

Local Government Performance 2014-15

We are pleased to present this, the tenth 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 updated our 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, 63% (26) of the 41 indicators which are comparable between 2013-14 and 2014-15 show improvement.

The gap in performance (between the best and worst performing authorities) narrowed in 56% (23) of the indicators.

For 39% (16) of the indicators, performance improved and the gap between the best and worst performing authorities narrowed.

Service improvement

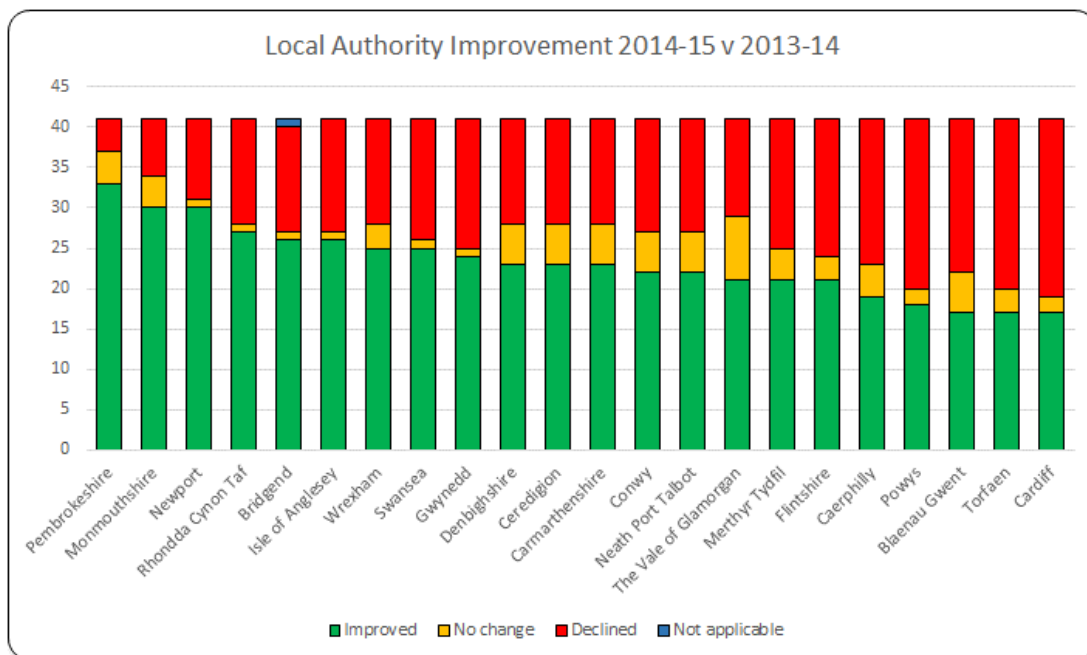
Local authorities are often one of the largest employers in an area and provide a range of services for the communities they serve. The table below shows how these services performed in 2014-15 compared to 2013-14.

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	73%	73%	55%
Social Care	18	56%	50%	33%
Housing	2	100%	0%	0%
Environment & Transport	6	67%	50%	33%
Planning & Regulatory Services	2	100%	100%	100%
Leisure & Culture	2	0%	50%	0%
Overall	41	63%	56%	39%

Improvement 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.

Last year we reported that 78% of comparable performance indicators showed an improvement over that period, and that every authority improved or maintained its performance in over half of the indicators. Of the 41 indicators that were comparable between 2013-14 and 2014-15, Pembrokeshire improved in 33, whilst Cardiff, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen improved in 17.

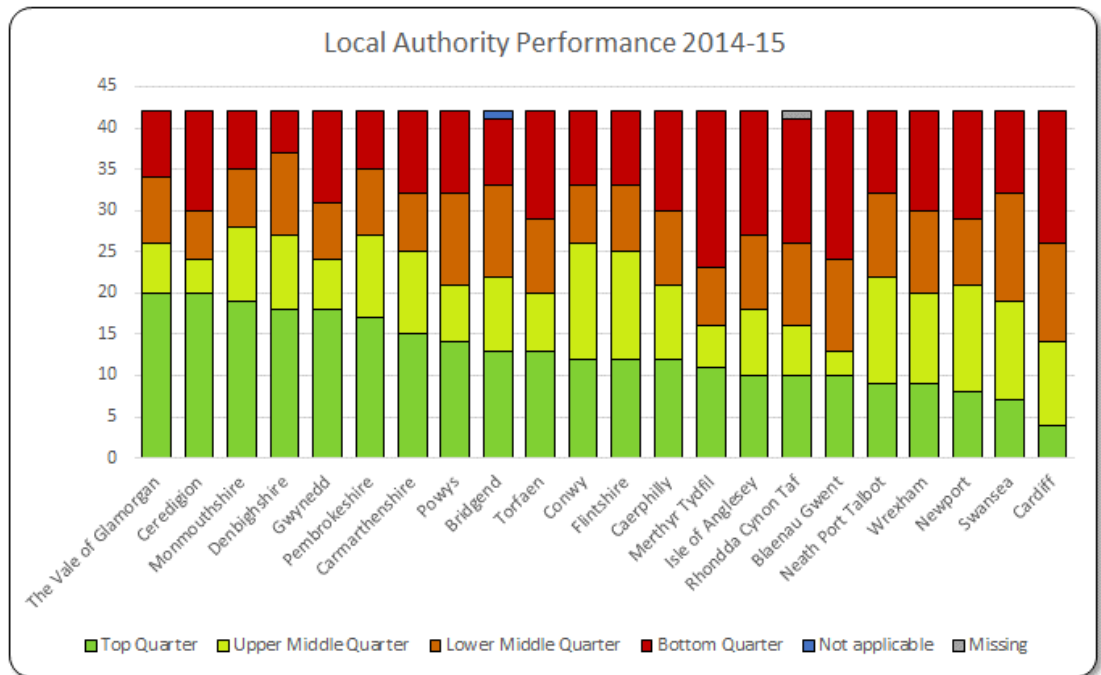


Whilst many indicators show continued improvement over many years, there are examples where historic improvement has slowed or is beginning to decline, including:

- Prevention of homelessness;
- Reviews of adult care plans; and
- Children seen at initial assessment.

Relative performance across Wales

Whilst absolute improvement is important, citizens will be interested in how their authority compares with others. Overall, in 2014-15, The Vale of Glamorgan and Ceredigion had the most indicators in the top quarter of Welsh local authorities, whilst Cardiff had the least.



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

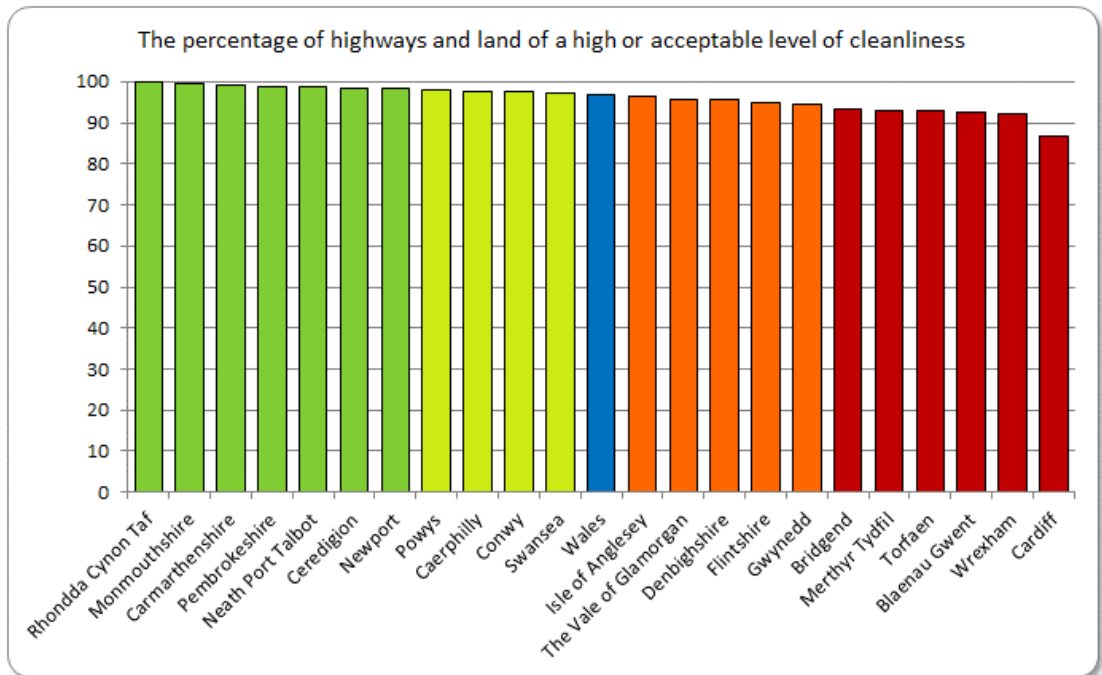
Note

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

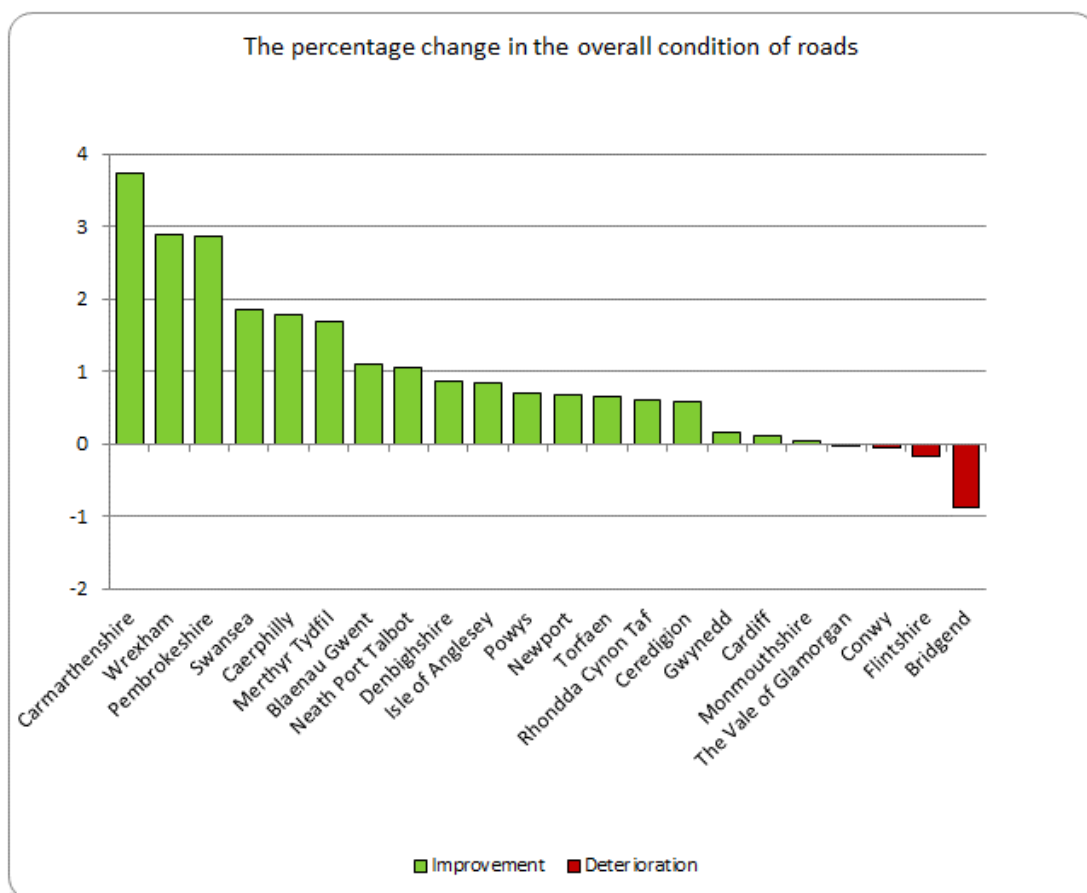
Providing a clean and safe environment...

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

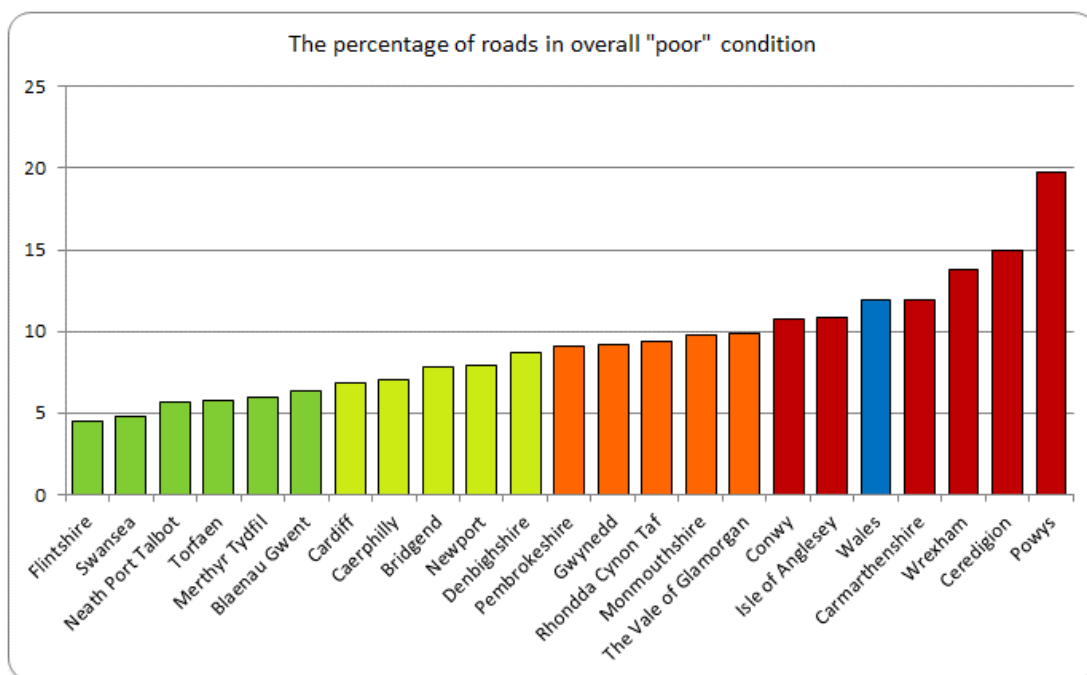
Across Wales, 96.9% of highways and relevant land inspected was of a high or acceptable quality in 2014-15 (compared to 97.5% in 2013-14). This ranged from 99.7% in Rhondda Cynon Taf to 86.8% in Cardiff.



