

# Trauma-Informed Communities

## A Comparative Study of Welsh Models of Practice



**Authors:** Samia Addis, Joanne C. Hopkins, Catrin Lyddon, Emma Sheeran

# Trauma-Informed Communities

## A Comparative Study of Welsh Models of Practice

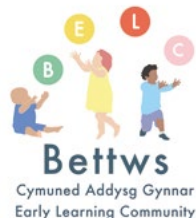


**Hyb ACE Cymru**  
**ACE Hub Wales**

ACE Hub Wales  
Policy and International Health,  
WHO Collaborating Centre on Investment  
for Health & Well-being,  
Public Health Wales,  
Floor 5, 2 Capital Quarter,  
Tyndall Street,  
Cardiff, CF10 4BZ  
**[www.acehubwales.com](http://www.acehubwales.com)**  
[ace@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:ace@wales.nhs.uk)

### Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank those in the case study areas who gave their time to contribute to this study: Richard Yelland, Detective Chief Inspector, Dyfed-Powys Police; Gethin Jones, Ceredigion Council; Dr Caroline Hughes, Dr Tegan Brierley-Sollis, Lisa Scully and Nina Ruddle, Wrexham Glyndŵr University; Clare Budden, Mandy Roberts, Elaine Gilbert and Sarah Barnett, ClwydAlyn Housing; Rebecca Thomas and Kate Smith, Save the Children; and Dr Jen Daffin, Plattform. Thanks also go to the reviewers, Dr Alex Walker, Violence Prevention Unit, Public Health Wales and Dr Rebekah Amos, Bangor University, for comments on an earlier draft.



Cyngor Sir  
**CEREDIGION**  
County Council



For mental health and social change  
Dros iechyd meddwl a newid cymdeithasol



PRIFYSGOL  
**Glyndŵr**  
Wrexham  
**glyndŵr**  
UNIVERSITY

### Funding

The report was produced by the ACE Hub Wales, with funding from the Welsh Government. ACE Hub Wales was founded in 2017 and was set up to support Welsh Society to help create an ACE Aware Wales and make Wales a leader in tackling, preventing and mitigating ACEs. We promote the sharing of ideas and learning, and to challenge and change ways of working, so together we can break the cycle of ACEs. ACE Hub Wales is funded by Welsh Government and is hosted by Public Health Wales and is part of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Collaborating Centre on Investment in Health and Wellbeing.

**Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg**

ISBN: 978-1-83766-142-8

© 2023 Public Health Wales NHS Trust.

Material contained in this document may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Government Licence (OGL) [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/) provided it is done so accurately and is not used in a misleading context. Acknowledgement to Public Health Wales NHS Trust to be stated. Unless stated otherwise, copyright in the typographical arrangement, design and layout belongs to Public Health Wales NHS Trust.

# Contents

|                                                                                    |           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Acronyms and Abbreviations .....</b>                                            | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Section 1: Background .....</b>                                                 | <b>5</b>  |
| 1.1 Wales; a trauma-informed nation .....                                          | 5         |
| Welsh Government; policy direction .....                                           | 5         |
| The research context .....                                                         | 6         |
| The Trauma-Informed Wales Framework .....                                          | 7         |
| 1.2 Trauma-informed approaches in the community setting .....                      | 9         |
| 1.3 Study rationale and aim .....                                                  | 12        |
| <b>Section 2: Methods .....</b>                                                    | <b>13</b> |
| 2.1 Data collection .....                                                          | 13        |
| Trauma-informed community initiatives in Wales .....                               | 13        |
| Trauma-informed community approaches beyond Wales .....                            | 13        |
| 2.2 Analysis .....                                                                 | 13        |
| Model One: Grass roots approaches .....                                            | 14        |
| Model Two: Multi-agency or cross sector approaches .....                           | 14        |
| Model Three: Local authority or city-wide approaches .....                         | 14        |
| 2.3 Ethics .....                                                                   | 14        |
| <b>Section 3: Case Studies of Trauma-informed Community Approaches in Wales...</b> | <b>15</b> |
| 3.1 <b>Case Study 1: Bettws Early Learning Community, South Wales</b> .....        | 16        |
| Background .....                                                                   | 16        |
| Trauma-informed community development .....                                        | 18        |
| Embrace pilot .....                                                                | 19        |
| 3.2 <b>Case Study 2: The TrACE Community in North Wales</b> .....                  | 22        |
| Background .....                                                                   | 22        |
| The 2025 Social Movement .....                                                     | 23        |
| ClwydAlyn Housing .....                                                            | 24        |
| Wrexham Glyndŵr University .....                                                   | 25        |
| 3.3 <b>Case Study 3: Ceredigion, West Wales</b> .....                              | 29        |
| Background .....                                                                   | 29        |
| Ceredigion Council: Porth Cymorth Cynnar .....                                     | 29        |
| Dyfed-Powys Police: INTACT .....                                                   | 32        |

|                                                                     |           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Section 4: Trauma-Informed Approaches beyond Wales</b>           | <b>35</b> |
| 4.1 Trauma-informed policy and practice in high-income countries    | 35        |
| North America                                                       | 35        |
| New Zealand                                                         | 36        |
| Scotland                                                            | 36        |
| England                                                             | 37        |
| Northern Ireland                                                    | 37        |
| Republic of Ireland                                                 | 38        |
| 4.2 Community initiatives; Grass roots approaches                   | 39        |
| 4.3 Community initiatives; Multi agency approaches                  | 40        |
| 4.4 Community initiatives; local authority and city-wide approaches | 42        |
| <b>Section 5: Discussion</b>                                        | <b>43</b> |
| 5.1 Summary of the findings                                         | 43        |
| 5.2 Key elements of the three models; a comparison                  | 44        |
| The grass roots approach                                            | 44        |
| The multi-agency approach                                           | 44        |
| The local authority approach                                        | 45        |
| 5.3 The contribution of this study                                  | 45        |
| 5.4 Opportunities for further research                              | 45        |
| <b>Section 6: Conclusion</b>                                        | <b>46</b> |
| <b>Section 7: Bibliography</b>                                      | <b>47</b> |

## Table of Figures

|                                                                         |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Figure 1: Trauma Practice Framework Model.....                          | 7  |
| Figure 2: TrACE Model.....                                              | 8  |
| Figure 3: Principles of a Trauma-informed Approach; SAMHSA.....         | 10 |
| Figure 4: Blue Knot Trauma-Informed Services.....                       | 10 |
| Figure 5: Socio-ecological Model .....                                  | 11 |
| Figure 6: Trauma-Informed Wales Framework Five Practice Principles..... | 12 |
| Figure 7: Map of Bettws.....                                            | 17 |
| Figure 8: Bettws Systems Model.....                                     | 17 |
| Figure 9: Ecological Systems Theory .....                               | 18 |
| Figure 10: Wellbeing Animation.....                                     | 19 |
| Figure 11: Three-part Embrace Model.....                                | 20 |
| Figure 12: Wrexham Glyndŵr University Governance Structure .....        | 25 |
| Figure 13: Navigating the Storm Animation .....                         | 26 |
| Figure 14: Kindness in Education Award .....                            | 28 |
| Figure 15: Through-age and Wellbeing Programme: Operating Model .....   | 30 |

## Table of Tables

|                                                                               |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Table 1: Case Studies in Wales .....                                          | 15 |
| Table 2: Community Initiatives; Grass roots approaches.....                   | 39 |
| Table 3: Community initiatives; Multi agency approaches .....                 | 40 |
| Table 4: Community initiatives; local authority and city-wide approaches..... | 42 |

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

|        |                                                           |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| ACEs   | Adverse Childhood Experiences                             |
| BBS    | Blackpool Better Start                                    |
| BCR    | Building Community Resilience                             |
| CAMHS  | Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services            |
| CDC    | Center for Disease Control and Prevention                 |
| CPR    | Center for Preparedness and Response                      |
| ELC    | Early Learning Community                                  |
| HSE    | Health Service Executive                                  |
| JRF    | Joseph Rowntree Foundation                                |
| MAST   | Multi-agency Support Team                                 |
| NES    | NHS Education for Scotland                                |
| PCSO   | Police Community Support Officers                         |
| PLP    | Plymouth Learning Partnership                             |
| SAMHSA | Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration |
| SBNI   | Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland                   |
| SDG    | Sustainable Development Goals                             |
| SOS    | Speak Out Scotland                                        |
| TICB   | Trauma-Informed Community Building                        |
| TIP    | Trauma-Informed Practice                                  |
| TrACE  | Trauma and ACE Informed                                   |
| TRiM   | Trauma Risk Management                                    |
| WHO    | World Health Organisation                                 |

## Section 1: Background

The aim of this report is to showcase and compare three examples of trauma-informed communities in Wales. Also, to place these examples within the context of similar initiatives across the devolved nations of the UK and other high-income countries worldwide.

### 1.1 Wales; a trauma-informed nation

#### Welsh Government; policy direction

In 2015, Public Health Wales published a ground-breaking report on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) (Bellis et al., 2015). This report gave a clear narrative on the importance of understanding the increased risk that ACEs pose to health, especially for people who do not have access to the positive, protective factors needed to overcome them. This was followed by a second report in 2017 (Bellis et al., 2017). Together, these reports provided the evidence base on which a public health approach to tackling ACEs was developed in Wales. Such an approach set out the prevalence of ACEs in the Welsh population, providing a compelling case for policy makers, leaders and influential change makers in Wales to understand and develop approaches to raise awareness of ACEs, and to consider the impact of ACEs when developing policy and practice.

The Welsh Government made a commitment to tackling ACEs in 'Prosperity for All', the programme for Government from 2016 to 2021 (Welsh Government, 2017). This led to the establishment and funding of the ACE Support Hub (now ACE Hub Wales), to develop and lead this work in collaboration with partners across Wales. The work on ACEs was reviewed in 2021 and a further commitment made by the Welsh Government to continue this work but with some clear recommendations around understanding better the terminology of trauma-informed practice, as well as to support the development of trauma-informed practice and services, including the development of tools and resources (Welsh Government, 2021). The Deputy Minister for Social Services also established a set of principles for the continued work in Wales, which included understanding how ACEs and trauma-informed practice is operating at the community level.

In response to this, ACE Hub Wales, hosted by Public Health Wales and funded by the Welsh Government, has set out a vision for Wales to become a trauma-informed nation by 2025. This does not mean that by 2025, everyone in Wales will be trauma-informed in practice. Instead, it is an iterative process, informed by the principles set out by the Deputy Minister following the review of ACEs in 2021, and building on the evidence of significant projects and programmes in Wales that are already making an impact (Walker et al., 2021).

## The research context

Reflecting the priority to better understand the work on ACEs and trauma at the grass roots and community level, several studies have been undertaken by ACE Hub Wales. These include the role of communities in preventing and mitigating the impact of ACEs and trauma (Addis et al., 2021; Addis and Hopkins, 2022); mapping interventions which use trauma-informed terminology or approaches in Wales (Walker et al., 2021); and an exploration of trauma-informed policy, practice and language (Addis et al., 2022). The current study addresses another aspect of this priority, to understand what approaches are being taken in Wales to develop trauma-informed communities and to identify and share best practice from three case studies which are making a significant contribution to this.

Previous research demonstrates the positive impact that community-based organisations can have on community members; it also identified a number of successful community-based initiatives in Wales which provide a collaborative response to adversity (Addis et al., 2021; Addis and Hopkins, 2022). The community projects identified worked with a variety of community groups and addressed a range of types of adversity. Beneficiaries of the projects note a range of benefits including wellbeing and parenting support, friendship, and advocacy in respect of health, welfare, and education services.

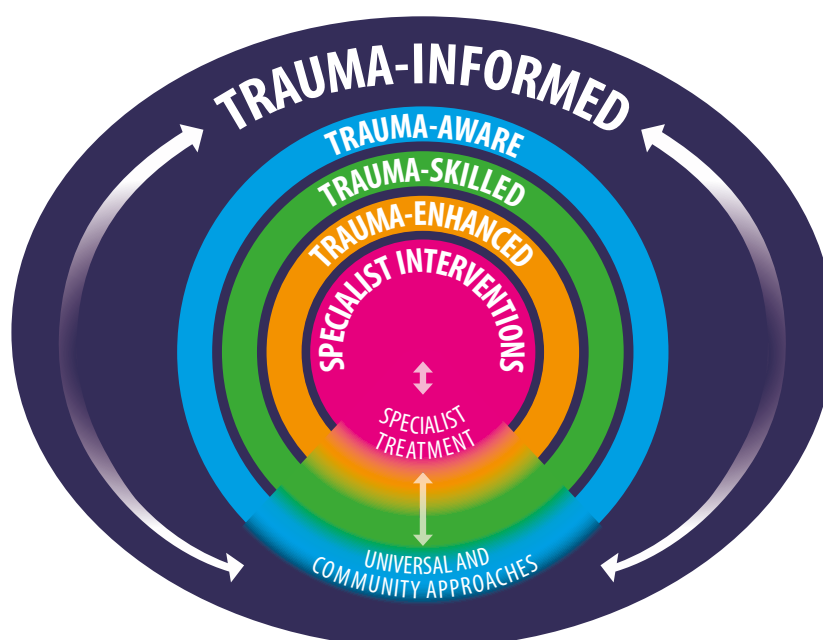
Another study led by ACE Hub Wales, mapped interventions which used trauma-informed terminology or approaches in Wales, identifying 73 projects, programmes, or interventions (Walker et al., 2021). This research indicates that a significant number of programmes made an association between being trauma-informed and preventing vicarious trauma, also that being trauma-informed requires a move away from medical models and being process-led, to being person-led, giving the service user choices, and offering appropriate support and interventions in a non-medicalised way.

A review of the literature explored the terminology and language in use around the concept of trauma-informed (Addis et al., 2022). This review found that a lack of consensus on the definition of trauma-informed is a barrier to creating trauma-informed systems; also, that trauma-informed approaches are implemented differently across settings and there is a need for a consensus on the components of trauma-informed care. Finally, that the lack of a consistent definition impacts on the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of such approaches since measurements use diverse and non-standardised measures.

