

Local Government Performance 2013-14

We are pleased to present this, the ninth annual bulletin on local authority performance. This bulletin contains information on a range of local authority services. We have used the data to highlight the overall level and range of performance across Wales. The full data set is available on our website.

We have also launched a new interactive tool which allows the public, councillors, officers and partners to easily compare councils' performance across Wales and over time. "MyLocalCouncil" has been designed to be intuitive and user-friendly in order to make the latest key performance information for Wales' 22 councils more accessible.

Overall performance

At a Wales level, 70% (31) of the 44 indicators which are comparable between 2012-13 and 2013-14 show improvement.

The gap in performance (between the best and worst performing authorities) narrowed in 59% (26) of the indicators.

For 43% of the indicators, performance improved and the gap between the best and worst performing authorities narrowed.

Service improvement

Local authorities are often one of the largest employers in an area and provide a range of services for the communities they serve. The table below shows how these services performed in 2013-14 compared to 2012-13.

Service Area	No of comparable indicators	% of indicators where performance improved	% of indicators where the gap narrowed	% of indicators where performance improved <u>and</u> the gap narrowed
Education	11	82%	64%	55%
Social Care	20	60%	60%	40%
Housing	3	100%	67%	67%
Environment & Transport	6	83%	50%	33%
Planning & Regulatory Services	2	50%	50%	50%
Leisure & Culture	2	50%	50%	0%
Overall	44	70%	59%	43%

Performance over time

The performance of local authorities across Wales has improved consistently over recent years. The indicator set has remained relatively stable since 2011-12. Since then, 78% of comparable performance indicators show an improvement. Over this period, every authority improved or maintained its performance in over half of the indicators, ranging from 53% in Newport to 86% in Cardiff.

On the following pages you will find information on the performance of local authorities as they deliver important outcomes for our communities.

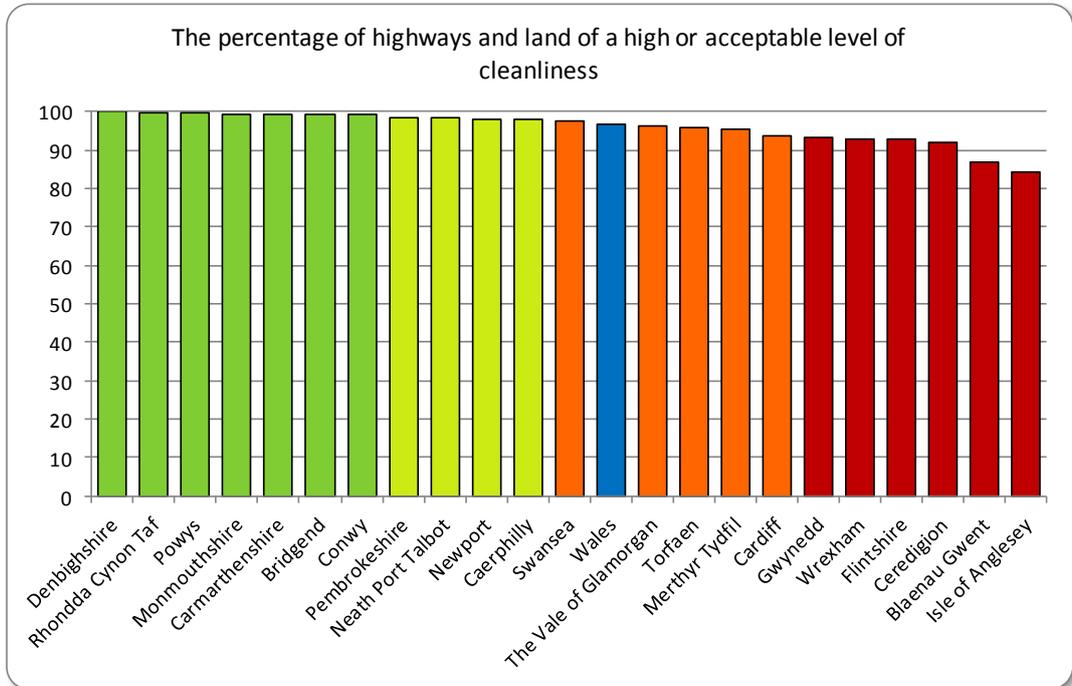
Note

- Performance indicator titles have been simplified to aid understanding.
- We have rounded the data where this makes comparison easier.

Providing a clean and safe environment...

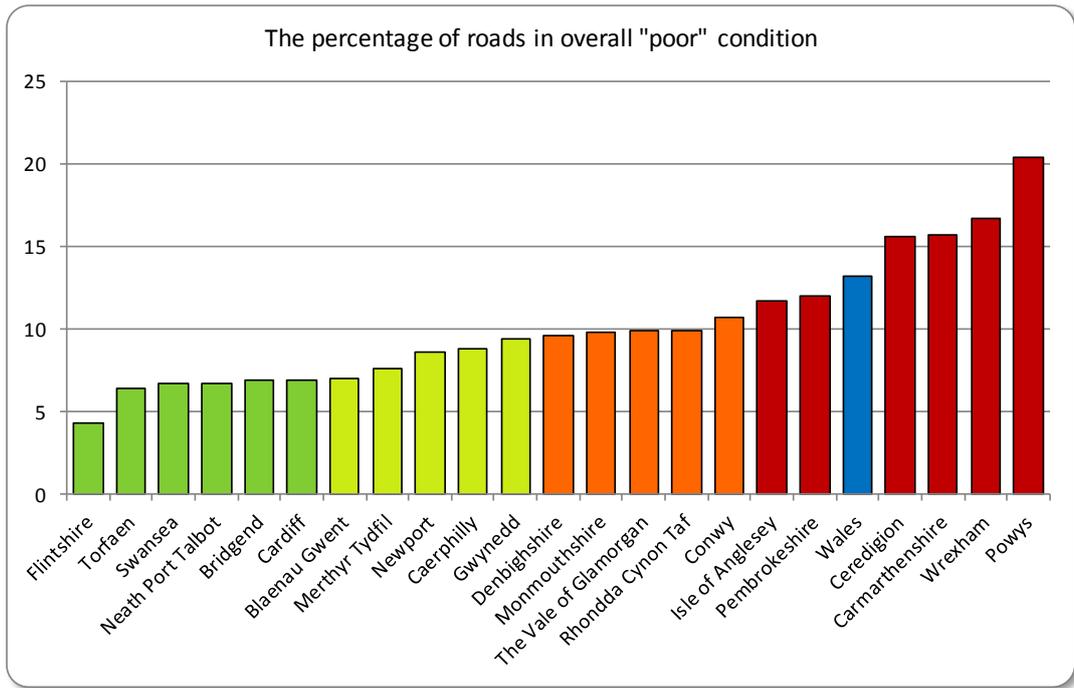
Local authorities ensure that the places where we live and work are clean and safe.

Across Wales, 96.8% of highways and relevant land inspected was of a high or acceptable quality in 2013-14 (compared to 95.8% in 2012-13). This ranged from 84.5% on the Isle of Anglesey to 100.0% in Denbighshire.

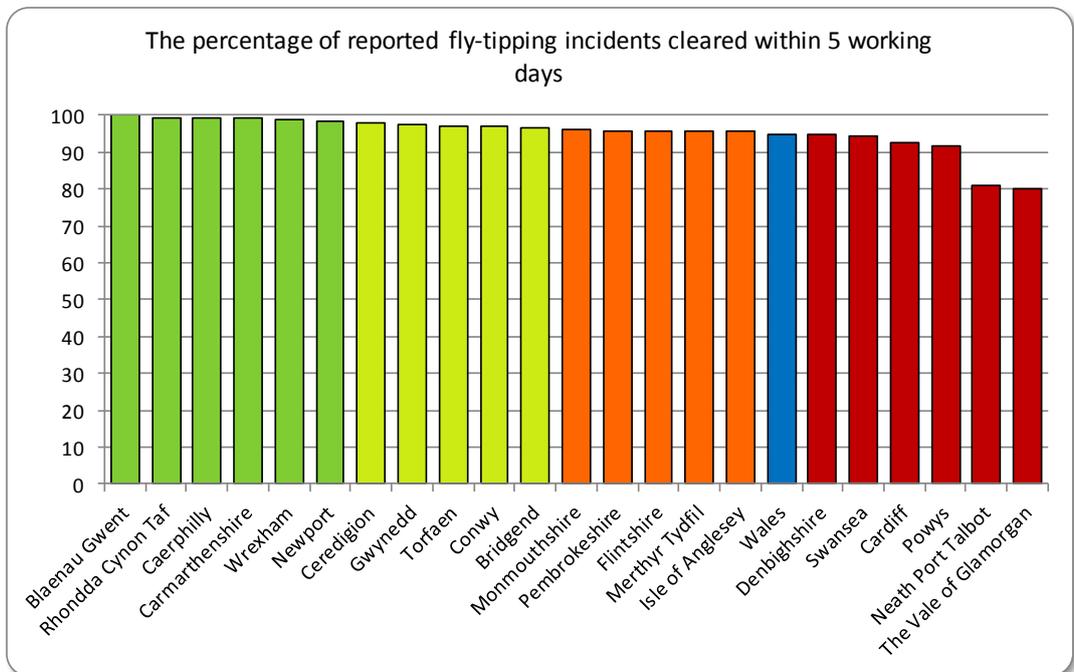


The Wales value for 2013-14 is the highest value reported since the indicator was introduced in 2007-08, with 18 of the 22 authorities improving their performance over this period.