In 2014-15, 11.9% of all roads were in an overall "poor" condition compared to 13.2% in 2013-14.



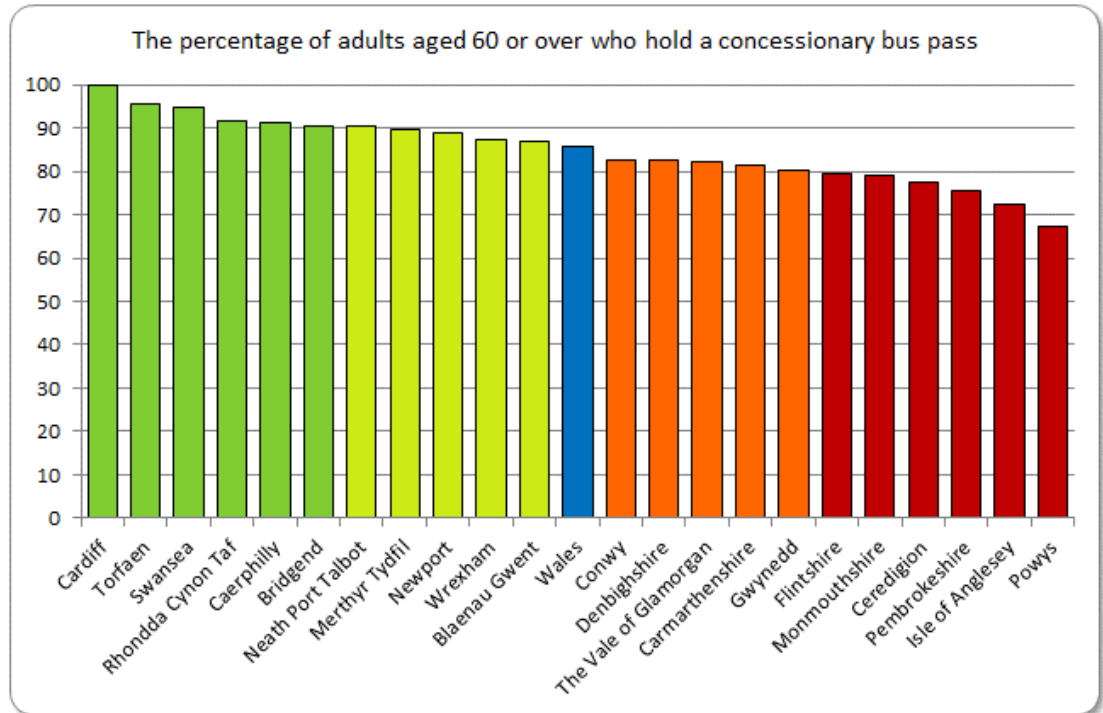
The percentage of all roads in an overall "poor" condition ranged from 4.5% in Flintshire to 19.7% in Powys.



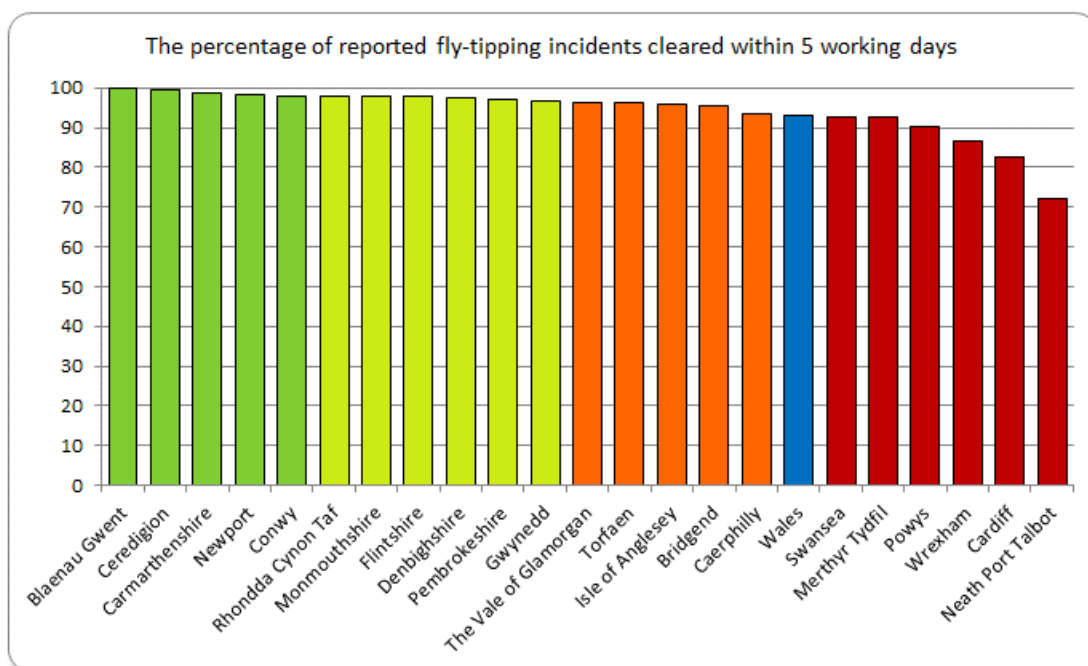
4.1% of A roads were in "poor" condition in 2014-15 compared to 4.5% in 2013-14, and ranged from 1.2% in Torfaen to 8.0% in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

For B roads, 5.0% were in "poor" condition in 2014-15 compared to 6.1% in 2013-14, ranging from 1.3% in Flintshire to 10.8% in Merthyr Tydfil, and for C roads 17.2% were in "poor" condition compared to 18.9% in 2013-14, ranging from 5.9% in Merthyr Tydfil to 27.1% in Powys.

85.8% of adults aged 60 or over hold a concessionary bus pass (compared to 84.3% in 2013-14). This ranged from 100.0% in Cardiff to 67.2% in Powys.

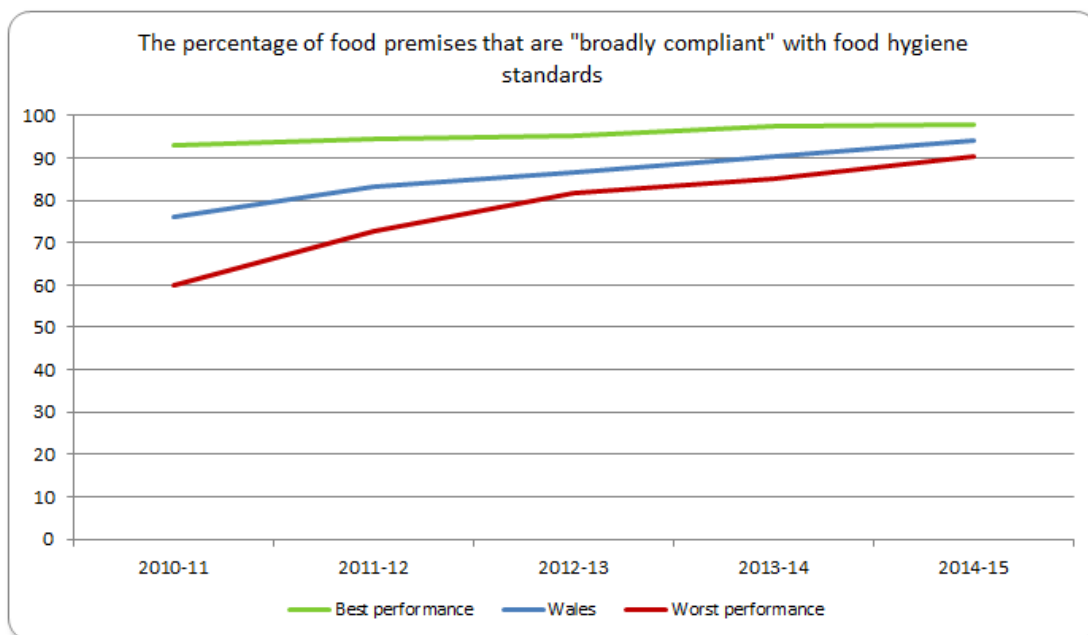


Fly-tipping is a serious environmental crime which can cause long lasting contamination, pollution and put human health at risk. Local authorities are required to clean up small scale fly-tipping incidents on public land within five days of them being reported. In 2014-15, 93% of fly-tipping incidents reported to local authorities were cleared within five working days (compared to 95% in 2013-14). This ranged from 100.0% in Blaenau Gwent to 72.1% in Neath Port Talbot.



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 guidance on our website.

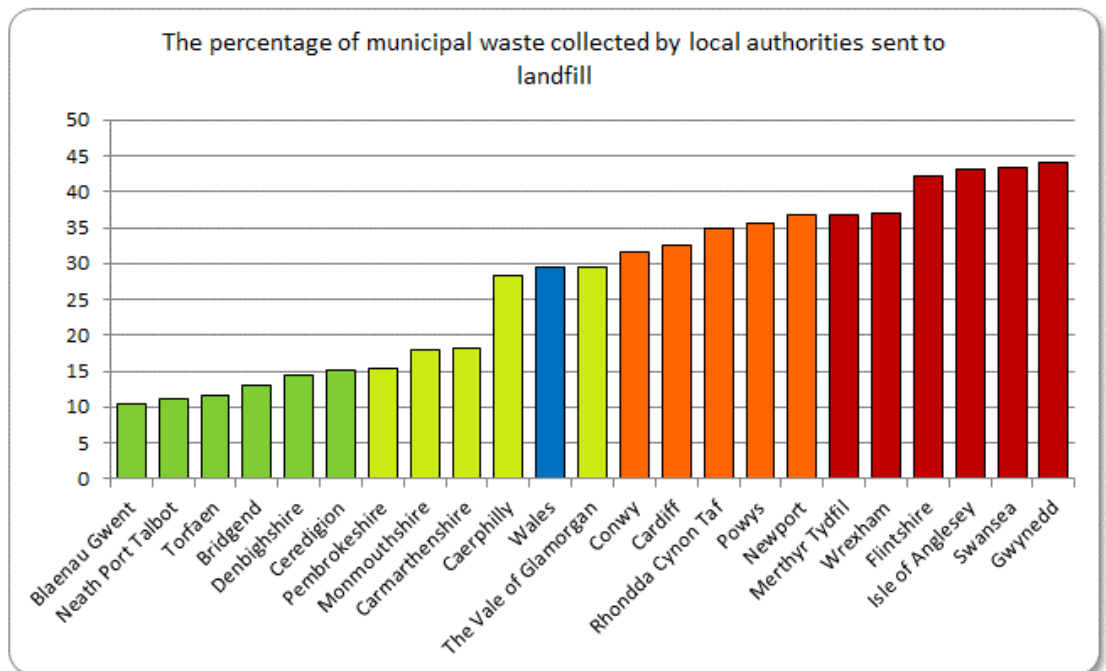
Authorities continue to improve their performance in safeguarding the food we eat, with 94.2% of food establishments being "broadly compliant" with food hygiene standards in 2014-15 (compared to 90.3% in 2013-14). This ranged from 90.4% in Rhondda Cynon Taf to 98.0% in Wrexham.



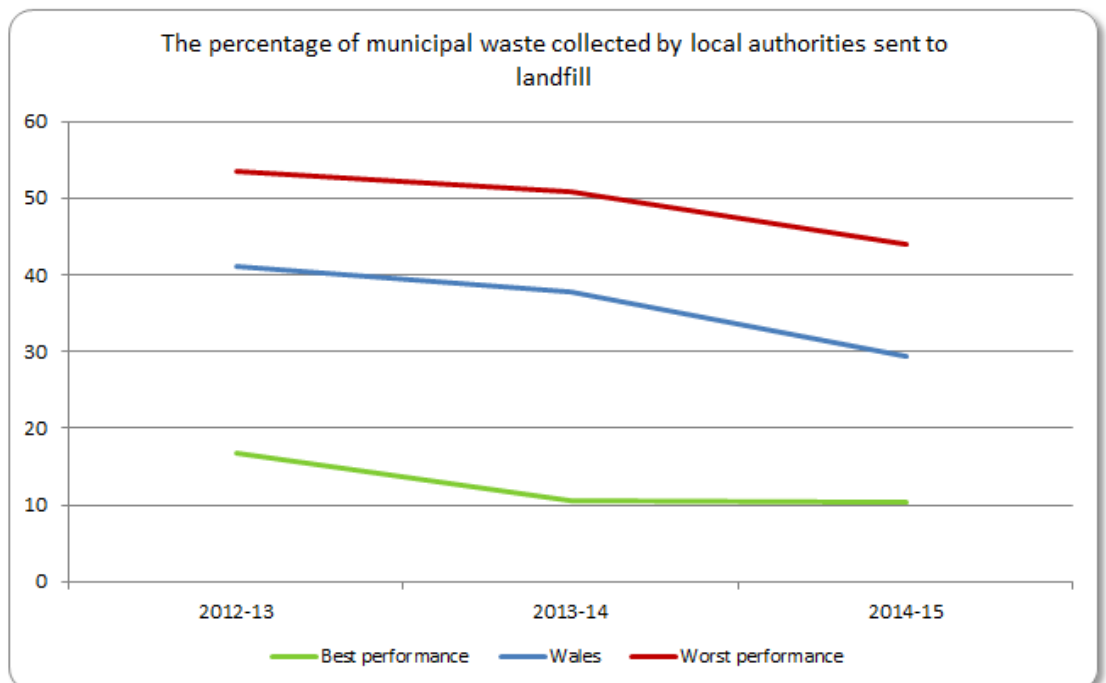
From promoting energy efficiency, to ensuring that resources are reused and recycled, local authorities play a big part in helping secure the future for the next generation.

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.