## The Trauma-Informed Wales Framework

The Trauma-Informed Wales Framework<sup>1</sup> provides an all-society approach to support a coherent, consistent approach to developing and implementing trauma-informed practice across Wales (ACE Hub Wales and Traumatic Stress Wales, 2022). It was developed with an Expert Reference Group, consisting of those with lived experience, practitioners, clinical and non-clinical leads and academics. The Trauma-Informed Wales Framework outlines five practice principles which specify that any approach should be: universal; person centred; relationship-focused; resilience and strengths-focused; and inclusive. The Trauma-Informed Wales Framework also outlines four practice levels (Figure 1) which describe different roles within a variety of contexts; these represent a spectrum and include: trauma-aware; trauma-skilled; trauma-enhanced and specialist interventions. Together, these four practice levels provide an integrated, trauma-informed practice framework that provides a joined-up approach way of working within organisations, systems and the community.

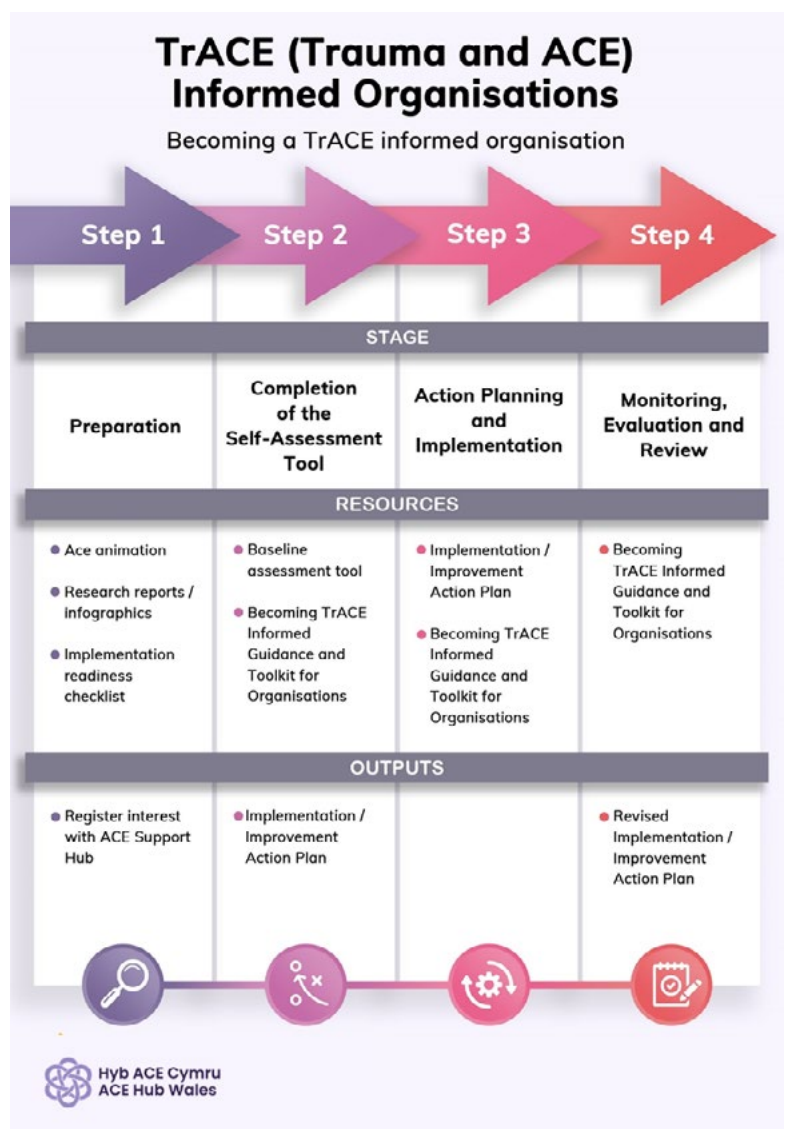
Figure 1: Trauma Practice Framework Model



The Trauma-Informed Wales Framework references the TrACE (Trauma and ACE) toolkit (Figure 2), developed by ACE Hub Wales to provide practical tools and techniques for organisations in Wales, as well as resources to help them become more trauma-informed. The TrACE model represents a four-stage process for organisational change, to provide a strong foundation towards creating a whole organisation-wide culture of being trauma-informed and ACE aware that prioritises staff wellbeing and support, alongside service users' experiences.

1 <https://traumaframeworkcymru.com/>

Figure 2: TrACE Model



<https://acehubwales.com/trace-toolkit/>

The toolkit is being implemented and delivered by sectors and organisations across Wales including substance misuse, further and higher education and policing and criminal justice as well as housing organisations such as Caredig and ClwydAlyn. A recent evaluation of the approach at Caredig found that it supported not only those who accessed services, but also the workforce of the service provider (New System Alliance, 2022).

The focus on a trauma-informed approach in policy and practice in Wales stems from a changing understanding of the impact of trauma and how to address trauma effectively. This reflects a similar shift in other high-income countries which has resulted in a changing emphasis for policy makers, organisations, services and communities. Preventing and addressing the impact of ACEs supports multiple global commitments, including those to prevent violence against children and all forms of violence across the life course; improve maternal, child and population health and wellbeing; build healthy, stronger and more resilient communities; and reduce health, social and gender inequalities (Bellis et al., 2023).

## 1.2 Trauma-informed approaches in the community setting

Trauma-informed principles were initially developed for clinical care treatment and therapy settings however, over recent years these principles have been adapted for work within communities<sup>2</sup> and organisations (Hanson and Lang, 2016). A trauma-informed approach recognises the widespread impact of trauma and the various pathways to recovery, also that experiences of trauma may be accompanied by specific signs and symptoms and there is a need for a comprehensive and integrative response and efforts to prevent re-traumatisation (Champine et al., 2022). The belief is that the adverse effects of trauma can be prevented and mitigated through holistic services and support which is trauma-informed, and fits diverse clinical, organisational and community settings (Champine et al., 2022). Consequently, the phrase trauma-informed is now used to denote frameworks, programmes and organisations that wish to reflect their awareness of trauma and the actions they have taken to mitigate the impact of complex trauma within their domain (Hanson and Lang, 2016).

While a universally agreed definition of trauma-informed is currently lacking (Addis et al, 2022), it is acknowledged that there are four main premises which are implicit in being trauma-informed; these are:

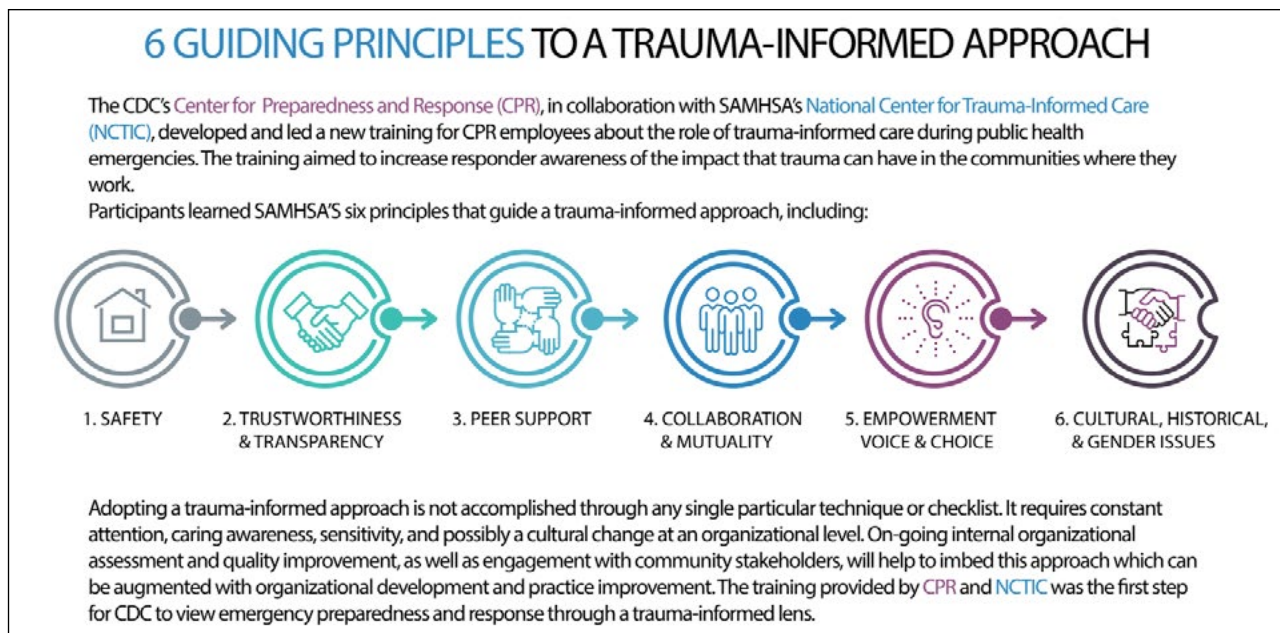
- (1) that exposure to trauma is widespread and has pervasive impacts.
- (2) the belief that healing from trauma is possible.
- (3) that relationships play a key role in the process of change.
- (4) that safety is critical for healing and preventing further impact.

(Avery et al., 2020).

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is a globally recognised model that defines trauma-informed care as a programme, organisation or system that is trauma-informed, realises the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognises the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff and others involved with the system; and responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures and practices, and seeks to actively resist in re-traumatisation (SAMHSA, 2014: 11). Such an approach emphasises safety, trustworthiness and transparency, peer support, collaboration and mutuality, empowerment, voice, and choice and addresses cultural, historical, and gender issues (Figure 3).

<sup>2</sup> A community is defined as 'a group of people either self-identified or identified by others, who share one or more common characteristics that can include geographical neighbourhood, health status, ethnicity, or shared interests, values, experience or traditions' (Brenner and Manice, 2011 cited in Brunton et al., 2014).

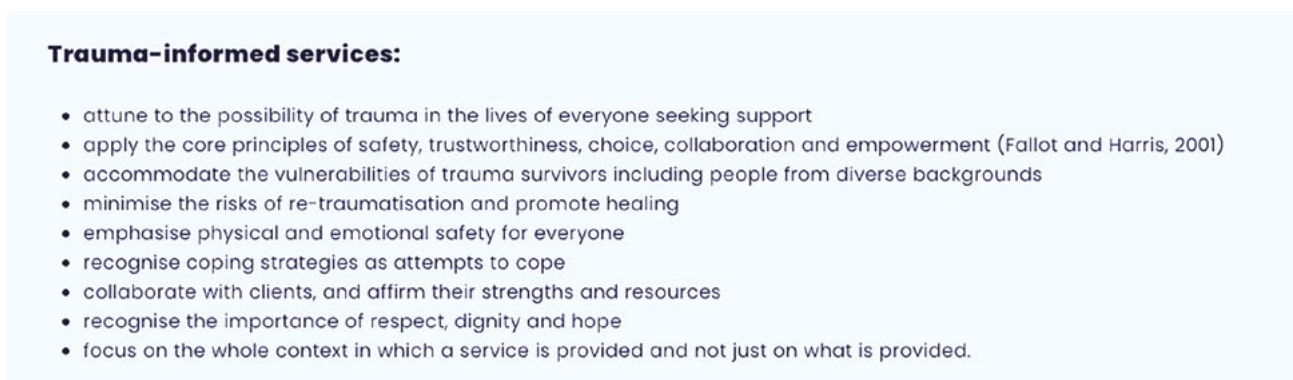
Figure 3: Principles of a Trauma-informed Approach; SAMHSA



(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020)

The Blue Knot Foundation<sup>3</sup> asserts that trauma-informed services can support people to feel safe, build trust, and overcome their fear and sense of betrayal. Specifically, trauma-informed services:

Figure 4: Blue Knot Trauma-Informed Services



(Blue Knot, 2022)

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)<sup>4</sup>, building resilient and trauma-informed communities is essential to improving emergency recovery outcomes and by being trauma-informed, they can become safe places for those recovering from distressing events. Communities can be resilient if they have the right resources available however, barriers that prevent those in a community from accessing resources can include cost, lack of transportation and availability of resources. Communities should strive to provide their services with a trauma-informed approach in an effort to make sure people experiencing trauma receive care that promotes healing and avoids re-traumatisation (Centers for Disease Control

<sup>3</sup> The Blue Knot Foundation is the National Centre of Excellence for Complex Trauma in Australia; they advocate for and provide support to people who have experience of complex trauma, and those who support them, personally and professionally.

<sup>4</sup> The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the US is the nation's leading science-based, data-driven, service organisation that protects public health.

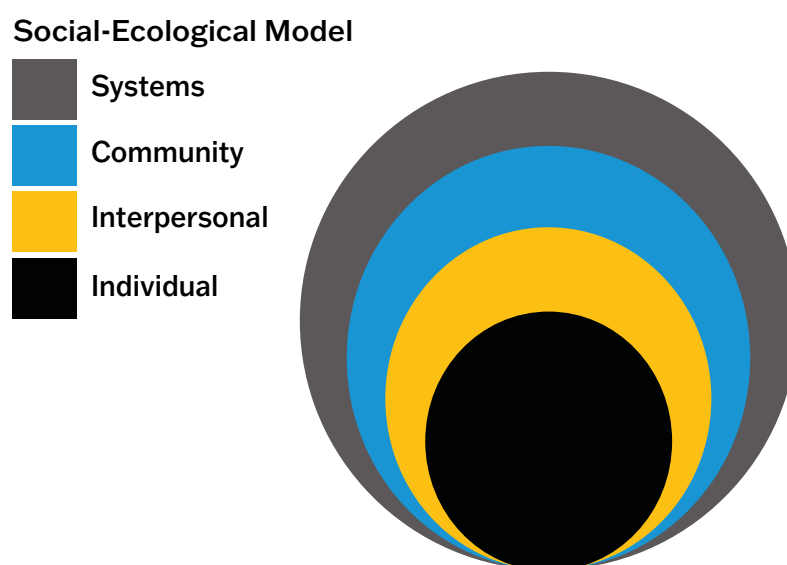
and Prevention, 2022).

