



# Your Council

News from Flintshire County Council



## December Edition 2015

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### Welcome

#### Thank you for getting involved

The Council has recently held seven well attended public engagement events across the county to inform people about the financial situation and threat to services the Council faces. People heard what the Council is doing to address that situation and how they can help us shape solutions to the significant challenges ahead.

"At each event strong support was shown for our strategy and our approach to making a case to the Welsh Government for its understanding and assistance in addressing the challenges faced by the Council as a result of UK Government fiscal policy. I would like to thank those people who attended the events and for their feedback" said Council Leader Councillor Aaron Shotton.

"Local communities have a big opportunity to play their part and work cooperatively in the future running of local facilities and services that the Council may no longer be able to provide. We are already supporting and working with local people to find local solutions to provide services and views expressed at the events reflect a real desire and growing momentum from individuals, groups and organisations to work with us to protect essential services and facilities at the heart of our communities"

Since the meetings took place the Council has been given details of its provisional financial settlement by Welsh Government. Councillor Shotton said:

"The Welsh Government has clearly accepted the strong case, passionately made by the Welsh Local Government family, for a 'slow down' in the scale and pace of budget cuts and I welcome that.

"Flintshire County Council has led the way in constructing a case for the defence of critical local services in the interests of those residents who value and rely upon them. Whilst there remains a significant budget challenge for this Council, the settlement announcement will reduce the previous shortfall of £21m by around £3.370m.

" While neighbouring Councils in England have been subjected to devastating cuts in recent years, we now have an opportunity to create a different reality for public services in Wales and we hope this welcome 'slow down' in the scale of local government budget cuts will mark the beginning of this process, we will continue to make the case for greater financial flexibility in how Flintshire County Council is funded in the interests of the residents and businesses we serve."

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### Spotlight on...

#### Annual Performance Report

Flintshire County Council's Annual Performance Report has been published.

It reviews the Council's good progress against the priorities set out in the Improvement Plan 2014/15 and summarises the achievements of the organisation. Last year the Council:

- Exceeded the majority of our targets and the promises made within the Tenants Choices document for the third year running, including: 966 heating upgrades, 1023 kitchen replacements and 127 bathroom replacements
- 1,235 referrals for reablement were completed in the year, with 78% of people requiring a reduced package of support or no further support following a period of reablement
- Implemented the Integrated Family Support Service
- Significant progress with the regeneration of Flint, including the demolition of the maisonettes which will be replaced by modern town centre housing
- Under the 21st Century Schools programme the full business case for the Band A programme was approved by Welsh Government, January 2015 for the development of the Holywell Learning Campus and the Post 16 centre at Coleg Cambria. Both construction projects have commenced.

- 99.6% of 16 year olds were in education, employment or training (the highest ever achieved) as a result of good partnership working and effective use of the Personal Support team.
- Completed the final phase of 20mph zones outside schools
- Completed the Deeside Corridor Synchronisation; improving traffic flow along the B5129 Deeside Corridor.
- Supported the creation of 1,012 new jobs within the Deeside Enterprise Zone, a significant increase on the 838 reported 2013/14.
- Supported seven businesses in Flintshire to set up, diversify or expand as social enterprises and developed a network of social enterprise support across North Wales teaming up with the other five local authorities and potential support agencies.
- Achieved good progress with the Flintshire Business Enterprise Network which is now notable best practice and is being promoted by Welsh Government for its excellence
- 59 individuals and 2 groups were given assistance and financial support to enable them to establish a new micro-enterprise through the Flintshire Enterprise Project.

Chief Executive Colin Everett said: 'The council continues to be a high performing authority which achieves well against its big objectives making good or satisfactory progress in 97% of them. In addition, the Council's performance which can be tracked over time shows a 63% improvement rate and ranks 'top' in 13% of measures.'