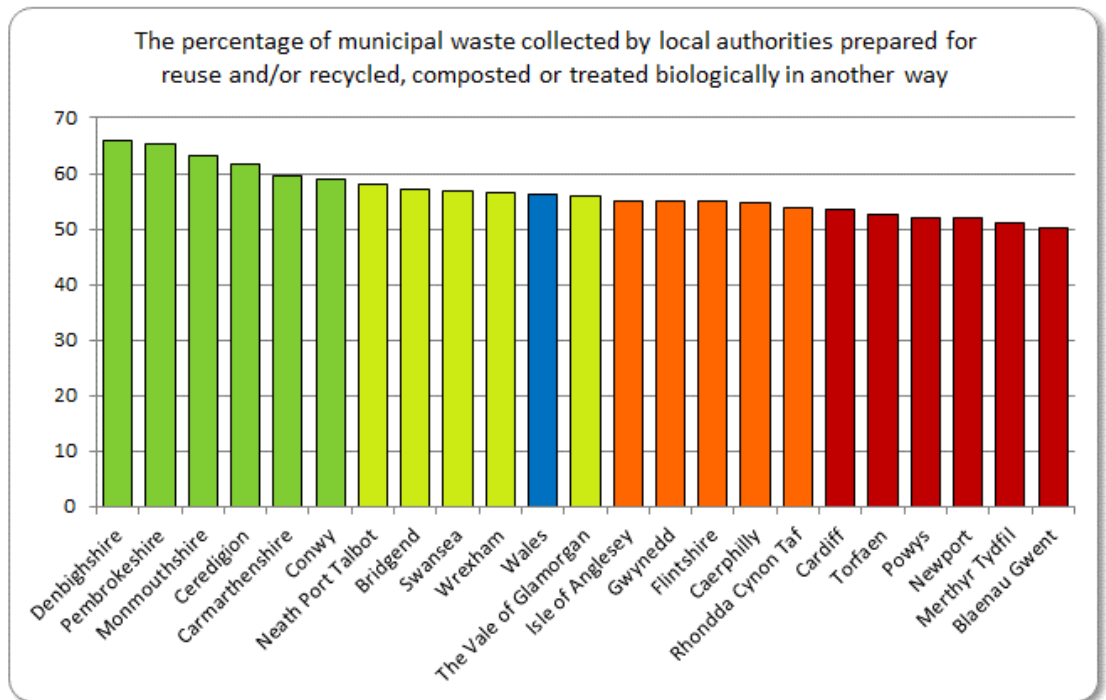
In 2014-15, 29.4% of municipal waste collected by local authorities was sent to landfill, compared to 37.7% in 2013-14. This ranged from 10.3% in Blaenau Gwent to 44.1% in Gwynedd.



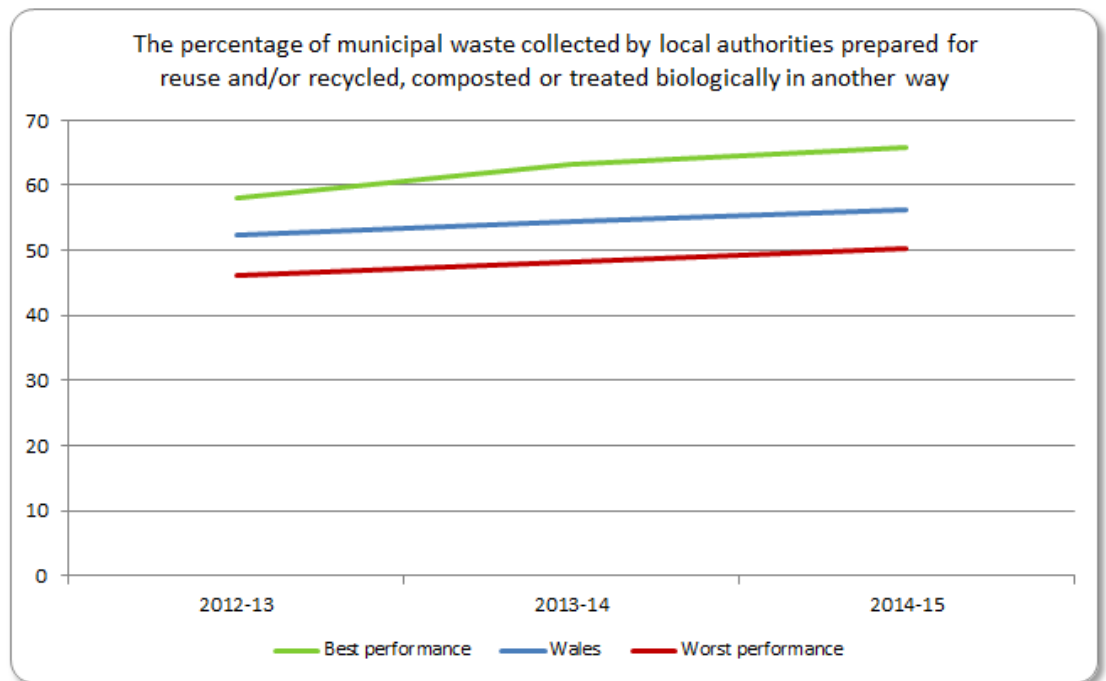
The percentage of waste sent to landfill has continued to reduce steadily since 2012.



56.2% of the municipal waste collected was reused or recycled in 2014-15 compared to 54.3% in 2013-14. This ranged from 65.9% in Denbighshire to 50.3% in Blaenau Gwent.



The percentage of waste recycled, reused or composted across Wales has continued to increase over recent years.



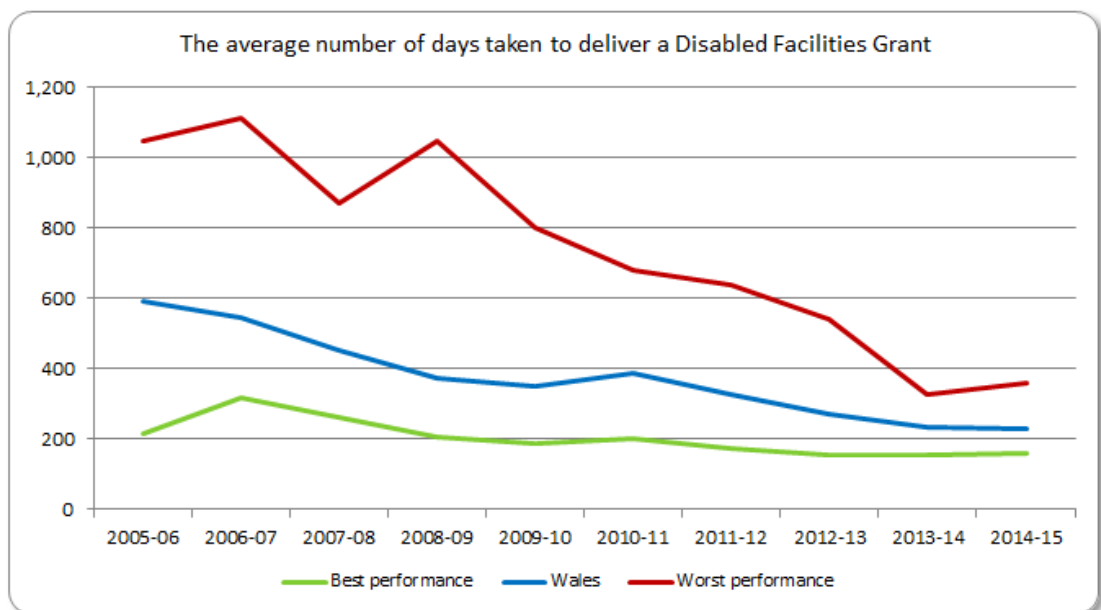
Providing affordable and appropriate housing...

Note: The concept of "affordability" is defined as the ability of households to purchase property that meets their need without subsidy.

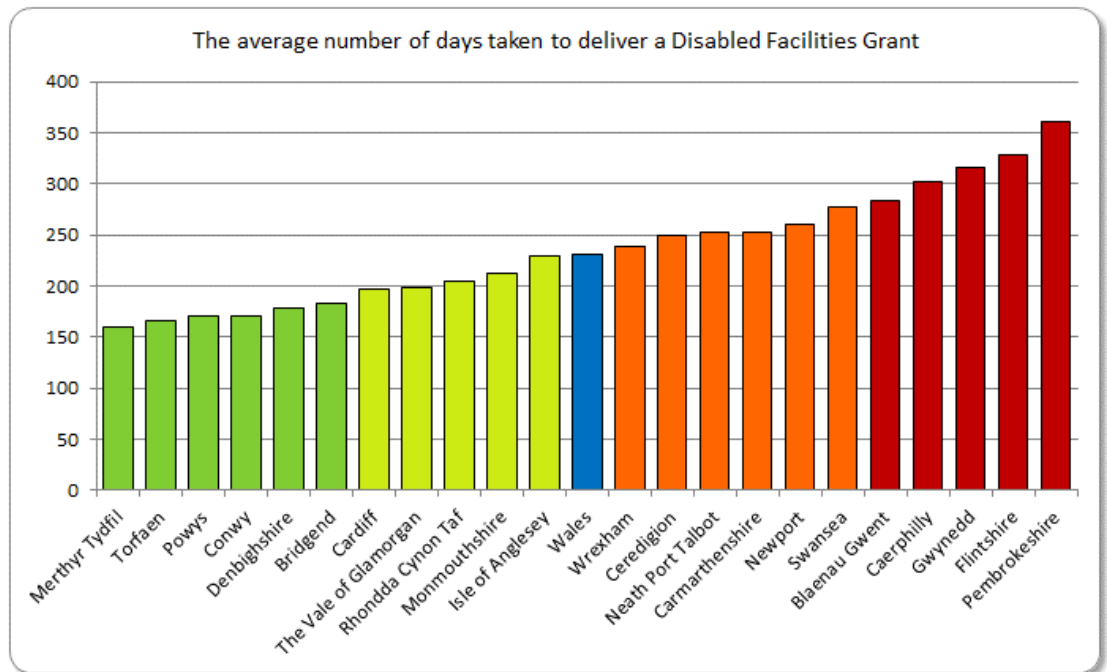
Local authorities have a key role to play in ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of affordable housing to meet identified need. 41% of all additional housing units provided during 2014-15 were affordable housing (compared to 37% in 2013-14).

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.

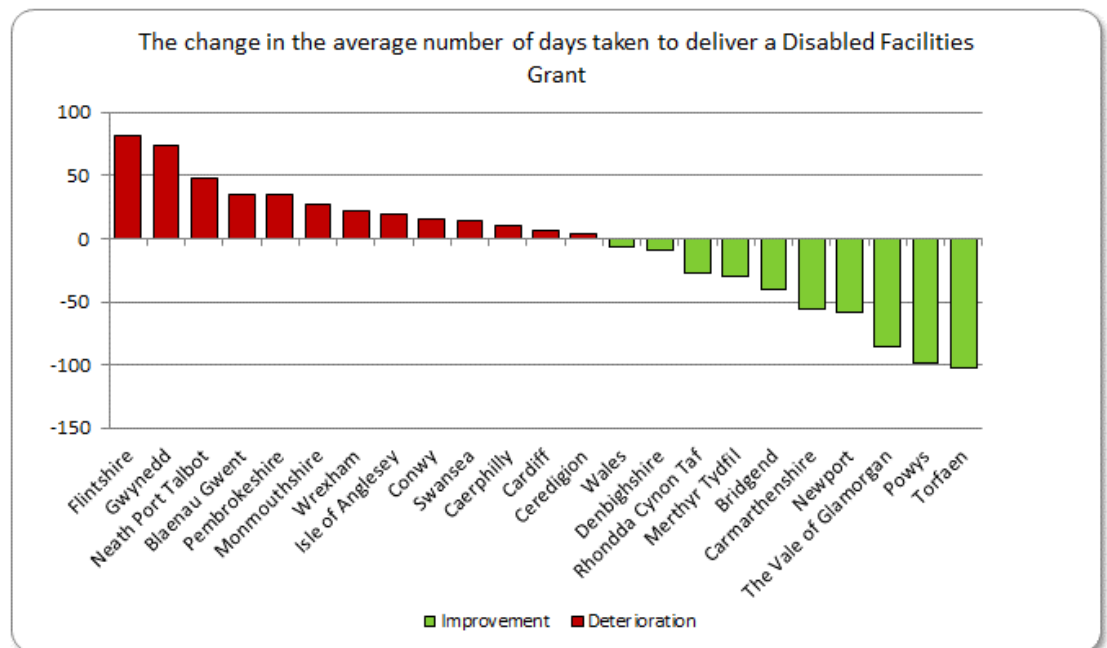
Local authorities took an average of 231 days to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant in 2014-15 (compared to 235 days in 2013-14).



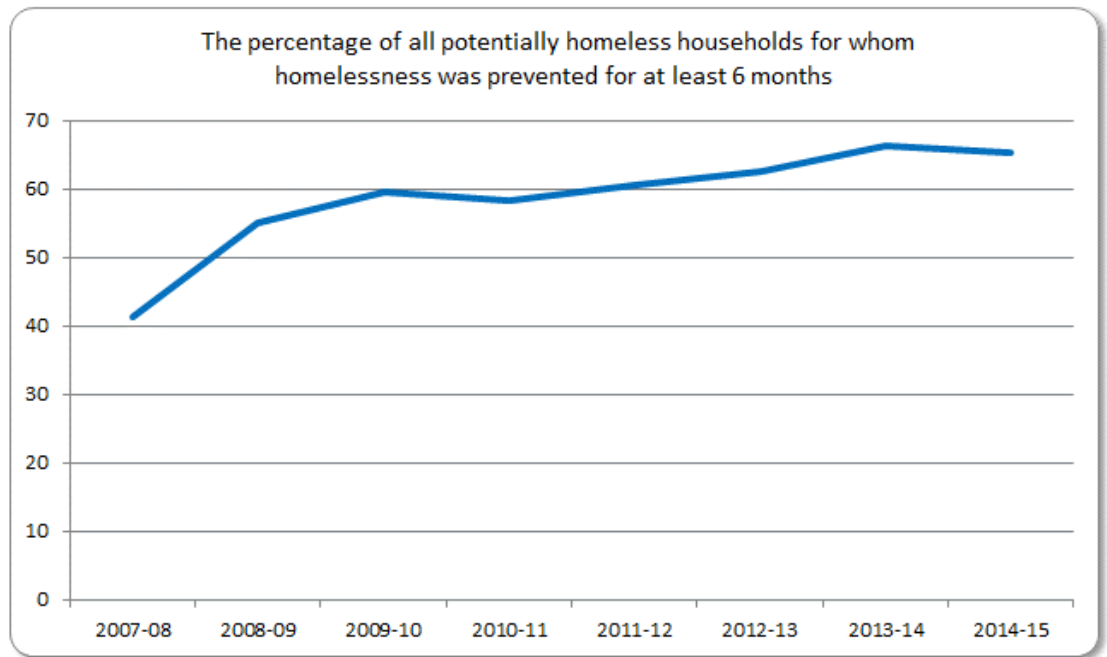
In 2014-15, the average number of days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant ranged from 160 days in Merthyr Tydfil to 361 days in Pembrokeshire.



