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Social Care



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Facing the future How to approach the funding shortfall?

Too often beholden to capricious governments, can social care take control of its own destiny?

David Brindle

Still the wait goes on. Social care leaders gather this week in Manchester for their annual conference none the wiser about what the government has in mind to resolve the fundamental and long-ducked question of how England, and by example the rest of the UK, should care for its ageing population, and how it should pay for it.

It's a can that's been kicked down the road for almost 20 years, since the then Labour administration shelved the report of the royal commission on long-term care for the elderly. The can was booted heftily ahead in 2015 when a planned cap on individual liability for care costs was deferred first to 2020, then indefinitely. Most recently, ministers promised a green paper with fresh ideas before the parliamentary recess this summer, then revised that to autumn, and then to the end of the year.

While we continue to wait, the care system continues to crumble. One recent snapshot: just 42% of UK councils now offer any form of meals-on-wheels service, with as few as 13% in the north-west doing so. Even though older people are encouraged to stay living independently as long as possible, and loneliness is at last recognised as a priority public health issue, this crucial tool for enabling the former and countering the latter is at risk of vanishing.

Some more money is being pumped into the system, but it

barely touches the sides. The "almost £1bn for social care" that was widely trailed ahead of last month's budget turned out to be £55m extra for home adaptations this winter and £240m exclusively for adult care in 2019-20, plus £410m to be shared with children's services, leaving local councils struggling on both fronts to make judgments of Solomon. All those allocations, for England alone, will be one-offs.

Glen Garrod, president of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, says councils will face "individuous" choices over the £410m. His opposite number at the Association of Directors of Children's Services, Stuart Gallimore, comments: "We need five times this amount just to plug the funding gap expected in children's services by 2020." And Niall Dickson, chief executive of the NHS Confederation, representing health providers and commissioners, says the further "sticking plaster" leaves adult social care the Achilles heel of the whole health and care system - "consistently underfunded, neglected and unloved by politicians over many years".

With the government committed to boosting the NHS budget in

England by £20.5bn by 2023, whether social care remains the Achilles heel in the medium term will depend not primarily on the promised green paper - any reforms emerging from which will take years to implement - but on the government's three-year spending review, to be conducted in 2019 for the period 2020-23.

Whatever the outcome, it is clear that much greater emphasis must be placed on preventing demand for social care, among both adults and children, to stop costs spiralling and needs going unmet. This supplement focuses on proven interventions and emerging ideas for prevention, including working with young people excluded from school, and simply listening to and learning from the experiences of people who have ended up in hospital unnecessarily. We also look at the vogue for intergenerational work that brings young and old together: does it deliver anything more tangible than warm feelings and television ratings?

We start, though, by turning the spotlight on a debate about tactics and priorities in adult social care. For this week sees not only the three-day National Children and Adult Services (NCAS) conference, but, for the first time alongside it, a parallel two-day fringe event organised by a grassroots group called Social Care Future. This promises a platform for new and radical thinking on what care and support might look like in years to come, developed in collaboration with people who have support needs.

Julie Stansfield, one of the organisers of the alternative event, sets out why she thinks it represents a necessary counterbalance to what critics see as NCAS's over-focus on the problems of funding existing patterns of services that are largely parcelled out to independent providers. In response, Garrod defends the record of the mainstream care sector in the face of unprecedented pressures and calls for unity to continue making a case to government.

Towards the end of the alternative event, a delegation will be admitted to the main conference to report on the fringe sessions and ideas for reinvigorating the sector's profile and message. It's a positive sign for forging a joint front in future discussions.

Too little, too rare

£2.6bn

The estimated combined funding gap for adult and children's social care in 2019-20, England

£650m

The one-off boost for adult and children's services in England, 2019-20



'Social care is discussed and thought about as a costly problem, not as an opportunity ripe for investment. It needs to tell a better story'

◀ Changes afoot? The social care sector will decide how best to move forward at this week's events
PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

Comment Julie Stansfield



We need to discuss an alternative future for social care

Perhaps now more than ever, during this time of terrible cuts, we need to reimagine and start to build a better future for social care. This year, for the first time, the National Children and Adult Services (NCAS) conference will run in parallel with a major fringe event, independently organised by voluntary network #socialcarefuture.

The network has for the past year been gathering and publishing a series of "visions and glimpses" of a positive future from a diverse range of voices. What unifies them is a willingness of public services to partner with citizens and communities, and to use all local resources to build health, wellbeing, inclusion and prosperity. They show how better support can be secured via human-sized and shaped approaches, led by organisations embedded in the community.

Even in the current, incredibly hard environment, we see exciting innovations that hold real promise. As sci-fi writer William Gibson said: "The future is already here - it's just not evenly distributed." For us, many experiencing the sharp end of cuts, despair is not an option - and neither is trying to sustain a system that isn't fit for the future.

These glimpses of the future are the basis of our coalition of the willing: local places where statutory organisations and communities move beyond traditional commissioning to build serious partnerships and start to see real results; where better ways of offering support are coming in from the margins; where, through reductions in bureaucracy, user-led organisations and self-managed teams enable people to take as much control as they want to over their support.

There are glimpses of support providers becoming real assets in their communities, beyond simply delivering contracts; of community business and micro-enterprises supporting full use of local assets; of people too often at risk of institutionalisation leading full lives in their own homes.

At least 300 contributors are coming together at two fringe venues in Manchester this week. Our gathering will connect people using social care, and their families, with workers and professionals, support providers, commissioners and politicians. What we have in common is our determination to turn frustration with social care that does not properly respond to our modern needs and aspirations into positive collective action for change. We are bringing people together who are not just going to share good examples and debate them; we will plan action to make practical change happen, and commit to these actions as people, groups and organisations.

We recognise that as well as working on what social care does, and how it does it, we must tell a compelling story of change that attracts support from the public and politicians, rather than one that repels people. Research by the Frameworks Institute into public thinking on social care, and by Lancaster University into how the media talks about social care, found that it is overwhelmingly discussed and thought about as a costly problem, not an opportunity ripe for investment.

Yet it is the sector itself that has generated this narrative. It now has the opportunity and influence to tell a better story - and we believe we can do it. By bringing more voices into the debate, and by sharing positive developments around the country that can be built upon, we believe we can turn crisis into opportunity. We need to make the future together.

Julie Stansfield is chief executive of In Control



Comment Glen Garrod



We are dedicated to making an impact with ever-fewer resources

As we gather for the annual NCAS conference and gear up for a critical year ahead for social care, the need for unity has never been clearer. We all know the backdrop against which we are operating: massive challenges confront us, whether that's the sector's significant funding restrictions, fragile care markets, the sustainability of our under-recognised and under-rewarded workforce, or the societal and health impacts of an ever older and more disabled population. With wealth and health inequalities widening, we face these challenges with seemingly ever-fewer resources.

Yet against this backdrop, there have been significant successes. Overall, delays in transfers of care from hospital in England have fallen, with the number of delays attributable to social care consistently half those attributable to the NHS.

That focus, however, has come at a cost, and we at the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (Adass) are looking at whether making funding contingent exclusively on reducing delays is the right thing to do when we need to be encouraging people's independence and interdependence. Without support to help people in their communities, more people will end up in hospital and pressures will only increase.

