

# CC4LD Social Impact Report 22-23

CHARITY NUMBER 1172199





## CC4LD Social Impact Report

### 2. Executive Summary

### 3. Introduction

### 4. Mission and Vision 2022-2023

### 5. Social Issues Identified

6. Providing support and self-advocacy for people with learning disabilities and their families to ensure they have equal access to education, employment, and healthcare.

12. Promoting social inclusion and integration by providing opportunities for people with learning disabilities to participate in community activities.

21. Raising awareness of learning disabilities and challenging the negative stereotypes and discrimination that people with learning disabilities often face.

24. Supporting people with learning disabilities to develop their skills and independence to live fulfilling lives.

26. Campaigning for the rights of people with learning disabilities and advocating for policy changes to address the issues they face.

### 28. Challenges and Limitations during 2022 – 2023

### 30. Recommendations



Canolfan Marl, Off Broad Street, Llandudno Junction, Conwy, LL31 9HE

[Catherine@conwy-connect.org.uk](mailto:Catherine@conwy-connect.org.uk)

Registered Charity Number: 1172199

## **CC4LD Social Impact Report 22-23**

### **Executive Summary**

This is an executive summary of a social impact report by Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities (CC4LD), which aims to showcase the positive outcomes and achievements of the organization in addressing social issues.

The report provides an overview of CC4LD's mission and vision, approach to tackling social issues, and presents data and evidence demonstrating the impact of their activities, including testimonials and case studies.

The charity addresses social issues such as providing support and self-advocacy for people with learning disabilities and promoting social inclusion and integration.

They also campaign for their rights and advocate for policy changes. The report highlights the social impact of their engagement service, which facilitates regular forum meetings, engagement groups, and national council meetings.

Through their commitment to support, self-advocacy, and engagement, CC4LD aims to ensure that people with learning disabilities and their families have equal access to resources and opportunities and are empowered to live fulfilling and independent lives.

The Children's Activities program fosters peer support and builds networks between parents and carers. The report acknowledges the challenges and limitations faced by the organization and outlines future plans to continue making a positive impact on social issues.

# Introduction to Conwy Connect Social Impact Report 22-23



Welcome to our social impact report. This report aims to showcase the positive outcomes and achievements of our organization in addressing the social issues we seek to tackle. Conwy Connect for Learning disabilities (CC4LD) is committed to making a positive impact on the lives of the people we serve, and this report highlights the progress we have made in achieving our goals.

In this report, we will provide an overview of CC4LD, including our mission and vision, as well as our approach to addressing the social issues we seek to tackle. We will then present data and evidence that demonstrate the impact of our activities on these social issues, including testimonials, and case studies.

We will also discuss the challenges and limitations we faced during the reporting period, and how we overcame them. Additionally, we will outline our future plans and how we plan to continue making a positive impact on the social issues we seek to address.

We believe that this report will provide valuable insights into the positive impact of CC4LD and increase awareness of our work. We thank our funders, volunteers, and other supporters for their continued commitment to our mission and look forward to continuing to work together to address the social issues that affect our communities.

## CC4LD Mission and Vision 2022 -2023



Mission statement: At Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities, our mission is to promote and protect the rights of people with learning disabilities living within North Wales. We strive to empower people with learning disabilities by ensuring they have equality of choice and opportunity in their communities. We aim to achieve this through providing high-quality support, self-advocacy, and promoting community integration.



Photo was taken on our big day out paddleboarding to Llyn Padarn summer 2022

Vision statement: Our vision at Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities is to create a world where people with learning disabilities are valued and respected members of society. We envision a future where everyone has the opportunity to live independently, access education, employment, and healthcare, and participate fully in their communities. We believe that by promoting their rights and empowering people with learning disabilities, we can build a more inclusive and just society.

## **Social Issues Identified**

Below are some of the specific social issues the charity has addressed in the past year:

- Providing support and self-advocacy for people with learning disabilities and their families to ensure they have equal access to education, employment, and healthcare.
- Promoting social inclusion and integration by providing opportunities for people with learning disabilities to participate in community activities.
- Raising awareness of learning disabilities and challenging the negative stereotypes and discrimination that people with learning disabilities often face.
- Supporting people with learning disabilities to develop their skills and independence to live fulfilling lives.
- Campaigning for the rights of people with learning disabilities and advocating for policy changes to address the issues they face.

