





FAMILY CONTEXT PILOT - EVALUATION

2021

CONTENTS

- I. Project Context
- 2. Pilot Objectives
- 3. Findings
- 4. Next Steps

PROJECT CONTEXT

THE PROJECT ORIGINATED IN 2018, AS A COLLABORATION SUPPORTED BY MHCLG

Start: 2018

Goal: Collaborate across councils to identify and build common solutions to shared problems, supporting LAs' work with vulnerable people

Initial participants: 10 Local Authorities including Stockport, Social Finance and MHCLG's Local Digital Collaboration Unit

Starter funding: MHCLG's Local Digital Fund, Christie Foundation







When social workers first interact with a family, they do not have easy access to key information. This includes the services that family members engage with. The consequences of this are:

- Social workers sometimes have incomplete information which can change decisions and outcomes
- Social workers waste time chasing information, which they would prefer to spend with the family
- The child could be placed at further risk from delays

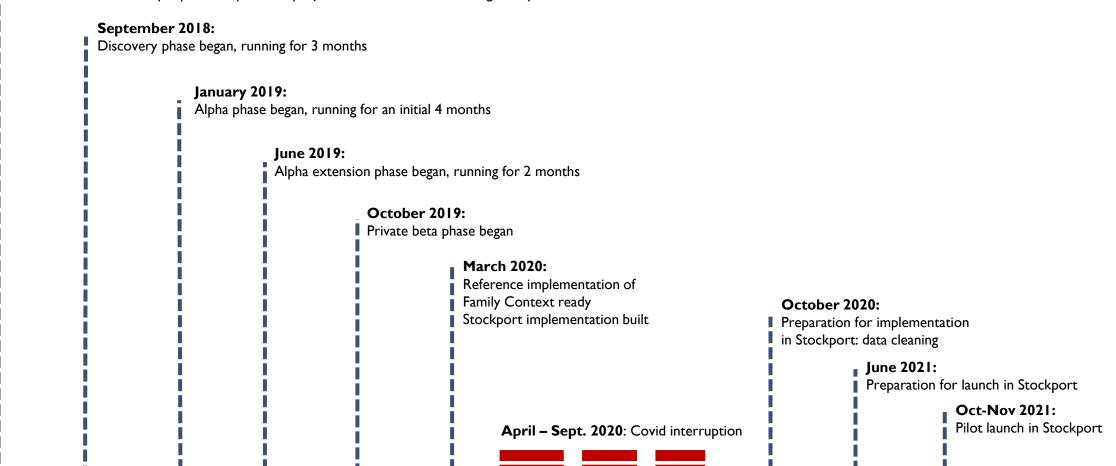


Family Context is a tool that allows social workers to easily access service involvement information on relevant individuals to a child. It facilitates conversations with lead practitioners from other services, so that social workers can better support families and safeguard children.

FAMILY CONTEXT WAS DEVELOPED IN CLOSE PARTNERSHIP WITH STOCKPORT AND LEEDS BETWEEN 2018 AND 2021

June 2018:

Stockport, Leeds & ten other local authorities met with Social Finance to discuss barriers for improving decisions and outcomes for vulnerable people. Two potential projects were identified, including Family Context in Children's Services



LOCAL AUTHORITIES PARTICPATED IN USER RESEARCH

62

PEOPLE FROM 5 USER
GROUPS PARTICIPATED IN
DISCOVERY USER RESEARCH

38

SOCIAL WORKERS
PARTICIPATED IN ALPHA AND
BETA USER RESEARCH

16

WEEKS ITERATING AND REFINING THE PROTOTYPE TO PRODUCE THE MINIMUM VIABLE PRODUCT

13

DIFFERENT SERVICES
PROVIDED ACCESS TO DATA
AND SYSTEMS

7

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SUPPORTED USING THE PROTOTYPES AS PART OF 'LIVE' TESTING 4

PROTOTYPES TESTED
ACROSS SIMULATED AND
'REAL' SITUATIONS

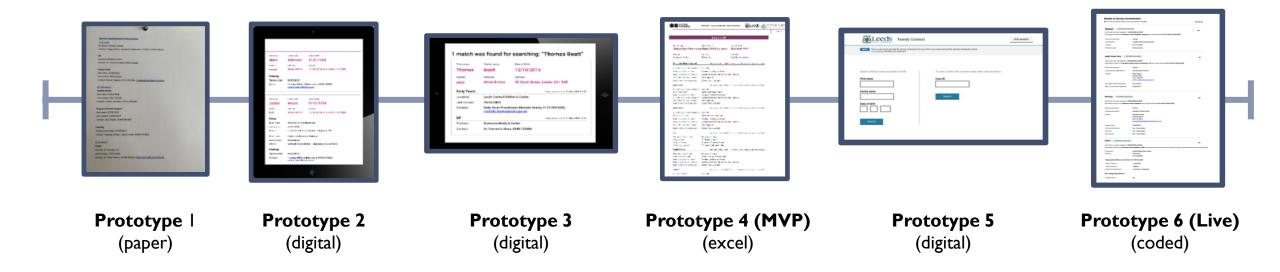
3

DATA SOURCES AGREED ACROSS 4 DATABASE SYSTEMS

AN ITERATIVE APPROACH, WORKING CLOSELY WITH SOCIAL WORKERS AT EACH STAGE, WAS USED TO DEVELOP THE LIVE TOOL

Agile principles and extensive user research were used to understand and frame the problem and design a solution in collaboration with social workers.

