to come together (virtually or in person) and addressing barriers such as lack of transport. The recipients of this fund in the first year (until March) were:

- Age Cymru Swansea Bay
- Forget me not dementia day services
- SNAP
- SBASS, (Swansea Bay Asylum seekers support)
- Pontarddulais Partnership
- Asdes, (autistic Spectrum Support)
- Mind, (mental health Support)
- Chinese in Wales Association

### **Family Support Network**

In 21/22 the Family Support Network continued to meet to communicate and discuss issues affecting service delivery. The group has a membership of over 50 organisations and departments and is the only forum of its kind where services meet in a coordinated way.

Some outcomes of the group included over the previous year include:

- Discussing the number of ad hoc grants available from Welsh Government and how best to allocate them
- Keeping family support services up to date with relevant information and changing guidance.
- Pooling resources where appropriate.
- Identifying emerging needs and how to address.
- Looking at referrals and capacity and if we can impact on waiting lists

### **Innovative housing and technology – To explore options for people with additional care needs that help them remain independent at home**

A review around this area will be undertaken in 22/23.

### **Housing Service**

- Review of Sheltered Accommodation Service carried out and re-branding exercise implemented to increase demand. It is now referred to as Independent Living Service and sheltered wardens have been re-named Independent Living Officers.
- The emergency call systems within the Councils' Housing Stock of Independent Living Schemes (Sheltered Accommodation) are in the process of being upgraded to digital systems, which will provide new opportunities for

introducing 'add-on' digital aids that can be supplied to assist tenants which will help improve their ability to live independently for longer and ensure that their systems are fit for purpose for the future.

- Independent Living Officer (sheltered wardens) support has been extended to provide home visits to older tenants living in general needs housing to promote and support independence.

### **Achievements**

- Good citizen engagement and involvement within this objective across the age range
- Reviewed public engagement mechanisms to ensure inclusive and accessible opportunities are facilitated for people to have a say and influence decision making processes that impact their lives.
- Good Partnership buy in around the objective.
- Huge amount of work around this area is already underway and has continued despite a pandemic.
- Expanded knowledge base through existing involvement out to wider partners.

### **Challenges/ Barriers**

- Not joining up all existing work to make sure the Live Well Age Well Objective adds value and not duplicates business as usual
- Not having the right people are around the table to take action and deliver outcomes
- How to expand the lens and age range of this objective

### **Priorities going forward**

- Ensuring a partnership approach is taken to encourage wider involvement and delivery of the priorities across the PSB and at all levels.
- Establish a plan for public engagement & consultation

## Working with Nature



To improve health, enhance biodiversity and reduce our carbon footprint.

**Lead** – This work is coordinated by the Working with Nature Task Group and led by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Swansea Environmental Forum (SEF).

### Partners / Stakeholders Involved

Natural Resources Wales (NRW)	Swansea Environmental Forum (SEF)	Swansea Council
Swansea University	Swansea Local Nature Partnership	Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue
Swansea Bay University Health Board	Low Carbon Swansea Bay network	The Environment Centre
Swansea Community Green Spaces Project	Public Health Wales	Welsh Government
Swansea Council for Voluntary Services	Pobl	4theRegion
Bwyd Abertawe		

### Overview of work within Working with Nature

The Working With Nature Task Group brings together representatives from several PSB organisations and others that support actions under the Working with Nature objective. The Task Group was again impacted by the ongoing pandemic restrictions but met a couple of times online during 2021/22 and some activities related to the Working with Nature priorities which had been postponed or delayed due to the Covid pandemic in the previous year were picked up and progressed.

## How The 5 Ways of Working have been considered in delivery of Working With Nature objectives



Due to the nature of this particular well-being objective, in many cases, action taken now delivers long-term benefits especially with regard to the nature and climate emergencies. For example, planting trees now or taking action to reduce carbon will result in greater and multiple benefits over many decades as trees mature and we achieve net-zero targets. But these actions also consider and meet current needs such as better access to green and natural spaces, improved active and sustainable travel options and air quality that also, over time, produce positive health outcomes. Joined-up working between WWN partners across our shared objectives also helps ensure long-term successes.



Nature is in decline and it is vital that we understand and tackle the root causes of this emergency. The Nature Recovery objective is doing just this by working with partners to assess ecosystem resilience based on the diversity, extent and condition of key habitats, and map out opportunities to prevent further losses and ensure they are better connected across the county, especially around urban areas. This work will also inform planning decisions. Another example is the Saving Swansea's Swifts project, which is taking practical action by siting nest boxes around the city centre to increase breeding and nesting opportunities for these birds to prevent further declines of this migratory species and monitor local populations.



The PSB promotes and strengthens partnership working and collaboration, which is necessary to ensure integration of priorities. The ongoing regeneration of the city centre is a good example of this where the WWN Green Infrastructure objective has been integrated into key and high-profile development schemes, including the coastal park at the new arena – Wales's largest green roof. Additionally, the Climate and Nature charter brings together cross-sector organisations and to give a focus to and help facilitate the integration of net-zero carbon plans and actions, doing so will also enable synergies and joint projects or initiatives to be identified.



Collaboration is essential if we are to tackle the climate and nature emergencies - meet net zero targets and reverse the decline of biodiversity. The Working With Nature Task Group has a diverse membership who all inform how objectives are delivered. For example, the Swansea Bay Healthy Travel Charter has been co-produced by a range of public and third sector organisations including universities, housing associations, NRW, and local authorities from across not just Swansea but Neath Port Talbot, too.



Just as cross-sector collaboration is needed, so is involving local people so that what we deliver is shaped by and meaningful to individuals and communities. Under the Working With Nature priority, a brilliant example of

Involvement is the community-centred approach taken by Pobl in the development and delivery of their Penderi Masterplan. Also, the city centre GI strategy talked to a large number of people, including children, to develop a shared vision for #natureinthecity. This approach is currently being taken to inform the county-wide GI strategy.

### Activity highlights during 2021-22

A key focus during the year was work on the Well-being Assessment with the lead partners – NRW and SEF – taking responsibility for compiling the environment dimension chapter and participating in the overall editorial team. Several other WWN partners contributed to this by providing data and information for the Assessment.

Since spring 2021, the Task Group has been focused on a refined set of priorities that took into consideration the impacts of Covid and the potential for a Green Recovery.

- **Green Infrastructure (GI)** (e.g. developing county-wide strategy and ensuring implementation).
- **Tree Planting** (e.g. identifying usable land and supporting community-led schemes).
- **Green Spaces** (e.g. supporting community use of and involvement with green spaces).
- **Nature Recovery** (e.g. producing Local Nature Recovery Action Plan and supporting pollinator projects).
- **Carbon Reduction and Climate Adaptation** (e.g. supporting work on climate plans).
- **Transport and Active Travel** (e.g. developing a healthy travel charter and organising transport forum events).
- **Community Engagement** (e.g. developing an online resource of replicable project for nature and climate recovery and a programme of public events).

Also in 2021, the WWN Task group adopted the Penderi exemplar project to observe and support. Here are some highlight developments in the scheme during the past year:

- Pobl secured £220k through the Community Renewal Fund in partnership with the Environment Centre, Room2Grow and Swansea Community Farm. The funding will support installation of Green Infrastructure examples at the 104-community house, wider community conversations about green space improvements, GI training and options for food growing in local gardens, engaging the schools, community and local businesses in conversations about green space improvement and green jobs.

- Penderi Apple Tree Nursery – working with the Orchard Project and Swansea Community Farm, 20 apple trees have been grafted and will be looked after at the Farm for the next 2 years to be planted in Penderi.
- Pobl commissioned Green Infrastructure consultancy to map out opportunities for GI improvements across Penderi.
- 650m<sup>2</sup> of wildflower turf was planted across 15 sites in Penderi in October without use of pesticides or plastic.
- Retrofitting of solar panel and batteries across Pobl homes in Penderi has started.

The following sections take each of the priority areas in turn and outline some of the progress made in the last year.

## **GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE (GI)**

### **Urban Green Infrastructure**

Between April 2021 – March 2022, Swansea Council and Natural Resources Wales have focused on working with partners to implement the action plan for the city centre GI Strategy *Swansea Central Area: Regenerating Our City for Wellbeing and Wildlife* both in terms. Delivery has fallen into 2 main distinct categories:

1. Development of the knowledge and skills,
2. GI Installation schemes.

### **Development of knowledge and skills (April 2021 – March 2022)**

The impact Covid restrictions impeded activities during 2021, and the focus has, therefore, been on identifying opportunities for (a) virtual networking during the pandemic and (b) delivering face-to-face knowledge and skills development post Covid restrictions, as well as producing material to support knowledge development.

**Knowledge and skills training** - Two successful bids were made to the UK Community Renewal Fund to be delivered during 2022, which will interconnect and support each other to develop the local GI economy in the short and medium term.