This social impact report will look at at these social issues and how they have been addressed.

- **Providing support and self-advocacy for people with learning disabilities and their families to ensure they have equal access to education, employment, and healthcare.**

## **What have we done to address this?**

The Health Check project in North Wales, began in June 2021 and employed 13 individuals with learning disabilities as Health Check Champions. This project has provided support and self-advocacy for people with learning disabilities and their families to ensure they have equal access to employment and healthcare in several ways:



**Advocacy for Accessible Healthcare:** The Health Check Champions have become advocates for people with learning disabilities, ensuring access to health screening services with reasonable adjustments. They have raised awareness about the importance of health screenings and inclusive healthcare services for people with learning disabilities by delivering workshops, attending conferences, and professional meetings. Through their advocacy efforts, the Health Check Champions have helped promote equal access to healthcare for individuals with learning disabilities, ensuring they receive the necessary screenings and services to maintain their health and well-being.

## Outcomes

**Promoting Annual Health Checks:** The main aim of the Health Check project is to promote annual health checks and screenings for people with learning disabilities. By promoting the importance of regular health checks, the project has encouraged individuals with learning disabilities and their families to prioritise their health and seek appropriate healthcare services, leading to improved health outcomes.



**Paid Employment Opportunities:** The Health Check project has provided paid employment opportunities to individuals with learning disabilities, specifically employing them as Health Check Champions. This has not only provided financial support but has also promoted independence, enhanced skills and experience, and improved social connections for the employed individuals. By offering meaningful employment opportunities, the project has empowered individuals with learning disabilities to become more self-sufficient and confident, contributing to their overall well-being.



## Outcomes

**Benefits of Employment:** The employment opportunities provided by the Health Check project have led to numerous benefits for individuals with learning disabilities, including increased independence, improved social connections, enhanced skills and experience, and improved health outcomes. By promoting equal access to employment, the project has helped individuals with learning disabilities gain valuable skills, build their self-esteem, and improve their overall quality of life.

An example of this is Fran Holmes who was recruited as a Health Check Champion in September 2021, having previously only worked on work placements and as a volunteer. Since joining the project, Fran has become an integral part of the team, contributing to the creation of the Health Check workshop, initially by Zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions, and then again face-to-face. With support, Fran gained confidence and professionalism, co-hosting Zoom workshops and transitioning into hosting the workshop presentation independently.



## Outcomes

As Fran developed her skills, she took on more responsibilities, leading the face-to-face workshops and being responsible for the presentation slides. Fran's growth continued, and she has now begun writing her own health screening presentations and runs her health screening Zoom session independently fortnightly on the App "Insight".

Fran's commitment to the project has enabled her to reduce her work placement from four days per week to only half a day per week. Her journey is a testament to the success of the Health Check Champion program.



Overall, the Health Check project in North Wales has supported individuals with learning disabilities and their families through advocacy efforts, promoting health screenings, providing paid employment opportunities, and offering various benefits. This has empowered individuals with learning disabilities to become effective advocates for their own health and well-being, while also promoting equal access to employment and healthcare services.

## Outcomes

### The social impact of our engagement service

Conwy Connect is committed to providing a wide range of services and support to people with learning disabilities and their families. In addition to ensuring equal access to education, employment, and healthcare, we also strive to empower our members by encouraging them to have an opinion and play an active role in shaping policy at a regional and national level.



To facilitate this, we offer regular forum meetings that gather information and collate it for regional and national groups, ensuring our members' voices are heard. Furthermore, our North Wales Flyers regional engagement group prepares representatives to attend meetings, debrief, and share information with their local groups, providing further opportunities for engagement and advocacy.



## Outcomes

### The social impact of our engagement service

Finally, our members have had the opportunity to attend National Council meetings, which provide exposure to national policy makers, allowing our organization to engage with those in power and drive positive change for our members and the wider community.



Through our commitment to support, self-advocacy, and engagement, we aim to ensure that people with learning disabilities and their families have equal access to resources and opportunities, and are empowered to live fulfilling and independent lives.



## Outcomes



- **Promoting social inclusion and integration by providing opportunities for people with learning disabilities to participate in community activities.**

### **A case study about a member who attends our groups**

"Izzy has accessed art club for a few months now. Before this she was not accessing any clubs and very socially isolated. She was not in education, and experiencing a considerable decline in her mental health and wellbeing.