In alpha/beta, we undertook 6 rounds of user research across Leeds and Stockport using different prototypes and types (synthetic and real).



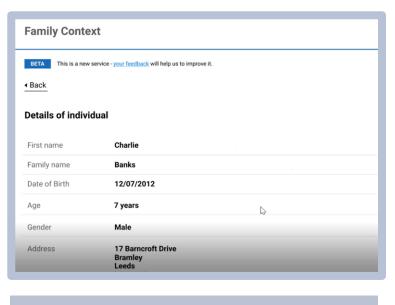
THE LIVE TOOL PROVIDES A SIMPLE INTERFACE TO SEARCH FOR AND VIEW SERVICE INVOLVEMENT INFORMATION ON ADULTS & CHILDREN

Family Context matches and aggregates data from education, adult social care & housing into a single searchable view

It gives basic information on service involvement and contact details of relevant professionals for social workers to speak to



Login page





Result page...

...with service information

INFORMATION IS FOUND THROUGH A SIMPLE 3 OR 4 STEP PROCESS

- I. Social workers access Family Context using their CMS (Liquid Logic) login details
- 2. They search for adults or children using name or Liquid Logic Children System ID
- 3. The results page shows any matched individual records, which the social worker then selects
- 4. The social worker then selects the desired individual and can choose to open a 'drop down' to view relevant service involvement and contact details



- I. In each option, searching can be done by: (i) name; (ii) Liquid Logic Children System ID; or (iii) a combination of the two.
- 2. Selection does not take place when a search is made using a Liquid Logic Children System ID because this causes a direct match.

FAMILY CONTEXT IN STOCKPORT DRAWS ON FOUR DATA SOURCES

Data source	Included when	Details
Adult Social Care (Liquid Logic)	A caseworker has been assigned	 <u>'Start of last involvement'</u> = start date of current/most recent referral <u>'most recent interaction'</u> = date most recent case note updated on liquid logic Service involvement shows as 'current' if no end date in system
Education (Synergy)	Child registered at a school	If dual registered, only main registration is shown
Housing (Stockport Homes)	Adult is a current tenant of Stockport Homes or has records in antisocial behaviour database	 If they are a current tenant: Notices of intent to seek possession (last 12 months) Notices of eviction proceedings (last 12 months) Current rent arrears if >6 weeks Whether current tenant or not: Anyone listed as a perpetrator in current or historic anti-social behaviour cases since 2014
Children's Social Care (Liquid Logic)	Child in Liquid Logic system	Address pulled through; data is accessible to social workers via LL account

A NUMBER OF KEY PRINCIPLES WERE CENTRAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY CONTEXT

- Importance of user input throughout design & development
 - Working with users at all stages in the design, from development through to pilot, to ensure it aligns to needs
 - Conducting final round of usability testing prior to launch to check UI and quality of data matches
- Centering data ethics and information governance
 - Working with the ICO from the outset and throughout design & development
 - Working with families considering ethics of what data should be included as well as meeting requirements
- Using open source and iterative development
 - Sharing code and design, aligned to GDS principles
- Working with existing systems
 - Using a single sign on, the same as for Liquid Logic, to remove barriers to access and login
- Value of working collaboratively
 - Bringing together data and front-end technical teams, working across data and the service
 - Building collaborative relationships to enable data sharing

PILOT OBJECTIVES

There were two main objectives:

To test whether the tool works in practice

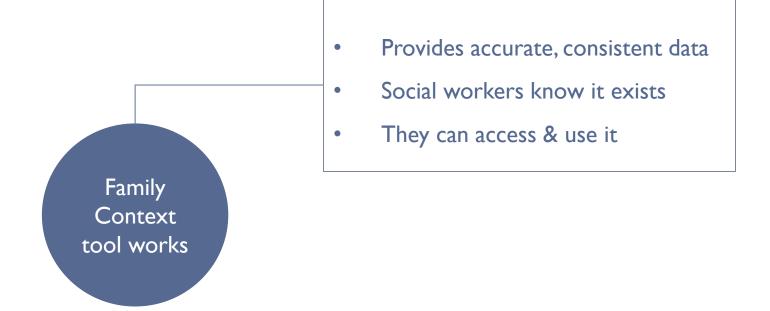
2. To test how far the tool delivers the desired outcomes and impact for social workers

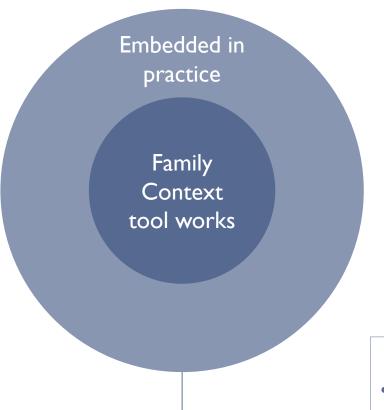
We wanted to explore questions such as:

- Are there any bugs/technical issues with the tool in live use?
- Do social workers know how to access it and are they choosing to use it?
- How is the tool affecting social workers' practice?
- Is it reducing time spent searching for information and supporting decision making?
- What would make the tool more impactful?