Councillor Billy Mullin, Cabinet Member for Corporate Management said:

"The Council has once again proved to be a high performing organisation, setting targets and meeting the priorities stated in the Improvement Plan. This consistent improvement year on year means better services for residents."

You can see a [summary](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-and-Democracy/Annual-Performance-Report.aspx) and a [full copy of the report](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-and-Democracy/Annual-Performance-Report.aspx) at <http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-and-Democracy/Annual-Performance-Report.aspx> (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-and-Democracy/Annual-Performance-Report.aspx>).

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## Council news

### Former Library HQ's new lease of life

Flintshire Foodbank is using the former Library Headquarters on the Civic Centre campus in Mold as a warehouse distribution centre for its six centres in the County.

It is being leased to the charity at a peppercorn rent for 12 months and will assist the Council in its overall rationalisation strategy by occupying a recently empty building which the Council would otherwise have to continue to run and manage.

The county reference library in the building moved to the Mold Town Centre library some time ago and other library support services which have been operating from there will also work from other sites.

Council Leader Aaron Shotton said: "This has been a great opportunity to assist the Flintshire Foodbank with their excellent work around the county and at the same time make valuable savings for the Council at a time when finances are stretched. It is part of our strategy to rationalise Council owned buildings to see if we can do things in a more efficient and cost effective way."

Deputy Leader Bernie Attridge added: " We have always been big supporters of the Flintshire Foodbank, already providing points in County Hall for people to leave donations. This latest initiative will, I hope, provide the charity with additional support to help them with the extremely valuable work they do in the community"

Pastor Andy Leake, Chair of Flintshire Foodbank said: "We are so grateful to Flintshire County Council for their amazing generosity in enabling the Flintshire Foodbank to use such a wonderful resource such as the Central Library building. Serving 6 centres across Flintshire, the Foodbank network in the County has fed 18, 750 people since it opened in 2012. Each month over 500 people receive help from the Foodbank, and our operations have expanded. The need for new premises was flagged up with the local Council, and we are thrilled to be opening this building to support the community, and to reduce the costs of the local Council. Over the next few months, we will be using this space to create a Regional hub for the Flintshire Foodbank."

For foodbank opening times go to <http://flintshire.foodbank.org.uk/> (<http://flintshire.foodbank.org.uk/>)

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### Holywell Learning Campus

Pupils and local dignitaries assisted with the fitting of locally sourced slate at the site of the new £30m Holywell Learning Campus.

Contractors Galliford Try have worked closely with Northern Welsh Quarries Ltd to source suitable slate from the Llechwedd slate quarry for use on the internal elements of the new school.

The new school, which forms part of Flintshire County Council's planned investment in their schools and is matched funded by Welsh Government under their 21st Century Schools and Education Programme, is being built on the site of Holywell High School. It includes a 315 place primary school which will replace Ysgol Perth y Terfyn Infants and Ysgol y Fron Junior school and a new 600 place three storey secondary school.

Galliford Try's regional director Ed Wootton said: "Galliford Try is always looking to be a productive partner with our supply chain, creating achievable and sustainable value through our 'Recycle the Local Pound' initiative. Recent Meet the Buyer events organised in collaboration with the North Wales Schools and Public Buildings Framework have introduced us to businesses such as Northern Welsh Quarries and I am delighted that the quality and heritage of their locally sourced product and the expertise of their team will be enjoyed by users of the new school once complete."

Councillor Kevin Jones Flintshire County Council's Cabinet member for Waste Management Strategy, Public Protection and Leisure, said: "This is another milestone in the building of the school which will provide first class facilities for students in the future. I am delighted that apprentices from North Wales are being engaged on the project and that its construction is providing valuable training opportunities for young people. These are testing times financially for local councils but it is good to see this level of investment in the futures of our young people."

The new schools are due to be open from September 2016 with the existing facilities remaining in use until that time to ensure no disruption for learners.



## Mold Connects

Following on from the success of the Flintshire Connects Centres at Holywell, Flint, Connah's Quay and Buckley, Flintshire County Council is pleased to announce the opening of a fifth Connects Centre in Mold.