We've seen unique and innovative approaches to person-centred care across adult services - whether that's the use of digital technology, appointing "flu champions" to reduce winter pressures on adult care, or adopting whole-system approaches that provide wraparound support across and between generations within a family. We've also seen how personalised health budgets have begun to mirror the success we've achieved with personal budgets in social care.

These approaches show that social care has the dedication and determination among its workforce to make the biggest impact it can with the resources available to it. In short, when we are presented with issues, we get stuck in, work together, and fix them.

That is why it is essential we adopt a unified approach. This week, the NCAS conference will play host to people from an array of divergent disciplines, with services from fostering to care homes represented. Our day jobs may vary wildly, but the challenges we face are startlingly similar. Both children's and adult social care face significant funding shortfalls, affecting their ability to deliver genuine care that takes the individual as its start and end point. Together, we know that we can secure real, lasting and meaningful change. For my colleagues in adult social care, with a green paper and the NHS long-term plan around the corner, it is essential that we shift towards ensuring people are treated effectively in the homes and communities where they live - whether that's safeguarding vulnerable young people or ensuring older people are supported.

As this year's president of Adass, I've had two things reaffirmed for me: the passion that those who need social care have for it; and the desire that it be the best it can possibly be, because high-quality services can make a huge difference to people's lives.

Those people do not want to meekly acquiesce to government policy, but to advocate strongly for their needs, and for social care to be put on a sustainable footing. That is the least that the people we care for need, deserve, and expect.

Glen Garrod is executive director of Adult Care and Community Wellbeing at Lincolnshire Council

▲ Unity and community: key social care figures agree on the need for more care to take place outside of homes
PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

'Users of social care want us to advocate strongly for their needs, and for it to be put on a sustainable footing. It's the least they deserve'



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Jonathan Carter, Head of Specialist Services – 01305 224281

Jon Goodwin, Head of Locality Services – 01305 225158

We look forward to hearing from you.

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Intergenerational care 'Children make them feel more human'

The more time young and old people spend together, the more both parties benefit

Andrew Cole

We live in a society where age segregation is on the rise. Research by the Intergenerational Foundation has found that only 5% of older people in England and Wales now live near someone under 18, whereas 15% did so 25 years ago. So the idea of intergenerational care - where children and older people come together to sing, play or just chat - seems to have much to recommend it.

Studies claim this type of interaction can decrease older people's loneliness, delay mental decline, lower blood pressure and even reduce the risk of disease or death. But, at heart, the benefit of almost any interaction between young and old is self-evident, according to Lesley Carter, clinical lead at charity Age UK.

"I have seen it so often, when a

child touches the hand of somebody who is perhaps very withdrawn, and not really speaking, and all of a sudden that person is alive," says Carter. "It's really humbling."

However, evidence for successful outcomes remains largely anecdotal and, partly because their growth has been driven mainly from the bottom up, funding for these programmes is often short-term and uncertain.

Prof Sarah Harper, an Oxford University gerontologist, points out that these initiatives are very small-scale and barely scratch the surface of the problem of social isolation: "We can learn a lot from them, but I don't think this is going to be the solution."

Intergenerational care started in Japan in the 1970s and was soon enthusiastically adopted in many other countries, including the US and Australia. The UK was slower off the mark, but there has been a rapid expansion in the past two years, inspired in part by the hit Channel 4 show, *Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds*, which has just completed a second series.

United for All Ages, a thinktank that focuses on intergenerational work, says between 30 and 40 projects are now up and running around the country, most of which involve care homes linking up with



nurseries or primary schools. Many more are in the pipeline, and director Stephen Burke predicts there will be more than 500 within five years.

The model of engagement can range from occasional, informal visits to settings where two organisations share premises, enabling children and residents to interact every day. The best-known example in the UK is the Apples and Honey nursery in Wandsworth, south London, which was purpose-built within the grounds of the 200-bed Nightingale House care home. Children (and care workers) take part with residents in daily activities such as singing, storytelling and playing games.

The project has been running for a year and, says co-founder Ali Somers, the results have been eye-opening. "There's something about having children on site which makes residents feel more human and gives them permission to care about others. It boosts their confidence and feeling of self-worth."

Many people with dementia seem to thrive in this environment. Somers recalls one very withdrawn resident who "became much more communicative with the baby and toddler group and, after coming to a singalong, took the song over and began to lead. There are many of these mini-awakenings."

Other schemes include regular get-togethers between school pupils and older people with dementia and depression in east London; weekly visits by pre-school groups to care homes in Torbay; and a link-up between Augusta Court care home in Chichester - part of the Anchor group - and a neighbouring nursery, run by national organisation Busy Bees. Discussions are already under way about replicating this model elsewhere in the country.

▲ Top to bottom: intergenerational care at the Albany nursing home, east London; children also benefit from the schemes; Marilyn O'Connor, activities co-ordinator at Albany nursing home

PHOTOGRAPHY: ELENA HEATHERWICK



Lorraine George, childcare development worker with Torbay council, who spent a month last year looking at intergenerational schemes in the US, came across many success stories: "Each one of these anecdotes describes real change to one person's life, but, for some reason, we don't value that as much as data and statistics," she says.

The benefits are not only felt by the older people - George noted how children's confidence also improved in these settings, as did their vocabulary and socialisation. "All the parents I spoke to felt their children had learned so much from the elderly residents," she says. "We're so time-poor as a society, so to be surrounded by people who have an unlimited amount of time to read with you and answer all your questions and offer unconditional love provides an incredible opportunity to learn."

Other benefits included greater job satisfaction among staff, improved recruitment and retention, happier relatives, and stronger links with the surrounding community.

In most US cases the care home and kindergarten or school were located together, often developing from economic or logistical necessity, since local schools were expanding and care homes had space on their hands. The UK is beginning to face similar issues. "In Torbay we have care homes that are not full and nurseries that are overflowing," says George. "It makes sense to team up and share some of the back-office costs."

Another abiding problem is funding. One scheme, the Together Project, which has had success in north-east London (see right), needed crowdfunding to get going, and, even then, one of its flagship projects ground to a halt after a year because the home closed down. Age UK's analysis of international schemes suggests they often founder if there is an imbalance in numbers between young and old or if one group feels at a disadvantage to the other.

Some observers also express concern about safeguarding, including the potential risk posed to young children by care home residents with dementia - the majority in most homes these days. Organisers say they take this issue extremely seriously, and follow rigorous safeguarding measures laid down by regulatory bodies.

Somers says Apples and Honey conducted detailed risk assessments before launching its scheme, and that residents are screened by staff before sessions and will never be left unsupervised with a child. School field-trip rules apply every time children leave the nursery.

While accepting the importance of risk assessment, however, George feels it can be used as an excuse for inaction. "Sometimes I feel we can risk-assess things so much we actually stop doing anything."

Somers's advice to anyone thinking about an intergenerational project is to go ahead, no matter how small the idea, because all interactions have an impact. As George puts it: "This is not rocket science and it's not hard to do. And when you see it in action you think: 'Why on Earth wouldn't you do this?'"