ULTIMATELY, SUCCESS FOR FAMILY CONTEXT = GIVING SOCIAL WORKERS THE INFORMATION THEY NEED, WHEN THEY NEED IT

- ✓ Saves time for social workers, prioritizing time with families
- ✓ Social workers are empowered to make informed decisions more easily
- ✓ Services around a family can be better connected.

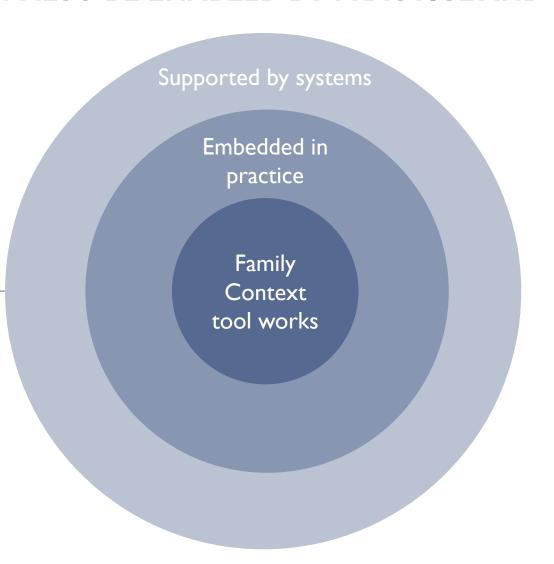




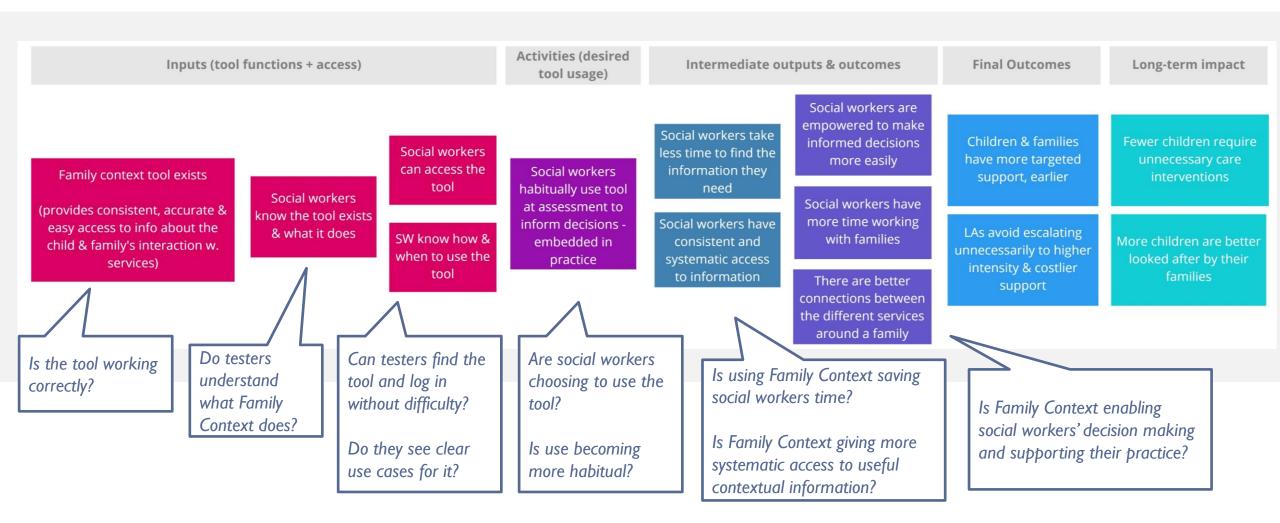
- Part of everyday practice for both
 Service & Data teams
- 'Standard' tool across Children's

THIS SUCCESS MUST ALSO BE ENABLED BY PRACTICE AND SYSTEMS

- Resource to sustain & develop tool
- Leadership support



THE PILOT WAS DESIGNED TO TEST SEVERAL STEPS IN THE THEORY OF CHANGE



WE RAN AN 8-WEEK PILOT WITH 8 USERS ACROSS 5 TEAMS, USING A MIX OF RESEARCH METHODS

Users

- 8 pilot users across 5 different teams:
 - Edgeley Social Work Team
 - Stepping Hill & Victoria
 - Werneth & Brinnington
 - Heaton & Tame Valley
 - Out of Hours + Children's Systems
- This included 4 senior social workers

