



Summer 2017

Welcome

A message from Flintshire County Council Leader, Councillor Aaron Shotton

Following the recent County Council elections, I am honoured and proud to be re-elected as Leader of Flintshire County Council.

The Council has worked hard over the last few years to protect public services and develop new schemes to benefit local communities. The new Council Cabinet will be continuing to prioritise, sustain and develop local community and public services despite ongoing financial challenges.



Cllr Billy Mullin	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Cllr Chris Bithell	Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection
Cllr Derek Butler	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Cllr Ian Roberts	Cabinet Member for Education and Youth
Cllr Christine Jones	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Cllr Aaron Shotton	Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cllr Bernie Attridge	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing
Cllr Carolyn Thomas	Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside

Our Council Plan sets out our key priorities to support and enhance residents' lives. Some of our priorities in 2017-18 include:

- expanding the provision of affordable homes for residents in need;
- protecting people from poverty, with a specific emphasis on fuel and food poverty;
- enabling people to live independently and well at home, whilst avoiding unnecessary admissions to hospital;
- safeguarding - keeping people safe from abuse;
- working with partners to sustain economic growth and increase employment opportunities;
- developing the county transport infrastructure to include an integrated 'Metro' transport system.

In addition, we aim to continue the work of supporting children and young people to achieve their potential; enhancing the natural environment and promoting access to open and green spaces. Despite continued financial austerity, we will remain committed and ambitious as a Council to continue to deliver for our local communities.

Tough times ahead.....

As we continue to deal with the current economic climate and the fact that Flintshire remains a low funded council when compared with other Welsh Councils, we are determined to continue our innovative and effective financial planning, which has averted any threats to our frontline services in recent years.

We will continue to stress that the funding formula for local government needs to be reformed. Flintshire can no longer go on, as a low funded council, receiving £17.5M less per year than the average grant for Welsh councils based on a comparative population size.

The forecast "gap" for 2018/19 between income and expenditure is currently £11.7M. The re-adoption of our Medium Term Financial Strategy is an important first step in the annual budget setting process which will also consider national, local, workforce and social care pressures as well as inflation.

Any savings will be on top of the significant efficiency savings the Council has made over a number of years whilst protecting local services and jobs.

We need to work harder than ever to plan and deliver essential council services in this continuing period of financial austerity. As a low funded council, we are more exposed to the impacts of significant annual budget reductions when combined with the increasing needs of our residents for key services such as social care. I believe that there is increasing public support and understanding of the reality that Government must act immediately to reverse the impacts of austerity if we are to successfully defend services into the future.

Each council service area is subject to extensive and ongoing reviews and is being asked how they can respond to these unprecedented cost pressures. The Council has limited efficiency options without having to reduce services to unacceptable levels of service provision.

Solid performance

Flintshire is recognised nationally as a Council which is being innovative in finding new solutions that are both cost efficient and resilient and are sustainable for the future.

Despite being a low funded Council, Flintshire has shown itself to be a solid performer in the standards to which it provides local services, with excellence in key services such as education, housing and social care. We are also number one in Wales in ensuring that Council tax collection rates remain as high as possible.

These are challenging times for both local councils and the Welsh Government. If we are to find a way through this with our vital local services still intact, councils need to work closely with the government and we plan to do that to find joint solutions.

Spotlight on...

Support for Armed Forces veterans and their families



Cllr Andy Dunbobbin and Capt Neil Turnbull raising the flags with Mike Dodd and Pete Fuller (both forces veterans now with the Council), Karen Armstrong, Flintshire County Council and Cllr Bernie Attridge

Flintshire County Council supported Armed Forces Reserves Day by raising the flag at County Hall, Mold on 21 June.

The Council recognises the valuable contribution their employees who are reservists make to the Armed Forces, our community, our organisation and nation. We were proud to support Reserves Day.

Reservists give up their spare time to serve in the Reserve Forces, balancing their civilian life with a military career to ensure that should their country need them, they would be ready to serve as part of the military.

Flintshire County Council's Armed Forces Champion, Councillor Andy Dunbobbin, said:

"Our employees who are reservists play a vital role in our Armed Forces and make a significant contribution to operations in the UK and overseas. Just as important are the knowledge and skills they gain from the military which they bring back to Flintshire County Council. All our reservists give up their time to serve the nation. They do an incredible job and it is an honour to celebrate the work they do."



The Council is fully committed to supporting the Armed Forces community including reservists and recently received a bronze award from the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) by the Ministry of Defence. Our new Armed Forces Reserves Policy sets out how we will support them if they are mobilised to duty.

The scheme encompasses bronze, silver and gold awards for organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant which is a voluntary statement of mutual support between civilian communities and their local Armed Forces community.

In addition to this, veterans and their families across North Wales will benefit from additional support from local authorities following an award of over £230,000 from the Ministry of Defence. The award will fund the employment of two Armed Forces Liaison Officers (AFLO) dedicated to strengthening the delivery of the Armed Forces Community Covenant across the region by ensuring the fair and respectful treatment of serving personnel, veterans and their families.

The officers' remit will include reviewing existing policies and procedures in areas including Human Resources, Social Care, Education and Housing. Officers will also ensure the needs of the Armed Forces Community are considered in new strategic plans and service changes linked to, for example, the Well-being of Future Generations Act, and the Social Services and Well-being Act.

The officers will seek to establish the size and complement of the region's Armed Forces Community, and to establish clear lines of communication so that information can flow to and from community members more effectively.

There will be a focus on training for front line staff too, allowing them to better understand and support the needs of the Armed Forces Community.

The award will be administered by Wrexham Council on behalf of the six local authorities in North Wales.

Safeguarding is no AFTA Thought



Flintshire County Council held a number of unique safeguarding workshops for their employees recently.

Safeguarding is the protection of children and adults and includes the promotion of physical, emotional and mental health, protection from harm and neglect, education and training and social and economic well-being.

Four half-day sessions, supported by the Council's Safeguarding Panel, were run by AFTA Thought Training who use drama in their workshops.

In these three hour sessions, employees were able to find the answers to questions like:

- What's Safeguarding got to do with me?
- What are the signs and symptoms of abuse?
- Do I have a duty to pass on concerns and, if so, what do I have to do?



Chris Callander from AFTA Thought said:

"We use actors to bring to life the actual lived experience of children, adults and professionals. The result is a training experience that will leave you in no doubt about your duties and responsibilities in protecting vulnerable people and promoting their well-being. Some of the scenarios used in the training include children, older people, mental health and learning disabilities."

Flintshire County Council's Champions for Safeguarding, Councillor Billy Mullin and Councillor Christine Jones, said:

"Keeping children and adults safe is everyone's business. Social Services is the lead Council service for dealing with enquiries regarding any concerns, but everyone has a duty to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and adults."

"Safeguarding is a priority for the Council and we take our responsibilities seriously. We have a Corporate Safeguarding Group which has developed the Council's policy. These workshop sessions have come about as part of our commitment to safeguarding."

Flintshire celebrates national award wins

Flintshire County Council was a big winner at the Constructing Excellence Wales (CEW) Awards Ceremony held at the Celtic Manor on Friday 14 July.

At the ceremony, hosted by Jason Mohammad, the Council was awarded "Client of the Year", after being nominated by their contractor Wates Residential, as well as another of their contractors, Galliford Try, being awarded the "Sustainability Award" for the flagship Holywell Learning Campus.

The CEW Awards are a barometer for the success of the Welsh construction industry. Since the Awards started in 2006, projects and organisations taking part have delivered community benefits ranging from support for more than 300 charities, to 1,500 school placements and coordinating around 10,000 hours of volunteering.

The Council was nominated by Wates Residential for their partnership working on the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP). From the outset, both parties worked together to ensure a joint approach to all elements of scheme design and planning, whilst also working on community engagement and providing many community benefits for local residents. Project working groups guaranteed a close-knit, team approach to all construction, commercial and community engagement activity.



Left to right: Denise Naylor - Flintshire County Council, Dawn Kent - Flintshire County Council, Kate Catherall - Flintshire County Council, Ian Powers - Wates Residential, Mel Evans - Flintshire County Council, Councillor Bernie Attridge - Flintshire County Council Cabinet Member for Housing, Mick Cunningham – Wates Residential, Darren Brimble - Flintshire County Council and Paula Marshall - NEW Homes Ltd

Flintshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Bernie Attridge, said:

"The SHARP programme is the first of its kind in Wales and is setting a national benchmark for quality and design. We are absolutely delighted to win this prestigious award and to have our housing programme highlighted in this way. A number of other local authorities have visited us to look at the progress being made and are now looking to replicate this innovative model in their own areas. Thank you to everyone at Wates for the nomination. Wates has been an excellent partner and we will continue to work with them to deliver quality housing for the residents of Flintshire."

Joanne Jamieson, Managing Director of Wates Residential, commented:

"Everyone at Wates Residential would like to congratulate the Council on this award, which is deserved recognition of the landmark regeneration it is undertaking across Flintshire. We are proud to be working with the Council on the SHARP programme, which will play a key role in addressing the housing shortage in the county.

"The significant investment involved in our collaboration is also enabling both parties to create extensive opportunities for local employment and training and, as the project progresses, we will continue to identify ways in which we can positively impact the communities of Flintshire."

Galliford Try was the contractor who delivered the state-of-the-art Learning Campus in Holywell.