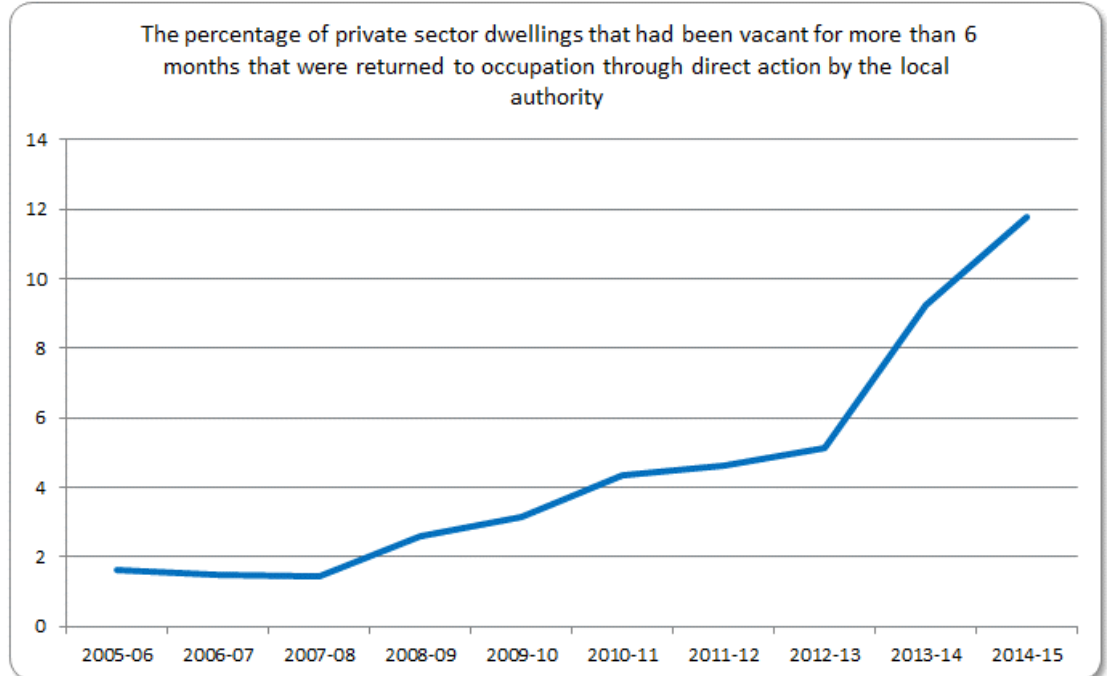
During the period, ten local authorities reduced the number of days they took to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant.



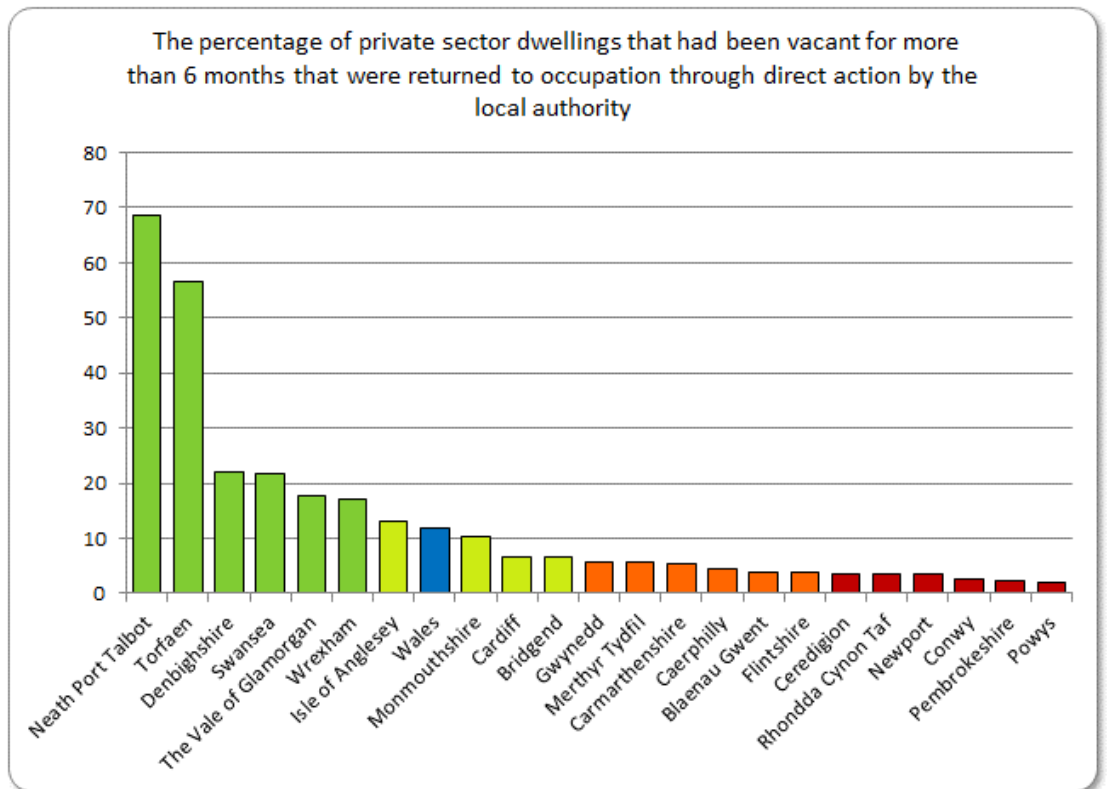
Homelessness is one of the most extreme forms of social exclusion. Action by local authorities prevented homelessness for at least six months for 65.4% of potentially homeless households in 2014-15 (compared to 66.4% in 2013-14). This was the first decline in this indicator since 2010-11.



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. 11.8% of long-term vacant private sector dwellings were returned to occupation through direct action by local authorities in 2014-15 (compared to 9.2% in 2013-14).

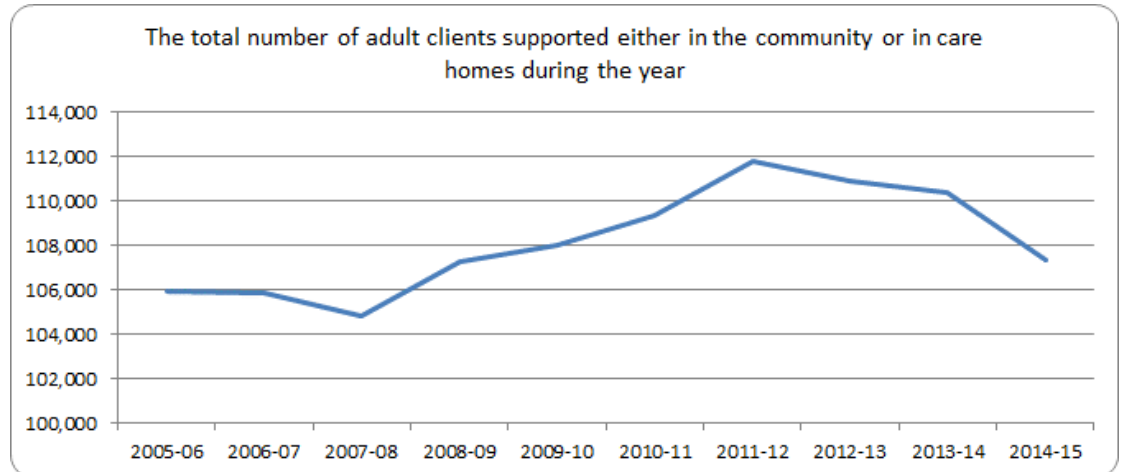


This ranged from 68.6% in Neath Port Talbot to 1.8% in Powys.

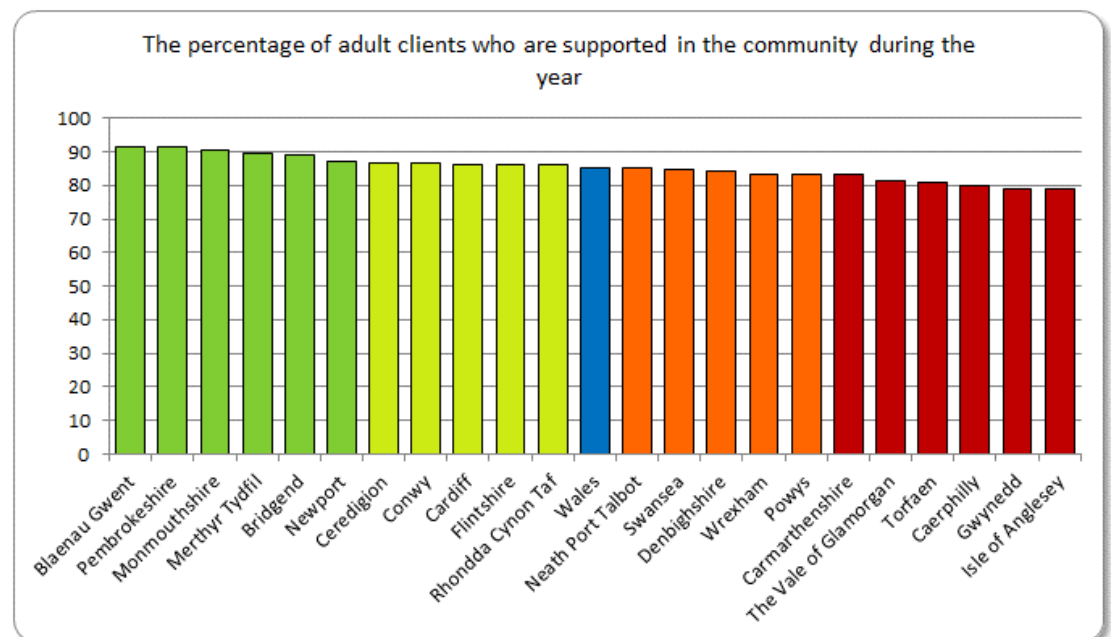


Supporting safe and independent lives...

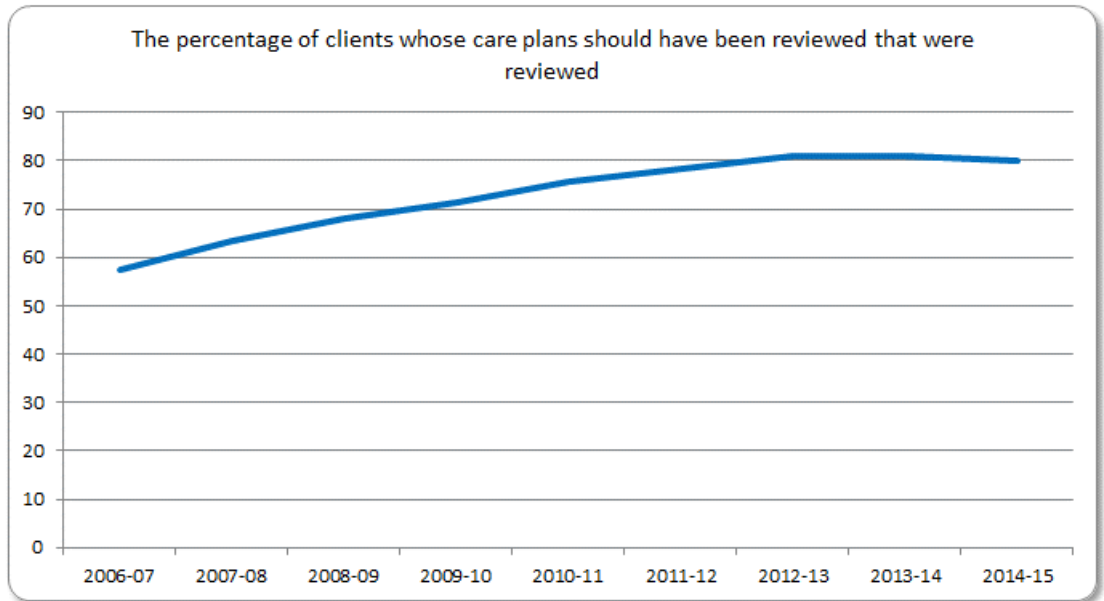
Local authorities' social services provide support to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. In 2014-15, local authorities supported around 107 thousand people in the community or in residential homes – some 3 thousand less than in 2013-14.



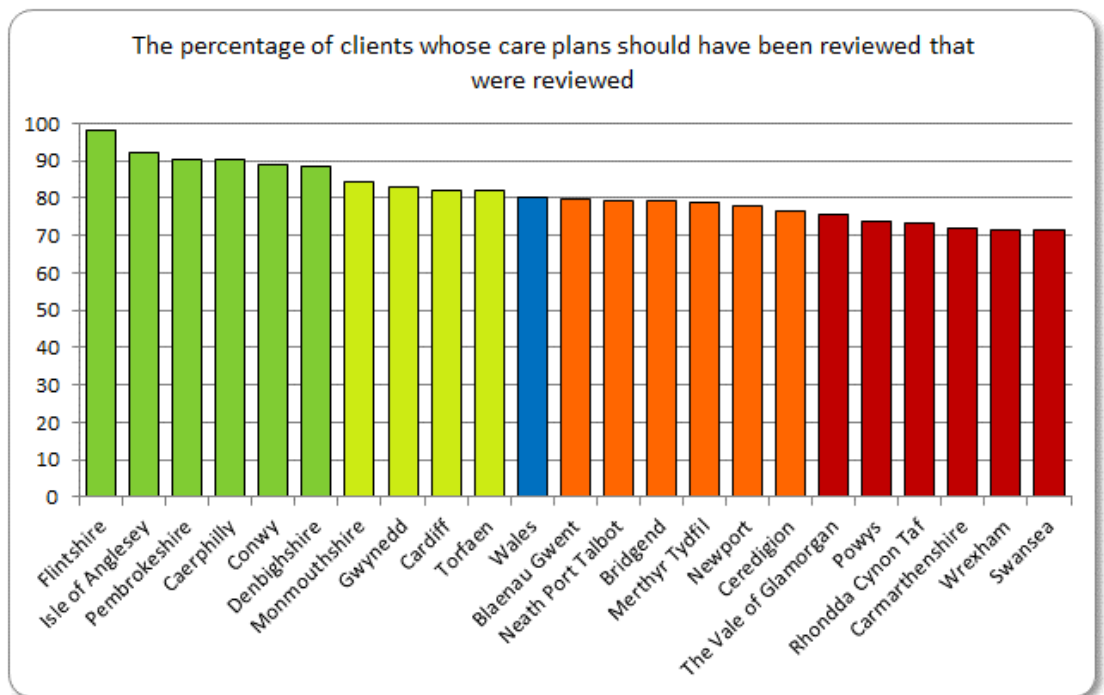
85.2% of people supported by social services received that support in a community setting in 2014-15 compared to 86.3% in 2013-14. This ranged from 91.5% in Blaenau Gwent to 79.1% on the Isle of Anglesey.