Methods

- 2 surveys (pre & post): anonymous online survey
- 24 semi-structured interviews: individual 30-45 minute interviews in weeks 2, 5 and the week after the pilot period ended
- 3 diary studies from each tester: brief reports on usage and experience during the week
- 8 weeks of Google Analytics: basic usage data collected throughout the pilot period
- Feedback tickets: a direct route to highlight bugs or issues with the tool to the FC team and developers

Timeline

• Oct 4th – Nov 26th

FINDINGS

FAMILY CONTEXT WORKS AND HAS HAD REAL IMPACT FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Family Context has performed well across all three elements tested by the pilot:

• Usage:

- Testers used the from day one and logged in regularly, without prompting
- They have continued to use the tool after the pilot ended

Usability & Performance:

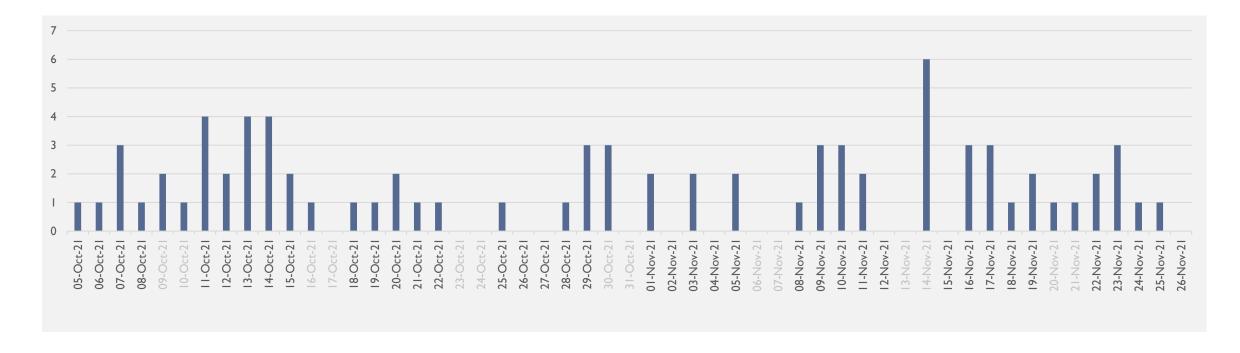
- Users liked the tool and reported that it is easy to use
- Only one technical issue was raised during the pilot, and this was resolved in a day

Impact:

- Family Context saves social workers >2 hours on average for each new referral
- Quick access to contacts and information also supports decision-making and has had a positive impact on families

The biggest message for improvement has been the demand for more data – a range of additional datasets were proposed, with probation and GP information flagged as highest priority

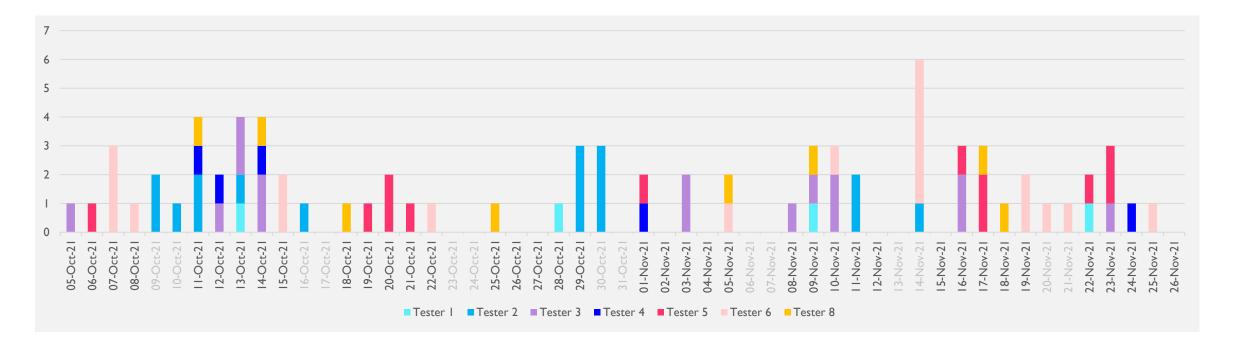
logins, by date



Lower usage during half term week (25th – 29th Oct)

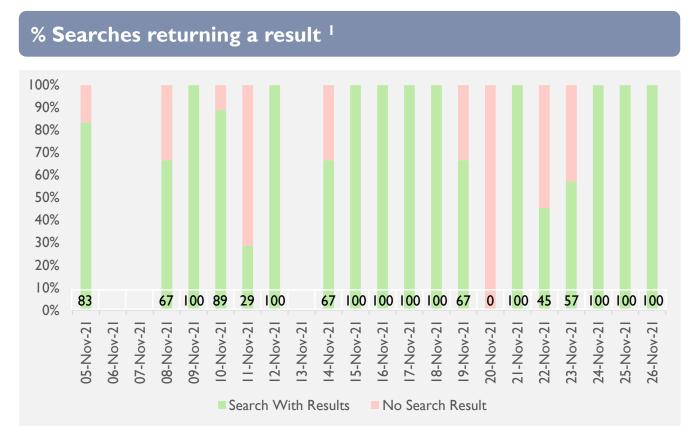
ALL USERS LOGGED IN, WITH USAGE DRIVEN BY WORK PATTERNS