Left to right – Dean Armstrong - M&E Coordinator, Galliford Try; Damian Hughes - Flintshire County Council; Robert Bradley – Regional Director for Waterman; Ian Marsh - Operations Manager, Galliford Try; Selina Manton - Quantity Surveyor, Galliford Try; Mark Wusthoff – Galliford Try; Joy Woods – Corporate Social Responsibility Manager, Galliford Try

Flintshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Education and Youth, Councillor Ian Roberts, said:

"From the start, Galliford Try ensured that sustainability was embedded in every aspect of the project. The demolition of the old high school left a huge amount of waste but an incredible 90 per cent of on-site demolition waste was reused. Not only that, but the project secured 55 employment opportunities and 19 apprenticeships as well as many educational and community activities."

Jim Parker, Managing Director for Galliford Try North West, said:

"Holywell Learning Campus has become an exemplar project not just regionally but nationally as well. The team has been exceptional in achieving over and above the targets set for them, and the award recognition they have received from Constructing Excellence is richly deserved."

Both Awards will now go forward to the UK Awards later in the year.

Council news

How the Council works

Meetings of the Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny Committees (of which there are six), the Council and other Committees are open for the public to attend except where exempt or confidential matters are being discussed, as defined by the law.

Flintshire County Council's Cabinet has to make decisions which are in line with the Council's overall policies and budget. If it wishes to make a decision which is outside the budget or policy framework, this must be referred to the Council as a whole.

For more information, visit the [Council and Democracy](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-and-Democracy/Home.aspx) (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-and-Democracy/Home.aspx>) pages on our website.

Social Services

Flintshire childcare offer



Earlier this year, Flintshire was successful in its bid to be one of only seven Welsh councils to take part in the early implementation phase of the Welsh Government childcare offer.

The Welsh Government offer is for working parents of 3 and 4 year olds, up to a maximum of 30 hours a week of combined early education and childcare during term time, and up to 9 weeks of 30 hours of childcare per week during school holiday, for up to 48 weeks of the year.

It is recognised that affordable, available and accessible childcare will enable parents to work, supporting the Welsh Government's drive to increase economic growth, tackle poverty and reduce inequalities

In Flintshire, it will be piloted from September 2017 in Buckley, Bagillt and Broughton, and within areas of Aston, Connahs Quay (Central and Golftyn), Garden City, Greenfield, Higher Shotton, Holywell (Central), Mancot, Queensferry and Sandycroft.

This will allow testing of the offer in areas of low and high employment, across travel to work routes, including travel outside Wales, and through a mixture of maintained and non-maintained settings. It will test capacity and demand of childcare along with how it fits with the Foundation Phase and Welsh medium provision.



Parents are eligible for the government funded childcare if at least one parent resides in the pilot areas listed above and:

- both parents are working or where the sole parent is working in a lone parent family;
- all parents, or co-habiting couples, in the household work the equivalent of 16 hours at national living wage or national minimum wage;
- self-employed parents or parents on zero hours contracts, must meet the minimum earnings criteria over a three month period;
- the child is age 3 or 4. The offer is available the term after the child's 3rd birthday.



For further information, to check your eligibility and apply visit [our website](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/childcare-offer.aspx) (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/childcare-offer.aspx>) or for more information please contact the Flintshire Family Information Service on 01352 703500 or email: fisf@flintshire.gov.uk (<mailto:fisf@flintshire.gov.uk>)

Further areas will be added as the childcare offer is rolled out; please check the website for up-to-date information.

If you are a childcare provider you can find out further information on the links above or please contact, 'The Childcare Offer' team on 01244 545979.

Llys Raddington



Work on the new Flint Extra Care Scheme Llys Raddington is progressing well.

Work is progressing well on the new £9.8 million Extra Care Housing Scheme in Flint, which offers individuals an independent lifestyle backed up by care and support as needed; and this latest development builds on the successes of Flintshire's two existing schemes Llys Eleanor in Shotton and Llys Jasmine in Mold.

Tŷ Glas Housing Society, part of the Pennaf Housing Group, in conjunction with Flintshire County Council is developing 73 Extra Care 1 and 2 bedroom high quality apartments for rent, with communal facilities, for individuals aged 60 and over. The scheme takes advantage of its prime location in the centre of Flint, located between the Flint Library and the Jade Jones Flint Pavilion leisure centre with shops, amenities, a brand new Health Centre and local transport links all on the door step.

The scheme will have an on-site support team for those individuals who have an assessed care need; there are also 15 apartments specifically designed and adapted for older people with memory loss or living with dementia.

Llys Raddington is expected to open a show apartment for viewings in November 2017, in advance of its completion in spring 2018. A professional Interior Designer has been commissioned to decorate and furnish the communal spaces to a high quality standard.

Housing management and ancillary services on-site will be provided by Clwyd Alyn Housing Association, as the managing agent for Tŷ Glas Housing Society, whilst Flintshire County Council will take responsibility for the provision of on-site domiciliary care, for tenants with an assessed need.

If you feel you would benefit from living in Llys Raddington Extra Care, contact: 0800 183 5757.

You should be aged 60 years and over and live in the county of Flintshire (or have a strong local connection) and have an assessed care and support need. Application forms are now available and should be returned to Tŷ Glas, with any supporting documents by September 2017.

Dewis Cymru



Dewis Cymru

Dewis Cymru is the place to go if you want information or advice about your well-being – or want to know how you can help somebody else.

Your well-being doesn't just mean your health, but also things like where you live, how safe and secure you feel, getting out and about, and keeping in touch with family and friends.

No two people are the same and well-being means different things to different people. So Dewis Cymru is here to help you find out more about what matters to you.

They've got information that can help you think about what matters to you, and they've also got information about people and services in your area that can help you with the things that matter to you.

If you want to know more about how to use Dewis Cymru to help you work out what matters to you, click [here](https://www.dewis.wales/how-to-use-dewis-cymru) (<https://www.dewis.wales/how-to-use-dewis-cymru>).

Dementia Friendly Flintshire



Flintshire now has three Dementia Friendly towns – Flint, Buckley and Mold and the Dementia Friendly Steering Groups in all three towns have recently held their Business Awards.

The events were a celebration for the businesses or organisations in each town which have been successful in achieving the status of "Working towards becoming Dementia Friendly".



The seventh café to support people living with dementia and their carers was opened in Saltney in March through partnership working of NEWCIS, a non-profit organisation which supports carers in the community, Flintshire County Council, Cheshire West & Chester Council and the community and residents of Saltney. The café opens once a month, every second Tuesday, from 2-4pm at Douglas Place Community Centre on Woodall Avenue.

This venture has been created to remove the boundary line between Flintshire and Cheshire West and Chester, so people living with Dementia and their carers can jointly access support and advice.

The eighth café opened in Connah's Quay in April. This memory café is open every first Tuesday 1-3pm at the Libbys Café, Cable Street off Tuscan Way.

Other memory cafés in Buckley, Flint, Sealand and Mold hosted an intergenerational project for their members.

The intergenerational project run by RMD - Memory Matters delivers a "Never Ending Story", using imagination and reminiscence and works with people living with dementia, their carers and school children.



Donna Redgrave from RMD - Memory Matters, said:

“RMD – Memory Matters believes that the arts can significantly help everyone affected by dementia to live well. They can also be a vehicle to enhance peoples’ awareness and understanding of the condition and bring communities together. We offer a range of creative services, training and support, for people



living with dementia, their carers and the wider community.

“Pupils, teachers and support staff from local schools have completed a “Dementia Friends” session which introduces them to the challenges of living with dementia. Following this, a group of students work with me on a “Never Ending Story” session.”

Dementia Cafés provide a safe, comfortable and supportive environment for people with dementia and their carers to socialise.

As well offering a range of fun and engaging activities, Dementia Cafés give both carers and people with dementia a chance to get information and advice and talk to others with similar problems.

For more information, please contact Luke Pickering-Jones at Flintshire County Council on 01352 702655.



Community and Enterprise

Council builds futures through major housing investment



Local jobseekers have been given a career kick-start with national developer, Wates Residential, as part of Flintshire County Council's programme to build 500 brand new homes across the county.

The training initiative saw 11 local people take part in Wates' national Building Futures programme last year, marking the 1,000th enrolment to the intensive two-week training course.

Candidates were recruited through Communities First and the Welsh Government's LIFT programme which works with people who face the greatest barriers to becoming employable and have been out of work for six months or more.

A further 12 candidates took part in the initiative this year with full support from the Communities First team, 92% completed the two week programme and eight have successfully found work.

Hosted at Deeside Leisure Centre, the training programme comprised construction skills trade sessions, including carpentry, plumbing and tiling, as well as CV and interview workshops with Wates Residential and its supply chain partners. Each candidate also received a certificate at an award ceremony at Flint Town Council Chamber.

Council tax and business rates - collection success

Figures published by the Welsh Government show that Flintshire County Council, with the support of local residents, is still the highest performing Council in Wales in its collection of Council Tax. In the financial year 2016-17, the Council collected 98.1% of Council Tax in the year it fell due which is well above the national average of 97.4%. This places Flintshire as the highest performing Council in Wales. This collection figure is also the highest collection level achieved by Flintshire and even reflects a 0.12% improvement on last year's collection.

It also demonstrates that, despite financial challenges faced by the Council to manage big reductions in the grants received from Central Government, we continue to work with residents by making it easier for residents to pay their bills, access our services and especially support those who experience payment difficulties.

