

Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report



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I. Introduction

I am pleased to present the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for East Dunbartonshire for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.


The purpose of this report is to provide East Dunbartonshire Council and other key stakeholders, including the East Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership Board, staff and people who use services, with information on the statutory work undertaken during the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994 requires every local authority to appoint a professionally qualified Chief Social Work Officer. The Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) provides professional governance, leadership and accountability for the delivery of social work and social care services whether these are provided by the local authority or purchased from the third or independent sector. The CSWO is also responsible for duties and decisions relating to the curtailment of individual freedoms and the protection of both individuals and the public. The specific role and functions of the CSWO are set out in guidance issued by Scottish Ministers, first issued in 2009, and updated in July 2016, for which a link is provided here <https://www.gov.scot/publications/role-chief-social-work-officer/>

Social work and social care services enable, support, care for and protect people of all ages in East Dunbartonshire, by providing or purchasing services designed to promote their safety, dignity and independence, and by contributing to community safety by reducing offending and managing the risks posed by known offenders. Those services, which are required to meet national standards and provide best value, are delivered within a framework of statutory duties and powers. Where possible, services are delivered in partnership with a range of stakeholders, including people who use them.

Social work and social care services are always delivered within a complex landscape of increasing demands, high levels of public expectation, economic uncertainty, substantial public sector financial challenges, and a constantly evolving legislative and policy landscape. In addition, we continued throughout the year to be affected by the COVID-19 context, and faced one of the most challenging winters ever in terms of our work that is in partnership with NHS acute and in patient services. Throughout, our staff have shown continued commitment, compassion and flexibility to help keep children and adults safe and well.

I would like to pass on my personal thanks to everyone for their hard work and for their clear commitment to the values of their chosen professions.



Caroline Sinclair
Chief Social Work Officer
East Dunbartonshire Council

A photograph of a modern building with a prominent curved section clad in teal-colored panels. Large glass windows are integrated into the curve, reflecting the sky and surrounding trees. To the right, a grey building with a cantilevered upper floor is visible. The foreground shows a paved area and some low-lying vegetation.

Governance,
accountability
and statutory
functions

2. Governance, accountability and statutory functions

Within East Dunbartonshire, the duties of the CSWO were discharged during the year by the Chief Officer of the Health and Social Care Partnership with a deputy role being discharged by the Interim Head of Adult Services. This somewhat unusual allocation of roles has been in place for some time now and although it was hoped that it would be reviewed during the year, due to the ongoing operational and strategic challenges, this remains an action to be completed in 2023 - 2024.

The CSWO has a key role to play in shaping the planning agenda for social work within the Council, the Health and Social Care Partnership and the Community Planning Partnership. The CSWO has also had the opportunity to influence budgetary decisions to ensure the needs of vulnerable people within our community are met, and resources are deployed effectively. These arrangements are well established and operate effectively.

Within the Council and the Health and Social Care Partnership there are clear structures and processes that have enabled the CSWO to fulfil their role and function.

The CSWO attends a range of key internal and external partnership meetings including;

- East Dunbartonshire's Health and Social Care Partnership Board – the CSWO is a non-voting member of the HSCP Board
- East Dunbartonshire's Child Protection Committee
- East Dunbartonshire's Adult Protection Committee
- East Dunbartonshire's Public Protection Chief Officers' Group, which brings together the highlights of the work of the Child Protection Committee, the Adult Protection Committee, the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences, statutory Mental Health work and any Prevent (safeguarding people from radicalisation) activity.
- The Community Planning Partnership's Executive Group and Board
- East Dunbartonshire's Community Justice Partnership - the CSWO is the Chair of the partnership Board
- East Dunbartonshire's Delivering for Children and Young People Partnership (Integrated Children's Services Plan steering group) – the CSWO is the Chair. This is a sub group of the East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership
- The CSWO also meets regularly with the Chief Executive of East Dunbartonshire Council

The quality of social workers and social work practice is reviewed in a range of ways. The CSWO is a key member of the HSCP's Clinical and Care Governance Group (CCGG). The Chair of the CCGG is the HSCP's Clinical Director and membership includes a range of senior health and social work professionals. The role of the CCGG is to provide the HSCP Board with assurance that services are delivering safe, effective, person-centred care to the residents of East Dunbartonshire. The CCGG group meets on a bi-monthly basis and has covered a variety of diverse issues including; the reviewing of complaints, significant clinical incidents, or duty of candour incidents, and the reviewing of quality improvement activity undertaken within teams.

Within the CCGG we have been working hard to develop a balanced approach that provides scrutiny and assurance in equal measure across health, social work and social care services and believe we have made good progress in that area. Notably, the CCGG is now routinely provided with information on the performance of registered care services, as assessed by the Care

Inspectorate, to enable scrutiny of this area of work. The CCGG Annual Report, which details the range of work undertaken, can be found on the Council and HSCP website.

Additionally, work was undertaken pre-pandemic to develop an East Dunbartonshire HSCP Quality Framework to complement and sit alongside the Performance Framework however, active implementation was delayed by the pandemic. Last year it was agreed to refresh and refocus on implementation and this took place. This work reports into the CCGG.

We have also continued to deliver a programme of systematic case file audits and quality assurance processes using a number of tools, which have contributed to improved standards. In some contexts, specifically around child and adult protection, these audits are undertaken as multi-agency processes. We consider this to be a robust and valuable process, reflecting our commitment to continuous improvement and a culture of sharing learning to support improvement.

Supervision and training also remains a key priority to ensure our staff are supported to maintain the knowledge and understanding required to deliver on our statutory functions. By necessity, much of this activity was moved to on-line but it continues to be delivered.

Over the course of the pandemic there was a significant increase to the levels of support provided to Care Homes within the area and this support, including delivery of assurance has continued. This is delivered in a collaborative partnership approach with the Care Home providers themselves, working alongside, rather than 'doing to', our partners, and has been well received.

Good Practice Example

Care Home Support Team

We established a multi-disciplinary team approach to support for care homes, jointly led between our social work and nursing services. Support is provided on a wide range of aspects of care from adult protection to infection prevention and control, anticipatory care planning, food fluid and nutrition support for residents and the promotion of exercise and activity for residents; supporting and maintaining their wellbeing. Examples are as follow:

Care About Physical Activity (CAPA):

Allied Health Professionals – Support to Care Homes

Care Home residents now have access to care and treatment when required by a Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist or Senior Rehabilitation Worker, to support residents who have been discharged from hospital and who need support to improve their function or mobility, to remain as independent as possible as per the recommendations in the Scottish Government's Care About Physical Activity Agenda.

Care About Physical Activity Projects

Two projects have been initiated by the CAPA team in line with the National Improvement Programme for Physical Activity Projects within two local Care Homes. Each project aimed to improve the amount of physical activities offered to residents and support Care Home Staff in delivering activities based on the resident's interests and needs. Both have been a success and have encouraged residents to be more active, particularly male residents who had not previously been showing an interest in taking part in activities. These activities support the reduction and prevention of falls and improves the mental health of residents.

A new Care Home Activity Coordinators Peer Support Group has also been set up to enable Care Home staff to share ideas about what has worked well within their Care Homes in relation to increasing the physical activity of residents.

Falls Reduction

The CAPA team have been delivering awareness raising and training sessions to Care Home staff about the Falls Pathway. This approach supports good decision after a resident has fallen and provides staff with professional advice about alternatives to hospital attendance and potential admission.

East Dunbartonshire Council has an established Housing, Health and Care Forum, which is a non-decision making forum that provides the opportunity for Elected Members to have sight of, and provided comment on, a range of social work and social care issues such as inspection outcomes, policy development considerations, service review issues and quality improvement work. The debate and discussion that takes place in the forum contributes to the final shape of policy and strategy, while recognising and respecting the overall accountability and governance of the Health and Social Care Partnership Board itself.

The Health and Social Care Partnership Board drafted a new Strategic Plan for 2022 – 2025. The development of the new plan involved consulting on the partnership's strategic priorities, a process that saw Public Protection defined as a new priority in its own right, supported by a commitment to prioritise delivery of the whole suite of public protection statutory duties. This new focus is very welcome.

Overall, the context in which social work, and therefore the CSWO works, continues to be challenging with a range of new priorities, such as support to care homes, support to families in times of financial crisis, and support to an increasing number of refugees and unaccompanied asylum seeking young people. The CSWO is supported in the role by a nominated deputy, strong professional networks across local services and the national CSWO network overseen by Social Work Scotland.



Service
quality and
performance

3. Service quality and performance

Children and Families – Child Protection

Our Child Protection Committee is independently Chaired, and consists of representatives from a range of agencies including education, social work and housing services, Police Scotland, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, the Scottish Children's Reporter's Administration and the third sector. It is a well-attended and engaging forum. The Chair and Committee are supported by the Council's Child Protection Lead Officer. Working in partnership, the Committee carries out its core functions which include continuous improvement, strategic planning and public information and communication. The multi-agency Committee produces an annual business plan and an annual report, and manages the required work through four standing sub-groups:

- Management Information & Self-evaluation
- Joint Public Information & Communication (shared with the Adult Protection Committee)
- Joint Learning & Development (shared with the Adult Protection Committee)
- Learning Review Sub Group

Key national developments that have been considered by the Committee and by services throughout the year include The Promise, the adoption into law of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the development of a National 'Minimum Dataset' for child protection work, and our role as part of the North Strathclyde pilot of the revised approach to the Joint Investigative Interviewing of children. The North Strathclyde Partnership moved from pilot to implementation phase over the year. In addition our third sector partner, Children 1st, received funding to build Scotland's version of a Barnahus, Bairns' Hoose, which is currently underway within East Renfrewshire. This will further develop our trauma-informed response for child victims and witnesses. These are all positive developments focused on ensuring a child-centred, rights focused approach to service delivery. During the year we also launched a new Public Protection website, providing more intuitive and accessible information and advice.

During the year we also concluded a Learning Review on a case with the key themes of disability, affluence, child protection and non-engaging parents. This was an extremely valuable exercise and has resulted in a multi-agency training calendar with the aims of improving early intervention, assessment and care planning.