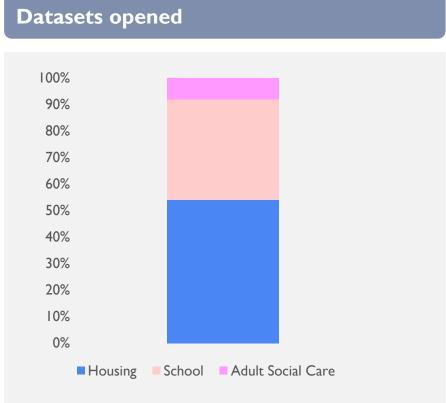
logins, by user & date



- Users flag that the tool is most useful 'on duty', and teams have different rotas: "Next week... I'm on duty a lot, so it'll get a hammering next week I know that"
- Meeting and holiday cycles also drive usage: "The formal meetings we have are mostly every half term and for secondaries every month and I might get a run of those but I haven't used it for a week and before that half term got in the way"

USERS' SEARCHES RETURN RESULTS >80% OF THE TIME, AND SOCIAL WORKERS CONSULTED DATA FROM ALL THREE LINKED DATASETS





- On average across the pilot, 82% of searches made returned a result
- Users made an average of 4 searches per login

 Users consulted data from all three databases linked to Family Context²

USERS REPORTED THAT FAMILY CONTEXT IS SIMPLE AND INTUITIVE TO USE, EVEN FOR THOSE LESS COMFORTABLE WITH TECHNOLOGY

"I've always found it easy to use. When we had the first conversation I was expecting it to be more complicated"

"When you showed me the tool I thought 'wow that's easy, literally a name or case #"

"The key things is it is easy, I've not had any misses. I've not spent more than 5-10minutes searching"

"It's pretty idiot-proof!"

"I found it really easy — and I'm a bit of a dinosaur. At home I always get my kids to sort tech things"

THE MAIN ISSUE REPORTED BY USERS WAS REMEMBERING TO USE FAMILY CONTEXT – THIS SHOULD FADE OVER TIME

Problems faced during the pilot period

Q: Through the launch phase, what were the 3 most problematic issues you faced? Even if more than 3 options apply, please select the top 3 only

Finding time to take part in the research activities

The tool not presenting reliable and accurate information

Getting incomplete information on families

Being unable to reach the right contact for service involvement

Bugs and issues preventing accurate results

Remembering to use it

Locating the link

Other (please add)

"I've not found any connection problems with it. I've been able to log in very quickly"

"So the times we've used it, it's given the right person [contact], so that's great"

"Up to now, it's been correct"

This user referred to a desired expansion of the data available:

"No information on own home/private rent tenants - maybe could link to Council Tax for more accurate information"

TECHNICALLY, THE TOOL HAS PERFORMED WELL

social workers with access/login issues

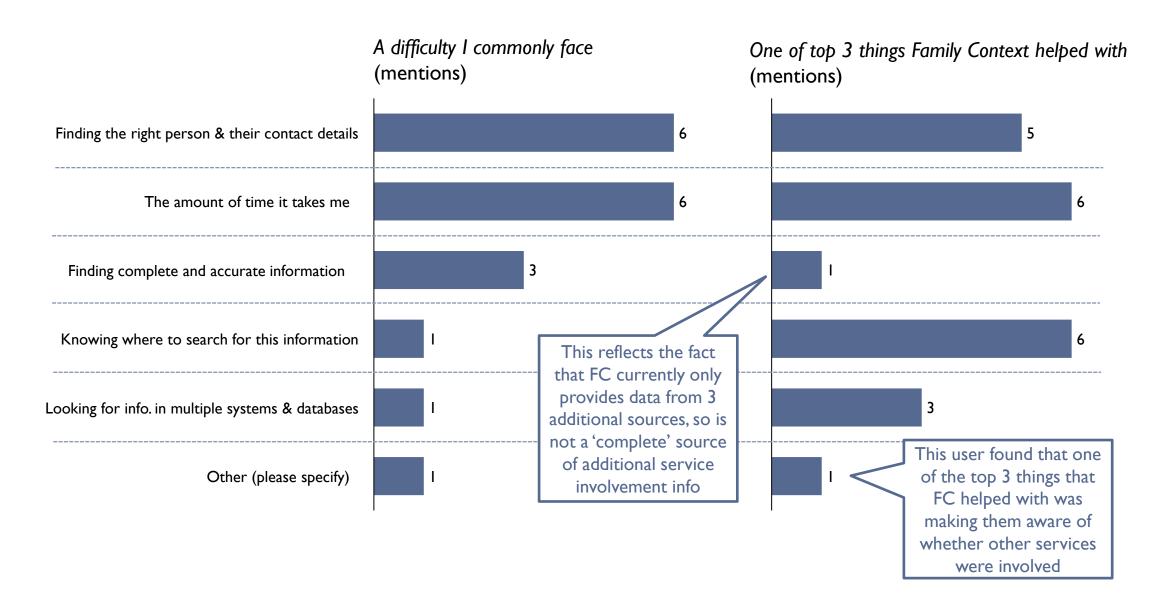
of bugs reported with the user interface