Art has historically been very important to Izzy and she has previously enjoyed all types of art.

Izzy started to engage with Conwy Connect via a bread making course , which gave her the confidence to start accessing other clubs.

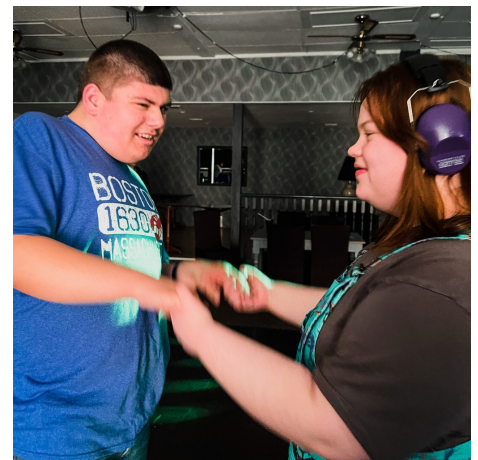
She has attended every Saturday, and I never had difficulty getting her up and out ready for club. She is always on time and stays for the duration.



## Outcomes

At the club she has made friends, engaged in activities and most importantly had lots of fun.

For the first session she wanted me by her side, but since then she has had the confidence for me to sit in the next room, this has given me a chance to talk with other parents, which is supportive. This has not been something I have done before, and I have felt massive benefits to my well being.



Art club has led to Izzy accessing other clubs and given her a real network of friends. She has enjoyed the activities, and felt happy about the praise she has been given in relation to her art. She has been confident to help others, and ask for help when she needs it. There is a really relaxed environment , with low demand or expectation which is really important for her to develop and achieve. Out of all the activities, I think this is one of her favourites, I believe this is due to how comfortable and relaxed she feels. She would not be able to access a mainstream art club at the moment , and I am so happy that she has found this club. Without it her weekends would be very different. The Saturday has become part of her routine, and where before club, she would stay in bed till the afternoon, we now have a full and enjoyable day".



We have been participating in a number of Conwy Connect activities over the last couple of years. Perhaps the most important ones for us are the regular discos and the karaoke evenings. They are important for so many reasons but perhaps I should allow Millie who attends these activities to tell you in her own words. I asked Millie to tell me why she loved Conwy Connect activities.

***“I am like disco. I love dancing with Sam and my friends. I love music, I love dancing to Happy. I love karaoke. Am love everyone singing. Am feel confident. I sang Don’t stop believing and Mama Mia. By Millie Dawson Wood***

The disco’s are important for developing Millie’s social confidence and her friendship groups. We regularly have friends round for ‘pre’s’ where they have dinner, get dressed together, help each other with their hair and their makeup. They are able to be teenagers in a safe environment. I also get to have a dance and catch up with friends. The Karaoke evening was very special for us. Millie can have social anxiety and is very quiet in school. At home she loves to listen to music and sing. I was unsure whether she would join in but she arrived armed with two songs she had learnt. She belted out Don’t stop believing and Mama Mia and danced her way through the two songs.

I have never seen her so confident and her friends even commented on how different she was outside of school. When she got home she created a playlist from the night, searching for the songs sung by her friends. I felt incredibly proud and somewhat surprised at this transformation. It showed everyone her personality and enabled her to do what she loves - to sing and dance. These two activities run by Conwy Connect have given Millie the opportunity to be a teenager and we really appreciate this sessions and hope that they will continue through her teenage years and beyond. Conwy Connect is a brilliant organisation which helps young people and carers in numerous ways. They provide information and training on vital topics such as trusts and probate; they put on activities through the holidays which help give structure to families who may feel excluded from more mainstream events. It is an organisation which provides us with a community where we can share achievements and help each other through challenging times. However I think perhaps Millie’s note is the best illustration on how important Conwy Connect is to us as a family. Caroline Dawson, Millie Dawson Wood and Lottie Dawson Wood. Deganwy



## Outcomes

The adults in Conwy Connect have a fun filled week which allows them to explore their creativeness as well as have the chance to meet with their friends and also engage in health and well-being activities. These activities show integration within the community as well as enabling people to have fulfilled lives.