Flintshire is recognised by Welsh Government as a Council with an excellent track record of collecting local taxes. We also recognise that some households struggle to pay and would urge anyone who is finding it difficult to pay to always make early contact with the Council Tax Service on 01352 704848 so that we can provide practical help and guidance on the best way to pay.

In addition, Welsh Government recently announced results of collection for business rates and, once again, Flintshire is recognised as one of most successful local authorities in Wales for the collection of Business rates and we collected 'in-year' 99.1% of all business rates that were due to be paid.

Non Domestic Rates (NDR) are also known as Business Rates and are a property tax paid on non-domestic properties. NDR are the means by which businesses and other users of non-domestic property contribute towards the costs of running Council services. Business rates are charged on most non-domestic properties, like shops, retail units, offices, pubs, warehouses and factories.

In Wales, all income from business rates is collected by each local authority and paid into the Welsh Government's Non-Domestic Rates Pool. They are then redistributed to local authorities as part of the local government revenue settlement each year. This money, together with revenue from Council Tax payers, and certain other sums is used to pay for our local services.

Flintshire at the heart of the region

The past twelve months have been an exciting time for Flintshire.

The launch of the [Growth Vision by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board](http://www.northwaleseab.co.uk/north-wales-growth-vision-to-create-120000-jobs/) (http://www.northwaleseab.co.uk/north-wales-growth-vision-to-create-120000-jobs/), articulated an ambitious programme for economic growth across the region by 2035. With particular focus on the key sectors of energy, advanced manufacturing and digital industries, the Growth Vision identifies £7.2bn in added value to the regional economy.

Flintshire has a critical role to play in the delivery of this vision. As a hub for 20,000 advanced manufacturing jobs, the County has continued to strengthen its economic position and has the potential to see considerable further growth. To further reinforce the role of Flintshire, Welsh Government have also announced the development of the [Wales Advanced Manufacturing Institute](http://gov.wales/about/cabinet/decisions/2016-new/oct-dec/business1/ks7640/?lang=en) (http://gov.wales/about/cabinet/decisions/2016-new/oct-dec/business1/ks7640/?lang=en) in Deeside in Flintshire which will focus on research into and development of advanced manufacturing techniques, innovation and skills for key manufacturing companies and SMEs. The Institute will be a catalyst for growth and job creation across the supply chain throughout North Wales, Northern Powerhouse and further afield. Now at an advanced stage for public sector investment, and with an exciting partnership with Swansea University emerging, the prospects for the vision becoming a reality are positive.

Much has been made of the opportunity which comes with designation as an Enterprise Zone. Of the seven such zones in Wales, Deeside Enterprise Zone (DEZ) leads the way. By capitalising on our location, the established and critical mass of our industrial base, and our reputation, a 'hard sell' is not always required to engender interest and secure results. In the five years since its designation the DEZ has seen 3,460 new jobs created and a further 3,445 safeguarded, with a conversion rate of 62% of business enquiries into actual investment.

The publication of the [Growth Track 360 prospectus](http://www.growthtrack360.com/home/resources/) (http://www.growthtrack360.com/home/resources/) for rail investment in the region has generated major support from businesses and public sector partners calling for the rail infrastructure to receive a much needed update. The prospectus sets out a realistic programme of support needed for the network and the ambitious economic growth that this would help to deliver.

Flintshire County Council plays a vital enabling role in realising the economic growth opportunities highlighted and, with an unwavering positive attitude to economic development and business support, is there for you.

Flintshire County Council's latest business event took place at Soughton Hall in June.

Flintshire in Business hosted a group of senior business leaders who had the opportunity to meet Lord Barry Jones, President of Flintshire in Business 2017, as well as hear from Flintshire County Council's Chief Executive, Colin Everett and Clare Budden, Chief Officer for Community and Enterprise.

Welcoming everyone to the event, President of Flintshire in Business, Lord Barry Jones, said:

"Flintshire County Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council are looking for contributions and feedback from business leaders. We want to engage you in conversation and consultation. You are the economic generators of this great region which is the only cross-border economy in Britain with great manufacturing activity – more than 32% of our GDP is manufacturing – far higher than anywhere else in the country. If today's meeting is a success, we want to hold more events like this."

Clare Budden then introduced four strategic documents which underpin the developing Bid:-

1. [Growth Track 360](http://www.growthtrack360.com/home/resources/) (http://www.growthtrack360.com/home/resources/)
2. North Wales Growth Deal
3. [Deeside Plan](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Business/Advice-and-guidance/The-Deeside-Plan.aspx) (http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Business/Advice-and-guidance/The-Deeside-Plan.aspx)
4. Mersey Dee Growth Prospectus from the [Mersey Dee Alliance](http://www.merseydeeealliance.org.uk/) (http://www.merseydeeealliance.org.uk/)

Colin Everett spoke in greater detail on the developing North Wales Growth Deal Bid which was on track to be submitted to both the UK and Welsh Governments over the summer. He said:

"We have a compelling package of ambitious plans for which we are seeking funding from both Governments. Transport infrastructure and services is the key which will unlock our potential."

There followed a lively discussion which generated great suggestions and ideas from the business leaders. These included working with schools to show the benefits of apprenticeships, improving careers advice, the need for innovation and digital connectivity, using the river as a resource for sea transportation and the possibilities of increased air transport – the room was positively buzzing with ideas, agreement and plans to work together closely in the future.





Flintshire County Council Chief Officer for Community and Enterprise, Clare Budden, said:

“We really appreciate all the input from the business leaders and it has given us a different perspective on things – we will certainly be following up with them. I believe that, with all the coordinated work being done in partnership, we are in the best place we have ever been in to get the investment we need.”

Free school meals

Are you entitled to Free School Meals?

Eligible Criteria: Are you getting any of these, if yes you may be entitled:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Guarantee Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit without Working Tax Credit with an earned annual income less than £16,190.00.

To Apply online please go to our website:
www.flintshire.gov.uk/FSM



Oes gennych chi hawl i gael Prydau Ysgol am Ddim?

Meini Prawf Cymwys: Ydych chi'n cael unrhyw un o'r rhain, os felly gallai fod gennych hawl:

- Credyd Cynhwysol
- Gymhorthdal Incwm
- Lwfans Ceision Gwaith yn Seiliedig ar Incwm
- Lwfans Cyflogaeth a Chymorth ar sail Incwm
- Credyd Pensiwn Gwarant
- Credyd Treth Plant (heb Gredyd Treth Gwaith) gydag incwm blynyddol llai na £16,190.00.

I wneud cais ar-lein, ewch i'n gwefan:
www.sir.yfflint.gov.uk/cy/Resident/Council-Tax/Benefits-Forms.aspx



Let's stop fly-tipping!



What is fly-tipping?

Fly-tipping is the illegal dumping of waste and is a crime. This activity can cause serious pollution to our environment and be a risk to human life and that of our wildlife and farm animals. It destroys the beauty of our land in North Wales, defaces our neighbourhoods and reduces our quality of life. The costs associated with fly-tipping and the implications on our lives and wellbeing are increasing every year.

Costs have soared to a six figure sum to deal with the huge amount of fly-tipping in Flintshire. Statistics provided by the Welsh Government indicate that Flintshire County Council had to pay out around £92,000 to deal with 900 recorded incidents 2014-2015. This cannot be allowed to continue. Therefore, we are reviewing our approach and are investing in monitoring and enforcement to tackle the problem. Fly tippers will be reported, investigated and prosecuted. This action is needed to achieve a greener, cleaner Flintshire.

How can we work together?

There are ways in which we can all dispose of our unwanted items. Why not donate it? REFURB FLINTSHIRE can collect re-usable furniture and electrical items from your doorstep free of charge. Call 01352 734111. Alternatively, advertise them on your local Freecycle/Freegle website. For more information, [visit our website.](http://www.sirymflint.gov.uk/en/Resident/Bins-Recycling-and-Waste/Bulky-item--furniture-collection.aspx) (<http://www.sirymflint.gov.uk/en/Resident/Bins-Recycling-and-Waste/Bulky-item--furniture-collection.aspx>)

Bulk Collection Charges

For up to 5 items £40 + £5 for each additional item.

Householders' Duty of Care

Two thirds of fly-tipping in Flintshire originates from local households. As a Flintshire resident, you have a duty of care to dispose of your own waste responsibly. If your waste is found to be dumped illegally, with or without your knowledge, you can be fined up to £5,000 or go to prison for up to 5 years. If you employ a tradesperson to remove your waste, it is your sole responsibility to ensure that they are legitimate registered waste carriers. Check your contractor is operating legally by visiting the [Natural Resources Wales website](https://naturalresources.wales/?lang=en) (<https://naturalresources.wales/?lang=en>), where you can check that a waste permit/licence is valid.

New council homes ready for tenants to move in



Good progress is being made on the Council's new housing development on The Walks, Flint. The scheme will consist of 30 new Council properties which will be managed by the Council's Housing Management team.

The remaining 62 properties will be managed by the Council's Housing Company, NEW Homes. The Council and NEW Homes work very closely together and will be jointly delivering housing management and Council services on the scheme.

The first Council tenants received the keys to their new homes in May, some of which previously resided in the Council maisonettes which were demolished to accommodate the new housing development.

The scheme is being built by Wates Residential who were appointed as Council's construction partner in 2015.

The new scheme is scheduled to be completed in April 2018.