In 2013-14, 13.2% of our roads were in an overall "poor" condition compared to 13.4% in 2012-13. This ranged from 4.3% in Flintshire to 20.4% in Powys.

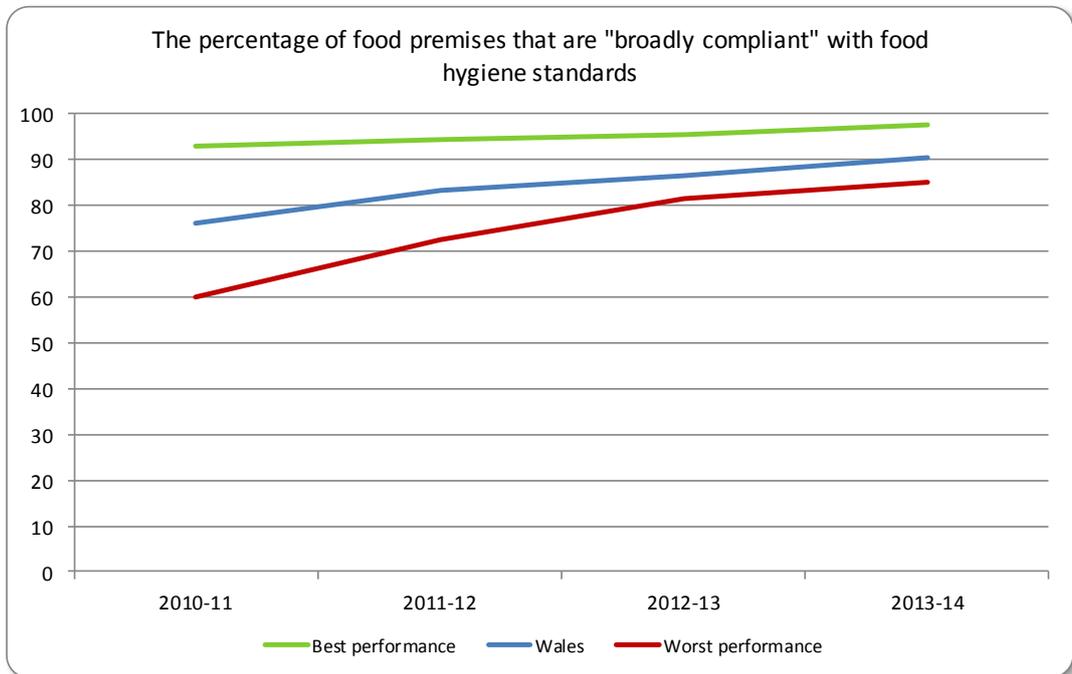


Fly-tipping is a serious environmental crime which can cause long lasting contamination, pollution and put human health at risk. Local authorities are required to clean up small scale fly-tipping incidents on public land within five days of them being reported. In 2013-14, 95.0% of fly-tipping incidents reported to local authorities were cleared within five working days (compared to 92.2% in 2012-13). This ranged from 80.3% in The Vale of Glamorgan to 100.0% in Blaenau Gwent.



Note: A premises which is "broadly compliant" is one where there are no significant issues in terms of food hygiene. The term "broadly compliant" is defined fully in the performance indicator on our website.

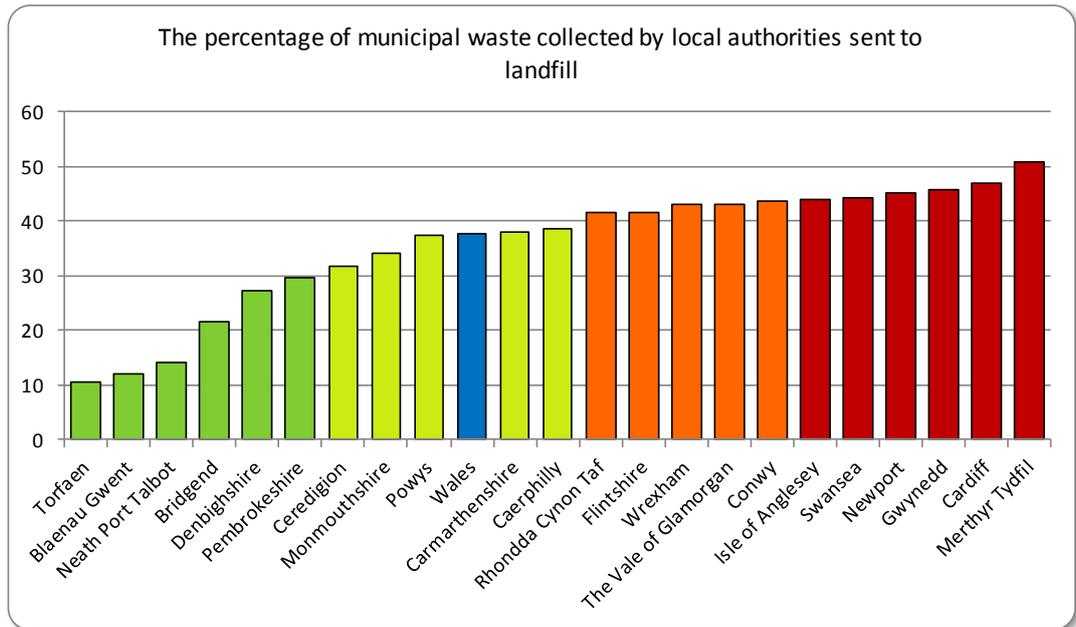
Authorities continue to improve their performance in safeguarding the food we eat, with 90.3% of food establishments being "broadly compliant" with food hygiene standards in 2013-14 (compared to 86.6% in 2012-13). This ranged from 85.0% in Newport to 97.5% in Gwynedd.



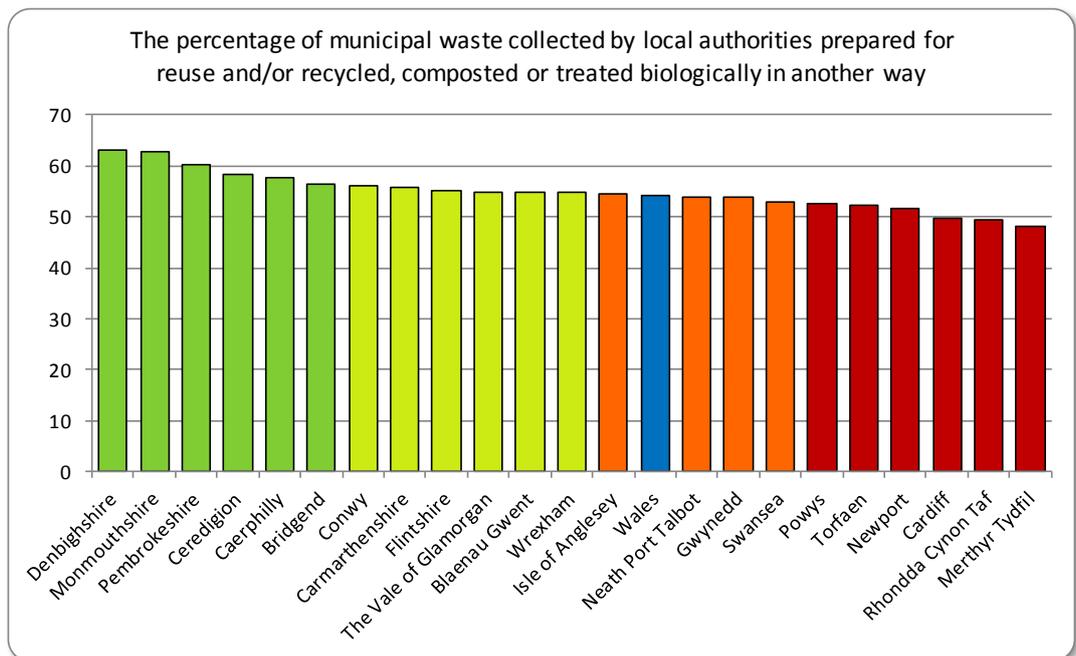
From promoting energy efficiency, to ensuring that resources are reused and recycled, local authorities play a big part in helping secure the future for the next generation.

Local authorities collect and process our waste. The amount of landfill space left in Wales is running out fast and landfill taxes mean we cannot afford to keep sending waste to landfill. Landfill can cause air, soil and water pollution. Developing ways of preventing waste, reducing waste going to landfill and increasing recycling, composting and anaerobic digestion will have a significant impact on our ability to combat climate change.

In 2013-14, 37.7% of municipal waste collected by local authorities was sent to landfill, compared to 41.0% in 2012-13. This ranged from 10.6% in Torfaen to 50.9% in Merthyr Tydfil. Over this period, Torfaen have gone from the worst performing local authority to the best.