In the autumn of 2022 the Care Inspectorate wrote to the East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership to advise that the Care Inspectorate, Education Scotland, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland and Healthcare Improvement Scotland would undertake a joint inspection of services for 'Children at Risk of Harm' in East Dunbartonshire. The inspection looked at the difference the Community Planning Partnership is making to the lives of children and young people at risk of harm and their families. The inspection graded the services in East Dunbartonshire as 'Good'. An evaluation of good is applied where performance shows important strengths which clearly outweigh any areas for improvement. The strengths will have been assessed as having a significant positive impact on children and young people's experiences and outcomes. The report highlighted many strengths and areas of good practice and can be accessed on the Care Inspectorate's website. The scrutiny partners concluded that they were confident that partners in East Dunbartonshire have the capacity to make changes to service delivery in the areas that require improvement, and an action plan to take forward the improvement areas that were identified has been put in place.

Over the year 100% of child protection case conferences took place within the target timescale. During the course of the year this target changed to reflect the new national guidance. In the coming year key activities will include finalising and rolling out the updated child protection guidance.

Integrated Comprehensive Assessments completed in line with the National target of 20 days continued to be high and above target. Ensuring that reports are available to Scottish Children's Reporter Administration on time supports the best assessment of children and young people's needs and delivery of actions to ensure they have access to the right support at the right time.

There has been a drop in the number of first LAAC reviews taking place within timescales to 87%. This equates a very small number of meetings being rescheduled to accommodate individual circumstances.

	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023
Child Protection Investigations	191	170	152
Child Protection Registrations	62	51	60
Child Protection De-registrations	54	59	44
Total on CP Register at Year End	35	27	43

Type of Case Conference	Number of Children Subject to Case Conference
Pre-birth	15
Initial	41
Review	69
TOTAL	120

Performance Indicator	Target	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023
% of assessments (ICAs) requested by the Scottish Children's Reporter completed on time (20 days)	75%	85%	91%	92%
% of first Child Protection review case conferences taking place within 6 months of registration*	95%	91%	100%	100%
% of first Looked After & Accommodated reviews taking place within 4 weeks of the child being accommodated	100%	100%	100%	87%
Balance of care for Looked After Children: % of children being looked after in the community	89%	86%	83%	83%

Performance Indicator – Looked After Children, Balance of Care

	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	% change over 3 year
At home with parents	42	44	41	-2%
Semi-Independent Living / Supported Accommodation	*	*	*	
With Friends/Relatives	49	43	45	
With Foster Carers	36	46	36	
With prospective adopters	*	*	*	
Total Community	129	134	124	-2%

	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	% change over 3 year
LA Children's Home	6	8	8	
Residential School	5	*	8	
Secure Accommodation	0	*	0	
Children's Home – other sector	10	10	9	
Total Non Community	21	28	25	+19%
Balance of Care - % of Children in community	86%	83%	83%	

Note - * denotes a number <5. Details are not further disclosed in the interests of protection of confidentiality.

Despite the challenges of requiring specialist children's placements, we have maintained the balance of care, from the previous year. Overall, there has been a decrease in the number of residential placements but there has been a significant decrease in the number of community based placements, including Foster Care and Looked After At Home placements. There has been an increase in demand for specialist placements due to the complexity of need presented by some children with disability. Overall, there has been a decrease in our Looked After population following a spike in 2021/22; this may be attributed to COVID.

Children and Families including the work of our Delivering for Children and Young People Partnership

During the year we have been working hard to develop a new Community Planning Partnership Integrated Children's Services Plan. We have undertaken a wide range of consultation, benchmarking and stakeholder engagement, including consulting children and young people, and their families. Our plan will be completed during the coming year and published on our website. Annual reporting on our current plan continues.

Our Delivering for Children and Young People partnership has also had a clear focus on The Promise over the year and we have undertaken a benchmarking exercise. This in turn has informed development of local Promise Plan which includes a performance measurement framework and this plan, which is designed to improve outcomes for looked after children, will also be finalised in the coming year.

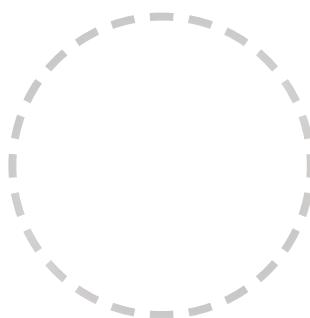
There has also been a strong focus in the year on supporting children's mental health and wellbeing and a range of early and preventative interventions have been developed, such as extended counselling services, a compassionate distress response service and nurture approaches within schools. This work is also overseen by the Delivering for Children and Young People partnership.

During the year we were notified by the Care Inspectorate that there will be a Scotland wide thematic inspection of social work services for children with disabilities. We have been engaging with this process, submitting the requested local information, and look forward to the final report which will not take the form of an area by area inspection report, rather it will be a thematic reflection on services across Scotland.

A key service area to acknowledge and celebrate is the successful delivery of year 2 of the children's House Project. The House Project supports the delivery of good outcomes for young people who are moving on from care placements to independent living and its impact evaluates well. There was a 100% success rate this year with seven young people moving into their new homes. This success was underpinned by strengthened links with the Council's Housing Services to increase appropriate housing offers for care experienced young people. The House Project is an excellent demonstration of our commitment to delivery of our Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

Other work in support of Corporate Parenting during 2022 - 2023 included:

- Joint working with Police Scotland to develop increased awareness of the difficulties and challenges care experienced young people face;
- Enhanced links were developed during the year with Woman's Aid, as domestic violence is a particular area of focused work for our care experienced young people;
- Care experienced young people attended Education Additional Support Needs Leadership Forum and gave a presentation on the challenges they face;
- Recognition at the HSCP and Health Board Award Ceremonies of care experienced young people's contribution through their Champs' Board. The Champs Board were our overall award winner for 2022 – 2023.



Over the year the services have also developed and implemented Family Group Decision Making; a service that brings a family together to develop a child-centred plan using a future-focused approach which is realistic and sustainable.

We have supported a number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people and children and young people who have been trafficked, from various backgrounds, who have suffered trauma, to be helped to recover with the provision of safe accommodation and support. These young people are considered Looked After and Accommodated children and have multi-agency plans to keep them safe and ensure their needs are met.

We also supported a range of activities aimed at helping families experiencing cost of living pressures such as The Christmas Project, the Warm Jacket Swap Shop, access to food vouchers, extensions to food banks, and self-directed support targeted provisions.

Good Practice Example

Mind of My Own App

The child care Integrated Comprehensive Assessment (ICA) cannot be completed and authorised for the Scottish Children's Reporter if the Child/Parents view is not recorded. In response to this, the Children and Families team have introduced the Mind of My Own App, which enables children and young people to communicate their views, experiences and feelings to a trusted adult in a safe digital space. This supports practitioner in understanding the child or young person, enables them to respond quickly to them and evidences their views.

Adult services – Adult Protection

Work around adult protection is grounded in the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. There is a statutory duty to set up and support East Dunbartonshire's Adult Protection Committee; to make inquiries where an adult is suspected to be at risk of harm; and to apply for protection orders where these are required to safeguard the adult. Qualified social workers continue to be trained and authorised to carry out "Council Officer" duties in East Dunbartonshire, as required by the legislation. We responded to a survey of the Council Officers workforce conducted by the Scottish Government in March.

The Adult Protection Committee is independently chaired and has representation from all key agencies. The Convenor and Committee are supported by the Council's Adult Protection Coordinator. A report on the Committee's activity is submitted to the Scottish Government on a biennial basis, with the most recent submitted in November 2022.

The Adult Protection Committee's strategic planning framework operates on a three-year cycle to align with the Child Protection Committee, and four standing sub-groups are established in respect of its statutory functions:

- Continuous Improvement
- Quality and Development Partnership
- Joint Learning & Development (shared with the Child Protection Committee)
- Joint Public Information & Communication (shared with the Child Protection Committee)

The Committee's Significant Case Review sub-group is only convened when required. It was convened once during the year to consider a case under the local case review protocol. Additionally, the terms of reference for the Significant Case Review sub-group were reviewed following publication of the new national guidance for Adult Protection Committees on conducting Learning Reviews. The Learning Review sub-group was established in its stead, and the local case review protocol was revised to reflect the new national guidance.

The Adult Protection Committee and services have been involved in a number of local and national developments which have potential to assist services to work more effectively in partnership with adults to secure their safety and wellbeing and prevent future harm. We have continued to act as a learning partner in the IRISS-led project to develop a national minimum dataset for Adult Support and Protection, which seeks to improve the range, consistency and

quality of information available about ASP activity across Scotland. Over the course of 2022 - 2023, we participated in the testing phase of the dataset and contributed to the development of the indicators for Phase I rollout of the dataset across Scotland in 2023 - 2024.

The refreshed Code of Practice to accompany the 2007 Act was published in July. A significant change in focus within the Code of Practice towards the use of investigatory powers during inquiries, rather than viewing inquiries and investigations as distinct processes, led to a prompt review of local procedures and training. The Code of Practice also influenced the indicators within the new national dataset project. We have monitored the use of the investigatory powers separate to formal investigations for a number of years in East Dunbartonshire and this proved very helpful during the pandemic in terms of providing assurance that adults at risk of harm were, for example, being seen face to face when the circumstances warranted it. We were able to feed our positive experiences of monitoring the individual powers into the dataset project.

Adult hoarding and self-neglect issues have become the source of considerable attention nationally in recent years and have affected East Dunbartonshire residents as well. The case review undertaken by the Adult Protection Committee this year involved an adult affected by self-neglect. A critical challenge for practitioners is how to support and safeguard an adult who has capacity but does not engage with that support to improve their safety and quality of life. Following on from multi-agency learning events in 2021 - 2022, the Committee set up a short-life working group to develop local interagency guidance. As part of this work, partners agreed to set up a network of Hoarding & Self-Neglect champions who would be able to provide advice to other agencies about any assistance they could offer the adult, as well as acting as a source of information within their own service. The working group also designed an escalation protocol to manage multi-agency information sharing in higher risk situations when the adult is not an adult at risk of harm and has capacity. The guidance will be rolled out in 2023 - 2024.

