



Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2022-2023

A Perth and Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequalities.

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Introduction

The national context for social work and social care in 2022-23 was characterised by significant policy and legislative change including the proposals for a new National Care Service and to #Keep the Promise. This report references the continued commitment and dedication of the social work and social care workforce across the Council as we continue to recover from the pandemic phase of Covid-19. The impact of the pandemic on our communities, services, and staff, however, has continued alongside the cost-of-living crisis and its significant, adverse effect on communities already struggling. This alongside our demographic challenges translates into more people reaching a point where they require social care and/or social work support and intervention.

We have maintained a focus on delivering social work and social care services that address risks in a context of continuous improvement. Our staff are highly committed and dedicated to serving the needs of our population and this report demonstrates that early intervention and prevention is having a positive impact.

During 2022-23, the Perth and Kinross multi-agency partnership was subject to a joint inspection of adult protection arrangements led by the Care Inspectorate. The findings were very positive concluding that the leadership for protecting people was very effective with major strengths. This was supporting positive experiences and outcomes for adults at risk of harm. The inspection also validated a number of areas of good practice in our work to protect vulnerable adults.

Work to support care homes for older people established early on in the pandemic has continued to be a key focus providing enhanced support through our local Care Home Oversight Group. A pan-Tayside Care Home website was launched in early 2023 to make it easy for professionals to access key information and guidance. This includes training and development opportunities for the care home sector in important areas such as supporting nutrition.

This report provides detail and assurance on how statutory social work responsibilities are being delivered. The report gives an overview for 2022- 2023 and highlights some key achievements and challenges for services over the reporting year and priorities for the period ahead. I hope it is a helpful insight into social work activity in Perth & Kinross over the past year and how we will continue to work with our communities to improve lives with compassion and kindness in the year ahead.

Jacquie Pepper

1 Governance, Accountability and Statutory Functions

The role of Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) is a statutory requirement, and the functions include providing professional governance, leadership, and accountability for the delivery of social work and social care services. The CSWO reports to the Chief Executive, Elected Members, and provides professional advice to the Integration Joint Board. The current CSWO has held the statutory role for the Council since 2017 and has continued to fulfil the responsibilities of CSWO on behalf of the Council after being appointed to the role of Chief Officer, Health & Social Care Partnership in May 2022.

The CSWO has direct access to Elected Members, the Chief Executive, Chief Officer of the Integration Joint Board, Executive Directors, Heads of Service, managers, and front-line practitioners both within the Council and Health and Social Care Partnership, and with partner agencies in relation to professional social work issues.

During 2022/23, the CSWO discharged the requirements of the role on behalf of the Council as follows:

- Oversight of a range of reports relating to social work and social care to Perth and Kinross Council committees.
- Member of the Council's Executive Leadership Team.
- Access to elected members, Chief Executive and Chief Officers as required.
- Member of the Perth and Kinross Chief Officers Group for Public Protection.
- Corresponding member of the Adult and Child Protection Committees.
- Non-voting member and professional advisor to the Perth and Kinross Integrated Joint Board (IJB) recognising that this was performed alongside the Chief Officer role.
- Non-voting member and professional advisor to the Perth and Kinross Integrated Joint Board's Audit and Performance Committee.
- Oversight of the Health and Social Care Partnership's Care and Professional Governance Forum with delegation of the Co-chairing role to the Interim Head of Adult Social Work during the year.
- Oversight of the Tayside-wide COVID-19 Enhanced Professional Clinical and Care Strategic Oversight of Care Homes Group (SOCHG) and the local Perth & Kinross Care Home Oversight Group.
- Decisions in relation to the implementation of secure care orders for young people.
- Overseeing Guardianship Orders on behalf of the Council.
- Accrediting and validating Mental Health Officer training and practice requirements.
- Leading on the submissions to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry and providing evidence to the Inquiry in December 2022.
- Leading the PVG Panel for the Council to support safe recruitment.

The CSWO takes part in the budget review process across all relevant services ensuring that the needs of vulnerable and at-risk groups needs are highlighted and considered. The CSWO also leads the Council's panel for safe recruitment, ensuring proportionate decision making to protect service-users and the public and at the same time ensuring that the Council is an inclusive employer. The CSWO is the lead signatory for the Scottish Social Services Council as the regulator of the social care workforce ensuring that the codes of practice are adhered to and acting as a point of contact when there are concerns about an employee's fitness to practice.

The Heads of Service for Adult Social Work and Services for Children, Young People and Families, as senior social work leaders, supported the CSWO to have oversight of key local, regional, and national developments and considering the most appropriate local response. Hazel Robertson, Head of Services for Children, Young People and Families and Kenny Ogilvy, Interim Head of Adult Social Work deputised for the CSWO providing full-time cover for key decisions that cannot be delegated.

Nationally, the CSWO deputies take part in meetings of all 32 CSWOs supported by Social Work Scotland.

Changes in Strategic Leadership and Chief Social Work Officer in 2024.

Perth & Kinross Council approved a new Executive and Strategic Leadership Structure in June 2023. This will result in a reduction in the numbers of officers at strategic leadership level and reflects an ongoing focus on efficiency, better integration of service functions and the prioritisation of frontline services. The statutory role of the Chief Social Work Officer will now be aligned to the Strategic Lead for Children, Families and Justice and the job profile ensures that the statutory qualifications and experience are met by the new postholder. Transitional arrangements are in place and the new Strategic Lead will take up post early in 2024. The current Chief Social Work Officer will continue in the role of Chief Officer for Health and Social Care.

2 Service Quality and Performance

2.1 Child Protection

Protecting children and young people from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation is a key priority for the Council reflected in the Council's Corporate Plan with actions to ensure we quickly identify children, young people, and adults at risk of harm and abuse and take the necessary actions to keep them safe.

This report highlights the challenges associated with delivering highly effective services in the face of increased levels of need for support and protection. The data and information in this report shows that our social work and social care services are intervening earlier and preventing escalation of difficulties within families. Increasing numbers of concerns are being reported about children and young people and staff are addressing these at an early stage. The effectiveness of this earlier intervention has reduced the number of children and young people for whom formal child protection measures are required.

The number of Child Concern Reports received by the Council's Child Protection Duty Team in 2022/3 increased by 967 which is a 14% increase on 2021/22. This is placing increasing pressure on front line social work teams as all of these concerns are screened to ensure that those children at risk of abuse, neglect and harm receive prompt help.

Positively, we can see from the data that there are fewer numbers of children progressing through child protection processes such as Initial Referral Discussions, Child Protection Investigations and Child Protection Meetings. However, it does mean that valuable expertise and resource is being used to assess children whose wellbeing is giving some cause for concern and who are not likely to require ongoing social work intervention.

The number of children and young people whose names have been placed on the child protection register has reduced since 2020 and at 31 July 2023 had fallen to 49 from 97 in 2020. This is the lowest number since 2013.

There is evidence that children and young people continue to receive high quality care, support, and protection. Increasingly, multi-agency child protection plans are effective in reducing risk and improving family circumstances. This is demonstrated by data that shows that children and young people are managed via the Child Protection Register for shorter periods, with sustained progress and positive longer-term outcomes evidenced.

Most child protection registrations last less than a year and the number of children and young people who remain on the child protection register for 12 months or more has continued to show a reduction over the year. The length of registration peaked in 2020/21 due to the impact of Covid-19. Re-registration has returned to previous levels following a sharp decrease in 2020/21.

The preventative work by social work teams to reduce risks and improve outcomes for children outside of the child protection process cannot be underestimated. Social workers are carrying out the role of lead professional with families supporting change and improvement.

Key processes and performance data

There are agreed timescales for holding Child Protection Case Conferences and **85% of Initial CPCCs and 95% of Pre-Birth Case Conferences met agreed timescales**. This is an area of continuous monitoring as it is a strong indicator of quick and effective action to ensure that children who may be at risk are protected via multi-agency protection plans.

An Inter-Agency Referral Discussion (IRD) is the start of the formal inter-agency process of information sharing, assessment, analysis and decision-making about the abuse or neglect of a child or young person up to the age of 18 years. **The number of Inter-Agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) has fallen by 16%**. This reduction can be attributed to a number of factors, including recent and ongoing service re-designs, and improved multi-agency working arrangements; which encourage identification, intervention, help and support at a much earlier stage; thus, preventing the need for IRDs.

The number of Child Protection Investigations reduced by 10% in line with the reduction in the number of IRDs being carried out. Conversely, the number of children and young people being considered at a multi-agency Initial Child Protection Case Conferences (ICPCCs) has remained relatively steady over the last three years.

The number of new registrations on the Child Protection Register has remained steady, with no change this year. Of the 67 children and young people being considered at an Initial CPCC, 58 (87%) had their names placed on the Child Protection Register. This is a high rate of conversion indicating that the right children were considered at multi-agency child protection case conferences. All children and young people whose names were recorded on the Child Protection Register went on to be safeguarded via a multi-agency Child Protection Plan, coordinated by a Lead Professional Social Worker.

Unborn babies and young children under 5 years made up the majority of children whose names were recorded on the Child Protection Register reflecting their vulnerability.

Quality Assurance and improving practices in protecting children and young people.

The self-evaluation plan for 2022/23 included a multi-agency audit/review of IRDs. Between October and November 2022, a multi-agency team of reviewers with representation from Social Work, Police, Health, and Education reviewed and examined 10 IRDs retrospectively.

These related to 10 children and young people, aged 0 – 16. This was a small-scale sample study and was carried out as a proof-of-concept exercise. The methodology has now been implemented across Tayside. Our established approach to IRDs is in keeping with practice outlined in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland.

Services for Children, Young People and Families appointed a Child Protection Case Conference (CPCC) Coordinator, which represented a significant investment into multi-agency child protection arrangements. The purpose was to improve performance and the experience of children, young people and their families and the following improvements are evidenced:

- the coordinator chairs all CPCCs (Pre-Birth; Initial and Reviews) providing independence and consistency;
- quality of assessments, chronologies and reports has improved with the coordinator providing feedback to improve quality and practice;
- improved relationships and participation of children, young people and their families;
- feedback from parents and carers has been overwhelmingly positive [*“I now know the situation and people and I am more comfortable as I find new people challenging”* and *“it’s been consistent, that’s a good thing, you don’t have to keep going over everything again and again”*]; and
- fewer cancellations of meetings through use of new technology.

The Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee in compliance with Scottish Government guidance, publishes an annual Standards and Quality (S&Q) report. This report is routinely presented to Perth and Kinross Council annually and is usually considered alongside the CSWO annual report. The Child Protection Committee concluded that **improved multi-agency partnership working (in particular with the third sector), recent service re-design, a shift towards much earlier intervention, with support being provided at a much earlier stage have all had a bearing on the effectiveness of interventions and keeping children out of the child protection system.** Effective use of multi-agency child or young person’s plans co-ordinated by social workers as lead professionals is also reducing the need for formal multi-agency child protection procedures. A high-level infographic produced by the CPC is set out below.

CPC Standards & Quality Report 2022/23 Summary

Numbers Increasing:



Child Concern Reports (14% increase)
Initial CPCCs (14% increase)
Re-registrations on the CPR (21% increase)
Unborn baby referrals (1% increase)
Medical Examinations (22% increase)

changes compared with 2021/22

Numbers Decreasing:



Inter-Agency Referral Discussions (16% decrease)
Child Protection Investigations (10% decrease)
Children on CPR at July 23 (11% decrease)
Referrals to Children's Reporter (11% decrease)
Child Protection Orders (8% decrease)
Joint Investigative Interviews (32% decrease)

changes compared with 2021/22

Nature of concerns



30% of all CCRs relate to a **trilogy** of complex vulnerabilities and/or variations thereof

18% domestic abuse

7% parental mental ill-health

5% problematic parental drug and/or alcohol use



Improvements seen in:



Updated inter-agency practice guidance



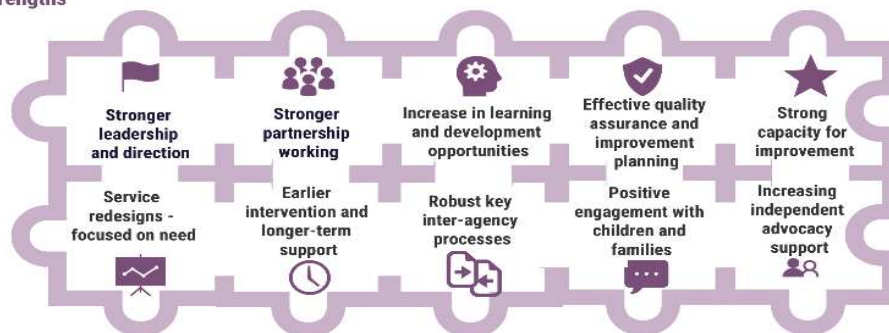
Inter-agency key decision making processes



Use of data to inform the work of the CPC

Public-facing website and training offer uptake

Strengths



Better Outcomes for Children and Families

2.2 Out of Hours Social Work Service (OOHS)

A generic out of hours social work service is provided by the Council which operates evenings, weekends, and throughout public holidays. This ensures that the statutory social work functions can be carried out by qualified and experienced practitioners at all times. The OOHS was managed by Services for Children Young People and Families during 2022/23.

The work carried out by out of hours social workers includes child or adult protection and mental health officer responsibilities, and this service is fundamental to fulfilling our statutory duties.

Performance data shows a 50/50 split in contacts for adults and children/young people. **Almost all of the individuals referred have had prior involvement with social work services and just over half had a current involvement.**

The team has experienced **a growth in the workload since 2020 of just over 30%** indicating the importance of the work that is carried out outside of office hours.

2.3 Children and Families Social Work Services

Child Protection & Duty Team

A Multi-Agency Screening Hub (MASH) was introduced in July 2022. Weekly MASH meetings bring together Social Work, Health, Education and Third Sector partners to review children and families that have been referred to the [Child Protection Duty Team](#) that are assessed as not requiring an immediate or child protection response. This allows appropriate responses to the identified needs of the child/family and allocation to the service best suited to meet those needs. The MASH promotes a whole family approach and ensures an early and non-statutory response wherever possible. **Between July 2022 and April 2023, 192 children were discussed and offered a service.** The impact of the MASH is being seen in the reduction of the numbers of children experiencing child protection processes.

The infographic below shows the impact the introduction of the MASH has had on staff across services.



2.4 Looked After Services

There were 250 Looked After Children as at the end of July 2023.

- 82% (207 children) were looked after away from home in a community setting (which means they were living in foster care or with kinship families);
- 11% (29 children) were looked after at home (which means they were living at home with their parents/families and the subject of compulsory supervision via the Children's Hearing); and
- 5.6% (14 children) were looked after in a residential setting.

It is helpful to compare the position with pre-Covid-19 levels and 2019 data and in July 2019 there were 282 Looked After Children.

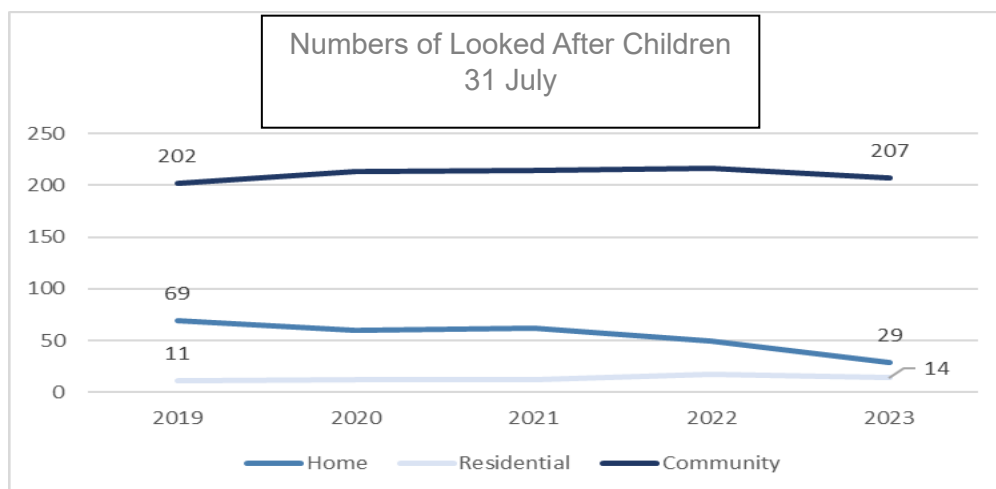
- 72% (202 children) were looked after away from home in a community setting;
- 24% (69 children) were looked after at home; and
- 4% (11 children) were looked after in a residential setting.

There has been a reduction in the overall number of looked after children and this is most notable in the number of children looked after at home which has reduced by 58%. This demonstrates the effectiveness of voluntary support and intervention with families and reducing the need for compulsory measures.

The number of children looked after away from home in all settings has slightly increased and this is placing pressure on the associated budgets for looked after children, particularly residential placements. Prior to the pandemic there had been significant impact through the implementation of REACH which introduced a successful team focused on preventing the need for residential care for young people in crisis. The increase in numbers is small but these specialist placements come at a high unit cost. During 2022-23, young people with complex behavioural problems post Covid, struggled to manage in the community. An additional one-off funding allocation of £1.952k was agreed by Council on 1 March 2023 to offset this.

We know that the social and emotional impact of Covid-19 has had a major impact on risk taking behaviour amongst young people which has resulted in an increased requirement for residential placements as the most suitable care option for older young people. **The highly effective impact of the REACH team is continuing keep the numbers of children and young people requiring residential placements down.** This situation is being monitored closely with a strong emphasis on enabling the young people to return home and community.