Flintshire Connects is a key part of changing and improving the County Council with an emphasis on first class customer service in accessible town centre locations with each centre being developed flexibly to meet the needs of the town it serves. The Flintshire Connects centre in Mold is an integration with Mold Library located on the Daniel Owen Square.

Customers will be able to access information and key County Council services including housing, Streetscene, welfare benefits and advice, Blue Badges, Concessionary Travel and Council Tax.

The centre is open Monday to Friday from 9.30 am to 5pm where Advisors will be on site to assist with enquiries relating to the above and any other Council enquiries. There is a provision for IT access and also a separate area where customers can discuss their enquiries in private with an Advisor.

Councillor Billy Mullin, the County Council's Cabinet Member for Corporate Management said:



"I am extremely pleased that we continue to make such excellent progress with our commitment to bringing Flintshire Connects to our county's towns. Flintshire Connects in Holywell was the first of its type in North Wales, and has significantly improved the way services are delivered to the residents of the town; it is pleasing that we have now extended that excellent work throughout the county."

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## NEW Homes

Plans for the future growth of NEW Homes are set out in a five year business plan.

NEW Homes was established in April 2014 to support the Council increase the range of housing options in the local housing market.

Proposals include the delivery of 300 new affordable homes throughout the county over the next five years through the Council's Strategic Housing And Regeneration Programme (SHARP). The first scheme is scheduled to be delivered at The Walks, Flint which will comprise up to 50 affordable homes on the site of the former maisonettes.

NEW Homes is also scheduled to receive 16 new build properties from developers meeting their affordable housing provision obligations through Section 106 Agreements. These units will be transferred into the company to be let as affordable housing. Plans are also in place to acquire eight housing units to let at affordable rents.

In addition to renting out its own properties, NEW Homes runs a range of offers for landlords which all include a 'tenant ready' service. The company is offering a fully managed letting and property management service and also a unique offer for home owners over 55 to lease their properties to the company and access suitable council accommodation

Councillor Bernie Attridge, Deputy Leader and Chairman of NEW Homes said:

"NEW Homes was established to provide a new alternative, affordable, housing offer for local people, who either can't afford high private landlords rents, and/ or don't qualify for a Council house. I am delighted that this innovative scheme is already making a real difference to meeting local housing need by providing a number of different ways in which people can find affordable homes."

Councillor Helen Brown, Cabinet Member for Housing added:

"Flintshire County Council was the first authority in Wales to set up its own housing company and this innovative scheme was recognised at a national level in November 2014 when the Council won the 'New Idea of the Year' Chartered Institute of Housing award for being the first authority in Wales to set up its own housing company.

"I am very pleased with the progress NEW Homes has made in the relatively short time since it was established. It is offering a great service to residents who need more affordable rents and will significantly improve the housing options available for our residents. The company is also offering services to landlords."

Councillor Aaron Shotton, Leader of Flintshire County Council said:

"We are very proud of NEW Homes and that Flintshire is the first council in Wales to take direct action to address local housing need problems. I am delighted that NEW Homes is now realising our ambitions in a practical way."

For further information visit: <http://www.northeastwaleshomes.co.uk/> (<http://www.northeastwaleshomes.co.uk/>)

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## Ready for winter

Flintshire County Council is reassuring residents it is well prepared to deal with icy conditions on the roads this winter.

For the coming winter, the authority has a total of 9,000 tonnes of salt stored at two sites (Alltami and Greenfield), which will be replenished as it is used.

The Council's team of gritters are now on standby until the end of March ready to take to the county's roads.

The team covers 12 priority 1 routes across the county, gritting 45% of Flintshire's roads, one of the highest percentages in Wales.

In addition, the council also has 38 agricultural contractors who can be called in to help clear snow. Each has a dedicated route to enable the entire adopted road network in the county to be cleared.

