

Statistical Bulletin produced by the Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales
31 October 2006

LOCAL AUTHORITY PERFORMANCE 2005-06

The Welsh Assembly Government introduced a new framework for measuring local authority performance in 2005. This replaced the previous set of performance indicators. We have provided a headline assessment of Local Authority performance against this framework for 2005-06 in this bulletin.

We have highlighted aspects of performance which we feel would be of interest to our readers (who include the public, elected members and officers in local and central government and other partner organisations). You can find the complete set of data on our website (www.dataunitwales.gov.uk).

This bulletin represents the first opportunity to report local authority performance within the new framework. A limited set of the new measures are comparable with those used previously and we have provided a year-on-year comparison where available. In future years, we will be in a position to report a broader set of measures and provide additional year-on-year comparisons. We have tried to simplify the descriptions of the indicators for use within this bulletin. We have also rounded the data to make comparison easier. We are keen to make these bulletins as useful as possible and would welcome your views.

Local Authority Performance

The performance indicators are grouped under 6 headings: Environment & Transport; Education; Social Care; Housing; Planning & Public Protection; and Corporate Health. Performance in relation to each of these policy areas follows overleaf.

A summary of some of the key facts for 2005-06 is provided below.

Some key facts for 2005-06:

- Local authorities in Wales recycled 15% of waste in 2005-06 compared to 12% in 2004-05.
- The amount of waste sent to landfill dropped by 7% to 71%.
- Inspections of food premises that pose a high risk fell from 94% in 2004-05 to 91%.
- Secondary school pupil attendance has remained at 91%.
- 2.3% of all pupils leaving full time education aged 15 or 16 did so without a recognised qualification compared to 19.9% for children in care.
- 86% of children entering care had a care plan in place at the time of their first placement compared to 79% in 2004-05.
- As in the previous year, 95% of emergency repairs to local authority housing stock were completed within 24hrs.
- The rate of people occupying hospital beds whilst waiting for social care continues to improve, falling by 18% in 2005-06.

More detailed performance information is provided in the pages that follow.

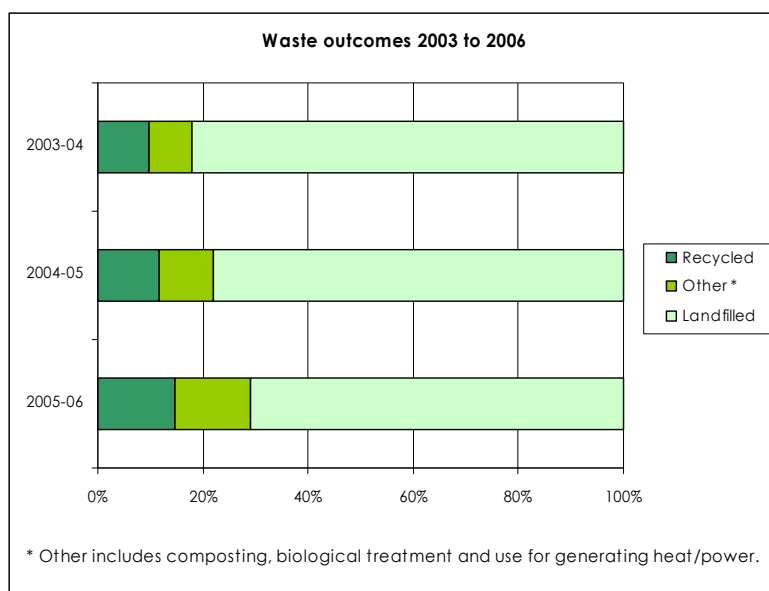
LOCAL AUTHORITY PERFORMANCE 2005-06

ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT

The environment is one of the key features on which a local authority's performance is judged by its public on a daily basis. The state of local roads; the amount of litter and graffiti; the efficiency of recycling; and waste collection services, all contribute to the public's perception of their local services.

Waste/Recycling

Local authorities in Wales collected a total of 1.9 million tonnes of waste in 2005-06. The percentage of households covered by a kerbside collection scheme for recyclables rose from 71% in 2004-05 to 78% in 2005-06. This ranged from 21% in Ceredigion to 100% in Swansea, Bridgend and the Vale of Glamorgan.



The percentage of waste recycled rose from 11.8% in 2004-05 to 14.7%. Over the same period, the percentage of waste sent to landfill dropped from 78% to 71%. These compare with figures of 9.8% and 82% in 2003-04.

In 2005-06 the percentage of waste recycled ranged from 8% in Cardiff to 30% in Ceredigion.