Table 1 Numbers of Looked After Children 31 July 2023



Stability and maintaining family relationships is also an important aspect of providing high quality care. Performance has improved over the year **with 81% of children and young people experiencing a single placement.** It is a priority to ensure that brothers and sisters can remain together in care placements whenever possible. This can be a challenge for large family groups. As of March 2023, **78% of brother and sister groups were either all placed together, or, had two or more brothers and sisters in the same placement** evidencing a commitment to achieving a key outcome within the Promise.

The Family Focus Team is responsible for the coordination of supervised and unsupervised contact arrangements between parents and their children who are looked after. The frequency, duration and nature of these contacts are often specified by the Court or Children's Hearing and must be adhered to. Over 2022/23, **1612 contact sessions were supervised involving 42 families.** 198 contacts had been cancelled due to: illness (children and also parents), non-participation of parents (failing to attend or attending under the influence of substances etc). This data shows the significant role of this team in

maintaining relationships between parents and children and ensuring the best conditions for a return home or for retaining meaningful links with their families if that is not possible.

Young Carers

As part of the Scottish Government's commitment to recognising the contributions of young carers across Scotland, a [Young Carers Package](#) has been introduced. This includes digital vouchers, subscriptions, and exclusive opportunities available to young carers aged 11 to 18 years old to help them make the most of their free time and provide support in their caring role. **Through the YoungScot portal 96 young carers in Perth and Kinross have signed up for the Young Carers Package and claimed 1266 entitlements.**

2.5 Criminal Justice

Community Justice and Safety Partnership

The Community Justice and Safety Partnership (CJ&SP) undertook several focused Strategic Needs and Strengths Assessments (SNSA) during the reporting period, in preparation for a new [Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan](#) which was launched in July 2023.

Several tests of change were initiated in collaboration with Alcohol and Drug Partnership including:

- Arrest Referral (July 2022)
- Complex Needs Co-Ordinator (September 2022)
- Voluntary Throughcare (March 2023)
- Specified Worker (January 2023).

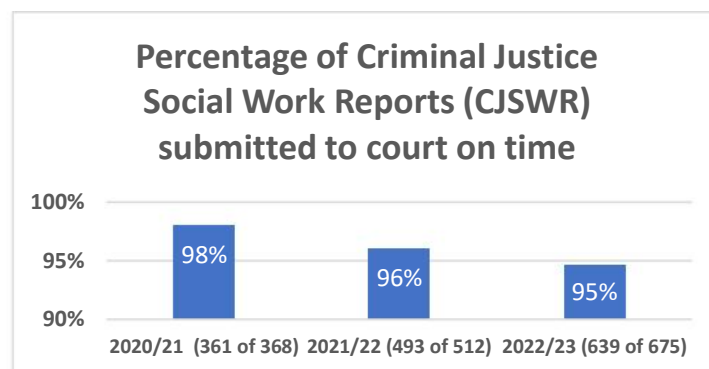
Learning highlighted the need for co-ordinated / collaborative working and the criminal justice Third Sector Forum was re-established in August 2022. The Community Safety Third Sector Collaborative has an expanded membership. An infographic created by the group and a list of participants can be viewed in Appendix 1. The Collaborative now routinely meets ahead of CJ&SP meetings, improving participation and supporting a more collaborative approach.

Performance Data for Criminal Justice Social Work Services

The Criminal Justice Social Work Service monitors the volume of reports provided to Court. **Average report volume during 2022-23 was 56 reports per month.** An increase in volume was anticipated to clear the COVID-19 backlog but this has not yet transpired and will continue to be monitored during 2023-24.

There has been an 83% increase in the number of reports requested by the Courts over the last 3 years. This has had an associated impact on the level of performance in providing reports to the Court on time which has reduced by 3% over that period. This is notable performance by the service in the face of increased demand.

Table 2 Percentage of Criminal Justice Social Work Reports submitted to Court on time.

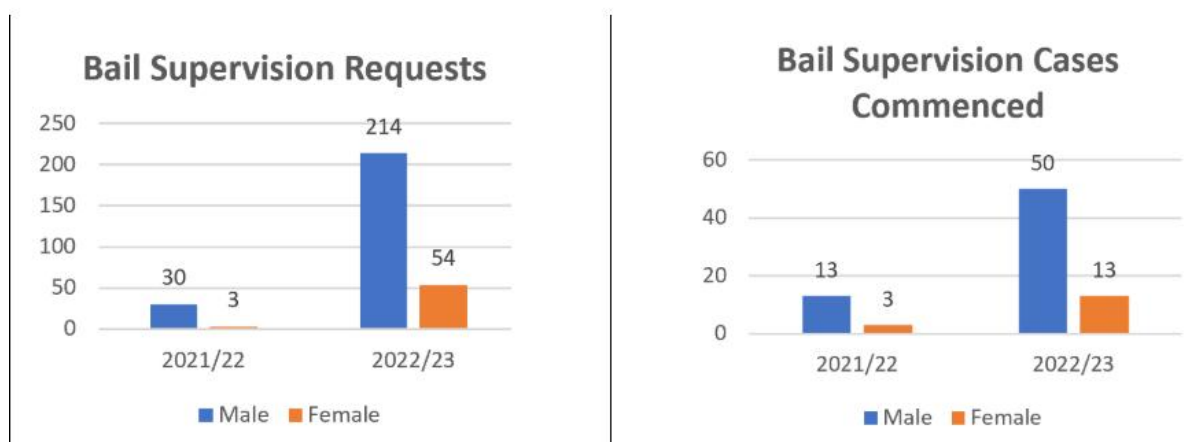


The Scottish Government notified stakeholders in March 2022 about risk and scoring issues with the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) IT system, and the system was suspended. This system is used universally across criminal justice social work services to support risk assessment in justice social work. Workers were instructed to undertake manual assessments. Phase one (completion of initial assessment) was not reinstated until March 2023, with a full return (1-8 assessment) later in the year. This has been challenging and time consuming for staff.

A Strategic Needs Self-Assessment was completed for **Diversion from Prosecution (DfP)** in June 2022. A joint training session was delivered by Community Justice Scotland (CJS) and Families Outside to Police and criminal justice social work staff. During the reporting period **there was a 53% increase in the number of people referred for DfP (68 referrals in 21/22 compared to 104 in 22/23)**. Of the 104 referrals received, 78 were suitable for DfP, with only 4 failing to complete the process. **Young people under 18 were the highest grouping referred and this measure is successfully keeping young people out of the justice system.**

Bail Supervision continued to be available to people aged 16 and over, in partnership with Services for Children and Young People and offered as an alternative to remand. **The number of people receiving Bail Supervision increased with 268 requests were received during the 2022-23 period compared to 33 requests during 2021-22.**

Tables 3 and 4 Bail Supervision Requests and Cases Commenced



Electronic Monitoring (EM) commenced in Perth and Kinross in May 2022 complimenting Bail Supervision. Between May 2022 and 31 March 2023, EM was imposed on one person

and a further three assessments undertaken. Bail supervision with EM is expected to increase as a result of the Bail and Release from Custody Bill.

The **Right Track** service uses a trauma informed approach designed to stabilise disordered lives of young people. The service supports 25 to 27 young people at any given time with 34 young people referred over the year. Numbers reduced during COVID-19 but have now returned to pre-pandemic levels. Court outcomes during the reporting period include a further period on Right Track (18), admonished (9), Community Payback Order supervision (6), custodial sentence (2), monetary penalty (1). Sheriffs from Perth Sheriff Court attended the Right Track Kabin in March 2023, to find out more about the project. **The Sheriffs shared how valuable they find the Right Track project as a sentencing option and its effectiveness for young people undertaking practical outdoor tasks and learning new skills.**

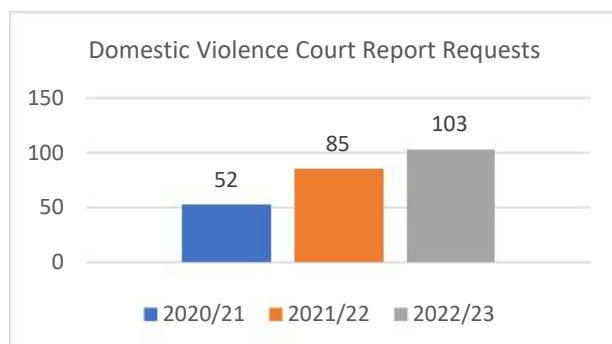
The **One-Stop Women's Learning Service (OWLS)** continues to offer women a safe space where they can access services, improve their mental health, and address offending behaviour. This takes place in a trauma informed environment to help empower women in their life choices. Although OWLS was initially established to work with women on Community Payback Orders, it has expanded to include those on a Throughcare Licence; Supervised Release Order; Bail Supervision; DfP; Voluntary Throughcare and women who occasionally need support after completing their statutory order. **OWLS supported 99 women across the year.**

The **Evolve** men's project is currently considering the learning from a pilot phase and exploring ways to expand into a resource that can be accessed by all male justice clients. This will be rolled out for all men completing Community Payback Orders. A modular groupwork calendar will include core modules on subjects like problem solving and conflict resolution, addiction, and healthy relationship skills. Social groups are also being scheduled to help men develop interpersonal skills and make connections and positive use of their time.

All Criminal Justice Social Work staff were trained in the Caledonian Programme or Spousal Assault Risk Assessment. The roll out of the above training has had multiple benefits – upskilling staff, increasing team resilience and a shared understanding of the aims of case management between staff and other agencies. Some staff at HMP Castle Huntly were also trained in providing Caledonian preparatory sessions with a view to these being completed prior to release. A pilot and subsequent report was completed. Feedback is awaited from SPS regarding next steps.

Domestic Violence Court Report requests have almost doubled between 2020 and 2023.

Table 5 Domestic Violence Court Report Requests



The **Unpaid Work Team (UPW)** continued to explore opportunities to develop partnerships to promote outcomes. Planning took place

between UPW and HMP Perth, to support a Men's Shed in HMP Perth making benches etc with the UPW team supporting the delivery and installation. Full details of UPW activity during 2022-23 is available in the Community Payback Order Annual Report.

Prison Based Social Work (PBSW) at Castle Huntly introduced a Drop-In session (December 2022) for prisoners to raise any issues of concern. This new initiative aimed to offer support and advice to prisoners in a more informal setting whilst building relationships with the PBSW team.

Trauma Informed/Responsive Approach

Clinical supervision, introduced during the last reporting period for staff within the Public Protection Team, was extended to Prison Based Social Work (PBSW) staff at HMP Perth and Castle Huntly in recognition of the impact of vicarious trauma. The Public Protection Team continued to develop Trauma Informed / Responsive Practice following the Epione Training staff received during the last reporting period.



Work has taken place to make meeting rooms at St Martin's House more trauma informed. The unpaid work team decorated the office spaces and built furniture. Work will continue in 2023-24 to develop further Trauma Informed spaces at Westbank (where the unpaid work team and Right Track services are delivered).

Training opportunities are being explored for PBSW staff at HMP Perth and Castle Huntly, and the teams are working with the Scottish Prison Service to develop Trauma Informed interview facilities within these establishments.

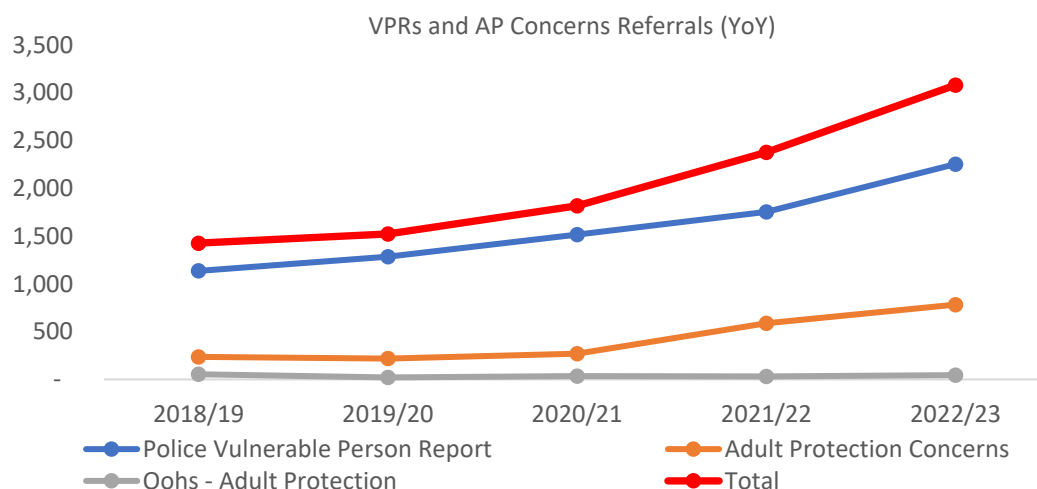
Violence Against Women Partnership (VAWP)

Violence Against Women and Girls is a key priority for **Community Justice** and is a priority for the Perth and Kinross CJ&SP. In the reporting period, the VAWP invited the Improvement Service to undertake some work to consider progress against the principles in Equally Safe.

2.6 Adult Support & Protection

Over 2022/23, a 30% increase in adult protection concerns was received by adult social work teams. This coincides with increased publicity to raise awareness about adults at risk of harm (see Table 8). There has been a year-on-year increase since 2018/19 and the table below shows that this is most acute in a higher level of police Vulnerable Persons Reports.

Table 6 Number of Vulnerable Person Reports and Adult Protection Concerns.



Notwithstanding this **steep increase in the numbers of adult protection concerns, almost all (98.2%), were screened by social workers within 24-hours. This is notable performance in the face of increased demand.**

77 Initial Referral Discussions (IRDs) were held for adults who may be at risk of harm. This is a reduction of 17% in comparison to 2021. A multi-agency audit of IRDs in 2022 highlighted that IRDs in Perth & Kinross were, in some cases, being overused. This led to some improvement work, and this is a desirable reduction.

The number of initial Adult Support & Protection case conferences increased by 15% in 2022/23 which demonstrates the increased use of multi-agency assessment and protection planning.

There were four (4) formal protection orders granted in Court. All four resulted in a Banning Order to prevent the vulnerable adult from coming into contact with another person who places them at risk.

There were seven (7) Large-Scale Investigations commenced in 2022/23 (an investigation when two or more people may be at risk – almost all taking place in relation to a care setting). This represents a reduction of four (4) from the previous year. The Care Home Oversight Group and the Enhanced Care Home Team has continued to provide support to care homes and provide a more preventative approach to addressing emerging concerns.

A joint inspection of Adult Protection in Perth & Kinross led by the Care Inspectorate reported in August 2022. This was part of the Scottish Government's improvement programme for adult support and protection. The inspection findings were positive and identified strong multi-agency adult support and protection arrangements in Perth and Kinross. Key strengths included leadership and governance, multiagency arrangements and policies and processes. Areas for improvement included engagement of adults in ASP process and use of medical examinations and these actions are set out in the Adult Protection Committee's Improvement Plan.

2.7 Adult Social Work Services

Social work and social care services for adults are delegated to the IJB for strategic planning. These services are managed by the Health and Social Care Partnership on behalf of the Council.

Over the year, adult social work and social care services have experienced high levels of demand without exception. This is set out in the HSCP [Annual Performance Report 2022/23](#). Perth & Kinross is experiencing an increasing number of frail older people with long term conditions living at home (see tables 7 and 8) and more people with profound and multiple disabilities. We have also experienced significant increases in the number of people seeking support for their mental health.