On a community level and using a trauma-informed lens, self-healing involves collective engagement, as people most affected by trauma come together around activities that have the potential to lift the entire community and foster individual and community resilience (Danielson and Saxena, 2019). Resilient communities are those which are cohesive, well connected and can collectively use available resources. Part of that resilience acknowledges that social connections and engaging in community life is an essential part of individual mental wellbeing, because it creates a sense of belonging, solidarity and enhances strong coping mechanisms (Davies et al., 2019).

Over the last decade, there has been an emerging movement to build resilient, trauma-informed communities. Initiatives such as Building Community Resilience (BCR) are efforts to bring together stakeholders from different community sectors including community member parents; youth; policymakers; health and social service providers and funders and researchers to develop coordinated community responses that can promote resilience (Matlin et al., 2019). Community organising and opportunities to engage in work that helps the community can give residents an avenue to affect their community's future and strengthen their sense of control and self-determination. Such efforts to reframe community narratives, peer support networks, and investment in community health and well-being are opportunities for healing from trauma (Falkenburger et al 2018).

Although Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP) is usually implemented within services and targeted at service users, TIP approaches can also be implemented across whole communities via public awareness campaigns. For example, in Wales, the 'Time to be Kind' campaign aimed to raise awareness of adversity in children's lives among the general public through a TV advertisement (Bellis et al., 2023). A socio-ecological model (Figure 5) illustrates the various layers that make up communities and how systems effect communities and in turn, effect interpersonal relationships and consequently, individuals. Strategies aimed at helping, supporting, empowering, or providing healing for individuals should include strategies that target each layer of the community.

Figure 5: Socio-ecological Model



(Weinstein et al., 2014 cited in Falkenburger et al., 2018)

## 1.3 Study rationale and aim

With the publication of the Trauma-Informed Wales Framework, Wales is establishing a foundation on which an all-society approach can be built. This approach recognises the adverse and traumatic experiences that people of all ages can be exposed to and affected by. The five principles (Figure 6) are explicit about the importance of community-led approaches as part of a universal approach that does no harm. This approach also recognises the natural resilience of individuals, families and communities and additionally, the importance of an inclusive approach that recognises the impact of diversity, discrimination and racism as well as of cultural, historic and gender inequalities that exist in society.

Figure 6: Trauma-Informed Wales Framework Five Practice Principles



(ACE Hub Wales and Traumatic Stress Wales, 2022).

Initiatives from Wales at a community level include the 'Time to be Kind' public awareness campaign and the whole school approach to ACE awareness and trauma-informed practice (Bellis et al., 2023). This study also complements the work of the World Health Organisation and two of its collaborating centres that identifies that there is tentative support for trauma-informed practice. The aim of this report is to showcase and compare three examples of trauma-informed communities in Wales; secondly, to place these within the wider context of similar initiatives across the other devolved nations of the UK and other high-income countries. The study addresses the following research questions:

1. What approaches have been taken to develop ACE and trauma-informed communities in Wales?
2. How do these approaches align with initiatives in other high-income countries?
3. What models underpin these approaches?

## Section 2: Methods

This study undertook two methods of data collection. Three case studies, each showcasing a different model and approach in three trauma-informed communities in Wales were identified, developed and co-produced with partners and communities. Secondly, examples of trauma-informed community initiatives in high income countries beyond Wales, including the other devolved nations of the UK were identified.

### 2.1 Data collection

#### *Trauma-informed community initiatives in Wales*

For each of the three projects, the project leads, together with other stakeholders engaged with the projects, were identified. To inform each case study, information was gathered by an initial question sheet, follow up interviews and focus groups. This information was supplemented by a review of reports produced by the projects themselves or about their outcomes as well as relevant websites and resources. The focus of data collection was to create a co-produced case study, which key stakeholders contributed to and reviewed throughout, to ensure accuracy and to capture all areas of good practice. Using a case study methodology allowed data collection from a range of sources, including interviews, documents, and surveys (Schoch, 2020). This method also allowed each case study to be co-produced with stakeholders which was considered essential to ensure that the final report accurately reflects the priorities and ongoing work in each case study area. The final version of each case study has been signed off by the projects.

#### *Trauma-informed community approaches beyond Wales*

Further models and examples of trauma-informed community approaches in high income countries were identified by a literature review, supplemented by short case study examples in each area. Projects and programmes for inclusion were identified using a range of sources, including reports, articles, and project briefs. To be included, a project, programme or intervention had to meet the following criteria: use a model of trauma-informed approaches; target communities and have published resources in the English language.

### 2.2 Analysis

All the community initiatives identified in this study were categorised and placed in a three-model framework for analysis and comparison. These three models are: grass roots approaches; multi-agency or cross sector approaches; and local authority or city-wide approaches. The case studies identified, both in Wales and as a result of the wider search, broadly align with one of the three models.



## Model One: Grass roots approaches

Grass roots organisations are groups of people pursuing common interests, largely on a volunteer and not-for-profit basis. Such organisations are often formed by activists in social movements, and many are closely linked to communities and local issues. Grassroots organisations have unique strengths, and many are involved in struggles over structural inequality and the promotion of human rights. They can also bring distinct awareness of inequities that are normalised or invisible from other perspectives and in this way, they can challenge the marginalisation that some communities experience (Flores and Samuel, 2019).



## Model Two: Multi-agency or cross sector approaches

Interagency collaboration can take many forms, ranging from low level joint decision making with limited shared resources, to multifaceted, fully integrated services. Generally, however, interagency collaboration involves three core principles: information sharing; joint decision making; and coordinated intervention (Parker et al., 2018). The importance of a multi-agency response to vulnerability becoming trauma-informed has been recognised (Barton et al., 2018) and multi-agency working is viewed as an effective way to approach a number of social issues including domestic abuse (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2014). For vulnerable children and families, a collaborative approach is likely to provide better support and improve professional practice (Barton et al., 2018) as well as leading to a more holistic, streamlined, and effective service delivery (Fox and Butler, 2004).



## Model Three: Local authority or city-wide approaches

This approach is based on recognition of the importance of action at the local, urban level and the key role of local governments in promoting health, equity and sustainable development through innovation and multi-sectoral change (World Health Organization, 2020). Such an approach works on the understanding that health can be improved or harmed by social policy, transport policy, education policy and the built environment, all of which can impact on vulnerable groups particularly. This is based on evidence which puts increasing emphasis on the right to health, equity and well-being in all policies through whole-of society approaches (Cork Healthy Cities Action Plan Phase V11 2020-2030, 2020).

## 2.3 Ethics

This study was reviewed by the Public Health Wales Research and Development (R&D) Office and the project was completed by taking into consideration all relevant safeguarding, financial, GDPR and information governance requirements.

## Section 3: Case Studies of Trauma-informed Community Approaches in Wales

The case study sites identified (Table 1) are initiatives that ACE Hub Wales is either working with, supporting or will be involved with. ACE Hub Wales is a key partner in all three models, supporting the development of local and national TrACE communities of practice. It is hoped that this study will further support the development of the work in each of these areas and wider, to contribute to the development of knowledge of what works to ensure that the Trauma-Informed Wales Framework meets its ambition of an all-society approach to understanding, preventing and supporting the impact of trauma and adversity.

Table 1: Case Studies in Wales

|                                                                                                            | Name                              | Location               | Approach                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Case Study 1</b><br>  | Bettws Early Learning Community   | Newport, South Wales   | Grass roots and voluntary charity sector        |
| <b>Case Study 2</b><br> | TrACE Community in North Wales    | North Wales Region     | Multi-agency, regional across local authorities |
| <b>Case Study 3</b><br> | Porth Cymorth Cynnar and 'Intact' | Ceredigion, West Wales | Policing, multi-agency, local authority area    |



### 3.1 Case Study 1: Bettws Early Learning Community, South Wales

This section discusses a Save the Children<sup>5</sup> Early Learning Community (ELC) in Bettws, Newport, South Wales, with a focus on a pilot of a trauma-informed community initiative, Embrace, which is delivered by ELC member, Plattform<sup>6</sup>.

## Background

Bettws Early Learning Community in Newport, South Wales is a partnership of local professionals, groups, organisations, schools and families working together to ensure children in the area get the support they need to have the best possible start in life. It is part of Save the Children's Early Learning Communities programme which aims to transform children's early learning, especially for children growing up in poverty, and to ensure help is on hand at whatever stage of their development they need it.

Evidence shows that adverse living conditions including poverty, lack of opportunity and trauma have a huge impact on mental health and learning outcomes, particularly during the first 1,000 days of a child's life (Cwm Taf Health Board, 2011). The ELC programme aims to add value to local services by bringing in specialist knowledge and methods and by bringing together people and organisations who are experts in children's development.

The Early Learning Communities project takes a 'whole system' approach to improving the early learning outcomes of children growing up in poverty; seeking to stimulate systems change across the breadth of service providers; thereby resulting in improved outcomes for members of the local early years community.

The ELC model aims to stimulate 'systems change' by empowering all the organisations working for and with children to work together flexibly and sustainably. By working together differently and with local people, they can address some of the root causes of issues affecting communities and families (Bettws Early Learning Community, 2022). Bettws ELC works alongside families to listen to their experiences and develop new ways of working that meet their needs. It then evaluates and shares the learning so it can impact beyond Bettws and help others in Wales and across the UK.

5 Save the Children are an international children's rights charity which operates in 118 countries. The aim is, in the UK and around the world, to make sure children keep safe, healthy and learning.

6 Plattform is the mental health and social change charity; Plattform work with people who are experiencing challenges with their mental health, and with communities who want to create a greater sense of connection, ownership and wellbeing in the place that they live.

## Bettws

Bettws is an area in the Northwest of Newport, South Wales. Bettws has a population of around 8,000 people and is still most commonly known for the Bettws estate, which was built in the 1960s and is at the centre of the ward. The Bettws area is categorised as one of the poorest areas of Wales, with the proportion of children living in low-income families far exceeding the Wales average of 20.5%. In two super output areas<sup>7</sup> in Bettws, the rates

reach over 40%. Around 43% of housing is social rented, benefit claimant rates are twice the Newport average and 40% of adults have no qualifications (Bettws Early Learning Community, 2019). Approximately 80% of Bettws is designated a Flying Start<sup>8</sup> area and Bettws is also part of Welsh Government's Early Years Transformation Pathfinder Programme to integrate health and social services for young children and families. This means that there is investment in support for families, including additional childcare and parenting support and an engaged local community wanting to work together to improve the system.

Figure 7: Map of Bettws



(Bettws Early Learning Community, 2022)

## How does the Bettws ELC work together?

The overall vision of Bettws ELC is to improve children's early learning so they can flourish and develop for the rest of their lives, with a particular focus on speech and language and health and wellbeing.

Bettws ELC seeks to create an integrated approach to children's development and outcomes by bringing together the policies, processes and work of organisations delivering early education, family support and health and social care services to ensure they are responsive to local strengths and needs. This means working in partnership to improve children's life chances by addressing how people work together across a community and taking a whole systems approach.

Figure 8: Bettws Systems Model

Supporting children in Bettws to grow and achieve – our systems model



(Bettws Early Learning Community, 2022)

<sup>7</sup> Super output areas were designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics. They are made up of smaller output areas which are the lowest geographical level at which census estimates are provided.

<sup>8</sup> Flying Start is a Welsh Government initiative delivered at a local authority level which helps families with children under 4 years old in disadvantaged areas of Wales.

The partnership includes everyone who is involved with bringing up children within the Bettws ELC; this includes families, communities, the local council, Flying Start, housing associations, schools and teachers, health visitors and GPs, and local, voluntary and community groups. In practice, the Bettws ELC works together to design and test new ways of working to:

- support children as they **start school**
- improve **play and learning** at home and in the community
- increase **emotional wellbeing and resilience**
- **address poverty and meet material needs**

This includes working to develop trauma-informed services and increase family emotional wellbeing and resilience.

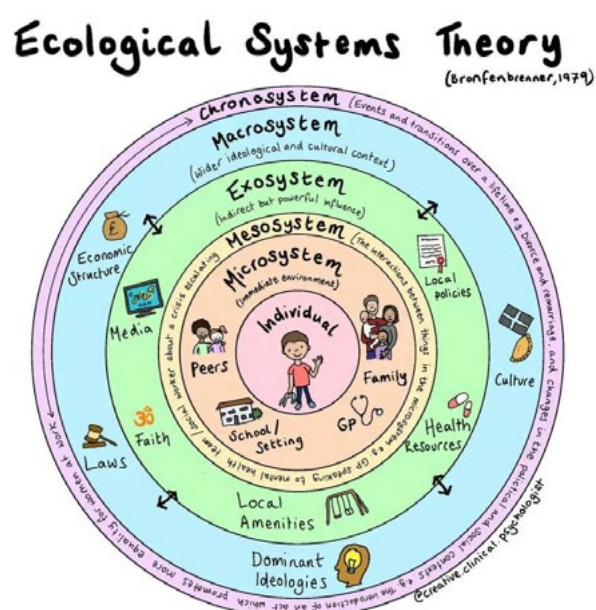
## Trauma-informed community development

Bettws ELC believe that resilient, healthy children develop best in resilient, healthy families and communities. Their approach to trauma-informed community development understands the impact that trauma, adversity and poverty can have on emotional health. They believe that means a focus should be put on creating the conditions that foster things like agency, security, connection, meaning and trust. This is in recognition that the stresses of living with inadequate access to economic and educational opportunities, or a lack of opportunity itself, contribute to experiences of community-level adversity.

The Bettws model is based on their understanding of chronic exposure to individual and community trauma such as humiliation, distrust and loneliness which are detrimental to our physical and psychological health. As a result, a number of psychosocial ecological approaches or place-based strategies are emerging. The Bettws approach recognises that these issues sit within complex networks within which relationships are key. With such complex problems, practice needs to be built together using principles of co-production, respecting culturally relevant knowledge, expertise and leadership.

The Bettws ELC approach builds on developing practice in Wales, particularly in a number of Families First<sup>9</sup> programmes in the same area which integrate applied psychologists into their practice models. In Bettws ELC, this approach is taken a step further by creating space that draws together not only Families First and mental health colleagues but other crucial players such as the local schools, housing associations, local policing, health visitors, Flying Start workers, and other relevant stakeholders who have influence over the conditions in which children, families and local residents live.