Councillor Bernie Attridge, Cabinet Member for Housing, said:

"The Walks scheme follows the delivery of the first Council house scheme on the site of the former Custom House School, Connah's Quay which delivered 12 new Council homes."

In addition to The Walks, construction work has started on 40 new Council properties at a number of schemes across Flintshire in Leeswood, Mold and Connah's Quay.

Site investigation works are also being undertaken at a further 22 sites across the county with the view of developing additional Council housing. These will be presented to Council for approval later this year.



Suspension of the Right to Buy Council houses

Flintshire County Council has been successful in its application to Welsh Government to suspend the Right to Buy in respect of all council dwellings.

Over the last 25 years the number of Council homes available for rent has reduced through Right to Buy sales, whilst the number of people in need of council housing has continued to rise. Between 1996 and 2016, a total of 1,606 properties were sold.

During 2016, the Council started its ambitious Strategic Housing And Regeneration Programme (SHARP) which will see 500 new council and affordable homes built across Flintshire by 2020.

By suspending the Right to Buy, Flintshire not only retains its existing council housing stock levels but also safeguards these new properties to maximise the housing opportunities for local people living in Flintshire. The suspension has been granted for five years.

If you require further information regarding the above you can find this on the [Flintshire County Council website](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Housing/Right-to-Buy.aspx) (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Housing/Right-to-Buy.aspx>).

Universal Credit - full service



New Claims

From April this year, Universal Credit is being expanded and offered to all the **majority of new claimants**. This is "Universal Credit Full Service" and replaces the following six benefits: Housing Benefit, Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. This means that if a customer now needs to make a claim for help towards their rent, it won't be paid through Housing Benefit but through Universal Credit.

Natural Migration

A customer will migrate over to Universal Credit when they have a change in circumstances to their old benefits, for example, if a customer becomes responsible for a child for the first time or they stop working due to sickness.

How is Universal Credit claimed?

The government expects almost everyone to claim and manage their Universal Credit online. To claim Universal Credit, customers must set up a Universal Credit account to complete their application. They will also manage their ongoing claim online through this account. Customers will therefore need regular online access to keep their circumstances up to date and ensure they are paid correctly. Universal Credit accounts are designed to work equally on desktop PCs, laptops, tablets and smartphones. To set up and maintain an account, customers will need an email account which is accessed regularly, to complete an online form entering a range of personal data and the ability to create and upload documents such as CVs and other evidence required.

How is it paid?

Universal Credit is paid differently from other benefits. It will be paid once a month usually into a bank/building society or credit union account. If the claim for Universal Credit is made by a couple then each person has their own account but will receive a single monthly payment.

Housing Costs

The monthly Universal Credit payment will include money for help towards rental costs and customers will need to arrange to pay it themselves by setting up a direct debit or standing order. Housing costs, otherwise known as rent, will not be familiar to all customers, so it

is important that customers know where and what they need to do to claim the right amount. To make payments towards rent, [go online](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Housing/Housing-Rents.aspx) (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Housing/Housing-Rents.aspx>).

Alternative Payment Arrangements

There are some Universal Credit payment options that can help customers manage their money, but not all requests for alternative payment arrangements will be granted. Alternative payments can be considered at any point during the customer's Universal Credit claim. If the customer is eligible for an alternative payment arrangement they can get:

- Money paid directly to their landlord from their monthly Universal Credit payment;
- Weekly or fortnightly payments instead of monthly – this can help prevent customers from running out of money if the customer is struggling to make their money last for a month;
- Payment split into 2 bank accounts instead of one (couples only). This can help customers manage their money themselves if they have responsibilities that are different from those of their partner.

If a customer falls into rent arrears, their landlord can apply for a third party deduction directly from their Universal Credit payment. This will only apply where the customer is at least 2 months in arrears with their rent. Customers may want to talk to their landlord and come to an arrangement to avoid these deductions.

Personal Budgeting & Support

Customers can get help to manage their money on a monthly basis, paying their bills on time, applying for an alternative payment arrangement and help with any other issues. Please contact the benefit department on 01352 704848 or email welfareformsresponse@flintshire.gov.uk (<mailto:welfareformsresponse@flintshire.gov.uk>).

Help paying Council Tax

Customers may be able to get help from the Benefit department towards their council tax if they are on a low income or claim benefits including Universal Credit. This help will depend on your circumstances, your household income – including savings, any children or other adults that live in the property. If a customer is claiming Universal Credit for the first time it is important that customers apply straight away for this help rather than wait for their Universal claim to be assessed and/or paid. To make an application for Council Tax Support, [please go to our website](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-Tax-and-Benefits/Council-Tax-Reduction.aspx) (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-Tax-and-Benefits/Council-Tax-Reduction.aspx>).

For any questions about Universal Credit please go to www.gov.uk/universalcredit (<https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>).

Welsh Housing Quality Standards - Car park improvements

As part of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) work currently being undertaken on council properties, it was identified that, as well as upgrading the kitchens, bathrooms and exterior of the buildings, car parking could be improved for residents. Although this was not a statutory requirement, it was seen as an opportunity to improve the surroundings, increase residents' safety and add to the residents' quality of life.

The improvements have been carried out across the county and have been welcomed by residents.

At the **Prince of Wales Court complex in Buckley**, an opportunity was taken to design off-street parking for residents. This entailed removing part of a play park, but to compensate for the loss of some of the play park, the play area was extended at the front.

Before:

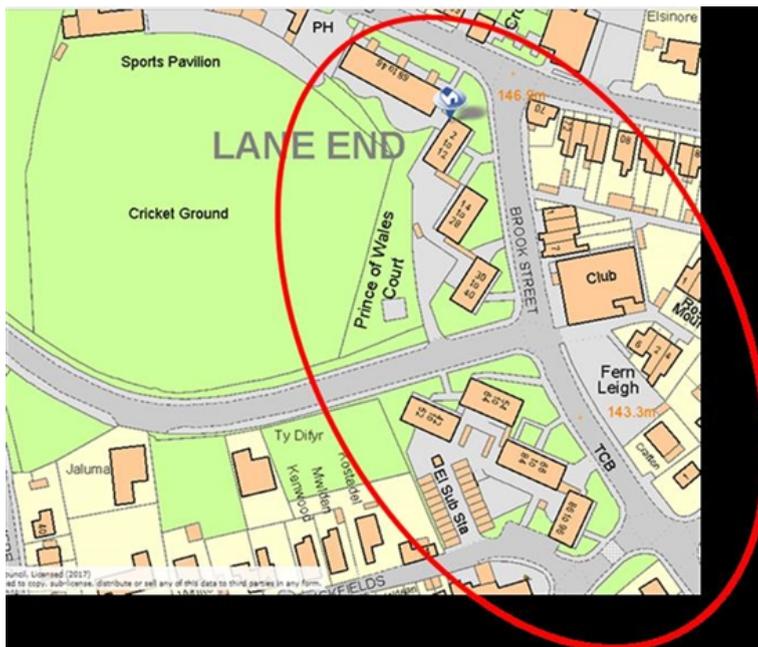


This created 23 clearly marked parking spaces, including 3 disabled bays, in an area where previously there were unmarked spaces for approximately 6 cars. To ensure security and safety, the car park was also fitted with a lighting scheme with motion sensing dawn til dusk solar powered LED lamps.

After:

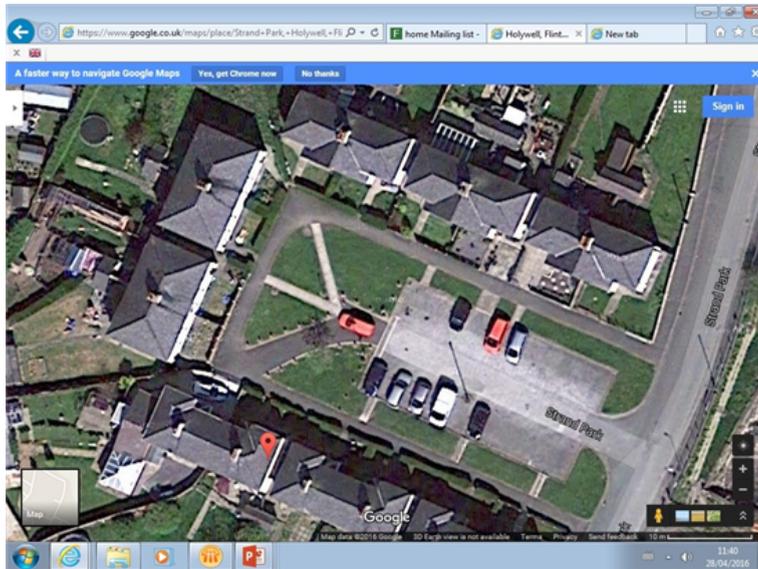


Prince of Wales Courts is made up of 8 blocks of flats with 60 residential units and 20 council owned garages. More improvement work on the exterior and interior of these blocks is due to start in 2018 and will be completed in time for the WHQS deadline of 2020.



In **Strand Park, Holywell**, the team working on the WHQS in the cul-de-sac identified the need for car parking improvements for the residents and the possibility to design sufficient extra parking to satisfy tenants.