The council's Streetscene Team will also treat footpaths on a priority basis in areas including hospitals, residential homes, schools, bus stops and shopping areas during prolonged freezing conditions and snow.

Salt bins/heaps will be filled at the start of the winter season and again in January if required.

Cllr Bernie Attridge, Cabinet member for Environment said:

"I'd like to assure all our residents that we are well prepared to deal with conditions on our roads this winter. We have good stock piles of salt and our gritting teams will be working tirelessly to make sure we provide the best quality service during times of bad weather."

## Children's Services Inspection

Children's Services in Flintshire are delivered by a suitably qualified, experienced and competent workforce which is able to meet the needs of local children, young people and their families, according to an inspection report.

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) undertook an inspection earlier this year when they looked closely at the experiences of children and young people who had needed or still needed help and/or protection.

The inspection also considered the quality of outcomes achieved for children and families including a small sample of children and young people who were, or had been, looked after. Inspectors read case files and interviewed staff, managers and professionals from partner agencies. They also talked to children, young people and their families.

The report praised the Council's clear decision making during child protection investigations and its proportionate urgent action taken to protect children and young people at risk of immediate significant harm.

The report's 12 recommendations are recognised as areas the Council itself had already identified for further improvement. This includes the need to further strengthen arrangements when people first contact the service and ensure that all internal systems support social workers in delivering excellent services.

The report endorses the strong leadership and governance provided by senior politicians and officers and welcomes the Council's commitment to developing and seeing further improvement in children's services. It also highlighted that feedback from staff generally was that Flintshire had a good reputation and was a positive place to work.

Inspectors found that when contacts were received where there was an obvious indication that a child or children were at risk or had suffered significant harm, prompt decisions were made and initial action was taken to protect the child.

The report notes that child protection case conferences observed by inspectors were well chaired and child focused. The council also worked hard to try to ensure that, where possible, children were looked after within their extended family or supported to maintain more meaningful relationships. To support this a positive family group conferencing service was in place.

Councillor Christine Jones, Cabinet member for Social Services said:

"There are good things to learn from this report and we are committed to delivering the inspectors' recommendations. We are pleased that the report recognises and endorses our effective approach to managing the safeguarding of children. Despite the enormous financial pressures faced by the Council we are working hard to ensure that we continue to deliver good services even in areas of rising demand. We accept there are areas which need continued improvement and will be addressing these in our action plan"

The Council's Statutory Director of Social Services Neil Ayling added:

"The report endorses our commitment to continued improvement to children's services in Flintshire. We are heartened that the report recognises many strengths in Children's Services, particularly the commitment and dedication of our social workers. We are already responding to the report's recommendations for further change."

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## Apprentices Celebrate

Flintshire County Council apprentices recently had two reasons to celebrate as the Council was announced as a finalist for Apprentice Programme of the Year 2016, in the prestigious National Learning Awards and its Apprentice Programme was also chosen as a model of good practice to host exchange apprentices from Europe by Coleg Cambria.

The Council's Business Administration Apprentices hosted four of their European counterparts at County Hall as part of a two week exchange initiative. The European Apprentices are all currently undertaking a Business Administration Apprenticeship in Germany and gained experience of council services providing support across a range of areas including social services, housing, finance and legal services.

Colin Everett Chief Executive said:

" We are delighted to be named as one of the UK finalists for this award which reflects the hard work and commitment of the Council to making its Apprentice Programme a beacon of excellence. It was a pleasure to have welcomed apprentices from Germany to County Hall and I am sure that all involved in the exchange will have benefitted from the sharing of experiences and skills.

"The Council has a long-standing commitment to apprenticeships and we are very proud that most of our apprentices are employed by the council after they complete the Apprentice Programme.