1. Developing the local GI economy – delivered by Natural Resources Wales, Urban Foundry and Swansea Council Nature Conservation Team, this bid focuses on:
  - Providing theoretical and practical training on GI to local businesses to develop knowledge and skills in the local supply chain. Training will be delivered over the summer and early autumn of 2022.
  - Scoping the feasibility and opportunity for the development of GI training modules, including apprenticeships, as part of formal education locally including the potential for bursary schemes.
  - Market development to stimulate local commercial interest in GI solutions.

2. Penderi Green Regeneration – delivered by Pobl group in partnership with Swansea Environment Centre, Room to Grow, Swansea Community Farm, Swansea Council Nature Conservation Team, and ReThink. This bid focuses on:
  - Regenerating the 104 Community House as a multifunctional live, work, play space to include GI installations as a show case at the heart of the community (Pobl and Green Infrastructure Consultancy).
  - Develop an understanding of how the community feel about local green spaces and develop a plan with them on how to improve those spaces to meet their needs in line with asset-based ways of working (Swansea Environment Centre and Pobl).
  - Deliver skills sessions for community members and local businesses in green skills and technology (Swansea Environment Centre, Pobl and Room to Grow).
  - Complement current GI mapping with tree mapping and ecological resilience mapping and identify spaces for tree planting (Swansea Council Nature Conservation team).
  - Develop an online GI skills portal for the area (Room to Grow).
  - Build community engagement and enthusiasm for green spaces, biodiversity and nature (Swansea Community Farm and Swansea Council Nature Conservation Team).

**Information Sheets** - Information sheets are typology specific – i.e. green roofs / green walls / rain-gardens, and are designed to provide professionals with an overview of the typology, the 5 principles of GI, the Green Space factor tool, and to signpost to further information and technical documents. They will be available here: [Swansea Central Area: Regenerating our City for Wellbeing and Wildlife - Swansea](#)

**Swansea City Centre Conference** – March 17<sup>th</sup> 2022, Swansea Arena. Community engagement and providing information about the strategy and its aims, and practical advice about the benefits of GI for addressing the climate and nature emergencies and improving wellbeing in the city centre.

**Action Plan** - The action plan focuses delivery of the strategic objectives in the Central GI strategy. Delivery continues whilst the action plan draft is going through adoption.





## GI Installation schemes (April 2021 – March 2022)



*Pier Street green wall - planted with native species and pollinators. Credit: Swansea Environment Centre*

**Welsh Government, Local Places for Nature Funding 'City Nature'** - enabled delivery of a number of *City Nature* schemes to increase biodiversity in the city centre, contributing to the implementation of the *Swansea Central Area: Regenerating Our City for Wellbeing and Wildlife* strategy's Strategic objectives to provide a high quality nature rich environment that creates a distinctive destination city and is resilient to the impacts of climate change. To build knowledge and skills locally and ensure stakeholder and community involvement in the design and maintenance of GI. The schemes also directly contributed to the strategies following Performance Indicators

(PI's): to increase biodiversity, territorial GI, canopy cover.

Schemes include the creation of a green wall, pop up ecology parklet, biodiverse planting scheme, green roofed bin shelters, and the replanting of biodiversity rich rain pools. These schemes include native species, or those with demonstrated benefits to native pollinators and form part of the city centre green artery and Buzz Highway, celebrating Swansea's rich and diverse natural ecology, and highlight the benefits of nature-based solutions. The schemes were delivered in partnership with Swansea Environment Centre, Pobl group, Ways for Working, Celtic Wildflowers, Coeden Fach, Plantasia, Urban Foundry, Natural Resources Wales and Swansea Council.



*Copr Bay Coastal Park from the air*

**Copr Bay Coastal Park** – the newly opened 1.1-acre coastal park is the first new city centre park in Swansea since Victorian times and is one of Wales's largest green roofs. The park includes pollinators and a living wall providing year round colour and amenity value, offer shelter and food for birds and insects, absorb pollution and surface water running off providing summer cooling.

### **Coastal Housing 85 – 86 the Kingsway –**

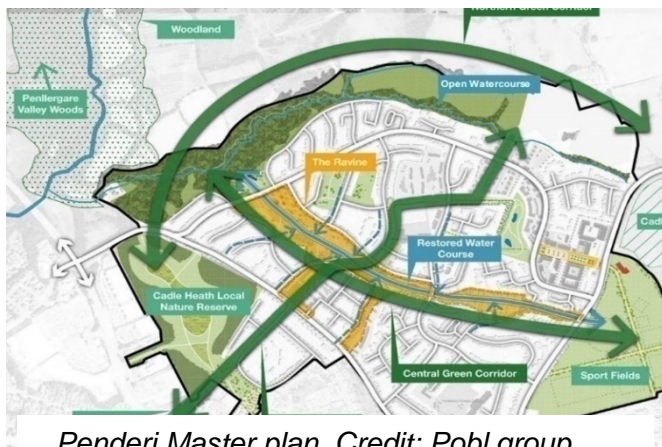
The green wall was designed and installed by Scotscape, using Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Green Infrastructure Grant. The green wall was part of the refurbishment by Coastal Housing. The planting and breathable soil pouches filter particulates and vegetation provides food and shelter for birds and insects along with amenity value.



*Coastal Housing 85-86 the Kingsway – green wall. Credit: Coastal Housing*

### **Ongoing GI programmes and resources for 2022/23**

**Penderi master plan** – The master plan was developed over 5 years with 14 partners and community consultation. It focuses on 7 core ambitions over the next 15 to 20 years; Integrated Blue and Green infrastructure, Connected and Accessible Neighbourhoods, High Quality Homes, Community Facilities Provision, Active and Involved Communities, Energy Efficiency, Economically resilient Homes. All ambitions relate to each other.

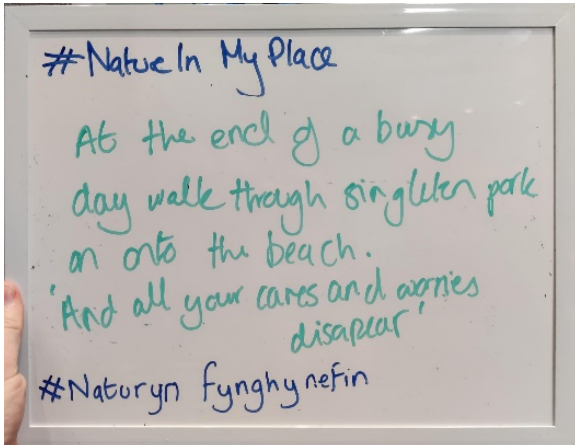


*Penderi Master plan. Credit: Pobl group*

A Green Infrastructure subgroup was established in 2021 with 26 agencies/departments, including PSB / WWN representatives. This group has influenced:

Supporting the Blaenymaes Drop-in Centre to apply for Natural Resources Wales funding to build a green roof shelter in the garden and to engage over 100 local people in outdoor activities in their local green spaces.

- Baseline mapping of GI in Penderi and an opportunities list for GI improvements across Penderi.
- The planting of 650m<sup>2</sup> of wildflower turf without pesticides or plastic across 15 sites in Penderi.
- Penderi Apple tree nursery - working with the Orchard project and the farm 20 apple trees have been grafted and will be looked after at the farm for the next 2 years to be planted



#NatureInMyPlace

**Countywide Strategy** - The engagement process for the county-wide strategy, led by the Council and NRW, started in Feb 2020 but had to be put on hold due to Covid, was relaunched at the Swansea City Centre Conference in March 2022 and will continue throughout the summer and early autumn. The engagement work will focus on what nature means to Swansea citizens using the hashtag #NatureInMyPlace / #Naturynfynghynefin. The Strategy will be supported by Planning Policy to enable the integration of GI into development requiring planning permission.

**Natural Resources Wales GI officer** – through its Opportunity Catchment programme, Natural Resources Wales created and funded a dedicated GI Senior Officer role, which covers Neath Port Talbot and Swansea, working collaboratively with partners on key projects and delivery of ambitious GI schemes. This collaborative approach has helped mainstream GI quickly and efficiently at a local and regional level over the past year. A bid has been submitted to WG for a 3-year extension (2022-2025) of this post and to widen the remit to cover the SW region whilst continuing to support strategic initiatives in Swansea.

**Welsh Government Rural Communities Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020 Connecting Green Infrastructure - South West Wales** - Regional project delivering a new, innovative and collaborative approach to designing and implementing GI and nature recovery across Neath Port Talbot, Swansea and Carmarthenshire, for the benefit of local communities and their natural environment. The project aims to take a strategic approach to the maintenance, enhancement and creation of GI for the benefit of people, the economy and wildlife by co-designing and co-delivering GI in ways that meets local needs, builds ecosystem resilience, enhances biodiversity and increases wellbeing.

