



Your Council

News from Flintshire County Council



Autumn Edition 2016

Welcome

Autumn Edition 2016

After a busy summer of events and sporting successes, this autumn's edition of Your Council has a round-up of what's been happening and what will be happening around our County – including important information on our upcoming consultation sessions in November, our Flintshire Communities First initiatives and the new Public Services Board.

We have enjoyed celebrating, along with the rest of Flintshire, the phenomenal achievement of Jade Jones, and the fantastic homecoming welcome for her in Flint on 17 September.



Has Jade inspired you to take up a new sport?

A number of Taekwondo classes are run by local clubs, using Council leisure centres, if you would like to get in touch with a club near you [contact your local leisure centre](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/LeisureAndTourism/Leisure-Services/Leisure-Centre-Contact-Details.aspx) (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/LeisureAndTourism/Leisure-Services/Leisure-Centre-Contact-Details.aspx>), who will be able to provide you with contact details.



Do you fancy trying another sport? Well there is a lot on offer ...

The Flintshire Sports Development team provides opportunities for children, young people and adults to take part in sport and physical activity through our programmes which include Active Young People (Dragon Sport and 5x60), Active 4-16 (Inclusion programme), Disability Sport and our walking for health programme.

The Flintshire team is one of the highest performing in Wales and the UK, as benchmarked by Quest, the industry standard for leisure and sports development. On top of this, the department has been awarded the ribbon award by Disability Sports Wales for its inclusion work.

The department works with local clubs to develop sports and leisure opportunities in the community for all ages.

37% of adults in Flintshire take part in regular sports and physical activity (3 times or more per week) and 49% of children, which is above the Welsh average.

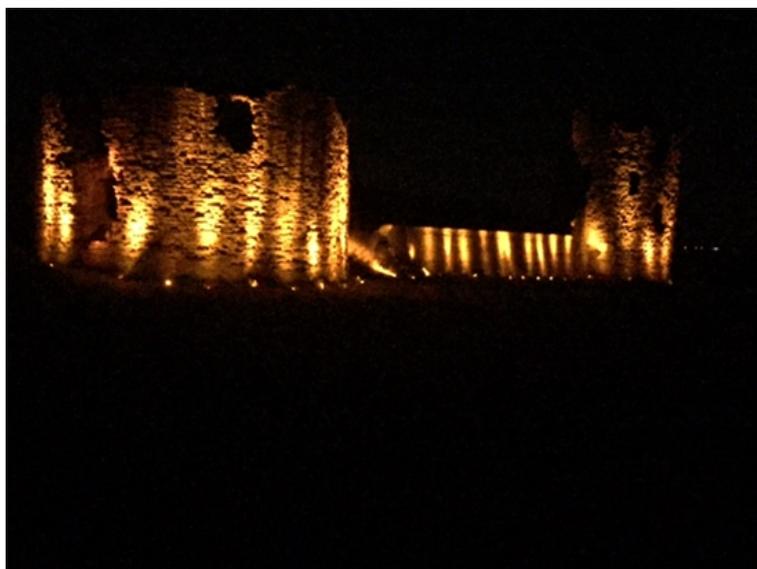
Over the past 4 years we have seen growth in sports such as football, tennis, golf, dodgeball, cycling, cheerleading, and gymnastics and we expect to see this trend continue with the success of the Olympics.

In the past 4 years, Sport Flintshire has worked with local clubs to help them develop their clubs, for example Flint Castle Gymnastics Club now has 120 new gymnasts taking part in the sport.

The department also works to develop doorstep opportunities and address inequalities in sport. As a part of this work, the team has worked with town and community councils and with the police to run girls only initiatives, as well as working in communities such as Northop Hall, Treuddyn and the Holway to develop doorstep sport opportunity.

The team has developed a thriving young leader programme, recruiting and training coaches to deliver their programmes. Young Ambassadors were part of the 2012 legacy and leaders are qualified through Sports Leaders UK. This provides the department with a high quality and qualified support coaches.

For more information go to the [Sports Development page](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/LeisureAndTourism/Leisure-Services/Sports-Development.aspx) (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/LeisureAndTourism/Leisure-Services/Sports-Development.aspx>) of the Council's website (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/LeisureAndTourism/Leisure-Services/Sports-Development.aspx>).



Spotlight on...

How the Council is performing

Flintshire County Council is a well-run and high performing council. Our consistently good performance has been recognised locally and nationally. The Auditor General for Wales has observed that "the Council's performance relative to other councils in Wales improved significantly".

It is a major challenge for any local authority to plan ahead without some certainty over the national funding we will receive year on year. Flintshire has called for longer-term financial plans from Welsh Government, and is supported by the Welsh Local Government Association as our representative body in making this call.

Flintshire has adapted, modernised and changed to cope with successive years of major reductions in its budgets. Despite the challenges of having to do more with less the Council and its partners retain their ambitions for a forward thinking and prosperous county, and region, with high quality public services.

Some of our recent notable successes are set out below:

- Partnership work with local housing associations to develop extra care schemes throughout the county - Llys Jasmine in Mold, Llys Raddington and a third in Holywell
- Reduced occupational therapy waiting lists with over 90 per cent of people feeling their "needs had been fully met"
- The highest overall satisfaction rate with education by a Local Authority (Source: National Survey for Wales)
- Creation of a property management company North East Wales Homes to fund further development of affordable housing
- Supporting more than 100 people into employment through jobs and employability clubs in 6 of the most deprived wards in the area
- Co-locating the first ever team of Social Workers, Occupational Therapists and District Nurses within Holywell Community Hospital
- 1,235 referrals for re-ablement completed in one year with 78% of people requiring a reduced package of support or no further support following a period of successful re-ablement
- Created an Integrated Family Support Service to support the most vulnerable families
- Co-funded and built the Holywell Learning Campus and the Post 16 centre at Coleg Cambria
- 99.6% of 16 year olds being in education, employment or training (the highest ever achieved) at the end of 2014
- Creation of 1,012 new jobs in the Deeside Enterprise Zone in 2015/16 and 838 in 2013/14
- Achieved 'dementia friendly' status in three towns - Flint, Buckley and Mold

Moving forward with Flintshire's Improvement Plan 2016-17

Our Improvement Plan sets the priorities for the Council. It is a statement of ambition. The plan has eight themes:-

- **Housing** – improving the choice and quality of local housing;
- **Living well** – enabling more people to live independently and well at home; ensuring that young people and children are safeguarded;
- **Economy and Enterprise** – growing the economy and creating jobs;
- **Skills and Learning** – improving learning provision and opportunities to achieve better learner outcomes;
- **Safe Communities** – keeping people and communities safe;
- **Poverty** – protecting people from poverty;
- **Environment** – safely accessing employment, local services and facilities; protecting our environment;

- **Modern and Efficient Council** – supporting communities to be resilient and ensuring front line services are efficiently and effectively supported.