Adult Support and Protection Statutory Activity 2022-23

Nature of Activity	2019 - 2021	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023
Referral Screenings	790	960	967	902
Duty to Inquire	452	493	505	566
Planning meetings (including Inter-agency Referral Discussions)	7	8	10	9
Investigations	22	31	28	11
Case conferences	20	25	24	27
Review case conferences	7	9	9	9
Protection plans initiated	7	8	6	6
Protection orders	0	0	0	*

Note - * denotes a number <5. Details are not further disclosed in the interests of protection of confidentiality.

Concerns about people living with dementia continue to comprise over 50% of our referrals, reflecting the significant demographic trend within East Dunbartonshire in terms of an "aging population" which is having an increasingly influential impact on local services.

The reduction in number of investigations is linked to the rapid implementation of the refreshed Code of Practice in East Dunbartonshire and ongoing involvement in the test phase of the new National Minimum Dataset, which have resulted in data about the use of investigatory powers rather investigations being collected and reported locally.

A review of our performance over time shows the following.

Performance Indicator	Target	2020 - 2021 Delivery	2021 - 2022 Delivery	2022 - 2023 Delivery
% of Adult Protection cases where the required timescales have been met	92%	92%	92%	94%

ASP performance levels continued to be on target despite the increasing demand and ongoing pressures experienced by services. Particular pressures were experienced over the winter months, and business continuity measures were utilised to support teams with higher absence and vacancy rates to manage and prioritise ASP activities.

No Large Scale Investigations (LSIs) were required during the year. In recent years, East Dunbartonshire LSIs have taken in place in care home settings. The multi-disciplinary Care Home Support Team established in 2021 has engaged pro-actively with care home managers and staff to support early identification, prevention and response to issues which might escalate and create safeguarding concerns about a group of adults. This engagement has included the provision of targeted ASP awareness-raising sessions for care home staff and the regular promotion and use of the Adult Protection Committee's ASP Risk and Thresholds Framework to improve understanding of ASP incidents and information-sharing responsibilities. A targeted programme of ASP Advanced Awareness session for Managers will be delivered in 2023 - 2024.

We have been notified by the Care Inspectorate that we can expect a formal inspection of our Adult Support and Protection services in the coming year. These inspections have a fairly lengthy footprint and require considerable input from staff across a range of services and agencies to deliver however, we welcome the scrutiny of this most important area of our statutory work.

Adult and Older People's Social Work and Social Care Services

In our adult and older people's social work and social care services the majority of our performance targets were met or exceeded in the year. Our Annual Performance Report 2022 - 2023, which gives more detailed information, can be found on the Partnerships pages of East Dunbartonshire Council's website. Positive examples include the target for the percentage of adults in receipt of social work and/or social care services who had their personal outcomes fully or partially met, which was 100%, the percentage of people 65+ indicating satisfaction with their social interaction opportunities and the percentage of services users satisfied with their involvement in the design of their care packages. We also completed 97.6% of community care assessments within the target of a six week timescale from receipt of referral.

For those targets which were not met, such as the falls rate for those over 65, and the percentage of people newly diagnosed with dementia receiving Post Diagnostic Support, improvement actions are being taken to improve performance. For example, the Dementia Post Diagnostic Support Service has undergone a service review, leading to service delivery model change, which is now fully embedded and the success of the restructure is already being seen, with improved levels of service delivery.

As in previous years, a key area of challenge is around the rate of falls for people over the age of 65. East Dunbartonshire has a high rate of falls which reflects particular demographic changes in East Dunbartonshire, such as the fastest growing population of people aged over 85 in Scotland and the associated increasing levels of frailty and complexity of care needs arising from advancing age. We are beginning to see the impact from a number of supportive options available to Community fallers to avoid conveyance to hospital and subsequent admission. There are also ongoing developments to work toward reducing falls in the Community through Heath

Improvement initiatives, which will support a model for Citizens in Active Ageing and Self-management. We are also pleased to continue to lead the way in the roll out of the Caring About Physical Activity (CAPA) programme to address frailty and falls amongst people who live in local care homes, showcased on page 6/7 of this report.

We have also recently implemented our East Dunbartonshire No One Dies Alone project, which aims to support compassionate end of life care for people within their own communities. We look forward to fully rolling the project out in the coming year.

Good Practice Example

Connect-ED

Connect-ED was an initiative piloted during 2022/23 to promote healthy aging and independence. It delivered a range of health and wellbeing information and support from the HSCP, the Council and local third sector services.

During the six month programme, 59 people were supported on issues including Power of Attorney and wills advice, provided by our Age Scotland partner. Others were provided with information on social clubs, walking groups and enquired about volunteering opportunities. It is also notable that all organisations who took part in the programme reported increased referrals and established new networks.

Performance in our adult and older people's social work and social care services in the year continues to be impacted by the pandemic response and recovery journey, coupled with the specifics of our demographics. East Dunbartonshire has a comparatively high proportion of people with long term conditions such as cancer and arthritis, as a result of the high proportion of older age older people in the area. This profile contributes to an elective hospital admissions rate around 13% higher than Greater Glasgow and Clyde as a whole and 31% higher compared with Scotland in 2021 - 2022. Whilst emergency attendances and admissions remained lower than pre-pandemic levels, 2022 - 2023 saw an increase in emergency admissions, unscheduled bed days and discharge delays but a decrease in emergency department attendances. This suggests the Right Care Right Place messaging is beginning to take get traction to ensure patients get access to the most appropriate care from the right professional in the right care setting.

Our assessment and case management services continue to receive new and urgent referrals, these are risk assessed and allocated as required. Our adult fieldwork social work services received a total of 7,476 referrals in the year, (an increase of 23% on last year), and a total of 3,820 new assessments were completed during the year, (an increase of 11%).

Referrals to our Hospital Assessment Team continues to rise with a 20% increase in referrals in 2022 - 2023, this is on top of a rise in 2021 - 2022 and 2020 - 2021 and is predicted to rise yet further as the complexity of need of those admitted to secondary care continues to rise. There was also a corresponding increase in demand for community services as a result of the changes described above with an increase of 40% in referrals to the Community Rehabilitation Team compared to pre-COVID referrals. There has also been a corresponding increase in demand on equipment services which has had an impact on waiting times.

Our previously good performance on our key target to minimising the numbers of people who are delayed in their discharge from hospital has seen a down turn over the year. The performance challenge in this area was consistently felt across all Greater Glasgow and Clyde HSCPs, and indeed almost universally nationally, and it continues to be an area of close scrutiny and improvement work. It was notable for East Dunbartonshire that delays in the ability to provide a care at home package to support people's discharge from hospital became a feature over the

winter period 2022 - 2023, a situation not seen previously. This was a direct result of challenges recruiting or commissioning sufficient care staff or services to meet growing need, both in terms of increasing complexity, and volume demand. In March 2023 we were providing Care at Home support to 1284 customers. Numbers of people requiring 2:1 supports has seen a 32% increase locally since 2019 and referrals to Care at Home Services increased throughout 2023. If we compare January to May 2022 to the same period in 2023 we have seen an increase in referrals by 55%.

Day Activities and Services for Older People

Pre COVID, East Dunbartonshire enjoyed an abundance of formal (Day Care) and informal social supports (community clubs and activities targeted at supporting older people to remain connected to their local communities). 2022 - 2023 enjoyed the full re-opening of informal social support assets for older people based within both the East and West localities of East Dunbartonshire. The pandemic did result in the closure of some small local groups and clubs, however the majority of the resources have now opened fully. The Local Area Coordinators for Older People (OPLAC) team have been instrumental in re-invigorating membership within the community assets. As identified last year, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a deterioration of both physical and mental wellbeing for a lot of older people living in East Dunbartonshire who, because of their increased physical and mental frailty, are no longer able to attend local community groups, but require the formal support of a one to one social care worker or day centre provision. This is reflected in the number of referrals to the OPLAC Team for social support assessments which, in 2022 - 2023, increased by 27% on the previous year. Overall, Social Support for Older People Strategy 2023 - 2028 aims to achieve capacity building within our local communities for people who can engage with these opportunities, supported by our team of Local Area Coordinators, alongside a sustainable model of building based care for those who need it going forward.

Good Practice Example

Older People's Local Area Coordinator Team

Mr E is a 90-year-old gentleman living alone at home. He was referred to the team to consider eligibility for social support opportunities. However, the assessment confirmed that Mr E was self-caring and managing at home independently. This meant that Mr E was not eligible to access any formal social support opportunities however he was an ideal candidate to enjoy the local community assets.

Mr E had been a very active man enjoying various social activities, however after being widowed in recent years, he was now finding himself lonely and isolated at home. He had also lost confidence when travelling outdoors due to being unsteady on his feet.

With assistance from the Local Area Coordinator for Older People Mr E is now enjoying the company and peer support offered by the Milngavie and Bearsden Men's Shed. Mr E had taken it upon himself to find out more about the Shed and contacted the Coordinator directly. He was struggling to attend the group independently and the Local Area Coordinator arranged a referral to the local Community Response Team who support him with transport to and from the Shed.

Mr E has now also started attending the Bite and Blether Group, enjoying lunch and social chat with other older people. He organises a taxi to attend the venue and is assisted home by one of the group members.

Mr E has reported that he thoroughly enjoys attending the groups, advising that they each offer different experiences. He is delighted at the opportunity to expand his circle of friends and having the social company whilst also remaining independent in his local community.

Drug and Alcohol Recovery Services

In our alcohol and drug recovery services demand has continued to be high. The service saw a 26% increase between 2021 and 2022 and a similar increase in 2022 - 2023. As well as increasing caseloads and referrals the service undertook 35% more assessments than in the previous year, the majority of which (70%) were alcohol related. We fell just short of the national waiting time target for drug and alcohol treatment but were within 2% of the target. Our performance was impacted by staffing availability.