data accuracy issues reported

Ave days taken to resolve issues

- Overall, very few tickets were raised by Social Worker testers
- Most queries concerned datasets that are not yet linked to Family Context, and/or the limits on data included from current sources. For example:
 - Query re: data on those housed in temporary Stockport Housing accommodation (Brindale)
 - Expecting to see historical rent arrears (not just current >6 weeks)
- Towards the end of the pilot, an update temporarily caused all Stockport Homes data to stop showing at the Front End. This was quickly identified in our user interviews and resolved by the devs team within 24 hours

SOCIAL WORKERS INDICATE SEVERAL WAYS IN WHICH FAMILY CONTEXT ADDRESSES CHALLENGES THEY FACE



THEY HAVE FOUND THE TOOL HELPFUL IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT USE CASES

New assessments

"Yes, I've used it. I had new cases, and used it to find who's involved"

"I've been able to pull strategy meetings together within minutes rather than hours"

"I think it's good practice to check FC when you have new cases — a habit to adopt"

"for me being reassured that you're prepped and ready to go out on an emergency, or a new assessment, or a new team around the school enquiry"

Quick checks with existing cases

"Before my visit, I'd looked at Family Context and seen there were rent arrears"

"I used it in a meeting with school to check where the two other children were enrolled"

"other times I'm just doing a bit of wider thinking about that family"

"It's an extra source of info. Recently I found the correct data in FC where Liquid Logic had the schools the wrong way round"

Other

"A family asked me to check the name of their new housing officer"

"It's useful for newly qualified social workers and trainees who don't have contacts yet"

"I have also found it helpful for case handovers — in CSC to ASC transition or from colleagues who have left and I've taken on the case"

THE MOST COMMONLY CITED IMPACT IS THE TIME THAT FAMILY CONTEXT SAVES

"Time. Time, time. It's **absolutely amazing** to be able to bring everything together **very quickly**"

"We're so busy that being able to do something in **20 minutes** rather than **2 hours** makes such a difference to us"

"previously we'd have had to search systems, whereas if you can speak to someone straightaway it takes down to half an hour what would normally take 2 hours"

"It's a time saver and saved me 30 minutes looking on Liquid Logic, phoning a social worker or trying to contact MASSH"

"I've been able to invite people to strategy meetings in minutes rather than hours"

"We are just firefighting... if you can **do things quicker**, at least you've made that initial step"

"You can spend a lot of time setting up a team around the child meeting...a couple of weeks... if the info is on here, you go straight to it — boom, boom, boom, send the invites out **right away**"

TESTERS INDICATE THAT, ON AVERAGE, THE TIME TAKEN TO FOLLOW UP WITH OTHER SERVICES HAS DROPPED FROM SEVERAL HOURS TO <30 MINUTES

Time taken to find relevant service involvement information

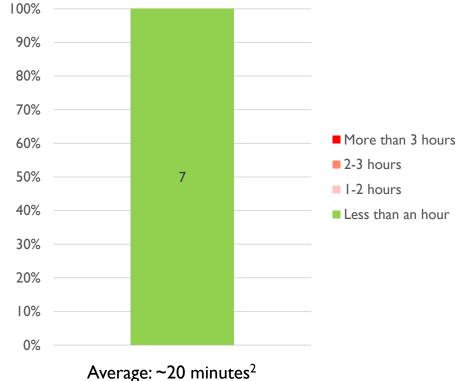
Without Family Context

Q: In the last month, how long on ave. has it taken you to find all relevant service involvement information (incl. contact details) for education, housing and/or ASC?

100% 90% 80% 70% ■ More than 3 hours 60% 2-3 hours 50% ■ I-2 hours 6 40% Less than an hour 30% 20% 10% 0% Average: ~157 minutes¹

With Family Context

Q: Since the beginning of the launch, how long on average has it taken you to find service involvement information using the Family Context tool?