The diagram below shows our priorities for 2016/17 in more detail:

Priorities for the 2016/17 Improvement Plan



The Improvement Plan can be viewed on the [Council's website](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-and-Democracy/Improvement-Plan.aspx) (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Council-and-Democracy/Improvement-Plan.aspx>).

This year's **public engagement meetings** on the future and how Flintshire plans to set its annual budget have been arranged. The dates and places are listed below.

The events will start at 6.30pm and run until approximately 8.30pm. Numbers will be limited to 200 at each venue.

1 November	Mountain Lane School, Buckley
7 November	Gwynedd School, Flint
8 November	Ysgol Bryn Coch, Mold
10 November	Ysgol Maes y Felin, Holywell
14 November	Sandycroft CP School
15 November	Broughton CP School

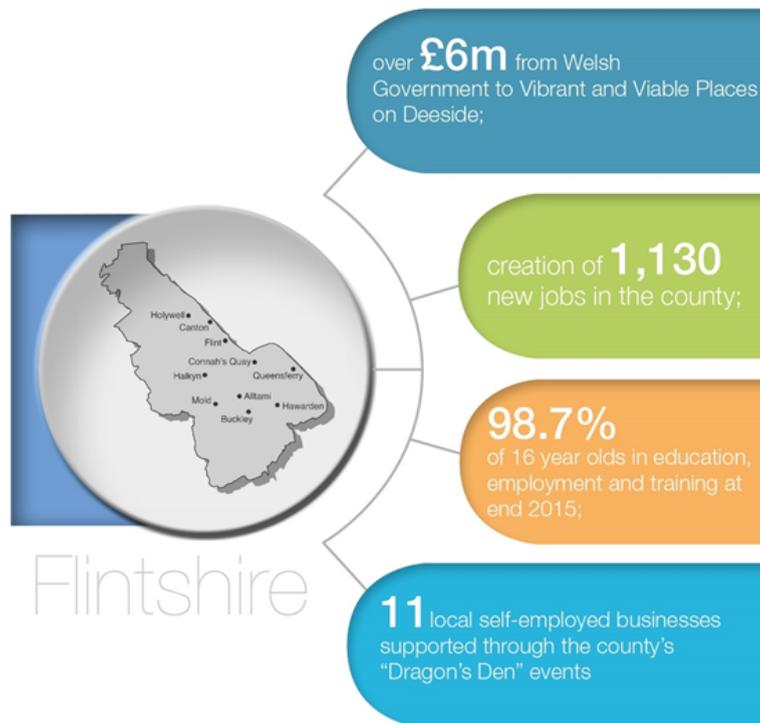
Click [here](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/YCYS) (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/YCYS>) to register your place or alternatively you can register by phone 01352 701701

Public Services Board

Flintshire has a longstanding and proud track record of partnership working. The communities we serve expect the public sector and voluntary sector organisations to work together, to work to shared priorities and, through collective effort, to get things done.

The Flintshire Local Service Board (LSB) was set up in 2008 and was responsible for setting out a programme for public sector organisations and voluntary groups to work towards shared goals.

Flintshire's LSB was one of the highest performing in Wales as a forward thinking partnership working together to make an impact. Some of our successes are set out below:



PLUS:

- The County's Extra Care Housing Programme;
- The development of the Young Entrepreneur Programme with the Flintshire Business Entrepreneurship Network;
- Successful partnership working with Citizens' Advice Flintshire to provide personal budgeting support;
- The expansion of Flying Start in the County;*
- First North Wales authority to receive White Ribbon accreditation for its work taken to tackle domestic abuse.

*Flying Start is the Welsh Government's flagship programme that works with families to improve the life chances of children in some of Wales' most disadvantaged communities.

In April the LSB became a Public Services Board (PSB) under a new Wales Act called the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

This new law challenges public sector partners to work together to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by thinking more about the long-term and taking a more 'joined-up' approach to getting things done. The national goal is to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future.

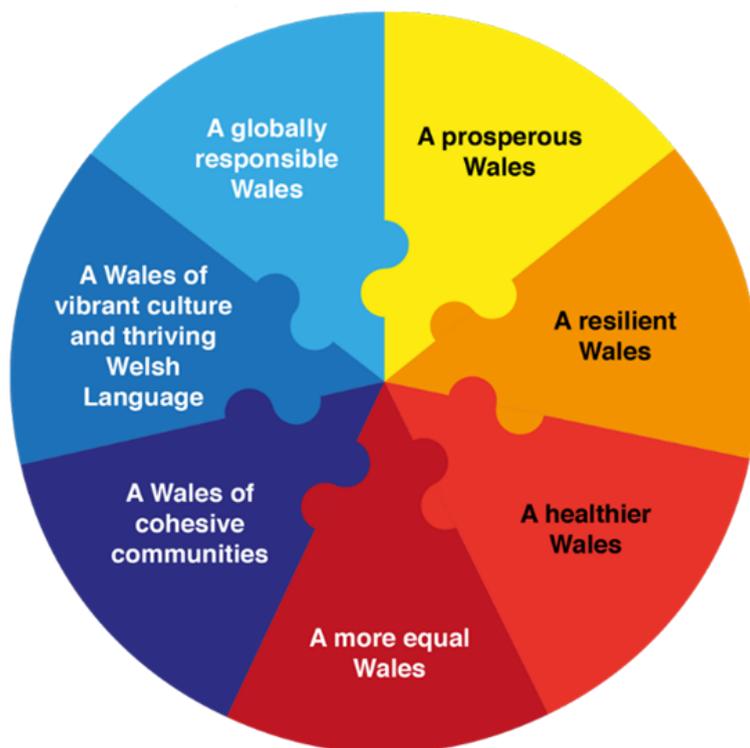
The Board concentrates energy, effort and resources on some of the big social issues of today. Its main partners are:-

- Flintshire County Council
- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- Natural Resources Wales
- North Wales Fire and Rescue Service
- Flintshire Local Voluntary Council
- Glyndŵr University
- Wales Community Rehabilitation
- Coleg Cambria

- North Wales Police
- Public Health Wales
- National Probation Services Wales
- Police & Crime Commissioner
- Welsh Government

Together these organisations are responsible for developing and overseeing a Well-being Plan for Flintshire.