Table 7 Projected changes in population

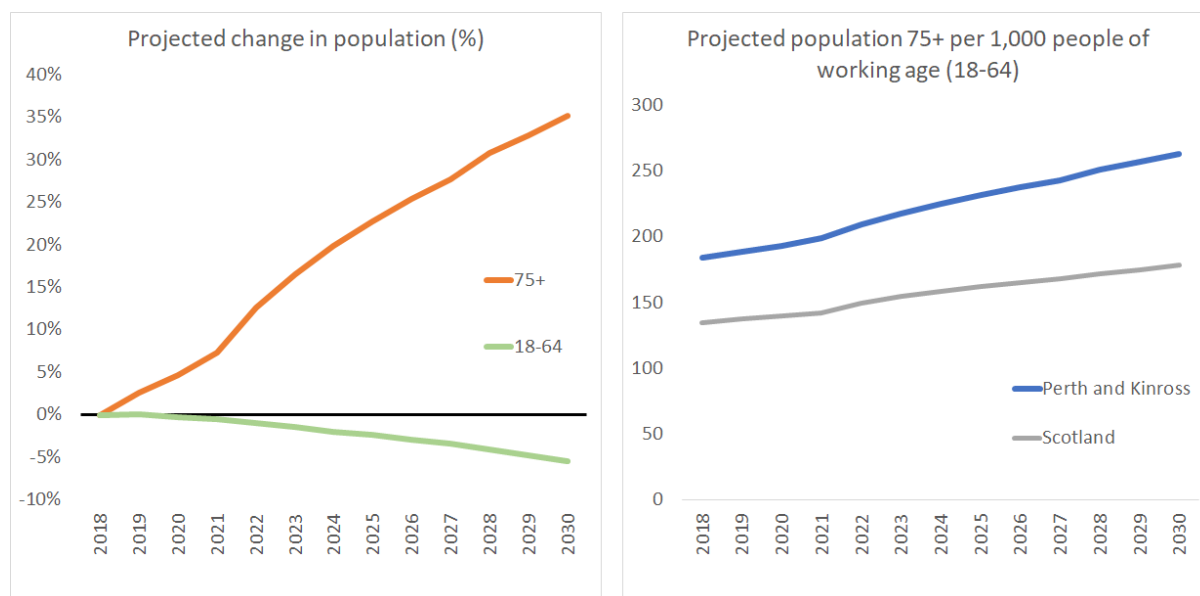
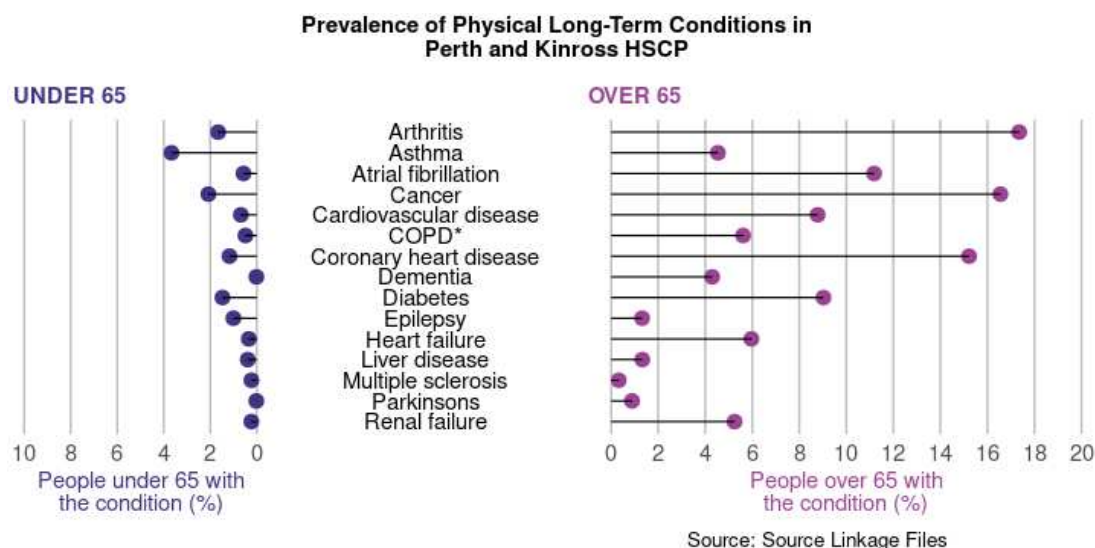


Table 8 Prevalence of long-term health conditions



To meet this increased demand and improve the quality of support available a number of service improvements have been carried out over the year using integration and locality working as key drivers. These include:

Social Work and Social Care Access Team redesign. The team provided a single point of contact and crisis response for all new referrals and short-term social work interventions up

to 12 weeks. The team experienced significant increased demand and long waiting lists had built up post COVID. Direct Access to HART/Reablement and community alarm was introduced, and short-term work referred directly to locality teams. The Access Team continues to be a single point of contact for referrals and responds to crisis situations where there is no key worker from a Locality Team. **As a result of the redesign the Access Team no longer has a waiting list and is able to provide a more effective support to people in crisis.**

Integrated Drug and Alcohol Team (IDART). The number of people seeking support with alcohol use has fallen slightly from 395 in 2021-22 to 368 in 2022-23. There has also been a decrease in the number of people requesting support with drug use from 313 in 2021-22 to 211 in 2022-23. **The IDART is working with approximately 670 people at any one time and there is an increasing number of people with complex needs including polydrug use and physical health issues.** Work to integrate community-based substance use services in Perth and Kinross has continued during 2022-23. The aim is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of support for people with substance use issues and their families through interventions ranging from Residential Rehabilitation to Recovery Cafes.

Key developments include:

- an integrated management structure for health, social work and social care;
- a new social work role with specialist mental health experience to provide support people experiencing mental ill-health and substance use;
- a justice pathway for people who are at risk as a result of offending;
- expanding social work support for families affected by substance use; and
- implementing of the Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) Standards 1-5.

There has been a reduction in the number of suspected drug deaths, from 19 in 2021-22 to 12 in 2022-23; a slight reduction in the number of non-fatal overdose incidents, from 98 in 2021-22 to 93 in 2022-23.

Thirteen (13) people attended a new same day prescribing drop-in clinic.
Fourteen (14) people were supported to attend the new community alcohol detox service.
Thirteen (13) people benefited from residential rehabilitation.

Support for Unpaid Carers

There continued to be a high level of requests for support for unpaid carers during 2022/23. **There were 1,213 referrals for carer support, an increase of 16% from the previous year.** Carers Support Workers have been added to the three locality Adult Social Work Teams, Autism/Learning Disability Team, and Substance Use Team. **A specialist support worker has also been recruited to provide prompt assistance to those who are caring for a person who is identified as requiring palliative and end of life care.**

The Carers Strategy has been updated for 2023-2026 and a report to the Integrated Joint Board in June 2023 highlighted progress from the 2019-2022 Strategy, highlights included:

- 2,887 Carer Referrals resulting in 1,649 Adult Carer Support Plans
- a rise in the number of registered carers to 2470 in 2022
- doubling of the number of Emergency Care Plans from 332 in 2020 increasing to 788 in 2022
- the percentage of people admitted to permanent care due to carer breakdown has reduced from 36% in 2019 to 16% as of December 2022
- a network of 15 support groups for carers
- 3,512 respite bed nights in Care Homes and 41,806 hours of Home Respite

Case Study – Carer Support

Karen and her husband, who she cares for, recently moved to Perth and Kinross to be nearer family. Karen had never been recognised as a carer and didn't have support before the move. Karen finds caring exhausting. Karen was advised to attend the Crieff Carers' Café which is supported by a local Carer Support Worker and a Carers' Hub Support Worker. Karen now has a personal Adult Carer Support Plan and she is supported to attend a painting class knowing her husband is looked after. Her husband occasionally stays in a local care home so she can get longer breaks and she was recently able to attend a funeral. Karen also gets support from PKAVS Carers' Hub and finds caring for her husband with this support easier.

Hospital Discharge Team

The Hospital Discharge Team (HDT) is responsible for the safe and timely discharge of people from hospital. Over the year, the team has integrated with health colleagues into what is now called the discharge hub. An integrated management structure has been introduced along with an integrated model to ensure discharge without delay and to ensure people receive efficient and effective support to return home after a period in hospital. A Performance Management Framework has been developed to monitor this work closely. Together with the improvements in Reablement and Care at Home this is expected to increase flow and reduce the number of people delayed in hospital significantly.

SCOPE (Learning Disability and Autism Team)

The redesigned multidisciplinary team to support people with a learning disability and/or autism, called SCOPE, has continued to develop. An integrated approach brings together Allied Health Professionals, learning disability nurses, psychologist, social workers, and outreach workers. The social workers in the team play an integral part in assessing and supporting clients. Outreach Workers work directly with clients and their families to enable independence and assist families through Behaviour Support plans.

SCOPE also works with young people and their families to help them negotiate the transition into adulthood. Social work support for transitions is provided for as long as is necessary to ensure the correct support is in place to meet outcomes and that this can be maintained.

More recently, a Family Group Decision-making approach has been introduced to take a whole family and person-centred approach to decisions about future care and support for people with complex needs.

In 2022/23 the SCOPE team supported 320 people. To ensure staff have the appropriate skills and knowledge a robust Learning Framework has been produced. It includes training in CALM, First Aid, Moving and Handling, Infection control, Physical Intervention, MIDAS, Talking Mats, Autism, Positive Behavioural Support, and Makaton.

Case Study

L was referred to the SCOPE for transition planning. L has a diagnosed Learning Disability and other complex diagnoses relating to early childhood trauma. L had disengaged from education and there were Adult Protection concerns. The relationship with L's parents broke down and L was 'sofa surfing' and engaging with other young people that were not always a positive influence.

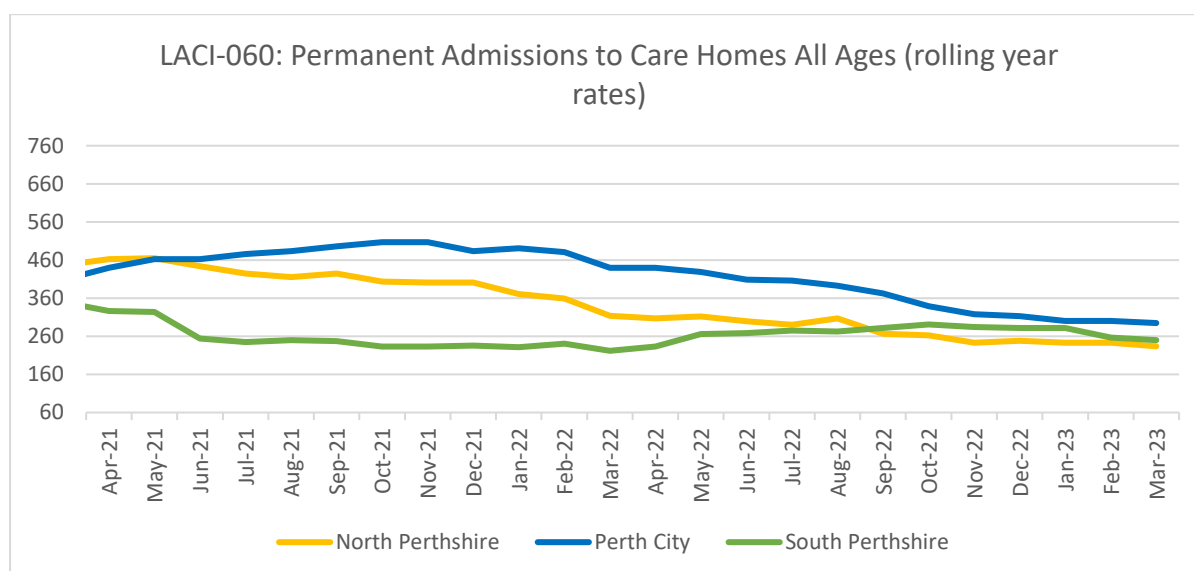
Through intervention from the multi-disciplinary team in SCOPE, including family group decision-making, social work, psychology and support from an Outreach Worker, L has been provided with a holistic assessment and guidance around independent living skills. She has now successfully moved into her own tenancy with a very small package of care. It is anticipated this will reduce further. There are no current concerns or risk-taking behaviour and relations with family are improving. L has also been able to find employment and is thriving within the workplace.

Locality Adult Social Work Teams (North, South & Perth City)

The locality adult social work teams work with individuals with long term and complex care needs who are over the age of 16 who do not meet criteria for support from the mental health, autism/learning disability or substance use teams. The teams also support families and carers. The majority of service users are older people. The teams undertake a variety of roles including Outcome Focussed Assessments, reviews, and statutory responsibilities in relation to Adults with Incapacity and Adult Support and Protection.

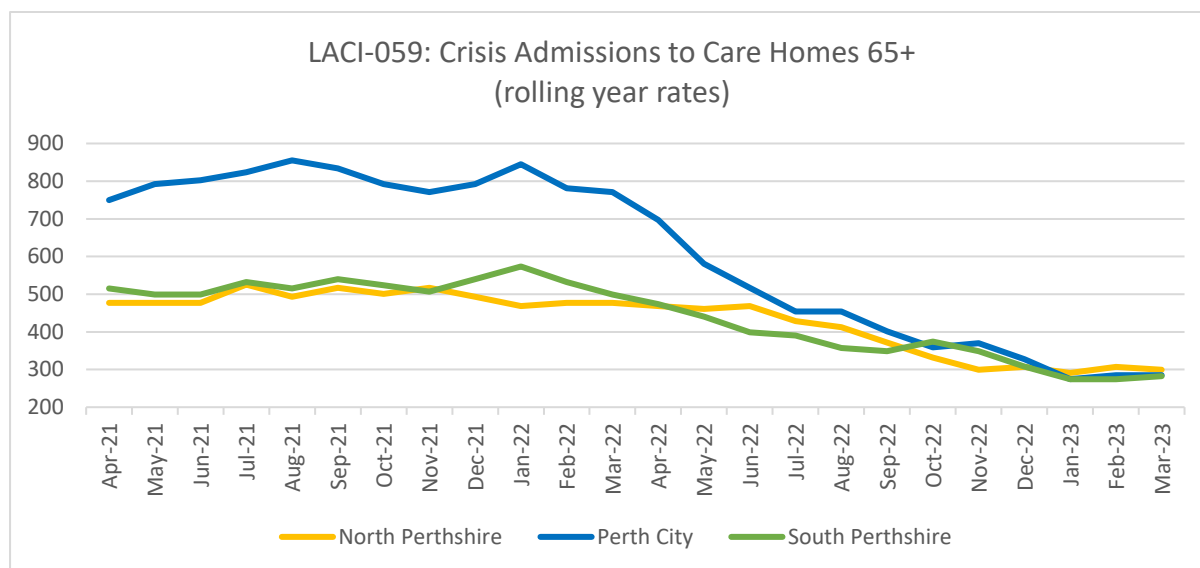
Over 2022-2023, the locality teams have responded to continuing high levels of demand, nevertheless we can see the impact of their work in shifting in the balance of care. When demographics are allowed for, **permanent admissions to care homes for older people are reducing overall with more people being supported to remain independently at home** (see Table 9).

Table 9 Permanent admissions to care homes.



The Locality Adult Social Work Teams have been integral to the LInCS model which is an integrated multi-agency approach to supporting individuals with deteriorating conditions to function in their own home. This model is aimed at increasing the range and accessibility of supports locally, ensuring coordinated, multi-disciplinary support is available when required and reducing the number of crisis admissions to hospital or care homes. Table 10 shows the **significant reduction in crisis admissions as more people are supported to live at home independently and greater reach and support for unpaid carers through the Carers Strategy.**

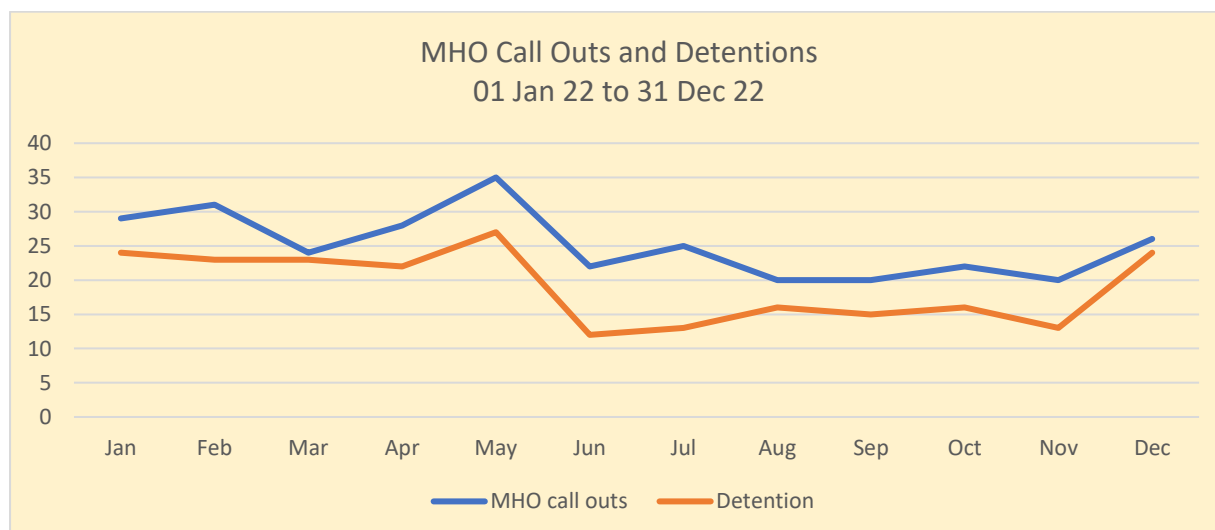
Table 10 Crisis Admissions to Care Homes for people 65 years and over



Mental Health Team

The Mental Health Team consists of Mental Health Officers and social workers. It continues to deliver on all MHO duties as defined in the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000. The Chief Social Work Officer retains responsibility for professional leadership and standards of MHOs and has responsibility for annual accreditation. The team also provides social work support for people with mental health issues. Demand remains high (see Table 11).

Table 11 Mental health callouts and detentions



The Mental Health Team is involved in the redesign of mental health services in Perth & Kinross and across Tayside including the redesign of CMHTs and redesign of the crisis response pathway. The team has also led the implementation of a multidisciplinary triage which helps ensure people are referred timeously to the most appropriate resource.

The Mental Health Team includes the Wellbeing Support Team who provide personalised, recovery focussed support to adults with low/moderate mental health issues in rural Perth &

Kinross. This team is included in the Primary Care Mental Health redesign which will bring all supports for people with low/moderate mental health issues into a coordinated and clear pathway.

Reablement and Care at Home

Care at Home is an essential service in supporting people to remain living in the community. The majority of Care at Home in Perth & Kinross is commissioned by the Health & Social Care Partnership on behalf of the Council from a network of independent providers. The Council provides HART/Reablement services.

Providing Care at Home has been a challenge for several years, especially in the rural areas of Perth & Kinross, with an historical level of unmet need of between 1,200 and 1,500 hours per week. In 2023, a Transformation Project was established to drive greater efficiency, improve recruitment, and introduce alternatives to Care at Home such as Technology Enabled Care. A dedicated service from an Independent Provider has been established in the Frailty Unit at Perth Royal Infirmary. Both of these developments have contributed to a significant reduction in people delayed in hospital.