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. 80.0% of care plans that should have been reviewed during the year were reviewed compared to 81.1% in 2013-14 - the first decline in performance since 2006-07.



The percentage of care plan reviews ranged from 98.2% in Flintshire to 71.6% in Swansea.

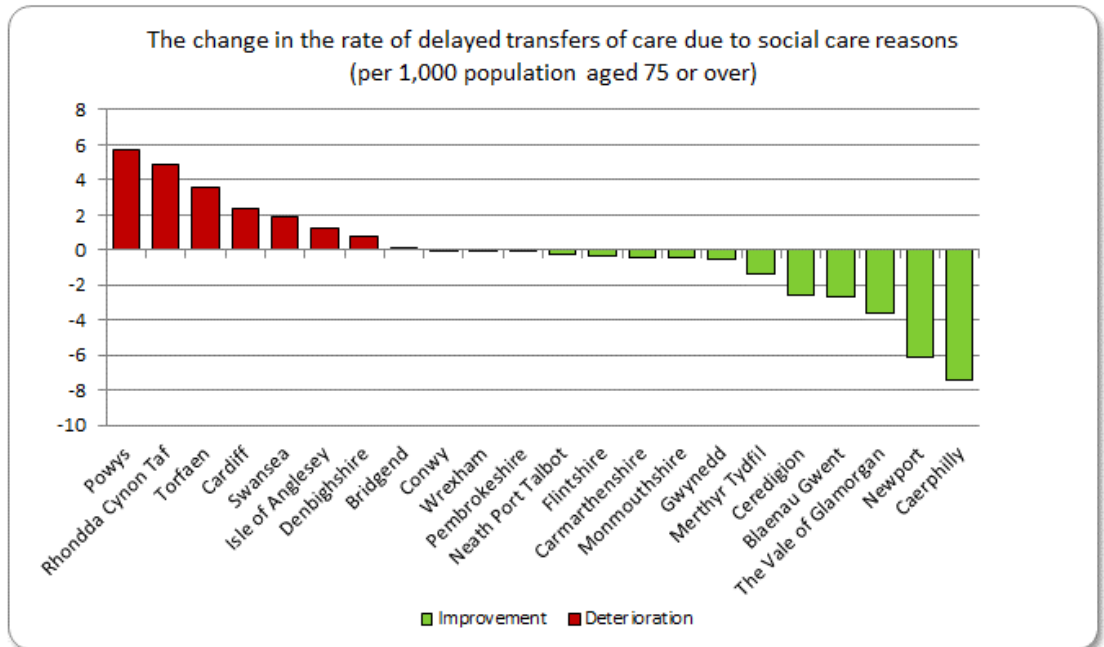


Local authorities play a vital role in ensuring that the most vulnerable people in our communities are protected from harm. The risk to the individual was managed in 95.6% of adult protection referrals received by local authorities during 2014-15 (compared to 94.5% in 2013-14) – the fourth consecutive year-on-year improvement for this indicator. This ranged from 100.00% in Gwynedd, Denbighshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Neath Port Talbot, The Vale of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire to 83.1% in Torfaen.

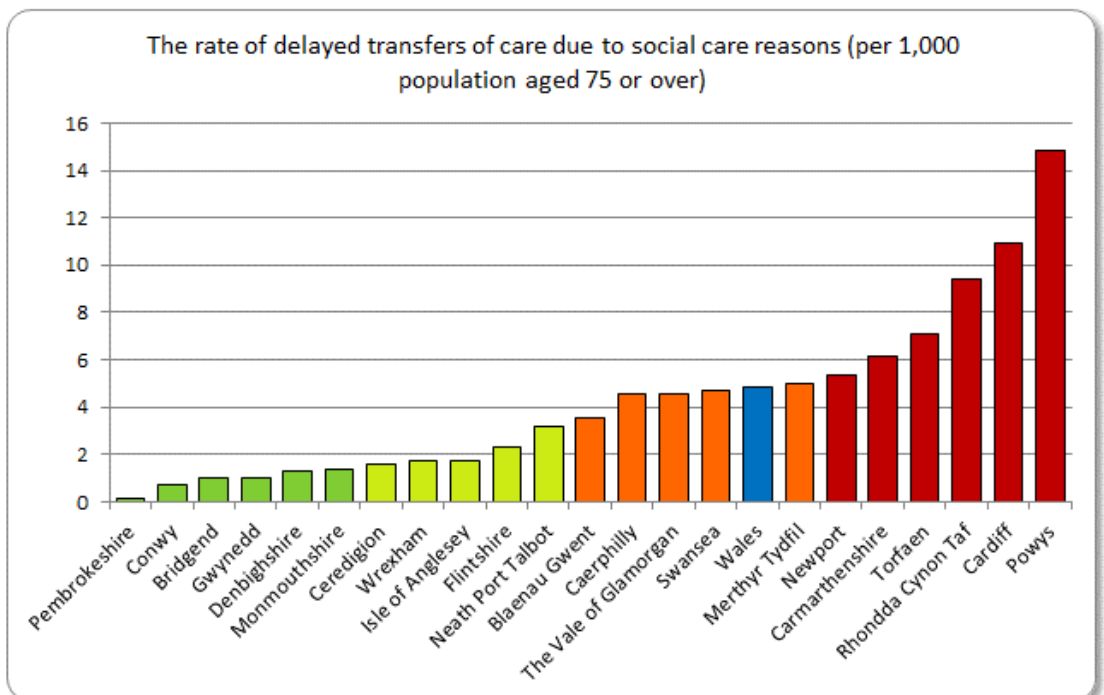
A delayed transfer of care – also known as “bed blocking” – arises when a person who no longer needs hospital treatment is unable to leave hospital and return to their own home or to a social care setting such as a residential

home. In 2014-15 the rate of delayed transfers of care due to social care reasons was reported at 4.83 per 1,000 population aged 75 or over – a further rise on the figure reported in 2012-13.

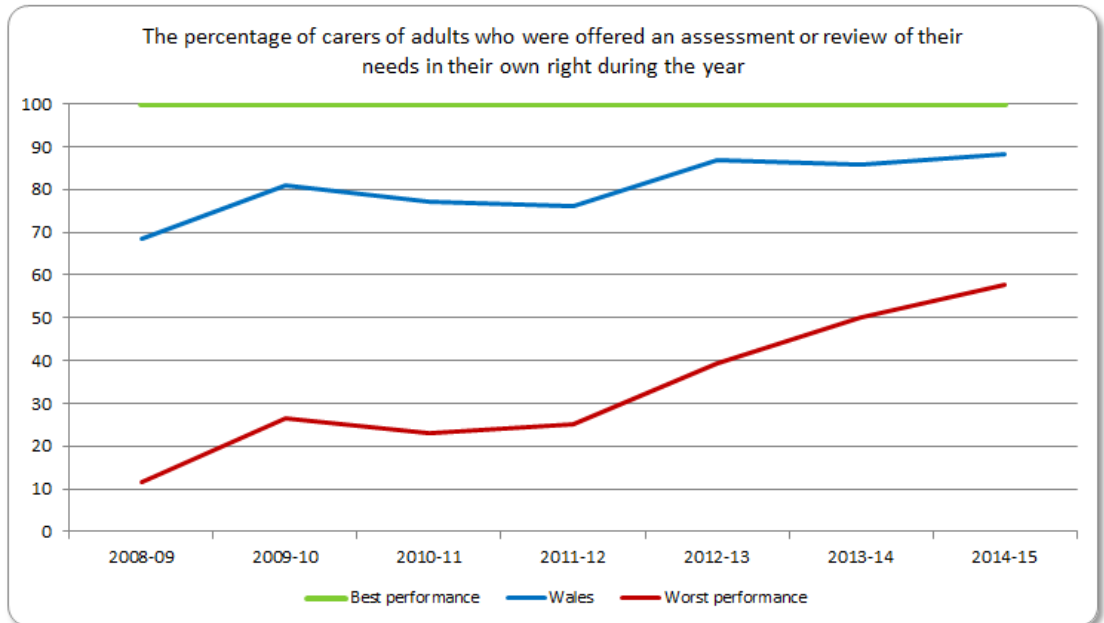
The rate of delayed transfers of care improved in 13 of the 22 local authorities across Wales.



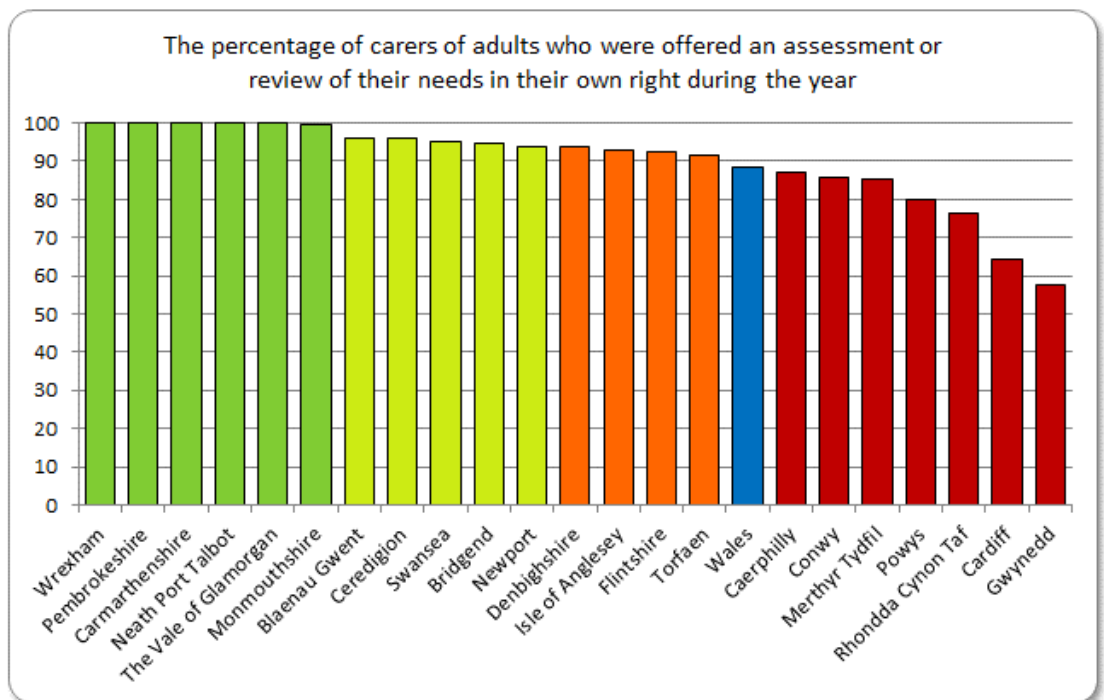
The rate of delayed transfers of care ranged from 0.16 per 1,000 population aged 75 or over in Pembrokeshire to 14.84 per 1,000 in Powys.



88.3% of carers of adults known to social services were offered an assessment or review of their needs in 2014-15 (compared to 85.8% in 2013-14).



The percentage of carers offered an assessment or review of their needs ranged from 100.0% in Wrexham, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot and The Vale of Glamorgan to 57.8% in Gwynedd.

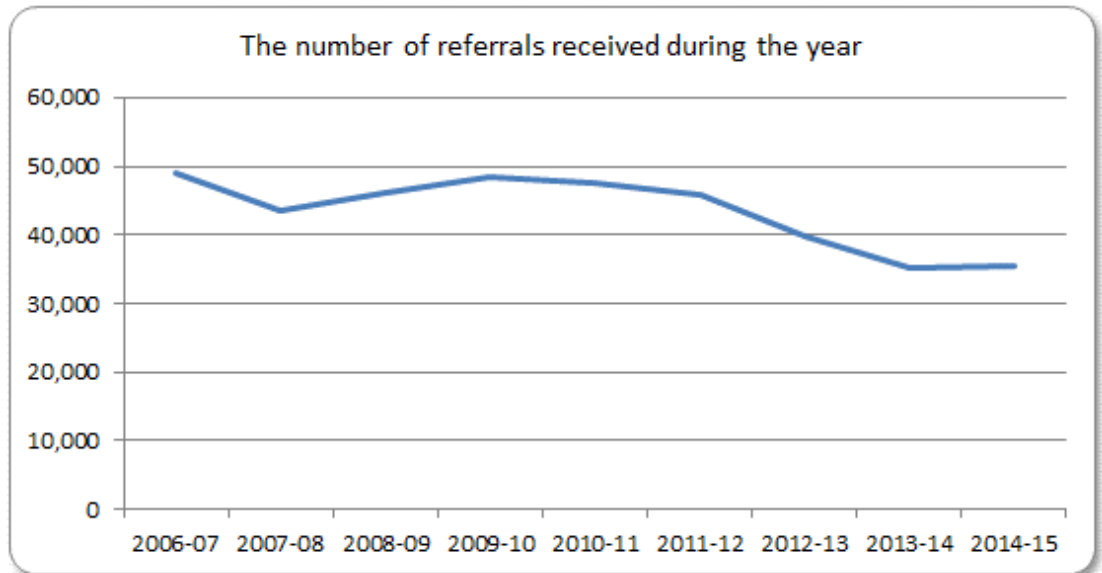


Local authorities across Wales remained in contact with 93.3% of young people aged 19 who were formerly looked after. In 2014-15, 93.1% of young people aged 19 who were formerly looked after with whom the authority were in contact, were known to be in suitable, non-emergency accommodation compared to 92.7% in 2013-14.