The programme, which runs until June 2023, focuses on:

- maintain and enhance GI, biodiversity and ecosystem resilience and sustainably manage natural resources;
- work collaboratively to design and pilot new place-based approaches to deliver GI;
- use best available data, modelling and technical expertise, take an evidence-based approach to identify opportunities and innovative design solutions, to deliver GI improvements across the area;
- work with local communities to design, maintain and enhance GI, and supporting volunteering and training opportunities;
- enable communities to maximise, and fully benefit from, the multiple services provided by GI opportunities, including health and well-being.



## **Tree planting**

### **Guidance for tree planting activities**

Following public consultation, in October 2021 the Council adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for trees, woodlands and hedgerows. It gives basic information on how all trees, hedgerows, and woodlands are dealt with in the planning system, not just to those that are protected, providing clear and consistent advice to developers. <https://swansea.gov.uk/treespg>

### **Right Tree Right Place**

A checklist has been prepared to ensure that any future tree planting meets a range of criteria to ensure that the right tree is planted in the right place for the right reason. Work is underway to map and update existing tree stock and to identify suitable opportunity areas for planting new trees, hedgerows, and woodlands.

### **Planting of new trees and woodlands**

During 2021/22 the Council was responsible for planting approximately 1000 standard trees and 5600 whips. This has included significant landscape improvements delivered within central Swansea including impressive avenues of trees along key highways (in particular Orchard Street and The Kingsway) and active travel routes, as well as increasing tree cover in and around Council housing areas and urban parks.

Swansea was also recognised as a Queen's Green Canopy Champion City as a result of tree planting schemes across the city. To mark the achievement, HRH The Countess of Wessex visited the city to plant a Jubilee Tree at the recently opened Arena's coastal park.

[The Kingsway goes green as Swansea points to the future - YouTube](#)



## **Tree planting as part of Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) wider external environment enhancement**

To date 440 large street trees have been planted and a number of larger green open space areas have been identified for further tree planting and improvements within Council housing estates countywide. This is part of a programme that seeks to enhance the physical environment and the feeling of wellbeing within these communities and in the immediate vicinity and setting of people's homes

## **Tree planting along Active Travel routes**

Active Travel routes are designed to connect local residents, schools and businesses with the wider walking and cycling network, encouraging more active travel and improving green infrastructure. So far more than 109 large / semi-mature trees, and over 1000 tree whips / transplants have been planted along the routes and more planting is planned for 2022/23.

## **Penllergare Valley Woods**

A Welsh Government Local Places for Nature (LP4N) grant enabled the restoration of a Plantation on an Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS) within Penllergare Valley Woods which is an important Site of Interest for Nature Conservation and Community Wildlife site. This involved the removal of invasive Rhododendron and Larch and the replanting of native woodland species.

## **Swansea Community Orchard Project and Coeden Fach Community Tree Nursery**

The WG LP4N grant also enabled the Council to support a new initiative to create 5 new community orchards last year, and to support our local community tree nursery by providing a new site in one of the Council's parks and working collaboratively with them to support community tree growing and planting schemes.

## **Trees for Cities**

Since 2019 Swansea Council have worked in collaboration with Trees for Cities to plant new native community Woodlands in urban Swansea. We are currently identifying suitable sites for planting this year.

## **Swansea University Tree Society**

Volunteers from Swansea University Tree Society planted trees at several sites including Ashlands and the three-cornered field in the Uplands





## **Nature Recovery**

### **Developing a Local Nature Recovery Action Plan**

In collaboration with members of the Local Nature Partnership, work has begun to review and update the existing Local Biodiversity Action plan which will then become the Local Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP).

### **Section 6 Biodiversity Action Plan for Swansea Council.**

A progress report on the first three years (2019-2021) has been submitted to Welsh Government. The Action plan for 2022-23 is being developed following the appointment of a part time Biodiversity Officer.

### **Declaration of Nature Emergency**

Following the declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019, the Council declared a Nature Emergency in November 2020. Since then, and with support from key PSB / WWN partners, it has been encouraging local organisations and individuals to sign up to the Council's Charter and/or Pledge for Climate Change and Nature Recovery.

### **Ecological resilience mapping**

Following a successful pilot project with SEWBREC (SE Wales Biological Records Centre) to map ecological resilience within a targeted area of Swansea, they have been commissioned to undertake an ecological resilience assessment of the whole County. A 'heat map' has been produced showing areas of high and low ecological resilience. This information will help to inform future decisions regarding land use, land



management and planning work as well as providing valuable evidence to underpin the County Wide GI Strategy and the Local Nature Recovery Action Plan.

### **Increased resources for maintaining and enhancing Biodiversity and Nature Recovery**

Additional grant funding from Welsh Government (LNP, LP4N and ENRAW ) together with core funding from Swansea Council has enabled the appointment of additional staff within the Council's Nature Conservation Team.

In addition, the Nature Conservation Team secured over £750,000 funding through Welsh Government LP4N, BERF and NRW for a wide range of Nature Recovery and GI projects and initiatives during 2021/22, including City Nature (covered under GI Section), Penlegare Valley Woods (covered under Tree planting), and Swansea Nature Network which enabled significant enhancements to be made to local wildlife sites and new green infrastructure interventions delivered - these included tree planting at 4 schools and other sites including Duvant, Tir John, Morryston, Tawe corridor and Leadfield; the creation of 6 community Orchards, dune stabilisation in Swansea Bay and scrub control at Swansea Vale Nature Reserve wetland as well as actions for pollinators.

The Council's management of their green spaces has taken a huge leap forward, a great deal of work has gone into trialling Cut-and-Collect methodology, purchase of equipment to enable the creation of wildflower meadows, planting of native wildflowers along the Mumbles to Margam pollinator corridor and providing additional signage to raise awareness of the work being undertaken. We have also supported the community greenspace project to deliver a number of biodiversity enhancements, mostly within urban Swansea.



### **Plantasia Rain Pools**

Plantasia is a tropical zoo / hot house in the city centre. Rainwater runoff from its roofscape is collected in rain pools around the base of the building. This project has enhanced the range of planting in the pools using locally grown plants to increase biodiversity.

**Swansea Swift Project** –100 swift boxes and 25 Swift Micro Caller systems have been purchased to encourage swifts into the city centre and to increase critical nesting opportunities for this declining species, the populations of which have declined by 72% in Wales since 1995. A community Saving Swansea Swifts project has been set-up including partners from the PSB, the Gower Ornithological Society, and many volunteers, to raise awareness of and help restore swift populations across the county.



### **Governance**

Within the Council, a Climate and Nature Programme Board, with officer representation across the Authority, has been established to ensure an effective governance framework for addressing nature recovery and climate change. The Board reports to the Climate and Nature Steering Group, which is chaired by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Biodiversity. This structure helps to ensure there is good communication and collaboration to integrate biodiversity into key plans and projects across the Council.

### **Swansea Local Nature Partnership (LNP)**

The Council has continued to support the LNP, which meets quarterly. It has recently appointed two part time Local Nature Partnership Co-ordinators. Covid 19 has severely limited meetings and activities over the past year but has enabled a wider audience to get involved through virtual meetings. The Local Nature Partnership contributed to the Wales Nature Week activities in June 2021.

### **Green Spaces**

One of the main delivery mechanisms for this priority theme is the Swansea Community Green Spaces Project - a partnership project managed by Swansea Environmental Forum with a steering group involving representatives of Swansea Council, NRW, Swansea CVS, and the Environment Centre. The project helps citizens and communities to have a greater involvement in the management and use of local green spaces. Over the past two years, during the Covid crisis, in local green spaces has increased and is reflected in the increased demand for support from the Green Spaces Project, and other similar initiatives and organisations.



A huge number of new and established initiatives on sites across the County benefit from the SEF-contracted Swansea Community Green Spaces Project Officer who provides support in the form of advice on site management, growing, community engagement, funding, etc. or may involve practical work through site development, training or negotiating agreements with landowners. As a result, more individuals and community groups have gained the confidence, understanding and skills to establish or develop initiatives in their local green spaces. In 2021/22, over 40 different projects were assisted with extensive support given to the Clydach Community Garden and the growing project in Craig Cefn Parc.



The project has also supported several partnership projects such as tree planting sessions and encourages or facilitates collaborative working between organisations to support green space enhancement and community growing. For example, identifying opportunities for deploying Welsh Government grant funding secured by Swansea Council and supporting local community groups to access this successfully.





### **Housing & Working with nature**

- Wildflower and tree planting continues to take place on council housing estates as part of Area Enhancement Schemes, contributing to the increase of bio diversity in local areas
- Achievement of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard in Council properties has led to significant Improvements in energy efficiency of council properties in 2021/22 to average SAP rating of 69 (Band C), contributing to the reduction of fuel poverty amongst council tenants and making contribution to carbon reduction targets.
- Independent Living Service has successfully applied for grants from Keep Wales Tidy's Local Places for Nature scheme to create communal growing areas in four complexes. Providing opportunities for group activities to address isolation and loneliness and improving bio-diversity in the areas.