The service has been focusing on delivering a recovery focused approach and implementing the Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) standards. We are on track well in relation to delivery of MAT standards 1 – 5 and are now working on plans for standards 6 – 10. You can see detailed reports on progress and action on the HSCP web site under reports but in summary the service improved on delivery in all MAT standard areas as illustrated below.

- 1 = Same day access to treatment
2 = choice
3 = assertive outreach and anticipatory care
4 = harm reduction focused approach
5 = retention in treatment

	2022	2023
MAT 1	RED	AMBER
MAT 2	AMBER	PROV GREEN
MAT 3	AMBER	AMBER
MAT 4	AMBER	PROV GREEN
MAT 5	AMBER	PROV GREEN

In addition to process and numerical reporting on the MAT standards, experiential information was gathered from service users, families and staff. This was undertaken by Scottish Drugs Forum based on surveys from Public Health Scotland. In order to capture experiential information on a more regular basis the service has developed feedback cards to capture the service user experience. These will be available in our own service locations, from third sector partners and online.

The partnership is also reviewing the commissioned Mental Health and Alcohol & Drugs recovery services to develop enhanced, holistic recovery focused services across adult mental health and alcohol and drugs recovery. Initial consultation and engagement sessions and a Provider Forum led to agreement from Healthcare Improvement Scotland to support plans to take forward a Collaborative Commissioning model. Agreement was also reached with Mental Health Network and Scottish Drugs Foundation to work on a collaborative basis on local service user engagement.

As part of our Drug Death Action Plan a focus of work has been to enhance joint working between the Community Mental Health Team and Alcohol and Drug Recovery Service. Joint protocols have been reviewed and updated and a series of joint training initiatives developed on trauma and substance misuse, motivational interviewing, children affected by substance misuse and 'Staying Alive'.

Good Practice Example

Alcohol and Drugs Recovery Service

The Alcohol and Drugs Recovery Service has developed a new Standard Operating Procedure that the Scottish Government are utilising as an example of good practice and sharing with other Alcohol and Drug Partnership areas.

Mental Health Services

Our mental health services have experienced a considerable increase in demand for statutory work from the previous year. During 2022 -2023 the Mental Health Officer (MHO) service has completed 119 Short Term Detention Certificates (STDC's) this is a considerable increase on the previous year when in comparison 97 STDC's were completed. This figure has been progressively increasing each year from 2020 - 2021 when 80 STDC's were completed and reflects similar sustained increases in referral demand upon the HSCP's Community Mental Health Team. The increase in STDCs has subsequently generated an increase in statutory reports e.g. Social Circumstances Reports and 59 Compulsory Treatment Order (CTO) Applications, which were made; 39 CTO applications were completed in the previous year. There have also been a small number Transfer for Treatment Directions and Assessment Orders, under the Criminal Procedures Scotland Act 1995, with subsequent reports being completed for Court. During the past year the Mental Health Officer service has also experienced an increase in crisis and emergency situations for people experiencing mental distress and illness. There have been 54 Emergency Detention certificates completed, which again highlights rising figures each year; 2021 - 2022; 45 EDC's and 2020 - 2021; 20 EDC's.

Over the past year, there have been 119 suitability reports completed by Mental Health Officers for court in respect of Guardianship applications under Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000. This has sharply risen from 65 in reports completed in the previous year. There are currently a total of 218 private Guardianship Orders being supervised by the Local Authority. The CSWO is currently welfare guardian to 25 individuals.

During the year we undertook a detailed self-evaluation of our application of the Adults with Incapacity Act. This led to a refresh of our procedures which was supported in roll out by refreshed joint training for staff. Our Social Work Mental Health team have delivered additional Adults with Incapacity Training this year across all adult services in support of the delivery of our 'Authority to Discharge' action plan. Further training has been planned with other agencies e.g. Housing in October 2023 and we will be looking to role this out to NHS staff to promote best practice in terms of the use of 13ZA/Guardianship Orders for discharge from hospital, and additional supervision of guardianship training is also being planned across all Adult services teams in terms of best practice.

In terms of the development of our MHO service we have established a working group this year explore the development of Advanced Practitioner Status for Practice Assessors and Link Workers to support the Practice Assessor role. The SSSC and Scottish Government are part of this group alongside West of Scotland Local Authorities and Learning Network. Two new Mental Health Officers successfully completed the MHO Course this year, with Distinction and Merit Awards respectively.

Positively, over the year we have consistently exceeded the 90% target of the percentage of people waiting less than 18 weeks to start treatment using a psychological therapy and have made good use of online and self-directed Cognitive Behavioural Therapy options. Our mental health and drug and alcohol services have made consistent and effective use of service user feedback to continue to shape service development and a number of changes to service location/time/model have been made based on feedback received, improving and tailoring the services to best meet the needs of those who use them.

Services for people with learning disabilities and autism

2022 – 2023 has been a very significant year for our services for people with learning disabilities. During the year the long awaited move to our new purpose built resource centre within the beautiful new Allander Leisure Centre was completed. People who access this service now experience a modern, high quality, fit for purpose setting which offers reciprocal access arrangements, progressive activity-based therapies and extensive accessible resources. The new centre is founded on the principles of a community based approach to service delivery and the feedback from people who attend has been really positive.

The local Autism Strategy 2014 – 2024 has been reviewed this year, and actions have been identified to further develop our autism services and supports in East Dunbartonshire. It is noted that there are now more children and young people being identified earlier at school, and being referred for diagnosis and that more adults are requesting a diagnosis from their GP. Our HSCP Local Area Coordination (LAC) Service continues to provide a valuable resource for adults with autism and also support an ASD Carers Group. Information about routes to diagnosis are also available on the LAC page of the EDC website. More options are now available for young people with autism, such as Tigers, Street League, Enable and 'No-one left behind' as well as support to access college courses. Our formal LAC support is based on an asset-based approach to working alongside autistic individuals and their families and offers sign-posting, future planning, access to formal and informal services, third sector supports and employment opportunities.

Good Practice Example

Dementia in people with learning disabilities

In line with Scotland's National Dementia Strategy, the team has been contributing towards the development of dementia support for people with learning disabilities. We have contributed towards the development of a new care plan guidance resource for Post Diagnostic Support. We have also been involved in the development and delivery of a dementia training programme, in line with the 'Promoting Excellence' framework, which is being rolled out across NHSGGC Learning Disability Services.

In the coming year we will focus on reviewing how we provide supported living to people with learning disabilities to ensure we are able to take forward the commitments in the Coming Home report and support as many people as possible to live in their own communities in suitable settings, rather than experience extended hospital stays or placements far from their local area.

Criminal Justice

During the year we implemented new diversion guidance and extended the range of Diversion from Prosecution options available to the Courts as a disposal, working alongside our Community Justice Partnership, aiming to ensure that individual needs are met at the earliest opportunity, to enable people to desist from crime. Our Youth Justice team have also had an increase in staff training in AIM3 which is a dynamic assessment model that helps practitioners to assess harmful sexual behaviours. This has also supported more diversion, with practitioners able to manage risks within the community.

The service was able to allocate 100% of report requests to a social worker on time, and submitted 95% of court reports on time. In addition, 93% of people began their unpaid work placement within seven days of receiving a Community Payback Order, against our target of 80%. During the year the service was also able to address the remaining backlog of the near 6000 Unpaid Work Hours which built up while COVID restrictions were imposed. The backlog was successfully cleared by quarter 3 of the year. We have seen a significantly acute increase in the number of MAPPA cases being supervised, by around 100% over the last year, as Courts work on clearing their own backlogs of cases. This increased upturn is largely attributed to prosecutions for technologically mediated offences although we have also seen an increase in terms of risk level with MAPPA 2 cases almost doubling to five cases. In terms of performance, the service is managing the supervision of these cases effectively and robustly in line with the MAPPA framework and National Outcomes.

Performance Indicator	Target	2020 - 2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
% of Criminal Justice Social Work Reports submitted to Court by due date	95%	98%	98%	95%
The % of individuals beginning a work placement within 7 working days of receiving a Community Payback Order	80%	Service ceased in line with Government guidance	83%	93%
The % of cases allocated within 2 working days	100%	99%	100%	100%

During the year the service successfully put in place the required arrangements to ensure use of the ViSOR system. Physical, IT, procedure and employment contract arrangements were completed to enable the appropriate installation of the system, and the ability for staff to use it as part of their core work roles. In time we will adapt our arrangements, where required, to enable a transition to the MAPPS system.

We also increased delivery of the Moving Forward Making Changes treatment programme for sex offenders, to reduce risk to the public.

Good Practice Example

Wayfinder – Peer Navigator for Justice Clients

Working in collaboration with the Alcohol and Drug Partnership and the Community Justice Partnership, Justice Social Work services secured funding from the Drugs Death Task Force, to commission a Peer Navigator post to enhance justice clients' ability to access alcohol and drugs services with a view to improving outcomes and reducing drug deaths.

The Peer Navigator has lived expertise and uses relationship-based practice to develop supportive and meaningful relationships with clients, many of whom are often difficult to engage. This service is aimed at men subject to community-based disposals and those returning to the community after custodial sentences.

Since coming into post the navigator has supported 15 clients to positive destinations.

We have been notified by the Care Inspectorate that there will be a Scotland wide thematic inspection of Prison Based Social Work. We will be required to input into this process when requested. The final report will not take the form of an area by area inspection report, rather it will be a thematic reflection on services across Scotland. We very much welcome this inspection, recognising that it is many years since Prison Based Social Work was independently scrutinised and the scale, complexity and volume of the professional task involved has grown considerably in that period of time. We hope the thematic inspection will draw out recommendations that will support us to do this important statutory service, with our partners in the Scottish Prison Service, as well as possible.

Community Justice Partnership

The East Dunbartonshire Community Justice Partnership is a collaborative multi-agency forum with a shared vision for a safer East Dunbartonshire. In 2022 – 2023 the partnership continued to hold virtual meetings, and sub group meetings, and to benefit from positive engagement with all partners.