The seven goals set for Wales are:



The Flintshire PSB has set the following priorities for local action:-

- Supporting Independent Living
- Vulnerability, Intervention and Prevention
- Inspiring Community Resilience
- Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour
- Supporting Families with Complex Needs

These priorities have been chosen as they are areas where the Flintshire PSB can add most value and make a positive and lasting difference. Working together to make an impact in these priorities is the collective aim of the PSB.

Look out for updates on the performance of the PSB in future editions of Your Council.

Vibrant and Viable Deeside

The Welsh Government Vibrant and Viable Places (VVP) programme was launched in May 2013 and all local authorities were invited to submit competitive proposals.

The VVP objectives are that “everyone in Wales should live in well-connected vibrant, viable and sustainable communities with a strong local economy and good quality of life”.

Flintshire County Council was successful after submitting a programme of work for the Deeside area, including transport improvements, housing investment, town centre regeneration and action to support business growth and skills. This success follows previous achievements; securing Communities First status, Housing Renewal Area and Enterprise Zone programmes.

The Council was initially awarded £6.024m over a period of three years to target regeneration projects in Deeside. This was subsequently increased to £7.391m as a result of the excellent progress made. These funds have been supported by public and private investment and have resulted in a number of key regeneration achievements to date.

Councillor Aaron Shotton, Leader of Flintshire County Council said:

"This grant from Welsh Government, along with other investment is positive news and reflects the well thought-out approach to regeneration across Deeside. The Council and its partners developed an ambitious and exciting programme to link the economic opportunities created by the Deeside Enterprise Zone to the wider area, spreading the benefits across Deeside, Flintshire and wider region. Being a Vibrant and Viable Places area is a major boost to the economy of Flintshire and the programme is due to run until April 2017."

£280,000 has been allocated to the Deeside Shopfront Improvement Grant (DSIG) scheme which funds grants of up to £15,000 to improve the external appearance of shops and commercial premises within the Deeside town centres of Connah's Quay, Garden City, Shotton and Queensferry.

The scheme, which offers 80% of the funding needed per property and which has been running since September 2015, is currently helping 19 shop tenants and property owners.

Actual building work on the first schemes starts this month (September) and is due to be completed by December 2016.

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

"This programme recognises the important role that town centres and shopping areas play. Small businesses are vital to the health of our high streets and this grant scheme will help businesses invest in their properties, attract customers and improve the appearance of our town centres".

One company that has already benefitted from a grant is Enbarr Recruitment and Training. They were able to carry out a number of improvement works, including new windows to improve the street frontage, new signs, updating and improving the guttering, painting the building and repairing the brick work.

Vicki Roskams, owner of Enbarr Recruitment and Training, said:

"We are delighted to open our office in Queensferry, creating jobs and the opportunity to invest in what is a fantastic area.

"This has been possible through partnership working with the Council. The Vibrant and Viable Places initiative presents wonderful possibilities and I would encourage others to find out more about it, to help uplift the whole look of the street and the local area."

The Living Over The Shops (LOTS) Grant offers £20,000 towards renovating existing accommodation or converting unused storage space above shops into residential accommodation. £60,000 per year has been available to the council over a period of 3 years, funding 3 projects per year.

The pictures below illustrate an example of the work completed at 70 Chester Road East, Shotton. This property was refurbished and is now operating as a Licensed House In Multiple Occupation, offering 4 units of accommodation with shared facilities.

Another Queensferry businesswoman, Susan Wong, accessed funding assistance through both the DSIG and LOTS grants to improve a shop and living accommodation at 26 Station Road, Queensferry, a property which had stood empty and in poor condition for several years. This has enabled Susan to undertake a comprehensive programme of refurbishment to the property. The result is a property that is a real asset to the town of Queensferry. The property now provides in demand affordable rented accommodation and retail space of a high standard.

The funding afforded by these two schemes has helped to strengthen the appeal of Queensferry town centre as a place to live and shop, helping to maintain Queensferry's unique vibrancy as an access point to the popular business, employment, retail, leisure and residential areas of Deeside.

But it's not just businesses who can benefit from a VVP grant. Residents were consulted on how to spend £200,000 on environmental improvements in the Garden City area.

Trees and shrubs have been planted in appropriate public locations, as well as replacing poor quality fencing and installing benches and picnic tables.

Tree and hedgerow planting was also offered to private and council homes where owners and tenants can commit to their future maintenance.



The funding has also helped the council further a long term ambition to regenerate Deeside. The council acquired an old dairy building on Mold Road, Connah's Quay and adjacent properties on the town's High Street. The properties were chosen as they represented a key site in Connah's Quay, many were vacant and most were in very poor condition. The final property was acquired in March 2015 thanks to funding from VVP enabling the redevelopment of the site.

The Council's strategic development partner for the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP), Wates Living Space, is now building the first new council homes in over 20 years on the site.



CUSTOM HOUSE SCHOOL CONNAH'S QUAY



SITE PLAN

HALLIDAY CLARK
ARCHITECTS



A total of 366 council homes across Deeside have received solar panels, making homes more energy efficient and reducing fuel poverty. This complements the wider energy strategy of insulating properties, both internally and externally, as well as bringing gas to communities that have previously been reliant on more expensive forms of heating.

The panels reduce the running costs of the properties, helping to tackle fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions. The tenants benefit from free electricity during daylight hours and the council derives an income from the surplus electricity produced which can be reinvested in the housing stock. It is anticipated that over the 20 year lifetime of the panels, tenants will save over £3.3 million.

Private homeowners have also been able to benefit from external wall insulation applied to their properties. To date, 181 homes have had insulation installed, with a further 70 homeowners set to benefit in the final year of the programme.

External wall insulation is a relatively expensive measure to install, but provides huge benefits in terms of the thermal efficiency of properties. Through the current round of funding the council has been targeting solid walled properties on certain streets across Deeside.

The increased thermal efficiency of these properties will act to significantly reduce fuel bills and help alleviate fuel poverty. The scheme, which asks for a £500 contribution from the homeowner, has been hugely popular and demand remains high. The current funding has been committed, but the council is retaining a list of interested homeowners in the event that more funding is made available.

Further work includes the Group Repair Scheme being undertaken within Deeside's VVP areas in Connah's Quay, Queensferry and Shotton.