Figure 9: Ecological Systems Theory



<sup>9</sup> Families First is a Welsh Government programme designed to improve outcomes for children, young people and families. It emphasises prevention and early intervention for families particularly those living in poverty.

## Wellbeing Animation

Supporting families to understand their own mental health and wellbeing is a key part of the Bettws ELC work, particularly making trauma-informed approaches accessible. The animation (Figure 10) developed by the project in 2022, helps children and families understand the key components of wellbeing and resilience. You can watch it here:

Figure 10: Wellbeing Animation



<https://vimeo.com/treetopfilms/review/710413500/d5b558c9ab>

To get better outcomes for children, Bettws ELC believes it is important for parents to be emotionally available and provide a nurturing safe and secure environment. Deep poverty gets in the way of this, since stressful circumstances can compromise parents' ability to be emotionally available to their children while also compromising their own relational and emotional health. To support parents, the project recognises the importance of thinking about the whole family in a joint poverty and relational health approach; this is the aspiration of the Embrace pilot.

## Embrace pilot

The Embrace pilot explores community wellbeing and resilience by supporting parents to develop skills to tell their own story and make meaning from experiences. The aim is to support parents to develop knowledge and skills to help improve their mental health and wellbeing. Embrace draws on the growing body of evidence and the work of ACE Hub Wales<sup>10</sup>. It is delivered by ELC member, Plattform, whose mission is to challenge the dominant narrative around mental health by advocating that trauma, life experiences and socio-economic circumstances have an impact on our mental health and ability to heal.

Small groups of parents meet monthly over a year to explore their own stories in a safe and supportive environment. An experienced facilitator supports parents to share their stories of living with stress and/or distress and to unpack how their life circumstances contribute to their emotional wellbeing.

*"Embrace for me helps me see things in a different way, it allows me to open up and share my trauma in a safe and completely understanding environment, it shows me how mental health works and how I can then use it to accommodate to my life"*

(Quote from a Bettws mum and member of the Embrace pilot group).

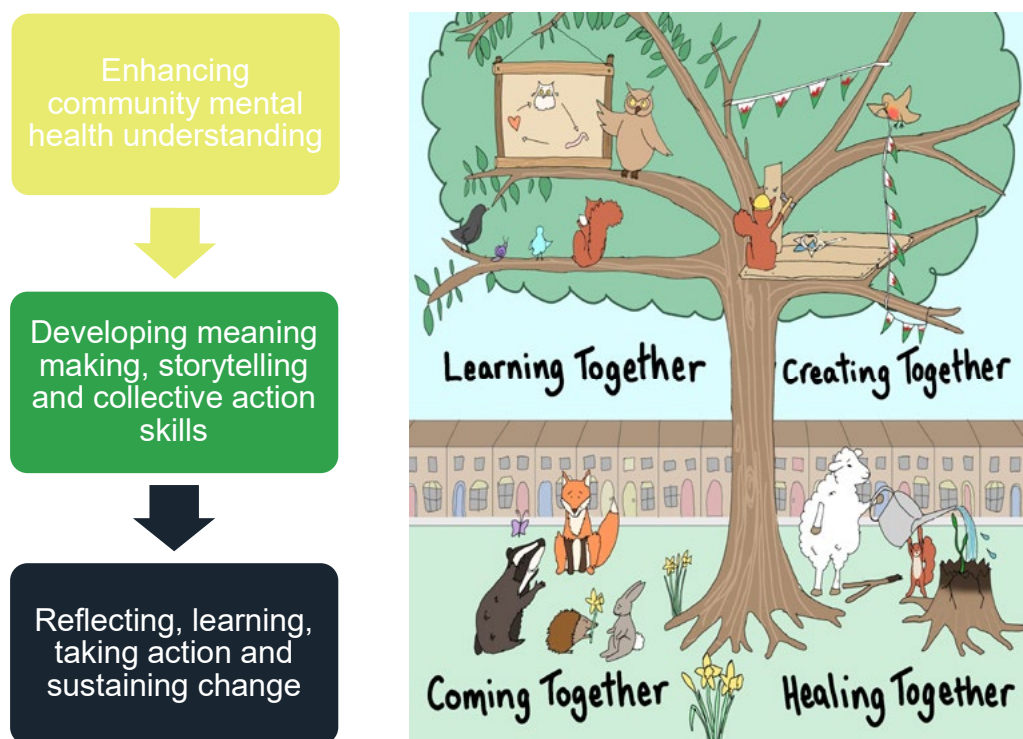
<sup>10</sup> <https://acehubwales.com/>

The group is supported by a community clinical psychologist. The vision of the Embrace pilot is to co-design and test a model to create trauma-informed neighbourhoods in which communities are psychosocially healthy and healing. The priorities are to:

- co-develop a place-based approach to understanding need and improving community wellbeing and resilience in Bettws.
- explore how to provide support and services that are human-rights focused, non-violent, trauma-informed, community-led, healing and culturally sensitive.
- set in motion a self-healer's movement (adult peer to peer support network).

The Embrace model uses storytelling for systems change in a three-part model (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Three-part Embrace Model



(Daffin et al., 2022)

## The importance of story-telling

The Bettws ELC approach places story telling at its heart. The project advocates that from an emotional and mental health perspective, a coherent understanding of yourself is important to good emotional health and research confirms good mental health relies on a story that makes sense to us. For Bettws ELC, making sense and processing is a key part of trauma recovery. A collection of techniques called 'narrative therapy' are helpful in this process. Narrative therapy is a collaborative and non-pathologising approach to counselling and community work which centres people as the experts in their own lives. A narrative approach views problems as separate from people and assumes people as having many skills, abilities, values, commitments, beliefs and competencies that will assist them to change their relationship with the problems influencing their lives. It is a way of working that considers the broader context of people's lives, particularly in the various dimensions of diversity including class, race, gender, sexual orientation and ability (Daffin et al., 2022).

Some expected impacts and outcomes of the pilot include:

### Outcomes for participants

- Improved understanding of the context that influences children and young people's psychosocial wellbeing within communities to support everyday relationships and interactions in their communities.
- To reduce the number of adverse childhood and community experiences children are exposed to, to break the cycle of intergenerational disadvantage and distress that deprived communities' experience. By doing so, the children supported by today's work will become tomorrow's adversity informed and relationally equipped parents.
- Improved psychosocial wellbeing in children, young people, families and communities. Reducing mental health distress and illness.

### Wider impact of this model:

For communities and organisations to understand mental health difficulties as complex responses to adversity, rooted in the meanings that individuals give to their experience. To think of children and young people's experiences as contextually bound.

Increased critical thinking/reflective capacity skills within communities, organisations and systems to support individuals to make sense of their own and their community's trauma and distress.

More information and contact details can be found on the Bettws ELC website:

<https://bettwselc.org.uk/>



## 3.2 Case Study 2: The TrACE Community in North Wales

This section discusses the TrACE community in North Wales, the aim of which is to create systems change with a collective vision, tackling avoidable health and housing inequalities through an approach which gives people the opportunity to grow while promoting wellbeing, healing and recovery. This section focuses on the 2025 Social Movement, ClwydAlyn Housing and Wrexham Glyndŵr University.

### Background

Organisations, individuals and communities in North Wales are piloting a complex and collaborative programme for creating trauma-informed communities across the region. This mission is centred on the belief that there is no single organisation or group which has the knowledge to do this alone, but that the identified partnerships provide the opportunity for the collective examination of the various lenses, while taking collaborative action to deliver a whole system approach.

This work has been initiated, informed and shaped by an innovative partnership between ACE Hub Wales, Wrexham Glyndŵr University and their co-created civic mission focus. The vision has been to work on an organisational level to become a Trauma and ACE (TrACE)-informed University (working alongside other organisations in different sectors, such as ClwydAlyn housing) and to use this as a catalyst to work with the vast range of partners across the region to see how work can be connected across organisation, sector and community boundaries to develop, test and explore a community-wide approach to TrACE informed practice.

The TrACE toolkit (created and shared by ACE Hub Wales) is being tested and explored by different organisations and sectors in North Wales such as Wrexham Glyndŵr University, ClwydAlyn Housing, and Youth Justice in Flintshire. The key principles of a trauma-informed approach, identified by staff involved in the different organisations as essential since testing the TrACE toolkit include:

- Collective approaches that are connected in a whole systems way to develop practical approaches to enable a TrACE lens to be applied across society
- Meaningful consultation, engagement and training around approaches
- Promoting positive relationships (between organisations and between individuals)
- Ensuring individuals feel safe mentally and physically
- Empowering individuals to make a difference in their community and actively participate in decisions
- Fostering a sense of belonging for everyone
- Ensuring that inequality, oppression and exclusion are addressed, and diverse needs are met in a sensitive and nurturing way.

The TrACE-informed project works alongside, and with Wrexham Glyndŵr University's on-going social inclusion work, a strong commitment to mental health and wellbeing and a drive to promote equality, diversity and inclusion. It is a key priority of the civic mission partnership strategy which is working to end social inequality in North Wales.

## The 2025 Social Movement



The North Wales 2025 Social Movement is one of the key partners in the approach, creating a policy context and call for change to drive forward the work begun by Wrexham Glyndŵr University. The 2025 Social Movement is a movement for change with a collective vision to tackle avoidable health and housing inequalities by 2025 in North Wales, with over 600 people and organisations involved in the movement. The approach to building it is founded in systems leadership and social movements resulting in transformational change in the way they work, think and deliver across the region as a collective. It brings together senior leaders and practitioners across a range of organisations such as social housing, local authorities, police and fire services, Public Health Wales, and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. In September 2020, the 2025 Movement agreed that building TrACE-informed communities would form part of their ambitious work plan and be used as the vehicle to realise the vision.

'Just do teams' drive the work of the 2025 movement, with each team bringing together a wealth of expertise from across the movement to identify new challenges, design and test ideas and bring forward solutions to specific health inequalities that are made in North Wales, for North Wales. The teams include Warm Wales; Food Poverty; and Social Prescribing among others. The Food Poverty 'just do' team started out in March 2018, as a place-based piece of work based in Flint but developed a network in Flintshire and a wider network across the whole of North Wales. Flintshire Council with Can Cook and ClwydAlyn have made a significant investment to establish a social enterprise 'Well Fed' to help address food poverty in Flintshire and ultimately North Wales. Initiatives include delivering free fruit for high schools in Flintshire; opening a Good Food Hub in Mold; free school meals during school closures and emergency food support for people who were shielding.

The social prescribing 'just do' team was set up to develop a 'Made in North Wales' social prescribing approach. The focus was to respond to the challenge of how to reimagine health services, shifting from paternal models of care through the NHS to empowering people to take control of their own health care choices and engage them in local community activities. The Community of Practice led in partnership by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board's North Wales programme and through Wrexham Glyndŵr University's civic mission focus was established in October 2018. It provides a wider platform for sharing across Wales, connecting with other communities of practice and is a partner in the Wales School for Social Prescribing research. This is a long-term sustainable model that brings together key practitioners from across a range of backgrounds to develop, improve, connect and share social prescribing practice.

## ClwydAlyn Housing

ClwydAlyn Housing have a Workplace Wellbeing Team to ensure one-to-one support, signposting and access to counselling for staff who have witnessed traumatic experiences, as well as promoting the primary prevention of vicarious trauma by ensuring indicators of trauma development are recognised and addressed. There is a three-year plan for all staff to have had TrACE training and to have become involved in the journey of developing the service's trauma-informed approach and TrACE plan alongside cultural change. ClwydAlyn Housing have two designated, licensed, Mental Health first Aid trainers and currently have 148 trained mental health first aiders within the organisation. This training is being rolled out to all staff across the organisation.

ClwydAlyn Housing also have trained, accredited Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) managers and practitioners in-house to ensure a TRiM process is in place for all serious incidents and will be rolling this out across the company this year. The Wellbeing team also provide post-incident support using a trauma-informed approach for all other incidents. TRiM, developed by the armed forces, is used by many emergency services and is used to further support the identification of secondary and vicarious trauma at an early stage, ensuring the mechanisms are in place to support in a person-centered way, as and when needed.

ClwydAlyn have encouraged cultural change by replacing policy with guidance that is less prescriptive and removing policy that is not TrACE-informed such as disciplinary and grievance policies. ClwydAlyn's organisational values have been refocussed as part of the cultural change which is evident by approaches to becoming a trauma-informed organisation, becoming a TRiM organisation and providing a Wellbeing Team to support all staff in a person-centred way, using a trauma-informed approach. Another example of this can be seen in the newly appointed Early Intervention Officers for residents who may be in a position of crisis, to help resolve issues rather than try to evict them, and work with neighbours to build understanding and support for the situation.