At a national level the partnership contributed to the development of the new National Strategy for Community Justice, the Community Justice Performance Framework, and the Community Justice Improvement Tool, and continued to engage well with Community Justice Scotland and Scottish Government Community Justice Division.

Locally, a Strategic Needs and Strengths Assessment for Community Justice in East Dunbartonshire was completed and the partnership developed its 2023 - 2026 Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan. We also delivered 70% of the 20 actions and activities in our interim delivery plan within timescales, with 6 (30%) ongoing and carried forward to 2023 - 2024.

At an individual level the partnership's multi-agency Reintegration Group case managed 32 residents released from a custodial sentence back into the community, with support, between April 2022 and March 2023 and achieved 69% engagement of individuals referred through the group to alcohol and drug recovery services, and a positive outcome for 79% of the individuals referred through the group to the Housing and Homelessness Service. 47% of released residents also had a statutory Justice social work intervention.

Our multi-agency Prevention, Intervention and Diversion Group was at the heart of increasing intervention options for Diversion from Prosecution for clients and worked to deliver innovative approaches to address the complex needs and inequalities that affect our residents who are in contact with, and on the cusp of entering, the justice system. A post diversion questionnaire has been developed and piloted to gather the views of people on diverted from prosecution and

make improvements based on feedback. During the reporting year, there were 36 Diversion cases started, 86% (31) were completed successfully. Eight of these were Young People.

Good Practice Example

“Make it Work”

Having a job is considered to be one of the main positive influences on an individual's ability to not reoffend. It not only improves their prospects of securing appropriate accommodation, healthcare, and more secure finances, but it can provide them with new peer groups, and help build their resilience and a positive self-image.

In collaboration with the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) the Criminal Justice Services and Community Justice Partnership have introduced the ‘Make it Work’ East Dunbartonshire employability project for people in contact with the Justice system, delivered by the Lennox Partnership.

A dedicated employment advisor has been employed and 21 people started on the first year of the programme in 2022/23, with 14 gaining a qualification necessary for ongoing employment and nine people undertook a work placement.

Self-directed support

We continue to have a strong focus on empowering individuals to make choices about the extent to which they wish to direct their own support. The second year of the local Self Directed Support (SDS) Implementation Plan 2021 – 2024 saw the HSCP:

- Develop a qualitative consultation survey to establish carers' and customers' views on SDS processes;
- Participate in the re-commencement of the SDS Stakeholders Group hosted by the local independent SDS information and advice service;
- Establish a creative and innovative support plan directory to aid Social Work practitioners to explore less traditional means of supporting customers and carers;
- Following temporary arrangements established during the pandemic period, formalising online contracting processes for SDS Option 1 (Direct Payments);
- Explore opportunities to develop e-modules focusing on ‘Good Conversations’ and ‘Outcomes’;
- Commence a training programme to develop in-house Social Work practitioner trainers in the subject of ‘Just Enough Support’;
- Review the Single Shared Assessment with a view to adopting a more user-friendly, outcome focused template;
- Continue to provide SDS training across a multitude of different agencies;
- Review and update the SDS information booklet and publish on the SDS page of the Council website;
- Record an information training video relating to the auditing of SDS Option 1 (Direct Payments) and publish on You Tube.

Following the introduction of the national SDS Standards Framework, the HSCP has been working with social work and health teams, and third sector organisations to establish a baseline position against each standard and its core components. Over the next few years this will provide the HSCP with the opportunity to gain an understanding of our position in respect of the continued implementation and development of SDS and will support the review and development of our local SDS Plan for the period 2024 – 2027.

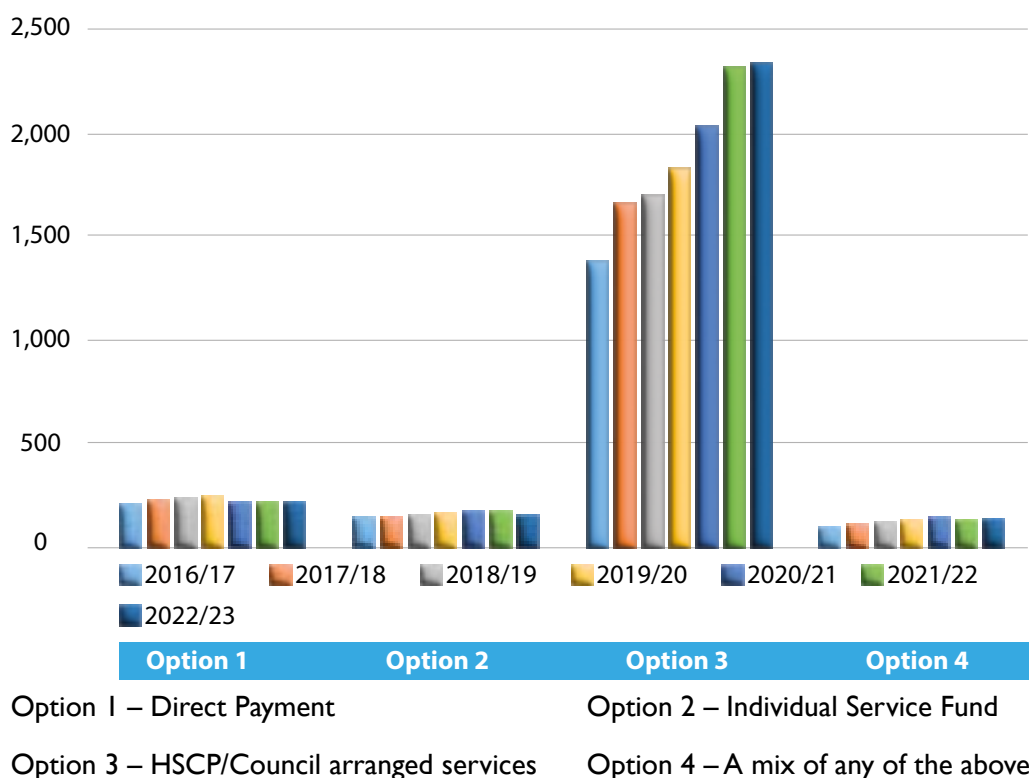
Similar to last year, statistical data for the SDS options shows the continued national impact in respect of the recruitment and retention of social care staff, including Personal Assistants, throughout the social care sector.

SDS Option 1 (Direct Payments) shows a slight increase in uptake, 3%, during 2022 - 2023, indicative of the national crisis in respect of the recruitment and retention of social care staff, in particular for Option 1, employment of Personal Assistants which is the preferred delivery option for many of the Option 1 customers and their carers. At one point during 2022 - 2023, the local independent SDS information and support service were supporting the recruitment of over 40 Personal Assistant vacancies.

SDS Option 2 (Individual Service Fund) was the only SDS option in 2022 - 2023 to reduce, (13% decrease in uptake). Again, indicative of the experience that customers and their carers find when trying to source social care providers who can deliver a flexible social care support package.

SDS Option 3 (Arranged Services) continues to see a year on year increase (approximately 0.5% increase in uptake). When customers and carers experience difficulties sourcing social care services or recruitment Personal Assistants, they often turn to the HSCP to arrange the support, finding the national recruitment issues too time consuming and onerous to deal with.

SDS Options



Support for Carers

In the year we refreshed and re-launched our on line community asset map, which is an interactive tool to support people to find local groups and facilities for their own and others' health and wellbeing. The map is populated by community members and local partners and can be found on the following link [East Dunbartonshire Asset Map \(eastdunassets.org.uk\)](http://EastDunbartonshireAssetMap(eastdunassets.org.uk)).

Good Practice Example

AskSARA is a self-help website which gives impartial expert advice and information on products and equipment to help make daily living easier for older and disabled people. We continue to promote and raise awareness of the AskSARA service. There has been a 33% increase in activity from last year.

The local Carers Strategy has been reviewed over the course of the year, with consultation and engagement on the content of the new plan for 2023 – 2026. This new strategy has been developed with the full involvement of carers, third sector partners and wider stakeholders. Our new Carers Strategy reflects the aspirations of the new national strategy but locates itself as an expression of local needs and priorities within East Dunbartonshire. This new plan will be published early in 2023 – 2024 along with a supporting action plan. When reviewing and updating the existing Adult Carer Support Plan, it was concluded that it didn't fully capture personal outcomes. So we worked in partnership with Carers Link and a small group of Social Work practitioners to update the Adult Carers Support Plan, to more fully record personal outcomes. The group also developed a new Review document designed to report on the extent to which carers' personal outcomes were being achieved, both informal and formal.

Good Practice Example

Income Maximisation

Over the past five years the Income Maximisation Service has generated a total of £3,898,000 of income which has directly benefited East Dunbartonshire residents. In 2022 the Health Improvement Team devised and developed a digital QR code to support the Income Maximisation service. The service can now receive service user referrals directly from the new digital pathway incorporating a quicker self-referral route, streamlining the process and making the service more accessible for a wider range of individuals.

Advocacy

Social work services recognise the importance of independent advocacy for service users and their families and carers. Advocacy is often focused on individuals who require support in their engagement with public bodies. However, advocacy also plays an important part in our engagement with service users and carers in respect of helping shape the social care marketplace.

We have in place long standing arrangements for advocacy services for adults and in addition, the National Practice Model for Children's Hearing has seen the introduction of an advocacy service for all children attending Hearings. The practice model has four main principles:

- Advocacy puts the child or young person first
- Advocacy seeks to understand and explain what is going on
- Advocacy workers only work with the child or young person
- Advocacy is for all children and young people who wish to take up the offer of Advocacy

In East Dunbartonshire, Partners in Advocacy (PIA) were successful in their bid to be the primary provider for Children's Hearings, with local implementation from October 2020. The service provides support for all children between 5-18 years old for all new or review Hearings.