Our inclusive disco on a Monday welcomes everyone to come and have a dance. Music is important to our members and allows them to show their talents to the rest of the group. Karaoke is an opportune way to do this and singing is a great way to relax and feel positive about yourself.

The Picasso art group on a Tuesday has a passionate leader who relishes taking a creative idea and adapting it to ensure that all the members are able to participate to the best of their ability. The group has a fantastic social element to it and members plus their support enjoy engaging with one another throughout the session.

Members tend to stay on to enjoy the boccia group and catch up with other friends who arrive for the session.







## Outcomes



The gardening group offers an opportunity for fresh air to enhance wellbeing and has been gradually transformed for all at the community centre to enjoy. Showing the positive impact our members can have within a community and enhancing the centre for all that attend there. It has also allowed many to learn new skills which they can then utilise within their home environment or within a work placement.

To ensure members stay fit and healthy, one of our members Rebecca supported by family organises a weekly walk. They members decide where they want to meet and where the walk should take them. This often finishes with members choosing to remain and share refreshments together. Offering another opportunity to socialise.

Olivia runs a relaxing yoga group towards the end of the week, adapting the sessions according to members abilities and flexibility. They participate independently enjoying the relaxation that the group offers.

The week doesn't end there! Fridays can continue with a busy social night. This is often a space where people may try a new skill or activity such as line dancing.

The Friendship group then continues the weekend with independently leading a walk and a quiz.



## Outcomes

I would like to say thank you to yourselves as the hard work you all put in is utterly amazing the difference to my son in going to all the different events trying things that he would normally not want to do and enjoying them which has helped his confidence so much he looks forward to the different events and meeting up with his pals who are all so kind and lovely it's lovely to see him and all the other wonderful children smiling and having fun thank you to you all x

Our Children's Activities program is dedicated to promoting social inclusion and integration by offering a wide range of community activities for people with Learning Disabilities. We aim to not only include the members with Learning Disabilities but also their parent/carer and families in our events.



By doing so, we foster peer support between the children and build networks between the parents and carers.





## Outcomes

We understand the challenges that come with caring for someone with a disability, which is why we also offer a weekly Chat and Crochet club exclusively for parent carers. This club has had a positive impact on those who attend, providing a safe space for them to relax and share their experiences without pressure.



We believe that by creating these opportunities, we can contribute to promoting social inclusion and integration for people with Learning Disabilities in our community.

Conwy connect, isn't just a charity. It's a life line!!! It's give me and my family quality time together, where we couldn't do it on our own. To feel safe to just be ourselves, with people around us that don't judge us and are always willing to help. To be a family. Sometimes we only get out of the house a few times because of my son's anxiety, we are starting meds now for him. Lockdown nothing because we been doing for 8 years. We always been welcoming, and never turned away because of behaviour or if we can't get out to some activities.



## Outcomes

The youth club is a core part of how we encourage our members to get out into the community post-lockdown restrictions. Every month we host a variety of online and face-to-face clubs throughout North Wales. In our clubs, it is an opportunity to practice skills, normalise social interactions and build friendships. Alongside this, out clubs seek to bring the brilliance and kindness of our young people to the local community.



In our Conwy/ Denbighshire club, the group wanted to solve a local problem through applying for additional funding. The group completed an ideas meeting which started the Conserving Conwy beach cleaning project. Over 8 months, the group removed 35kg of litter, over 30 participants took to the beach, and they won an award from Colwyn Bay Town Hall.



## Outcomes

The group showed that they can achieve amazing things when they are included. Throughout the club's development, making friends has been a cornerstone to the group's success. Parents are given an opportunity to discuss and share support whilst they are present during the club. Our youth clubs have helped grow community resilience and provides a platform for coproduction.



Without Conwy Connect and there amazing team my girl would miss out on so much but they go above and beyond to get the equipment she needs to do what most people take for granted she has a great time and has meet so many amazing friends at all the events she goes to so thank you so much from both Lexie and myself

To the staff of Conwy Connect, thank you so much for all your hard work, most of which people can't see! You make so many children/adults and their parents and carers so happy with your fantastic clubs, trips and activities. You should be very proud.