The percentage of incinerator residues, construction and demolition wastes, abandoned vehicles and beach cleansing wastes recycled rose from 65% in 2004-05 to 75% in 2005-06.

The percentage of waste composted rose from 7.6% to 8.5% whilst the percentage used to recover heat and power rose from 0.04% to 0.61%.

Transport & Highways

The percentage of main roads requiring maintenance rose from 11% in 2004-05 to 13% in 2005-06. This ranged from 0.6% in the Isle of Anglesey to 29.7% in Ceredigion. Over the same period, the percentage of other roads requiring maintenance fell from 20% to 16%. This ranged from 2.5% in Merthyr Tydfil to 50.8% in Torfaen.

In 2005-6, it took local authorities an average of 4.2 days to repair a street lamp failure. This ranged from 1 day in the Vale of Glamorgan to 15 days in Ceredigion.

In 2005-06, 96% of local roads and public spaces were of an acceptable level of cleanliness compared to 95% in 2004-05. For 2005-06, this ranged from 82% in Blaenau Gwent to 99% in Merthyr Tydfil.

EDUCATION

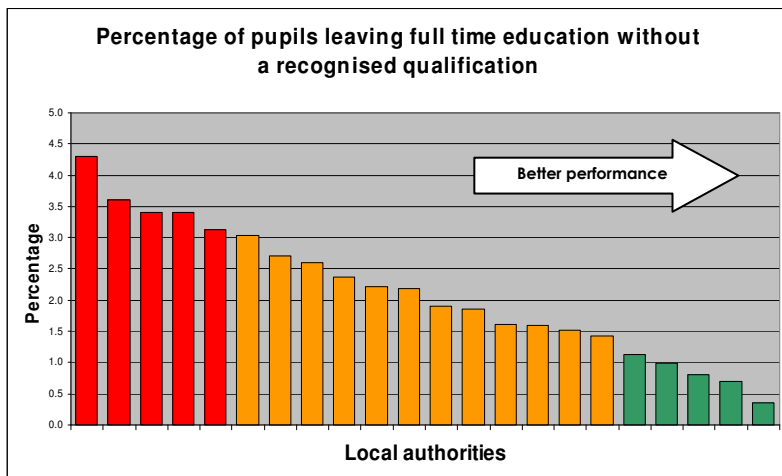
Lifelong learning is essential to raise levels of achievement and empower children, young people and adults to achieve social and economic wellbeing. Local authorities are central in planning and delivering education for children in partnership with schools and their governing bodies.

Pupil attendance at secondary school remained at 91% for both 2004-05 and 2005-06. This ranged from 89.0% in Rhondda Cynon Taf to 92.4% in Monmouthshire.

In local authority-maintained schools, 74% of pupils at Key Stage 2 achieved Level 4 or above in each of the core National Curriculum subjects of English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination. This ranged from 68% in Blaenau Gwent to 80% in Monmouthshire. At Key Stage 2, 19% of pupils were assessed in Welsh (first language).

58% of pupils at Key Stage 3 achieved Level 5 or above in each of the core National Curriculum subjects. This ranged from 48% in Blaenau Gwent to 66% in Powys and Monmouthshire. At Key Stage 3, 14% of pupils were assessed in Welsh (first language).

The average external qualifications point score for all 16 year olds remained at 40 in both 2004-05 and 2005-06. This is the "score" derived from the number of points gained by a pupil based on their individual exam results e.g. A*=8 points, A=7, B=6,..., G=1 point. In 2005-06, this ranged from 33 in Merthyr Tydfil to 48 in Ceredigion.



In 2005-06, 2.3% of all pupils leaving full time education aged 15/16 did so without a recognised qualification. This ranged from 0.4% in Ceredigion to 4.3% in Denbighshire.

19.9% of children in the care of their local authority leaving full time education aged 15/16 did so without a recognised qualification.

HOUSING

Local Authorities are central to taking a comprehensive overview of housing needs and priorities in their local areas, and therefore have a crucial role to play. Local authorities provide public housing and work with others, such as registered social landlord, to meet housing need, and fund and support improvements in standards for private sector housing.

Local authority maintained housing

The average number of days local authorities took to re-let dwellings fell from 56 days in 2004-05 to 53 days in 2005-06. This ranged from 26 days in Conwy and Caerphilly to 109 days in Swansea.

The average rent lost per tenant through dwellings being left vacant rose from £57.76 in 2004-05 to £62.80 in 2005-06.