The Group Repair Scheme is jointly funded by VVP, Specific Capital Grant Funding for Renewal Areas, Flintshire County Council and client contributions which are means tested.

The Group Repair Scheme consists of the external refurbishment of privately owned properties within the Renewal Area which includes the renewal of slate roof coverings, fascias, guttering, down pipes, soil stacks, windows, external doors, front boundary walls, fences, paths, gates and structural repair works.

The work is improving the quality of existing private housing stock in Flintshire by using experienced local contractors in this field of work and by using locally sourced high quality traditional materials such as Welsh slate for the roofs.

£200,000 of VVP funding was spent on the Group Repair Scheme on thirteen properties in Glynne Street, Queensferry during 2014/15, whilst a further £250,000 was spent on 22 Group Repair Scheme properties in Glynne Street, and Bank Road, Connah's Quay during 2015/16.

The aim of the programme is to increase the pride of property owners in their refurbished homes and continuing living in the area, thus sustaining the communities living in Deeside.

View of rear elevation walls of 44 Glynne Street before (left) and after (right) the installation of the 'Alumasc' Rendered External Wall Insulation System



In addition, **Flintshire Streetscene** secured funding from VVP which has been used on a number of enhancements in Deeside. These include:

- A 3km LED lighting system (photo) along National Cycle Route 5 between Dock Road, Connahs Quay and Deeside Industrial Park. In 2015 approximately 65,000 cyclists and 54,000 pedestrians used this route.



With the introduction of the lighting scheme, it is expected the usage will increase.

- A scheme to widen and upgrade existing link footpaths and footways between Sandycroft, Queensferry and Shotton to provide a shared use walking/cycling facility.
- Installation of a toucan crossing in Church Street, Connahs Quay.
- Increasing the car parking spaces in Terrig Street car park and Shotton Station car park.

The new Deeside Leisure Centre hub has benefitted from a £250,000 investment.

The internal foyer, main entrance and play area has undergone a major refurbishment. The foyer has been transformed and redecorated to complement the new integrated Deeside Library.



The entrance has been landscaped to improve its visual appeal, access and lighting. A range of new play items have been installed that has improved both the look and play value that includes picnic tables and seats. This play area is very popular with young families and



leisure centre customers.

VVP has also been instrumental in improving other community facilities in Deeside. Some of the schemes we have been able to implement are:

Welsh Road recreation ground in Sealand now has a new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), replacing an old kickback goal and installing a new fence along Welsh Road. Plus a major refurbishment of the play equipment with new panels and ropes, replacement handrails and seats.



Central Drive recreation ground, Shotton, has been landscaped and includes new pedestrian link pathways within the recreation ground, new seating and fencing. A new entrance gate will also improve wheelchair and double buggy access improving the appeal of the area.

Alexandra Street play area, Shotton, been improved with the provision of a range of dynamic play equipment.



Central Park play area, Connah's Quay, now has a MUGA for informal ball sports that can be used all year.

VVP has also given young people in Deeside the opportunity to work with Groundwork North Wales on a training programme called "The Green Team". The programme, which started in September 2014, has, to date, delivered 5 phases of the traineeship programme, providing around 90 young people aged 16 – 24 who are not in education, employment or training with a 12 week practical traineeship programme. The young people learn training and employability skills and in addition get practical work experience delivering local community projects improving the appearance of green spaces around Deeside, Flintshire.

Projects that trainees have worked on have regenerated and refreshed areas around Deeside including creating new cycle paths at Wepre Park, maintaining and improving the grounds at the Connah's Quay Health Centre, and clearing up the High Street at Connah's Quay.

Flintshire Communities First

In April 2012, Communities First, a Community Focussed Programme, supporting the Welsh Government's Tackling Poverty agenda was relaunched.

Communities First was originally launched in 2001 and this next stage preserves the best of the earlier programme.

It supports the most disadvantaged people in our most deprived areas with the aim of contributing to alleviating persistent poverty.

Communities First Delivery Teams funded by the Welsh Government work with residents, community organisations, business and other key agencies in these areas, called “clusters”, and focus on actions leading to the long term sustainability and wellbeing of communities. Involving local people in all aspects of this work is an essential feature of the programme.

Communities First aims to contribute, alongside other programmes, to narrowing the education/skills, economic and health gaps between our most deprived and more affluent areas.

The Programme has three strategic objectives helping to achieve these outcomes:

- Prosperous Communities
- Learning Communities
- Healthier Communities

Communities First also runs the LIFT programme for Flintshire - a programme which focuses on those who have spent more than six months out of work or training and who face the greatest barriers to becoming employable.

The work that Communities First does is invaluable to the local communities in which it operates – just take a look at some of the things which have been achieved just this year.



Dragon's Den Cymru 2016 – a free event run every year by Communities First aimed at anyone wanting to set up their own business. This is part of the great work being done through Flintshire Business Entrepreneurship Network, helping local people find employment in today's labour market. This year seven budding entrepreneurs pitched their ideas to the dragons and they all received positive feedback.

Flintshire Enterprise Club which meets every other Friday, has helped 100 local people set up in business since its inception four years ago. The group, which is

managed by Communities First, advises people on courses and grants that could benefit their business, also providing them with a relevant mentor to help them develop their business or business idea. The group also has invited speakers and advisors from other agencies, such as Business Wales. The sessions are always friendly, informative and full of energy, co-operation, inspiration and ideas! At a recent meeting there was a variety of people and ideas – ranging from established businesses to brand new ideas – all looking for that next step.



The club is free to attend and meets every two weeks at the John Summers Community Campus, Chester Road East, Queensferry, Deeside CH5 1SE. The meetings take place every other Friday from 10.30 am until 12.30pm. For more information, please contact Communities First 01244 846090 or email beverly.moseley@flintshire.gov.uk (<mailto:beverly.moseley@flintshire.gov.uk>)

Another project called “**Sky's the Limit**”, in partnership with Reaching Wider North and Mid Wales Partnership and Theatr Clwyd, is an innovative business programme for primary schools. Inspired by “Dragons' Den Cymru” and piloted at Theatr Clwyd in Mold, its aim is to engage with children aged 9-11 to develop confidence, public speaking, maths and English in a fun way with an ultimate aim of preparing them to pitch a business idea to “Angels” who are all local business entrepreneurs volunteering their time.



Communities First also runs a number of **Jobs Fairs** throughout the year, working in partnership with Jobcentre Plus and Careers Wales, these have become hugely successful events which lead to many local people securing employment and training opportunities. At an event in April this year, there were 300 employment opportunities and over 500 attendees.