Exchange apprentice Irene Hemming said:

"I have loved working with Flintshire Apprentices. It has been a great opportunity to broaden my work experience and improve my English. In Germany we spend less time in the workplace and longer hours in college. The way apprentices learn in the UK is really good and I enjoyed the way the course is delivered in the college"

Councillor Aaron Shotton said:

"The council is proud of its commitment to apprentice training and clearly the exchange programme complements our challenging and rewarding programme offering our apprentices the opportunity to compare techniques and working practices with those of other areas of Europe.

"The Apprenticeship Programme, which remains a priority for the Council, will be extended next year with apprenticeships being offered with contractors working on council building projects in Connah's Quay and Flint."



The Business Administration students are pictured with the Leader of Flintshire County Council Councillor Aaron Shotton, Chairman Councillor Ray Hughes and Chief Executive Colin Everett.

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## Business Week Success

Flintshire Business Week 2015 has been hailed a success for the ninth year running, with events and workshops attended by more than 2,000 delegates proving that Flintshire is an established place to do business.

Highlights this year included the official opening by Rt. Hon. Lord Jones, President of Flintshire Business Week, at the Regional Business Exhibition in Coleg Cambria, sponsored by Westbridge Furniture Designs.

The business exhibition was the largest of its kind in North Wales with 62 stands showcasing companies and services from across the region. Workshops and seminars covered social media and marketing with more than 200 people attending the Merseyside Dee Alliance Innovation Breakfast.

The Regional Prospects for Growth seminars on Wednesday at Springfield Hotel, Holywell included speakers from North Wales Prison Project; Northern Gateway and Construction Industry Training Board and on Thursday at the National and Regional Economy Day at St. David's DeVere Hotel, Ewloe, presenters included Deloitte, Grant Thornton and Barclays Bank. On Friday, AM's and MP's arrived in Flintshire for Question Time, organised by CBI Cymru.

The Week also saw the official launch of the Flintshire Tourism Ambassador Scheme, part of the wider North East Wales scheme, following a successful event in association with Pro PPC at Northop Country House Hotel.

FBW 2015 ended with the ever popular Flintshire Business Awards at Soughton Hall.

This year's Flintshire Business Week was held in association with AGS Security Systems, Westbridge Furniture Designs, along with many other partners and sponsors.

Councillor Derek Butler, Cabinet Member for Economic Development said:

"Flintshire Business Week has once again brought hundreds of businesses together with the unique and successful partnership between the public and private sector. We've had some fantastic events and seminars and on behalf of the Council, I want to sincerely thank all of our sponsors and partners who work so hard with the Council's business team to make this event possible."

Details about the Flintshire Business Awards can be found at <http://www.flintshirebusinessawards.co.uk/> (<http://www.flintshirebusinessawards.co.uk/>)

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## Dublin Declaration

Certificates which reaffirm Flintshire County Council's commitment to the national Dublin Declaration agreement to create an age-friendly community are on view at County Hall, Mold.

As the number of people living longer increases, councils need to consider ways to ensure that communities offer quality of life for the older population.

The signing of the Dublin Declaration by the Council in February 2014 adds an important dimension to the work that is already being undertaken across the County.

The declaration is a public statement of intent to work with other organizations, share experiences, and promote equal rights and opportunities for older people.

Displaying the certificates marks the launch of the Ageing Well in Flintshire plan which sets out the work that will be taking place across Flintshire to support older people to maintain their wellbeing and independence – to make Flintshire a good place to grow old. The plan has been developed in response to the Older People's Commissioner for Wales 'Ageing Well in Wales' programme which identifies five priority areas for action that will have a positive impact on the lives of older people in Wales, ensuring they are able to remain healthy and active and continue to contribute to family and community life.

Councillor Christine Jones, Cabinet Member for Social Services said:

"Living in a community that is sensitive to individual needs is something we all want to experience. The signing of the agreement puts the Council on an international stage and will provide further confirmation of dedicated, on-going work. It will enable the Council to participate in a co-ordinated network across Wales which will work to adapt the guidelines of the World Health Organisation to best fit with Welsh communities."