Advocacy will engage with the child/young person on a voluntary basis, using age appropriate resources to illicit the child/young person's views. They will support the child/young person through all stages of the Hearing process. Together PIA and Children & Families social work service have worked collaboratively to promote this service amongst our children and young people to ensure all have equitable access to this service. This has included PIA attending managers meetings, our team meetings as well as completing a whole service briefing. This way, our children and young people will receive independent support to have their direct views shared at Hearings while having decisions explained to them by someone independent from the Hearing process.

Our Children at Risk of Harm inspection noted that we had a range of advocacy services available in East Dunbartonshire but suggested we could take a more strategic approach to provision, signposting, and rising awareness of the benefits of advocacy with staff. We followed these points up in our inspection action plan and in addition during 2022 - 2023, have been an active representative on the NHSGGC joint working group which had responsibility for reviewing and updating a Board area wide Joint Advocacy Strategy. The updated Strategy covers the period 2022 – 2026 and adopts the principles contained within the 'Guide for Commissioners' developed by the Scottish Government. The Joint Advocacy Strategy will serve as a guiding document which we will then underpin with a local advocacy delivery plan to be drafted during 2023 - 2024.

Complaints and Duty of Candour

We take complaints seriously and have a robust process for investigating and responding to complaints about social work and social care services.

Complaints during the year were as follows

	Total	Outcome
Stage 1	24	10 not upheld
		7 partially upheld
		* upheld
		* Resolved
		* withdrawn
Stage 1 Extended	*	* not upheld
		* partially upheld
		0 resolved
		0 upheld
Stage 2	12	* not upheld
		8 partially upheld
		* upheld
Stage 2 Extended	6	* not upheld
		* partially upheld
		* resolved
		0 upheld
Total	46	

Complaint themes broadly covered services/standards, staff attitude and behaviour and disagreement with a service decision. For the year 2022 – 2023 there are no duty of candour incidents to report for social work and social care services.



Challenges and improvements

4. Challenges and improvements

In setting out the CSWO annual report many of the challenges and improvements are woven throughout the body of the report. In this section a few significant points of note are highlighted that are additional to the body of the main report.

Positive inspection outcomes

Throughout the year we have been pleased to be able to report on positive inspection findings for both our local registered services and our strategic and partnership approach. We are particularly pleased to note that our Care at Home service achieved grades of 5 'very good' in all areas in the most recent inspection. This is a huge credit to the staff who have been working over the past number of years in the most challenging circumstances imaginable in terms of growing demand, COVID restrictions and winter pressures. We are also very pleased with our grading of 'Good' in our Children at Risk of Harm inspection.

National Care Service Uncertainty

The subject of the National Care Service has been with us for some time now but we are still unclear as to what it will really mean for us in the future. We welcome the commitment given to a human rights based approach to social work and social care services and to a focus on improving outcomes for people. However, as of yet, there is little on offer that helps us understand how this will be achieved. While we appreciate the slowdown in decision making at a government level, allowing greater time to co-design an end product designed to meet people's needs, the slow down also means an increased period of uncertainty for staff and living with uncertainty about the future does not support people to focus as best they can on the roles they have and the system they work within in the present. We look forward to more clarity in 2023 – 2024.

A challenging financial future

Throughout this report there is reflection on the upturn in demand for a wide range of social work and social care services. This has to be delivered in the context that sees the unit costs of service delivery rising and the available public funding to deliver services with, flat lined or reducing. Combined, we face a significant financial challenge for the future. During the coming year we will undertake community consultation on service priorities and will strive to work with partners to identify further scope for change and transformation for efficiency in services however, it seems unlikely that the future will not see changes to what can be delivered, to remain within budget.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Trafficked Children

We are committed to the support and recovery of our young UASC and Trafficked Children, and we are very pleased to be able to say that those we are already supporting are thriving in our local communities. However, we are experiencing real challenge in resources for this work. Throughout Scotland there is a pressure on placements and a lack of accommodation and support services.

	2020 - 2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
UASC – starting to be Looked After	0	*	6

East Dunbartonshire, as with all other Scottish Local Authority areas, is expected to offer placements equivalent of 1% of our child population. That equates to 22 placements based on current figures. Finding safe, sustainable and sufficient resources to deliver on this commitment is a significant challenge and one that we will be working closely with all key stakeholders on in the coming year.

Growing workforce challenges

We will explore our workforce challenges in greater detail in section 6 of this report but we want to highlight growing challenges in recruiting sufficient social work and social care staff. There are a range of factors that impact this, but the net effect is to hamper our ability to meet people's needs and deliver the best services we can. This will be an area of close attention in coming years.



Resources

5. Resources

The HSCP was able to manage service delivery within the budget set for 2022 - 2023 in delivery of our strategic priorities. This included reporting on and maximising the funding available for specific priorities including the Primary Care Improvement Plan, Mental Health Action 15, Annual Delivery Plan, Mental Health Recovery and Renewal and Adult Winter Planning.

Managing public sector austerity and reducing financial resources within a climate of increasing demand for services is a key risk area for the Council and the Health and Social Care Partnership. Like other local authorities, East Dunbartonshire Council has faced increasingly difficult financial challenges over recent years, and the reduction in public sector budgets will continue over at least a medium term financial planning period. In addition, COVID has created a wide range of cost pressure and service demand implications, some of which are very much still emerging, such as the impact of delayed access to services.

Our demographics present a challenge through our ageing population and increased populations of people with learning and / or physical disabilities and multiple long term health conditions, which now include the impacts of COVID recovery, long COVID and the deconditioning, stress and distress that the COVID restrictions have brought. This challenge is seen in community settings and also in our ageing prison population, for whom the increasing needs for what would otherwise have been community care support and community equipment, is a growing issue for consideration.

There is also a growing challenge to support people's mental health and wellbeing, to address Scotland's significant drug related deaths, and to respond to increasingly sophisticated types of offending and abuse including an increased rate of on-line causes of harm, and issues such as trafficking and child sexual exploitation. Responses are essential, but can be complex and costly.

There are also areas of government policy change that bring service demand costs, and while they are welcome from the point of view of what they seek to achieve, they are unfunded, leading to questions as to how they can be applied. Examples include the extension of rights to aftercare support for looked after and accommodated young people from 21 to 26 years of age, and the presumption against prison sentences of less than 12 months, which results in increasing demand on criminal justice services to manage increasing numbers of offenders in the community. More recently, we have also seen a significant upturn in service demand supporting asylum seekers and refugees, and particularly unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people. While we always seek to respond with compassion and a person-centred approach, it is notable that funding provided for these services does not meet the true cost of delivery.

The financial performance of the Health & Social Care Partnership, including social work and social care services is regularly reported to the Health and Social Care Partnership Board and to both East Dunbartonshire Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, as the key funding partners.

The HSCP aimed to increase adult social work capacity in line with the Scottish Government funding allocation and implement a revised operating model which is fit for purpose and aligned to the strategic priorities of the HSCP. Not all posts were filled as planned, due to resourcing issues and recruitment. Work continues to progress these roles.

Social care service provision in East Dunbartonshire continues to be a mixture of commissioned and in-house delivery. Over 70% of services are provided by the third, independent and private sectors, with the remainder provided in-house by the Council on behalf of the Health and Social Care Partnership. Whilst market fragility remains a concern, enhanced monitoring and oversight

arrangements are in place with an emphasis on long term viability and sustainability. Looking ahead, our focus and priority is to strengthen partnership working with key stakeholders via our commitment to further develop and embed a collaborative commission approach.

Overall, a balanced budget was able to be set for 2023 – 2024 which included a savings programme underwritten by general reserves however, this is an approach that can only apply for a fixed period of time, while reserves remain. It is anticipated that the years ahead will see significant financial challenges in the context of rising demand for services, increasing unit cost of service delivery and the very constrained overall public funding pot available. We work hard to assess the financial position and risks in an ongoing manner and to develop a medium term financial plan to support delivery of our key strategic priorities. During the year 2023 – 2024 we will also undertake public consultation on service priorities, to inform future planning.

Performance of the registered services in our area can be found at appendix I

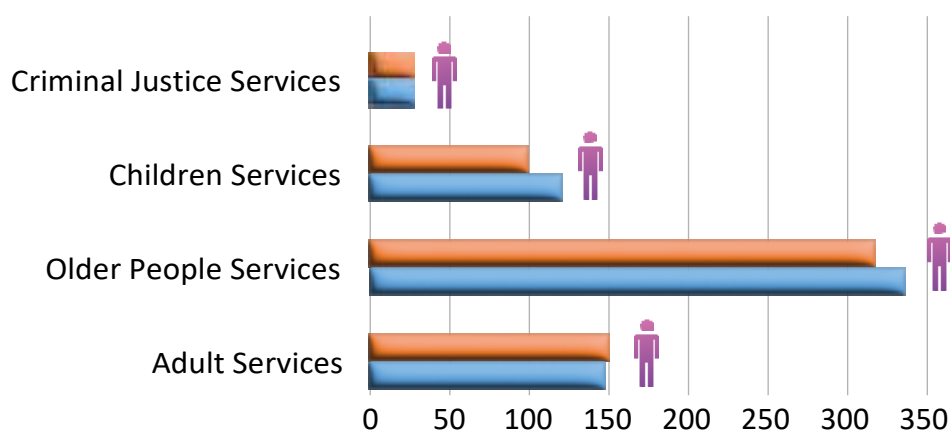


Workforce

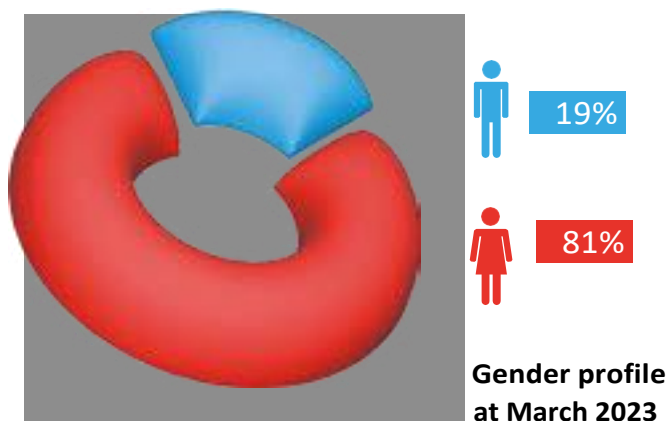
6. Workforce

East Dunbartonshire HSCP had 588 Social Work and Social Care staff across our services as of March 2023, which was a reduction of 37 from April 2022. Although this is a slight decrease in headcount it does demonstrate the challenging recruitment conditions that all Social Work and Social Care services are experiencing at this time.