THIS COULD ADD UP TO 15 HOURS PER SOCIAL WORKER PER MONTH, OR ~1500 HOURS ACROSS CHILDREN'S SOCIAL WORK IN STOCKPORT

~137

Minutes saved searching for information per new referral



~1.6

Ave. # of new referrals per week for each social worker



~100

Social workers in Children's Social Care Stockport

Per social worker:
190 hours a year
16 hours a month

Across Stockport CS: 19,000 hours a year 1585 hours a month

Based on reported time saved and reported average # referrals received per week. Social workers have reported a broader set of use cases than new referrals, including FC saving time looking for existing case information, so this is likely to be an underestimate of total time saved

FAMILY CONTEXT HAS ALSO PROVIDED VALUABLE INFORMATION THAT HAS INFORMED SOCIAL WORKERS' ACTIONS

Having information 'at their fingertips' has helped decision-making:

"I used Family Context to contact the primary lead and got the information back in that same meeting and fed that in — and that was really interesting info...it helped inform what that intervention was going to be for that family"

It has also given social workers new information they would otherwise not have seen

"I'd looked at a family and seen there were rent arrears — so I'd gone out and said to her, 'I know you've got rent arrears so let's talk about it, what happened?' I'd never have had that information had I not seen it on there, cos I just wouldn't have asked. Unless you're at a point of eviction you don't know."

And in some cases, has enabled immediate action

"I was able to find the name of a child who the Foster Carers thought this child was with and an address, and that a quite dangerous person was attached to that address — I informed police. In this case, it might have saved this young person from being in a dangerous situation"

OVERALL, TESTERS SEE FAMILY CONTEXT AS A TOOL THAT HELPS CONNECT SERVICES AROUND A FAMILY AND SUPPORT THEM IN THEIR WORK

How would you describe Family Context in your own words?

"It's a tool for giving you the right background information so you can make the links"

"It helps me with identifying professionals involved with my family"

"It's like a yellow pages"

How would it support your practice?

"It's useful to find out who is involved...that gives me an idea what level the work is at and what's going on with the family"

"It helps with a holistic approach"

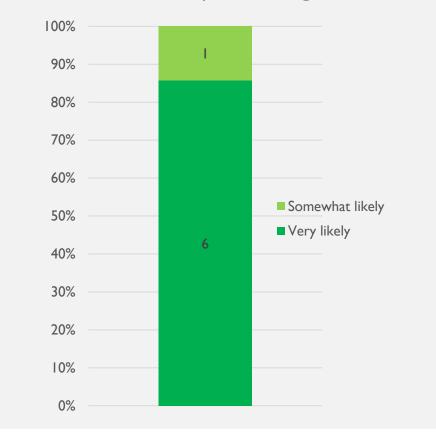
"all this other info... that sometimes takes a plethora of emails and calls to different systems to get... available from the off"

> "If we've got this to go on for a new referral, it's brilliant"

ALL SOCIAL WORKER TESTERS WANT TO KEEP USING THE TOOL AND WOULD RECOMMEND IT TO COLLEAGUES

% of testers who would recommend FC

Q: How likely would you be to recommend Family Context to a colleague for finding service involvement information on families they are working with?



All our testers say they would like to keep using the tool:

"I'd like to keep it – please and thank you!"

"I like Family Context. I think I'll keep using it after the end of the pilot."

"Can I just ask — after this trial is finished, are you going to take it away from me?!"

Some have also had interest from colleagues:

"They haven't wanted to join the trial but they will appear here and ask 'can you just check this...?"

"I've had people over my shoulder saying, 'can you have a quick look at this for me?"

NEXT STEPS

There were two main objectives:

To test whether the tool works in practice

2. To test how far the tool delivers the desired outcomes and impact for social workers

Usage

 Testers used the tool throughout the pilot and have continued to do so since it ended

Performance & Usability

- Family Context performed well technically, with no major bugs or errors
- Testers found it intuitive and v. easy to use
 Impact
- Family Context saves social workers an average of ~80 minutes each time they look for information on a new case
- It supports decision making and provides useful information that better connects services around families

...BUTTHE BIGGEST DEMAND FROM SOCIAL WORKERS IS FOR MORE DATA

"I'm still set that there are benefits with me being able to see very quickly who's involved but for me, I want more. So the housing stuff is very useful, the school is always useful **but I want more**."

"What databases can we get access to other than just the ones that are on there now?"

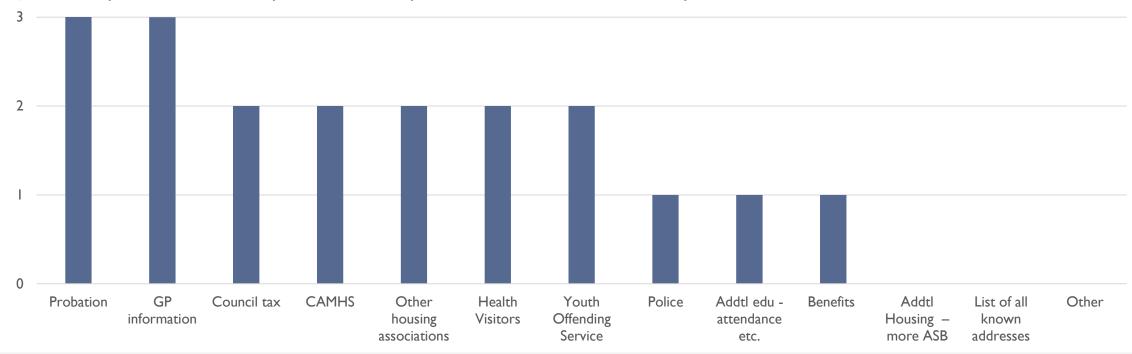
"It feels like it's a work in progress — and that's **because there's not all the** information on there yet"