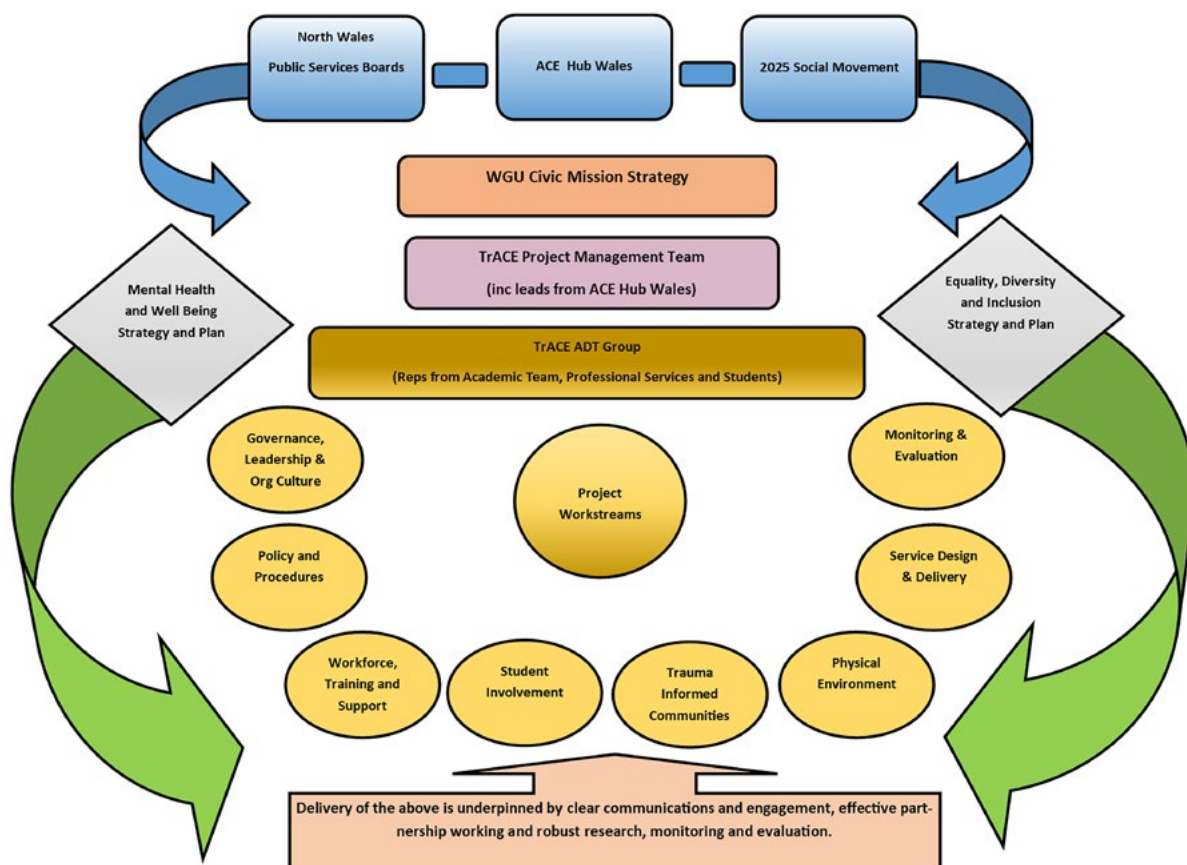
The experience of ClwydAlyn Housing in transitioning policy and practice to become a TrACE-informed organisation has improved the lives of staff and residents. TrACE is being monitored via embedding processes per area of business within ClwydAlyn, and the Wellbeing Team are also going to provide and support managers to use reflective practice within staff teams. It is felt that a network of organisations across Wales and collaborative work groups across services would improve the impact of the approach internally and in the community and allow for reviewing what organisations are doing around TrACE. In addition to this, support with impact monitoring and data gathering, as well as the development of a model that can be used to measure outcomes of TrACE training and changes to policy and practice is also needed.

## Wrexham Glyndŵr University

Wrexham Glyndŵr University are working to become a TrACE-informed institution. The project is being carried out in partnership with ACE Hub Wales. Being TrACE-informed means developing the understanding of trauma and the impact of trauma for everyone that works and studies at Wrexham Glyndŵr University. Becoming TrACE-informed is about developing a fundamental approach that recognises that adversity and trauma are a possibility for everyone, so it is necessary to promote opportunities for wellbeing, healing and recovery.

Wrexham Glyndŵr University have stated that to be trauma-informed within an organisation requires embedding a culture of understanding within all aspects of the organisation (amongst students and staff), and they have used the TrACE toolkit to develop their institutional approach. The approach seeks to remove or adapt policy and practice that may traumatise/ re-traumatise individuals and appreciate that behavioural displays may be a form of communication based on previous experiences. It also must ensure everyone's strengths are highlighted and embraced, and that individuals are given the opportunity to grow and thrive by promoting opportunities for well-being, healing and recovery, with everyone having a role in delivering this.

Figure 12: Wrexham Glyndŵr University Governance Structure



Wrexham Glyndŵr University have a TrACE Academic Development Team Associates Network (consisting of academic and professional services staff, students and representatives from external organisations) who work on various aspects of the TrACE toolkit to embed practices and be the change makers in order to drive policy, process and cultural change across the organisation. Wrexham Glyndŵr University are ensuring that this work is linked into all other relevant and existing plans across Wrexham Glyndŵr University including those relating to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Group and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy Group. Wrexham Glyndŵr University have also established TrACE Champions, made up of students and staff, with a logo and lanyard to bring to life the University's TrACE work.



Wrexham Glyndŵr University have worked closely with ACE Hub Wales, which has included academic input and expert reference support on publications. For example, a collaboratively produced literature review on the key language and terminology used around trauma-informed approaches (Addis et al., 2022). Wrexham Glyndŵr University have also produced (in collaboration with ACE Hub Wales) the 'Navigating the Storm' animation (Figure 13), launched with the Welsh Government, the Future Generations Commissioner and UNICEF. Various organisations within the community are using this animation to help with the understanding of trauma and trauma-informed practice. Wrexham Glyndŵr University's future approach plans to use smart communications, engagement, and training to drive forward this agenda with both staff and students.

Figure 13: Navigating the Storm Animation



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uFSsE2qOnuw>

Wrexham Glyndŵr University has a co-produced civic mission that has been shaped with partners and communities to end social inequality by 2030 across North Wales. Wrexham Glyndŵr University works with all partners across the region on this collective challenge to enable action in three priority areas, all focused on enabling outcomes to support and enable the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

1. Leadership and whole systems working
2. Building community resilience
3. Keeping well

The call for change by the 2025 movement has been driven forward through civic mission partnerships by Wrexham Glyndŵr University and partners such as ClwydAlyn. They are supporting this work, by using and testing the TrACE toolkit as a framework at a regional, institutional and organisational level to create a trauma-informed North Wales. A Civic Mission Project Manager leads the engagement around the TrACE-informed University project for Wrexham Glyndŵr University, while the lead for the Civic Mission Partnerships Strategy promotes the TrACE agenda through national and international conferences and involvement in partnership such as the Actif North Wales, and as part of the Public Service Boards established by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act legislation. Another key part of the Civic Mission Project Manager's role is to project manage and act as the bridge between both Wrexham Glyndŵr University, and the trauma-informed communities work, which interact and inform one another.

The current focus is to implement the TrACE informed approach across Wrexham Glyndŵr University and establish a North Wales Community of Practice. This applies for anyone across the region that is working or trying to work in a TrACE-informed way so they can create a dynamic learning community that shares, innovates, learns, connects and drives change within organisations and communities and connect this across the region to initiate a TrACE community wide approach. This will be led by Northeast Wales Mind and supported in partnership by Wrexham Glyndŵr University, the 2025 Movement, ACE Hub Wales and the North Wales Insight Partnership (set up to connect the Public Service Boards across the region to work together to innovate and maximise the wellbeing assessments impact and share and learn across the region).

Wrexham Glyndŵr University has also developed content around TrACE within an induction module for all new students and are developing a round of communications based on the new Trauma-Informed Wales Framework (ACE Hub Wales and Traumatic Stress Wales, 2022) to inform the leadership team and cascade organisational change across Wrexham Glyndŵr University.

The mission to become a trauma-informed university has already seen several key achievements and developments in the last two years. This includes winning a Kindness in Education Award (Figure 14) as a result of the project team submitting a 3-minute video application in which they highlighted the commitment to becoming a TrACE-informed university with two project examples: Navigating the Storm and the TrACE Champions.

Figure 14: Kindness in Education Award



One of the student ambassadors who nominated Wrexham Glyndŵr University for an 'Above and Beyond' staff team award said:

*"The team strive to ensure Wrexham Glyndŵr University leads the way in becoming the first Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (TrACE) informed University. Not only is the passion and desire to improve student experiences and encourage engagement apparent, but the inclusive approach drawing upon a collaborative approach using student skills in the process."*

(Student Ambassador, Wrexham Glyndŵr University)

*"At Wrexham Glyndŵr University, we aim to embed kindness and compassion in everything we do, and we want to ensure that all students and staff are nurtured to thrive in a supportive environment that builds on their strengths recognising that people respond incredibly well when they feel safe, empowered and trusted, so that everyone at Wrexham Glyndŵr University can thrive and achieve their aspirations."*

(Dr. Caroline Hughes, Wrexham Glyndŵr University)

In respect of impact, to understand and learn from the approaches taken so far and to capture any early impacts, Wrexham Glyndŵr University will use the Most Significant Change Technique. This is a technique which is about capturing people's stories of change and what changes they have seen and felt. It will provide a richness and nuance to understand what has changed and why, as well as providing powerful stories that can be shared with others. The formal evaluation will begin in December 2022, with key findings available by April 2023.



### 3.3 Case Study 3: Ceredigion, West Wales

This section discusses a multi-agency approach on a local authority footprint in Ceredigion, West Wales. It includes examples from Ceredigion Council (Porth Cymorth Cynnar) and Dyfed-Powys Police (INTACT) of initiatives to identify and support communities and individuals through a series of programmes and interventions.

## Background

Ceredigion is a local authority area in West Wales. It has a population of approximately 75,000, with 49% of adults speaking Welsh (Ceredigion County Council, 2022). It has a university town in Aberystwyth and is part of the Dyfed-Powys Police force area and is served by Hywel Dda Health Board. Over the last decade, Ceredigion has seen a significant increase in older age groups living in the area. As a consequence, demand for certain services has increased, placing a greater financial pressure on those service areas. Unemployment levels, coupled with low-income levels, has placed increased difficulties on the ability of people to access safe, affordable housing, and concerns around substance use, mental ill health and domestic abuse are all issues that pose significant challenges for the community. Ceredigion is a low-income economy, with household income amongst the lowest in Wales, despite having relatively high qualification levels in the workforce. In-work poverty is significant and affects a higher proportion of citizens in Ceredigion than in the acknowledged deprived areas in the Valleys and East Wales (Ceredigion County Council, 2017). West Wales has seen a dramatic rise in child poverty during the last five years as a result of stagnating family incomes, an increase of rent and the COVID-19 pandemic. The rate of children living in poverty in Ceredigion in 2019/20 was 31.85, a percentage increase from 2014/15 of 2.7% (Ceredigion County Council, 2022).

## Ceredigion Council: Porth Cymorth Cynnar

Porth Cymorth Cynnar provides through-age, integrated delivery of universal and focussed early support, information, advice and intervention. The service aims to improve aspects of an individual's personal, social, educational, physical, mental and emotional wellbeing by promoting individual and family resilience, empowerment and independence. It aims to provide easily accessible, focussed advice and support. The service also enhances the physical activity offer in Ceredigion whilst strengthening and increasing the skills and knowledge of individuals, through work experience and volunteering opportunities.

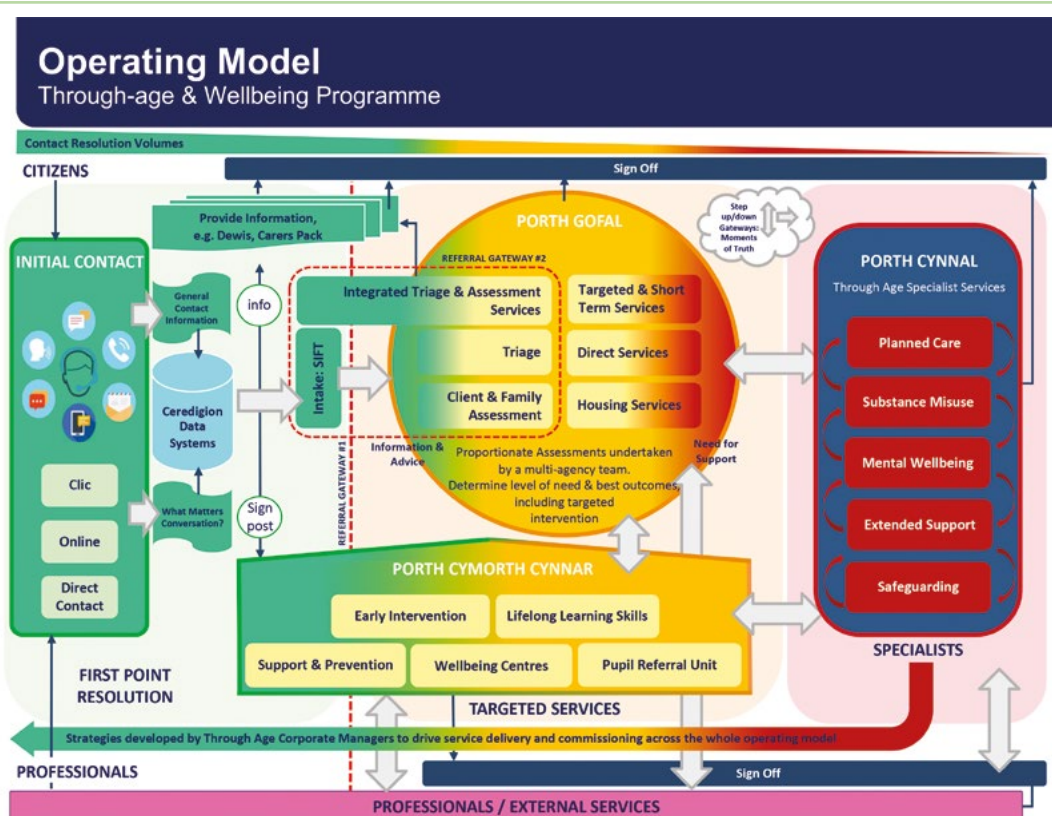
Porth Cymorth Cynnar is a multiagency approach involving partnership working between the health sector, police, voluntary and third-sector.

The overall aim of Porth Cymorth Cynnar is:

- To ensure every child, young person and adult in Ceredigion will be able to reach their full potential
- To ensure fair access to excellent universal and targeted services that safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of all citizens
- To develop skills and resilience that will last a lifetime and enable individuals to cope well with the challenges and pressures they face

The Porth Cymorth Cynnar service sits under the Through Age and Wellbeing Model Strategy 2021-2027. The Strategy is a key part of the Ceredigion County Council Corporate Strategy, which aims to enable the delivery of services that will enhance the social, economic, environment and cultural wellbeing for the people of Ceredigion. A multi-agency approach is utilised in this model to effectively cover the breadth of service provision in Ceredigion.

Figure 15: Through-age and Wellbeing Programme: Operating Model



The top level of service delivery is that of Porth Cynnal which will provide the specialist service for all clients based on need; and includes services to support substance use, mental health, extended support, safeguarding and planned care. A small triage hub has been set up with Porth Gofal which determines the level of need for all customers and looks to get the best outcome for those individuals who come in contact with the service. This hub will be at the heart of service provision and will focus on ensuring that citizens receive intervention that is timely, best placed to meet their needs, and where necessary, a guide to specialist services.