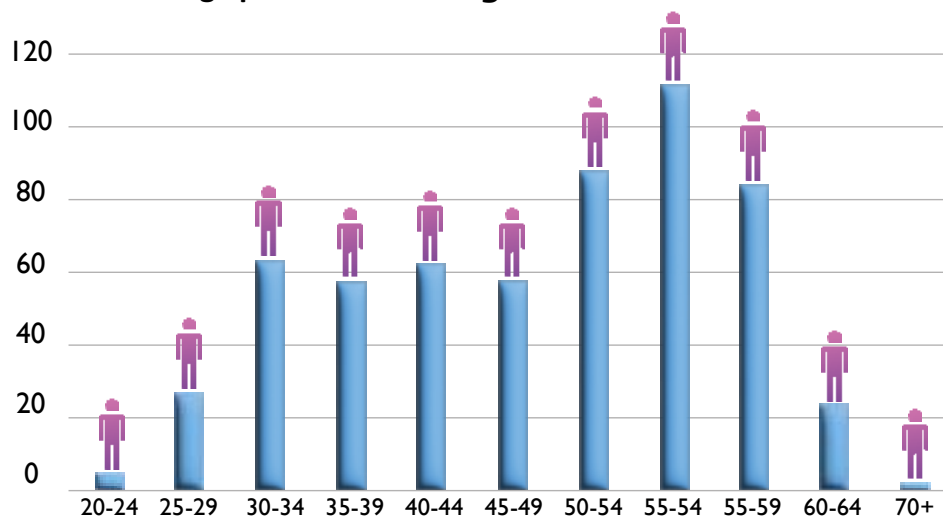
Staff by Care group over 2022 - 23



In relation to some of our workforce demographics that can be seen in the tables below, we have a predominantly older workforce with very few staff under 25. In relation to gender we have a predominantly female workforce at over 87%, whilst our work pattern is split almost 50:50 Full-time to part-time.



Age profile of staffing at March 2023



The HSCP continues to participate in Council and the NHS Scotland iMatter survey annually and demonstrates very effective responses from our staff, with over 65% of staff responding and showing an Employee Engagement Index of 78. Some of the responses to specific questions are highlighted below as they show staff enjoy working in East Dunbartonshire:

- I'm clear about my duties and responsibilities - 88%
- I am treated with dignity and respect as an individual - 86%
- My work gives me a sense of achievement - 84%
- I feel my direct line manager cares about my health and wellbeing - 87%
- My line manager is sufficiently approachable – 89%
- I would recommend my team to be a good one to be part of - 86%

Workforce Planning:

In April 2022, the HSCP published its three year Workforce Plan for Health & Social Care 2022 - 2025. As required by Scottish Government, the plan is aligned with the HSCP three year Strategic Plan and looks at the many drivers for workforce and the workforce challenges at this time. The plan was also aligned with the Workforce Strategic for Health & Social Care launched by Scottish Government to address the five key Pillars of Workforce: Plan, Attract, Train, Employ and Nurture. The first year of our workforce plan was focused on Staff Wellbeing, Service recovery from COVID, development of a recruitment strategy and trying to hone in on some of the key areas of growth for staff recruitment.

In developing our recruitment strategy it was clear that it was in three stages;

- Firstly, ensuring that we could get our message heard in a busy employment marketplace by making best use of social media and local radio to highlight what was good about working in East Dunbartonshire
- Secondly, ensuring that staff induction and initial training was effective and welcoming. All new staff starting in the HSCP receive a welcome pack, which supports our values into practice
- Thirdly, the plan is about retaining staff, ensuring that staff feel supported, are appropriately trained and have opportunities for development

During the year we were able to take forward our plans to co-locate our children and families social work staff with the children's health services staff. This co-location is now in place and staff report it has enabled improved communication, collaboration, and relationship building.

Foster carers are an important part of the services that are delivered in the local area, if not actually part of the workforce. We have observed that our balance of care in terms of percentage of children being looked after in the community could be higher, sitting below the national performance indicator target. Accordingly, we will be undertaking a further foster carer recruitment campaign in the coming year.

During 2022 – 2023 we received additional investment from Scottish Government for our core adult social care and social work services. Capacity has improved across many areas of function, but persistent difficulties in recruiting to Social Worker, Mental Health Officer, and Social Care posts continues to present challenges. These challenges have impacted negatively on our capacity to respond to the level and complexity of presenting need. We have implemented pro-active recruitment campaigns, offered pathways to work process for students on placement

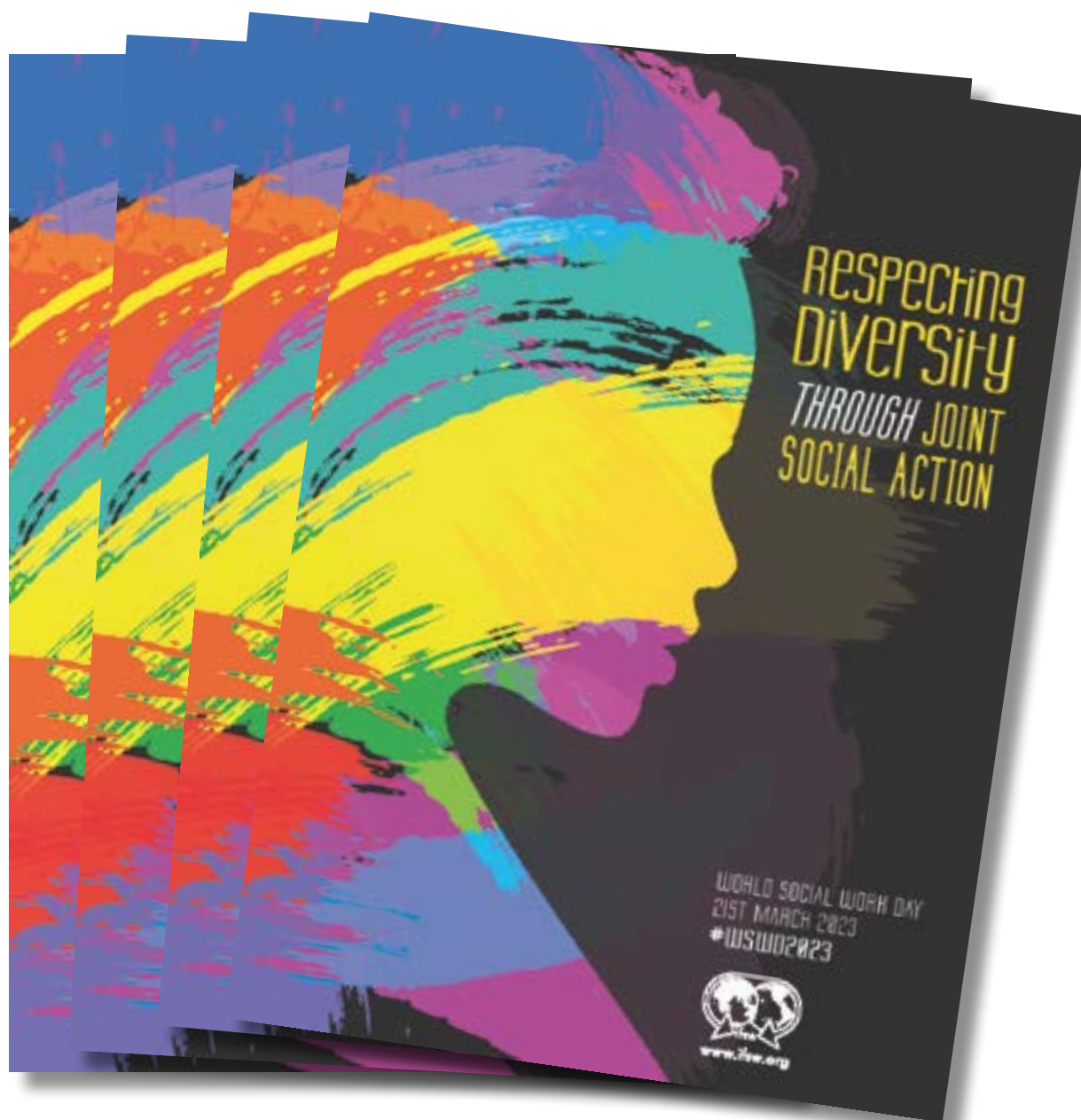
and considered how Mental Health Officers can be remunerated in a way that enables them to continue to operate as front line staff while being paid appropriately for the high level of autonomy with which they work however, challenges remain, for us, as they do across Scotland. The National Care Service, in whatever form it finally takes, must consider workforce, in its widest sense, as a national priority action area.

During the year we also gave a great deal of thought to supporting staff with new COVID ways of working and then returning to a higher level of office based working. Risk assessments and the review of guidance in relation to physical distancing and mask wearing continued to be undertaken throughout the year in line with the changing guidance from the Scottish Government. Guidance within buildings has been aligned to a blended working approach where staff work both at home and in the workplace. This continued to be reviewed and changes to location of teams within building were put in place when necessary, to ensure maximum opportunities for integrated working. An Organisational Development plan was put in place to support staff returning to building based working arrangements with continued communication with staff throughout 2022 - 2023.

In relation to staff wellbeing, the HSCP started the year with a series of virtual sessions during April to support National Stress Awareness Month, Moving on to Men's Health, Cycle to Work and the opening of our new Cycle Garage at a number of sites. We also successfully bid for some resources to fund a supply of snack food that staff could access and finally finished the year with our celebrations of World Social Work Day in March 2023.