For more information about the Ageing Well in Wales programme, visit:

<http://www.ageingwellinwales.com/en/home> (<http://www.ageingwellinwales.com/en/home>)



Caption from left to right Councillor Christine Jones, Councillor Ray Hughes, Chairman of the County Council and Neil Ayling , Chief Officer for Social Services.

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## Changes to Services

### Garden Waste Collection Service

Changes from 1st December 2015:

- **All garden waste collections will cease for a period of 3 months (December, January and February).**

Changes from 1st March 2016:

- We will continue to collect 1 brown bin per household every two weeks.
- **Additional brown bins will be subject to a collection charge of £24 per bin per annum and a one-off purchase of £20 per bin (up to a maximum of two).**
- Any additional garden waste not placed within your brown bin/s will not be collected.

To register for additional brown bin/s, please call the Streetscene Customer Contact Centre on 01352 701234. In order to guarantee collections from 1st March 2016, please contact us as soon as possible.

**Please note:** - any additional bins you currently have can be kept for storage, however **only** bins that you have registered with Flintshire County Council will be emptied from 1st March 2016.

We would strongly advise that you clearly mark all your bin/s with your house name or number.

Thank you for your continued support in the service.

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## New Library

People were invited to take a look at what the new library hub at Deeside Leisure Centre might look like.

Proposals to modernise and re-shape library services in Flintshire were announced by the County Council earlier this year and included a proposal for a brand new library hub within Deeside Leisure Centre to serve the communities of Hawarden, Mancot and Queensferry where part-time facilities are being delivered in outdated or under used buildings.

Consultations about the proposals took place in the affected communities. Although it was recognised that it was in the overall best interests of future library provision to progress with the development of a new hub, many library users also emphasised that the service must be designed to reflect all three local communities, and asked that it also be supplemented by additional community based services along with the consideration of a Community Asset Transfer.

The new hub is expected to cost approximately £130,000, with the majority of the funding - over £90,000 - coming from a CyMAL grant. It will also save the library service in the region of £50,000 a year.

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## Mold Car Boot Sale

Love Lane Car Boot Sale in Mold has closed for the winter season.

The Sunday morning sale closed on 1 November and will re-open on 3 April 2016.

The sale is run by Flintshire County Council's market service and during the summer months generates a small income for the authority however due to fewer traders in the colder months, it runs at a loss during the winter.

Councillor Derek Butler, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, said: "As an authority we are facing unprecedented cuts to our budget and unfortunately the financial pressures on our services means we can no longer justify the cost of keeping the car boot sale open during the winter months."

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## What's on

### Flint gives Urdd Eisteddfod a Colourful Welcome

Over 3,500 supporters paraded in Flint, Saturday, 3 October to celebrate the fact that the Urdd National Eisteddfod will be visiting Flintshire at the end of May 2016.



The Proclamation ceremony was an opportunity for children, young people, teachers, parents and local residents to show their support to the family friendly festival that will visit the area 30 May – 4 June 2016.

The crowd, led by a local Samba band, paraded through the town from Flint Secondary School to the castle. In the castle, there were two stages with live music, football sessions, crazy golf, stalls, a graffiti wall and circus workshops.

Aled Sion, Director of the Eisteddfod said, "The support that that we had in Flint on Saturday was very encouraging and it bodes well for our Urdd Eisteddfod that will visit the area next year.

"We are also grateful for the assistance of the local community and town councils and for Flintshire Council's support and presence at the proclamation ceremony."



## News from our partners

### Think Safe, Drink Safe

The 2015 Think Safe, Drink Safe Christmas Campaign for Flintshire is underway to promote safe and responsible drinking in our communities.

It is aimed at ensuring people can enjoy a safe and relaxed night out during the festive period. It also aims to promote responsible drinking and prevent and reduce levels of alcohol fuelled violent crime and anti-social behaviour at this time of year.