54.3% of the municipal waste collected was reused or recycled in 2013-14 compared to 52.3% in 2012-13. This ranged from 63.2% in Denbighshire to 48.2% in Merthyr Tydfil.

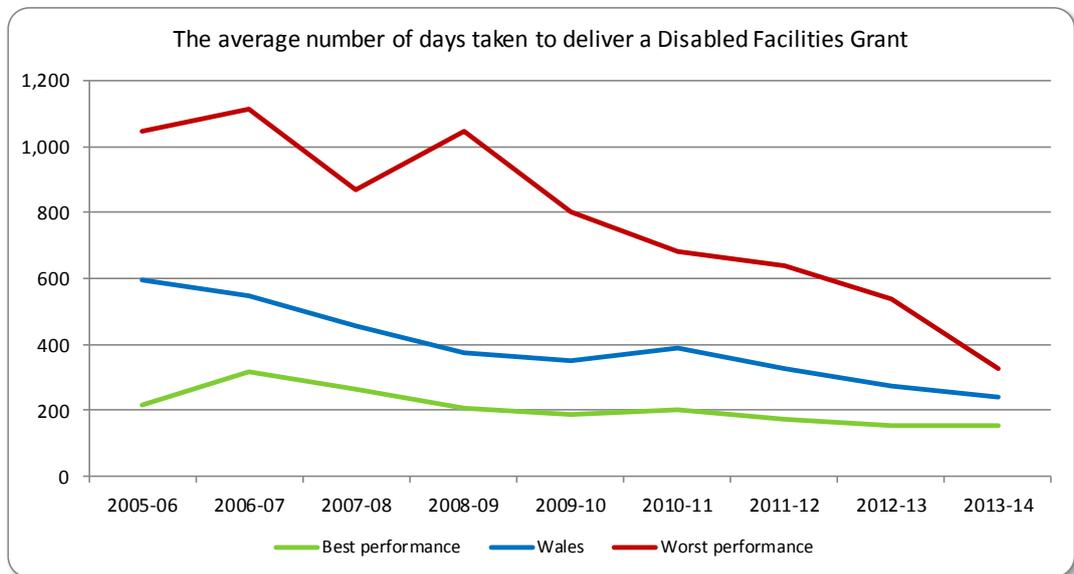


Providing affordable and appropriate housing...

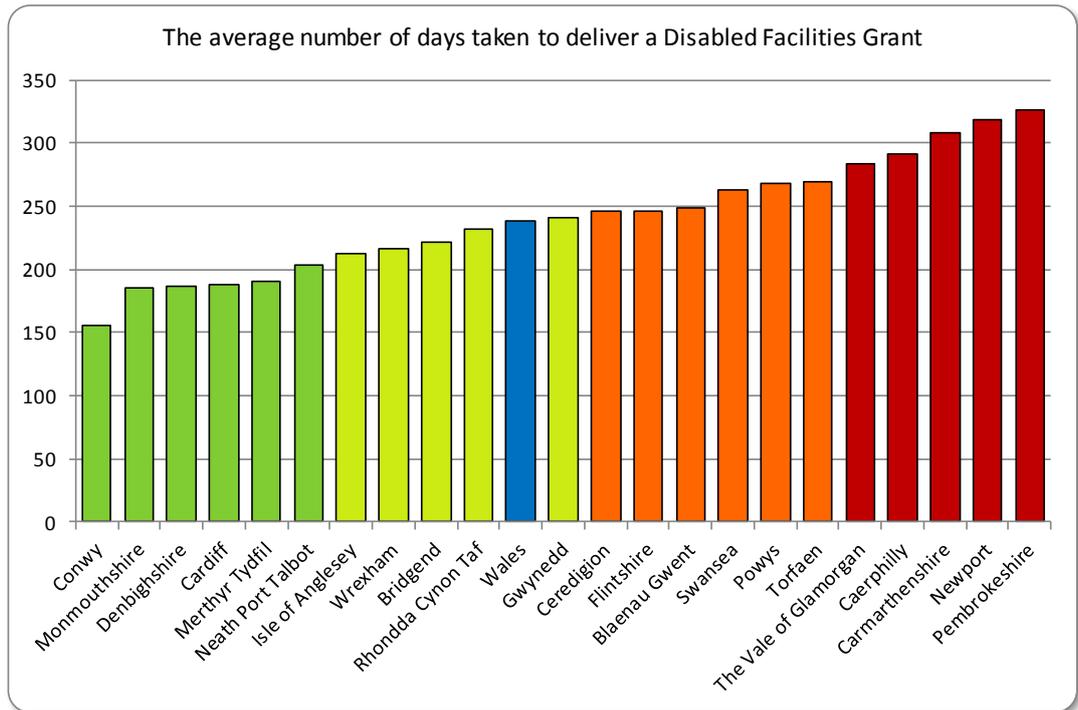
Local authorities have a key role to play in ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of affordable housing to meet identified need. 37% of all additional housing units provided during 2013-14 were affordable housing.

For disabled people of all ages, housing is a key enabler of independent living. Adapted housing enables people to maintain their independence, remain in their communities and exercise choice in the way they live their lives. Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) can help towards the cost of adapting a disabled person’s home.

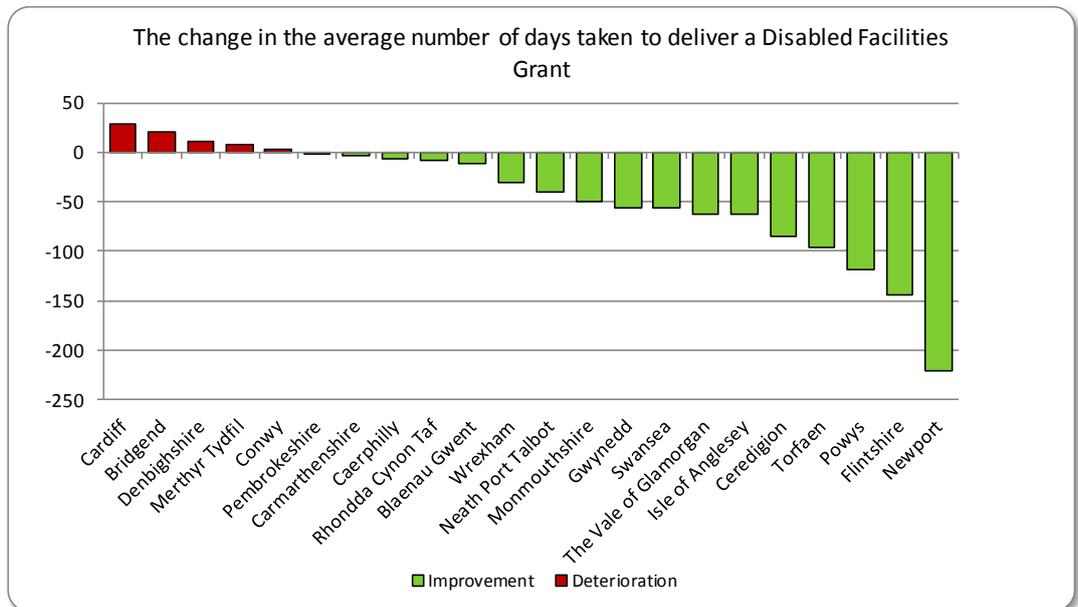
Local authorities took an average of 239 days to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant in 2013-14 (compared to 271 days in 2012-13). During this period, the gap between the best and the worst performing authorities reduced by 216 days.



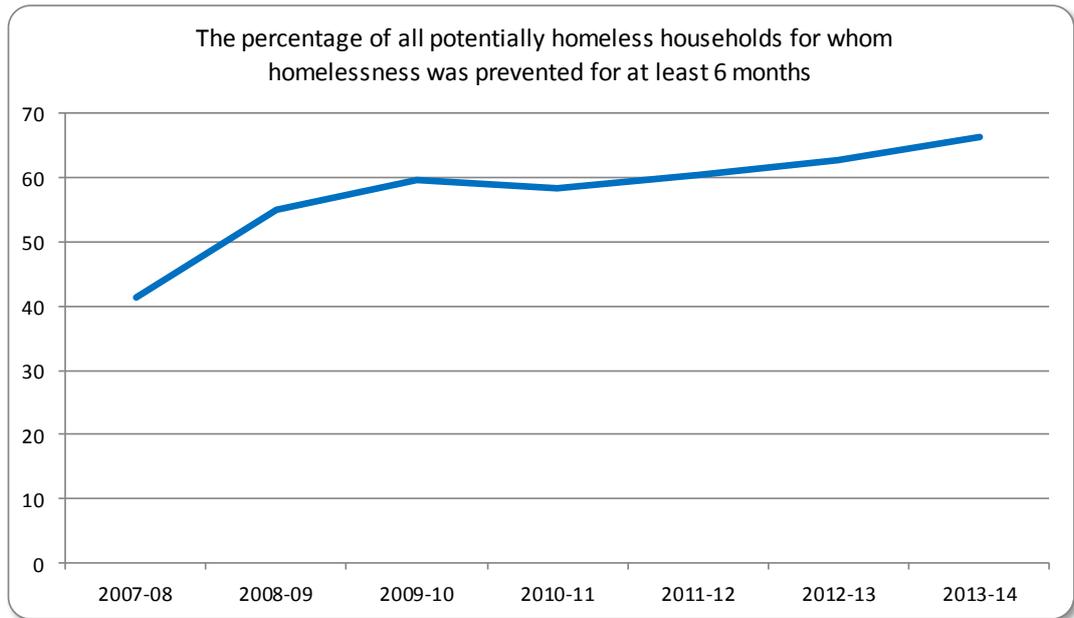
In 2013-14, the average number of days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant ranged from 156 days in Conwy to 326 days in Pembrokeshire.