Self-Directed Support

The four Self Directed Support (SDS) options are now embedded in all the major care pathways in Perth and Kinross. Over the past year we have funded a Test of Change project, offering Community Brokerage to adults across Perth and Kinross. Community Brokerage supports people to identify the social care support which is right for them and assists them to put that support in place. Trained and accredited Community Brokers help prepare people for assessments, support the development of agreed support plans and understanding budgets, as well as helping people to access local support and activities in the community. Funding has been secured to continue and expand this project.

Case Study

Mrs B is the main carer for Mr B who has Parkinson's Disease and dementia. Mrs B was struggling with her caring role and it was impacting on her mental health. She had requested support previously but was confused by the initial response and the overall process. With support from a Social Worker and a Community Broker both Mr and Mrs B were able to identify appropriate help for both of them. This process involved a number of visits and discussions to clarify any issues and explain the various options of addressing them. A flexible package of support was arranged using Personal Assistants to meet both Mr and Mrs B's needs.

Social Prescribers

Social Prescribing within Perth and Kinross is well established with 7 social prescriber posts. The staff work in defined geographical areas and are linked with GP Practices. Social Prescribers can work with anyone over 16 years and accept referrals from a range of sources including GPs, statutory services, third sector organisations and self-referral. The Social Prescribers support people to access a wide range of community-based activities. This helps people improve their wellbeing without resorting to medication. During the year a single management structure was implemented for the Social Prescribers which has improved consistency of service across Perth & Kinross and strengthened the professional support for the team.

Supported Living Services (Learning Disabilities, Autism and Mental Health)

Perth and Kinross HSCP and Perth & Kinross Council work with a number of local and national organisations to secure quality support and care provision for vulnerable adults who may be living with enduring Mental Health needs, an Autism Spectrum Condition, a range of mild to complex learning disabilities, associated distressed behaviour, forensic needs, physical disabilities, and complex care needs.

In the past year a Core and Cluster development in Rattray has been opened to support people with Autism and/or a Learning Disability. This project enables people to have their own tenancy whilst being able to access the specialist support they require. This enables people to return to the community from long stay hospitals.

3 Scrutiny

Overview of complaints

Table 14 overview of complaints

	Number of complaints			Number of complaints acknowledged on target		
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Adult Services	11	17	13	10	16	12
Services for Children, Young People & Families and Criminal Justice Services	9	9	18	8	7	14

Key learning arising from specific complaints over 2022/23 include:

- Improvements in recording – This related to a failure to include relevant information in social assessments. an improvement plan was put in place to ensure the correct completion of hand-held records ensuring all entries were dated, factual and no gaps were left between entries to ensure all relevant information is included in social work assessments.
- Addressing delay in relaying outcomes of decisions relating to financial assessment – This related to the Discretion Panel which is a management approach to consistency in decision-making for large/costly care packages for adults. Arrangements put in place to ensure that notifications are systematically and timeously communicated.

Inspections

The Council's [Report of 29 August 2022](#) highlights the inspections of Services for Children and Young People by the Care Inspectorate. The [Fostering Service](#), [Adoption Service](#) and [Supported Lodgings](#) were all inspected (short notice announcement) on 31 May 2022. Table 15 shows the gradings awarded by the Care Inspectorate and indicates continuing good quality in regulated care services.

Table 15

	How well do we support people's wellbeing?	How well is our care and support planned?	How good is our Leadership?	How good is our staff team?
Fostering Services	Good	Good	-	-

Adoption	Very Good	Good	-	-
Supported Lodgings	Good	Good	Good	Very Good

4 Challenges and Improvements

Support for Kinship and Foster Carers

As the cost-of-living crisis mounted there were concerns that kinship and foster carers may require additional funds to ensure that the 'heating and eating' costs of Looked After children were met. This was reflected in rising numbers of kinship carers being supported by the Welfare Rights Team. The [Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022 to 2023](#) contained an action to deliver a Cost-of-Living Crisis Support programme aimed at mitigating the impact on struggling families. As part of a whole-Council approach, kinship and foster carers were identified as a key group requiring support. A [report](#) was brought to Council in September 2022, in which funding was requested for allocation to actions that would help with tackling the ongoing challenges for those most in need over the upcoming winter period. This included a request for a non-recurring cost of living crisis payment to kinship and foster carers to the amount of £120,000, which equated to £500 for each Looked After child. This request was approved, and payments were made in January 2023.

Feedback from kinship and foster carers highlighted that the additional financial help was very welcome, much needed and much appreciated. It enabled them to heat their homes to an acceptable standard. In 2022/23 the number of families receiving social work support and who were supported to maximise their income through help from the Welfare Rights Team almost doubled from the previous year, from 33 to 59.

In March 2023, as part of the 2023/24 budget, an additional £600,000 was committed over the next 3 years to increase the foster carer and kinship carer fee. It is anticipated that this will reduce some of the cost-of-living related pressures for foster and kinship carers in the current and future years.

We will continue to take a cross-Council approach to ensure that all kinship carers have access to appropriate benefits advice and support so they can receive all applicable financial entitlements. We will also use our experiences and the feedback received to further develop partnership working across the Council to tackle poverty and respond to needs in a timely and effective manner.

Independent Living Panel

The Independent Living Panel was created to provide an integrated approach to meeting the housing, health, and social care needs of some of our most vulnerable people. It is intended to enable them to live well and as independently as possible, either in their own home or within a specialist provision.

Prior to the development of the Panel in 2019 there was no recognisable pathway for people with independent living needs to access both accommodation and support. While agencies did collaborate, it was in an ad hoc way and there was limited planning for future provision.

The Independent Living Panel meets monthly and has a core membership of representatives from the Council, the Perth and Kinross Health and Social Care Partnership and third sector partners. Where appropriate, key workers or the client and/or the parent/guardian are also invited to the meeting to contribute.

The Independent Living Panel has considered around 200 referrals since 2019 and has allocated around 30 pre-existing supported accommodation vacancies and enabled approximately 20 people to move into mainstream housing in the community with an appropriate package of support.

As well as providing a fair and transparent way to allocate supported accommodation vacancies the Panel also assesses future independent living needs to inform the Strategic Housing Investment Programme.

A survey of people who had been referred to the Panel and their parents/guardians/key workers showed that the Panel has been successful in achieving its original objects to enable people with complex needs as independently as possible. For more information on our approach to helping people live independently in Perth and Kinross can be found on the [Independent Living pages](#) of our website.

Over the past year there has been significant service development in Adult Care. As stated, the key drivers have been integration and locality focus. There is evidence this is improving outcomes for people across all client groups for example fewer older people admitted to care homes permanently, a reduction in the number of people delayed in hospital, fewer people dying because of drugs and people with autism and/or a learning disability being supported in the community rather than admitted to a long stay hospital bed.

5 Resources

Table 16

Net Recurring Expenditure	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m
Services for Children, Young People & Families	18.40	20.25	22.63
Criminal Justice Services¹	2.153	2.186	2.417
Adult Social Work and Social Care	54.56	62.87	77.06

Services for Children, Young People and Families

During financial year 2022-23, Services for Children, Young People and Families experienced significant financial pressures as a result of COVID-19; these are detailed in the report submitted to the Council's Learning and Families Committee on 3 May 2023 ([Report No.23/131](#) and [Appendix](#)). Additional one-off funding was agreed by Council to meet financial pressures in 2023/24 and 2024/25.

These financial pressures are directly related to the rising complexity of families who require social work intervention; the limited availability of care places across the sector (i.e. Residential, Foster and Kinship) and higher levels of staff turnover since the pandemic. Economic factors, which are being experienced nationally, such as inflation, is also impacting on the purchasing power of the available budgets for services such as residential care, client travel etc. Competitiveness of salaries is also impacting on recruitment and retention of staff.

The Whole Family Wellbeing Funding is being used to introduce transformational ways of working to improve the support provided to families. The four-year timescale for such

¹ Criminal Justice Services is funded by Perth & Kinross Council and Scottish Government grant fund

transformational changes to be realised and feed through to front line service delivery is ambitious, nevertheless it is fundamental to earlier intervention and improving children's life chances within their own families and communities.

Adult Services

Additional funding was received from the Scottish Government in 2022-23 to assist with the ongoing recovery from the pandemic and recognising that social care is experiencing huge challenges nationally. This non-recurring funding was targeted at Care at Home Capacity, Adult Social Work Capacity, and support for Multi-Disciplinary Team Working. This led to a significant increase in spending from expenditure reported at 2021-22 as did the significant pay awards for Social Care staff across all commissioned services and rate uplifts for care providers. This funding was passed through to providers in line with Government policy and guidance.

Expenditure of £1.7m was incurred on COVID related activities and provider sustainability claims in 2022-23.

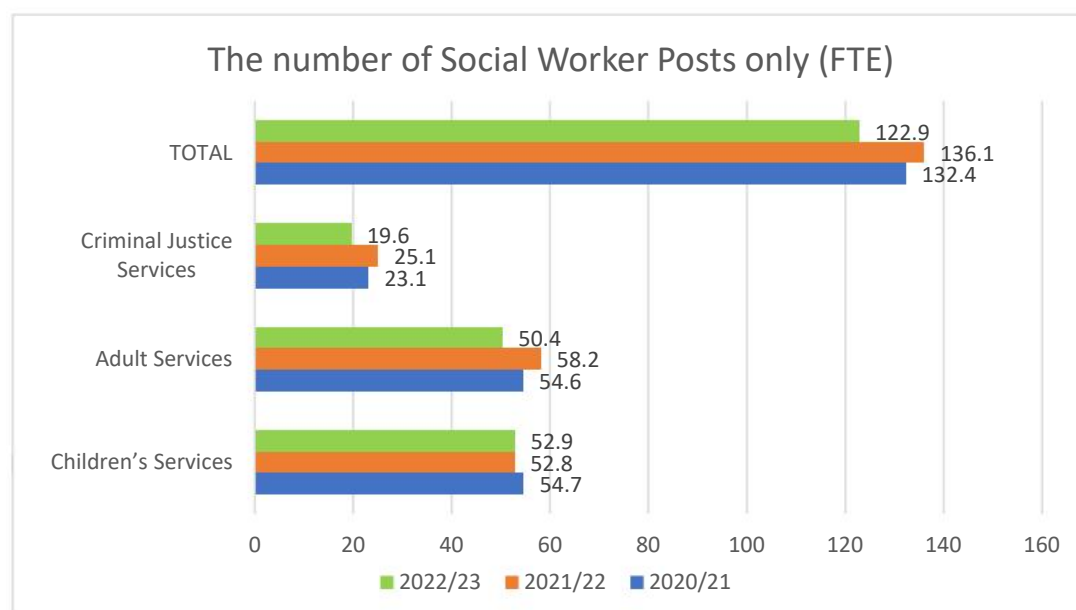
6 Workforce

Perth & Kinross Council's [Community Plan](#) (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan) 2022-2032 sets out key objects for the council's workforce. The Perth and Kinross Offer reflects the Community Planning Partnership's (CPP) commitment to empowering frontline staff to 'think yes' and take the action they judge is needed to make positive change happen on a day-to-day basis. This report reflects the [commitment](#) of social work and social care staff in that regard.



Meeting rising demand is an ongoing issue across adult care, as is workforce planning. Social care is a particular challenge. Redesigning services helps meet rising demand by improving effectiveness and efficiency. A Health & Social Care Workforce Plan was developed for 2022-5 and a range of actions are being taken to mitigate the risk associated with a lack of social care staff. This plan is organised five pillars of workforce, plan, attract, train, employ, and nurture. The workforce plan for health and social care was approved by the Integration Joint Board in June 2022 and progress reported six monthly.

Table 17 the number of qualified social workers



The number of qualified social work posts has decreased over all over the last three years (7% / 9.5 WTE posts) with an increase in 2021/22 which is related to non-recurring resources available in order to address pressures associated with the pandemic. This change is driven by the integration of teams and the emphasis on multi-disciplinary working.

Workforce continues to be one of our most significant challenges, especially in relation to social care. To determine current requirements, scope future demand and identify actions required Perth & Kinross HSCP developed a three year Workforce Plan. ([IJB Report 27 June 2022](#); [3-year Workforce Plan](#), [Autism & Learning Disability Strategic Delivery Plan](#)).

Perth & Kinross faces particular challenges due to demographics and geography. We have a higher proportion of older people than the national average and this will increase significantly in coming years. Perth & Kinross has an urban centre and a large rural and remote rural hinterland. This poses a considerable challenge in relation to staff recruitment, deployment, and delivery of services.

Central to the plan is ensuring Perth & Kinross is an attractive place to work, by offering attractive terms and conditions, clear career pathways, a culture of compassion and learning in which developmental opportunities, skilled supervision, and support for wellbeing.

The number of vacancies across health and social work/social care is gathered monthly and monitored regularly. A Workforce Plan Steering Group has been established and a programme manager will be recruited.

A Reablement/Care at Home Transformation Programme has also been initiated by the HSCP with a workstream focussing on recruitment and retention for social care. Over 100 WTE social carer posts are required to meet current levels of unmet need for social care. Funding has been provided for additional capacity in Perth and Kinross Council's Communications Team. This post supported a successful recruitment campaign which resulted in a net increase of 22 social carers in 5 months. These campaigns are being continued on a rolling basis. As well as the domestic market we are also recruiting from overseas as one of two local authorities selected to be part of the social care international recruitment work led by Scottish Government.

Actions are being developed and implemented to target specific potential workforce populations such as schools and colleges, long term unemployed, ex armed forces and people who have recently been made redundant or retired.

Alternatives to Care at Home provision including increased use of TEC, enhanced Sheltered Housing, Community Circles and community led Social Care Cooperatives are being explored as part of the Programme.

Flexible working, compressed hours and hybrid working are made available where possible to make Perth & Kinross an attractive place to work along with ensuring workers have access to regular formal and informal supervision and workload management.

Staff wellbeing is a top priority. There is a wealth of evidence that supports the link between staff wellbeing and the quality of care and experience for people who rely on health and care services. We recognise that psychological safety, autonomy and choice, and health and wellbeing are fundamental needs of our staff. The Workforce Plan recognises that compassionate leadership and a culture which places staff engagement at its heart is the best predictor of staff wellbeing and quality in care outcomes.

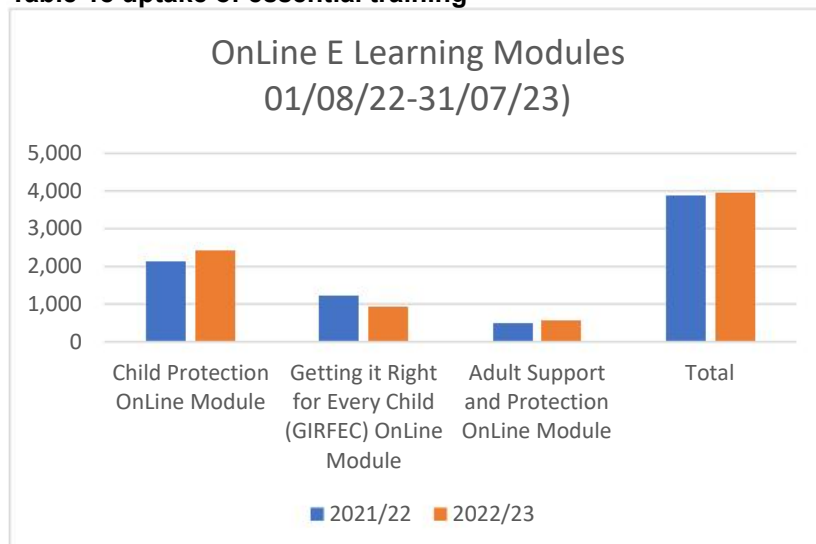
Over the past year we have consulted and worked with staff to develop our 'wellbeing offer.' This combines a values-based approach, emphasising compassion and kindness and creating an environment where staff feel cared for at work with practical supports to help

people enhance their wellbeing. Support includes psychological services virtual and face to face, spiritual care services and the creation of Wellbeing Champions. 30 day passes to local gyms and leisure centres were also made available to staff free of charge.

7 Training, Learning and Development

All CPC inter-agency child protection staff learning and development opportunities continue to be compliant with [National Guidance](#), which we have translated into our robust and dynamic [CPC Inter-Agency Child Protection Learning and Development Framework](#).

Table 18 uptake of essential training



We have delivered live webinars and expanded our range of interactive OnLine Learning Resources; allowing busy practitioners to learn at a time, pace and place convenient to them; whilst ensuring relevance to the general contact workforce; specific contact workforce and the intensive contact workforce and in compliance with [National Guidance](#).

Learning and Development has been reviewed to ensure training is available to ensure workers have the appropriate skills and knowledge to fulfil their roles. This has also helped clarify career pathways. For example, we are currently funding four staff to obtain their professional Social Work qualification through distance learning. We also have a rolling programme for MHO training maintaining a positive position nationally.



Trauma Informed Practice

Since 2018, the CPC and the APC have continued their partnership work with RASAC PK and commissioned them annually

to deliver multi-agency Trauma Informed Practice learning and development opportunities as we continue to strive to develop a critical mass of trauma informed and aware practitioners across Perth and Kinross.

Between October 2022 and April 2023, RASAC PK delivered a total of 11 multi-agency trauma informed practice workshops (both in-person and online). A total of 206 multi-agency staff attended these workshops, which were evaluated very highly.