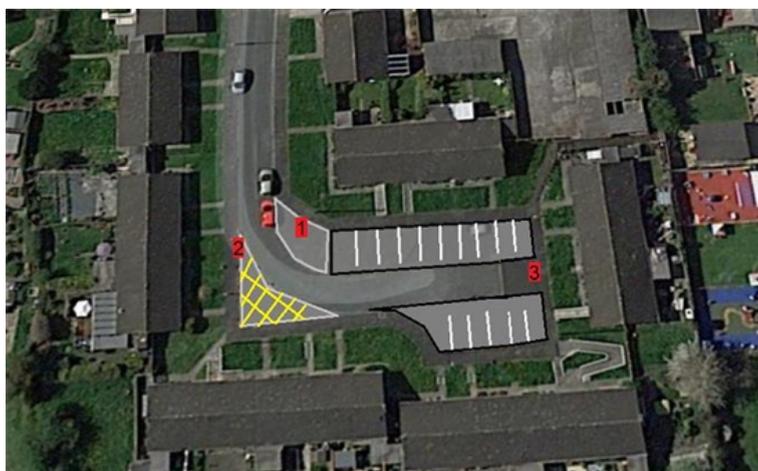
Before:



The scheme removed some green space to allow increased parking, from around 16 unmarked spaces, to 23 marked spaces, included two disabled spaces and is much improved as can be seen below:



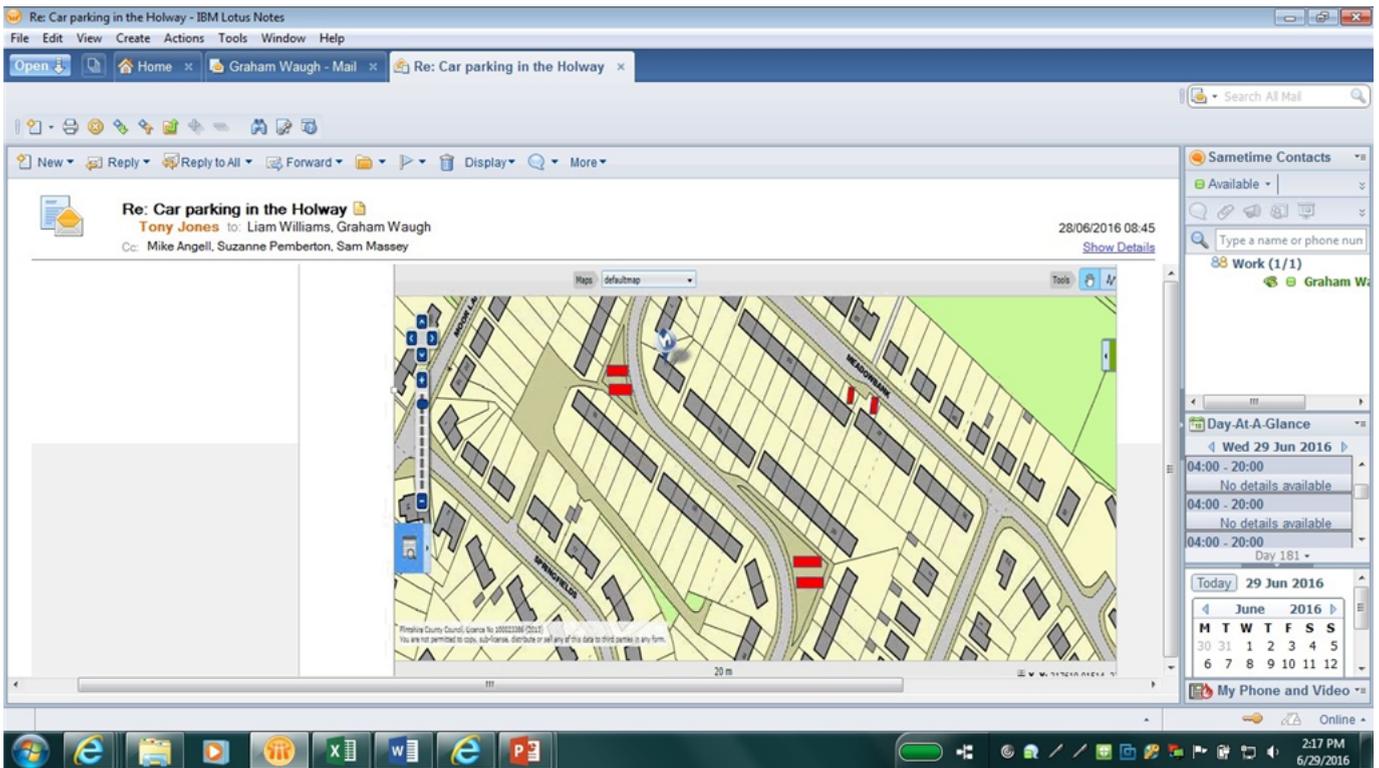
In Broughton, **Heron Close** lacked off-road parking and there was an opportunity to redesign the area to create up to 16 spaces.



See the finished result below:



Other areas for improved car parking are being considered – including Moorfields in Holywell where the proposed car parking improvements are shown outlined in red below:



Welsh Housing Quality Standards - Community Benefits



The community garden is looking rosy

Flintshire County Council welcomed a recent project to help develop community gardens at one of their housing schemes.

Task Team is a new initiative supported by the European Social Fund through the Welsh Government Innovation Fund for over 25 year olds living in a Community for Work cluster. Groundwork North Wales is running the project along with their partner Communities at Work.

A new community garden was chosen at Pen-y-Llan Courts in Connah's Quay where the Council is upgrading the properties as part of the Vibrant and Viable Places (VVP) scheme as well as working to ensure that all the properties are brought up to the Welsh

Housing Quality Standard (WHQS).

Ten volunteers worked on the ten week community project, spending two days a week learning new skills on an accredited course on volunteering.

The volunteers helped with planting and looking at maintenance of the new community garden at Fern/Ivy Court and also spent a day giving the Holly Court community garden a makeover. This community garden was developed in 2009.

The volunteers gained confidence in various skills in areas such as building, health and safety at work and environmental.

Flintshire County Council Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Bernie Attridge, said:

“We hope the new community garden will provide a pleasant environment for all residents of Pen-y-Llan Courts to enjoy. It is pleasing to see that the hard work of the volunteers has led to them gaining valuable experience and a qualification. The garden really complements all the improvement work that has been done in this area in recent years. I'd also like to acknowledge the generous support from BAAS the on-site contractor who provided a water butt to collect rain water, another step to a greener and more environmentally friendly space for residents.”

Dee Cottages



A big thank you to employees of Flintshire County Council Housing Services and A Connolly Ltd who raised over £240 for the Alzheimer’s Society at a Cupcake Day coffee morning. Special thanks to the residents of Dee Cottages and the surrounding area for their donations and to Louis and Rachael Hughes for their wonderful colouring and cake decorating, and to Karen for such lovely cakes.

Scouts get a helping hand

Flintshire County Council has partnered with a number of building contractors to help complete the upgrade work needed on our housing stock.

The contractors are working on the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) which is a national standard of quality for homes set by the Welsh Government and this work gives employment and apprenticeship opportunities to local people.

Not only that, but our contractors have been active in helping local communities in various ways.

Mitie, one of our contractors, has been involved with refurbishing the local scout hut in Flint which was officially opened recently.



Mitie upgraded the exterior which was concrete and in need of repair. They completely renovated the outside of the building by replastering and fitting external wall insulation which, not only has given it a professional makeover, but has also made it much more secure and energy

efficient.

Joanna Hughes, Assistant Cub Scout Leader, said:

"We are so proud of what we have achieved, but it would not have been possible without the support of Mitie, the Rotary Club, Willmott Dixon, Flintshire County Council and everyone else involved – we thank you all. Our Cub Scouts deserve a special thank you for sticking by us during the refurbishment. We hope that 1st Flint Scout Group will flourish and continue for many years to come. If you are interested in joining us, please contact me on 07919 836463 or email 1stflintcubs@gmail.com."

Flintshire County Council Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Bernie Attridge, said:

"The standard of the work carried out is impressive and really does show quality workmanship at its best. I'd like to thank Mitie – their commitment to our local communities really is appreciated and I'm sure the regular users of the centre will be very pleased with the improved facilities.

"This is another example of contractors working with our team providing facilities to the wider community. These new facilities are in addition to other community centres which have been refurbished by our contractors such as Llwyn Aled and Llwyn Beuno in Holywell and Aston Community Centre. The WHQS contracts request contractors to provide Community Benefit as part of their contractual obligations."

Kenny Rushton, Contracts Manager with Mitie, said:

"Mitie was awarded the contract to upgrade the kitchens and bathrooms in 328 homes as part of the Council's WHQS scheme. We pride ourselves in being a responsible business and serving the wider community and we are delighted to have been able to refurbish this local centre to help benefit the community and improve the facilities available."

Education and Youth

Cabinet Secretary for Education visits local school



Kirsty Williams, Cabinet Secretary for Education visited Ysgol Bryn Deva in Connah's Quay recently.

She was there to look at the "Touching the Sky" project and "Clwb Seren Bach" which have both been recognised as excellent practice by Estyn in their 2016 report.

Ysgol Bryn Deva pupils are the first children in Wales to take part in a project to improve their fitness levels, their spoken Welsh and their academic achievement levels.

The school, working in conjunction with Glyndwr University, set up a project called 'Touching the Sky.'

Junior children's fitness was tested and then, over the following 8 months, they took part in various activities in preparation to walk up Snowdon, which they did on 26 May this year.