During the period, all but five of the local authorities reduced the number of days they took to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant.



Homelessness is one of the most extreme forms of social exclusion. Action by local authorities prevented homelessness for at least six months for 66.4% of potentially homeless households in 2013-14 (compared to 62.6% in 2012-13).

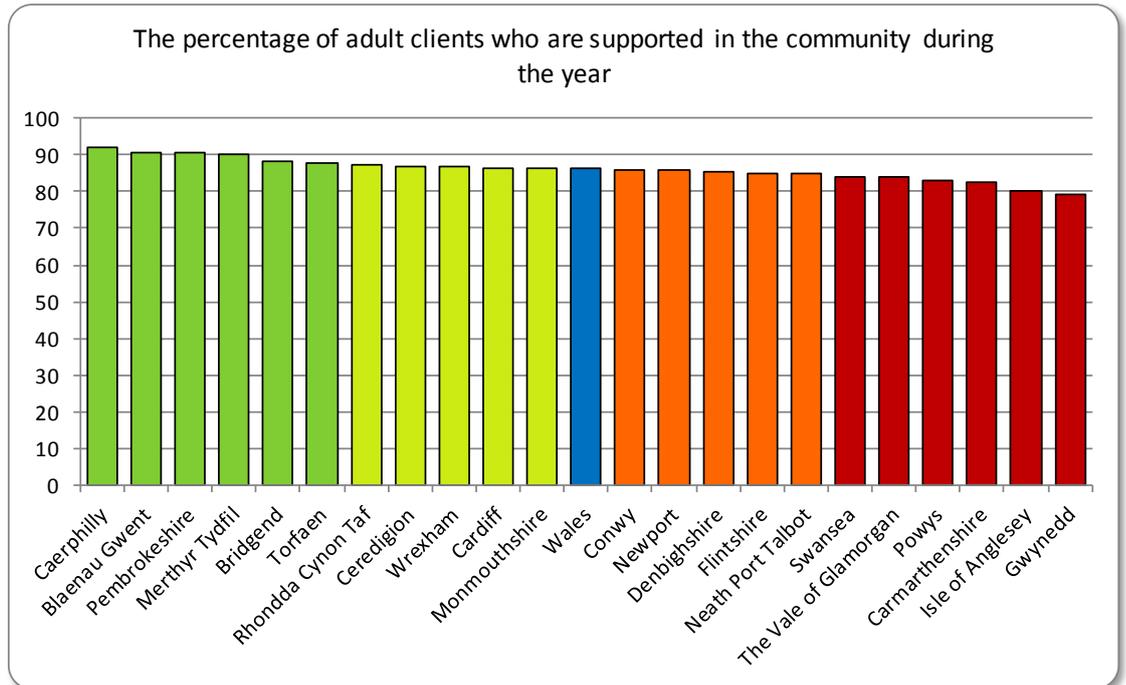


Empty homes represent a potential housing resource that may be currently underutilised. Empty homes can be a focus for increased levels of crime, vandalism, anti-social behaviour and drug-abuse. 9.2% of long-term vacant private sector dwellings were returned to occupation through direct action by local authorities in 2013-14 (compared to 5.1% in 2012-13). This ranged from 56.9% in Torfaen to 0.0% in Pembrokeshire.

Supporting safe and independent lives...

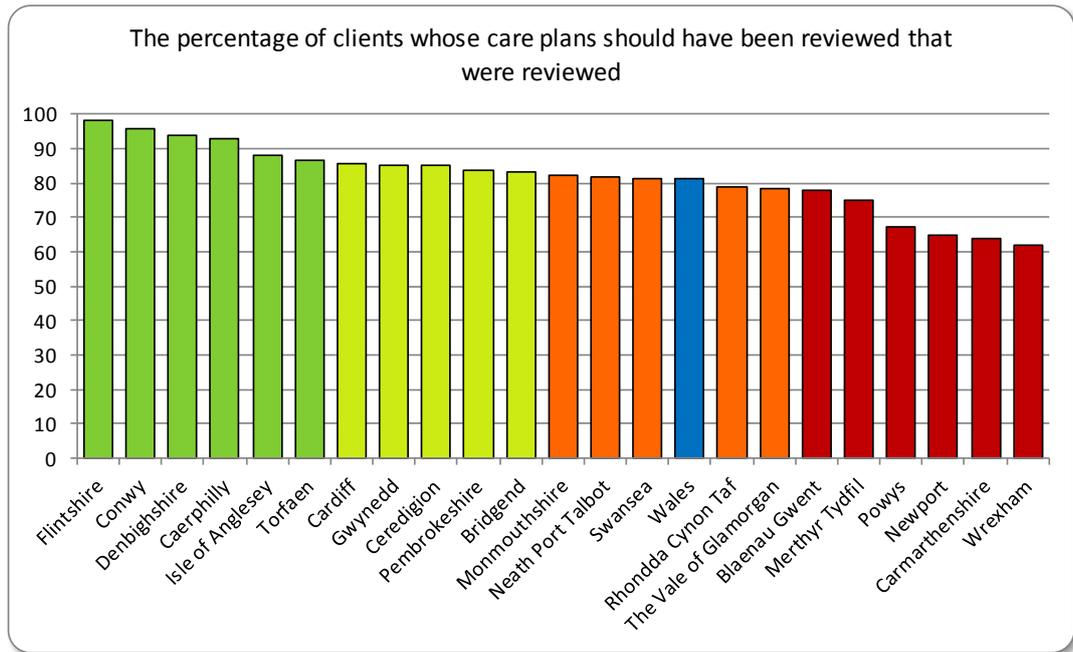
Local authorities' social services provide support to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. In 2013-14, local authorities supported over 110 thousand people in the community or in residential homes.

86.33% of people supported by social services received that support in a community setting in 2013-14 compared to 86.16% in 2012-13. This ranged from 79.27% in Gwynedd to 91.90% in Caerphilly.



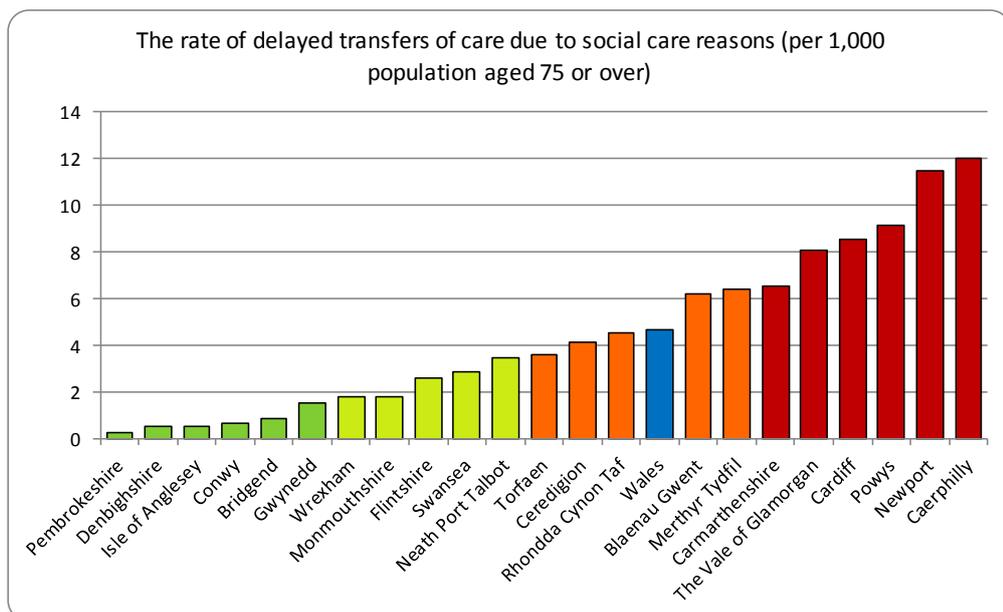
A 'care plan' describes the range of services which are put in place to meet individual's care needs. These should be reviewed regularly to make sure that the services being provided continue to be appropriate. 81.1% of care plans that should have been reviewed during the year were reviewed - the seventh successive annual improvement since 2006-07.

The percentage of care plan reviews ranged from 98.5% in Flintshire to 61.8% in Wrexham.