In addition, two follow-on multi-agency next steps trauma informed workshops were delivered (one in-person and one online) and a total of 36 multi-agency staff attended these follow-on next steps workshops, which again, were evaluated very highly.



Safe and Together Training

Last year, we reported on the continued roll-out and implementation of the Safe & Together Practice Model (aimed at tackling Domestic Abuse) across Services for Children, Young People and Families (SCYPF). Safe and Together is predicated on partnering with the non-abusive parent to keep them safely with their children wherever possible and, through intervention with the abusive parent, it aims to reduce risk of harm to the other parent, children, and young people.

To date, 135 practitioners and managers from SCYPF and from Criminal Justice Services have been trained in the full model and over 240 staff from across partner services and agencies have been trained in the overview model. In addition, the Perth and Kinross GIRFEC Coordinator, within Education Services, has now undertaken this training and is now acting as a point-of-contact for advice and guidance which all Child Protection Officers in our Schools can rely on.

Implementing Safe & Together, within and across Perth and Kinross has promoted additional levels of co-working and co-production and is allowing us to grow the model and establish a critical mass of those trained. It is also ensuring that fathers and male carers are included in the day-to-day lives of their children and in key child protection assessment, planning, and key decision-making processes.

From Services for Young People the Youth Engagement Team (YET) was developed. Using the detached youth work approach, it aimed to build working relationships with the young people who were out and about on a Friday and Saturday evening. It was made clear that the team was there to listen, support and make the young people feel safer.

All staff are trained in detached youth work which includes drug education. The workers have completed naloxone training and have knowledge of Trauma Informed Practice. The YET ran from 2021 and concluded on 31 March 2023.

Glossary

AAASG	All Age Autism Strategy Group
ADP	Alcohol & Drugs Partnership
AP	Adult Protection
APC	Adult Protection Committee
APCC	Adult Protection Case Conference
ASC	Autism Spectrum Condition
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
ASP	Adult Support and Protection
ASIST	Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
AWI	Adults with Incapacity
BAAF	British Association for Adoption and Fostering
BMIP	Business Management & Improvement Plan
BPD	Borderline Personality Disorder
CAB	(Perth) Citizen Advice Bureau
CAMH	Children and Adolescent Mental Health
CASA	Children Alone Seeking Asylum
CCR	Child Concern Reports
CELCIS	Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection
CHD	Chronic Heart Disease
CHP	Child Health Partnership
CJA	Criminal Justice Authority
CJOIP	Community Justice Outcomes and Improvement Plan
CJS	Criminal Justice Service
CJSW	Criminal Justice Social Work
CLD	Community Learning & Development
CMHT	Community Mental Health Team
COG	Chief Officer Group
COPD	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
COPE	Children and families who are Open to social work services for Planned interventions in the Evenings and weekends
CPO	Child Protection Order
CPCC	Child Protection Case Conference
CPP	Community Planning Partnerships
CPO	Community Payback Order
CPR	Child Protection Registration
CREST	Connecting Relationships Empowering Supporting Together
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CSP	Children's Services Plan
CSO	Compulsory Supervision Order
CSWO	Chief Social Work Officer
CYP&FP	Children, Young People and Families' Partnership
CYRO	Children and Youth Rights Officer
ECS	Education & Children's Services
EDC	Emergency Detention Certificate
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
ESF	European Social Fund
FYI	Fun Young Individuals
FLR	Front Line Resolution
GP	General Practitioner
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
GIRFEC	Getting It Right for Every Child
H&SCI	Health and Social Care Integration
H&SP	Health & Social Care Partnership
HART	Home Assessment and Recovery Team
HDT	Hospitality Discharge Team
HEAT	Health Improvement Efficiency Access to services and Treatment
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison

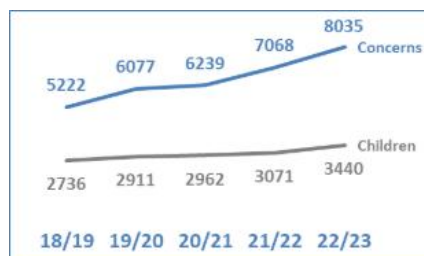
HRARG	High Risk Adult Referral Group
IAPK	Independent Advocacy Perth & Kinross
ICR	Initial Case Review
ICSP	Integrated Children's Services Plan
IDART	Integrated Drugs and Recovery Team
IJB	Integrated Joint Board (for Health and Social Care)
ILG	Independent Living Group
IRD	Inter-Agency Referral Discussion
IRF	Integrated Resource Framework
IRISS	Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services
ITT	Independent Travel Training
LAC	Looked After Children
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex
LinCS	Locality Integrated Care Service
LSI	Large Scale Investigations
MA	Modern Apprentice
MAP	Multi-Agency Plan
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MASG	Multi Agency Screening Group
MEAD	Minority Ethnic Access Development Project
MECOPP	Minority Ethnic Carers Of People Project
MHO	Mental Health Officer
NHS	National Health Service
NPS	New Psychoactive Substances
NRS	National Records of Scotland
OT	Occupational Therapy
OWLS	One-Stop Women's Learning Service
PAN Tayside	Perth, Angus, and Dundee Councils across Tayside
PB	Participatory Budgeting
PG5	Priority Group 5, Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative
PKAVS	Perth & Kinross Association of Voluntary Service
PKC	Perth & Kinross Council
PRTL	Post Registration Training and Learning
RASAC PK	Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre Perth and Kinross
REACH	Resilient; Engaged; Achieving; Confident; Healthy
ROSC	Recovery Oriented Systems of Care
SCOPE	Supporting young people and adults with complex needs; Community based approach/assessment; Offering young people and adults' choice in their care packages; Person-centre planning; Enriching people's lives
SCR	Significant Case Review
SCRA	Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
SCYP&F	Services for Children, Young People & Families
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SDS	Self Directed Support
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SLT	Speech and Language Therapist
SMHFA	Scotland's Mental Health First Aid
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound
SMT	Senior Management Team
SOHCG	Strategic Oversight of Care Homes Group
SPS	Scottish Prison Service
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
SSSC	Scottish Social Services Council
SSCO	Senior Social Care Officer
START-AV	Short-Term Assessment of Risk and Treatability: Adolescent Version
STDC	Short-Term Detention Certificate
SUSE	Scottish Union for Supported Employment
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualification
TCA	Tayside Council on Alcohol
TCAC	Throughcare Aftercare

TCJA	Tayside Criminal Justice Authority
TEC	Technology Enabled Care
TISS	Tayside Intensive Support Service
TRIC	Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative
TSMS	Tayside Substance Misuse Services
UBB	Unborn Baby
VPR	Vulnerable Person Reports
VPD	Vulnerable Person's Database
VTO	Volunteer Tutors Organisation
YET	Youth Employment Team
YTS	Young Carer Statement

Appendix to CSWO Annual Report 2022/23

CHILD PROTECTION

Figure 1: Child Concern Reports (CCRs)^{2 3}

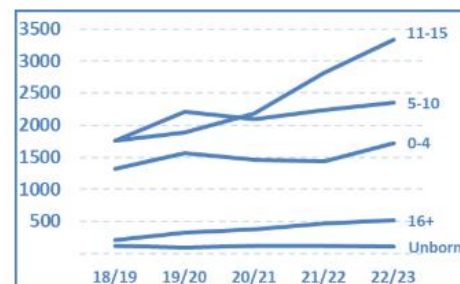


The total number of Child Concern Reports (CCRs) shows a continued increase over the last five years, with an increase of 967 (14%) CCRs this year (13% increase last year); whilst the number of children and young people subject to a CCR has also risen by 12% this year, more than in previous years. Many of these CCRs relate to concerns which are both multiple and complex in their nature.

By far the majority of CCRs do not relate to child protection, but to wider wellbeing concerns. However, all require to be screened and investigated further by multi-agency partners. This longitudinal increasing trend continues to place additional pressures on our existing single and multi-agency screening and child protection arrangements. CCRs can relate to the same child or young person, particularly where there are multiple or repeated concerns about the same child or young person. CCRs are all subject to multi-agency screening arrangements and shared proportionately with key partners. Within police and social work services, escalation and trigger mechanisms are in place to monitor and review multiple and / or recurring CCRs. Following multi-agency screening arrangements there are a number of possible outcomes. For example, where the child or young person is known to social work and / or an open case to social work, the CCR is shared with the Lead Professional (almost always the Social Worker) for further investigation, assessment and follow-up; or for single or multi-agency assessment and support; or referral to The Reporter (Scottish Children's Reporter Administration – SCRA) for compulsory measures of care; or referral to a Third Sector organisation for help and support; and referral to the Named Person (Education and Health) for a single service / agency response and offer of support. CCRs which are clearly of a child protection nature and / or which after multi-agency screening indicate the need for a child protection investigation are immediately fast-tracked, without delay, for an Inter-Agency Referral Discussion (IRD).

Figure 2: Child Concern Reports by Age

The number of children and young people with a CCR in most age groups has remained relatively steady; with the number in the 5-10 and 11-15 age groups again being the largest groups. Of particular note is the children and young people in the 11-15 age group, which continues to increase and feature more prominently over the last two years.



² Note: A Child Concern Report (CCR) is a mechanism by which any practitioner or manager across the public, private or third sector, or indeed, any member of the public, can raise any worry or concern they may have about a child or young person's health and / or wellbeing.

³ Note: Figures are accurate as at 31 July 2023, however, they may be updated in subsequent reporting periods due to retrospective data validation and quality assurance processes.

Figure 3: Child Concern Reports by Source



The main source of CCRs continues to be Police Scotland, followed by Education Services and Health Services. Overall, these three source groups account for over 86% of all CCRs submitted.

The number of CCRs submitted by Police Scotland has been continually increasing over the last 5 years. Any Police Officer can raise a CCR, and these are coordinated and quality assured, prior to sharing, by Police Scotland's Tayside Division's Risk and Concern Hub.

Figure 3a: Child Concern Reports by Source – 2022/23

The originating source of all CCRs continues to be monitored by the CPC. This TreeMap diagram shows the % of CCRs from Police Scotland (66% this year, last year 67%); Education Services (13% this year, last year 12%) and Health Services (7% this year, last year 6%) during the last year; which account for over 86% of all CCRs submitted.

CCRs relate to a wide range of child welfare, child care and protection concerns and are all subject to multi-agency screening, initial assessment and decision-making arrangements.

Overall, 30% of all CCRs relate to a trilogy of complex vulnerabilities and / or variations thereof, i.e. Domestic Abuse 18%; Parental Mental Ill-Health 7%; Problematic Alcohol and Drug Use 5%.

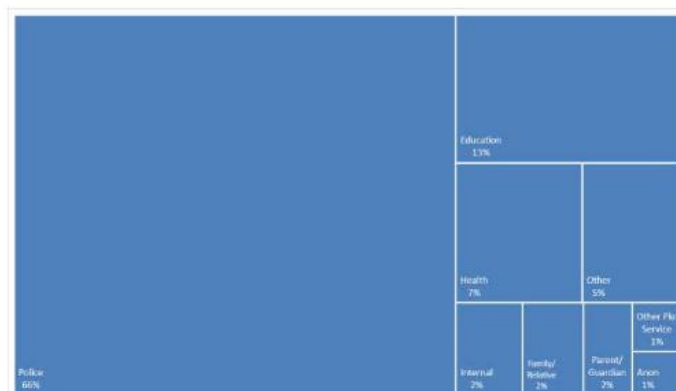


Figure 4: Inter-Agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) ^{4 5}



The number of Inter-Agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) taking place (which may involve more than one child or young person) and the number of children and young people subject to an IRD, has fallen (by 16% and 12% respectively) for the first time in several years.

This reduction can be attributed to a number of factors, including recent and ongoing service re-designs and improved multi-agency working arrangements; which encourage identification, intervention, help and support at a much earlier stage; thus, preventing the need for IRDs.

In addition, we are continuing to make increasing and effective use of multi-agency Child or Young Person's Plans, which, via a Lead Professional (Social Worker), coordinate single and multi-agency help and support to vulnerable children, young people and their families.

Following an IRD there are a number of possible outcomes; including the need for a joint child protection investigation (social work and police); a joint investigative interview (social work and police); a medical examination; referral to SCRA; further emergency legal measures and orders; or a single service or agency intervention and support; including the offer of help and support from Named Persons (Education and Health).

⁴ Note: An Inter-Agency Referral Discussion (IRD) is the start of the formal inter-agency process of information sharing, assessment, analysis and decision-making, following a reported concern about the abuse or neglect of a child or young person up to the age of 18 years; in relation to familial and non-familial concerns; and of siblings or other children within the same context. This includes any concern about an unborn baby that may be exposed to current or future risk.

⁵ Note: Extract from the [CPC Inter-Agency Child Protection Guidelines 2023](#).

IRDs are recognised as good multi-agency child protection working practice and may be repeated a number of times for the same child or young person.

Locally, following a recent CPC led quality assurance and review of IRDs in Perth and Kinross, a significant amount of improvement work has taken place and will continue to take place, to ensure our IRDs are robust, and our interim safety planning is effective. This is a positive and improving practice position.

Our established approach to IRDs is in keeping with the shift expected and with the good practice outlined in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 – updated 2023 (Scottish Government: 2021 and 2023).

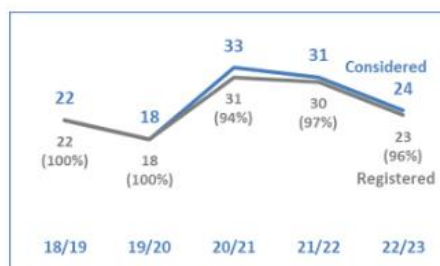
Figure 5: Child Protection Investigations ^{6 7}

The number of Child Protection Investigations and the number of children and young people subject to an investigation has fallen (by 10% and 6% respectively) for the first time in several years. This is directly attributed to this year's reduction in the number of IRDs being held / taking place.



These are joint investigations between social work and police, decided upon and agreed at the IRD stage and carried out by specially trained joint investigative interviewers who are trauma aware.

Figure 6a: Pre-Birth Child Protection Case Conferences (Pre-Birth CPCCs)



Of the 127 unborn baby referrals (see Figure 15) received this year, after multi-agency screening and assessment, 24 unborn babies were the subject of a multi-agency Pre-Birth CPCC. At the Pre-Birth CPCC, 23 out of the 24 (96% - very high conversion rate) unborn babies considered were registered on the Child Protection Register (CPR). All unborn babies registered on the CPR are subject to a multi-agency Child Protection Plan. These cases tend to be complex, and have multi-faceted areas of concern, vulnerability and needs.

This continued high level of pre-birth registrations has also significantly changed the age profile of those placed on the CPR. Overall, unborn babies and young children under 5 now make up the majority of those currently registered on the CPR.

The remaining unborn baby referrals, which did not proceed to a Pre-Birth CPCC, all received a variety of other supportive interventions and responses, having been screened at the Unborn Baby Multi-Agency Screening Group (UBB MASG), i.e. single service or agency support; multi-agency support; the pregnancy did not continue, or the mother moved out with the local authority area, with information being shared proportionately with the new local authority area.

⁶ Note: A Child Protection Investigation is carried out jointly by specially trained police officers and social workers. Such investigations are carried out where a Child Concern Report, including an Unborn Baby Referral, indicates that a child or young person is in need of care and protection from harm, abuse or neglect; or there is a likelihood or risk of significant harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

⁷ Note: Extract from the [CPC Inter-Agency Child Protection Guidelines 2023](#).

Figure 6b: Initial Child Protection Case Conferences (Initial CPCCs)

The number of children and young people being considered at a multi-agency Initial Child Protection Case Conferences (ICPCCs) has remained relatively steady over the last three years; albeit there has been a slight increase of 8 (14%) this year.

Of the 67 children and young people being considered at an Initial CPCC, 58 (87%) had their names placed on the Child Protection Register (CPR). All were the subject of a multi-agency Child Protection Plan, coordinated by a Lead Professional (Social Worker).

Those children and young people whose names were not placed on the CPR will also have benefited from ongoing support via a multi-agency Child or Young Person's Plan. Multi-agency Child or Young Person's Plans, which if agreed early; provide much needed supports and help build positive relationships with the family. They are coordinated by a Lead Professional (Social Worker) and in many cases, this has negated the need for an Initial CPCC, having effectively reduced risks.

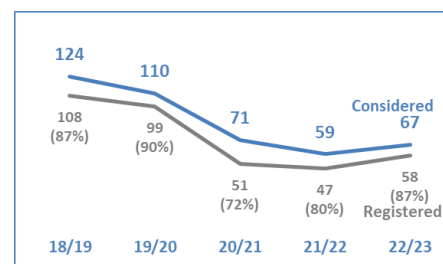
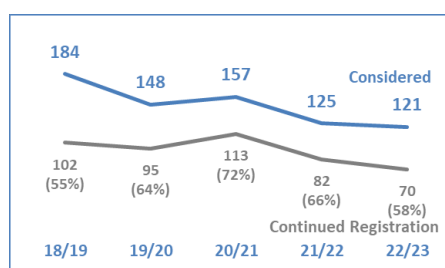


Figure 7: Review Child Protection Case Conferences (Review CPCCs)



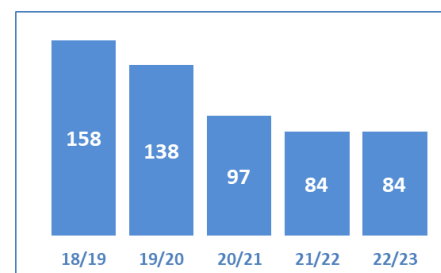
Multi-Agency Review CPCCs reconsider the decision to place and / or retain a child or young person's name on the CPR. These child protection meetings take place within standard timescales to monitor changes in circumstances and progress made to reduce and eliminate risk. Where sufficient progress has been made, the Review CPCC can make a decision to remove (de-register) an unborn baby, child or young person from the CPR or to continue that registration. This is always a multi-agency decision.