Experience 'When I tell her the babies are coming her face lights up and she's animated'

An intergenerational initiative in London is transforming how care residents behave

Andrew Cole

When Louise Goulden brought her one-year-old son to see his great-great-aunt in her care home, the experience was "like a light had been switched on" for both the aunt and other residents. "Residents who were dozing or not particularly engaged suddenly lit up," she recalls.

That was also a lightbulb moment for Goulden, and the result was Songs and Smiles, an intergenerational initiative that organises regular visits by local baby and toddler groups to five local care homes in north-east London.

The visits - part of the Together Project, also run by Goulden, which seeks to tackle ageism and social isolation - take place each week and last around an hour. They always start with music, taking in singing, playing instruments and movement. After a break for refreshments, parents and toddlers are then invited to stay and interact more informally.

The music acts as a focus and an ice-breaker, says Goulden. "It's designed to work for the youngest and oldest and for a range of abilities and capacities. Some residents have quite advanced dementia, but we try to make it as inclusive and enjoyable as possible."

Up to a dozen residents will usually attend the sessions, along with a similar number of children, plus parents, volunteers and care

home staff. So it can often be quite a busy environment, but the pleasure both residents and children derive from the experience is clear.

Goulden says she and the care home staff have noticed quite significant changes in residents since Songs and Smiles launched last year. One care home manager described the transformation as miraculous. "She noticed that people who she wouldn't have thought had the capability to use a musical instrument started to use them more and people with quite advanced dementia started to try to communicate more."

Marilyn O'Connor, activities co-ordinator at Albany nursing home in Leyton, mentions one resident who rarely understands what people are saying to her, "but when I tell her the babies are coming her face lights up and she's animated for the whole session".

This impact is felt well beyond the sessions. "Residents look forward to them every week. It does wonders for them overall - it's a bit like an anchor point in their week." It has also had an effect on the children. "Part of our aim has been to make older people and the ageing process an accepted part of their lives," says Goulden. "Older people are people they sing with, play games with and have fun with - that makes a big difference."

Getting to this point has not been easy. Finding suitable care homes, working out the logistics of the visits and recruiting and training volunteers to support residents and parents have all taken time and energy.

But, predictably, the biggest challenge has been funding. Goulden receives a payment from the care homes for each session, while parents pay £1 to attend. But the Together Project relied on crowdfunding to get off the ground in the first place, and future funding remains an issue. She nevertheless hopes to expand Songs and Smiles to other parts of London as well as, in time, further afield.

'It was like a light was switched on. People who were not particularly engaged suddenly lit up'

Louise Goulden
Songs and Smiles



► Louise Goulden has plans to expand Songs and Smiles, but must overcome funding challenges

PHOTOGRAPHY: ELENA HEATHERWICK

Comment
David Williams



We are all capable of creating magical things in later life. Too often this is lost to society

Since it officially opened in April, St Monica Trust's newest retirement village, The Chocolate Quarter, in Keynsham, near Bristol, has attracted national interest because it was designed by the people using its services and the local community. The core concept is about breaking down the walls that stop older people being valued, and promoting mutually beneficial relationships with the wider community.

The first series of *Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds*, which was filmed at our Cote Lane retirement village, was a fantastic example of the benefits of developing these kinds of relationships. It had a hugely positive effect on both the young and old volunteers who took

part and proved a showcase for the skills and experience that older people still have to offer.

Older people rightly feel aggrieved that at the age of 70 they are suddenly considered to have nothing to offer their communities. Many of the volunteers who applied to take part in the show either had teaching backgrounds, like Michael Hardwick, or worked in children's services, like Pat Ison and Mary Evans. Hamish Hall had had a career in the insurance sector. Who

would ever have thought that in his third stage of life he would become a television star, share a breakfast show sofa with Eamonn Holmes and be nominated for a Bafta award?

Their examples represent a real testament that we don't stop developing after 60, and prove that we are all capable of creating magical things in later life. The potential of this asset base is more usually lost to society. It's vitally important that we open up opportunities for older people to use their knowledge and expertise and enable them to deliver important outcomes for the wider community, as well as giving a sense of value and wellbeing to those involved.

However, if as housing and care providers we are to invest in new environments and services, we need to provide a clear evidence base in terms of what's effective about bringing generations together. To that end, my trust has created a Guide to Intergenerational Activity, based upon the latest research, to act as a framework for those wishing to create their own projects.

Simple ways to ensure success for your initiative include helping friendships to develop by providing plenty of opportunities for one-to-one interactions; planning activities that people are passionate about; and trying to meet somewhere that is comfortable for both young and old. Good planning and preparation is a must - try to avoid reinforcing negative stereotypes and remember that not everyone wants to be involved, so make sure people have a choice.

Traditionally, care home environments have been very protective, because of the higher perceived vulnerability of their residents. However, as with retirement villages, the best outcomes come from breaking those walls down. Care homes shouldn't be off limits and, as we have seen at our dementia care homes, visits by a mums' and babies' group and by local primary school children have led to some hugely exciting bonds developing. We have every intention of forging many more such bonds.

David Williams is chief executive of the St Monica Trust. The trust's Guide to Intergenerational Activity can be downloaded at stmonicastrust.org.uk/guide

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Children's services

Spend now, reap the benefits later

Investing in vulnerable young children and their families is a smart move for cash-strapped local services

Mark Ivory

Headteacher Ian Read recalls when children ran riot in the corridors of his primary school and told anyone reckless enough to intervene where to go. But Watercliffe Meadow, Read's school in the deprived north Sheffield community of Shirecliffe, has fought its way up the performance rankings, by engaging with families so that new arrivals are better equipped to learn.

"If you came here now you wouldn't think it was the same school, because they're just nice kids who want to learn and who value what we do for them," Read says. "Clearly, having more positive experiences at home is having an impact on their behaviour when they come here."

Much of this success has come from projects such as Families and Schools Together (Fast), a partnership with Save the Children that helps local parents support their child's learning and development at home and deepens parental relationships with the school. Now the partnership plans to start even earlier, when the child is just two, if the standard health visitor check finds the family in difficulty.

"Some children arrive at school and they can't hold a pencil, or they can't speak or they're still in nappies," says Read, adding that the social cost of failing to intervene early is enormous. Far too much money is spent on picking up the pieces later on, he says.

In her Vulnerability Report, published in July, England's children's commissioner, Anne Longfield, estimated the cost of late intervention to acute and statutory services alone at £17bn a year, while pointing out that the wider social and economic costs were far greater. Yet public spending on early intervention and youth services had fallen by 60% since 2010 and 1.6 million "potentially highly vulnerable" children had no professional support.

As the number of children in care reaches record levels, councils face unprecedented pressure to divert their dwindling budgets into statutory services. "You can't lose almost 50% of funding for children's services nationally without making cuts," says Alison

Michalska, director for children and adults at Nottingham council, pointing to the closure of 600 youth services and 1,200 children's centres across England. A recent Guardian exclusive on the use of computer algorithms to identify families at risk of child abuse is just one example of the methods some councils are adopting to target scarce resources.