The team has recently joined forces with FareShare FoodCloud which aims to redistribute fit-to-eat food from stores directly to charities and community groups. As an example, two groups who provide hot meals and refreshments to their communities in Greenfield at affordable prices have been helped recently - Greenfield Luncheon Club and Greenfield coffee morning group.

Communities First has also been supporting the Older Peoples Commissioner for Wales with a national survey looking at older people's experiences accessing their GP services.

The LIFT programme has been helping local people who have been out of work for more than six months. Here are two of their stories:



Neriesha Coathupe joined LIFT in June last year. She lives in Shotton and had been on benefits for over 3 years. She had previous experience employed as a childminder, her children are now grown up and she felt she was now ready to start her own childminding business from home. About her time on the LIFT programme, Neriesha said: "It has been a long road to start my childminding business but with the support and help from my LIFT mentor, I have been able to keep going and achieve my dream. There are a lot of organisations out there but LIFT is unique with its one to one support, this has been key to me starting my business. If anyone would like more information, please call me on 0787 6133340."

Nineteen year old Kane Fox registered with LIFT in April last year and realised the construction industry was the career path he wanted to pursue. The LIFT team organised various relevant courses and he was then taken on as an apprentice on a permanent basis. Kane, talking about his experience with LIFT Flintshire, said: "LIFT gave me the opportunity not only to gain employment but to start on a career path. I am 19 years old and I now have a career goal. The qualifications I now have on my CV, together with my work experience, have given me the determination to fulfil my ambitions. Without LIFT Flintshire and the excellent opportunities they provided me with this, would never have been possible."



If you are interested in joining the LIFT programme and meet the criteria set out below, please feel free to contact us on : 01244 846090 or email debbie.barker@Flintshire.gov.uk (mailto:debbie.barker@Flintshire.gov.uk).

Communities First Flintshire Cluster Manager, Sharon Jones, said:

"I'm immensely proud of what our team has achieved and we will continue to help and support Flintshire residents as much as we are able. It's great to see so many people finding employment and fulfilling their dreams, but it's not just about that, it's about supporting all people to be their best and achieve as much as they possibly can – if Communities First can help them do that, then we will."

Tough decisions ahead for Council

Autumn – A Big Season for National Budgets

The anticipation over the budgets to be set by Government will be over shortly. The Welsh Government Budget, to be announced on 18 October by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government will be quickly followed by the first national budget statement of the new Chancellor for the Exchequer, Phillip Hammond MP, late on in November.

Last year Flintshire set out a campaign calling for local support in appealing to Welsh Government for some relief from the relentless annual cuts to our national grant. Government grant accounts for close to three quarters of the Council's budget. Under the *This Is Our Moment* campaign we laid out the local services which would be at risk unless Welsh Government listened. The Council had played its part in finding unprecedented levels of local savings but could not bridge the funding gap alone. Welsh Government did listen, and together we were able to prevent services being exposed to major cuts and even closure.

We face a similar challenge for next year. The Council has managed to find a further £6 million of savings already. This, though, will not be enough to meet the forecast budget gap for 2017/18. The remaining gap, in the region of £8 million, is still significant and of considerable concern. The gap is caused by the costs of the increased demand for some services, the impact of the Living Wage mainly in the low paid social care sector, increases in workforce costs, the costs of pension reforms and changes to Government taxation levies. Many of our services are reaching breaking point with their reduced budgets and with every year that passes the options for making savings diminish.

We are calling on the Welsh Government to set a budget without any further reductions in the main grant for councils called the Revenue Support Grant, to provide additional financial support to protect the social care sector, and to give councils the freedom to vary local fees and charges for services where there is an ability for customers to pay. Flintshire is one of the lowest funded councils in Wales most exposed to the cumulative effect of annual budget reductions. We and other councils are calling for a review of the local government funding system to ensure that there is sufficient and fair funding for all councils in the future.

We will be holding a second season of public engagement meetings to share our position, to explain our plan and to invite your support. See below for details. Look out for more information on our website.

This year's **public engagement meetings** on the future and how Flintshire plans to set its annual budget have been arranged. The dates and places are listed below.

The events will start at 6.30pm and run until approximately 8.30pm. Numbers will be limited to 200 at each venue.

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15 November	Broughton CP School
21 November	Ysgol Caer Nant, Connah's Quay

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Council news

Flintshire housing success

We believe that all our residents have the right to decent and appropriate accommodation and living standards. That's why we are working with a number of contractors to improve our current housing stock as well as investing in building new council house stock for the first time in a generation.

We gave you an overview in May's newsletter on what was happening and here we give you an update on two of our major projects.

Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP)

The SHARP programme is the first of its kind in Wales and will see up to 2,000 people employed in addition to the creation of around 20 apprenticeship positions for local people. It is estimated that Flintshire sub-contractors will benefit from work packages totalling £40m throughout the programme.

In May, the Council agreed to provide capital finance to fund the development of 62 affordable homes in Flint - the first council in Wales to agree this revolutionary approach to funding affordable housing.

Once built, these homes will be managed by NEW Homes (North East Wales Homes), a company set up by the Council in April 2014 to increase the housing options available to local residents. This funding allows NEW Homes to extend its offer of quality affordable housing in Flint and across the county.

Councillor Aaron Shotton, said:

"This is a really innovative and exciting way to finance affordable homes for our residents. This development will support delivery of a key strategic objective in the Council's Improvement Plan while generating a financial return for the Council for the next 45 years."

In July, the Council approved the proposal for the development of 40 new Council homes on 5 sites in Mold, Leeswood and Connah's Quay under Phase 2 of SHARP. The new homes will be built on sites at Ysgol Delyn, Mold (16); Heol y Goron (5) and Maes Y Meillion, Leeswood (8); Redhall (5) and The Dairy, Mold Road (6) in Connah's Quay.

Each property will be designed to comply with the Council's Flintshire House Standard. The standard complies with the Welsh Government's Design Quality Requirements and will guide the design and specification of all the new housing delivered through this programme. This includes the consistent good quality internal layout of properties, high standards of energy efficiency and adequate parking.

Councillor Shotton said:

"These 5 sites form the next key stages of our ambitious house building programme and will build on the considerable progress being made at the first developments currently underway at The Walks in Flint and in Connah's Quay on the site of the former Custom House Lane School, where the first new Council homes in over 20 years are expected to be completed before Christmas."

Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)

WHQS is a national standard of quality for homes set by the Welsh Government. It means that all tenants in Wales should have the opportunity to live in good quality homes which meet the requirements of that household.

Flintshire County Council is working hard to achieve this standard in all of its properties before the deadline of 2020.

For those of you who have been to Flint lately, you couldn't help but notice the transformation of the Towers now that the scaffolding has come down. Work to the interior of the buildings has also been completed.

The Council has fitted a sprinkler system throughout the whole of the three blocks, working closely with **North Wales Fire and Rescue Service**.

The whole project ran for three years from the tender process when South Wales firm **RSP Sprinklers Wales** were appointed to take on the work.

All new buildings have to be fitted with sprinklers following the introduction of new building regulations in January this year. Although it is not a requirement to fit sprinklers in older buildings, the Council took the decision to install sprinklers in all 270 flats in total (Richard Heights - 84 flats, Castle Heights - 84 flats, Bolingbroke Heights - 102 flats).

Flintshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Helen Brown, said:

"Sprinklers have been installed in the lounge, kitchen, bedroom and hallway of each flat as well as in all communal areas, including the basement. As a Council, we have gone above and beyond to ensure that our residents have peace of mind and feel more secure. The increased safety could have a positive effect on savings in insurance for both the Council and our residents."

Stuart Millington, Senior Fire Safety Manager with North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS), said:

"We were pleased to work on this project with the Council and **RSP Sprinklers Wales** to provide safe accommodation for the residents of the three tower blocks in Flint.

"There is clear evidence that sprinklers can be effective in stopping fires spreading, significantly enhancing fire safety and drastically reducing death and serious injury as a result of fire. Smoke detectors are a super alert system and warn you there is a fire, but a sprinkler system will contain and may extinguish the fire, subsequently protecting the occupants."

The Council also worked with **Warmer Energy Services** to update the heating systems in the 84 flats in Richard Heights and the 102 flats in Bolingbroke Heights - a total of 286. These two blocks have a common heating system which has now been upgraded to deal with issues such as energy costs.

Flintshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Helen Brown, said:

"The upgrade of the heating systems and hot water system will ensure that the residents benefit from warmer homes and, potentially, savings on their heating bills. There are now meters in each flat, ready for when legislation says we must charge individually. We have also installed a weather compensation system, so, instead of being permanently on, our residents can rely on effective heating, combined with the new insulation, ensuring a healthy and comfortable environment."



Community benefits

Our WHQS contractors have not only been working hard on upgrading our Council properties, they have also been active in helping local communities in various ways. Recently, two of our contractors replaced the kitchens in a number of community centres in the county.



Novus Solutions donated and fitted kitchens to two Community Centres in Holywell - Llwyn Aled and Llwyn Beuno – which were decorated using subtle contrasting colours in line with the Visibly Better Cymru - RNIB's accreditation scheme for supported housing across Wales.



And Keepmoat, another contractor, installed a new kitchen at the Aston Community Centre.

Councillor Aaron Shotton said:

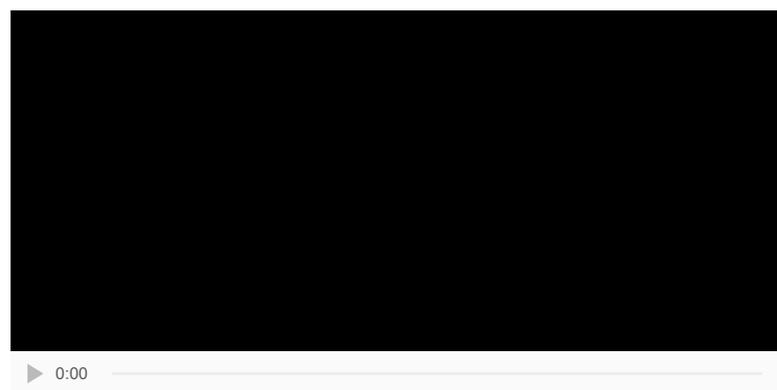
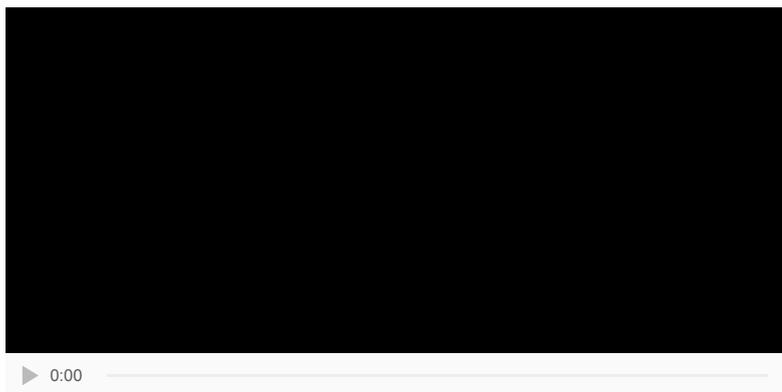
"The standard of the work carried out at these venues is impressive and really does show quality workmanship at its best. I'd like to thank our two contractors, Novus Solutions and Keepmoat - their hard work really is appreciated and I'm sure the regular users of the centres will be very pleased with the improved facilities." The Capital Works Team at Flintshire County Council is responsible for delivering internal and external upgrades to all council owned properties, complying with the WHQS by the year 2020."

Tony Jones, Capital Works Manager, said:

"These are great examples of contractors working with our team to provide facilities to the wider community. These new kitchens are in addition to other kitchens we have previously provided in other communities such as Coppa View in Buckley; Chapel Court in Connahs Quay, and Hawksebury in Buckley. The WHQS contracts request contractors to provide Community Benefit as part of their contractual obligations."

Back to the future schools!

Enjoy these images of the new Learning Campus in Holywell and Deeside 6 in Connah's Quay - officially opened recently by the First Minister, Rt. Hon Carwyn Jones AM.



Update on Local Household Recycling Centre provision

Following a Welsh Government review of the Council's Household Recycling service, a report was presented to the Council's Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in May.

The report recommended a reduction in the number of current sites to three strategically placed sites that were modern and fit for purpose. It was clear from a public consultation exercise, undertaken at the time, and feedback to the report from both residents and the local members that they wanted a more localised provision.

In response, the Council's Cabinet requested officers to look at a five site option that balanced the expectations of the communities and met the need for the Council to meet challenging statutory recycling targets. Capital funding has been approved by Welsh Government to support the changes that include major redevelopment of 2 existing sites, Nercwys and Buckley. The refurbishment at each site will include clear step-free access and improved traffic management along with an increase in recycling opportunities.

Flintshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Waste, Councillor Kevin Jones, said:

"The Council has listened to the public, the site improvements will deliver an improved customer experience with a greater emphasis on reuse and recycling that will help us in meeting the statutory recycling targets set by Welsh Government."

To secure the Welsh Government funding the redevelopment works need to be completed by March. The plans showing the changes are to be submitted as part of a planning application. The proposals are to be displayed at each of the 2 sites for the public to view and comment on.

Llys Raddington



In July, work started on the new flagship £10 million extra care housing scheme for older people in Flint.

Llys Raddington is an extra care housing scheme for the over 60s that is being developed by Tŷ Glas, part of the Pennaf Housing Group, in partnership with Flintshire County Council and the Welsh Government.

The housing scheme, on land between Coleshill Road and Earl Street, is an integral part of Flintshire County Council's multi million pound regeneration programme for the town centre and will provide 73 self-contained one and two bedroomed apartments with communal facilities in a four-storey development

The £8.64 million contract to build the state of the art facility has been awarded to award-winning contractors Anwyl. The total development costs of the scheme including land acquisition and professional fees is around £10 million.

The scheme is funded with Welsh Government Social Housing Grant Support secured by Flintshire County Council, and by private finance arranged by developers Tŷ Glas.

Councillor Aaron Shotton said:

"Working together with our health partners, we are firmly committed to extra care because it is a highly successful way of responding to the social and housing needs of older people. The existing extra care homes at Llys Eleanor, Shotton and Llys Jasmine, Mold have been extremely well-received by local residents and I am sure that Llys Raddington will prove just as popular."

Mr Paul Robinson, Chair of Tŷ Glas, said: "We are delighted to mark the ground-breaking stage of this flagship development which will provide a superb independent living option for older people in the County."

Llys Raddington will offer a high quality housing option for people over 60 who wish to continue living independently, while having the benefit of communal facilities and the peace of mind of 24-hour access to a wide range of services supporting a wide range of care needs.

Raddington is a name deeply connected with Flint's history, as it was the name of the original settlement. The town now known as Flint was first mentioned in the Domesday book in 1086, where it was referred to as Raddington. It is the area where Flint Castle was built, but by the end of the 13th century, the borough of Flint was created, and the name Raddington disappeared from use.

If you are 60 or over, have a care or support need, and feel you would benefit from living in Llys Raddington Extra Care Independent Living Scheme, you can contact us in the following ways: Freephone: 0800 183 5757, email: enquiries@tyglas.co.uk (<mailto:enquiries@tyglas.co.uk>)

Flintshire Business Awards - 21 October 2016

The Search is on for Flintshire's Best Businesses 2016.....

Awards are one of the most powerful and cost-effective marketing tools and winning a Flintshire Business Award can help your business stand out from the crowd, send a positive message to your existing customers and attract new business. **Why enter the Flintshire Business Awards?**

- Prove your excellence
- Acknowledge your team's efforts.
- Impress partners, clients and investors
- Join a network of exceptional organisations

Awards are open to all businesses in Flintshire, any size, any type of business, start-ups and, previous winners. Winning can be a real boost for you and your employees!

The categories for 2016 are:

- Apprentice of the Year sponsored by Coleg Cambria
- Business Person of the Year sponsored by B2 Business Systems
- Best Business over 10 employees sponsored by FSB
- Best Business under 10 employees sponsored by Edge Transport
- Best Business to Work for sponsored by Wagtail International
- Entrepreneur sponsored by Pochin
- Most Enterprising Start-up company sponsored by DSG Chartered Accountants
- Most Socially Responsible Business Award sponsored by Wates Living Space
- Technology, Innovation and Enterprise Award sponsored by Wrexham Glyndwr University

Take a look at last year's Awards Gala dinner to see how you can be part of this prestigious event in the Flintshire's Business Calendar

<https://vimeo.com/156430192> (<https://vimeo.com/156430192>)

For more details, contact: Kate Catherall – 01352 703221, Kate.p.catherall@flintshire.gov.uk (<mailto:Kate.p.catherall@flintshire.gov.uk>)

<http://flintshirebusinessweek.co.uk/about-flintshire-business-awards/award-categories/> (<http://flintshirebusinessweek.co.uk/about-flintshire-business-awards/award-categories/>)

What's on

15 October: Festival of Light - Basingwerk Abbey

A free family friendly festival of light projections and activities will take place at Basingwerk Abbey, Greenfield, on Saturday 15 October 2016.

This year's Festival of Light will showcase the assets, environment and heritage of the Flintshire coast.



The event starts at 4pm and ends at 7:30pm and is **free of charge**. There will be the chance to take part in **lantern-making and percussion workshops with local artists**, to **listen to live acoustic music**, bring a picnic or enjoy an on-site BBQ, take part in a twilight lantern parade and then enjoy the finale of the **dance performance and projections**, which will have all been created leading up to the event.

Specialist art installations, dance pieces, film projections, music and workshops are being created by NEW Dance, artists Ben Davis, Judith Wood, Rob Spaul, Ynyr Llwyd and Honor Pedican specifically for the festival. This will be achieved by working with participants from a range of coastal Flintshire communities and schools in a variety of activities throughout September.

Live music from local acoustic musicians, on stage inside the abbey, plus a twilight lantern parade will add to the atmosphere at the free festival for all ages to create an encounter that it is hoped will give people a new perspective on the region's history and landscapes, inspire

creativity in the region and encourage people to explore the coast.

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

"We are proud to be showcasing our diverse, attractive and vibrant coastal communities and associated heritage as the main feature during the Basingwerk Festival of Light. I am sure that visitors to our beautiful coastal region will enjoy the event immensely and return in the future to explore the full range of visitor attractions Flintshire has to offer."



The festival is being organised by Flintshire County Council's arts, culture and events team with financial support from the Coastal Communities Fund and Cadw. The Coastal Communities Fund is funded by the Government with income from the Crown Estate's marine assets. It is delivered by the Big Lottery Fund on behalf of UK Government and the Devolved Administrations in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

19 October 2016 - Technology for Business Growth Workshop



Superfast Business Wales Inspiring Action Workshop
Technology for Business Growth – 19 October 2016
UNDERSTAND ~ ADOPT ~ EXPLOIT

A FULLY FUNDED EVENT FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED BUSINESSES IN FLINTSHIRE

Join Superfast Business Wales for a practical and realistic presentation explaining how businesses of any size can reduce costs and increase profits from even a basic use of digital technology.