The number of children and young people considered at a multi-agency Review CPCC shows a general downward trend over the last four years, consistent with the reducing rate of conferences and registrations; while the proportion of continued registrations has remained relatively steady.

Figure 8: New Registrations on the Child Protection Register (CPR)

The number of new registrations on the Child Protection Register (CPR) has remained steady, with no change this year. The number of children and young people's names placed (new registrations) on the CPR has been decreasing for the last three years, following a sharp increase in 2018/19.

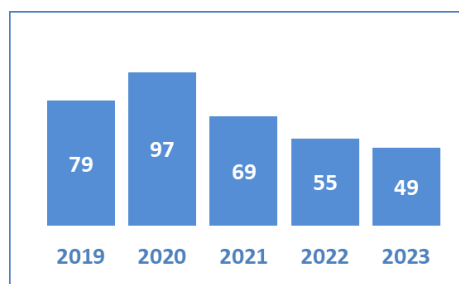
This reduction since 2018/19 is a consequence of a significant investment made to secure consistent Chairing of CPCCs; recent and ongoing service re-designs, which encourage identification, intervention, help and support at a much earlier stage and in our increasing early use of multi-agency Child and Young Person's Plans, thus, reducing the need to go to CPCC and for CPR Registrations.



New registrations include unborn babies (23), registrations following an ICPCC (58) and temporary registrations (3) (for children and young people who move into the Perth and Kinross Council area for a limited period; for a holiday with relatives etc). These figures routinely include large family sibling groups of 3 (or 4) and more.

As previously described, this year the age profile of those placed on the CPR has significantly changed. Unborn babies and younger children currently make up the majority of those whose names have been placed (registered) on the CPR.

Figure 9: Children on the Child Protection Register as @ 31 July 2023



Following the previously described approach to early identification, intervention and single and multi-agency support arrangements being in place, this year there has been a further reduction (11%) in the number of unborn babies, children and young people's names placed on the CPR @ 31 July 2023.

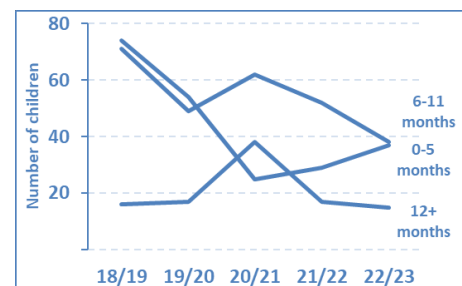
This reduction is also a consequence of the significant investment made to secure consistent Chairing of CPCCs (described further on pages 19 to 21 of this report) and

increasing use of multi-agency Child and Young People's Plans at a much earlier stage; thus, reducing the need to go to CPCC and CPR Registrations.

The number of children and young people, whose names were on the CPR @ 31 July 2023 has decreased to the lowest level since 2013, from a relatively high figure of 97 in 2020 (COVID-19 related).

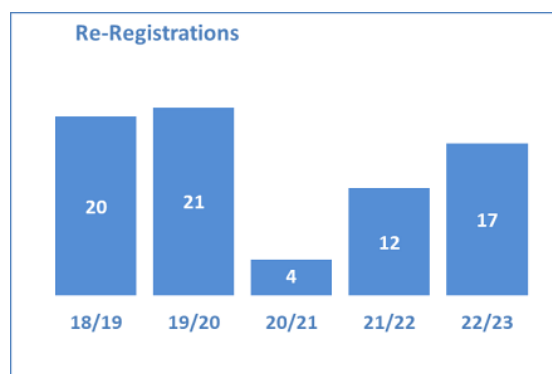
Figure 10: Length of CPR Registration

Most CPR registrations last less than a year, and the number of children and young people's names, which remain on the CPR for 12 months or more, remains low following an increase in 2020/21. Many of these children and young people have multiple and / or complex needs which require coordinated support. The number of children and young people whose names are included on the CPR for a period of less than 5 months can demonstrate that decisions are being made on the evidence of sustained progress and a greater likelihood that the changes made will lead to positive longer-term outcomes.



The CPC closely monitors registration rates and in particular de-registrations, re-registrations and length of time children and young people remain on the CPR as part of its quality assurance work.

Figure 11: CPR Re-Registrations



The number of children and young people that are re-registered (names re-placed) on the CPR, having been previously removed from the CPR, has returned to previous levels, following a sharp decrease in 2020/2021.

Most of these children and young people had last been removed (de-registered) from the CPR more than two years previously, following a multi-agency robust assessment and review conference meeting agreement.

Re-Registrations take place where the previous improvements in the child or young person's circumstances have not been sustained and the risk of significant harm has returned.

Areas of Concern ⁸

Whilst recognising that the number of new registrations on the CPR has remained the same this year; albeit it had been steadily decreasing over the last few years; the number of unborn babies, children and young people whose names are included on the CPR and who are affected by a complex combination of either parental mental ill-health, domestic abuse, problematic parental drug and / or alcohol use, remains significant, and in many such cases, there is an element of parental non-engagement. We continue to recognise that in the majority, if not all of these cases, there will be an element of emotional abuse and neglect. The CPC continues to monitor these trends closely and also concerns relating to neglect and poverty.

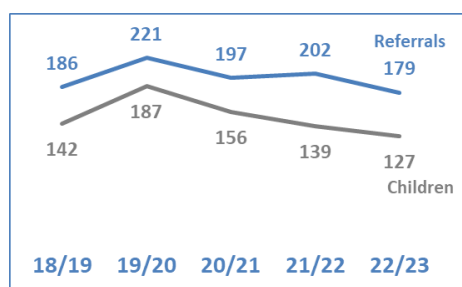
⁸ Note: Areas of Concern are the registration categories for placing a unborn baby, child or young person's name on the CPR and these have been specified by Scottish Government. Unborn babies, children and young people can have more than one area of concern recorded. These are decided upon at the multi-agency CPCC and recorded by the Chair, after the CPCC has been concluded.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION (SCRA) (figures based on Financial Years (01 Apr – 31 Mar))

During 2022 / 2023, SCRA in Perth and Kinross, has seen a return to normal activity that pre-dated the COVID-19 pandemic.

This could be attributed to recent service and agency re-designs in Perth and Kinross, where there is a strong practice shift towards early identification, intervention, new support services for vulnerable children and families and early and effective use being made of multi-agency Child or Young Person's Plans to manage needs and risks.

Figure 12: Referrals to SCRA (figures based on Financial Years (01 Apr – 31 Mar))



This year, the number of referrals to SCRA, from Perth and Kinross, has shown an 11% reduction; with a corresponding 9% reduction in the number of individual children being referred to SCRA.

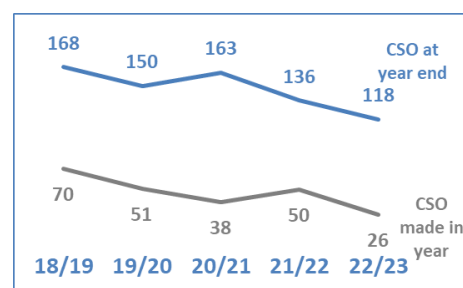
However, during this reporting period, Non-Offence Referral rates have risen, and peaked at 105. The primary reason for referral was due to children and young people experiencing a lack of parental care (59 cases), the secondary reason was the child or young person had failed to attend school

regularly without excuse (12 cases).

Over 49% of the children and young people referred to the Reporter were brought to a Children's Hearing. This conversion rate of referral to Hearings continues to mirror previous years in Perth and Kinross and is twice that of the national average. This confirms that the children and young people who need to be referred, are being referred to the Reporter. During this reporting period, Hearings in Perth and Kinross totalled 400, this was slightly down on the previous year which saw 417. There were 144 Court callings for 38 Court Applications in relation to denied or not understood grounds of referral. The Reporter successfully established 35 cases which equated to a 92% success rate. 14 appeals were lodged at Court in the past year. Of these 14 appeals, 2 Hearings decisions were not found justified.

Figure 13: Compulsory Supervision Orders (figures based on Financial Years (01 Apr – 31 Mar))

The number of children and young people placed on Compulsory Supervision Orders (CSOs) and the number of children and young people who remained on a CSO at the year end, has continued to display a general downward trend over the last five years. This year, there has been a significant decrease of 48% of children and young people being made subject to a new CSO during the year, following grounds of referral being established and numbers remain small.

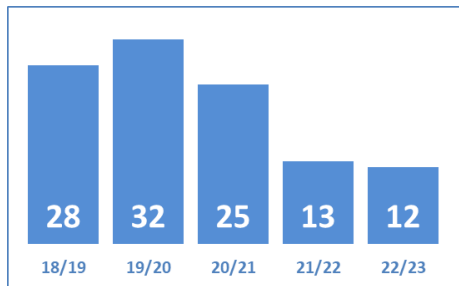


Children and young people who are placed on a CSO are looked-after, either at home or away from home in another placement and subject to regular supervision visits and contacts by a social worker.

Figure 14: Child Protection Orders (CPOs) (figures based on Financial Years (01 Apr – 31 Mar))

The number of children and young people placed on Child Protection Orders (CPOs) has remained low, having reduced by one (1). These figures, which regularly include large sibling groups, are closely monitored by SCRA and the CPC.

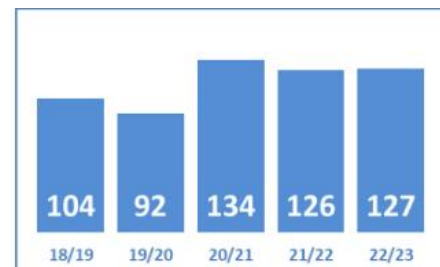
Whilst the Reporter considers these reductions to be positive trends, the CPC is continuing to explore them further to determine their origins



UNBORN BABY REFERRALS

Figure 15: Unborn Baby Referrals ⁹

The number of Unborn Baby referrals received this year has remained relatively steady, following a significant increase in 2020/2021. By far the majority of Unborn Baby referrals continue to come from NHS Tayside; albeit any practitioner, service or agency can raise such a referral.



The number of Unborn Baby referrals, when measured against the number of women booking for pregnancy care, equates to around 11.9%, which is a very slight increase from 11.4% last year.

The areas of Unborn Baby vulnerability continue to be similar to the areas of concern for registration on the CPR, in particular those relating to complex combinations of either parental mental ill-health, domestic abuse, problematic parental drug and / or alcohol use.

The impact on our single and multi-agency screening and assessment processes for these referrals remains very challenging; resource intensive and the level of child protection activity, in relation to vulnerable pregnant women and unborn babies remains high (see Figure 6a). Nevertheless, the CPC and partner agencies will continue to promote further awareness and understanding of the needs of vulnerable pregnant women and their unborn babies. The CPC also plans to further promote the Tayside Multi-Agency Practitioner's Guide: Concern for Unborn Babies across all services and agencies within Perth and Kinross.

Figure 16: Joint Investigative Interviews (JIs)

Following an IRD and the decision that a joint police and social work child protection investigation is necessary, consideration will be given to the need for a Joint Investigative Interview (JII); carried out jointly by fully trained, trauma informed police and social work interviewers. The number of children and young people who have had a JII carried out has fallen from 272 to 186 (32%) compared to last year, which was the highest level in recent years. This is in keeping with this year's reduction in the number of IRDs and child protection investigations. JII remain a key component part of our multi-agency child protection services.

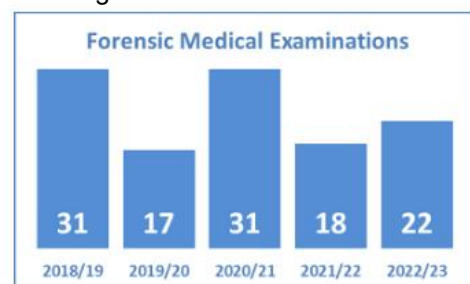


Figure 17: Joint Paediatric / Forensic Medical Examinations (JPFME)

Following an IRD and the decision that a joint police and social work child protection investigation is necessary, depending on the nature of the concern, consideration may also be given to the need for a JPFME.

JPFME as are specialist examinations carried out in compliance with national and local guidance.

The number of children and young people who have had a JPFME carried out shows considerable variation from year to year and has risen slightly this year from 18 to 22 (22%).



⁹ Note: Currently an Unborn Baby Referral is a mechanism by which any practitioner or manager across the public, private or third sectors, can raise any worry or concern they may have about an unborn baby's health and / or wellbeing; or in relation to whether or not that baby will be safe and / or in need of care and protection, pre-birth and / or after birth.

- Women received Reiki as a way to relax and take time for themselves, some were apprehensive having never tried alternative therapies.

“WOW I did not totally believe, this would let me relax, I felt I was floating and so peaceful.”

- Women attended a nature trail walk to The Hermitage, this was an educational day, finding out more about local area and the history as this was once the grounds for the Duke of Atholl.

“Walking with my worker in such a lovely place, I felt myself talking about my trauma, it was so healthy for me to be so relaxed, my new motto is Walk & Talk”.

- A social day at the centre. Women prepared lunch. The day gave them the opportunity to meet other women, gain peer support, and hear each other's laughter. Women created memory boxes using the arts & crafts.

“Making lunch for others and eating with others makes me feel part of a family.

- External service ADHD came in for several weeks using a video and materials to educate women who have ADHD or family members. Some women felt they finally could relate to their or their families' behaviours due to having informal education sessions.

Grace Chocolates gave the opportunity for a woman to complete Peer Mentor Training online and face to face. This provided a gateway to securing a full-time paid job in a service where she had received support.

“I cannot believe the support I received during my CPO and Voluntary Supervision. I am finally in a better place, my dreams are all coming true, I completed my training, I applied for a job and guess what, I got it, thank you OWLS”.

Reclaim the night March on 1 December 2022, as part of 16 days of Activism, 6 women created a banner: “Survivor”, with buttons and fabric and took part in the March organized by RASAC & PKC Violence Against Women Partnership.



One woman wrote her words and thoughts:

“Darkness is the female curfew”.

This was a very powerful story from a woman about how she felt, this was used during the march and was projected onto the wall at St Pauls Church.

During 2022, OWLS began a new partnership with a local business, The Bike Station. This Community Enterprise invited OWLS to participate in their 'Shifting Gears' programme which aims to get people using bicycles more. This has personal benefits to the cyclist but also environmental benefits to the wider community. Four women participated in the programme. They each received bicycle maintenance lessons, general bicycle tutoring, a bike as well as safety equipment such as helmet, lights and lock. One woman went on to gain part time employment with The Bike Station having completed her bike maintenance course through the Bike Station.

"I cycle every day, my bike has gave me so much freedom, fitness and work, I could not have even dreamt about this".

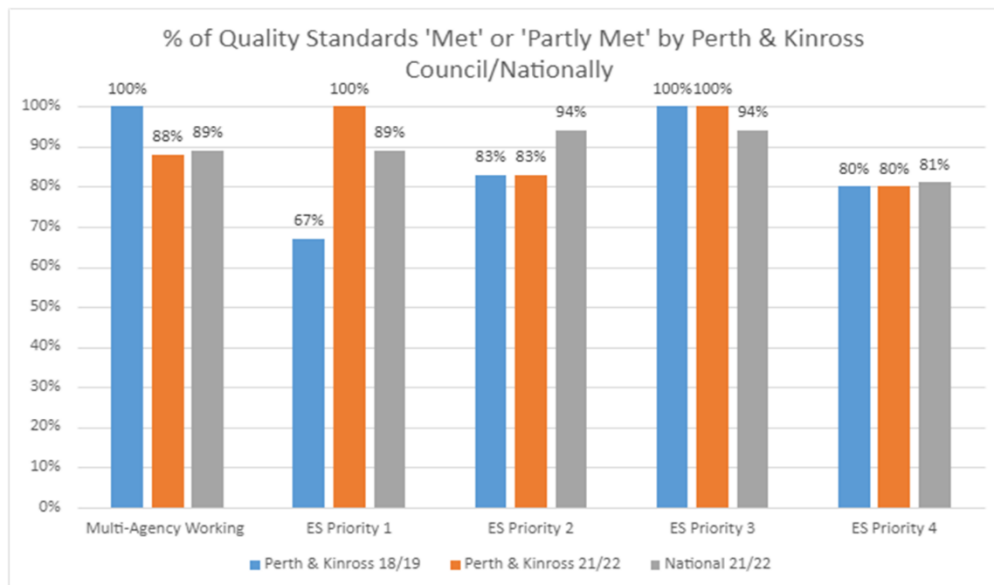
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Improvement Activity

The outcomes were as follows against the Equally Safe (ES) priorities:

- ES 1 – Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls.
- ES 2 – Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically, and politically.
- ES 3 – Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising safety and wellbeing of women, girls and children.
- ES 4 – Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response.

Figure 18



A Development Day identified the Partnership were performing well across a range of measures but there were areas for improvement. An Improvement Plan has been agreed which will inform activity in 2023-24 under the following broad themes:

- Raising awareness in schools and through youth organisations
- Review of workplace policies
- Increased training provision
- Raising awareness of services and better provision for hard-to-reach groups
- Improved services for perpetrators
- Improved collaboration with other Public Protection specialisms
- Undertake a Partnership Self-Assessment with Improvement Service support.