### **Carbon reduction & Climate adaptation**

Low Carbon Swansea Bay (LCSB) network continues to be a key conduit for knowledge-sharing and collaboration between organisations across Swansea and the wider region. Ongoing restrictions associated with Covid made it difficult to arrange in-person networking events and site visits during 2021/22 but three online webinars took place:

- **May 2021: Sustainability and WELL-being with Hoare Lea**  
Award-winning international building engineering company, Hoare Lea, shared their sustainability journey and gave a presentation on healthy buildings and the international WELL certification scheme. This company is supporting the Biophilic Living Swansea development.
- **June 2021: Driving a Circular Plastics Economy in Wales**  
This webinar included two presentations from WRAP – the first introduced the work of WRAP and the second focused in on the circular plastics economy in Wales. These were followed by a case study presentation on Smile Plastics by its founder.
- **November 2021: Pathways to Net Zero: Carmarthenshire County Council**  
This session looked at Carmarthenshire's decarbonisation strategy to meet the 2030 net zero carbon target and the support provided by energy management specialists Ameresco.

The third webinar was intended to be the first of a series focussed on the decarbonisation plans of key public sector partners across the region and a further session focused on Swansea Bay University Health Board was initially scheduled for March 2022 but postponed to May.

Representatives of Swansea Council and Swansea Environmental Forum, including NRW and Swansea University, started to meet on a regular basis this year to discuss shared priorities in support the Council's commitment towards a 'Net Zero' City and County of Swansea by 2050. It was agreed that priority areas should include transport and travel, energy systems, food resilience and nature recovery – reflecting key findings from NRW's State of Our Natural Resources Report (2020). Swansea Council relaunched its Climate and Nature Charter and an online pledge wall and also hosted a regional net zero carbon event at the Brangwyn Hall (and online), in September 2021, in collaboration with Planet Mark as part of the Zero Carbon Battle Bus tour. The 4 statutory members of the PSB led the way by being the first organisations to sign-up to the Charter.



The Environment Centre was commissioned by Swansea Council to set up an Energy Hub in the city centre to provide advice and information on energy saving to the public. This was established on a temporary basis with plans to take the hub on the road in 2022-23 to community buildings and projects in various parts of Swansea.

A number of environmental campaigning bodies in Swansea came together in 2021 to collaborate and organise joint action ahead of and during COP26. The Environment Centre and Swansea Environmental Forum provided support to this new coalition of groups which led to a large protest event in Castle Square to raise awareness of the climate and nature emergencies. Following this, there was an appetite for ongoing collaboration and a new partnership was formed called Swansea Climate Action Network (SwanseaCAN) which aims to enable information exchange and organise events and activities.

Another collaborative group has also emerged with a focus on transforming the food systems in Swansea. Initially bringing together interested individuals to regular meetings on the theme of food resilience, a new partnership, Bwyd Abertawe, has become established with an aim for Swansea to join the Sustainable Food Places network. Swansea Environmental Forum collaborated with 4theRegion and other partners to organise a regional food conference, Food for the Region, in October 2021 and this was followed up with a Swansea Food Forum event, led by Bwyd Abertawe partners at the end of March 2022.



### Transport & Active Travel

Following on from the regional transport conference held in early 2021, a few transport-related partnership initiatives have progressed.

### **Community-led Sustainable Transport Solutions**

In May 2021, Swansea Council for Voluntary Service led a partnership bid for a Community Renewal Fund, with support from Swansea Environmental Forum and 4theRegion. The successful bid was for a multi-faceted project called Community-led Sustainable Transport Solutions: Investing in Communities and Place. This proposed a programme of activities to strengthen sustainable transport and active travel in Swansea, with a focus on what communities can do for themselves. Community consultation activities linked to the project started in January 2022 with 'Getting Around Swansea' project branding.



The project has four main elements:

1. Undertake an assessment of community transport and travel needs and a review of existing provision (including community consultation through surveys and focus groups on travel needs and barriers, research and mapping of existing community-led initiatives and analysis of specific needs, gaps and opportunities)
2. Establish a “whole system” network of service providers, community groups, residents and other stakeholders that share an interest in community-led transport solutions (including a major awareness raising event for partners and stakeholders, and establishing a forum for the exchange of information, ideas and best practice and subgroups to take forward specific work strands)



3. Develop a Community Travel 'Routemap' & Shared Plan of Action (including a co-produced delivery-focussed plan with wide community buy-in)
4. Produce a portfolio of support materials to facilitate the sharing of ideas and help communities to take projects forward (including producing, collating and disseminating 'how to' guides; potential funding sources and case study videos)



**Teithio Llesol  
Bae Abertawe  
Healthy Travel  
Swansea Bay**

**Healthy Travel Charter:** After several delays due to the pandemic in 2020 and the first half of 2021, Swansea Environmental Forum and the Low Carbon Swansea Bay network were able to progress plans for a healthy travel charter for the Swansea Bay (Swansea and Neath Port Talbot), working in collaboration with Public Health Wales. A working group of potential partners met for the first time in September 2021, involving 20 participants representing 14 public bodies

and voluntary sector organisations. There followed three further meetings in November, December and January to draft the charter commitments and agree arrangements for launching and implementing the initiative.

The charter includes actions linked to active travel, electric vehicle fleets and public transport. It will be formally launched in May and supported on an ongoing basis through the Swansea Bay Travel Plan Forum.

In November 2021, 4theRegion and partners organised a follow-up event linked to the Moving Forward Together Regional Transport Conference that took place earlier in the year.

### **Community Engagement**

Many of the projects and practical activities outlined above involved community engagement and public events but in addition to these WWN partners organised a wide range of talks, workshops and other activities related to environmental themes.

Swansea Environmental Forum and the Environment Centre worked with several local groups to organise a programme of events to mark Green Week in September 2021, which included talks, film screenings, a cycle ride, guided walks and litter picks. Then to coincide with the Global Day of Action for COP26 in November, several local campaigning groups and environmental organisations came together to jointly arrange a climate coalition event in Castle Square, which then led to the establishment of Swansea Climate Action Network (see above).

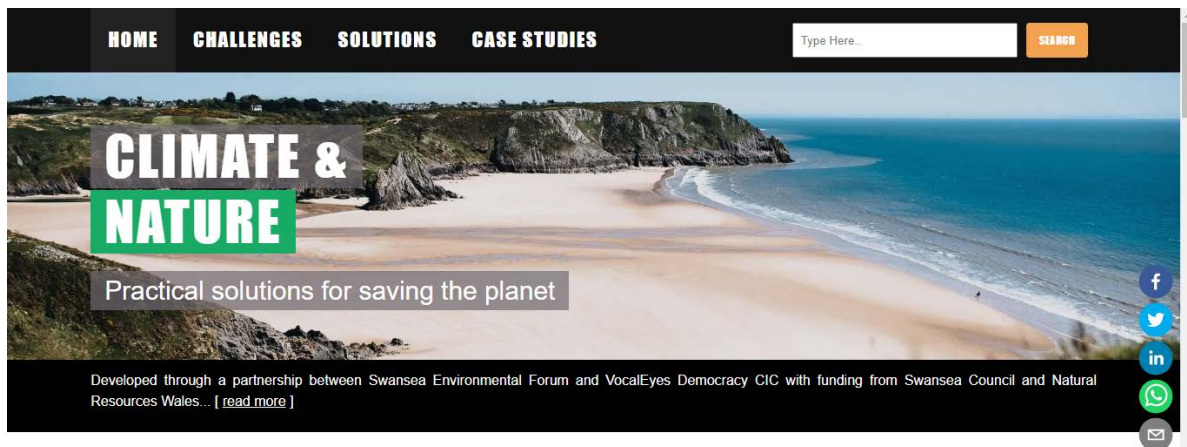
The Environment Centre continued to engage communities on environmental issues and activities through its core services and several outreach and partnership projects including the Beyond Recycling Swansea project, the Renew Wales programme, the Switched On Energy Hub (see above) and the Penderi Green Infrastructure project.

Swansea Environmental Forum and the Environment Centre were commissioned by the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership to create a comprehensive Green Recovery Toolkit as part of the West Glamorgan Volunteering Support Project. The purpose of

this resource was to provide useful information and guidance to voluntary sector organisations and community groups on what they can do to respond to the climate and nature emergencies with local case studies of good practice and a directory of environmental volunteering opportunities and sources of support.

In June 2021, Swansea CVS and Swansea Environmental Forum collaborated to organise a webinar with the National Lottery on their environment-linked funding schemes.

The online resource, *Inspiration Hub* [www.inspirationhub.org.uk](http://www.inspirationhub.org.uk) – developed by Swansea Environmental Forum and VocalEyes Democracy CIC with funding from Swansea Council and Natural Resources Wales - was finalised this year, but technical problems delayed its launch which is now planned for 2022/23 and will be promoted widely by partners as a useful and interactive resource offering practical ideas for action on climate change and nature recovery for organisations and individuals.