This year's Think Safe Drink Safe campaign is taking on a regional and local element to highlight the significant pressures that front line operational services are put under at this time of year including police, ambulance and A&E departments. Resources are often put under increasing pressure as key personnel have to deal with extra cases of alcohol related incidence, whilst continuing to support already over-stretched services.

The public is encouraged to download and use the Public Health Wales free app ONE DRINK ONE CLICK\* which is a helpful tool to inform the public how much they are drinking.

Cllr Bernie Attridge, Cabinet Member for Environment said: "We know that Christmas and the New Year is an extremely busy time. Our aim is to encourage people to have a good time but to drink responsibly. Excessive drinking can affect behaviour and lead to serious consequences. The message is simple - anti social behaviour and violence will not be tolerated and anyone behaving irresponsibly will be dealt with appropriately and quickly ensuring that Flintshire is a safe place to come and enjoy a night out."

Superintendent Jane Banham, North Wales Police said: "We want people to enjoy the festive season, but we know from experience that at this time of year some people will come to harm due to alcohol excess and it is the emergency services and local councils who are left

picking up the pieces.

"The aim of this campaign is to ensure that those who consume and sell alcohol take responsibility for their actions.

"We make a significant contribution to keeping our town centres safe so people can enjoy a good night out, but we must get the message across that people need to take greater responsibility for themselves and their friends to reduce the likelihood of them being injured, becoming a victim of crime, or being involved in violence through excessive drinking.

"North Wales Police, working with our partners, will ensure that pubs, clubs, shops and drinkers are complying with the law. Those who don't will be dealt with robustly.

"The message is simple – think safe, drink safe."

\*The 'One Drink One Click' app is available to download at <http://appstore.com/onedrinkoneclick> (<http://appstore.com/onedrinkoneclick>).

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## Dry January 2016

The Welsh Government is working with Alcohol Concern again this year to promote the **Dry January** challenge to go for 31 days without alcohol. As Christmas and the New Year are fast approaching, December is the ideal time to think ahead and consider the Dry January challenge which more and more people are taking up every year!

Dry January is aimed at all of us who consider ourselves normal social drinkers. It's not about getting anyone to stop drinking for ever more it's more about us having a pause for thought, and maybe getting out of some drinking routines we've got into. It's about waking up with a clear head every day for a month, probably saving some money, and possibly losing some weight. Above all, it's about taking control of our drinking and our health.

Getting involved couldn't be easier. Anyone can sign up online in English or Welsh at <http://www.dryjanuary.org.uk/> (<http://www.dryjanuary.org.uk/>). People can also follow the conversation, and share encouragement and ideas for things to do instead of drinking @DryJanuary and on Facebook.

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## Christmas Council services

### Refuse and Recycling Collections



**Flintshire County Council's  
Waste and Recycling Team  
wish you all a Happy Christmas**

<b>Normal Collection day</b>	<b>Revised Collection day</b>	<b>What will be collected</b>
Monday Dec 21	No change	Black Bin, Food & Recycling
Tuesday Dec 22	No change	Black Bin, Food & Recycling
Wednesday Dec 23	No change	Black Bin, Food & Recycling
Thursday Dec 24	No change	Black Bin, Food & Recycling
<b>Friday Dec 25</b>	<b>27th, 28th or 29th</b>	<b>FOOD WASTE ONLY*</b>
<b>Saturday Dec 26</b>	<b>27th, 28th or 29th</b>	<b>FOOD WASTE ONLY*</b>
Sunday Dec 27	No change	Food Waste & Recycling
Monday Dec 28	No change	Food Waste & Recycling
Tuesday Dec 29	No change	Food Waste & Recycling
Wednesday Dec 30	No change	Food Waste & Recycling
Thursday Dec 31	No change	Food Waste & Recycling
<b>Friday Jan 01</b>	<b>3rd, 4th or 5th Jan</b>	<b>Black Bin, Food &amp; Recycling*</b>
Saturday Jan 02	No change	Black Bin, Food & Recycling
Sunday Jan 03	No change	Black Bin, Food & Recycling