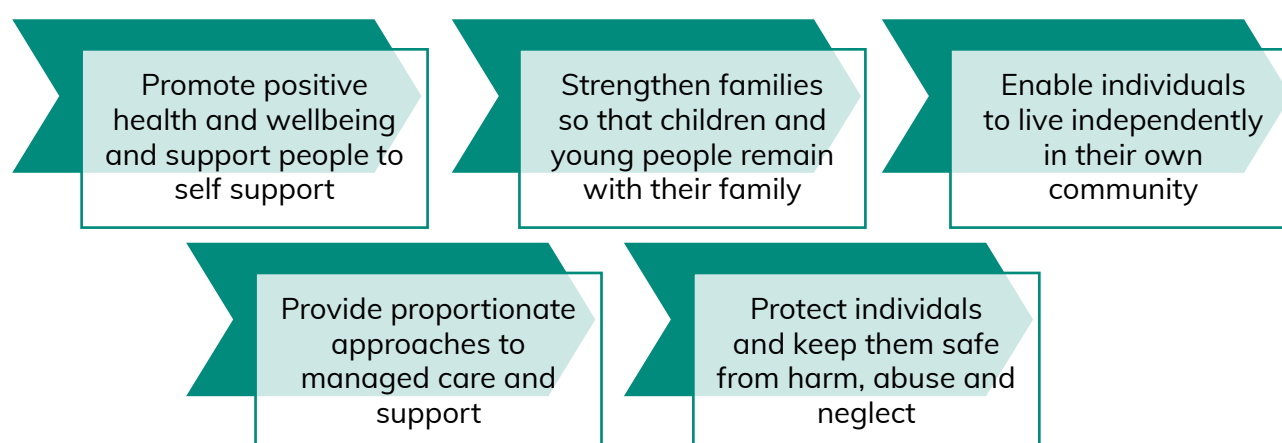
Porth Cymorth Cynnar seeks to build early help, prevention and intervention services for a range of groups and individuals. The purpose of these services is to identify need and offer support before issues and concerns need a formal intervention.

Porth Cymorth Cynnar Services include:

- Wellbeing Centre North
- Through Age Physical Activity & Play Team
- Wellbeing Centres Mid and South
- Employment and Training
- Vocational Learning and Skills
- Parenting and Families
- Carers and Community Support Team
- Support and Attainment
- Youth Work and Engagement
- Community and Youth Prevention

To ensure that the Porth Cymorth Cynnar service is used for its intended purposes whilst being dedicated to effective service delivery, it has been recognised that a change from theory to practice needs to happen. This practice change involves ‘being prepared to try different ways of working’ and:

|                                                                                                 |                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Focusing on enabling people to do things for themselves, promoting independence and autonomy    | Supporting the family and social network                                                       |
| Being led by a good ‘what matters conversation’ that identifies what is important to the person | Enabling people to build on what they can do and the support that they have around them        |
| Creativity and innovation to develop a tailored approach to the person and their network        | Promoting positive risk taking and enable people to exercise choice in how their needs are met |



*“We believe that the work we are implementing around the Porth Cymorth Cynnar model will build on the extensive training, development and investment we have made at Ceredigion towards a trauma-informed approach. We are working with limited resources, and incising challenges from COVID-19 and the increasing cost of living. This model will enable us to provide ‘the right support at the right time to those that need it most’”*  
(Elen James, Ceredigion Council)

## Dyfed-Powys Police: INTACT

INTACT is a multi-agency partnership programme to tackle serious violence and organised crime in Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire and Powys – and aims to keep our communities safe together.

One of the priorities of the programme is early intervention and prevention, and this work is undertaken by a dedicated team of INTACT Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) who were appointed in April 2021. The team are very much a ‘specialist Neighbourhood Policing Team’ and have supported more than 235 referrals through a project called 121 Trusted Adult Work (supporting children, young people and vulnerable adults to access the right help at the right time) or group interventions since the pilot started in May 2021. They have also contributed to problem solving around the management of organised crime groups and have educated more than 5,000 people about the signs and harms associated with different types of serious violence and organised crime.

### Meet Michala:

Michala is an INTACT PCSO for Ceredigion. Before joining Dyfed-Powys Police Michala was a youth worker; she joined as a desk clerk dealing with public enquiries at Lampeter Police Station, then moved to Aberystwyth police station before becoming a PCSO. Her past experience of working with children and young people, and passion for the job really shows as she describes how the INTACT team, and her role, support the overarching aims of Dyfed- Powys Police Vulnerability Hub. The INTACT programme looks for opportunities for prevention and early intervention with Michala working with parents and communities throughout Ceredigion when children and young people go missing from school or concerns are raised about their behaviour. Michala works with parents on a voluntary basis, signposting to help such as Choices West<sup>11</sup>, the Specialist Substance Misuse Young Person Service Ceredigion or working with services such as Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Project pathways might include working with a Choices West worker and Hywel Dda Young Person Liaison Nurse doing group work on sexual health, alcohol and drugs, consent or sexting and social media.

<sup>11</sup> Choices West is a specialist substance misuse young person service covering Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire and works with young people aged 18 or under and their concerned others.

### What Michala does

Michala is able to describe the families, individuals and communities she has helped in amazing detail; she is part of that community and makes a difference. Sometimes it is through referring to programmes such as Premier Kicks run by Swansea City Foundation. Dyfed-Powys Police and Crime Commissioner funded these free sessions to encourage participation in sport and promote social interaction. Michala and other INTACT officers and youth workers attend weekly and 35-40 young people come along. Michala has also helped out on the youth services' summer trips to Laser Tag, the surfing activity and mountain biking – again promoting structure, support and participation. She has also supported girls to understand the importance of healthy relationships and self-esteem with sexually active teenagers at 'Go Girls' and tackling county lines through male focussed rugby activities at 'Ruck It'.

## Impact

### Story 1:

A young boy had started using Cannabis and mixing with a group of boys in another town. Cannabis use once a week was exacerbated by the group of boys winding him up and then the wider community beginning to accuse him of causing trouble just because they knew his face. Following his referral to INTACT and sessions around violence and injury it was established that his ambition was to join the army. Following encouragement to do football and boxing and through Michala's engagement he became interested in fitness; there were no calls from the community, and he stopped smoking. He is now engaged at a further education college where he hopes to pursue an army career when he reaches 18.

### Story 2:

A family was struggling to support their son, who had been diagnosed with ADHD. He was struggling with volatile behaviour and increasing shut down towards his mother. Michala visits mum, in uniform, to chat about what could be done to support him, finding things that they can do together but also providing a break by taking him for walks in the summer. Now when Michala speaks to him on the phone, he looks forward to talking; and he will now be heading for secondary school.

### Story 3:

A group of girls had a falling out; the peer group became separated, and messages were being exchanged that were goading, promoting self-harm and bullying. Through group work on the impact of bullying and education into its effects the girls have established their friendships based on a better understanding of the harm they were causing to each other.

*“INTACT are providing the single trusted adult model as opposed to a multiple contact, overwhelming model that traumatises children and young people. INTACT is one arm of the interventions needed. What we would like to see in Ceredigion is a joined-up model with Porth Cymorth Cynnar and Aberystwyth University to realise the potential that we have here for an integrated, multi-agency approach.”*

*(Richard Yelland, Chief Inspector, Dyfed-Powys Vulnerability Hub)*

### **Aberystwyth University**

Aberystwyth University have committed to developing their approach to becoming a trauma-informed university with support from ACE Hub Wales, and the work will continue to join up these multiagency models to become an integrated approach to trauma-informed communities in Ceredigion.

## Section 4: Trauma-Informed Approaches beyond Wales

This section outlines examples of trauma-informed community approaches at the policy level in high income countries beyond Wales, including United States, Canada, New Zealand and Republic of Ireland as well as England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, together with brief examples of initiatives in those countries (Table 2, 3 and 4).

### 4.1 Trauma-informed policy and practice in high-income countries

#### North America

In the United States, CDC research has found that trauma is prevalent within communities and that everyone can experience trauma throughout their lives (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022). ACEs are common, with 62% of adults surveyed across 25 states reporting that they have experienced one type of ACE before age 18 and nearly one in six reporting to have experienced four or more types of ACEs (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022). The CDC's Center for Preparedness and Response (CPR), in collaboration with SAMHSA's National Center for Trauma-Informed Care, developed and led new training for CPR employees about the role of trauma-informed care during public health emergencies. The training aimed to increase responder awareness of the impact that trauma can have in the communities where they work. Examples of trauma-informed community initiatives in the US include the Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model (Table 3).

In Canada, 32% of adults report having an experience of abuse in childhood (Afifi et al., 2016), with the Alberta ACE study reporting that 55.8% of participants have one or more ACEs, while 20% reported three or more (Public Health Ontario, 2020). Since 2010, trauma-informed policies have emerged, highlighting an increased understanding of a broad definition and various types of trauma (Lee et al., 2021). The Canadian Government recognises that trauma is a public health concern both nationally and internationally and to address this, trauma-informed approaches are being widely promoted. An example is Stella's Place, a young adult, age-specific, community based mental health service (Table 2).

## New Zealand

In New Zealand, achieving wellbeing for children is a national Government priority, with a goal for the country to be the best place in the world for children and young people (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2019). It has been identified that the prevalence of ACEs in the population stand at 55% of people reporting to have experienced at least one ACE (Fanslow et al., 2021). The prevention of childhood trauma, maltreatment, and family dysfunction remain important public health goals to address to support the wellbeing of children and adults in New Zealand (Fanslow et al., 2021). An example is the All Right? Initiative (Table 3).

## Scotland

In Scotland, the Scottish Government has made a commitment to preventing and mitigating ACEs and trauma, first outlined in its 'Programme for Government (2017-2018)' which advised how best to support resilience in children and adults negatively affected by ACEs or trauma (Scottish Government, 2017). Building on this, the 'Programme for Government' (2019-2020 and 2021-2022) outlined four key actions: (1) support parents, families and children to prevent ACEs; (2) mitigate the negative impact of ACEs for children and young people; (3) develop an adversity and trauma-informed workforce and services, supported by the National Trauma Training Programme and; (4) raise societal awareness about ACEs and support action across communities (Scottish Government, 2021).

The Scottish Government has made a commitment to preventing ACEs and to supporting the resilience and recovery of all children and adults affected by psychological trauma (Scottish Government, 2018). Part of this commitment includes investment of over two million pounds since 2018, to establish a National Trauma Training Programme, led by NHS Education for Scotland (NES) to support a trauma-informed and trauma responsive workforce and services across Scotland (NHS Education for Scotland, 2019). The National Trauma Training Programme provides accessible, evidence-based trauma training resources, including a leadership development component, and a team of Implementation Co-ordinators to support all sectors of the workforce to embed and sustain trauma-informed practice (NHS Education for Scotland, 2021). In 2021, the Programme further established a network of senior 'Trauma Champions' from across local authorities and health boards, who will be supported by NES and the Improvement Service to influence change across local areas and ensure sustainability beyond the life of the Programme (NHS Education for Scotland). Examples of trauma-informed approach initiatives in Scotland include 'Speak Out Scotland' and 'Settle Wellbeing' (Table 2).

## England

In England, it is estimated that nearly 50% of people have experienced at least one ACE and around 9% of people have experienced four or more ACEs (Bellis et al., 2014). 'Health Matters' has called for co-working across voluntary, community and private sectors to ensure that children have the best start in life to carry them forward into healthy and secure adults who can live fulfilling, productive and connected lives (Public Health England, 2019). In 2019, the NHS Long Term Plan integrated trauma-informed approaches to health, making it a priority for children and young people's mental health services to understand complex trauma. The NHS Long Term Plan also included the need for a model of primary and community mental health services that support adults and older adults to provide support and trauma-informed care (NHS England, 2019).

The Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (Formerly Public Health England) produced a document which seeks to provide a working definition of trauma-informed practice for practitioners working in the health and care sector. This definition reflects the internationally recognised SAMHSA definition (Section 1.2), identifying the key principles of trauma-informed practice as: safety; trust; choice; collaboration, empowerment and cultural consideration (Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, 2022). Examples of trauma-informed community initiatives in England include Blackpool Better Start (Table 3); Empower (Table 3); Trauma-Informed Lancashire (Table 4) and Plymouth Trauma Network (Table 4).

## Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland in 2018, the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) commissioned a rapid evidence assessment to facilitate and support the adoption of trauma-informed practice across health, social care, justice, education and community and voluntary systems in Northern Ireland. The key message was that, with the correct provision of resources and commitment to planning and ongoing review, trauma and adversity informed systems could potentially offer valuable gains for children and young people, their extended networks and communities (Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland, 2018). This built on the Stormont House Agreement published in 2014, which identified key issues that would open the way to a more prosperous, stable and secure future for Northern Ireland, and in particular a focus on the improvement of mental health and trauma services (Department of Health, 2022). The commitment made by the Health Minister for Northern Ireland is to move towards this commitment with the establishment of a Regional Trauma Network to better support victims and survivors. The Regional Trauma Network will involve statutory, community and voluntary sector organisations working collaboratively across sectors to provide trauma care to individuals (Health and Social Care Board, 2022). An example of a trauma-informed initiative in Northern Ireland is the WAVE Trauma Centre (Table 2).

## Republic of Ireland

In the Republic of Ireland, 61% of people have experienced at least one ACE and 12.5% of the general population have experienced four or more ACEs, additionally, 50% of the population accessing mental health services have experienced four or more ACEs (Trauma Informed Practice Ireland, 2022). The need for a trauma-informed approach has been acknowledged and Trauma Informed Practice Ireland provides a range of training and support to assist organisations that are seeking to work in a trauma-informed way. The programme includes core training in trauma-informed practice, specialised training, TIP standards; assessment supports, and other implementation supports. An example of a trauma-informed initiative in the Republic of Ireland is Cork Healthy Cities (Table 4).