Michalska has begun to turn the tide by investing in prevention to keep children out of the care system. Largely through intensive therapeutic work with families whose children would otherwise go into care, and with teenagers vulnerable to knife crime or sexual exploitation, Nottingham's in-care population has fallen by 6%. It is an invest-to-save approach

"There will be a £2bn funding gap by 2020 unless we start investing in the future of our children"

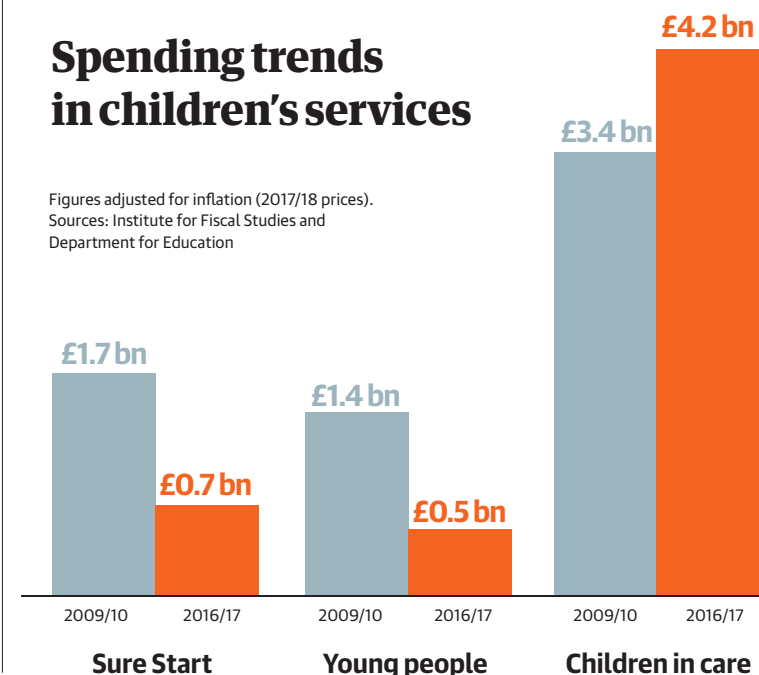
Alison Michalska
Nottingham council

predicated on what she describes as Nottingham council's "strong commercial outlook".

"By making these changes we're delivering £10m in savings every year, and we've reinvested a lot of that into more prevention services that push down on our costs," she says. "But I suspect that we're coming to the end of invest-to-save, unless the government starts to listen to those of us who are telling them

Spending trends in children's services

Figures adjusted for inflation (2017/18 prices). Sources: Institute for Fiscal Studies and Department for Education



▲ Children at the Fast graduation at Watercliffe Meadow Community primary school, near Sheffield. PHOTOGRAPHY: BETHANY CLARKE/SAVE THE CHILDREN

there will be a £2bn funding gap by 2020. I just hope that, somewhere, a lightbulb switches on about investing in the future of our children."

Critics claim that councils struggling to balance budgets are too narrowly focused on quick wins, and need to take a longer-term view that looks beyond the balance sheet to determine success or failure. "The benefits of investing in prevention are wide-ranging, accrue to multiple public services and agencies, and

often emerge some years down the line," says Donna Molloy, director of policy and practice at the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF), an independent charity and part of the government's What Works Network. "It is important we are clear about why these savings may not materialise; otherwise, early intervention will be seen as having failed to deliver."

Teaching children social and emotional skills before and during their school years is a case in point, and is one of more than 80 well-evidenced and targeted interventions that the EIF believes should be routine to access. Instead, schools trimmed away more than 32% of the time spent on these skills from 2012 to 2016, according to a study by the Sutton Trust foundation, which promotes social mobility.

"If you track the long-term results, these skills correlate with how well you do at school, better mental health and less involvement in violent crime," Molloy says. "That's why the Sutton Trust findings are so depressing. If you want to set children up for life and close the socioeconomic gap between disadvantaged and better-off children, social and emotional skills are core and fundamental."

In the absence of better financial incentives for more public services to get involved, independent initiatives from the Big Lottery Fund and the voluntary sector are staking a claim. Save the Children devotes

£8m a year to local partnerships like the one in Shirecliffe, while the Big Lottery's A Better Start programme is worth £215m over 10 years.

Based in five areas in England, A Better Start draws on the science of early childhood development and harnesses the contribution of parents who help with its outreach programme in poorer communities. Its south London project, the Lambeth Early Action Partnership, encourages parents to talk, sing and play with their babies to create strong attachments and give their children more confidence to express themselves, manage difficult feelings and form future relationships.

Laura McFarlane, the partnership's director, has four family engagement workers and 21 "parent champion" volunteers who often share the background of hard-to-reach families and can overcome cultural, linguistic and other barriers.

"Children's centres are reaching about 60% of their target population, but what about the 40% who aren't coming?" McFarlane asks. "It's about making sure parents are equipped and well-informed about attachment, reading to their child from when they are a baby, or knowing where they can get support for breastfeeding. Everything starts from there - better relationships for their child, better outcomes in early learning and a better foundation for their social and emotional life."

Intervention: turning young lives around

A new series of initiatives aims to get the growing number of excluded children back into education and realising their full potential

Linda Jackson

Leaders of children's services are growing increasingly concerned at the plight of vulnerable young people being "bounced" between public agencies after exclusion from school. A damning cross-party report by the Education Committee of MPs found that rising numbers of pupils are being needlessly excluded by schools and "abandoned" to alternative provision (AP).

Researchers at the Institute for Public Policy Research found that these youngsters are "twice as likely as others to be in care, four times as likely to have grown up in poverty and seven times as likely to have a special educational need". Alienated by their experience, many fail to thrive or end up in the prison system.

Local authority attention is now being focused on how early intervention in AP can make a real difference in these cases, and ultimately ease the burden on children's services. From Cornwall to east London, a more holistic approach is reaping rewards for youngsters, who are getting help with anger management, as well as other specialist support, during their education.

Recent official statistics reveal that 41 children face permanent exclusion in England every day.

Others face fixed-term exclusions and are in and out of mainstream school. Many exclusions trigger a spiral of decline, leading to costly intervention by social workers and other children's services professionals.

"The situation is very worrying," says Stuart Gallimore, president of the Association of Directors of Children's Services. "Local authorities have seen their funding cut by 50% since 2010. Schools can no longer afford support staff, and money that would have been spent on early-years help services, such as children's centres, is being spent on safeguarding or looked-after children," he adds.

Against this backdrop, it is unsurprising that examples of good practice among AP or specialist education providers are attracting growing interest. In Cornwall, which has some of the poorest neighbourhoods in the UK, family support staff from the Wave multi-academy trust work alongside teachers to help children overcome their difficulties and reintegrate with mainstream education. Therapy dogs and mindfulness training are also used by staff at Wave, which is one of the top-performing AP providers inspected by Ofsted.

As a result, some youngsters who have been excluded from mainstream schools are now still able to go on to study at university or to gain apprenticeships after taking their GCSEs.

"Many of these children have spike profiles in terms of behaviour and literacy," says Wave chief executive Rob Gasson. "There is a common thread - most of them don't like crowds and work better in small groups. It is really important that children have a fair shot at academic progress, while we support them emotionally and socially."