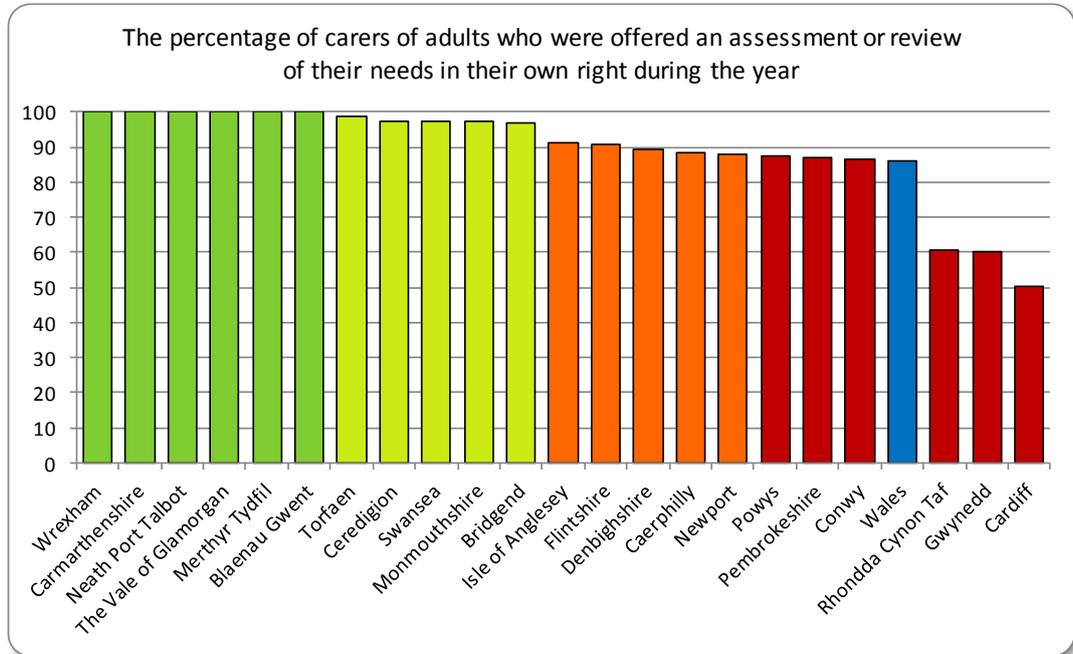
The risk was managed in 94.4% of adult protection referrals received by local authorities during 2013-14 (compared to 91.8% in 2012-13) – the third consecutive year-on-year improvement for this indicator. This ranged from 100.0% in Denbighshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend and The Vale of Glamorgan to 73.2% in Torfaen.

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. In 2013-14 the rate of delayed transfers of care due to social care reasons was reported at 4.70 per 1,000 population aged 75 or over – a slight rise on the figure reported in 2012-13. The rate of delayed transfers of care ranged from 0.24 per 1,000 population aged 75 or over in Pembrokeshire to 11.99 per 1,000 in Caerphilly.



85.8% of carers of adults known to social services were offered an assessment or review of their needs in 2013-14 (compared to 86.8% in 2012-13).

The percentage of carers offered an assessment or review of their needs ranged from 100% in Wrexham, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, The Vale of Glamorgan, Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent to 50% in Cardiff.

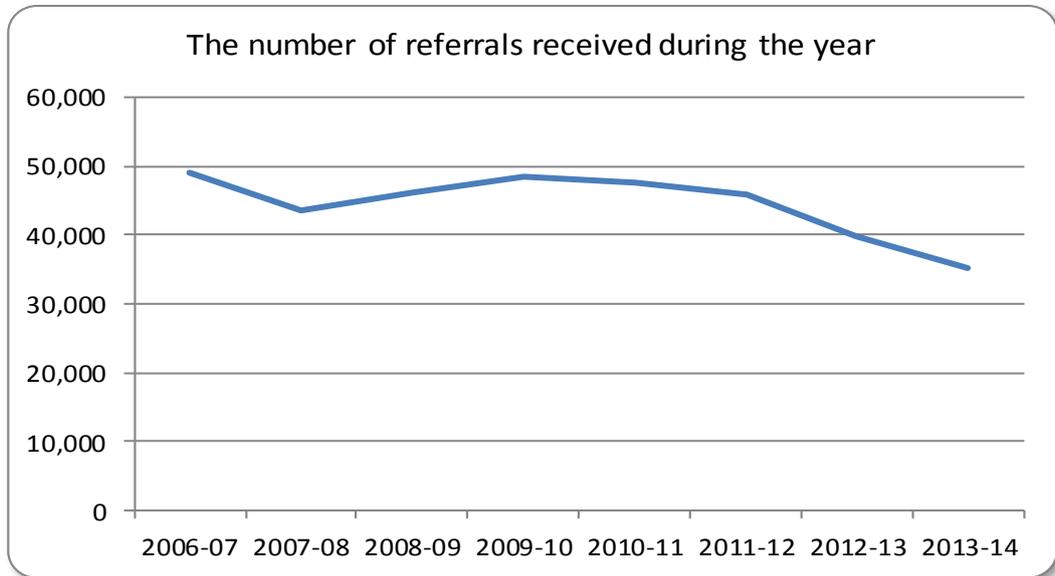


In 2013-14, 92.7% of young people aged 19 who were formerly looked after with whom the authority were in contact, were known to be in suitable, non-emergency accommodation compared to 93.2% in 2012-13.

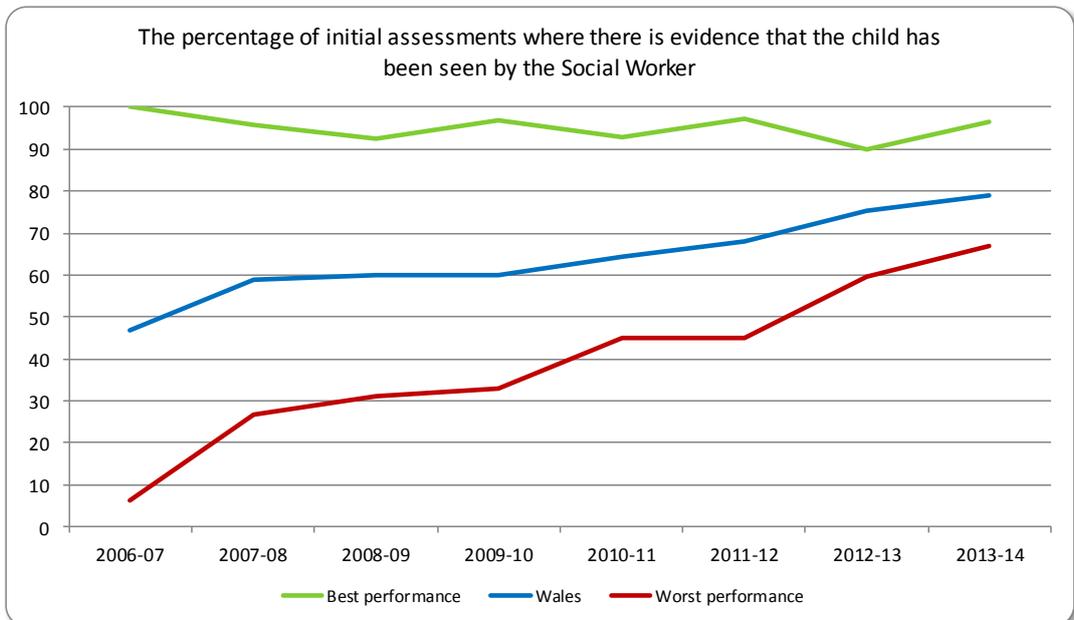
This ranged from 100.0% in Conwy, Powys, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot and Newport to 76.9% in Wrexham.

Safeguarding children...

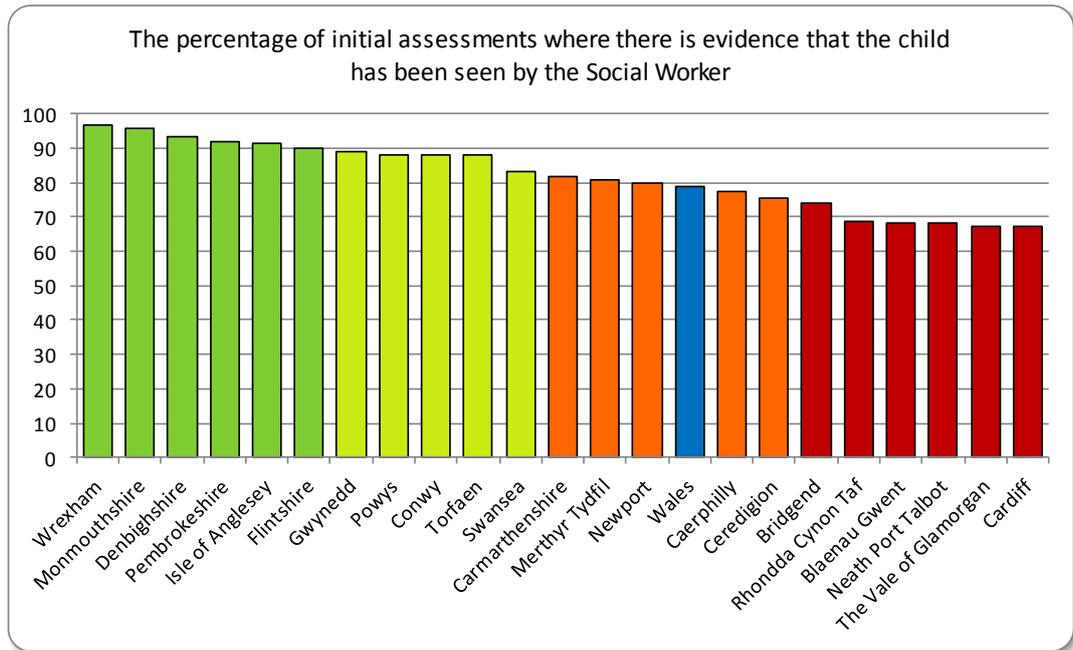
Local authorities received just over 35 thousand referrals relating to children in 2013-14 – the lowest number reported since 2006-07 and a further reduction of over 4 thousand compared to 2012-13. They provide a range of support to ensure that children remain safe and are supported in order to achieve the best they can in life.