Steve Thomas, Bryn Deva PE Leader, said:

"As a school, we really want to promote a healthy lifestyle including physical activity and a healthy diet, to improve our children's overall well-being. So far it has had a really positive effect on our pupils."

The school also set up 'Clwb Seren Bach' in order to improve the academic and social performance of pupils in the Foundation Phase who were struggling to cope in whole-class settings.

Flintshire County Council's Leader, Councillor Aaron Shotton, said:

"Ysgol Bryn Deva attained excellent in their Estyn inspection last year for their partnership working, care, support and guidance and a best practice case study has been published by Estyn. The school is part of an Estyn Best Practice Thematic Study into how schools are engaging with recommendations following the Donaldson report, specialising, in Bryn Deva's case, in well-being. I am delighted to be able to show the Minister one of our schools which is a shining light in promoting pupil well-being as a central part to the curriculum."

Cabinet Secretary for Education Kirsty Williams said:

"The new curriculum in Wales will put issues of health and wellbeing at the core of education - I want all of our young people to leave school as healthy confident individuals. The work going on here at Bryn Deva is fantastic and it was a pleasure to speak to children and staff."





Celebrating Welsh language success

Flintshire County Council has celebrated the success of teachers and classroom assistants who have completed Welsh courses during the year.

At an Awards Ceremony held at the Beaufort Park Hotel, teachers and classroom assistants from English medium primary schools across the County received awards presented by the outgoing Chief Officer for Education and Youth, Ian Budd and Claire Homard who has since taken over as Interim Chief Officer.

At the event, Ian Budd said:

“Events such as this are important not only to celebrate the success of our workforce in improving their Welsh language skills but also to consolidate Flintshire’s strong commitment to the Welsh language. Through our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), we support people of all ages to improve their Welsh language skills and to give them the confidence to use the language in their daily lives.”

The manager of the Flintshire Welsh Advisory team, Rhian Roberts, said:

“Training staff has been high on the team’s agenda for several years and continues to be a vital element of our work. It is really important that our workforce has the necessary language skills to deliver age appropriate and sufficiently challenging work to pupils. Teachers and classroom assistants have also taken the opportunity to carry out Welsh Sabbatical courses provided by Bangor University in conjunction with Welsh Government. We will continue to work on this priority to ensure that Flintshire can meet the challenges of the Welsh Government’s target of creating a million Welsh speakers by 2050.”



Penyffordd School



A local contractor has been selected to undertake the new build of Ysgol Penyffordd.

Local firm Wynne Construction, based at Bodelwyddan, will build this new 21st Century primary school facility, amalgamating the all-through 3-11 English medium community primary school on the Abbotts Lane site, together with the demolition of the existing infants school and the construction of improved and increased staff and visitor car parking with the dedicated drop off zone for parents and carers. The facility will provide a new inspirational learning experience for primary school children.

The project is in its early stages and there will be opportunities for all interested parties to have their say. There was a public consultation event at the school's Abbotts Lane site on 11 July where the public were able to talk to the contractors and all the team involved in the new build.

The new purpose built school will include classrooms to accommodate nursery, foundation phase and key stage 1 and 2 for 315 pupils as well as a hall and studio. It will retain the existing sports grassed area.

Building work start dates have yet to be decided, but the contractor is assuring as little disruption as possible to learners and the local community. The new build will be constructed while the school remains open.

Flintshire County Council's Leader, Councillor Aaron Shotton, said:

"This is another milestone in the provision of the 21st Century Schools programme in Flintshire. It will be a wonderful modern facility for children, young people and the wider community."

Chris Wynne, Managing Director of Wynne Construction said: "We are delighted to have been selected as the contractor for this exciting new project and we look forward to working with Flintshire County Council, the school and the local community to deliver an inspirational learning environment, providing lasting community benefits including local employment and training."

Finance for the project is currently being sought under the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme. Match funding will be on a 50:50 basis with Flintshire County Council providing the other 50% of the required finance. This project follows the successful completion of Holywell Learning Campus and Deeside 6th Form College and the recent announcement of the modernisation programme starting later this year at Connah's Quay High School.

For more information, visit [the website](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/School-Modernisation-Related/Home.aspx) (http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/School-Modernisation-Related/Home.aspx), or contact <mailto:21stcenturyschools@flintshire.gov.uk> (mailto:21stcenturyschools@flintshire.gov.uk). You can also follow school modernisation on twitter [@FCCSchoolMod](https://twitter.com/FCCSchoolMod) (https://twitter.com/FCCSchoolMod).



Success for Ysgol Maes Hyfryd students



Flintshire Communities First supported students from Ysgol Maes Hyfryd in Flint recently who took part in a Young Enterprise project.

The project team "Hyfryd Seasons" was partly funded by Communities First and the school was successful, winning the Best Team Presentation at the Young Enterprise Cymru Final in Cardiff.

An enterprise team of ten 6th form students developed a business model to provide popular products and services at a reasonable price. All made by the students, items include cards for all occasions and seasonal crafts for special events.

Their customers are students, staff and visitors to school. Their aim was to be an effective team and work extremely hard to be the best they can be.

Flintshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Councillor Derek Butler, said:

"This is a great achievement by these students. I'm delighted that they have won this prestigious award but, not only that, I am very proud and they should also be proud of what they have accomplished."

Beverley Moseley, an officer with Communities First, said:

"I attended the event and the students delivered a great fun-filled presentation which kept the audience fully informed and engaged and received great praise from the judges when they delivered their results."

Young Enterprise is the UK's leading charity that empowers young people to harness their personal and business skills, it works directly with young people, their teachers and businesses. Its hands-on employability and financial education programmes have been delivered to many schools in Community First areas in Flintshire.

Maes Hyfryd students have also been taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards at Gold level for the first time.

The school has been delivering the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, at bronze and silver level for several years. But in September last year, they enrolled four students for gold and they recently completed their four day / three night practice and final expeditions. In July, they travelled to Nottinghamshire to undertake a week long residential with the National Trust. When their gold award is confirmed in the near future, they will be the first students from an additional needs school in North East Wales to achieve a gold award.

Within the next year, they will receive an invitation to receive their Gold certificate from a member of the Royal Family.



Thanks to the school for supporting the Duke of Edinburgh Awards and a special mention to Glenys Roberts and Mandy Manseri for their support of all participants in school and also during all their expeditions.

The Duke of Edinburgh Awards has been running for over 60 years and is known as 'the world's leading achievement award for young people'. There are three levels bronze, silver and gold and within each level there are four sections – skill, volunteering, physical and the expedition, at gold level only there is also a residential section.



Celebrating Healthy Schools



The Flintshire Healthy Schools annual Celebration of Achievement event took place recently at Ysgol Gwynedd, Flint.

This uplifting and inspiring event is organised by the Healthy Schools team, which is part of the Council's Education and Youth portfolio. For the second year running, the event was celebrated jointly with the Flintshire Primary School Games Association. The event recognises the achievements of schools in all aspects of health education and sport.

Pupils from schools across the county attended to receive their awards from the Vice Chairman of the Council, Councillor Paul Cunningham, accompanied by his Consort, Mrs Joan Cunningham, Cabinet Member for Education and Youth, Councillor Ian Roberts and Interim Chief Officer for Education and Youth, Claire Homard.

Kate Fox-Parry, Chair of Flintshire Primary Schools Games Association and Head of Ysgol Cae'r Nant, welcomed everyone to the event which included a polished performance from Ysgol Croes Atti Choir, a skipping demonstration by Ysgol Gwynedd, presentations from Wood Memorial CP School on what it means to be a "Healthy School", from Ysgol Mynydd Isa entitled "Playful Futures" as well as a presentation from Ysgol Bryn Deva called "Touching the Sky" and an outstanding dance performance from Mountain Lane School.

Councillor Cunningham presented the County Team Sports Awards, saying:

"Today highlights the excellent work which is happening in all our schools across the County. There are a wide range of sports covered including rounders, hockey, football, athletics, cricket, rugby and netball. Events such as this show the ongoing commitment to the Healthy Schools Scheme – well done to everyone involved."

Claire Homard then presented the Healthy Schools Awards to 12 schools.

The biggest awards of the morning were the presentations of the National Quality Award for Healthy Schools. Two schools, Wood Memorial CP School and Ysgol Bryn Deva, achieved accreditation and one school was successfully re-accredited for 2016/17 – Ysgol Mynydd Isa.

On presenting the awards, Claire Homard, said:

“The National Quality Award is the highest accolade in the scheme and schools must complete five phases before being eligible for the award – on average this can take 10 years to achieve! The National Quality Award involves developing a whole-school approach to issues that impact health and wellbeing; they include seven different health themes ranging from Emotional Health, Food and Fitness to Environment and Safety.

“A huge congratulations to all schools on such an achievement!”

Alongside the Healthy School awards, there were special presentations for William Norman from Mountain Lane School and Evan Withe from Ysgol Owen Jones who were both awarded Male Most Promising Sportsman 2017 and Mayzee Davies from Ysgol Gwynedd for Female Most Promising Sportsman award. This year’s Outstanding Contribution to Sport in Flintshire was awarded to Mr Neil Williams for his contribution and dedication to Flintshire junior rugby over the past 16 years.

Councillor Ian Roberts said:

“This is a very special celebration event. It is important that we recognise the sporting achievements of children and young people and celebrate the county’s talented athletes.