- Find out how you can use digital technology to:
- Save your business money – with pay-as-you-go cloud computing and internet based telephone calls (VoIP)
 - Make your business more efficient – access your business 24/7 from anywhere with mobile technology
 - Sell more to your customers using social media
 - Build your online business presence and get an advantage over your competitors
 - Understand your customer needs, track buying habits, and increase customer retention with a customer relationship management (CRM) system
 - Grow your business!

BOOK NOW

All delivered in a jargon-free and easy to understand way – don't miss this ideal opportunity to learn more about the benefits of digital technologies. Get Inspired!

An ideal event for micro, Small and medium sized businesses based in Flintshire

Village Hotel St David's
 St David's Park
 Deeside
 Flintshire, CH5 3YB

Registration: 10.00am
 Event: 10.30am – 12.30pm

REGISTER NOW

To Register

Or visit:
<https://wales.business-events.org.uk/>

Bookings are subject to eligibility and will be confirmed by Superfast Business Wales once submitted. Please note that due to the funding for this programme, businesses can only attend one workshop throughout the duration of the project. For more information on the service visit:
<https://businesswales.gov.wales/superfastbusinesswales/>

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Llywodraeth Cymru
 Welsh Government



Cronfa Datblygu Rhanbarthol Ewrop
 European Regional Development Fund

27-30 October: Wales GB Rally



News from our partners

Are you Rent Smart ready?



Rent Smart Wales is the brand name for the new registration and licensing requirement under Part 1 of the Housing Act (Wales) Act 2014. introduced by the Welsh Government at the end of last year.

This new law applies to all landlords and agents of private residential property across Wales. If you own, rent out, manage and/or live in a rented property then this law will impact on you.

Rent Smart Wales will improve the image of the private rental sector. It will benefit people who rent their home in the sector and improve the practices of landlords and agents.

From November 2015, landlords and agents were given 12 months to register and become licensed with Rent Smart Wales. This can be done online at the Rent Smart Wales website. During this first year, the focus is on compliance and awareness of the new requirement.

There are compulsory approved training courses listed on the Rent Smart Wales website. Your nearest venue and contact details can be viewed and booked online through the website.

Online courses for both landlords and agents will soon be available from Rent Smart Wales.

To find out more and to apply Visit [rentsmart.gov.wales](https://www.rentsmart.gov.wales) (<https://www.rentsmart.gov.wales/en/>) or call 03000 133344.

The new legislation and Rent Smart Wales replaces the voluntary Landlord Accreditation Wales scheme, which has been operated by Cardiff Council. In the future the local authority will lead enforcement action against those landlords and agents not complying with their legal obligations on behalf of the licensing authority.

105 Power Cut



Many people don't know they should contact their local **electricity network operator** if they have a power cut. They often mistakenly call the electricity supplier they pay their bills to.

That's why the electricity network operators have introduced 105 – to give you an easy-to-remember number to call that will put you through to the local people who can help.

You can call 105 no matter who you choose to buy electricity from.

<http://www.energynetworks.org/info/powercut105.html> (<http://www.energynetworks.org/info/powercut105.html>)- information available from this website by clicking on the page links for English or Welsh.

Superfast Business Wales - Six Steps to Increase your Email Subscriptions



Here are six important steps you can take to give your email subscriptions a boost!

1. **Go organic**

No – we're not talking food! There are easy ways to grow your email list and there are effective ways. Email marketing content will only be successful and show return on investment (ROI) if you're engaging readers who really care about your product, service or the content you are sharing. If you purchase a ready-made list online, you may be favouring quantity over quality. Growing your lists organically through converting website visitors, social media users or new customers will be much more beneficial in the long term as you will be starting the journey with an engaged reader.

2. **Stand out**

When you land on the business homepage, is the email subscription link in a prominent place? Make the most of your website and online touchpoints by ensuring the sign up form is in an easy-to-locate position that receives most traffic. It sounds obvious, but that's exactly what the sign up process should be – obvious! The user should not have to hunt for your sign up form so make sure it's not buried on an obsolete website page or hidden in the footer of the homepage.

3. **Call to action!**

If you've got an email newsletter – shout about it! Wherever possible and appropriate, include a call to action that encourages users to sign up. This could be in blogs, marketing materials, e-flyers or social media. All of your online touchpoints should make reference to your email newsletter and offer the user the opportunity to convert. Include direct links and clear, active language which will engage their interest and lead them to subscribe.

4. **Make it easy**

Capturing user data should be a straight-forward and hassle-free process. Limit the amount of information you are collecting to what is necessary and ensure the form is user-friendly. If the sign-up process is too lengthy or slow to load then users are likely to lose interest and abandon the form. As consumers become more aware and discerning about how they share their details, it's important to only take the information you really need and let subscribers know how their data will be used. Be upfront and honest with your readers so you can begin an honest and engaging relationship.

5. **Communicate the worth of signing up**

Clearly communicate the value that subscribers will receive from being signed up to your email newsletters. Let them know the types of content they can expect in their inbox, alongside any promotional offers or deals you may plan to send. You could also allow readers to tailor their experience based on their preferences so they only receive specific news or types of content. Being upfront with subscribers will encourage them to sign up and ensure they expect your communications, increasing the likelihood that they will open the emails.

6. **Offer something more**

If you can't encourage people to sign up with the promise of high quality content, why not offer them an initial freebie, discount off a purchase or special content? Offering something exclusively to email subscribers will not only provide an attractive reason for users to sign up, but the promise of a free product when they purchase or personalised voucher will also encourage subscribers to convert to customers!

Once you start building up your email subscription list, the only thing left to do is ensure you're actively sharing interesting and engaging content! Take a look at our [top tips to help you create the best business e-newsletter](https://businesswales.gov.wales/superfastbusinesswales/how-craft-best-business-e-newsletter) (https://businesswales.gov.wales/superfastbusinesswales/how-craft-best-business-e-newsletter).

Interested in learning more about how to engage your customers with digital technology?

Join Superfast Business Wales at an upcoming Workshop to gain practical advice. [Register now](https://wales.business-events.org.uk/en/events/superfast-business-wales-inspiring-action-workshop-technology-for-business-growth/) (https://wales.business-events.org.uk/en/events/superfast-business-wales-inspiring-action-workshop-technology-for-business-growth/).!

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