The trust, which comprises six academies and a hospital and community education service, aims to reintegrate children into mainstream education, or get them into further education or the world of work. It currently has 450 youngsters on its roll.

Academy staff use the natural environment, relying on forest schools, surfing and sailing, at different times, to re-engage the children. Over the next few months,



'Children must have a fair shot at academic progress, while we support them emotionally'

Rob Gasson
Wave

boxing, songwriting, animal care, and photography.

Fortnightly meetings with local schools ensure pupils are not lost in the system. As at Wave, the intention is to reintegrate young people into mainstream education. And, in a special move, London East extends year 11 into year 12 for pupils who fail to get English and maths GCSEs at 16.

"Our aim at London East AP is to find increasingly better ways of supporting, motivating and inspiring our students to be as successful as possible in the future," says headteacher John Bradshaw. "Students come to us at various points during their secondary schooling - usually as a result of their previous school placement having broken down, whether through ill-health, behaviour issues or other difficulties - frequently feeling less than positive about themselves and their life chances.

"Our job is to help get them back on track, either through a return to regular schooling or by completing year 11 with us, so that they emerge prepared to make a positive contribution wherever they go next. One kid left last year saying: 'You saved my life.'"

Ellie Owen, London East's top performer this year, has just left with five good GCSEs and plans to do a BTec business diploma. It is a far cry from when she arrived, at the end of year 10, having been excluded from mainstream schools for fighting.

"Here, teachers at the school know your name and how things are at home, and make you comfortable and ready to learn," says Owen.

"At my old school, I found it difficult to concentrate in large groups and my friends dragged me down. Here, I have been put around the right people and I have been supported all the way through," she adds.

► Alternative provision can help get students back on track - emotionally and academically
PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

however, they will also be creating stronger ties with parents and carers, having been selected for a pilot project by the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families. Restormel AP, in St Austell, is one of three units chosen nationally to take part in the project, which aims to get parents involved in their children's education and behavioural support programmes. It is hoped later to extend this work across Wave, which plans to expand into Devon.

Youngsters at Wave may be victims of domestic violence, drug abuse or sexual grooming, or may suffer mental health problems. The aim throughout is to integrate them back into mainstream society. This can mean extending support beyond year 11 (age 16), as they embark on further education or apprenticeships.

Similar support is offered in the capital, where staff at London East AP go the extra mile for 200 pupils across key stages 3 and 4 (ages 11-16). On-site vocational training, ranging from hairdressing to vehicle maintenance, and building and construction, is offered alongside a range of GCSEs. Its range of enrichment programmes, run on Fridays, includes activities such as

Experience From problem child to star pupil

Excluded from school as a teenager, Chelsea Stanyard was lucky to be supported by Cornwall's Wave multi-academy trust - now she's on the verge of doing her PhD

Interview by Linda Jackson

It is a remarkable story of academic success against the odds. While the rest of Britain spent the summer basking in glorious sunshine, Chelsea Stanyard was cooped up writing her dissertation for her master's degree in criminology at the University of Leicester. In a few months, she hopes to start a PhD.

Not too long ago, life was very different for the Cornish 23-year-old, who has dyslexia. At 14, disillusioned and disengaged from school, she was almost out of control. After throwing a chair at a teacher, she was excluded for the fifth time. She changed schools and soon after ended up in alternative provision (AP).

With support from her teachers at the Wave multi-academy trust, and lessons in anger management,

'Now, I am in love with studying. I want to look at positive approaches to AP for my PhD'



she turned her life around. "The teachers all really wanted to make a difference and I felt as if I had unconditional support," she says.

Having studied health and social care at Truro College, Stanyard got a job working in an amusement arcade. "The thought of university never occurred to me. But then I was laid off, so I started looking at my options, and applied to university to study criminology. It was a bit of a last-minute decision.

"Now, I am in love with studying, particularly social issues - I feel there should be more focus on the prevention of crime.

"I really want to make a difference and would like to look at positive approaches to alternative provision for my PhD."

◀ Chelsea Stanyard went from excluded pupil to master's graduate

Adult care

How new tech is getting older people back on their feet

Smart speakers and fitness trackers are keeping people in their own homes for longer

Kim Thomas

Shropshire resident Ann Maltby, 72, lives with the bone disease osteomyelitis. "I tend to fall over for no reason at all," she says. "One second I'm standing up and the next second I'm down on the floor." Because she

lives alone, there is no one to help her if she has a dangerous fall. But, since July, support has come in the form of a fitness tracker she wears on her wrist, and an Amazon Echo, both provided by Shropshire council. The fitness tracker keeps track of her heart rate, how many steps she takes and how many flights of stairs she's climbed. If she has been inactive for 50 minutes, it tells her to take a walk, and if she falls over, the fitness tracker will detect it. The Alexa virtual assistant talks to her via the Echo, recommending recipes, providing the weather

forecast and offering to book a seat on the local charitable bus service if she hasn't been out for a few days. "It's like having a friend in the house," she says. Maltby is one of a small group of older residents trying out consumer devices that might reduce the risk of injury and illness - and therefore enable people to stay out of residential care for longer. Already, Maltby says she couldn't manage without her fitness tracker. But the plan, says Jamie Burns, Shropshire council's housing services manager, is for it to do much more. In future, the data it collects will automatically be sent to a GP, and a fall or abnormal heart reading will trigger an alert to send help. If data collected about the user's gait shows someone is struggling to walk, it will be possible to "step in and stop them having the fall in the first place", he says. Alexa, meanwhile, could be programmed to ask users how they're feeling and offer to call the GP or a relative. The introduction of consumer technology is part of a bigger plan to tackle the problem of providing expensive social care for an ageing population. It's an issue felt particularly keenly in Shropshire, a county described by Andy Begley,

director of adult social care and housing, as "a net importer of older adults and an exporter of younger, economically active adults". Shropshire's 65-plus population is predicted to grow from 74,300 in 2016 to 114,600 in 2041, while the population of people aged 85 and over is growing even more rapidly. At 3,487 square kilometres, Shropshire is also one of England's larger counties, which makes delivering services particularly challenging; and a diverse provider market means that the council is "contracting between 90 and 100 domiciliary care agencies in any one day", says Begley. Rather than succumb to despair at the scale of the challenge, Begley is asking commissioners to think about the economic opportunities social care can bring to the region. He has shifted resource away from residential care and into helping people stay in their own homes, introducing drop-in sessions, for example, at which residents can ask health professionals and voluntary

Shropshire challenges

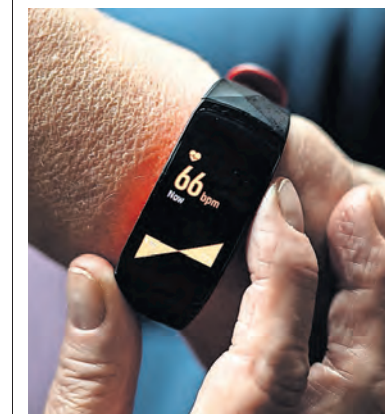
114,600
The predicted 65+ population in 2041 - up from 74,300 in 2016

90-100
The number of domiciliary care agencies contracted by Shropshire county council on any one day



Ann Maltby, who has been given a fitness tracker and an Amazon echo, describes the latter as 'like having a friend in the house' PHOTOGRAPHY: FABIO DE PAOLO

sector workers for advice about local services. Sceptical about the "big grey boxes with the red buttons" currently on offer to monitor older people in their own homes, Begley wants to embrace sophisticated - yet comparatively cheap - consumer technology such as fitness trackers, and is talking to technology companies, big and small, about what they can offer. Pete Jackson, a programme manager at Improvement and Efficiency West Midlands, which helps councils to improve efficiency, believes this represents a great opportunity for the technology sector: "a guaranteed cohort of people constantly coming through who are going to have complex needs as they grow older". Jackson believes successful projects in Shropshire could be copied elsewhere; Dorset has already joined the county in a collaboration with a small tech company to develop an app that links small handyman-type tasks to willing volunteers.