SOCIAL WORKER TESTERS INDICATED A NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL DATASETS THAT WOULD BE VALUABLE TO ADD TO FAMILY CONTEXT

	Category	Detail	Rationale
	Health	 GP – registered surgery & contact details CAMHS / Healthy Young Minds Community Mental Health team Community Nurse / Midwife / Health Visitor – contact details 	 Key contact but often very difficult to (a) find and (b) get hold of Mental health is often relevant for either the child or their adult guardians but it can be difficult and take a lot of time to find who they are involved with and the right contact details Where the child or adult has another health professional involved, e.g. midwife or health visitor teams, this would also be helpful to know
New	Justice	 Probation – e.g. past & present licence conditions, offences Youth Offending Services 	 Probation are a risk-assessing agency; prev. case worker contact would be v. helpful. It is very hard & time consuming to find out about their involvement – spread across 2 offices, hard to get to the right person YOS record on a different system – 'we often don't find out about it in that crucial first 2 weeks of assessment'
	Police		 Police background information is really helpful, but often difficult to get Police are not always available to join strategy meetings
	Тах	• Council Tax – registered address	Council tax system often has most up to date address of all databases
Expanded	Education	Additional info e.g. attendance, school nurse contact	 Some additional high-level info would be helpful context School nurses tend to be more consistent than health visitors
	Housing	 Other housing associations Temporary housing agencies Historical tenants from Stockport Homes 	 Housing info was particularly valuable to testers – it would be great to see the same data for those not in Stockport Homes properties The same contact info for those facing homelessness and based in temporary accommodation is also important – e.g. Brindale house for SH For social workers to be aware of historical housing involvement

Priority datasets to add to Family Context

Q: Which top 3 data sets would you like to see expanded or have available on Family Context?



- While this provides a helpful starting point for next stage development, the service leads (Lindsey Yates, Philip Wilkinson & Katy Collins) should be brought in to help determine selection & details of data needed
- Testers recognized that feasibility would also be important in expanding the available datasets

ALONG WITH EXPANDING THE DATA AVAILABLE, FIVE OTHER IMPROVEMENTS WERE IDENTIFIED FOR THE NEXT STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

Change	Rationale
Include all addresses from across databases in a dropdown	 Children and families move address regularly or may be in temporary housing so a list of all 'open' addresses across the system helps for accuracy Often required in urgent situations
Amend the search function to be surname first, then first name	To mimic the LCS set up and make the tool more intuitive
Amend the search to ignore any 'wildcard' characters (such as * or %)	To mimic the LCS set up and make the tool more intuitive
Add a desktop icon to all children social worker's desktops	 To make the tool more visible and aid uptake & use This is desired in addition to adding to Liquid Logic 'useful links'
Check further refine the UI to clearly state what "no data" means – e.g. "no current arrears of >6 weeks" or "not a current Stockport Homes tenant"	• To mitigate the risk of users assuming no data means there is no involvement with the given service (rather than no shown involvement against agreed flags/data areas)

Make the benefit crystal clear

- Be careful as social workers can be cautious and worry it is just more work
- Make clear from the start that FC is easy and saves time reduces work rather than adding to it
- Highlight availability of housing information as that is a 'big hook'

Embed it into training and practice

- Build into standard training for newly qualified workers and new staff
- Team managers should recommend using FC particularly useful when working from home and less
 contact with colleagues who can signpost contacts
- Be purposeful about culture shift get teams talking about it to keep it front of mind

Consider timing and context

- Family Context is extra useful when all working from home, but lower visibility of others' practice means need to think creatively about how to get people talking about it
- Bear in mind other big changes and attention required pick the right moment

THE KEY NEXT STEPS ARE TO ROLL OUT ACROSS CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND AGREE THE ROADMAP FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Rollout

- Plan rollout approach & timelines
- Produce one pager on consent & IG
- Set up permanent feedback route for users to flag issues with IT/devs team and integrate into business-as-usual
- Add desktop icon & LL link as standard

- Risk: loss of momentum from pilot
- <u>Mitigation</u>: begin rollout soon
- Risk: not embedded as fully functional part of CSC
- <u>Mitigation</u>: ensure feedback loop connects to front & back end devs, embed in IT ecosystem, ownership by service for rollout

Further Devt.

- Get resource in place
- Agree roadmap & timeline for devt.
- Select addtl. datasets in consultation with Service
- Agree other improvements

- Risk: loss of momentum and buy-in, users conclude tool is helpful but limited
- <u>Mitigation</u>: agree roadmap and communicate this with users, keep the ambition to be 'game-changing'
- Risk: fail to maximise opportunity to join up services around a family and save SW time
- <u>Mitigation</u>: Establish resource, contacts and a project plan and roadmap for development