\* Please refer to Council website and type in your postcode and click the link to your Christmas Calendar

**Normal collections will resume week commencing  
Monday 4 January 2016; please refer to your calendar.**

**For further information please visit our website:  
[www.flintshire.gov.uk](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk)  
or call 01352 701234**

**Recycling Parks:**  
All Household Waste Recycling Centres will be open as usual  
All will be closed on Christmas Day  
Christmas trees can be taken to any of the 7 Household  
Waste Recycling Centres after Christmas



## Christmas closures

Flintshire County Council is closing County Hall and other buildings between Christmas and New Year to save money on the running costs of Council premises over the quiet festive period.

Critical services such as emergency housing repairs, social services and Streetscene services will be unaffected and continue to be provided.

County Hall, Mold – will close at 5pm on Thursday 24 December 2015 and re-open on Monday 4 January.

Register Office, Llwynegryn Hall, Mold – will operate a reduced level of service, opening as required.

The decision for the shutdown comes as the Council faces unprecedented cuts to its budget.

Councillor Billy Mullin Cabinet Member for Corporate Management said: "Like many organisations, the Council has in the past operated with a reduced workforce over the festive season as many employees take annual leave to spend time with their families.

"Regardless of the number of employees in our office buildings during this period, the costs for heating and lighting remain the same. In the current financial climate this is an inefficient use of resources and so the decision has been made to completely close County Hall and the campus buildings over the festive period."

Chief Executive Colin Everett added:

"The public can be assured that critical services will be maintained during this period. Essential and emergency services will not be affected."

## Office opening times and emergency numbers



### Opening Hours and Emergency Contact Numbers over Christmas

#### County Hall, Mold

Closed from 5pm Thursday 24 December until 8.30am Monday 4 January 2016

#### Register Office, Llynegryn Hall, Mold

Reduced level of service, opening as required

#### Libraries

Check website for opening hours

#### Flintshire Connects Centres

##### Buckley and Mold

Monday 21 December to Thursday 24 December 9.30am to 5pm  
Closed from 5pm Thursday 24 December to 9.30am Monday 4 January

##### Connah's Quay and Holywell

Monday 21 December to Thursday 24 December 9.00am to 5pm  
Closed from 5pm Thursday 24 December to 9.00am Monday 4 January

##### Flint

Monday 21 December to Thursday 24 December 8.30am to 5pm  
Tuesday 29 December to Thursday 31 December 8.30am to 5pm

**For Council services in an emergency the out of hours contact numbers are Highways 0300 123 3086  
Housing & Property 0300 123 3086  
Social Services: 0845 053 3116**

**You can also use our website for information and to contact us on [www.flintshire.gov.uk](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk)**

#### Flintshire Markets over Christmas

Wednesday 23 December	Mold Market
Thursday 24 December	Mold (extra Christmas Market), Holywell, Connah's Quay Markets
Friday 25 December	Flint Market cancelled
Saturday 26 December	Mold Market cancelled
Wednesday 30 December	Mold Market
Thursday 31 December	Holywell, Connah's Quay Markets
Friday 1 January 2016	Flint Market cancelled
Saturday 2 January	Mold Market



## Road works embargo over Christmas

Flintshire County Council has placed an embargo on non-urgent road works on all major routes through Flintshire and within town centres during the Christmas period.

Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Environment Councillor Bernie Attridge said: "Due to the significant increase in both vehicular and pedestrian traffic in and around our town centres in the run-up to and throughout the Christmas and New Year period we have introduced a road works embargo to minimise the traffic congestion on the Council's highway network during the festive period. The County Council is also working closely with the Utility companies to avoid congestion and ensure the continued vitality of our towns".



The embargo started on Friday 11 December and will remain in force until Monday 4 January 2016.

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