Fitness trackers could raise an alarm in the event of abnormal readings

Fighting fire with data

One key strand of Shropshire's drive to harness data to improve prevention in social care relies on combining the council's own rich datasets, such as housing, with those of other agencies, to identify the people most at risk. A new collaboration with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) demonstrates what's possible. For five years, it has been using a Public Health England dataset, Open Exeter - from which it can identify people aged 85 and over and registered with a GP - and the Strengthening Families dataset, which identifies families with multiple problems. Both groups are at higher risk of house fires, and are targeted for the 5,000 "safe and well" visits the SFRS makes each year. By combining those datasets with the council's housing dataset, it is possible to identify a group of interest to both the council and the fire service: residents aged 80 and over who live alone in thermally inefficient properties. Such properties are often a fire risk, especially when residents live in one room with a single fire that they use to dry laundry. Guy Williams, head of transformation and collaboration at SFRS, says that as well as fitting smoke alarms and giving advice about fire prevention, the fire officer carries out other basic checks, such as asking elderly residents about "slips, trips and falls". The same householders are also often at risk of poor health, tending to stay in the one warm room and not drink water, so they don't need to use the cold toilet. A lack of movement, together with a lack of hydration, can lead to urinary tract infections, which, says Andy Begley, Shropshire's director of adult social care and housing, can "knock them off their feet completely". If the visiting fire service officer reports that the resident is living this way, the council can offer to insulate the house for free, or suggest ways for the resident to become more socially active. Although there could be many more opportunities for collaboration, data-sharing poses a challenge: while residents' permission to share data has been sought and granted, the stringent provisions of GDPR have delayed implementation of data-reliant projects. If that hurdle can be overcome, the effect of sharing and analysing data between services could be transformational.

A singular care model for multiple needs

People's needs don't always fall into one neat category; the Esther model ensures care is tailored to the individual

Rachel Williams

It took time for Mandy Mitchell to find out why her client was unhappy with his care package - an hour and a half, to be precise. "A lot of people don't want to ask the carers for anything, because they feel like they're a burden," she says. "They're not used to being helped, because they've been through world wars, you know?" It turned out the man in question simply wanted them to offer to wash his hair. "I think the breakthrough was when I asked: 'What is important to you?'" recalls Mitchell, a case officer in the adult social services' supporting independence team in Thanet, Kent. "He said: 'My appearance - and I don't want greasy, smelly hair.'" Mitchell tells the story as an example of how her practice has

changed since training last year under the Esther model - a Swedish scheme adopted in Kent in 2016 that's designed to improve people's experiences and quality of care by putting them at the heart of it, and encouraging health and social care providers to collaborate. Developed more than 20 years ago, it was inspired by a patient who, over 10 hours between falling ill with heart problems and being admitted to hospital, had to tell her story to professionals 32 times. Diagnosis, treatment and care planning were delayed as a consequence, prolonging her suffering. The name Esther was picked to represent patients like her, who need attention from more than one health and care provider. Esthers tend to be admitted to hospital frequently because their needs are not recognised. In the Höglandet region of Sweden, where the Esther model was developed, hospital admissions fell from 9,300 in 1998 to 6,500 in 2013, and readmissions within 30 days for patients aged 65 and over dropped from 17.4% in 2012 to 15.9% in 2014. In Kent, where the philosophy has so far been rolled out in east

Kent, with work now beginning to implement it in north Kent, the mantra is simple. Rather than asking "What is the matter with Esther?" professionals should be asking "What matters to Esther?" A key feature of the model is "Esther cafe" sessions, during which Esthers recount their recent experiences of health and social care services to listening professionals from multi-disciplinary teams, who use those stories to identify what could have been done better, as well as what good practice can be spread. "It's not about how bad it has been in the past, but about what we can put in place to improve it in the future," says Dr Robert Stewart, clinical design director of Kent's Design and Learning Centre for Clinical and Social Innovation, set up to redesign and test new models of care and ways of working. "When you're listening to the story you shouldn't be defending what your organisation did," Stewart says. At the end of the cafe, professionals agree five things they think would make a difference, and ask the Esther if they are good ideas. The scheme was born from a recognition that person-centred care needed to be improved. "We recognised that [with] a lot of those services, we think they're joined up but actually they're not," Stewart says. A mark of success would be Esthers feeling safe to be in their own homes, not that hospital was the default place of safety. "They would

"These Esther cafes can be fun. People tell us things they might not want to reveal one to one"

Mandy Mitchell
Esther scheme coach

feel empowered to look after their own health and wellbeing, and we'd reduce admissions to hospital and also reduce length of stay," he adds. Twelve Esther cafes have been held so far, and it's hoped that will be scaled up as the work spreads. But it's not always easy to recruit Esthers, admits Anna Carlborn, a former coordinator of the Swedish scheme who has been in Kent for two years, first employed by a private care home that piloted the approach, but now working full-time with the Design and Learning Centre. "[Just] as we might be a bit scared

of washing our dirty laundry in public, Esthers might be scared of putting forward what could be seen as complaints in public," says Carlborn. "We're trying to build confidence in the Esthers, and that's why it's so important the cafes have a very relaxed, informal atmosphere. It should be a no-blame culture." At the Esther event addressed by Stewart, attendees are given the chance to participate in a "mini Esther cafe". In fact, Alison [not her real name], a 75-year-old who shattered bones in her arm, wrist and hand when she tripped up a

kerb, has nothing but praise for how she was looked after - especially the care package that has meant she can stay at home, rather than going to a care home for rehabilitation. But the professionals in the room still identify room for improvement, including better pre-surgery communication, which would have given Alison a better idea of what to expect of her procedure. Kent has already trained more than 600 Esther ambassadors, who promote the scheme within their organisations, and that number will rise to around 800 by the end of the year. There will also be 70 coaches, who have more intensive training and coach their teams to make improvements for Esthers. Mitchell, an Esther coach, says the experience made her look at things completely differently, despite some initial misgivings. "When we first started doing the training, I thought: 'We already do this, you're teaching us to suck eggs.' Then, by the third session I was just like: 'No, we need to be more focused.' We don't need to go and change the world. Something very small can make such a big difference to a person." Hearing from clients informally at an Esther cafe is lovely, Mitchell says - and instructive. "Normally when I go out to see someone I'm there to review them, so I'm going over their care needs, whereas doing a cafe - it can be fun. They can tell us things that actually they might not want to tell us on a one-to-one basis."