The percentage of emergency repairs which local authorities completed within 24hrs remained at 95% for 2004-05 and 2005-06. In 2005-06 this ranged from 78% in Ceredigion to 100% in Pembrokeshire and Swansea.

The percentage of urgent repairs which local authorities completed within 7 days rose from 82% in 2004-05 to 85% in 2005-06. This ranged from 60% in Carmarthenshire to 99% in Isle of Anglesey.

The average number of days which local authorities took to complete non-urgent repairs fell from 33 days to 29 days in the same period. This ranged from 8 days in Newport to 60 days in Caerphilly.

Homelessness

In 2005-06, 83% of people presenting as homeless received decisions within 33 working days. This compares with 81% in 2004-05. For 2005-06, this ranged from 58% in Cardiff to 100% in Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent.

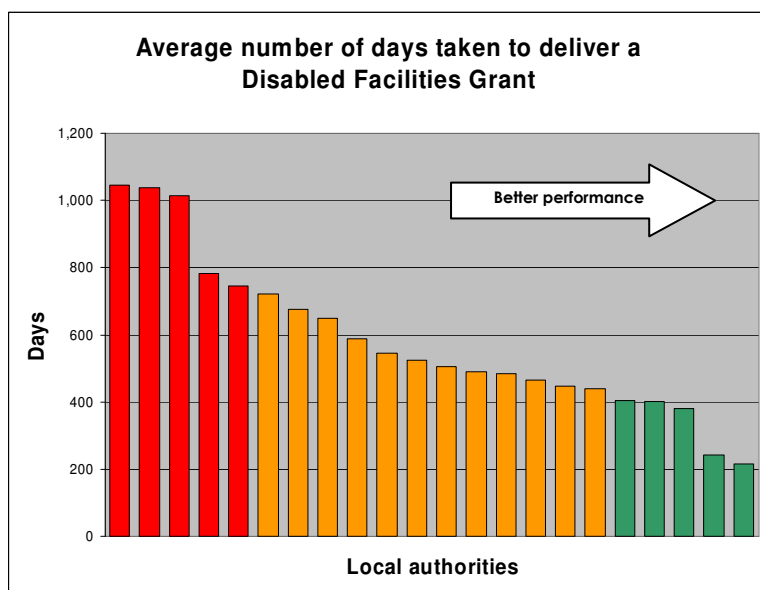
The average number of days taken for local authorities to discharge their duty where an applicant was deemed to be homeless was 79 days. This ranged from 17 days in Cardiff to 218 days in Ceredigion.

In 2005-06, homeless households spent an average of 102 days in temporary accommodation compared with 112 days in 2004-05. In 2005-06 this ranged from 41 days in Wrexham to 164 days in Pembrokeshire.

In 2005-6, local authorities housed a total of 888 homeless families with children in bed and breakfast accommodation. This ranged from zero families in Blaenau Gwent to 82 families in Pembrokeshire.

Other housing

Through direct action by local authorities, 1.6% (317) of private sector dwellings that had been vacant for more than 6 months were returned to occupation. This is the same level as reported in 2004-05.



In 2005-06, it took an average of 593 days for local authorities to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant. This ranged from 216 days in Merthyr Tydfil to 1,045 days in Conwy.

Local authorities took an average of 255 days to deliver an adaptation for a local authority tenant where the Disabled Facilities Grant process was not used. This ranged from 21 days in Isle of Anglesey to 726 days in Conwy.

Housing & Council Tax Benefit

The average time local authorities took to process a new benefit claim decreased from 44 days in 2004-05 to 37 days in 2005-06. This ranged from 24 days in Blaenau Gwent to 56 days in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The average time local authorities took to process a notification of change of circumstances increased from 10 days in 2004-05 to 17 days in 2005-06. This ranged from 9 days in Caerphilly to 35 days in Cardiff.

Over the same period, the accuracy of claims processing improved from 97% in 2004-05 to 98% in 2005-06. This ranged from 87% in Merthyr Tydfil to 100% in Swansea, the Vale of Glamorgan, Torfaen and Newport.

SOCIAL CARE

Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide a range of services designed to meet the social care needs of some of the most vulnerable people in society. For example, a local authority will act as a "corporate parent" for children who need to be in care and provide practical assistance to help adults maintain their independence.

Social Care – Children

In 2005-06, around 1,900 children entered care in Wales. Almost 4,600 children were in care on 31st March 2006.