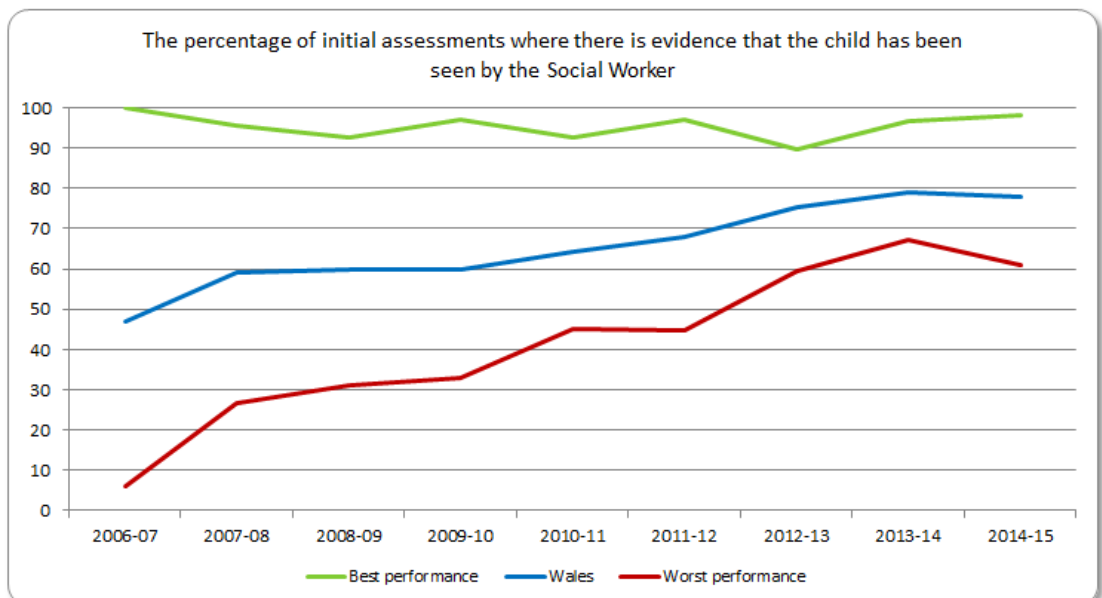
This ranged from 100.0% on the Isle of Anglesey, in Swansea, Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Caerphilly to 86.4% in Newport.

Safeguarding children...

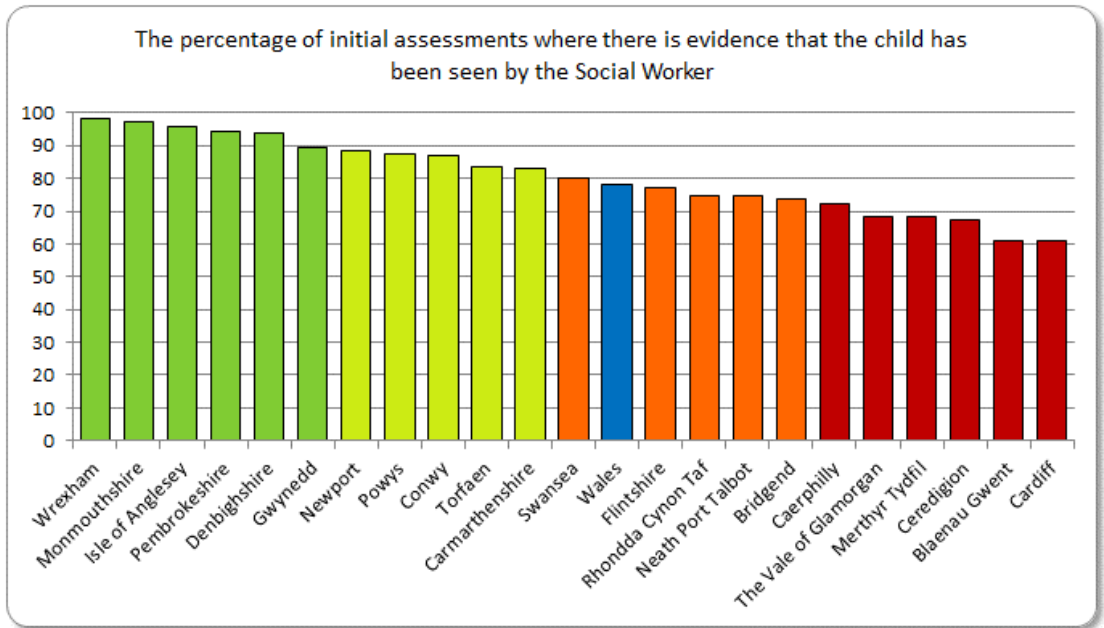
Local authorities received just over 35 thousand referrals relating to children in 2014-15 – slightly more than reported in 2013-14. They provide a range of support to ensure that children remain safe and are supported in order to achieve the best they can in life.



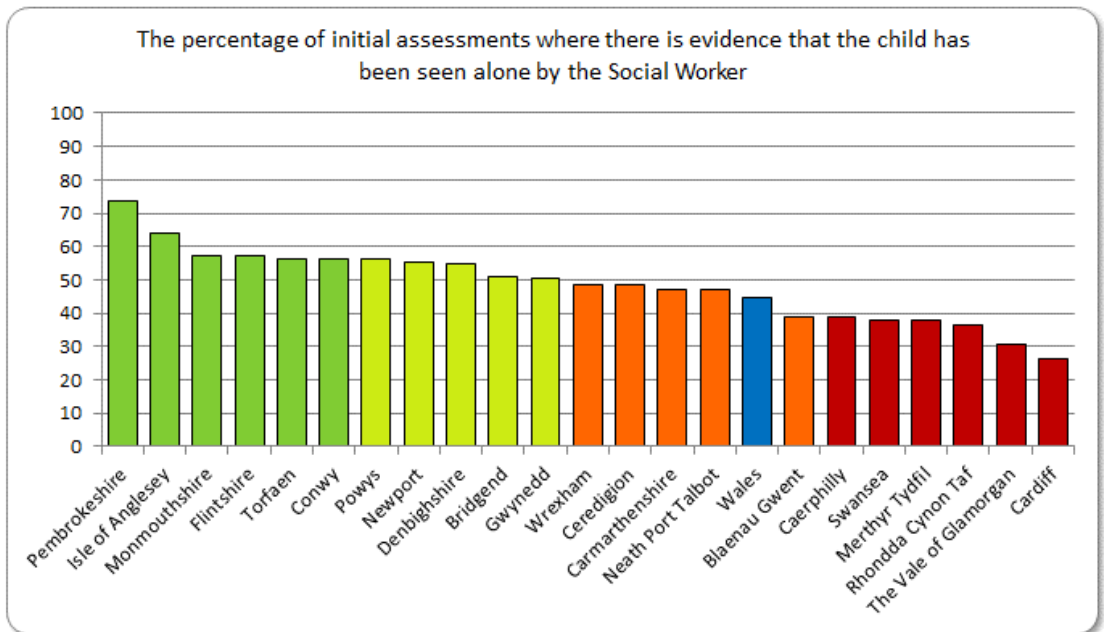
It is important that children's views are taken into account when planning for their care. There is evidence that the child was seen by a social worker in 78.0% of initial assessments (compared to 78.9% in 2013-14). This is the first decline in performance for this indicator since 2006-07.



The percentage of initial assessments where there is evidence that the child was seen by a social worker ranged from 98.3% in Wrexham to 60.9% in Cardiff.

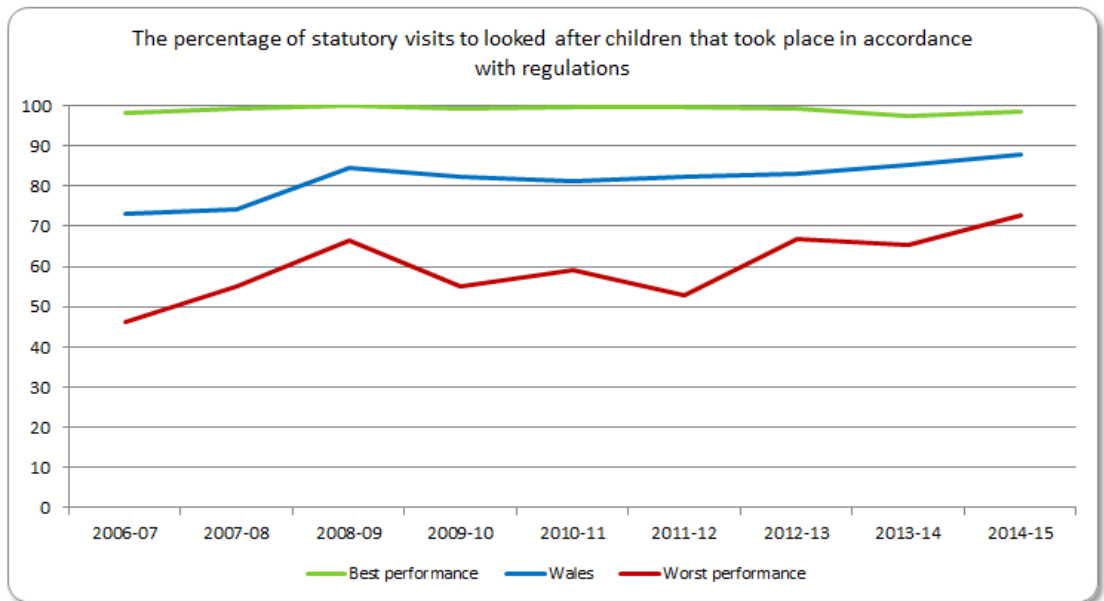


There is evidence that the child was seen alone in 44.8% of initial assessments compared to 42.9% in 2013-14. This ranged from 73.6% in Pembrokeshire to 26.4% in Cardiff.

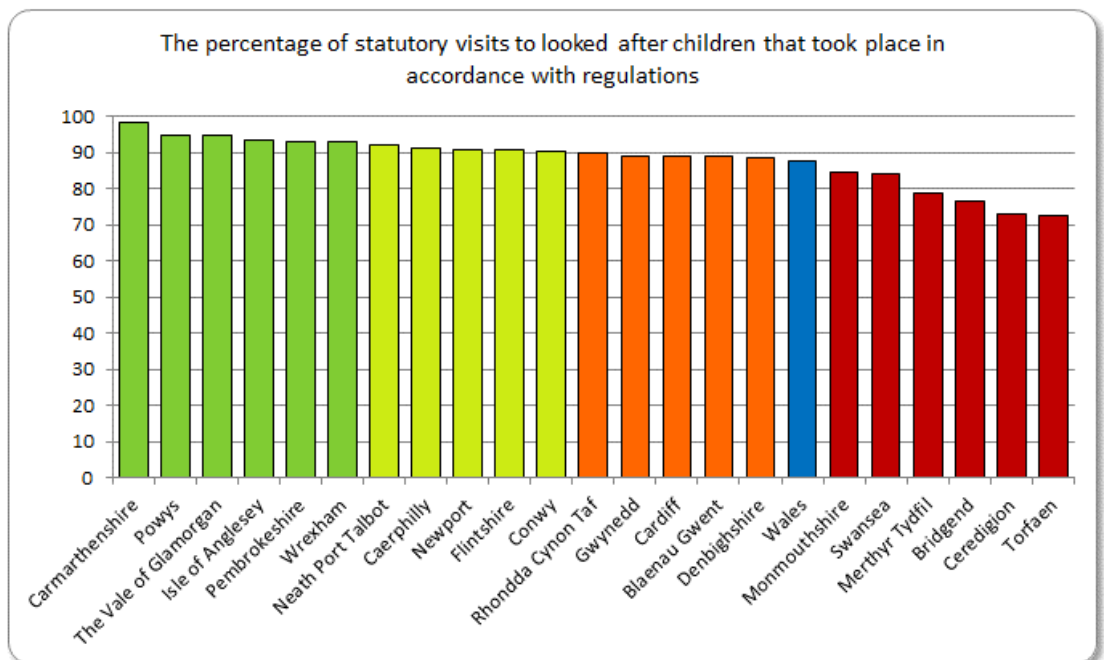


As corporate parents, local authorities are required to ensure the safety and wellbeing of looked after children, and to ensure that they are given the same opportunities as their peers. Over 2,200 children entered care during 2014-15, with around 5,600 children in the care of their local authority at the end of March 2015.

In 2014-15, 87.7% of statutory visits to looked after children took place in accordance with regulations (compared to 85.3% in 2013-14).

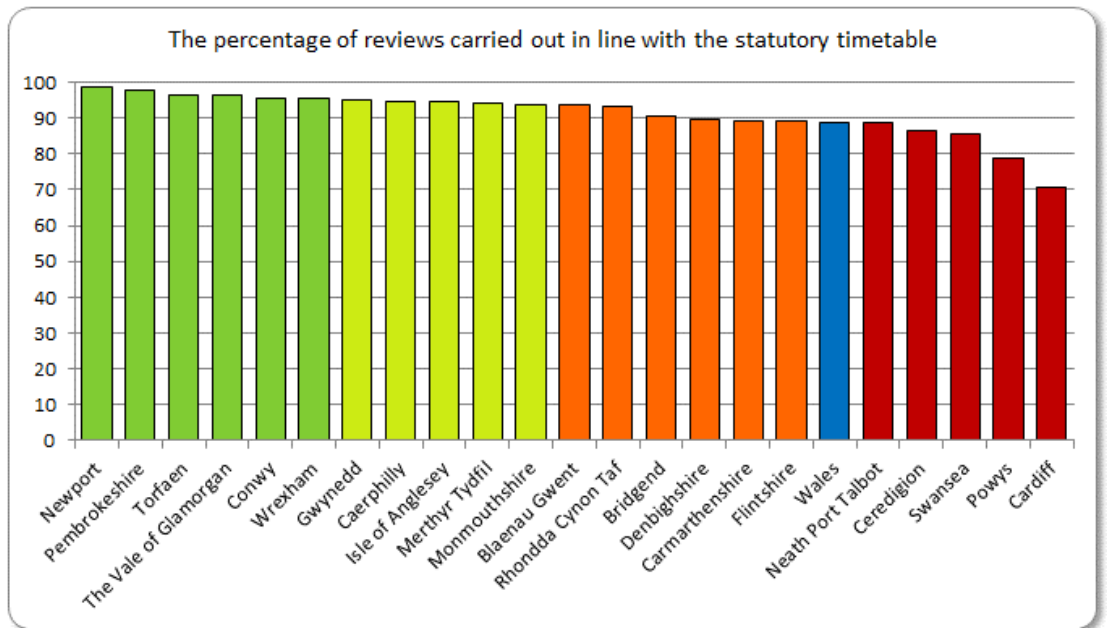


The percentage of statutory visits to looked after children taking place in accordance with regulations ranged from 98.5% in Carmarthenshire to 72.6% in Torfaen.