The Kent scheme revolves around patients who require attention from more than one care provider PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

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Career changers 'They bring life experience and have an empathy'

Unfulfilled or plateauing in your current job? The social care sector offers a new challenge for those wanting to help others

Debbie Andalo

People who change careers are often attracted to the social care sector because of its potential to transform other people's lives. Success, whether supporting an older person to live more independently or helping a family in crisis, tends to be palpable.

Such recruits account for up to 40% of entrants to social work postgraduate training programmes and come from a variety of backgrounds - this autumn, according to course leaders, an undertaker and a singer and dancer are among those who have chosen to embark on a new career. In the past, many redundant miners retrained as adult support workers.

"A lot of career changers are looking for something more fulfilling, and when you look at social care, at its heart it's about relationships and what makes a good life for people," says Sharon Allen, chief executive at Skills for Care, the sector skills agency. "Social care is also probably the only career where there will always be a job for you."

Local councils continue to struggle to fill vacancies for child and family social workers: the national vacancy rate for England is 17%, but in some parts of London it rockets to 27%. In such a recruitment climate, career changers are pushing at an open door.

Mark Jenkins, recruitment manager for care group Anchor, which is campaigning to attract career changers, especially men, says: "We offer them the opportunity to develop their transferable skills in a different way - professional development in this sector goes as far as you want

it to go. For us, they bring their life experience with them, which they can use in different roles, and they have an empathy with the people they support."

Postgraduate programmes for social workers traditionally attract career changers, especially teachers and other public sector workers. Frontline, which trains child and family social workers, says 40% of its 2018 cohort have switched careers. Around 30% of recruits to Step up to Social Work, the original fast-track postgraduate training scheme, are aged 35-plus, but it does not keep official career-changer figures. Think Ahead, the newest postgraduate programme, designed specifically for mental health services, says 30% of recruits are coming from other careers, including law and teaching.

Ivan Wise, Think Ahead's recruitment director, says: "Most of our recruits are in their late 20s and early 30s, but some are also in their 40s. People coming in after maybe 10 years in a different job are coming in after a longer level of reflection; they may have been thinking it through for a number of years. Some are attracted to Think Ahead because they have gone as far as they can in their career, or their career hasn't given them professional satisfaction."

With all the added value that career changers bring, does that make them better support workers

'Having experience from another career helps people in what can be quite scary circumstances'

Rosanna Ware
Open University

or social workers than those who join straight from school or university?

"There is a certain roundness to somebody who has been in a different career and has more life experience than other students, who need a bit more time to get there," says Rosanna Ware, education manager for the Open University's social worker undergraduate programme in Scotland - which includes students who are sponsored by their employer to complete the social worker degree, as well as others who self-fund. "Having that experience is really valuable in social work as a profession - it helps people's confidence in what can be quite scary circumstances."

Rachael Wardell is chair of the Association of Directors of Children's Services workforce committee and director of children, schools and families in Merton, south London. She believes that what makes a good social worker comes down to the individual being a good fit for the role. "I don't think a career changer will necessarily be a better social worker," she says. "It's true that life experience can bring benefits, and that you learn more by living, but the key issue is how people deploy that experience - if it brings wisdom into the workplace, or if it brings inflexibility."



Experience 'Care isn't seen as a job for men. I wanted to explore that'

Simon Wells explains why he left his 'shallow' job as a librarian to become a care assistant in a residential home

Debbie Andalo

Simon Wells gave up his job as a librarian after 20 years to become a care assistant in a residential home for older people. He was looking for a new career that offered fresh challenges and in which he felt he was making a difference.

"The worst thing that can happen if you are a librarian is that somebody loses a book, or somebody has a paddy because they can't find the information that they want. I thought: 'There must be more to life than this,'" says Wells.

He was attracted to adult social care as he had always admired older people and felt they sometimes got a raw deal. "Older people have a wisdom and a sense of peace, and

I'd always thought they were badly represented; I had an empathy with them and thought that I could bring something. The other thing that appealed was that care isn't seen as something that men want to do. I've always been a bit of an outsider, so I wanted to explore that."

Today, 56-year-old Wells is a support worker at a home for 64 residents with differing needs, some with dementia, run by Anchor in Surrey. Every day is different: "There's a perception that care is a grotty job, that I must spend my time getting people ready for bed or changing them. But personal care is only a very small part of my day. I spend time socialising and entertaining residents. You aren't there to get things going all the time - it's about creating a homely atmosphere and sometimes it's just about sitting down and listening."

Wells, who completed a level 2 qualification in health and social care alongside continuing in-house training, thinks the rewards are "immense". He says: "Working in a reference library in Kensington and Chelsea was pretty shallow - I think the same can be said for a lot of intellectually based careers. But now I feel like I am making a difference - that I am part of a team that is committed to bringing quality of care and creating an atmosphere where people are happy."

And what added value does Wells think he brings as a career changer? "My experience of life."

▲ Simon Wells on looking after older people: 'They have a wisdom and a sense of peace'
PHOTOGRAPHY: HANNAH MAULIE FINCH



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Mae Caerdydd hefyd wrthi'n dechrau datblygu Gwasanaeth Cymorth Cynnar amlasiantaeth ar gyfer plant, pobl ifanc a theuluoedd er mwyn sicrhau bod pobl yn cael yr help iawn ar yr amser iawn cyn i bethau gyrraedd pwynt argyfyngus.

Ein dull yw cefnogi ein gweithwyr cymdeithasol wrth iddynt ddatblygu ymarfer rhaforol fel y gallant gynnig y canlyniadau gorau posibl i blant. Rydym yn cynnig amgylchedd gwaith cefnogol ynghyd â'r hyblygrwydd o weithio ystywth.

Gwyddom y bydd angen i chi fod ar eich gorau felly byddwn ni yno i'ch cefnogi ar bob cam o'r ffordd. Gallwch ddisgwyl llwythi achos wedi eu diogelu a goruchwylioeth reolaidd a byddwch yn gwerthfawrogi'r agwedd tîm yr ydym yn ei defnyddio i gefnogi plant a'u teuluoedd. Byddwch yn manteisio ar raglen hyfforddi eang yn ogystal â thîm rheoli gofalgar a fydd yn cymryd yr amser i wneud yn siŵr eich bod yn datblygu.

Rydym eisiau sicrhau bod gan Weithwyr Cymdeithasol yr amser a'r lle sydd eu hangen arnynt i wneud pob plentyn yn flaenoriaeth drwy roi pob unigolyn wrth galon ein gwaith. Mae'r tîm yn gweithio gan ddefnyddio dull seiliedig ar gryfderau (Anwyddion Diogelwch) i ddiwallu anghenion plant a'u teuluoedd.

Os ydych chi'n barodi i dreulio amser yn gwrandao ar yr hyn sydd gan blant i'w ddweud, yn datblygu perthnasoedd, a bod wrth ochr plentyn a'i deulu i'w helpu i gyflawni eu nodau a gwneud yn newidiadau angenrheidiol, efallai mai hon yw'r swydd i chi.