All this activity will be carried out within the context provided by the recently published Independent Strategic Review of Funding and Commissioning of Violence Against Women and Girls Services.

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Figure 19

Looked After Children

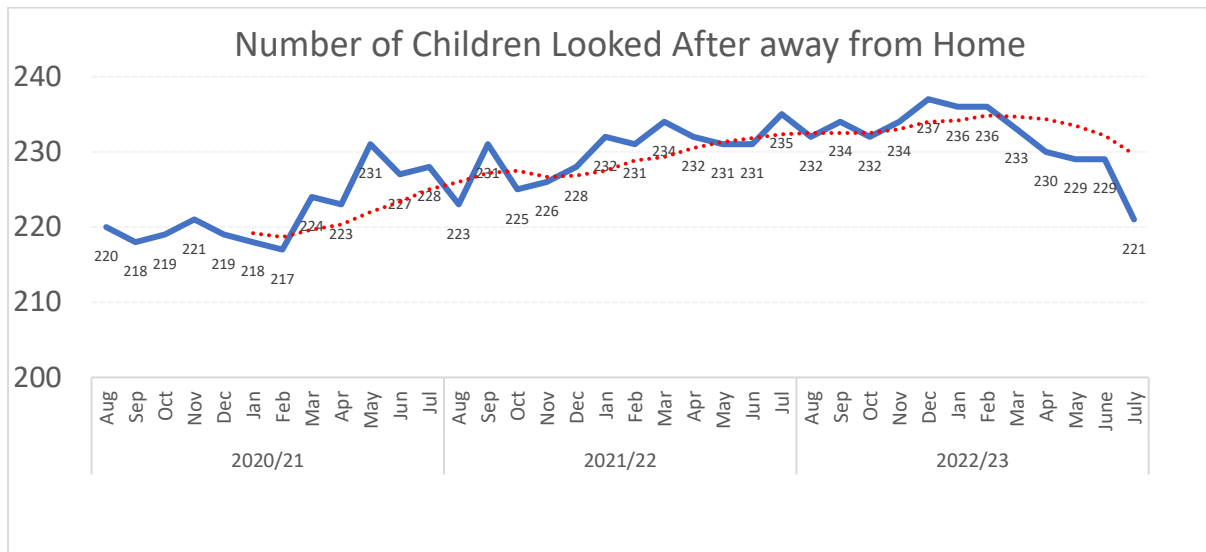


Figure 20

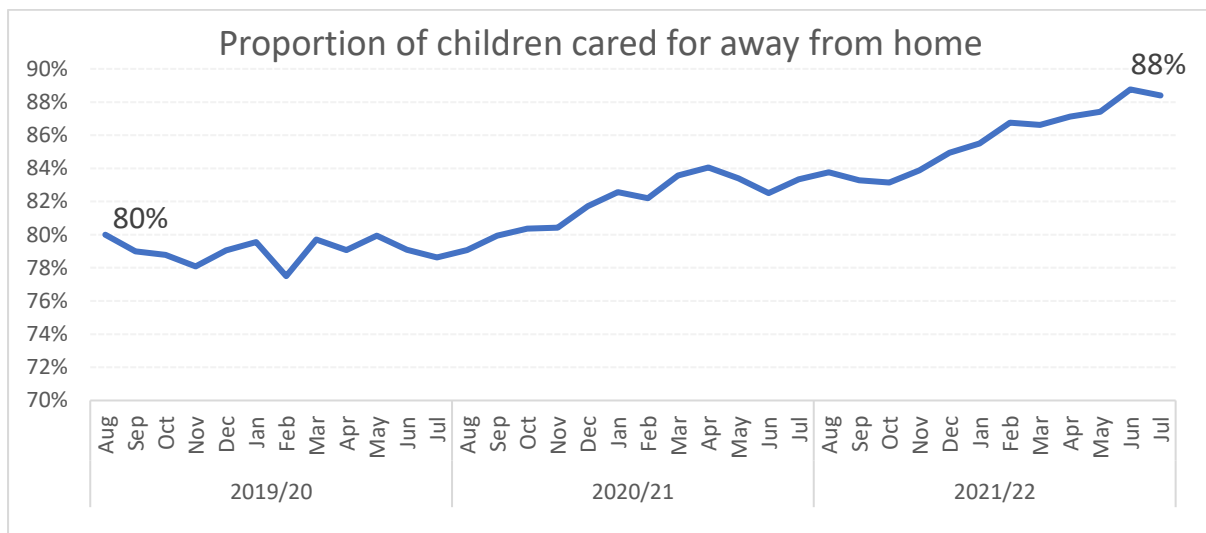


Figure 21

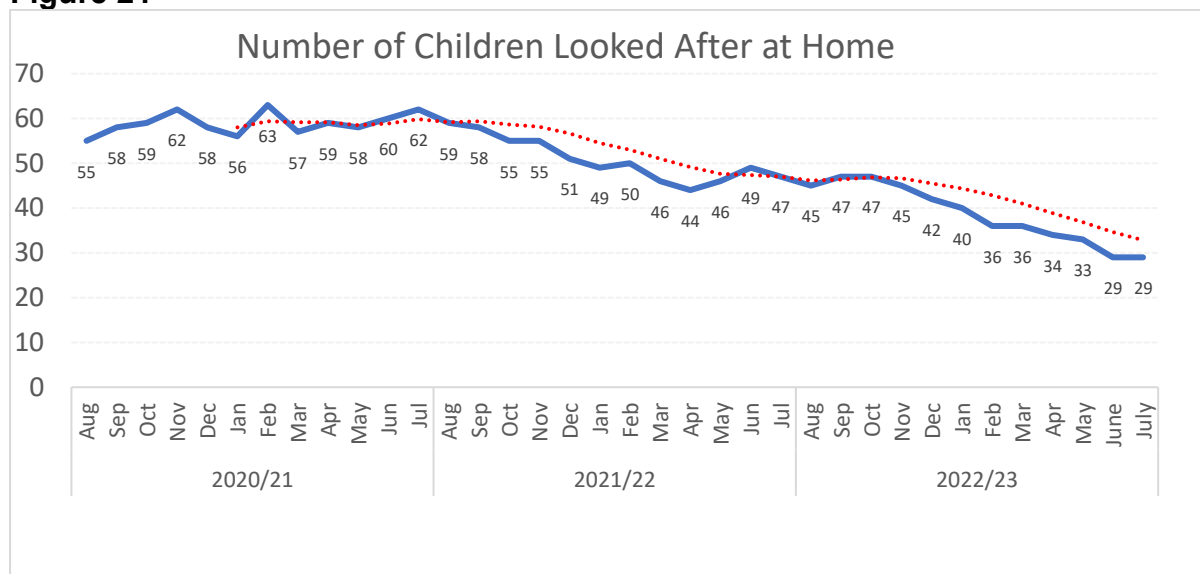
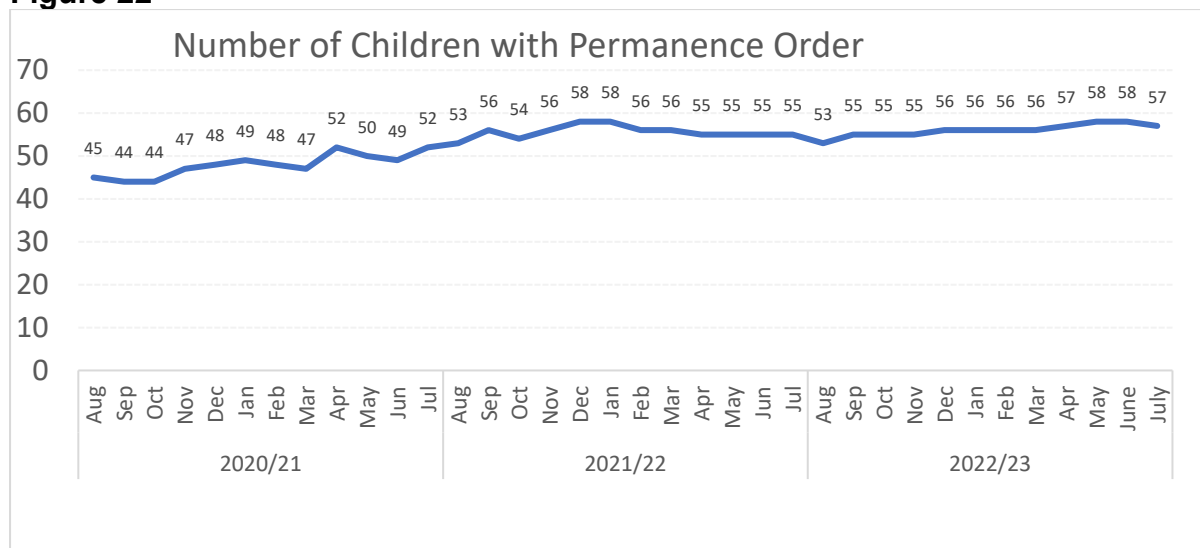


Figure 22



FOSTER CARE

As of the 31 March 2023, there were 76 children/young people in either interim/long term or permanent placements within 49 fostering households.

Additionally, there were 5 continuing care young people within these fostering households. We also provide an additional 9 short break placements for children who are in either kinship placements or at home with their parent(s) where an identified need for short break support has been made to prevent a disruption in that placement.

External foster care provision:

20 external foster care placements as of 31-03-23 compared to 22 at the same time 2022.

KINSHIP CARE

Kinship carers groups were identified as being a crucial part of our team plan for this year. They were reintroduced in March 2022 following the relaxation of COVID restrictions. They take place once a month.

The themes this year have been:

- Difficult conversations
- Self-harm and suicide
- Internet safety
- Grief and loss
- LGBTQ+
- Trauma informed care
- Christmas crafts
- Mindfulness – this session was led by one of our carers.

These sessions have opened up discussion that have led to adaptations within our own practice about how we approach certain topics with our carers. All kinship care team members are now trained using the Talking Mats training. This was identified as an area of development last year and has been fully achieved. As of the 31 March 2023 there were 91 kinship carers being supported to care for looked after children with 88 informal carers being offered support (204 children).

ADOPTION

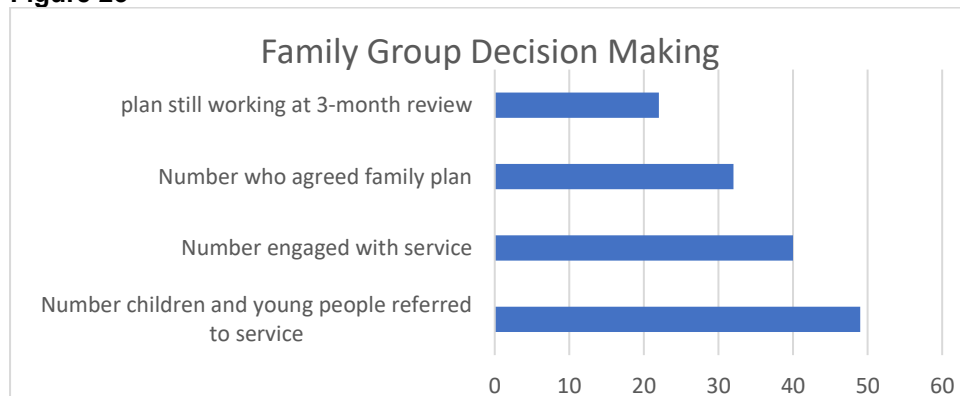
The Care Inspectorate inspected the service in May 2022 and commented that child and carer assessments were completed timeously and were good quality with the views of others being sought and recorded. They recognised a “*culture of ambition for children, carers and staff*” and that “*staff go above and beyond what would be expected of them in terms of care and support*” (verbal feedback). They also commented on the high quality of Life Story books and the consistent use of Adoption Support Plans for every child. Inspectors noted, “*Perth & Kinross Adoption Agency has developed a unique and supportive team structure, specialising in permanency and adoption work. They work closely with other P & K teams and take a multiagency approach to assessing and meeting the needs of children in their care.*”

CREST

CREST is a team of independent Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) and Lifelong Links (LL) Coordinators. The teamwork in partnership with children, young people, their families, and the professionals who support them to promote an innovative way of working that is inclusive, rights based and future focused.

Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) is a strength-based approach which is designed to empower families to make a safe plan when there are concerns about a child or young person. It is a structured process that leads to a family group meeting, helping families to identify their own strengths and solutions, and mobilising resources and alliances in their identified network. FGDM is recommended as an early intervention where statutory processes may be required.

Figure 23



Lifelong Links - despite all the hard work and commitment from professionals, we know that when children and young people enter the care system, they can lose touch with the people who mean the most to them. Lifelong Links supports children and young people, who are looked after away from

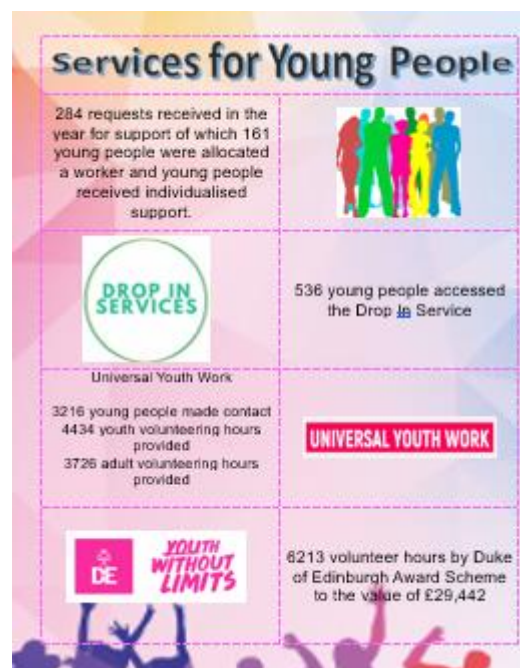
home, to stay connected to, or reconnect with, people that are important to them in a planned, structured, and safe way.

SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

During 2022/23 through Services for Young Peoples Lifelong Learning approach 1,249 young people were supported to achieve [Duke of Edinburgh Awards](#). Included in this number are 214 young people who required additional supports to complete their achievements.

Through partnership working with [Universal Youthwork providers](#), young people in Perth and Kinross have achieved the following:

- 4 participants achieved silver awards in [SQA Youth Achievement](#)
- 63 participants achieved a [Youth Scotland Dynamic Youth Award](#)
- 49 participants achieved a [Saltire Award](#)
- 1 participant achieved a [John Muir Award](#)
- 3 participants achieved a [Dynamic Youth award](#)
- 57 participants achieved a [Hi5 award](#)



On the last voyage with [Ocean Youth Trust](#), 7 young people received SQA Core Skills qualifications at Level 3 in Communication in Listening, Speaking, Reading & Writing and Numeracy.

Locality Youth Workers - in August 22 this approach was strengthened by allocating a school to each youth worker. The team had 5.5FTE staff members and 11 secondary schools but this increased by two Community learning workers in 2023 to increase capacity and target two more schools. We attached the two new team members to two schools that have high numbers of looked after young people.

The Young Persons Guarantee (YPG) aligns with No-one left behind (NOLB) and aims to give all young people in Scotland a better chance of success following the devastating impact of coronavirus. The guarantee is aimed at young people aged 16 to 24 and up to age 26 if care experienced. The commitment is that all young people will have the opportunity of work, be in education, training or take part in a formal volunteering programme. YPG has been created by the Scottish Government in response to covid-19 and the realisation that our young people, particularly those that are most vulnerable need extra support to avoid the lifelong impact of the pandemic.

Specialist support

The Independent Living Panel ensures people with particular housing and support needs have their needs assessed through a multi-agency approach. The right solutions enable them to live independently within their own community in locations they know and have networks in. The panel also ensures that future accommodation needs are factored into the Strategic Housing Investment Plan.

Services have continued to support over 450 people from Ukraine to settle into accommodation and continue to work with the third sector and community groups to provide support to these and the 109 people seeking asylum. This has seen us undertaking a range of activities, including:

- Carrying out property and disclosure checks to ensure that appropriate hosting arrangements are in place.
- Working closely with the Home Office to ensure appropriate support and assistance is in place for people seeking asylum.

- Expanding provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) to provide additional capacity to meet growing demand and support the 116 children who have enrolled in our local schools.
- Setting up a dedicated [webpage](#) containing information on support for Ukrainians

Throughcare and After Care

In our ongoing commitment towards the National Transfer Scheme, which was made mandatory across Scotland in October 2021, we continue to receive referrals from COSLA to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people to settle into the local community. Due to the age of the young people on arrival, they have looked after status and afforded the same rights and supports as other looked after and care experienced (18 years+) young people open to the Team. As such, it is logical for this service to be facilitated as a part of the Throughcare and Aftercare Team, however with an increase in referrals it has been necessary to expand this service including recruiting further staff to support young people and host families. This part of the service has been given the title CASA (children alone and seeking asylum).

There has also been a noted increase in young people presenting to the Throughcare/ Aftercare team with varying degrees of complexity, whether this is ASN, mental health or behaviours which presents a risk to themselves or others in the community. This has created a challenge for the whole Team in terms of increased levels of support.

Grandmentor scheme -This is a 2-year partnership agreement Oct 2022-2024 with Volunteering Matters to deliver an intergenerational mentoring programme for young people who are care experienced or have faced childhood adverse experiences (ACEs). Predominantly focused on young people who live on their own. Through the skill of mentoring, these young people are supported to be autonomous, capable, and empowered adults.