86% of children entering care had a care plan in place at the time of their first placement. This represents an improvement over the reported rate of 80% in 2003-04 and 79% in 2004-05. In 2005-06, the figures ranged from 70% in Bridgend to 100% in Isle of Anglesey, Carmarthenshire, Vale of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire.

Stability is recognized as being important for children in care. The percentage of children in care who experienced three or more placements during the year remained at 10% for both 2004-05 and 2005-06. For 2005-06 this ranged from 2% in Neath Port Talbot to 20% in Denbighshire.

During 2005-06, 14% of children in care experienced one or more changes of school. This ranged from 7% in Neath Port Talbot to 26% in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

In 2005-06, 85% of children in care had a plan for permanence by their second review. This ranged from 62% in Bridgend to 100% in Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Flintshire, Neath Port Talbot, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen.

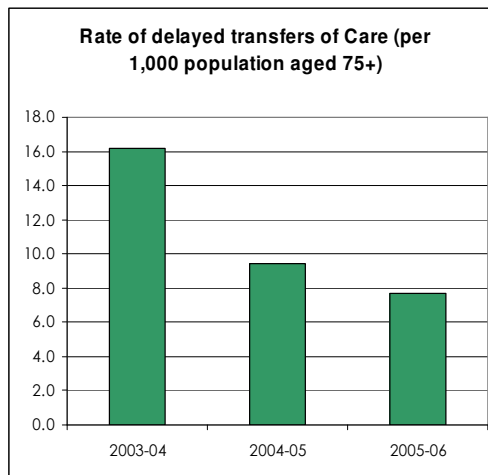
Social Care – Adults

A delayed transfer of care – also known as ‘bed-blocking’ – arises when a person who no longer needs hospital treatment is unable to leave hospital and return to their own home or to a social care setting such as a residential home.

The rate of delayed transfers of care has more than halved over the last two years.

The rate of delays due to social care reasons dropped from 9.4 in 2004-05 to 7.7 in 2005-06. This continues the improvement from 16.2 in 2003-04.

For 2005-06, the rate of delayed transfers of care ranged from 0.08 in Conwy to 24.23 in Carmarthenshire.



For people aged 65 or over in 2005-06, local authorities supported 27 per 1,000 in care homes and helped 86 per 1,000 to live at home.

In the same period, local authorities supported 91% of social services clients aged 18-64 in the community.

PLANNING & PUBLIC PROTECTION

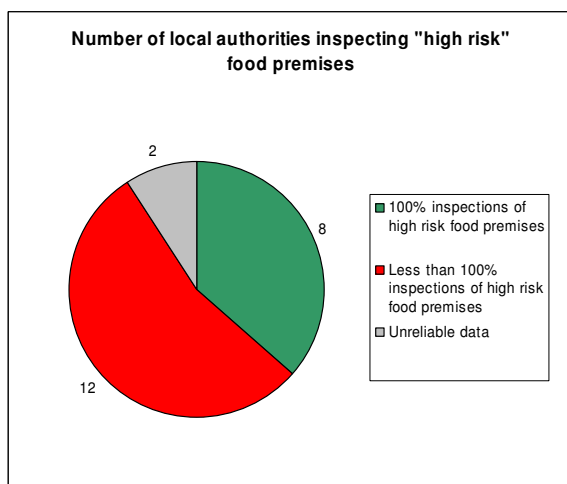
Local authorities determine whether individual building and other developments should go ahead, taking into account the proposed development's impact on amenities and the environment. Local authority regulatory services, including environmental health, trading standards, licensing and street scene, are important frontline services that protect the quality of life and wellbeing of local communities. Often unseen, they play a key role in providing protective services to safeguard public health, consumer protection and the environment.

Planning

During 2005-06, local authorities processed 73% of domestic planning applications within 8 weeks. This ranged from 53% in Swansea to 93% in Isle of Anglesey.

In the same period, local authorities processed 47% of small commercial planning applications within 8 weeks (ranging from 21% in Monmouthshire to 70% in Isle of Anglesey) and 33% of large commercial planning applications within 13 weeks (ranging from 10% in Rhondda Cynon Taf to 54% in Bridgend).

Public Protection



Local authorities are required to undertake inspections of all premises which are assessed as “high risk”. For food premises, eight of the twenty-two local authorities in Wales achieved this 100% rate in 2005-06 - Isle of Anglesey, Wrexham, Carmarthenshire, Swansea, Vale of Glamorgan, Caerphilly, Torfaen, and Monmouthshire. The lowest reported rate of inspection was 69% in Gwynedd.