“The Healthy Schools Scheme has been running for 15 years in Flintshire and it goes from strength to strength. It’s wonderful to see the children so engaged and enthusiastic about this inspirational scheme.”

Countryside

Dogs campaign



Take the lead in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) by putting your dog on a lead.

The Warden team of the AONB have launched a campaign targeting dog owners to be responsible when taking their dogs for a walk in the countryside.

Popular destinations such as Moel Famau Country Park are experiencing increased sheep worrying incidents which is an offence by law and could lead to the destruction of the dog.

Tom Jones, Trainee Warden, explains:

“With an increase in livestock attacks in recent weeks we would like to remind visitors and users of the countryside that this is agricultural land much of which is covered by heather and gorse which means it might not always be possible to see sheep and lambs.”

Working with North Wales Police Rural Crimes team, the AONB have produced short films on social media and designed new posters and leaflets highlighting key messages.

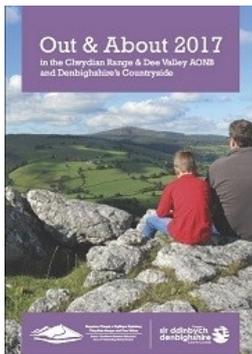
Recently, wardens have been out and about talking to dog owners about the campaign and have received a good response and are continuing to educate owners about their responsibilities in the countryside.

News from the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

You and a view - sometimes that’s all you need from a day in the great outdoors

The AONB 2017 Programme offers a range of ways to enjoy the stunning landscape and heritage of the Clwydian Range & Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There’s something for all of the family.

Download your copy by clicking on link below:



(<http://www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/files/1937378125-out%20&%20about%202017%20ENG%20lo.pdf>)

Volunteering in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Volunteering is good fun, gets you out in the fresh air and teaches you new skills that look good on your CV. And it means you're putting something back into the landscape.

Because an **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** doesn't just happen. It needs constant work.

These practical tasks start at 10am and finish between 3 and 4 pm. You need to "dress for a mess" with comfortable boots that grip well. Don't forget your waterproofs and a packed lunch – and please make sure your tetanus jab is up to date!

We'll provide full training. If you want to try an activity first, just come along to one of our events – download a copy of our Volunteer Programme by clicking on the link below:



(<http://www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/files/1773654599-Volunteer%20programme%202017.pdf>)

For more information on the Clwydian Range & Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty visit [their website](http://www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/discovering-the-aonb/) (<http://www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/discovering-the-aonb/>).

follow them on:

 [clwydianrangeanddeevalley](https://www.facebook.com/clwydianrangeanddeevalley/) (<https://www.facebook.com/clwydianrangeanddeevalley/>)

 [@Clwyd_De_AONB](https://twitter.com/Clwyd_De_AONB) (https://twitter.com/Clwyd_De_AONB)

Young Rangers conserving the countryside

This year young people have been getting stuck into conservation work across the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley, with two 'Young Ranger' groups up and running in the area.

Young Rangers is perfect for young people who want to learn more about the amazing landscape on their doorstep and don't mind getting messy working and exploring in the great outdoors. The Young Ranger groups get involved in practical conservation work, wildlife surveying, visit ancient hillforts and enjoy recreational activities available to us locally.

The Clwydian Range Young Rangers group is based at Moel Famau and Loggerheads Country Park, and is open to young people aged 11 to 18. This group started in 2012 and past young rangers have continued to volunteer with the Countryside service as young adults with

one now a member of staff.

Dee Valley Young Rangers started just over a year ago. Open to 11-16 year olds, this group has undertaken a wide range of activities working alongside some of our partner organisations and learning about the importance of the work taking place in the Valley.



Young Rangers helping the Canal and Rivers Trust with some cutting back at the Llangollen Mooring Basin. This was then rewarded with an afternoon of canoeing on the canal!

A very cold morning was spent helping the Llangollen Heritage Railway clear vegetation from the railway embankment. This will allow passengers to enjoy a view of the River Dee. In the afternoon they were kindly given a tour of the working railway sheds in Llangollen by volunteer, Bob Jacques.



Young Rangers have worked on Coed Pen y Pigyn near Corwen which we manage in partnership with Natural Resource Wales. They take out invasive tree species and coppice others to help bring the woodland back into a good condition. They also practice their bush craft skills and explore the area.



Ros Stockdale, Community Partnership Officer for the AONB in the Dee Valley said:

“It’s great to get young people out into the countryside learning new skills and about the area that they live in. We have a great summer of events coming up where we’ll hopefully encounter some of the amazing wildlife we have here.”



Did you know there are more than 250 different species of bee in the UK! Around 225 solitary bees, 24 bumblebees, and just one single honey bee species. The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Young Ranger groups had a great day at Coed Nercwys with our Partnership Officer who is jointly employed by CRADV AONB and Natural Resources Wales, learning all about bees and other pollinators.

Equipped with nets and bug viewers, the Young Rangers set off in and around the Old Enclosure catching and identifying pollinators and also looking under rocks to see what other creepy crawlies they could find!

After lunch they got suited up to visit a local honey bee hive, located just outside of Coed Nercwys. Here the Young Rangers learnt about the importance of beekeeping, bee behaviour within their hive and also some tips on beekeeping.



Meeting once a month, the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Young Ranger groups are perfect for young people aged between 11 and 18 who want to learn more about the amazing landscape on their doorstep, getting involved in practical conservation work, wildlife surveying, visiting ancient hillforts and experiencing fun recreational activities in the area such as canoeing on Llangollen canal or cycling around Coed Llandegla!

If you would like more information about our Young Ranger Groups, please contact:

Clwydian Range group: Vicky Knight 01824 71 2747, vicky.knight@denbighshire.gov.uk (<mailto:vicky.knight@denbighshire.gov.uk>)

Dee Valley group: Ros Stockdale 01824 71 2794, ros.stockdale@denbighshire.gov.uk (<mailto:ros.stockdale@denbighshire.gov.uk>)



Public Protection

Food safety - How to barbecue safely



Our Food Safety and Food Standards teams want you to stay safe while barbecuing this summer.

If you want to serve up a sensational barbecue that also helps keep your family and friends safe, take the following simple steps to avoid food poisoning bugs.

Pre-cook - consider cooking all chicken and pork in the oven prior to giving it a final 'finish' on your barbecue where possible. Your friends and family will still experience that special barbecue 'chargrilled' taste – and you will know that you've cooked the chicken all the way through. This technique can also be used for sausages, burgers and kebabs if you're cooking for large numbers.

Don't eat rare burgers. Burgers served less than fully cooked can remain contaminated with harmful bacteria, such as E. coli. Burgers are not like steak or other whole cuts of beef and lamb; harmful bacteria from the surface of the raw meat will be spread all the way through the burger when the meat is minced. These bacteria inside will not be killed if all parts of the burger aren't fully cooked. Burgers should not be served rare or pink if being prepared at home; they should always be cooked all the way through until steaming hot.

Charred on the outside doesn't mean cooked on the inside. Cut open and check your burgers, sausages and chicken. Turning meat regularly and moving it around on the barbecue will also help to cook it evenly. If in doubt, keep cooking. Remember that most types of meat are safe to eat only when:

- the meat is steaming hot throughout;
- there is no pink meat visible when you cut into the thickest part;
- any juices run clear.

Disposable BBQs take longer to heat up and to cook food. Don't overload the barbecue and always check that your meat is cooked thoroughly.

When you're cooking most types of meat on a barbecue, such as poultry, pork, burgers or sausages, make sure:

- the coals are glowing red with a powdery grey surface before you start cooking, as this means they're hot enough;
- frozen meat is properly thawed before you cook it;
- you turn the meat regularly and move it around the barbecue to cook it evenly.

Avoid cross-contamination - store raw meat separately before cooking. Use different utensils, plates and chopping boards for raw and cooked food. Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and hot water and dry them before and after handling food.

Keep plates and cutlery away from raw meat and fish and never reuse a marinade used on raw meat, unless you give it a thorough cook first. You'll only be serving up bugs along with that extra flavour to your guests!

Keep cold foods below 5°C and hot foods above 63°C and don't leave food that you would store refrigerated standing around in the warm, before serving.



For your definitive guide to safe summer food, go to <https://www.food.gov.uk/science/microbiology/your-definitive-guide-to-safe-summer-food> (<https://www.food.gov.uk/science/microbiology/your-definitive-guide-to-safe-summer-food>).

Healthy homes, healthy people initiative



Healthy Homes Healthy People (HHHP) Project can provide free help and advice to local people who are struggling to pay their energy bills, heat their homes or are living in unsafe homes in Flintshire.

"Everyone deserves to live in a home which is safe, sound, warm and secure which they can live, grow, play and work in".

The project works with North Wales Energy Advice Centre and front line staff such as health visitors, social workers, support workers and others to target vulnerable tenants living in private rented properties and owner occupiers. Referrals are taken from general public, family, neighbours, careers, social and health services and charitable sector professionals.

This is a person based approach to address their need, to improve their health and wellbeing by creating a home for all which is safe, sound, warm and secure which everyone can live, play, grow and work in. Outcomes possible from a HHHP visit:

- Housing, Health & Safety Rating System visits to reduce 29 hazards in the home and ensure that all rented properties are safe, sound, secure and warm;
- Tenancy support;
- Fire safety visits;
- Benefit/ debt advice can enhance income;
- Police home safety advice/neighbourhood warden;
- Energy efficiency improvements -contribute to reducing fuel poverty risk of fuel debt or being disconnected from gas and electricity supplies, improving energy efficiency of properties and reducing carbon footprints;
- Home improvements/disabled facilities grants, adaptations and financial assistance to get urgent works carried out;
- Health related advice/referrals to improve health outcomes and encourage behaviour change.