### Key areas of work for the coming year will include:

- Support the development of the Well-being Plan and associated engagement and consultation activities.
- Support the engagement process for the county-wide GI strategy and the ongoing implementation of green infrastructure initiatives across Swansea.
- Map potential areas for future tree planting and publish *The Right Tree in the Right Place* guidance note/checklist for community groups and others and continue to deliver an ambitious programme of tree planting.
- Support and promote the Penderi Project and other initiatives that provide practical demonstrations of sustainable development and positive ways of working.
- Support the Bwyd Abertawe partnership and plans to make Swansea a Sustainable Food Place for the benefit of people and the planet.
- Support stakeholder engagement on climate change and the development of a county-wide 2050 climate strategy and action plan.
- Launch and promote the Inspiration Hub online resource and maintain a programme of awareness-raising events and engagement activities.

- Formally launch the Swansea Bay Healthy Travel Charter and support partners to make progress on charter commitments.
- Support the Community-led Sustainable Transport Solutions project to improve the capacity and effectiveness of community-led transport initiatives across Swansea.
- Review and develop the Low Carbon Swansea Bay network and the Swansea Community Green Spaces Project.

### **Challenges/ Barriers**

- Integration of well-being topics and collaborative working / delivery across task groups e.g. preventative health and equality of access to green / blue space.
- Resourcing / funding of project delivery / activities.
- Lack of data evidence in some areas.
- Opportunity for more regional working.

### **Priorities for next period**

- Continue developing and delivering against the projects listed above, including securing funds for longer-term delivery.
- Start the process of Well-being Plan priority setting:

Part of Swansea Bay University Health Board's vision is to be a sustainable organisation, one that protects and enhances our environment.

## **Case study: Biophilic Wales Collaboration**

### **(Demonstrating how Health Board land can be used to support biodiversity and staff/patient wellbeing)**

A unique collaboration between the National Botanic Garden of Wales, Swansea University, Natural Resources Wales and SBUHB, to deliver the Biophilic Wales Project aligning its outcomes to the Welsh Government's Well-Being and Future Generations Act 2015.

This pilot study saw the botanical gardens work within the Swansea and Neath Port Talbot area, using 40 sites within the SBUHB estate as focal points for community co-developed green infrastructure projects. The sites surround hospitals, health-centres, mental health and residential facilities. The project increased biodiversity value, accessibility, ecosystem services and connectivity, through the creation of "Inspirational Green Spaces" for people, and evaluate what works best to develop models that can be applied throughout Wales. By working in partnership with other bodies, the project promotes the designated ways of working with in the Well-being and Future Generations Act and draws on the expertise of other organisations.

**Approach to Healthcare:** Increase human well-being and health within SBUHB green estate. Evidence shows that socioeconomic inequalities in health may be narrower in places with better access to green spaces, compared to those with poorer access. (PHE: Improve access to Greenspace 2020) Delivering a tangible shift in the provision of health and care services into communities shifting the emphasis to well-being.

Support a substantial increase in people's physical activity through healthier lifestyles using Wales' significant natural resources.

A three year project from 2019 – 2022 premised on the utilisation of volunteers, during the 2020 the lockdowns associated with COVID 19 pandemic provided a significant obstacle to delivery necessitating innovation and change in approach including the distribution of plant seeds to people homes with over 6000 people accessing the opportunity to improve their wellbeing by growing indigenous plants at home.

The project is a £1.3 million investment to deliver this pan-Wales project which sought to increase the well-being of people, biodiversity and the environment, using three interconnected work packages. Inspiring Spaces, grasslands for life, and plants for people. The Health Board engaged with all three if these projects. Biophilic Wales's project accessed funding through the Enabling Natural Resources and Well-Being in Wales Grants (ENRaW). Biophilia states that humans possess an innate tendency to seek connections with the natural world and that this is vital to their health and well-being. Within Wales, the Well-being of Future Generations Act, has the potential to make Wales a world leader in connecting the environment to people's lives. We need to put the Well-being Goals into action to make Wales the first Biophilic nation. We have only 12 years to limit climate change catastrophe and this needs an approach that protects biodiversity and ecosystem services and inspires people to live sustainable lives.

#### **Partners and stakeholders**

- National Botanic Garden of Wales.
- Swansea University
- Natural Resources Wales
- Keep Wales Tidy
- Plant life
- Swansea and Carmarthen Local Nature Partnerships
- Swansea and Neath Port Talbot CVS
- The Orchard Project
- Singleton Botanical Gardens
- Mumbles to Margam Connectivity Corridor project and PRIME
- B-Lines
- Local Individual volunteers

Inspiring Spaces project sought to Develop the green infrastructure (GI) of the Swansea and Neath Port Talbot area, focusing on the Swansea Bay University Health Board estate. The sites range from those composed entirely of tarmac and concrete to others with extensive grounds, containing valuable wildlife habitats close to SSSIs.

Key outcomes were to:

- Create a GI action plan for 40 sites within the Swansea Bay University

health board estate.

- Increase biodiversity, accessibility and ecosystem services (e.g. flood prevention, air quality, pollination) within the 40 sites.
- Using the 40 sites as focal points, increase connectivity to other suitable areas within the NPT and Swansea area, maximizing biodiversity, accessibility and ecosystem services. Use GI opportunity mapping to guide this and connect with other initiatives.
- Improve sites so that the Health Board can apply for Green Flag status, or other appropriate designations, in as many of the sites as appropriate.
- Increase human well-being and health within AMBU green estate and surrounding green space.
- Create volunteer action groups that will champion different sites.
- Provide appropriate training to staff and volunteers to ensure sustainability at the end of the project.
- Use events, workshops, art, bio-blitzes, VR and other technology to engage the public with biodiversity within the SBUHB Health Board estate.
- Use the SBUHB estate case study to develop a plan for Biophilic Wales.

### **Project Benefits**

- Qualitative and quantitative benefits of the project- Qualitative benefits- many areas in SBUHB Estate have been improved by Biophilic interventions leading to greater biodiversity and more attractive areas to look at and be amongst.
- Relaxation areas have drawn people to grassed areas that weren't utilised before, providing opportunities for people to connect with green spaces and nature. Spending time in these areas provides a much needed break for the medical environment, which relieves stress.
- Volunteers have benefitted greatly from the Covid-safe social interactions on our weekly volunteering days. The project also provides training which increases employability and self-confidence.
- Human health is improved by increased physical activity (Staff getting away from work area and out into relaxation areas plus volunteers taking part in practical conservation tasks.)
- Tree planting and grassland managed for biodiversity will improve the air quality on sites. The enhanced green infrastructure on SBUHB sites will inform and inspire people to encourage more wildlife into their gardens and community areas at home. Where appropriate some of the areas being planted will also support rare plant species, with exsitu conservation.
- During Covid over 8000 volunteers engaged with the project by planting seeds we sent out in the post, to benefit SBUHB sites. These home volunteering opportunities provided opportunities to learn more about native wildflowers, to spend more time amongst nature and be part of an online volunteering community.
- Quantitative benefits- Over 400 trees planted including 5 orchards, Over 25 ha of grassland with management optimised for biodiversity.
- Pollinator planting on at least 20 sites, bird and bat boxes and bug hotels on at least 5 sites, walking routes and relaxation spaces on 10 sites, interpretation panels explaining about the benefits of biophilic areas on Health Board sites.

Swansea Bay University Health Board (SBUHB) engaged with the National Botanic Garden of Wales to deliver the inspiring Spaces programme. This involved 40 of the health board sites being reviewed. The review looked at how the green spaces could be used to benefit the well-being of patients, staff and visitors alike.

The project set out to deliver inspirational green spaces within the Swansea and Neath Port Talbot area, using the Swansea Bay University Health Board estate as a focal point. The botanical Gardens set out to use this collaboration as a pilot study to develop approaches that can be rolled out across Wales. The project delivered on three individual initiatives. They sought to use innovative approaches to assess our most abundant habitat of Wales (grasslands), developing protocols that will transform habitat monitoring. They aim to have protected 35 of Wales’ most threatened plant species and inspired the people of Wales about their natural heritage.

This project built on a number of previous projects in order to ensure that methods were robust and the approach was cost-effective. This included the Green Infrastructure mapping project (NRW), Barcode Wales project (NBGW), Saving Pollinators (NBGW) Assets and treasures - conserving and sharing Wales’ plants), GMEP project DNA barcoding soil biodiversity (Bangor University ). We worked closely with other projects within the ENRaW portfolio in particular connecting with the Swansea and Neath Port Talbot local authorities and pollinator work.

Whilst there has been significant interest from staff and members of the public to volunteer with the project, the COVID-19 pandemic could not have been predicted and had a significant impact on the delivery of the project in 2020 - 21 due to the “lockdowns”. This disruption delayed the onsite presence of volunteer groups, which subsequently required a change of approach and led to the development of the home volunteering experience called “Join Our Growing Team”, whereby wild flower seeds were sent to volunteer’s homes.





## Strong Communities



To build strong communities with a sense of pride and belonging.

are more cohesive and prosperous, enable individuals to trust each other and support people to feel safe and confident.