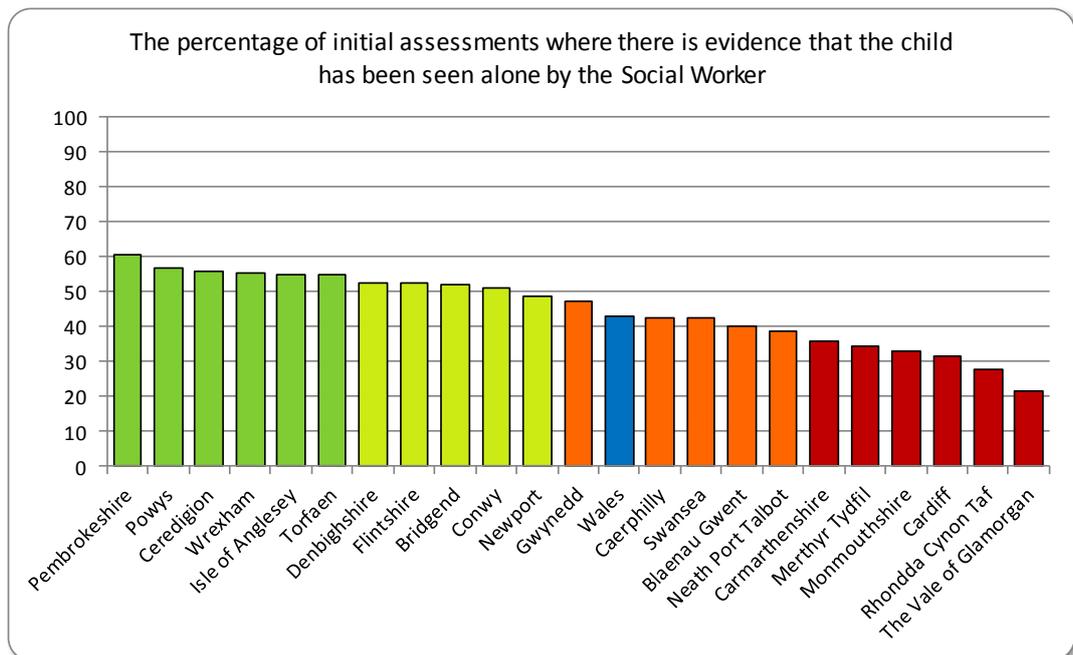
It is important that children’s views are taken into account when planning for their care. There is evidence that the child was seen by a social worker in 78.9% of initial assessments (compared to 75.4% in 2012-13). This is the seventh consecutive annual improvement for this indicator.



The percentage of initial assessments where there is evidence that the child was seen by a social worker ranged from 96.6% in Wrexham to 67.1% in Cardiff.

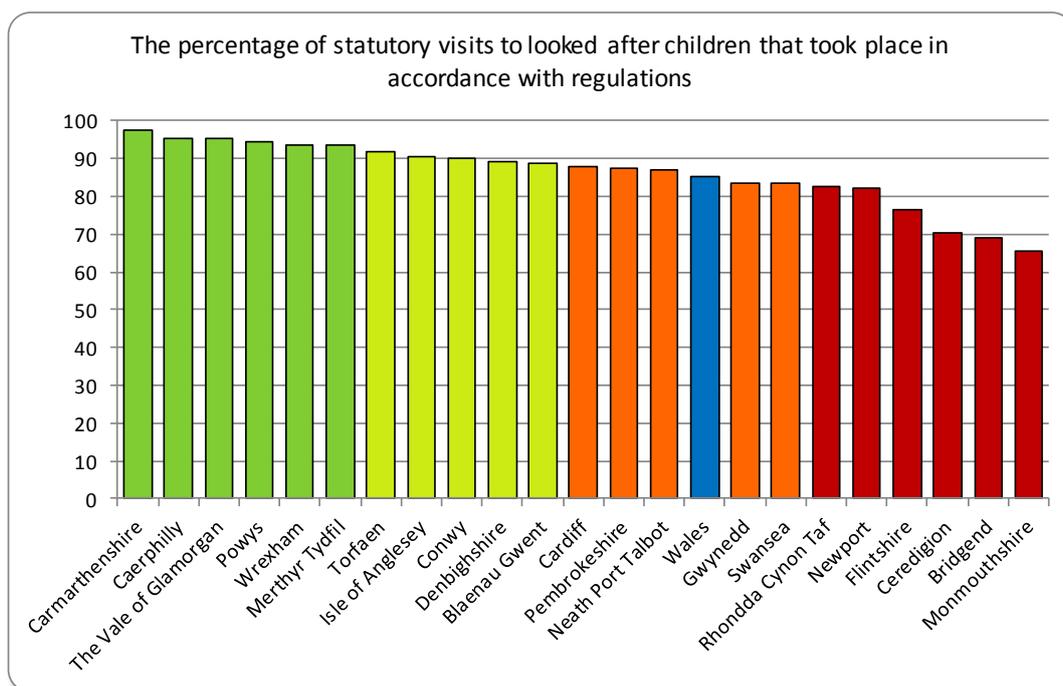


There is evidence that the child was seen alone in 42.9% of initial assessments compared to 37.5% in 2012-13. This ranged from 60.7% in Pembrokeshire to 21.5% in The Vale of Glamorgan.



As corporate parents, local authorities are required to ensure the safety and wellbeing of looked after children, and to ensure that they are given the same opportunities as their peers. As in 2012-13, there were around 5,750 children in the care of their local authority at the end of March 2014.

In 2013-14, 85.3% of statutory visits to looked after children took place in accordance with regulations (compared to 83.0% in 2012-13). This ranged from 97.5% in Carmarthenshire to 65.3% in Monmouthshire.

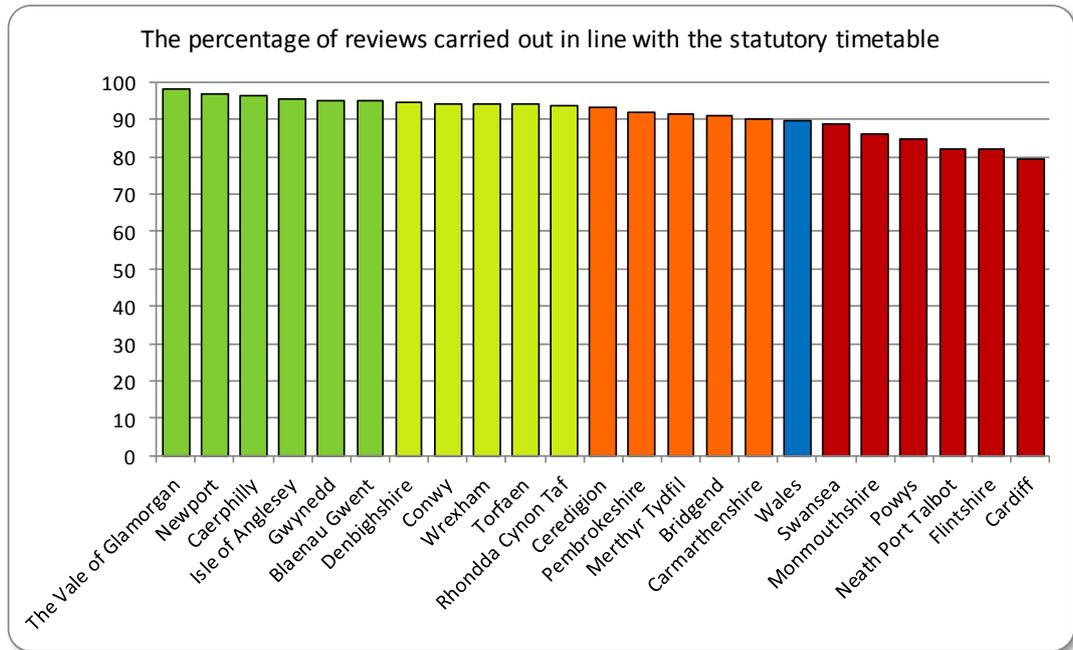


Over 2,200 children were placed in care for the first time during 2013-14 – around the same number as reported in 2012-13.

90.9% of these “first placements” began with a care plan in place (compared to 89.1% in 2012-13). This ranged from 100.0% in Gwynedd, Denbighshire, Powys, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, The Vale of Glamorgan, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent to 60.8% in Wrexham.