## 4.2 Community initiatives; Grass roots approaches

Table 2: Community Initiatives; Grass roots approaches

| Name                      | Location          | Summary of Services                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Stella's Place</b>     | Toronto, Canada   | <p>Stella's place has a mission of partnering young adults and professionals to provide a collaborative, innovative model for mental health services and has become a prototype for young adult driven age-specific, community based mental health services in Canada. Working in a variety of ways to include peer support, clinical services, employment support, wellness, art and recovery programmes, Stella's place looks to work to help young adults learn skills, build community and be empowered to manage their own mental health.</p> <p><a href="https://stellasplace.ca/">https://stellasplace.ca/</a></p>                                                                            |
| <b>Settle Wellbeing</b>   | Glasgow, Scotland | <p>Settle Wellbeing are a community interest company based in Glasgow who work with young adult survivors of persecution and organised violence. The aim of this community project is to support and empower service users to live a satisfying and meaningful life by providing a range of social, community and mental health support services. Activities include drama projects, peer support groups, preparing food as a community and trauma-informed exercise. The aim of these activities is to increase socialisation and enhance wellbeing while empowering life skills and building self-esteem.</p> <p><a href="https://settlewellbeing.org.uk/">https://settlewellbeing.org.uk/</a></p> |
| <b>Speak Out Scotland</b> | Scotland          | <p>Created as a response to the lack of services available for male survivors of trauma, Speak Out Scotland offer a holistic approach to recovery from childhood sexual abuse. Putting survivors at the heart of the organisation, they aim to improve the health and wellbeing of Scotland's male survivors using a designated outreach programme. Within this, there is a commitment to raising awareness of trauma, breaking down the stigma surrounding childhood sexual abuse and engaging with communities to educate and identify barrier to services.</p> <p><a href="https://speakoutscotland.org/">https://speakoutscotland.org/</a></p>                                                   |
| <b>WAVE Trauma Centre</b> | Northern Ireland  | <p>Wave was formed in 1991 by eight women who had experienced spousal loss during the conflict in Northern Ireland. The main objective was to empower women to cope after traumatic bereavement or injury as a result of conflict. The organisation has evolved to be the largest cross community victim's group in Northern Ireland, with five centres and fifteen projects spread across the country. The ethos of the organisation is one of inclusiveness for anyone who has been bereaved or traumatised by conflict or troubles in Northern Ireland.</p> <p><a href="https://wavetraumacentre.org.uk/">https://wavetraumacentre.org.uk/</a></p>                                                |

## 4.3 Community initiatives; Multi agency approaches

Table 3: Community initiatives; Multi agency approaches

| Name                                 | Location                | Summary of Services                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Building Community Resilience</b> | Oregon, USA             | <p>Building Community Resilience (BCR) is a transformative approach which looks to foster collaboration across health systems, community-based agencies and cross sector partners to address the root causes of toxic stress and childhood adversity and build community resilience. One such example of this approach is in Oregon, USA where the Trillium Group is the largest provider of mental and behavioural healthcare for children and families and has acted as the host organisation for fundamental and organisation platform change. A key component of the BCR Oregon work is to address the 'Pair of ACEs' (Ellis and Dietz, 2017) by providing and expanding trauma-informed approaches to individuals and services that work directly with families. By adopting trauma-informed approaches in practice there is an understanding, recognition and sensitive response to experiences of trauma and adversity.</p> <p><a href="https://www.oregonalliance.org/aces-and-bcr">https://www.oregonalliance.org/aces-and-bcr</a></p> |
| <b>All Right?</b>                    | Canterbury, New Zealand | <p>All Right? is a collaborative partnership between Canterbury District Health Board and the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand. All Right? was originally launched in 2013 to support the psychological recovery of citizens following the earthquakes of 2010 and 2011. Since then, the campaign has become a trusted brand in the community helping people to recover from traumatic life events. All Right? has now developed into a health-promoting social marketing campaign and has become a powerful champion for wellbeing. A vision for All Right? is to normalise social conversations surrounding mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p><a href="https://www.allright.org.nz/">https://www.allright.org.nz/</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Blackpool Better Start</b>        | Blackpool, England      | <p>Blackpool Better Start is available to support families in Blackpool to have the best outcomes for their babies and children from pregnancy to starting school. This community model is a multi-agency partnership in Blackpool between the NSPCC<sup>12</sup>, Local Authority, Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundations Trust and Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group, community members, police and voluntary nursery settings. The aim is to improve the outcomes of children by working collaboratively across partnerships to provide services that help with child and parent health and wellbeing as well as issues such as addiction and anger in the home.</p> <p><a href="https://blackpoolbetterstart.org.uk/">https://blackpoolbetterstart.org.uk/</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

12 The NSPCC is the UK's leading children's charity, working to prevent abuse, help rebuild children's lives and support families

|                         |                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Empower Plymouth</b> | Plymouth, England | <p>Empower Plymouth was commissioned by Barnardo's and the NSPCC to develop a strategic approach to quality healthy relationship education. The project was underpinned by academic research and formed the basis of creating a whole school approach to relationship and sex education. Empower Plymouth provides the voice of lived experience and have devised a common definition of a healthy relationship to create a common language moving forward. By utilising lived experience combined with professional expertise in this space, Empower have been able to co-create an online media presentation to help explain a healthy relationship.</p> <p><a href="https://vimeo.com/320294361">https://vimeo.com/320294361</a></p> |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## 4.4 Community initiatives; local authority and city-wide approaches

Table 4: Community initiatives; local authority and city-wide approaches

| Name                              | Location                  | Summary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Trauma-informed Lancashire</b> | Lancashire, England       | <p>Trauma-informed Lancashire is a culture change and multi-agency initiative, facilitated by Lancashire Violence Reduction Network<sup>13</sup> with an aim to support public and third sector services (Lancashire Violence Reduction Network, 2020). There is a strong working relationship pan-Lancashire with safeguarding, public health and voluntary and community sectors recognising that there is a need for social change to deliver consistent support. Lancashire Safeguarding Children's Board and Lancashire County Council have identified the need to be trauma and ACE-aware at the most basic level for developing appropriate family support services across the region.</p> <p><a href="https://www.traumainformedlancashire.co.uk/">https://www.traumainformedlancashire.co.uk/</a></p>                                |
| <b>Plymouth Trauma Network</b>    | Plymouth, England         | <p>Through the Plymouth trauma network, the city envisions a transformative approach that enables people, communities, and services to come together to mobilise and be compassionate. Underpinning the approach of the network is recognition of the impact of traumatic experiences and the need for safe relationships for healing to occur. This approach recognises the signs and expressions of trauma and seeks to address the causes, it responds with empathy, integrating this into every aspect of the community and resists re-traumatising people and aims to de-escalate anxiety that adversity can cause. It also aims to build resilience of people and communities.</p> <p><a href="https://traumainformedplymouth.org/our-network/">https://traumainformedplymouth.org/our-network/</a></p>                                 |
| <b>Cork Healthy Cities</b>        | Cork, Republic of Ireland | <p>Cork has been designated a World Health Organisation (WHO) Healthy City since January 2012. The European Healthy Cities movement is based on a recognition that citizen health is not just the responsibility of healthcare services but largely determined by policies and action beyond the health sector. A Healthy Cities approach can uniquely advance health and health equity while also advancing other sustainable development goals (SDGs), this is the mission of Cork Healthy Cities. This approach works on the understanding that health can be improved or harmed by social policy, transport policy, education policy and the built environment which can all impact vulnerable groups.</p> <p><a href="https://corkhealthycities.com/action-plan-2020-2030/">https://corkhealthycities.com/action-plan-2020-2030/</a></p> |

<sup>13</sup> Lancashire Violence Reduction Network are a team of specialists from health, education, police, youth offending, probation, local government and social care who work together to share best practices and connect services to tackle violent crime and its underlying causes.

## Section 5: Discussion

The study has showcased three examples of trauma-informed communities in Wales and placed these models within the wider context of similar approaches in other high-income countries. This section brings together the evidence by providing a brief summary of the findings and a comparison of the key elements of the three case studies using grass root, multi-agency and local authority models as a framework. This section then outlines the contribution this study makes to the evidence base and finally, identifies areas for further research.

### 5.1 Summary of the findings

The case studies of trauma-informed community initiatives in Wales detail three community models of trauma-informed approaches: a grass roots approach in Bettws, South Wales; a multi-agency approach in North Wales; and a local authority approach in Ceredigion, West Wales. In other high-income countries, initiatives similar to the three Welsh case studies are evident. Examples include, at the grass root level: Stella's Place, an age specific mental health services in Canada and the Wave Trauma Centre in Northern Ireland which was established to empower women to cope after traumatic bereavement or injury as a result of conflict. At the multi-agency level, examples of programmes include Building Community Resilience (BCR) in Oregon, USA which aims to foster collaboration across health systems, community-based agencies and cross sectors partners to address the causes of toxic stress and build community resilience. Also, Blackpool Better Start which aims to improve the outcomes of children by working collaboratively to provide services that help with child and parent health and wellbeing. Finally, at the local authority level, Plymouth Trauma Network which enables people, communities and services to come together to mobilise and create a compassionate city and Cork Healthy Cities, that connects to improve the health and wellbeing of all its people and reduce health inequalities.

## 5.2 Key elements of the three models; a comparison

The aim of this study is to contribute to knowledge of what are the key elements of a trauma-informed community approach in Wales, and what works in a range of different demographic and geographical settings and at different scales. This section compares the three Welsh case studies using three models as a framework.



### The grass roots approach

A **grass roots approach** is highlighted by the Early Learning Community (ELC) in Bettws, South Wales. The ELC programme focusses on improving learning outcomes for children growing up in poverty by using a collaborative way of working and bringing services and people together to understand the needs of the community and provide support. Key features of the grass roots approach, as demonstrated by the Bettws ELC, include a community model of trauma-informed approaches which provides a holistic view of transformational change, relying on people within the community to support the cause and initiate change. As a result, the lived experience of community members is a facilitator of healing, contributing to change to meet the needs of the community in which they live. In this way, working together to integrate trauma-informed approaches can increase social support between community members, social cohesion and promote a sense of belonging (Falkenburger et al., 2018). Further, community members' knowledge can be a bridge to services, linking the gap between what organisations think a community needs and what the community actually needs. Finally, approaches that use creative practices to promote healing, such as the storytelling approach in Bettws, are a powerful mechanism of change and allow opportunities for community members to reframe the narrative about their community (Wolin et al., 2015).



### The multi-agency approach

In respect of a **multi-agency approach**, the TrACE Community in North Wales aims to create systems change with a collective vision to tackle avoidable health and housing inequalities. Such an approach looks to give people the opportunity to grow, while promoting wellbeing, healing and recovery. In North Wales, the multi-agency approach includes everyone who participates in systems such as health, education, childcare or recreation. As a result, interventions within these systems have the potential to reach the entire population and consequently, when trauma-informed practices are embedded in these systems, there is the potential to address inequalities (Tebes et al., 2019). Such multi-agency working is viewed as the most effective approach, both at an operational and strategic level and observed benefits of multi-agency working include improvements in inter-professional relations and communications as well as improved wellbeing among professionals (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2014).



## The local authority approach

Ceredigion provides an example of a multi-agency approach in a **local authority** footprint, highlighting the importance of using a multi-faceted approach and cross-sector collaboration to ensure service provision. Ceredigion Council and Dyfed-Powys Police have developed initiatives to identify and support communities and individuals through a series of programmes and interventions. Within a local authority approach, collaborations linked to meaningful change at a system and policy level, can encourage community healing as developing trauma and ACE-informed approaches within communities requires change at multiple levels across a nation, with a systematic alignment of key principles and initiatives (Falkenburger et al., 2018). Such an approach provides a platform and mechanism for engaging and working with local governments and communities on issues impacting health and well-being (World Health Organization, 2020).

### 5.3 The contribution of this study

This study will contribute to the ongoing knowledge development and exchange on TrACE at ACE Hub Wales as a key resource to support the development of trauma-informed communities across Wales. It will also be an important resource for the implementation of the Trauma-Informed Wales Framework, which identifies communities in its five key principles and throughout the all-society approach. This study also supports the Deputy Minister for Social Care's principles for the ACE work in Wales, to continue with a focus on communities.

This report also provides an opportunity for shared learning in terms of which model would be the best fit given the background, circumstances and needs of each community; the use of the three models as a framework could be used to underpin further analysis.

### 5.4 Opportunities for further research

Understanding how people perceive the implementation of a trauma-informed model within their communities and the impact of these projects on individuals is important to capture when evaluating outcomes. However, while evaluations at the case study sites are planned, there are challenges in terms of how to measure the impact of such interventions on those who use these services. The number of factors at play in such complex community initiatives cannot be easily measured, and this makes it difficult to understand the impact of such initiatives on stakeholders (Longhi et al., 2019 cited in Champine et al., 2019).

## Section 6: Conclusion

In Wales, a trauma-informed approach is supported and championed in recognition of the need to support the development of trauma-informed practice and services and the commitment to become a trauma-informed nation (Welsh Government, 2021). The Welsh case studies showcased in this report indicate a rich environment in Wales, with examples of initiatives at the grass roots, multi-agency and local authority level. Rather than an evaluation of each approach, the purpose of this study is to build a picture of the activity that is ongoing, the outcomes they are hoping to achieve, and an understanding of the developing contribution of Wales to trauma-informed communities work, globally.

These initiatives provide a range of services for community members, including improving learning outcomes for children growing up in poverty, tackling avoidable health and housing inequalities and using a multi-faceted approach and cross-sector collaboration to ensure service provision. Key to these approaches is the use of a collaborative way of working, bringing services and people together to understand the needs of the community and provide support. As a result, such approaches give people the opportunity to grow, while promoting wellbeing, healing and recovery.