**Lead** – This work is coordinated by the Strong Communities Steering Group and is led by Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service.

### Partners/ Stakeholders Involved

Coastal	Pobl	SCVS	Family Housing
Public Health Wales	Clase 4 All	Council-Local Area Co-ordination	Regeneration Swansea Council
Swansea Learning Partnership	Poverty Partnership Forum	Regional Partnership Boards (RPB);	Partner agency Procurement staff
GP Cluster Networks	Housing and social landlords	West Glamorgan Social Value Forum	Beyond Bricks and Mortar
South Wales Police	Swansea City of Sanctuary and others supporting refugees and asylum seekers (Eyst and others)	Swansea Council, Community Cohesion Steering Group (which sits under Safer Swansea Partnership);	City of Culture Steering Group Swansea
Menter Iaith Abertawe	Merched Y Wawr	Co Production Network	Human Rights City group

Womens Aid /multi agency domestic violence practitioners	Regional Black Minority Ethnic Network	Community Cohesion group	
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## Overview of work within Strong Communities

Following the introduction of new governance arrangements, this Objective was allocated to Mid & West Wales Fire and Rescue Service (MAWWFRS) and a full review of the intended action plan has been in progress. The review includes actions that are complete, those that are ongoing and new actions that need to be considered in the future.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, several meetings had taken place between the former and newly appointed lead officer and a new strategic stakeholder group was identified. This group was convened to ensure that it included partners who were able to reflect the work of the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) and the Transformation programme as there were many close links and common goals, which have links to a number of actions within the workstream.

The group's membership promotes intelligence sharing and joint working across other PSB Objectives and between other agencies and departments.

## Achievements

There is clear governance of the Critical Incident Group to the Safer Swansea Partnership and then to Public Services Board. All communications are channelled through the Safer Swansea Partnership (all partners are signed up with South Wales Police leading) and all work is branded Safer Swansea Partnership.

## Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service's (MAWWFRS) contribution to Strong Communities.

During the last twelve-month period, (MAWWFRS) has been involved in several initiatives that have contributed to Strong Communities in Swansea, these include:

### Operation Dawns Glaw (Welsh for 'Rain Dance')

Operation Dawns Glaw, a multi-agency partnership to reduce deliberate fires across Wales. Fire and Rescue Services in Wales have attended 3230 grass fire incidents over the last five years, which cost the Welsh economy millions of pounds every year, many of which are started deliberately.

A task force was established in 2016 to tackle incidents of deliberately set grass fires across Wales. Whilst the initial focus was on reducing incidents of anti-social behaviour and arson, more recent work has concentrated on assisting farmers and landowners in ensuring the safe execution of their land management plans.

The multi-agency taskforce, set-up to bring a dedicated focus on deliberate and accidental grass fires across Wales (Operation Dawns Glaw). This multi-agency taskforce including partners from Natural Resources Wales (NRW), the four Welsh Police Forces, Local Authorities.

There is a strong focus on collaboration, working with a wide range of local and national partners across Wales to deliver common and shared outcomes of reducing the impact of arson on Welsh communities

Specialist Arson Reduction and Fire Crime teams have evolved to coordinate arson reduction initiatives and to provide an extensive and specialised range of services. Targeted interventions are provided to vulnerable individuals and communities identified at risk of arson.

### **Benefits of Operation Dawns Glaw**

- Work together to protect our countryside and our country
- Raise awareness of the consequences of accidental fires in our countryside.
- Land Management - Collaborative work to utilise machinery and skills to reduce fire loading posed by bracken and gorse will progress outside of the Dawns Glaw period, targeting areas of known high risk
- Engagement with Youth Teams and Youth Agencies
- Youth engagement work will be planned as part of arson reduction intervention as this is a proven area of intervention with high-risk groups but the arrangements for delivery will depend on lockdown restrictions and partner agencies
- To provide a coordinated and cohesive partnership response to incidents and is available, to provide advice, guidance, and support about fire safety concerns.

### **Wildfire Planning and Mitigation**

Planning and collaboration work has continued into the new wildfire season within the Swansea Rural Group which includes members from MAWWFRS Arson Reduction, MAWWFRS Road Safety, Swansea Council (Environment), South Wales Police (SWP), Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Gower Commoners Association and PONT Cymru.

In preparation for this season, firebreak and scrub cutting were carried out at Pengwern and Fairwood Commons following application and consent provided via NRW.

Meetings also discussed the following:

- Planning permission fee for ponds at Moorlakes field (immediately adjacent to the common)
- 100 reflective cattle collars (for commoners and Cowtan)

- Allocated some funds for additional fencing at Moorlakes to improve the right of way and keep walkers and cows separate

MAWWFRS and Swansea Council also collaborated on provision of a firebreak on Kilvey Hill to the rear of Buckingham Rd, Ogmores Place, Dartford Place and Kenfig Place, off Brokesby Road.

This was approx. 240m long and 30m wide (c.7500m<sup>2</sup>) comprising of thick gorse, small conifers, scrub and bramble between the main NRW conifer block and adjacent to garden fences.



### Service iCut

In March 2022, Welsh Government provided funding for MWWFRS for a remote-controlled robotic flail in order to assist with the cutting of firebreaks over challenging terrain. This has subsequently been utilised across the Service area for creating firebreaks in areas where traditional means are limited (access, gradients etc). Planning is already underway to utilise the machine in designated areas within Swansea including the Commons and Kilvey Hill moving forward. Cutting is currently limited through permissions and ground assessments.

### Swansea Council's Tackling Poverty Services contribution to Strong Communities.

During the last twelve-month period, Swansea Council's Tackling Poverty Services have been involved in several initiatives that have contributed to Strong Communities in Swansea, these include:

- The development of a Swansea Truth Commission, the first Poverty Truth Commission in Wales.

- 2,452 enrolments on to a range of Lifelong Learning Service courses to improve health and wellbeing and increase skills, accreditation levels and job prospects, which amounted to 1,207 unique learners being supported.
- Face-to-face, online, and blended learning courses were offered and ranged from family learning and essential skills, such as maths and English, computer skills, cookery, and yoga.
- Providing daily IT support to individuals which enabled them to access online services and information.
- Assisting members of the community to access job opportunities through the loaning of Chromebooks, via the Communities for Work (CfW) loan scheme, which resulted in 62 Chromebooks being loaned to participants, with 17 subsequently moving into employment.
- The CfW teams also helped 311 people in to work and assisted 612 people with enrolment in the programmes.
- Mentors from CfW and CfW+ attending hubs in the City Centre (BAME and the Jac Lewis Foundation) generated several referrals.
- The CfW and CfW+ teams supported 1,793 with finding employment and training provision, by the single referral pathway, 973 vacancies were sourced by the Employer Engagement team via contacts and partnerships formed, 454 people were supported by the engagement team to access employability provision, 400 people were trained on accredited courses in several sectors and 12 bespoke events for specified cohorts were established, developed, and implemented.
- Swansea Working supported programmes and initiatives aimed at vulnerable groups, such as prison leavers, those on probation and care leavers.
- Bespoke training packages were provided with the offer of related work experience with contractors and employers in Swansea.
- £878,000 in welfare benefits for the residents of Swansea was raised by the Welfare Rights Team, which addressed in excess of £65,000 worth of debt.
- The Local Area Coordination Team was expanded to 23 meaning all communities across Swansea have access to a coordinator, helping communities to be more confident and connected avoiding the need for individuals to access formal services.
- The Local Area Coordination team recruited twice in 21/22 and reached the milestone of full county coverage, which means that every individual and community now has a connection to a LAC. The team has continued to facilitate the informal hyper local, neighbour to neighbour support as we came out of the pandemic. As restrictions were lifted, the team were able to encourage groups to restart and vulnerable community members to engage with each other in the community again. The team have been involved in some wonderful examples of communities creativity and spirit for example in Cwmbwrla where a community book, radio station and events have kept the community connected and confident.
- Swansea Council for Voluntary Service and the Tackling Poverty Service continued with the Community Calling campaign in partnership with Hubbub and O2. The project will donate 700 phones to people who are digitally excluded in Swansea, with O2 providing 12 months of free data and unlimited calls and texts.

- Grants totalling £300,000 were offered to Med's Sheds, Food Poverty and Period Dignity in communities, with £25,000 supporting new and existing Med's Shed's in Swansea to enable them to provide community spaces where people from all backgrounds can meet, chat, and take part in activities to help reduce loneliness and isolation.
- 40 organisations were awarded £236,000 to tackle food poverty in Swansea, which included £42,000 from the Household Support fund to help organisations meet the increased demand for support with food poverty.
- Working with the children's society and the development of a coordinated community support programme, a "worrying about money" leaflet was launched, together with the introduction of a multi-agency referral system.
- A fuel poverty voucher scheme was established in partnership with Citizens Advice to offer those in fuel poverty additional financial support.