Sadly, we were again unable to meet as a body of social workers to celebrate World Social Work Day in 2023, but we once again marked it. The goal of the day is to highlight the importance of social work and its impact on people's lives both locally and internationally. We marked the day in two ways locally. We again published a newsletter highlighting the achievements and good practice within our teams in the past year. This year's theme asked us to reflect on, and celebrate how communities, and we as a community of practitioners, can change the society around us to be more inclusive. We met virtually to hear from Dr Gillian Ferguson on "How Social Workers Learn in the Workplace".

An example of how we are approaching different ways of supporting workplace learning and development is through our Local Practitioners' Forum. This was re-established in 2022 by a SW Practitioners Committee with the support of the NQSW Coordinator. Continuing operational pressures meant it was really challenging for Committee members drawn from six busy fieldwork teams to find the time to attend meetings. Despite these pressures, two learning events were held successfully during the year. The first was organised by a senior practitioner in one of the adult locality teams, who arranged for a Consultant Addiction Psychiatrist to give an overview of addictions and address some of the misconceptions of the speciality. The second was organised by a social worker in the Care Home Support Team, who arranged for the Senior Dementia Consultant at the Dementia Services Development Centre to talk about dementia and its implications for cognition and person-centred care. The Consultant spoke about the importance of Lifestory, a practice tool which is more usually linked with working with children and provided case examples of utilising Lifestory information in care planning for people exhibiting distressed behaviour.



We also had a focus on support to Team managers and Team leaders. We developed a MS Teams site which had regular updates that could support staff in relation to mental and physical health, financial support resources, eating on a budget and making good use of the outdoors. We also produced a number of posters for these resources which staff could access through the use of QR codes, making them more accessible. The HSCP has an active Staff Health group that continually looks to support new initiatives and promote areas like the National wellbeing Hub.

In September 2022, the HSCP launched their local staff awards, which had attracted 36 nominations across the five categories: Employee of the Year; Team of the Year; Volunteer of the Year; Leader of the Year and Innovation of the Year. The awards panel highlighted the quality and range of nominations which showcased the work that our staff undertake in ensuring that services users are safe, valued and treated as individuals with dignity and respect. The awards presentation in February 2023 was an idea opportunity to thank our staff for their work at what has been an extremely difficult time.



Training, learning and development

7. Training, learning and development

In setting out the CSWO annual report many of the training, learning and development aspects that should be reflected in this report are woven throughout the body in service sections. In this section a few significant points of note are highlighted that are additional to the body of the main report

During the year we rolled out Safe and Together training to enable staff to implement the Safe and Together model which is designed to support victims of domestic violence and keep children safe and together with a protective parent. We also rolled out Just Enough Support training as previously outlined in the report.

We refreshed our social work supervision policy to take account of the increase in use of technology and remote working, and to take account of the work styles that have emerged post-pandemic as new ways of working for the future.

Over the course of the year our Public Protection Team wrote and implemented a Learning and Development Framework to ensure the upskilling of our workforce. This covers a wide range of learning opportunities.

Practice Learning and Education

We provided placements to 14 students in 2022-2023 two of these on a blended basis to manage the demands on fieldwork teams. Six students were asked to complete 120-day placements, as they had not had a first placement the previous year due to pandemic measures adopted by the universities. This means they started with us in August and finished their placements at Easter. The eight other students enjoyed a more conventional length of placement although placement dates had to be re-arranged to enable us to cope with the demand, which meant that several placements did not complete until the summer. We expect a full return to pre-pandemic placement arrangements next year, and a further increase in the number of students looking for a placement.

The rising demand for placements also means there is an increased demand for practice educator support. In addition to our full-time practice teacher, we rely on practice educators based in frontline posts to support placements. This year we have sponsored two social workers to train for the Professional Development Award in Practice Learning which will enable them to take on this vital role.

Sixteen teams in total were involved in supporting placements. Teams continue to voice their enthusiasm for hosting student placements, which are also viewed as supporting a learning culture within the team and encouraging workers to pursue opportunities for their own learning and development as link workers and practice educators. The quality of our practice learning service is seen as an important recruitment and retention measure within the service's current Learning and Development strategy.

Newly Qualified Social Workers Supported Year

We are continuing our involvement in the SSSC's Early Implementation Project. The core components of the NQSW Supported Year aim to ensure that NQSWs have appropriate induction opportunities, supervision and mentoring support, protected time and protected caseload to enable them to plan and focus on their professional learning and development. Our NQSW Coordinator has supported the NQSWs and their supervisors through the key stages and collaborated with the NQSWs to develop a bespoke programme of learning inputs running from MHO work to MAPPA. Four of our NQSWs have completed the Supported Year and another five are at different stages.

The learning and experiences of our NQSWs, managers and mentors is helping to inform national arrangements and guidance for the formal rollout of the NQSW Supported Year across Scotland from autumn 2024. Feedback to date indicates that NQSWs, their managers and other professionals think that the Supported Year will provide significant benefits for social workers, social work services as well as our service users in the years to come.

Good Practice Example

Trauma Informed Practice

We are committed to embedding trauma informed practice during 2022 - 2023, recognising where people are affected by trauma and adversity, and being better able to respond in ways that prevent further harm and support recovery. Staff training has been rolled out and work has begun to improve clinical and service user spaces to appear more user friendly with framed pictures, furnishings and softer lighting. Noise outside rooms has also reduced by minimising staff use of the corridors. In November 2022, we appointed a Trauma Informed Coordinator to progress this work and support the Aces and Trauma Collaborative.

8. Looking ahead

The pressure on delivering social work and social care services has continued to be intense throughout the period of this report, due in part to the continuing impact and consequences of the Coronavirus pandemic. With fluctuating emergency response arrangements and the impact on services and staffing levels, our services have continued to adapt to a fast pace of change and respond quickly to frequently changing circumstances and regulations. This has been particularly felt during the winter months, when pressure on services, and particularly those that interlink with health services for older adults, vulnerable people and carers, was exceptional, contributed to by a return to high influenza rates and the rebounding of demand that was inevitably under-presented during successive periods of lockdown. It is clear that it will take a period of time for health and social care capacity to rebalance and recover from the impact of the last three years. Our social work and social care staff have risen to these challenges and have continued to work to support the most vulnerable people in our community and promote social justice, equality and safety.

Looking ahead, it's clear that resilient services are dependent on a stable workforce, and a key priority will be for us to continue to develop innovative, attractive recruitment approaches and job roles to ensure we attract and retain a social work and social care workforce to meet local needs.

Innovation continues to be central to delivery of safe, effective and sustainable services and a key approach going forward will be to:

- Focus on early intervention and prevention
- Empower people and communities by encouraging more informal support networks at a local level
- Ensure that people have access to better information earlier, to allow them to access the right support at the right time, from the right person.

These developments should deliver better outcomes for people and will also make for a more efficient, sustainable system of care and support. The Health and Social Care partnership has sought to develop and implement a model of community-led support locally based on best practice, which seeks to reduce waiting lists and divert needs to alternative effective service options. We will continue this focus, alongside ongoing development of locality based planning and working, as our model for the future.

Many of our next steps for the future are contained in the relevant service sections above, but woven throughout our plans is also a commitment to building the voices of people with experience of services into our improvement methodology and ensuring that we can demonstrate the impact those voices make on how services are designed and delivered.



Performance of our Registered Services

Appendix I – Performance of our Registered Services

Performance of Registered Services

The partnership commissions and provides a range of registered care services to meet assessed care needs. All registered care services are regulated and evaluated by the Care Inspectorate. The following grading system is used;

Grade 6 – Excellent	Grade 3 – Adequate
Grade 5 – Very good	Grade 2 – Weak
Grade 4 – Good	Grade 1 – Unsatisfactory

During the pandemic, the Care Inspectorate narrowed its inspection programme to focus on high-risk services such as care homes, however, during the past year, the Care Inspectorate gradually resumed inspections across all registered services resulting in an increase in local inspections and revision to grades – which are captured in the table below:

Service	Wellbeing	Leadership	Staffing	Setting	Care Planning
HSCP / Council In-house Registered Services					
Ferndale Care Home for Children & Young People	5	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	6
John Street House	5	4	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Homecare Service	5	5	5	Not Assessed	5
Commissioned Services					
Supported Accommodation					
Cornerstone Community Care	5	5	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Living Ambitions	4	4	5	Not Assessed	5
Orems	5	4	4	Not Assessed	4
Quarriers Phase 3	4	4	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Quarriers Phase 2	5	4	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Quarriers Phase 1	5	4	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Real Life Options	4	3	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
The Richmond Fellowship	5	4	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Empower (Day Care)	5	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed

Service	Wellbeing	Leadership	Staffing	Setting	Care Planning
Care Homes					
Abbotsford House	How good is out care and support during COVID-19 pandemic - 4				
Milngavie Manor	4	4	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Antonine House	How good is out care and support during COVID-19 pandemic - 4				
Birdston Care Home	4	4	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Buchanan House	3	3	3	4	3
Buchanan Lodge	4	4	4	4	4
Campsie View	4	5	5	Not Assessed	4
Lilyburn	5	5	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	5
Mavisbank	4	5	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Mugdock	5	5	5	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Springvale	3	3	3	4	3
Westerton	4	4	4	4	4
Whitefield Lodge	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	3	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Ashfield	5	4	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Buttercup House	5	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	4
Twechar Respite	5	5	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed

Previous Inspection Model

Service	Care and Support	Environment	Staffing	Management and Leadership
HSCP / Council In-house Services				
Milan Day Service	5	Not Assessed	5	Not Assessed
Kelvinbank Day Service	5	Not Assessed	5	Not Assessed
Meiklehill & Pineview	5	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	5
Fostering Service	5	Not Assessed	5	4
Adoption Service	4	Not Assessed	5	4
Community Support Team for Children and Families	5	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	6
Commissioned - Supported Accommodation				
Key Housing Association	5	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	5
Commissioned - Day Care				
Birdston	6	Not Assessed	6	Not Assessed
Oakburn	6	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	6



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1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023