Stability is recognised as important for the wellbeing of children in care. 9.0% of children looked after experienced three or more placements during 2014-15 (compared to 8.3% in 2013-14). This ranged from 1.9% in Monmouthshire to 15.4% in Blaenau Gwent.

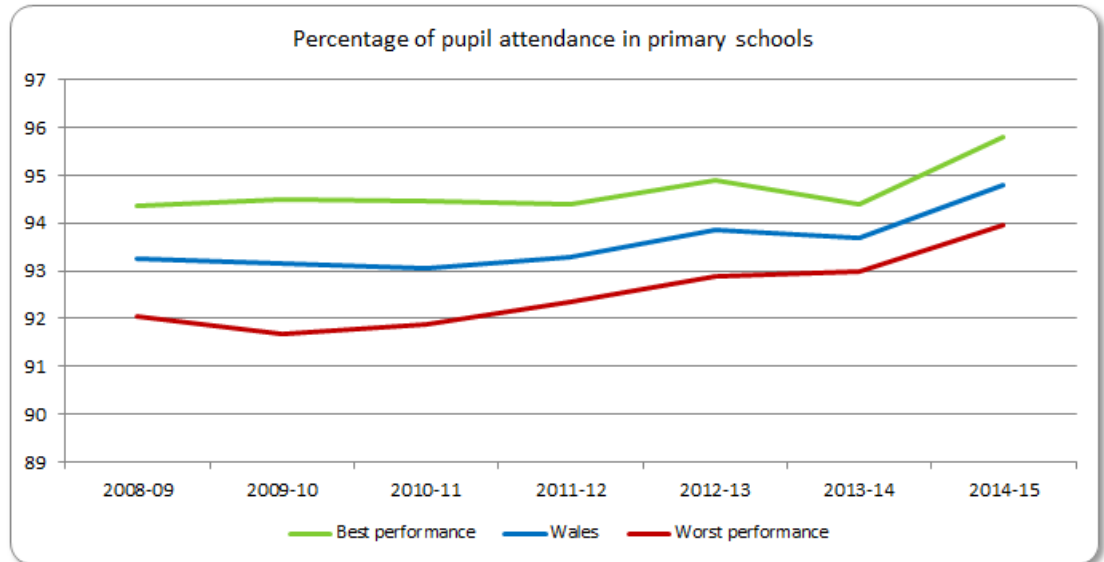
In 2014-15, 88.9% of children reviews were carried out within statutory timescales (compared to 89.6% in 2013-14). This ranged from 98.6% in Newport to 70.8% in Cardiff.



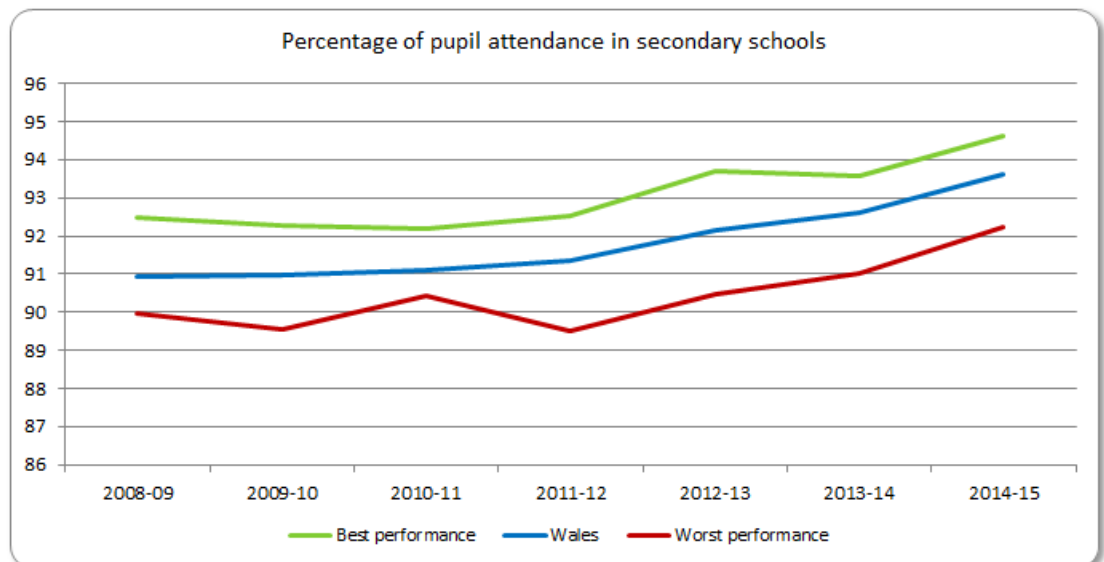
Educating children...

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

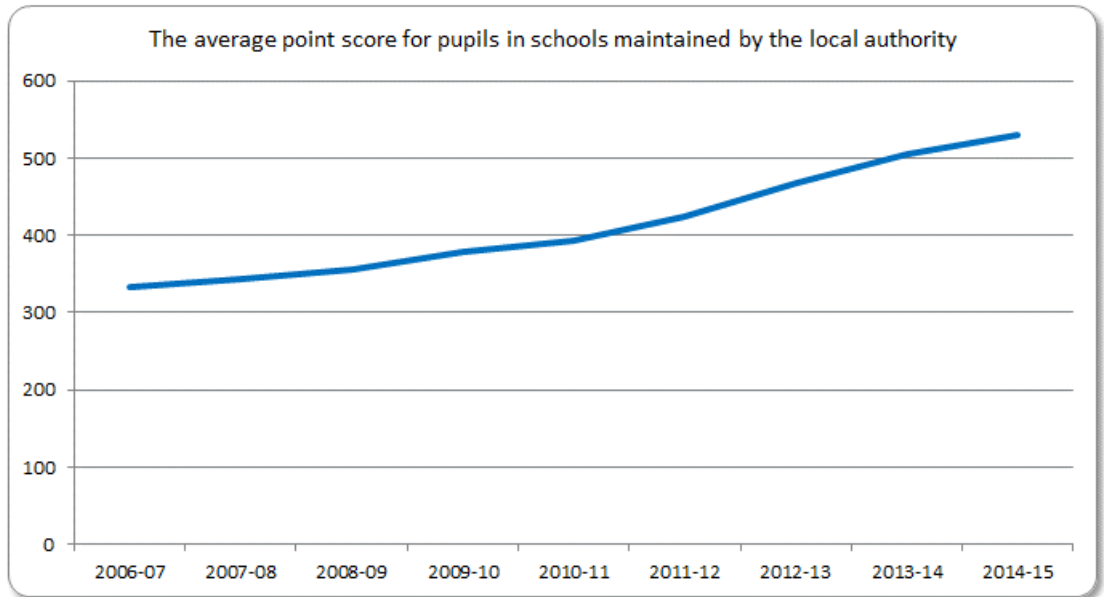
Good attendance is important if children are to learn. In 2014-15, pupil attendance at primary schools across Wales increased from 93.7% to 94.8%.



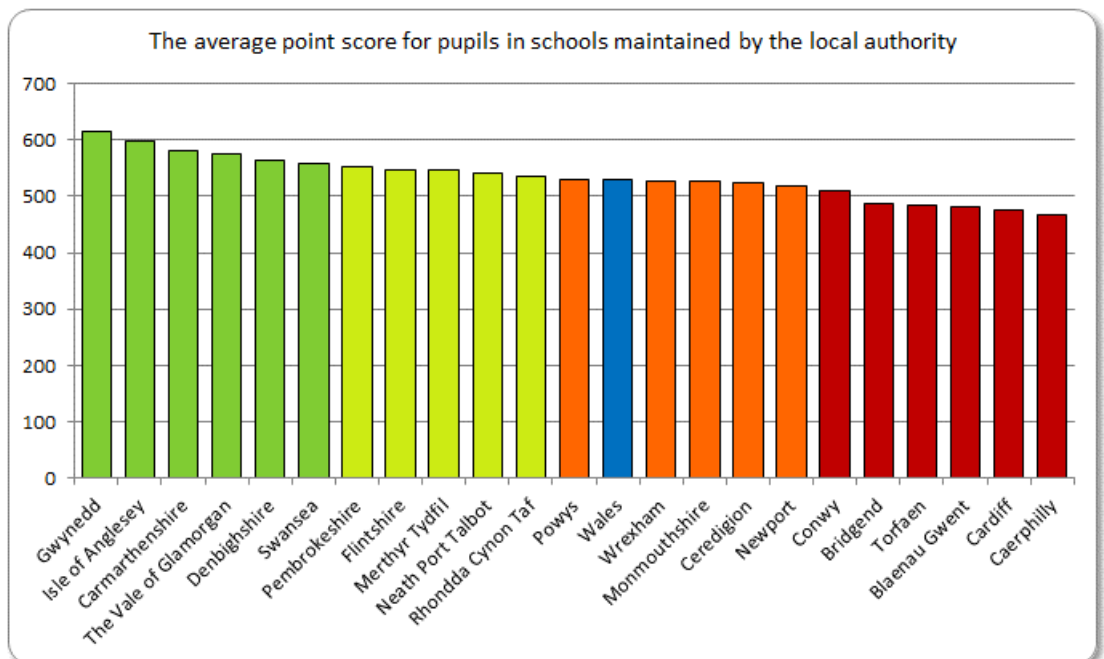
During the same period attendance at secondary schools increased from 92.6% to 93.6%.



The average point score for pupils aged 15 in local authority maintained schools continued to rise (for the eighth successive year) to 530 points.

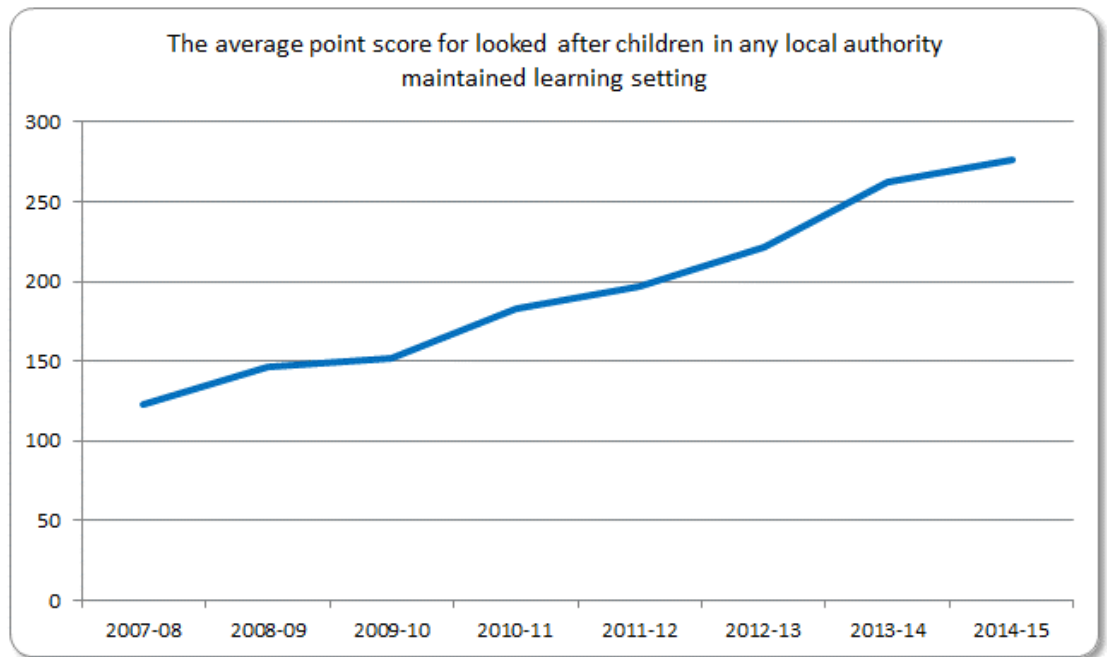


The average point score ranged from 616 points in Gwynedd to 467 points in Caerphilly.

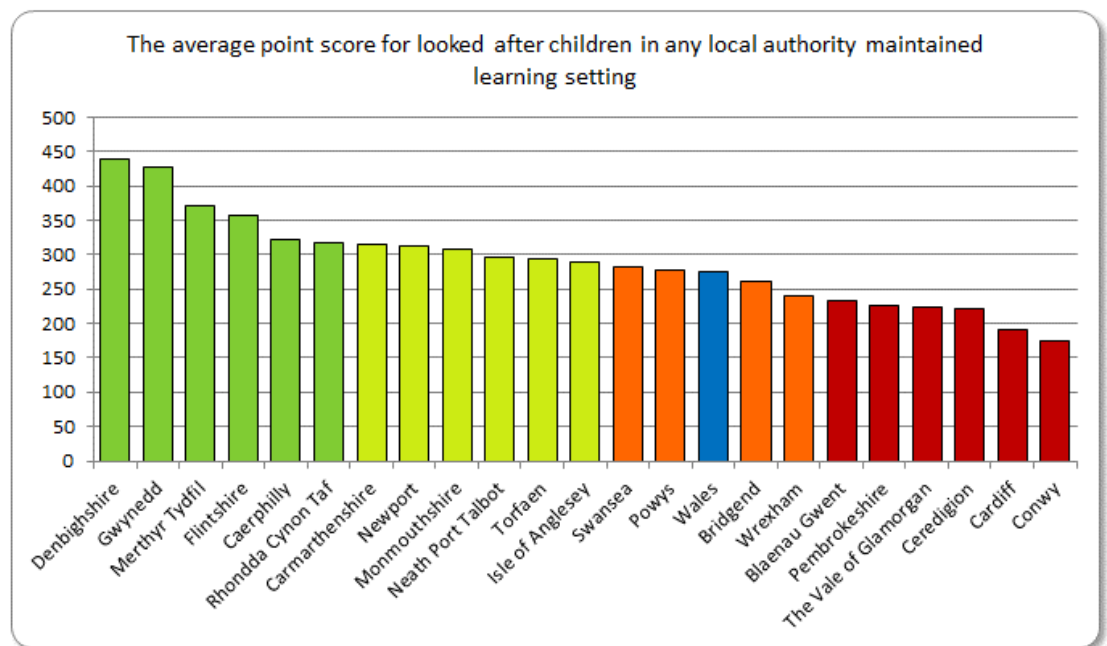


13.5% of children looked after experienced one or more changes of school in the last 12 months (compared to 13.8% in 2013-14). This ranged from 3.3% in Conwy to 21.8% in Denbighshire.