### **Safer Swansea Partnership's contribution to Strong Communities**



During the last twelve-month period, the Safer Swansea Partnership (SSP) has been involved in several initiatives that have contributed to Strong Communities in Swansea, these include:

- Work was undertaken to support the National ASB Awareness Week campaign, including holding 3 engagement events in hotspot locations throughout the city. The events were supported by statutory and non-statutory partners, raising awareness, and providing support and information to residents and businesses.
- During the period March 2021 – September 2021, a total of 2283 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) incidents were reported, which resulted in 66 stage 1 youth letters being issued, with only 5 receiving a final warning, 5 received stage 2 referral to the Youth Justice Team for further interventions and 42 adults received stage 1 letters.
- During the period October 2021 – March 2022, a total of 1387 ASB incidents were reported, which resulted in 109 stage 1 youth letters being issued, and a further 43 final warnings sent. There were 10 stage 2 referrals made to the Youth Justice Team for further interventions, and 33 adults also received stage 1 letters.
- Management of 33 hot spot cameras, which were utilised to capture evidence and deter ASB, fly-tipping and criminal damage.
- Management and planning of the Mayhill – Waun Wen community engagement family day on the 12 August.
- Attendance at weekly student safety sessions with South Wales Police and University Liaison Officers.
- Development of the Vetch community space.
- Promotion of the Safer Streets campaign throughout Swansea.
- Introduction of a drink spiking awareness campaign and distribution of associated testing packs and posters to all Evening and Night-time Economy



(ENTE) premises, including the management and supply of water for the ENTE help point.

- Securing funding for additional lighting in Singleton Park in partnership with Swansea University.
- Working alongside South Wales Police to submit a female safety at night funding bid.
- Design and distribution of Swansea City FC community safety posters, which featured advice and guidance on hate crime, county lines, radicalisation, ASB and bullying.
- Management of a two-week online primary school crucial crew event.
- Undertaking target hardening improvement work at the Strand and adjacent routes to the City Centre.
- Supporting Paws on Patrol engagement sessions and the distribution of their quarterly newsletter.
- Providing advice and support to Neighbourhood Watch groups.
- Management and placement of two partnership A-frame trailers to promote community safety messages.
- Promotion and the management of a number of campaigns, including White Ribbon Day, the “Heads Up” domestic violence campaign and the students’ freshers guide to Swansea City Centre.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour Work**

Work is continuing through engagement and education arrangements. This is co-ordinated through the Service’s Arson Reduction Team alongside South Wales Neighbourhood Policing Teams for community engagement and patrols targeting problematic areas and emerging trends through data sharing. The Arson Reduction Team has also utilised Welsh Government funding to deliver a wildfire awareness production to several schools in Swansea in order to engender a culture change in younger people’s perceptions and to promote a sense of guardianship for our environment. This production is being delivered by a theatre production company across the Service area.

- The Service’s Community Safety department (CS), alongside South Wales Police and Swansea City County Council, signed up for additional Operation Options sessions, which are aimed at engaging with those drivers and passengers who break the law by not wearing their seatbelts by highlighting the dangers of not wearing a seatbelt when driving.
- A multi-agency Summer Safety campaign was being delivered to promote the safety messages of MWWFRS, Dyfed Powys and South Wales Police Forces, RNLI and the National Parks and other partners. Events were held at several holiday sites to reach the increased number of people holidaying locally, providing messages on risks such as campfires, disposal of refuse and BBQs.
- The Service’s Data Protection Officer agreed with partners, a Wales Accord for Sharing Personal Information (WASPI) on Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour, which has helped a wide range of partners to share information for the purpose of reducing Anti-Social Behaviour or the impact of Anti-Social behaviour.

- All Fire Stations within the Service area were designated “Safe Havens” thus offering protection to anyone feeling threatened, intimidated or at risk within our communities.
- Community Safety teams attended the Mayhill Community event in Swansea during August. The event was organised by the Safer Swansea Partnership as a means of bringing local people together after a turbulent time. Our staff joined Swansea Council, South Wales Police and other partners and representatives to support the fun day held for the residents of Mayhill almost three months on from the scenes of violent disorder and arson.
- A partnership with British Red Cross was developed, which enabled British Red Cross Volunteers to provide practical and emotional support to families who have experienced house fires.
- Educational Resources were widely developed to ensure that our safety education messages were accessible to our target audience, schools, and parents through HWB.
- The Service’s Arson Reduction Team maintained partner links and adapted collaborative working practices to safeguard personnel.
- The Service supported digital awareness, and volunteers were trained in digital skills, which enabled them to become digital champions, who have been able to share their knowledge and skills within the community.
- The Service has fully trained digital champion volunteers, who can share their knowledge and skills within the community.
- The CS team continued to provide Violence against Women Domestic Abuse Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) training to all staff to enable the identification of those experiencing abuse within the community.

## **Housing & Building Stronger Communities**

- The Council’s Housing Service is committed to working in partnership to improve community engagement. A number of housing led community engagement events have taken place during the last 12 months including two event with a Community Safeguarding theme and one event with a Estate management / ASB theme). All three events have been attended by partner agencies including the Fire Service and by Community Safety team from the Safer Swansea Partnership (plus police, 3<sup>rd</sup> sector, other council services)
- The Council’s Housing Service is working in partnership with Registered Social Landlord’s to enable the delivery of affordable homes, with a target together to develop 5,000 new affordable homes in Swansea over a 10 year period (1,000 to be delivered by the Council through its Development Programme, 4,000 to be delivered by RSLs).
- The Council’s Housing Development Programme is committed to building energy efficient, zero carbon homes to Welsh Development Quality Requirements 2021 Standards, to help reduce fuel poverty and ensure homes are suitable for the long terms needs of tenants.
- The Council’s Homelessness service has maintained the “No One Left Out approach” initiated by Welsh Government at the start of the pandemic. This means all homeless households continue to be offered temporary accommodation and has resulted in over 650 positive moves from temporary accommodation into more suitable supported or permanent accommodation

between April 2020-Dec 2021. This has resulted in the lowest levels of rough sleeping in Swansea since records started. The nightly average in April 2022 was 4, compared to 19 in the last one night national rough sleeper count undertaken in 2019. NB the national count did not take place in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic however Swansea continues to closely monitor levels of rough sleeping to ensure support and accommodation is provided as quickly as possible.

### **Regeneration Swansea's contribution to Strong Communities**

During the last twelve-month period, Regeneration Swansea have been involved in several initiatives that have contributed to Strong Communities in Swansea, these include:

- Regeneration Swansea continued to meet virtually during 2021/22, with a focus on partnership working and making links between regeneration schemes to maximise the benefits for Swansea.
- Representation in the group was expanded to include Public Health Wales, UK Government, and some new private sector representatives.
- The Swansea Economic Recovery action plan developed last year continued to be monitored and progressed by partners.
- Discussions commenced regarding preparations for bidding to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).
- Regeneration Morriston, a subgroup working together to support the economic regeneration of Morriston continued to meet virtually to progress their action plan for the Morriston economy.
- The partnership supported the Welsh Government Transforming Towns Programme which will bring 1896m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space back into use in the city centre and district centres. A new communal area was also created in the centre of Swansea market and twelve new housing units were created with Transforming Towns funding.
- Nine town centre loans providing nearly £3.7m funding on an interest-free term mostly over five years were also approved by the partnership.

### **Swansea Council for Voluntary Services (SCVS) contribution to Strong Communities.**



SWANSEA COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE  
CYNGOR GWASANAETH GWIRFODDOL ABERTAWE

During the last twelve-month period, Swansea Council for Voluntary Services (SCVS) have been involved in several initiatives that have contributed to Strong Communities in Swansea, these include:

Formal and informal volunteering and voluntary organisations contributed hugely to ensuring that communities have remained resilient over the last year.

## **Case Study Information provided by Swansea Council for Voluntary Services (SCVS).**

### **Interact : Case Study (March 2022)**

Victoria (anonymised) was originally referred for 1-1 support, but she started with our women's Zoom group in November 2021. Our groups were planned to last an hour, but people are so chatty that they frequently last two hours. Victoria has never missed a session. She has said how much she enjoys it and what a difference it has made to her wellbeing.

Victoria lives with her partner who has advanced Parkinson's disease. She has lots of illnesses herself which include severe anxiety and agoraphobia. As she rarely leaves the house or has visitors (her children live abroad) she has said that meeting people online has been particularly beneficial.

During group discussions she raised lots of issues she's needed support with, particularly in relation to her partner who was struggling to have his medication and support reassessed. She said she had given up asking for help. With the gentle encouragement of the group, she re-contacted Social Services and as a result of this, additional equipment has been brought to the house including a rise and recline chair, a wheelchair, and a shower chair. A specialist Parkinson's nurse has started to visit regularly along with an Occupational and Speech Therapist. His medication has been changed so he's feeling more balanced. Victoria said that without the encouragement of the group none of this would have happened.