Initially, referrals had been slow to start with limited engagement from TCAC young people, but there has been reenergised interest in this scheme for the remaining period. Young people have loved meeting their mentors and enjoy spending time together.

Cost of living crisis - Covid and the cost-of-living crisis have increased the number of calls from young people in the 19 + age group. All have been living independently for years but had become isolated, lonely and struggling to cope with increasing financial costs and stress as to how to cope with the financial pressure on them. This has increased demands on staff time to respond to calls and if necessary, establish regular contact with these young people, offer access to supports and process referrals to support services (for action taken please refer to quicker responses to young people).

Children Alone Seeking Asylum (CASA)

We continue to participate in the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) and since April 2022 to date we have accommodated 13 CASA young people, 9 of which were referred directly through this scheme. Placements were also offered out with the NTS rota when available and also in response to specific requests e.g., for a young person to be nearer to adult relatives who were housed in a local hotel or to allow a young person to remain in Scotland or transferring from another Scottish LA. In total, we support 34 young people, and it is anticipated that the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children arriving via small boat crossings over the coming year will increase.

We continue to support young people once they turn 18 and there is a high engagement with college. One of our young people was Perth College's overall Student of the Year and he attended the graduation ceremony in Perth Concert Hall to be presented with his award, he also received Perth College Citizenship Award. This year another young person has received a Personal Endeavour Award from his NC Sound Engineering course.

Continuing Care

Following the care inspectorate inspection in 2022 registration for continuing care has been acknowledged as a part of the adult placement service. The decision was made for continuing care to remain with the TCAC Team rather than with the Family Based Care Team as it was recognised that

this was the best fit in terms of existing processes including assessment and review as well as adapting and formalising the existing panel process. This will include the role of a reviewing officer to ensure that timescales are met for reviewing both the placement and the young people concerned.

Throughcare Aftercare Workers work closely with the Family Based Care Team regarding foster and kinship carers being considered for conversion to a continuing care arrangement to enable young people in their care to remain in a caring and supportive environment which enables them to have a graduated transition from care. This joined up approach has seen a further 6 young people moving into this type of arrangement following the carers successful approval through panel. It has also allowed staff to have access to appropriate training and support groups facilitated by FBCT. d intervention has continued with plan partners with the YP beginning to identify the serious

"Thank you so much for all the help you have given me. Out of all the social workers I have had, you have been the one that has helped me the most and reminded me that I have self-worth. The counselling, the driving lessons, support, and my tribunal wouldn't have been possible without you. Thank you for always being there for me and I wish there were more people like you in the system and in general because you turn a bad life into a good one. To help is your job but your kindness is a gift."

"Thank you so much for always going above and beyond for the young people under your care and guidance. You are a credit to your field, and truly the most incredible social care officer I have come across during my decade in the system. I'm incredibly grateful that I have been able to access your continuous support. Never doubt the endlessly positive, lasting impact you have on the lives of young people you interact with. I desperately hope that more people follow in your footsteps. Thank you for all you have done for myself and my daughter and countless other young, vulnerable people in need of support."

Youth Engagement Team (YET)

During the summer of 2021 in Perth – particularly in the City Centre, on the Inches and at Moncrieff Island It was reported that hundreds of young people had been involved in drinking and 'rowdy' behaviour, which was alarming for residents and people passing by. Further reports indicated an escalation to violence, and evidence that weapons were being carried and used. Young people were found so drunk they were unable to protect themselves and were vulnerable to abuse, violence, and further risk-taking behaviours. These concerns were also raised at a senior council level and funds were allocated from budget motion monies to provide support towards a partnership initiative. The Partnership of Services for Young People, Police Scotland, Safer Communities, and the 3rd Sector then launched 'Operation Stung'. This was aimed at reducing incidents of violence and anti-social behaviour, while also protecting those in the wider community who had been affected by this behaviour.

Using the detached youth work approach, the team aimed to build working relationships with the young people who were out and about on a Friday and Saturday evening. It was made clear that the team was there to listen, support and make the young people feel safer. Milestones:

- YET only missed two days (Christmas) of detached work since the inception of the project in May 2021.
- 196 detached sessions delivered by the YET, 98 follow up visits, 44 weekend awareness sessions in school.
- 4,252 contacts made during Detached work.
- Geographical approach to detached youthwork in various communities. This includes, Perth city centre, Bridge of Earn, Letham, Craigie, Scone, Crieff, Aberfeldy, Pitlochry, and Stanley.
- Worked in Partnership with the Police to locate two missing young people.
- A flexible service example is highlighted by the quick response to work in Crieff following violent and anti-social incidents involving young people.

- Responding to the issues raised by the young people through the detached work led to the delivery of a school programme to inform young people about drugs, alcohol, sexual health, consent and mental health. 44 sessions delivered to 752 fourth year pupils in 5 secondary schools.
- Follow up work carried out when required in relation to concerns about young people identified over the weekends by themselves or partners. This led to 37 home/school visits (98 sessions due to more than one visit per child).
- Through their weekend work the team have also signposted 30 young people to a variety of appropriate agencies.
- Development of various projects to deal with a variety of issues that the young people we work with experience such as the weekend awareness sessions in school and the diversionary project in Crieff.

Drug Ambassador Group – young people are involved in creating, planning and delivering a project around the needs and issues they feel strongly about. Young people have access to information with a means to keeping young people informed and safe.

Young Person K does not engage in any service and does not like working with others, they find people annoying and groups can be boring. Young person K likes to "get on it at the weekend", Young person K can now identify ways to keep themselves safe and when they are more at risk. Young person K has attended every group and loves it, they miss it when it is not on and "they need it in their life" the group is the thing they look forward to the most in their week. Young person K when first starting the group said they would never talk to other young people, they would be behind the scenes making things for people to use and designing. Young person K is now interested in delivering sessions to young people in the primary School.

FAMILY CHANGE

Family Change is a specialist therapeutic social work service, set up to support children and their families who have experienced significant trauma. We accept referrals for direct therapeutic services from all Perth and Kinross Services for Children, Young People and Families Teams and all the children who use the service have experienced significant trauma, such as maltreatment and developmental trauma, traumatic loss or bereavement.

This year the team has been approached and asked to provide creative therapy to young people who are in Scotland unaccompanied and seeking asylum. We are pleased to have this opportunity to support some of the most vulnerable young people in our community and are in the early stages of establishing this part of our service. We have also been asked, as part of the counselling in schools service, to offer support, alongside our colleagues in Education Psychology, to Ukrainian families displaced by war. A new development over the last year has been the introduction of creative supervision groups to support our fieldwork colleagues who are working directly with children and young people. Feedback about the benefits of the group supervision have been:

"I was really surprised at how focused the group was on the group and how we were doing as individuals";

"I think that I certainly really feel listened to and feel a little lighter when I come out of the group supervision".

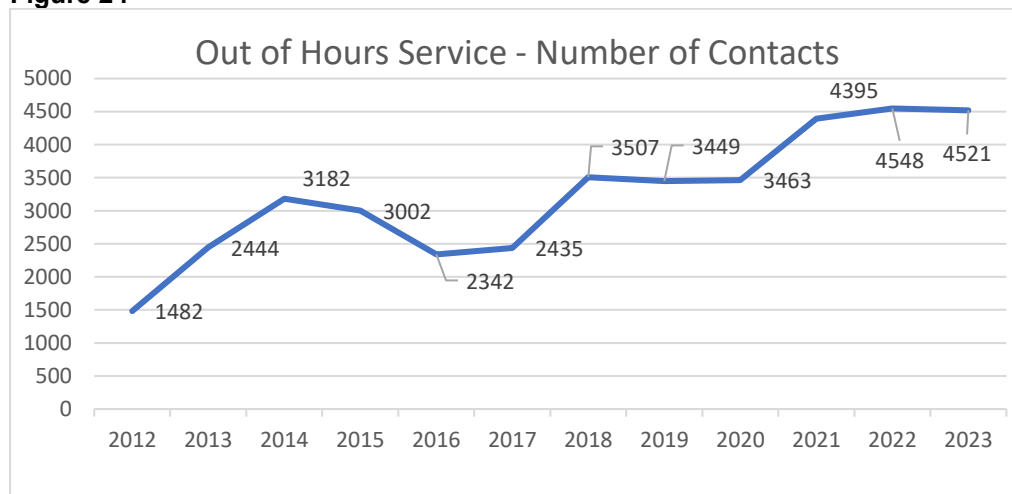
"I have found these sessions a huge support It has been a safe space to talk about how I feel and to not have my opinions judged."

The team was delighted to have been selected to present at this year's Pride in Practice Annual Children and Families Social Work Gathering. They presented the work they do through the consultation service and the creative supervision groups, focussing on relationship-based and trauma informed practice.

OUT OF HOURS SERVICE

The contact information reflects a constant demand for OOHS over the year. The generic nature of OOHS is reflected in the figures with an almost 50/50 split in adults and children's age groups. 99% of service users were already known to PKC and 51% were open referrals. In terms of the spread of work, weekdays account for 69.3% of the OOHS contacts but it is noted Friday, Saturday and Sunday accounts for 30.7% of OOHS contacts. Contacts after 23.00 hrs when the OOHS on call system is available accounted for 14% of contacts.

Figure 24



SHINE – Supported, Healthy, Included, Nurtured, Empowered

The SHINE Outreach Team was formed on the 1 April 2022 as part of a transformation project to further enhance support for children and young people who have a diagnosis or are awaiting assessment of autism spectrum disorder and/or other complex or additional support needs.

SHINE offer planned focused support which involves looking at the social, emotional, and physical needs of the child/young person, the factors that are impacting them and their family and identify support and strategies to help address such needs to enhance the quality of life for the child and their family. Outcomes are agreed with the young person, parents/carer, and any other relevant person or professional.

The team promote the rights of the child as outlined in UNCRC. They treat everyone with dignity and respect, promote the voice and views of the child/young person. Some of the children referred can experience added challenges due to their additional needs and the team aim to break down any barriers that they may face to enable them to achieve the same outcomes as their peers in relation to their wellbeing, health and educational outcomes.

SHINE has received 217 referrals.

Feedback

<p>"They have listened and taken into consideration our family views and lifestyle and helped us in a way that works for us as a family. They provided visuals for our child which has been a huge success in our house. We would definitely recommend to others who are in need of the same help. SHINE is a great service that we never knew about until our support worker referred us" (parent).</p> <p>"Staff understood my daughter very well and we would have loved to have worked with them longer but we understand the demands of the service. Fantastic girls who need an award" (parent).</p>	<p>"The SHINE team endeavour to support families in a way that includes and empowers the young person benefit from having structure and routine, which they may fight against initially but usually come round to knowing it makes life easier. I think the service you provide is invaluable to parents and families, but also to other professionals. Working as a team offers the best possible outcome for families. I just wish that there was more of you!" (family support worker).</p>
<p>"Staff understood my daughter very well and we would have loved to have worked with them longer but we understand the demands of the service. Fantastic girls who need an award" (parent).</p>	

FIELDWORK SERVICES – Children and families social work

Perth City South Fieldwork Team

Case Example: Two siblings (4 and 7 years old) of Eastern European heritage placed in a foster placement in Scotland and a request from the family to consider moving them to a kinship carer abroad. This case required intensive and close co-operation with the Authorities in the home country of the parents with close links to the Central Authority for Scotland and the Consulate in Edinburgh. In this specific case parallel assessments in Scotland and the parent's country of origin were undertaken on the proposed kinship carer to determine if it was in the children's best interest to transfer them. This process created many challenges in regard to legal requirements for assessments and decision making, cultural differences and language barriers. Regular professional meetings between the Scottish services involved but also with the international colleagues allowed good information sharing and learning along the way about the requirements of the 1996 Hague Convention on the Protection of Children. It was necessary for the proposed kinship carer to visit Scotland in order to be assessed by the colleagues from the kinship team and also to allow them to meet the children. In addition to these two staff members travelled abroad to meet the family and communicate with colleagues locally.

Strathearn and Kinross Team

Use of the Safe and Together approach

Formal training has taken place to support the team to be able to practice in a way that reflects the Safe and Together approach. Staff have been able to discuss where there are difficulties in working with this model, as well as seeing benefits in how this approach can support families in other circumstances. An example of this includes recognising the role of the father, as well as recognising the gendered expectations that professionals can hold.

The non-abusing parent has felt able to disclose to social work a large extent of what has happened, further to their initial position of denying any concerns. We have been able to support the parent to make decisions for themselves rather than being put under pressure to take certain actions such as calling the police. We have also ensured that the perpetrator has been held to account and made aware that his actions are being seen as parenting choices. In the past, this is a case where the children may have been accommodated into care as a result of the non-abusing parent not taking actions such as calling the police; instead, the children remain at home with their mother and are thriving. We have assessed that the non-abusing parent has been able to keep their children safe, and we know that the parent has felt supported and empowered in this process.

Children and Disabilities Team

Workers have used Talking Mats in school situations where the teacher did not think the child would be able to participate and has been surprised. This has led to the teacher to then continue to use this method to obtain the child's views.

Self Directed Support –

Following a request from a young person with Autism and diabetes, an assessment resulted in the provision of a Medical Detection dog. Flash supports the young person by alerting him as to when his blood sugars are low. The parent has advised that the: *'relationship with the dog and the child and the effort he had to put in to train the dog had a profound effect on him'*.

SDS has being used by a parent to set up a Dance Group for Disabled Children in Blairgowrie

Funding towards a mobility car so that the family could get a car that would meet the whole family's needs not just the disabled child.

Change Is A Must / First Steps Team

The remit of the team is to provide a high-quality response to address unmet needs of pregnant mothers, fathers and parents of young children pre and post birth, through proportionate intervention as early as possible in the pregnancy and/or the child's infancy.

The addition of a Specialist Mental Health Practitioner has been enormously beneficial and she has worked with 18 parents to date. Of these parents, 33% were male, 56% had experienced domestic abuse and 33% had a dual diagnosis (substance or alcohol dependency and mental health) and were open to drug and/or alcohol service. Fathers are not currently able to access the PNMHT during pregnancy and are not currently a priority due to pregnancy.

The use of Easy Read documents for parents is now used as standard with parents who require this support. These are used with parents to improve their understanding of information in relation to assessments, social work processes, risk and parenting advice. One worker in the team who helped develop the documents alongside the Speech and Language worker from REACH, is now able to train and support other workers to use the Easy Read documents.

Family Group Decision Making is now considered in all cases allocated within the First Steps Team. Uptake of this service by parents has depended on whether they feel there is a need, whether they feel they have family support in place already and their willingness to work with Social Work pre-birth. The team has increased the number of unborn babies being referred for Family Group Decisions Making (FGDM) which has enabled babies to remain within their own families after birth.

I have been involved with the children and family services since late 2017. I must say I have had an up and down experience since working with the Change is a Must Team, all the way though to working with the Adoption Team. I just really want to highlight the support and dedication to keeping my family together. Some of the people I have worked with, have shaped me into the mum I always wanted to be. There were just a few people [edited] I really wanted to thank and let you know they are a credit to the Perth a Kinross Children, Young People and Families Service. If it wasn't for them taking a massive chance and having my parent capacity reassessed, I don't think my child would ever have come home. I had endless amount of support available to me, weekly sessions focused on me and my parenting and how I can see where things weren't good before and how I can make positive changes to impact my parenting. I was given contacts throughout lockdown and was given the best opportunity possible to have my child home. The Family Focus Team (I know it's no longer that called that anymore) - I honestly don't know if I have the words to describe how amazing the worker was. She has been 100% dedicated to me and my family from the second she started working with us, I couldn't and wouldn't trust anyone more than I trusted her. She's been a shoulder to cry on, the stern words I've needed a few times and best of all, she was non-judgemental. I will be so sad when we are no longer working together anymore in the late summer. But I do have to add, she has put things in place, where if I did ever need her, I can always call her. I just want to say a massive thank you to everyone involved with myself over the years, you've shaped me as a mum and a person in some ways. I am really grateful for the time and effort to keep me and my child together. We have three years of time to make up on and we are over a year and half in now, I couldn't be happier and part of that is down to the individuals who have been there for me.

COPE C – Children and young people who are **O** – Open cases to Social Work and need **P** – Planned interventions at **E** – Evening and Weekends

COPE is an intensive family support model and works alongside children, young people, and their families to reduce risks and promote positive change. In line with The Promise, Services for Children, Young People and Families want to ensure that support for children, young people and their families is available at the times when they most need it and where they most need it. COPE deliver support and assistance weekdays from early afternoon to evenings and from mid-morning through to evenings at weekends, providing a mix of planned intervention and response to crises.

"Thank you so much for everything you have done for me. You have made such a positive impact on me, and my family's life and I will be forever grateful for that. You have helped me when I have been at my lowest and helped me see the positives in life and that is something I will never forget, thank you again."

"You've been such a massive part of our lives and our family and I'm going to miss you so much as is X, you've held me up so many times when I just wanted to crumble, you've always listened when no one else could hear, you've always been there for my girl and I can't thank you enough for that, for always being consistent when I couldn't be there for her and for teaching me so many things, I'm so sorry being so nasty to you when X had been away, it's been the most torrid time of my life and to think I might not even have been here to see my child grow up..... but I really do wish you all the best in your new chapter of life and I hope you're really happy, you've worked so hard to get here, you really are one in a million!!!! Gonna miss you so much 'Worker' Poppins but I guess the wind had to change one day"