## Outcomes

- **Raising awareness of learning disabilities and challenging the negative stereotypes and discrimination that people with learning disabilities often face.**

The Conwy Connects Makaton Choir is an all-inclusive group that showcases the different forms of communication beyond verbal language, including speech, body language, expression, and Makaton.

It welcomes both verbal and non-verbal participants, as well as members, parents, and carers. A recent event demonstrated the level of skills our members possess, as one of the organizers was invited to perform with us but quickly became lost when realised the skill required to utilise Makaton.



This experience highlighted the significance of Makaton as a communication tool, far more effectively than any explanation could.



## Outcomes

Our activities are designed to allow all abilities to become involved in the capacity that they are comfortable with. We have also enabled people to try experiences such as sno-tubing / forest coaster that they would never have considered. Participating in activities like this, within the community and throughout social hours highlights to others that anything can be possible.



We offer a combination of activities that are either utilising an activity within the community, zip world, swim centre, tennis, ski slope, greenwood, train journeys, climbing centres, theatre, cinema and integrated with community sessions. Or we book an activity specifically for our members, miniature railway, book entire theatre, book whole of SC2 ninja tag or pool.

I like coming to Conwy connect because I like the activities we do and I have been a member about 16 years ago and I would like to continue with my membership.

I love being a part of Conwy Connect because I enjoy the variety of weekly activities such as the forum and Drama. I feel like I have made lots of new friends and that I found a place to belong



## Outcomes

Conwy Connect like to offer a mix of activities and opportunities that may also push a comfort zone. A prime example was the Talent Show. We hired the theatre and created a whole show full of all our members talents. The theatre was packed, the performers were amazing, emotions ran high as this was a first for so many to be on a stage and have the confidence to be themselves.



The feedback was that it was the best show many had seen. This has resulted in individuals having the confidence to participate in other groups and work on their interests.





## Outcomes

- **Supporting people with learning disabilities to develop their skills and independence to live fulfilling lives.**

At Conwy Connect, we take pride in providing our members with a range of services and support that promote skill-building, independence, and community engagement.

Our Connect Forum has been particularly successful in this regard, with members reporting that it has helped them learn valuable self-advocacy skills and become more engaged in their communities.



I love coming to Conway and doing activities such as yoga drama 🙏 very much appreciated I like going on zoom with the form and having the chance to socialize with friends and make new friendships I have come a long way since Covid lockdown at first I scared to go out but my confidence got better I also been doing music with gav and to Colwyn bay zoo which was fun I went with my mum my cat Haley likes seeing people on zoom I think she would like to see herself on zoom in lockdown she gives a big meow when we were on zoom chatting she was a regular on the chats thanks conwy connect for keeping us all connected and the face to face activities from Philip and Haley the cat



## Outcomes

The leisure service offered by Conwy Connect has also been popular, providing a fun and social outlet for our members to visit and spend time with their friends. One particularly beloved group is our Makaton choir, which has brought joy and creativity to our members. Additionally, our back to the future service has been instrumental in getting our members back into the community following the COVID-19 pandemic. Through weekly drop-in sessions held at the Canalofan Marl Office, we have been able to provide our members with a safe and supportive space to re-engage with the community and build connections.



Overall, our range of services and support have been designed to meet the unique needs and interests of our members, promoting inclusivity, independence, and a sense of belonging.



## Outcomes

- **Campaigning for the rights of people with learning disabilities and advocating for policy changes to address the issues they face.**

At Conwy Connect, we are committed to campaigning for the rights of people with learning disabilities and advocating for policy changes that address the issues they face. We believe that one of the most effective ways to achieve this is by ensuring that the voices and perspectives of our members are heard at the highest levels of government.



To this end, we provide support to individuals who wish to attend the Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group with the Welsh Government. We prepare representatives by helping them see the links for people with learning disabilities in Conwy and ensuring that they have the tools and resources necessary to make their voices heard. In addition to this, we hold regular “Rep & Deps” meetings, which facilitate the flow of information and help people understand the roles they have volunteered for and the importance of their contributions.



## Outcomes

We also work with external organizations such as the Conwy County Council, Denbighshire County Council, North Wales Together team, AWPf, and the North Wales Regional Partnership to ensure that policies and practices are addressing the needs of people with learning disabilities. Finally, we encourage individuals and groups of people with learning disabilities to have the confidence and ability to voice their concerns, what works well, and suggestions for change to those who can make a difference in policy and practice.