Originally, she declined support from staff to get additional help herself. But she recently allowed us to contact the Carers Centre who are currently helping her to get additional Welfare Benefits. We've given her various other support contacts too, including details about referring to the Community Dental Service. We've also been able to allocate a telephone befriender for her partner.

### **Pen Picture : Case Study (July – Sep 2021)**

N is a care leaver and has a child who has just turned 3yrs old during this quarter. The volunteer has supported N for several years. N has no support from any other organisation only from us and is mistrusting services generally given her background. N has in the past self-harmed as a child and currently receives medication for depression. During this quarter, the volunteer, myself, and N met on zoom and discussed resuming face to face visits, we went through our SCVS Covid guidance and what is expected of both parties for the session to be carried out safely. During the zoom session, we discussed what support would look like going forward. Following the volunteer meeting with N and her daughter face to face, the volunteer and staff discussed some issues that needed addressing:

- Housing was no longer appropriate or meeting N and her child's needs
- N needs some support with ideas of how to occupy her daughter
- Possible services that may help she could be referred to, for support with managing her daughter's behaviour.

- Support available for school uniforms.

### **Actions**

- The volunteer and staff agreed to write a letter of support for N for housing which had been written.
- N speaking to her Health Visitor regarding new accommodation.
- The volunteer will discuss with N, Team Around the Family and Home start support.
- The volunteer suggested N asking at the school if they have a second-hand uniform shop.
- Staff suggested activities N could do with her daughter and them having time together that was not calling to the shop to get milk but was an activity in the park looking for leaves or collecting stones to paint, some quality time etc.

## **A Better Welcome to Swansea : Case Study 1**

The project aims to support people seeking sanctuary to connect with local services and activities which support independent living and integration through volunteer mentoring and translation support. The project also offers group drop-in sessions in the Swansea area and liaises with education establishments to offer support to families seeking asylum. Swansea was granted City of Sanctuary status by the national city of sanctuary movement in May 2010 and was the second city in the UK to achieve this status.

The project hopes to make Swansea a more welcoming place to those seeking asylum and refuge in the area by providing information and volunteer mentors to offer orientation to those new to the area. The project also aims to raise awareness of the issues faced by those seeking asylum and refuge to services in Swansea and help those services to be more accessible and sensitive to the needs of all.

Following a referral from the Health Access Team, a lady had fled her country owing to persecution and was keen to make Swansea her home and connect with life in Swansea. The lady had some issues relating to health which were being attended to by the local health team, support organisations and other specialist services.

At the time of the first assessment, the individual had already been out exploring the city and was keen to link with churches in the locality. Both herself and her partner were supported in accessing English classes and conversation groups to attend whilst waiting for an English assessment. They were keen to build links with social groups and were provided with email addresses and alternative methods of communication in order for them to be able to be contacted so that they don't miss out on groups that could be valuable to them. They were able to connect with similar groups culturally to be able to talk to others in a similar position from a similar background, and also able to talk to the couple about where to access things in Swansea to match their interests. Volunteering opportunities were communicated to

the couple as they were keen on integrating into the community through this avenue too.

Some of the outcomes for the service user included an improvement in quality of life through obtaining clothes, food and direction to various groups, increased knowledge of what was available in the locality and online for the community and having valued support provided to both herself and her family.

### **A Better Welcome to Swansea: Case Study 2**

Following emails to the individual about the pilot project, a request was received from a family wanting ideas around healthy living, especially healthy cooking. Project staff and others presented a variety of sessions surrounding nutritional health, emotional health, and physical health. As part of this, the BAME outreach programme presented topics of healthy living and diabetes information.

A Better Welcome Swansea presented information on how healthy and nutritious choices could be made on a budget, and also information about healthy meal planning. The mental health foundation was invited to present ideas for preserving mental health and how to recognise poor mental health. The outcomes that were achieved for the service users included the ability to recognise instances of poor mental health, ideas for making a positive difference to mental health, ideas for budgeting and planning for healthy choices, knowledge of what a healthy diet looked like and a recipe bank for healthy eating.

### **Transcend Peer Mentoring : Case Study**

Transcend is a project which matches people with mental ill-health to peer mentors. These peer mentors are trained volunteers who have lived experience of mental ill-health. Volunteer mentors work with people to develop action plans or goals and take control of their recovery by slowly building up trust and taking every step at the individual's pace.

Transcend volunteer mentors are people from all walks of life who have personal experience of mental health issues and have worked towards their recovery. They are able to offer empathy, support, and guidance to those in similar situations.

Following a referral of an individual to the Transcend Peer Monitoring Project by a partner agency (Sanctuary) who was presenting with loneliness, isolation, low mood, little routine, agoraphobia, and social anxiety. Following discussions with the individual it was identified that they would like to work towards three main goals, that would be achievable steps and could be worked towards with the Transcend volunteer. These goals were, to get out a bit more, other than just for a specific reason to help lose weight, go to cafes, and stop feeling like they are being watched and judged and have a haircut.



The individual has been linked with a volunteer who calls for 2 hours per week to talk about goals, achievements and coping mechanisms, the individual was referred for counselling and has slowly established a routine and increased confidence and social connection due to the intervention from Transcend.

The above working together on projects are just a snip bit of all the work we do as a collective.

### **Challenges/ Barriers**

- The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to cause a considerable delay to the progression of this Objective, with the majority of partners and stakeholders being required to re-direct their resources to maintaining business as usual and also reducing the opportunities for engagement
- Further challenges include the wider impact from the COVID-19 pandemic, linked with individual organisations' return to the workplace, access to longer-term funding and the impact of remote working, particularly with public-facing, community-based roles.
- The ability to ensure consistent and appropriate representation from all stakeholders, ensuring success from different partnerships is captured effectively, together with the capacity of partners' workloads, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to be a challenge.
- The lack of hypothecated funding available to PSBs, in comparison to other strategic partnerships, has certainly reduced the effectiveness and speed of delivery of PSB Wellbeing plans, and in particular the Strong Communities Objective.

**Future activity** for the 22/23 year includes:

- To embed amongst all our partners, approaches that support individual, family and community resilience.
- To work towards us working as a whole organisation and whole public sector with one approach.
- To deliver collective action to remove barriers to participation including fear of difference, sharing resources regularly to do so.
- To further embed our Intercultural City approach to promote the Welsh language whilst also recognising and celebrating the other cultures, languages, and communities in Swansea.
- To fully embed the economic regeneration plans within all our partners and actions will be taken to enhance a social benefits approach.
- To work together and jointly design and implement local projects that support the achievement of the Minimum Income Standard.
- Promote the work and encourage engagement with the multi-agency task force set up during Operational Dawns Glow.
- Support Community Engagement and outreach projects alongside arson reduction messages (the Fire and Rescue Service provides advice to a range of forums including Community Cohesion, Hate Crime Awareness, Domestic Abuse and engagement with Refugee Families).

## Conclusion

**It has never been more important for us to pull together, connect and understand the resources we have here in Swansea. All PSB members have shown willingness to work together collectively to come out of this situation stronger, more resilient and better connected.**

Maintaining effective communication and relationships has been vital. It has been important to use our relationships and networks we have built up over the past years and draw on one another's knowledge and experience. It has been crucial for all our different organisations to come together to help and support one another.

PSB members/stakeholders together are stronger and we must not lose sight of how much we can achieve when we work together and support one another. The people of Swansea have never needed our support as much as they do now and for the future.

## Our Next Steps

Swansea PSB's strengths lie within the expertise, experience and enthusiasm of its partners, from the frontline staff working to deliver the Local Well-being Objectives to the leadership representatives who work together to strategically improve Swansea's well-being.

Austerity and continued uncertainty following the pandemic will continue to challenge our organisations moving forward. However, significant opportunities have been identified to build our capacity by working together and increasingly share assets and resources.

The next steps for the PSB involves building on the existing Well-being Plan and using the recently completed Well-being Assessment to work together to review our Well-being Objectives and produce a plan for the next 4 years. In summary, this will involve:

- Reviewing, drafting and agreeing a set of local Well-being Objectives and steps to address them.
- Receiving advice from the Future Generations Commissioner.
- Gathering information from partners.
- Undertaking Integrated Impact and Equality Assessments.
- Consulting with the public before the final objectives are agreed

## How you can get involved?

The work undertaken by Swansea Public Services Board is published online at [www.swanseapsb/swansea.gov.uk](http://www.swanseapsb/swansea.gov.uk).

Our Joint Committee Meetings are held in public and questions from the public are invited via a standing agenda item Public Question Time.

A successful partnership Forum was last held following lockdowns in November 2021. SCVS and Swansea Council came together to host the event online ensuring maximum virtual interaction. However, we are now looking to re-establish Partnership Forums at local venues where we can welcome everyone along to contribute in person.

You can also contact our Public Services Board Co-ordinator directly by email at [Swansea.psb@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:Swansea.psb@swansea.gov.uk) or telephone 07989 138917.

We welcome your involvement, ideas and suggestions in all areas of our work so that we could consider for our future work.