There are three parts to a visit:

1. Identify vulnerable residents living in properties who require assistance with improvements- including heating via access to grants or through action by Environmental Health Officers.
2. Identify if other support is required in the form of reducing fuel bills, taking people out of debt with energy bills, helping them to use their heating system better.
3. Look at other support that may be required such as tenancy support, debt help, health and wellbeing, mental health and any other service that may be able to help.

Contact us

For more details or to arrange a home visit call: 01352 703440 or email healthyhomesHP@flintshire.gov.uk
(<mailto:healthyhomesHP@flintshire.gov.uk>)

All private rented properties in Wales are required to be licensed with Rent Smart Wales and all persons involved with the management of letting of rented properties will require a licence. For more details or to find out more visit: [rentsmart.gov.wales](https://www.rentsmart.gov.wales/en/)
(<https://www.rentsmart.gov.wales/en/>) or call **03000 133344**

Scams are crimes

The Trading Standards department receives regular reports of people being affected by scams. Unfortunately scams are very common and can occur:

- On the telephone;
- Online e-mails or scam websites; and
- By post.

We would also like to remind residents to always report scams to The Flintshire Trading Standards Investigations team on 03454 040506.

Telephone Scams

This is a popular way to scam people because it is easier than coming face to face with someone.

These scams include PPI claims where the caller states you have a valid payment protection insurance (PPI) claim and they can do the paperwork for you. What they don't tell you is how much they will take from your successful claim and that you could do it yourself at no cost.

Another popular scam includes computer repairs, often using a well-known name like 'Windows' or 'Microsoft'. The person could say that you have a computer virus and they need to resolve this for you urgently by accessing your computer remotely. They will also ask for your bank details.

The best way to protect yourself is to say no and put the phone down. If it is something you are interested in, don't agree to anything and don't be rushed into making a snap decision. You can always telephone Trading Standards for advice.

Never give permission to access your computer, the caller may infect your computer with a virus or spyware. If this were to happen, your personal information including passwords, financial information, documents and photographs would be at risk. If you do think that your computer might be at risk, buy a good anti-virus software package or take the computer to someone reputable and ask them to look at it. Never trust a stranger on the telephone.

Online Scams

Emails claiming to be from, for example, your bank or HMRC are very common. They are copycats pretending to be from a legitimate organisation. There will often be a link in the email which contains a virus and will infect your computer with spyware if opened.

Scam websites copy a genuine website to make you think you are on the right website. However there is often a small change in the web address which takes you to the scam copycat site. Be careful when online, always check that you are on the genuine site, look for the padlock symbol and also some sites operate under "https".

Postal Scams

These include mail order offering some over priced items, they may even offer a sweep stake for good measure. Others include foreign lottery prizes, psychic readings and many more.

They have one thing in common, they are scams and all want your bank details. They also work together, it isn't a coincidence that you get a letter saying you have won a prize of a life changing amount of money, and then a psychic tells you in another letter that you will have a financial windfall. They are trying to entice you to complete the details slip and send them your bank details. You will probably be advised that your money is being held at various places and you need to pay various administration charges or taxes. This is just to extort more money from you. You will never need to pay money to claim a legitimate prize.

Protect yourself, report scam mail to Trading Standards and then shred it. Scam mail is a huge problem in the UK and steps are being taken to tackle it, but it will be a slow process.

In the meantime time, the Trading Standards team wants to reduce the likelihood of people falling victim to scams. So the golden rule is, if it looks too good to be true, it probably is.

If you haven't entered a competition, then how can you win? Never give anyone your personal or financial information, scammers will use this to commit crimes, such as fraud, they will steal your identity and your hard earned money.

Always report scams to Trading Standards, we are interested and we will listen, we can warn others using our [Flintshire Trading Standards Facebook Page](https://www.facebook.com/Flintshire-Trading-StandardsSafonau-Masnach-Sir-Y-Fflint-382838768464300/) (<https://www.facebook.com/Flintshire-Trading-StandardsSafonau-Masnach-Sir-Y-Fflint-382838768464300/>) and our Twitter page [@FlintshireTS](https://twitter.com/FlintshireTS) (<https://twitter.com/FlintshireTS>). By reporting it, you are helping us to prevent future victims. Whether you experienced a scammer, on the telephone, at your door, online or by mail, report it, scams are crimes.

Streets and Travel

Active Travel



(<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Streetscene/Active-Travel-Integrated-Network-Map-Consultation.aspx>) Public consultation has now started on Flintshire County Council's Integrated Network Map and Schedule which is a 15-year vision to improve infrastructure for walkers and cyclists across the County. The Integrated Network Map has been developed to meet our duties under the Active Travel Act which was passed by the Welsh Assembly in October 2013. The aim of the Act is to encourage people to walk or cycle for short journeys to access a workplace or educational establishment or to access health, leisure or other services or facilities and to ultimately make Wales a walking and cycling nation. For further information about the Active Travel Act click [here](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Streetscene/Active-Travel.aspx) (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Streetscene/Active-Travel.aspx>).

The consultation, which is running from **3 July to 24 September 2017**, is an opportunity for the public to have their say on the proposals set out on the Integrated Network Map. You can respond to these consultation proposals by emailing active.travel@flintshire.gov.uk (<mailto:active.travel@flintshire.gov.uk>).

What happens next?

Consultation responses will be considered with a view to amending the proposals on the Map where it is deemed appropriate.

A Consultation Report will be published and the Integrated Network Map will be submitted to Welsh Government for approval by **3 November 2017**.

For more information about the consultation, click on the logo at the top of the page.

Public Consultation Drop In Events

Public 'Drop-in' sessions have been arranged at the following locations to give Flintshire residents the opportunity to meet with Council Officers and discuss the maps or any other aspects of Active Travel.

Venue	Date	Time
Holywell Connects Offices	Thursday 3 August, 2017	12:00 - 17:00
Deeside Leisure Centre	Tuesday 8 August, 2017	14:00 - 19:00
Flint Pavilion	Tuesday 5 September, 2017	14:00 - 19:00

Community transport



Flintshire County Council and Higher Kinnerton Community Council introduced a sustainable community transport service for the area earlier this year, the first of its kind in the County and part of the Flintshire Community Travel Project.

The new Taxibus service started on 6 February 2017 and operates with a fixed route and timetable enabling residents from Higher Kinnerton to access and connect with key services at Broughton.

There will shortly be schemes running from Penyffordd to Buckley and Northop Hall to Connah's Quay. These will operate in the same way as the Higher Kinnerton service.

A Taxishare service is also being introduced and will operate as a "ring-and-ride" style service for people who are unable to access or use conventional public transport services in South East Flintshire. The Taxishare service will enable people to attend health/medical appointments or connect with the Taxibus service.

Summer 2017 drink drive campaign

Flintshire County Council is supporting the all Wales Drink / Drug driving campaign and would like to reiterate this very important message.

All Welsh police forces are joining together for a summer campaign targeting Drink / Drug drivers.

At this time of year, the temptation to drink and drive is even greater as people are often tempted to have a few drinks socialising with friends, and then they don't think about the dangers of getting behind the wheel.

Drugs also affect the way you think and behave and this can have a significant impact on your sense of judgement and reaction times. Be smart about drug driving and think before you get behind the wheel or accept a lift from someone who you know is not in a fit state to drive. Remember, possession of illegal drugs is an offence and you could receive a heavy penalty including a fine and/or prison sentence for possession or intent to supply and the penalties are the same as for drink driving; a fine, a ban, and a criminal record.

Please also be aware that some prescribed drugs and those you can buy over the counter such as cold and flu medicine can also affect your ability to drive and always read the label if you're taking prescribed medication including antihistamines and tranquilisers. If the label advises against 'operating heavy machinery' consider it a warning not to get behind the wheel.

We all know that drinking and driving does not mix and alcohol is a drug like any other.

Don't drink/drug drive. Don't even think about it.

What's on

17 August



(<http://www.denbighandflintshow.com/cms/>) The Denbigh and Flint Show site sits in the heart of the beautiful Vale of Clwyd and has been at the current site at the Green, Denbigh since 1990.

Flintshire County Council is gearing up for this year's show which takes place on Thursday, 17 August, when we will once again team up with Denbighshire County Council to host a marquee and exhibition, this year celebrating the 'Year of Legends'.

Find out more about how you can become a 'volunteer legend' and help Flintshire and Denbighshire Countryside Services and the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB with their fantastic work in the beautiful North East Wales countryside and coast.

You can also learn about other Welsh legends, get involved with legendary story-telling and create your own legendary arts and crafts.

There will be plenty of activities for the whole family to enjoy, including Hemlock the Dragon who will be with us on the day.

So come along and see for yourselves the many legendary adventures on offer in Denbighshire, Flintshire and North East Wales. We will be located next to the main ring and look forward to seeing you.

For further details about the Denbigh and Flint Show, click on the logo above to visit their website.

Theatr Clwyd

There's a lot happening at Theatr Clwyd - check out [their website](https://www.theatrclwyd.com/en/) and be inspired!

What's on in Flintshire

Visit [our website](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-Apps/Events.aspx) to find out ...

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