Across Wales, inspections of food premises that posed a high risk fell from 94% in 2004-05 to 91% in 2005-06.

For other high risk premises, 95% were inspected for trading standards, 84% for animal health and 89% for Health & Safety in 2005-06.

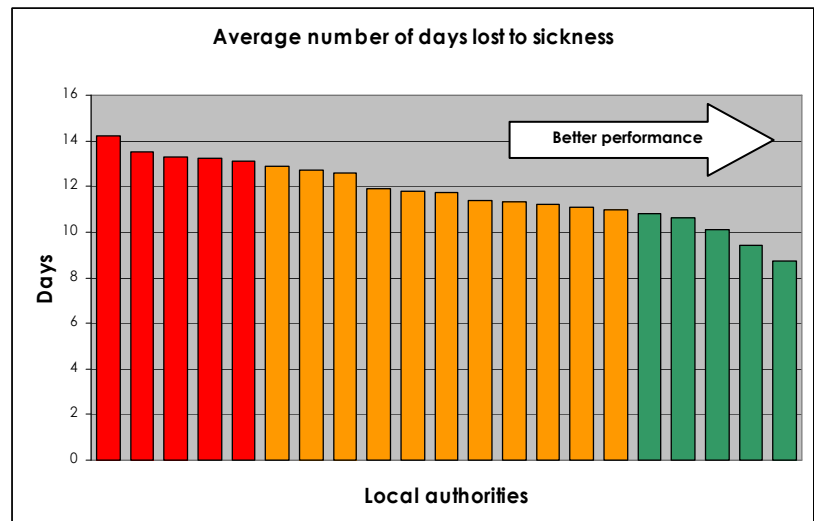
LOCAL AUTHORITY CORPORATE HEALTH

As public bodies using public resources, local authorities are expected to have high standards in the way they manage their affairs. This includes good people and financial management.

Corporate Health

An average of 11.7 days per (Whole Time Equivalent) employee were lost due to sickness in 2005-06.

This ranged from 8.7 days in Pembrokeshire to 14.2 days in Powys (21 of the 22 local authorities provided data for this indicator).



The percentage of employees (including teachers and school-based staff) who left the employment of the local authority ranged from 6.5% in Monmouthshire to 27.2% in Merthyr Tydfil.

The percentage of local authority staff declaring that they are disabled rose from 1.39% in 2004-05 to 1.48% in 2005-06.

In 2005-06, 0.9% of local authority staff were from ethnic minority communities.

Financial Health

The percentage of council tax due that was collected increased from 96% in 2004-05 to 97% in 2005-06. A similar improvement was evident for the collection of non-domestic rates, rising from 97% to 98%.

89% of undisputed invoices were paid within 30 days in 2005-06 compared to 84% in 2004-05.

If you require any further information regarding this bulletin, contact details are as follows:

Richard Palmer, Head of Improvement & Development
Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales
3-7 Columbus Walk
Cardiff CF10 4SD
Tel: 029 2090 9500
E-mail: enquiries@dataunitwales.gov.uk

The full Performance Indicator dataset is published on the Internet at: <http://www.dataunitwales.gov.uk>.
For further information relating to the dataset, please contact:

Helen James, Acting Head of Data & Information Services
Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales
Tel: 029 2090 9500

Notes:

One of the key functions of the Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales is to collect, process, interpret and disseminate statistical data on local government services and activities. Further information about the range of our work can be found on our website (www.dataunitwales.gov.uk).

The National Strategic and Core Set Indicators are part of the Performance Measurement Framework for Local Authorities in Wales. It replaces the previous set of National Assembly for Wales Performance Indicators (NAWPIs). 2005-06 represents the first year of data collection in support of this new framework. A limited set of the new indicators are comparable with previous NAWPIs. Where this is the case, a year-on-year comparison has been provided.

National Strategic indicators reflect key priorities identified by the Welsh Assembly Government and local government in Wales. Core Set Indicators serve to provide service/policy area specific performance information.

The Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales has collected data for the framework from the 22 local authorities in Wales.

The National Strategic Indicator data has been audited by the Wales Audit Office. Any data which has been qualified as a result of the audit has been considered to be unreliable and has been omitted from this analysis.

Data presented in this bulletin has been effectively rounded for ease of comparison. The complete dataset is available on the Data Unit website <http://www.dataunitwales.gov.uk>.

Definitions of, and guidance for, local authorities on the 2005-06 indicator set are also available on our website. This provides a detailed definition for each of the indicators and its classification i.e. National Strategic Indicator or Core Set Indicator.