The average point score for children in care continued to increase from 262 points in 2013-14 to 276 points in 2014-15.

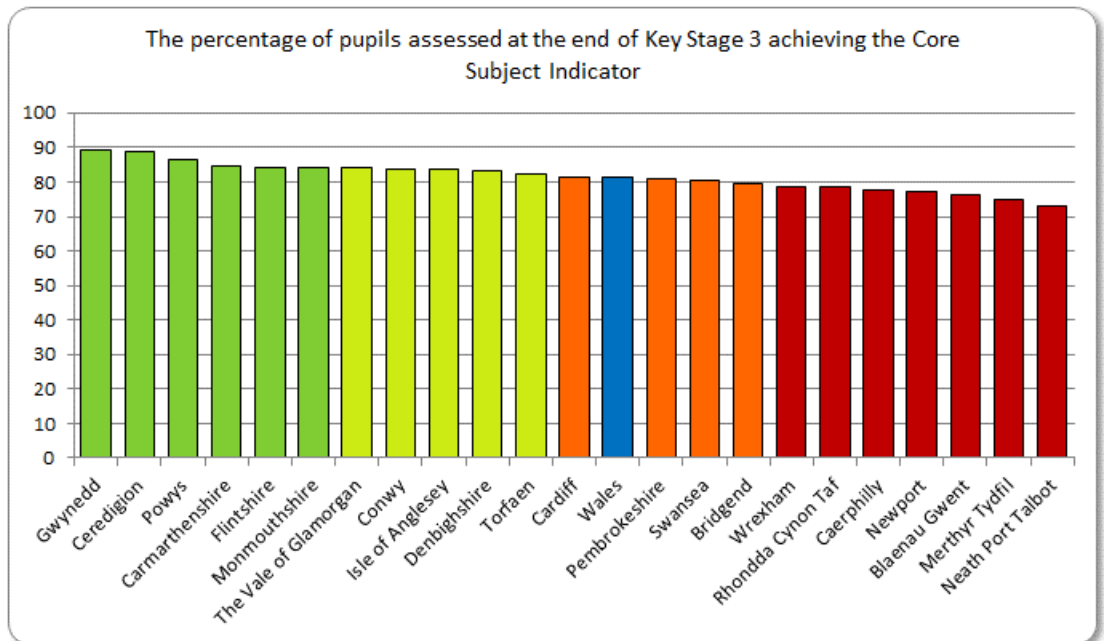


In 2014-15, it ranged from 439 points in Denbighshire to 175 points in Conwy.



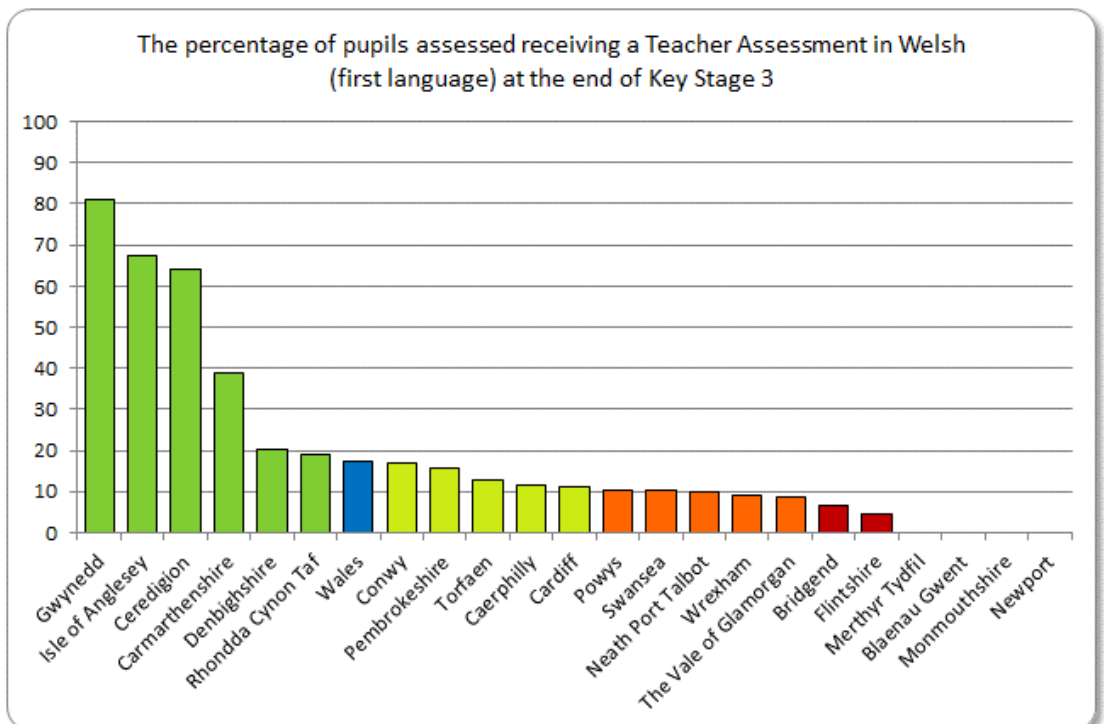
The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 2, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator increased again from 84.6% in 2013-14 to 86.4% in 2014-15. This ranged from 91.2% in Torfaen to 83.8% in Blaenau Gwent.

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 77.2% to 81.2%. This ranged from 89.1% in Gwynedd to 73.1% in Neath Port Talbot.



In 2014-15, 55.5% of pupils achieved the level 2 threshold, including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics (compared to 52.5% in 2013-14). This ranged from 65.6% in Monmouthshire to 41.8% in Blaenau Gwent.

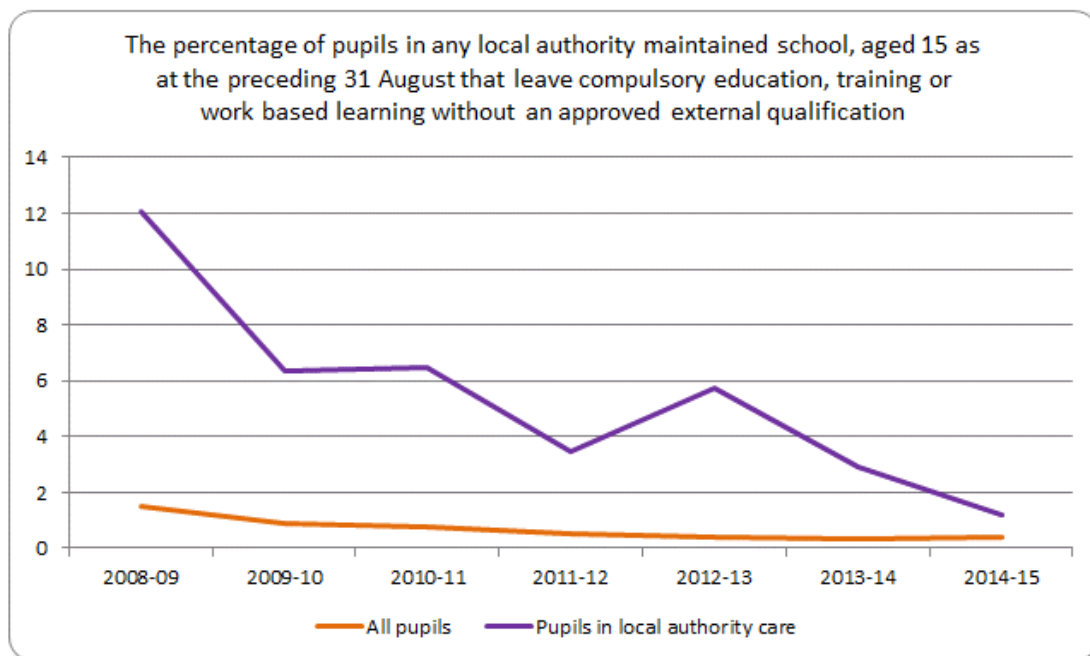
Across Wales, 17.2% of pupils assessed received a Teacher Assessment in Welsh (first language) at the end of Key Stage 3 (compared to 17.0% in 2013-14). This ranged from 81.2% in Gwynedd to 0.0% in Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Newport.



In 2014-15, 0.4% of all children leaving compulsory education aged 15 or 16 (who did not go on to full time education, training or work based

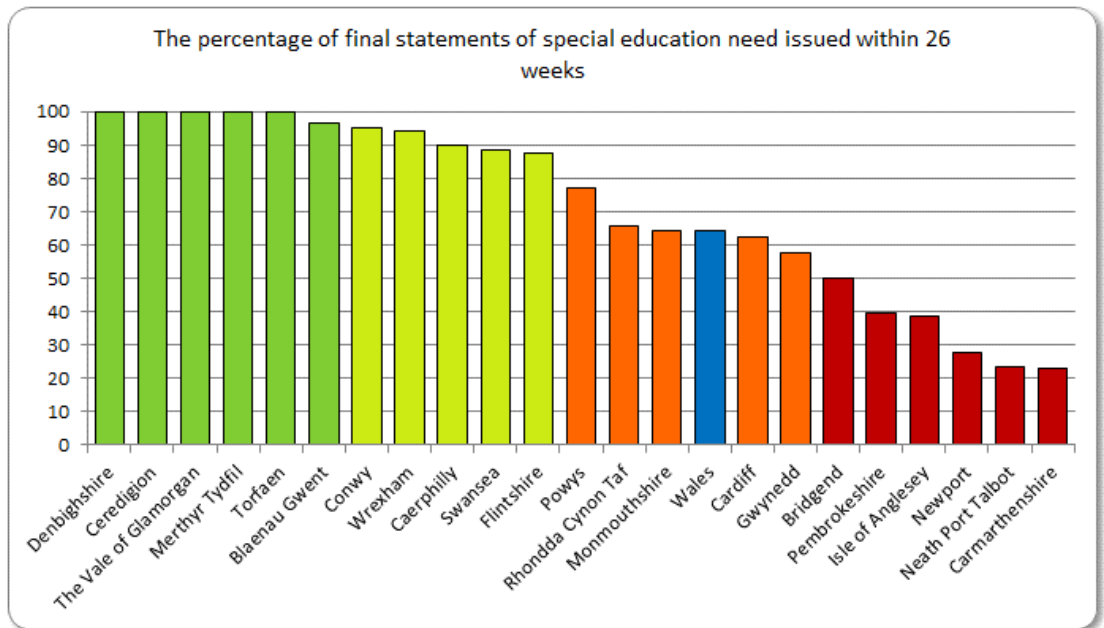
learning) did so without a recognised qualification (compared to 0.3% in 2013-14).

For children in care, 1.2% of children left without a recognised qualification (compared to 2.9% in 2013-14) – the best performance for this indicator.



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).

64.5% of all statements issued were issued within 26 weeks in 2014-15 (compared to 69.6% in 2013-14). This ranged from 100.0% in Denbighshire, Ceredigion, The Vale of Glamorgan, Merthyr Tydfil and Torfaen to 22.9% in Carmarthenshire.



Over the same period, 95.6% of statements (excluding exceptions) were issued within 26 weeks (compared to 96.6% in 2013-14).

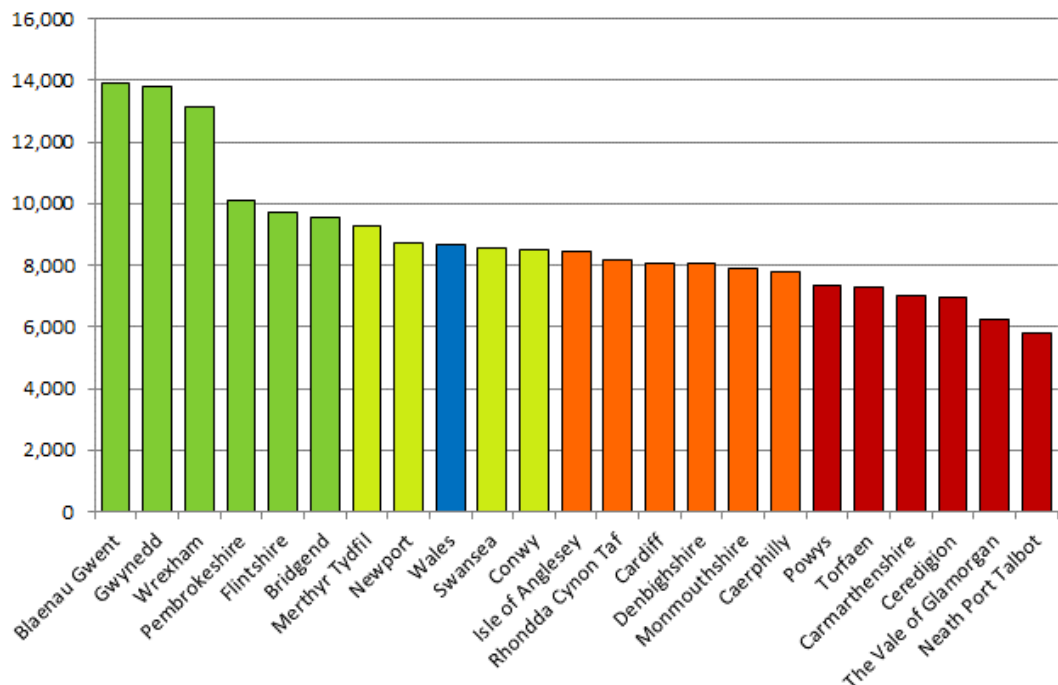
Supporting Leisure & Culture...

Local authorities across Wales provide a range of services which provide leisure and cultural opportunities for the people in their communities.

In 2014-15, there were 8,662 visits to local authority sport and leisure facilities during the year per 1,000 population where the visitor will be participating in physical activity. This compares to 8,954 per 1,000 population in 2013-14.

Visits to sport and leisure facilities ranged from 13,915 per 1,000 population in Blaenau Gwent to 5,775 per 1,000 population in Neath Port Talbot.

The number of visits to local authority sport and leisure facilities during the year per 1,000 population where the visitor will be participating in physical activity



Note: "public libraries" exclude those owned and run by community councils

There were 5,526 visits to public libraries during the year, per 1,000 population in 2014-15 compared to 5,851 per 1,000 population in 2013-14. This ranged from 8,376 per 1,000 in Cardiff to 3,646 per 1,000 in Torfaen.

Contact details

If you require any further information regarding this bulletin please contact:

Richard Palmer

Head of Improvement
Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales



029 2090 9500



enquiries@dataunitwales.gov.uk

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 2014-15 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.