Fel chithau, rydym yn gwybod bod angen ychydig o help ar deuluoedd pan fydd angen ymgysylltu â Gweithiwr Cymdeithasol – nid yw'r arferol yn ddigon da. Felly, os ydych chi'n Weithiwr Cymdeithasol creadigol a brwdfrydig, ar unrhyw gam o'ch gyrfa, sy'n credu bod gan blant yr hawl i fyw heb ofn a cham-drin a, lle y bo'n bosibl, gyda theulu sy'n eu caru ac sy'n gallu bodloni eu hangenion, byddem wrth ein boddau'n clywed gennych.

I gael rhagor o wybodaeth am ein swyddi gwag presennol, ewch i <https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/CYM/preswlydd/Swyddi-a-hyfforddiant/Pages/default.aspx>

Os hoffech gael sgwrs anffurfiol am weithio yng Ngwasanaethau Plant yng Nghaerdydd neu os oes gennych unrhyw gwestiynau penodol, cysylltwch â Rachael Jones ar **02920 873847** neu e-bostiwch RecruiwtioGwasanaethauCymdeithasol@caerdydd.gov.uk

Cardiff Children's Services are recruiting for qualified Social Workers now

Cardiff is a fantastic place to work and live – a vibrant and diverse city. The Council, through its Capital Ambition programme is committed to addressing the root causes of deprivation and inequality through a number of exciting initiatives with the aim of reducing the need for statutory social services.

Cardiff is also embarking on developing a multi-agency Early Help Service for children, young people and families to ensure people get the right help at the right time before things reach a crisis point.

Our approach is to support our social workers in the development of excellent practice in order to provide the best possible outcomes for children. We provide a supportive working environment together with the flexibility of agile working.

We know that you will need to be your best to give your best so we will be there to support you every step of the way. You can expect protected caseloads, regular supervision and you will appreciate the team approach we take to supporting children and their families. You will benefit from an expansive training programme and a nurturing management team who will take time to make sure you develop.

We want to make sure that Social Workers have the time and space they need to make each child a priority by putting the individual at the heart of our work. The team works from a strengths-based (Signs of Safety) approach to meet the needs of children and their families.

If you are prepared to spend time listening to what children have to say, building relationships, and get alongside a child and their family to help them achieve their goals and make the changes that are needed then this could be the job for you.

Like you we know that sometimes families need that something extra when it comes to a Social Worker – ordinary is not good enough. So, if you're a creative, enthusiastic Social Worker at any stage in your career development, who believes that children have the right to live free from fear and abuse and whenever possible with a family that loves them and can meet their needs then we would love to hear from you.

For more information on our current vacancies, please go to www.cardiff.gov.uk/jobs

If you would like an informal chat about working in Children's Services in Cardiff or have any specific questions please contact Rachael Jones on **02920 873847** or email SocialServicesRecruitment@cardiff.gov.uk





SOCIAL WORKERS

£34,106

Ref: 2643

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council Children's Services is pleased to offer a number of Social Work posts within its Intensive Intervention Service.

All our practitioners have the chance to influence the development of our work and are supported by a strong, experienced management team both at strategic and operational levels.

We recognise that social work is professionally and personally challenging and demands considerable levels of skill, commitment, and enthusiasm. We offer a dedicated in house Learning and Development Centre which actively supports practitioners at each level to maintain their skills and Continuous Professional Development.

Our Children's Services Department has benefitted from comprehensive and significant investment in recent years, and we have responded to this by strengthening preventative services which aims to add capacity to the front line. To consolidate on this success we intend to invest and further develop the Intensive Intervention Service.

We are currently in the position to offer the right candidates the ability to work flexibly and the opportunity to offer Permanent, Temporary and Casual posts.

INTENSIVE INTERVENTION

The Service is divided into two areas, East and West. The East office is based in Ty Trevithick, Abercynon and the West office is based in Tonypany, Rhondda.

We expect our practitioners to have a sound understanding of the practice implications of the Children Act, the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and other relevant legislation,

be up to date with emerging issues and have experience of or an interest in working within childcare. Committed to anti-oppressive practice, successful candidates will bring strong assessment, communication, and planning skills.

Those starting a Social Work career will also be supported to attend our First Year in Practice peer support programme which aims to bridge the gap between qualifying and consolidating practice.

We will look to you to manage a defined caseload while building and maintaining links with partner agencies. You must possess a professional recognised Social Work qualification and be expected to be registered as a 'Social Worker' with Social Care Wales on appointment.

For further information and an informal discussion please contact Tracy Prosser, Head of Service on (01443) 744063 or Nicola Bowditch, Service Manager on (01443) 744078.

THE SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS WILL BE SUBJECT TO AN ENHANCED DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECK.

The deadline for receipt of applications is midday on 30 November 2018.

We encourage electronic applications, for further information please log on to: www.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk/jobs or contact the Recruitment and Advertising Team on (01443) 425005.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council is striving towards Equality of Opportunity. Applicants are welcomed from all sections of the community. We operate a Job Share Policy and a recognised Welsh Language Scheme.

www.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk



Social Workers in Cornwall play a leading role in delivering effective front line services that safeguard the welfare of the most vulnerable children and adults in Cornwall. They work in multi-disciplinary teams and in positive partnerships with colleagues from different professions and agencies.

We actively encourage and enable our best practitioners to stay in practice and reward them for their expertise and commitment.

If you are committed to continuing professional development, and can demonstrate learning in your practice and in improved outcomes for those you help and protect, we will provide you with the career options and remuneration that match your achievements. We will support your career progression through a core curriculum of evidence-based practice skills and access to post-qualifying awards.

SOCIAL WORK

Make a Real Difference to the Lives of Children & Adults in Cornwall



To find out more please visit:
<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers/work-in-social-care/>



Courses designed to meet the demand of today's rapidly changing social care sector

Ensuring your skills and knowledge are up to date has never been more important for professionals involved in today's changing and expanding social care sector.

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Join Oxfordshire's ASYE programme – develop your practice and change lives.

- Full and part time – flexible working options considered
- £29,323 starting salary with progression up to £35,444
- Up to £8,000 relocation package

We are looking for ambitious, newly qualified children's social workers to kick start their careers with Oxfordshire County Council's ASYE programme at our Social Work Academy, which gives you access to the best professional development and career progression opportunities.

We've partnered with prestigious social work training universities, Ruskin College Oxford and Oxford Brookes University, to bring together inspiring, cutting edge training for our staff and industry-leading research.

Join our Social Work Academy and you will receive bespoke 1:1 support to help you complete your ASYE portfolio, and meet the new Knowledge and Skills Statement standards. We will provide a supported induction and

give you the opportunity to gain a broad range of statutory social work experience – everything you need to give your career a strong start.

You'll be able to learn in a fast paced, positive, safe, and supportive working environment. A place with plenty of opportunities to collaborate and to continually develop your learning and career and where safeguarding vulnerable children is our priority.

If you're an experienced Social Worker looking for an exciting opportunity to excel and grow as a practitioner in a supportive team, we also have a number of positions available!

Join a team rated as 'good' by Ofsted!

careers.newjob.org.uk/OCC

For more information visit: oxfordshiresocialworkacademy.org.uk
For general enquiries contact: workforus@oxfordshire.gov.uk



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