## Section 7: Bibliography

- ACE Hub Wales and Traumatic Stress Wales. (2022) Trauma-Informed Wales: A Societal Approach to Understanding, Preventing and Supporting the Impacts of Trauma and Adversity. Cardiff. Available at: [Trauma-Informed Wales \(traumaframeworkcymru.com\)](https://traumaframeworkcymru.com) (Accessed: 12 December 2022).
- Addis, S., Wey T., Toll E., Hopkins J.C. (2021) 'What Works to Prevent Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) at the Community Level? An Evidence Review and Mapping Exercise'. Available at: [What-Works-to-Prevent-ACEs-at-the-Community-Level.-An-Evidence-Review-Mapping-Exercise-Executive-Summary-1.pdf \(aceawarewales.com\)](https://aceawarewales.com) Accessed: 25 November 2022).
- Addis, S., Brierley-Solis, T., Jones, Hughes, C. (2022) "Trauma-informed": Identifying Key Language and Terminology through a Review of the Literature'. Available at: [ACES-Trauma-informed-Literature-Review-English-Final.pdf \(phwwhocc.co.uk\)](https://phwwhocc.co.uk) (Accessed: 25 November 2022).
- Addis, S. and Hopkins, J.C. (2022) What Works in the Prevention and Early Intervention of ACEs at the Community Level? Identifying and Supporting Project across Wales. Cardiff. Available at: [ACES-What-Works-in-Community-Interventions-English-final.pdf \(aceawarewales.com\)](https://aceawarewales.com) (Accessed: 12 December 2022).
- Affi, T., MacMillan H. L., Boyle, M., Cheung K., Taillieu, Turner, S., Sareen J. (2016) Child Abuse and Physical Health in Adulthood. *Heath Rep.* 16:27 (3): 10-8
- Avery, J.C., Morris H., Galvin, E., Misso, M., Savaglio, M., Skouteris, H. (2020) 'Systematic Review of School-Wide Trauma-Informed Approaches', *Journal of child & adolescent trauma*, 14(3), pp. 381–397. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-020-00321-1>.
- Barton, E., Bezecsky, Z., Newbury, A., Roberts, J. (2018) Evaluation of a Structured Multi-Agency, Early Intervention Approach to Vulnerability with Neighbourhood Policing Teams. Available at: <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Evaluation-of-a-structured-multi-agency-early-intervention-approach.pdf> (Accessed: 30 November 2022).
- Bellis, M. A., Ashton, K., Hughes K., Ford,., Bishop,., Paranjothy S. (2015) Adverse Childhood Experiences and their impact on health-harming behaviours in the Welsh adult population. Available at: [2016\\_01\\_adverse\\_childhood\\_experiences\\_and\\_their\\_impact\\_on\\_health\\_harming\\_behaviours\\_in\\_the.pdf \(ljmu.ac.uk\)](https://www.ljmu.ac.uk)
- Bellis, M., Hughes, K., Hardcastle, K., Ashton, K., Ford, K., Quigg, Z., Davies A. (2017) 'The impact of adverse childhood experiences on health service use across the life course using a retrospective cohort study', *Journal of Health Services Research & Policy*, 22(3), pp. 168–177. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1355819617706720>.
- Bellis, M.A. Hughes K., Leckenby N., Perkins C., Lowey H. (2014) 'National household survey of adverse childhood experiences and their relationship with resilience to health-harming behaviors in England', *BMC Medicine*, 12(1), p. 72. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1186/1741-7015-12-72>.
- Bellis, M.A., Wood, S., Hughes, K., Quigg, Z., Butler, N. (2023) Tackling Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs); State of the Art and Options for Action. Available at: <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/-/media/phi-reports/pdf/2023-01-state-of-the-art-report-eng.pdf> (Accessed: 9 February 2023).
- Bettws Early Learning Community (2019) Bettws Early Learning Community Local Strategic Plan .
- Bettws Early Learning Community (2022) Bettws Early Learning Community. Available at: <https://bettwselc.org.uk/> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Blue Knot (2022) Building a Trauma-Informed World. Available at: <https://blueknot.org.au/resources/building-a-trauma-informed-world/> (Accessed: 10 February 2023).
- Brunton, G., Caird, J., Stokes, G., Stansfield, C., Kneale, D., Richardson, M., Thomas, J. (2014) Review 1: Community engagement for health via coalitions, collaborations and partnerships A systematic review. Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng44/evidence/evidence-review-1-community-engagement-2015-brunton-pdf-2368403677>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020). Six Guiding Principles to a Trauma-informed Approach. Available at: [https://www.cdc.gov/orr/infographics/6\\_principles\\_trauma\\_info.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/orr/infographics/6_principles_trauma_info.htm)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2022) Building Trauma-informed Communities. Available at: <https://blogs.cdc.gov/publichealthmatters/2022/05/trauma-informed/> (Accessed: 29 December 2022).
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2022) Fast Fact: Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/fastfact.html>
- Ceredigion County Council (2017) Corporate Strategy 2017-2022. Available at: <https://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/media/2458/corporate-strategy-2018-2022.pdf> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Ceredigion County Council (2022) West Wales Population Assessment 2022.
- Champine, R. B., Hoffman, E. E., Matlin, S. L., Stramber, M. J., Tebes J, K. (2022) "What Does it Mean to be Trauma-Informed?": A Mixed-Methods Study of a Trauma-Informed Community Initiative', *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 31(2), pp. 459–472. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-021-02195-9>.
- Cork Healthy Cities Action Plan Phase V11 2020-2030 (2020). Available at: <https://corkhealthycities.com/action-plan-2020-2030/>.
- Cwm Taf Health Board (2011) The First 1000 Days: Foundations for Life. Available at: <https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/local-public-health1/cwm-taf-morgannwg-public-health-team/cwm-taf-morgannwg-public-health-documents/cwm-taf-annual-report-of-the-director-of-public-health-2011-first-1000-days-foundations-for-life/> (Accessed: 10 February 2023).
- Daffin J, Thomas R and Parry S (2022) 'Unlocking the System: Place-based ways of working with children, their families, and a neighbourhood psychologist in Bettws, Wales', *Clinical Psychology Forum*, 357.
- Danielson, R. and Saxena, D. (2019) 'Connecting adverse childhood experiences and community health to promote health equity', *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 13(7), p. e12486. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/SPC3.12486>.
- Davies, A., Grey, C., Homolova, L., Bellis, M. A., (2019) Resilience: Understanding the Interdependence between Individuals and Communities. Available at: <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/2019-Grey-PHW-Individual-and-Community-Resilience-report-E-Final-big.pdf> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Department of Health (2022) Way Forward for Regional Trauma Network for Northern Ireland. Available at: [https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/news/way-forward-regional-trauma-network-northern-ireland#:~:text=A%20Regional%20Trauma%20Network%20\(RTN,specialist%20trauma%20care%20to%20individuals.](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/news/way-forward-regional-trauma-network-northern-ireland#:~:text=A%20Regional%20Trauma%20Network%20(RTN,specialist%20trauma%20care%20to%20individuals.) (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (2019) Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy. Available at: <https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/child-and-youth-wellbeing-strategy> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Ellis W and Dietz W (2017) 'A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR)Model', *Academic Pediatrics* [Preprint].
- Falkenburger, E., Arena, O. and Wolin, J. (2018) Trauma-Informed Community Building and Engagement. Available at: <http://hope-sf.org/about.php>.

- Fanslow, J., Hashemi, L., Gulliver, P., McIntosh, T. (2021) 'Adverse childhood experiences in New Zealand and subsequent victimization in adulthood: Findings from a population-based study', *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 117, p. 105067. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.CHIABU.2021.105067>.
- Flores, W. and Samuel, J. (2019) 'Grassroots organisations and the sustainable development goals: No one left behind?', *The BMJ*, 365. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.l2269>.
- Fox, C. and Butler, G. (2004) 'Partnerships: Where Next?', *Community Safety Journal*, 3(3), pp. 36–44. Available at: [https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/17578043200400021/full/pdf?casa\\_token=wggATtNi4ZEAAAAA:z6HzM0HbvLoQ5IbNsetK84-iysR98JKUYQV4H\\_3I9kXvaMpxo8UIJKbVf-vwEGAt1eGCDgiTa1o9icGce7-2BzLnycXuVD9oBrSifgoV5Yjfn1TgQ](https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/17578043200400021/full/pdf?casa_token=wggATtNi4ZEAAAAA:z6HzM0HbvLoQ5IbNsetK84-iysR98JKUYQV4H_3I9kXvaMpxo8UIJKbVf-vwEGAt1eGCDgiTa1o9icGce7-2BzLnycXuVD9oBrSifgoV5Yjfn1TgQ) (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Hanson, R.F. and Lang, J. (2016) 'A Critical Look at Trauma-Informed Care Among Agencies and Systems Serving Maltreated Youth and Their Families', <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1077559516635274>, 21(2), pp. 95–100. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077559516635274>.
- Health and Social Care Board (2022) Regional Trauma Network. Available at: <https://hscboard.hscni.net/regionaltraumanetwork/> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Lancashire Violence Reduction Network (2020) A trauma Informed Organisational Development Framework. Available at: <https://www.lancsvrn.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Lancs-VRN-Trauma-Informed-toolkit.pdf> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Lee, E., Kourgiantakis, T., Lyons, O., Prescott-Cornejo, A. (2021) 'A trauma-informed approach in Canadian mental health policies: A systematic mapping review', *Health policy (Amsterdam, Netherlands)*, 125(7), pp. 899–914. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.HEALTHPOL.2021.04.008>.
- Matlin, S.L., Champine, R. B., Srambler M, J., O'Brien, C., Hoffman, E., Whitson, M., Kolk, L., Tebes, J. K. (2019) 'A Community's Response to Adverse Childhood Experiences: Building a Resilient, Trauma-Informed Community', *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 64(3–4), pp. 451–466. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12386>.
- New System Alliance (2022) Wisdom from Housing. Available at: [https://platform.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Wisdom-from-Housing\\_English.pdf](https://platform.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Wisdom-from-Housing_English.pdf) (Accessed: 8 February 2023).
- NHS Education for Scotland (2019) The Scottish Psychological Trauma Training Plan. Available at: <https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/media/5lvh0lsu/trauma-training-plan-final.pdf> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- NHS Education for Scotland (2021) National Trauma Training Programme. Available at: <https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- NHS Education for Scotland (no date) National Trauma Training Champions; Local Trauma Champions. Available at: <https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/working-together/local-trauma-champions/> (Accessed: 10 February 2023).
- NHS England (2019) The NHS Long Term Plan. Available at: <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/nhs-long-term-plan-version-1.2.pdf> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- NICE (2014) Domestic Violence and Abuse: Multi-Agency Working. Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph50/resources/domestic-violence-and-abuse-multiagency-working-pdf-1996411687621> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (2022) Working Definition of Trauma-informed Practice. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-definition-of-trauma-informed-practice/working-definition-of-trauma-informed-practice> (Accessed: 6 February 2023).
- Parker, A., Scantlebury, A., Booth, A., MacBryde, J. C., Scott, W. J., Wright, K., McDaid, C. (2018) 'Interagency collaboration models for people with mental ill health in contact with the police: A systematic scoping review', *BMJ Open*, 8(3). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2017-019312>.
- Public Health England (2019) Health Matters: Prevention - a Life Course Approach. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-life-course-approach-to-prevention/health-matters-prevention-a-life-course-approach#a-life-course-approach> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Public Health Ontario (2020) Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Available at: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/a/2020/adverse-childhood-experiences-report.pdf> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (2018) Developing Trauma-informed Practice in Northern Ireland: Key Messages. Available at: <https://www.safeguardingni.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/ACEs%20Report%20A4%20Feb%202019%20Key%20Messages.pdf> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Schoch, K. (2020) 'Case Study Research', in, pp. 245–258. Available at: [https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/105275\\_book\\_item\\_105275.pdf](https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/105275_book_item_105275.pdf) (Accessed: 30 November 2022).
- Scottish Government (2017) A Nation with Ambition: The Government's Programme for Scotland 2017–2018. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/corporate-report/2017/09/nation-ambition-governments-programme-scotland-2017-18/documents/00524214-pdf/00524214-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00524214.pdf> (Accessed: 1 December 2022).
- Scottish Government (2018) Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Scottish Government Event . Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/factsheet/2018/05/adverse-childhood-experiences-aces-ministerial-event/documents/aces-event-march-2018-report-discussions-pdf/aces-event-march-2018-report-discussions-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/ACES%20event%20-%20March%202018%20-%20report%20of%20discussions.pdf> (Accessed: 10 February 2023).
- Scottish Government (2021) 'Trauma-informed practice: toolkit', Closing the poverty-related attainment gap: progress report 2016 to 2021 [Preprint]. Available at: <http://www.gov.scot/publications/trauma-informed-practice-toolkit-scotland/> (Accessed: 25 November 2022).
- Tebes, J.K. Champine, R. B., Matlin, S M., Stramber M, J. (2019) 'Population Health and Trauma-Informed Practice: Implications for Programs, Systems, and Policies', *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 64(3–4), pp. 494–508. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12382>.
- Trauma Informed Practice Ireland (2022). Available at: <https://www.traumainformed.ie/> (Accessed: 29 December 2022).
- Walker, A., Jones, V.J., Hopkins, J.C. (2021) An exploration of the trauma-informed terminology and approaches being used by significant projects, programmes and interventions in Wales. Cardiff. Available at: <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/ACEs-Terminology-and-Approaches-report-Engfinal.pdf> (Accessed: 12 December 2022).
- Weinstein, E., Wolin, J. and Rose, S. (2014) Trauma Informed Community Building: A model for Strengthening Community in Trauma Affected Neighborhoods. Available at: <https://organizingengagement.org/models/trauma-informed-community-building-model/>
- Welsh Government (2017) Prosperity for All: Economic Action Plan. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-02/prosperity-for-all-economic-action-plan.pdf> (Accessed: 8 February 2023).
- Welsh Government (2021) Review of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Policy: Report. Cardiff. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2021/3/3/1615991408/review-adverse-childhood-experiences-ace-policy-report.pdf> (Accessed: 29 December 2022).
- Wolin, J. (2015) Art and Healing in HOPE SF Communities.
- World Health Organisation (2020) 'Healthy Cities: Effective Approach to a Rapidly Changing World'. Available at: <file:///C:/Users/sa168753/Downloads/9789240004825-eng.pdf> (Accessed: 2 December 2022).



ACE Hub Wales  
Public Health Wales,  
Floor 5,  
2 Capital Quarter,  
Tyndall Street,  
Cardiff  
CF10 4BZ

[www.acehubwales.com](http://www.acehubwales.com)

 [/acehubwales](https://twitter.com/acehubwales)

 [/acehubwales](https://facebook.com/acehubwales)