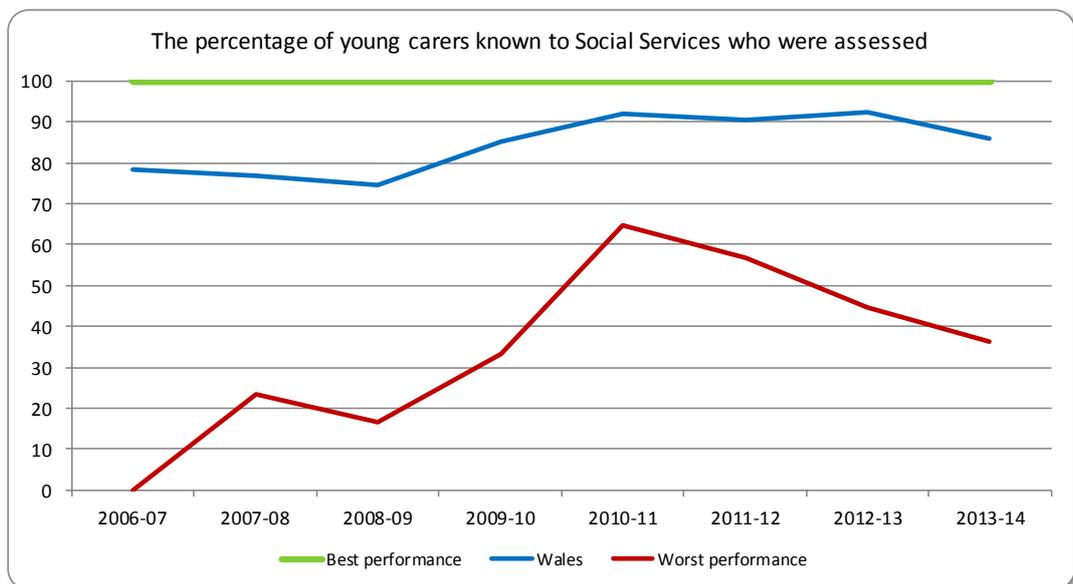
Stability is recognised as important for the wellbeing of children in care. 8.3% of children looked after experienced three or more placements during 2013-14 (compared to 9.4% in 2012-13). This ranged from 3.4% in Merthyr Tydfil to 14.5% in Pembrokeshire.

In 2013-14, 89.6% of children reviews were carried out within statutory timescales (compared to 86.4% in 2012-13). This ranged from 98.0% in The Vale of Glamorgan to 79.2% in Cardiff.

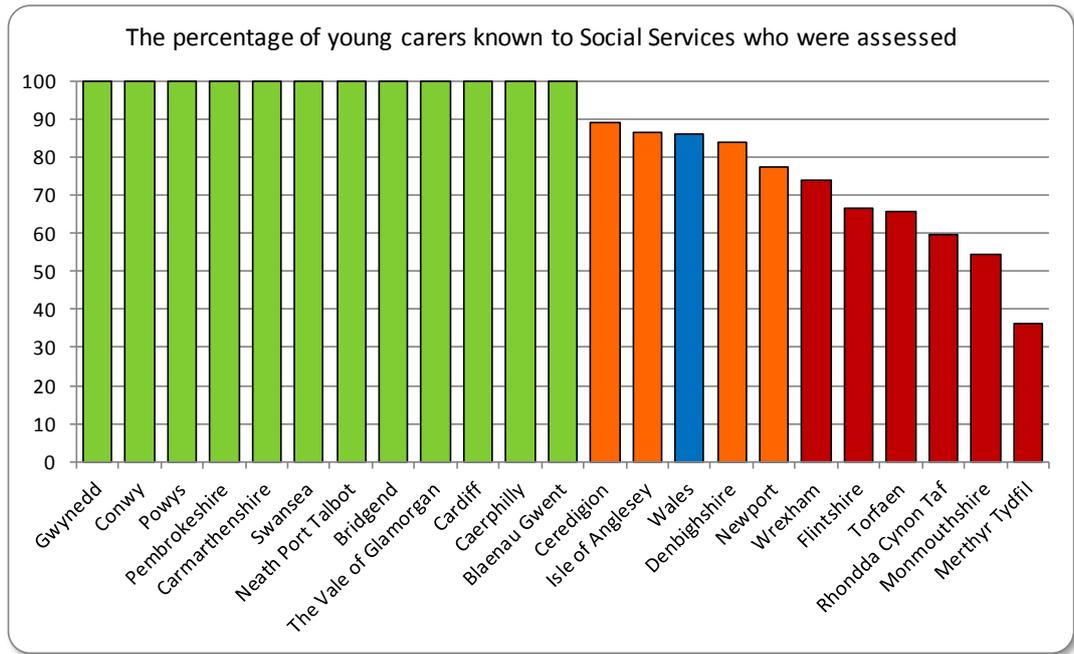


Children sometimes find themselves in circumstances where they have to provide significant support for other family members. As such, these young carers also need to be supported by local authorities to ensure their health and wellbeing is safeguarded.

In 2013-14, 85.9% of young carers known to Social Services were assessed to ensure their own needs were being met (compared to 92.3% in 2012-13).



This ranged from 100.0% in Gwynedd, Conwy, Powys, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend, The Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent to 36.4% in Merthyr Tydfil.

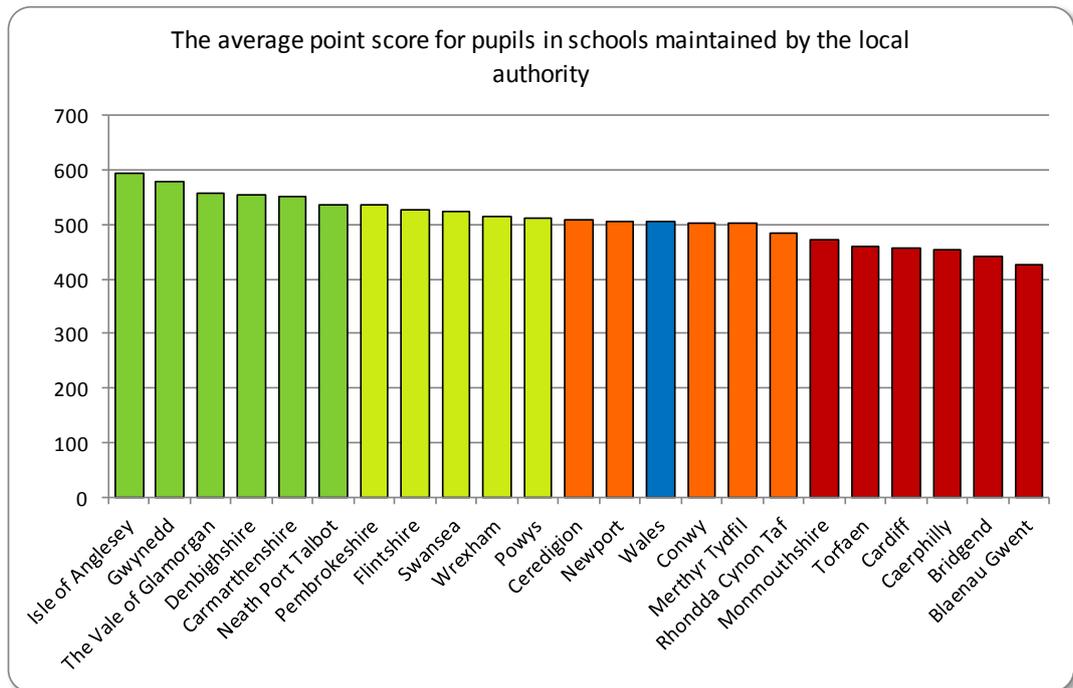


Educating children...

Local authority maintained schools educate around 460 thousand children each year.

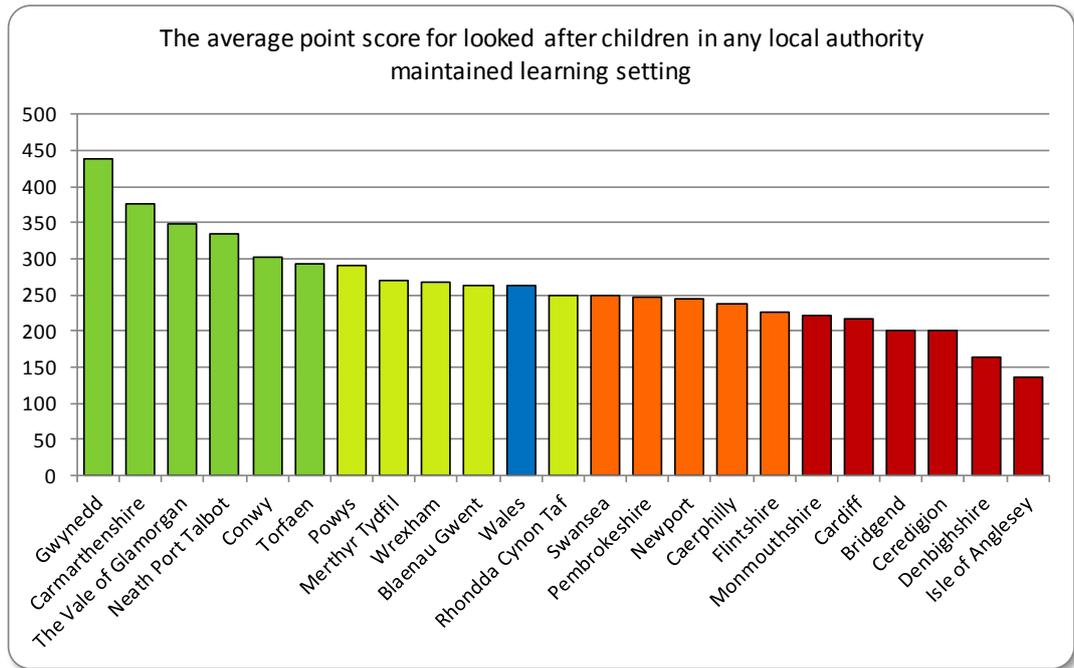
Good attendance is important if children are to learn. In 2013-14, pupil attendance at primary schools decreased slightly from 93.9% to 93.7%, whilst attendance at secondary schools increased slightly from 92.1% to 92.6%.