CYDWEITHREDFA GWELLA GWASANAETHAU  
GOFAL A LLESIANT **GOGLEDD CYMRU**  
**NORTH WALES SOCIAL CARE AND WELL-BEING  
SERVICES IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATIVE**



Through our commitment to self advocacy and engagement, we aim to drive positive change and ensure that people with learning disabilities have the rights, resources, and opportunities they deserve.



# Challenges and Limitations during 2022 – 2023

During the reporting period, the organisation faced several challenges and limitations that impacted its operations and delivery of services. Here are some of the challenges and how the organisation overcame them:

1. Rural locations: North Wales is predominantly rural, and this poses significant challenges for service delivery. The organisation found it challenging to reach people living in remote areas who may need its services. To overcome this challenge, Conwy Connect partnered with other local organizations and community groups to increase awareness and reach of its services. They also provided online resources and support to help people access their services remotely.

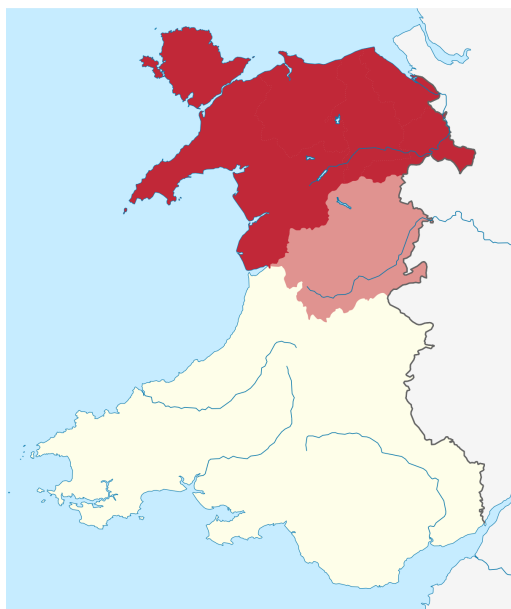


2. Welsh language: Many people in Rural North Wales speak Welsh as their first language, and this can be a barrier to accessing services. Conwy Connect recognized this challenge and ensured that its services were available in both English and Welsh. They also recruited staff who could speak Welsh to ensure that people could communicate effectively with their support workers.

# Challenges and Limitations during 2022 – 2023



3. Limited reach: Conwy Connect is well-known in Conwy County, but it wanted to widen its reach to other counties. To achieve this, the organization developed partnerships with other organizations and service providers in neighbouring counties. They also developed marketing campaigns to promote their services beyond Conwy County and increase their visibility.



In summary, Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities faced several challenges and limitations during the reporting period, including its rural locations, Welsh language, and limited reach. The organization overcame these challenges by partnering with other organizations, providing online resources, recruiting bilingual staff, and developing marketing campaigns. These efforts enabled Conwy Connect to expand its reach and improve its services to people with learning disabilities in the region.



## Recommendations

Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities can outline its future plans by considering the following:

1. **Expansion of Services:** The organization can aim to expand its services to reach more people with learning disabilities in Conwy and other neighbouring counties. This can include developing new programs, and partnering with other organizations.

2. **Fundraising:** To support its expansion plans, the organization can explore different fundraising methods such as grant applications, donations, and community fundraising events.

3. **Self Advocacy:** The organization can continue to advocate for the rights of people with learning disabilities and raise awareness of their needs and challenges. This can include engaging with policymakers, media outreach, and collaborating with other advocacy groups.

4. **Partnerships:** To strengthen its impact, Conwy Connect can build strong partnerships with other organizations and service providers to provide a more holistic approach to supporting people with learning disabilities.



## Recommendations

5. **Staff Development:** The organization can invest in the development of its staff, including training and development opportunities, to ensure high-quality service delivery.

6. **Technology:** Conwy Connect can leverage technology to enhance its service delivery and increase accessibility for people with learning disabilities. This can include developing online resources and remote support services.

By implementing these future plans, Conwy Connect for Learning Disabilities can continue to make a positive impact on the social issues it seeks to address and improve the lives of people with learning disabilities in its community.





Conwy Connect  
Canolfan Marl  
Off Broad Street  
Llandudno Junction  
Conwy  
LL31 9HE

01492 536486

Message and What's App 07925 966009