The average point score for pupils aged 15 in local authority maintained schools continued to rise (for the seventh successive year) to 505 points. The average point score ranged from 594 points on the Isle of Anglesey to 426 points in Blaenau Gwent.



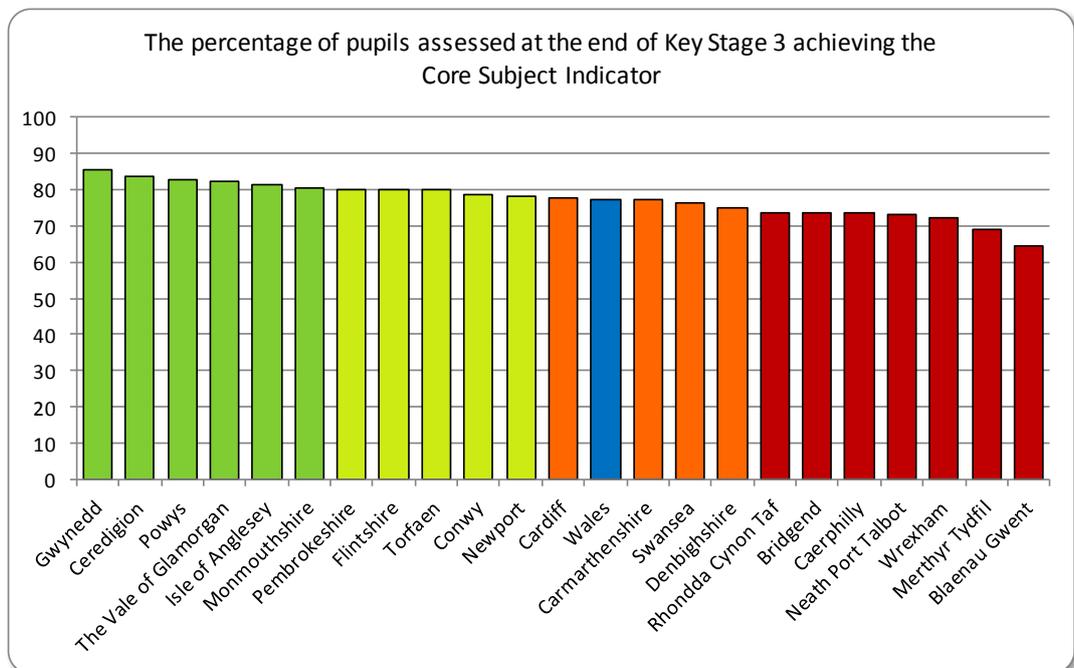
13.8% of children looked after experienced one or more changes of school in the last 12 months (compared to 13.7% in 2012-13). This ranged from 8.1% in Denbighshire to 22.8% in Gwynedd.

The average point score for children in care continued to increase from 221.1 points in 2012-13 to 262.0 points in 2013-14. In 2013-14, it ranged from 438.7 points in Gwynedd to 135.8 points on the Isle of Anglesey.



The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 2, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator increased again from 82.8% in 2012-13 to 84.6% in 2013-14. This ranged from 89.3% in Monmouthshire to 80.1% in Blaenau Gwent.

Over the same period, the percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 3, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator also increased from 72.7% to 77.2%. This ranged from 85.4% in Gwynedd to 64.5% in Blaenau Gwent.



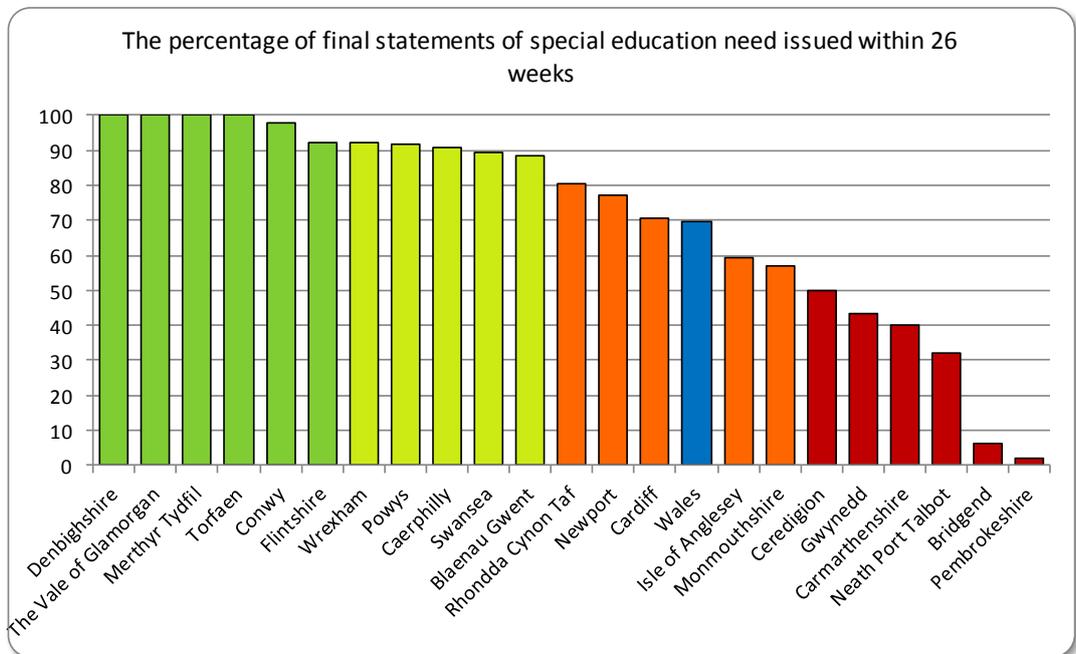
In 2013-14, 52.5% of pupils achieved the level 2 threshold, including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics (compared to 50.7% in 2012-13). This ranged from 62% in Flintshire to 39% in Blaenau Gwent.

In 2013-14, 0.3% of all children leaving compulsory education aged 15 or 16 (who did not go on to full time education, training or work based learning) did so without a recognised qualification.

For children in care, 2.0% of children left without a recognised qualification (compared to 5.7% in 2012-13) – the best performance for this indicator since 2008-09.

Local authorities have statutory obligations in terms of assessment and statementing, to ensure that children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) have appropriate support in place to enable them to reach their potential. SEN statements should usually be in place within 26 weeks of the request for an assessment (in some exceptional cases, this can take longer).

69.6% of all statements issued were issued within 26 weeks in 2013-14 (compared to 69.9% in 2012-13). This ranged from 2% in Pembrokeshire to 100% in Denbighshire, The Vale of Glamorgan, Merthyr Tydfil and Torfaen.



Over the same period, 96.6% of statements (excluding exceptions) were issued within 26 weeks (compared to 95.9% in 2012-13).

Contact details

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The full performance indicator data set is published on our website (www.dataunitwales.gov.uk).

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 in support of local government improvement.

The indicators quoted here are part of the Performance Improvement Framework for local authorities in Wales. The indicators reflect key priorities identified by the Welsh Government and local government in Wales.

The National Strategic Indicator data, which is a sub-set of the data used here, was collected and published by the Welsh Government.

Wales values are based on the base data submitted by the authorities. Where authorities have not supplied their base data, their figures do not contribute to Wales values.

Where appropriate, data has been rounded for the purposes of this bulletin. The complete data set is available on our website www.dataunitwales.gov.uk.

You'll find MyLocalCouncil at www.MyLocalCouncil.info where you'll have a choice of language.

Guidance documents relating to the 2013-14 indicator sets are also available on our website (Public Accountability Measures) and on the Welsh Government website (National Strategic Indicators). These provide a detailed definition for each of the indicators along with their classification i.e. National Strategic Indicator or Public Accountability Measure.

The colours used in the performance ranking charts are based on the range of PI values. The colours show how the authority's performance compares with others:

-  - Performance in the top quarter of authorities
-  - Performance in the upper middle quarter of authorities
-  - Performance in the lower middle quarter of authorities
-  - Performance in the bottom quarter of authorities

In performance range charts, blue represents the Wales PI value, green shows the PI value for the best local authority performance, and red shows the PI value for the worst local authority performance.